

The complaint

Mr P complains that First Rate Exchange Services Ltd has not delivered his currency that he bought from it.

What happened

Mr P says he bought £500 worth of Euros from First Rate in December 2023. He says the money was not delivered which meant he made a number of visits to a local branch of the business that is in partnership with First Rate. Mr P says he has been given misleading information and has made numerous telephone calls to try and find out where his money is as well as what took place.

First Rate has not provided Mr P with a final response letter and has not provided us with any information from its business file.

Mr P brought his complaint to us and our investigator upheld the complaint. The investigator thought Mr P had provided evidence of the currency purchase and details of his attempts to locate his money. The investigator thought First Rate should refund the money and pay 8% interest on it from the intended delivery date in or around December 2023. The investigator recommended Mr P be paid £300 compensation.

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 have come to the overall conclusion that I uphold this complaint.

I am satisfied having looked at the evidence Mr P has provided, that he didn't receive the currency he paid for. I have no doubt that in itself would have caused him distress and inconvenience and accept that he then bought currency from a different provider. I also accept that Mr P then spent a considerable amount of time trying to sort matters out and that he was given misleading information by a number of businesses involved in this complaint. I am satisfied that First Rate was responsible for the initial mistake, and it is therefore responsible for what then took place.

It would have been helpful if First Rate had provided some information about what took place. But I am satisfied it hasn't provided Mr P with a final response letter, and it has provided us with very little information. In those circumstances I agree with the investigator that there is no evidence to suggest that First Rate was not responsible for Mr P's money going missing and the subsequent events. In any event I am satisfied that Mr P has provided clear evidence of what took place.

Putting things right

First Rate should refund the £500. It should also pay 8% simple interest on that amount from the intended delivery date in or around December 2023. If First Rate is required to deduct

taxation from that amount, then it should provide Mr P with the usual certificate of deduction. I am satisfied Mr P has lost a significant amount of money that required him to make an additional currency purchase. I am also satisfied that this problem has taken over 18 months to get to this stage and that Mr P made numerous attempts to find out what took place. For those reasons I think First Rate should pay Mr P £300 compensation which I consider fair and reasonable.

My final decision

My final decision is that I uphold this complaint. First Rate Exchange Services Ltd should pay Mr P £300 compensation, refund the £500 and pay 8% interest on that money from December 2023 to settlement.

Under the rules of the Financial Ombudsman Service, I'm required to ask Mr P to accept or reject my decision before 20 September 2025.

David Singh
Ombudsman