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## **Casework report**

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Agenda item: 7  
LTW666  
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### **Quarter two**

#### **Overview**

This report gives details on the types of cases we receive and our responses to them, Information is also provided about contacts to Ventrice and the Rail Ombudsman.

#### **Rail operators**

Many of the cases received in quarter two was similar in nature to those received in quarter four. Most consisted of ticket refund conditions and policy. Appeals concerning penalty fares have started to increase as the railway operators re-start their revenue protection policies. Many of these cases are for passengers who are not aware their railcard is out of date or are not carrying their railcard along with their discounted ticket.

#### **Ticket retailers**

Ticket retailers are not yet part of the Rail Ombudsman scheme. Therefore, any uplift in passengers using these retailers to purchase tickets will also cause increase in contacts to Transport Focus and London TravelWatch.

#### **Eurostar**

We have started to see an increase in contact from Eurostar passengers. Unfortunately, a number of these cases have been regarding the actions of UK Border Force preventing passengers from travelling due to the providers of the Covid test not being a recognised agency.

## TfL

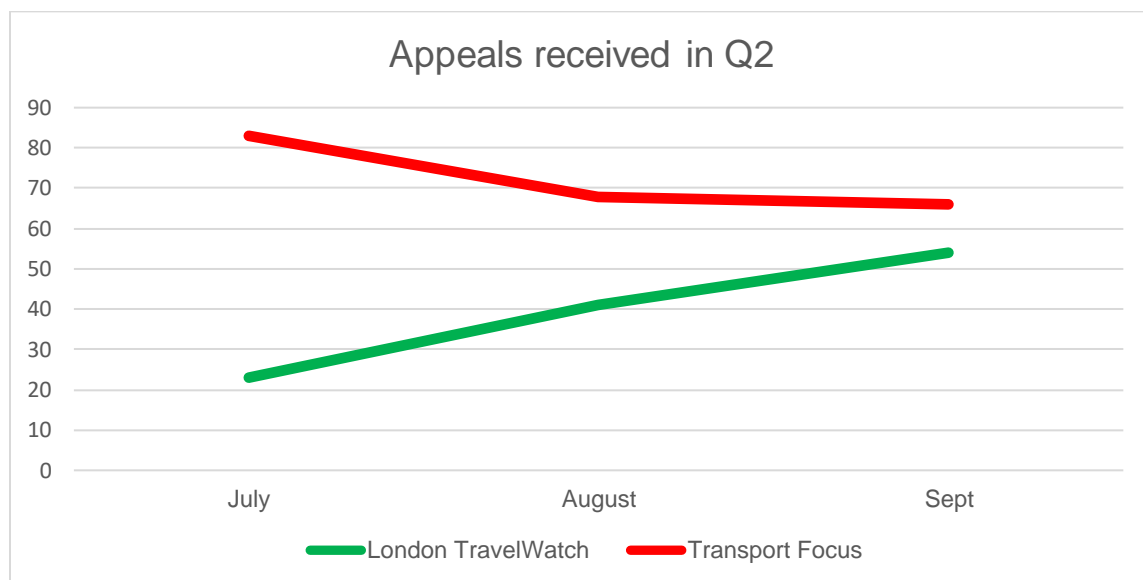
TfL cases increased in quarter two which was expected following the TfL contact centre notifying of a further increase in passengers contacts in the summer.

### Satisfaction survey

This has been drafted and with Transport Focus for comments and feedback.

### Appeals received by Transport Focus and London TravelWatch from July to September 2021

**Total cases received - London TravelWatch 118 and Transport Focus 217**



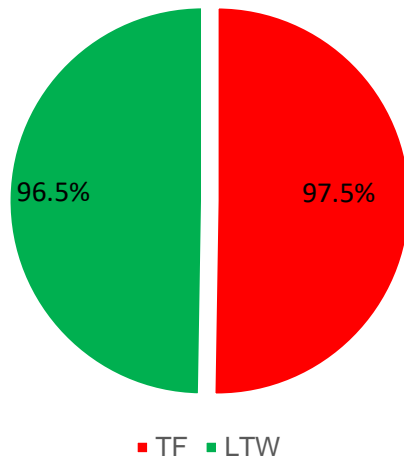
There was an approximate 45% increase of cases received by London TravelWatch and almost 30% increase of cases received by Transport Focus when compared to the previous quarter. This increase was expected as passengers move back to using public transport.

### Casework performance

The aim for closure for appeal cases is 35 working days (WD). It is acceptable for cases to be open beyond this time if the caseworker is negotiating with the operator or if the case is of a complex nature and the caseworker requires assistance from other staff members. However, where possible, we keep the passenger informed of the situation every 15 working days until the case is closed.

The responses within 35WD are much the same as quarter one.

### Appeals closed with 35WD



### Transport operator/ticket retailer response times

All those responded within their advertised timeframes in Q2 although some cases took longer to close as the caseworker challenged and negotiated on behalf of the passenger. None of the response times have caused concern.

### Rail operators with highest number of received appeals in quarter two

Operators receiving the most complaints	No of complaints	Subject of complaint	Outcome
Eurostar	10	Refunds and not allowed to travel – Covid tests	1 successful, 4 neutral, 5 information given
Northern	11	Penalty fares	4 successful, 1 unsuccessful, 5 neutral, 1 information given
RailCard	14	Difficulty renewing	6 successful, 7 unsuccessful, 7 neutral
Trainline	38	Refunds, exchanges and complaint handling	25 successful, 1 unsuccessful, 12 neutral

\*An example of a neutral outcome would be one where the passenger does not believe that their refund calculation is correct. The casework team would check the calculation themselves and with the TOC. A neutral outcome would be where the calculation is correct, and the caseworker would reassure the passenger of this.

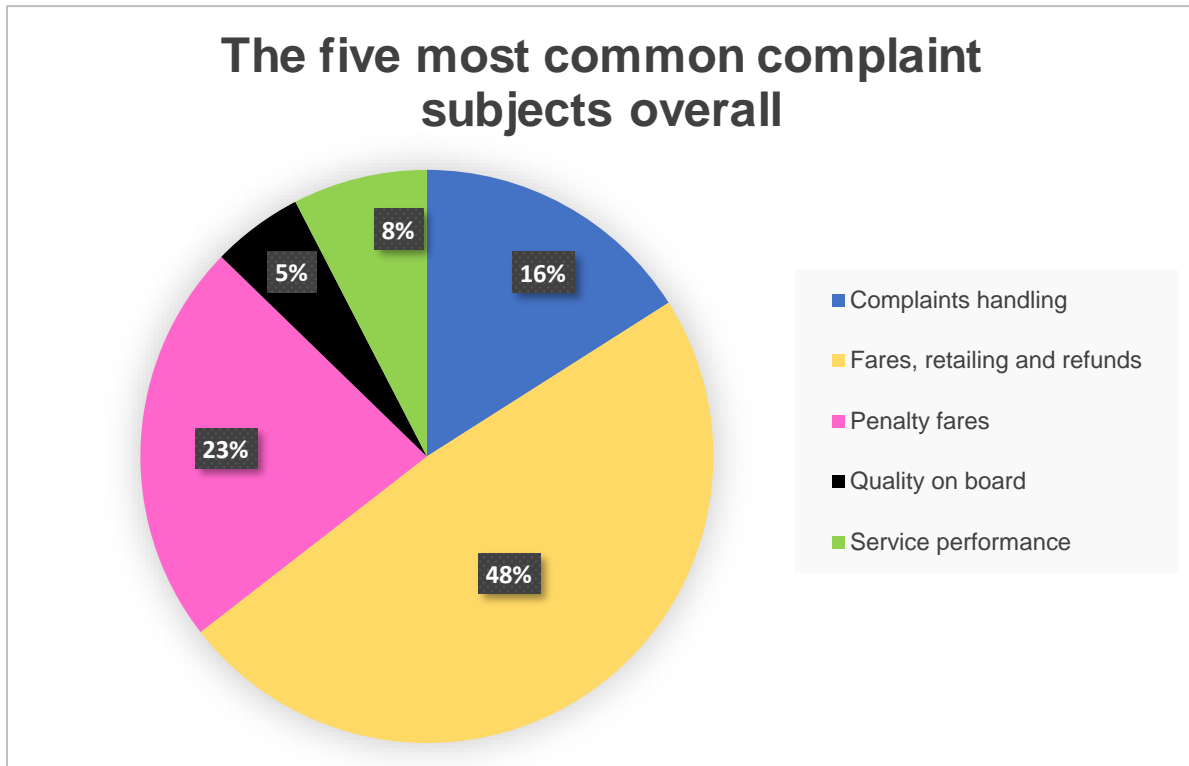
## Trainline

London TravelWatch and Transport Focus are still the appeals body for Trainline and all ticket retailers as these organisations do not currently fall within the remit of the Rail Ombudsman.

## TfL appeals by mode with the highest number of received appeals

TfL by mode	No of complaints	Subject of complaint	Outcome
TfL Congestion Charge	7	Refunds, lack of response and PCN parking, general bus complaints and policy challenges	16 Successful, 1 unsuccessful, 3 neutral
TfL Oyster and Contactless payment	10		
TfL Buses	13		

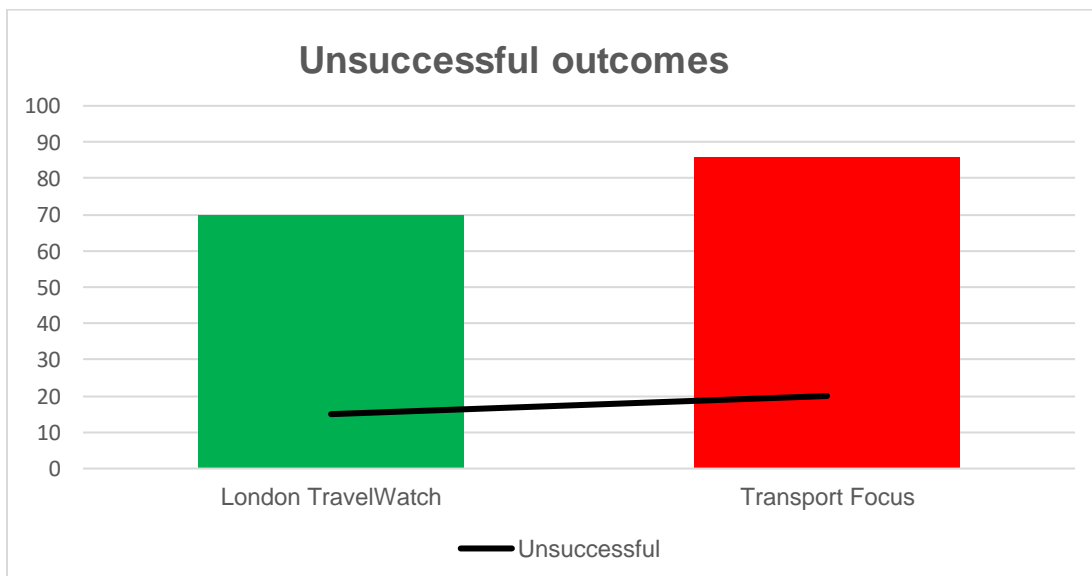
## Case types received



## Closed appeals for quarter two

63 appeals closed for London TravelWatch in this period

102 appeals closed for Transport Focus in this period



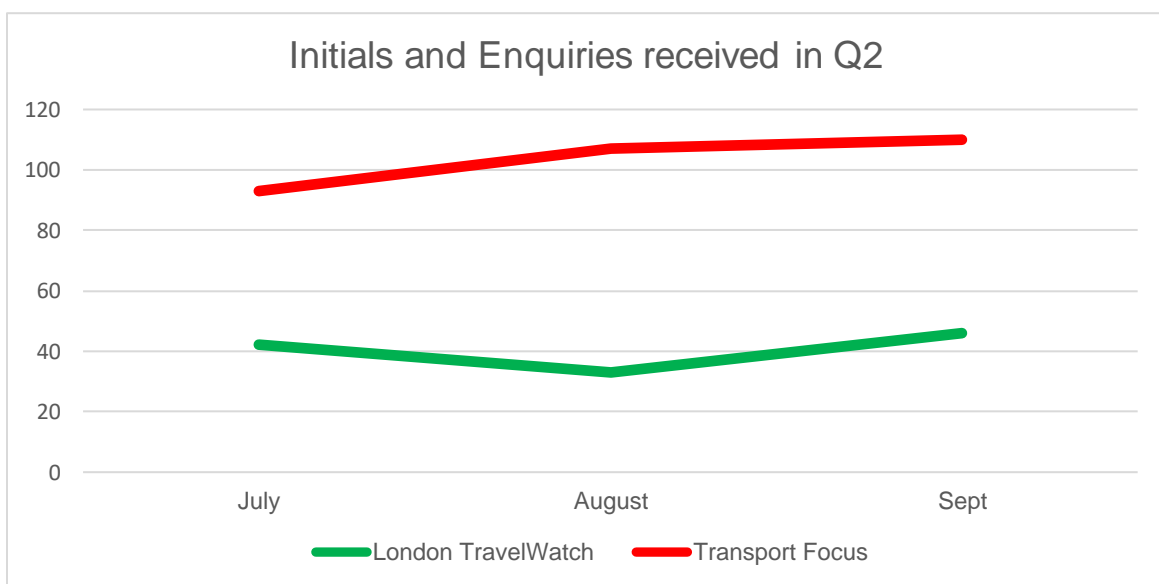
The graph above demonstrates the low numbers of unsuccessful appeal outcomes in this period. London TravelWatch had 15 unsuccessful cases and Transport Focus had 20. This demonstrates the challenging casework received by the

casework team where, in order to try to obtain successful outcomes on behalf of the passenger, they are challenging policy.

### Initial and enquiry contacts

On behalf of London TravelWatch and Transport Focus Ventrica received 431 initial and enquiry contacts (London TravelWatch had 121 and Transport Focus 310) in quarter two which is a slight increase on the previous quarter.

The table below shows how many of these case types were received each for Transport Focus and London TravelWatch per month in the previous three months. The majority of passenger contacts were for those looking for help with refunds.

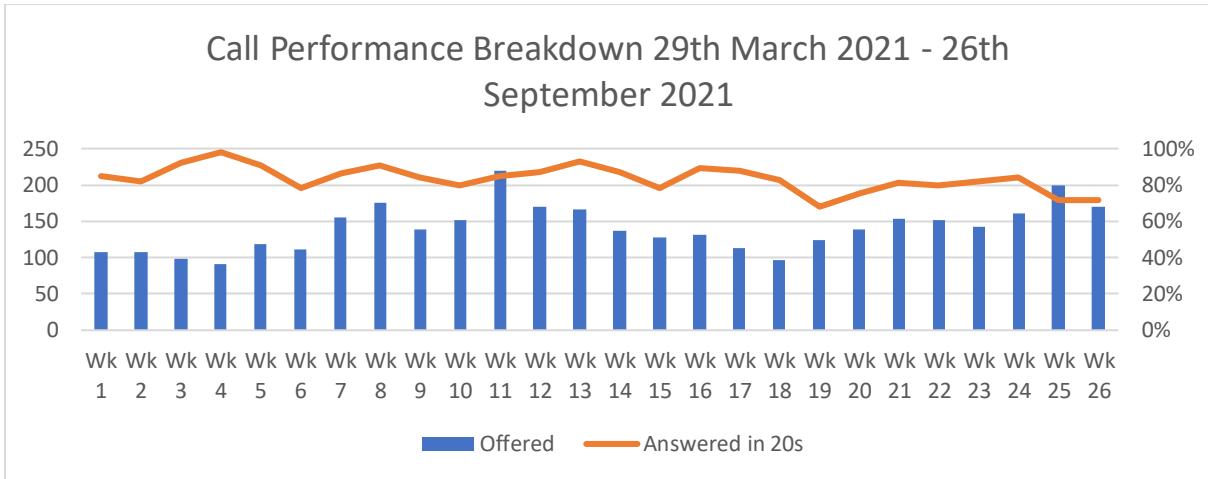


Total number of contacts received – 431 which is a slight increase compared to quarter one.

### Ventrica – call answering and initial enquiries

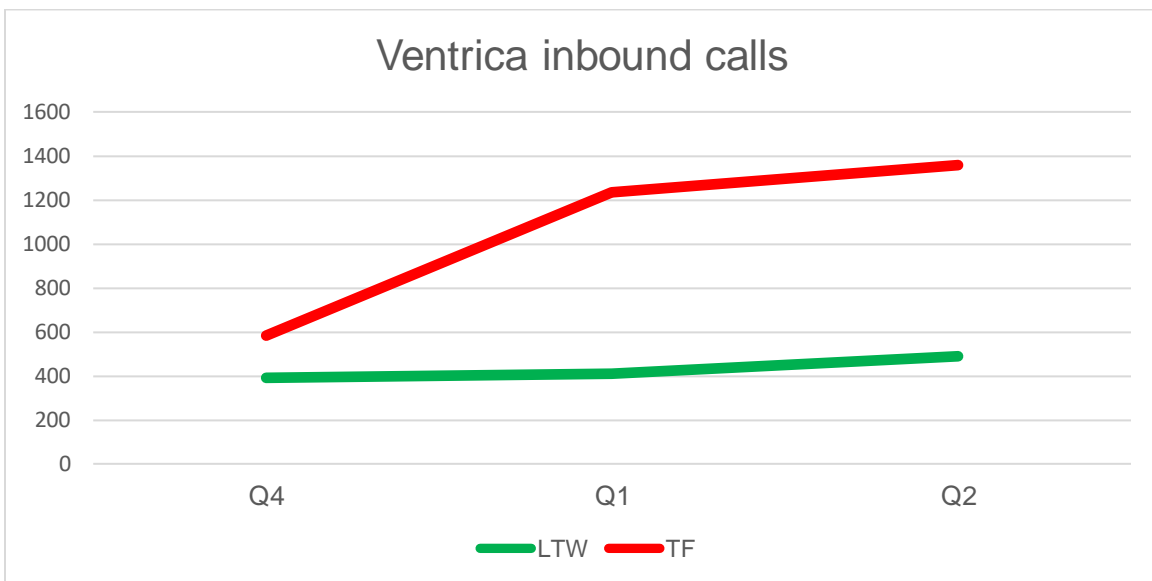
#### Calls answered in 20 seconds by Ventrica

Out of the 13 weeks that made up quarter two on average, Ventrica answered on average 84% of calls (shown in the percentage on the right-hand side of the table) within 20 seconds and 98% were answered within 30 seconds. Throughout August Ventrica reported some staff issues including annual leave which affected the call answering times.



\*Offered calls means calls made by the passenger

In quarter four 2020-21, the table below was started to record the call numbers received by both London TravelWatch and Transport Focus and answered by Ventrica. This graph will be added to as the year progresses.



Contacts to Ventrica are slowly starting to rise. Most contacts are regarding refunds or fares including penalty fares.

### Rail Ombudsman

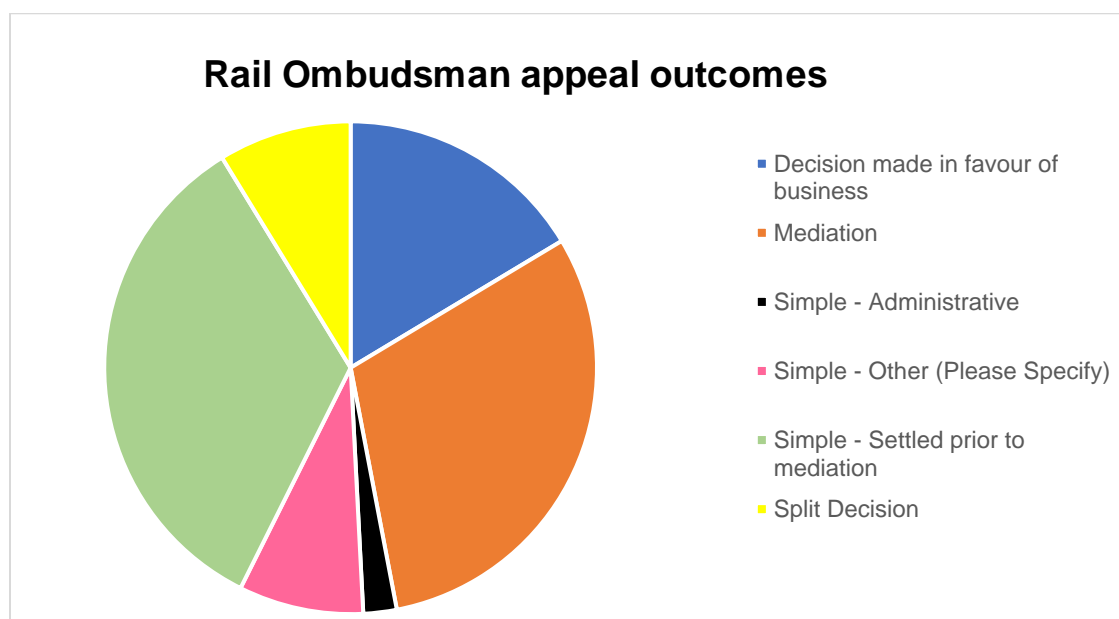
In quarter two the Rail Ombudsman received 150 in scope appeals and closed 187 appeals.

Most of the complaints received by the Rail Ombudsman were regarding complaints handling and refunds/company policy.

Most of the closed appeals were about:

Rail Operator	No of complaints	Subject of appeals	Outcome
Avanti West Coast	45	Complaints handling and refunds	3 outcomes were in favour of Avanti and 10 went to mediation and 29 were considered simple and settled prior to mediation.
GWR	30	Complaints handling and refunds	3 outcomes were in favour of GWR and 10 went to mediation and 9 were considered simple and settled prior to mediation.

### Rail Ombudsman appeal outcomes

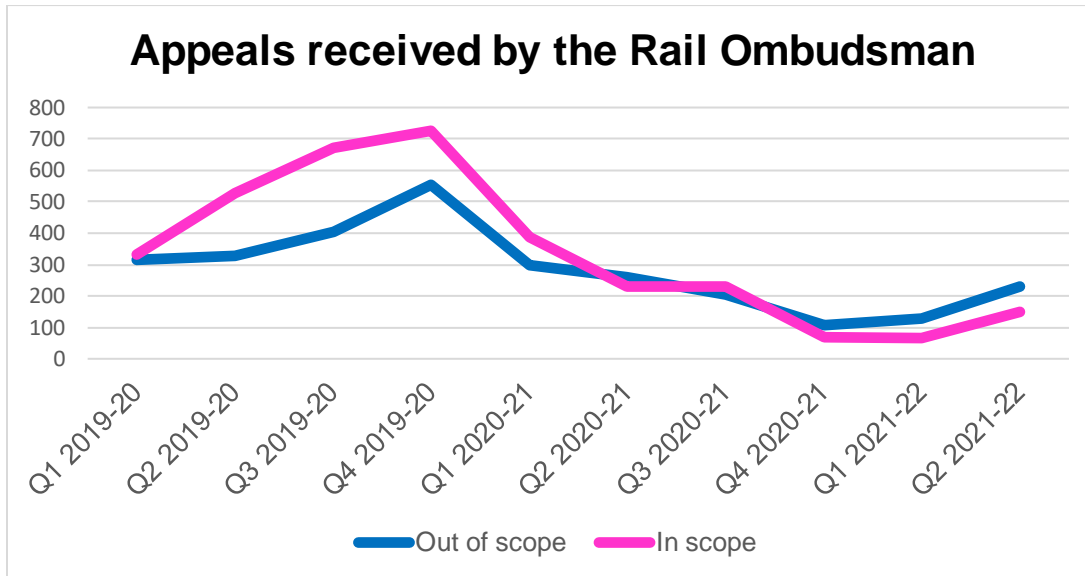


The number of appeals to the Rail Ombudsman has increased in this quarter most likely due to the passengers returning to the railways. During this quarter of the 234 cases that were considered out of scope of the Rail Ombudsman, 47 were considered in scope for London TravelWatch and Transport Focus and transferred to us.



## Other Rail Ombudsman casework information

Where the Rail Ombudsman were required to make a final decision regarding a passenger's complaint, none were made in favour of the passenger and 16% in favour of the rail operator.



## Recommendations

The Board are asked to note this report.