

## **complaint**

Mr B is unhappy with how Lloyds Bank plc dealt with him after he was tricked into making several overseas transfers.

## **background**

In 2014 Mr B was trying to complete an overseas deal. Between 16 September 2014 and 14 October 2014 he made three transfers to separate accounts overseas. Mr B thought he was making the payments to legitimate officials.

By 20 October 2014, Mr B realised that he had been scammed. He called Lloyds. But the bank told him that it couldn't help him because he had authorised the payments. It told him to contact the police.

Mr B complained to Lloyds. It accepted that it could have tried to help him by contacting the overseas banks who received the payments. It paid £50 for the poor service that Mr B had been given. But he wasn't happy. He brought his complaint to us.

Lloyds did contact each of the overseas banks to see if it could help Mr B get his money back. It couldn't.

Our adjudicator found that even if Lloyds had contacted the overseas banks straight away, it was unlikely that any of Mr B's money would have still been in the recipients' accounts. But she did recommend that the bank should pay Mr B £150 for the distress and inconvenience that had been caused.

Mr B ideally wanted the amount of his last repayment refunded to him. But he said £500 would recognise the poor service he has received. Lloyds didn't agree to this. The bank did say that it was happy to pay the £150 recommended by the adjudicator.

Mr B remains unhappy. He wants an ombudsman's review.

## **my findings**

I have considered all the available evidence and arguments to decide what is fair and reasonable in the circumstances of this complaint.

In cases like these, where the evidence is incomplete, I reach my decision on a balance of probabilities. That means I'll look at all the available evidence. I'll then decide what I think is most likely to have happened.

Mr B has my genuine sympathy. I can fully understand why he transferred the money overseas. It was an elaborate and plausible scam. But my decision focuses on Lloyds' actions when he told them of his problem.

I can see that when Lloyds did contact the three overseas banks, none of them would confirm when Mr B's money was taken out of the beneficiary accounts. And it is unfortunate that Lloyds didn't contact the overseas banks sooner than it did.

But it is usual in such cases for the money to have left these accounts very rapidly. Certainly more quickly than the six days from when the last payment was made to when Mr B realised

he had been tricked. So, on balance, I am satisfied that it is unlikely that any of his money would have still been available, even if Lloyds had contacted the three banks straight away.

I can see that Mr B feels very strongly about this. He has been a customer of Lloyds for many years. But calculating compensation in such circumstances isn't an exact science. In the circumstances, I am satisfied that £150 is fair and reasonable.

**my final decision**

My final decision is that Lloyds Bank plc has made a fair offer. I leave it for Mr B to decide whether to accept its offer of £150 – bearing in mind that this would be in full and final settlement of this overall complaint.

Under the rules of the Financial Ombudsman Service, I am required to ask Mr B to accept or reject my decision before 10 July 2015.

John Miles  
**ombudsman**