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Press Release

August 16, 2011

LIRR

IMMEDIATE

LIRR Launches Pilot To Test Hand-Held, Wireless Ticket Machines That Accept Credit Cards & Debit As Credit Onboard

Program Begins Today on Trains Running Between Ronkonkoma & Greenport; Test Expands to Two Montauk Trains on August 26th

MTA Long Island Rail Road is launching a pilot program using wireless, hand-held Ticket Issuing Machines (TIMS) that will allow customers to purchase tickets on board trains with all major credit cards and with a 'debit-as-credit' card, including Visa, MasterCard, Discover and American Express.

Beginning today, August 16, LIRR conductors assigned to trains running between Ronkonkoma and Greenport will be carrying an Apple iPhone 4 equipped with a PaySaber cradle device that uses an application designed by the LIRR that enables train crews to make credit card sales and 'debit-as-credit' sales and print out tickets in one easy transaction. The device will be used to process onboard cash sales as well during the pilot program.

To save time and avoid higher, on-board fares, the Long Island Rail Road strongly urges customers to purchase tickets in advance at station ticket windows or Ticket Vending Machines (TVMs)

Customers who opt to buy tickets onboard will still be required to pay an extra fee of up to \$6.50 per ticket if they board at a station which has a ticket machine and/or a ticket window that is open. In situations where a customer must buy on board the train and isn't carrying sufficient cash, making a ticket purchase with a credit card or debit-as-credit card will be an added convenience.

"This device uses the latest technology to offer a real convenience to customers," said LIRR President Helena E. Williams. "Credit card and debit-as-credit card transactions will allow customers to pay for their LIRR fares even when they don't have enough cash on hand. It also will help the LIRR to speed up end-of-tour accounting of onboard transactions.

"We live in a time that is more and more a cashless society," said Williams. "Our younger customers in particular often don't carry cash. Smart phone technology is offering new improvements and efficiencies almost every day. It's time for the LIRR to explore how these applications can help provide better customer service."

During the pilot, the electronic, hand-held devices will replace the familiar "duplex" paper ticket and ticket punch system that conductors have been using for decades. Instead, customers will be issued a smaller ticket printed by the device with no punching of the ticket required at the time of issue. Customers should retain the ticket to be used on any connecting trip.

Smart Phone Also To Be Tested For Some Bar Cart Purchases

As part of the pilot, customers will also be able to use credit cards to make bar cart purchases on the North Fork Wine Train departing Ronkonkoma for Greenport at 5:21 PM on Fridays. The North Fork Wine Train features a different Long Island vineyard selection each week during the summer season.

The pilot project is scheduled to run through October 9. At the conclusion of the pilot, the Railroad will determine if more testing is needed before a decision is made about expanding use of the hand-held devices to other branches of the LIRR.

A select group of LIRR conductors have been training on the new devices. Crew members were involved in the design and development of the application, offering a number of key suggestions that led to improvements. Crew members will also be involved in the evaluation of the devices during and after the pilot program.

The hand-held device is expected to make it easier and faster for LIRR crews to account for cash at the end of their tours. The ability to accept credit cards and debit-as-credit cards also is expected to decrease the number of onboard fare disputes and reduce the need for crews to issue bills that are mailed to customers' homes when they are unable to pay onboard.

During this pilot program, credit cards will be accepted on the following trains:

Between Ronkonkoma and Greenport

All trains between Ronkonkoma and Greenport on weekdays and two trains on Saturday and Sunday between August 16 and October 9.

Between Penn Station and Montauk

Starting Friday, August 26, the smart phones will be used on the 5:09 PM train from Penn Station to Montauk and on Sunday, August 28, the 3:35 PM train departing Montauk for New York. The testing will continue on those two trains only through October 9.

The higher, onboard fare will be charged at Ronkonkoma and Medford where either tickets windows are open or ticket machines available.

For More Information

Customers can get information about the on-board credit card pilot program at the LIRR's website or by calling the LIRR's Travel Information Center at 718-217-5477 (718-217-LIRR). If you are deaf or hard of hearing, use your preferred relay service provider or the free 711 relay to reach LIRR at 718-217-5477.