

Rail delay compensation claims

2020-21 Rail periods 1 to 4 (1 April 2020 to 25 July 2020)

29 October 2020

There were **79,544 delay compensation claims closed** by train operators during 2020-21 rail periods 1 to 4 (1 April 2020 to 25 July 2020). This is a decrease of 93.6% from 1.2 million claims during the same four rail periods in 2019-20.

During 2020-21 rail periods 1 to 4, delay compensation claims have been affected by the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. There was a substantial reduction in train services and passengers on the network which led to improvements in punctuality and reliability and subsequently a reduction in the volume of delay compensation claims.

Volume of delay compensation claims closed by rail period, Great Britain, 2018-19 P1 to 2020-21 P4 (Table 4410)



Overall, **99.8% of delay compensation claims were closed within 20 working days** (up 1.3 percentage points (pp) compared to 2019-20 rail periods 1 to 4) and 74.7% of claims closed were approved (down 8.3pp compared to 2019-20 rail periods 1 to 4).

All data tables, a quality and methodology report and an interactive chart associated with this release are published on the [delay compensation claims page](#) of the ORR data portal. Key definitions are in annex 1 of this release.

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 and the volume of those claims closed which were **approved**.

Source: Train Operating Companies

Latest periods: 2020-21 rail periods 1 to 4 (1 April to 25 July 2020).

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Next publication:

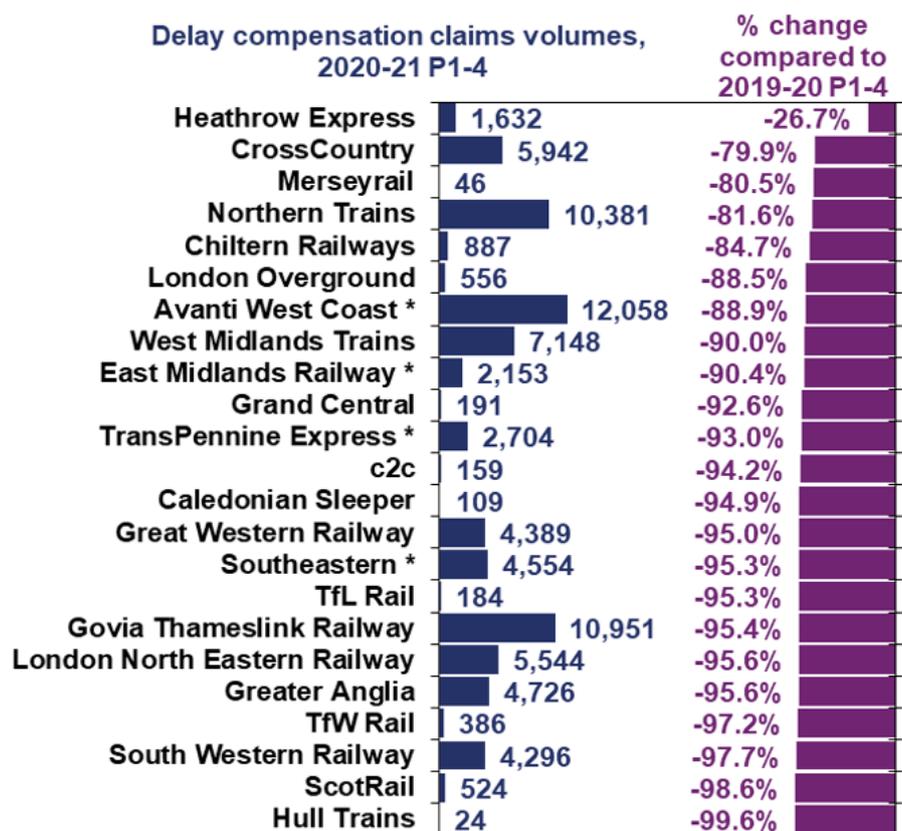
7 January 2021

1. Delay compensation claim volumes

During 2020-21 rail periods 1 to 4, all train operators experienced decreases in delay compensation claim volumes compared to the same four periods in the previous year. The decline was due to reduced travel in order to limit the impact and transmission of coronavirus (COVID-19) which also led to improvements in punctuality and reliability. [Rail passenger journeys](#) in Great Britain for 2020-21 Quarter 1 fell to 8.1% of the level seen in 2019-20 Q1. ORR [train punctuality statistics](#) for 2020-21 Q1 show that nationally 99.6% of recorded station stops were arrived at early or within 15 minutes after the scheduled arrival time. This is an increase of 0.7pp (i.e. better) from the same quarter in 2019-20.

Hull Trains had the largest decrease with 99.6% fewer delay compensation claims; note that Hull trains ran no trains during 2020-21 rail periods 1 to 4. Heathrow Express had the smallest decrease in claims with a reduction of 26.7% compared to rail periods 1 to 4 last year.

Figure 1.1 Volume of delay compensation claims closed, Great Britain, 2020-21 rail periods 1 to 4 (Table 4410)



Notes:

- 1). 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.
- 2). * indicates the train operator has switched to DR15 scheme from the DR30 scheme at some point since 2019-20 rail periods 1 to 4).
- 3). Hull Trains ran no trains during 2020-21 P1-4 and Grand Central ran only a small number in the first few days of April. For these operators along with Caledonian Sleeper, it was not possible to estimate rail usage in 2020-21 Q1.

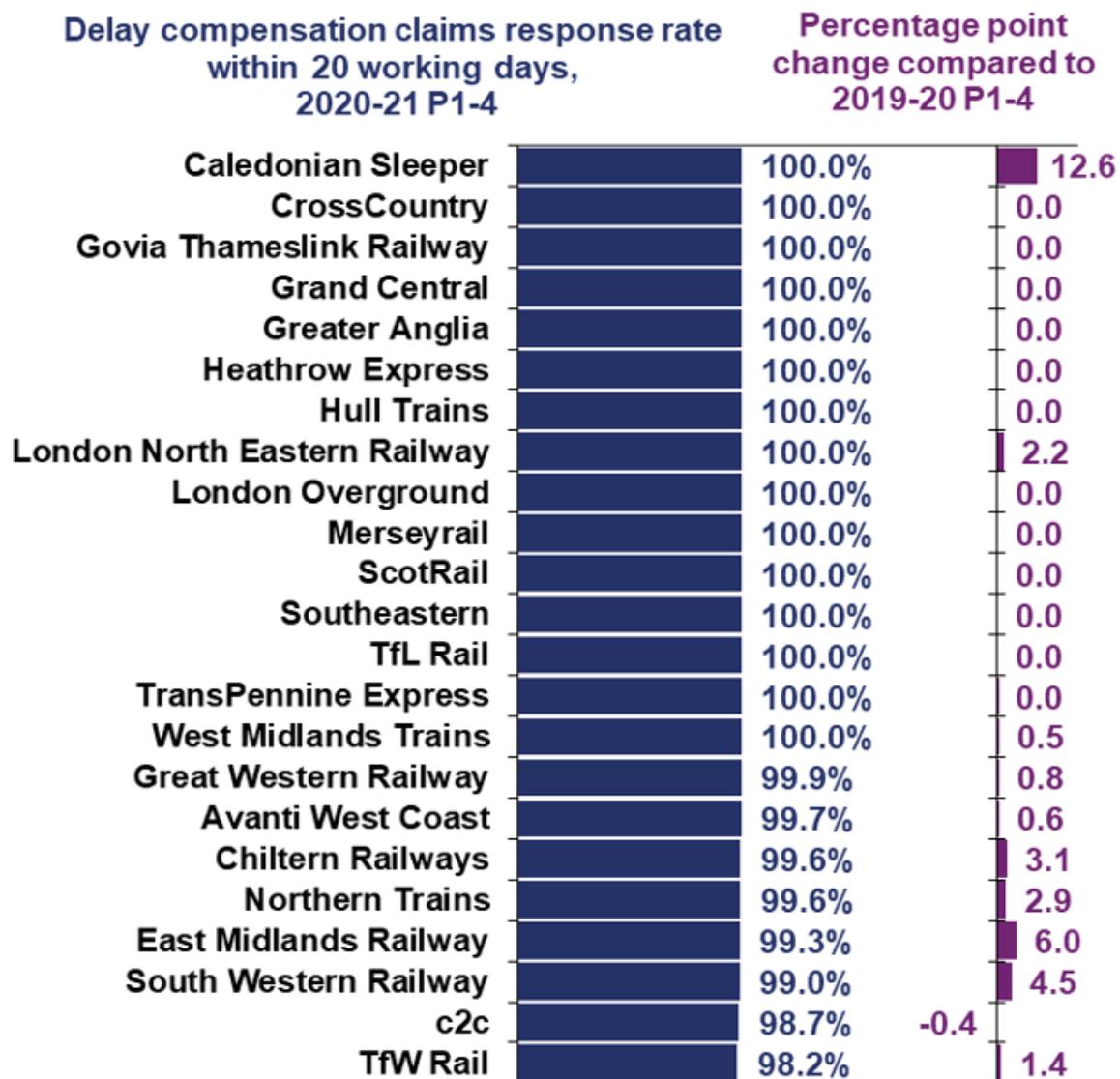
2. Delay compensation claim response rates

Nationally, 99.8% of delay compensation claims were closed within 20 working days during 2020-21 rail periods 1 to 4. This represents an increase of 1.3pp compared to the same rail periods last year.

All 23 train operators had a response rate within 20 working days of 98% or above, with 15 of the 23 train operators closing all of their delay compensation claims within 20 working days.

There were 22 out of the 23 train operators which either increased or maintained their response rate within 20 working days during 2020-21 rail periods 1 to 4 compared to the same rail periods last year. Only c2c's response rate fell (by 0.4pp).

Figure 2.1 Delay compensation claim response rates within 20 working days, Great Britain, 2020-21 rail periods 1 to 4 (Table 4410)

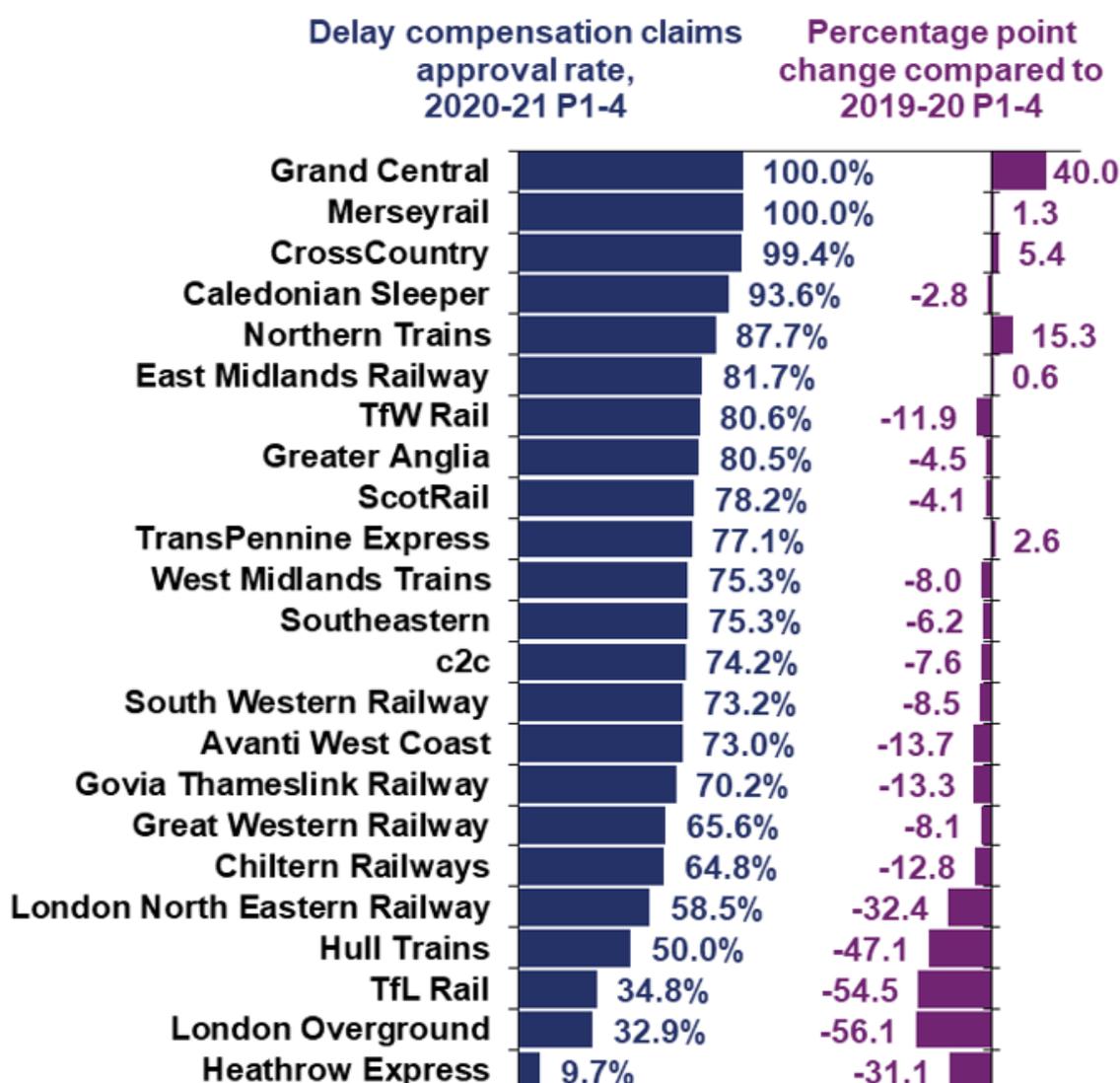


3. Delay compensation claim approval rates

Overall, 74.7% of delay compensation claims were approved by train operators during 2020-21 rail periods 1 to 4. This represents a decrease of 8.3pp compared to the same rail periods last year.

There were 6 out of the 23 train operators which either increased or maintained their approval rate during 2020-21 rail periods 1 to 4 compared to the same rail periods last year, with the remaining 17 operators having a lower approval rate.

Figure 3.1 Delay compensation claim approval rates, Great Britain, 2020-21 rail periods 1 to 4 (Table 4410)



4. Annexes

Annex 1 – 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 passenger's claim has been successful and approved.
- **Delay Repay:** The most popular delay compensation scheme is Delay Repay. This 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 (DR 15):** Passengers can additionally claim compensation if the train is delayed by 15 minutes or more. DR 15 allows a passenger to claim 25% of the cost of a single ticket if they are delayed between 15 and 29 minutes.
 - **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 scheme. Compensation may not be available if the delay is caused by an event outside the operators control.
- **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.

Annex 2 – Quality and Methodology

Data source

Administrative data submitted by the train operating companies.

Methodology

As part of train operators' [Core Data](#) requirements, train operators provide information on delay compensation claims on a periodic basis. Core Data is the term ORR uses to describe the primary compliance monitoring framework it uses to assess its licensee's compliance with their regulatory obligations in relation to passenger-facing activities.

The ORR collects number of delay compensation claims closed, received and approved. ORR also ask for the percentage of claims responded to within 20 working days as train operators have a target to process all delay compensation claims within one month of receipt, as given in condition 30.3 of the [National Rail Conditions of Travel](#).

Delay compensation data was first collected from train operators in 2018-19. ORR's technical guidance to operators is available on the ORR [Core Data page](#) (within the related files section). Delay compensation claims are not considered as complaints, though there may be formal complaints made about delay compensation schemes which are then included as complaints. Unlike complaints handling, train operators cannot 'stop the clock' while the operator is waiting for the complainant to provide information to them.

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.

Delay compensation scheme by train operator:

The table below shows a list of the different delay compensation schemes each train operator currently runs as at the end of 2020-21 rail period 4.

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 2020-21 rail period 4	Notes
Avanti West Coast	DR 15	Automated 'one-click' compensation on Advance tickets since 8 December 2019
c2c	DR 15	Automatic DR for 2+ mins at 3p per min when registered with smartcard
Caledonian Sleeper	DR 30	
Chiltern Railways	Traditional	30+ minutes, claim needs to be within railway industry's control to get compensation
CrossCountry	DR 30	
East Midlands Railway	DR 15	Automated 'one-click' compensation on Advance since 18 August 2019
Govia Thameslink Railway	DR 15	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	DR 15	Traditional Charter on selected season Tickets. DR15 on other tickets
Greater Anglia	DR 15	
Heathrow Express	Delays of 15+ mins	
Hull Trains	Traditional	30+ minutes
London North Eastern Railway	DR 30	
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	DR 15	Automatic DR for Advance tickets purchased from operator's website, with registered details
ScotRail	DR 30	
South Western Railway	DR 15	Automated 'one-click' compensation on Smartcards & Advance: 31 March 2019
Southeastern	DR 15	
TfL Rail	Traditional	30+ minutes, claim needs to be within TfL's control to get compensation
TfW Rail	DR 15	
TransPennine Express	DR 15	Automated 'one-click' compensation on Advance: 1 July 2019
West Midlands Trains	DR 15	

Revisions

There have been no revisions to historic data. Further details on historic revisions can be found in the [Revisions log](#).

Further information on data collection and the historic background can be found in the [quality and methodology report](#).

Annex 3 – List of data tables associated with this release and other related statistics

Data tables

The data table 4410 – *Delay compensation claims* can be accessed on the [delay compensation claims page](#) of the ORR data portal free of charge in OpenDocument Spreadsheet (.ods) format. We can also provide data in csv format on request.

Other related data

ORR Passenger Rail Service Complaints Statistics:

ORR publish statistics about [rail passenger complaints](#). The latest 2020-21 Quarter 1 statistics show that the most common reason to complain about delay compensation schemes were related to the claim being rejected. This was followed by complaints about the compensation claims process.

There are six complaint categories about delay compensation, which together accounted for 11.4% of all complaints made during 2020-21 Quarter 1. This represents a 4.2pp decline compared to the same quarter in 2019-20, where 7.2% of all complaints made were related to delay compensation schemes.

Rail Ombudsman Statistics:

The [Rail Ombudsman](#) provide a service to help sort out unresolved customer complaints about service providers within the rail industry. The Rail Ombudsman publish quarterly statistics on appeals made from complainants.

Department for Transport:

The Department for Transport (DfT) have published [compensation amounts paid by train operators](#) to passengers since 2009-10. The 2019-20 figures show that £89 million was paid out in compensation by DfT-franchised train operators (an increase of 13% from 2018-19). The DfT figures are not directly comparable to statistics given here because they also include discretionary compensation payments made following complaints of poor service.

DfT have also published research on [rail delays and compensation](#). The 2020 survey results show that the claim rate has increased over the past two years:

- 37% of passengers claimed for their most recent delay (up 2pp from 2018)
- 46% of passengers eligible under DR30 claimed (an increase of 7pp from 2018)
- 22% of passengers eligible under DR15 claimed (up 4pp from 2018)



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