

The complaint

Mr A complains about how long it's taking Tradex Insurance Company PLC to make a decision on a claim he made on his motor trade policy.

Reference to Tradex includes its agents.

What happened

In September 2023 Mr A made a claim for damage to a vehicle covered his motor trade policy with Tradex. Initially Mr A looked to claim, with the help of a third party, directly from insurer of the other vehicle. But after around six months, the claim was passed to Tradex to ask them to handle.

Mr A brought a complaint to us about Tradex's handling of the claim up to June 2024. We considered that complaint and Mr A didn't ask us to look into that further – so anything involved in the scope of that complaint isn't covered in this decision.

But, Mr A made a further complaint. As of September 2024 Tradex hadn't made a decision on whether or not to accept Mr A's claim. Mr A didn't think that was fair and brought his complaint to us.

He also said he was told making a complaint would delay any decision on his claim further. And he also complains that the price of his policy has increased as a result of the claim remaining open.

Our investigator thought Tradex was entitled to conduct the investigations it was doing. But she thought that because it had acknowledged some delays, it should pay Mr A £200 compensation. Our Investigator wasn't persuaded that Mr A was told that a complaint would delay his claim. And she thought Tradex had evidenced that the price of his policy was fair and in line with its underwriting criteria.

Mr A didn't agree, so, the case has been passed for an Ombudsman's decision.

For clarity, this decision concerns Tradex's actions between the end of June 2024 and the end of September 2024. Mr A's complaint about events prior to June 2024 has already been considered by us. And any events after September 2024 would be a new complaint.

What I've decided – and why

I've considered all the available evidence and arguments to decide what's fair and reasonable in the circumstances of this complaint.

Having done so, I'm upholding it in part. I'll explain why.

- Tradex has explain it's been carrying out investigations into Mr A's claim. It's shown it's asked Mr A for information around his ownership of the vehicle and that it's been assessing the information it's been provided.

- I'm satisfied Tradex is entitled to undertake such investigations.
- Tradex has acknowledged some delays however, and while I can't say whether it's delayed a decision on the claim, it may well have. Any delay in this case is likely to have caused inconvenience to Mr A given his work as a motor trader.
- I also don't know Tradex's decision on this claim – because it hadn't reached it. So I can't fully determine the level of inconvenience caused by the delays. That said, like our Investigator, I think £200 compensation at this stage is a reasonable amount to compensate Mr A.
- Like our Investigator, from everything I've seen, I'm not persuaded Mr A was told a complaint would delay his claim further. Tradex, nor any other firm should be putting up barriers to policyholders making a complaint. But here, I've not seen Tradex putting up any such barriers. In any event, Mr A made a complaint, so he was clearly undeterred from anything Tradex told him.
- I'm satisfied Tradex has evidenced the price of Mr A's policy is in line with its underwriting criteria. Which means I'm satisfied it's treating him as it would any other policyholder in his position. It follows that I'm satisfied it's priced his policy fairly.

My final decision

For the reasons set out above, I uphold this complaint and require Tradex Insurance Company PLC to:

- Pay Mr £200 compensation for the inconvenience caused by the avoidable delays between June 2024 and September 2024.

Under the rules of the Financial Ombudsman Service, I'm required to ask Mr A to accept or reject my decision before 5 February 2025.

Joe Thornley
Ombudsman