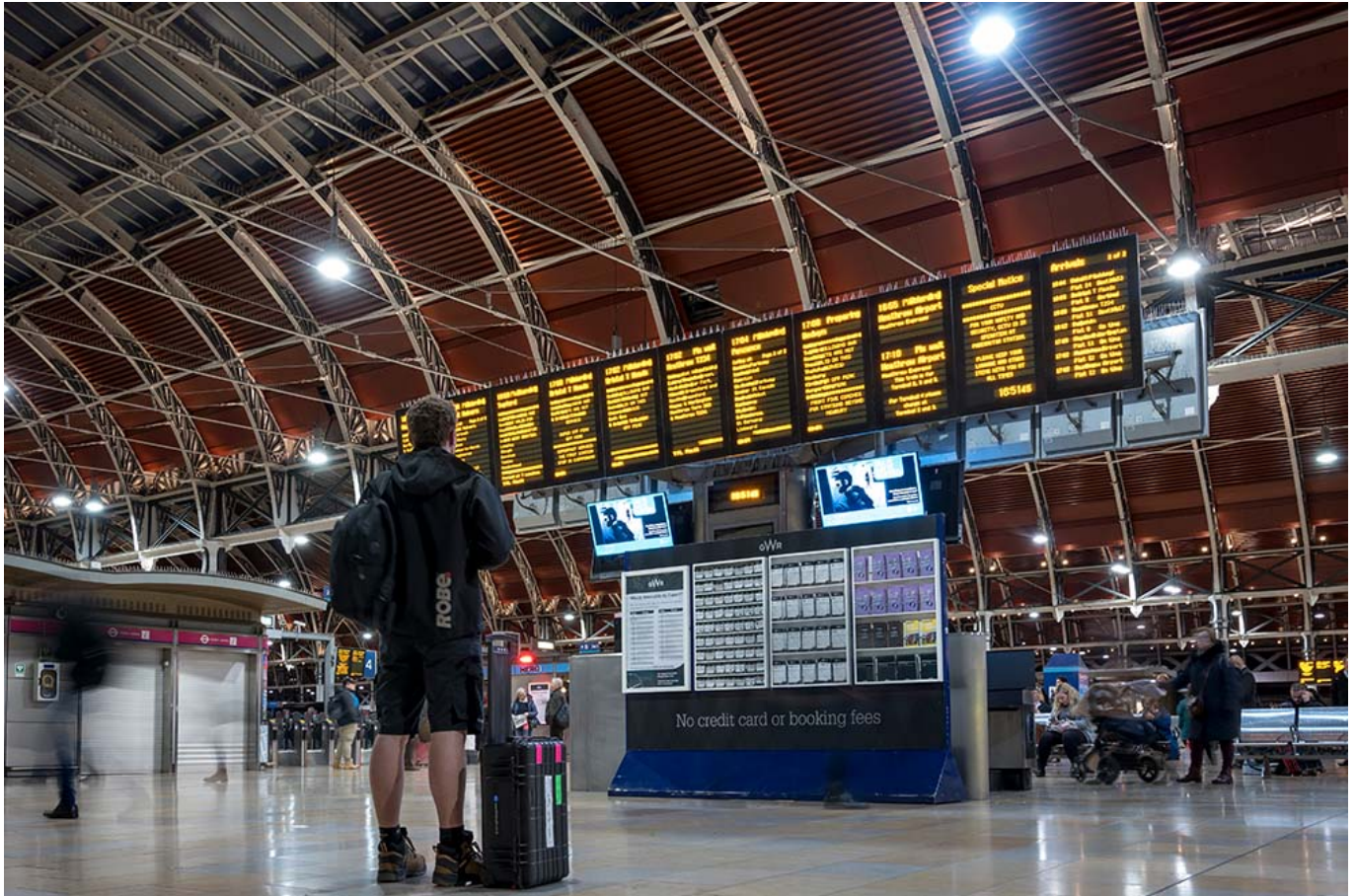


ORR: Passengers to be reimbursed after IT error

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Thousands of rail passengers impacted by an IT error will be reimbursed for the inconvenience they experienced when attempting to claim compensation for a delayed journey.

FirstGroup, which runs Avanti West Coast, Great Western Railway, South Western Railway and TransPennine Express and open-access operators Hull Trains and Lumo, self-reported the issue to the **Office of Rail and Road (ORR)** after a recent audit identified the issue.

When a passenger submits a Delay Repay claim to the wrong train company, the claim should be redirected to the appropriate train company for processing.

An error with **FirstGroup's** IT system meant this was not happening, affecting more than 53,000 delay compensation claims.

Britain's rail regulator and **FirstGroup** worked together to understand what happened, ensure compliant processes were put in place, and also make sure proposals to compensate passengers affected were adequate.

ORR reached an agreement with **FirstGroup** that means the operator has begun contacting all eligible passengers and will make a goodwill payment of at least £10 for the inconvenience.

Customers can be reassured they will be contacted by **FirstGroup** and do not need to take any action.

ORR is satisfied that the matter has now been resolved, and FirstGroup did not financially gain from the issue.

“Disappointed” issue went unnoticed

Jacqui Russell, Head of Consumers at the **Office of Rail and Road**, said: “We were disappointed that this issue had gone unnoticed until an internal audit by FirstGroup flagged it up.

“We’ve been working with them ever since to make sure passengers impacted by the error are contacted and adequately redressed.

“We’re now happy this issue has been resolved and delay compensation claims will be passed to the right train operating company in future.”

A spokesperson for **FirstGroup** said: “A recent internal audit has unfortunately highlighted an IT issue that has meant that some cases weren’t successfully forwarded to the correct operator as we promised at the time the affected customers were advised of our rejection of their claim.

“We recognise this could have caused additional complications for customers as they would have had to pursue their claims directly with the correct operator and we will therefore be making a goodwill payment to those customers affected for any inconvenience caused.

“Whilst the issue has now been fully rectified, we’re really sorry if this has caused any inconvenience to customers when resolving their claims.”