The Rail Ombudsman

Quarterly Statistical Report

Q4

Dates: 01/01/23 - 31/03/23

Contents

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. 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.

Simple 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 a Simple 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 a Simple 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.

Notes

All percentages shown within this report have been rounded up or down to the nearest whole number.

Passenger journeys delivered by Participating Rail Operating Companies vary in length and number. Unless specified, complaint volumes in this report have not been weighted to reflect this and should not be used as mechanisms for comparison.

Further information on Rail Operating Companies' passenger numbers and complaint volumes can be found on the Office of Rail and Road's data portal here: https://dataportal.orr.gov.uk/

Complaints evaluated / closed by the Rail Ombudsman during Quarter 4 include complaints raised in the previous quarter.

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Quarter 4: Key Facts

	Q4 2022-23	vs Q3 2022-23	vs Q4 2021-22
New cases referred to the Rail Ombudsman	1433	-9%	+50%
Cases evaluated by the Rail Ombudsman	1551	-0.5%	+58%
% Cases found to be In Scope for the scheme	70%	-4% pts	+2% pts
% Cases referred to consumer advocacy bodies	6%	+2% pts	-1% pts
% Cases found to be Out of Scope: Ineligible	24%	+2% pts	-1% pts
Average financial award (where financial award secured)	£94	0% pts	+71%

'Delay compensation schemes' remains the largest complaint category accounting for 38% of complaints evaluated this quarter. 'Complaints handling' is in second place with 14% of complaints and 'Train service performance' remains the 3rd largest category with 13% of complaints this quarter.

1. New complaints referred to the Rail Ombudsman for assessment, by month

Month	Value
Apr	253
May	273
Jun	303
Jul	350
Aug	407
Sep	474
Oct	635
Nov	532
Dec	407
Jan	582
Feb	435
Mar	416

Q1 2022-23 | Q2 2022-23 | Q3 2022-23 | Q4 2022-23
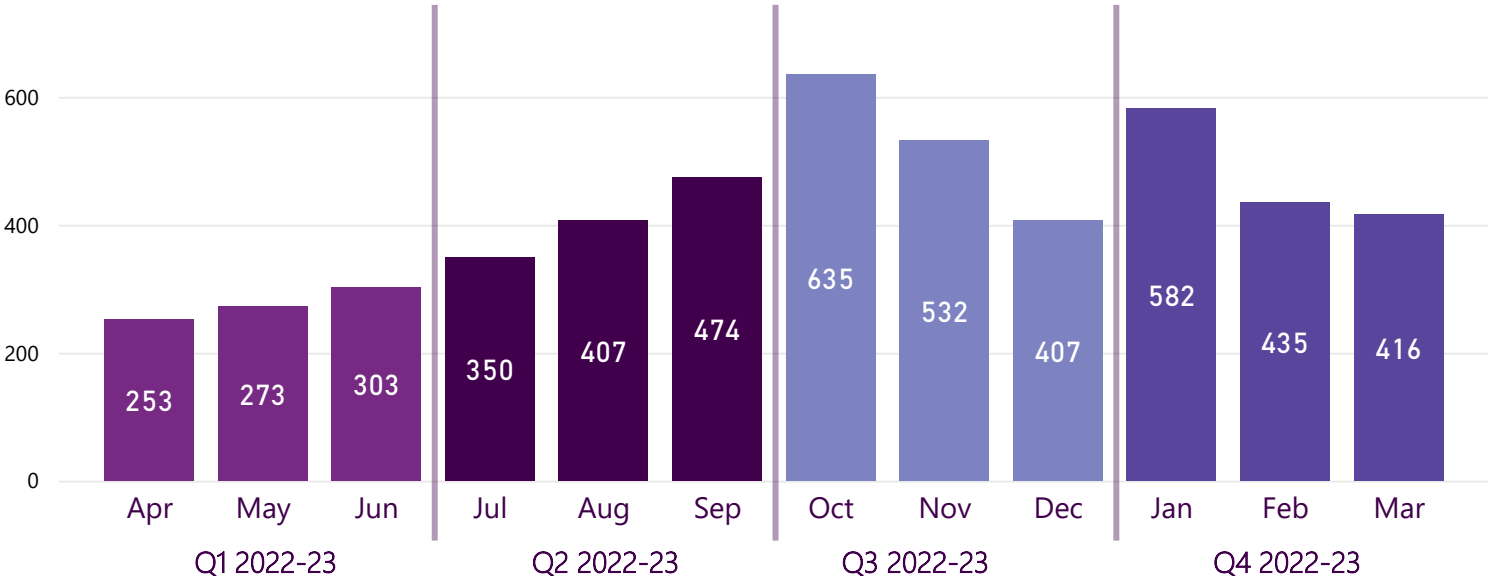
Total referred to the Rail Ombudsman in Quarter 4: 1433

The above chart covers complaints referred to the Rail Ombudsman during Quarter 4 and includes both In Scope and Out of Scope complaints. Note: Outcomes of some of these will carry forward into the next Quarter.

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2. Complaint volume by Participating Rail Operating Company
Volume of complaints assessed during Quarter 4 by Rail Operating Company.

● In Scope ● Out of Scope

60 Out of scope

Operating Company	In Scope	Out of Scope
Avanti West Coast	242	60
Great Western Railway	154	42
London North Eastern Railway	110	38
Govia Thameslink Railway	88	43
TransPennine Express	90	29
CrossCountry	97	21
Northern Trains Ltd	79	34
West Midlands Trains	47	9
East Midlands Railway	29	25
Greater Anglia	19	34
Transport for Wales	40	9
ScotRail	24	13
Chiltern Railways	22	11
South Western Railway	10	18
Southeastern	8	17
Grand Central	14	
Lumo	10	7
Network Rail	15	
Merseyrail	8	
TfL Rail	6	
Caledonian Sleeper		
National Rail Enquiries		
c2c		
Heathrow Express		
London Underground (certain stations)		
Hull Trains		
London Overground		
Nexus		

0   50   100   150   200

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3. Ombudsman referrals per 1000 complaints handled by Rail Operating Companies

Volume of complaints assessed during Quarter 4 by Participating Rail Operating Company, normalised by Rail Operator complaints (scaled by 1000s for ease of reading).

● In Scope ● Out of Scope

Operator	In Scope	Out of Scope
CrossCountry	34	7
Chiltern Railways	27	14
Merseyrail	3	25
East Midlands Railway	15	13
Lumo	16	11
Northern Trains Ltd	18	8
TransPennine Express	19	6
Avanti West Coast	17	4
Grand Central	17	4
Great Western Railway	13	4
Govia Thameslink Railway	11	6
Caledonian Sleeper	8	8
Greater Anglia	6	10
London North Eastern Railway	11	4
London Overground	7	7
West Midlands Trains	11	2
Transport for Wales	9	2
Heathrow Express		10
ScotRail	6	3
Hull Trains	2	2
South Western Railway	1	3
Southeastern	1	2
c2c		3

(Rail Operators' complaint volumes source: ORR)

4. Channel used by Rail Passengers to refer complaints to the Rail Ombudsman

The channel used by a Rail Passenger to refer a complaint (excluding contact relating to general enquiries, advice and signposting).

Channel	Vol. of complaints
Web	1245
Post	126
Email	52
Telephone	10
Total	**1433**

Email 4%
Post 9%
Telephone 1%
Web 87%
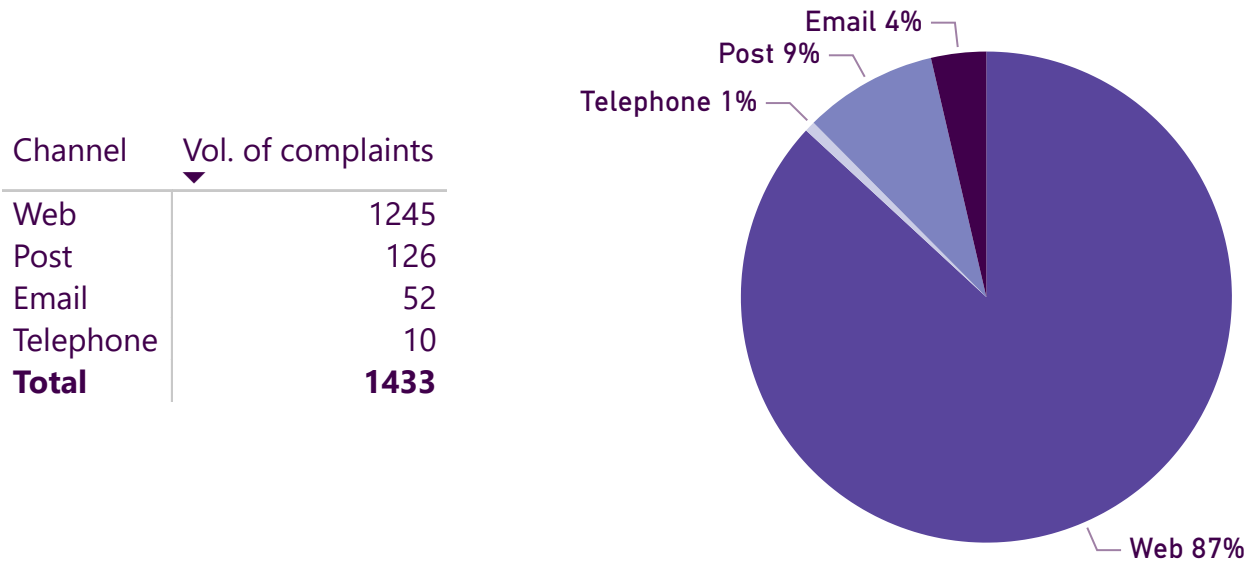
5. Average time to close In Scope complaints in working days

Complex Resolution/Adjudication — 39.1
Complex Resolution/Mediation — 32.3
Simple Resolution — 21.0

Average days to resolve
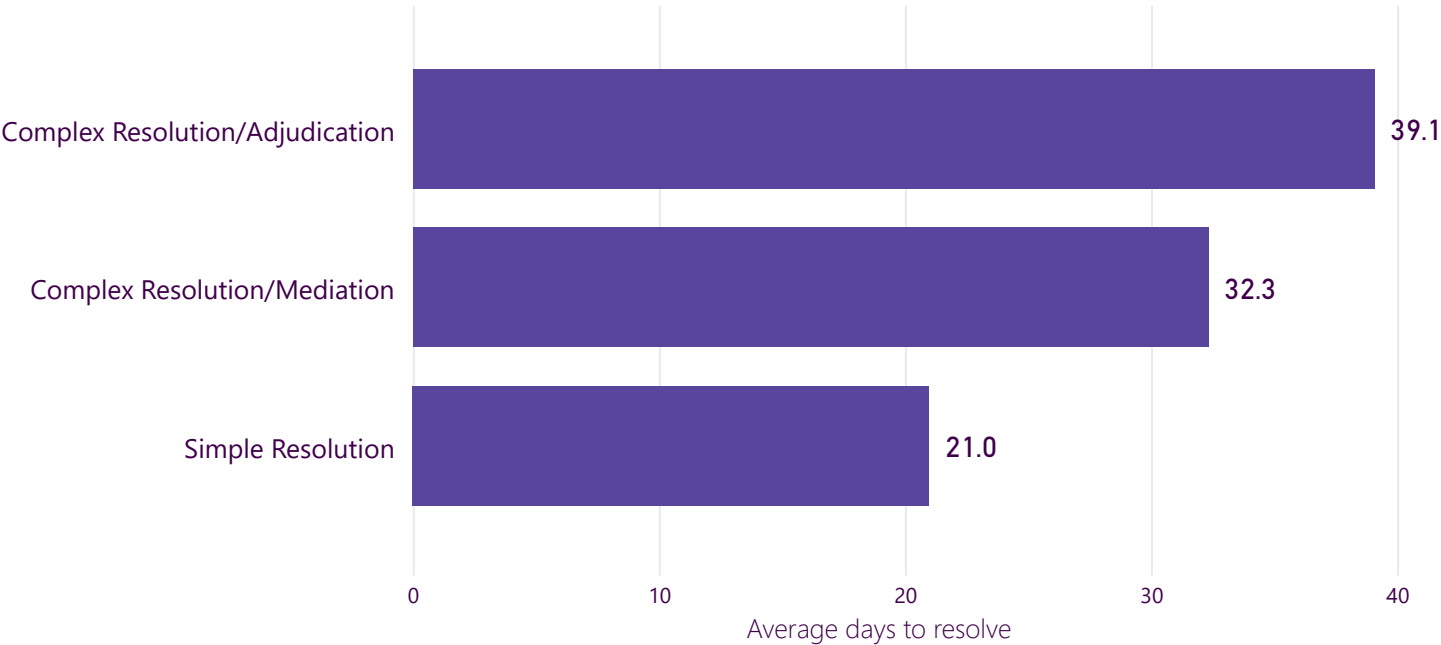
We work to resolve cases within 40 working days. However, extensions may be agreed by all parties in the event of exceptional circumstances or where additional evidence or independant advice is necessary for a decision to be made.

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6. Complaints assessed by the Rail Ombudsman, by top level complaint category

● In Scope ● Out of Scope

144 Out of Scope

Category	In Scope	Out of Scope
Delay compensation schemes	442	
Complaints handling	159	60
Train service performance	157	51
Fares and retailing	71	61
Company policy	74	51
Quality on train	60	13
Timetabling and connection issues	38	13
Staff conduct and availability	27	13
Safety and security	21	12
Provision of information	23	8
Accessibility issues	14	8
Station quality	11	
Environmental	15	

7. Complaints assessed by the Rail Ombudsman, by top level complaint category per 1000 complaints handled by Participating Rail Operating Companies

● In Scope ● Out of Scope

Category	In Scope	Out of Scope
Complaints handling	57	22
Environmental	46	
Delay compensation schemes	32	10
Fares and retailing	8	7
Timetabling and connection issues	11	4
Accessibility issues	9	5
Company policy	8	5
Safety and security	8	4
Train service performance	9	3
Provision of information	6	2
Station quality	2	5
Staff conduct and availability	3	2
Quality on train	3	
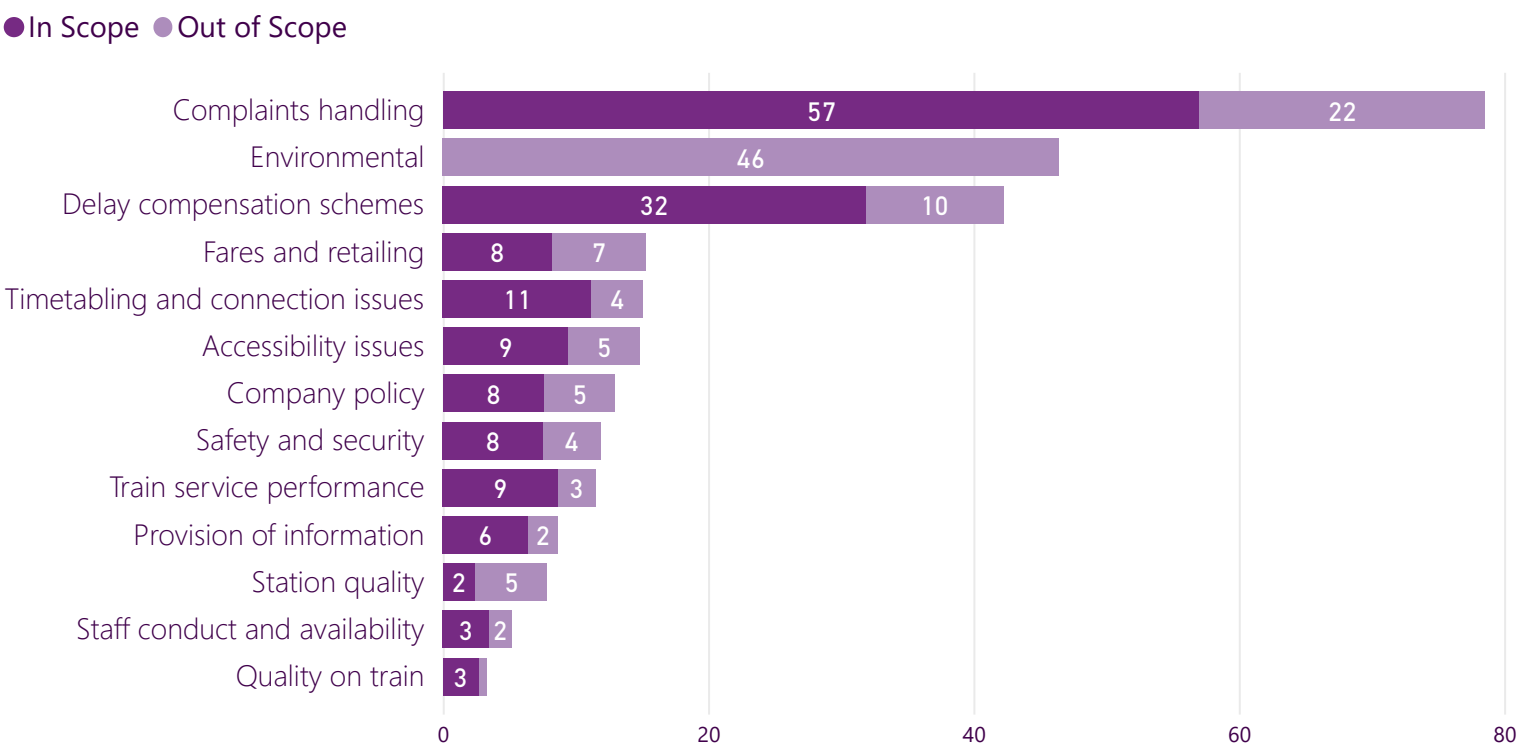
Using the above chart it is possible to identify the complaint categories that most commonly resulted in escalations to the Rail Ombudsman.

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8. Complaints assessed by the Rail Ombudsman, by second level category

Top level category ▲	Second level category	Vol. of complaints
Accessibility issues	Assistance staff	3
Accessibility issues	Booked assistance not provided at station	3
Accessibility issues	Booked assistance not provided on train	1
Accessibility issues	Lack of disabled facilities at station/on train	1
Accessibility issues	Lack of information	3
Accessibility issues	Other	9
Accessibility issues	The ease of being able to get on and off	1
Accessibility issues	Unbooked assistance not provided at station	1
Company policy	Onboard policy	4
Company policy	Other	1
Company policy	Ticketing and refunds policy	120
Complaints handling	Complaint not received	1
Complaints handling	Complaints not fully addressed/fulfilled by Participating Rail Operating Company	116
Complaints handling	No response from Participating Rail Operating Company	35
Complaints handling	Other	4
Complaints handling	Response time	15
Complaints handling	Staff member was impolite/unhelpful	6
Complaints handling	Unhappy at type/level of compensation	42
Delay compensation schemes	Awareness/promotion of schemes	1
Delay compensation schemes	Compensation claim rejected	250
Delay compensation schemes	Compensation claims process	104
Delay compensation schemes	Level of compensation	74
Delay compensation schemes	Other	43
Delay compensation schemes	Participating Rail Operating Company processing error	17
Delay compensation schemes	Speed of response	97
Environmental	Lighting of station	2
Environmental	Litter and contamination	2
Environmental	Noise pollution	3
Environmental	Other	5
Environmental	Overgrown vegetation	3
Fares and retailing	Other	69
Fares and retailing	Smartcards	6
Fares and retailing	Ticket buying facilities	25
Fares and retailing	Value for money of ticket price	32

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Top level category	Second level category	Vol. of complaints
Provision of information	Other	6
Provision of information	Provision of information about train times/platforms	11
Provision of information	Provision of information on website or mobile apps	4
Provision of information	The provision of information during the journey	10
Quality on train	Cleanliness of train	4
Quality on train	Facilities onboard	22
Quality on train	Other	2
Quality on train	Sufficient room for all passengers to sit/stand	38
Quality on train	The comfort of the seating area	1
Quality on train	The toilet facilities	4
Quality on train	Upkeep and repair of the train	2
Safety and security	Other	7
Safety and security	Personal security onboard	22
Safety and security	Personal security whilst using station	4
Staff conduct and availability	How request to station staff was handled	2
Staff conduct and availability	Other	3
Staff conduct and availability	The attitudes and helpfulness of the staff at station	17
Staff conduct and availability	The availability of staff - at station	1
Staff conduct and availability	The availability of staff - onboard	1
Staff conduct and availability	The helpfulness and attitude of other staff (not on train/not at station)	5
Staff conduct and availability	The helpfulness and attitude of staff on train	11
Station quality	Facilities for car parking	5
Station quality	The availability of seating	1
Station quality	The facilities and services	7
Station quality	The provision of shelter facilities	1
Station quality	The upkeep/repair of the station buildings/platforms	2
Timetabling and connection issues	Connections with other forms of public transport	2
Timetabling and connection issues	Connections with other train services	12
Timetabling and connection issues	Other	10
Timetabling and connection issues	Routing	3
Timetabling and connection issues	The frequency of the trains on that route	5
Timetabling and connection issues	The length of time the journey was scheduled to take (speed)	4
Timetabling and connection issues	Timetabling	15
Train service performance	Other	21
Train service performance	Punctuality/reliability (i.e. the train arriving/departing on time)	187

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9. Volumes assessed as In Scope or Out of Scope

How we classified complaints that were closed by the Rail Ombudsman or deemed to be Out of Scope.

Classification Type	No. of complaints
In Scope/Complex Resolution	425
In Scope/Simple Resolution	666
Out of scope (Ineligible)	366
Out of Scope (Transferred)/London TravelWatch	32
Out of Scope (Transferred)/Transport Focus	62
Total	**1551**

Of the 1551 complaints assessed in Quarter 4, 70% (1091 complaints) were In Scope, 30% (460) were deemed to be Out of Scope and Ineligible for the scheme (60% of which were due to no deadlock letter provided). 6% (93) were transferred to consumer advocacy bodies. See chart 12 on page 11 for Out of Scope reasons.
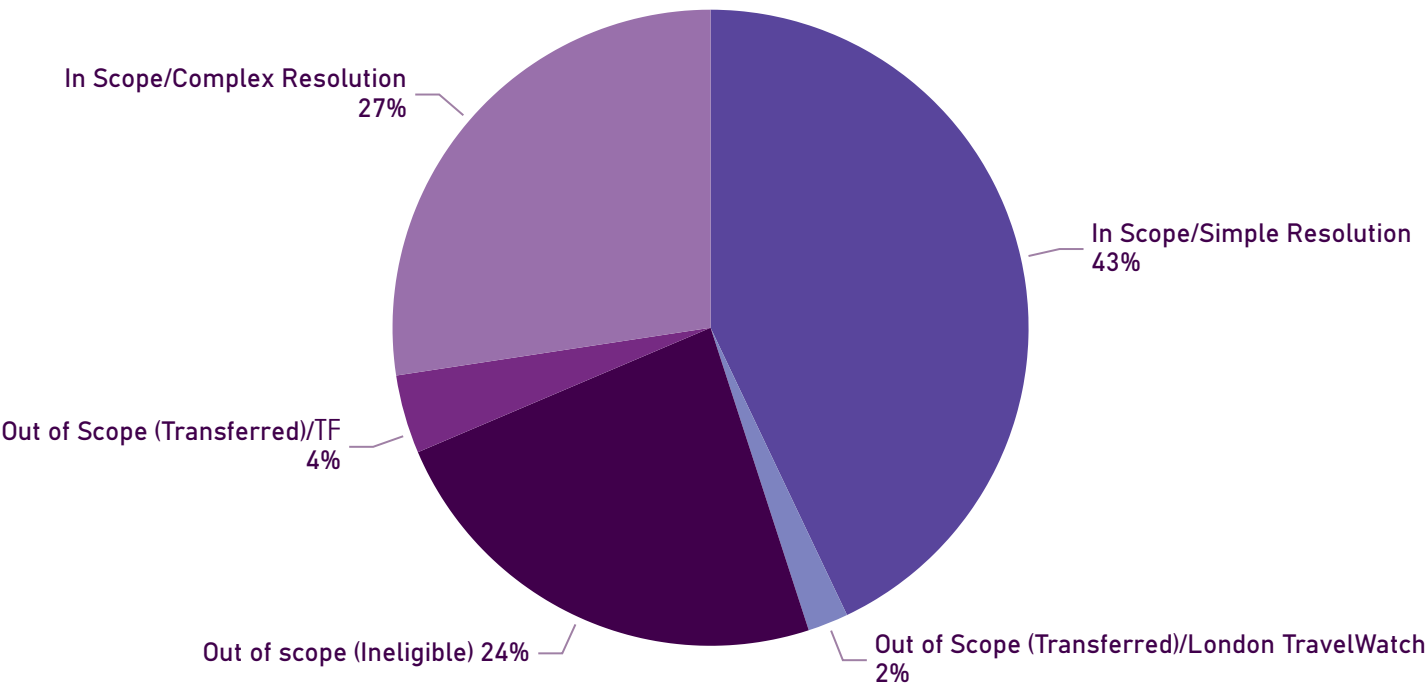
Note: Complaints assessed include complaints carried forward from the previous quarter as well as some of the new complaints referred to the Rail Ombudsman during this quarter.

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10. Complaint classifications by Participating Rail Operating Company
Complaints evaluated by the Rail Ombudsman during Quarter 4, by Participating Rail Operating Company.

● In Scope/Complex Resolution ● In Scope/Simple Resolution ● Out of Scope

Operating Company	In Scope/Complex Resolution	In Scope/Simple Resolution	Out of Scope
Avanti West Coast	99	143	
Great Western Railway	62	92	42
London North Eastern Railway	27	83	38
Govia Thameslink Railway	47	41	43
TransPennine Express	26	64	29
CrossCountry	41	56	21
Northern Trains Ltd	29	50	34
West Midlands Trains	12	35	9
East Midlands Railway	11	18	25
Greater Anglia		14	34
Transport for Wales	17	23	9
ScotRail	13	11	13
Chiltern Railways	11	11	11
South Western Railway	6		18
Southeastern		6	17
Grand Central	6	8	
Lumo	6	7	
Network Rail			15
Merseyrail			8
TfL Rail			6
Caledonian Sleeper			
National Rail Enquiries			
c2c			
Heathrow Express			
London Underground (certain stations)			
Hull Trains			
London Overground			
Nexus			

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11. Complaints retained by the Rail Ombudsman or transferred to consumer advocacy bodies, by month

Transferred to ● Retained by the Rail Ombudsman ● Transport Focus ● London TravelWatch

	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
Transport Focus	8%		6%	6%	7%		6%					7%
Retained	87%	91%	89%	91%	91%	95%	93%	96%	96%	92%	94%	90%

Q1 2022-23	Q3 2022-23	Q3 2022-23	Q4 2022-23
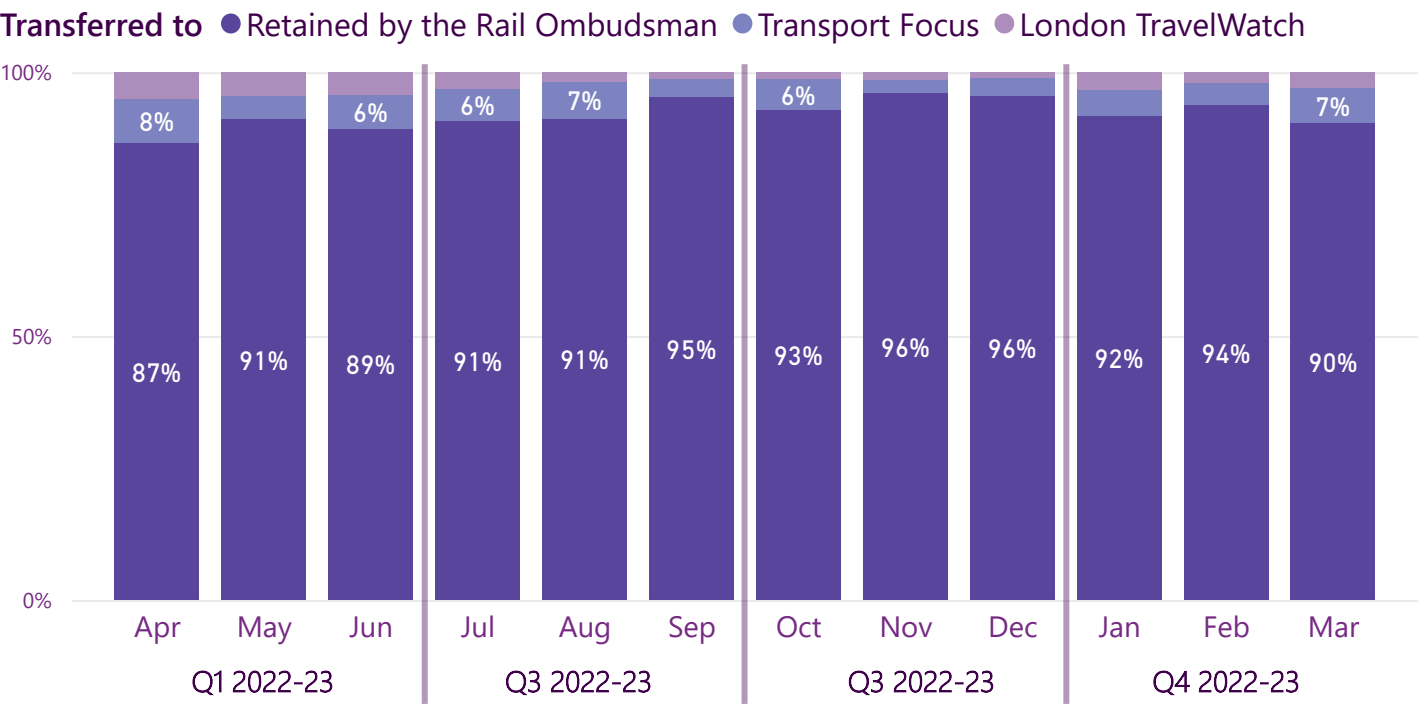
12. Out of Scope categories

Reasons complaints referred to the Rail Ombudsman were assessed to be Out of Scope.

Out of Scope category	Out of Scope (Ineligible)	Out of Scope (Transferred)	Total ▾
No deadlock letter provided	276	1	277
Policy issues	6	37	43
Action being taken by alternative channel	20	22	42
Already settled	32		32
Penalty fare appeals	1	29	30
Residential or lineside issues	13		13
Personal injury claim	12		12
Planned service alterations/closures		4	4
Consumer withdrew	3		3
Parking charge notices	2		2
Campaigns/Petitions		1	1
Parking ticket pricing	1		1
Total	366	94	460

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13. Simple Resolution case outcomes
Outcomes of closed Simple Resolution cases.

Outcome	Value
Resolution reached between parties prior to Mediation	519
Rail Passenger complaint not upheld	145

14. Complex Resolution case outcomes
Outcomes of closed Complex Resolution cases.

● Mediation ● Adjudication ● Withdrawn

Outcome	Value
Settled through Mediation	300
Rail Passenger complaint not upheld	69
Rail Passenger complaint upheld in part	36
Rail Passenger complaint upheld in full	5
Rail Passenger withdrew complaint	16

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15. Simple Resolution case outcomes, by Participating Rail Operating Company
Outcomes of closed Simple Resolution cases by Participating Rail Operating Company.

● Rail Passenger complaint not upheld ● Resolution reached between parties prior to Mediation

Operating Company	Complaint not upheld	Resolution reached
Avanti West Coast	20%	80%
Great Western Railway	10%	90%
London North Eastern Railway	8%	92%
TransPennine Express	8%	92%
CrossCountry	5%	95%
Northern Trains Ltd	57%	43%
Govia Thameslink Railway	51%	49%
West Midlands Trains	6%	94%
Transport for Wales		100%
East Midlands Railway	50%	50%
Greater Anglia	43%	57%
Chiltern Railways	45%	55%
ScotRail	55%	45%
Grand Central	50%	50%
Southeastern	83%	17%
Lumo	50%	50%
South Western Railway	75%	25%
Hull Trains	100%	
Merseyrail		100%
TfL Rail	100%	

0%   20%   40%   60%   80%   100%

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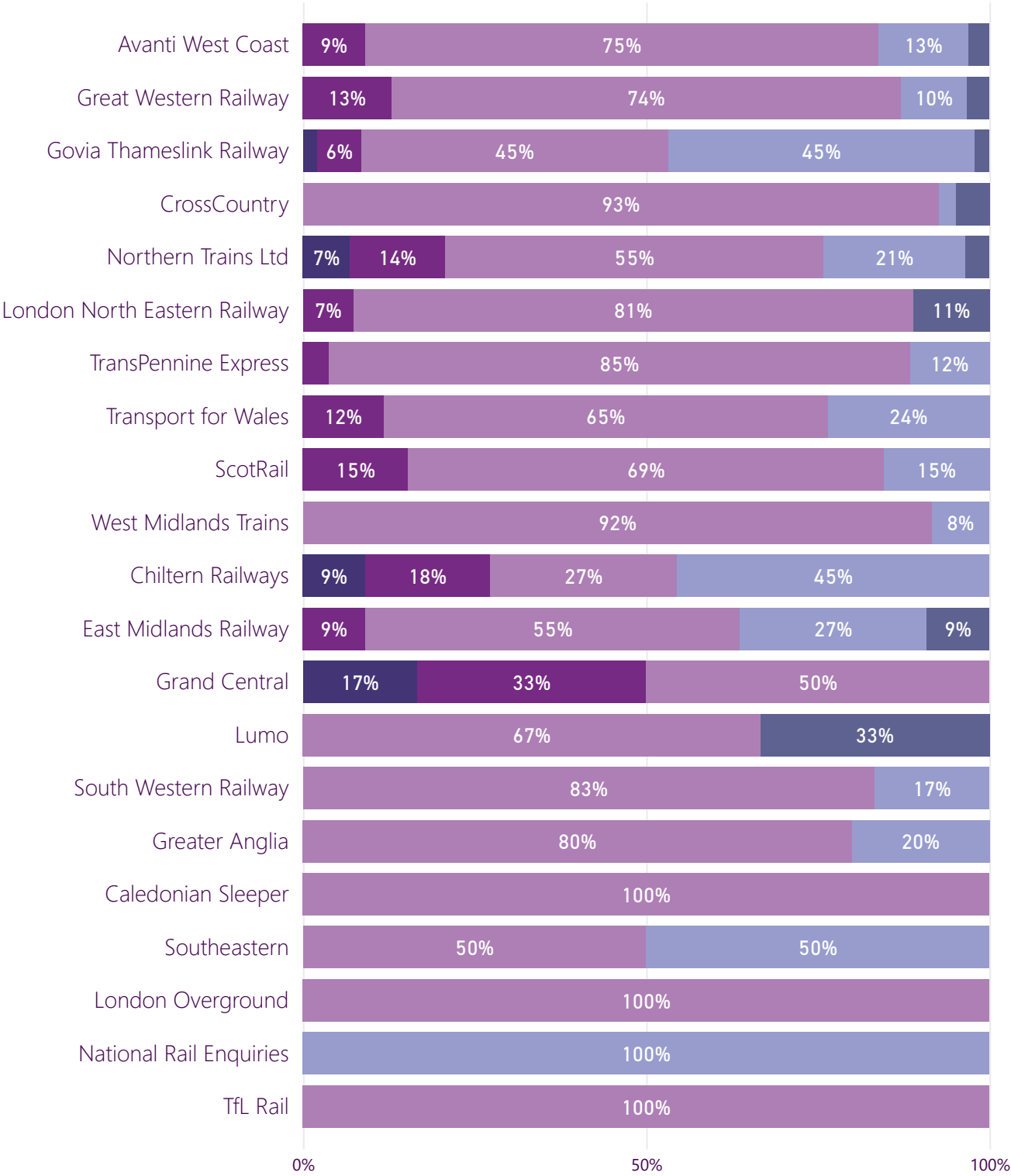www.railombudsman.org | info@railombudsman.org

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16. Complex Resolution case outcomes, by Participating Rail Operating Company
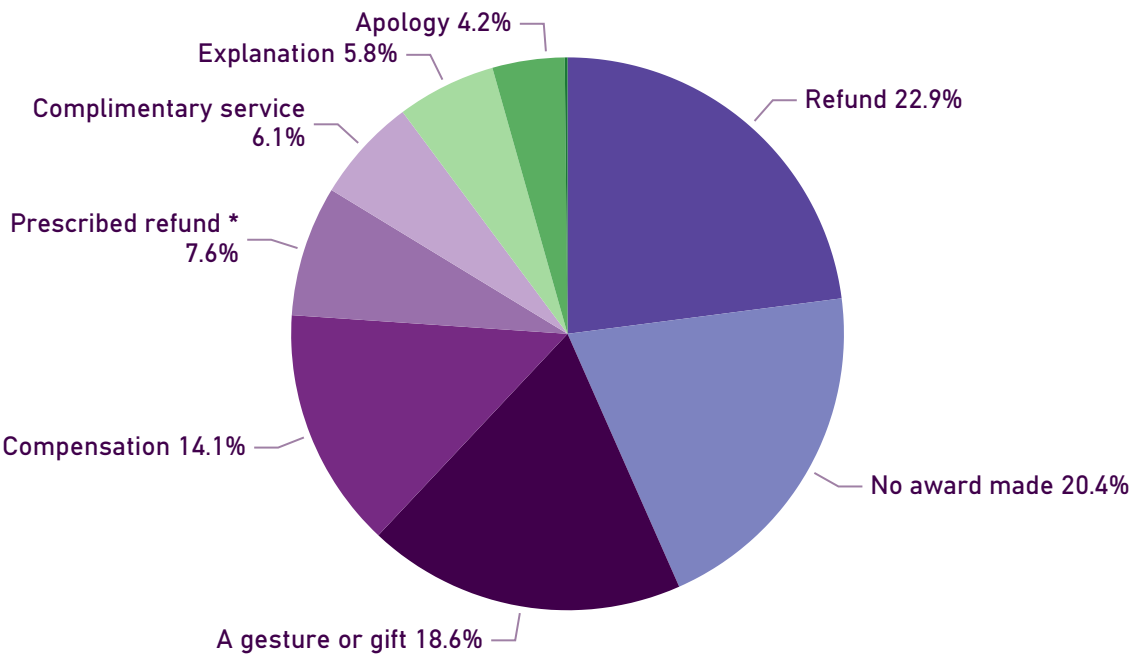Outcomes of closed Complex Resolution cases by Participating Rail Operating Company.

● Rail Passenger complaint upheld in full ● Rail Passenger complaint upheld in part ● Settled through Mediation
● Rail Passenger complaint not upheld ● Rail Passenger withdrew complaint

Company	Upheld in full	Upheld in part	Settled through Mediation	Not upheld	Withdrew
Avanti West Coast		9%	75%	13%	
Great Western Railway		13%	74%	10%	
Govia Thameslink Railway	6%		45%	45%	
CrossCountry			93%		
Northern Trains Ltd	7%	14%	55%	21%	
London North Eastern Railway	7%		81%		11%
TransPennine Express			85%	12%	
Transport for Wales		12%	65%	24%	
ScotRail		15%	69%	15%	
West Midlands Trains			92%	8%	
Chiltern Railways	9%	18%	27%	45%	
East Midlands Railway		9%	55%	27%	9%
Grand Central	17%	33%	50%		
Lumo			67%		33%
South Western Railway			83%	17%	
Greater Anglia			80%	20%	
Caledonian Sleeper			100%		
Southeastern			50%	50%	
London Overground			100%		
National Rail Enquiries				100%	
TfL Rail			100%		

0%   50%   100%

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17. Resolution types and volume

Award type	No. of awards
A gesture or gift	688
Apology	156
Compensation	520
Complimentary service	226
Explanation	214
No award made	755
Prescribed refund *	282
Refund	848
Ticket reissue	6
Total	**3695**

* paid in accordance with the delay repay procedure

Apology 4.2%
Explanation 5.8%
Complimentary service 6.1%
Prescribed refund * 7.6%
Compensation 14.1%
A gesture or gift 18.6%
Refund 22.9%
No award made 20.4%

Note: Some closed complaints may have received more than one award type to reach resolution.

Average financial award made
£94

Largest financial award made (inc. refund)
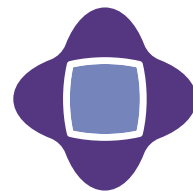£2,372

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18. Resolution types and volume by Participating Rail Operating Company

ServiceProvider ▲	A gesture or gift	Apology	Compensation	Complimentary service	Explanation	No award made	Prescribed refund *	Refund	Ticket reissue	Total
Avanti West Coast	31	2	52	30	10	65	21	82	1	294
Caledonian Sleeper Train	1					1				2
Chiltern Railways	2		3		1	16		1		23
Cross Country	8	3	23	11	7	8	29	30		119
East Midlands Railway	5	1	4	2	2	15	1	3		33
Govia Thameslink Railway	6	2	11	2	2	58	7	6		94
Grand Central			4		2	6		3		15
Great Western Railway	38	3	35	6	6	26	13	68	1	196
Greater Anglia	3		2	1	2	11	1	3		23
Hull Trains						1				1
London North Eastern Railway	47	3	14	5	7	15	8	71	1	171
London Overground	1									1
Lumo	2				1	4		4	1	12
Merseyrail	1									1
National Rail Enquiries						1				1
Northern Trains Ltd	5	1	12	2	5	45	9	8		87
ScotRail	4	1	4		2	10	1	5		27
South Western	1		2		1	6				10
Southeastern			1			7				8
TfL Rail						1		1		2
TransPennine Express	44	1	24		1	10	7	53		140
Transport for Wales	15	1	9	4	2	7	7	14		59
West Midlands Trains	8	1	13	5	3	3	5	27		65
Total	222	19	213	68	54	316	109	379	4	1384

paid in accordance with the delay repay

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