

17 July 2023

File Ref: OIAPR-1274023063-3536

[REDACTED]

Tēnā koe [REDACTED]

### **Request for information 2023-160**

I refer to your request for information dated 16 June 2023 which was received by Greater Wellington Regional Council (Greater Wellington) on 16 June 2023. You have requested the following:

*“How much money have Wellingtonians using the train service paid in penalty fees for not snapping off the trains since Snapper was introduced. Please provide the amounts broken down by train line/service.*

*How was the decision of a \$10 penalty decided?*

*Has there been any consideration of reducing the penalty fee while train fares have been reduced to half price?”*

### **Greater Wellington’s response follows:**

*How much money have Wellingtonians using the train service paid in penalty fees for not snapping off the trains since Snapper was introduced. Please provide the amounts broken down by train line/service.*

Please note that we refer to the amount charged due to a missed tag off as a ‘Default Fare’ as opposed to a penalty. This is primarily due to the nature of these fares as outlined under the answer to your second question.

Snapper supplies records of the Default Fares to Greater Wellington, however, the data does not identify whether the Default Fares applied were due to missed tag offs on the bus network or the rail network. This data caveat is basically due to the way that Snapper ticketing system charges fares. In the absence of a tag-off for a trip, Snapper card reverts to a Default Fare and keeps it in the card’s memory until next tag on. On the next tag on, the Snapper card deducts the Default Fare from the remaining balance on your card. For example, if a Snapper card holder misses a tag off on bus, and

connects to a train service, the Default Fare will be deducted from the card at the time of tag-on on the train service. The Snapper data would show the Default Fare against the tag-on transaction recorded for the train leg of the journey.

Further to the data caveat outlined above, to support rail passengers through the introduction of Snapper on rail, Metlink also provided a Default Fare amnesty period, up until 30 April 2023, where the passengers were able to contact Snapper and request to:

1. Fully reverse the Default Fare for the first time it is requested (per card)
2. Provide a 50% reverse of the Default Fare for the second occurrence on request.

As the Snapper ticketing has no way of knowing where a passenger has travelled if they do not tag off, Greater Wellington is unable to identify the breakdown of Default Fares by rail line.

While it is possible to extract the total amount of Default Fares recorded against rail trips from the existing Snapper ticketing data, it would take a significant amount of officer time as it would require review of each transaction in the data set to extract the information requested. The information would also be incomplete as it would not show any refunds/reversal of payment of the Default Fare. We would also not be able to provide you the information by train service/line, as we do not hold information at that level.

Therefore, we are refusing this part of your request under section 17(f) of the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 (the Act) on the basis that the information requested cannot be made available without substantial collation or research.

When refusing a request under section 17(f) of the Act we are required to consider whether consulting you, charging you for the supply of the information, or extending the timeframe to make a decision on your request would help us meet your request. In this instance, we do not believe that this would resolve the difficulty in meeting your request.

*How was the decision of a \$10 penalty decided?*

Please refer to **Attachment 1** which contains information relating to the decision-making behind the Default fares and transition to Snapper on Rail.

Please note we have deleted information in this attachment that are outside the scope of your request.

*Has there been any consideration of reducing the penalty fee while train fares have been reduced to half price?*

Snapper on Rail was introduced while half price fares were in place, therefore the Default Fare of \$10 took into consideration the reduced fares. We will be reviewing the Default Fare policy in light of the recently announced age-based concessions, and the return to full price adult fares.

If you have any concerns with the decision(s) referred to in this letter, you have the right to request an investigation and review by the Ombudsman under section 27(3) of the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987.

Please note that it is our policy to proactively release our responses to official information requests where possible. Our response to your request will be published shortly on Greater Wellington's website with your personal information removed.

Nāku iti noa, nā



**Samantha Gain**

Kaiwhakahaere Matua Waka-a-atea | Group Manager Metlink

TO Samantha Gain – GM Metlink

COPY Tim Shackleton, Melissa Anderson, David Boyd

FROM Nicki Lau Young, Director NTS

DATE 28 October 2022

**FOR YOUR ACTION: APPROVAL OF SNAPPER ON RAIL ISSUES**

There are a number of decisions required to be made in relation to the roll out of Snapper on Rail which have financial implications in terms of farebox collected and/or impacts on customer experience. We are seeking approval of these decisions prior to implementation on 12 November.

Issue	Rationale	Financial Impact
<p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p>	<p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p>	<p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p>
<p>[REDACTED]</p>	<p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p>	<p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p>

		[REDACTED] [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] [REDACTED]	[REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED]  [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED]  [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED]  [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED]  [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED]	[REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED]  [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED]  [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED]



	<p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p>	
<b>Default fare to apply from go live</b>	<p>A default fare needs to apply if a passenger forgets to tag off as it is the only way of charging a fare for the journey taken.</p> <p>It is proposed that the default fare for all lines is set at \$10/\$5 (adult/child) on the basis that, based on half price fares, this default fare level is below the maximum fare charged on the rail network. This default fare level is not unnecessarily punitive during the transitional period when customers are most likely to inadvertently not “tag off” but is also high enough that people will choose not to proactively “tag off” as the default fare is less than the actual fare.</p> <p>We still need to confirm our proposal for the default fare once full price fares return. Based on the rationale above, this would lead us to a default fare of \$20/\$10 which is a relatively high ‘penalty’ for lower zone journeys (including the Johnsonville Line) and may risk customer push-back or customers disposing of their Snapper card if it has a very low or negative balance as a result of incurring a default fare.</p>	None – potentially additional revenue due to the imposition of default fares







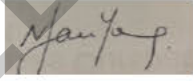
	<p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p>	
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It is recommended that you:

- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]
- **Approve** an initial default fare of \$10 for an adult and \$5 for a child with further option analysis to be undertaken prior to the end of the half price fares;
- [REDACTED]

• [REDACTED]

**Prepared by:**

Name	Title/Team	Date	Signature
Nicki Lau Young	Project Director NTS	28/10/22	

**Reviewed by:**

Name	Title/Team	Date	Signature
Tim Shackleton	Manager Commercial, Strategy and Investment	31 <sup>st</sup> October 2022	
Melissa Anderson	Manager Operations and Partnerships	28 <sup>th</sup> October 2022	

**Approval and sign off**

I approve the approaches recommended in this memo to the Snapper on Rail transitional issues and agree to the financial implications of these approaches.



**Samantha Gain**

**GM Metlink**

Date: 3/11/2022

PROACTIVE RELEASE