



**Determination order for the introduction of Irish
Rail's Leap card single operator daily and weekly
capping rates**

May 2013

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1. Introduction

The National Transport Authority (the Authority) entered into a Public Service Contract with Iarnród Éireann (Irish Rail) in December 2009 for the provision of all national rail passenger services. The services Irish Rail provides under this contract attract a public service obligation payment in line with EU regulation 1370/07. Irish Rail is 100% owned by Córas Iompair Éireann (CIÉ) and CIÉ is a statutory body with ownership vested in the Minister for Transport, Tourism & Sport.

As part of a process of improving public transport service quality the Authority has been developing a number of initiatives such as the real time public transport information, the Authority's National Journey Planner, investment in the bus and rail fleet, the reconfiguration of city bus services, station improvements and the Leap card. The Leap card is currently in use on a number of bus and rail operators and the Authority has been gradually extending the functionality and various features available on the Leap card, with one of these specific features being fare capping.

Fare Capping is where there is a maximum charge per day or week for journeys done with a Leap card on one public transport operator. So, if a customer makes a lot of trips with their Leap card during a Daily or Weekly (Monday to Sunday) time period, the amount they spend will be capped and the Leap card system will make sure they never pay more than the fare cap limit. Capping aims to make paying for public transport easier as users will be able to Pay-As-You-Go without having to decide in advance if they wish to commit to the up-front expense of buying a daily or weekly ticket.

2. Proposal by Operator

Irish Rail has written to the Authority requesting approval for the introduction of their Leap card single operator daily and weekly capping rates at the levels outlined below:

Irish Rail's requested Leap card single operator fare capping levels

Daily fare cap	Weekly fare cap
€10.00	€37.00

3. Determination by the Authority

The Authority has determined that Irish Rail can implement fare capping rates from the 13th May 2013 and must implement them from the end of May 2013 unless there are technical reasons why this cannot be done.

Having considered a number of factors, the Authority has determined that the Leap card single operator daily and weekly fare capping levels are to be at the rates outlined below:

Approved Leap card single operator fare capping levels on Irish Rail services

Daily fare cap	Weekly fare cap
€9.20	€35.50

Comparison of Leap Card Cap with the equivalent cash ticket

	Leap card	Cash ticket	Leap discount
Daily fare cap	€9.20	€10.10	9%
Weekly fare cap	€35.50	€37.00	4%

There are a number of benefits to this new Irish Rail Leap card proposal, including:

- The Leap daily Cap is 9% cheaper than the one-day cash ticket
- Customers who make any number of journeys won't pay any more than the fare cap
- Fare capping provides certainty of cost for regular travellers using the Leap card
- Irish Rail's fare capping is another improved feature of using the Leap card; customers already have capping on Luas
- Fare capping happens automatically, so customers just need to use their Leap card as normal
- Customers don't need to decide in advance if they want to buy a daily or weekly ticket
- The fare capping system is convenient and is adaptable to customers' unique travel patterns
- Customers will be rewarded when they take extra journeys as they won't pay beyond the cap

It is important to point out that customers don't need to do anything further to avail of fare capping. They use their Leap card as normal, making sure to Touch On and Touch Off for all journeys and then the fare caps will be applied automatically.

Customers should be aware, however, that even when they hit the cap value, they should still Touch On and Touch Off as normal in order to have a valid ticket. Fare capping and the benefits of the new feature will be available to customers who use a Leap card to pay for their Irish Rail journeys in the Dublin area Short Hop Zone, (see the map in Appendix A).

4. Conclusion

A key benefit of the introduction of the Leap card fare capping feature on Irish Rail is that it is a further stepping stone in implementing the Authority's policy on having fare arrangements that facilitate multi-leg and multi-modal journeys and also that customers can let Leap do the work for them rather than having to pre-plan ticket buying.

The introduction of Irish Rail's Leap card single operator daily and weekly capping rates is therefore a further positive development for customers. It will see greater certainty with fares and will allow free travel in the Short Hop Zone once customers have made a number of journeys with the Leap card and have reached the fare cap.

Appendix A

Irish Rail's Dart and Commuter Short Hop Zone

