



Number 44 of 2004

ROAD TRAFFIC ACT 2004

REVISED

Updated to 20 May 2024

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All Acts up to and including *Employment (Collective Redundancies and Miscellaneous Provisions) and Companies (Amendment) Act 2024 (14/2024)*, enacted 9 May 2024, and all statutory instruments up to and including *Road Traffic (Electric Scooters) Regulations 2024 (S.I. No. 199 of 2024)*, made 20 May 2024, were considered in the preparation of this Revised Act.

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ACTS REFERRED TO

Finance Act 1976	1976, No. 3
Finance Act 1992	1992, No. 9
Finance (No. 2) Act 1992	1992, No. 28
Finance Act 1993	1993, No. 4
Finance Act 1994	1994, No. 27
Local Authorities (Traffic Wardens) Act 1975	1975, No. 14
Local Government Act 2001	2001, No. 37
Road Traffic Act 1961	1961, No. 24
Road Traffic Act 1968	1968, No. 25
Road Traffic Act 1994	1994, No. 7
Road Traffic Act 2002	2002, No. 12
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AN ACT TO AMEND AND EXTEND THE ROAD TRAFFIC ACTS 1961 TO 2003, THE LOCAL AUTHORITIES (TRAFFIC WARDENS) ACT 1975 AND THE TAXI REGULATION ACT 2003. [22nd December, 2004]

BE IT ENACTED BY THE OIREACHTAS AS FOLLOWS:

PART 1

PRELIMINARY AND GENERAL

Short title, commencement, collective citation and construction.

1.—(1) This Act may be cited as **the Road Traffic Act 2004**.

(2) This Act (other than **section 36**) comes into operation on such day or days as, by order or orders made by the Minister under this section, may be fixed therefor either generally or with reference to any particular purpose or provision and different days may be so fixed for different purposes and different provisions.

(3) The Road Traffic Acts 1961 to 2003 and this Act (other than **Part 6**) may be cited together as the Road Traffic Acts 1961 to 2004 and shall be construed together as one Act.

Interpretation.

2.—(1) In this Act— “Act of 1968” means Road Traffic Act 1968;

“Act of 1975” means Local Authorities (Traffic Wardens) Act 1975;

“Act of 1994” means Road Traffic Act 1994;

“Act of 2001” means Local Government Act 2001;

“Act of 2002” means Road Traffic Act 2002;

“administrative area” has the meaning assigned to it by the Act of 2001;

“built up area” means the area of a city, a borough or a town within the meaning of **the Local Government Act 2001**;

F1[“chief executive”, in relation to a county council or city council, means a chief executive for the purposes of section 144 of the Local Government Act 2001;

“Chief Executive of the National Roads Authority” means a person—

(a) directed under section 28 (1)(b) of the Roads Act 1993 to perform the functions referred to in section 29(2) of that Act, or

(b) appointed under section 29 of the Roads Act 1993;]

“Commissioner” means Commissioner of the Garda Síochána;

“county council” and “city council” have the meanings assigned to them, respectively, in the Act of 2001;

“local road”, “regional road”, “national road” and “motorway” have the meaning assigned to them, respectively, in the Roads Act 1993;

“Minister” means Minister for Transport;

F1[“national managed road” has the same meaning as it has in the Roads Act 1993;]

“Principal Act” means Road Traffic Act 1961.

F1[“road works speed limit” means a speed limit applied by—

(a) the chief executive of a county council or a city council under section 10, or

(b) the Chief Executive of the National Roads Authority under section 10A;

“road works speed limit order” means an order made by—

(a) the chief executive of a county council or a city council under section 10, or

(b) the Chief Executive of the National Roads Authority under section 10A;

“special speed limit” means a speed limit specified by—

(a) a county council or a city council in bye-laws under section 9, or

(b) the National Roads Authority in bye-laws under section 9A;

“special speed limit bye-laws” means bye-laws made by—

(a) a county council or a city council under section 9, or

(b) the National Roads Authority under section 9A;]

(2) In this Act—

(a) a reference to a section is a reference to a section of this Act, unless it is indicated that reference to some other enactment is intended,

(b) a reference to a subsection, paragraph or subparagraph is to the subsection, paragraph or subparagraph of the provision in which the reference occurs, unless it is indicated that reference to some other provision is intended, and

(c) a reference to any enactment is to be construed as a reference to that enactment as amended, adapted or extended by or under any subsequent enactment including this Act.

Regulations.

3.—(1) The Minister may make regulations prescribing any matter or thing which is referred to in this Act as prescribed or to be prescribed.

(2) Regulations made under this Act shall be laid before each House of the Oireachtas as soon as may be after they are made and, if a resolution annulling the regulations is passed by either such House within the next 21 days on which that House has sat after the regulations are laid before it, the regulations shall be annulled accordingly, but without prejudice to the validity of anything previously done thereunder.

PART 2

SPEED LIMITS

Ordinary speed limits.

4.—(1) The Minister may make regulations prescribing a speed limit (“ordinary speed limit”) in respect of all public roads, or all public roads with such exceptions as may be specified in the regulations, for any class of F2[vehicle].

(2) Regulations under this section may prescribe different speed limits for any class of vehicle using particular categories of public roads.

(3) Regulations under this section may make provision for the exemption of a class or classes, including a sub class, of vehicles from a speed limit specified in any such regulations.

Built-up area speed limit.

5.—(1) There is a speed limit (“built-up area speed limit”) of 50 kilometres per hour in respect of all public roads, other than a motorway in built-up areas for all mechanically propelled vehicles.

(2) The built-up area speed limit does not apply to a road or part of it in a built-up area where a special speed limit or a road works speed limit applies to that road or part.

Non-urban regional and local roads speed limit.

6.—(1) There is a speed limit (“regional and local roads speed limit”) of 80 kilometres per hour in respect of all regional and local roads, other than such roads in built-up areas, for all mechanically propelled vehicles.

(2) The regional and local roads speed limit does not apply to a non-urban regional and local road or part of it where a special speed limit or a road works speed limit applies to that road or part.

National roads speed limit.

7.—(1) There is a speed limit (“national roads speed limit”) of 100 kilometres per hour in respect of all national roads, other than national roads in built-up areas, for all mechanically propelled vehicles.

(2) The national roads speed limit does not apply to a national road or part of it where a special speed limit or a road works speed limit applies to that road or part.

F7[National primary roads speed limit]

7A. ...

Motorway speed limit.

8.—(1) There is a speed limit (“motorway speed limit”) of 120 kilometres per hour in respect of all motorways for all mechanically propelled vehicles.

(2) The motorway speed limit does not apply in respect of any motorway or part of it where a special speed limit or road works speed limit applies to that motorway or part.

Special speed limits.

9.—(1) A county council or a city council may make bye-laws F8[...] specifying in respect of any specified public road or specified part of a public road or specified carriageway or lane of a public road F9[other than a national managed road, part of a national managed road or carriageway or lane of a national managed road] within its administrative area the speed limit F8[...] which shall be the speed limit on that road or those roads for mechanically propelled vehicles.

(2) The special speed limits that may be specified in bye-laws under this section are—

F10[(a) (i) 20 kilometres per hour,

- (ii) 30 kilometres per hour, and
 - (iii) 40 kilometres per hour,
- in respect of a road or roads in accordance with guidelines issued by the Minister under F11[*section 10D*],]
- (b) 50 kilometres per hour, in respect of any road other than a road in a built-up area,
 - (c) 60 kilometres per hour,
 - (d) 80 kilometres per hour, in respect of a motorway, a national road or a road in a built-up area,
 - (e) 100 kilometres per hour, in respect of a motorway, a non-urban regional or local road or a road in a built-up area, and
 - (f) 120 kilometres per hour, in respect of a dual carriageway that forms part of a national road that is not a motorway in accordance with guidelines issued by the Minister under F11[*section 10D*]
- (3) Before making special speed limit bye-laws a county council or city council shall give notice to—
- (a) the council of any borough or town in the administrative county concerned of any provision in the proposed bye-laws relating to roads in their respective administrative areas, and
 - (b) the Commissioner, and
- shall consider any representations made in writing by any such council or the Commissioner where they are received within the period (not being less than one month after the date of service of the notice) specified in the notice.
- (4) Whenever a county council or city council having considered any representations under *subsection (3)*, proposes to make bye-laws under this section, the following provisions have effect—
- (a) the council shall publish notice of the proposal at least once in at least 2 daily newspapers published in and circulating in the State or the area to which the bye-laws relate,
 - (b) the notice shall include—
 - (i) a statement of the purpose for which the bye-laws are to be made,
 - (ii) an intimation that a copy of draft bye-laws is open for public inspection at the address stated in the notice, and
 - (iii) an intimation that any person may submit to the council objections to the draft bye-laws at any time during the period of 30 days commencing on the date of the first publication of the notice,
 - (c) the council shall, during that period of 30 days, keep a copy of the draft bye-laws open for public inspection during ordinary office hours at the address stated in the notice,
 - (d) any person who objects to the draft bye-laws may submit his or her objection to the council in writing at any time during that period of 30 days and the council shall consider the objections.
- (5) In making special speed limit bye-laws under this section a county council or city council may, in the interests of road safety, apply a special speed limit for a specified period or periods during any day or during specified days (such periods and

days being indicated in such bye-laws) on a specified road or specified motorway or part of it and such special speed limit shall, notwithstanding any other provision in the said bye-laws relating to any such road or motorway or part of it, be the speed limit for that road for that period or periods only.

(6) F8[...]

(7) A county council or city council shall not make bye-laws under this section relating to a national road or a motorway without the prior written consent of the National Roads Authority.

(8) The Minister may make regulations in relation to all or any of the following matters:

(a) the varying of the speed limits standing specified in *subsection (2)* and that subsection shall have effect in accordance with any such regulations for the time being in force; or

(b) the exemption of a class or classes of mechanically propelled vehicles from a specified speed limit or from all of the speed limits specified or having effect under this section.

(9) F8[...]

(10) The making of special speed limit bye-laws under this section and the making of representations under *subsection (3)(a)* are reserved functions (within the meaning of the Act of 2001).

(11) Where special speed limit bye-laws F9[[under this section](#)] apply a special speed limit to a specified public road or specified part of a public road or specified carriageway or lane of a public road, that speed limit does not apply where a road works speed limit order is made in respect of the public road, part, carriageway or lane of it.

(12) A document which purports to be a copy of special speed limit bye-laws F9[[under this section](#)], and which has endorsed on it a certificate purporting to be signed by an officer of the county council or city council which made the bye-laws stating that the document is a true copy of the bye-laws and that the bye-laws were in force on a specified day, shall, without proof of the signature of such officer or that he or she was in fact such officer, be evidence, until the contrary is shown, in every court and in all legal proceedings, of the bye-laws and of the fact that they were in force on that date.

F9[(13) Where—

(a) a speed limit specified in bye-laws under this section is the speed limit on a road for mechanically propelled vehicles, and

(b) the Minister designates such road or a part thereof as a national managed road,

[the speed limit specified in bye-laws under this section in respect of the road shall continue to be the speed limit on that road for mechanically propelled vehicles until the National Roads Authority makes bye-laws under *section 9A* specifying a speed limit for mechanically propelled vehicles in respect of that national managed road or part thereof.\]](#)

F14[Special speed limits on national managed roads

9A.—(1) The National Roads Authority may make bye-laws specifying in respect of any specified national managed road or specified part of a national managed road or specified carriageway or lane of a national managed road, the speed limit which shall be the speed limit on that road or those roads for mechanically propelled vehicles.

(2) The special speed limits that may be specified in bye-laws under this section are—

- (a) (i) 20 kilometres per hour,
 - (ii) 30 kilometres per hour,
 - (iii) 40 kilometres per hour,in respect of a national managed road or nationally managed roads in accordance with guidelines issued by the Minister under this Part,
- (b) 50 kilometres per hour, in respect of any national managed road other than a national managed road in a built-up area,
- (c) 60 kilometres per hour,
- (d) 80 kilometres per hour, in respect of a national managed road that is—
 - (i) a motorway,
 - (ii) a national road, or
 - (iii) in a built-up area,
- (e) 100 kilometres per hour, in respect of a national managed road that is—
 - (i) a motorway, or
 - (ii) in a built-up area, and
- (f) 120 kilometres per hour, in respect of a dual carriageway that forms part of a national managed road that—
 - (i) is a national road, and
 - (ii) is not a motorway,in accordance with guidelines issued by the Minister under this Part.

(3) Before making special speed limit bye-laws pursuant to *subsection (1)*, the National Roads Authority shall give notice to—

- (a) the council of any county council or city council concerned of any provision in the proposed bye-laws relating to roads in their respective administrative areas, and
- (b) the Commissioner,

and shall consider any representations made in writing by any such council or the Commissioner where they are received within the period (not being less than one month after the date of service of the notice) specified in the notice.

(4) Whenever the National Roads Authority, having considered any representations under *subsection (3)*, proposes to make bye-laws under this section, the following provisions have effect—

- (a) the National Roads Authority shall publish notice of the proposal at least once in at least 2 daily newspapers published in and circulating in the State or the area to which the bye-laws relate,
- (b) the notice shall include—
 - (i) a statement of the purpose for which the bye-laws are to be made,

- (ii) an intimation that a copy of draft bye-laws is open for public inspection at the address stated in the notice, and
 - (iii) an intimation that any person may submit to the National Roads Authority objections to the draft bye-laws at any time during the period of 30 days commencing on the date of the first publication of the notice,
- (c) the National Roads Authority shall, during that period of 30 days, keep a copy of the draft bye-laws open for public inspection during ordinary office hours at the address stated in the notice, and
- (d) any person who objects to the draft bye-laws may submit his or her objection to the National Roads Authority in writing at any time during that period of 30 days and the Authority shall consider the objections.
- (5) In making special speed limit bye-laws under this section the National Roads Authority may, in the interests of road safety, apply a special speed limit for a specified period or periods during any day or during specified days (such periods and days being indicated in such bye-laws) on a specified national managed road or part of it and such special speed limit shall, notwithstanding any other provision in the said bye-laws relating to any such national managed road or part of it, be the speed limit for that national road for that period or periods only.
- (6) The Minister may make regulations in relation to all or any of the following matters:
- (a) the varying of the speed limits standing specified in *subsection (2)* and that subsection shall have effect in accordance with any such regulations for the time being in force;
 - (b) the exemption of a class or classes of mechanically propelled vehicles from a specified speed limit or from all of the speed limits specified or having effect under this section.
- (7) Where special speed limit bye-laws under this section apply a special speed limit to a specified national managed road or specified part of a national managed road or specified carriageway or lane of a national managed road, that speed limit does not apply where—
- (a) a road works speed limit order is made in respect of, or
 - (b) a variable speed limit is applied to,
- that national managed road, part, carriageway or lane.
- (8) A document which purports to be a copy of special speed limit bye-laws made under this section and which has endorsed on it a certificate purporting to be signed by an officer of the National Roads Authority stating that the document is a true copy of the bye-laws and that the bye-laws were in force on a specified day, shall, without proof of the signature of such officer or that he or she was in fact such officer, be evidence, until the contrary is shown, in every court and in all legal proceedings, of the bye-laws and of the fact that they were in force on that date.]

Speed limits at road works.

F16[10.—(1) The chief executive of a county council or a city council may, where he or she considers it is in the interests of road safety on a road, other than a national managed road, or part of such a road, in the administrative area of the county council or city council for which he or she is the chief executive, where road works are being carried out, by order apply to that road or part of it a special limit being a speed limit of not less than 20 kilometres per hour, as the speed limit on the road for mechanically propelled vehicles, in lieu of the speed limit provided or having effect under this Act in respect of the road or motorway or part of it.

(2) An order under *subsection (1)* is in force for the duration of the road works, subject to no such order having effect for a period of more than 12 months from the date of its making.

(3) The chief executive of a county council or a city council shall not make an order under *subsection (1)* in respect of a national road without the prior written consent of the National Roads Authority.

(4) Before making an order under *subsection (1)*, the chief executive concerned shall notify the Commissioner in writing of his or her intention to make the order.

(5) The chief executive shall consider any representations made by the Commissioner in writing and in such manner as the Minister may prescribe received by the chief executive within 1 month, or such other period as the Minister may prescribe in relation to the type of road and type of road works concerned, of the notification under *subsection (4)*.

(6) When a chief executive of a county council or a city council makes an order under *subsection (1)* he or she shall publish a notice—

(a) in one or more newspapers circulating in the county council or city council to which the order relates, or

(b) in such other manner as the Minister may prescribe in relation to the type of road and type of road works concerned,

indicating the location where the order will have effect, the period for which it will have effect and the speed limit being applied through the order.

(7) The chief executive shall have regard to any representations that are made to him or her in relation to the order under *subsection (1)* prior to making such an order.

(8) A chief executive of a county council or a city council may at any time within the period specified in *subsection (2)* revoke or amend an order made by him or her under *subsection (1)*.

(9) A document which purports to be a copy of an order made under *subsection (1)* which has endorsed on it a certificate purporting to be signed by the chief executive of a county council or, as the case may be, a city council, making the order or an officer of the county council or a city council concerned designated by the chief executive stating that the document is a true copy of the order and that the order was in force on a specified day, shall, without proof of the signature of the chief executive or officer or that he or she was in fact such chief executive or officer, be evidence, until the contrary is shown, in every court and in all legal proceedings, of the order and of the fact that it was in force on that date.]

F17[Speed limits at road works on national managed roads

10A.—(1) The Chief Executive of the National Roads Authority may, where he or she considers it is in the interests of road safety on a national managed road, or part of a national managed road where road works are being carried out, by order apply to that road or part of it, subject to *section 10C*, a special limit being a speed limit of not less than 20 kilometres per hour, as the speed limit on the national managed road for mechanically propelled vehicles, in lieu of the speed limit provided or having effect under this Act in respect of the national managed road or part of it.

(2) An order under *subsection (1)* is in force for the duration of the road works, subject to no such order having effect for a period of more than 12 months from the date of its making.

(3) The Chief Executive of the National Roads Authority shall not make an order under *subsection (1)* in respect of a national managed road without giving, or causing to be given, prior written notification to the county council or city council, within whose administrative area the road works occur in writing of his or her intention to make the order.

(4) Before making an order under *subsection (1)* the Chief Executive of the National Roads Authority shall notify the Commissioner in writing of his or her intention to make the order.

(5) The Chief Executive of the National Roads Authority shall consider any representations made by the Commissioner in writing and in such manner as the Minister may prescribe received by the Chief Executive within 1 month, or such other period as the Minister may prescribe in relation to the type of road and type of road works concerned, of the notification under *subsection (4)*.

(6) When the Chief Executive of the National Roads Authority makes an order under *subsection (1)*, he or she shall publish a notice—

(a) in one or more newspapers circulating in the county council or city council to which the order relates, or

(b) in such other manner as the Minister may prescribe in relation to the type of road and type of road works concerned,

indicating the location where the order will have effect, the period for which it will have effect and the speed limit being applied through the order.

(7) The Chief Executive of the National Roads Authority shall have regard to any representations that are made to him or her in relation to the order made under *subsection (1)* prior to making such an order.

(8) The Chief Executive of the National Roads Authority may at any time within the period specified in *subsection (2)* revoke or amend an order made by him or her under *subsection (1)*.

(9) A document which purports to be a copy of an order made under *subsection (1)* which has endorsed on it a certificate purporting to be signed by the Chief Executive of the National Roads Authority or an officer of the National Roads Authority designated by the Chief Executive stating that the document is a true copy of the order and that the order was in force on a specified day, shall, without proof of the signature of the Chief Executive, or the officer or that he or she was in fact the Chief Executive of the National Roads Authority, or such officer, be evidence, until the contrary is shown, in every court and in all legal proceedings, of the order and of the fact that it was in force on that date.]

F18[Variable speed limits

10B.—(1) The National Roads Authority may apply, or cause to be applied, by automated means or otherwise, to any national managed road or any part, carriageway or lane thereof, a special limit (referred to in this Act as a "variable speed limit") being a speed limit of—

(a) not less than 20 kilometres per hour, and

(b) not more than the speed limit otherwise provided or having effect under this Act,

as the speed limit for mechanically propelled vehicles on that national managed road, part, carriageway or lane, in lieu of the speed limit provided or having effect under this Act by displaying the speed limit, or causing it to be displayed, electronically on a traffic sign above or to the side of the national managed road, or part, carriageway or lane thereof.

(2) A variable speed limit is in force for the period during which it is displayed in accordance with *subsection (1)*.

(3) The speed limits that may be applied under this section are—

(a) 20 kilometres per hour,

(b) 30 kilometres per hour,

- (c) 40 kilometres per hour,
- (d) 50 kilometres per hour,
- (e) 60 kilometres per hour,
- (f) 70 kilometres per hour,
- (g) 80 kilometres per hour,
- (h) 90 kilometres per hour,
- (i) 100 kilometres per hour,
- (j) 110 kilometres per hour,
- (k) 120 kilometres per hour,

and different variable speed limits may be applied to different carriageways and different lanes on different parts of the same national managed road.

(4) The Chief Executive of the National Roads Authority may authorise persons to carry out the functions referred to in *subsection (1)*.

(5) In any legal proceedings in which it is shown that a speed limit was displayed electronically on a traffic sign above or to the side of a national managed road, or part, carriageway or lane thereof it shall be presumed until the contrary is shown that that the speed limit was displayed in accordance with *subsection (1)*.

(6) A document which has endorsed on it a certificate purporting to be signed by the Chief Executive of the National Roads Authority or a person authorised by the Chief Executive of the National Roads Authority under *subsection (4)* stating that a variable speed limit applied at a specified location on a specified day, at a specified time or during a specified period, shall, without proof of the signature of the Chief Executive or the person or that he or she was in fact the Chief Executive of the National Roads Authority or so authorised, be evidence, until the contrary is shown, in every court and in all legal proceedings, of the fact that the electronic speed limit applied at that location on that day, at that time or during that period.

(7) Where a speed limit other than a speed limit referred to in *subsection (3)* is displayed electronically on a traffic sign above or to the side of a national managed road, or part, carriageway or lane thereof such speed limit shall have no effect and the speed limit provided or having effect under this Act shall apply to the road, or part, carriageway or lane thereof.

(8) No action or other proceedings shall lie or be maintainable (except in the case of wilful neglect or default) against any officer of, or person authorised by, the National Roads Authority for the recovery of damages in respect of loss of life and personal injury in respect of any injury to persons, damage to property or other loss alleged to have been caused or contributed to by the performance of functions referred to in *subsection (1)*.]

F19[Variable speed limit schemes

10C.—(1) The National Roads Authority may prepare a scheme in relation to the application of variable speed limits to a national managed road or any section, carriageway or lane of a national managed road.

(2) The National Roads Authority shall specify in any scheme prepared under *subsection (1)*—

- (a) the national managed road or the section, carriageway or lane of the national managed road to which the scheme relates,
- (b) the speed limits that the Authority intends will be applied to the road, section, carriageway or lane to which the scheme relates,

- (c) information regarding the rationale for applying variable speed limits to the road, section, carriageway or lane to which the scheme relates,
- (d) such other information as the National Roads Authority considers relevant to the application of variable speed limits to the road, section, carriageway or lane to which the scheme relates, and
- (e) such other information in relation to the application and operation of variable speed limits as the Minister may prescribe.

(3) The National Roads Authority shall publish a draft of any scheme prepared under *subsection (1)* on its website.

(4) Where the National Roads Authority publishes a draft of a scheme in accordance with *subsection (3)* it shall give notice of such publication to—

- (a) the council of any county council or city council concerned of any part of the scheme that relates to roads in their respective administrative areas, and
- (b) the Commissioner,

and shall consider any representations made in writing by such a council or the Commissioner where they are received within the period (not being less than one month after the date of service of the notice) specified in the notice.

(5) Where the National Roads Authority publishes a draft of a scheme in accordance with *subsection (3)* the following provisions shall have effect:

- (a) the National Roads Authority shall publish notice of the publication of the draft scheme in at least 2 daily newspapers published in and circulating in the State or the area to which the proposed scheme relates,
- (b) the notice shall state that—
 - (i) it is intended to apply variable speed limits on a specified national managed road or a section, carriageway or lane of a national managed road,
 - (ii) a copy of the draft scheme in relation to the road, section, carriage or lane is available for public inspection, and
 - (iii) any person may make submissions to the National Roads Authority in relation to the draft scheme at any time during the period of 30 days commencing on the date of the first publication of the notice,
- (c) the National Roads Authority shall, during that period of 30 days, keep a copy of the draft scheme open for public inspection during ordinary office hours at the address stated in the notice,
- (d) any person who wishes may make submissions to the National Roads Authority in relation to the draft scheme in writing at any time during that period of 30 days and the National Roads Authority shall consider the submissions.

(6) Having considered any representations and submissions received in accordance with this section the National Roads Authority may make the scheme with or without amendment and shall publish such scheme on its website.]

F20[Speed limit guidelines

10D.—(1) The Minister may issue guidelines relating to the making of special speed limit bye-laws, road works speed limit orders and variable speed limit schemes and may amend or cancel any such guidelines.

(2) Where guidelines under *subsection (1)* are, for the time being in force, a county council, city council or the National Roads Authority, as the case may be, shall ensure when they are making any special speed limit bye-laws, road works speed limit orders

or variable speed limit schemes that such bye-laws, order or schemes are in accordance with such guidelines.

(3) Any guidelines issued by the Minister under *section 9(9)* that are in force on the day on which this subsection comes into force shall be deemed to have been made under this section.]

F21 [Ministerial policy directions in relation to certain speed limits

10E.—(1) The Minister may, from time to time, give policy directions in writing to a county council, city council or the National Roads Authority with regard to any of its functions that relate to the application and operation of special speed limits, road works speed limits, or variable speed limits and a county council, city council and the National Roads Authority shall comply with any such direction.

(2) Notice of any direction given under *subsection (1)* and details of it shall be—

(a) laid before each House of the Oireachtas, as soon as may be, after it has been given, and

(b) published in *Iris Oifigiúil* and on a website operated by or on behalf of the Department of Transport not later than 21 days of it being given.]

Offence of exceeding speed limit.

11.—The following section is substituted for section 47 of the Principal Act:

“47.—(1) A person shall not drive a mechanically propelled vehicle at a speed exceeding the speed limit—

(a) that applies in respect of that vehicle, or

(b) that applies to the road on which the vehicle is being driven where that speed limit is lower than that applying to that vehicle.

(2) A person who contravenes subsection (1) is guilty of an offence.

(3) In this section “speed limit” means a limit which is—

(a) an ordinary speed limit,

(b) the built-up area speed limit,

(c) the regional and local roads speed limit,

(d) the national roads speed limit,

(e) the motorway speed limit,

(f) a special speed limit, or

(g) a road works speed limit.”.

Transitional provisions — speed limits.

12.—(1) On the commencement of *section 9*, bye-laws made under section 46 (inserted by section 33 of the Act of 1994) of the Principal Act continue in force and are deemed to be bye-laws for the purposes of that *section 9* and are to be read as applying—

(a) a speed limit of 50 kilometres per hour, in lieu of the built-up area speed limit of 30 miles per hour,

(b) a speed limit of 60 kilometres per hour, in lieu of the special speed limit of 40 miles per hour, and

(c) a speed limit of 80 kilometres per hour, in lieu of the special speed limit of 50 miles per hour,

and have effect in any county or city to which they apply until such time as bye-laws are made in respect of such county or city under that section.

(2) Subject to *subsection (3)*, traffic signs provided for in regulations made under section 95 (as amended by section 37 of the Act of 1994) of the Principal Act depicting the speed limits referred to in *subsection (1)* as applying in lieu of the former speed limits applying prior to the commencement of *section 9*, shall be provided as soon as may be after that date at the locations where the said former speed limits applied as provided for in bye-laws made under section 46 (inserted by section 33 of the Act of 1994) of the Principal Act.

(3) A traffic sign provided for the purpose of indicating a speed limit applying prior to the commencement of *section 9* shall on or after that day be regarded as indicating the new speed limit applying in lieu of the former speed limit until a traffic sign is provided for in accordance with *subsection (2)*.

Amendment of section 53 of Principal Act (dangerous driving.

13.— F22[...]

Repeals (*Part 2*).

14.— Sections 44, 44A (inserted by section 24 of the Act of 1968), 44B (inserted by section 31 of the Act of 1994), 45 (as amended by section 32 of the Act of 1994) and 46 (inserted by section 33 of the Act of 1994) of the Principal Act are repealed.

Evidence in relation to certain offences under Act of 2002.

15.— F23[...]

PART 3

FIXED CHARGES, PENALTY POINTS AND OUTSOURCING

Amendments of section 2 of Act of 2002 (endorsement of penalty points).

16.— Section 2 of the Act of 2002 is amended—

(a) in subsection (5), by inserting “or a person appointed under section 103 of the Principal Act” after “Garda Síochána” and “Commissioner”, and

(b) in subsection (6), by substituting for paragraph (a) the following:

“(a) Where a person is convicted of a penalty point offence, the Minister shall be notified of the conviction by the Courts Service—

(i) in case an appeal is brought against the conviction and it is determined against the person, as soon as may be after such determination, and

(ii) in case an appeal is not brought against the conviction, as soon as may be after the expiration of the ordinary time for bringing such an appeal.”.

Amendment of section 7 of Act of 2002 (appeal against conviction for penalty points).

17.— Section 7 of the Act of 2002 is amended by substituting for subsection (4) the following:

“(4) Where an order is made under subsection (3), the Minister shall be notified by the Courts Service.”.

Outsourcing of fixed charge functions from Garda Síochána.

18.—F24[...]

Driver of vehicle where registered owner is not an individual.

19.—F25[...]

Offence by body corporate, etc.

20.—F26[...]

Inspection of driving licences of persons charged with certain offences.

21.—The following section is substituted for section 22 of the Act of 2002:

“22.—(1) A person who it is alleged has committed an offence or has been charged with the commission of an offence under the *Road Traffic Acts 1961 to 2004* other than—

(a) section 84 (inserted by section 15 of the Act of 2002), section 85 (inserted by section 16 of the Act of 2002) or section 101 of the Principal Act, or

(b) section 35 (in so far as it relates to the parking of vehicles) or section 36 of the Act of 1994,

and is due to appear before a court to answer the accusation or charge, shall on the first date he or she is due to appear before the court or on a subsequent date at the discretion of the presiding judge, produce to the Court his or her driving licence and the Court shall record whether or not the licence has been produced.

(2) A person who fails to produce his or her licence to the court in accordance with the requirements of subsection (1) is guilty of an offence.

(3) In any proceedings for an offence under subsection (2)—

(a) a certified copy of a court order in relation to an offence referred to in subsection (1), or

(b) any other form of notification certifying that the driving licence was not produced to the court as provided for in the Rules of Court,

is admissible as evidence of those facts.”

Amendment of First Schedule to Act of 2002.

22.—The First Schedule to the Act of 2002 is amended—

(a) in Part 1, by inserting—

(i) in column (3) at reference number 9 after “Careless driving” the following:

“where the offence involves the use of a mechanically propelled vehicle”,

and

(ii) after the matter at reference number 16 the following:

“

17	Offence under section 51A of Road Traffic Act 1961	Driving without reasonable consideration	2	4
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”

and

(b) in Part 4, by substituting for the matter contained in column (3) at reference number 16 the following:

“Failure to comply with certain mandatory signs”.

Amendment of section 3 of Act of 1975 (Traffic Wardens).

23.—Section 3 (inserted by section 12 of the Act of 2002) of the Act of 1975 is amended—

(a) in subsection (3), by substituting for paragraph (b) the following:

“(b) the registered owner of the vehicle—

(i) being an individual was not driving or otherwise using the vehicle, or

(ii) being a body corporate or an unincorporated body of persons was not capable of driving or otherwise using the vehicle,

at the time of the commission of the alleged offence to which the notice relates.”,

(b) by inserting after subsection (5) the following:

“(5A) (a) A notice under this section in the prescribed form may contain details of the manner of payment of a fixed charge.

(b) Notwithstanding the requirements of subsections (6), (7) and (8) of this section requiring that the payment of a fixed charge be accompanied by the notice served or affixed, as the case may be, the notice in the prescribed forms may contain details of the manner of payment of the fixed charge or without the payment being accompanied by the notice.”,

(c) in subsection (7), by substituting for paragraph (h) the following:

“(h) subject to paragraph (f) of this subsection, failure to comply with the said subsection (4) is an offence upon summary conviction of which the registered owner is liable to a fine not exceeding €1,000.”,

(d) by inserting after subsection (7) the following:

“(7A) The payment of a fixed charge shall not be accepted after the expiration of the period of 56 days beginning on the date of the notice concerned that was served or affixed under subsection (2) or served under subsection (4) of this section, as the case may be.”,

and

(e) by substituting for subsection (9) the following:

“(9) In a prosecution for a fixed charge offence it shall be presumed until the contrary is shown that—

(a) the relevant notice under this section has been served or caused to be served, and

(b) that a payment pursuant to the relevant notice under this section, accompanied by the notice, duly completed (unless the notice provides for payment without the notice accompanying the payment) has not been made.”.

PART 4

MISCELLANEOUS

Courts Service to inform Minister of court orders under section 36 and 29 of Principal Act.

24.—Section 36 of the Principal Act is amended by substituting for subsection (8) (inserted by section 8(b) of the Act of 2002) the following:

“(8) The Courts Service shall inform the Minister of an order made—

- (a) under subsection (3) or (4) of this section,
- (b) suspending or postponing an order under either of those subsections, or
- (c) under section 29 of this Act removing a consequential or ancillary disqualification.”.

Amendment of section 9 of Act of 2002 (disqualification pursuant to European Convention on Driving Disqualifications).

25.—Section 9 of the Act of 2002 is amended by—

(a) substituting for subsection (8) the following:

“(8) When the appropriate judge makes or refuses to make an order under subsection (2), the Courts Service shall notify the Minister and the Minister shall cause the central authority of the State of the offence to be notified thereof.”,

and

(b) in subsection (9), substituting for paragraph (a) the following:

“(a) the Courts Service shall—

- (i) notify the Minister of the disqualification as soon as may be, and
- (ii) comply with any request of the Minister for further details or information relating to the person, the offence, the disqualification or otherwise required for the purpose of the Convention,”.

Permits.

26.—(1) Section 35(2) of the Act of 1994 is amended by inserting after paragraph (s) the following:

“(t) the issue of permits at a prescribed charge by a local authority, or any other body authorised by the Minister to issue such permits, for the purpose of—

- (i) exempting permit holders from restrictions or prohibitions on parking applied under this section,
- (ii) allowing for the parking of vehicles by permit holders at specified locations, or
- (iii) exempting permit holders from the application of prohibitions and restrictions to specified traffic from entering or using specified roads, and

separate charges may be prescribed in respect of different permits.”.

(2) The following subsection is inserted after subsection (6) of section 35 of the Act of 1994:

“(7) A permit issued under regulations made under subsection (2)(t) may be inspected, at all reasonable times, by a member of the Garda Síochána or (other than in respect of a permit issued under regulations made under subsection (2)(t)(iii)) a traffic warden.

(8) A person who, without reasonable excuse, fails or refuses to permit the inspection of a permit referred to in subsection (7) is guilty of an offence.”.

Exemptions for emergency vehicles. **27.—**F27[...]

Functions of Commissioner of Garda Síochána. **28.—**F28[...]

Amendment of section 84 of Principal Act (bye-laws in relation to taxi stands). **29.—**Section 84 (inserted by section 15 of the Act of 2002) of the Principal Act is amended by substituting in subsection (11) for the definition of “local authority” the following:

“‘local authority’ means a county council, a city council or a town council (within the meaning of [the Local Government Act 2001](#)), other than the council of a town mentioned in Part 2 of Schedule 6 to that Act;”.

Supply of mechanically propelled vehicles to minor. **30.—**(1) A person shall not supply a mechanically propelled vehicle—
(a) to a person who is under the age of 16 years, or

(b) other than a mechanically propelled vehicle in respect of which a person who has attained the age of 16 years is entitled to hold a driving licence to drive, to a person who is under the age of 17 years.

F29[(2) A person who contravenes *subsection (1)* commits an offence and is liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding €5,000 or to imprisonment for a term not exceeding 6 months or to both.]

(3) In this section “supply”, includes supply by way of sale, hire, loan, gift, or other means of making the vehicle available to a person.

Power of road authority to provide and maintain certain equipment, etc., on public roads. **31.—**(1) A road authority may, with the consent of the Commissioner or at his or her request, provide and maintain on public roads in their charge any equipment or structure which the authority consider desirable for the detection of offences under the *Road Traffic Acts 1961 to 2004*.

(2) Section 42 of the Act of 1994 is repealed.

“registered owner”. **32.—**Section 3(1) of the Principal Act is amended by substituting for the definition of “registered owner” the following:

“‘registered owner’ has the meaning assigned to it by the Road Vehicles (Registration and Licensing) (Amendment) Regulations 1992 ([S.I. No. 385 of 1992](#)) (as amended by the Road Vehicles (Registration and Licensing) (Amendment) Regulations 2004 ([S.I. No. 213 of 2004](#))), but, if those regulations should be revoked, it shall have the meaning assigned to it by such regulations corresponding to those regulations as may for the time being be in force;”.

Production of driving licence to member of Garda Síochána subsequent to commission of road traffic offence. **33.—**F30[...]

INSURANCE

Obligation to be insured.

34.—The Principal Act is amended by substituting for section 56 the following:

“56.—(1) A person (in this subsection referred to as the user) shall not use in a public place a mechanically propelled vehicle unless—

(a) either a vehicle insurer or an exempted person would be liable for injury caused by the negligent use of the vehicle, by him or her at that time, or

(b) there is in force at that time an approved policy of insurance whereby the user or some other person who would be liable for injury caused by the negligent use of the vehicle at that time by the user, is insured against all sums, subject to subsection (2) of this section, without limit, which the user or his or her personal representative or such other person or his or her personal representative becomes liable to pay to any person (exclusive of the excepted persons) by way of damages or costs on account of injury to person or property caused by the negligent use of the vehicle at that time by the user.

(2) The insurance required by this section may be subject to the following limitations and the following exception or any of them—

(a) it may in so far as it relates to—

(i) injury to a person, be limited to such sum as the Minister specifies in regulations,

(ii) injury to property, be limited to the sum of €200,000,

in respect of injury caused by any one act of negligence or any one series of acts of negligence collectively constituting one event,

(b) there may be excepted from the liability covered thereby any liability (in excess of the common law or the statutory liability applicable to the case) undertaken by the insured or the principal debtor by special contract.

(2A) (a) A draft of every regulation proposed to be made under subsection (2)(a)(i) of this section shall be laid before each House of the Oireachtas and the regulation shall not be made until a resolution approving of the draft has been passed by each such House.

(b) Section 5(2) of this Act does not apply to a regulation made under subsection (2)(a)(i) of this section.

(3) An approved policy of insurance referred to in subsection (1)(b) of this section extends to damages or costs on account of injury to persons or property incurred by the negligent use of a mechanically propelled vehicle by the user in any of the designated territories to the extent required by the law relating to compulsory insurance against civil liability in respect of the use of mechanically propelled vehicles of the territory where the damages or costs may be incurred, or to the extent required by this Part, whichever is the greater.

(4) Where a person contravenes subsection (1) of this section, he or she and, if he or she is not the owner of the vehicle, such owner are each guilty of an offence and are liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding €3,000 or, to imprisonment for a term not exceeding 6 months, or to both.

(5) Where, in a prosecution for an offence under this section, it is shown that, a demand having been made under section 69 of this Act—

(a) the person on whom the demand was made refused or failed to produce a certificate of insurance or certificate of exemption then and there, or

(b) such person, having duly produced such certificate consequent upon the demand, refused or failed to permit the member of the Garda Síochána to whom such certificate was produced to read and examine it,

it shall be presumed, until the contrary is shown by the defendant, that the vehicle was being used in contravention of this section.

(6) Where a person charged with an offence under this section is the owner of the vehicle, it is a defence to the charge for the person to show that the vehicle was being used without his or her consent and either that he or she had taken all reasonable precautions to prevent its being used or that it was being used by his or her employee acting in contravention of his or her instructions.

(7) Where a person charged with an offence under this section was an employee of the owner of the vehicle, it is a defence to the charge for the person to show that he or she was using the vehicle in compliance with the express instructions of the owner.

(8) In this Part 'designated territories' means the European territories of the Member States of the European Communities (other than the State) and Croatia, Iceland, Norway and Switzerland.

(9) In this Part a reference to the territory in which a vehicle is normally based is a reference to—

- (a) the territory of the state of which the vehicle bears a registration plate,
- (b) in a case where registration is not required for a type of mechanically propelled vehicle, but the vehicle bears an insurance plate or a distinguishing sign analogous to the registration plate, the territory of the state in which the plate or sign is issued, or
- (c) in a case where a registration plate, an insurance plate or a distinguishing sign is not required for a mechanically propelled vehicle, the territory of the state in which the person who has custody of the vehicle is permanently resident.

(10) In this Part—

'mechanically propelled vehicle' includes a semi-trailer or trailer (whether coupled or uncoupled to a mechanically propelled vehicle) used in a public place;

'semi-trailer' means the drawn component of an articulated vehicle or a vehicle constructed or adapted for use as such drawn component;

'trailer' means a vehicle attached to a mechanically propelled vehicle (or to another vehicle attached to a mechanically propelled vehicle) or a vehicle constructed or adapted for the purpose of being drawn by a mechanically propelled vehicle.

(11) Nothing in this Part shall be read as extending compulsory motor insurance cover to any person in or on a semi-trailer or trailer when used in a public place."

Amendment to
Table to section
23 of Act of
2002.

35.—Part 1 of the Table to section 23 of the Act of 2002 is amended by the deletion of the matter in columns (2) and (3) at reference number 18.

PART 6

AMENDMENT OF TAXI REGULATION ACT 2003

Amendment of
section 36 of
Taxi Regulation
Act 2003
(mandatory
disqualification).

36.— F31[...]



Number 44 of 2004

ROAD TRAFFIC ACT 2004

REVISED

Updated to 20 May 2024

About this Revised Act

This Revised Act presents the text of the Act as it has been amended since enactment, and preserves the format in which it was passed.

Related legislation

Road Traffic Acts 1961 to 2024: this Act is one of a group of Acts included in this collective citation, to be read together as one (*Road Traffic Act 2024* (10/2024), s. 1(3)). The Acts in the group are:

- *Road Traffic Act 1961* (24/1961)
- *Road Traffic Act 1968* (25/1968)
- *Road Traffic (Amendment) Act 1973* (15/1973) (repealed)
- *Road Traffic (Amendment) Act 1978* (16/1978) (repealed)
- *Road Traffic (Amendment) Act 1984* (16/1984)
- *Dublin Transport Authority (Dissolution) Act 1987* (34/1987), insofar as it amends the *Road Traffic Acts 1961 to 1984*
- *Road Traffic Act 1994* (7/1994)
- *Road Traffic Act 1995* (7/1995) (repealed)
- *Road Traffic Act 2002* (12/2002)
- *Road Traffic Act 2003* (37/2003) (repealed)
- *Road Traffic Act 2004* (44/2004), other than Part 6
- *Railway Safety Act 2005* (31/2005), Part 17
- *Road Traffic Act 2006* (23/2006), other than s. 21
- *Road Traffic and Transport Act 2006* (28/2006), s. 1
- *Roads Act 2007* (34/2007), s. 12
- *Road Traffic Act 2010* (25/2010)
- *Road Traffic Act 2011* (7/2011)
- *Road Traffic (No. 2) Act 2011* (28/2011)
- *Taxi Regulation Act 2013* (37/2013), Part 11
- *Road Traffic Act 2014* (3/2014)
- *Vehicle Clamping Act 2015* (13/2015), Part 5
- *Road Traffic Act 2016* (21/2016)
- *Road Traffic (Amendment) Act 2018* (18/2018)
- *Civil Law (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2022* (19/2022), Part 7 (ss. 46, 47)
- *Road Traffic and Roads Act 2023* (16/2023), other than Part 3 (s. 4), Part 6 (ss. 7-10) and ss. 36-47
- *Road Traffic Act 2024* (10/2024)

Local Authorities (Traffic Wardens) Acts 1975 to 2023: this Act deals with similar subject matter to a group of Acts included in this collective citation (*Road Traffic and Roads Act 2023*, s. 1(5)). The Acts in the group are:

- *Local Authorities (Traffic Wardens) Act 1975* (14/1975)
- *Dublin Transport Authority (Dissolution) Act 1987* (34/1987), in so far as it amends the *Local Authorities (Traffic Wardens) Act 1975*
- *Road Traffic and Roads Act 2023* (16/1923), Part 6 (ss. 7-10)

Annotations

This Revised Act is not annotated and only shows textual amendments. An annotated version of this revision is also available which shows textual and non-textual amendments and their sources. It also shows editorial notes including statutory instruments made pursuant to the Act and previous affecting provisions.

Material not updated in this revision

Where other legislation is amended by this Act, those amendments may have been superseded by other amendments in other legislation, or the amended legislation may have been repealed or revoked. This information is not represented in this revision but will be reflected in a revision of the amended legislation if one is available. A list of legislative changes to any Act, and to statutory instruments from 1972, may be found linked from the page of the Act or statutory instrument at www.irishstatutebook.ie.