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Ez-Link has yet to justify new charges

I REFER to the official reply by Ez-Link in the Forum Online on Saturday ('Ez-Link addresses concerns over new charges') which, unfortunately, does not address the concerns that Forum contributors voiced.

I asked about how a service that was previously rendered free of charge for years could suddenly require a convenience fee of 25 cents to cover processing costs. No other merchant that I know of charges for Giro.

In fact, most merchants encourage customers to schedule payments through Giro, and without a DBS/POSB accounts- only limitation.

EZ-Link, in its reply, also mentioned that to encourage cardholders to sign up for the Giro facility, the one-time 'subsidised application fee' of \$1.50 would be waived until Feb 26. Before the non-Cepas-compliant cards were introduced, commuters could apply for Giro through the General Ticketing Machines and enjoy the service instantly, without charge.

A seamless process that used to require only the cardholder's DBS/POSB Nets card and PIN has been turned into a form-filling exercise with a 21-day turnaround, with processing expenses to be borne by cardholders.

The only observable convenience in this card exchange exercise appears to be for EZ-Link to start charging its cardholders. I now look forward to other Cepas card issuers such as Nets (the FlashPay Card) to announce their top-up mechanisms and hope they will be more competitive than EZ-Link's offerings. In addition, it may also be an opportunity for me to finally wean myself off the DBS/POSB account that I have long maintained just for ez-link top-ups.

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