National Ambulance Handover Delays – FINAL

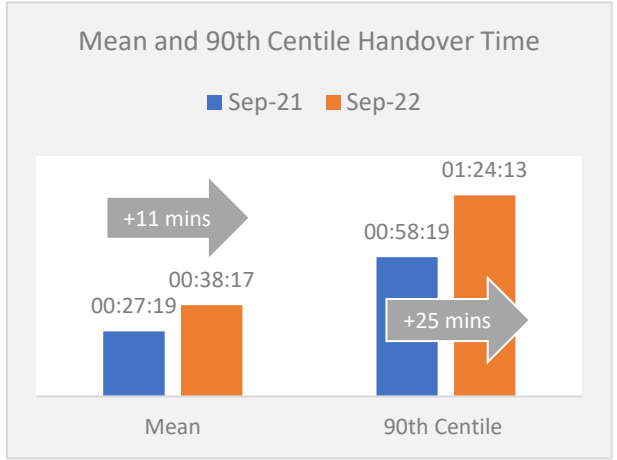
Data period to end September 2022

Date of Report: October 19th, 2022

2. Summary and Contents

Summary: Hours lost to patient handover delays increased to the third highest level in September 2022 – the equivalent of 116k ambulance job cycles. Longer handovers also increased after a drop-off last month: delays exceeding ten hours reached their second highest to-date, while the longest handover recorded by any trust hit 26 hours.

- **In September, 203k patients experienced handover delays exceeding 15 minutes.** This figure has remained steady for several months, although handover length continues to increase, with most measures reaching their third highest to-date.
- **In September 2018, the proportion of handovers taking more than 60 minute was 1.5%: in September 2022 this figure is more than ten times greater at 15%.** The proportion taking two or more hours has doubled in 12 months from 3.5% in September 2021 to 7.2% today.
- **As a result of delays exceeding 60 minutes, an estimated 38k patients could have suffered potential harm, with over 4k of these suffering severe harm.** This equates to over 1 in every 7 patients who experienced a hospital handover in September.
- **Handovers exceeding 10 hours reached their second highest volume since March 2022**: 673 patients waited 10 hours or longer in September.
- **The equivalent of nearly 4k ambulance jobs was lost every day in September as a result of hours lost to delays of over 15 minutes.** This is the same as fifth of all face-to-face incidents actually attended by ambulances across the month.
- **The longest individual handover was 26 hours in September.** This is the longest recorded to-date.

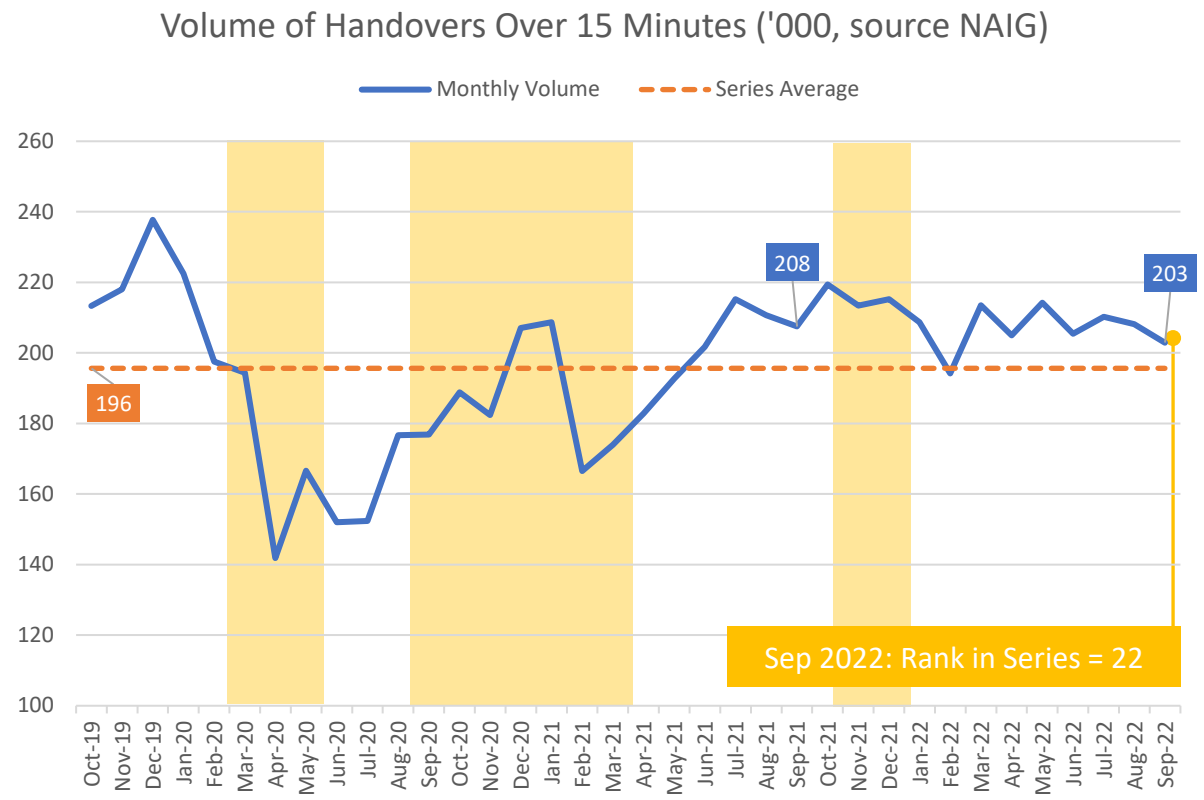


For 2022/23, NHSE have revised hospital handover standards. These now aim for 65% of handovers to be achieved within 15 minutes (vs. the previous standard of 100% within 15 minutes) and 95% within 30 minutes. An additional aim included in the new standards is to eliminate handovers exceeding 60 minutes: in September 2022, 44k patient handovers were subject to delays of 60 minutes or longer: this equates to a monthly average of 15% of all handovers, up from 9% in September 2021.

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

While the overall volume of patient handover delays remained relatively steady (decreasing by 5k month-on-month) the hours lost to these delays increased to its third highest level on record. All three of these series-highs have occurred since March 2022, with the highest in July. This month's data shows a decrease of 4k handover delays compared with September 2021, but an increase of 48k hours lost.

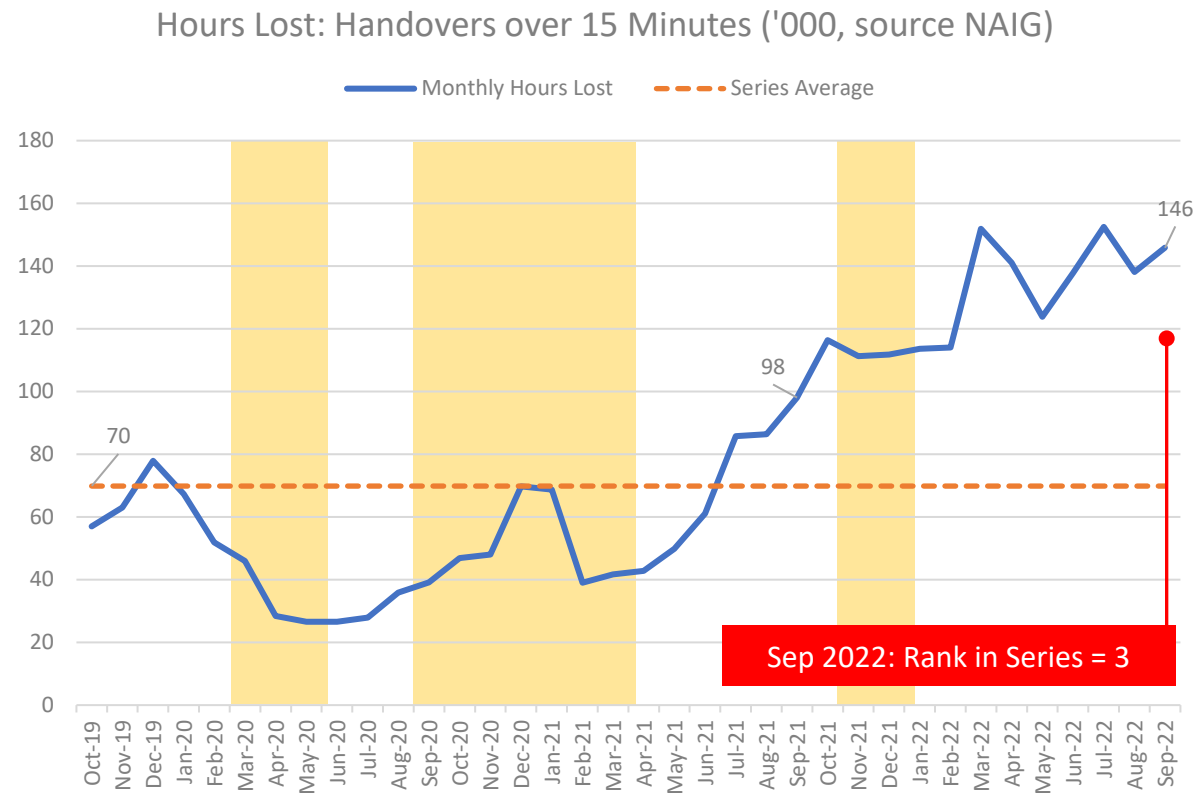
1. Delays over 15 Minutes



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

-2% (or -4k)
difference, Sep 2021 to Sep 2022

2. Hours lost for Handovers Over 15 Minutes



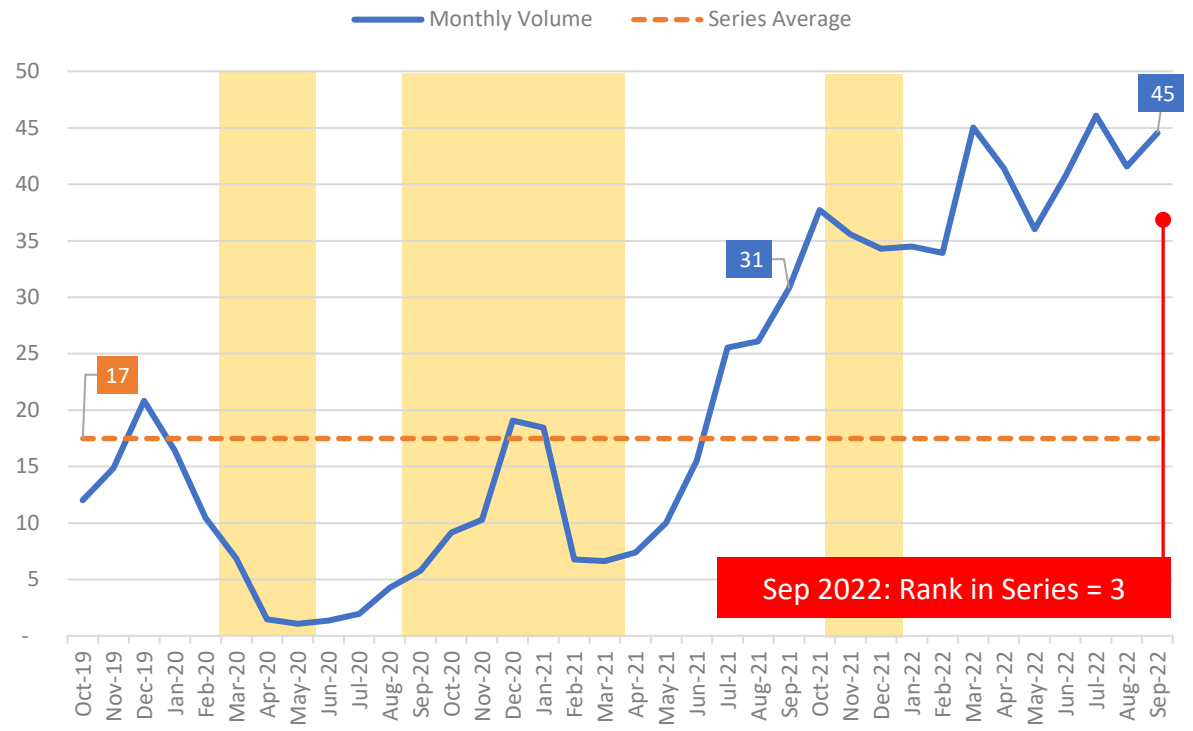
+49% (or +48k)
difference, Sep 2021 to Sep 2022

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

Handovers taking an hour or longer also reached their third highest level in September, as did the hours lost associated with those delays. Number of delays reached 45k, against a series average of 17k: hours lost reached 74k against a series average of 21k. Both measures are considerably greater than the same time last year.

1. Delays over 60 Minutes

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

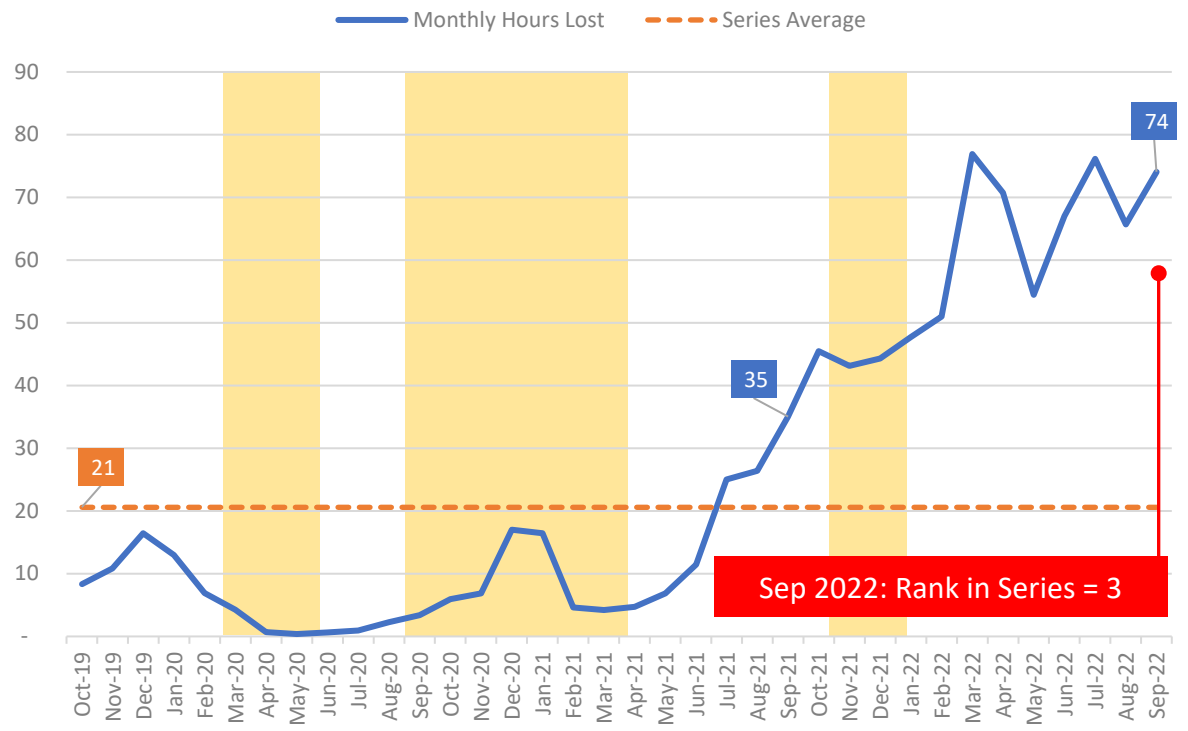


Yellow areas denote COVID waves in the UK: source ONS.

+45% (or +14k)
difference, Sep 2021 to Sep 2022

2. Hours lost for Handovers Over 60 Minutes

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

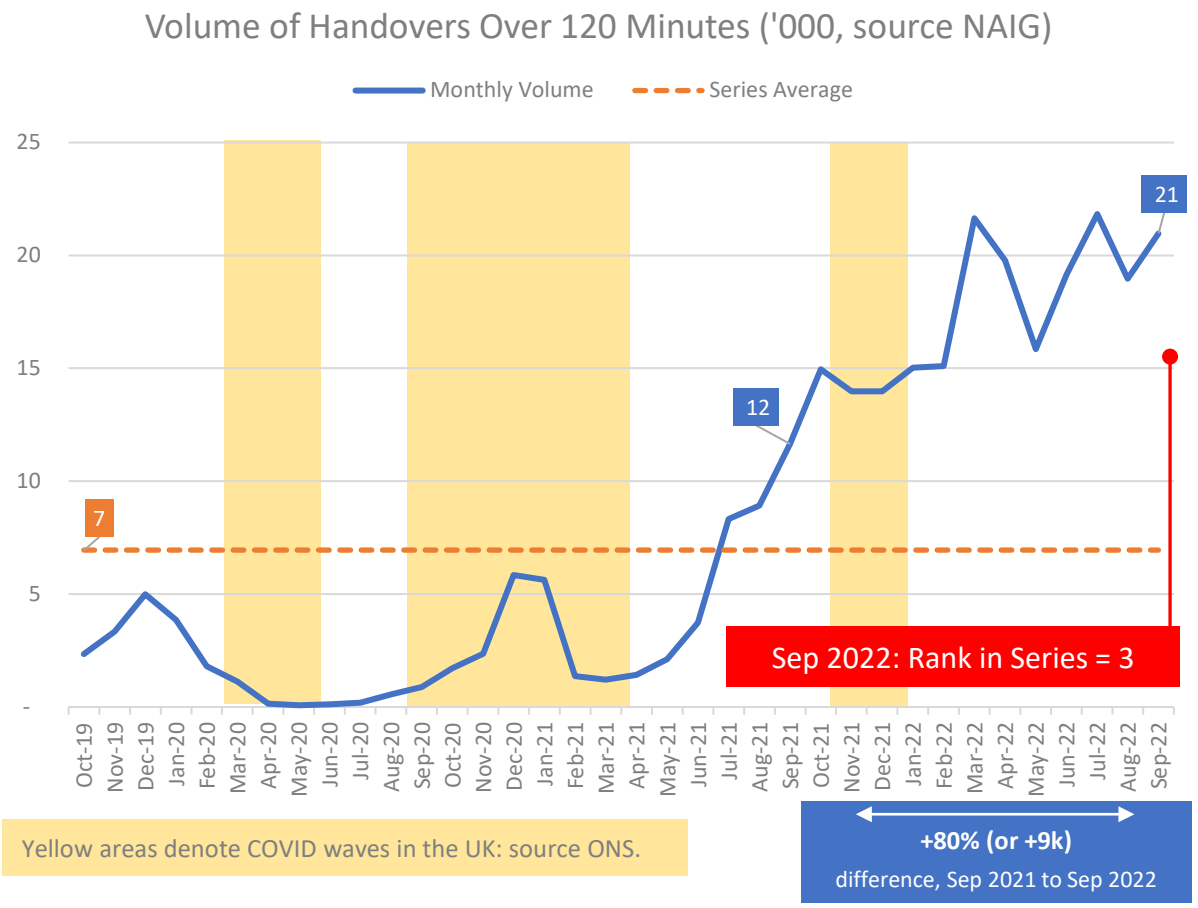


+111% (or +39k)
difference, Sep 2021 to Sep 2022

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

For two-hour delays, volume and hours lost both recorded an increase taking them to their third highest level to date. The volume of these delays is 9k greater than the same time last year, while hours lost is well over double its equivalent from September 2021.

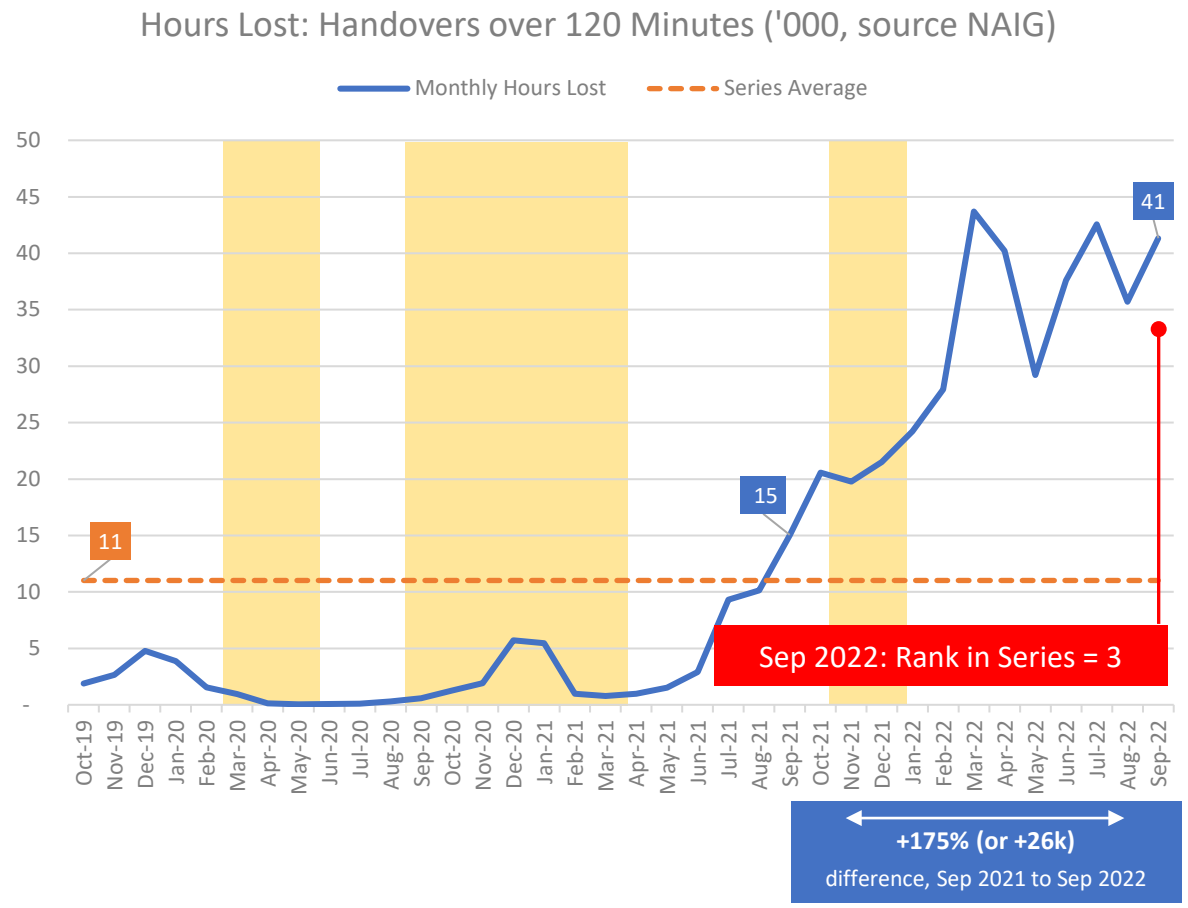
1. Delays over 120 Minutes



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

+80% (or +9k)
difference, Sep 2021 to Sep 2022

2. Hours lost for Handovers Over 120 Minutes

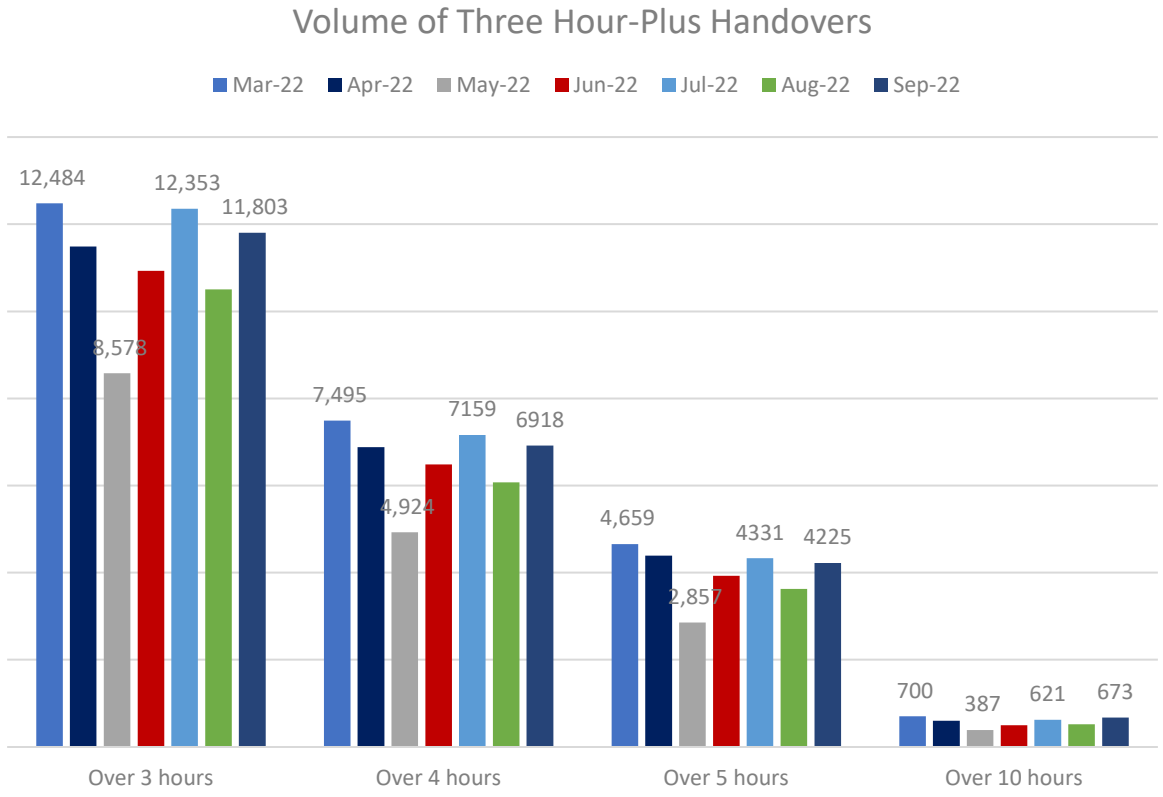


+175% (or +26k)
difference, Sep 2021 to Sep 2022

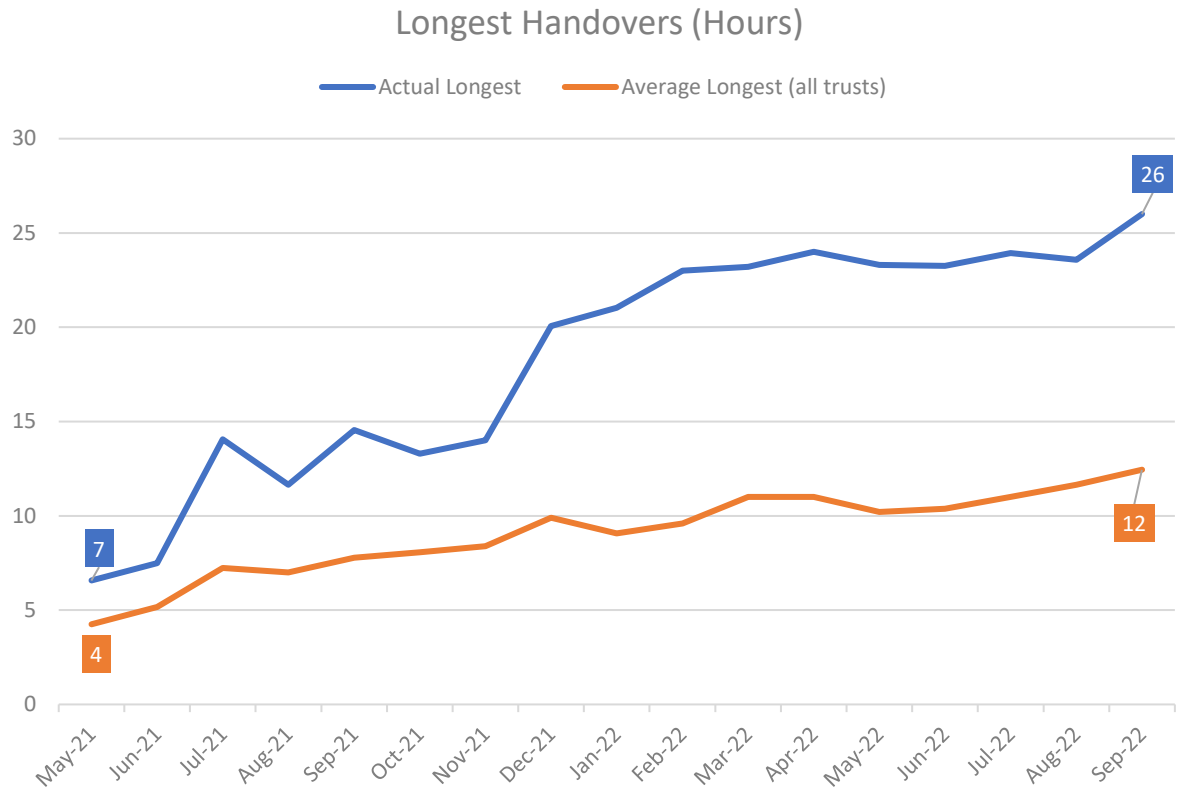
6. Patient Handovers Longer than Three Hours (source, NAIG)

Handovers exceeding three hours increased in September. Those exceeding ten hours reaching their second highest level since this measure started recording in March. One trust recorded a patient handover delay reaching 26 hours – a series high – while the average longest-handover across all trusts was 12 hours.

1. Breakdown of delays over three hours



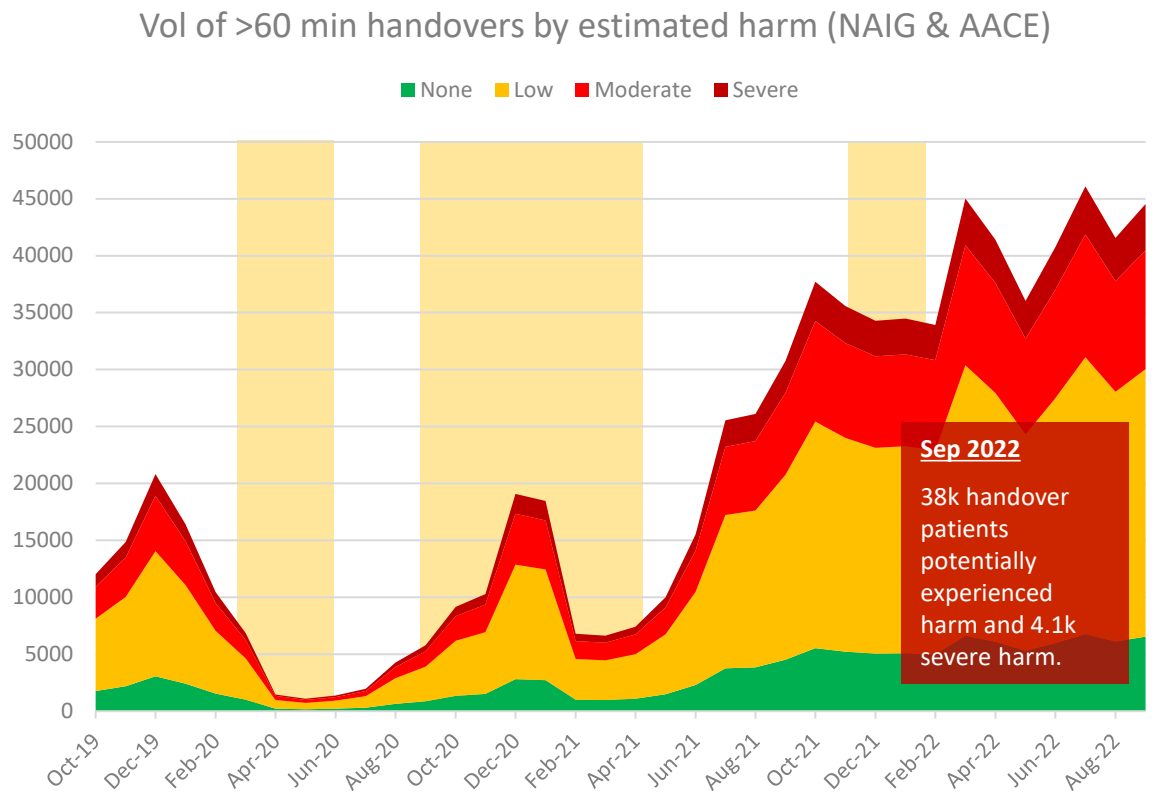
2. Longest individual handover delays



7. Impact on Patients and Crew (source, NAIG, AQI Data and AACE)

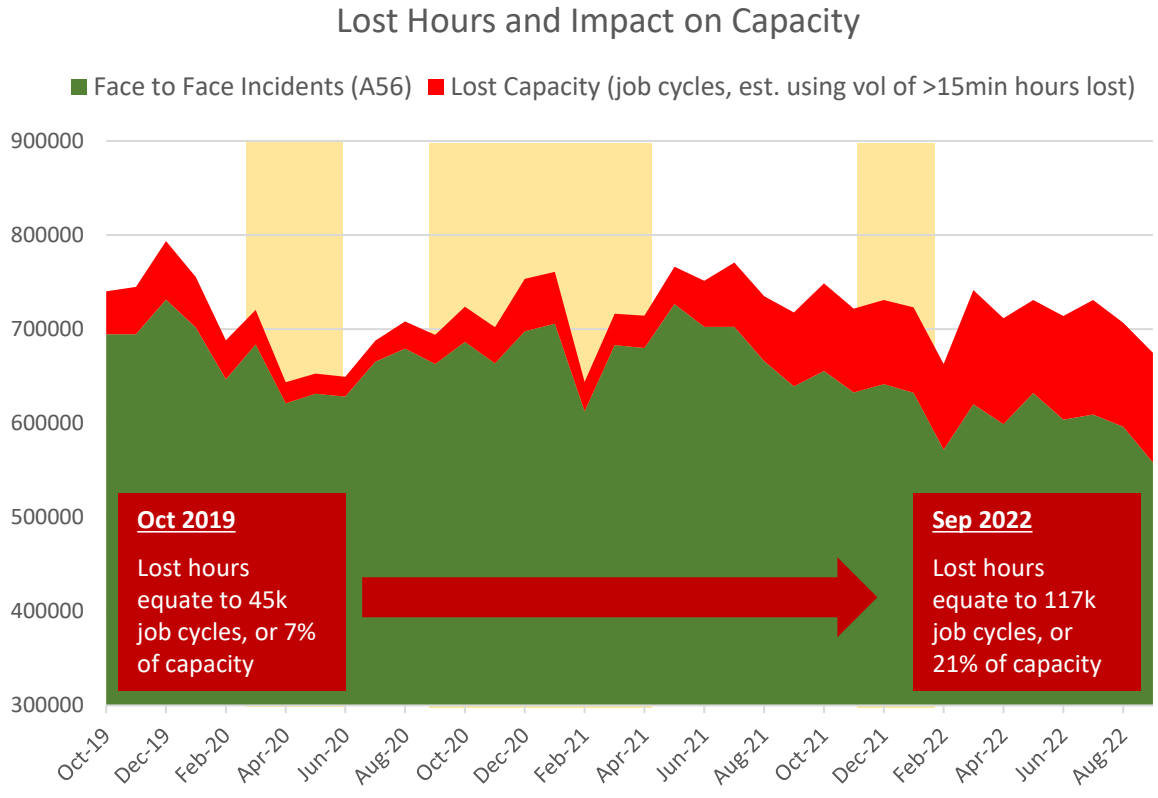
Around 38k patients experienced potential harm as a result of long handover delays in September, with over 4k of these experiencing severe harm*. Taking the total hours lost to handover delays in September, the sector lost the equivalent of 117k job cycles. Using Face-to-Face AQI data, this equates to 21% of potential capacity – this compares with 5% in September 2019.

1. Estimated number of patients experiencing potential harm



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

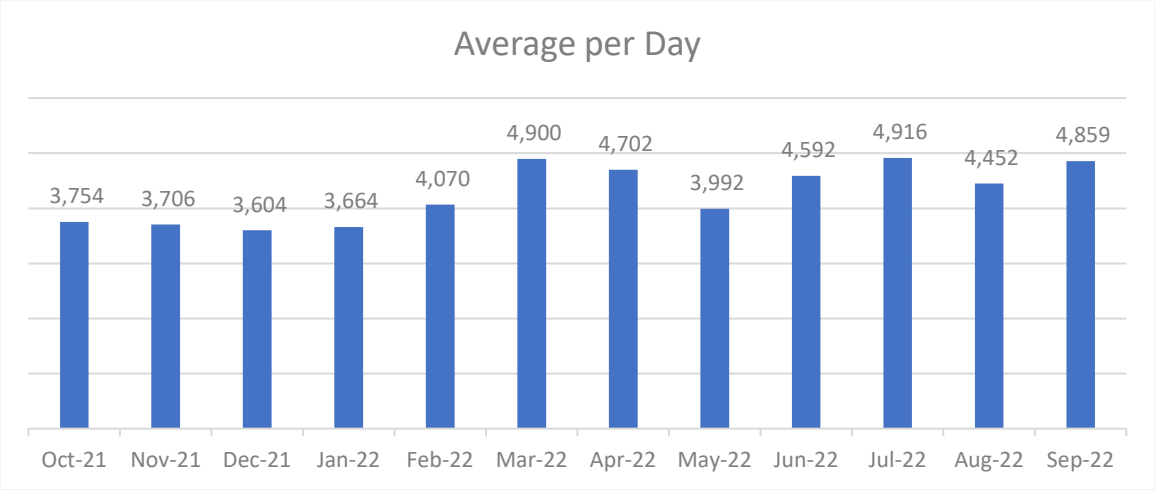
2. Estimated impact of lost hours on capacity

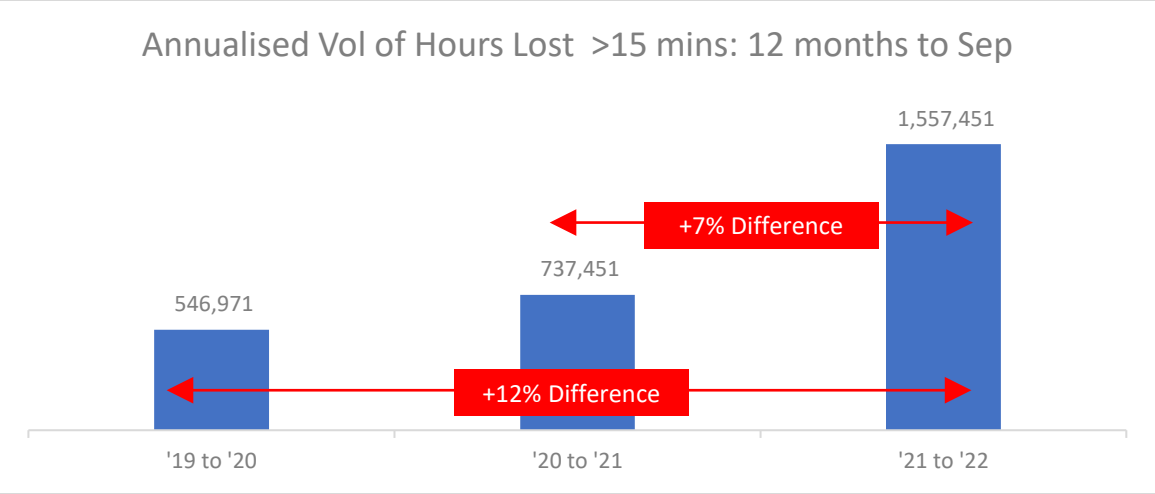


Yellow areas denote COVID waves in the UK: source ONS.

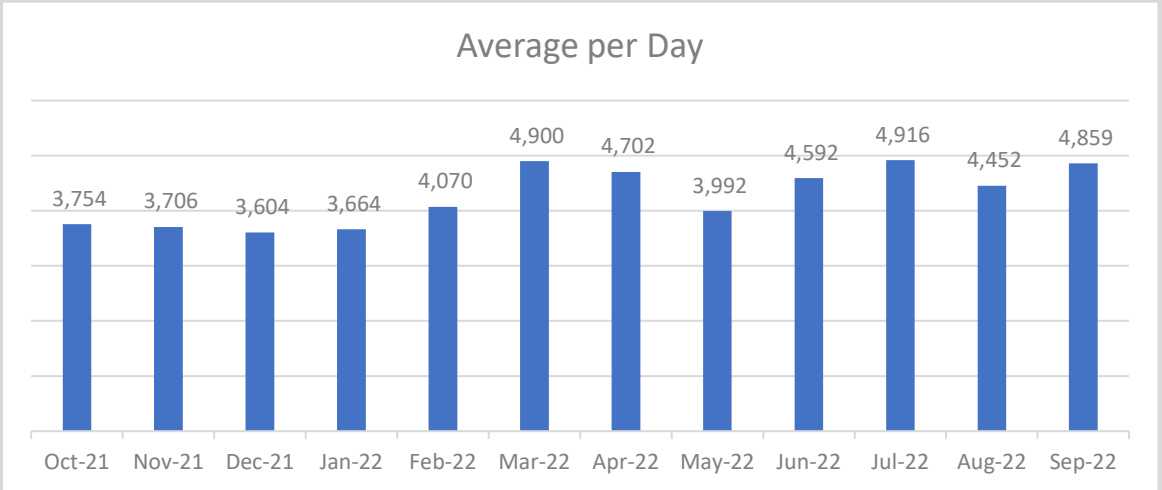
8. Appendix (i): Average Daily and Annualised Data for >15 minute delays (source, NAIG)

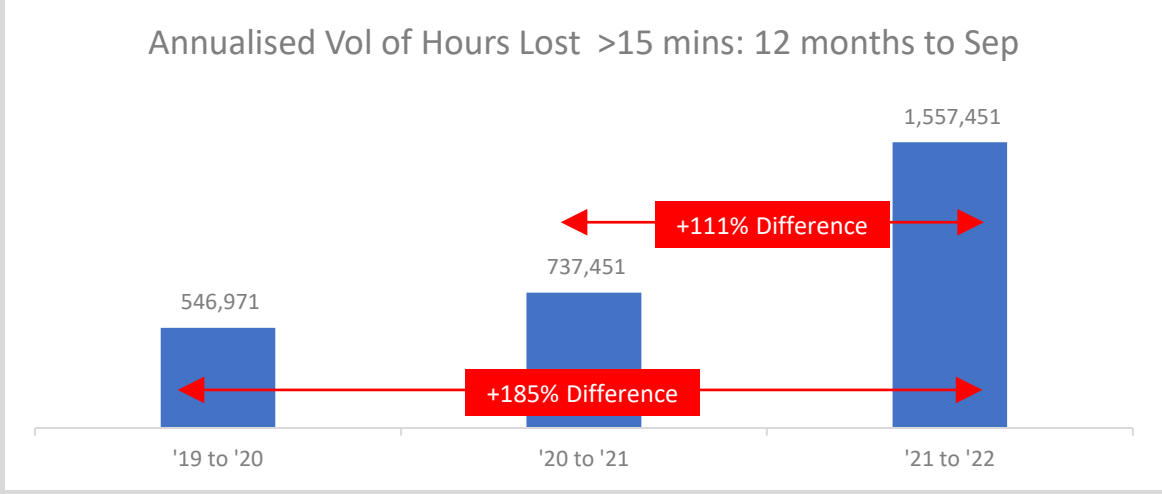
1. Volume of Handover Delays over 15 minutes





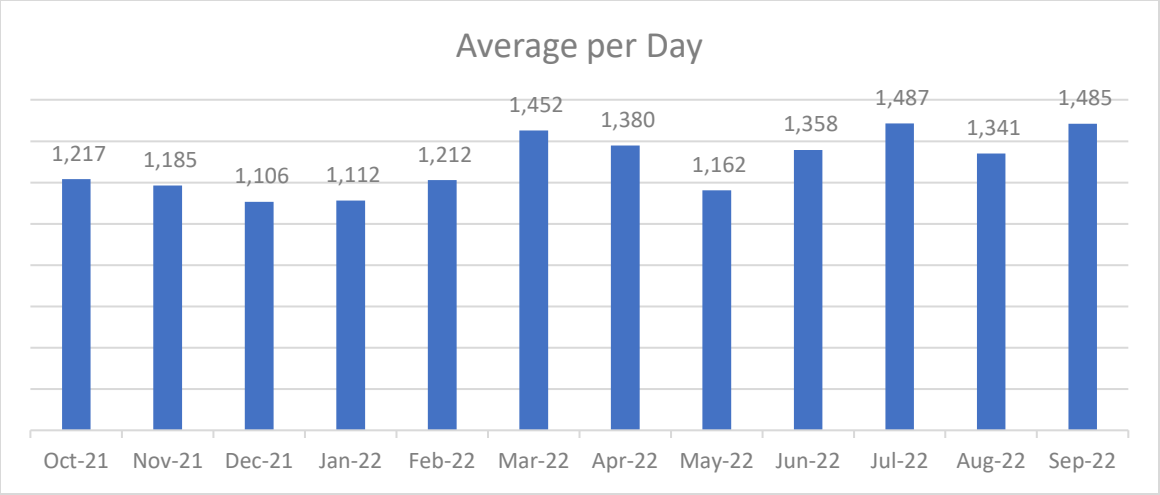
2. Hours Lost for Handover Delays over 15 minutes

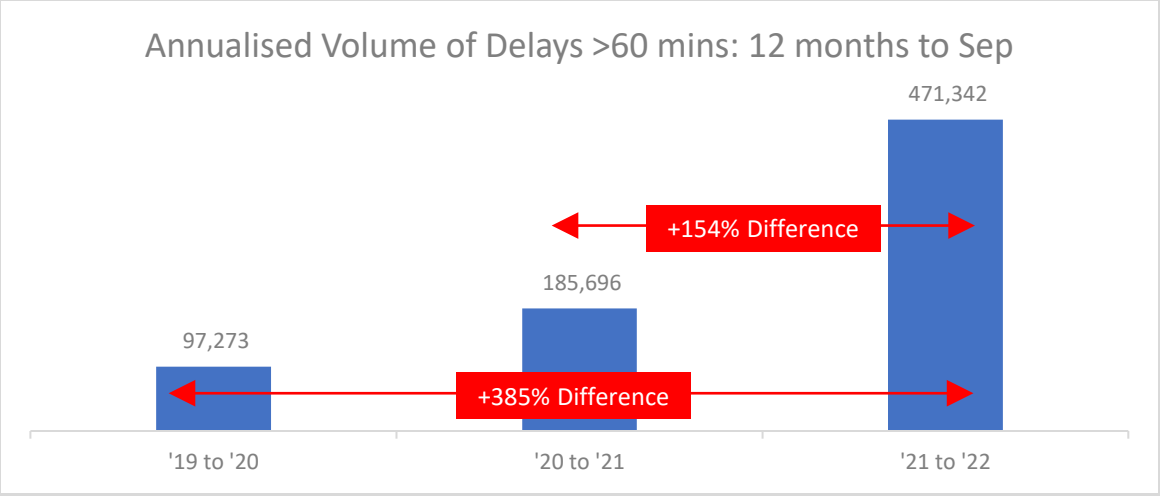




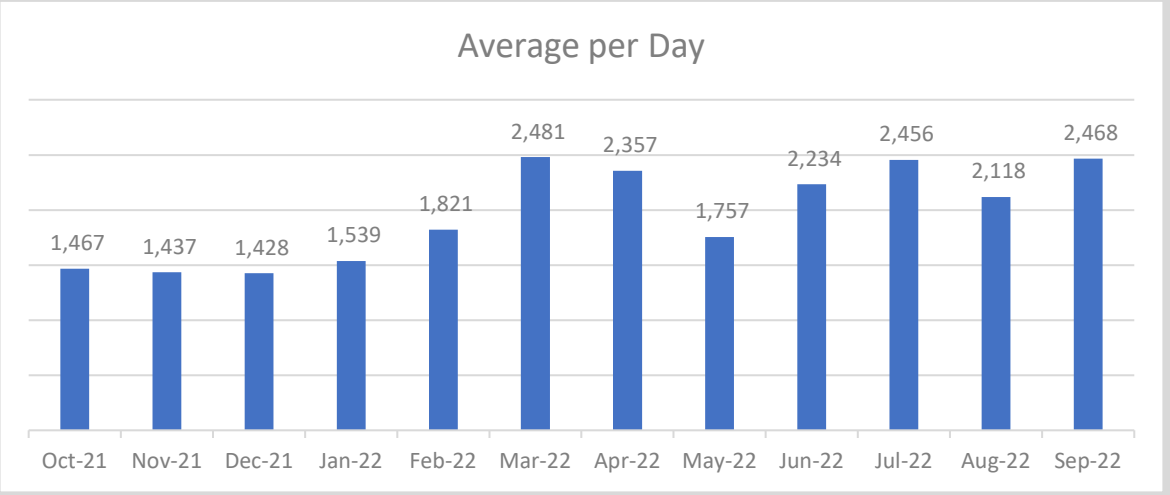
9. Appendix (ii): Average Daily and Annualised Data for >60 minute delays (source, NAIG)

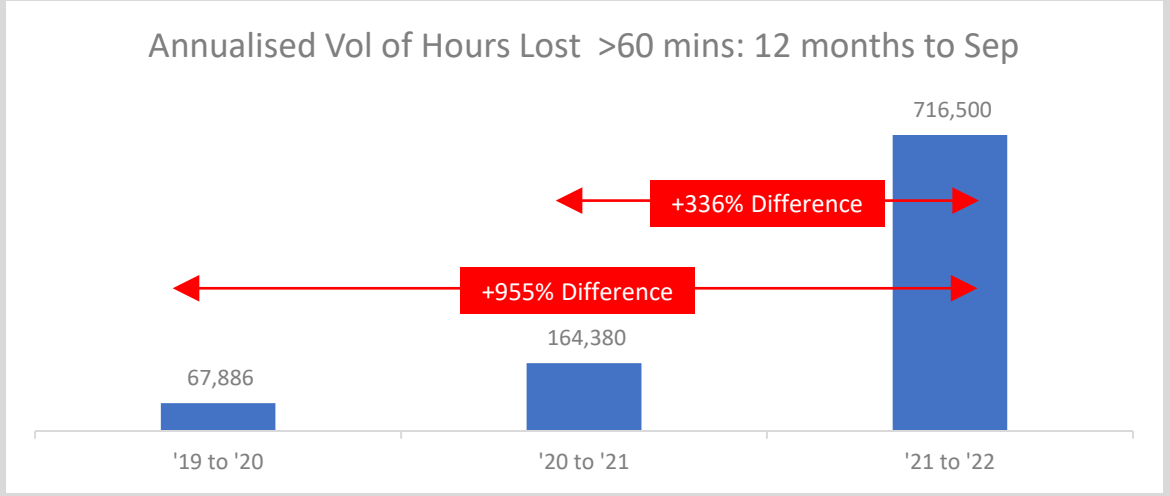
1. Volume of Handover Delays over 60 minutes





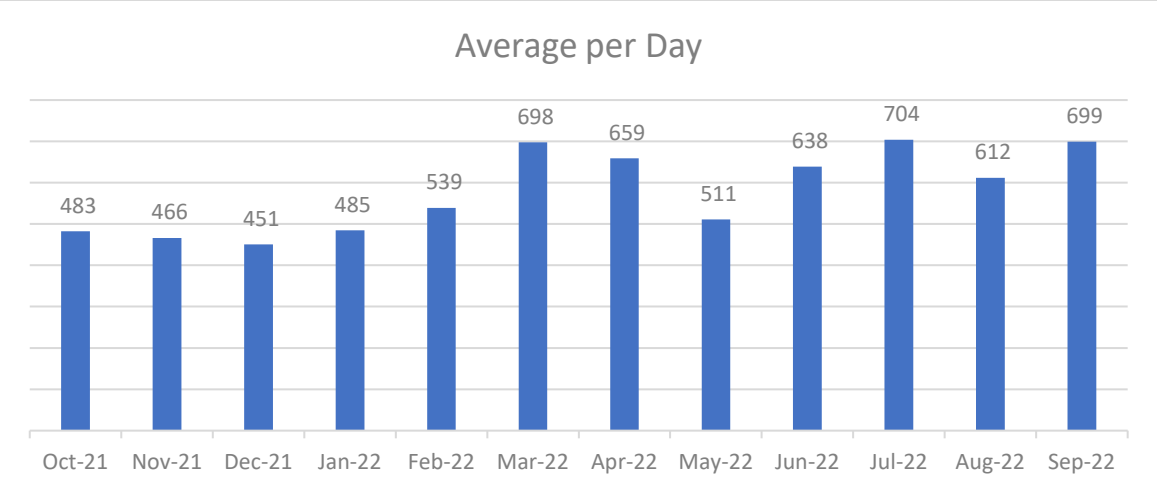
2. Hours Lost for Handover Delays over 60 minutes

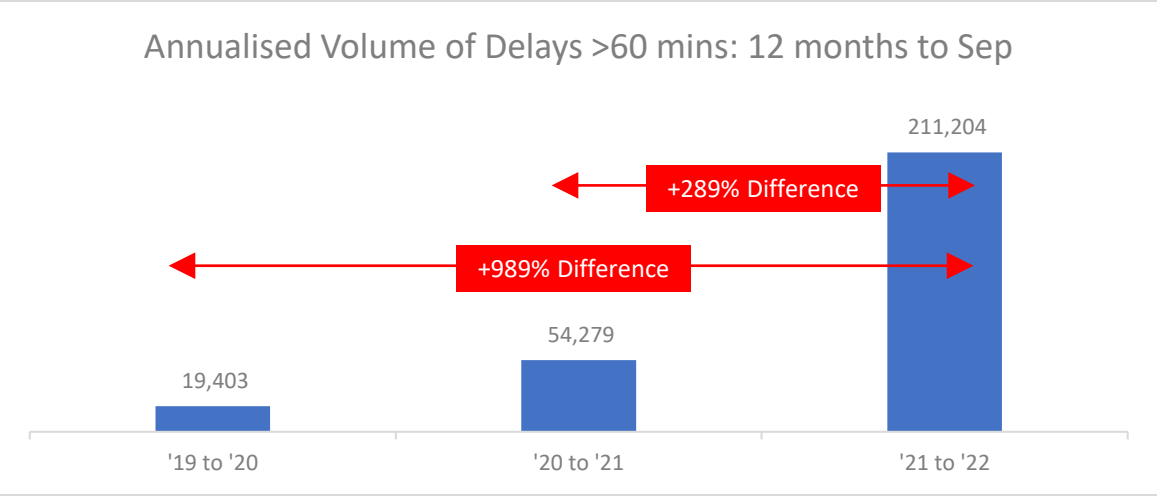




10. Appendix (iii): Average Daily and Annualised Data for >120 minute delays (source, NAIG)

1. Volume of Handover Delays over 120 minutes





2. Hours Lost for Handover Delays over 120 minutes