



Rail delay compensation claims

2019-20 factsheet

Publication date: 25 June 2020

Next publication date: 22 October 2020

Background

This factsheet contains information on delay compensation claims made by passengers on rail services in Great Britain. These statistics contain:

- Delay compensation claim volumes (received and closed per rail period);
- The response rate of those claims closed;
- The volume of those claims closed which were approved.

[All tables associated with this release can be found under data tables on the delay compensation page](#)

Definitions

Volume of claims closed:

The claim is closed when the train operator issues payment for a successful claim or when the passenger was informed that their claim was rejected.

Claims closed within 20 working days (percentage):

ORR use 20 working days as a proxy for the one month target referred to in the National Rail Conditions of Carriage.

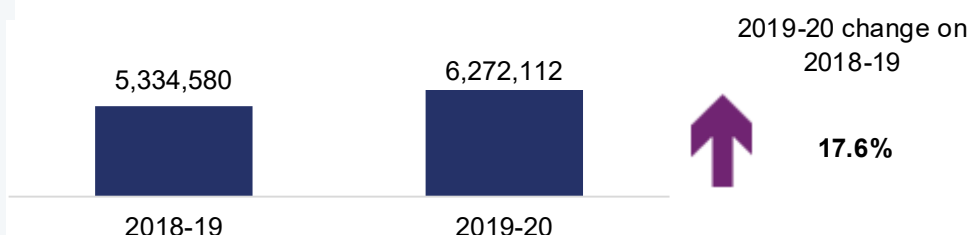
Volume of claims approved:

The volume of delay compensation claims closed where the passengers claim has been successful and approved.

There were 6.3 million delay compensation claims closed by train operators in 2019-20. This is an increase of 17.6% compared to 2018-19.

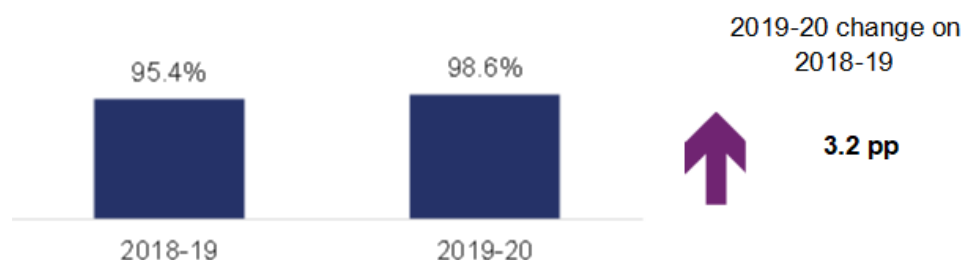
At the end of 2018-19, and throughout 2019-20, a number of train operators moved to the Delay Repay 15 (DR15) compensation scheme. The switch to DR15 means the threshold to claim compensation is lower (15 minutes), whereas previously it was 30 minutes in most cases, therefore more passengers were eligible to claim delay compensation.

Figure 1. Delay compensation claims closed, Great Britain, 2018-19 and 2019-20



Overall, **98.6%** of delay compensation claims were closed within 20 working days in 2019-20. This is 3.2 percentage points (pp) higher than 2018-19.

Figure 2. Delay compensation claims response within 20 working days, Great Britain, 2018-19 and 2019-20



Of those claims closed, **84.2%** of claims were approved by train operators in 2019-20. This is 0.6 pp higher than 2018-19.

Delay compensation claims made in 2019-20 P13 may have been affected by the coronavirus (Covid-19) pandemic. The impact on statistics presented in this factsheet is small given the number of days affected up to the end of March 2020. We expect to see a more noticeable impact in the next statistical release covering 2020-21 P1-4 (1 April- 25 July 2020).

Responsible Statistician: Christopher Casanovas

Public Enquiries: E-mail: rail.stats@orr.gov.uk

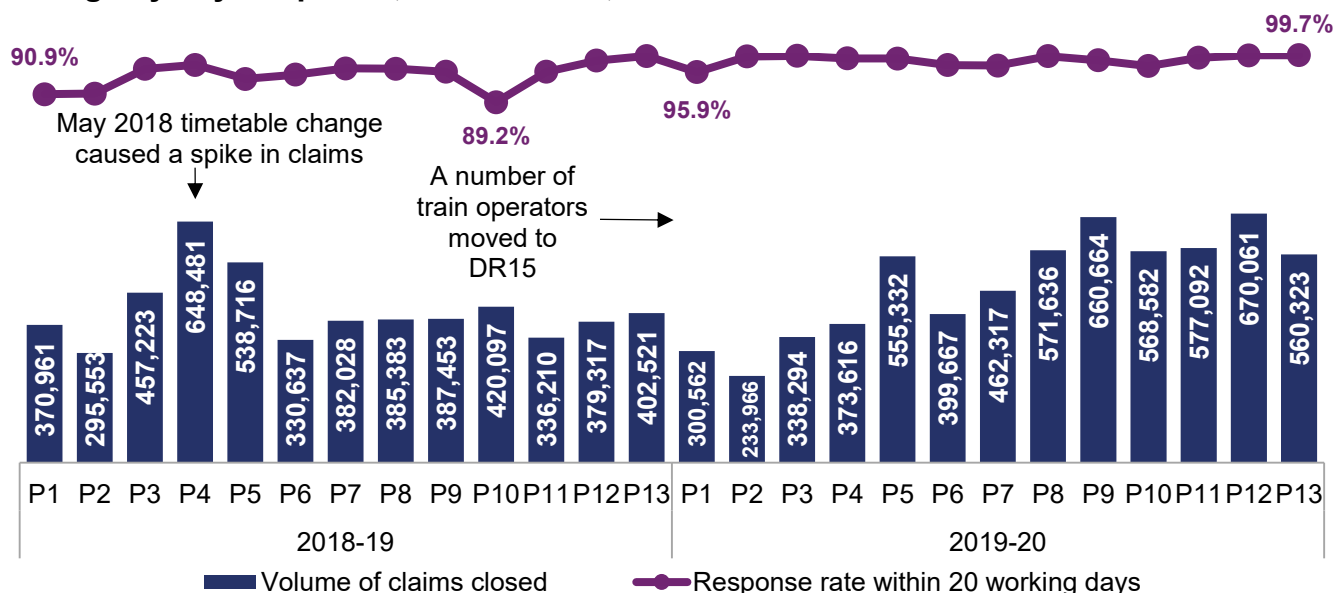
Media Enquiries: Tel: 0207 282 2094

Website: <https://dataportal.orr.gov.uk/>

Delay compensation claim volumes and response times

- There were 6.3 million delay compensation claims closed by train operators in 2019-20. This is 17.6% higher than 2018-19, where 5.3 million claims were closed.
- Nationally 98.6% of claims were closed within 20 working days in 2019-20. This is 3.2 percentage points higher than 2018-19, where the response rate was 95.4%.

Figure 3. Volume of delay compensation claims closed and response rate within 20 working days by rail period, Great Britain, 2018-19 P1 to 2019-20 P13



Note: A 'rail period' is normally 28 days, or four weeks, for business reporting purposes and there are 13 rail periods in a financial year starting on 1 April.

Train operators who have changed to DR15 within the time series

Northern
(P10 2018-19)

TfW Rail
(P11 2018-19)

Great Western Railway and Greater Anglia

East Midlands Railway and Southeastern

Avanti West Coast
(P10 2019-20)
TransPennine

Delay compensation data was first collected from train operators at the start of 2018-19. The volume of delay compensation claims remained fairly stable during 2018-19, apart from an increase between rail periods 3 and 5. This increase was due to the [timetable change](#) on 20 May 2018 (end of rail period 2) where 46% of train times were changed from the previous timetable. This resulted in disruption for several weeks after the timetable was implemented.

At the end of 2018-19, and throughout 2019-20, a number of train operators switched to the Delay Repay 15 (DR15) compensation scheme. The switch to DR15 means the threshold to claim compensation is lower (15 minutes), whereas previously it was 30 minutes in most cases, therefore more passengers were eligible to claim delay compensation.

ORR [train punctuality statistics](#) show that nationally 98.4% of recorded station stops were arrived at early or within 15 minutes after the scheduled arrival time in 2019-20. This is similar to the 98.3% of stops arrived at within 15 minutes for 2018-19.

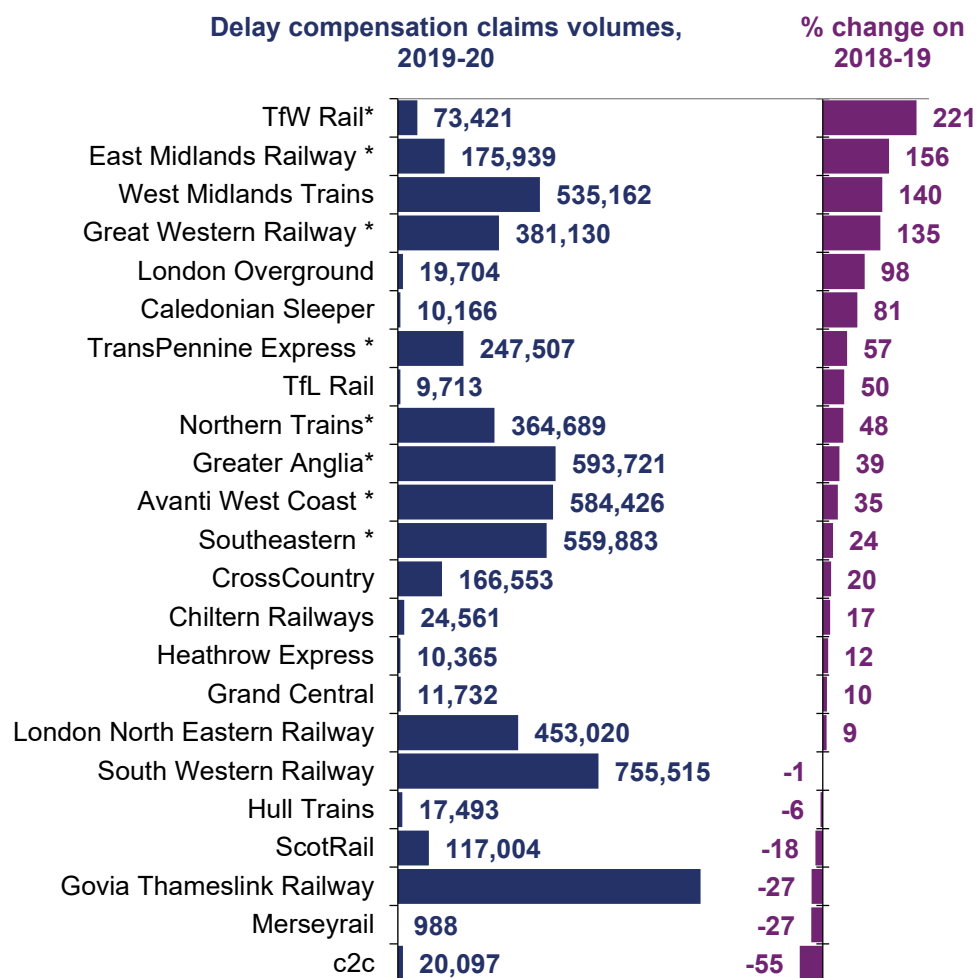
Delay compensation claim volumes by train operator

Comparisons between train operators should be treated with caution. This is because the number of train journeys operated by each train operator varies and due to the different schemes each train operator runs.

A number of **train operators have changed delay compensation scheme since last year.** Therefore the percentage change compared to last year should be treated with caution.

- Many train operators who moved to DR15 in the past year have experienced a large percentage increase in delay compensation claims in 2019-20 compared to 2018-19. The switch to DR15 means the threshold to claim compensation is lower (15 minutes) than it was previously, so therefore more passengers were within the threshold to claim compensation.

Figure 4. Volume of delay compensation claims closed, Great Britain, 2019-20



Notes:

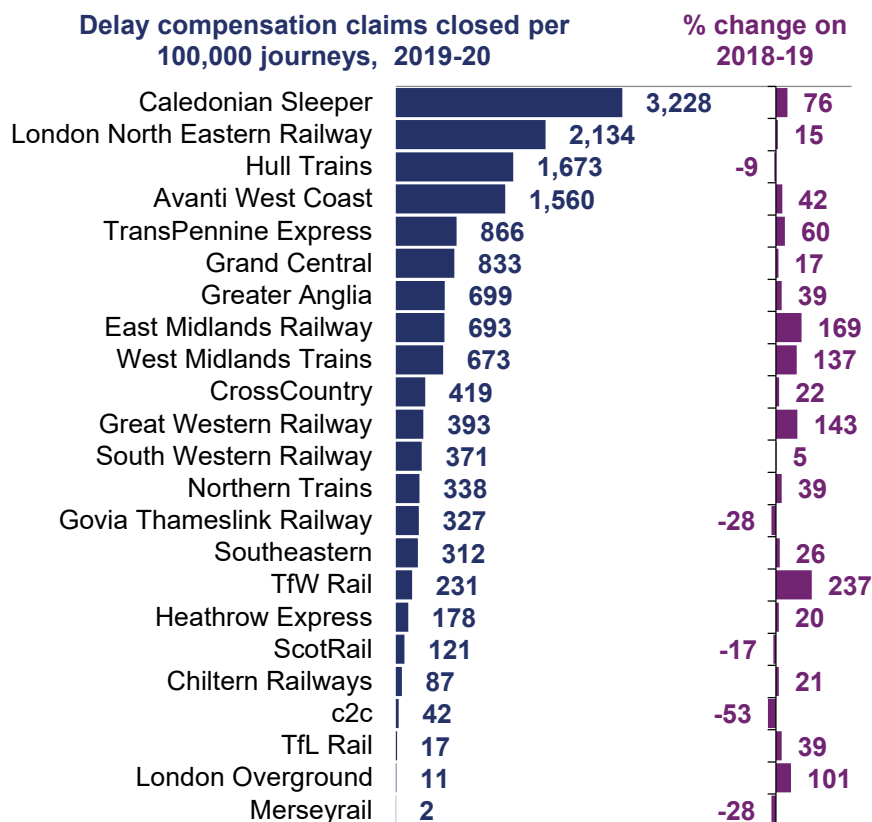
* indicates the train operator has switched to DR15 scheme at some point since the time series began in 2018-19.

- Avanti West Coast changed from DR30 scheme to DR15 from 2019-20 P10.
- East Midlands Railway changed from DR30 to DR15 from 2019-20 P6.
- Greater Anglia changed from DR30 to DR15 from 2019-20 P1.
- Great Western Railway changed from a traditional delay compensation scheme to DR15 from 2019-20 P1.
- Northern Trains changed from DR30 to DR15 from 2018-19 P10.
- Southeastern changed from DR30 scheme to DR15 from 2019-20 P6.

Delay compensation claims closed per 100,000 journeys

- Nationally there were 358 delay compensation claims closed per 100,000 journeys in 2019-20, this represents an 18.5% increase compared to 2018-19 (302 claims per 100,000 journeys in 2018-19).

Figure 5: Volume of delay compensation claims closed per 100,000 journeys by train operator, Great Britain, 2019-20



Source: Train operators and rail journeys data sourced from ORR's [Passenger Rail Usage](#) statistical release.

Notes: * indicates the train operator has switched to DR15 scheme at some point since the time series began in 2018-19. See the previous page for further information.

Factors which influence whether passengers claimed compensation

The Department for Transport (DfT) published research on [rail delays and compensation](#) in October 2018. The research showed factors which influenced passengers decision to claim compensation for their most recent eligible delay. Key areas have been summarised below:

Price of ticket: The higher the price of a ticket, the more likely a passenger claimed delay compensation. The research found that 52% of passengers who paid over £40 claimed compensation, compared to 25% when the ticket was £5 or less.

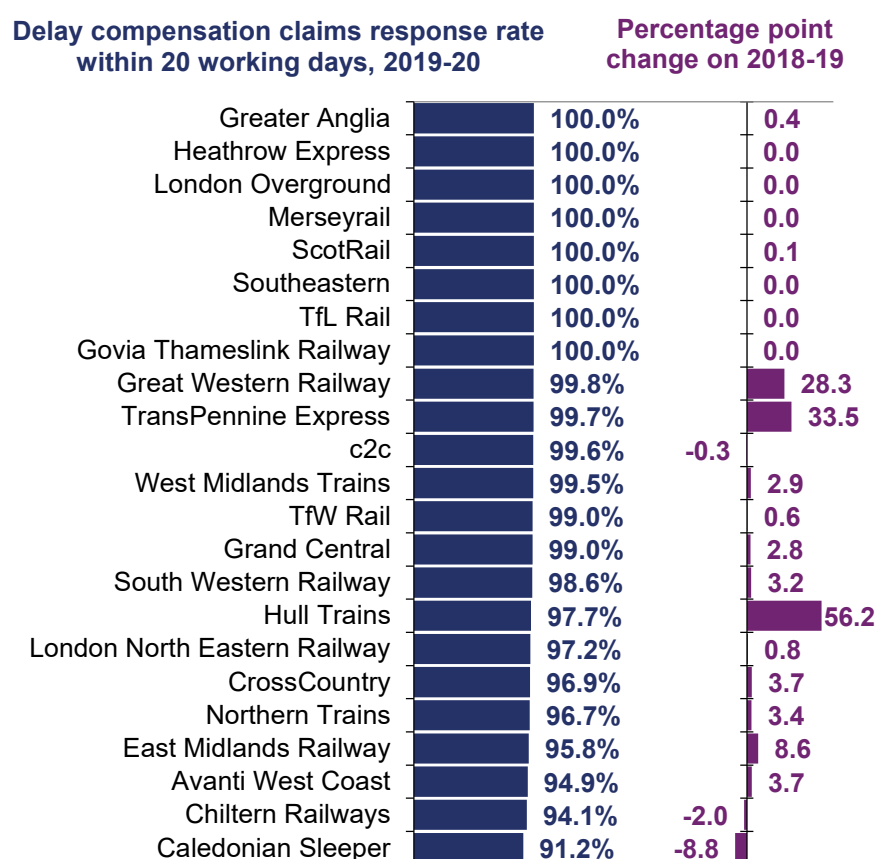
Multiple delays: Passengers who experienced multiple delays were more likely to claim. Overall, 42% of passengers who did not claim stated that the delay was the only one they could recall experiencing in the past six months compared to 33% of passengers who claimed.

Journey delay: The longer the delay, the more likely the passenger was to claim compensation. Overall 18% of those surveyed claimed compensation for delays between 15 to 29 minutes. The claim rate increased substantially when the passenger was delayed longer than 45 minutes (47% of passengers claimed when delayed between 46 and 60 minutes).

Business users: Passengers travelling on business were more likely to claim compensation compared to commuters or leisure users. The research showed 43% of business users claimed delay compensation compared to 38% of commuters and 32% of leisure passengers.

Delay compensation claim response rate by train operator

Figure 6. Delay compensation claims response rate within 20 working days, Great Britain, 2019-20



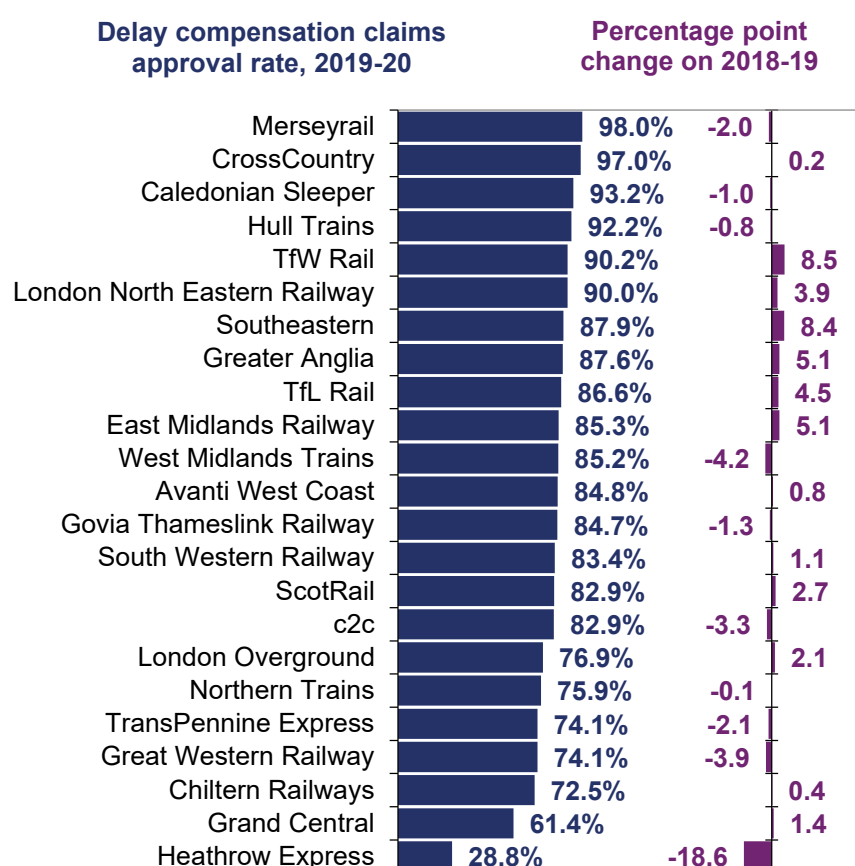
Train operators have a target to process delay compensation claims within one month of receipt. This is specified in condition 33.2 of the [National Rail Conditions of Travel \(NRCoT\)](#).

Overall, 98.6% of delay compensation claims were closed within 20 working days in 2019-20.

There were 20 out of 23 train operators which either increased or maintained their response rate within 20 working days in 2019-20 compared to last year, with 3 operators having a lower response rate compared to last year.

Delay compensation claim approval rate by train operator

Figure 7. Delay compensation claims approval rate, Great Britain, 2019-20



Overall, 84.2% of delay compensation claims were approved by train operators in 2019-20.

There were 13 out of 23 train operators which either increased or maintained their approval rate within 20 working days in 2019-20 compared to last year, with 10 operators having a lower approval rate compared last year.

Background information

Type of schemes: The most popular delay compensation scheme is Delay Repay. Delay Repay is a national scheme train operators use to compensate passengers for delays. For those operators using the Delay Repay scheme, all ticket types are covered and passengers can make a claim for delay compensation whatever the cause of disruption. There are two types of Delay Repay schemes available:

Delay Repay 30 (DR30): Passengers can claim compensation if the train is delayed by 30 minutes or more. Passengers delayed between 30 and 59 minutes are entitled to 50% of the cost of a single ticket, and if the passenger is delayed by 60 minutes or more, the passenger is entitled to a 100% refund of a single ticket. If delayed 120 minutes or more the passenger can claim the cost of a return journey if they have a return ticket.

Delay Repay 15 (DR15): Passengers can additionally claim compensation if the train is delayed by 15 minutes or more. DR15 allows a passenger to claim 25% of the cost of a single ticket if they are delayed between 15 and 29 minutes. Eight train companies operated this scheme from the beginning of 2019-20, with East Midlands Railway, Southeastern and Avanti West Coast moving to this scheme during 2019-20.

Other schemes (traditional schemes): A small number of operators run other schemes which are different to Delay Repay. Often these schemes have different timeframes to be eligible, and compensation can vary between each schemes. Compensation may not be available if the delay is caused by an event outside the operators control.

Delay compensation scheme by train operator

For up-to-date information on delay compensation schemes, please see the train operator's website or the [National Rail Enquiries](#) website. The following information is accurate as far as ORR know at the time of publication.

Train operator	Delay scheme at end of 2019-20	Notes
Avanti West Coast	DR15	Automated 'one-click' compensation on Advance tickets since 8 December 2019
c2c	DR15	Automatic DR for 2+ mins at 3p per min when registered with smartcard
Caledonian Sleeper	DR30	
Chiltern Railways	Traditional	30+ minutes, claim needs to be within railway industry's control to get compensation
CrossCountry	DR30	
East Midlands Railway	DR15	Automated 'one-click' compensation on Advance since 18 August 2019
Govia Thameslink Railway	DR15	Automated 'one-click' compensation on Smartcards since July 2017
Grand Central	Traditional	60+ minutes, claim needs to be within railway industry's control to get compensation
Great Western Railway	DR15	Traditional Charter on selected season Tickets. DR15 on other tickets
Greater Anglia	DR15	
Heathrow Express	Delays of 15+ mins	
Hull Trains	Traditional	30+ minutes
London North Eastern Railway	DR30	
London Overground	Traditional	30+ minutes, claim needs to be within Transport for London's (TfL) control to get compensation
Merseyrail	Traditional	30+ minutes; special season ticket holders compensation
Northern Trains	DR15	Automatic DR for Advance tickets purchased from operator's website, with registered details
ScotRail	DR30	
South Western Railway	DR15	Automated 'one-click' compensation on Smartcards & Advance: 31 March 2019
Southeastern	DR15	
TfL Rail	Traditional	30+ minutes, claim needs to be within TfL's control to get compensation
TfW Rail	DR15	
TransPennine Express	DR15	Automated 'one-click' compensation on Advance: 1 July 2019
West Midlands Trains	DR15	

For information on the methodology and quality of these statistics, please see the [methodology and quality report](#).

Frequently asked questions:

How are several claims on one form recorded?

If a passenger submitted several journeys on one delay compensation form, then each journey is counted as a claim.

Are discretionary compensation payments or enhanced compensation claims included?

These statistics include claims for delays only, and exclude discretionary compensation payments made following complaints of poor service (for example, compensation due to wi-fi not working). Some operators may also provide enhanced or additional compensation during periods of extended disruption, but these claims are not included within these statistics.

Are Automated Delay Repay claims included? A number of operators now provide automated Delay Repay where they automatically advise passengers who use smartcards and/or buy advance tickets that they may be eligible for compensation by generating a delay repay claim for them. The passenger has to then login to the system and confirm that the claim is correct. Only claims which are confirmed by the passenger are included within these statistics.

Are Automatic Delay Repay claims included? Automatic Delay Repay is when a passenger is automatically compensated when their journey is delayed within the timescales to be eligible for compensation. If the claim meets the criteria for DR15/30, then these claims are included within these statistics.

Related data

ORR Rail Passenger Complaints Statistics:

ORR publish statistics about [rail passenger complaints](#). The latest 2019-20 statistics (see figure 8) show that the most common reason to complain about delay compensation schemes were related to the delay claim being rejected by the train operator (2.7% of all complaints). This was closely followed by complaints about the process the passenger had to go through to make a delay compensation claim (2.1% of all complaints).

There are six complaint categories on delay compensation, which together accounted for 7.5% of all complaints made in 2019-20. This represents a 0.8 pp decline compared to 2018-19, where 8.3% of all complaints made were related to delay compensation schemes (see figure 9).

Figure 8. Percentage of complaints made about delay compensation schemes, Great Britain, 2019-20

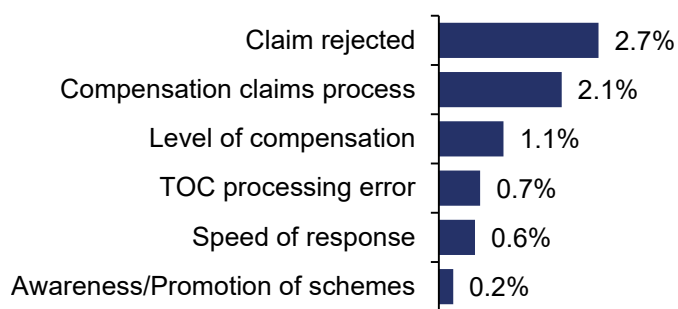


Figure 9. Percentage of all delay compensation complaints, Great Britain, 2016-17 to 2019-20



Rail Ombudsman Statistics:

The [Rail Ombudsman](#) provide a service to help sort out unresolved customer complaints about service providers within the rail industry. The 2019-20 statistics show that of those cases assessed by the Rail Ombudsman, delay compensation is the most appealed about issue. Overall, 42% of all cases dealt with in 2019-20 Q4 by the rail ombudsman were related to delay compensation.

Department for Transport:

The Department for Transport (DfT) have published [compensation amounts paid by train operators](#) to passengers since 2009-10. The DfT figures are not directly comparable to statistics given here because the DfT compensation figures also include discretionary compensation payments made following complaints of poor service.

DfT have previously published research on [rail delays and compensation](#), please see page 4 of this factsheet for a summary.