



**Determination order for the Visitor/Trainee Leap
card – Dublin Area**

Determination No. 1 - 2015

June 2015

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1. Introduction

The National Transport Authority (the Authority) entered into Public Service Contracts with Dublin Bus (Bus Átha Cliath) in December 2014 and with Iarnród Éireann (Irish Rail) in December 2009 for the provision of transport passenger and ancillary services. The services that Dublin Bus and Iarnród Éireann provide under these contracts attract a public service obligation payment in line with EU regulation 1370/07. Dublin Bus and Iarnród Éireann are 100% owned by Córas Iompair Éireann (CIÉ) and CIÉ is a statutory body with ownership vested in the Minister for Transport, Tourism & Sport.

The National Transport Authority (the Authority) has the statutory obligation to secure the provision of light railway passenger services in the Greater Dublin Area. On 29th September 2014 the Authority co-signed with the Railway Procurement Agency (RPA) a five year contract with Transdev Dublin Light Rail Limited to operate the Luas services. The Authority has assigned aspects of its statutory function to the RPA, however, Luas fares and their alteration are determined by the Authority.

Under Part 3, Chapter 2 of the Dublin Transport Authority Act 2008, the Authority has statutory responsibility for securing the provision of public transport services by way of public transport services contracts as referred to above. Those contracts must, among other things, provide for the “fares to be charged and provision for the variation, including increase or decrease, of fares”. All fares charged by public transport operators under these contracts must be determined by the Authority.

The Leap card was introduced in 2012 and since then the Authority has been gradually extending the functionality and various features available on the Leap card. In 2014 the Authority introduced the Visitor Leap card and the Trainee Leap card. As indicated in determination No. 7 – 2014 published in October 2014, the fares for these Leap card products would be advised later following a review.

2. Current Leap Visitor Card and Leap Trainee Card

The Leap Visitor Card is a pre-paid ticket that allows unlimited travel for 72 hours (3 days) after first use on Airlink 747 airport bus service, All Dublin Bus scheduled services (not valid on tours), All Luas services and DART and Commuter Rail in the Short Hop Zone.

The Leap Visitor card costs €19.50 and is aimed at visitors to Dublin and is currently only on sale in Dublin Airport.

The Trainee Leap card can be valid for 1, 2, 3 or 4 consecutive weeks and currently costs between €46.50 and €118.00 depending on the card purchased. It is mainly aimed at people who are attending short educational courses such as English language students and is sold directly to those who are providing the courses by Dublin Bus.

The card provides unlimited travel on DART and Commuter Rail (SHZ), Dublin Bus (excluding Airlink and tours) and Luas. The type of card (i.e. 1, 2, 3 or 4 week) is printed on the card and inspection will show the expiry date of the product. The card is activated upon first use and therefore must be validated by all customers. This card as with the Visitor card cannot be reloaded with additional travel credit.

Both cards were introduced around the middle of 2014 with a view to reviewing the cards at the end of 2014 before 2015 prices would be determined.

3. **Determination by the Authority**

The review examined the production, distribution, target market and flexibility of these cards and concluded that rather than having two distinct card types that one card type would be enough.

While there were more than 150,000 visitor trips and over 700,000 trainee trips in the first year it was decided that one combined Visitor/Trainee Leap card would simplify the offering and also it would be possible to offer greater flexibility to both visitors and trainees. The combined card will be offered as a 1-day, 3-day, 7-day, 14-day, 21-day and 28-day Visitor card which will offer the tourist visiting Dublin much greater flexibility rather than just a 3-day offering as at present. Similarly for English language students who may not study for exactly 1, 2, 3 or 4 weeks or who may wish to spend an additional few days in Dublin after their English language course they will have the option to purchase an additional 1-day or 3-day product.

The combined Visitor/Trainee product will be valid on Dublin Bus PSO services, Iarnród Éireann rail services in the Short Hop Zone, Luas services and Airlink & Nitelink operated by Dublin Bus.

When considering the cost of these products for 2015 the Authority took into consideration the range of tickets and Leap card products currently on the market. These included Leap card daily and weekly caps, both individual transport operator caps and multi-operator caps, rambler tickets offered by Dublin Bus, day return fares, 3-day and 7-day fares offered by Irish Rail, 1-day and 7-day fares offered by Luas and transport fares aimed at tourists such as the Dublin Bus Freedom Pass.

Another consideration is that most of the Visitor and Trainee products sold in the first year were the trainee products which in many cases were used by students learning English. While a number of the students who study English in Dublin for a few weeks are business people a large number of them are students and the price of this new product should reflect the mix of people purchasing these products.

Having considered the factors outlined above the Authority have determined that the cost of the new Visitor Leap Product will be as outlined in the table below. The approved fares can be implemented from 10th June 2015 unless there are technical reasons as agreed with the Authority why this cannot be done.

Visitor Leap Products and Price Points (Dublin Region)		
<u>Time</u>	<u>Current Fare</u>	<u>Approved fare</u>
1-day /24 hours	Not available	€10.00
3-days / 72 hours	€19.50	€19.50
7-days	€46.50	€40.00
14-days	€70.00	€75.00
21-days	€94.00	€100.00
28-days	€118.00	€125.00

There are a number of benefits to this new multi-operator Leap card product, including:

- This is another step in having a modern, innovative and integrated fares system for Dublin and in particular tourists to Dublin.
- It allows easier transport planning for visitors and is more hassle free than having to pre-purchase individual tickets, few of which apply across all operators.
- Increase flexibility for visitors, thereby widening appeal.
- Simplifies the transport offering to visitors and trainees to Dublin.

The 1-day and 3-day products will be loadable products on a card that will be sold at Dublin airport and limited tourist outlets. The 14-day, 21-day and 28-day products will continue to be available through Dublin Bus only while the 7-day product will be available to purchase both at Dublin airport and limited tourist offices and be available through Dublin Bus.

The new card will have a limit on the number of days of validity from sale. This will initially be set at 90 days; the Authority may change this parameter if necessary. Operators will be advised in advance of any change.

4. Conclusion

A key benefit of the Visitor Leap card is that it allows travel on Dublin Bus, Iarnród Éireann and Luas services and it is a further stepping stone in implementing the Authority's policy of having fare arrangements that facilitate multi-leg and multi-modal journeys and also that visitors to Dublin can let Leap do the work for them rather than having to pre-plan ticket buying.

