

12TH December 2011

LEAP CARD GOES LIVE

INTEGRATED TRANSPORT TICKET OFFICIALLY LAUNCHED

- FIRST OFFICIAL JOURNEY TAKEN BY MINISTER ALAN KELLY -

Today, Public Transport Minister, Alan Kelly, along with the National Transport Authority (NTA) officially launched Leap Card, the new integrated transport ticketing system for the Greater Dublin Area. From today, public transport users will be able to purchase and top up their Leap Card at more than 350 authorised Leap Card agents (Payzone) across Dublin and online at www.leapcard.ie.

Formally launching the Leap Card today, Public Transport Minister Alan Kelly TD, described it as a great boost for commuters. He said: *"The Leap Card will be among the cheapest ways to get around Dublin and will make public transport more attractive. The testing period produced over 15,000 successful journeys and very positive feedback so now the Leap Card can go live,"*

John Fitzgerald, Chairperson of the National Transport Authority said: *"Today marks the first stage of an important journey for public transport users in the Greater Dublin Area and we estimate that in time there will be circa 250,000 users of the Leap Card annually. The intention all along has been to introduce the system on a phased basis, to ensure that we are satisfied that the system is fully tested and robust at each stage. Integrated ticketing has been a complex project to roll-out and we thank the Railway Procurement Agency for their work in managing the project so well until its transfer to the National Transport Authority in 2010."*

Leap Card will initially offer a credit top-up system. A refundable €5 deposit for adults and a refundable €3 deposit for children is required to purchase the Card initially and after that, travel credit works just like phone credit - you top it up and then the cost of your fare is deducted from your balance every time you travel. Leap Cards can be used on all Dublin Bus services, all Luas services and all DART and Commuter Rail services in the Short Hop Zone (Balbriggan-Greystones-Hazelhatch-Maynooth).

The Leap Card offers passengers value and convenience with every transaction. It is easy to use and is hassle-free because it doesn't require public transport users to have the correct change or lots of coins to hand. It's also quicker with no more queuing at ticket machines for single tickets on Luas, DART and Commuter Rail Services. It's safer because public transport users can top up online and can report their card lost or stolen so that no one else can use it. With Dublin Bus, Luas, DART and Commuter Rail Services all being on board, public transport users can travel around Dublin as it suits them, without having to buy a specific ticket in advance.

Using Leap Cards to travel by Luas is up to 17% cheaper than purchasing single tickets from ticket machines, travelling by DART and Commuter Rail using Leap is up to 19% cheaper than purchasing singles from ticket machines, while the same fares as cash apply on Dublin Bus until January 2012 when a discount of 9% will come into play, following the rise in cash fares. Commuters and travellers are urged to buy their Leap Cards now, to be ready to take advantage of these differentials as soon as they come into effect.

Public transport users who currently hold pre-paid tickets including annual and monthly tickets on Dublin Bus, Luas and DART and Commuter Rail services can be assured that their cards will continue to work as normal, alongside the new Leap Card, until well into 2012.

The National Transport Authority plans to continue to develop the Leap Card further, bringing different products (e.g. Rambler, Travel 90) into the scheme throughout 2012 and beyond. The Authority will introduce the scheme onto Bus Éireann GDA services throughout 2012. Matthews Coaches begins its live test of Leap this week on its Bettystown – Laytown – Dublin route.

IBM (supported by their sub-contractor MSI) were engaged to provide back office, clearing house and support office services for the system, based on their experience of delivering a best-in-class system in Singapore. HP, supported by Payzone, will operate the system and will provide support services on the website, call centre and card supply. HP have also worked on the hugely successful Oyster system in London.

Sequoia Smart Solutions developed the original concept design and continue to support NTA with their international experience in providing smart card solutions.

For detailed information on fares and other aspects of Leap Card, please visit www.leapcard.ie

Ends

Notes to Editors:

Using Leap Card

Luas

Touch On at a Validator on the platform before you get on the tram and Touch Off when you get off the tram. A default fare will be deducted from the Travel Credit on your card when you Touch On; and when you Touch Off the appropriate amount will be refunded to your card for your journey. Touching On and Off in this way will ensure the correct smartcard fare is deducted from your Leap Card.

DART and Commuter Rail Services

Touch On at the platform entry gate or Validator before your journey and Touch Off at the platform exit gate or Validator after your journey. As with Luas, a default fare will be deducted from the Travel Credit on your card when you Touch On; and when you Touch Off the appropriate amount will be refunded to your card for your journey. The card can be used between stations within the 'Short Hop Zone'. This Zone includes all stations in the Dublin area from Greystones to Balbriggan, and Commuter Stations from Dublin City Centre to Maynooth, and from Dublin Heuston to Hazelhatch.

Dublin Bus

When using Leap Card on Dublin Bus, public transport users should:

Go to the driver: tell the driver your destination and hold your Leap Card to the target on the driver's ticket machine and the correct fare will be deducted from your Travel Credit.

If you are paying for a fare of over 13 stages or Outer Suburban you can Touch On at the Smartcard Validator on the right hand side as you enter the bus. The default fare of €2.20 will be deducted from your Travel Credit.

If you are unsure which fare applies to your journey, **ask the driver**, or go to Dublinbus.ie.

For any further information please see leapcard.ie or contact customer.care@leapcard.ie or 1850 824824