

The complaint

Miss B complains that AXA Insurance UK Plc (AXA) has poorly handled her motor insurance claim.

What happened

In April 2025 Miss B's car was stolen so she contacted AXA to claim on her car insurance policy. During the claim, Miss B raised a complaint. She said there had been delays due to the claim handler being off work for a week and that she was having to chase for updates. Miss B was also unhappy she was required to attend a second in-person interview and that her keys were misplaced by AXA for three weeks.

In its response to the complaint, AXA said it hadn't caused any unnecessary delays. Unhappy, Miss B referred her complaint to our Service for an independent review. Our Investigator looked into what happened. He thought AXA had caused an unnecessary delay when Miss B's keys went missing for three weeks. He recommended AXA pay Miss B £150 compensation. AXA accepted our Investigator's view but Miss B didn't. So, the complaint has been passed to me to decide.

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'm aware I've set out the background to this complaint in less detail than the parties have presented it. I'm not going to respond to every single point raised. Instead, I've focused on what I find are the key issues here. I assure both parties, however, that I've read and considered everything they've provided.

The scope of my decision

As the Investigator has already mentioned, this Service can only consider AXA's actions up to its final response letter dated 25 June 2025 and that's what I'm considering. Miss B's concerns about the satellite navigation and excess waiver she purchased for her courtesy car will need to be addressed under a separate complaint.

AXA's handling of the claim

Industry rules set out by the regulator say insurers must handle claims promptly and fairly and shouldn't unreasonably reject them. They must also provide reasonable guidance to help a policyholder make a claim, as well as appropriate information on its progress. I've kept this in mind while considering this complaint together with what I consider to be fair and reasonable in all the circumstances.

Miss B feels her claim was delayed due to her claim handler being off work for a week. I can appreciate Miss B's frustration in finding out her claim handler wasn't working when she called to provide more information about her claim. However, I don't think this caused any

unnecessary delays in the progression of her claim. I say this because I can see the other claim handlers offered to help and correctly updated the information she gave at the time about her car going missing again after it was recovered. They also told Miss B that once the stolen marker would show on the hire purchase investigation (HPI), they would review the claim and update her on the next steps which I think was reasonable and in line with what I'd expect.

Miss B was also unhappy she was asked to attend a second in-person interview which she said led to further delays and inconvenience as she had to wait for an available appointment. I understand Miss B's strength of feeling here, but I'm mindful that making a motor insurance claim can cause distress and inconvenience, even when things go as they should. It's common within the insurance industry to investigate and validate claims, and it's not unreasonable for insurers to do so. AXA was entitled to carry out a thorough investigation and ask questions to determine whether or not Miss B's claim was covered under the policy terms. So, I don't think AXA has acted unfairly in this respect.

Having reviewed AXA's claim notes, like the Investigator, I've also concluded that there was an avoidable delay of about three weeks when AXA misplaced Miss B's keys. I think this was regrettable. However, I can see that AXA tried to minimise the impact of this on Miss B by offering her a courtesy car, initially for 7 days but then extended to 20 days.

Under the terms of the policy, Miss B is entitled to a courtesy car for up to 14 days while her car is with the approved repairer and being repaired. As Miss B's car wasn't being repaired due to it being a total loss, I think AXA acted fairly by stepping outside its policy terms to keep Miss B mobile for the period of time it caused an unnecessary delay.

I think the above delay would've caused Miss B unnecessary distress and I can see that she was inconvenienced by having to chase AXA for updates. So, I think it's fair that AXA pays Miss B some compensation to put that right. Having considered our award bands alongside the impact on Miss B, I think £150 is an appropriate amount.

This amount recognises the avoidable delay but also that Miss B did have the benefit of a courtesy car during that period. So, the impact of the delay was lessened by Miss B still having access to a car for the period that AXA failed to progress her claim as it should've. So, I'll be directing AXA to pay Miss B £150 compensation.

My final decision

My final decision is that I uphold this complaint. I direct AXA Insurance UK Plc to pay Miss B £150 compensation for the distress and inconvenience it caused.

Under the rules of the Financial Ombudsman Service, I'm required to ask Miss B to accept or reject my decision before 12 January 2026.

Linda Tare
Ombudsman