

London TravelWatch casework performance report quarter three

This quarterly report examines our own performance in dealing with casework. Every six months we also include the results of our satisfaction monitoring. A separate quarterly report and the policy committee monitors industry feedback in dealing with the casework appeals we raise on behalf of passengers and transport users.

This table below records the volume of casework received during October to December 2018. London TravelWatch received 1,698 casework contacts via telephone, email and web forms.

Case types*	Oct to Dec 2018	Jul to Sep 2018	Apr to Jun 2018	Jan to Mar 2018	Oct to Dec 2017
Casework related telephone enquiries	164	237	315	442	248
Enquiries email	37	28	66	58	95
Initial cases	356	509	392	345	343
Initial plus cases	145	143	127	149	108
Request for papers	221	272	192	196	173
Appeals made to operator	292	319	239	226	231
Appeals responded to directly	322	275	191	256	225
Appeals responded to directly plus	161	98	115	143	95
Appeals sub total	775	692	545	625	551
Total of new contact	1,698	1,881	1,637	1,815	1,518
Appeals carried over from last quarter	32	22	32	49	40
Total cases	1730	1,903	1,669	1,864	1,558

*See following page for definitions of case types

Enquiries telephone

This is a record of all telephone calls that have been received by London TravelWatch.

Enquiry

These are cases where the passenger has contacted London TravelWatch looking for information that is not a complaint.

Initials

An initial case is one where the complainant has written to London TravelWatch but has not yet approached the operator.

Initial plus

As initials above but where the caseworker has felt the need to respond to the passenger and/or forward the case to the operator. An example of this type of case is one where a passenger's initial contact clearly demonstrates that they are struggling with the English language. In these cases, we forward the complaint to the correct operator for them to respond directly to the passenger. For this type of case, we would usually also advise the passenger of our actions.

Such cases are resource heavy which is why they have their own category.

Papers requested

A case classified as request for papers is one where we have asked the passenger to forward copies of all correspondence between themselves and the operator. We cannot consider taking forward a case without this information.

Appeals made to the operator

Where the passenger has already complained to the operator and London TravelWatch has taken it forward as an appeal.

Appeals responded to directly

A 'direct' categorised case is one where London TravelWatch responds directly to the passenger without needing to contact the operator. This is because London TravelWatch already has the information needed to answer the passengers query.

Appeals responded to directly (plus)

These are cases where more correspondence is required but London TravelWatch is not appealing. Examples of this type of case would be one where we do not have to appeal to an operator but we do need some additional information, usually from the passenger, in order to respond fully.

This category was created to demonstrate additional work and correspondence between a passenger and caseworker but where the case cannot be fairly classed as an appeal.

Appeals carried over from previous quarter

Where the appeal was started at the end of one quarter and carried over to the next. It was previously very difficult to separate cases carried over from cases received. However, with some system changes, we can now separate the existing cases from those newly received.

Casework performance against targets

Type	Performance		Target
Acknowledgement sent to appellant	Oct to Dec 2018	100% of cases acknowledged within 5 working days	100% within 5 working days
	Jul to Sep 2018	100% of cases acknowledged within 5 working days	
Appeals referred to operator within 5 days of receipt	Oct to Dec 2018	97% of appeals were referred within 5 working days	75% within 5 working days
	Jul to Sep 2018	96% of appeals were referred within 5 working days	
Final response sent to passenger	Oct to Dec 2018	99% of appeals final replies within 10 working days of receipt of operators response 100% within 20 working days of receipt of operators response	90% within 10 days 100% within 20 days
	Jul to Sep 2018	94% of appeals final replies within 10 working days of receipt of operators response 100% within 20 working days of receipt of operators response	
All directs response from casework to appellant	Oct to Dec 2018	99% of appeals final replies within 10 working days of receipt of operators response 100% within 20 working days of receipt of operators response	90% within 10 days 100% within 20 days
	Jul to Sep 2018	100% of appeals final replies within 10 working days of receipt of operators response 100% within 20 working days of receipt of operators response	

Casework performance context

Appeals made to the rail providers have decreased in this quarter and TfL's have risen by 16% and all targets have been met.

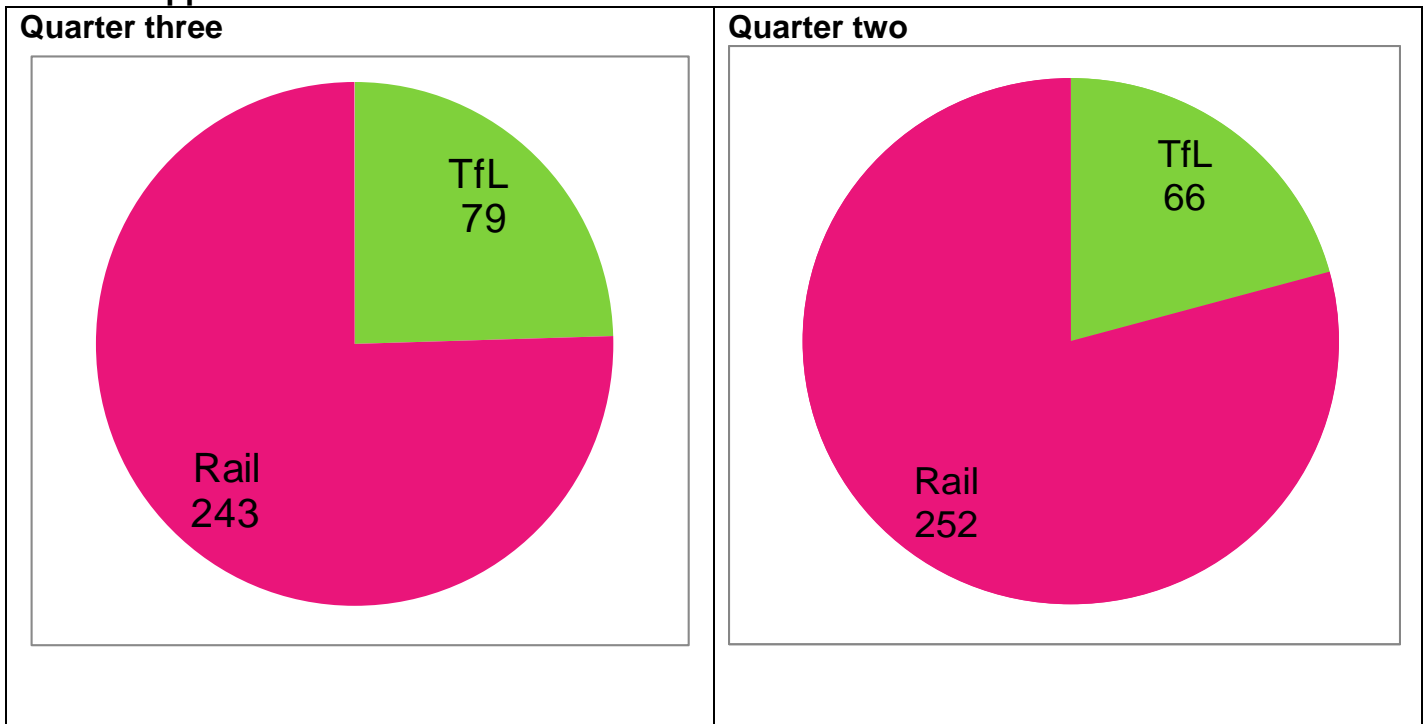
Telephone calls

There appears to be a reduction in the number of calls received by London TravelWatch. However, the office relocation and initial issues with telecoms following the move, may have impacted on the number of calls recorded.

Appeals

There was an increase in TfL appeals and further information is below.

Total appeals received



Rail

Appeals from rail passengers have decreased. However, contacts from passengers who have been refused the additional industry compensation offered to qualifying passengers by GTR following the timetable changes in May 2018, has risen considerably.

Stansted Express

Passengers who have incurred penalty fares for using Oyster/contactless payment to travel from Liverpool Street or Tottenham Hale stations to Stansted airport, continue to voice their dissatisfaction at the lack of prominence of Oyster/contactless payment information at these London stations. This is particularly frustrating when ticket information is very visible and prominent at Stansted airport itself.

TfL

There is an increase of appeal cases regarding TfL modes although there is currently no noticeable common theme in these cases.

Rail ombudsman

Following a year of intense work with the Rail Delivery Group (RDG) to outline the scope of the rail ombudsman and the eligibility criteria, the rail ombudsman's start date was 26 November 2018. This means that appeals relating to rail journeys made after this date must be escalated to the rail ombudsman following a complaint being raised with the appropriate rail operator.

Currently, membership of the scheme is voluntary and with the exception of Eurostar and Heathrow Express, most rail operators will be mandated to participate in the ombudsman scheme from 1 April 2019. It is expected that TfL Rail and Overground will join the scheme in April 2019 and London TravelWatch will continue to work with the ombudsman and TfL to ensure that the transition for the passenger is seamless.

In order to help the ombudsman staff understand rail passenger travel a senior staff member from the RDG, who are representatives of the rail operators, is based at the ombudsman offices in Stevenage.

Accessing the ombudsman

Passengers who wish to access the ombudsman must first complain to the rail operator. If the rail operator and passenger cannot reach an agreement, the rail operator must issue a deadlock letter up to eight weeks after the complaint was first received. If the rail operator stops corresponding with the passenger, the passenger can approach the ombudsman without a deadlock letter when 40 working days have passed.

Passengers who have approached the ombudsman where they're journey took place before the 26 November 2018 or the complaint is not within the eligibility criteria of the Ombudsman, their appeal is transferred electronically to the casework database fairly seamlessly following efforts by London TravelWatch to ensure the two systems were compatible.

London TravelWatch casework and rail ombudsman

It is not yet clear what the impact the rail ombudsman will have on the number of appeals managed by London TravelWatch as we are continuing to receive appeals where the passenger's journey took place before 26 November 2018. TfL Rail and Overground appeals being managed by the rail ombudsman is unlikely to have any effect as only one or two cases are received by London TravelWatch each quarter regarding these modes. The casework performance report for quarter four January to March 2019 will give a clearer picture with a review of the casework service to take place in quarter one 2019.

Appendix one

