

# National Ambulance Handover Delays – FINAL

Data to the end of August 2023

Published - September 25<sup>th</sup>, 2023

## 2. Summary and Contents

**Overview:** Despite an uplift in handover delays in August 2023, the volume of delays – and the consequent hours lost – mostly remain well below the levels seen in August 2022. Although the numbers are smaller, the impact on those patients experiencing delays is undiminished – around 20-thousand experienced potential harm as a result of hour-plus handovers in August, while 60 patients experienced handover delays of ten-or-more hours.

Page 3.  
Average Handover Times and Delays as a  
Proportion of All Handovers



- The average patient handover time was just over 25-minutes in the most recent month, ten minutes faster than August 2022, and a minute slower than August 2021.
- The proportion of handovers of an hour-or-longer was seven-percent – half that seen in August 2022, and one-percentage point lower than August 2021.

Pages 4 and 5.  
Handovers of 15-minutes and over and  
Hours Lost



- Handover delays of 15-minutes or longer reached their second highest volume in 2023 to-date. There were 209-thousand such delays, one-thousand more than the same month in 2022.
- Time lost to these handovers increased to 88-thousand in August 2023: this is significantly less than for August 2022 – and around the same as seen in August 2021.

Pages 6 to 11.  
Longer Handover Volume and Hours Lost



- Hour-plus handover delays increased to 25-thousand, and the subsequent hours lost to 30-thousand in August 2023 – despite this increase, both measures are well below the levels seen in August 2022.
- Volume of three-hour-plus delays are well below the series average, having dropped steadily throughout the year. This is also true of ten-hour-plus delays – although 60 patients still fell into this category.

Page 12.  
Impact on Patients and Crew



- The volume of patients experiencing potential harm as a result of hour-plus handover delays was around 20-thousand in August 2023.
- Total hours lost to handover delays was the equivalent of 71-thousand job-cycles in August – this equates to around 11% of actual capacity based on AQI face-to-face incidents across the month.

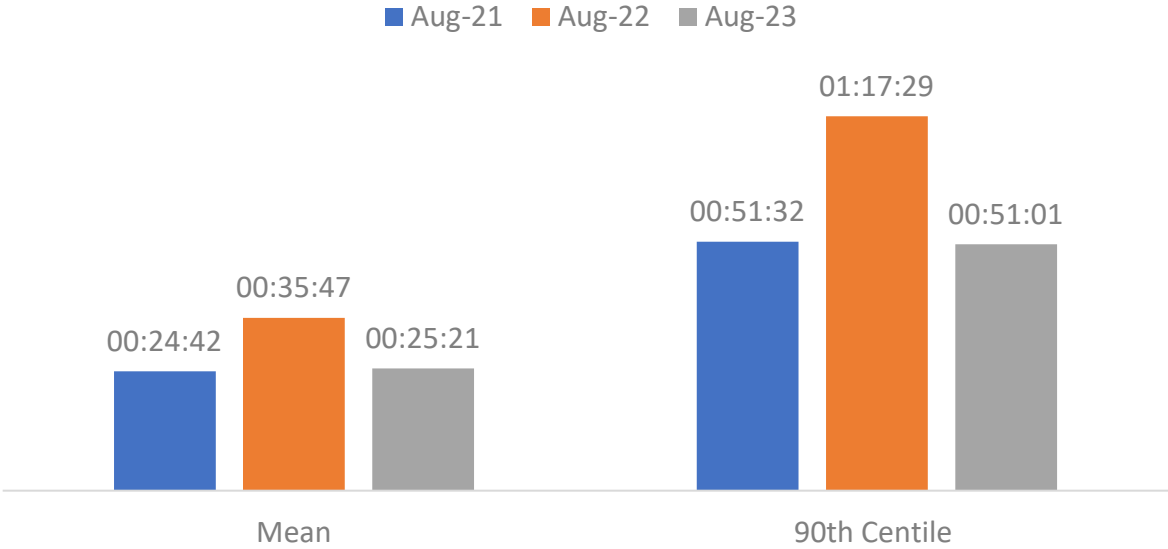
# 3. Average Handover Times and Delays as Proportion of All Handovers (source, NAIG)



The mean handover time in August 2023 was ten-seconds faster than the previous year – but 39-seconds slower than in 2021. Delays as a proportion of all handovers was lower than in August 2021 and August 2022 for those over 15-minutes, and for those of one hour or longer.

## 1. Mean and 90<sup>th</sup> Centile Handover Times

Mean and 90th Centile Handover Time (hh:mm:ss)

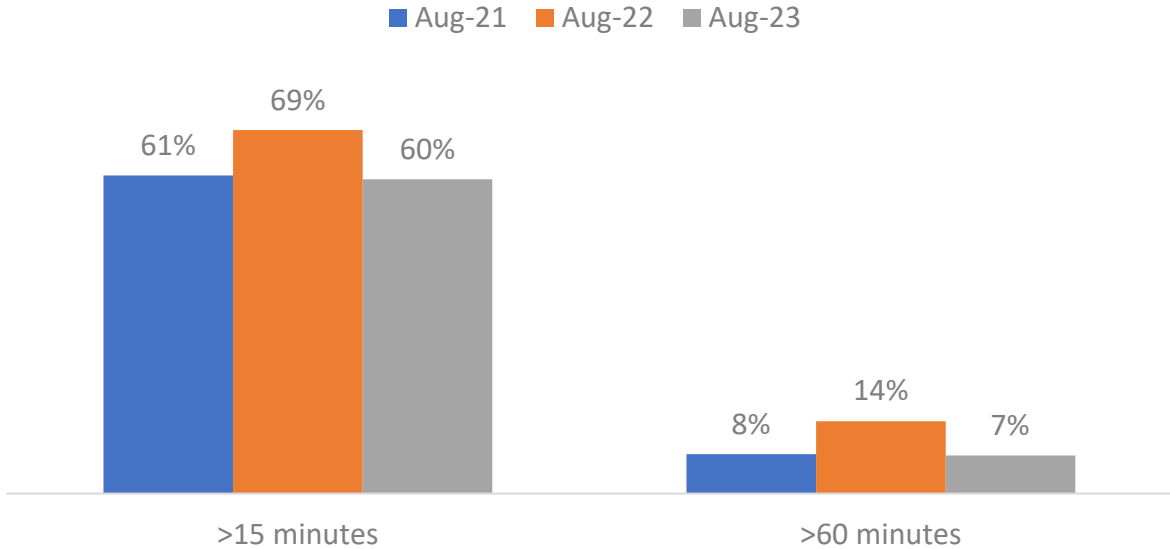


2021 to 2023	2022 to 2023
+39 seconds	-10 minutes

2021 to 2023	2022 to 2023
-30 seconds	-26 minutes

## 2. Handover Delays as a Percentage of All Handovers

Handover Delays as % of All Handovers



2021 to 2023	2022 to 2023
-1pp	-9pp

2021 to 2023	2022 to 2023
-1pp	-7pp

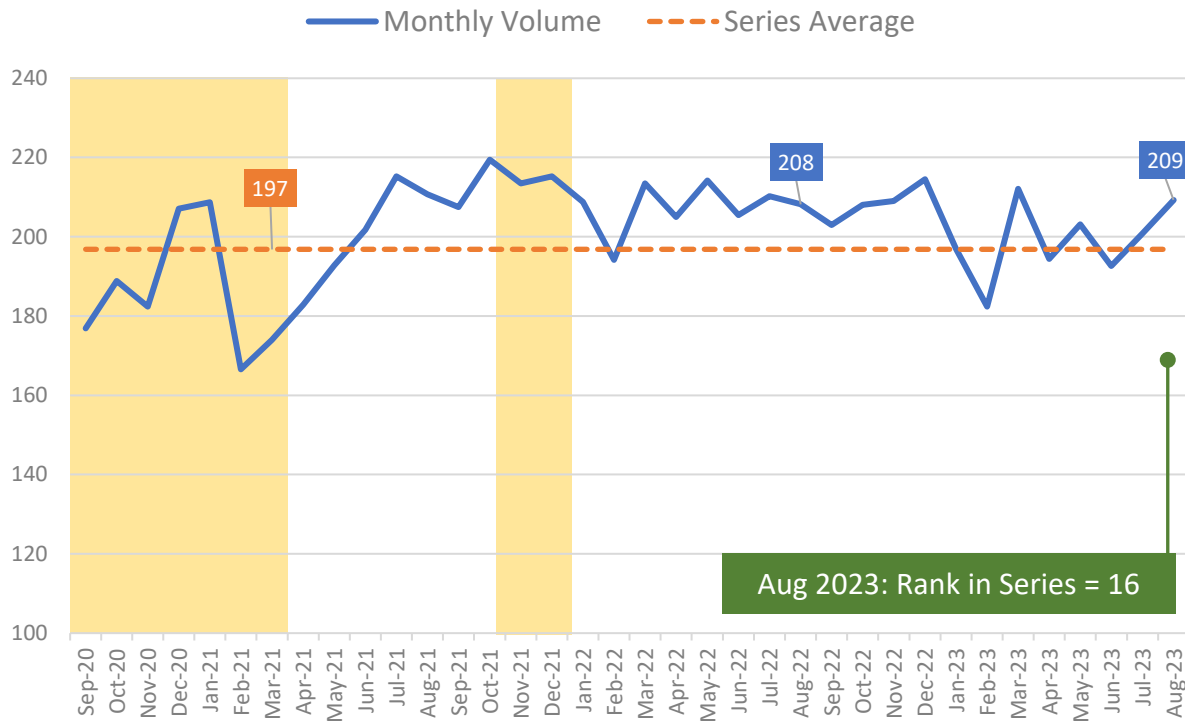


# 4. Patient Handover Delays over 15 Minutes (source, NAIG)

Handovers exceeding 15-minutes increased for the second consecutive month in August, reaching their second highest volume this year – and just exceeding the August 2022 total. Hours-lost to handovers also increased, but remain well below the 2022 equivalent.

## 1. Delays over 15 Minutes

Volume of Handovers Over 15 Minutes ('000, source NAIG)

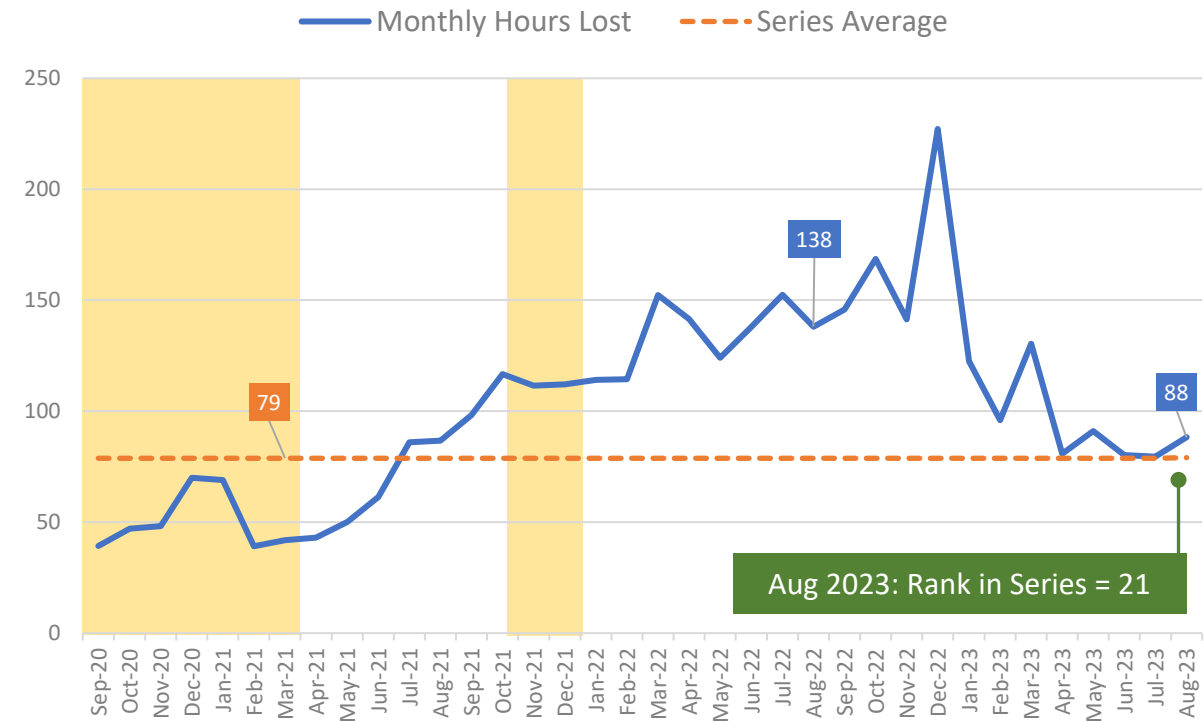


Yellow areas show COVID waves in the UK: source ONS.

← +1% (or +1k) →  
difference, Aug '22 to Aug '23

## 2. Hours lost for Handovers Over 15 Minutes

Hours Lost: Handovers over 15 Minutes ('000, source NAIG)



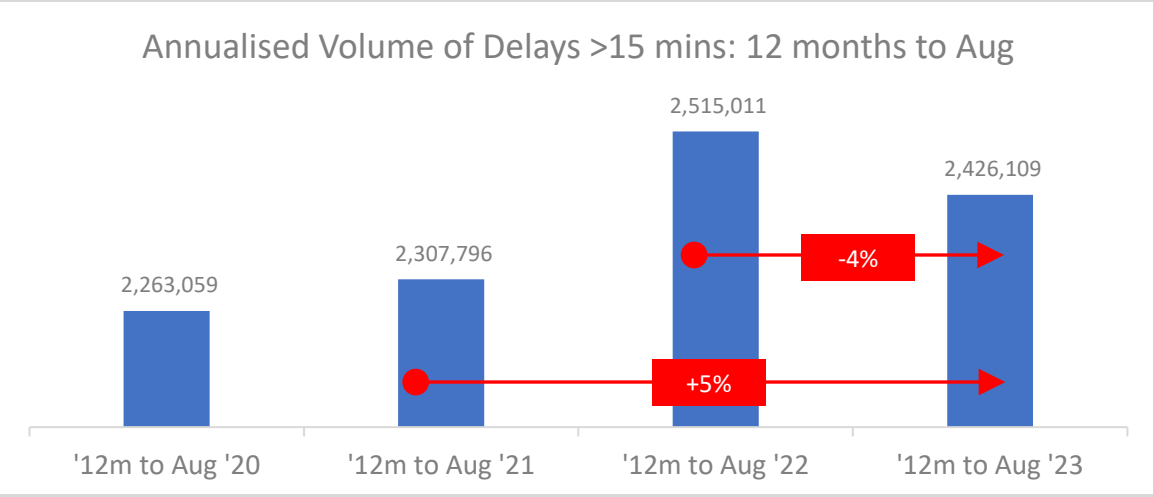
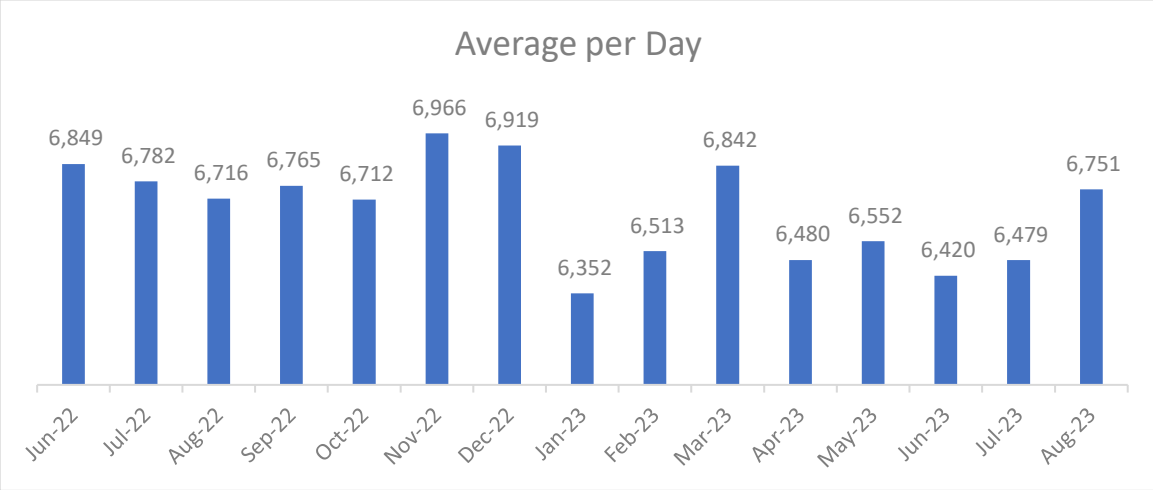
← -56% (or -50k) →  
difference, Aug '22 to Aug '23



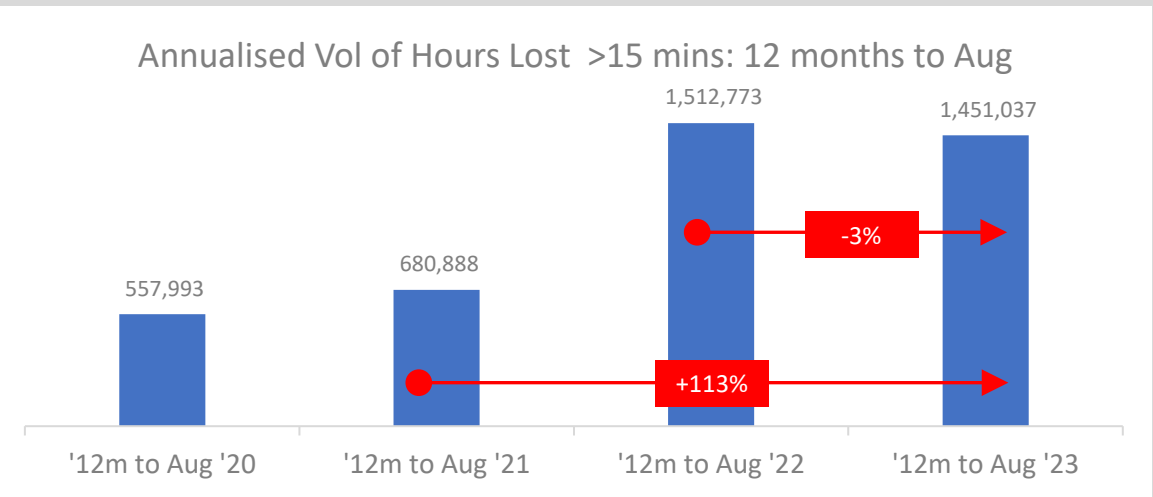
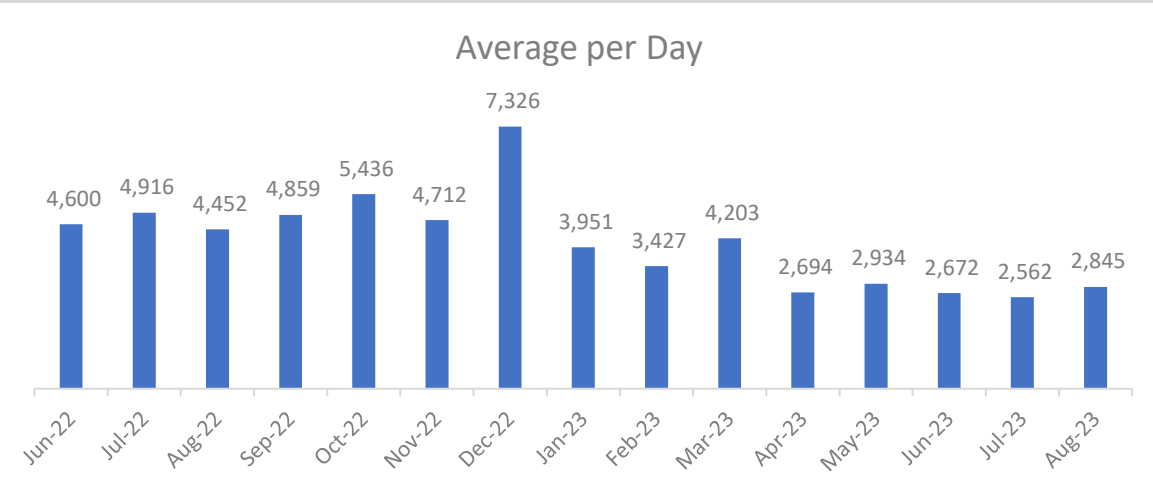
# 5. Average Daily and Annualised Data for >15 minute delays (source, NAIG)



## 1. Volume of Handover Delays over 15 minutes



## 2. Hours Lost for Handover Delays over 15 minutes

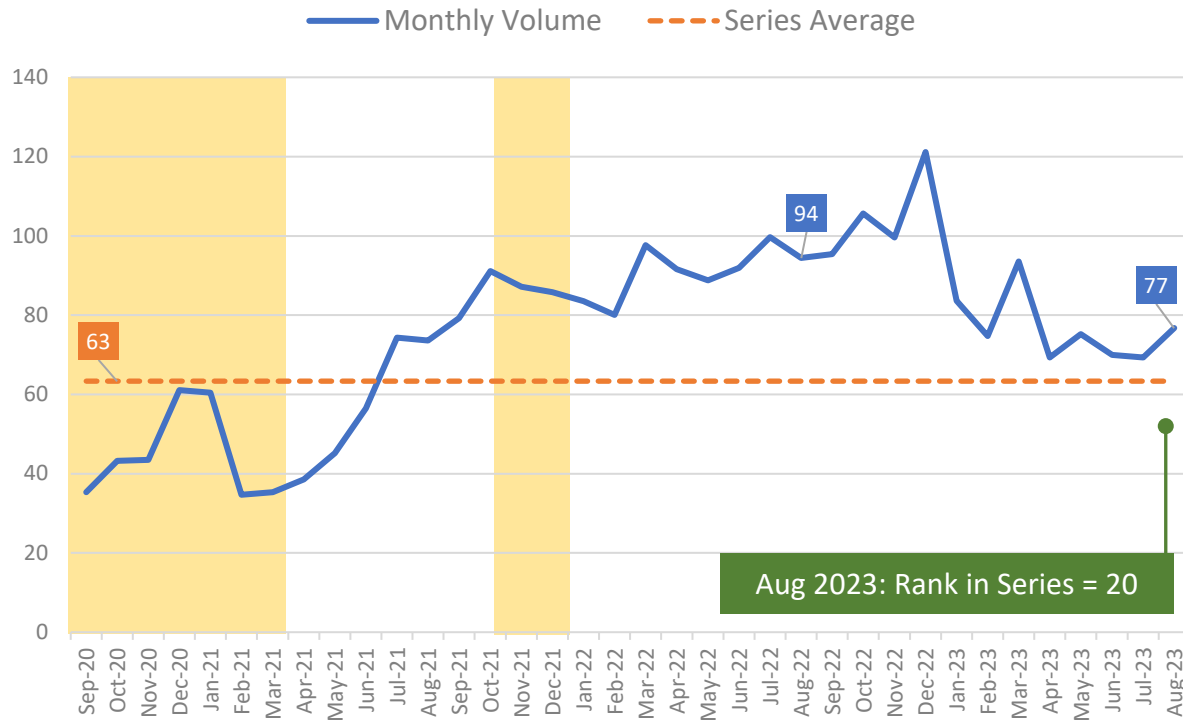


# 6. Patient Handover Delays over 30 Minutes (source, NAIG)

Handover delays of 30-minutes or longer – and the subsequent hours lost – both increased between July and August. However, but figures remain well below those seen in August 2022.

## 1. Delays over 30 Minutes

Volume of Handovers Over 30 Minutes ('000, source NAIG)

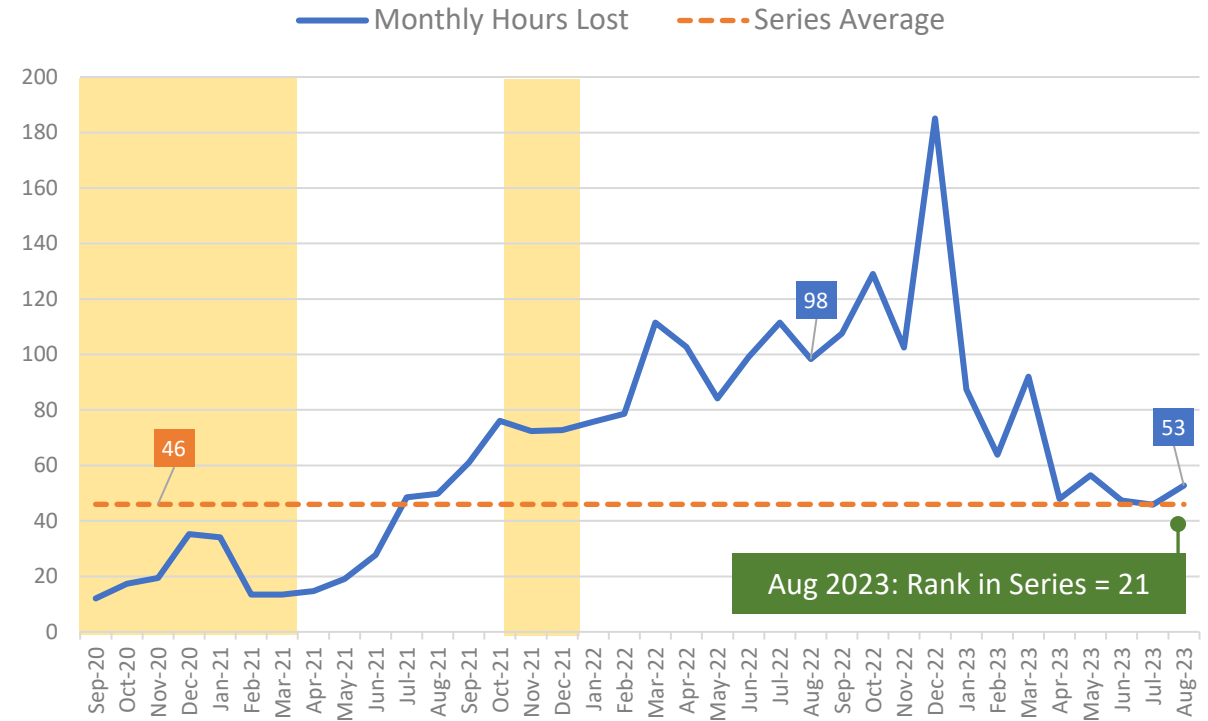


Yellow areas show COVID waves in the UK: source ONS.

← -19% (or -18k) difference, Aug '22 to Aug '23 →

## 2. Hours lost for Handovers Over 30 Minutes

Hours Lost: Handovers over 30 Minutes ('000, source NAIG)



← -46% (or -46k) difference, Aug '22 to Aug '23 →

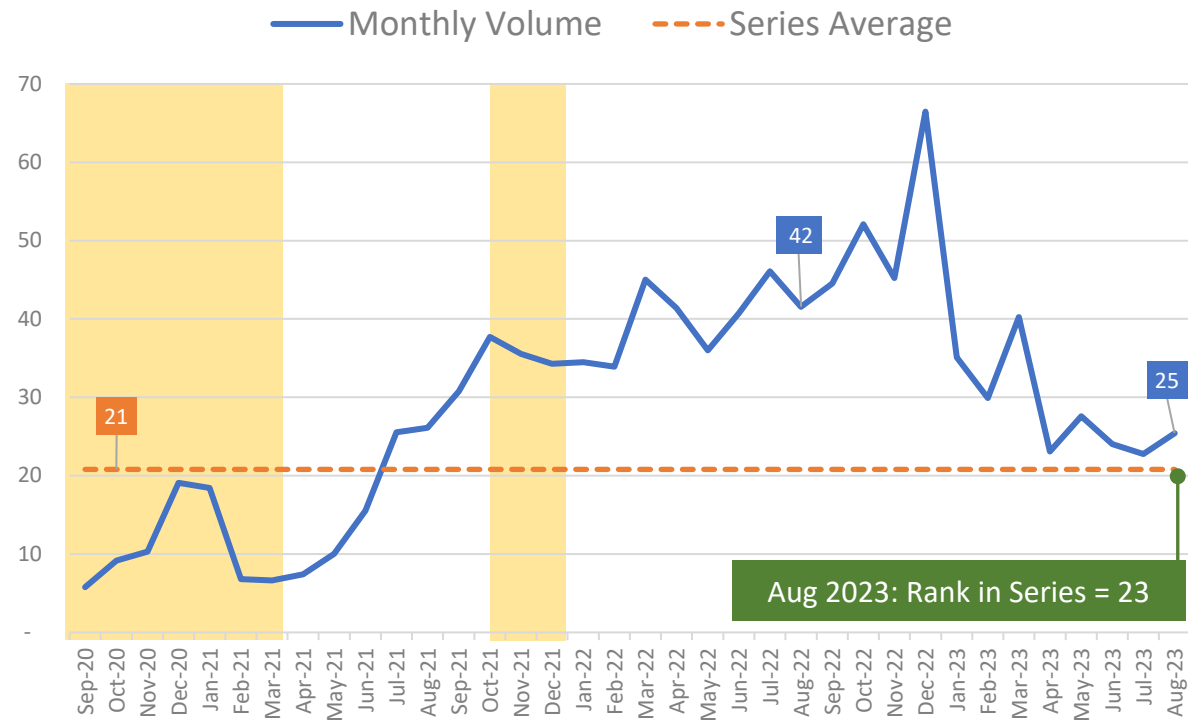


# 7. Patient Handover Delays over 60 Minutes (source, NAIG)

In July, hour-plus handover delays reached their lowest level since June 2021. August saw an uplift in volume (of two-thousand delays), although – again – the monthly total is significantly lower than that seen 12-months ago. Hours lost to these delays follows a similar pattern.

## 1. Delays over 60 Minutes

Volume of Handovers Over 60 Minutes ('000, source NAIG)

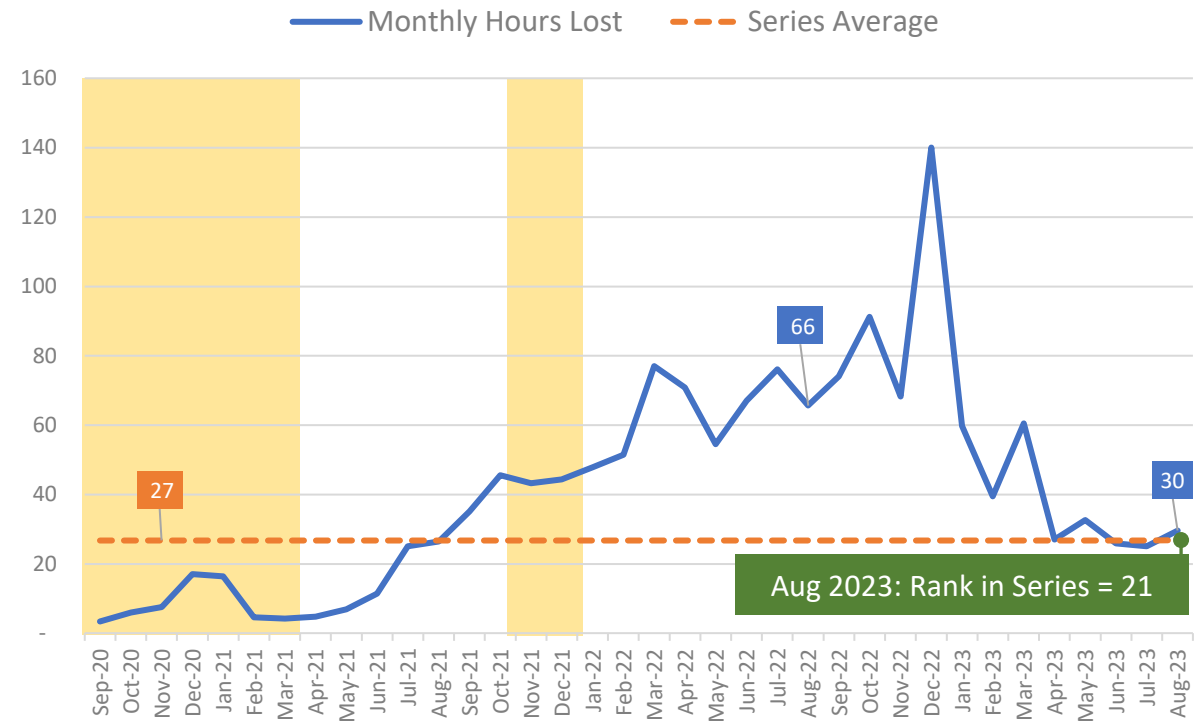


Yellow areas show COVID waves in the UK: source ONS.

← -39% (or -17) difference, Aug '22 to Aug '23 →

## 2. Hours lost for Handovers Over 60 Minutes

Hours Lost: Handovers over 60 Minutes ('000, source NAIG)



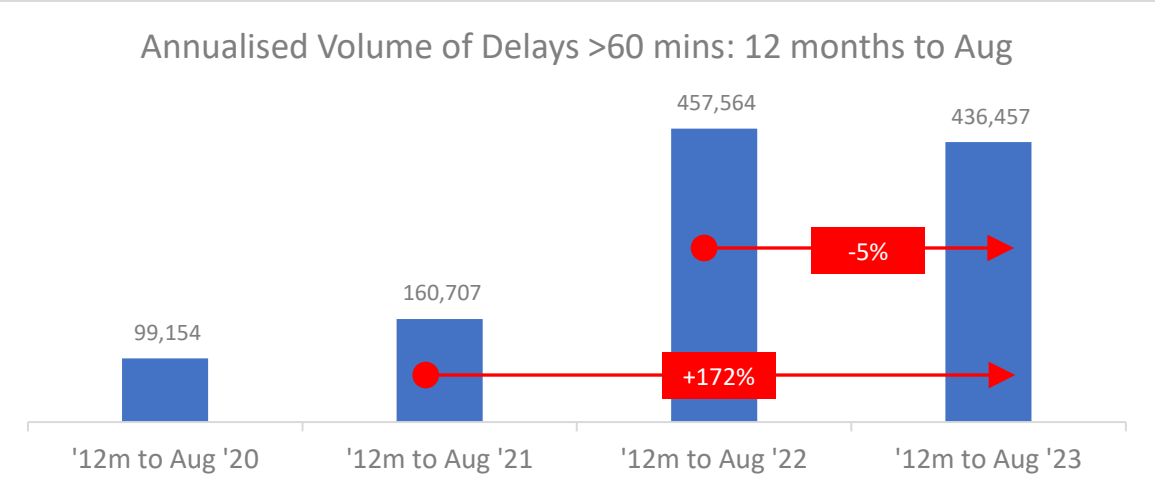
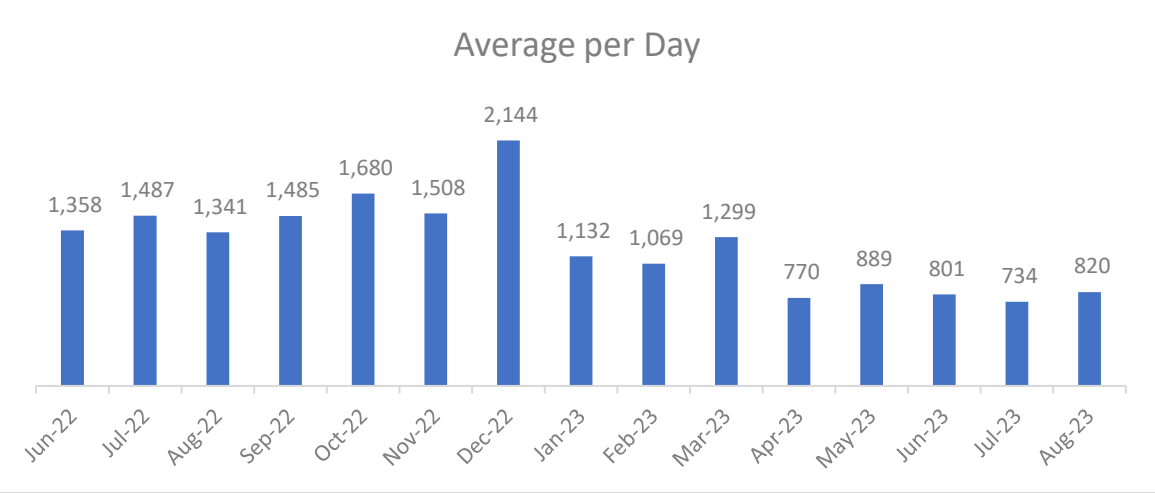
← -55% (or -36k) difference, Aug '22 to Aug '23 →



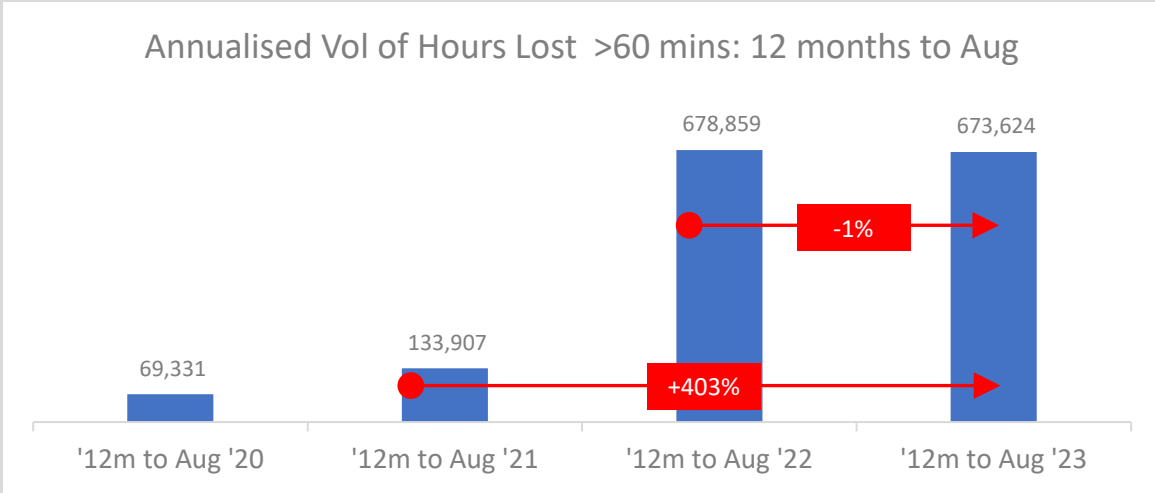
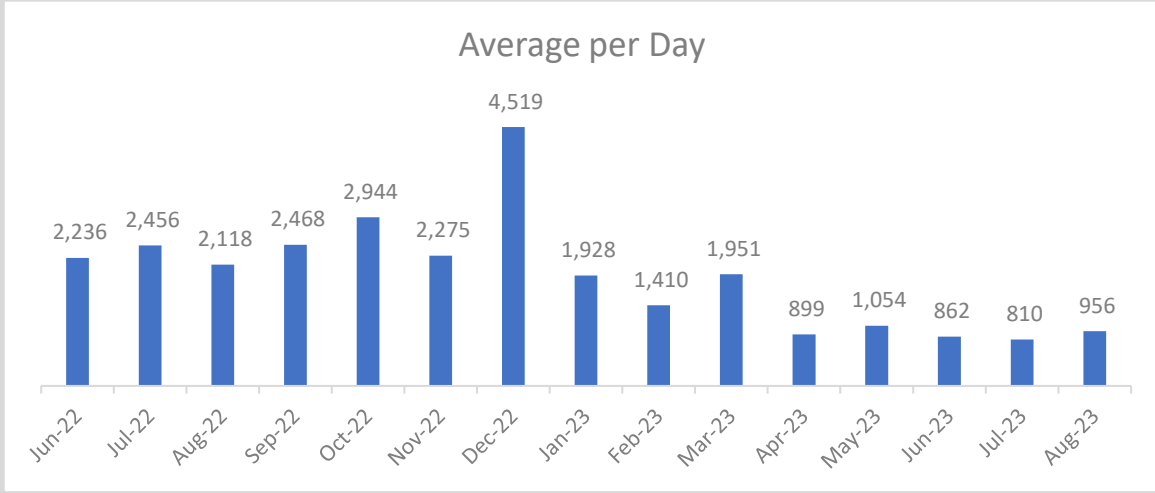
# 8. Average Daily and Annualised Data for >60 minute delays (source, NAIG)



1. Volume of Handover Delays over 60 minutes



2. Hours Lost for Handover Delays over 60 minutes





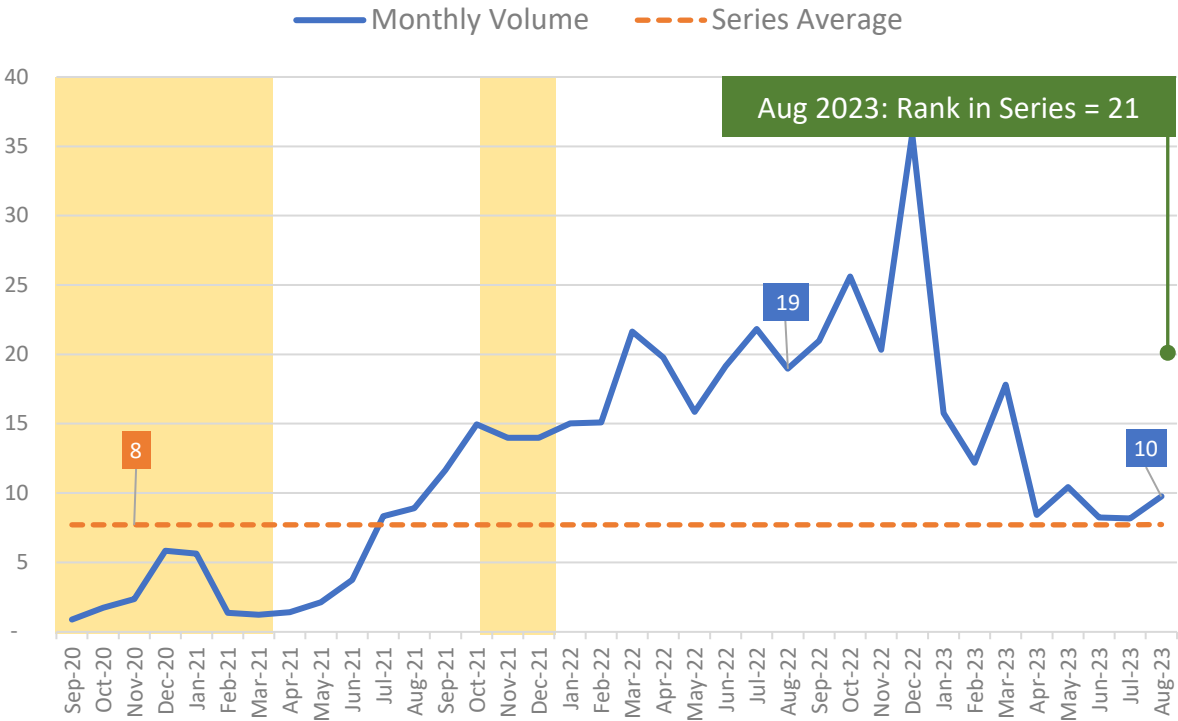
# 9. Patient Handover Delays over 120 Minutes (source, NAIG)



There was an uptick in handover delays of two-hours or longer in August, although both volume, and the subsequent hours lost, are well below the numbers seen last August.

## 1. Delays over 120 Minutes

Volume of Handovers Over 120 Minutes ('000, source NAIG)

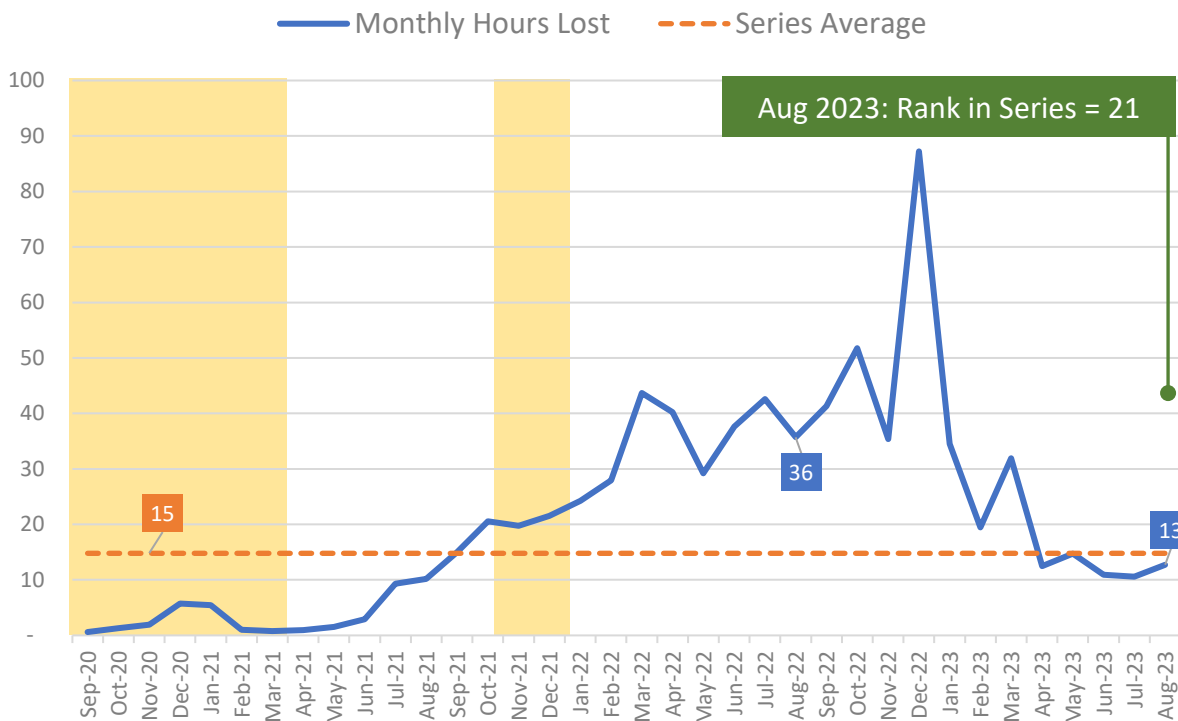


Yellow areas show COVID waves in the UK: source ONS.

← -49% (or -9k) →  
difference, Aug '22 to Aug '23

## 2. Hours lost for Handovers Over 120 Minutes

Hours Lost: Handovers over 120 Minutes ('000, source NAIG)



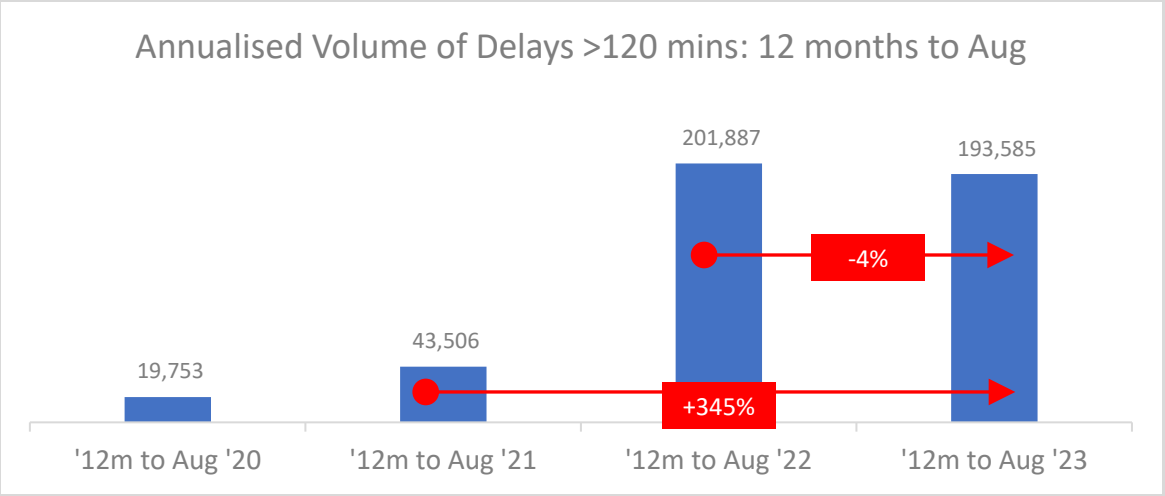
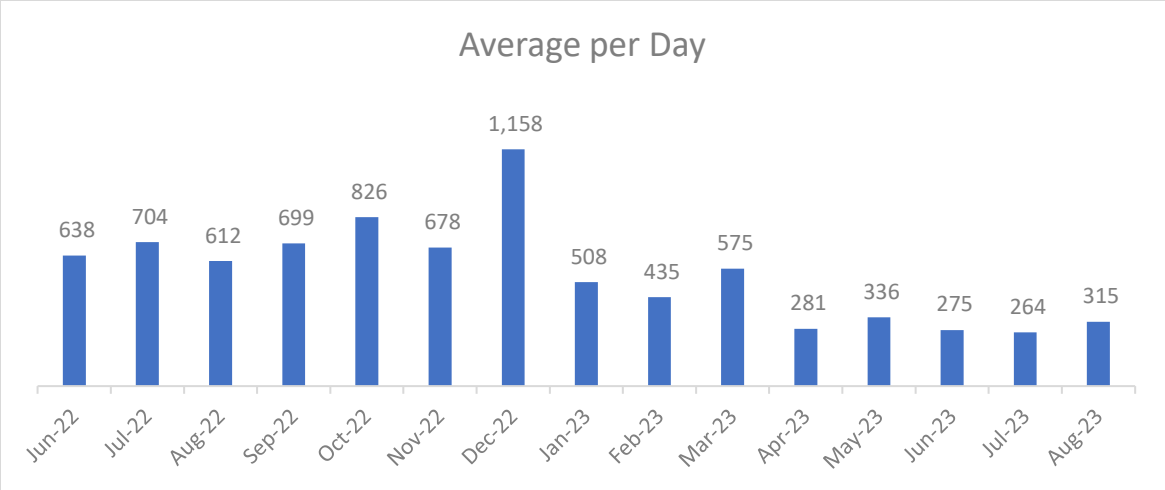
← -64% (or -23k) →  
difference, Aug '22 to Aug '23



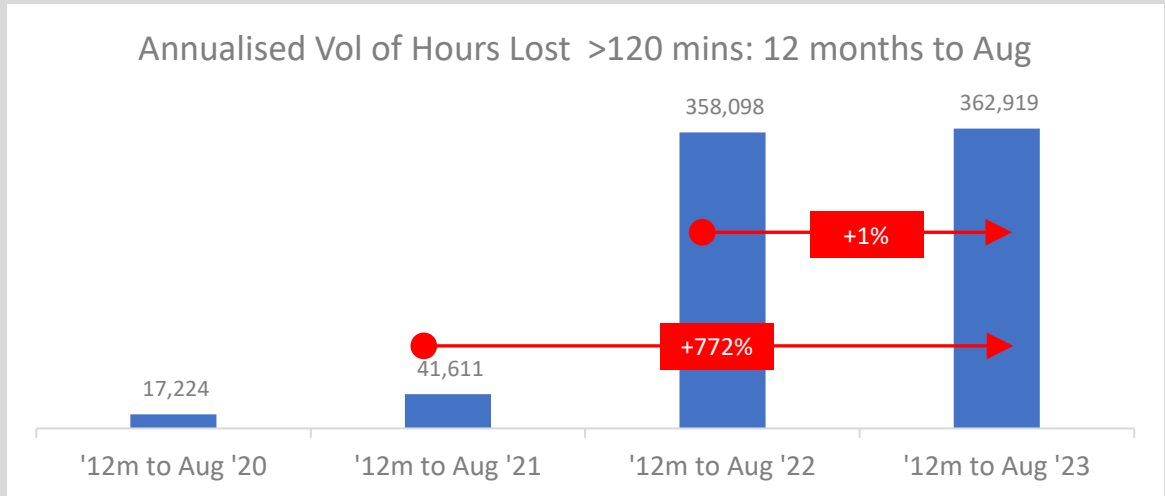
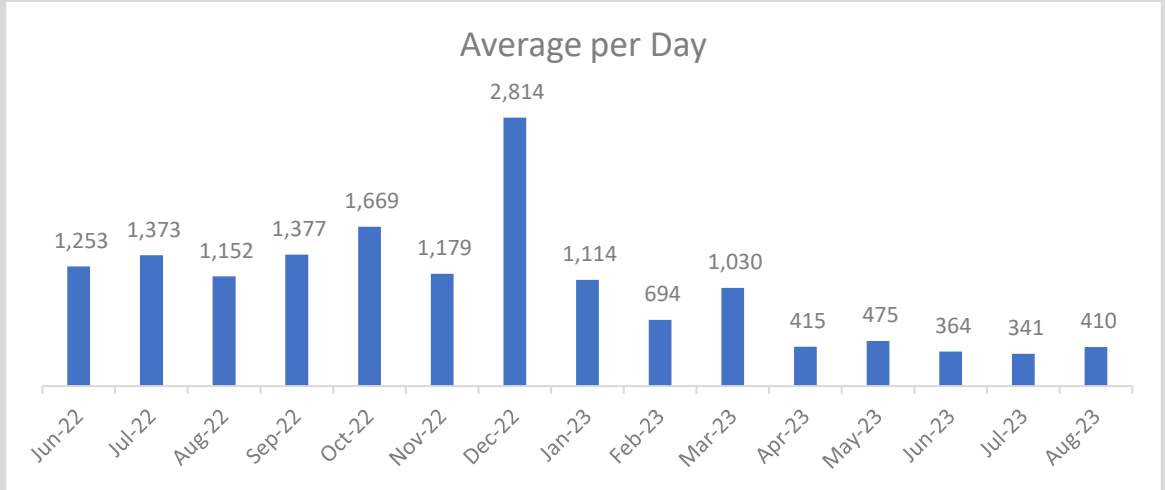
# 10. Average Daily and Annualised Data for >120 minute delays (source, NAIG)



## 1. Volume of Handover Delays over 120 minutes



## 2. Hours Lost for Handover Delays over 120 minutes



# 11. Patient Handovers Longer than Three Hours (source, NAIG)

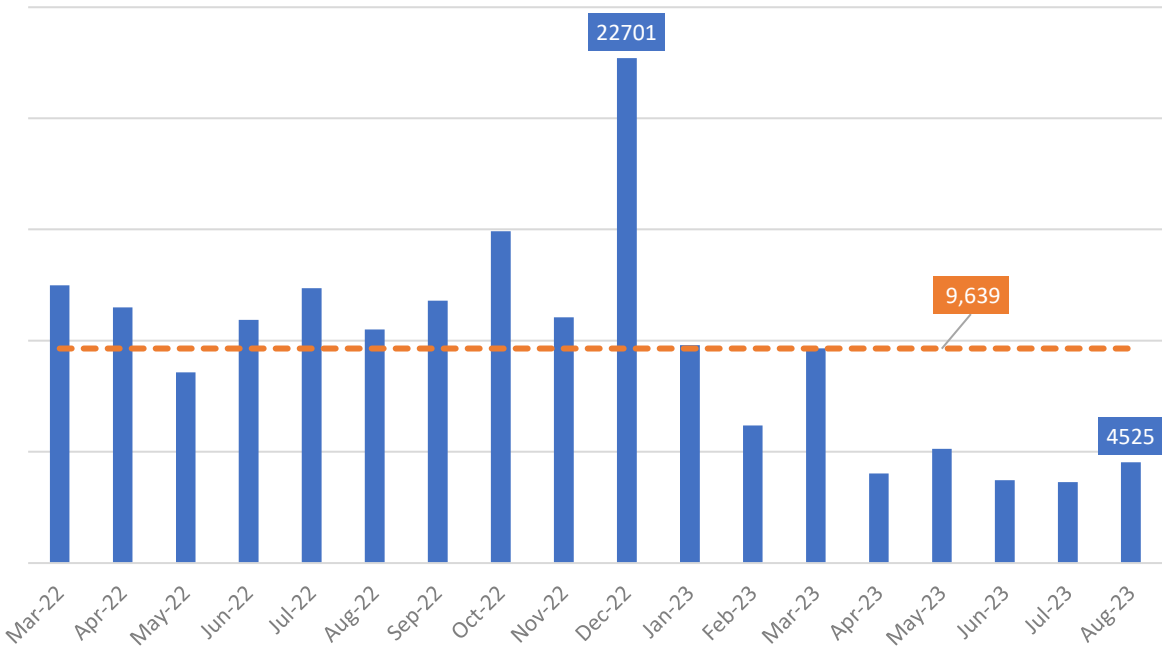


As seen with the other handover delay measures, above, those exceeding three, and ten hours saw an increase in volume in August 2023 – although volumes continue to remain lower than their respective series average, and some of the lowest seen over the past two-years.

## 1. Longer Handover Delays: All Over Three Hours

Volume of Handovers over Three Hours

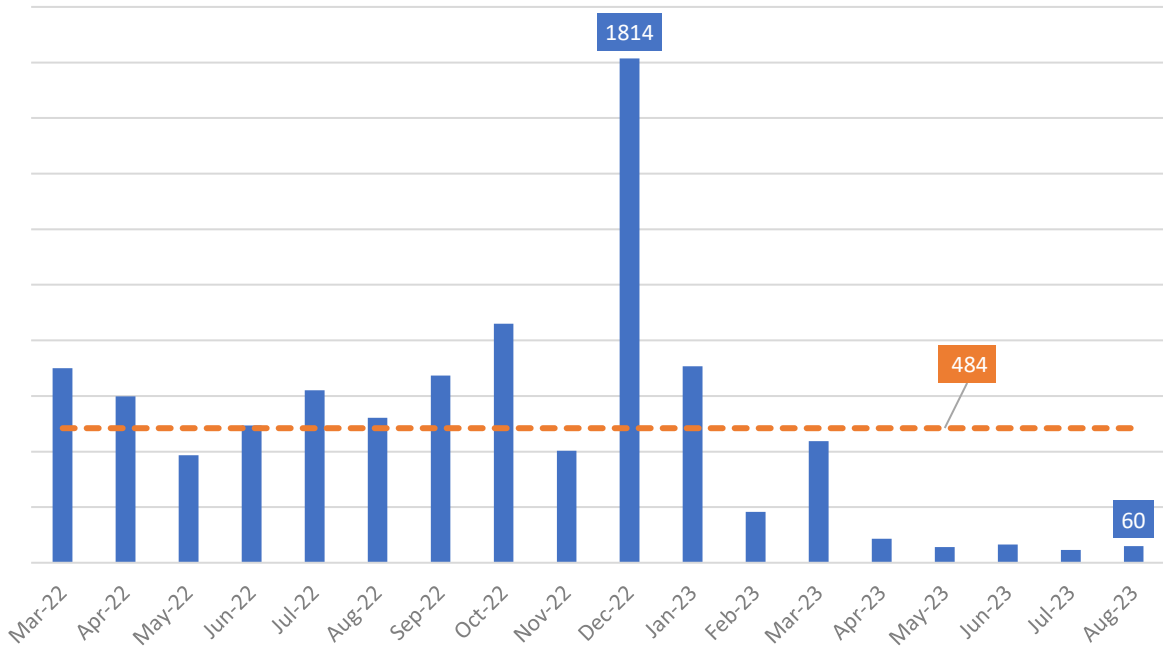
Over 3 hours (blue bar)      Series Average (dashed orange line)



## 2. Longer Handover Delays: All Over Ten Hours

Volume of Handovers over Ten Hours

Over 10 hours (blue bar)      Series Average (dashed orange line)

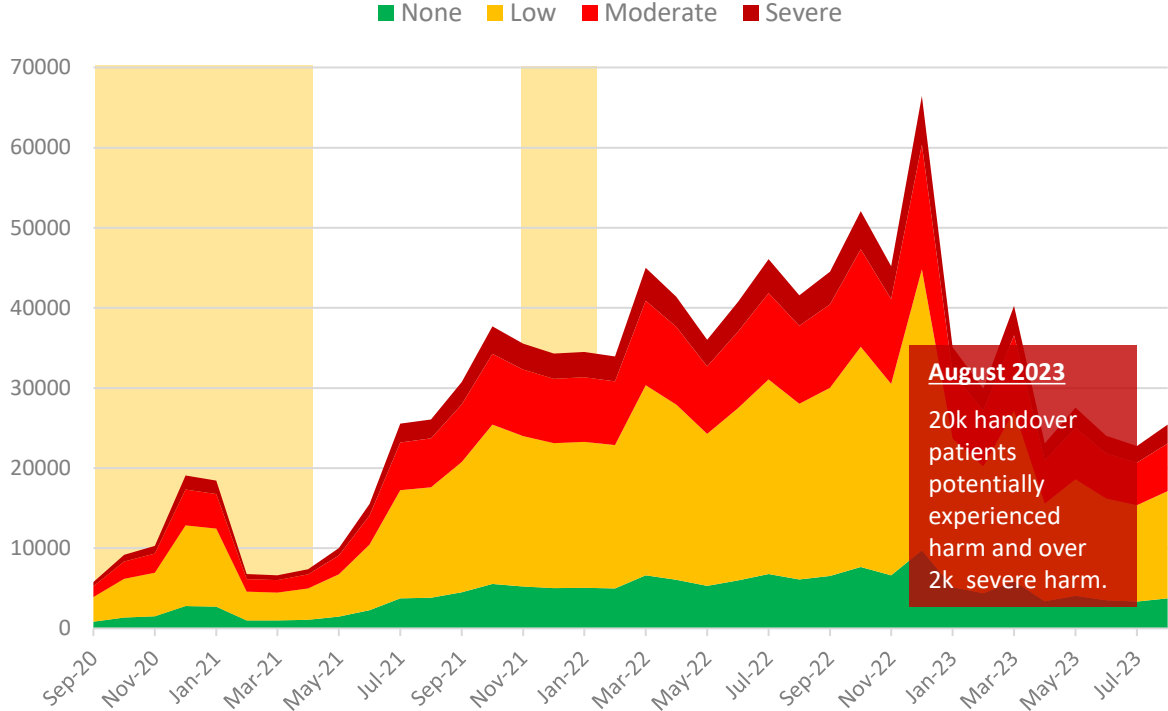


# 12. Impact on Patients and Crew (source, NAIG, [AQI Data](#) and [AACE](#))

Around 20k patients experienced potential harm as a result of long handover delays in August 2023. Looking at the total hours lost to handover delays, the sector lost the equivalent of 71k job cycles. This equates to 11% of potential ambulance capacity across the month – compared with four-percent in August 2020.

## 1. Estimated number of patients experiencing potential harm

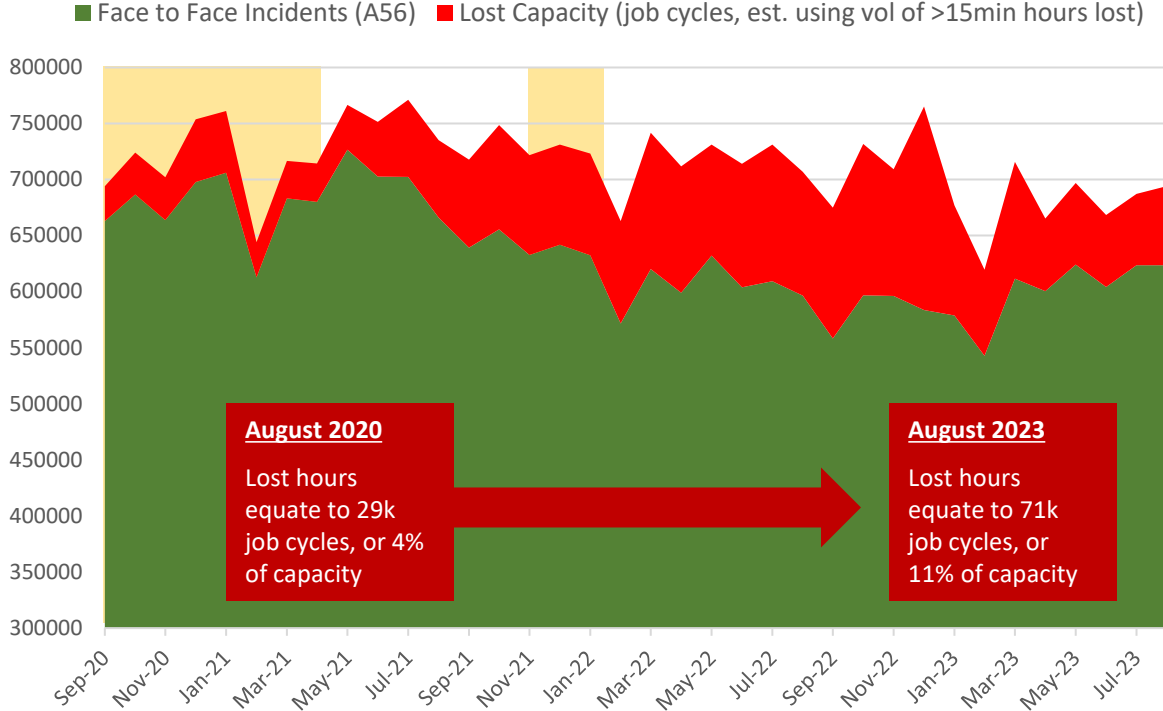
Vol of >60 min handovers by estimated harm (NAIG & AACE)



\*Estimates based on clinical review of patients waiting >60 minutes in 2021

## 2. Estimated impact of lost hours on capacity

Lost Hours and Impact on Capacity



Yellow areas denote COVID waves in the UK: source ONS.