

The complaint

Mr F complains about the way One Call Insurance Services Limited ('One Call') handled his insurance renewal process and says they provided incorrect information.

What happened

Mr F held a motor insurance policy with One Call. In early October 2024, he received a renewal email from them outlining the cost of the next year's premium of around £103 with a breakdown. Around ten days later; Mr F received another email with a slightly higher total price of £168 and breakdown. And then around two weeks later; a third email with a much higher total premium of £1,677.

Mr F complained to One Call and said he was unhappy with how they had handled the renewal process and that he'd received the emails while he was away on holiday with his family which had caused confusion and distress as he tried to source alternative cover. One Call responded to Mr F's complaint, but he remained unhappy with their reply, so he brought the complaint to this Service.

An Investigator looked at what had happened and concluded that the first two letters were sent out in error. He said both these incorrect renewal prices were very low for a car insurance premium. The Investigator also outlined that One Call made an error around a previous balance owed by Mr F which stopped him receiving a renewal invite for One Call's 'platinum' cover. The Investigator concluded this was due to a human error and that this was a monthly rolling contract arrangement which allows a policyholder to cancel the policy at any time with no cancellation fees.

The Investigator said they didn't think it was fair or reasonable for One Call to provide Mr F with cover at the original incorrect amount and instead looked at what steps One Call had taken to put things right. He noted that One Call had removed an outstanding balance of £47.97 and awarded £50 compensation. But overall, the Investigator thought One Call should increase the compensation to £200 to account for the distress and inconvenience caused by their incorrect correspondence.

One Call didn't agree with the Investigator. They said due to the low prices initially quoted and provided via emails in October – this could have prompted Mr F to call in to discuss what these sums were so low and to pay any outstanding balance to allow him to be re-invited to the 'platinum' cover policy. And they disagreed that they needed to increase the compensation as they felt their total redress of removing the balanced owed plus £50 compensation was sufficient.

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.

I have carefully considered all points raised by both parties, but I do not consider it necessary to specifically reference them in reaching my decision. Where I don't comment on

every point made by the parties, that's not to say I haven't seen or considered them. Finally, when considering what's fair and reasonable in the circumstances of the complaint, I've taken into account the relevant regulations, regulator's rules, guidance and standards and codes of practice.

One Call have already confirmed they provided incorrect renewal prices via emails – so I don't need to make an extended finding on whether they did something wrong. Instead, the main issue in this case is whether they should increase the compensation award to account for these errors.

I recognise and appreciate One Call's submissions on whether Mr F should have recognised the renewal prices were too low and should have called in to discuss this. In hindsight, this may well have meant he was alerted to the outstanding balance and could have resolved this earlier. But I think this ignores One Call's own regulatory responsibilities: specifically for firms to provide information that is clear, fair, and not misleading (ICOBS 2.2.2R). Mr F was clearly confused by multiple conflicting letters which One Insurance has confirmed were due to their errors.

I haven't outlined everything again here, as the same is well known to both parties. But while I agree it was fair for One Call to remove any outstanding balance, I think there is evidenced distress and inconvenience above the removal of fees. Had One Call provided correct and full information in the first email in early October 2024, I'm persuaded this would have removed a lot of the issues Mr F faced and the inconvenience caused.

As such, I need to think about the overall impact to Mr F when deciding what a fair sum of compensation would be. I've weighed up Mr F's testimony, the available evidence, and the duration of the incident. Overall, I consider £200 to be a fair and reasonable sum of compensation – so I think One Call should pay this sum, less any amounts already released to Mr F.

While I appreciate this sum may not be what Mr F had hope for; it's important to note that this Service does not punish or fine a business. Instead, we look at the impact caused by a mistake or actions. And so, while this sum may not fundamentally change matters for him – I consider this to be in line with the level of compensation appropriate to these issues and the impact caused.

I'm also satisfied it's in line with similar awards this Service would make and that it produces a fair and reasonable outcome in the circumstances of this particular complaint.

My final decision

For the reasons I've given above, my final decision is that I uphold this complaint and direct One Call Insurance Services Limited to pay £200 compensation (less any sums already raised).

Under the rules of the Financial Ombudsman Service, I'm required to ask Mr F to accept or reject my decision before 7 July 2025.

Stephen Howard
Ombudsman