

ANNUAL REVIEW

2021



Inspiring consumer confidence

Contents

02

Foreword - Kevin Grix

03

2021 - Judith Turner

04

About us

05

Our year in numbers

06

Our results for 2021

08

Recommendations to Industry

09

Case Study

13

Rail Ombudsman Members

14

Profiles

The mainline railway in Great Britain is an extraordinarily complex structure. Comprised of some 2,569 stations, almost 10,000 miles of track and 63,000 full time equivalent employees it truly is like no other transport sector in this country. With so many moving parts it is inevitable that things can go wrong – and when they do - it's important that lessons are learnt and redress is available. The Rail Ombudsman helps with both of these things.

Much has been written and spoken about the devastating impact of Covid-19 on all of our friends and families. The effects of the virus were being felt no less intensely than in 2021. The prevalence of the disease and the consequential stay-at-home directives inevitably meant that passenger footfall across the railways was down and so too were complaints.

Despite these darkest of times, the Rail Ombudsman was in demand and people still needed our help. In 2021 we received thousands of enquires and closed over seventeen-hundred cases. As we performed our services throughout the year, we never lost sight of the fact that the conditions that we were living through were at times overwhelming not only to our colleagues, but also the users of our services. As our work seemed to take on new dimensions, we were even more mindful that it is not always possible to tell what the person at the other end of the telephone or email is going through. Complaints are often synonymous with heightened emotions and the pandemic certainly did little to deescalate that.

My colleagues displayed extraordinary resilience during this period – and they continue to. I am extremely grateful to them for it and their contribution to the success of the service which is appreciated.

Normality will return and so too will passengers. Case levels at the Rail Ombudsman are continuing to trend towards pre-pandemic levels and I am excited about what we can achieve in the year ahead.

I hope you enjoy reading our Annual Review.

Kevin Grix
CEO and Chief Ombudsman



Approved by Government under the Alternative Dispute Resolution for Consumer Disputes (Competent Authorities and Information) Regulations 2015



Full member of the Ombudsman Association



City & Guilds approved training centre



Cyber Essentials certified



Travelling with Confidence is a key cornerstone of the considerations of passengers of the rail network. Whether it is commuting to work or otherwise travelling for business, going to a hospital appointment or going on holiday, we all want to be able to travel with confidence that we will reach our destination, safely, in comparable comfort and on time.

This for me has been all the more important during 2021 and is reflected in the nature of the cases that the Rail Ombudsman has looked into, the themes we have noted and the outcomes and recommendations we have made.

The types of complaints are beginning to revert to their pre-Covid types. We note that complaints handling is a large driver for complaints and it is telling that the quality on board the train ranks higher in terms of case numbers than train service performance, indicating that people are motivated to complain more about expected quality of service, rather than punctuality per se. The provision of information, whilst not a large driver of complaints in itself, does though feature prominently in the recommendations that the Rail Ombudsman makes.

But of greater importance to me are the human stories that sit behind the complaints and that drive the dispute being raised in the Rail Ombudsman in the first place. It is these human stories that have the greatest propensity for effective feedback. Understanding the circumstances that surround each individual's complaint has long been the crux of law and legal precedent, from Mrs Carill and the Smokeball, of great importance assessing the contractual status of advertising materials, to Mrs Donoghue, whose snail-infested ginger beer changed the law of negligence. That is why at the Rail Ombudsman each case is assessed individually, taking into account the circumstances of each person and the impact this has had on them.

This is also important in terms of confidence in the Rail Ombudsman itself and this manifests in both the transparency of our processes and robustness of our decisions. The Rail Ombudsman is still a relatively new feature of the ombudsman landscape, but our consumer satisfaction surveys note year on year increases both in customer satisfaction, the professionalism and knowledge of our staff and the access to our scheme via our various contact channels. This is also borne out in feedback from individuals.

Travelling with confidence can mean different things to different people and for disabled passengers, this can be the single factor in deciding whether to take a train or look at alternative forms of transport. This is also a time when the reasons for travel are changing, with a more buoyant leisure market than previously, which can lead to different issues and challenges for passengers to overcome. What each of us is entitled to when we travel, is a service delivered in accordance with the promise made by the Rail Service Provider (RSP) and in accordance with the law. This means that the way in which information is provided and presented and the way in which complaints are managed, can be a crucial factor encouraging return custom and even first-time travel.

The Rail Ombudsman has a broader remit than the individual decision, but it is from each individual's voice that we learn and provide feedback to enable the industry to continuously improve. We are pleased to share some of our key recommendations with you in this Annual Review and remain committed to providing the industry with objective feedback so that people can travel with confidence that an independent Ombudsman is available to not only listen to their dispute and impartially assess it, but also that their voices are being heard and their recommendations for improvements are taken on board.

Judith Turner
Deputy Chief Ombudsman

About us

We are an independent, not-for-profit organisation approved by the Chartered Trading Standards Institute and validated as a Full Member of the Ombudsman Association.

Our vision

Our vision is to work with the rail industry to inspire consumer confidence and resolve complaints without the need for costly litigation. We are neither a consumer champion nor a trade body. We operate independently to ensure fairness in every case.

What do we do?

We offer a free and expert service to investigate unresolved complaints about participating service providers (such as train companies).

We also support the rail industry to raise standards and improve services for passengers. We listen to both sides and seek to find a solution that the parties can both agree to. If that's not possible, we are empowered to make decisions which are binding upon Rail Service Providers this means, that they have to comply with our decisions.

We can also make recommendations to Rail Service Providers to improve the way their service is delivered and we publish case studies and data which can provide insight into common complaints.

Training

One of the key ways in which the Rail Ombudsman is geared to help RSPs to improve their customers' experience is via training and development. The application of consumer law to the complex rail infrastructure requires customer service techniques employed by RSPs to define what drives complaints, developing and delivering training that will positively impact customer service colleagues and reduce complaints. An area for ongoing development at the Ombudsman; advanced executive courses are in a developed stage of production for the future. The following organisations took part in our two day City & Guilds consumer law accredited training during 2021, demonstrating their appetite to progress and improve their people's understanding, skills learned and ultimately impacting the consumer's experience:

EMR



AVANTI
WEST COAST

lumo

ThamesLink



c2c



The Rail Sector Liaison Panel members during 2021:

Jon Walters (Chair)

Service Management & Improvement,
Citizens Advice

Greg Suligowski (Vice-Chair)

Head of Customer Strategy at Merseyrail

Christopher Hodges MA PhD FSALS OBE
Professor of Justice Systems and Head of the Swiss Research Programme on Civil Justice Systems, Centre for Socio-Legal Studies, University of Oxford.
Supernumerary Fellow, Wolfson College, Oxford University. Fellow, European Law Institute

Susan James

Head of Casework, London TravelWatch and Transport Focus

John Smith

CEC Operations Manager, Northern

Mike Ross

Senior Customer Relations Manager

Marcus Clements

Head of Consumer Policy, ORR

Dr Scott Hamilton

Head of Rail Ombudsman Sponsorship Review, Competition and Consumer Policy, Economics, Markets & Strategy

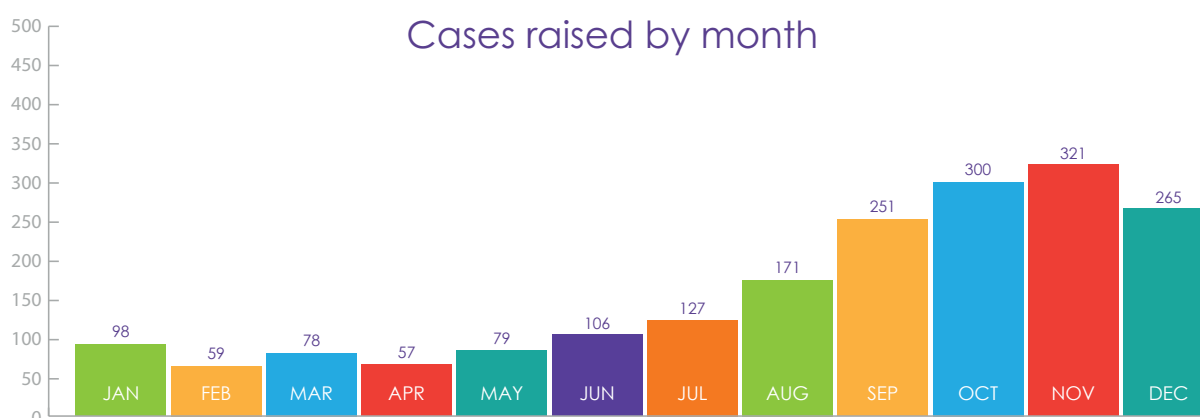
Our year in numbers



Our results for 2021

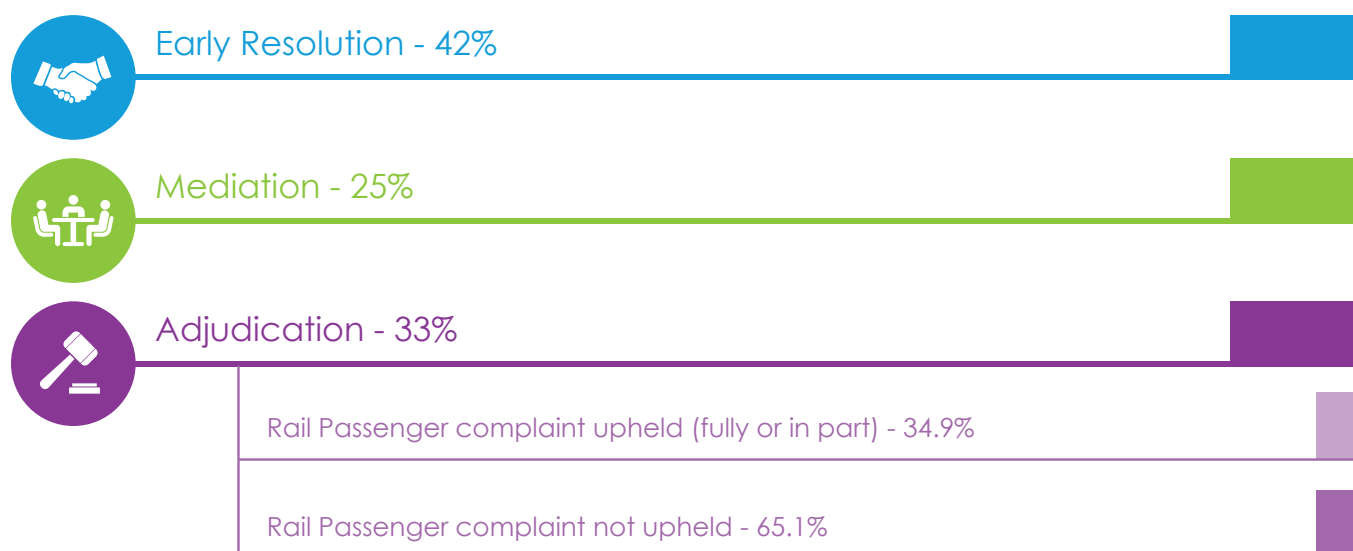
Cases raised: 1912 Cases closed: 1786

Due to the ongoing 'stay at home' directive issued by the Government designed to curb the spread of Covid-19, England and its Devolved Administrations entered their third national lockdown from January - March 2021. Therefore, an increase in cases referred to the Rail Ombudsman is seen, as case numbers start to climb towards the latter part of the year as restrictions are lifted.



Early Resolution, Mediation & Adjudication

Excluding cases found to be Out of Scope



Definitions

Rail Passenger	An individual who has undertaken, or has attempted to undertake, a journey on a scheduled rail service, and has purchased (or has had purchased on their behalf), or has attempted to purchase, a ticket for that journey.
Participating Rail Operating Company	A rail operating company which is part of the Rail Ombudsman scheme. We sometimes refer to these as Rail Service Providers (RSPs). The full list of Participating Rail Operating Companies is available here: www.railombudsman.org/about-us/Participating-service-providers
In Scope	A complaint accepted as being eligible for the Rail Ombudsman scheme.
Out of Scope (Transferred)	A complaint that is outside the scope of the Rail Ombudsman scheme which is transferred to either Transport Focus or London TravelWatch.
Out of Scope (Ineligible)	A complaint which is deemed ineligible for the Rail Ombudsman scheme and also for Transport Focus and London TravelWatch. The majority of complaints found to be ineligible are caused by Rail Passengers approaching the Rail Ombudsman without a deadlock letter and before the end of the 40 working day period allowed to Rail Operating Companies to resolve their complaints.
Early Resolution	A stage in the Rail Ombudsman process that provides an opportunity, in some circumstances, to quickly resolve an issue.
Complex Resolution	A stage in the Rail Ombudsman process where an Early Resolution is not possible. The Rail Ombudsman will first Mediate and then where applicable, Adjudicate to resolve an In Scope complaint.
Mediation	The process by which, assisted by an independent view from the Rail Ombudsman, a settlement in relation to an In Scope complaint can be negotiated to which both the Rail Passenger and the Participating Rail Operating Company agree.
Adjudication	The process by which, in the event that an Early Resolution and Mediation have been unsuccessful in reaching agreement between the Participating Rail Operating Company and the Rail Passenger, the Rail Ombudsman will investigate and make an impartial decision on the case.

Recommendations to Industry

In 2021, the Rail Ombudsman recorded 135 Formal Recommendations either to individual RSPs or to the industry more widely as a result of investigations through its case work.

The impact of the pandemic has continued to be noted in the Rail Ombudsman's casework and recommendations have related to face-mask adherence, staff knowledge of current policies and managing the impact of declassifying first class or seat reservations.

However, as the public have returned to the rail network, the Rail Ombudsman continues to urge the industry to be proactive with the way in which it engages with consumers, pre-empting their needs and being responsive to their feedback.

Some examples of our recommendations are set out below:

Assistance

The Rail Ombudsman recommends that the RSP considers how better to highlight and manage planned service changes to ensure the information is given sufficient prominence and the impact of such changes is minimised for service users with assistance requirements.

Catering

The Rail Ombudsman recommends that, on long-distance services, particularly sleeper trains, where there are likely to be catering service amendments, the RSP ensures that there is adequate drinking water provision onboard, to be distributed amongst passengers.

Broader Approach to Service Limitations

The Rail Ombudsman recommends that the RSP takes a broader approach to considering claims for reduced service and recognises that the Charter compensation may not, alone, satisfy all of the RSP's obligations to the consumer.

Social Media Updates

The Rail Ombudsman recommends that the RSP considers all channels of communication. It was noted when attempting to review evidence that the RSP makes very limited use of social media in communicating with consumers.

Information at Remote Stations

The Rail Ombudsman recommends that the RSP look for ways to improve provision of information at remote stations to ensure that consumers still have access to up-to-date information about delays and cancellations, particularly where mobile phone coverage may be limited.

Provision of Information within the Industry and transfers to other RSPs

The Rail Ombudsman recommends that the industry considers a more integrated system between ticket retailers and other RSPs for complaints to be transferred, particularly where a claim may be subject to a time limitation.

The Rail Ombudsman recommends that the rail industry considers how to improve the complaint handling process for incidents involving multiple RSPs.

Travelling with Confidence

The Rail Ombudsman recommends clearer signposting during disruption, such as including information on posters or making announcements, empowering consumers to highlight vulnerabilities to staff and receive the assistance that they need.

Case Study

The Rail Ombudsman has jurisdiction to look at complaints arising out the RSP's obligations under the Equality Act 2010. This is an important part of our casework. This case study outlines our role, our approach and the outcome that was to the satisfaction of the individual, avoiding the necessity and risk of court action in terms of time, cost and stress.

The Rail Ombudsman hosted a webinar for the industry, outlining the legal framework that sits behind such decisions. Sharing learnings from casework, including insights and feedback, seeks to mitigate the impact of such issues in the future, reflecting our impact on an individual's ability to travel with confidence.

Case Study: Failure to Disembark Passenger & Impact of Complaints Handling

The Issue

The Consumer complained about an incident when travelling using a free-travel pass.

In the application to the Ombudsman, the Consumer explained that they were a wheelchair user and were accordingly provided with a ramp to board the train at the station of origin. At this point they were informed that they would be met with a ramp on arrival at their destination. The Consumer advised that at the destination station they were preparing to disembark, but due to an error, the Consumer was unable to alight. The Consumer states that they asked someone to push the emergency button to stop the train. It stopped and there was then an attempt to get the Consumer off the train for about 10-15 minutes, but it was not possible because the carriage could not be opened due to the train's positioning in the station.

The Consumer was therefore told that they would have to travel onwards, and board another train back to their destination. They were met on the second arrival at the station by a team leader who apologised and arranged for a taxi, advising that someone would be in touch to discuss the incident. The Consumer expressed feelings of shock, anger and disappointment, relating that the incident impacted their confidence in travelling independently.

The Consumer spoke to a number of senior members of staff but was not provided with a report of the incident. The Consumer further advised they had received a hamper from the RSP which contained things they did not like to eat, so they made contact with the RSP to note this and advise that they were expecting a financial settlement, rather than a gesture.

The Consumer is dissatisfied with the handling of his complaint because they felt it was not taken seriously enough and no meaningful resolution was provided. The Consumer sought compensation for anxiety, depression and the confidence lost in being able to travel independently.

The Response

The Consumer received contact with several members of senior staff to reassure them that the RSP were "taking all measures to understand the full circumstances surrounding this incident". A letter was sent offering the details of the Area Station Manager if the Consumer wanted to talk further about the incident, and/or take forward an offer of counselling.

What the Ombudsman did

The Ombudsman discussed the matter with both parties in an attempt to bring them together in a mediated resolution.

The Consumer confirmed that the RSP had apologised for sending the unwanted hamper. However, the Consumer felt that the accompanying monetary offer was insulting and advised that they were seeking the Ombudsman's maximum award limit to settle the complaint. The Consumer intimated in conversations during mediation that they may have considered a lower amount to settle the claim at that time. The Consumer advised the Ombudsman that they were offered a complimentary ticket as recompense, but they had explained to the RSP that they had a pass which allowed free travel (within a certain area).

The RSP accepted an error in dispatch had occurred and that the consumer was inconvenienced, however, the RSP stated the Consumer's safety was not compromised as a result of this incident. The RSP offered a financial gesture to settle the complaint in addition to the customer service gestures and an offer of free counselling for the consumer. The RSP advised that the Consumer had received exceptional customer service demonstrated via senior contact but was unable to provide records of what was discussed in the telephone calls.

Assistance

The failure to provide assistance was not disputed by the RSP. The RSP's Passenger Charter provides that a failure to provide Planned Assistance would be compensated with 100% of the cost of the single ticket. As previously noted, the Consumer travelled with a free travel pass, so their ticket was cost-free.

Impact of the Incident

Based on the account from both parties, the assistance failure was compounded due to an error in dispatch. The rail operator has a system in place. However, it is accepted on the facts that the system was not operated in the present case. The Ombudsman noted that the RSP clearly tried to rectify the situation immediately, but the Ombudsman also took account of the fact that this would have been a public and protracted incident, which would have been frustrating and embarrassing for any consumer. The additional journey time was 8 minutes each way, and a taxi was offered when the Consumer arrived at the destination station for a second time. Therefore, although the Consumer experienced a short delay the overall journey time was more than doubled. Further, this was an inconvenience caused entirely by a failure of the RSP and beyond the control of the Consumer. It was also noted that the diverted journey was proposed after approximately 10-15 minutes of failed attempts to disembark, which prolonged the situation and will have put a lot of unwanted attention on the Consumer.

In considering the appropriate award, the Ombudsman recognised that this was a one-off incident which was certainly not a deliberate act. The RSP tried to arrange for the passenger to disembark but for some reason there was an issue both with the deployment of the ramp as well as inadequate processes to inform the driver of the incident. It was then not possible to remove the passenger given the train's location. However, it must be considered that the failed assistance delayed the Consumer, causing significant upset and has impacted the Consumer's confidence in travelling independently. The RSP did take action providing apology by telephone and then in writing. However, despite this being an isolated incident and measures that were thereafter to ensure the Consumer was safely alighted later, this was not without inconvenience in circumstances that the Rail Ombudsman understood were distressing, caused delay and necessitated the Consumer to seek assistance from other passengers. The Consumer has also noted the effect it has had on their confidence in travelling independently.

The Ombudsman therefore made a financial award within the middle range of the Ombudsman's compensatory capability, also being within the bounds of a settlement figure mooted by the consumer as being acceptable to recognise the full impact of the incident upon due consideration of the factors outlined above and within the context and remit of the Rail Ombudsman scheme.

Impact of case handling

The Rail Ombudsman considered that the unsuitability of the hamper and offer of a complimentary ticket demonstrates the RSP may not have exercised proper consideration of the Consumer's circumstances, or the described impact. For example, the Consumer states that when offered the complimentary tickets by telephone, they advised the RSP that they held a free-travel pass, so would not use them; tickets were sent regardless of the consumer's needs. The Ombudsman was satisfied that offers were made in good faith, in addition to the counselling offer as previously noted, however, it should be recognised that there is scope for an alternative interpretation in relation to these gestures in the context of the Equality Act 2010.

The Ombudsman concluded that the case handling which was evidenced had not provided a meaningful recognition of the impact that such an incident may have, and that the impact of the incident itself was exacerbated by the way the case was handled and recorded. An additional sum was awarded in recognition of this. Furthermore, the Ombudsman is recommending industry training to address the gap between listening and empathy as opposed to following processes that this and other cases clearly demonstrate across the rail service network.

Advice to Consumers: The Rail Ombudsman can look into disputes concerning passenger assistance, facilities for customers with disabilities, and discrimination or issues arising under the Equality Act 2010 within its Maximum Award Limit of £2500.

Customer Experience Survey

Since the Rail Ombudsman's first year of operation, independent consumer experience monitoring has been conducted by Ipsos Mori, an independent research agency. This enables us to measure and track the perceptions of service users, and provides us with feedback that we can use to review our ways of working and seek improvements.

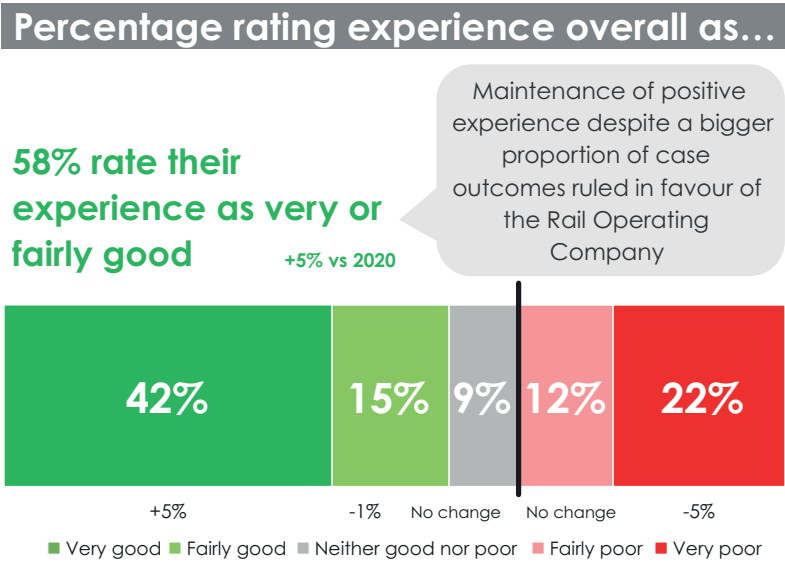
In 2021, a positive experience was recorded overall, and year-on-year improvements in scores were noted in several areas.

How does it work?

Ipsos Mori contacted users of the Rail Ombudsman service, whose cases were closed during 2021. Their fieldwork was conducted during December 2021. Consumers were asked to complete a survey that explores the full spectrum of their interaction with the Rail Ombudsman. The data captured helps to create a profile of respondents, reflecting the different types of outcome a user of the Rail Ombudsman may see.

Results

Ipsos Mori found that: **Experience of the Rail Ombudsman remains positive**



For consumers whose cases are dealt with by the Rail Ombudsman, the experience remains positive, despite a greater proportion of cases being ruled in the Rail Operator's favour this year, and the ongoing impact of the pandemic.

Almost 3 in 5 say the overall experience has been positive, with a similar number likely to recommend and recontact the Rail Ombudsman.

It was found that the outcome of the case (i.e. whether the consumer's complaint was upheld in full, in part, or not upheld) significantly impacted perceptions of the service. For example, despite consistent service standards being applied, for consumers whose cases were upheld in full or in part, 81% agreed that the Rail Ombudsman was fair. Where the case was not upheld – i.e. it was decided in favour of the Rail Operator – this figure drops to 9%.

Whether a consumer's complaint was within or outside the remit of the Rail Ombudsman also had a bearing on perception, with those whose complaints were within remit tending to view the service more positively. However, 24% of consumers whose cases were out of scope still rated the service as good.

Overall, 61% of respondents were likely to recommend the Rail Ombudsman.

Staff professionalism strengthened this year. Accessibility remains strong.

Across all the measures relating to our staff, a year-on-year improvement in consumer perception was recorded. The professionalism rating increased by 10% on 2020. 74% of consumers rated professionalism as fairly or very good. This rises to 91% where the consumer complaint was upheld in full or in part.

The range of channels for contacting the Rail Ombudsman, and the speed of initial response, were rated positively. 69% agreed the service was accessible and around 70% agreed that the online application process was easy to use, accessible and clear. This is the dominant contact channel.

One respondent, whose case was resolved as a Simple Resolution, said: **"They responded quickly to my concerns and they were efficient and prepared to stick with me through the complaints process. I never felt out of my depth and it felt good to have somebody in my corner"**.

Consumer perception of signposting by rail operators has improved, although less than a fifth state they are informed of the Ombudsman at the start of the complaint process.

10% more consumers said they were told about the Rail Ombudsman when they first complained to the rail operator, reaching 17% – a positive step in inspiring confidence in the complaints process. However, 35% felt that the Rail Ombudsman was well signposted by the rail operator.

Ipsos Mori's full report is available to view on our website at: www.bit.ly/ROIMreport

Key learnings and actions

We are pleased that our service continues to be rated positively by consumers overall. As an independent and impartial body, we understand that the outcome will not always be what the consumer sought to achieve, and we want to ensure that whatever the outcome, consumers feel they can rate the quality of service and overall perception highly.

In particular, we are focussing on transparency. While 77% whose case was fully or partially upheld agreed that the Rail Ombudsman was transparent, just 15% whose case was decided in favour of the rail operator did so. We will produce a new case study to explain our process and ways of working more clearly, and publish this on our website.

Ipsos Mori asked: "How clearly was the complaints process explained", with 66% overall finding the explanation fairly or very good. We'll focus on our initial interactions with the consumer, ensuring we clearly set out next steps and the process they can expect to see.

We also want to ensure consumers can rate us highly with regard to demonstrating an understanding of their complaint. We're focussing on the techniques we use to recognise each element of a complaint expressed by the consumer, and citing these clearly to demonstrate understanding.

Rail Ombudsman Members



New rail operators for 2021



Profiles



Kevin Grix
Chief Ombudsman
& CEO

Kevin was appointed in 2008 and is responsible for directing the activities of the Ombudsman. He read law at university for 3 years and graduated with honours, prior to studying to be a Barrister in London at the Inns of Court School of Law. He was called to the Bar by the Honourable Society of the Inner Temple, after successfully passing his Bar exams and is also professionally qualified by the Chartered Institute of Arbitrators (CI Arb). Having initially served for a period of four years between 2015- 2019, in 2021 Kevin was re-elected to the Board of Directors of the Ombudsman Association, a body that advises government and helps to oversee the ombudsman and complaint handling landscape in the UK, Ireland, British Overseas Territories and British Crown Dependencies. In November 2018, Kevin was invited to join the Board of Trustees at Citizens Advice Stevenage.

Kevin has a dual-mandate serving also (from the 1st January 2022) as the Chief Ombudsman at the Independent Football Ombudsman ("IFO"), a scheme that was established by the football authorities (The Football Association, The Premier League, and The Football League) to receive and adjudicate on complaints which have not been resolved at an earlier stage. Prior to this appointment, Kevin sat on the IFO's Advisory Board between 2015 and 2021 where he advised his predecessor on football-related casework and dispute resolution procedures.

Kevin has a keen interest in consumer affairs and has appeared several times on television, radio and in the press to provide expert opinion on a range of issues that affect consumers. He has a specialist understanding of consumer law and has written and presented a series of accredited courses and seminars in this field.

Kevin was previously employed for 2 years as in-house legal counsel at a global certification and testing business and in 2005 he was part of the team of advisers that set up the University of Hertfordshire Law Clinic, a pro-bono legal advice centre that served the local community. Kevin's previous non-legal and ADR career includes positions in the retail, financial and online gaming industries.

Kevin and his colleague, Deputy Chief Ombudsman Judith Turner, are the co-authors of Volume 28 of Atkin's Court Forms and Precedents on Ombudsman schemes in England and Wales. Published by LexisNexis in 2020, it forms part of the UK's only encyclopaedia of civil litigation forms, precedents and procedure and is a leading authority on the process that should be followed by complainants.



Judith Turner
Deputy Chief
Ombudsman

Judith read Law at King's College London for three years before graduating with honours in 1998. She then went on to complete the Legal Practice Course (LPC) and a training contract before qualifying as a solicitor in 2001. She was previously employed by a City Law firm, practising in Commercial Law. Judith joined the Ombudsman in 2011 and now specialises in Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR). Since her appointment, she has written and presented a wide variety of accredited training courses on Consumer Law and Compliance tailored to the sectors within which the Ombudsman operates. Judith is a regular speaker at industry and ombudsman conferences and events. Judith is the current Chair of the Ombudsman Association Policy Network and serves as a member of the Civil Justice Council's ADR Liaison Panel. She has written extensively on ADR and consumer issues and the co-author of the Ombudsman content for Atkins Court Forms.

Judith is the Rail Ombudsman's representative on the collaboration of European ADR schemes, Travel-Net and was instrumental in forging the relationship with Bus-Users UK, an example of the Rail Ombudsman's broad approach to engagement in order to share best-practice and influence the delivery of ADR more broadly.



Kathryn Stone OBE
Independent Assessor

Kathryn has enjoyed a 40-year career in public service. She is the current Parliamentary Commissioner for Standards, an independent officer of the House of Commons overseeing the code of conduct and rules for MPs. During her career, she spent 11 years as Chief Executive of the charity Voice UK, representing the rights of people with learning disabilities who were victims of abuse and crime. She was awarded an OBE in 2007 for her services to people with learning disabilities. She has also held the challenging role of Commissioner for the Victims and Survivors in Northern Ireland, worked for the Independent Police Complaints Commission and held the role of Chief Legal Ombudsman of England and Wales.



Rosie Tackley
Lead Ombudsman

In October 2021, Rosie was officially made Lead Ombudsman, after a period of acting up in which she steered the team through a period of change and fluctuating demand, partly related to the pandemic. She holds a Bachelors in Business, which she converted through the Graduate Diploma in Law, and Legal Practice Course, in addition to a Masters in Globalisation. Prior to working as an Ombudsman, she assisted on Legal Aid cases at a major charity. She now has over four years' experience of working as an Ombudsman, and over three as a Rail Ombudsman. Rosie was directly involved in the setup of the Rail Ombudsman when it was launched in 2018 and been a key player in adjusting the service to fit the changing landscape. She now manages the casework team and works closely with senior managers in stakeholder activities.



Matthew Thomas
Head of Engagement

Matt started working with the Ombudsman in 2017, and in June 2018 began helping to establish the new Rail Ombudsman. Matt brings diverse experience spanning both sales/commercial and policy roles, gained in the private and public sectors. As Head of Engagement, Matt has a strong customer service ethos and his responsibilities include stakeholder relationship management and working with Rail Ombudsman members to generate insight from casework data. As a keen advocate of rail travel with a first-hand appreciation of the benefits it offers, Matt is always looking to work collaboratively with the industry to see real impacts on the network.

Financial Statements for the Rail Ombudsman

Income

Figures are £

Rail membership:	980,917
------------------	---------

Cases:	34,739
--------	--------

Grants:	89,454
---------	--------

Total income:	1,105,110
----------------------	------------------

Expenditure

Staff costs:	771,235
--------------	---------

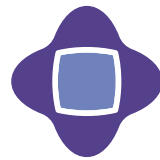
Operating costs:	241,750
------------------	---------

Net profit/loss:	91,125
-------------------------	---------------

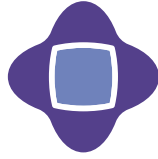


Based on data extracted from the annual audited accounts of the Dispute Resolution Ombudsman Limited for the 12 months ended 31 December 2021 by Wagstaffs Chartered Accountants

The Rail
Ombudsman



The Rail Ombudsman



www.railombudsman.org

Premier House
1-5 Argyle Way
Stevenage
Hertfordshire
SG1 2AD

Registered Office

Dispute Resolution Ombudsman Limited - Registered in England. No 8945616
Registered office: Premier House, 1-5 Argyle Way, Stevenage, Hertfordshire, England SG1 2AD

Inspiring consumer confidence