

## **The complaint**

Mr R complains about a missing payment he sent from his account, held with HSBC UK Bank Plc trading as first direct. He also complains about the general service he received while trying to trace the payment.

## **What happened**

Prior to a holiday abroad, Mr R sent the balance he owed for the accommodation he planned to stay in. The payment was the second of two payments, both to the same account. The beneficiary had confirmed receipt of the first payment, but said the second payment hadn't arrived.

Mr R contacted first direct to find out what had happened. It raised a trace on the payment and was eventually told by the beneficiary bank that the funds had been collected by the beneficiary. Mr R had been in contact with the beneficiary, who provided what they said was a statement to show the funds never arrived in their account. Mr R said he reached an agreement with the owner of the property he intended to stay in, allowing him to make the second payment again, on arrival, by cash.

Mr R thought first direct had made an error and complained about the missing payment, and about the service he received over the phone from first direct. In its response to Mr R's complaint, first direct said that, as the beneficiary bank had confirmed receipt of the funds, it didn't think there was anything more it could do for Mr R. However, it agreed with Mr R's concerns about the service he'd been given by one of its agents over the phone and said it had passed the details to the agent's manager for review.

Dissatisfied, Mr R brought his complaint to our service. Our Investigator looked into things, but didn't uphold the complaint. She noted the second payment was sent to the same account as the first. She was satisfied with first direct's actions and the information it had received around the beneficiary having collected the funds. She acknowledged Mr R had been given statements by the person he'd intended to pay, but noted they appeared to be for a different account to the one Mr R had sent his payments to.

Mr R didn't accept the Investigator's view, stating the account in question was under the name of the property he stayed in. As no agreement could be reached, the case was 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.

Having done so, I won't be upholding this complaint. I realise this will be very disappointing for Mr R and so I've provided the reasoning for my decision below.

As noted by the Investigator, both payments made by Mr R appear on his statement, and both payments show as being sent to the same account. Given the beneficiary confirmed to

Mr R that they had received the first payment, I think Mr R had the correct account details and used them both times. And, as the payments show on his statement, I think it's unlikely that a keying or processing error occurred for the missing, second payment.

Where a missing payment is correctly executed by a bank – which I'm satisfied it likely was – I'd expect the bank to help its customer, in this case, Mr R, by trying to trace it within a reasonable period of time. I'm satisfied with the steps first direct took to locate the payment and, upon receipt of confirmation from the beneficiary bank that the funds had arrived and been withdrawn, I'm satisfied there was nothing else first direct could reasonably do to help Mr R.

The Investigator noted the statements provided by the beneficiary didn't appear to be for the account Mr R sent his money to – a finding Mr R disagrees with. I understand the Investigator's concerns around the statements provided by the beneficiary, particularly as they're in a different name to the account Mr R sent his money. However, my role here is to decide whether first direct got something wrong which caused Mr R to lose out as a result – and, for the reasons mentioned above, I'm not persuaded it did.

Turning to the service Mr R was given by first direct's agent; while I haven't identified any impact to Mr R which I think warrants financial compensation, I'm pleased to see first direct's response to the matter, and its assurances that feedback will be given.

I realise this decision will not be the one Mr R wanted, and I recognise he has suffered a loss which appears to be through no fault of his own. But for me to tell first direct to cover Mr R's lost payment, I must be persuaded the issue was, more likely than not, as a result of something first direct got wrong. And, for the reasons set out above, I don't think it was.

### **My final decision**

My final decision is I don't uphold this complaint.

Under the rules of the Financial Ombudsman Service, I'm required to ask Mr R to accept or reject my decision before 10 March 2026.

James Akehurst  
**Ombudsman**