LONDON TRAVELWATCH

Public Event 11.11.26
Board paper LTW852 – Agenda item 08

Casework report

Q2 July to September 2026/27

LONDON
TRAVELWATCH

Purpose of report

The majority of the Casework report is to provide members with retrospective information about appeals received by the Casework team in Q2 and to highlight passenger issues arising through the appeals function.

Any follow up action taken by London TravelWatch will be indicated throughout the report.

Overview

Casework performance Q2 headlines

- A sharp increase in London TravelWatch receive appeals in Q2 which follows the pattern of cases received in 2025/26. Transport Focus cases received rose in Q2 although they are generally fairly steady.

- LTW initial numbers are higher than usual. There is no real reason other than we have received more calls about rail operators than other quarters this year.

- We resolved 212 cases for London TravelWatch and 114 for Transport Focus (159 and 126 in Q4). The increase of London TravelWatch cases resolved is likely to be due to the higher number of cases received.

- Case closure within 35 working days reduced in Q2 with further information in slide 13.

- London TravelWatch's continued higher rate of success compared with Transport Focus reflects their different modal/operator remits

What has happened in the industry that has impacted the CW team

- Bus curtailments. TfL cite that the Hopper fare is available but this is unhelpful when no other services call at the stop. In addition, where there is disruption, there is frequently overcrowding and one bus decants into a different service. So while the option of the Hopper provision works in theory, the practice can look completely different. We will continue to liaise with TfL as part of the bi weekly meetings.
- The lounges containing the ETIAS kiosks at St Pancras are still not open. Eurostar advise that the French Border control continue to want to carry out this function at the security desk. This has not yet led to extensive delays although we have received some contact about queuing.

Other issues

- London TravelWatch has a new survey that includes demographic questions and therefore removed any identifying questions. This will be sent between October and December 2026.
- London TravelWatch has now a separate ‘queue’ for incoming contact on the CRM database. This means that our compliance managing appellants personal data has been significantly improved. It also means that we now have an auto acknowledgement specifically for London TravelWatch that can be amended as required.
- In response to the increasing amount of abuse the team received on the phone by appellants, all casework staff have new mobile phones with a call recording app to be used when telephoning appellants.
- Slide 13 outlines the delays to Transport Focus responding to questions asked by the Casework team. It is likely that this is due to the ongoing staff and recruitment challenges at Transport Focus. We are escalating our concerns within Transport Focus as the current process does not always work. This information was provided to Transport Focus as the PCG on 13 October.

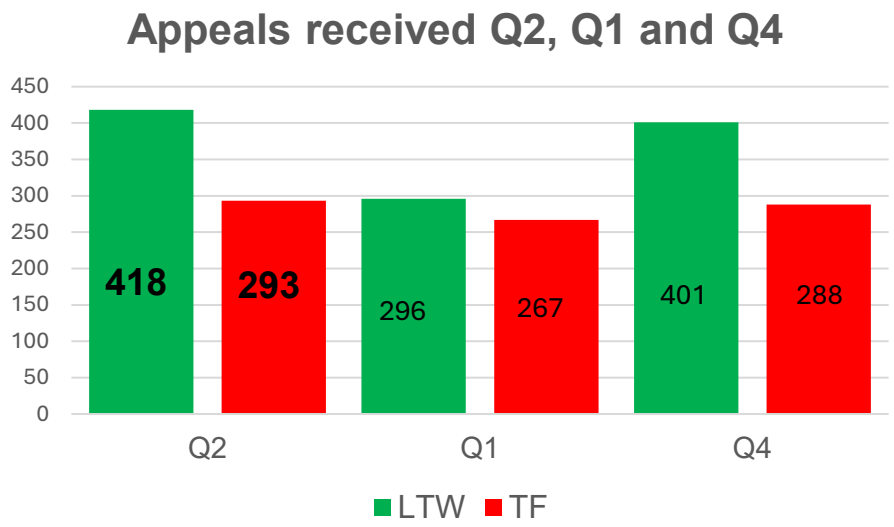
Glossary of terms	
Appeal	A complaint that has already been made to a transport provider or ticket retailer.
Case	Electronic file where all information from a passenger contact is held.
Consultation	The industry seeks to make changes and invites formal responses.
Enquiry	A passenger is asking questions directly of London TravelWatch, or Transport Focus, or other contacts that do not fall within the categories of appeals and initials.
Initial	The passenger has complained directly to London TravelWatch or Transport Focus before first approaching the transport provider or ticket retailer.
Rail Ombudsman	The alternative dispute resolution (ADR) provision for rail passengers in England, Scotland, and Wales. NB: Not all issues are considered in (within the) scope for (of) the Rail Ombudsman.
Ticket retailers	Sell rail tickets. but do not provide any form of transport.
Foundever	The current outsourced contact centre manages the telephone calls and first contacts. This provision is currently being market tested.

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Statistics and data

Q2

Appeals received recent and historic



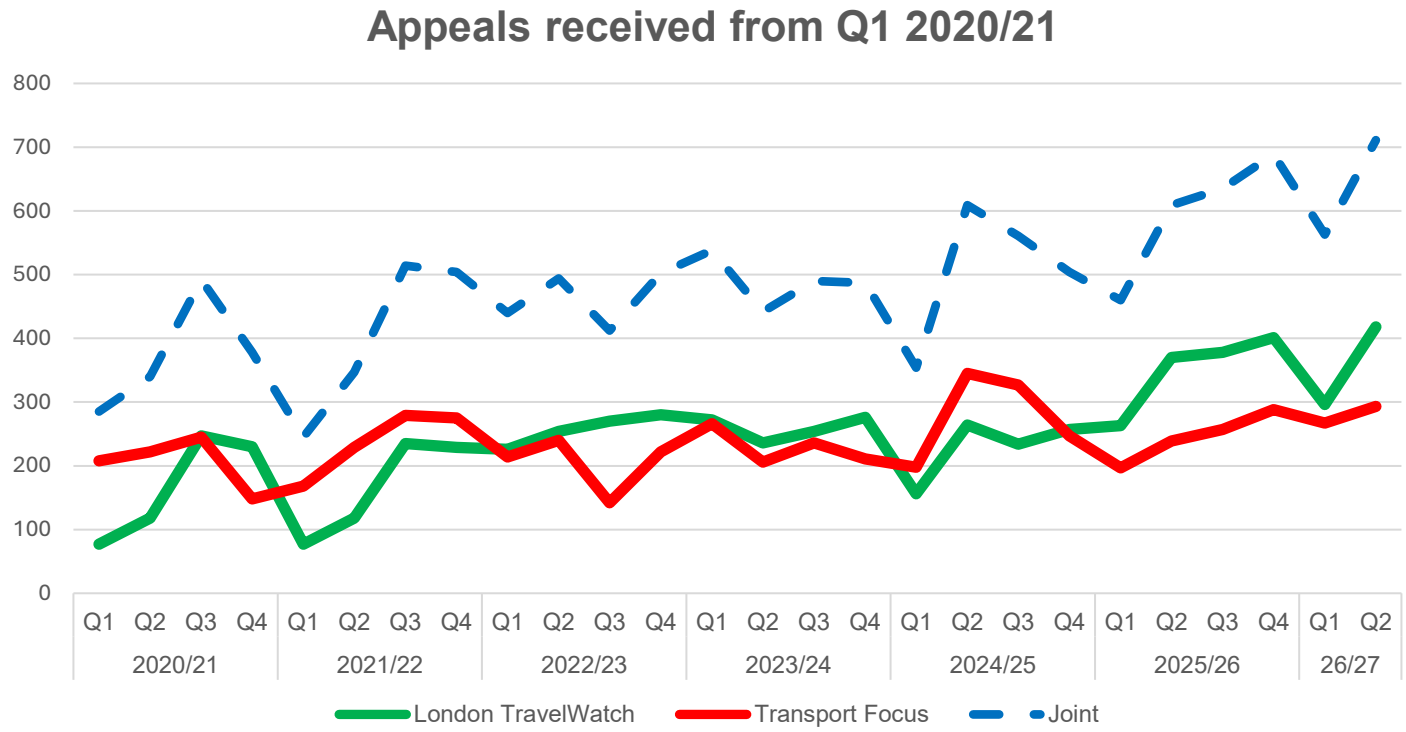
London TravelWatch received a considerably higher number of appeals in Q2 compared to Q1.

Transport Focus appeals received has remained fairly steady in the last few quarters.

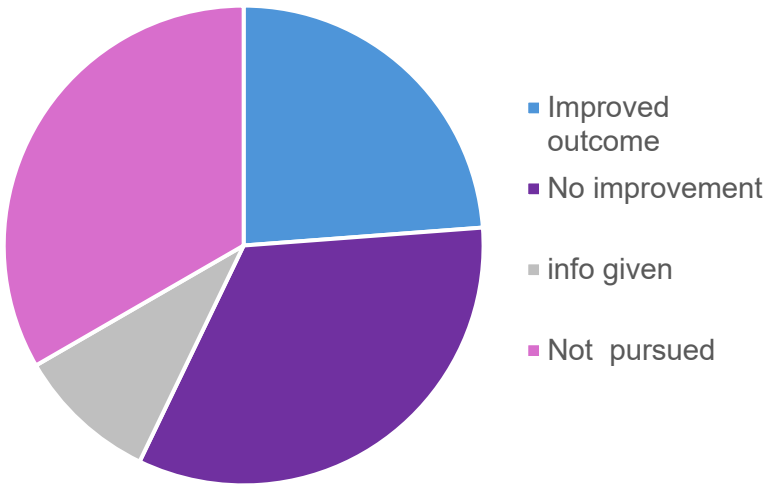
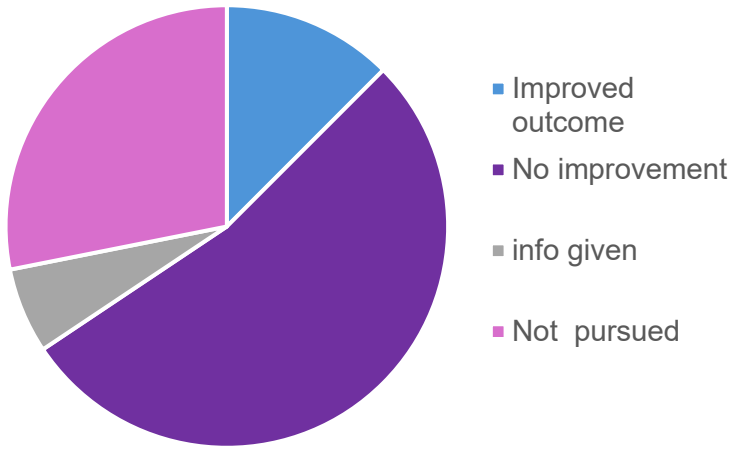
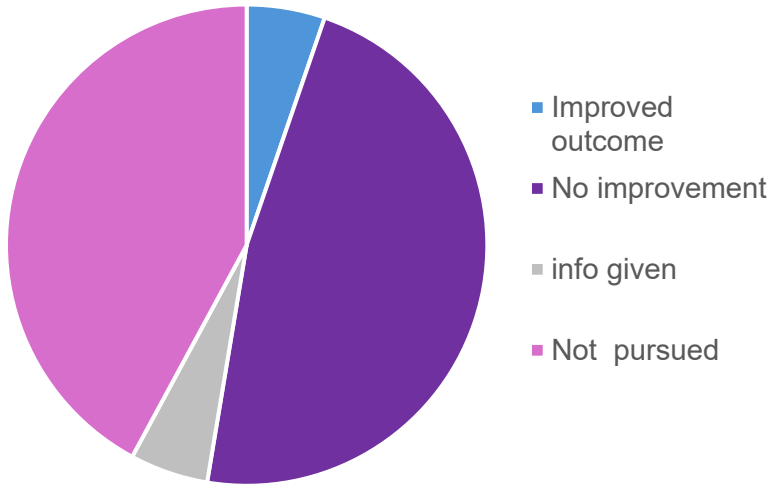
Contact is being closely monitored to ensure the team are not overwhelmed.

Both London TravelWatch and Transport Focus saw an increase in appeal contact in Q2 compared to Q1.

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Transport Focus – resolved appeals. Top three TOCS

Northern – 21 appeals	WMT – 32 appeals	GTR – 19 appeals
		
Over 62% of appeals are about penalty fares or other revenue protection. 6% about refund policy.	84% of appeals are about penalty fares or other revenue protection.	79% of appeals are about penalty fares or other revenue protection.

Information

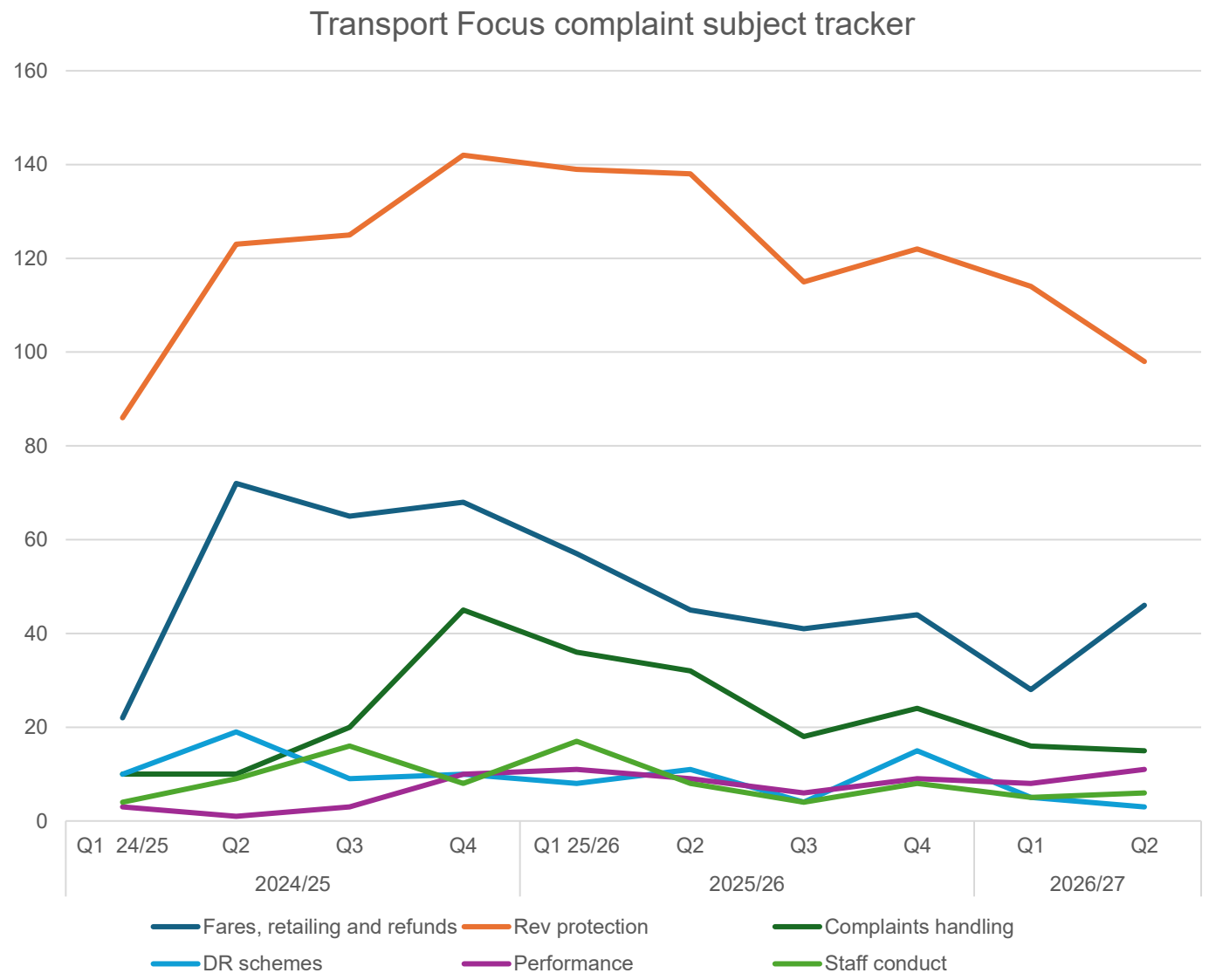
Since changing into public ownership, many rail operators are increasingly less willing to change the outcome of revenue protection, particularly penalty fares that have been through the appeal process.

Transport Focus case study and subject tracker

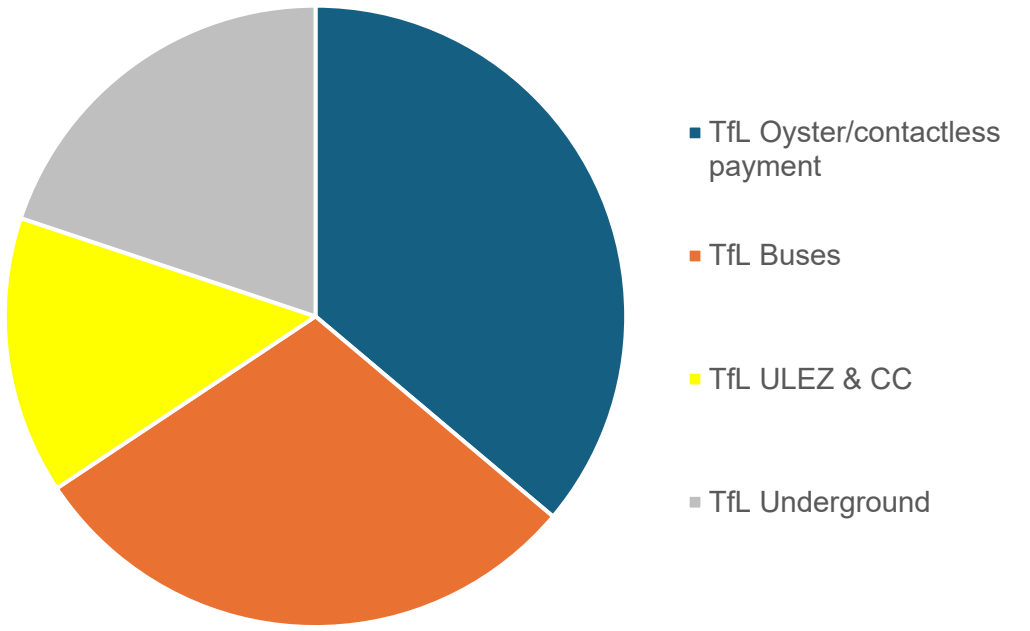
Case study

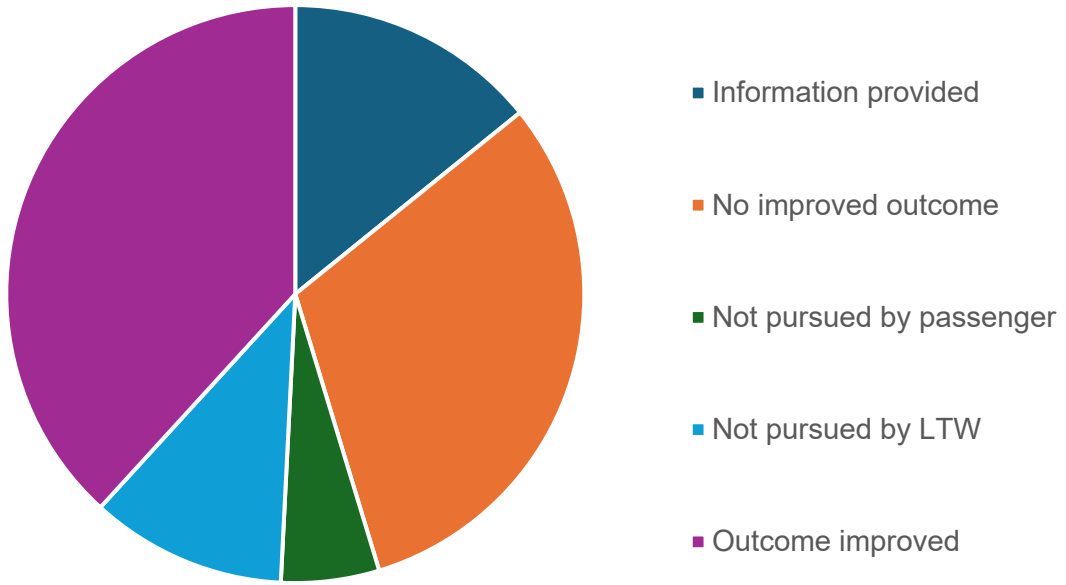
Mr H had to abandon the return journey as it was cancelled. Mr H purchased new tickets to travel with a different rail operator. He asked TrainSplit for a refund but this was declined and he was advised to contact Avanti who told Mr H that Trainsplit needed to provide the refund.

Transport Focus raised concerns with TrainSplit after checking the conditions of the ticket. Transplit agreed that they should refund Mr H and sent this directly.



TfL – appeal information



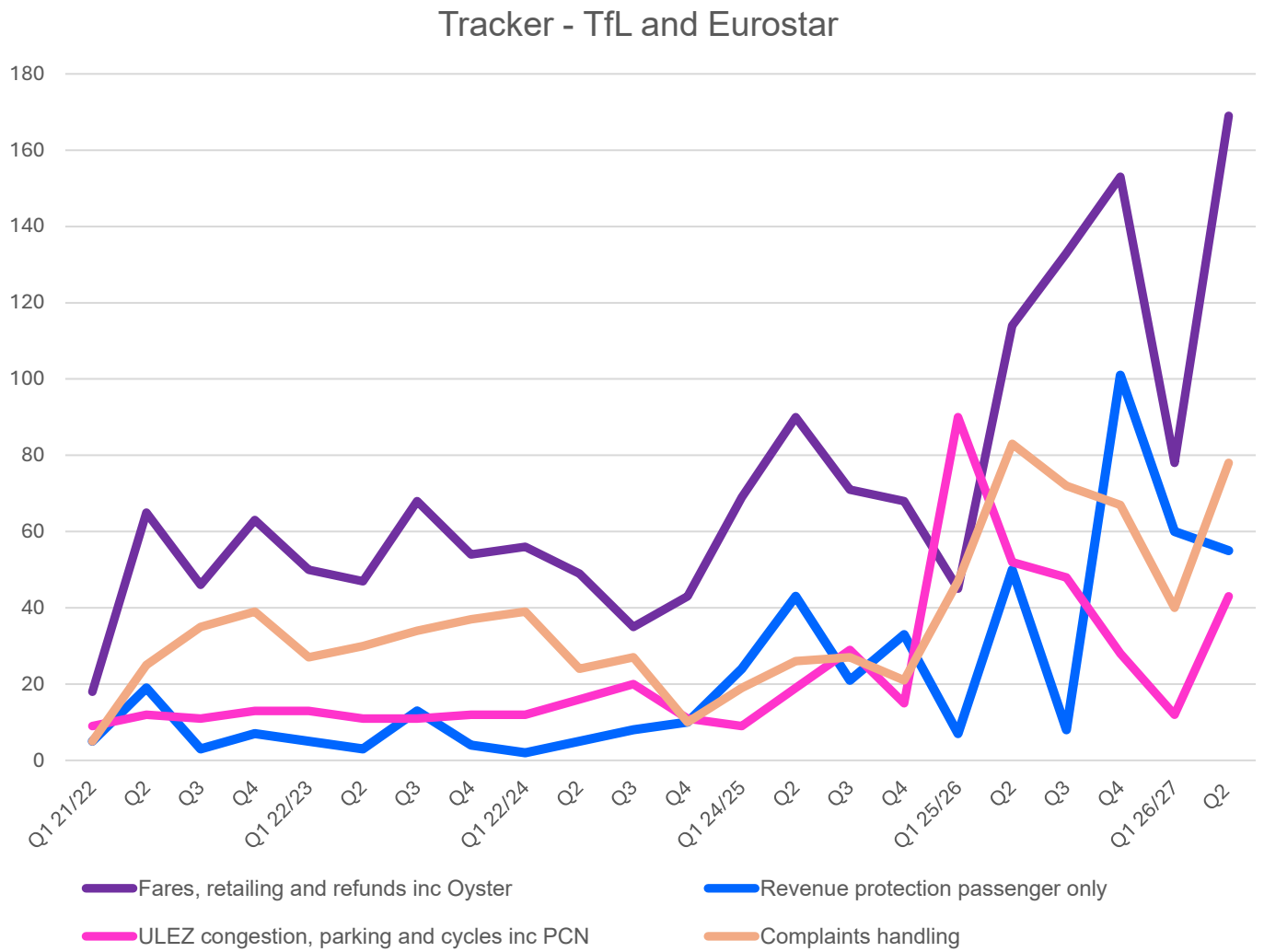


TfL appeals

Oyster and contactless can be used for payment on all TfL modes plus many rail operators in the London area. It is therefore expected that appeals for these payment types would be higher. Appeals are general around quality of station, stop or bus//tube, penalty fares, Oyster issues, refunds, staff complaints and delays.

Non passenger appeals includes contact from drivers about penalty charge notices for ULEZ, congestion charge, Blackwall and Silvertown tunnels and parking.

TfL and Eurostar case study and tracker



TfL Oyster case example

Mr H contacted London TravelWatch as his bus journeys continually terminated early and TfL refused to provide him with refunds which Mr H was due to cap of three refund claims per months. Mr H was further concerned that his complaints about bus services were not taken seriously, and that TfL were no longer responding.

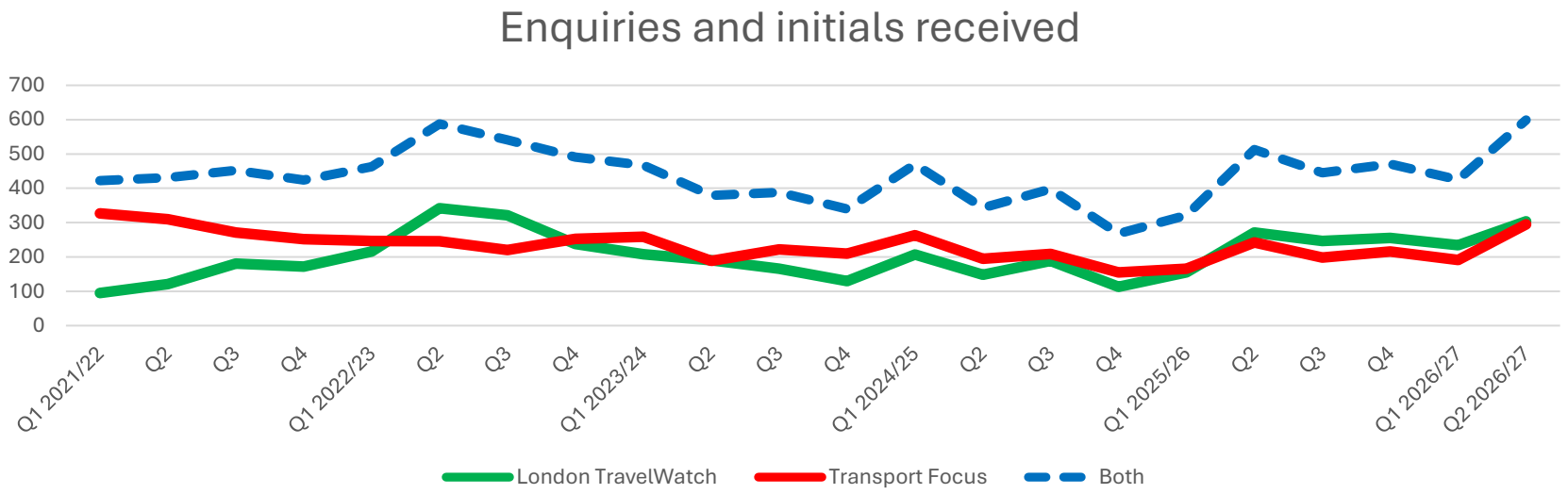
London TravelWatch took up the appeal and asked questions about continuous delays, lack of response and cap on claims. TfL provided a very comprehensive response having examined each of the dates provided so to explain the reasons for the curtailments. The three refund claims per month are related to delay compensation on the Tube, rail and the DLR but do not apply to buses as refunds for delays are not offered. In addition, bus passengers affected by delays on a particular bus route can board another service without payment (Hopper Fare). But TfL did recognise that Mr H's complaints had received a standard of service below that which he should expect and provided a goodwill gesture in recognition of this.

And the passenger said

Thank you very, very kindly for taking my case and working on it so diligently. And sorry to drag you into it. I really appreciate the care and attention you've given.

Initials and Enquiries

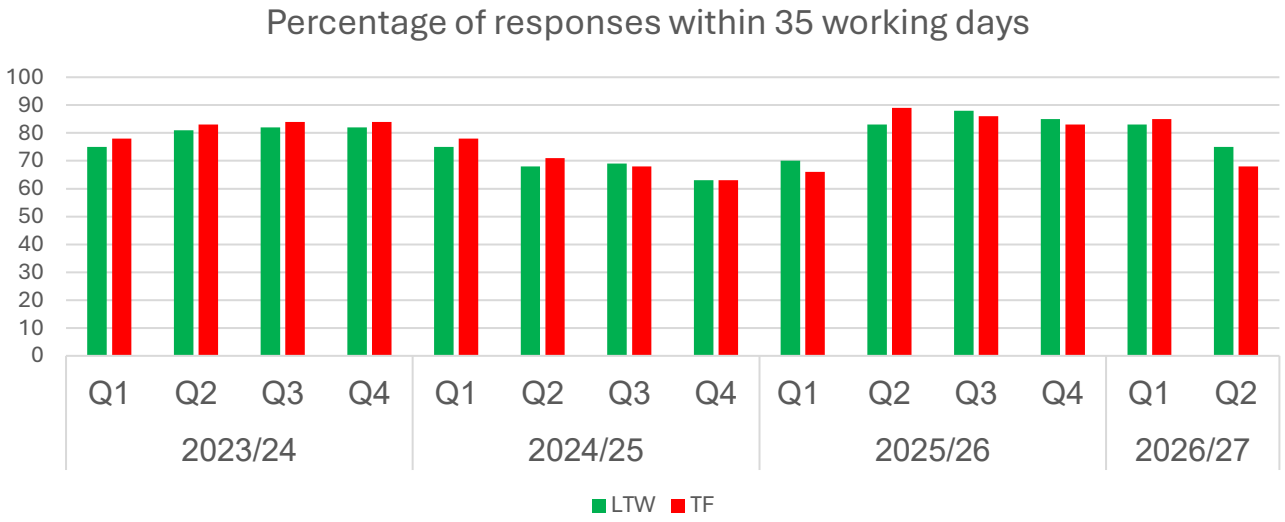
The majority of enquiry and initial contacts are from those who have not yet contacted the transport provider or ticket retailer.



London TravelWatch
Contact was primarily around fares, refund inc refund policy, penalty charge notices, penalty fare notices, staff (including bus driver complaint) and service performance.
Modes/TOCs – TfL Oyster, Streets, Buses, Rail and Eurostar.

Transport Focus
Contact was focused on fares, penalty fares, provision of information or the lack of it and refunds.
TOCs - Railcards, WMT and Northern.

Casework performance and quality



Response time update

The percentage of cases closed within 35 working days is 75% for London TravelWatch and 68% for Transport Focus

This is lower than the previous quarter due to a mixture of delays getting responses from transport operators/ticket retailers, making additional challenges and reopening a larger number of cases.

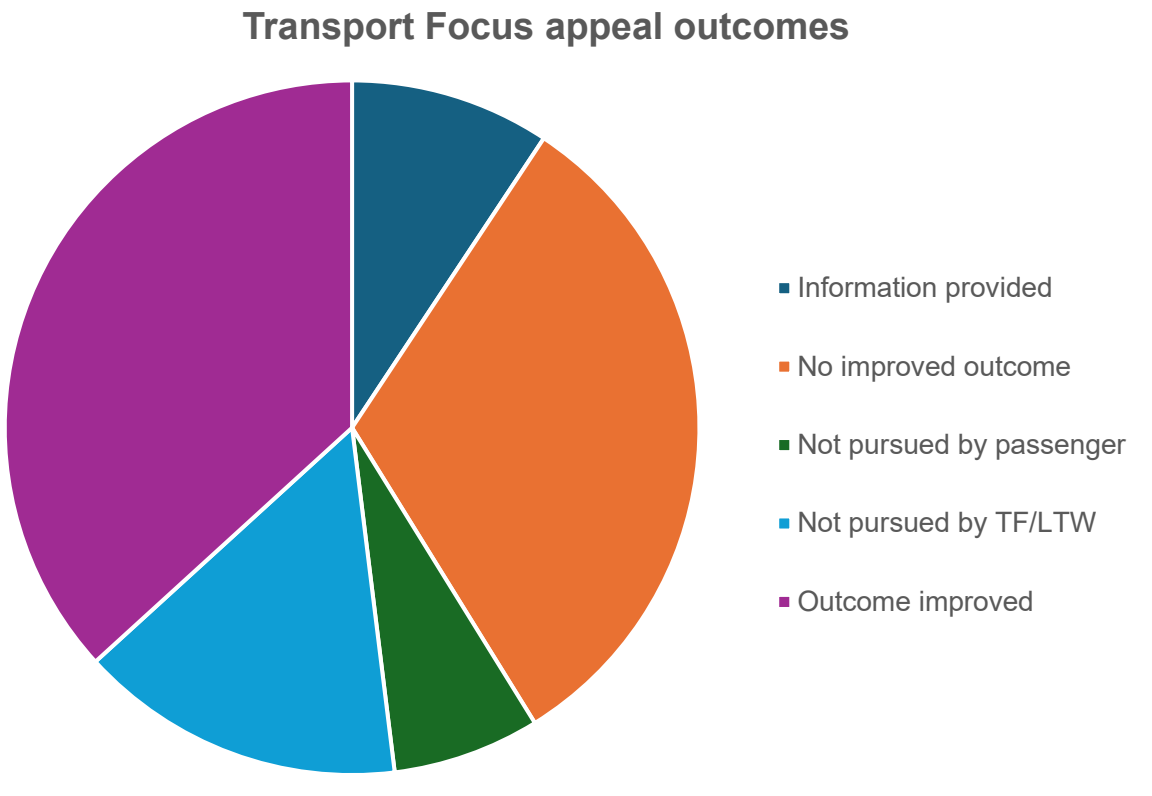
8 cases were closed in this period following information requested of Transport Focus. Responses to three of these were received in 28 days. Two between 40 and 65 days. One case took 108 days and one took 207 days to get a response.

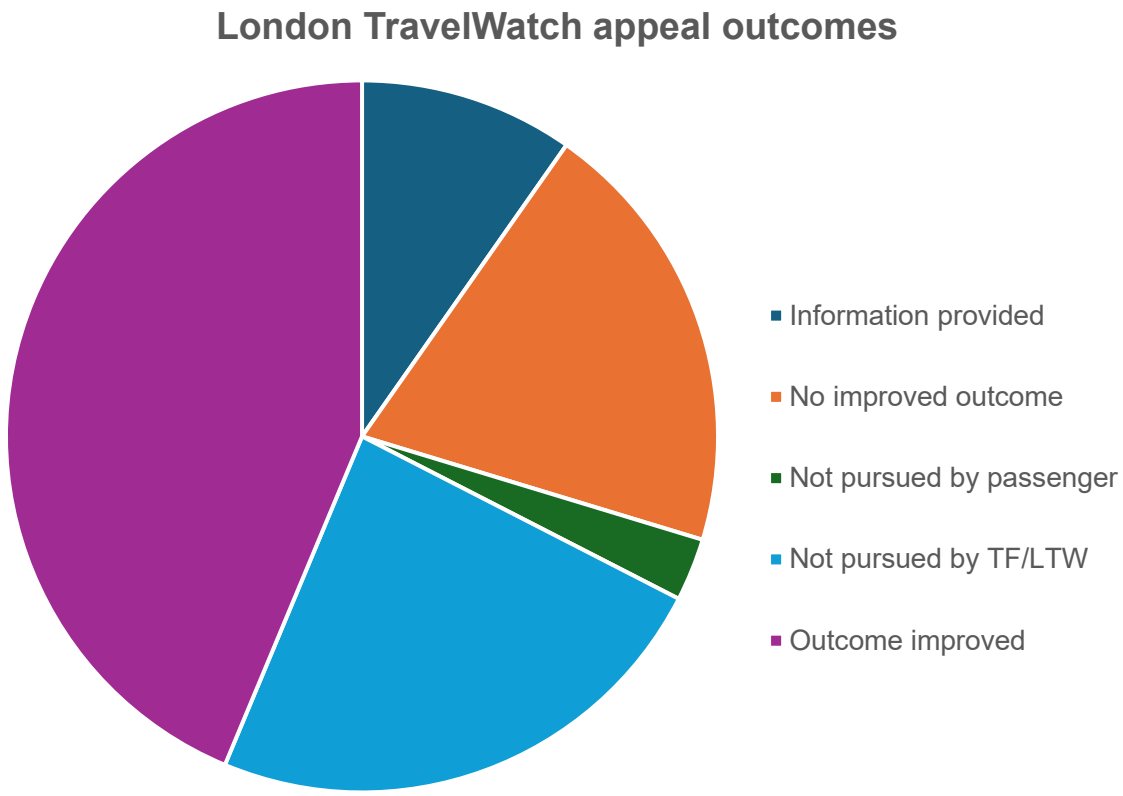
Cases reopened (comebacks)

Cases are reopened if the passenger sends additional information to support our ability to appeal or is unhappy with our response and wants further information.

We reopened 57 cases for London TravelWatch and 20 for Transport Focus. The majority of these were reopened as additional responses needed to be sent to those appellants unhappy with the outcome to their case.

Appeal outcomes





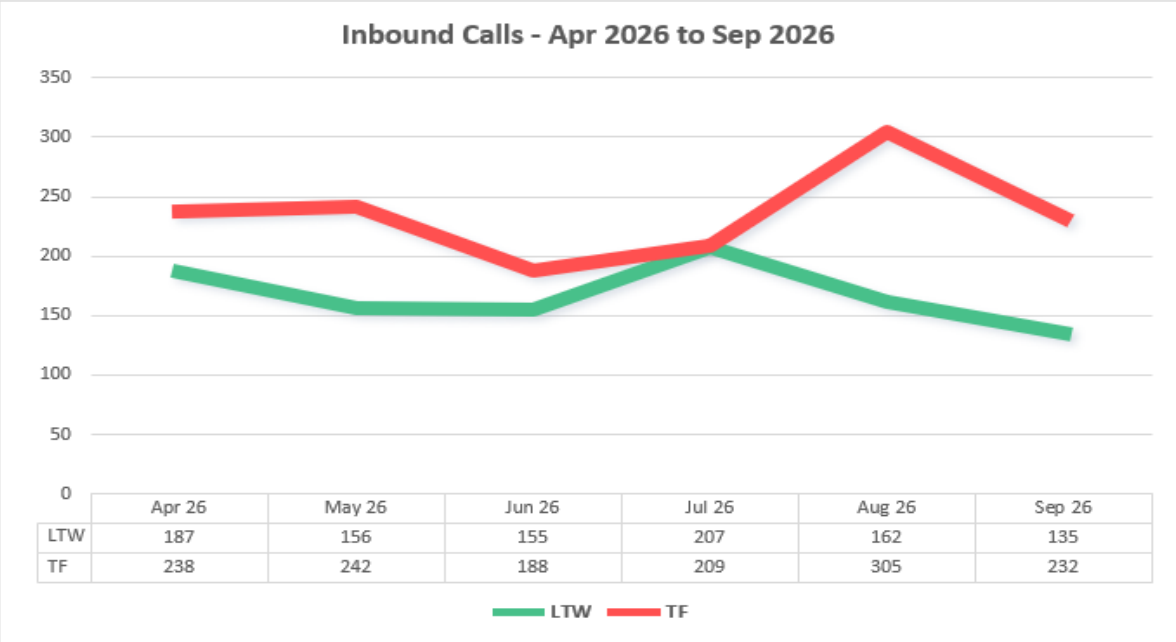
London TravelWatch is still the appeals body for most of TfL and all of Eurostar. This means that we are the first and frequently only body who will assess passenger appeals.

Transport Focus mode is rail for which there is a Rail Ombudsman. The majority of appeals sent to Transport Focus are related to policy or have already been via the independent penalty fare appeal process.

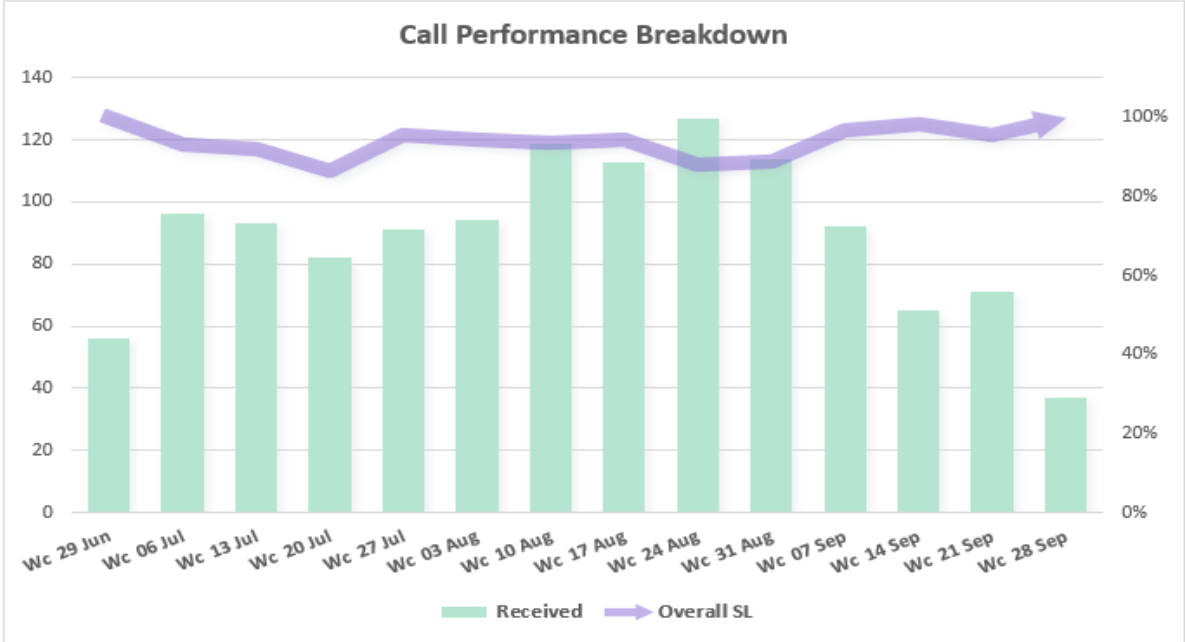
Foundever (outsourced provider)

LONDON TRAVELWATCH transportfocus

foundever™

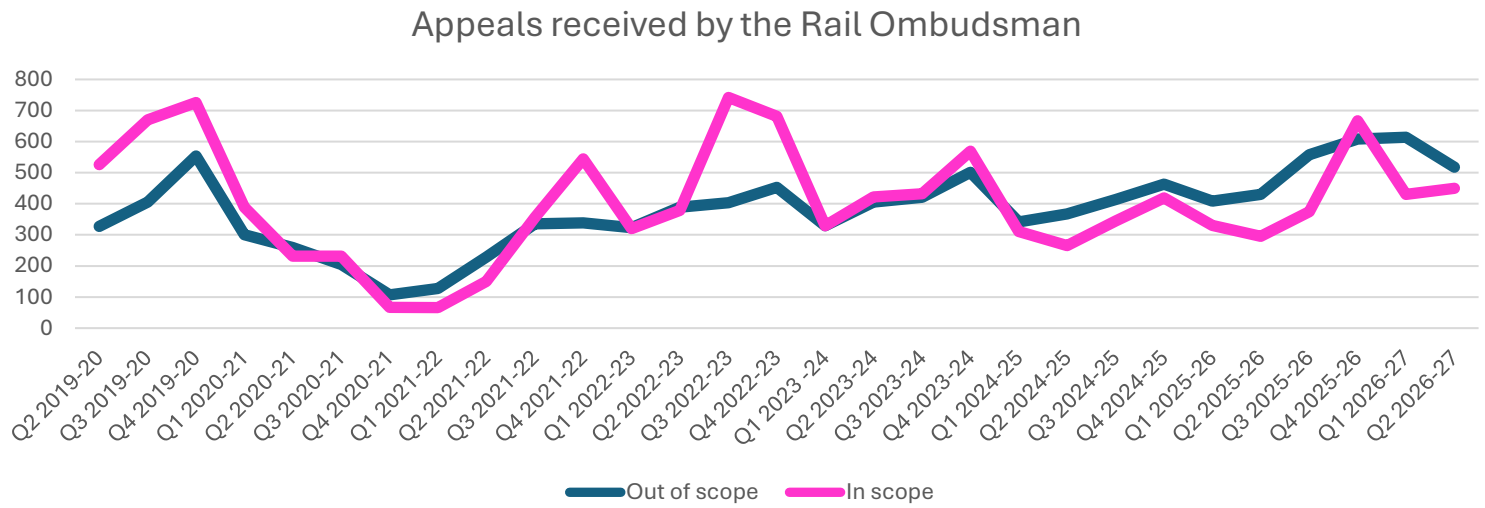


	Apr 26	May 26	Jun 26	Jul 26	Aug 26	Sep 26
LTW	187	156	155	207	162	135
TF	238	242	188	209	305	232



Foundever reported that contact volumes have dropped back from the peak in August, Performance has remained consistent and all KPIs are within contractual target. No significant areas of concern or risk anticipated for Q3.

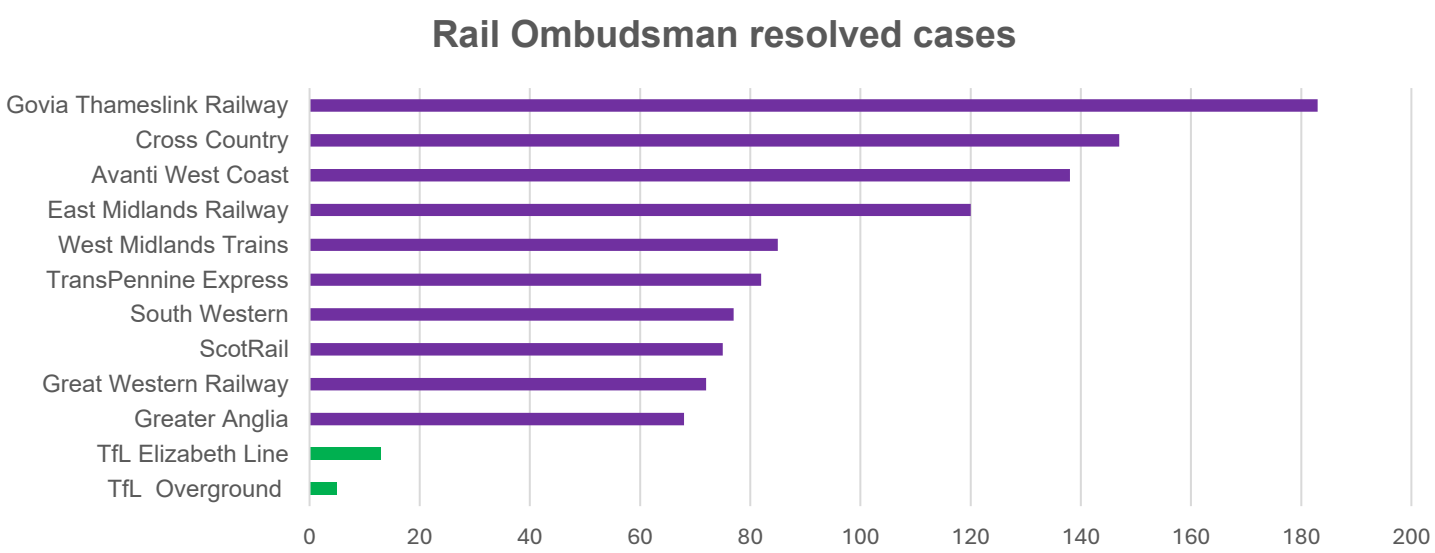
Rail Ombudsman appeals stats

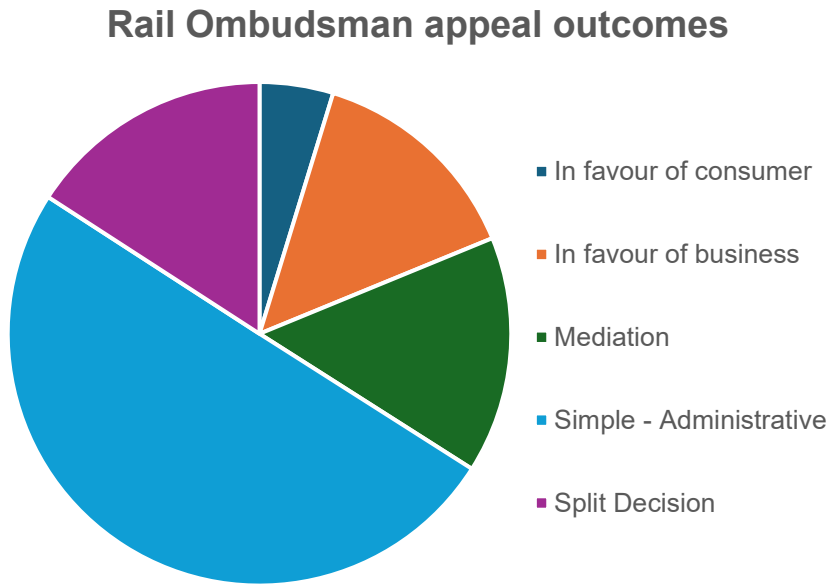


The Rail Ombudsman received 450 in scope cases in Q2.

Of the 518 out of scope cases

- 16 were transferred to LTW
- 64 were transferred to TF





Graph above shows top ten TOCs that the RO received the most contact including the London specific TOCs (in green).

Rail Ombudsman appeal information

The information below related to information contained in an appeal made to the Rail Ombudsman but not is not necessarily the primary issue. The sample data is quite small – less than 600 cases.

Avanti West Coast, **Thameslink**, **Southern**, **Great Northern**, **CrossCountry** and **West Midlands Trains/London Northwestern Railway (LNWR)**
Many complaints are no longer about the original rail disruption, but about how the complaint was subsequently handled.

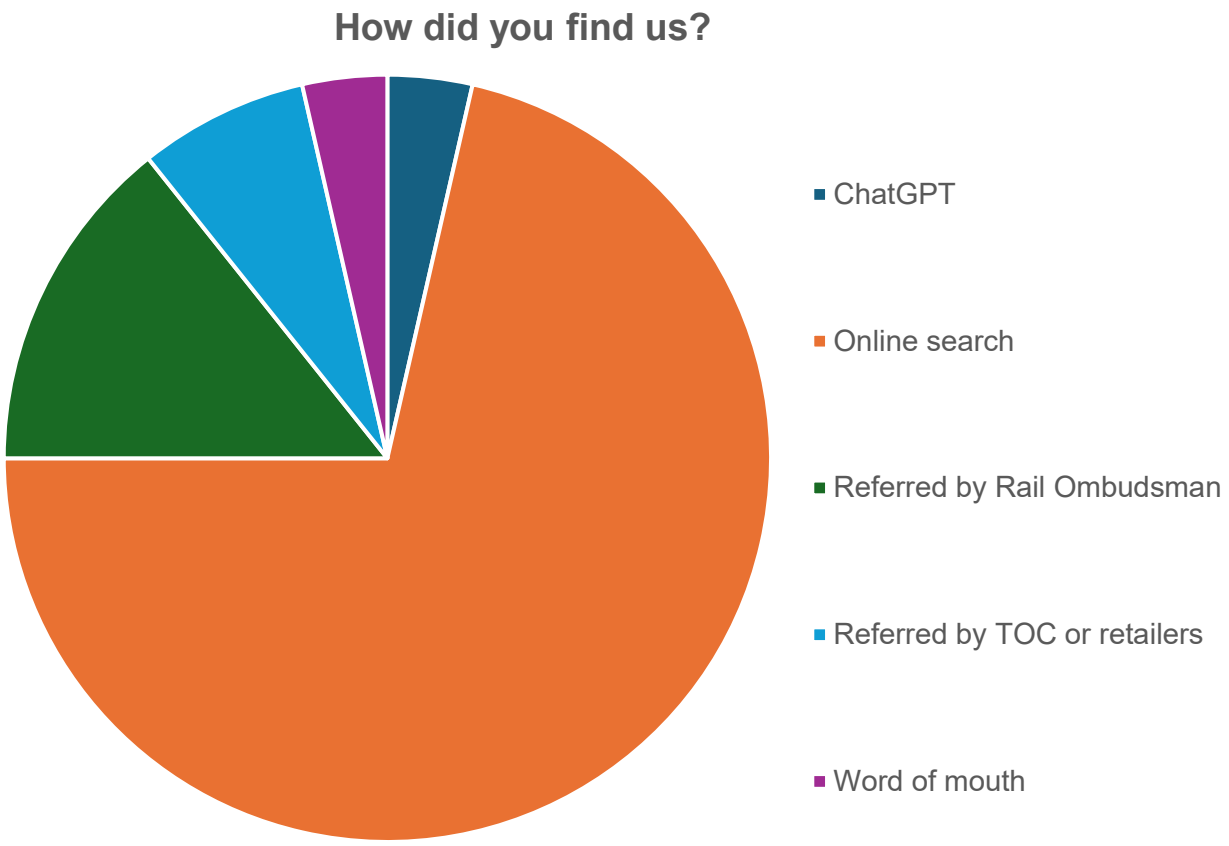
Impact of disruption
It is clear that most passengers seem to understand and accept disruption. The relationship breaks down due to the handling of the complaint requiring the Rail Ombudsman often dealing with the consequences of a damaged relationship rather than simply the original railway problem.

Stations
The stations that appear most often in appeals are generally not ordinary local stations. They tend to be major interchange stations or airport linked stations which appear to promote the most intense dissatisfaction.

Common issue
Many passengers seem to want an acknowledgment that something happened that caused them frustrations and or inconvenience. Many people will provide endless correspondence they have had with a TOC trying to get a reasonable response. The phrase “its not about the money anymore” appears frequently.

Survey results (29 responses)

The survey has been amended. These results are London TravelWatch only.



All respondents confirmed that we managed expectations at the outset.

28 out of 29 confirmed that our service was easy to use.

28 out of 29 confirmed that their Caseworker was helpful and clearly explained.

27 out of 29 agreed their Caseworker kept them informed.

28 out of 29 agreed that their Caseworker wrote clearly and in plain English.

28 indicated satisfied or very satisfied.
1 respondent indicated that they were unsatisfied with the handling of their appeal.

28 indicated that they were likely or very likely to recommend us. 1 respondent indicated that they were very unlikely to recommend London TravelWatch.

Positive feedback

I would like to say a huge thank you to my caseworker, Sean Goss, who showed a high level of professionalism and empathy throughout this entire process. After being caught in a stressful, automated loop of rejections between the train operator and the appeals panel, Sean was the only person who actually took the time to read into the specific facts of my case. He immediately spotted the common-sense logic that others had missedâ€”noting that I was a legitimate, fare-paying passenger who had simply misplaced a physical ticket after an on-board inspection. Sean's human approach and proactive communication completely transformed a very frustrating experience. By escalating the matter to the correct team at GWR to request a refund, he provided the advocacy I desperately needed. He is an absolute credit to London TravelWatch, and I am incredibly grateful for his support.
Natasha Reed was very helpful and persistent with TfL.
Initially I was told you couldn't help with my case as I had been constantly chasing Eurostar who were simply failing to reply. I was told I needed to wait a month from my last contact. This seemed counterproductive as it would mean I would need to stop my attempts to get a response before you would help. Thankfully Mags stepped in and almost as soon as she did, after more than a month of no response the problem was solved completely to my satisfaction. My only concern is that other passengers might not know about this service.
Margaret Croucher was a joy to liaise with and was very helpful
I couldn't recommend Sean Goss enough - the way they helped me exceeded all kinds of expectations I had and was one of the best services I received ever. Quick, competent, respectful, thoughtful. They fought for my case and reached all the goals set. Very grateful, thank you again.
MRS. Mags Croucher GUIDED ME THROUGHOUT THE ENTIRE PROCESS AND HELPED ME GET MY REFUND IN LESS THAN 24 HOURS. I AM EXTREMELY SATISFIED WITH THE SERVICE I RECEIVED, THE WAY THE CASE WAS HANDLED, AND THE HIGH LEVEL OF PROFESSIONALISM WITH WHICH I WAS ASSISTED.
Great customer service from Sean Goss.

Positive feedback

My case worker Margaret Croucher did an excellent job in communicating and being an advocate on my behalf. She made the experience very easy and stress free. Thank you for the service you provide.
Invaluable service when all given contact options on the eurostar website were inaccessible so that I posted a letter to the travel centre, ccd to the CEO. I believe that I only received a response after LTW had contacted eurostar.
I wasnâ€™t very hopeful that we would receive a very positive response from Eurostar but Sean/London Travel Watch clearly have more influence than I could have imagined. Very pleased with outcome.
I didnâ€™t even know you guys existed before doing a lot of searches. You need more visibility online
Very appreciative of the assistance your service provided - great result! Hopefully, going forward, TfL will have learned from this issue THEY created and in future avoid making these type of problems for all customers! Many thanks again to Transport Watchdog ðŸ‘ðŸ¤œðŸ¥ðŸ¤›
Sean Goss was my very professional and efficient caseworker who was kind enough to really read through my case and advised the correct outcome. Thank you Sean for your prompt responses and professional conduct.
Thanks very much to Mags Croucher - although the appeal was not successful, she tried really hard for me and understood the situation.
Margs we thank you for your assistance in the case and the time you took on it. Sorry for the delay on doing this btw kind regards
Sean Goss was the only person among the different agencies I contacted who took my case seriously. He kept in touch with me in a case which some might have disregarded. I really appreciate the service you offer to passengers- especially when, as in my case, every other avenue seemed to have closed.
While the result was less than I had hoped for, your intrvention cewrtainli improved things for me! Thank you very much

Positive feedback

Natasha was extremely helpful throughout my case. TfL had acknowledged that charges had been applied incorrectly but maintained that no further refund was due and considered the matter closed. London TravelWatch took the time to understand the issue, contacted TfL on my behalf and continued to pursue them despite a significant delay in TfL responding. Their intervention ultimately resulted in TfL reviewing the matter and issuing the outstanding payment. The process took some time, largely because TfL did not respond to London TravelWatch for several months, but I particularly appreciated Natashaâ€™s persistence and clear communication. Without London TravelWatchâ€™s intervention, I do not believe I would have achieved this outcome. Thank you to Natasha and the London TravelWatch team for their help.
Fantastic outcome. I was being bullied by TFL, who insisted I needed to prove my innocence, instead of them proving my guilt! The watchdog worked quickly and effectively and couldn't recommend them highly enough. Obviously, I hope to never need your services again, but it's good to know you're there when we need you! Thanks everyone. Andy.
I was very impressed with you service. Transport for London however were very poor.

Negative feedback

Your representative merely responded by copying in the decision initially presented by the ToC, to you which only after my considerable challenge did the ToC back down. Your intervention was quite frankly useless and did not help me at all. I attach the final response from the Toc. It is regrettable that you seem to expect passengers to have to fight the incorrect decision of the ToC without any support from either you or the Ombudsman. There is no acknowledgement of the fact that GA are one of the Company's who used the SJP process to incorrectly prosecute passengers as could have been the case with me had I not been more challenging. Quite frankly your intervention was a complete waste of time
My complaint was about a systematic error in the handling of tickets and discounts by Thames Clipper/Uber Boats, which led to a wholly unpleasant public row with staff, onboard. You claimed not to have any sway over the operation of a private company. Given that this runs like a public service, as an alternative to tubes, buses and trains, I really think you ought to have some influence and be lobbying to do so.
It was disappointing that ultimately TfL were allowed to be their own judges. The platform at Acton Town was very overcrowded and we were held there for 20 minutes with no information Both of these points were denied by TfL claiming to have checked the former from video evidence yet didn't share this.