

Veterinary Board of Tasmania

Annual Report

2014-2015



The Annual Report of the Veterinary Board of Tasmania is submitted to the Minister for Primary Industries and Water in accordance with section 6 of the *Veterinary Surgeons Act 1987*.



Dr N L Leighton BVSc MACVSc

Chairman

26 August 2015

Table of Contents

Preamble	2
The Board	3
Meetings	3
The <i>Veterinary Surgeons Act 1987 and Veterinary Surgeons Regulations 2012</i>	3
Registrations	4
Recognised qualifications	4
Specialist Registration	5
National Recognition of Veterinary Registration (NRVR)	5
Australasian Veterinary Boards Council Inc.	5
Exemption from Registration	6
Section 13 exemption	6
Regulation 5(2) exemption	6
Veterinary Service Standards	7
Veterinary Practice Inspections	8
Communication	8
Complaints	8
Financial Report	9
Auditors' Report 2014-15	10
Special Purpose Financial Report	11
Approved Fees 2015	13
Other Statutory requirements	13
Demographics of the Profession	14

Veterinary Board of Tasmania

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Veterinary Board of Tasmania

Annual Report 2014-2015

Preamble

The *Veterinary Surgeons Act 1987* provides for the registration of veterinary surgeons, the regulation of the practice of veterinary surgery and incidental matters.

The Veterinary Board of Tasmania consists of five members appointed by the Minister for Primary Industries and Water. One community member is nominated by the Minister, another is a registered veterinary surgeon employed in the Department Of Primary Industries, Parks, Water and Environment (DPIPWE) and nominated by the Secretary. The remaining three members are appointed by the Minister from a panel of five registered veterinary surgeons nominated by the Australian Veterinary Association (Tasmanian Division) (AVA Tas).

Primary functions of the Board are:-

- to maintain and review standards for registration of veterinary surgeons, veterinary specialists, and veterinary service companies;
- to ensure that registered veterinary surgeons and registered veterinary specialists provide veterinary services in a competent manner;
- to arrange, where it thinks necessary and in such manner as it thinks appropriate, for the examination of persons seeking to become registered;
- to arrange, where it thinks necessary, for the inspection of veterinary establishments; and
- to hear and determine any inquiry under Part VI (Disciplinary Proceedings) of the Act.

The Board may also approve qualifications for persons seeking to become registered (s5A); and, by notice, may declare veterinary service standards (s5B).

The Board

The Board members were appointed in November 2012 for a three year term. They are:

Dr Neil Leighton (Chair)	AVA Tas nominee
Dr Neale Ward (Deputy Chair)	AVA Tas nominee
Dr Tessa Frazer-Oakley	AVA Tas nominee
Dr Kevin Ellard	Nominee of the Secretary DPIPWE
Ms Jo Bradley	Nominee of the Minister

Meetings

During the year the Board met on the following occasions:

Meeting	Date	Location	Attendance
103	7 August 2014	Launceston	4
104	30 October 2014	Launceston	5
105	13 November 2014	Devonport/Hobart/Launceston (audio-visual link)	5
106	18 December 2014	Launceston	5
107	19 February 2015	Launceston	5
108	14 May 2015	Launceston	5

The Board is fortunate to be able to use DPIPWE offices for its meetings.

Registrar

The Registrar, Mrs Anne Horner, is appointed in accordance with s 7(1)(a) of the Act.

The Veterinary Surgeons Act 1987 and Veterinary Surgeons Regulations 2012

It is anticipated that amendments to the *Veterinary Surgeons Act 1987* may be enacted later in 2015.

Registrations

To practise veterinary surgery or provide a veterinary service in Tasmania, a person must be registered as a veterinary surgeon with the Veterinary Board of Tasmania; or, if not permanently resident in Tasmania, must be registered as a veterinarian in another state or territory (NRVR). Registration may be renewed for each calendar year.

As at 30 June 2015 there are 267 registered veterinary surgeons entered on the Veterinary Register of Tasmania.

	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
Registered at 1 July	279*	283	240P / 60S	245	253
New Registration	38	47	25P / 7S	19	29
Cancellation	34	30	88#	12	14
Registered at 30 June	283*	240P / 60S	244 (P)	252	267

*Total registrations (Primary + Secondary).

#All secondary registrations were cancelled on 31/12/12 with the commencement of NRVR.

Cancellations of registrations are made under the following circumstances:

- where the Board becomes aware that the registrant has died; or
- at the request of the registrant due to retirement from practice, departure from the state, or other reason for non-practice in this state; or
- by the Board due to non-payment of the annual registration renewal fee following service of the renewal advice notice.

Of the 14 cancellations at the end of 2014, eight moved interstate, four moved overseas, one overseas registrant did not renew and one retired.

Recognised qualifications

The Act provides that a person is qualified to be registered as a veterinary surgeon if the person has attained a qualification approved by the Board, and is a fit and proper person to practice as a veterinary surgeon in Tasmania.

The Board has approved the qualifications recognized by the Australasian Veterinary Boards Council Inc. (AVBC) as providing a holder with eligibility to apply for registration as a veterinary surgeon in Australia and New Zealand without further examination. The full list of qualifications is set out on the AVBC website, but in summary, all Australian and New Zealand veterinary degrees are approved:

- University of Sydney
- Murdoch University (WA)
- Charles Sturt University (NSW)
- Massey University (NZ)
- University of Melbourne
- University of Queensland
- James Cook University (Qld)
- University of Adelaide (2013)

Overseas trained veterinarians who have been awarded the Australian National Veterinary Examination Certificate (NVE) or the New Zealand National Veterinary Examination Certificate (NZNVE) are also recognized. The NVE is administered by the AVBC. Upon successful completion of the NVE a candidate is issued with a certificate as proof that they have satisfied the examination requirements. All Australian Boards have agreed to accept the certificate as proof of professional competence.

Degrees and qualifications recognized by the following accreditation bodies are also recognized:

- Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons (RCVS) United Kingdom
- Educational Commission for Foreign Veterinary Graduates (ECFVG)
- European Association of Establishments for Veterinary Education (EAEVE)
- American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA).

Specialist Registration

The Board has the power to register veterinary specialists in an approved speciality. One veterinary specialist in the area of Small Animal Surgery holds registration. A number of interstate registered veterinary specialists provide visiting specialist services in Tasmania under NRVR.

National Recognition of Veterinary Registration (NRVR)

NRVR commenced in South Australia on 1 January 2015, joining the eastern states (Queensland, New South Wales, Victoria and Tasmania). This means that a Tasmanian vet may undertake locum work or short term work in South Australia, Queensland, New South Wales and Victoria without being required to hold secondary registration in those states.

Under NRVR, Tasmania recognises all other states and territories' registration, so interstate registered vets may undertake locum or short term work in Tasmania without being registered in Tasmania. However, if an interstate registered vet moves to Tasmania, while they may work initially here under NRVR, they need to be registered in Tasmania within a reasonable time of settling here.

Australasian Veterinary Boards Council Inc.

The Australasian Veterinary Boards Council Inc. (AVBC) is a legal entity which has authority to speak and act on behalf of all veterinary registering authorities in Australia and New Zealand. Although it has no legislative power to impose any decisions made at meetings on any participating Boards, it has a valuable advisory function and makes recommendations to the Boards in the areas of:

- the accreditation of veterinary schools and courses leading to a degree in veterinary science or medicine;
- assessment of suitability for practice in Australia and New Zealand of persons with foreign qualifications, including the running of the NVE;
- uniform criteria for recognition of qualifications for registration;
- provision of advice on matters concerning the occupational regulation of veterinarians, including general and specialist registration; and

-
- encouraging harmonisation of the standards, regulations and quality assurance of veterinary services provided to the community in all jurisdictions.

The state and territory Veterinary Boards of Australia, the Veterinary Council of New Zealand and the Australian Veterinary Association (AVA) and the New Zealand Veterinary Association Ltd (NZVA) are members of AVBC. The AVA and the NZVA do not contribute to the financial support of AVBC and are not entitled to vote.

AVBC members have discussions bimonthly, primarily by teleconference, with a face to face meeting for the AVBC AGM. The AVBC delegate, Dr Neale Ward, and the registrar attended the AGM which was held in Brisbane in May 2015.

The AVBC is financed by a levy on participating jurisdictions, based on the number of veterinary surgeons holding primary registration in that jurisdiction.

Exemption from Registration

Section 11 of the Act makes it an offence for a person to engage in the practice of veterinary surgery or render a veterinary service unless that person is a registered veterinary surgeon. There are some exceptions to the offence provision, including veterinary students acting under the direct supervision of a registered veterinary surgeon and any other 'prescribed case'. The penalty for breach of section 11 is a fine not exceeding 50 penalty units (\$7,000).

Section 13 exemption

Section 13 provides that an individual may apply to the Board for exemption from the operation of section 11 in relation to a specific veterinary service.

As at 30 June 2015, there are two exemptions in place:

- An exemption under s13 has been granted annually since 1994-95 to an artificial breeding operator to enable him to perform laparoscopic artificial insemination of sheep.
- An exemption under s13 has been granted annually since 2007 to an overseas trained veterinarian employed by an interstate pharmaceutical company. The exemption is limited to the diagnosis of pig and poultry conditions and is conditional upon the person holding limited registration with the NSW Veterinary Practitioners Board.

Regulation 5(2) exemption

Regulation 5 prescribes two categories of persons who are exempted from the offence provision of s11.

- National Veterinary Exam candidates: reg. 5(2)
An overseas trained vet studying for the final clinical National Veterinary Exam (NVE) is allowed to practise veterinary surgery without being registered, provided he or she is working under the direct supervision of a registered veterinary surgeon. The person must seek approval from the Board prior to commencing work.
One approval granted by the Board under this regulation in 2013-14 remains current.

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- Research and teaching: reg. 5(4)
Students and scientists at a licensed research institution (for example, the University of Tasmania), may provide a veterinary service for the purposes of teaching or research, if the work is part of a research project approved by an Animal Ethics Committee. The researchers must be either trained and assessed as competent by a registered veterinary surgeon in a particular technique required for a research project and be acting under the authority of that veterinary surgeon; or be supervised by and providing the veterinary service in the presence of a registered veterinary surgeon. In either situation, the vet must be nominated by the licensed institution.

Veterinary Service Standards

Section 5B of the Act provides that the Board may declare veterinary service standards which may specify the standards of service, and may specify the rules of conduct of a veterinary surgeon in carrying on the practice of veterinary science.

The Board is in the process of revising, updating or replacing the Standards.

Matters currently covered in the *Standards of Veterinary Practice* include:

- The Standards of Veterinary Premises 2/2014 (*Declared July 2014*)
- Supply of Prescription Animal Remedy (PAR) Veterinary Drugs (S4s)
- Guide for the Dispensing and Supply of Drugs and Poisons by Veterinary Surgeons
- Code of Practice for the Supply and Use of Veterinary Chemical Products
- Record Keeping in Veterinary Practices 1/2013 (*Revised and declared 2013*)
- Professional Ethics of the Veterinary Surgeon (*under revision*)
- Veterinary Certificates
- Appendix to Standards: Various treatment forms and Advice Note

Standards of Veterinary Premises 2/14

As reported in the 2013-14 Annual Report, the “Standards of Veterinary Premises” were declared by notification in the Government Gazette on 16 July 2014. The Standard applies to all forms of veterinary premises, including veterinary consulting rooms; house call practices; veterinary clinics, centres and hospitals; mobile veterinary clinics; and equine and farm/production animal practices.

Draft Standard of Professional Conduct and Ethics

In December 2014 the Board released a consultation draft of the ‘Standard of Professional Conduct and Ethics’. Following receipt of the consultation comments the draft is being further revised. Once finalised, this Standard will replace the 2002 Standard: “Professional Ethics of the Veterinary Surgeon”.

Veterinary Practice Inspections

The Board inspectors carry out practice inspections on a five yearly cycle or as required; for example, for new practices or if practices have had major renovations. During the year eight practice inspections were carried out across the State, comprising one in the north, three in the south and four in the north-west.

The inspectors assess the practices against the Standards and in particular look at:

- the physical premises, including vehicles if a mobile practice;
- the equipment including sterilisers, imaging and anaesthesia machines;
- the pharmacy including the recording and storage of drugs;
- record keeping; and continuing education.

The Board met with the three inspectors in November 2014 for an information gathering and development session.

Communication

Website

The Board maintains a website established within the website of DPIPWE. The site provides information for the members of the profession and the public. The following information is provided:

- Membership of the Veterinary Board
- The Board's *Standards of Veterinary Practice*
- Instructions on making complaints
- The Board's newsletters and news items
- Details of services provided by the Board
- Details regarding Veterinary Service Entities
- Registration application forms
- Fees and charges
- An extract from the Register of registered veterinary surgeons (updated quarterly)

Newsletters

The Board issued Newsletters in July and December 2014.

Information Sheets and news items

The Board periodically circulates news items including approved survey requests via email and the website. The email list is updated as part of the annual registration renewal process and emails are sent to most veterinary surgeons as necessary.

Complaints

A function of the Board is to hear and determine any inquiry under Part VI of the Act (Disciplinary Proceedings). A complaint may be made to the Board by any person against a registered veterinary surgeon or a person who was previously registered as a veterinary surgeon. The Board does not deal with complaints relating to veterinary fees or compensation.

Twelve complaints were received during the year and the Board commenced two investigations on its own motion. Two complaints had been carried over from the previous year.

Complaint Outcomes:

No jurisdiction: Dismissed	1
Complaint not proceeded with: No further action	1
Dealt with on papers without proceeding to Inquiry. No case to answer: Dismissed	5
<u>S44 Inquiry</u>	
Finding of misconduct in a professional sense:	7
Caution: 5	
Conditions imposed: 2	
Carried over to 2015-2016	2
TOTAL	16

Financial Report

The Board is responsible for its expenses 'incurred in the administration of the Act' and has the authority to approve the fees under the Act.

Section 57 of the Act provides that fees are payable to the Board and are not required to be paid into the Consolidated Fund. Further, to provide for scrutiny of the Board's approval of the fees, s57(4) provides that the relevant provisions of s47 of the *Acts Interpretation Act 1931* apply to an approval by the Board of fees payable under the Act. This means that the approved fees are published in the *Tasmanian Government Gazette* and tabled in both Houses of Parliament.

During the year the Board reviewed the 2014 fees and approved an increase of 2.8% (rounded) based on the Hobart CPI for the June quarter 2013 to 2014. The increase applies to fees payable for the 2015 registration year. Notice of the approval was published in the *Gazette* on 20 August 2014 and tabled in both Houses of Parliament.

The Board also charges administrative fees for a Letter of Good Standing (\$49.50), a copy of the Register (\$110) and a late fee for late renewals (\$66).

While the Income and Expenditure statement below is for the financial year, in practice, the Board's finances operate on a calendar year, given that its main income is from registration renewal fees which are received at the end of the calendar year. Therefore the operating profit from 2014-15 needs to be carried over to meet Board expenses, ie meeting expenses, inspection costs and the registrar's contract, for the next six months.

In 2014 the Board decided in the interests of accountability that its accounts and financial report for the financial year should subject to an independent audit. The Independent Auditor's report and Income and Expenditure Statement are set out below.

Auditors' Report 2014-15

Max Peck and Associates

ABN 40 322 767 816

Principal: Rendell W Ridge B.Ec Registered Company Auditor #161503

Independent auditor's report to members of Veterinary Board of Tasmania

I have audited the special purpose financial report of Veterinary Board of Tasmania for the year ended 30 June 2015.

Management Committee's Responsibility for the Financial Report

The Management Committee is responsible for preparation and fair presentation of the special purpose financial report and information contained therein. This responsibility includes establishing and maintaining internal controls relevant to preparation and fair presentation of the financial report that is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error; selecting and applying appropriate accounting policies; and making accounting estimates that are reasonable in the circumstances.

Auditor's Responsibility

My responsibility is to express an opinion on the financial report based on my audit. I have conducted my audit in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards to provide reasonable assurance as to whether the accounts are free of material misstatement. My procedures included examination, on a test basis, of evidence supporting amounts and other disclosures in the accounts, and the evaluation of accounting policies and significant accounting estimates. These procedures have been undertaken to form an opinion as to whether, in all material respects, the financial statements are presented fairly in accordance with Australian Accounting Concepts and Standards and other mandatory professional reporting requirements (Urgent Issues Group Consensus Views) (where applicable), and statutory requirements so as to present a view which is consistent with my understanding of the Board's financial position and the results of its operations and cash flows.

I believe that the audit evidence I have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my audit opinion.

Independence

To the best of my knowledge and belief, there has been no contravention of auditor independence and any applicable code of professional conduct in relation to the audit.

Limitation of Scope

As is common for organisations of this type, it is not practicable to establish complete accounting control over cash received from all of its activities. Verification therefore has been limited to the receipt of funds recorded in the Board's financial records.

Audit Opinion

In my opinion, the special purpose financial report of Veterinary Board of Tasmania presents fairly in accordance with applicable Accounting Standards and other mandatory professional reporting requirements in Australia the financial position of the Board as at 30 June 2015 and the results of its operations and its cash flows for the year then ended.

MAX PECK & ASSOCIATES

Rendell W. RIDGE
12 August 2015

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Special Purpose Financial Report

Income and expenditure statement for the year ended 30 June 2015

REVENUE		Notes:
Registration renewal fees	\$89,908.00	1
New registrations, exemptions	\$14,101.00	2
Services	\$1,635.00	3
GST on services	\$163.50	
GST refunded by ATO	\$813.00	
Interest Bus Online A/C	\$803.93	
Interest Term Deposits	\$2,398.04	
Miscellaneous	\$1,638.67	
Overpayments	\$340.00	
Total revenue	<u>\$111,801.14</u>	
EXPENDITURE		
Registrar contract	\$47,052.39	4
Board sitting fees / travel expenses	\$14,002.75	5
Bank fees	\$126.20	
Inspections	\$3,323.04	
GST on Purchases	\$1,269.31	
GST on Services to ATO	\$154.00	
PAYG Board sitting fees	\$4,910.00	
AVBC levy	\$6,552.00	6
Workers comp	\$1,117.75	
Audit fee	\$957.50	7
Meeting expenses	\$461.93	
Miscellaneous	\$2,542.38	
<i>To Term Deposit 20/2/15</i>	\$25,000.00	
Total expenditure	<u>\$107,469.25</u>	
Operating profit	\$4,331.89	
Add balances brought forward:		
Operating Accounts 1/7/14	\$31,892.86	
Term Deposits 1/7/14	\$75,361.97	
Add Term Deposit of 20/2/15	<u>\$25,000.00</u>	
Balance carried forward	<u>\$136,586.72</u>	
Balance represented by:		
Operating accounts	\$33,826.71	
Term deposit balances	<u>\$102,760.01</u>	
Net position 30/06/2015	<u>\$136,586.72</u>	

Notes:

1. The annual fee applies for the calendar year and was due by 31 December for 2014. The Board approved annual renewal fee for 2015 was \$364, which was a 2.25% (CPI rounded down) increase from the previous year.
2. This figure comprises fees from 29 new registrations and 2 exemptions approved during the financial year. New registration fees include an application fee and a pro-rata component of the annual fee calculated on a quarterly basis in accordance with s21A.
3. The Board charges an administrative fee for services being \$49.50 (inc GST) for a Letter of Good Standing and \$110 (inc GST) for a copy of the Register; and for follow-up practice inspections.
4. In accordance with the registrar's contract, the registrar is responsible for the provision of suitable office facilities and own vehicle and:
 - All office equipment and supplies including stationery, postage, PO Box, phone, internet, email and printing
 - Travel expenses associated with up to 5 Board meetings per year except overnight accommodation when required. Travel costs for any additional meetings will be covered by the Board as will costs of interstate travel.
 - The registrar's contract is reviewed annually. A CPI increase of 2.8% was approved from 1/8/2014.
5. The Board is responsible for Board sitting fees and expenses and members' ATO PAYG. The amount shown reflects the costs for six face to face Board meetings and 6 out of session meetings. The remuneration per meeting as approved by the Minister increased to \$430 (chair) and \$326 (members) in February 2014. Travel expenses are paid at the government rate. The DPIPWE member does not receive a sitting fee.
6. The Board pays an annual levy (plus GST) to the AVBC in January each year based on the number of registered vets as at 30 June of the preceding year.
7. The Audit fee represents audit charges for two previous years, ie 2012-13, and 2013-14.

Approved Fees 2015

As notified in the *Gazette* 20 August 2014

Veterinary Surgeons Act 1987

APPROVAL OF FEES

The Veterinary Board of Tasmania, in pursuance of section 3 of the *Veterinary Surgeons Act 1987*, at a meeting on 7 August 2014, approved, in relation to each matter set out in an item described in column 2 of the Schedule, the fee specified opposite in column 3 of the Schedule, as the fees payable in relation to the matter. Items 1 and 7 take effect from the date of this notice and the other fees take effect from 1 January 2015.

Dr Neil Leighton Chairman

Schedule

Column 1 - Item number	Column 2 – Description	Column 3 – Fee \$
1.	Application for exemption under section 13 of the Act	575
2.	Application for registration under section 18 of the Act as a veterinary surgeon (plus pro-rata of initial registration fee under s21A)	115
3.	Application for registration under section 18 of the Act as a veterinary specialist (must be registered as a veterinary surgeon)	185
4.	Provisional registration under section 19 of the Act (plus pro-rata of initial registration fee under s21A)	115
5.	Temporary registration under section 20 of the Act (out of session fast track fee only payable if registration required within 10 business days of receipt of application)	73
6.	Initial registration fee under section 21A of the Act – (a) 1 January – 31 March (b) 1 April – 30 June (c) 1 July – 30 September (d) 1 October – 31 December	364 273 182 91
7.	Annual registration fee under section 22 of the Act (renewal)	364
8.	Application for approval under reg. 5(2) NVE candidate exemption	115

Other Statutory requirements

No requests were made to the Board under the *Right to Information Act 2009* and *Personal Information Protection Act 2004* during 2014-15.

Demographics of the Profession

As part of the registration renewal process, registrants are requested to provide information on their practice for the preceding calendar year.

The 2015 renewing registrants provided the following information relating to 2014 quoted as a percentage (%) of survey respondents.

Survey forms distributed	247
Survey forms completed	191
Survey respondents	77%

Year of Renewal	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
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Work Status

Full time	72	67	67	67	65	63.3	63.0	54.9	54.5	57.1
Part time	21	24	23	21	23	25.8	28.0	35.1	35.0	34.2
Retired	7	9	10	12	12	10.9	8.9	9.9	10.5	8.7

Work Location

Tasmania	70	67	67	67	68	70.6	68.4	93.1	95.2	95.7
Tasmania & Interstate/overseas	19	20	23	26	24	21.3	24.6	5.2	3.6	3.7
Interstate/Overseas	11	13	10	7	8	8.1	6.9	1.7	1.2	0.6

Type of Employment

Private Practice	81	82	82	80	83	80.2	83.1	83.1	85.1	86.1
University	1	1	1	2	1	.09	0.4	0.5	0.6	0.6
Government Service	9	7	10	9	8	8.1	7.1	11.5	8.9	9.1
Industry	5	3	2	4	3	4.1	3.1	1.1	1.8	0.6
Other	4	7	5	5	5	6.8	6.7	3.8	3.6	3.6

Type of Practice/Work (Major Activity)

Large Animal	7	9	7	9	7	9.6	6.8	2.2	3.6	4.5
Small Animal	35	38	37	40	41	40.2	37.4	46.2	48.6	48.3
Mixed Practice	30	27	27	27	25	27.4	28.1	34.2	31.5	28.4
Equine	6	6	7	6	9	6.8	6.8	4.9	4.0	4.5
Aquaculture	3	2	3	3	3	3.7	2.1	1.6	2.4	1.1
Regulatory/Advisory	4	5	5	4	4	3.2	3.8	3.8	4.1	6.3
Consultancy	3	3	2	2	1	1.8	3.4	1.1	0	0.6
Research/Laboratory	3	2	3	3	3	2.3	2.1	1.6	1.7	1.1
Industry	3	2	1	2	2	0.9	0.8	0	0	0
Avian/Poultry	1	1	2	1	1	0.9	0.8	0	0	0
Other/Specialist	4	3	4	2	3	1.8	4.3	0	0	0.6
Non-Veterinary	1	2	2	1	1	1.4	0.8	1.1	1.7	1.7
Wildlife							2.1	3.3	2.4	2.8
Teaching							0.4	0	0	0
Average weekly hours worked	37.4	36.0	37.9	37.5	38.2	34.8	30.9	43.4 18.6	41.9 19.2	44.0 20.0

Note

1. The figures from 2013 onwards relate to Tasmanian registrants only, as vets registered interstate and not resident in Tasmania do not have to register here.
2. Only 139 of 2014 respondents provided an hours worked / week estimation for 2014. Full time and part time hours are shown separately for 2013 onwards.