

complaint

Mr A complains about the service he received from British Gas Insurance Limited under his home emergency insurance policy.

background

British Gas attended Mr A's property to deal with a problem relating to his central heating boiler.

Mr A later complained to British Gas about the service he'd received. And, being unhappy with its response, he complained to this service.

Our adjudicator thought Mr A's complaint shouldn't be upheld.

Mr A disagreed with the adjudicator's conclusions, so the matter's been referred to me to make a final decision.

my findings

I've considered all the available evidence and arguments to decide what's fair and reasonable in the circumstances of this complaint.

I've decided not to uphold Mr A's complaint and I'll explain why.

Mr A says the engineer who attended told him parts were no longer available and the boiler would need replacing. And Mr A says when he told the engineer it had been serviced recently and all parts were available at that time, the engineer opened his laptop and confirmed parts were available for next day fitting.

So, Mr A says he feels he was being put under pressure to buy a new unit and he's furious that he could've been thousands of pounds out of pocket.

British Gas says it understands when the engineer attended he advised Mr A that as his boiler's on its reduced service parts list, some parts aren't available. But it says the engineer then checked and fortunately found that the required part was available. So, it says the engineer advised Mr A he would order the part and he arranged another appointment to complete the repair.

British Gas also says its engineers have a duty of care to mention to customers that if their boiler's listed on its reduced parts list, a new one would be more energy efficient. But it says this is only a recommendation and it's up to the customer to decide whether to follow it or not.

In addition, British Gas says it's paid Mr A £50 compensation for missing an appointment and a further £50 as a gesture of goodwill because it had no record of receiving a letter Mr A had sent it.

The initial advice the engineer gave Mr A about parts no longer being available for his boiler was wrong. But British Gas has acknowledged this and it's indicated the engineer's been given feedback about how to deal with this kind of issue in future. From the information I've seen, I'm satisfied this situation was the result of misunderstanding and not any deliberate attempt to mislead Mr A or to cause him to incur unnecessary expense.

I note British Gas has paid Mr A £100 compensation for any distress he's been caused as a result of other issues with the handling of his claim. I think this was reasonable. And, as the wrong advice Mr A was given didn't cause him any actual harm, such as leading him to replace his boiler when it didn't actually need to be replaced, I can't uphold his complaint.

my final decision

I don't uphold Mr A's complaint against British Gas Insurance Limited.

Under the rules of the Financial Ombudsman Service, I'm required to ask Mr A to accept or reject my decision before 15 May 2017.

Robert Collinson
ombudsman