

## **The complaint**

Ms F and Mrs P complained about Advantage Insurance Company Limited. They are not happy about the way it dealt with a claim under their motor insurance policy after their car was declared a total loss.

## **What happened**

Ms F made a claim under her motor insurance policy and her car was deemed an economic write off. And while the claim was being advanced Advantage's salvage agent started the process of selling the car when in fact Ms F and Mrs P wanted to retain the car. Fortunately, Advantage was able to stop the sale and the salvage was returned to Ms F and Mrs P but as they were not happy with how all this was handled they complained to Advantage and then this Service.

Advantage looked into Ms F and Mrs P's complaint and initially offered £75 by way of compensation for the stress and inconvenience caused by its mistake. And while the complaint was with this Service for consideration it increased its offer to £250 but Ms F and Mrs P remained unhappy.

Our investigator looked into things for Ms F and Mrs P. And although she accepted that Advantage got things wrong here, she thought its final offer of £250 compensation for the stress and inconvenience caused here was fair.

As Ms F and Mrs P didn't agree the matter has been passed to me for review.

## **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.

As it isn't disputed that Advantage got things wrong here, I will simply focus on whether the level of compensation it offered for its mistake for its error is fair.

I also think it's important to explain I've read and taken into account all of the information provided by both parties, in reaching my decision. If I've not reflected something that's been said in this decision it's not because I didn't see it, it's because I didn't deem it relevant to the crux of the complaint. This isn't intended as a discourtesy to either party, but merely to reflect my informal role in deciding what a fair and reasonable outcome is. This also means I don't think it's necessary to get an answer, or provide my own answer, to every question raised unless it's relevant to the crux of the complaint.

I can understand why Ms F and Mrs P have complained as Advantage clearly got things wrong here in allowing their car to proceed to sale when they hadn't agreed to this and wanted to retain their vehicle. But I think Advantage's eventual offer of £250 compensation in acknowledgement of its error feels fair. I know this will come as a disappointment to Ms F and Mrs P, but I'll explain why.

Advantage placed a hold on the sale of Ms F and Mrs P's car with its salvage agent, but it failed to continue to hold the vehicle while the claim was being finalised. Fortunately, Ms F and Mrs P had contact with the salvage agent and the sale was stopped and they were able to retain the salvage. I accept all this caused a great deal of stress, inconvenience and worry but I feel £250 feels fair.

I know Ms F and Mrs P would like an additional £250 compensation, especially given the impact all this had on their mental health. But I feel Advantage's offer is in line with the kind of award I would ordinarily make in circumstances like this. Had Ms F and Mrs P been unable to get their car back then I may have thought a higher award was due. I do accept that it took positive steps from Ms F and Mrs P to prevent the sale of their car going through which is fortunate. But that doesn't mean the compensation should be increased further as they did get their car back. And I don't feel a separate additional award to both Ms F and Mrs P is fair or required in the circumstances as, although I accept that it has impacted them both, the eventual overall award for the stress, worry and inconvenience caused is sufficient.

### **My final decision**

It follows, for the reasons given above, that I think Advantage Insurance Company Limited's offer of £250 compensation feels fair.

Under the rules of the Financial Ombudsman Service, I'm required to ask Ms F and Mrs P to accept or reject my decision before 28 April 2025.

Colin Keegan  
**Ombudsman**