



Veterinary
Practitioners
Board

Problems in practice and how to overcome them

Complaints

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Registrar

Agenda



Problems



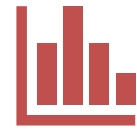
Overcoming



Examples



Support



Statistics

Complaints



Practice



Regulator



Practice



Quality



Trust



Grief



Money

Regulator^{4,5}



| Domain | Category | Sub-category |
|---------------|----------------------|---|
| Clinical | Quality | Inadequate examination |
| | | Poor or unsuccessful treatment |
| | Safety | Errors in diagnosis |
| | | Medication errors |
| Management | Institutional issues | Poor accommodation or hygiene |
| | | Inadequate staff, resources |
| | | Billing |
| | Timing and access | Lack of access to staff, delays in referral |
| Relationships | Communication | Inadequate, delayed, incorrect |
| | Caring | Rude, disrespectful |
| | Rights | Confidentiality, consent |

Regulator⁸



- Management of case not in accordance with current standards
- Records not in sufficient detail to allow another veterinarian to continue treatment
- Failure to gain informed consent from the client before providing a service
- Failure to explain the likely extent and outcome of services and/or estimate fees
- Failure to utilise the skills of colleagues by consultation or referral as appropriate
- Not making arrangements for the ongoing care of an animal



Regulator⁸

- Supply of restricted substances without a physical examination
- Failure to provide records to another veterinarian when requested and with consent of the client
- Breach of client confidentiality
- Failure to comply with the rules of sporting organisations
- Assistants do not have skills, knowledge or equipment to perform duties to current standards



Overcoming



Opportunity



Trust



Process

Opportunity⁹

[Amy's Baking Company](#)



Trust

- Respect and empathy provide the basis for trust
- Acknowledge their concerns
- Express sympathy and apologise for inconvenience or suffering
- Provide an assurance that you will act on their concerns and follow up with them
- Be open and honest



Process^{6,7}

- Quality management research suggests that around 70% of quality issues are systems related and can be addressed through better processes
- Develop practice processes that focus on practice and regulator perspectives
- Decrease the focus on individuals
 - Poor processes can adversely affect individual performance
 - Strong processes can prevent poor individual performance

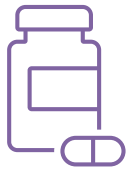


Process

- Develop a complaints process
 - Perspectives and outcomes
 - Shared, agreed and provide training
 - Enables a fair and consistent approach to preventing and overcoming problems associated with complaints



Examples



NSAIDs



Dentistry



Records



Anaesthesia



Communication

Support



Colleagues and Employer



Insurer



AVA



Services



Regulator

Summary



Veterinarians are problem solvers. A complaint is an opportunity to improve.



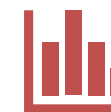
Create a process for dealing with complaints that addresses various perspectives and outcomes.



BoardTalk¹¹ provides summaries of cases where a decision was made against the veterinarian and is release every June and December.



Colleagues, employers, insurers, AVA and Boards appreciate the stress created by problems in practice and are able to help.



Problems (complaints) are increasing but there is evidence they are being managed well by the profession.

Questions



<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2021-07-06/paul-vaughan-sacked-by-dragons-for-covid-19-breach-party/100270152>

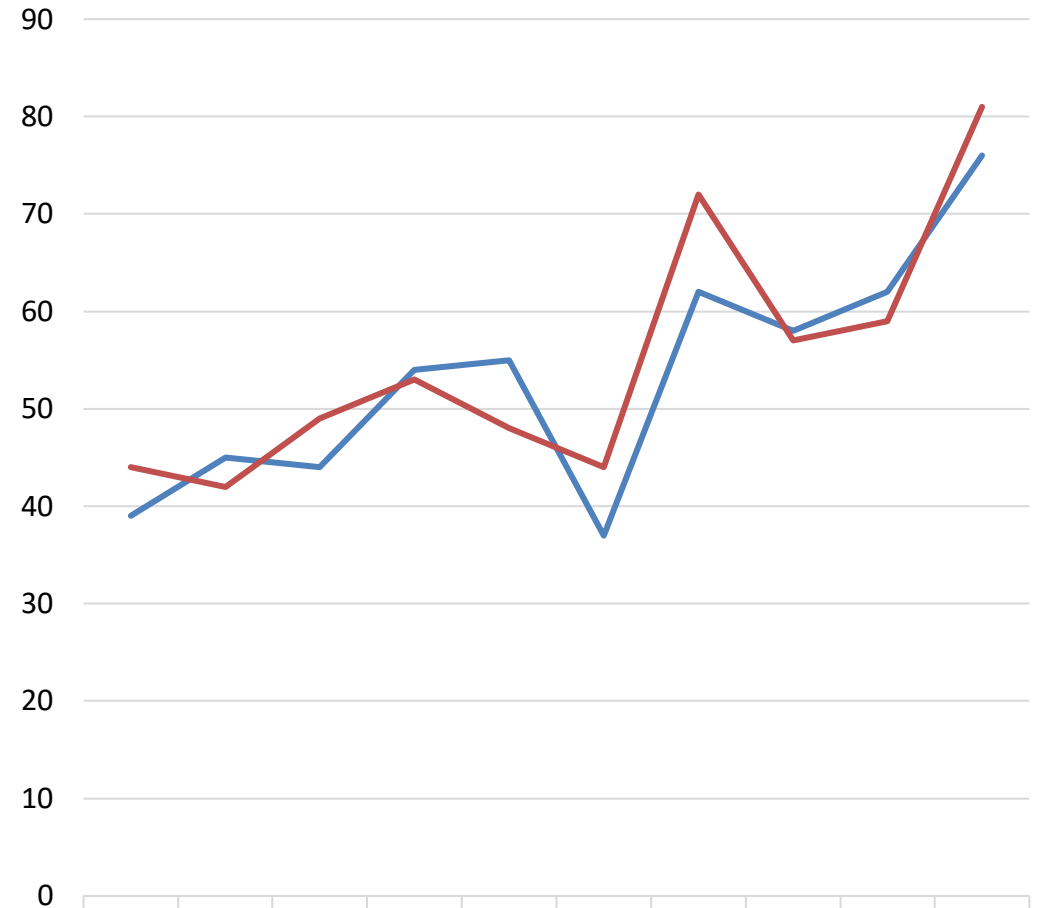
Statistics



Finalised and New Complaints 2011-2020



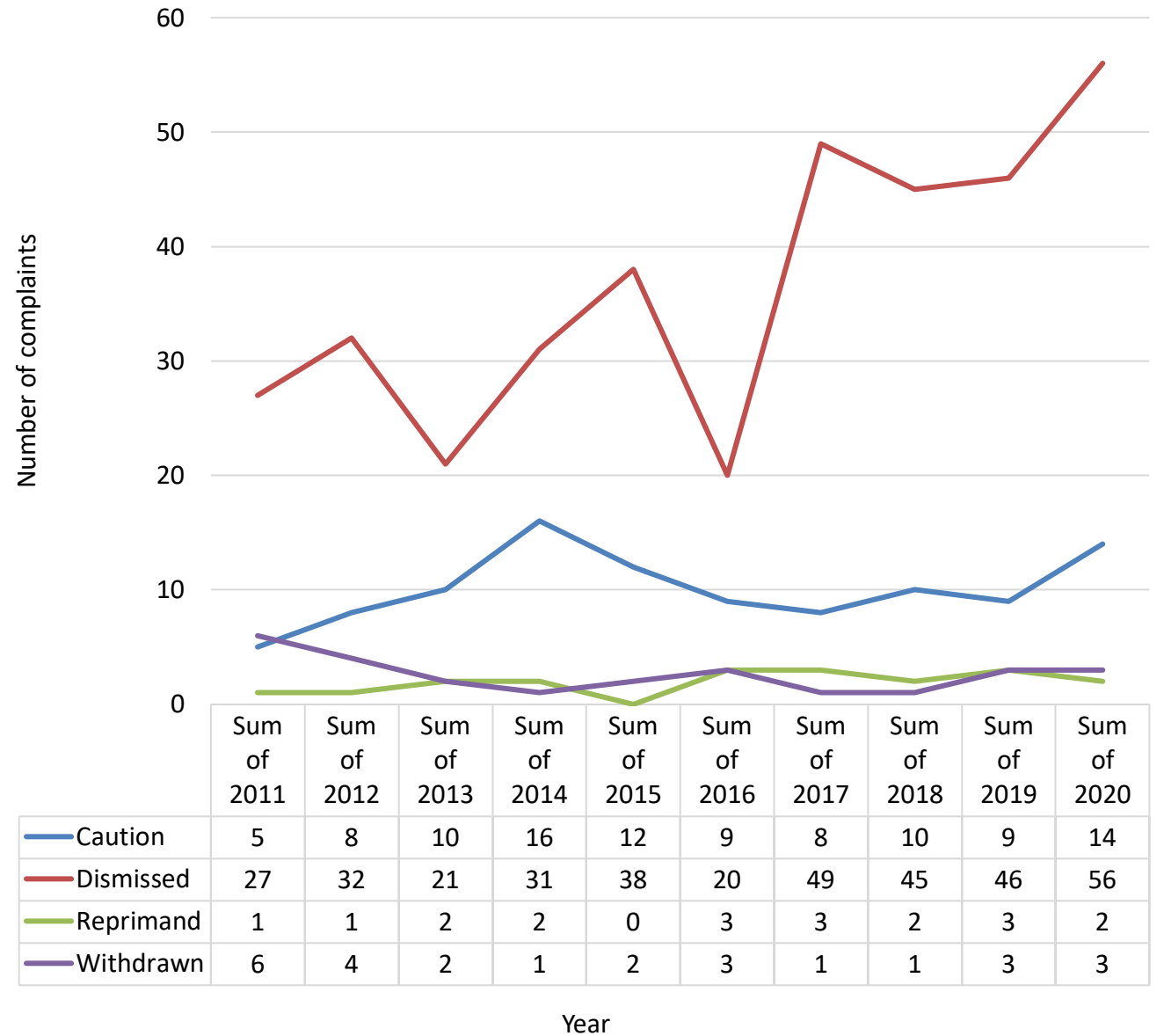
Number of complaints



| | Sum of 2011 | Sum of 2012 | Sum of 2013 | Sum of 2014 | Sum of 2015 | Sum of 2016 | Sum of 2017 | Sum of 2018 | Sum of 2019 | Sum of 2020 |
|----------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Finalised Complaints | 39 | 45 | 44 | 54 | 55 | 37 | 62 | 58 | 62 | 76 |
| New Complaints | 44 | 42 | 49 | 53 | 48 | 44 | 72 | 57 | 59 | 81 |

Year

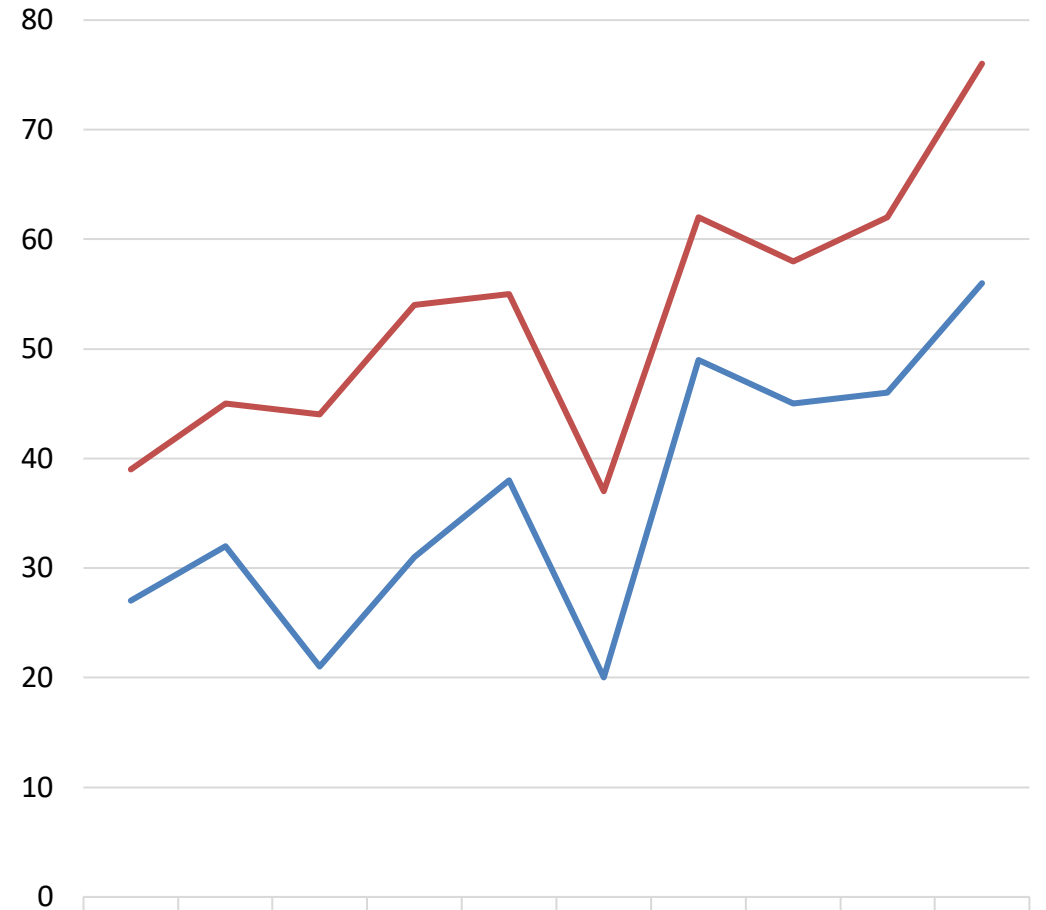
Complaint decisions 2011-2020



Complaint decisions Dismissed 2011-2020



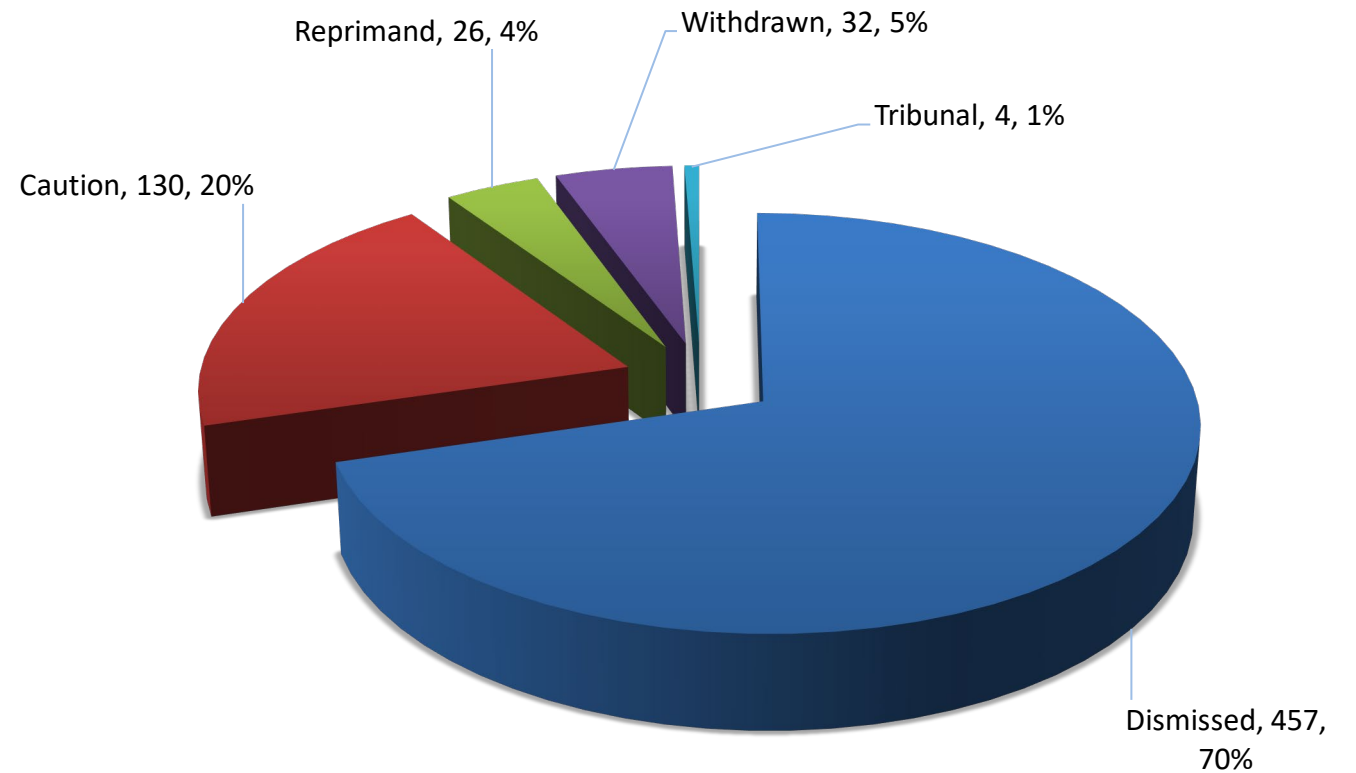
Number of complaints



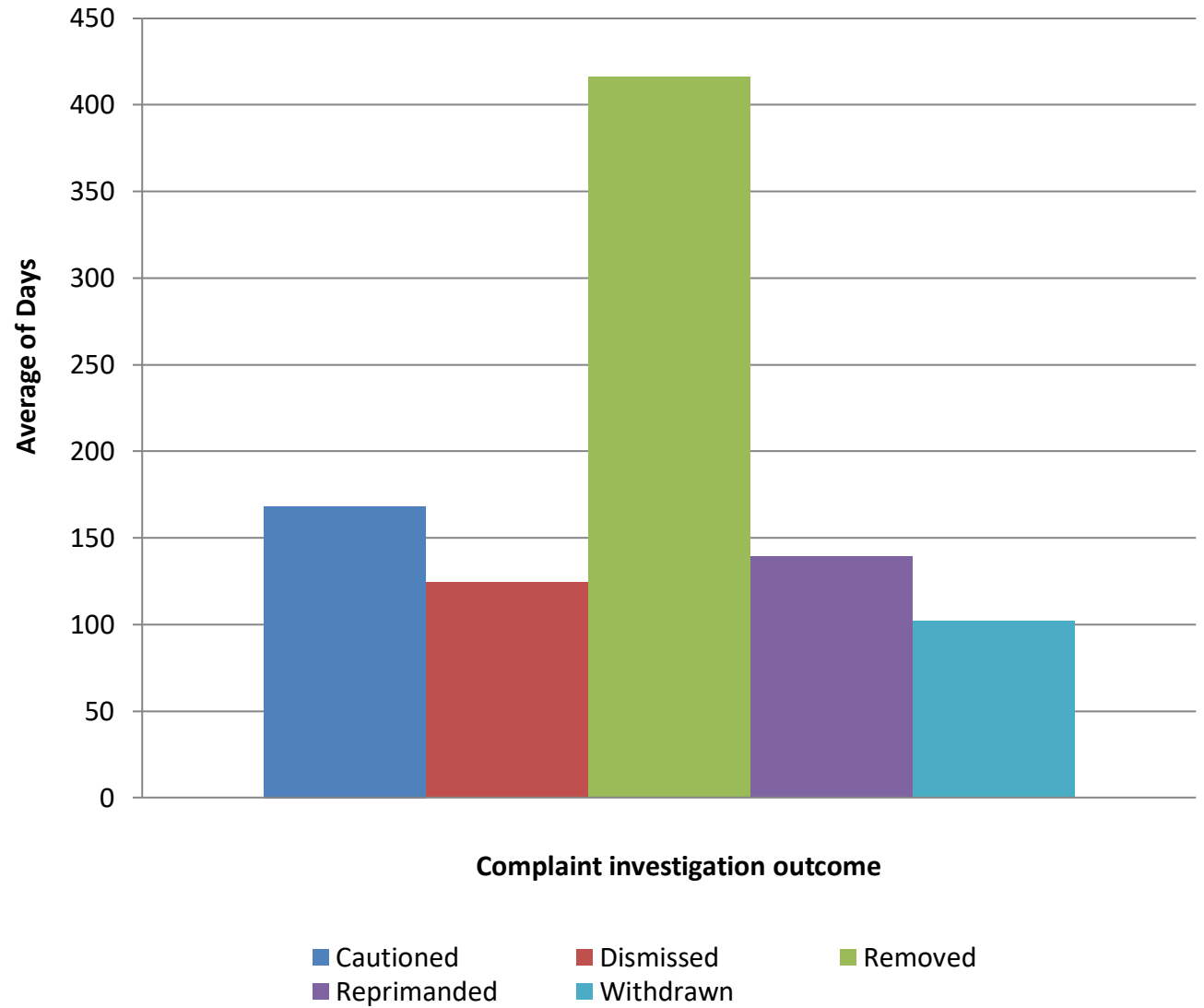
| | Sum of 2011 | Sum of 2012 | Sum of 2013 | Sum of 2014 | Sum of 2015 | Sum of 2016 | Sum of 2017 | Sum of 2018 | Sum of 2019 | Sum of 2020 |
|----------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Dismissed | 27 | 32 | 21 | 31 | 38 | 20 | 49 | 45 | 46 | 56 |
| Finalised Complaints | 39 | 45 | 44 | 54 | 55 | 37 | 62 | 58 | 62 | 76 |

Year

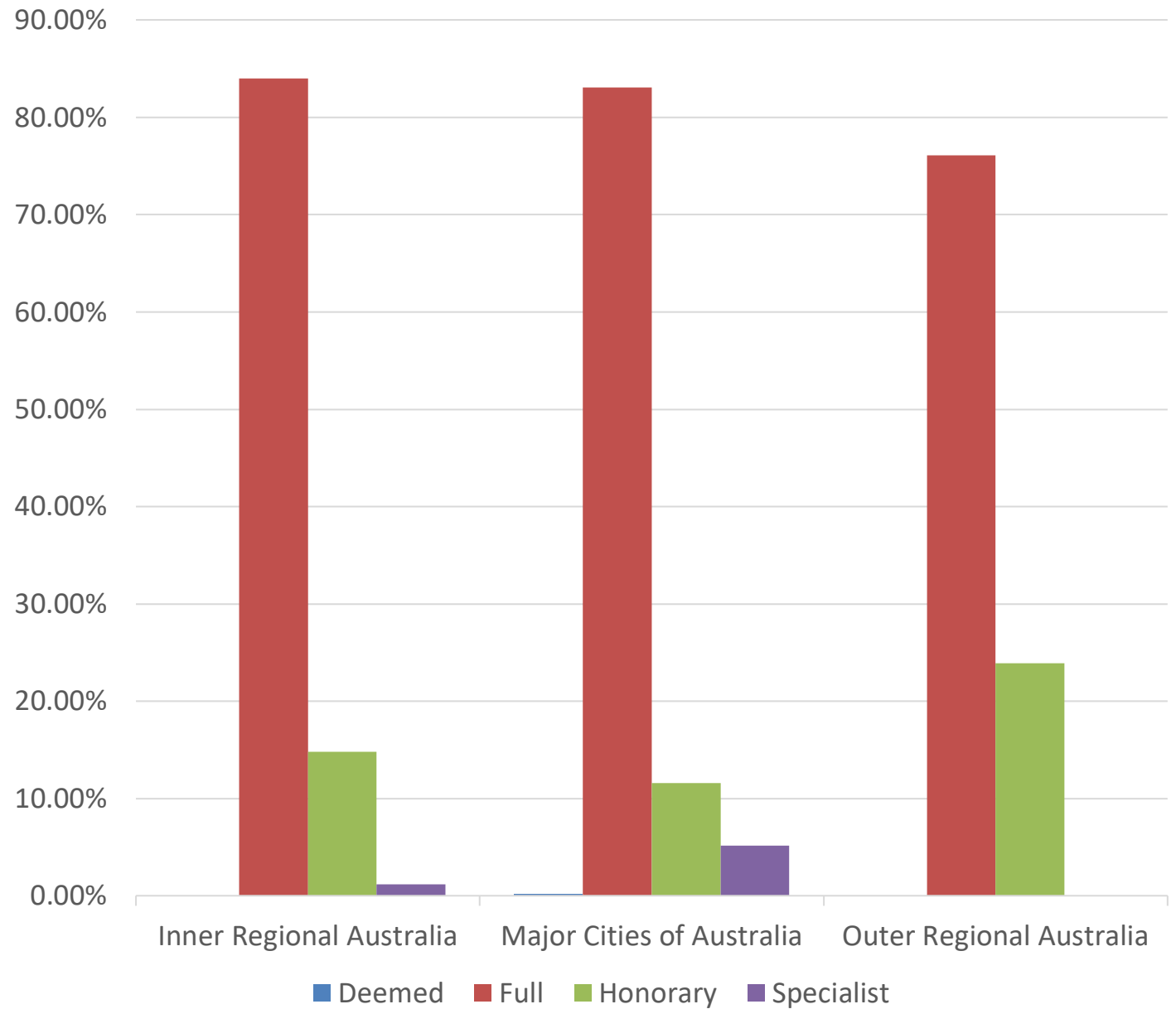
Complaints investigated by decision 2007-2020



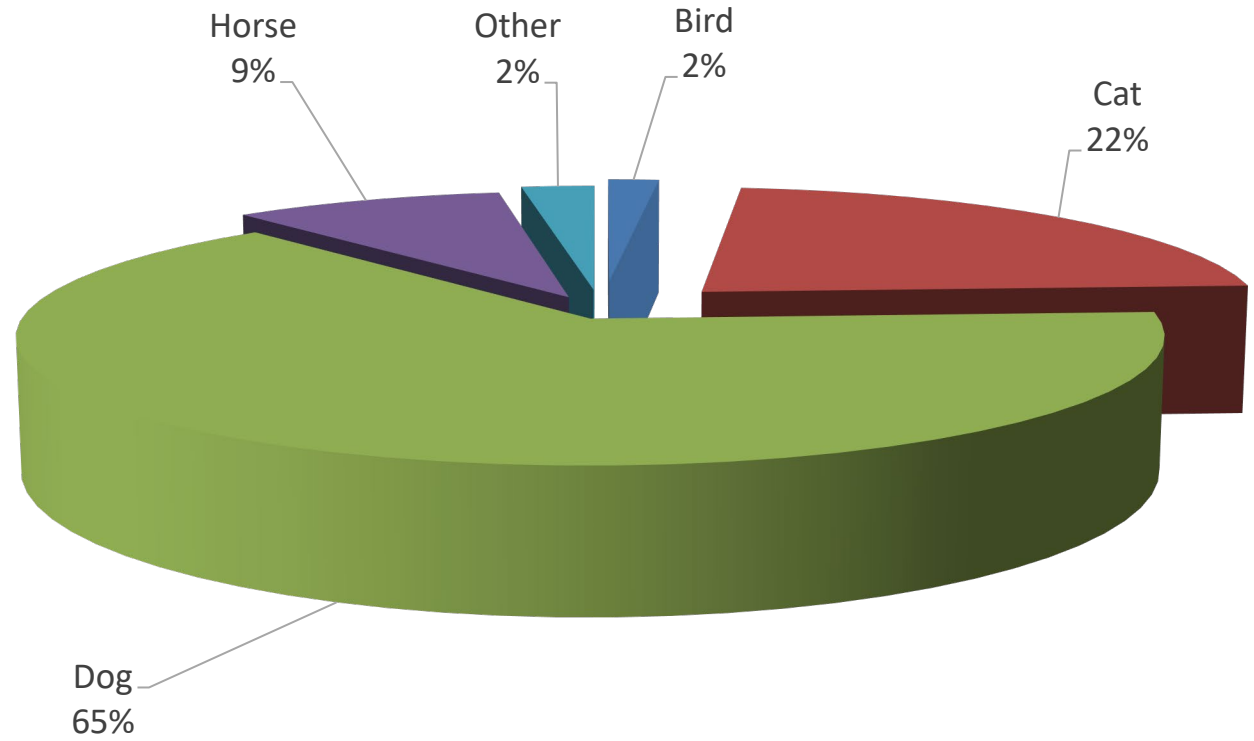
Complaints by average number of days to decision 2006-2015



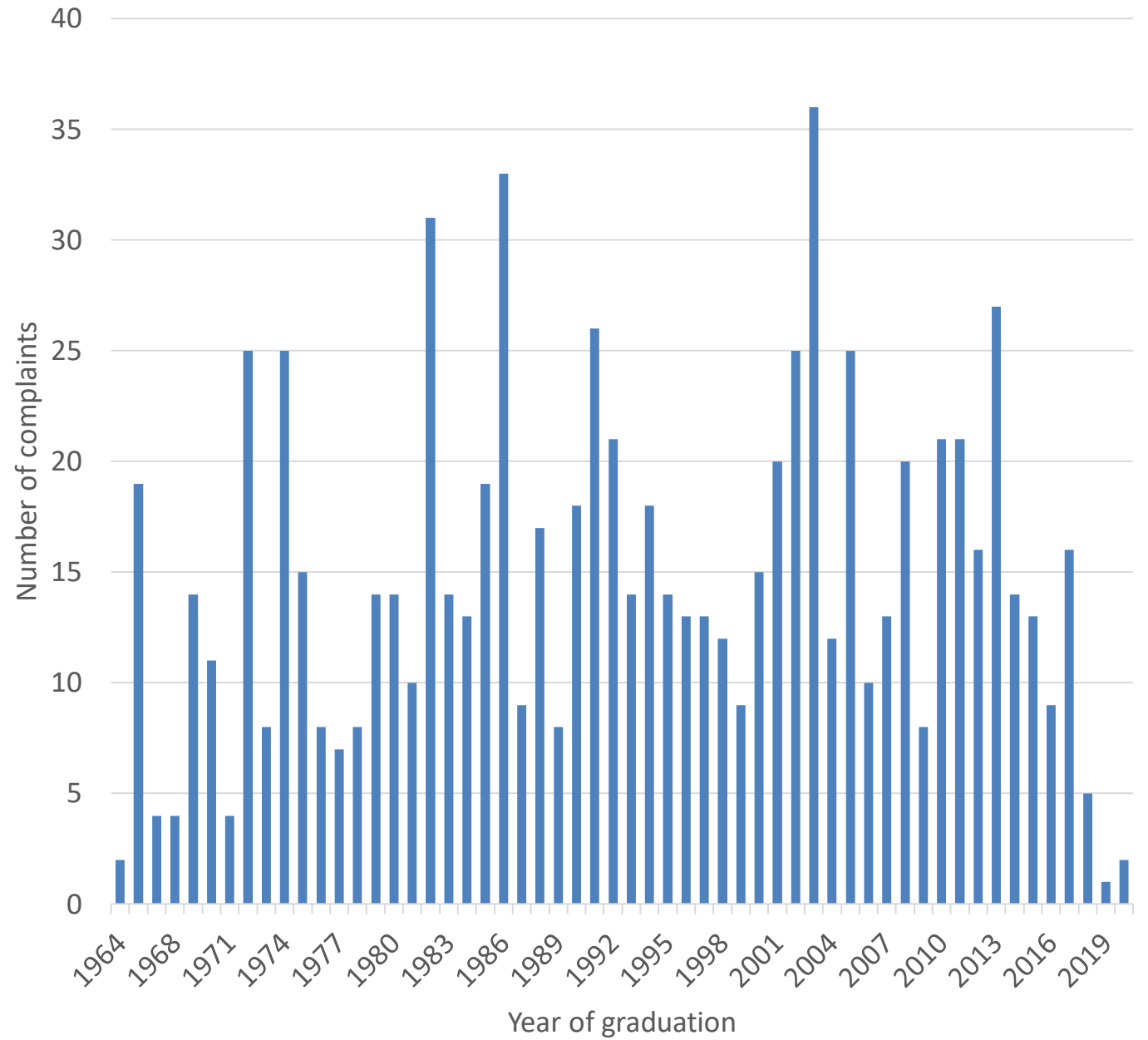
Percentage of complaints by registration type



Complaints by species



Complaints by year of graduation



References

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