



Australian Veterinary Association
Veterinary Workforce Survey 2021

Analysis Report

December 2021



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The Australian Veterinary Association (AVA)

The Australian Veterinary Association (AVA) is the only national association representing veterinarians in Australia. Founded in 1921, the AVA today represents 8500 members working in all areas of animal science, health and welfare – including conservation and wildlife. Veterinary roles extend far beyond caring for the health and welfare of our pets and production animals. Veterinarians are the pathologists, field officers and inspectors that secure the safety of our food, ensure market access for our exports, and help to safeguard the human population from zoonotic diseases.

Introduction

The AVA conducted its 6th workforce survey of veterinarians in 2021. The purpose of the survey was to collect data about the current profile of the veterinary profession and anticipate future trends and challenges. The information will assist the profession, governments, veterinary boards and others to understand how the provision of veterinary services may be affected by various factors. This report provides a summary of responses to the AVA 2021 Veterinary Workforce Survey.

Methods

The workforce survey was originally based on an adaptation from a survey administered each year by the Veterinary Council of New Zealand. The AVA has now conducted six workforce surveys since 2012 with this survey being the most comprehensive. Past reports on workforce surveys can be found on the [AVA website](#).¹

Veterinarians that resided in Australia voluntarily completed the survey. Each of the state and territory surgeons' boards were asked to distribute to veterinarians in their jurisdiction and AVA distributed the survey electronically via numerous platforms such as direct emails, content in within newsletters and social media platforms.

The online survey was made available to veterinarians between 10 April – 20 June 2021.

The analyses of this report are based on the responses to questions that comprised the workforce survey. Alongside the data summaries, comments from respondents are also provided.

Results

A total of 3770 rows of categorical data were provided via the electronic copy of completed survey results. The number of registered veterinarians in Australia on 3 August 2021 was 13,993 (Australasian Veterinary Boards Council). The overall response rate to the survey therefore was 26.94%. Many questions in the survey were not mandatory to answer. This is by far the most survey responses received from workforce surveys conducted by the AVA. The 2018 survey received responses from 10% of the registered veterinarians in Australia.

¹ <https://www.ava.com.au/policy-advocacy/advocacy/workforce/workforce-data/>



Demographics

Gender & Age

Of the 3749 respondents that indicated their gender, 67.30% were female (2523), 32.30% were male (1211), 0.19% were non-binary (7) and 0.21% chose not to disclose (8). This data is almost identical to results from the 2018 AVA Veterinary Workforce Survey that indicated 67% were female, 33% were male and five respondents identified as “Other.”

The below table lists the age of the 3683 respondents that indicated their age at the time of responding to the survey.

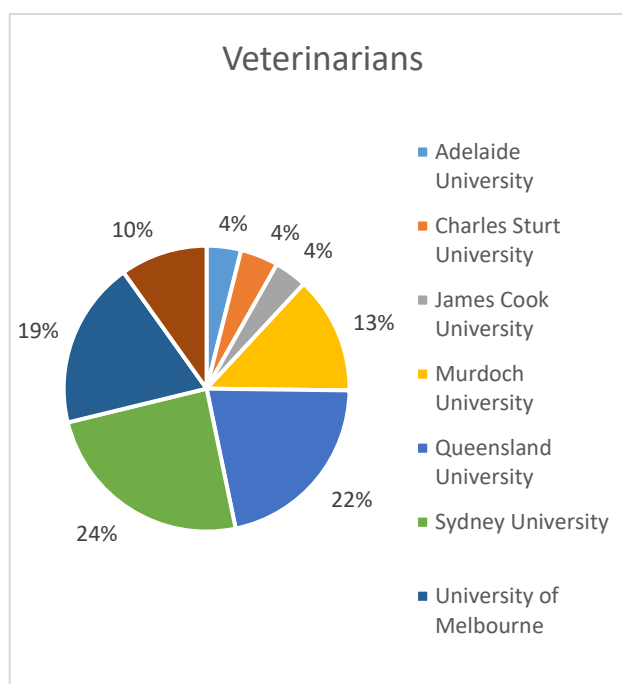
Age	Gender				Total
	F	M	Non-Binary	Not disclosed	
20-24	53	14	1	0	68
25-29	461	77	2	3	543
30-34	461	94	1	6	562
35-39	373	85	0	1	459
40-44	329	90	0	1	420
45-50	253	100	1	1	355
50-54	197	123	0	0	320
55-59	181	133	0	3	317
60-64	95	135	0	2	232
65-69	51	109	0	1	161
70-75	20	115	0	0	135
75+	6	104	0	1	111
Total	2480	1179	5	19	3683

AVA Membership

3758 respondents indicated their AVA membership status. A total of 65.99% were AVA members (2480) and 34.01% were non-members (1278).

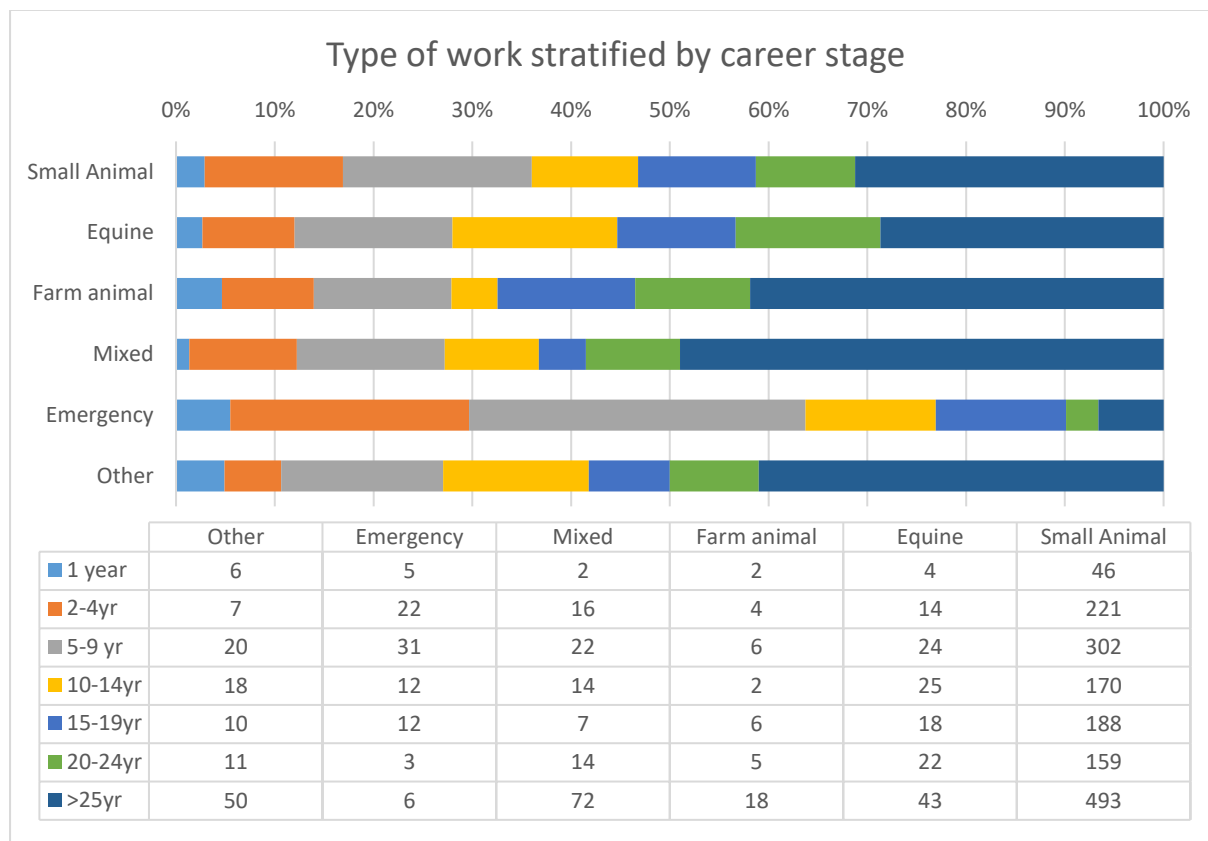
Graduating facility

All respondents (3770) indicated where they received their veterinary degree. 90.13% were educated domestically (3398) with 9.87% receiving their veterinary degree internationally (372). A large majority of internationally educated veterinarians received their degree from the United Kingdom, New Zealand and South Africa.





Career stage





Employment status

Respondents were asked whether they were engaged in clinical or non-clinical work in Australia over the past two years. 3733 respondents provided a response. This equated to 76.43% working throughout the whole period, 17.09% working for parts of that period and 6.48% not working during that period.

Employment status	Number	Percentage
For all of the past two years	2853	76.43
For parts of the past two years	638	17.09
Not during the past two years	242	6.48
	3733	100.00

Reasons for non-employment

Of the 242 that indicated they were not working in Australia during that period, 237 indicated why that was the case. Below illustrates those reasons. Of those that indicated a particular reason, further questions were then asked of them.

Reason	Number
Parental leave	3
Family care	1
Mental health reasons	7
Physical health reasons	7
Alternative professional interests	10
Emotionally too demanding	1
General disillusionment with the profession	6
Personal reasons	3
Negative clinical experiences (moral conflict, patient care outcomes)	3
Poor remuneration	3
Difficulty finding work	1
Retired	127
Professional growth/study	3
Working in a non-vet role	27
Had not yet graduated	4
Did not wish to disclose	1
Other	30
	237



Of the 30 that selected 'other' these included reasons such as:

- Not being able to find a position where family care and work could be balanced
- Working in livestock production
- Working overseas during the period
- Issues with the Vet Board – restrictions and registration
- Semi-retirement

Retired veterinarians

Of the 127 that indicated they had retired during that period, 118 of the respondents indicated at what age they took retirement. This concluded that 59.32% retired by the age of 65, with a further 22.88% retiring by the age of 70. A total of 17.80% continued to work beyond age 70.

Intention of returning to employment

Those that indicated that they were not working in Australia during that period (excluding those that had retired) were then asked whether they intended to return to work as a veterinarian. There were 103 respondents that indicated their intentions.

Intention to return to employment	Number	Percentage
Yes	34	33.01
No	28	27.18
Unsure	41	39.81
	103	100.00

Working veterinarians - Breakdown by state

3216 respondents indicated they were currently working in the previous 12 months. When asked what postcode they were working in, a total number of 3209 respondents recorded a valid postcode.

State/Territory	Respondents	Registered Veterinarians	Percentage
Australian Capital Territory	171	305	56.07
New South Wales	835	3808	21.93
Northern Territory	48	135	35.56
Queensland	596	3299	18.07
* South Australia	312	870	35.86
Tasmania	90	334	26.95
Victoria	827	3573	23.15
Western Australia	330	1669	19.77
Total	3209	13993	100



*figures from South Australian Veterinary Board website as not formally reported to AVBC

The above table indicates the state or territory in which they worked in during the past 12 months in contrast to the total number of veterinarians registered in each state (AVBC as at 3rd August 2021). Response rates vary from state to state as is the case in previous surveys.

Veterinarians working in veterinary roles

3456 respondents indicated they were currently working in a veterinary role. Of those respondents, 2780 (80.44%) indicated they were working in clinical practice as their primary role. Government and Academia were also both prominent industries that veterinarians worked within.

Primary role	Number
Practice (includes all types of clinical practice, non-veterinary roles within clinical practice, specialists, consultants, locums)	2780
Government	216
Academia	113
Industry	67
Public Health	7
One Health	9
Pathology	26
Imaging consultancy	1
Pharmaceutical industry	32
Ancillary veterinary services	6
Other	199
	3456

Those veterinarians that indicated 'other' were roles in fields such as:

- Biosecurity
- Research
- Ethics
- Insurance
- Education
- Regulatory/compliance
- Consultancy
- Manufacturing
- Diagnostics
- Animal health
- Veterinary wellbeing
- Workplace Health and Safety
- Breeding
- Animal training
- Animal welfare
- Allied health
- Animal husbandry
- Animal rehabilitation
- Farming
- Horticulture



Veterinarians working in a practice setting

2762 respondents indicated that they were currently working in a practice setting. They were asked what best described their current primary employment.

Practice role

Role	Number	Percentage
Employed veterinarian (includes non-clinical role within practice)	1722	62.34
Practice Owner/Partner	812	29.40
Locum/Consultant	185	6.70
Other	43	1.56
	2762	100.00

Specialist Registration

Respondents were asked to indicate if they were a registered specialist. Only a small percentage (4.16%) of respondents have specialist registration.

Specialist registration	Number	Percentage
Yes	115	4.16
No	2647	96.84
	2762	100.00

Practice size

Practice size	Number	Percentage
Small or sole practice (1-3 veterinarians)	894	32.37
Mid-size practice (4-7 veterinarians)	923	33.41
Large practice (8 or more veterinarians)	451	16.33
Multi-location	171	6.19
Corporate practice	222	8.04
Locum	101	3.66
	2762	100.00



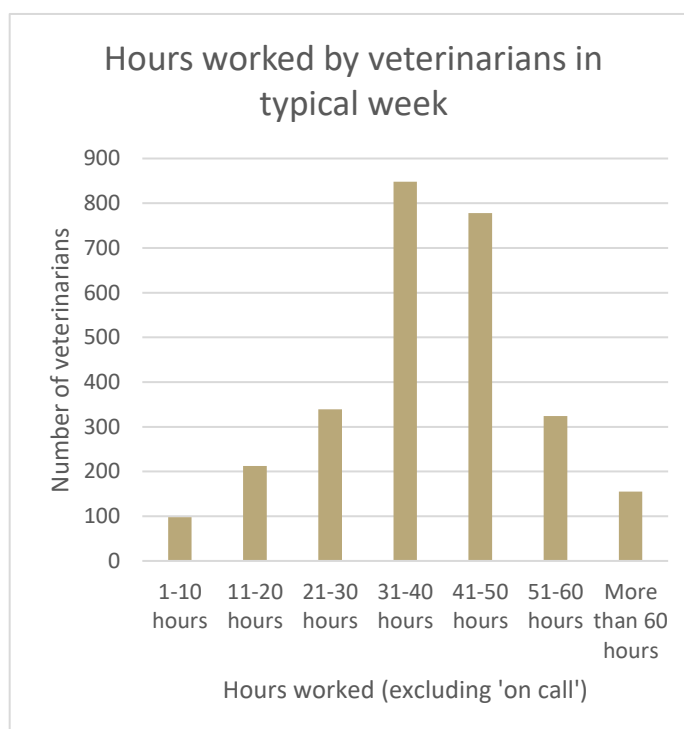
Practice type

They were then asked what best described the setting they currently worked in. Small animal practices were the most prominent (57.17%) with mixed animal practices that predominately serviced small/companion animals the next most prominent (17.74%).

Practice Type	Number	Percentage
Small animal practice	1579	57.17
Mixed animal practice – mostly companion/ small animal and some large animal	490	17.74
Mixed animal practice – mostly large animal and some companion/small animal	129	4.67
Farm/Production/Livestock animal practice	43	1.56
Equine only practice	150	5.43
Commercial poultry facility	1	0.04
Zoo/Native animal facility	13	0.47
Referral facility	115	4.16
Emergency facility	91	3.29
Mobile vehicle	42	1.52
Other	109	3.95
	2762	100.00

Hours of Work

The veterinarians working in a practice setting were asked approximately how many hours they worked in a typical week (excluding any on call hours). For this purpose, we defined a 'typical week' as 'an average week over the past three months' This included all activities relating to their work such as: CPD, reading, preparing for cases, analysing pathology results, writing notes, client or staff communication and management, supervision of staff, clinical advice, etc. There were 2754 respondents. A large component (45.64%) indicated they worked 41 or more hours per week, demonstrating the demand on the profession.





Part time employment

Further insights were sought from those 649 veterinarians working 30 hours or less on the reasons for working those hours. 648 responses were received. Parental responsibilities and personal preference to work part time made up 52.31% of the responses.

Reasons for working 30 hours or less	Number	Percentage
Casual or locum work (short term contract)	24	3.70
Personal preference to work part time	131	20.22
Difficulty obtaining work	3	0.46
Own business	38	5.86
Parental responsibilities	208	32.10
Provision of care to family members	17	2.62
Sustaining mental health	66	10.19
Sustaining physical health	17	2.62
Semi-retired	68	10.49
Professional growth/study	9	1.39
Other employment (related to veterinary profession)	6	0.93
Other employment (unrelated to veterinary profession)	16	2.47
Other	45	6.95
	648	100.00

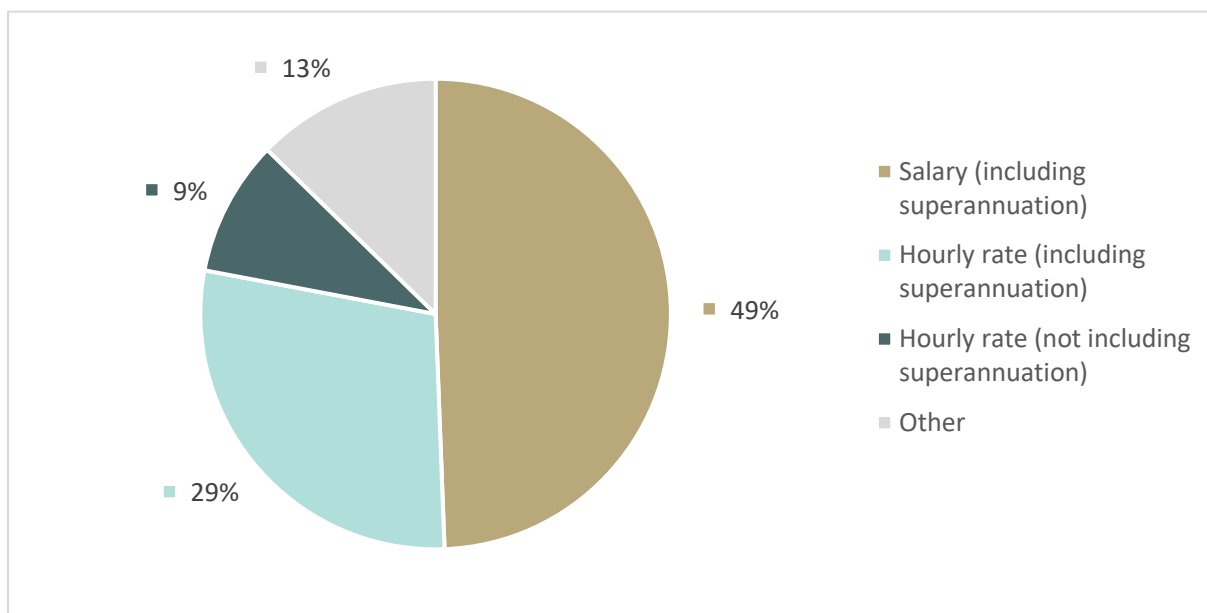
Those that indicated 'other' as to why they worked 30 hours or less per week advised reasons such as:

- Seasonal work (stud season) – sometimes 15 hours, sometimes 60 hours
- Difficulty securing day care for children
- Combining with study/further degree
- Inability to cope with demands of full-time work
- Working in same clinic as spouse and sharing parental responsibilities
- More attractive financially to work as a casual



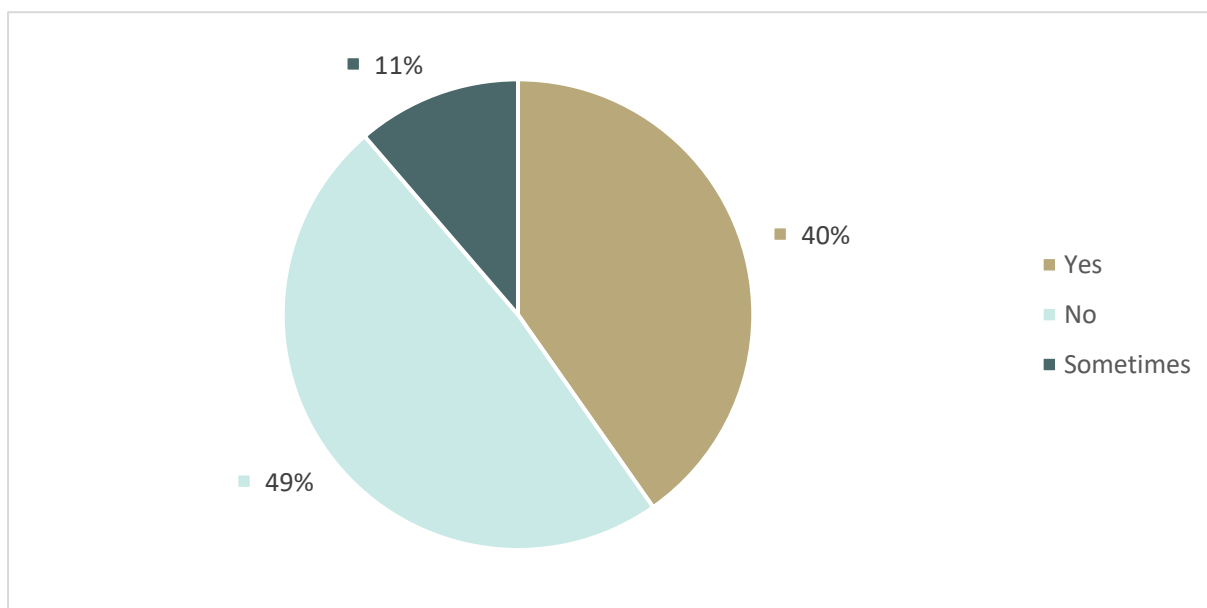
Remuneration - configuration

Veterinarians that are working in a practice setting were asked how they were remunerated. There were 2725 respondents.



Remuneration – compensation for hours worked

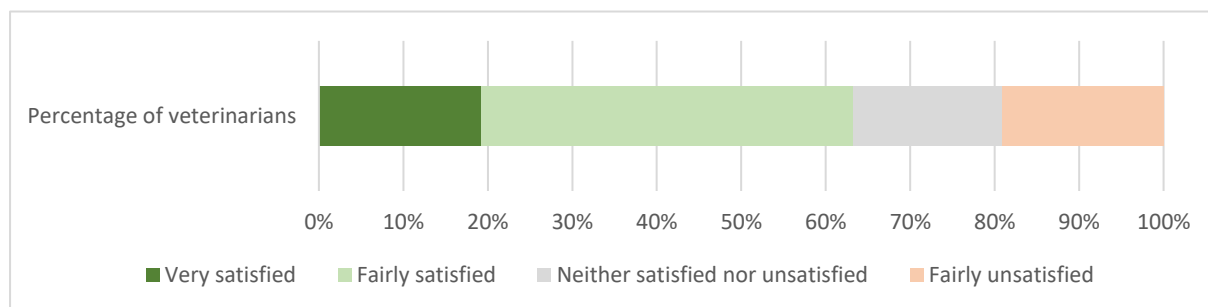
They were then asked whether they considered that they were remunerated for every hour that they worked.





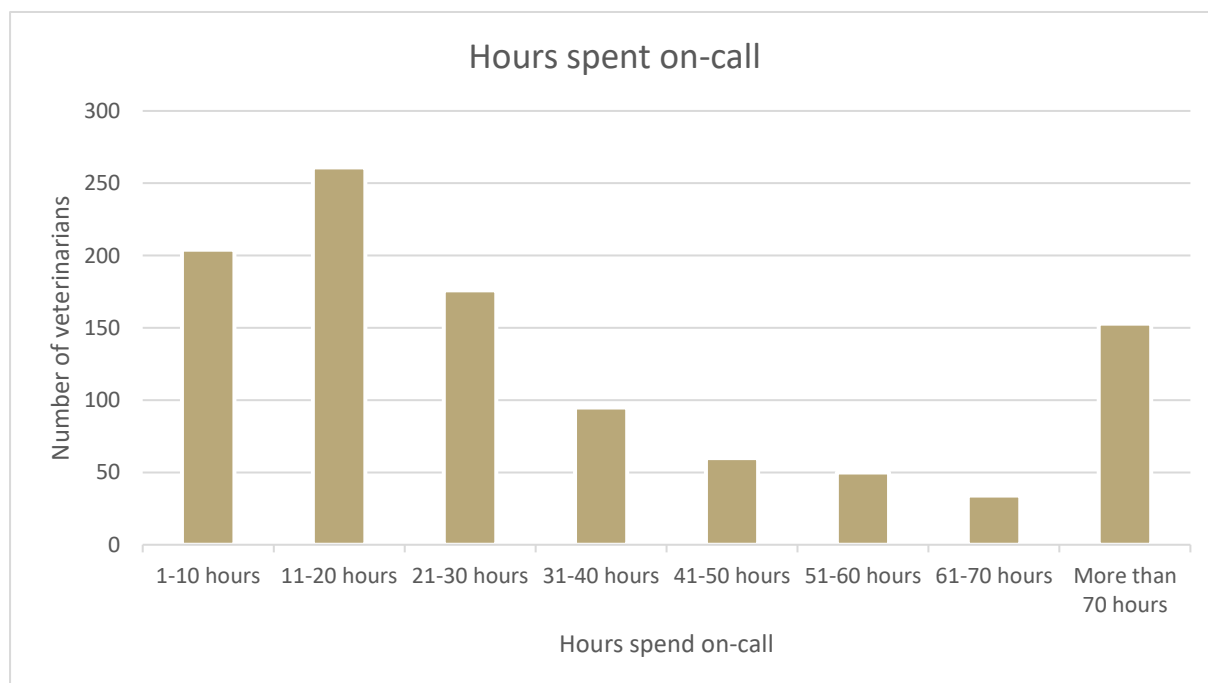
Remuneration – satisfaction

They were then asked to rate their level of satisfaction in regard to their current remuneration. A total of 63.31% of respondents were either fairly or very satisfied with their current remuneration. Respondents were also given the opportunity for respondents to provide comment.

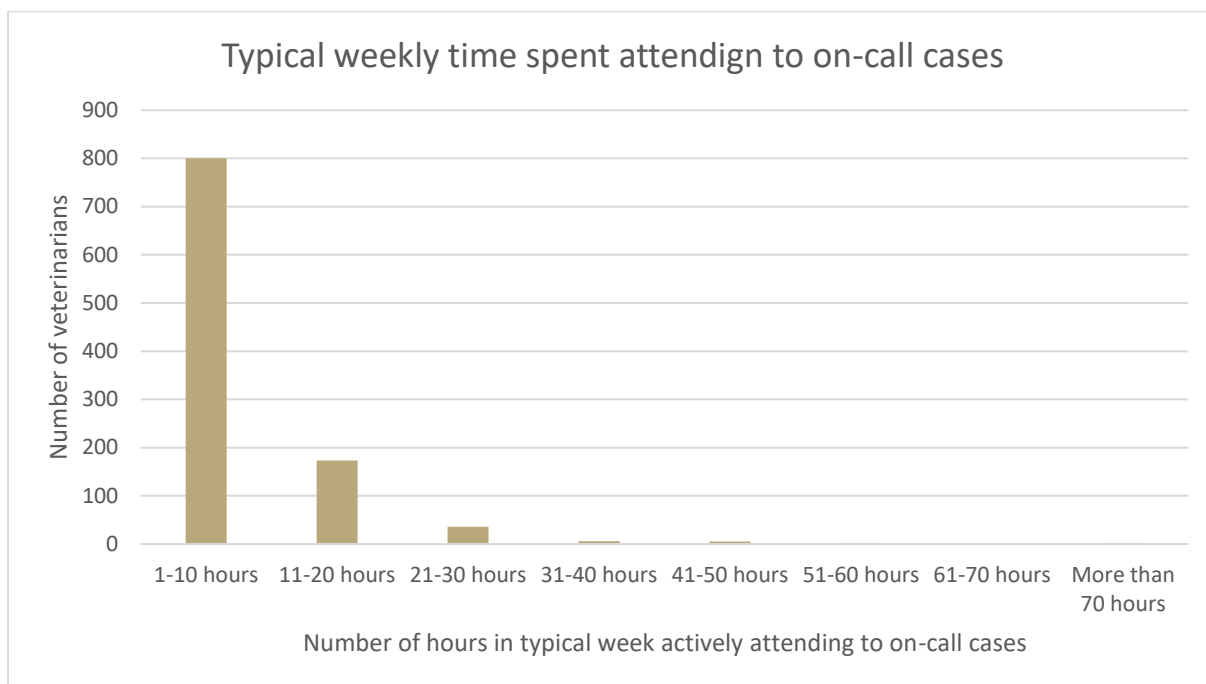


On-call duties

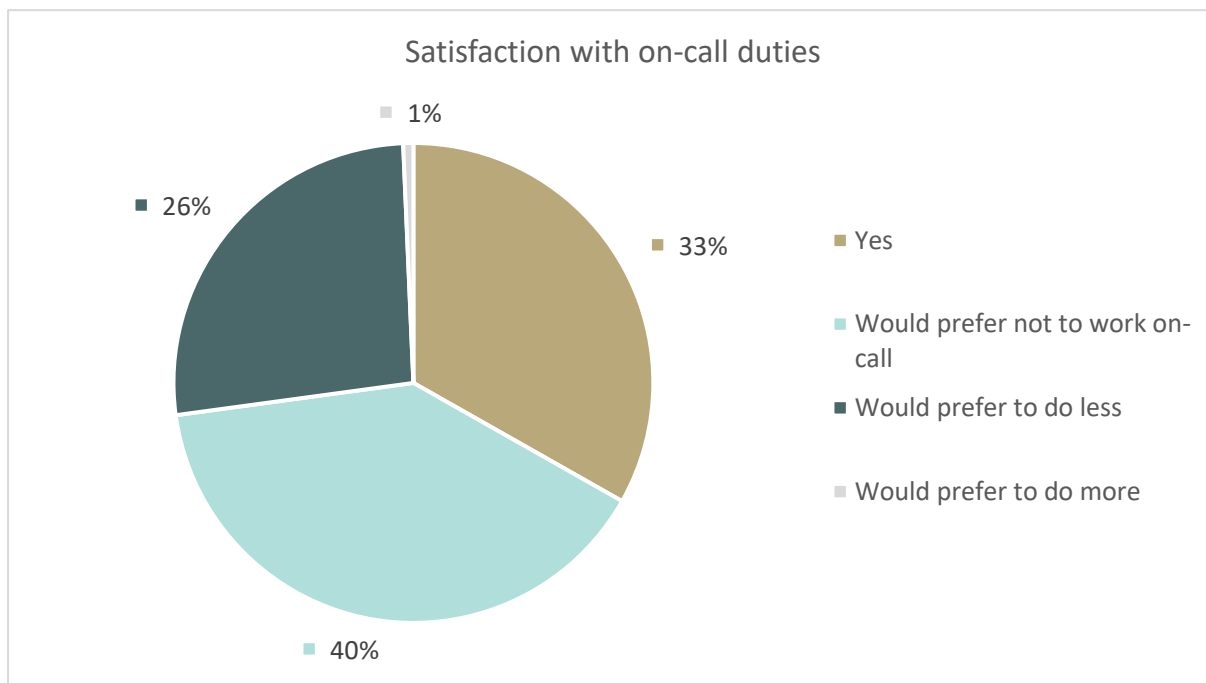
These veterinarians were asked typically how many hours they were rostered for on-call duties per week, excluding their normal working hours. 62.09% of respondents did not perform on-call duties at all. Of those who did perform on-call duties:



Of the 1033 respondents that performed on-call duties, respondents were asked on average in a typical week how many hours they were called back to work. This included seeing patients or giving advice over the phone. A total of 1024 respondents provided responses.



These respondents were then asked if they were satisfied with their current on-call duties.



It is apparent that most on-call duties relate to rural and semi-rural practices due to the lack of dedicated emergency centres in those areas. Comments received regarding on-call duties were as follows:



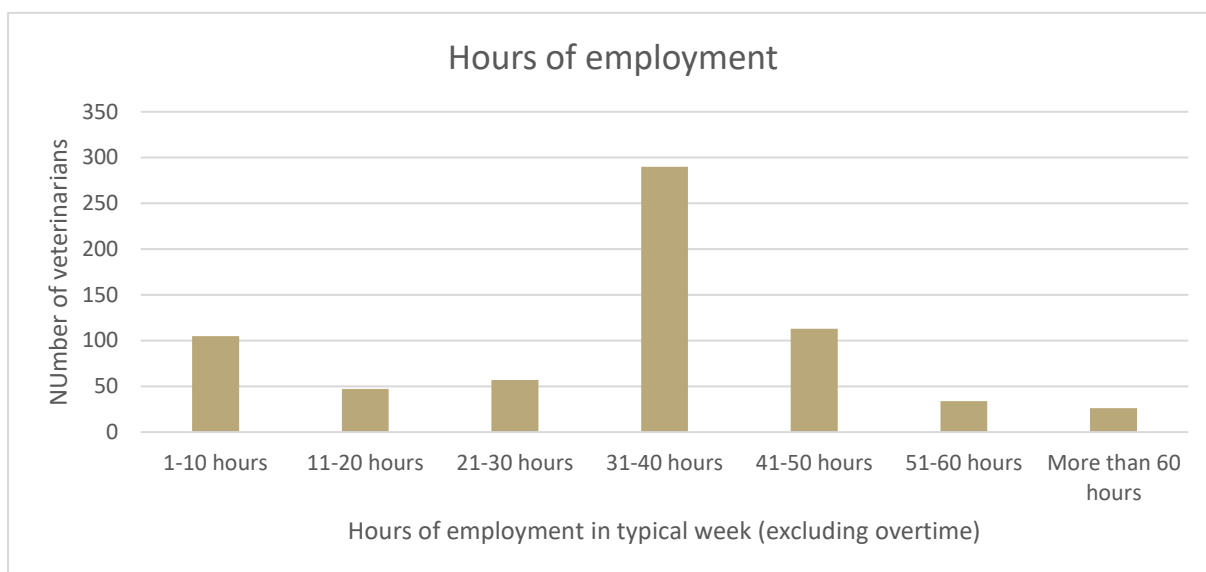
- Would be nice to do less but it is a good learning opportunity
- Often not compensated for phone calls – only paid if treating patient
- Incredibly stressful and a lot of rural clinics expect you to work the next morning after being called out at night
- Reality is that animals need help at all hours
- I would happily do more if I could be taken off shifts during the week
- We feel obliged to provide out of hours service as we are semi-rural without a dedicated emergency centre. It is problem for our staff
- Everyone would love not to do on call but it's the reality of the health profession. Anyone not doing on call is relying on others to do it for them
- Can be very challenging to balance with other commitments such as children
- Younger vets are not willing to do the hours of previous generations
- Most times the after-hours work is genuine and unavoidable
- Persistent on call/emergency work is extremely draining and in addition to regular work hours is to the point of dangerous to levels of fatigue and sleep deprivation
- Sole owner in remote location leaves little option but to be available 24/7
- Remuneration sufficient to make on-call palatable does not exist



Veterinarians in a veterinary role working in a non-practice setting

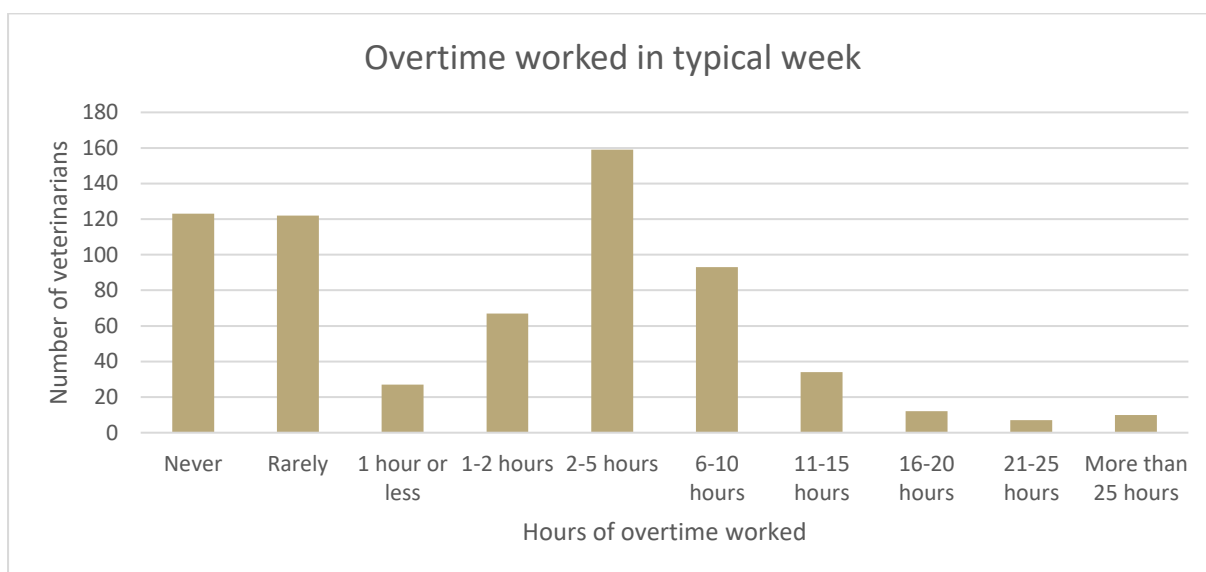
Hours of employment

Those respondents were then asked how many hours per week their primary employment role involved (excluding overtime).



Overtime

Respondents were asked how many hours on average of overtime is worked during a typical week. There were 654 respondents.





Registration maintained

Veterinarians that were working in a veterinary role and working in an alternate setting to a practice totalled 676. They were asked as to whether they maintained their veterinary registration. 672 respondents provided a response. 97.02% indicated they have maintained their veterinary registration.

Veterinary registration maintained	Number	Percentage
Yes	652	97.02
No	20	2.98
	672	100.00

Part time employment

Of those respondents (209) that indicated that they worked 30 hours or less, they were asked as to what reasons contributed to that. As with veterinarians working 30 hours or less in a practice setting, results were similar with 27.05% indicating parental responsibilities and 39.61% indicating a personal preference to work part time. The following was indicated by 207 respondents:

Reasons for working 30 hours or less	Number	Percentage
Casual work (short term contract)	14	6.76
Personal preference to work part time	82	39.61
Difficulty obtaining work	14	6.76
Own business	19	9.18
Parental responsibilities	56	27.05
Provision of care to family members	15	7.25
Sustaining mental health	54	26.09
Sustaining physical health	25	12.08
Semi-retired	54	26.09
Professional growth/study	24	11.59
Other employment (related to veterinary profession)	18	8.69
Other employment (unrelated to veterinary profession)	21	10.14
Working overseas	1	0.48
Other	38	18.36



Remuneration configuration

Veterinarians that are not working in a practice setting were asked how they were remunerated. There were 654 respondents.

Remuneration	Number	Percentage
Salary (including superannuation)	423	64.68
Hourly rate (including superannuation)	84	12.84
Hourly rate (not including superannuation)	33	5.05
Other	114	17.43
	654	100.00

Overtime remuneration

Those 654 respondents were then asked if they were remunerated for the overtime hours they worked.

Overtime remuneration	Number	Percentage
Yes – paid at my usual hourly rate	53	8.10
Yes – paid at an hourly overtime rate	61	9.33
Yes – with time off in lieu	140	21.41
Never	234	35.78
Sometimes	58	8.87
Other (please specify)	108	16.51
	654	100.00

Remuneration satisfaction

They were then asked to rate their level of satisfaction in regard to their current remuneration. A total of 63.31% of respondents were either fairly or very satisfied with their current remuneration.

Remuneration satisfaction	Number	Percentage
Very satisfied	171	26.15
Fairly satisfied	295	45.11
Neither satisfied nor unsatisfied	88	13.45
Fairly unsatisfied	73	11.16
Very unsatisfied	27	4.13
	654	100.00



Workplace culture

The workforce survey explored the workplace cultures in which respondents are employed. This looked at a range of perceptions and processes that workplaces have in place.

Describing workplace culture

Respondents currently working were asked what best describes the workplace culture they currently work in. Workplace culture was defined as being formed from values, traditions, beliefs, interactions, behaviours, and attitudes of the workplace. There were 2479 respondents.

Workplace culture	Number	Percentage
Excellent - everyone is happy and positive almost all of the time	459	18.51
Good - most people are happy and positive much of the time	1231	49.66
Average - from time to time some of us are unhappy and negative	653	26.34
Poor - most of us are unhappy and negative most of the time	136	5.49
	2479	100.00

There was also an opportunity to comment further on this. All comments reflected a severe difficulty with workplace culture and poor mental health. Respondents reported concern over the wellbeing of colleagues and workload pressures within practices.

Disclosure

“Doesn't help much. Owners are often aggressive and unreasonable and difficult to placate, particularly damaging new graduates.”

Respondents were asked if their workplace has an open disclosure policy? Open disclosure is defined as a process for ensuring that open, honest, empathic and timely discussions occur between staff and clients when any unplanned or unintended event or circumstance occurred which could have resulted, or did result, in harm to a patient. There were 2482 respondents

Workplace disclosure	Number	Percentage
Yes	1376	55.44
No	348	14.02
I'm not sure	598	24.09
Other	60	6.45
	2482	100.00

Those that indicated 'other' were given the opportunity to comment. Generally, open disclosure is not occurring, with a few practices trying to implement more formalised processes and poor client behaviour mentioned as a disincentive.



Support

Respondents were asked if they feel adequately supported when things go wrong. There were 2476 respondents.

Support	Number	Percentage
Yes	1791	72.34
No	346	13.97
Other	339	13.69
	2476	100.00

Lack of support was mentioned as an issue for a variety of reasons: geographical isolation, sole practice, range of veterinary skill levels. However, support from colleagues/ friends outside of workplaces was noted.

Strategies in place

Respondents were asked what is in place at their workplace to enable them to work as efficiently as possible. Respondents were invited to tick all options that applied to them. There were 2312 respondents – an average of 5.31 options below per respondent were selected.

In place	Number	Percentage
Achievable workload: consultation times spaced appropriately, scheduled breaks, time allocated for follow up, adequate nurse to vet ratios	1257	54.37
Work-life balance: flexibility to meet my needs, on call duties (if applicable) are manageable, sufficient rest after active on call duties	1340	57.96
Debriefing available: there is an opportunity to talk to my peers when adverse situations occur such as negative clinical outcomes or negative interactions with colleagues or clients	1513	65.44
Positive feedback: my colleagues provide recognition that makes me feel valued	1286	55.62
Peer support: I have peers and other professionals for support to bounce ideas around, whether clinical or not. There is time set aside to discuss cases	1553	67.17
Professional growth: goal setting, professional development event opportunities, development of new skills	1204	52.08
Motivation: values and goals are met	703	30.41



In place	Number	Percentage
Conscientious objection: ability to speak up in non-judgmental environment without fear of retribution	1092	47.23
Communication: inclusive discussions about the workplace, adequate salary negotiation processes	947	40.96
Protection: appropriate support and protection in place from abusive client behaviour	1374	59.43

Difficulties in employing efficiency strategies were noted due to solo practice and workload which can vary due to case load and complexity. There were also concerns with physical safety for female veterinarians. Comments included:

- As I work solo, I do not have this support. I am unable to obtain it from other veterinary practices due to their time restraints and policies.
- Achievable workload varies week to week...
- My biggest complaint with my workplace is the 15 minute consultations.
- None of the above apply
- I do not feel adequate safety protocols are in place for a young female going alone to strange properties after hours.

Satisfaction factors

Respondents were asked which factors they regard as the most important in maintaining job satisfaction. They were able to select up to 3 factors from the below. There were 2493 respondents – with an average of each responding selecting 2.88 factors. The most prominent factors for job satisfaction were achievable workload, work-life balance and peer support.

Respondents were asked what is in place at their workplace to enable them to work as efficiently as possible. Respondents were invited to tick all options that applied to them. There were 2312 respondents – an average of 5.31 options below per respondent were selected.

Satisfaction levels	Number	Percentage
Achievable workload: consultation times spaced appropriately, scheduled breaks, time allocated for follow up, adequate nurse to vet ratios	1943	77.94
Work-life balance: flexibility to meet my needs, on call duties (if applicable) are manageable, sufficient rest after active on call duties	1839	73.77



Satisfaction levels	Number	Percentage
Debriefing available: there is an opportunity to talk to my peers when adverse situations occur such as negative clinical outcomes or negative interactions with colleagues or clients	328	13.16
Positive feedback: my colleagues provide recognition that makes me feel valued	336	13.48
Peer support: I have peers and other professionals for support to bounce ideas around, whether clinical or not. There is time set aside to discuss cases	1053	42.24
Professional growth: goal setting, professional development event opportunities, development of new skills	612	24.55
Motivation: values and goals are met	192	7.70
Conscientious objection: ability to speak up in non-judgmental environment without fear of retribution	137	5.50
Communication: inclusive discussions about the workplace, adequate salary negotiation processes	442	17.73
Protection: appropriate support and protection in place from abusive client behaviour	296	11.87

Conflict

Respondents were asked if they experience workplace conflict. Workplace conflict can include any type of conflict which takes place within a workplace or among employees and/or employers. It can, potentially including conflict between employees/employers out of work hours. There were 2476 respondents.

Experience conflict	Number	Percentage
Yes	241	9.73
Yes - occasionally	1175	47.46
No	1060	42.81
	2476	100.00

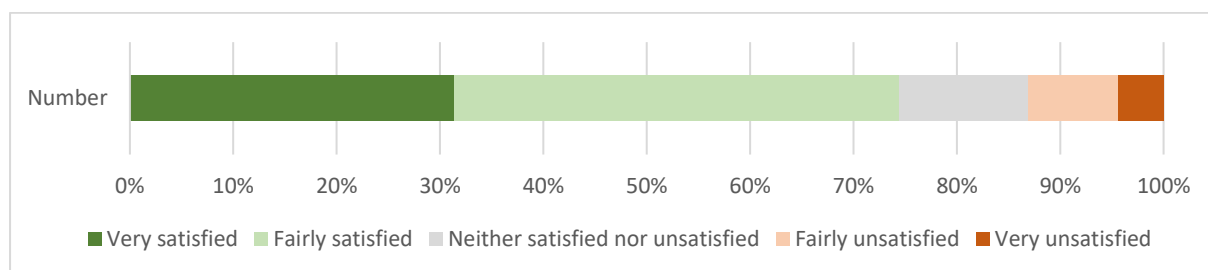
Most of the comments regarding conflict centred around poor workplace conditions and remuneration. Comments included:



- Not enough nurses or support staff, thus constant conflict between vets with the limited resources and who take priority
- Due to lack of work force and severe traditional under charging
- Mainly between vets and reception/admin who book consults inappropriately (inadequate time, consult runs into lunch or after hours, vet is not comfortable with that species/procedure).
- Employees (millennials) always want to work less and get paid more. They can't understand the money has to come from somewhere...
- Usually during high stress times

Culture satisfaction

Respondents were asked their level of satisfaction with the culture at their workplace. There were 2479 respondents. A total of 74.56% indicated they were either very or fairly satisfied.

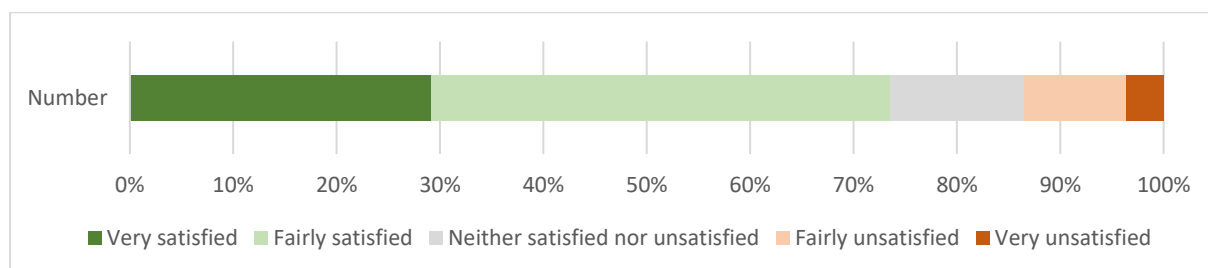


Comments were variable but "Great team" was frequently mentioned. The disconnect between management and clinical staff was also frequently mentioned. Comments included:

- Great culture, love my team
- Used to be better, now lack of HR and management has allowed issues to develop and persist
- We are overworked and this creates some negativity amongst support staff at times
- Generally everyone is on the same page but we have some mental health issues amongst staff which makes safe constructive development challenging.

Job satisfaction

Respondents were asked their level of satisfaction with their current primary employment. There were 3111 respondents. A total of 73.61% indicated they were either very or fairly satisfied.





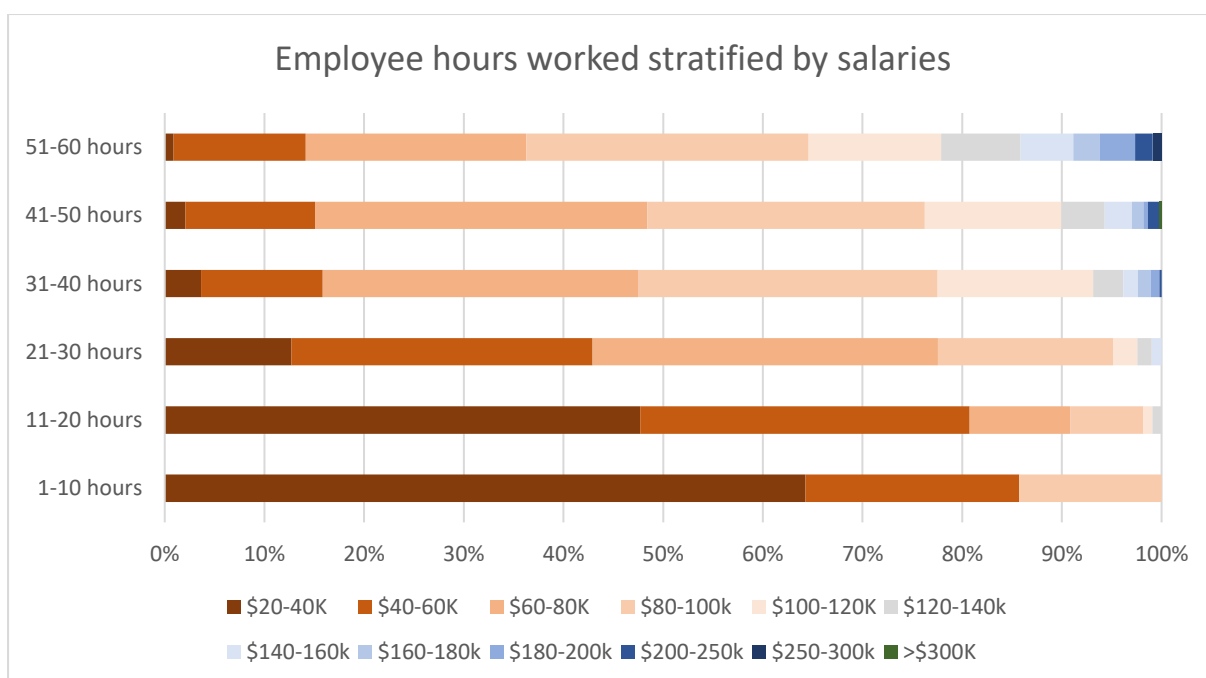
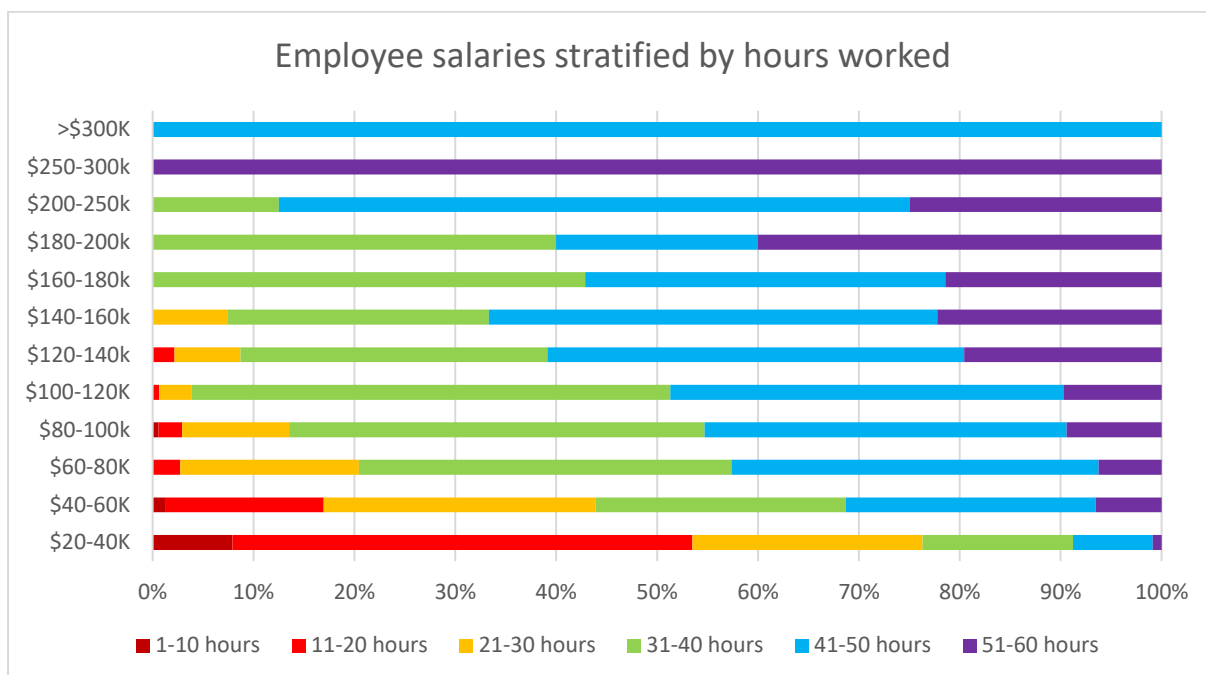
There was also an opportunity for respondents to provide comment. A wide variation of satisfaction was noted for a variety of reasons: workplace culture, quality of clinical care, working conditions and pay, gender issues. Comments included:

- My boss thinks that I am stupid and treats me with contempt
- The job isn't what I was told it would be. There is no support
- Some days it feels like there's no career progression. The men in the clinic get priority over who can buy in and start to manage.
- Old school clinic with poor approaches to antimicrobial use, pain relief, the clinic doesn't charge enough and hence I'm not paid enough
- Very good work-life balance. Relatively well-paid.
- Supportive environment with care to ensure excellent staff working conditions are maintained and client service standards are high.



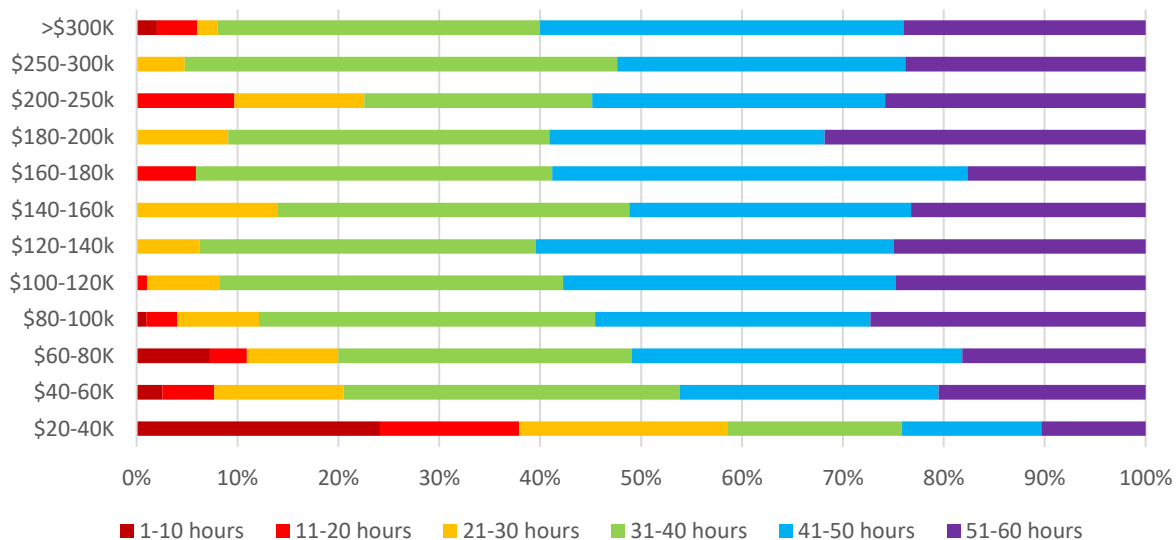
Remuneration levels and allowances

Remuneration levels have been included for employees and employers. For a breakdown of salary data by career stage and area of practice, please see the AVA Workforce Survey Salary Integration Report 2021.

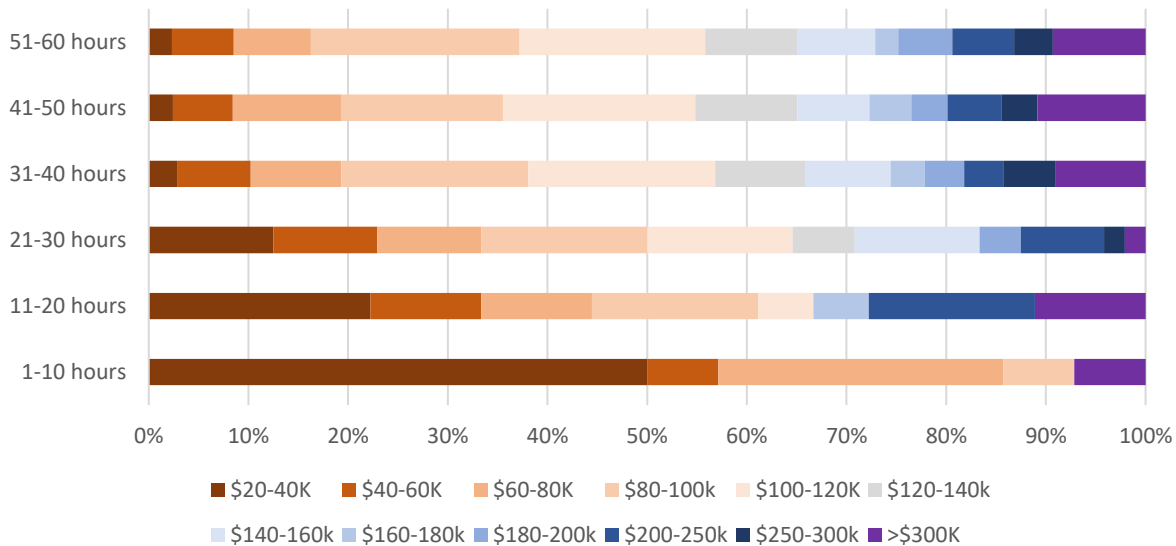




Employer salaries stratified by hours worked



Employer hours worked stratified by salaries





Allowances

Respondents were then asked if they received additional further allowances. They were able to select all that applied. There were 2412 respondents that made selections.

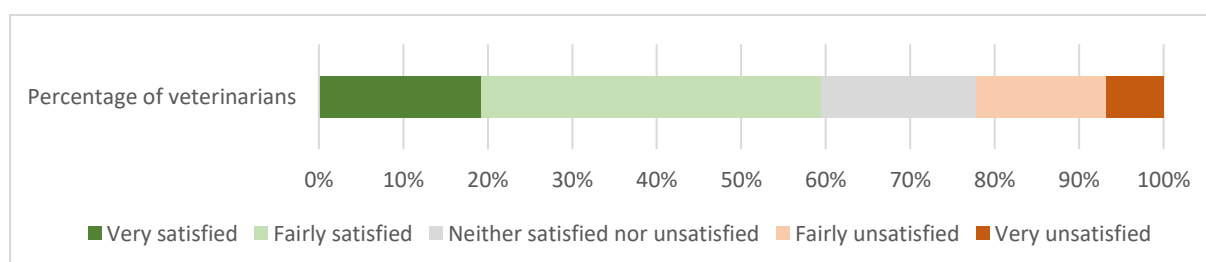
Allowances	Number	Percentage
Phone allowance	593	24.59
Travel allowance	568	23.55
Personal protective equipment	387	16.04
Memberships	1004	41.63
Conference/Continuing Education allowance	1524	63.18
Education leave	1021	42.33
Professional liability insurance	788	32.67
Other	482	19.98

Those respondents that selected 'other' included allowances such as:

- Vet Board registration
- Work vehicle
- Laundry/Uniform
- Outdoor
- Home internet
- Petrol
- Flights for conferences
- Study leave
- Performance bonuses
- Rent
- Gym membership
- Accommodation
- Radiation licences
- Income protection insurance

Remuneration/allowance satisfaction level

Respondents were asked their level of satisfaction with their current remuneration/allowances. There were 2989 respondents. A total of 59.48% indicated they were either very or fairly satisfied.





Vacancies for veterinarian

“We’re constantly short of veterinarians, so are constantly advertising.”

Advertised vacancies

Respondents that work in a practice setting were asked if the practice they currently worked in has advertised for a veterinarian to fill a vacancy in the past year. 2619 respondents provided a response.

Vacancy for veterinarian advertised	Number	Percentage
Yes	2029	77.47
No	518	19.78
I don't know	72	2.75
	2619	100.00

Reason for vacancy

Of the 2029 respondents that indicated that the practice setting they currently worked in did have a veterinarian vacancy advertised were then asked whether the position advertised to replace a veterinarian leaving the practice or if it was a newly created position due to workload. 2027 respondents provided a response. A total of 60.78% advertisements were to replace a veterinarian leaving a practice.

Reason for vacancy	Number	Percentage
Replacing a veterinarian leaving the practice	1232	60.78
New position	795	39.22
	2027	100.00

Duration of vacancy

Those respondents when then asked the duration of time it took to fill the position. Concerningly 30.64% of vacancies took more than 12 months to fill or were still not filled.

Duration of vacancy	Number	Percentage
Less than 3 months	423	20.87
3-6 months	388	19.14
6-9 months	156	7.69
9-12 months	97	4.79
More than 12 months or still not filled	621	30.64
I don't know	342	16.87
	2027	100.00



Future employment

Intention to remain in a veterinary role

Respondents that are currently working were asked whether they are planning to continue working in a veterinary role (clinical or non-clinical) for the next twelve months. A total of 3139 respondents provided a response.

Continuing in veterinary role	Number	Percentage
Yes	2717	86.56
No	139	4.42
Not sure	283	9.02
	3139	100.00

Reasons for not remaining in a veterinary role

Those respondents (422) that indicated they were either not planning to continue working in a veterinary role or were not sure if they would continue to work in a veterinary role were asked to indicate the determining factor. They were asked to selection the option that mostly describes the main reason.

Reason	Number	Percentage
Parental leave	29	6.87
Family care	7	1.66
Mental health reasons	41	9.72
Physical health reasons	15	3.55
Disillusionment with the profession	139	32.95
Personal preference	13	3.08
Financial viability	26	6.16
Difficulty finding work	2	0.47
Retiring	55	13.03
Professional growth/study	10	2.37
Working in a non-vet role	40	9.48
Other	45	10.66
	422	100.00



What would make you leave a role?

Those respondents that are currently working were asked what factors would make them leave their current role to work elsewhere. Respondents could select up to 5 factors which are of the greatest importance to them. There were 3046 respondents.

Factor	Number	Percentage
Suitable hours of work	1234	40.51
Lesser workload	839	27.54
Better remuneration	1951	64.05
Better support for my growth and development	875	28.73
Better workplace culture	891	29.25
A new challenge	1188	39.00
Opportunity to develop new/different skills	1310	43.01
Relocation	597	19.60
Position with more/higher responsibilities	345	11.33
A change from clinical work	541	17.76
No/better on-call duty requirements	508	16.68
Bigger clinic/more vets	219	7.19
Increased ratio of veterinary nurses to veterinarians	431	14.15

What would make you stay in a role?

Those respondents that are currently working were asked that if they were to consider leaving their current workplace, what actions could be done to help them find satisfaction to remain. Respondents could select up to 5 factors which are of the greatest importance to them. There were 3046 respondents.

Actions	Number	Percentage
Pay rise	1874	61.52
More time off	1009	33.13
More flexible working conditions	897	29.45
Opportunity to grow skills via continuing education	1071	35.16
More leadership/management tasks	505	16.58
Less leadership/management tasks	241	7.91
None or less on-call requirements	575	18.88
None or less weekend work requirements	784	25.74



Experience after changing roles

Those respondents that are currently working were asked if they had changed employment in the last two years to a more satisfying role. They were asked what was different about the more satisfying role. They were able to select up to three of the below factors. Those that have not changed jobs were asked to select that option. There were 3048 respondents.

Different factors	Number	Percentage
I have not changed jobs in the past two years	2151	70.62
More continuing education/learning opportunities offered	97	3.18
I felt more valued	345	11.33
I could use and develop my skills more	269	8.83
Improved workplace culture	373	12.25
I am paid better for the hours I work	407	13.36
Better work/life balance	397	13.03
I don't have on-call duties	142	4.66
I don't have to work after hours	96	3.15
I don't have to work on weekends	85	2.79

Working in rural or regional location

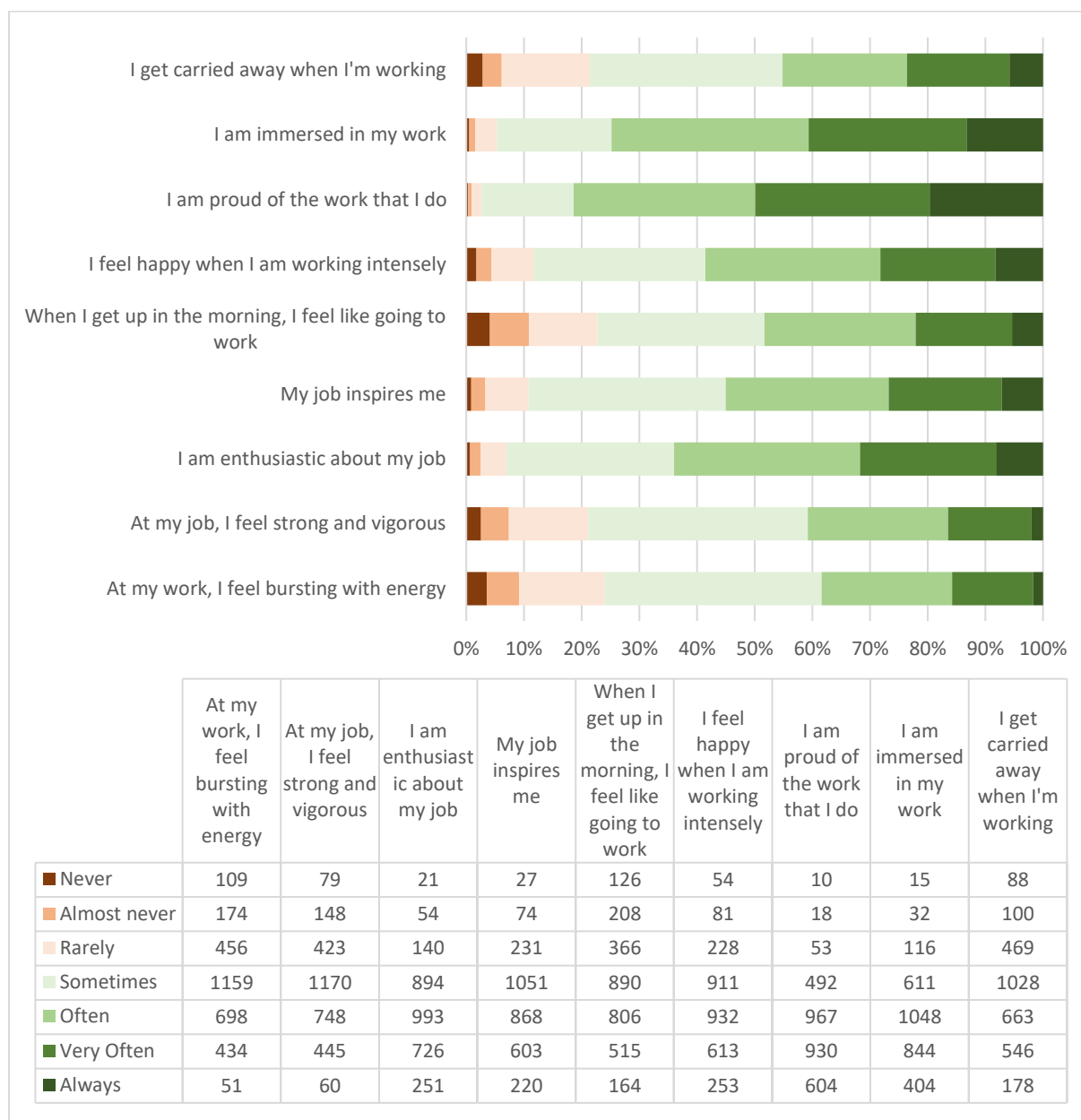
Those respondents that are currently working were asked what would encourage them to accept a veterinary role (clinical or non-clinical) in a regional or rural location. Respondents were asked to select all option that applied. There were 3074 respondents.

Factors of influence	Number	Percentage
I already work in a regional or rural location	1257	40.89
Government financial subsidy	342	11.13
Flexible working hours	558	18.15
Workplace conditions	567	18.45
Minimal on-call duties	582	18.93
Higher salary than in a metropolitan location	800	26.02
Opportunity to develop specific skills/experience	421	13.70
Ability to work with a single species, ie. companion, equine	309	10.05
Lifestyle	864	28.76
Cost of living	485	15.78
I would not consider working in a regional or rural location	860	27.98



Utrecht Work Engagement Scale questionnaire

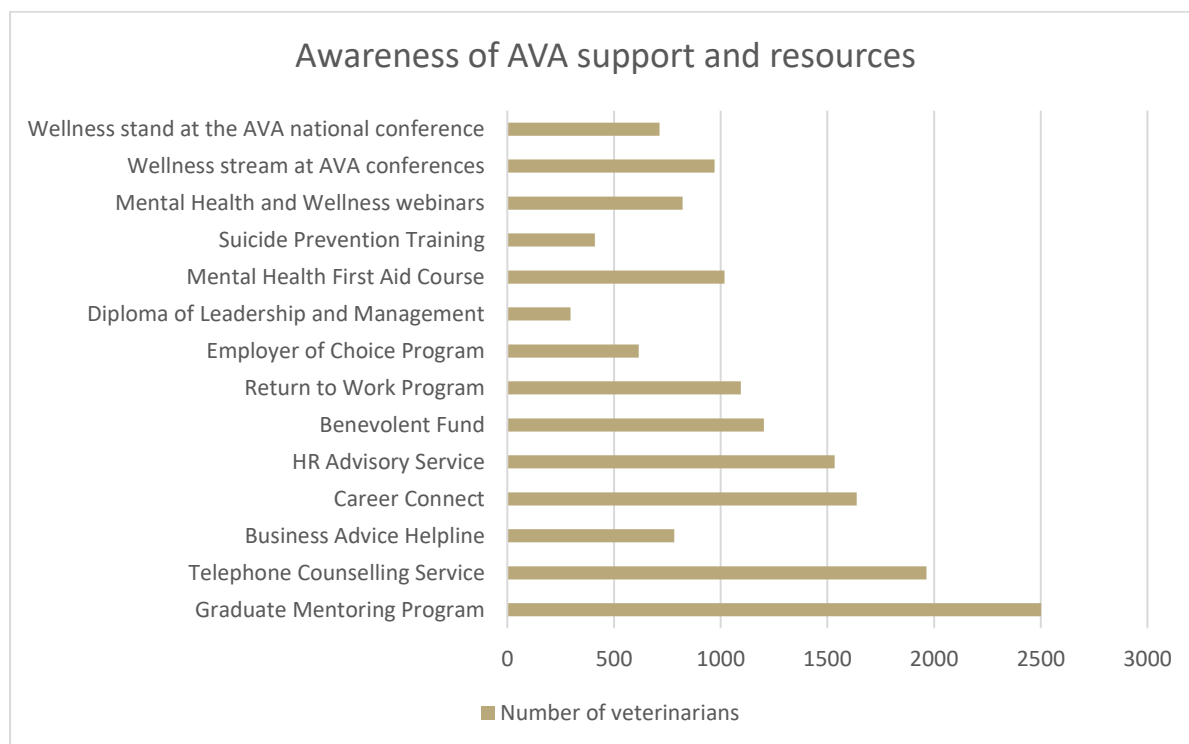
All respondents that indicated they were working were asked to complete the 9 item Utrecht Work Engagement Scale questionnaire. There were 3111 respondents invited to selection an option to each statement.





AVA Wellness and Support Resources – awareness

All respondents were asked which of the AVA resources they were aware of. They were asked to select each of the resources that they were aware of.





Self-Care strategies

All respondents were asked what self-care strategies they have in place to support them. They were asked to select all options that applied. There were 3176 respondents.

Strategies	Number	Percentage
I prioritise getting enough sleep	1940	61.08
I mostly eat healthily	2229	70.18
I exercise 3 or more times a week	1761	55.45
I maintain connection with family and friends	2303	72.51
I debrief after difficult situations and cases at work	1272	40.05
I remind myself of the difference my work is making	817	25.72
I take lunch breaks most days	1293	40.71
I look for the positives	1564	49.24
I practice mindfulness	801	25.22
I mostly leave work on time	1063	33.47
Other	460	14.48

Respondents who selected 'other' were given the opportunity to advise of strategies not listed. These included:

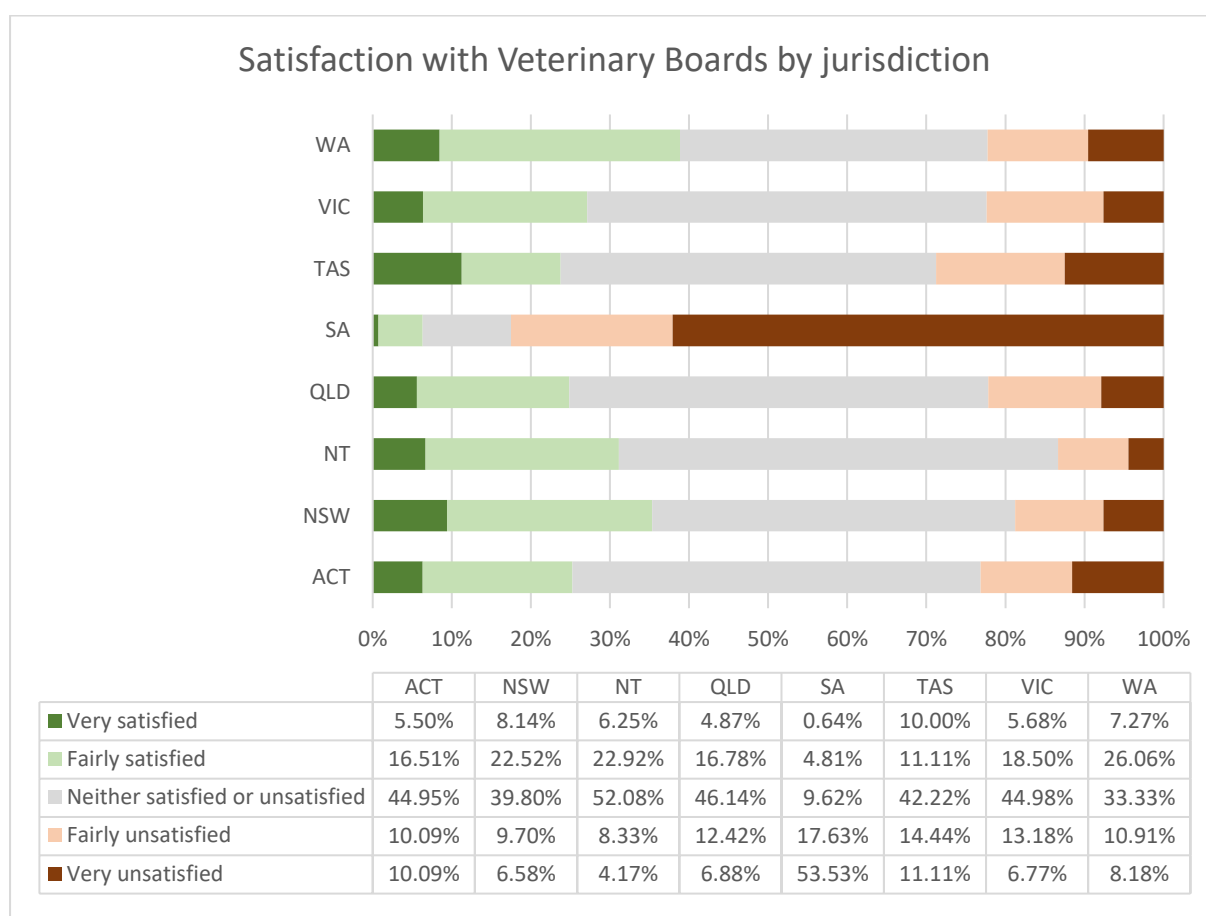
- I am taking long term sick leave atm from BurnOut and a couple of physical problems from overworking, so am using the time to claw back self-care and connect with family
- my faith helped me to an enormous extent
- I have a sleep each afternoon if possible
- Gratitude diary
- I regularly see a psychologist
- I am involved in a choir
- I'm so overwhelmed most of these answers are unrealistic



Veterinary Surgeons' Boards

All respondents were asked as to what extent they were satisfied with the activities of the Veterinary Surgeons' Board in the state they permanently reside or practise in. There were 3198 respondents.

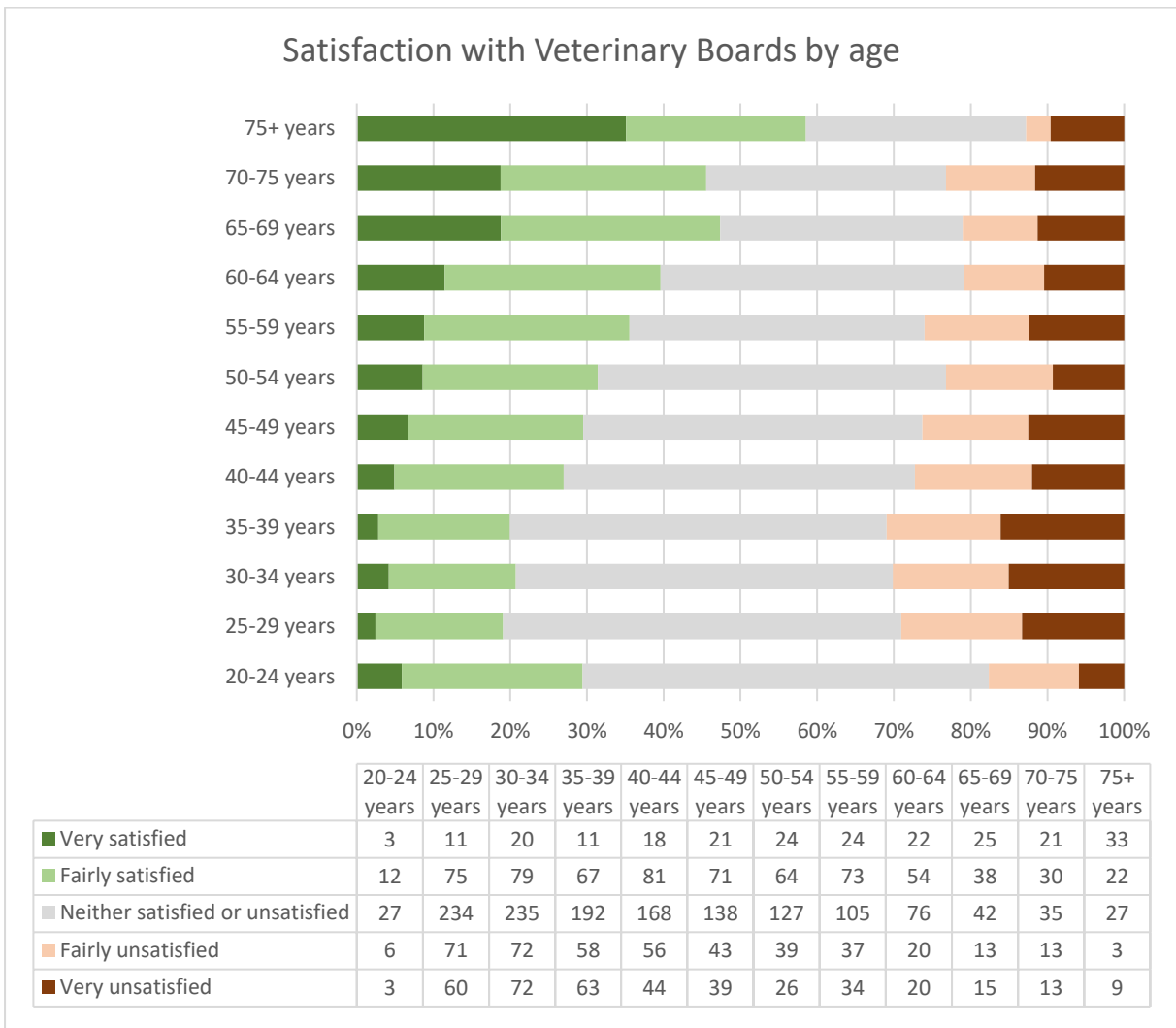
Results showed a crucially high level of dissatisfaction with the Veterinary Surgeons' Board of South Australia. Satisfaction levels with other Australian veterinary boards were similar, with the Veterinary Surgeons' Board of Western Australia having the highest level of satisfaction amongst survey respondents.



A large volume of comments were collected about expense, response times, increasing CPD requirements, support and mental health.



Assessed by age of veterinarian, older practitioners are more likely to have a favourable view of the veterinary board.





Future of the Veterinary Profession

All respondents were asked what they believed will have changed in the industry in five year's time. They were able to select as many options as were applicable. There were 3155 responses.

Willingness to assist with response	Number	Percentage
More part time positions	2119	67.16
More remote working/flexible hours/home-based roles	1037	32.87
Higher degree of specialisation	1348	42.73
Fewer but larger veterinary clinics	1409	44.66
More corporate owned clinics	2501	79.27
Increased use of telehealth	1313	41.62
Increased use of artificial intelligence/technology	687	21.77
Greater competition for talent	795	25.20
Other	459	14.55