

National Ambulance Handover Delays – FINAL

Data to the end of September 2023

Published - October 25th, 2023

2. Summary and Contents

Overview: September 2023 saw handover delays increase, with the overall of volume taking 15-minutes or longer reaching it's highest level since November 2021. Longer delays also grew to some of the highest seen over the past six-months. While these volumes remain lower than those seen in September 2022, they nonetheless represent several months of growth with the subsequent increases in potential patient harm, and reduced ambulance capacity.

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



- The average patient handover time in September 2023 was just under 29 minutes – around 10 minutes faster than September 2022, and a minute slower than the previous year.
- The proportion of hospital handovers taking an hour or longer was 9% - a notable drop from the 15% seen in September 2022, and the equivalent as seen in 2021.

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



- Handovers of 15-minutes or longer have increased since June 2023, reaching 201-thousand in the most recent month. This is 7-thousand more than September 2022, and represents the highest average daily volume since November 2021.
- Hours lost to all handover delays also increased, reaching 108-thousand, the highest since March 2023, but lower than the 146-thousand hours seen in September 2022.

Pages 6 to 11.
Longer Handover Volume and Hours Lost



- Hour-plus handovers increased to their highest since April, as did the subsequent hours lost. Both measures are lower than their September 2022 equivalent, but greater than recorded in September 2021.
- The same pattern was repeated for two-hour plus handovers. Meanwhile, 200 patients had to wait ten-or-more hours – three times greater than August 2023, but three times smaller than September 2022.

Page 12.
Impact on Patients and Crew



- Around 27-thousand patients experienced potential harm as a result of hour-plus handover delays in September 2023 – with three-thousand potentially experiencing severe harm.
- The sector lost the equivalent of 86-thousand job cycles due to delays. This is the same as 14% of potential ambulance capacity across the month – compared with five percent in September 2020.

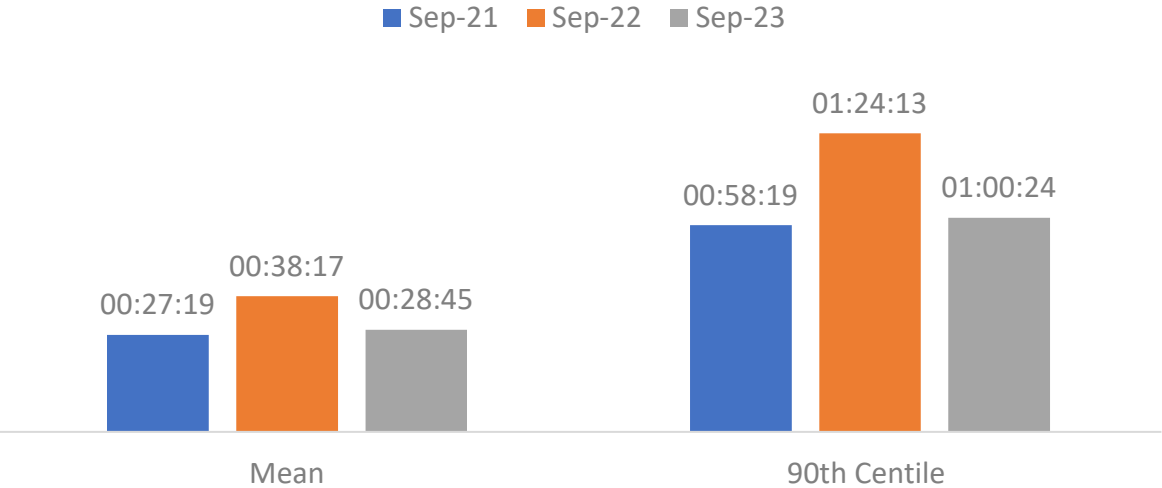
3. Average Handover Times and Delays as Proportion of All Handovers (source, NAIG)



The Mean handover time was nearly 29-minutes in September, ten minutes faster than the previous year, but a minute slower than September 2021. Hour-plus handover delays accounted for 9% of all handovers across the month – unchanged from 2021, but 6-percentage points less than September 2022.

1. Mean and 90th Centile Handover Times

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

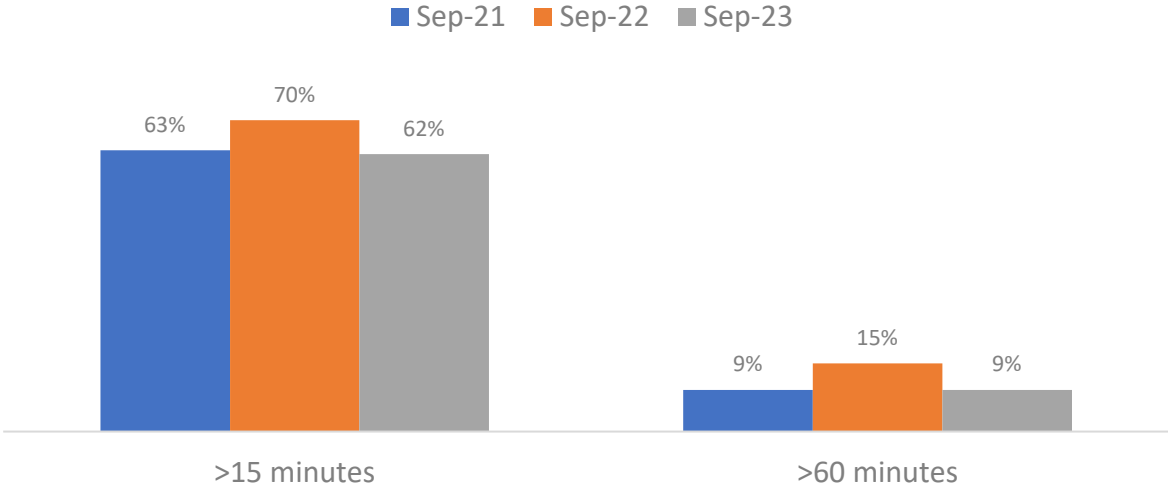


2021 to 2023	2022 to 2023
+1 minute	-10 minutes

2021 to 2023	2022 to 2023
+2 minutes	-24 minutes

2. Handover Delays as a Percentage of All Handovers

Handover Delays as % of All Handovers



2021 to 2023	2022 to 2023
-1pp	-8pp

2021 to 2023	2022 to 2023
=	-6pp

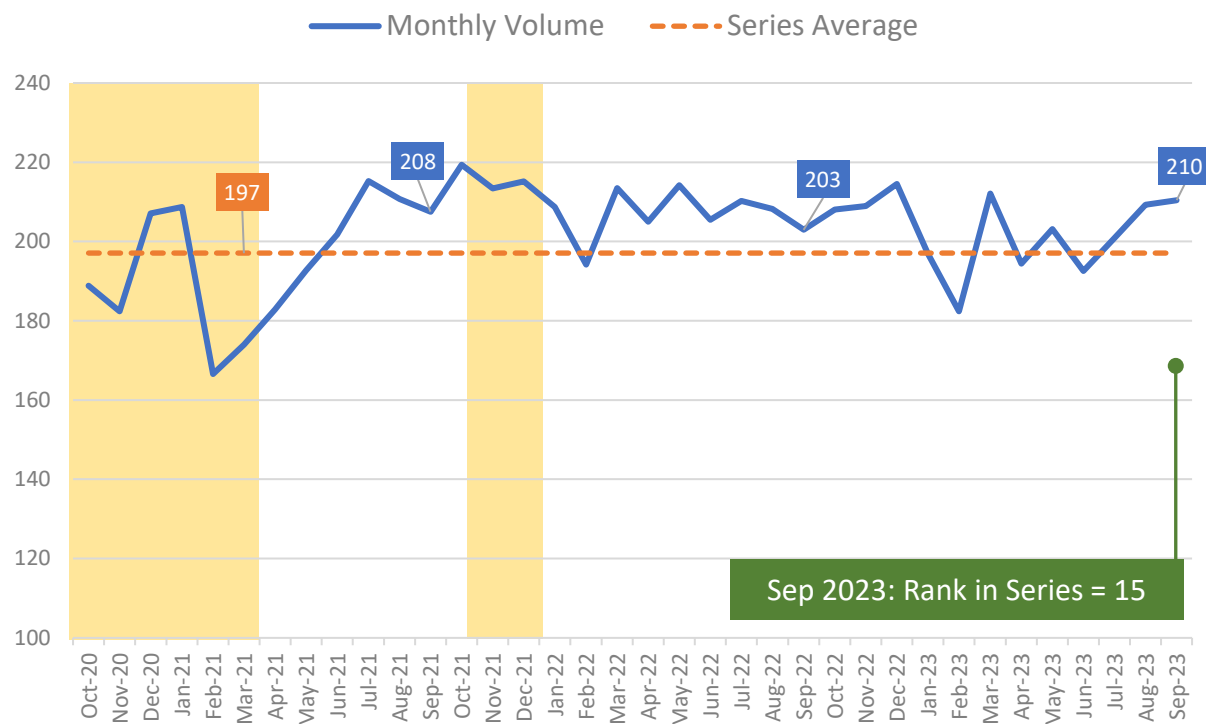


4. Patient Handover Delays over 15 Minutes (source, NAIG)

Handovers exceeding 15-minutes have increased each month since June 2023, reaching 201-thousand in the most recent month. This is 7-thousand more than September 2022, and represents the highest average daily volume since November 2021 (see next page for details).

1. Delays over 15 Minutes

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

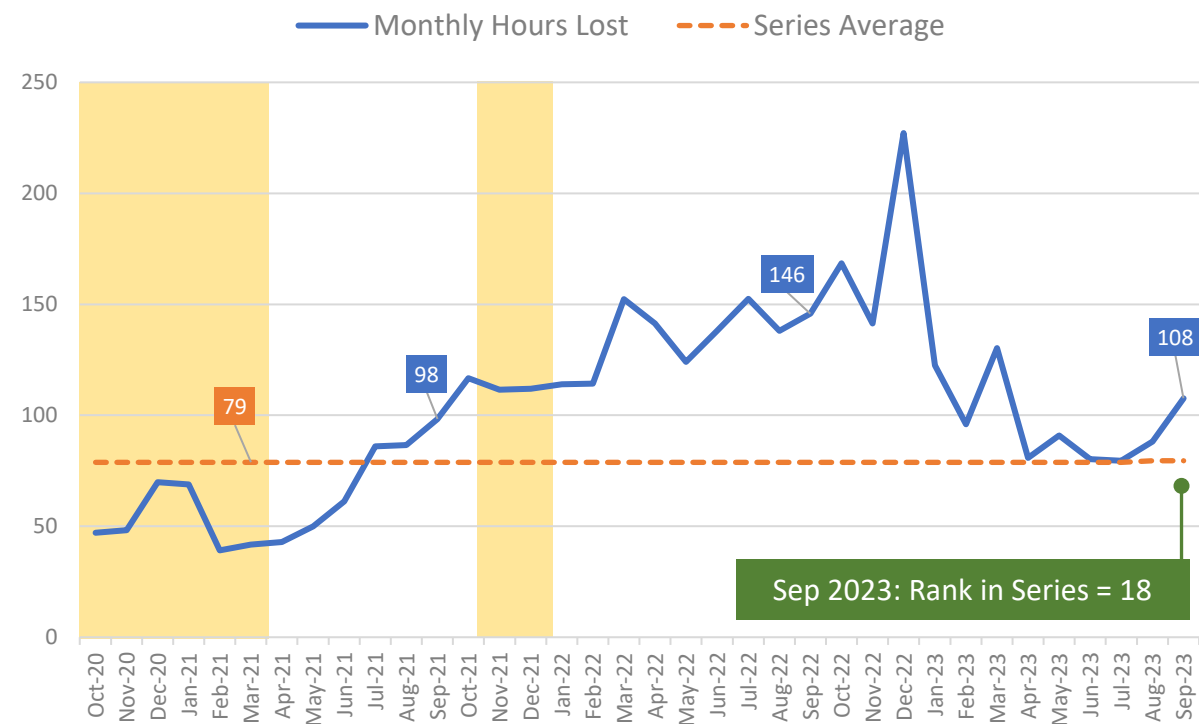


Yellow areas show COVID waves in the UK: source ONS.

← +4% (or +7k) →
difference, Sep '22 to Sep '23

2. Hours lost for Handovers Over 15 Minutes

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



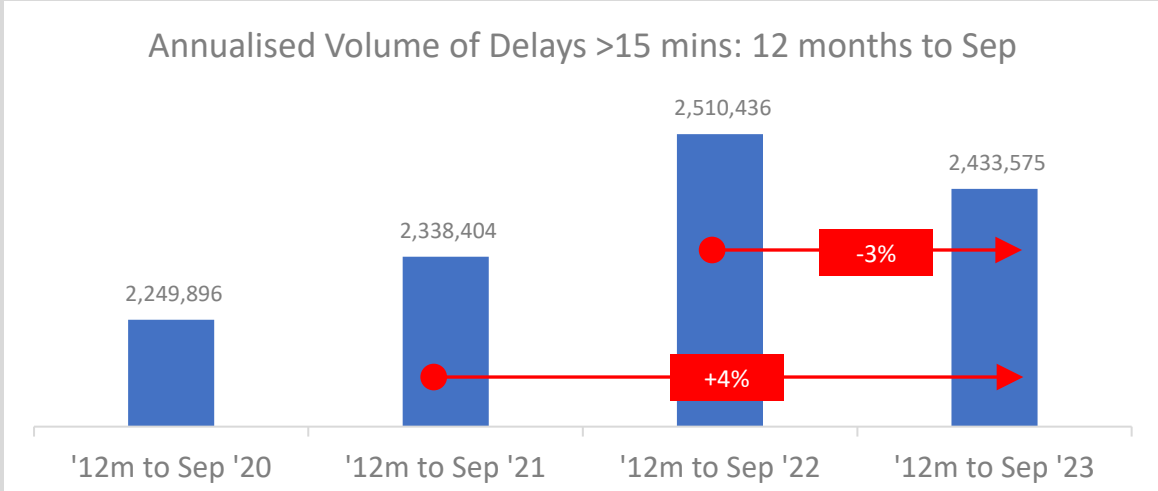
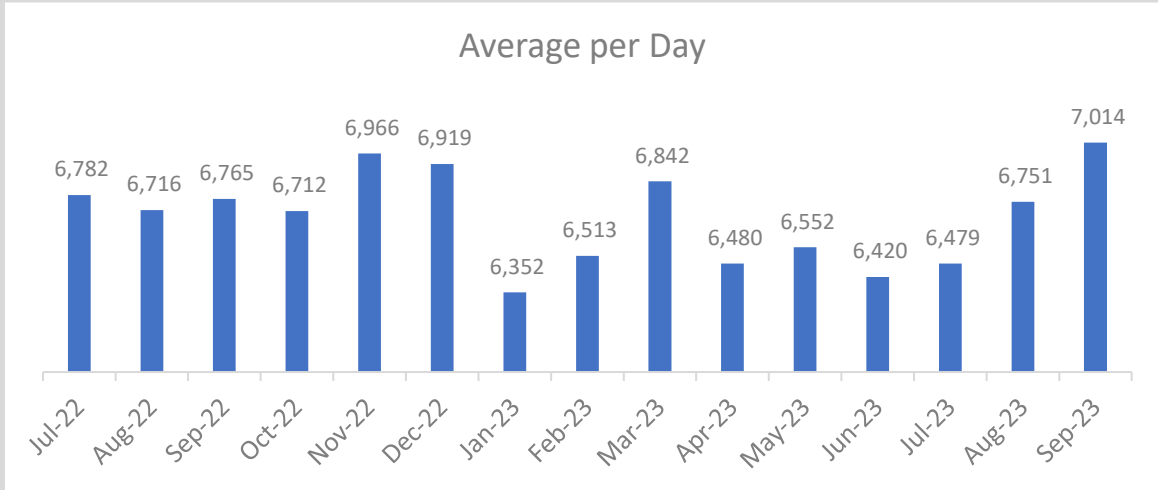
Sep 2023: Rank in Series = 18

← -26% (or -38k) →
difference, Sep '22 to Sep '23

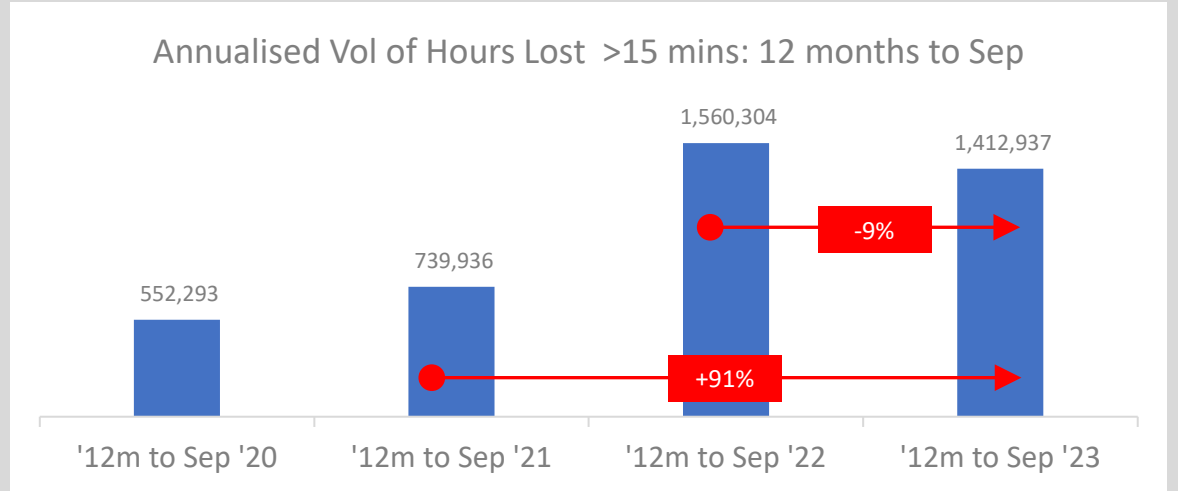
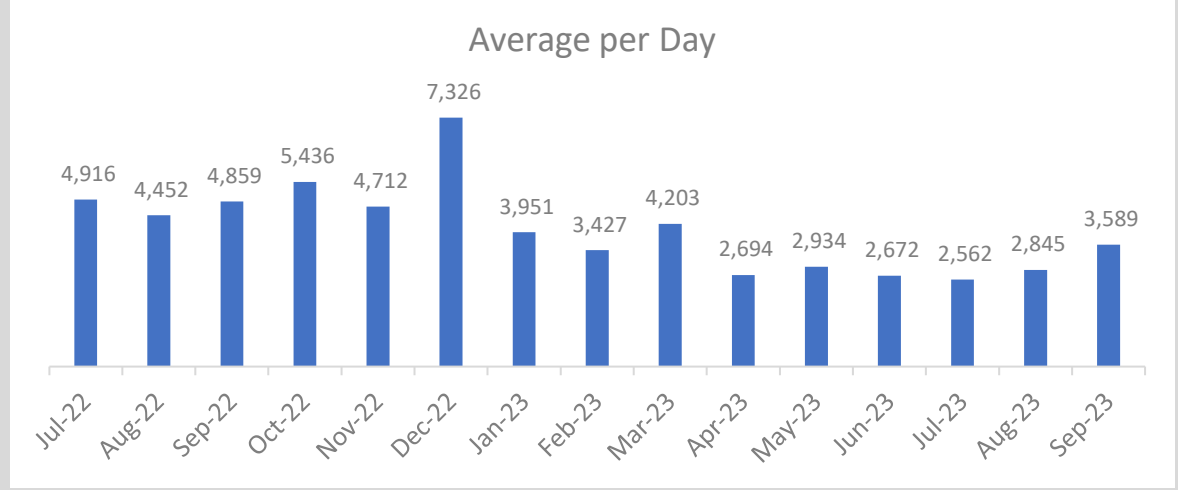
5. Average Daily and Annualised Data for >15 minute delays (source, NAIG)



1. Volume of Handover Delays over 15 minutes



2. Hours Lost for Handover Delays over 15 minutes

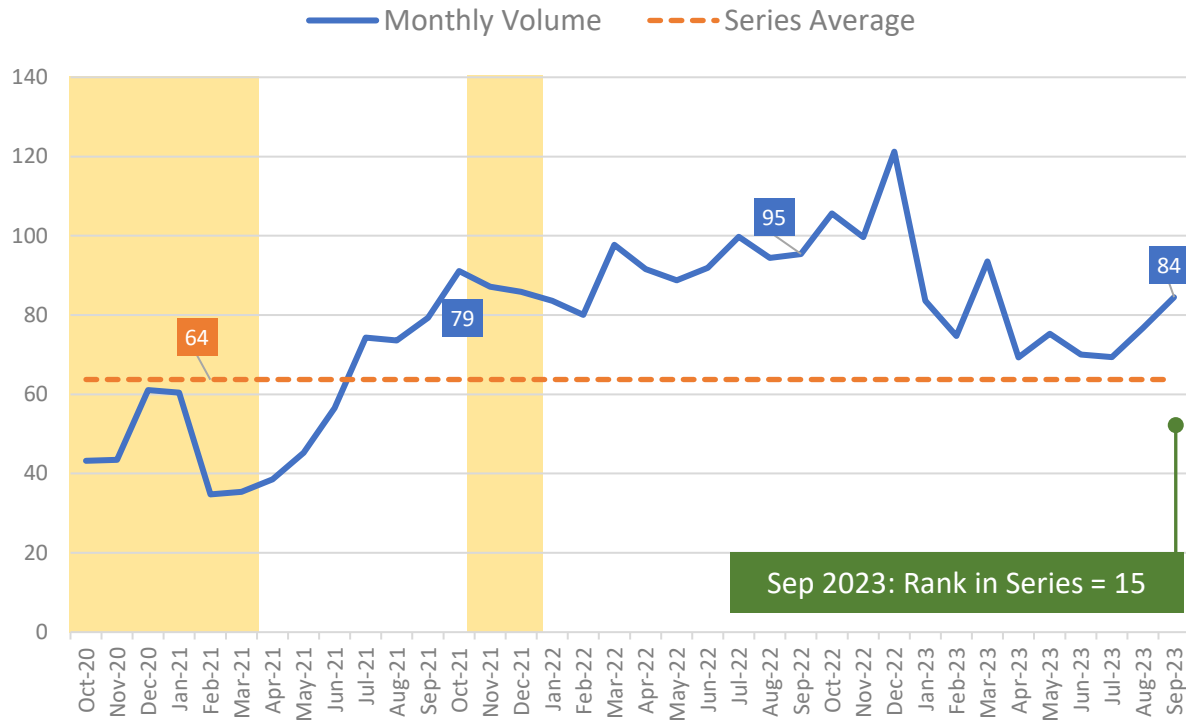


6. Patient Handover Delays over 30 Minutes (source, NAIG)

Handover delays exceeding 30 minutes grew to 84-thousand in September. This is 11-thousand fewer than September 2022, but the 15th highest volume to-date. Hours lost to these delays totalled 71-thousand, again lower than the same month last year but the highest volume since April 2023.

1. Delays over 30 Minutes

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

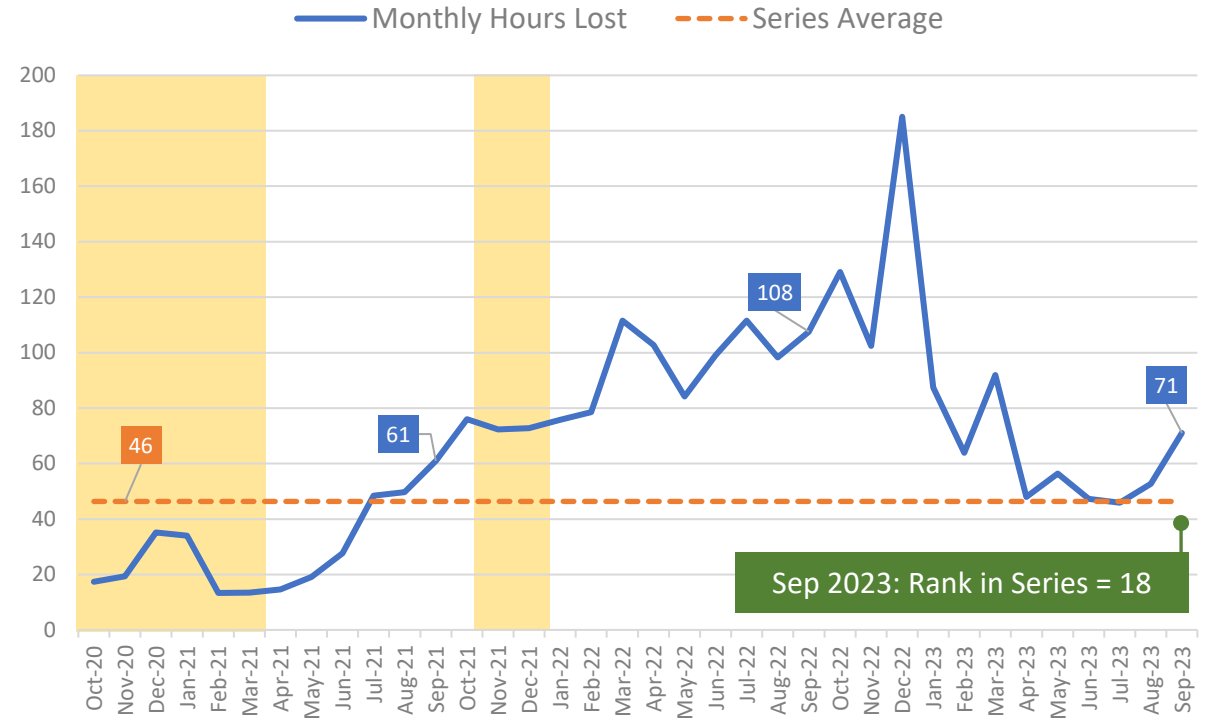


Yellow areas show COVID waves in the UK: source ONS.

← -11% (or -11k) difference, Sep '22 to Sep '23 →

2. Hours lost for Handovers Over 30 Minutes

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



← -36% (or -46k) difference, Sep '22 to Sep '23 →

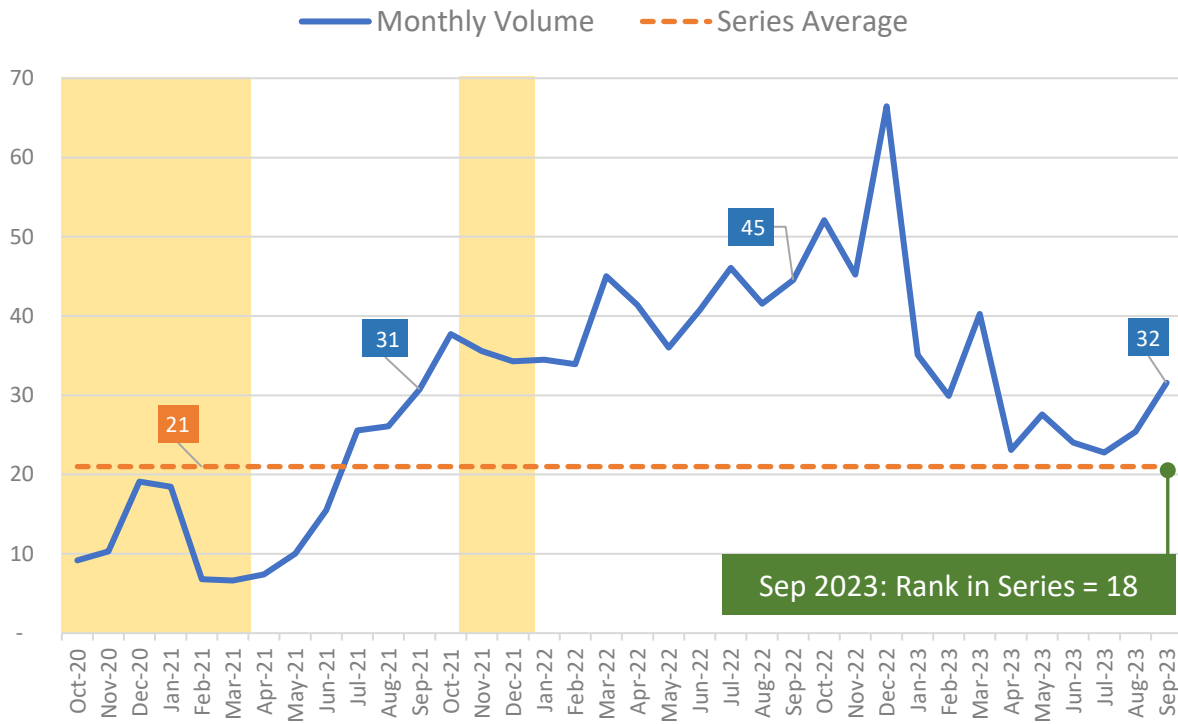


7. Patient Handover Delays over 60 Minutes (source, NAIG)

Hour-plus handover delays totalled 32-thousand in September, a decrease compared with September 2022, but the highest volume since March this year. Hours lost also increased – again, remaining below the levels seen last September, but the highest number recorded since March 2023.

1. Delays over 60 Minutes

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

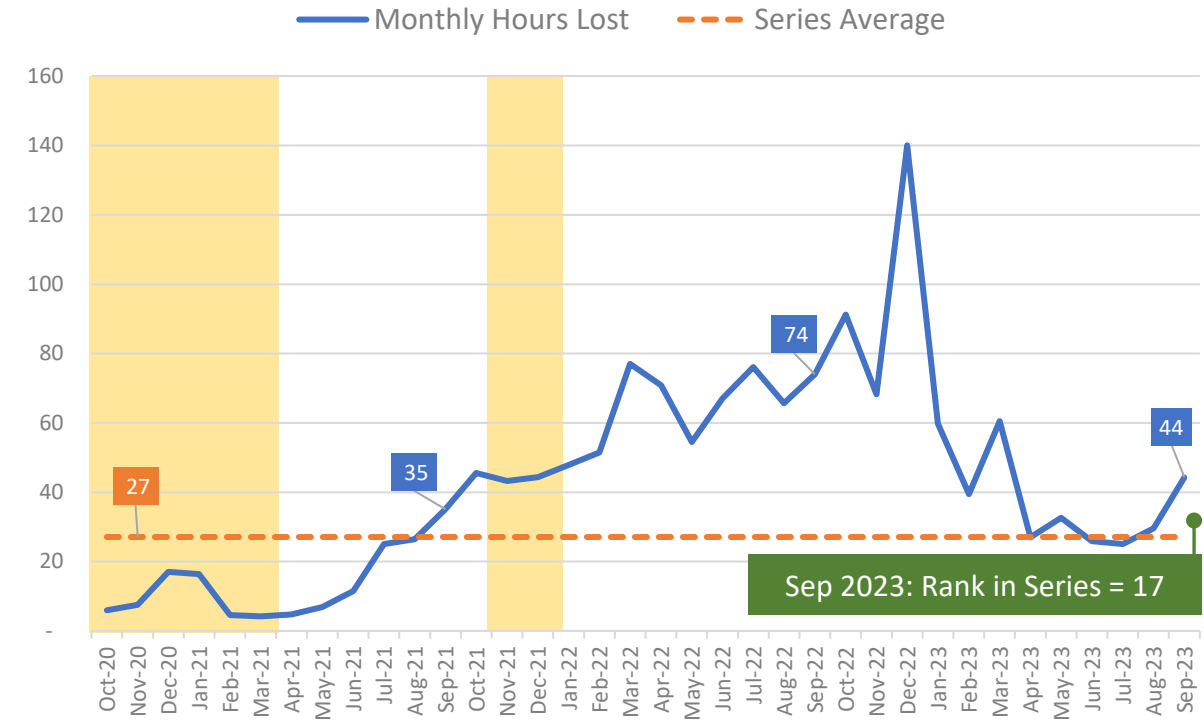


Yellow areas show COVID waves in the UK: source ONS.

← -29% (or -13) difference, Sep '22 to Sep '23 →

2. Hours lost for Handovers Over 60 Minutes

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

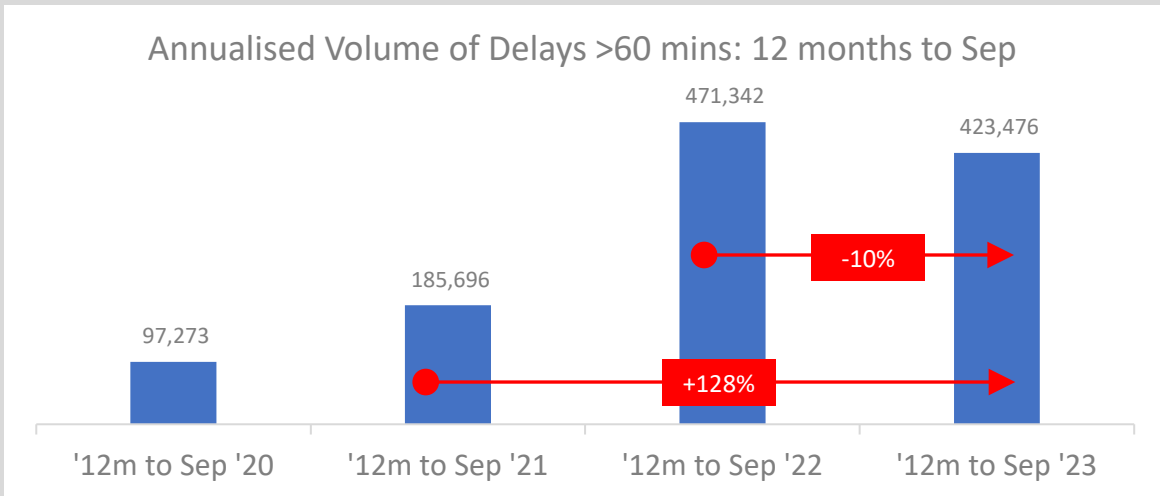
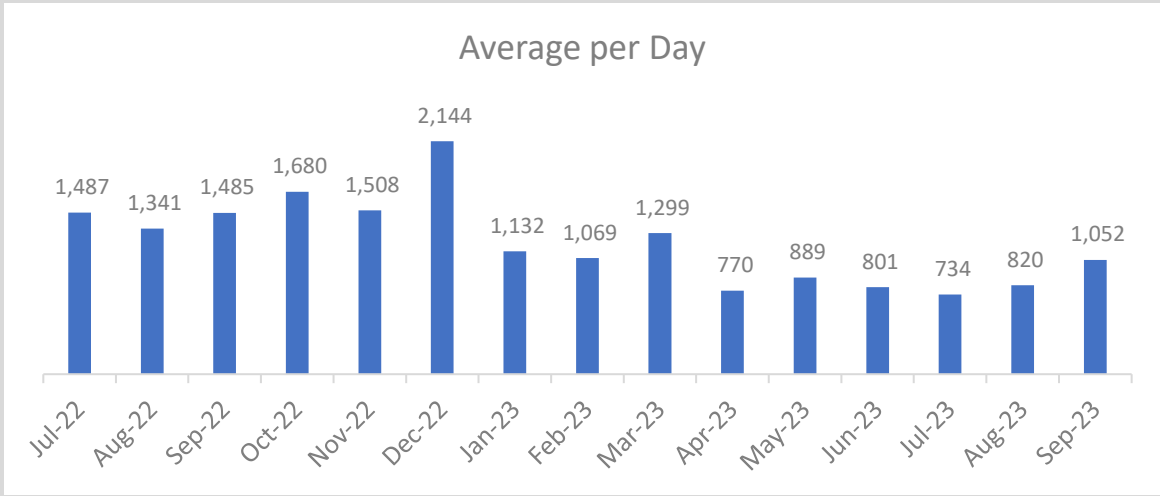


← -40% (or -30k) difference, Sep '22 to Sep '23 →

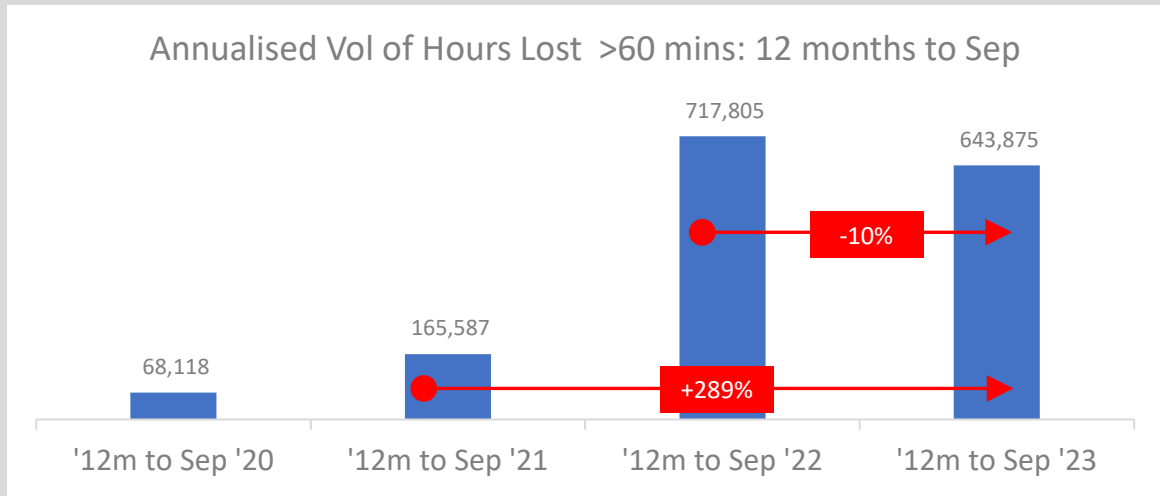
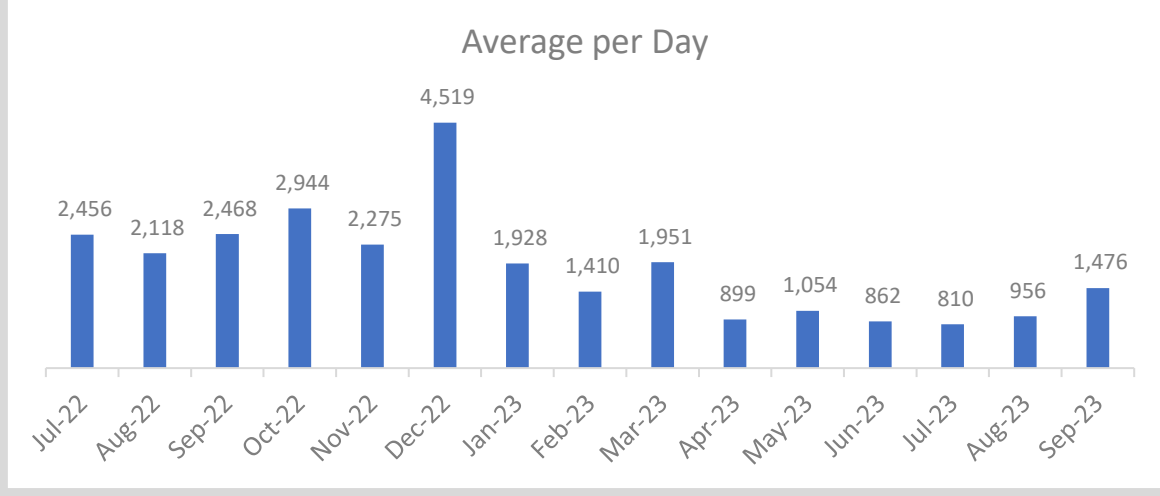


8. Average Daily and Annualised Data for >60 minute delays (source, NAIG)

1. Volume of Handover Delays over 60 minutes



2. Hours Lost for Handover Delays over 60 minutes



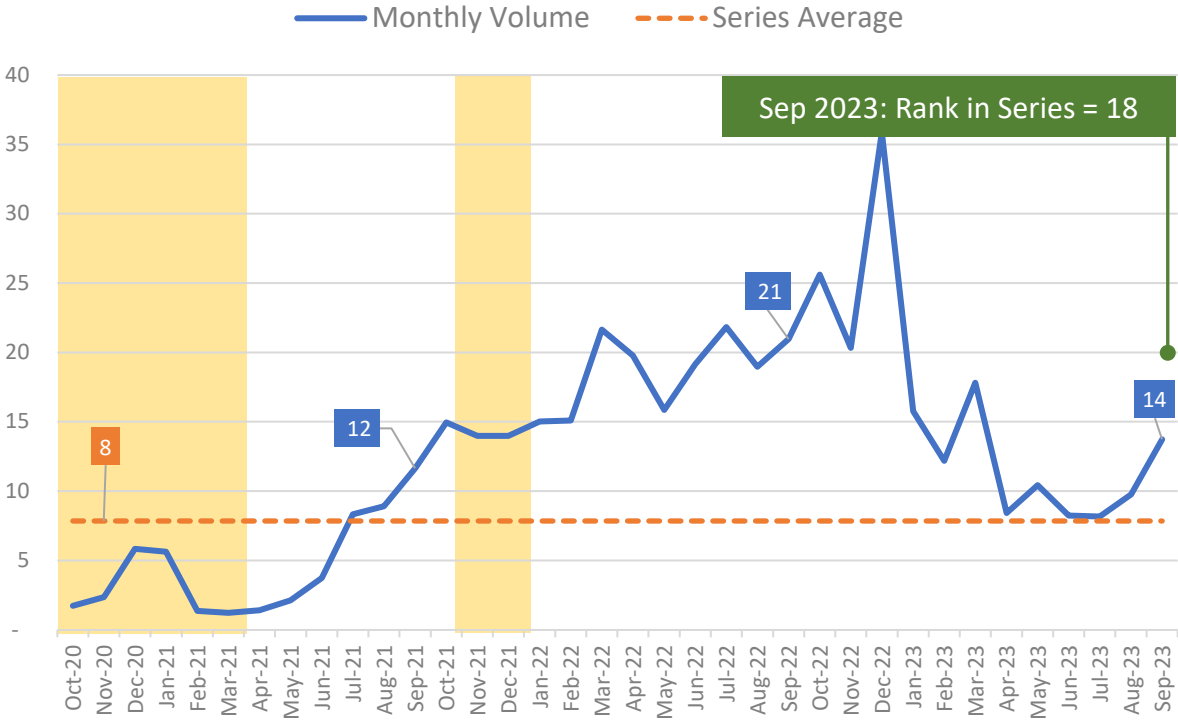
9. Patient Handover Delays over 120 Minutes (source, NAIG)



Two-hour plus handover delays reflect the trends outlined above - an increase in volume and hours lost in September taking levels to a recent high, but remaining below those seen 12-months ago.

1. Delays over 120 Minutes

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

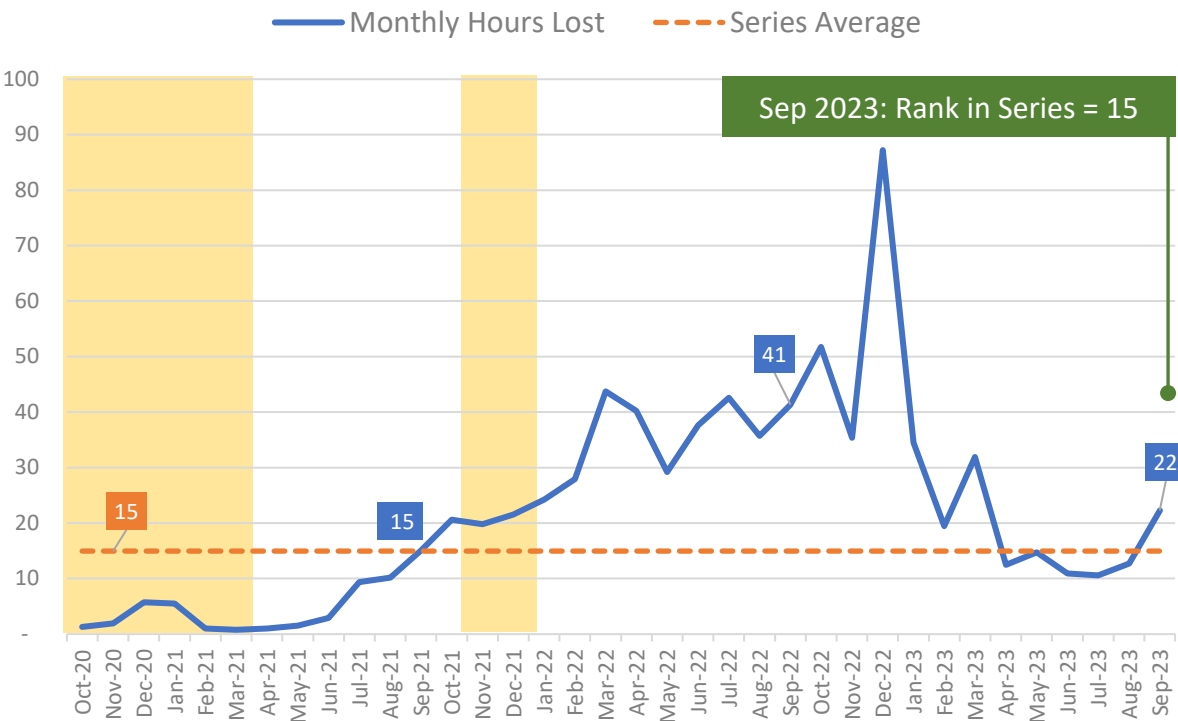


Yellow areas show COVID waves in the UK: source ONS.

← -35% (or -7k) →
difference, Sep '22 to Sep '23

2. Hours lost for Handovers Over 120 Minutes

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



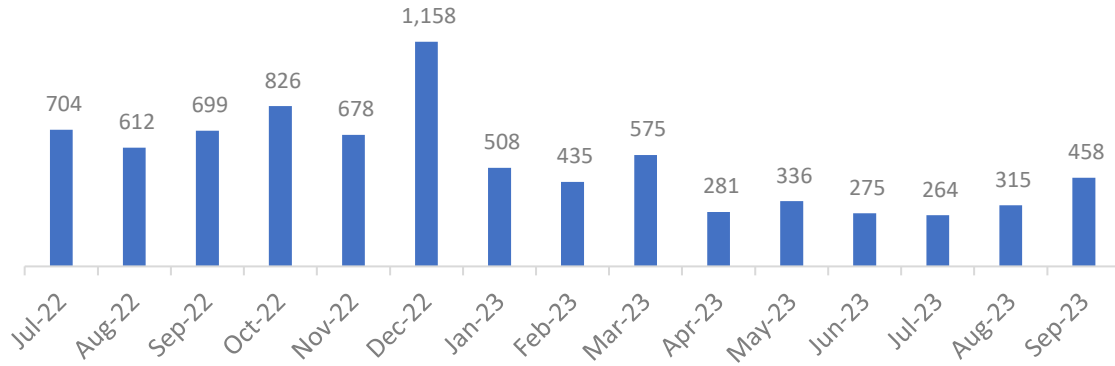
← -46% (or -19k) →
difference, Sep '22 to Sep '23



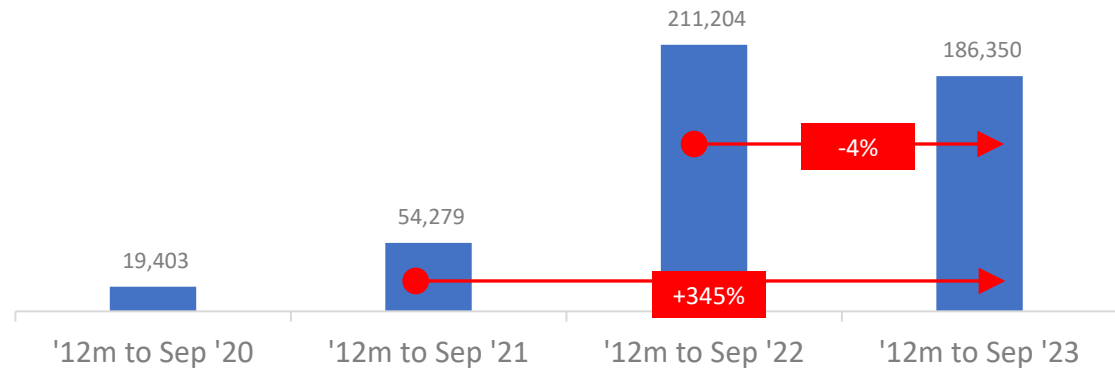
10. Average Daily and Annualised Data for >120 minute delays (source, NAIG)

1. Volume of Handover Delays over 120 minutes

Average per Day

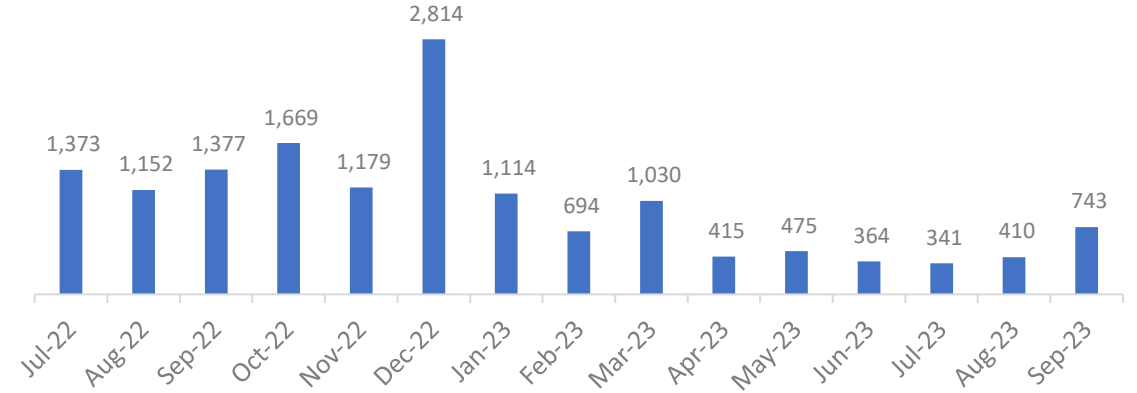


Annualised Volume of Delays >120 mins: 12 months to Sep

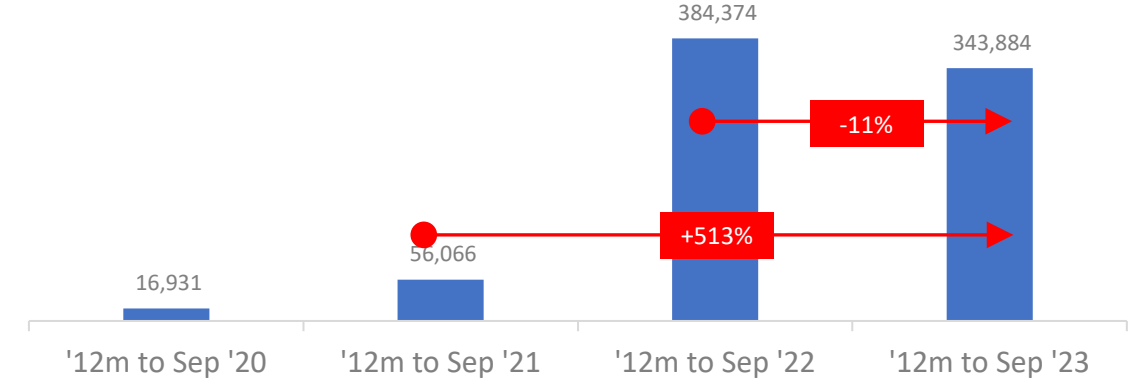


2. Hours Lost for Handover Delays over 120 minutes

Average per Day



Annualised Vol of Hours Lost >120 mins: 12 months to Sep



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

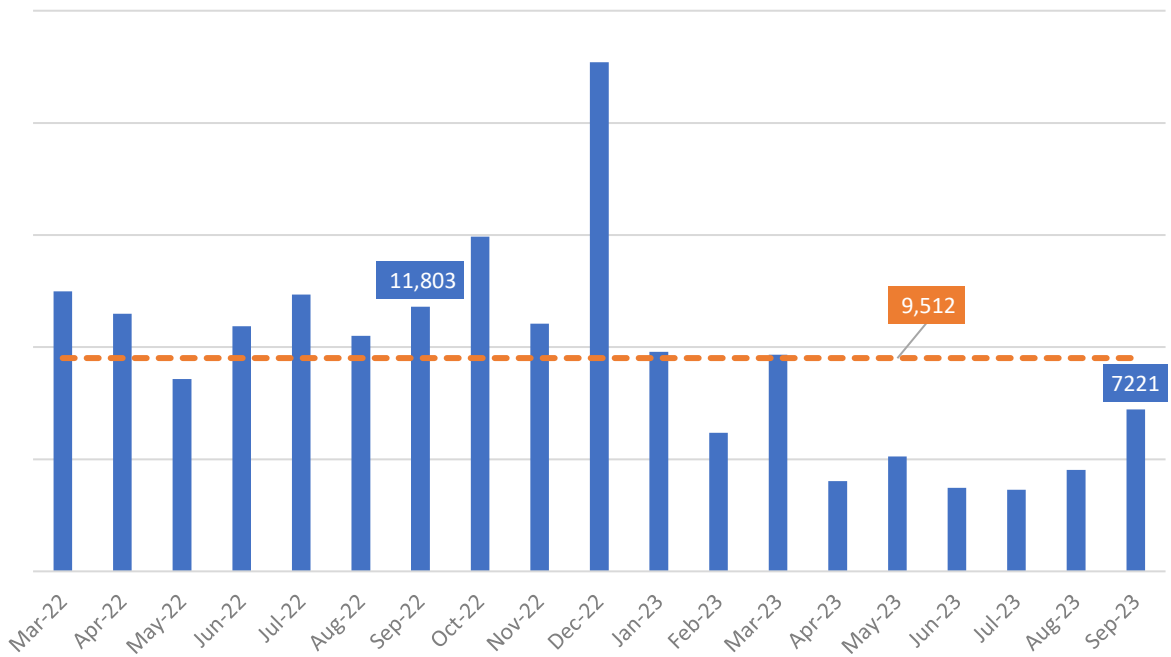


The very longest handover delays increased to reach the highest volumes seen in recent months, but remaining below the series average – and fewer than those recorded in September 2022. Nonetheless, nearly 200 patients experienced handovers exceeding ten-hours in September 2023.

1. Longer Handover Delays: All Over Three Hours

Volume of Handovers over Three Hours

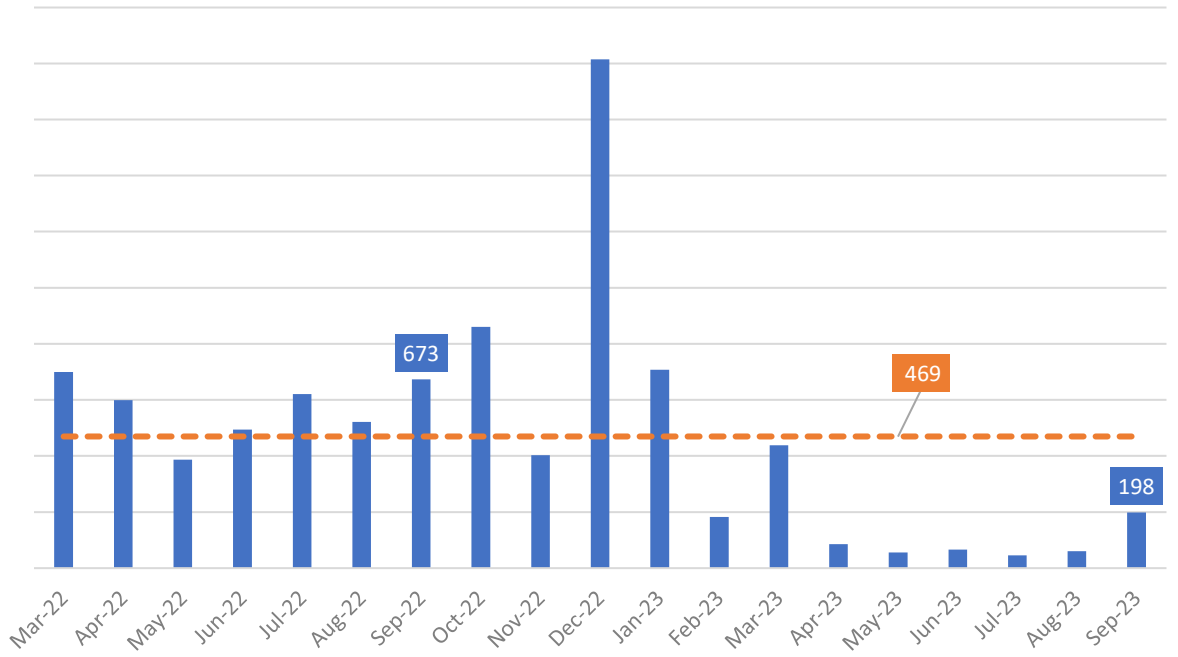
Over 3 hours Series Average



2. Longer Handover Delays: All Over Ten Hours

Volume of Handovers over Ten Hours

Over 10 hours Series Average



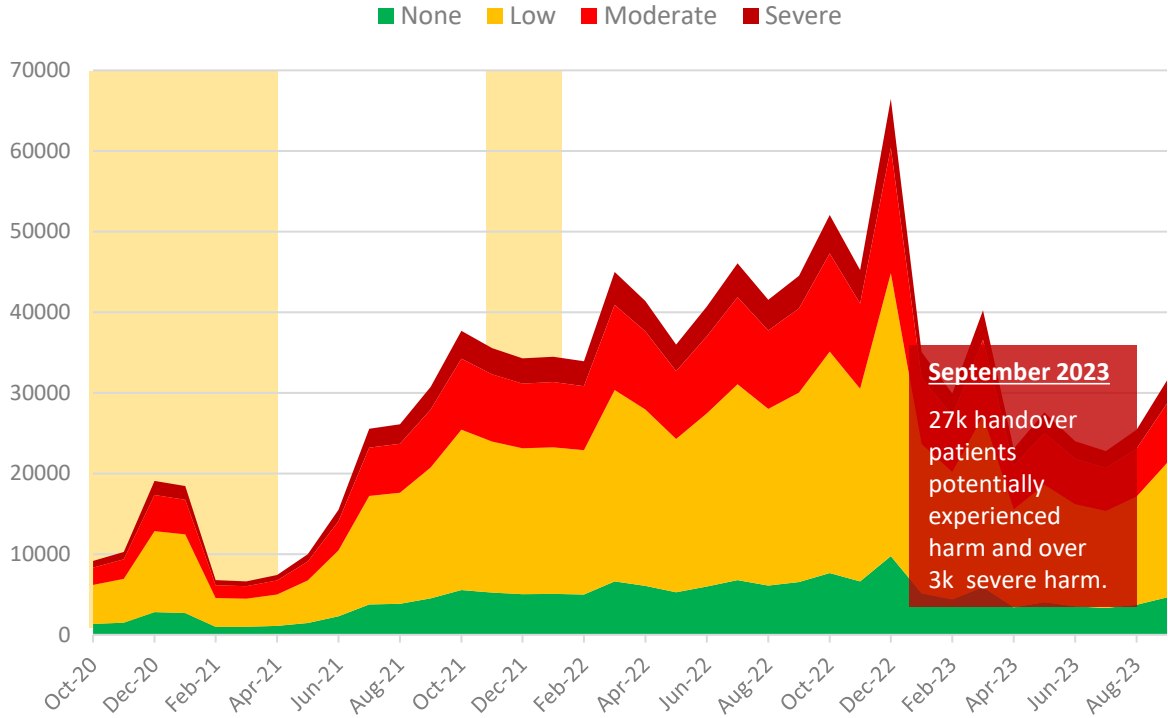
12. Impact on Patients and Crew (source, NAIG, [AQI Data](#) and [AACE](#))



Around 27-thousand patients experienced potential harm as a result of hour-plus handover delays. Over the same time, the sector lost the equivalent of 86-thousand job cycles due to delays. This is equivalent to 14% of potential ambulance capacity across the month – compared with five percent in September 2020.

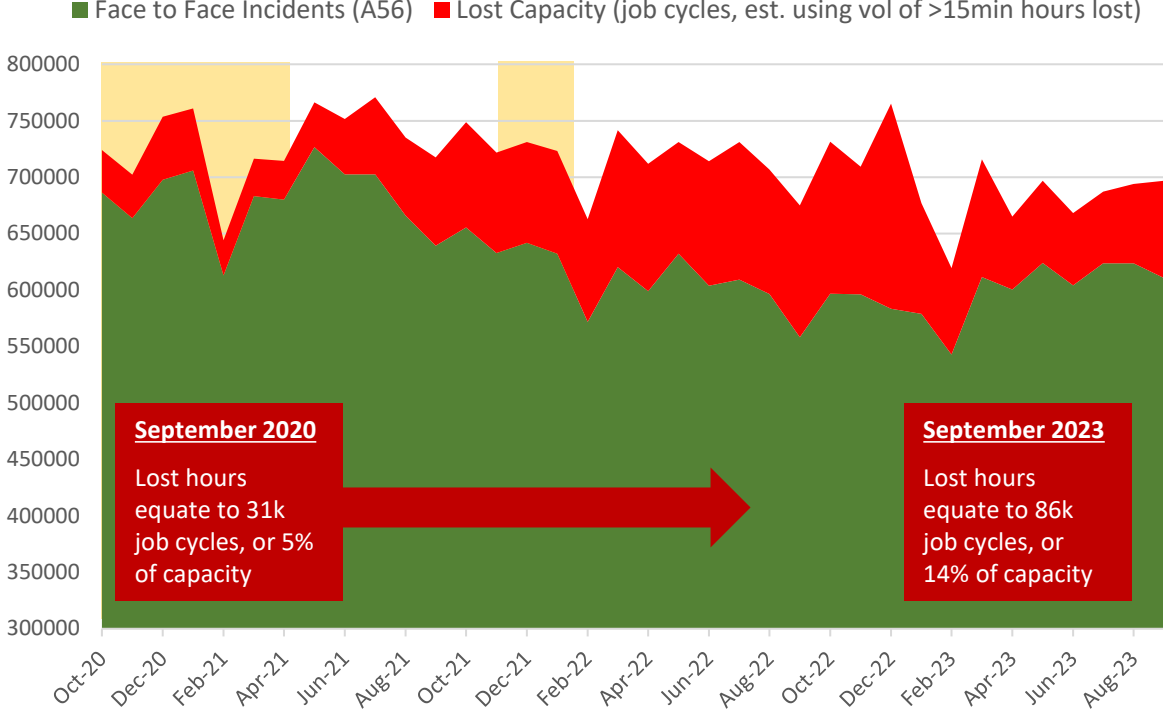
1. Estimated number of patients experiencing potential harm

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



2. Estimated impact of lost hours on capacity

Lost Hours and Impact on Capacity



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

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

