Annual rail consumer report 2024 to 2025

Complaints and compensation

Where things go wrong, we want passengers to feel confident that they will be compensated for delays, can easily complain and that their complaints will be addressed. We want operators to use learnings from all complaints to drive continuous improvement in passengers' experiences of rail.

Meeting minimum expectations

Operators report core data on their performance in handling complaints and delay repay claims to us every month. We monitor this data to identify where we need to intervene to protect passengers.

This year, performance has been generally good. The industry average over the year has seen 97% of complaints responded to within 20 working days, which is our minimum requirement, and 77% responded to within 10 working days. Similarly, 99% of delay repay claims were processed within 20 working days. No individual operator has performed substantially worse than the average during the year.

Continuous improvement

Operators should always be looking to improve their handling of complaints and delay repay claims, and they report to us annually on how they are doing that.

In order to share good practice, we published a short summary of the steps that operators are taking to improve their delay repay claims processes and to raise awareness of passengers' entitlement to compensation.

Improving complaints processes for disabled passengers

In April 2024, we published a report on disabled passengers' experiences of complaints handling by train companies, which found that some disabled passengers experience accessibility difficulties with the rail complaints process.

We identified five operators whose disabled customers reported the most barriers to accessing and engaging with the complaints process, and asked them to review their processes.

We welcomed the initiatives they took forward in response, which we consider could be implemented more widely across other operators.

For the first time in May 2025, all operators were required to include specific consideration of the needs of disabled people in their annual complaints handling continuous improvement reports. We are in the process of reviewing those reports.

Regulatory framework for complaints and redress

We hold operators to account against requirements set out in:

- the Delay Compensation licence condition and supporting Code of Practice that defines minimum requirements; and
- the Complaints Handling licence condition, which is also supported by a Code of Practice that defines minimum requirements.

Our priorities for April 2025 to March 2026

We will:

- Assess the continuous improvements reports that operators are required to produce each year on their delay repay and complaints handling processes, with a particular focus on the new requirement to report on improvements to disabled people's experiences of complaints handling.
- Monitor operator performance using the data they report to us each month and our

ongoing survey of passenger satisfaction with complaints handling, intervening where necessary.
- Continue to challenge industry to fully utilise the insight and learning that is generated from complaint handling.

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