
Casework Report Q2 2019-20

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Casework report for quarter two July to September 2019.

1. Purpose of report

To provide information on the issues raised by passengers and the Rail Ombudsman with London TravelWatch.

2. Summary

Since the start of the Rail Ombudsman scheme in November 2018, the number of rail appeals received by London TravelWatch has reduced, although the level of other appeals has slightly increased. This is because TfL are experiencing issues with their response times and the executive contact team are coming in to discuss this and introduce new members at the end of October. Other contacts have also increased slightly but not enough to be of concern or deserving of further scrutiny.

We continue to have concerns about the number of appeals raised by the Rail Ombudsman. In quarter two last year, London TravelWatch and Transport Focus combined appeals were over 2,500. High level scrutiny of the number of appeals raised by the Rail Ombudsman in the same quarter is no more than 300. Many rail operators have made significant changes to their internal complaints handling processes which would reduce the amount of passengers wishing to escalate their appeal. It is doubtful however, that these efforts would have reduced the amount of passenger passengers wanting to appeal to such an extent. London TravelWatch and Transport Focus continue to investigate this issue.

In partnership with Transport Focus, London TravelWatch has achieved agreement from rail operators to jointly carry out audits to bring consistency to the signposting process to the Rail Ombudsman and to recognise and share good practice.

It was expected that appeals for TfL Rail and Overground and the Heathrow Express would be sent to the Rail Ombudsman for any journeys after 1 July 2019. This date moved to November 2019 but a specific date is not yet known.

Following intervention by London TravelWatch and Transport Focus, passengers who were issued incorrect penalty fares due the Regulations not being properly applied when the calculation was made are being contacted and issued refunds of the difference between what passengers were charged and what they should have been charged. London TravelWatch and Transport Focus would have preferred that the full penalty fare be cancelled and refunded but welcome the action taken by the industry.

3. Report contents

There are two parts to this report.

- i. Contacts received – breakdown of contacts received
- ii. Appeals data
 - a) Rail appeals
 - b) Rail appeals received from the Rail Ombudsman
 - c) TfL appeals
 - d) Eurostar appeals

4. Equalities and inclusion implications

There are no specific implications arising from this report.

5. Legal powers

Section 248 of the Greater London Authority Act 1999 places upon London TravelWatch (as the London Transport Users Committee) a duty to consider – and, where it appears to it to be desirable, to make representations with respect to – any matter affecting the services and facilities provided by TfL which relate to transport (other than freight) and which have been the subject of representations made to it by or on behalf of users of those services and facilities. Section 252A of the same Act (as amended by Schedule 6 of the Railways Act 2005) places a similar duty upon it in respect of representations received from users or potential users of railway passenger services provided wholly or partly within the London railway area.

6. Financial implications

There are no specific financial implications for London TravelWatch arising from this report.

7. Recommendations

Members are asked to note the contents of this report and advise if there is information that they would like to see in future reports from Casework.

(i) Contacts received

This report covers the incoming casework received from July to September 2019 and includes information from the previous quarter to demonstrate changes in work practices. The way cases are classified has changed from this quarter to better reflect the changing workload of the casework team.

Telephone enquiries will now feature in the communications report and are also provided for purposes of comparison.

New contact types	Jul to Sep 2019	Apr to Jun 2019	Previous contact types (no longer used)	Jan to Mar 2019	Oct to Dec 2018	Jul to Sep 2018
Telephone enquiries*	<i>(See below)</i>	331	Telephone enquiries	304	164	237
			Enquiries email	18	37	28
Initial cases	256	69	Initial cases	227	356	509
			Initial plus cases	64	145	143
Appeals Rail	20	29	Request for papers	120	221	272
Appeals from Rail Ombudsman	10	40	Appeals made to operator	227	292	319
Appeals TfL and Eurostar	108	86	Appeals responded to directly	263	322	275
Other contacts Rail	178	293	Appeals responded to directly plus	136	161	98
Other contacts TfL & Eurostar	312	292				
			Appeals sub total	626	775	692
Total of new contacts	884	809	Total of new contact	1,359	1,698	1,881
Appeals carried over from last quarter	24	30	Appeals carried over from last quarter	32	32	22
Total contacts	908	1,170	Total cases	1,391	1,730	1,903

*During the summer months, there was frequent interruption to our telephone service and not all calls have been recorded, so our statistics are incomplete. In addition, from quarter three 2019/20, information regarding telephone calls will be recorded in the Communications report.

Initials

Complaints that have not yet been made to the operator

Appeals Rail

Appeals received from passengers

Appeals from Rail Ombudsman

Appeals that are out of the Rail Ombudsman scope and within our geographical remit.

Appeals TfL and Eurostar

Appeals received from passengers

Other contacts - rail

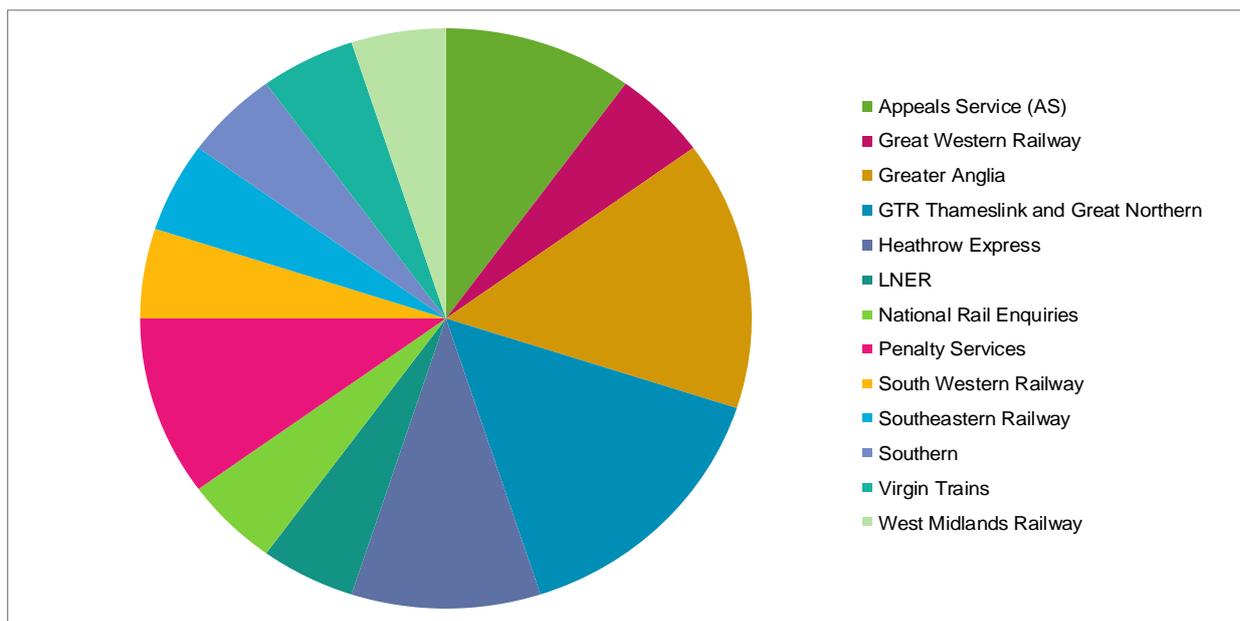
All other contacts from passengers, such as requesting information, further comebacks, unable to find transport provider contact details, and responses to complaints that London TravelWatch would not appeal.

Other contacts TfL & Eurostar

Other contacts from passengers.

Appeals data

a) Rail appeals by organisation



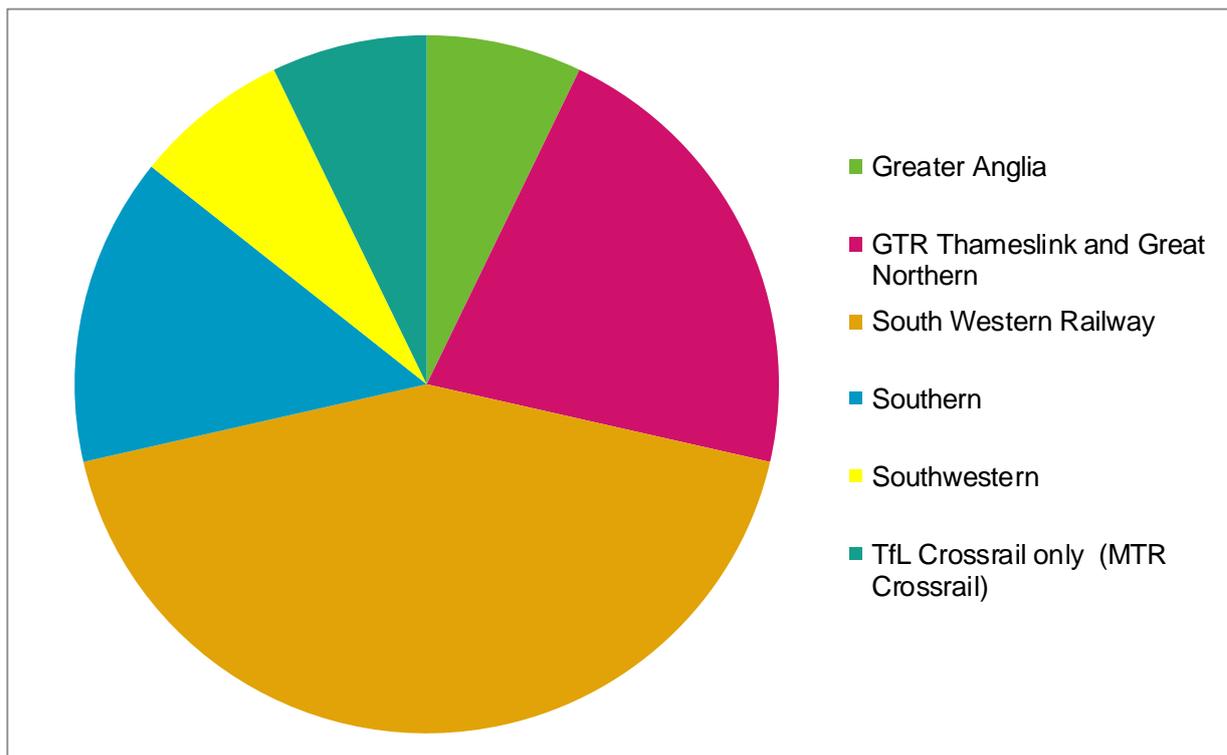
Appeals by rail operator and the issues raised

Appeals Service (AS)	2
Penalty fares and prosecutions	1
Failure to carry or validate	1
Great Western Railway	1
Penalty fares and prosecutions	1
Greater Anglia	3
Engineering works	1
Timetable and connection Issues	1
Unhappy with operator reply	1
GTR Thameslink and Great Northern	3
Information	1
Transport company's reply did not fully address complaint/all the issues	2
Heathrow Express	2
Cost and value	1
Ticket Refunds and compensation (inc Oyster)	1
LNER	1
Advanced purchase ticket/reservations not available	1
National Rail Enquiries	1
No reply received from transport company	1
Total	26

Context

With the exception of Heathrow Express, TfL Rail and penalty fare/prosecution complaints, all appeals regarding the railways should come via the Rail Ombudsman. Some appeals still reach us directly, and where it's appropriate, we continue to take these forward.

b) Rail appeals received from the Rail Ombudsman by rail operator



Appeals (from Rail Ombudsman) by rail operator and the issues raised

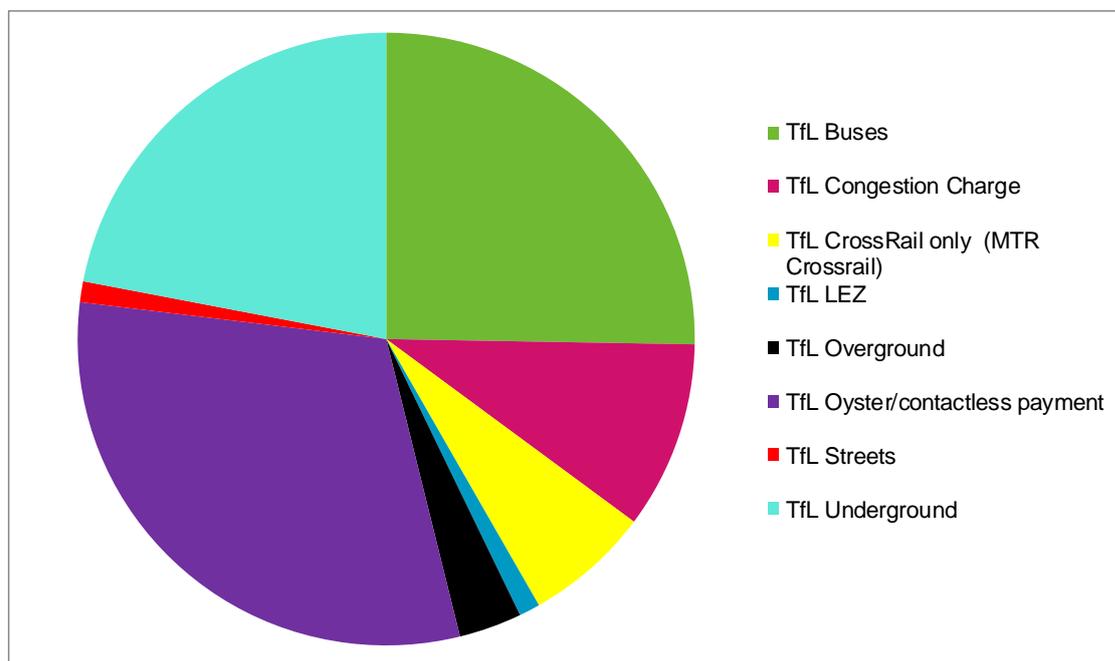
Greater Anglia	1
Failure to Offer	1
GTR Thameslink and Great Northern	3
Incorrect ticket	2
Pricing structure/policy	1
South Western Railway	6
Service Performance	1
No ticket purchased	1
Ticket Refunds and compensation (inc Oyster)	1
Failure to Offer	2
Unhappy at level of compensation/no compensation	1
Southern	2
Incorrect ticket	1
Overcrowding	1
Southwestern	1
No ticket purchased	1
TfL CrossRail only (MTR Crossrail)	1
Penalty fares and prosecutions	1
Total	14

Context

From the appeals sent to London TravelWatch, there is no individual issue or any particular rail operator that has caused concerns.

(c)Transport for London

TfL appeals received by mode.



TfL appeals by mode and the issue raised

Policy only at TfL	3
Information	1
Non-passenger issues	2
TfL Buses	63
Service Performance	4
Failure to stop	1
Staff Conduct and Availability	9
Fares, Retailing Policy and Refunds	2
Penalty fares and prosecutions	3
Failure to carry or validate	3
Information	2
Stopping pattern	2
Quality on Train/bus/other vehicle	3
Antisocial behaviour	2
Complaints Handling	13
Transport company's reply did not fully address complaint/all the issues	11
Response time	3
Safety and Security	2
Street signage	2
TfL Congestion Charge	13
Ticket Refunds and compensation (inc Oyster)	1
Complaints Handling	1
Response time	4
Surface Transport issues	1
Penalty Charge Notices (PCNs)	4
Parking/etc.	1

TfL CrossRail only (MTR Crossrail)	10
Penalty fares and prosecutions	1
Incorrect ticket	1
Failure to follow correct policy	1
Information	1
Announcements too loud/too frequent	1
Station/stop/pier Quality	1
Transport company's reply did not fully address complaint/all the issues	5
TfL LEZ	1
Low Emission Zone issues	1
TfL Overground	14
Delay	4
Staff Conduct and Availability	1
Timetable and connection Issues	3
Complaints Handling	6
TfL Oyster 60+	2
Replacement fees/delays	1
Unhappy with operator reply	1
TfL Oyster/contactless payment	52
Fares, Retailing Policy and Refunds	2
Ticket Refunds and compensation (inc Oyster)	20
Method of calculation – season tickets	1
Information	2
Complaints Handling	25
TfL Prosecutions/Penalty Fares	2
Penalty fares and prosecutions	1
Incorrect ticket	1
TfL Streets	10
Damage to property/clothing	1
Surface Transport issues	5
Penalty Charge Notices (PCNs)	3
Street signage	1
Low Emission Zone issues	1
TfL Tramlink	1
Penalty fares and prosecutions	1
TfL Underground	52
Service Performance	4
Rude/Discourteous staff	1
Fares, Retailing Policy and Refunds	4
Information	1
General lack of information	2
Quality on Train/bus/other vehicle	3
Total	226

Context

226 appeals were received from TfL users in quarter two and the casework team raised 91 of these with TfL. 71 of these appeals resulted in an improved outcome for the passenger.

The casework officer, who deals with most of the TfL penalty fares, spent an afternoon with the TfL prosecutions teams to discuss cases and build and maintain relationships with the staff.

c) Eurostar

Ticket Refunds and compensation (inc Oyster)	7
Information	2
Website/apps/mobile ticket information	1
Timetable and connection Issues	1
Complaints Handling	1
Unhappy at level of compensation/no compensation	3
Unhappy with operator reply	2
Grand Total	17

Context

Eurostar have had a fairly uneventful few months and this is reflected in the low number of appeals made to London TravelWatch.