

Complaints against veterinarians

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Board composition

The Board consists of 8 members appointed by the Governor and selected by the Minister:

- i. One veterinarian representing specialist veterinarians
- ii. One veterinarian representing urban veterinarians
- iii. One veterinarian representing rural veterinarians
- iv. One veterinarian representing academics in the field of veterinary science
- v. Two veterinary practitioners selected personally by the Minister
- vi. Two persons who are not veterinarians selected by the Minister to represent consumers of veterinary services

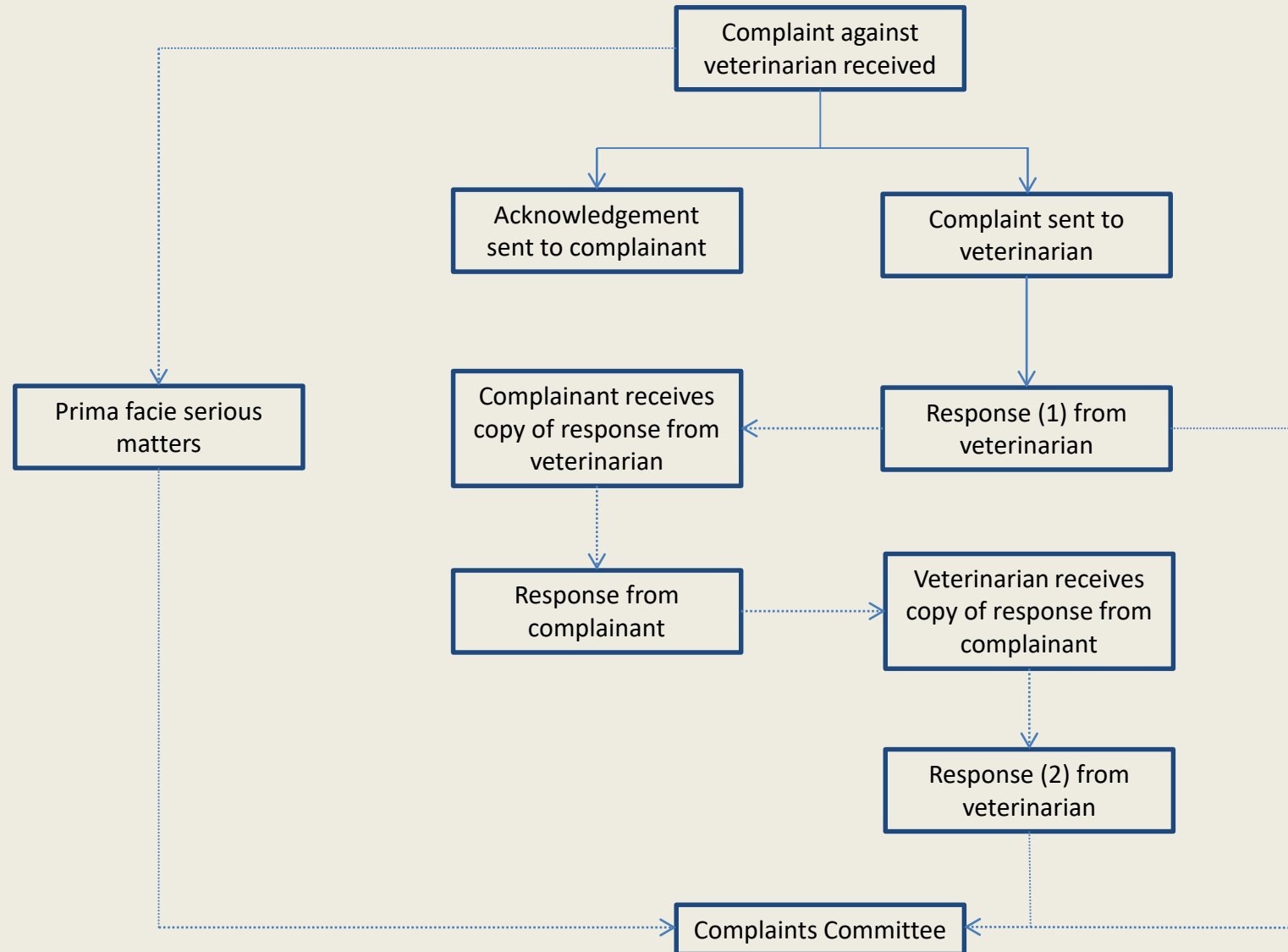
Complaints against veterinary practitioners

- Any person, including the Board, may make a complaint against a veterinary practitioner in respect of the veterinarian's conduct
- The Board does not have the legislative authority to investigate complaints concerning fees or charges and refers such complaints to the Department of Fair Trading
- The Board is not required to investigate a complaint against a veterinarian if the complaint is made more than 3 years after the conduct is alleged to have occurred
- Complaints must be made in writing, must identify the complainant and the Board requires that the complaint and details of the complaint be verified by statutory declaration
- The Board has created a Complaint Form to assist with lodging complaints against veterinarians

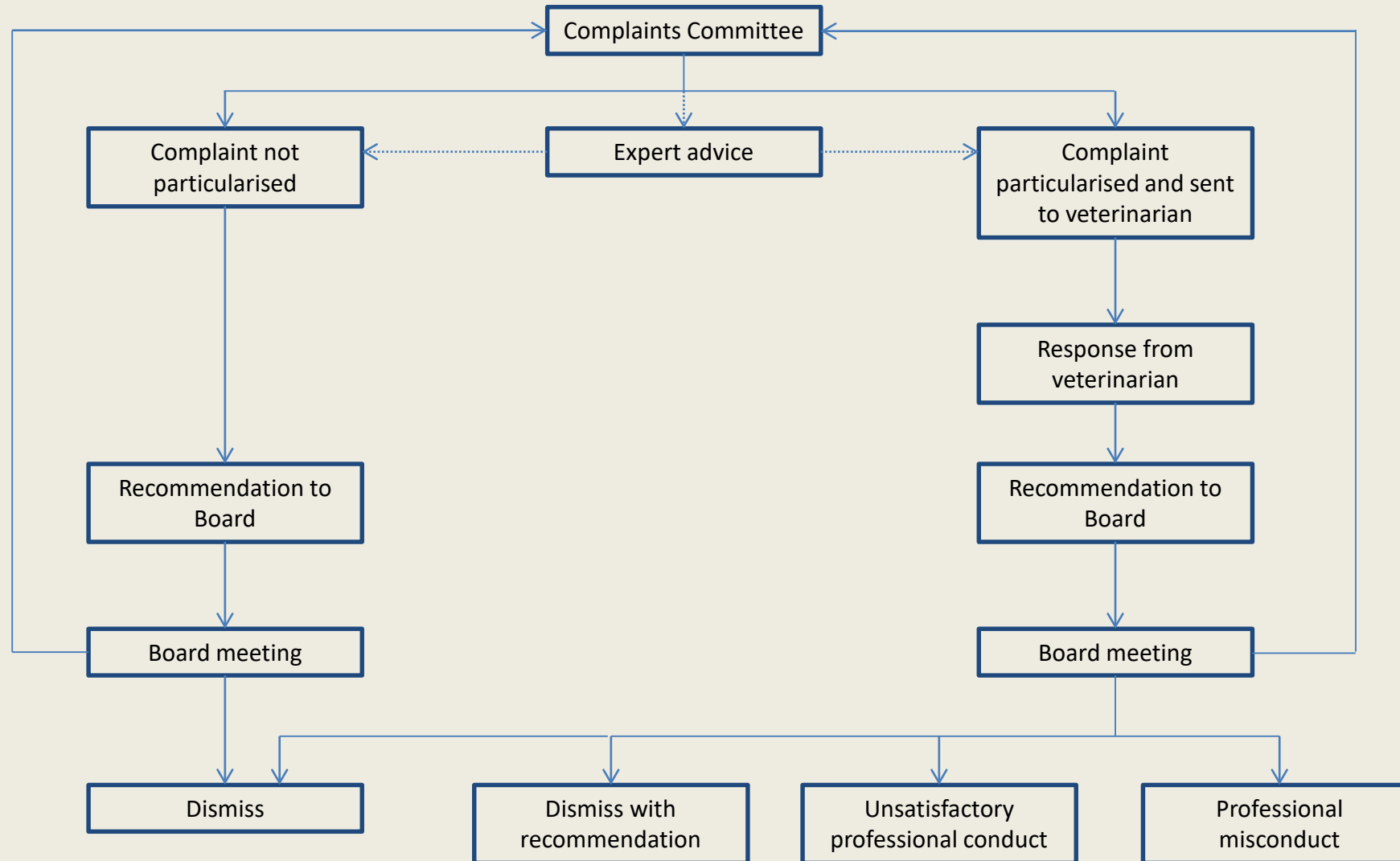
Complaints against veterinary practitioners

- The Board delegates the function of investigating complaints to a Complaints Committee
 - 2 veterinarian members
 - 1 non-veterinarian member
 - Others as required
- The Complaints Committee collects information from the complainant, the veterinarian and other sources as required
- The Board has the power to summon a person to appear before the Board to give evidence and to produce documents
- The Complaints Committee makes a recommendation to the Board
- The full Board determines the complaint

Investigation of complaints – gathering information



Investigation of complaints – determining the complaint



Decision after investigation of a complaint

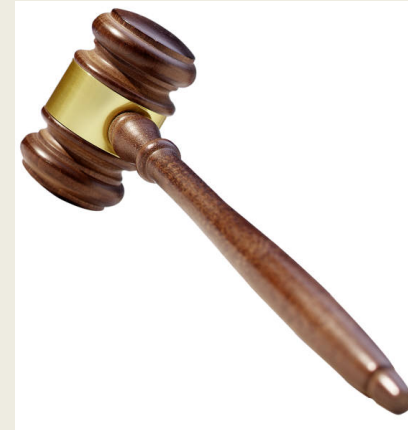
If the Board is satisfied the veterinarian is guilty of unsatisfactory professional conduct or professional misconduct the Board may:

- i. Apply to the NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal (Tribunal) for a disciplinary finding against the veterinarian or
- ii. Take one or more of the following actions including:
 - Reprimand or caution the veterinarian
 - Impose a fine on the veterinarian
 - Require the veterinarian to pay specified costs
 - Impose conditions on the veterinarian's registration
 - Require veterinarian to undertake further education

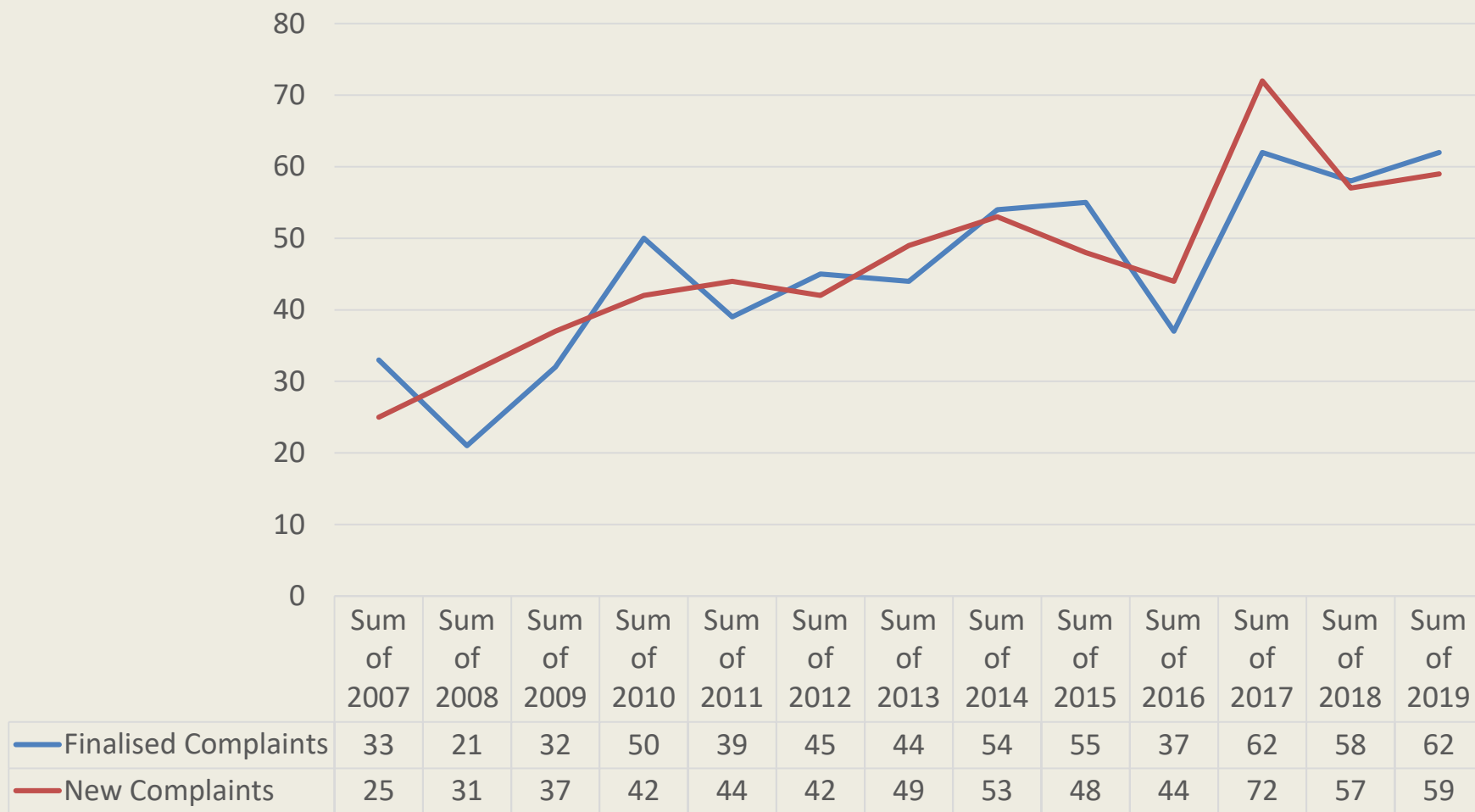
If the Board is satisfied the veterinarian is guilty of professional misconduct and has applied to the Tribunal for a disciplinary finding the Board may suspend the veterinarian's registration pending determination by the Tribunal

Review of Board decisions

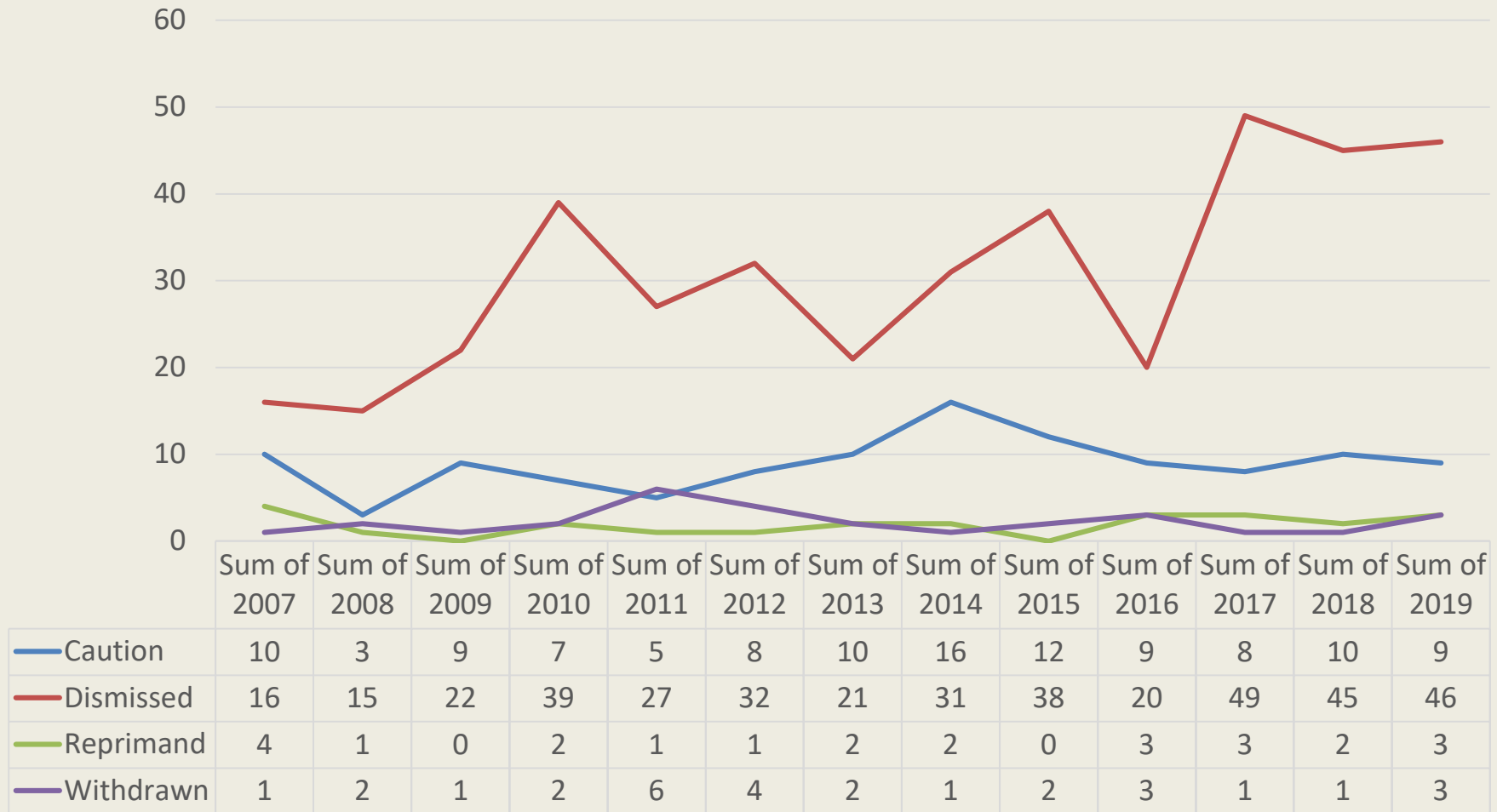
The Tribunal may also be asked by the veterinarian to review of a disciplinary finding made by the Board
A veterinarian may appeal a decision of the Tribunal to the Supreme Court of NSW



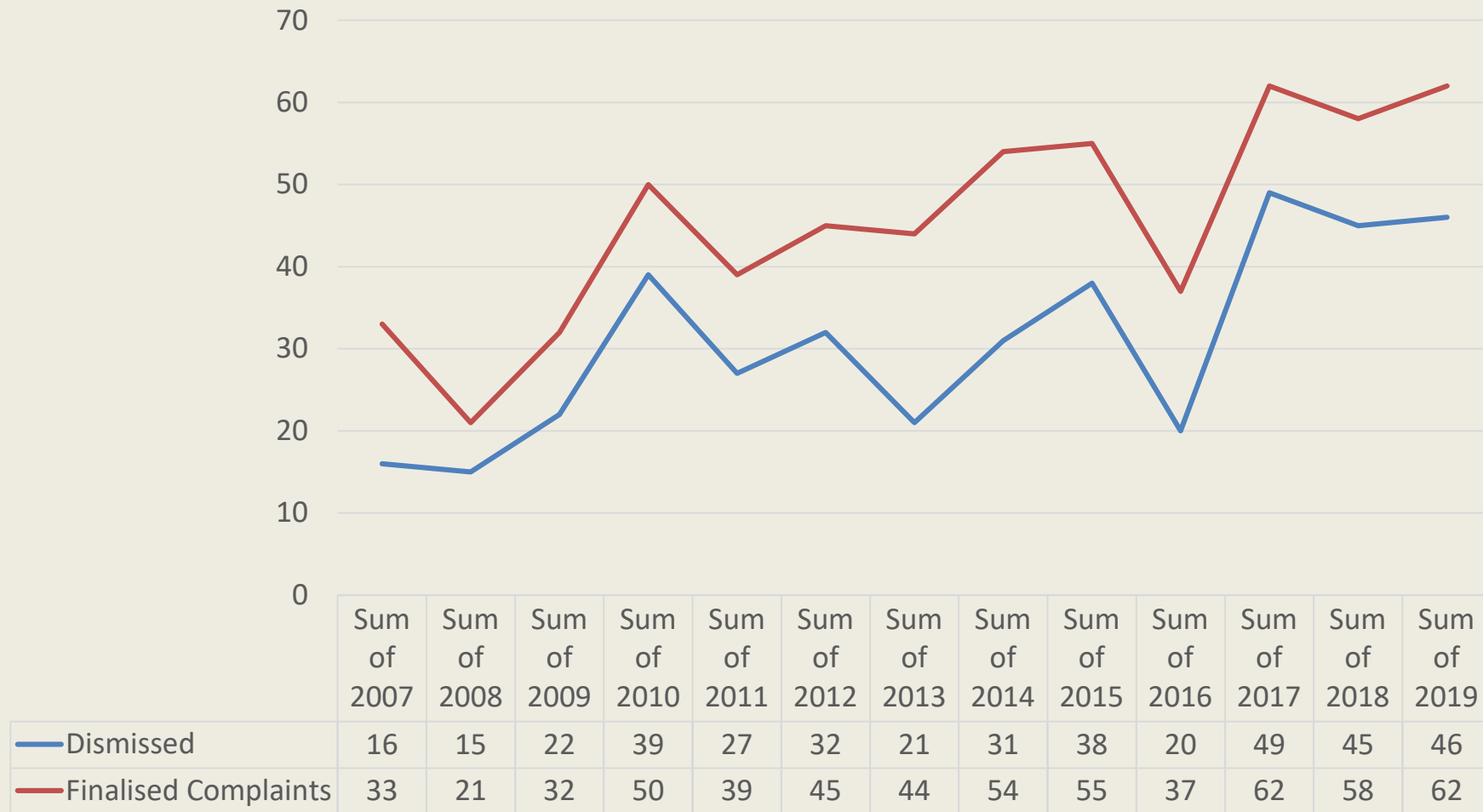
Finalised and New Complaints 2007-2019



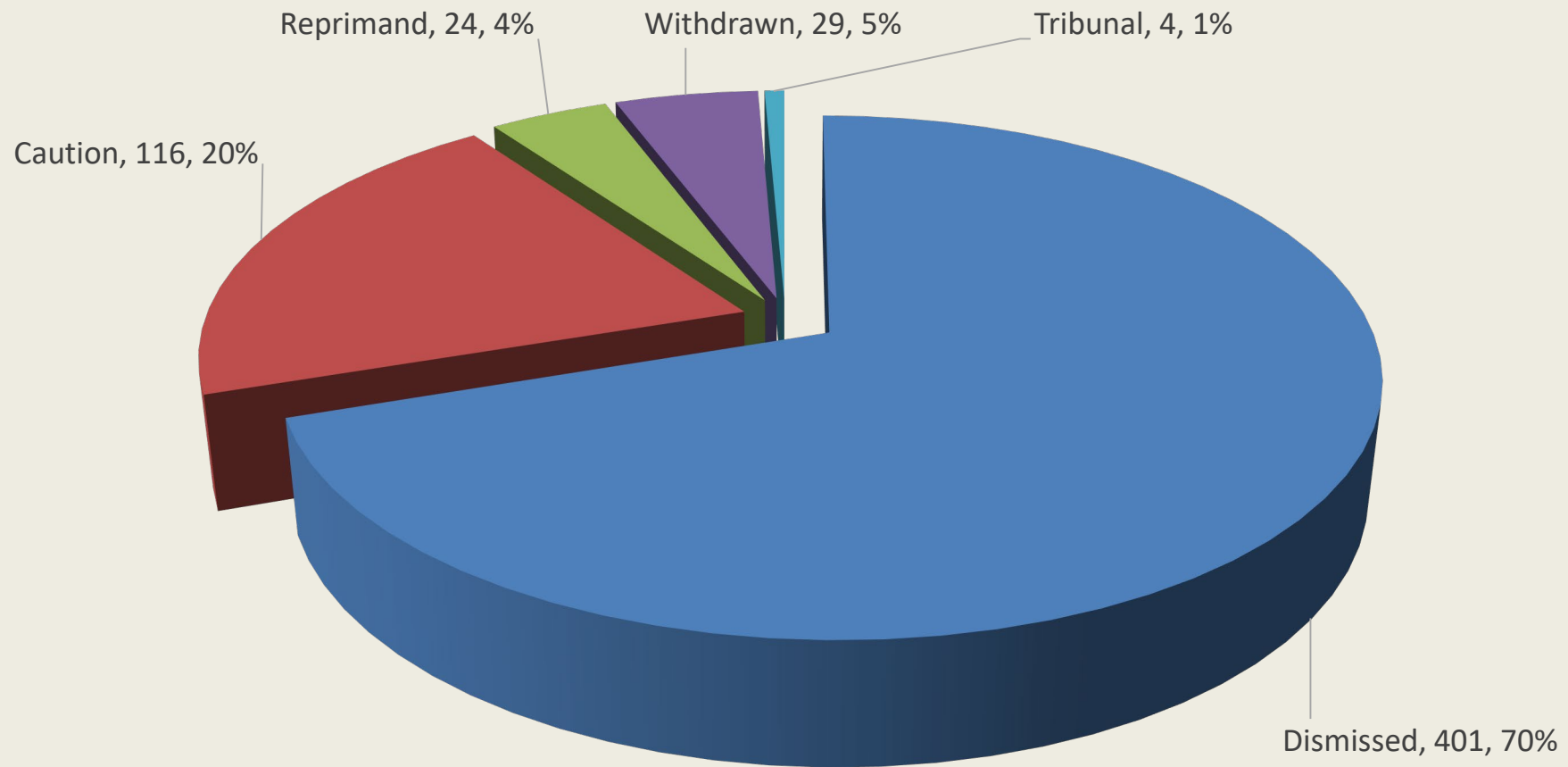
Complaint decisions 2007-2019



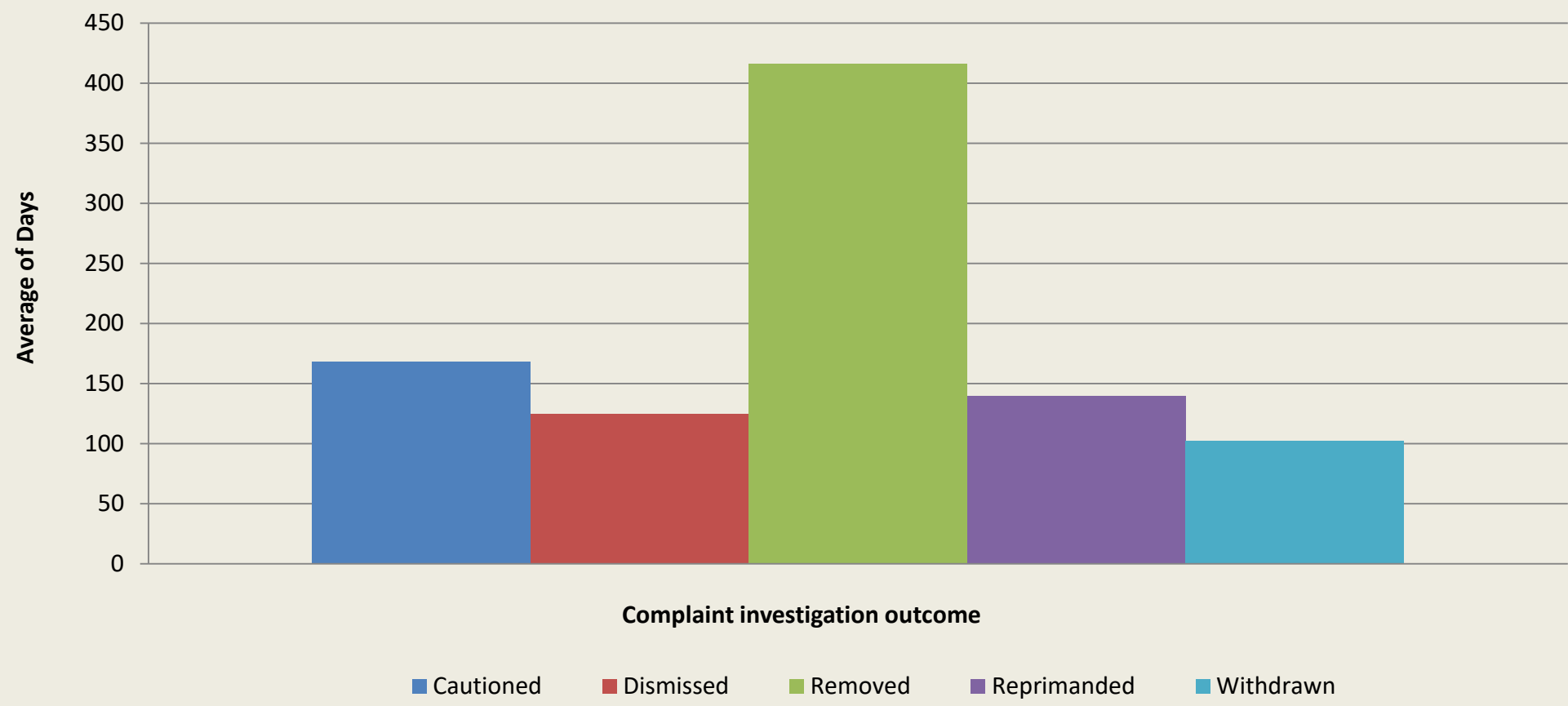
Complaint decisions 2007-2019



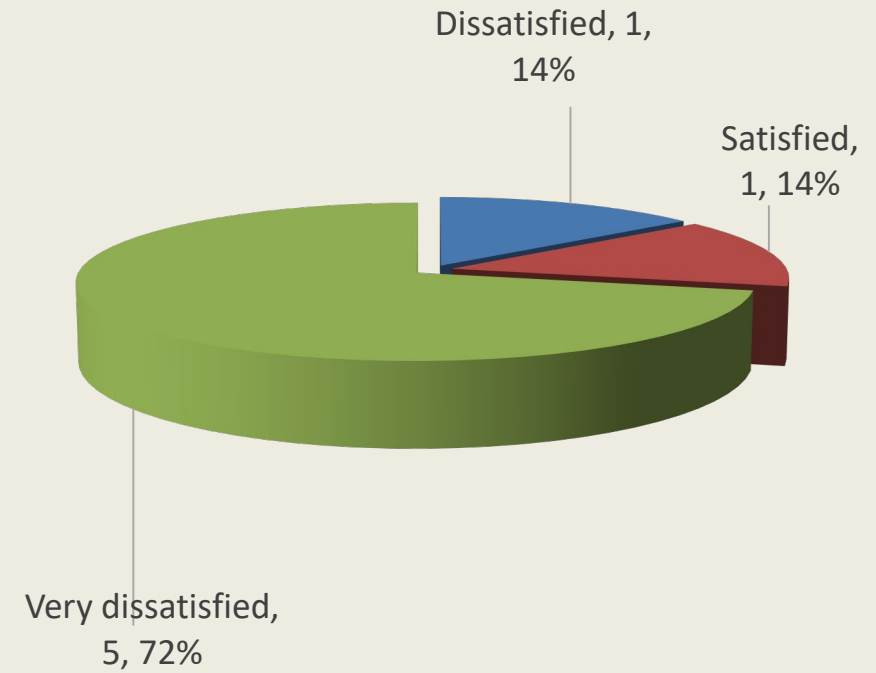
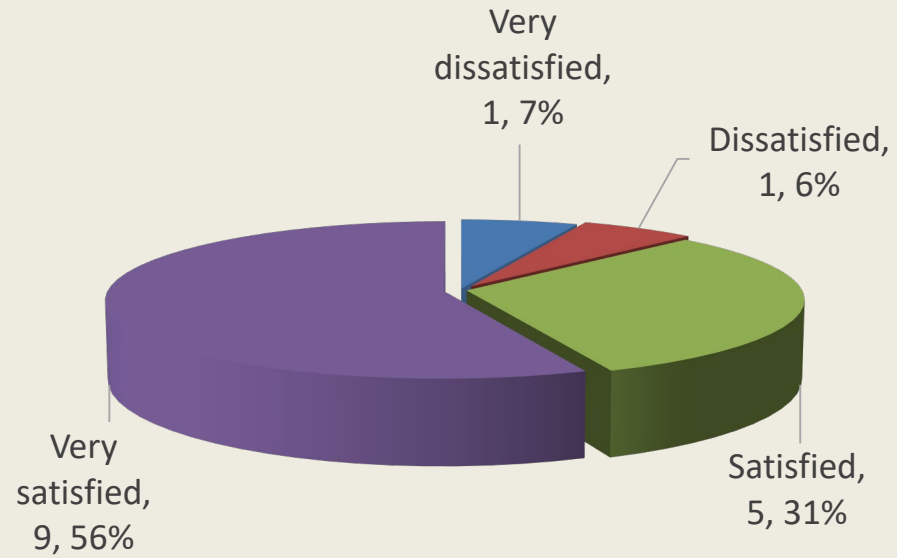
Complaints investigated by decision 2007-2019



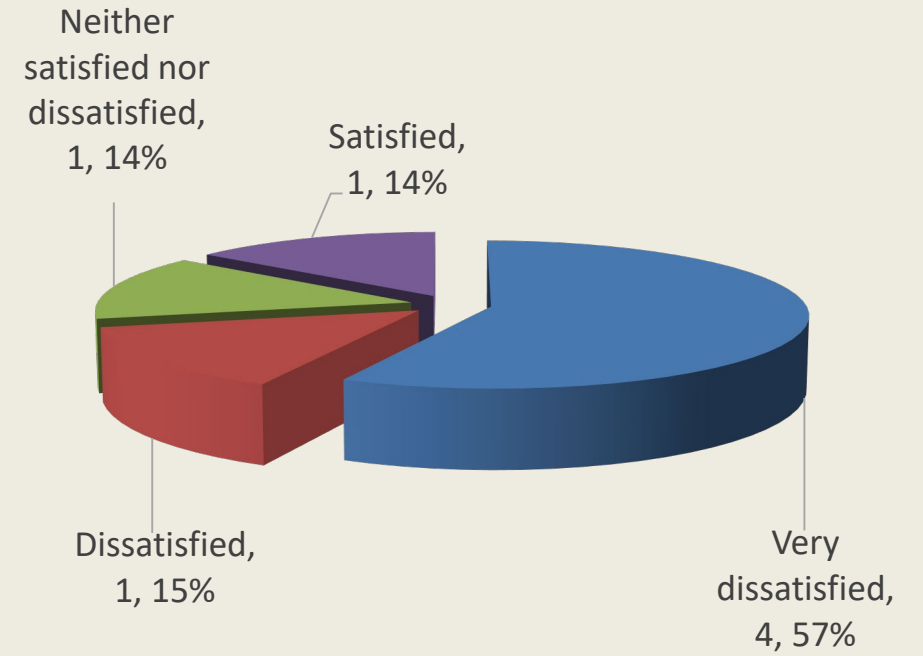
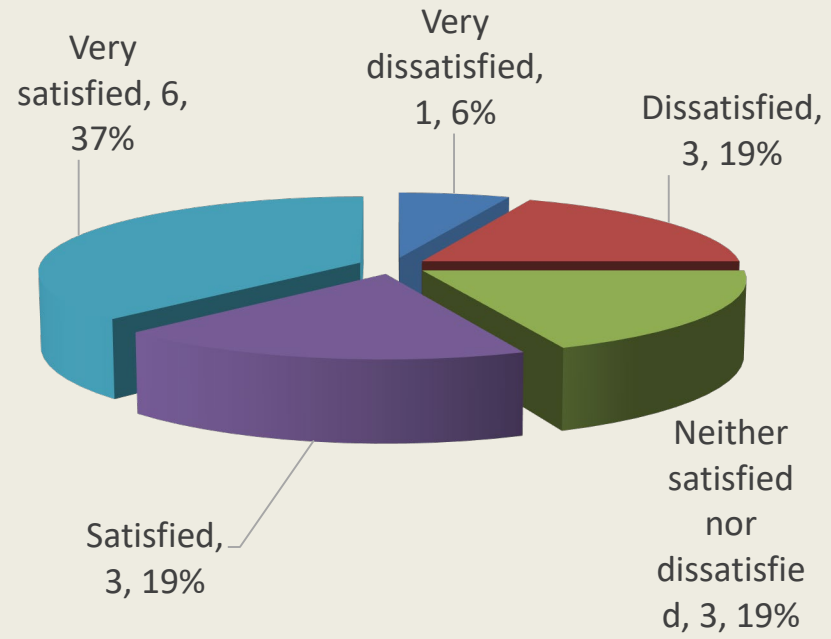
Complaints by average number of days to decision
2006-2015



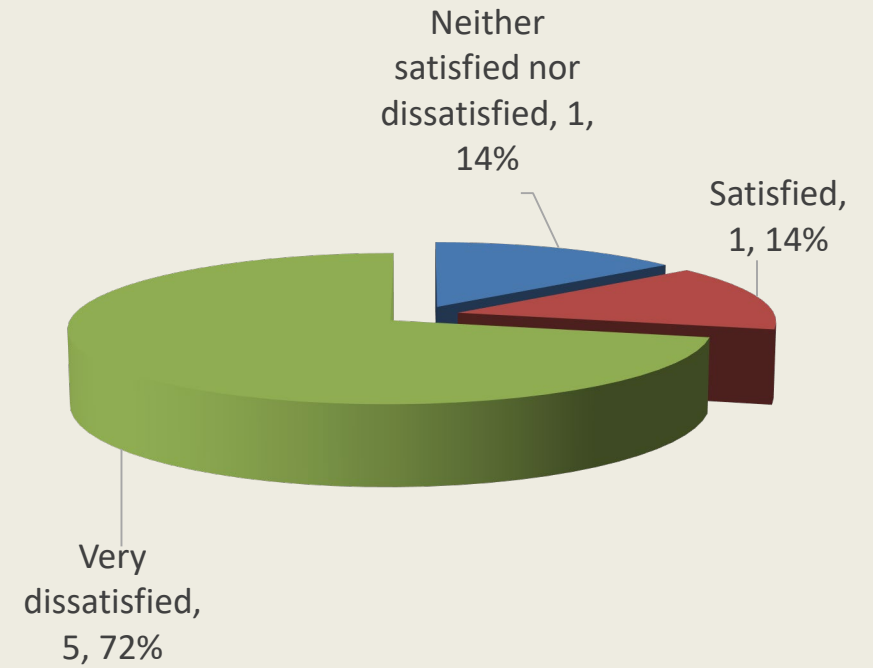
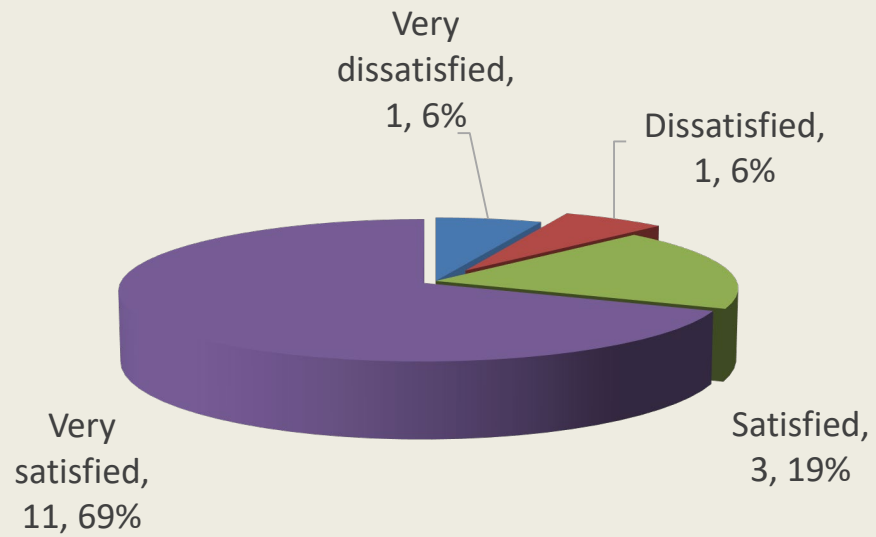
Complaints Feedback on outcome



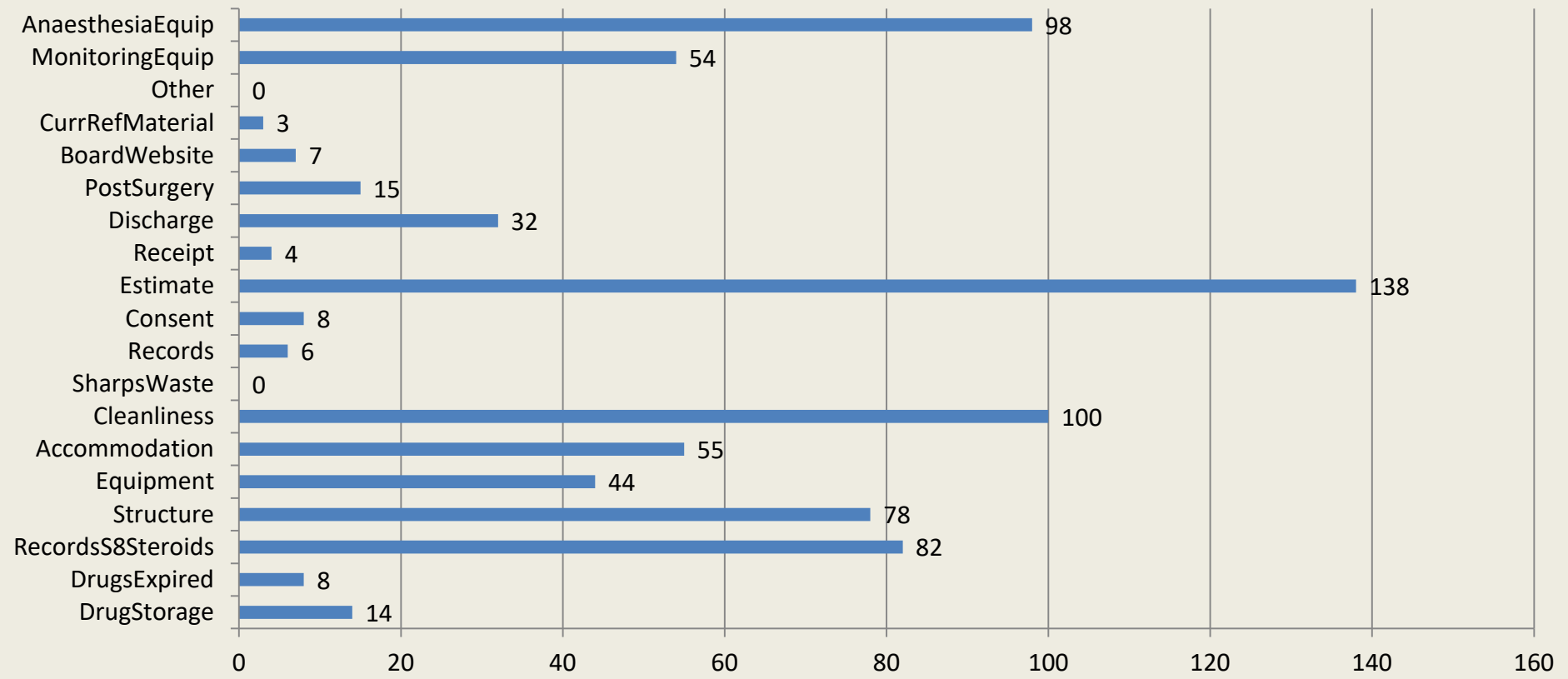
Complaints Feedback on processes



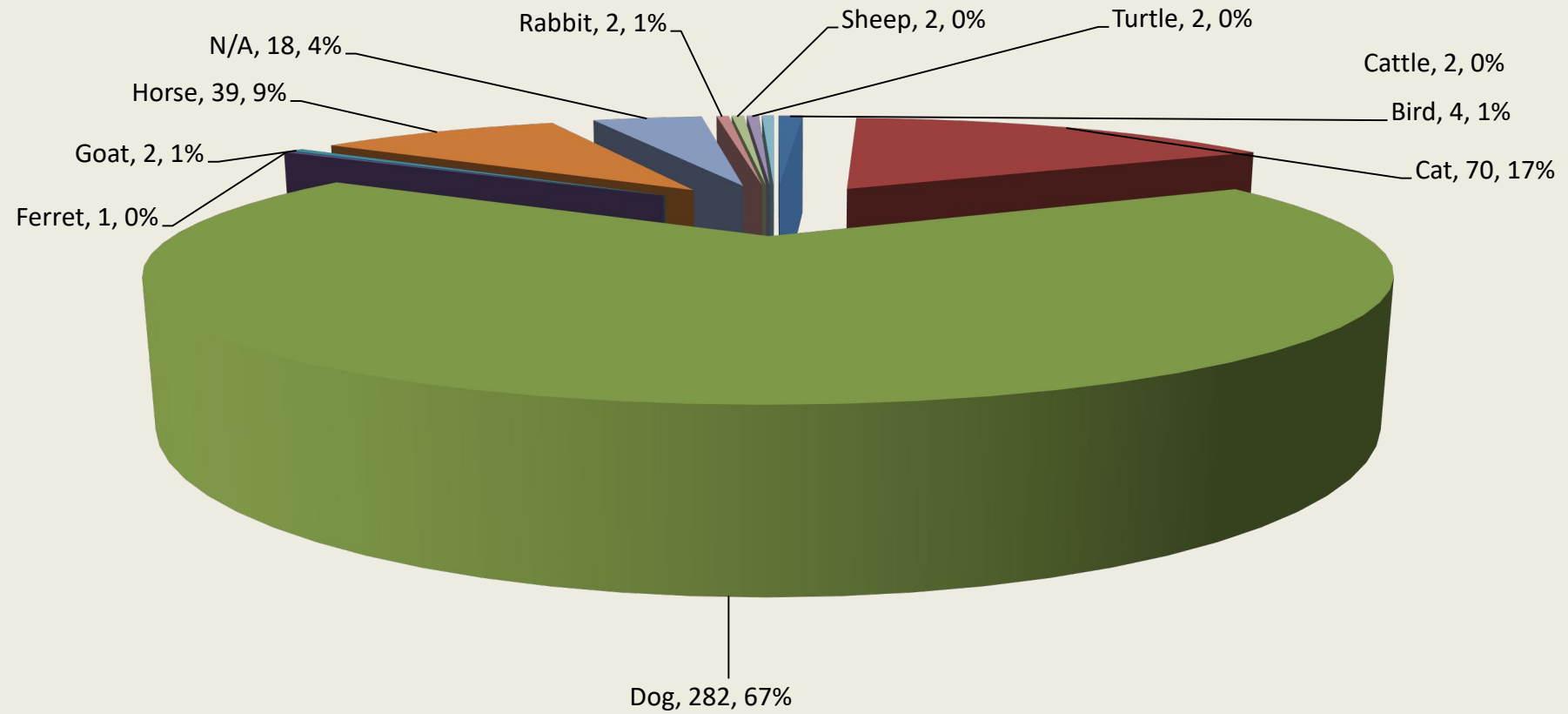
Complaints Feedback on reasons



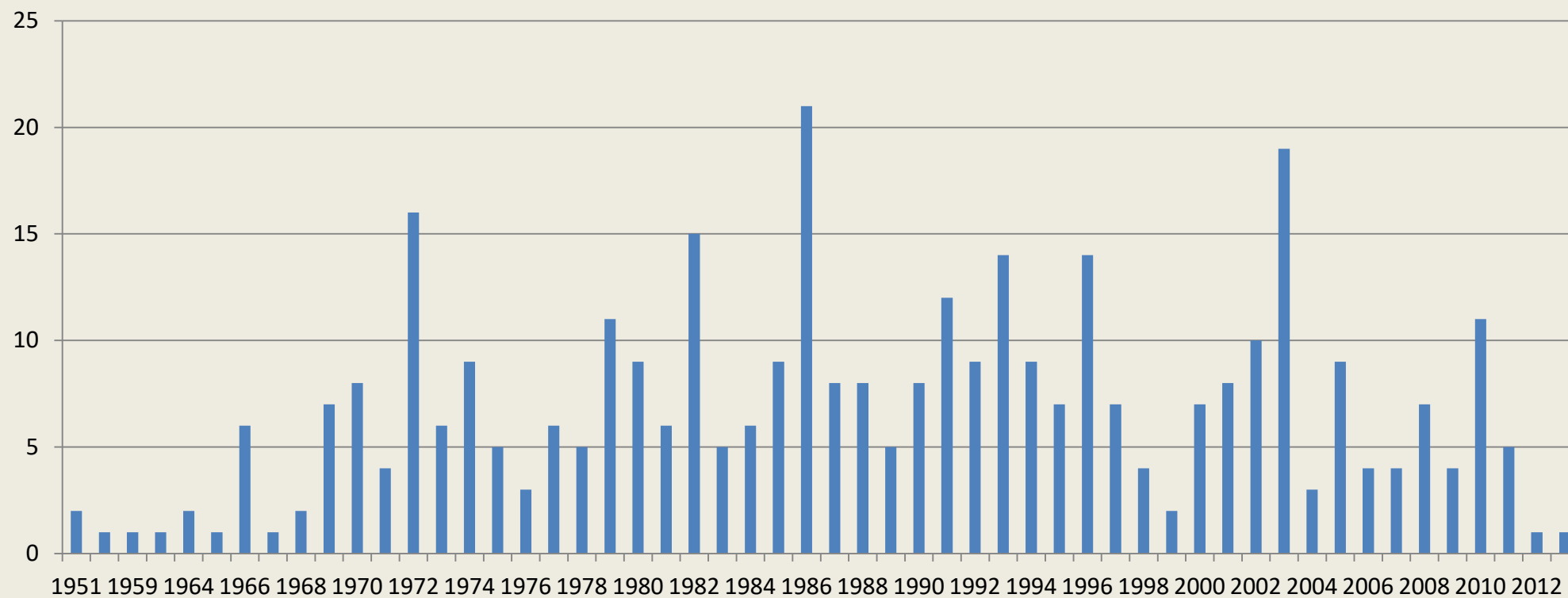
Hospital Inspections Summary of Issues 2012-2013



Complaints by species 2007-2014



Complaints by year of graduation 2007-2014



Summary

- Complaints often result from errors and adverse events both of which can be addressed through examining individual performance and systems (processes)
- Individual performance is a function of capacity, opportunity and willingness and continuing professional development (CPD) plays an important part in improving individual performance (capacity and willingness)
- Systems approaches focus on physical resources (facilities and equipment), processes (policies and procedures), and people
- The Board promotes animal welfare and protects the public through
 - Enforcing CPD requirements
 - Inspecting veterinary premises
 - Communicating with the profession
 - Investigating complaints
- Both individual performance and systems need to be addressed in order to reduce errors and preventable adverse events but evidence suggests that focusing on processes rather than individuals provides greater benefits for quality and productivity

Questions

