

Postal Redress Service (POSTRS): Independent Complaint Reviewer Report July - December 2022.

1. Introduction

This is my twelfth report on POSTRS - which deals with complaints about postal operators who are members of the Service. It covers 1 July to 31 December 2022.

2. My Role

I am an independent consultant and am not based at CEDR, nor am I part of that organisation. There are two aspects to my role.

I can review cases where users of the Service have complained to POSTRS or CEDR and, having been through the complaints procedure, remain dissatisfied with the outcome. I cannot consider the merits or otherwise of decisions made by CEDR's adjudicators; nor can I investigate or review the substance or outcomes of claimants' applications. I may make recommendations based on my findings.

The second aspect of my role is to review complaints about the Service generally, and produce six monthly reports. These are based on my findings from any individual complaints that I've reviewed; and by examining all or some of the complaints about POSTRS as I see fit.

3. CEDR's Complaints Procedure

CEDR's complaints procedure¹ covers POSTRS. It explains the scope of the procedure and the two internal review stages that take place before, if necessary, a complaint is referred to me.

The procedure is articulated clearly with timescales and information about what can be expected. In brief, if after CEDR's first stage response to a complaint a customer remains dissatisfied they can ask for escalation to stage two of the process, where a senior manager will review the complaint. Where this does not resolve the matter, it can be referred to me for independent review.

¹ <https://www.cedr.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/07/CEDR-Complaints-Procedure-July-22.pdf>

4. This Report

This is a brief report as CEDR only received three complaints, one of which was in the pipeline at the time of my review.

5. My Findings

(a) Quantitative

POSTRS received 230 applications during this reporting period – 24% fewer than the preceding six months.

CEDR received three service complaints, representing 1.3% of the applications (up from 0.3% on the six months before, but the absolute numbers are small).

Of the 230 total applications, 56% (130) received an adjudicator's final decision. The remaining 44% either fell outside of POSTRS' scope, or were settled without progressing to adjudication. The corresponding figures for the previous six months were reversed, at 44% and 56% respectively.

Of the 130 adjudicated claims, POSTRS found wholly for the claimant in five cases (3.9%); partly for the claimant in nine cases (6.9%); and wholly for the postal operator in 116 cases (89.2%). This remains in line with the norm.

It's not my role to comment on claims or their outcomes; I include these data for contextual purposes only.

Of the two cases that had completed the complaints procedure at the time of my review, one was in scope and CEDR upheld it in full; and one was out of scope.

(b) Qualitative

(i) Timescales

CEDR acknowledged 100% of the complaints they received within their two working day target.

CEDR completed the two Stage 1 responses within their 30 working day target (one taking 15 working days, the other 30).

(ii) **Casework and Outcomes**

The in scope complaint was about problems the customer experienced submitting his claim on-line, and a lack of response to an email.

The Stage 1 reply was of a high standard, with an excellent summary section. It looked like user error was the cause of the problem – which ended up with the claim being submitted twice. CEDR reassured the customer that his claim, together with all his evidence and comments, had been safely received and processed; and they offered £25.00 compensation for any confusion caused by the duplication of the claim. Only one email from the customer was found, to which CEDR had replied. CEDR asked the customer to let them know more about the email that had gone unanswered, but he didn't reply.

The out of scope complaint was entirely about the adjudicator's decision so was rightly rejected.

6. Conclusion

Three complaints is a low number, and I'm content that POSTRS is maintaining a very good performance.

The Stage 1 responses were of a high standard.

I have no further comments.

7. Recommendations

I have no recommendations.

Acknowledgements

I conducted my review remotely, with open and unrestricted access to the systems and records that I needed. I'm grateful to CEDR for facilitating this.

Chris Holland



Independent Complaint Reviewer
26 January 2023