

Mining, Exploration and Geoscience Quarterly Performance Report

Quarter Four 2023

January 2024

Published by the Department of Regional NSW

Title: Mining, Exploration and Geoscience Quarterly Performance Report

Subtitle: Quarter Four 2023

First published: January 2024

Department reference number: RDOC24/961

Amendment schedule		
Date	Version	Amendment
January 2024	1.0	First published

© State of New South Wales through Regional NSW 2024. You may copy, distribute, display, download and otherwise freely deal with this publication for any purpose, provided that you attribute the Regional NSW as the owner. However, you must obtain permission if you wish to charge others for access to the publication (other than at cost); include the publication in advertising or a product for sale; modify the publication; or republish the publication on a website. You may freely link to the publication on a departmental website.

Disclaimer: The information contained in this publication is based on knowledge and understanding at the time of writing (January 2024) and may not be accurate, current or complete. The State of New South Wales (including the Regional NSW), the author and the publisher take no responsibility, and will accept no liability, for the accuracy, currency, reliability or correctness of any information included in the document (including material provided by third parties). Readers should make their own inquiries and rely on their own advice when making decisions related to material contained in this publication.

Executive Summary

Quarterly Wrap-Up

In Quarter 4 2023, Mining, Exploration and Geoscience (MEG) finalised 95 measured title actions. This quarter saw a continuation of strong results from preceding Quarters, with 95% of matters determined within target timeframes.

The Quarter also saw determination of 85 ageing dealing matters resulting in the completion of over 90% of matters within the Ageing Dealings project.

As at the end of 2023, 597 of 662 Ageing Dealing Project matters have been completed. The majority of remaining ageing dealings are awaiting finalisation of applicant action (such as obtaining development consent or furnishing final surveys), or management of final rehabilitation and security deposit matters following expiration of title terms. MEG will continue to liaise with applicants to determine these dealings and report on their progress separately from determinations received since the SDS were introduced. These are covered on page 11 of this report.

Overview

This report provides a summary of the performance for title assessments and application processing within the Department of Regional NSW's Mining, Exploration and Geoscience (MEG) division for Quarter 4 2023 (1 October 2023 to 31 December 2023).

MEG's performance is reported against the Service Delivery Standards ('target dates') which define target timeframes for the processing of applications under the *Mining Act 1992*. Service Delivery Standards and 'Target dates' are published by MEG at:

meg.resourcesregulator.nsw.gov.au/mining-and-exploration/service-delivery-standards

Processing Timeframes

Processing timeframes for title applications, renewals, transfers, part transfers and changes in control commence when a complete application, including payment of relevant application fees and all required supporting information, is received by MEG. If an application is deficient, the applicant is notified and given 10 business days to submit all required supporting information. Processing timeframes for Stage 1 ends when the applicant is notified of the proposed decision for the application. Processing timeframes for Stage 2 ends when the applicant is notified of the final decision for the application.

Exception management (stop-the-clock) principles apply when circumstances beyond the control of MEG's process prevent the valid assessment of an application. The exception management principles can be found at the link above.

Table of Contents

Executive Summary	3
Quarterly Wrap-Up	3
Overview	3
Processing Timeframes	3
Quarter Four 2023	5
Performance Overview	5
Historic Performance Trend	5
Table 1. Service performance for the quarter	6
Average processing time by stage	7
Mineral Exploration Licences	7
Coal Exploration Licences	7
Mineral Mining Leases	7
Coal Mining Leases	8
Average end-to-end processing time by resource	8
Exploration Licences	8
Mining Leases	8
Remaining pending applications	9
Ageing Dealings Project	11

Quarter Four 2023

Performance Overview

The following chart (Table 1) details the performance of decisions as measured against the target dates for the quarter. The ‘target date’ represents an end-to-end application process (application to final decision) that incorporates the title instrument being issued as the final step. Table 1 below shows how many applications for grant, renewal, transfer and part transfer were completed within the ‘target date’ within this quarter, by resource (mineral or coal), and by application type.

During this quarter:

- 20 exploration licences were granted
- 44 exploration licences were renewed
- Three assessment leases were renewed
- Two mining leases were granted
- Six mining leases were renewed
- 20 transfers were registered

Of these, **95 per cent** met the target timeframe.

Historic Performance Trend

Figure 1 below shows the historic trend in the reported service delivery standard performance each quarter. Quarter 4 2021 saw the implementation of MEG’s new SDS. These SDS now report on end-to-end performance, rather than to proposed decisions, as well as the inclusion of transfer and part transfer applications in the performance report.

Figure 1 – Historic trend of service delivery standard performance (for all application types measured)

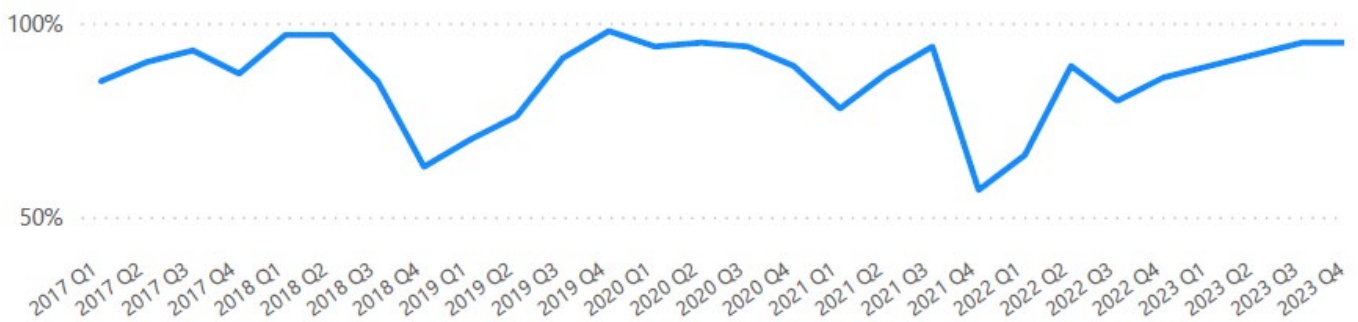


Table 1. Service performance for the quarter

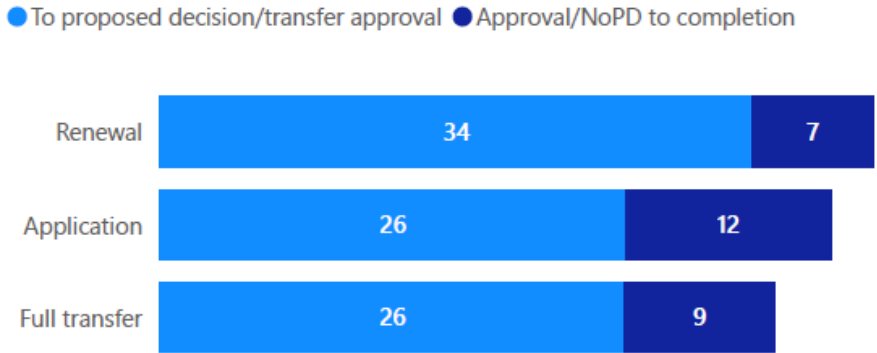
Service Performance - Itemised				
Application type	Total Matters	Met Target Date	Missed Target Date	Service Performance %
MINERAL				
Exploration licence applications	19	19	0	100%
Exploration licence renewals	41	40	1	98%
Assessment lease applications	0	0	0	N/A
Assessment lease renewals	3	3	0	100%
Mining lease applications	1	1	0	100%
Mining lease renewals	5	5	0	100%
Coal				
Exploration licence applications	1	1	0	100.00%
Exploration licence renewals	3	1	2	33.33%
Assessment lease applications	0	0	0	N/A
Assessment lease renewals	0	0	0	N/A
Mining lease applications	1	0	1	0.00%
Mining lease renewals	1	0	1	0.00%
Other				
Transfers	20	20	0	100%
Part transfers	0	0	0	N/A
Total	95	90	5	95%

Average processing time by stage

Figures 2, 3 and 4 below display the average number of days taken to process the applications determined in the quarter, broken down by application category and application stage (from submission to notice of proposed decision, customer acceptance to final notice etc).

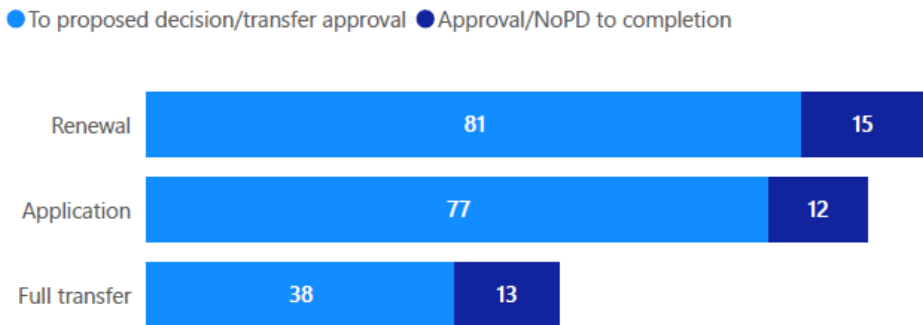
Mineral exploration licences

Figure 2 – Average processing days for mineral exploration titles by application stage



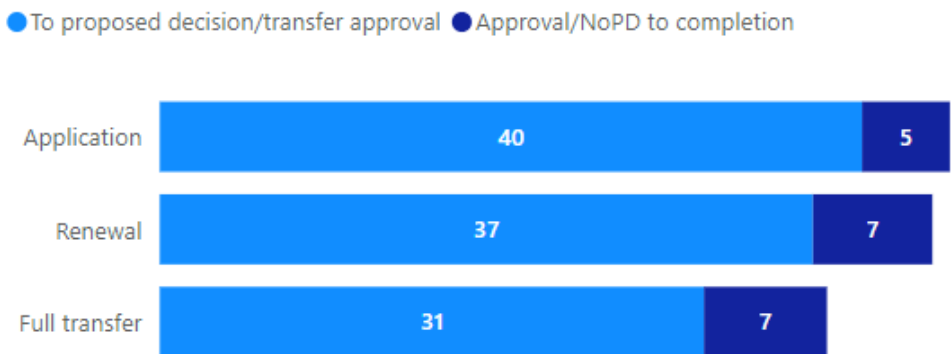
Coal exploration licences

Figure 3 – Average processing days for coal exploration titles by application stage



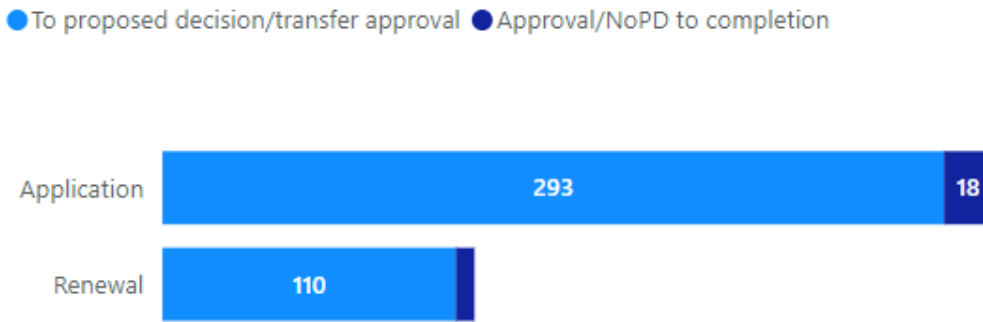
Mineral mining leases

Figure 4 – Average processing days for mineral mining titles by application stage



Coal mining leases

Figure 5 – Average processing days for coal mining titles by application stage

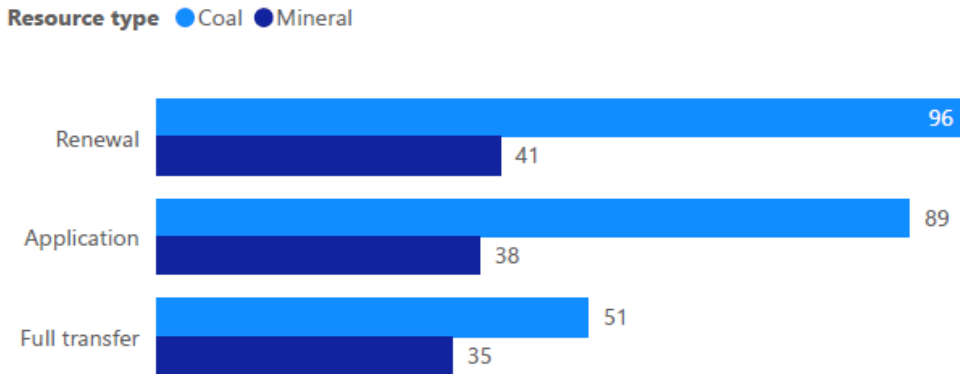


Average end-to-end processing time by resource

Figures 6 and 7 below display the average number of days taken processing the applications determined in the quarter, broken down by application category and resource type (coal, mineral and petroleum).

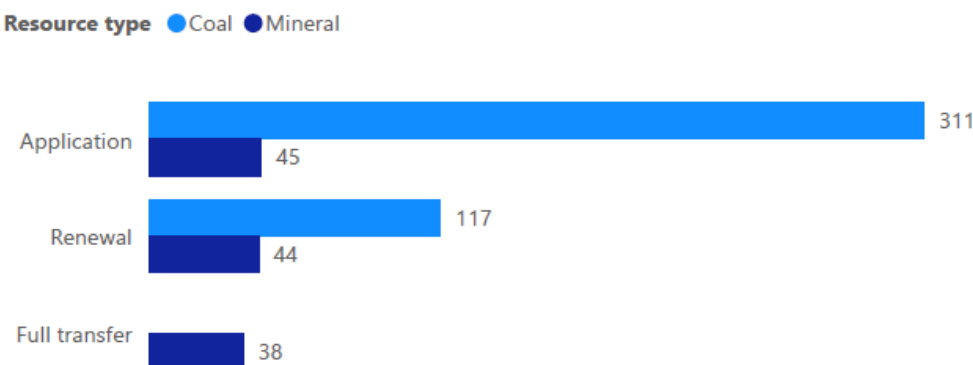
Exploration licences

Figure 6 – Average processing days for exploration titles by resource type



Mining leases

Figure 7 - Average processing days for mining titles by resource type



Current pending applications

Figures 8 and 9 below detail the number of pending applications for grant, renewal, transfer and part transfer under assessment with MEG at the end of the quarter. Figure 8 itemises the applications by type and resource, and figure 9 details when these applications were received. Please note that these pending applications do not include applications which form part of MEG’s ageing dealings project (applications received prior to 1 January 2020). These are reported separately.

Figure 8 – Current pending applications by type and resource

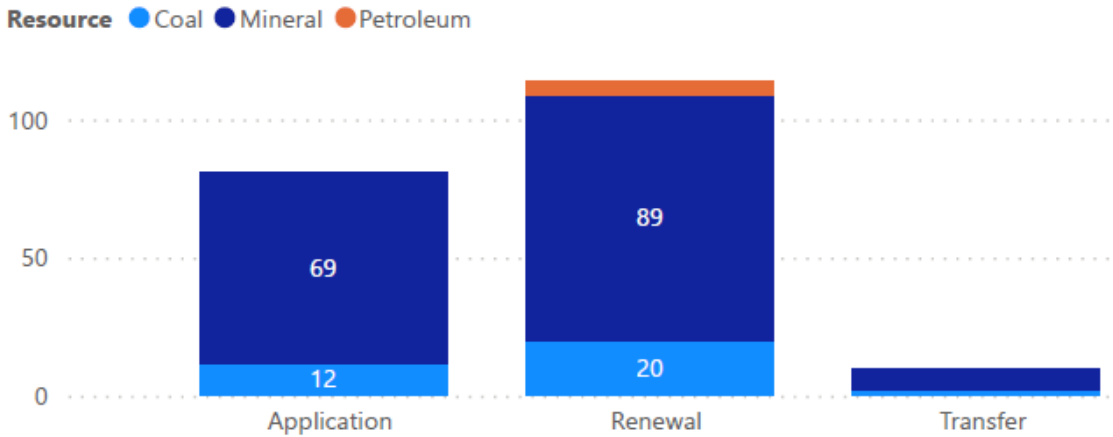


Figure 9 – Remaining pending applications by received date

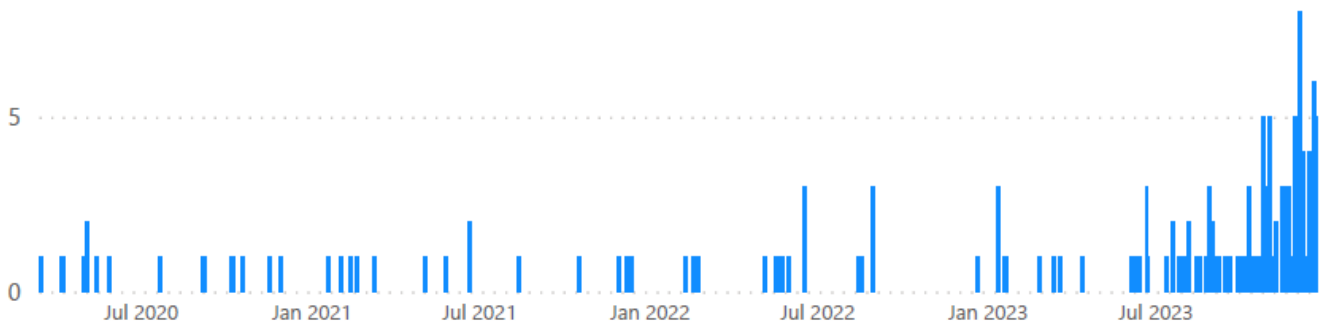


Figure 10 below details the number of applications that currently have their processing clock stopped and identifies the reason for the stoppage.

Figure 10 – Current clock stoppages by category

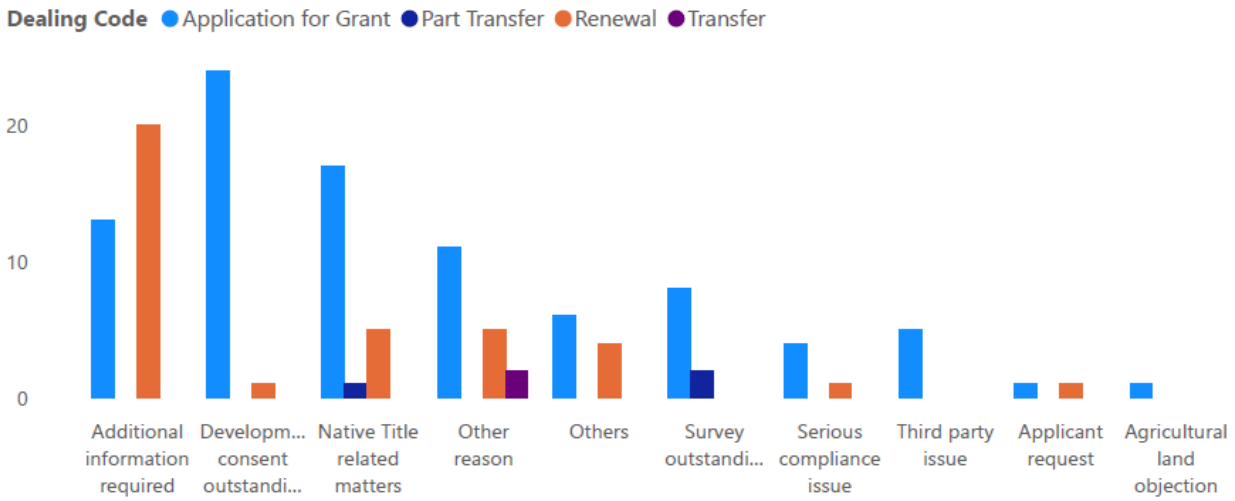
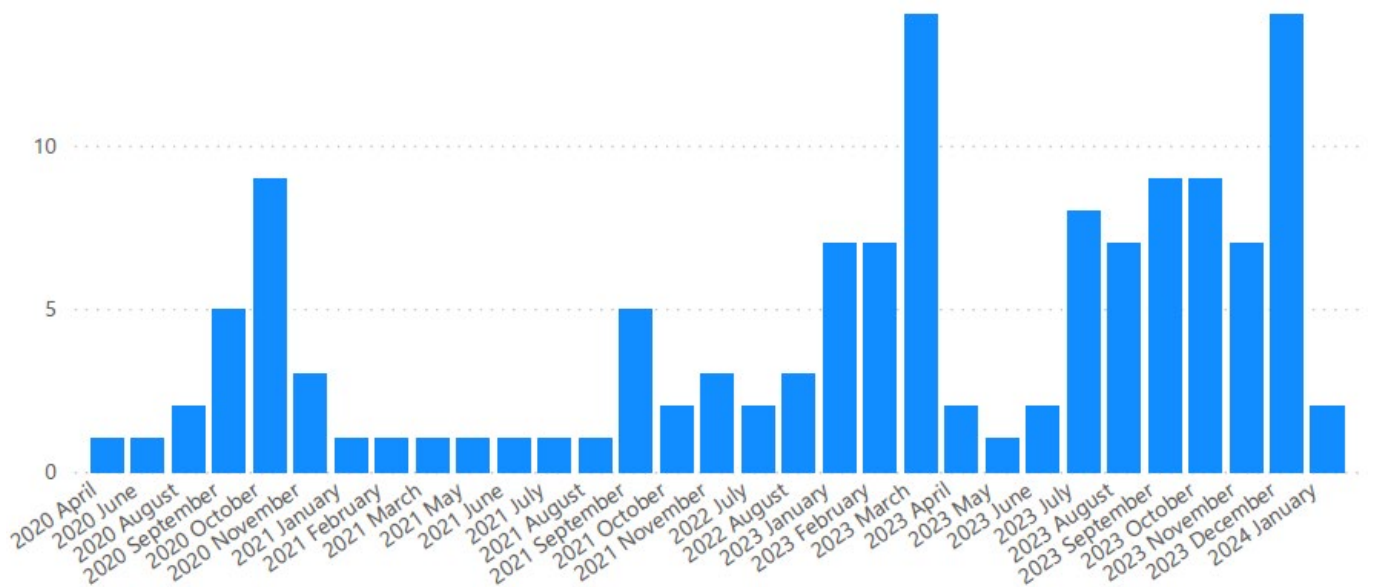


Figure 11 below identifies the number of items on stop the clock and shows the date the stoppage occurred.

Figure 11 – Current clock stoppages by stoppage date



Ageing dealings

The Ageing Dealings Project was established to review and finalise long standing applications including complex legacy matters that have been pending with MEG for a prolonged time. The items within the scope of the project were those applications lodged with MEG prior to 1 January 2020 that were pending completion at that date.

In addition to the internal triage of these applications to determine priority of processing, MEG also communicated with industry to prioritise assessments according to operational need where appropriate.

As of the end of Quarter 4 2023 a further 85 dealings had been finalised, bringing the total ageing dealings completed to 597. The final 65 dealings from the project have case officers assigned to them and are being prioritised by MEG for completion in 2024 alongside our business-as-usual dealings.

Figure 12 below shows the monthly progression of completed matters by the Ageing Dealings Project, with completed items per month in the bars and a running total represented by the line graph.

Figure 12 – Ageing dealings project items completed by month

Dealings completed by month

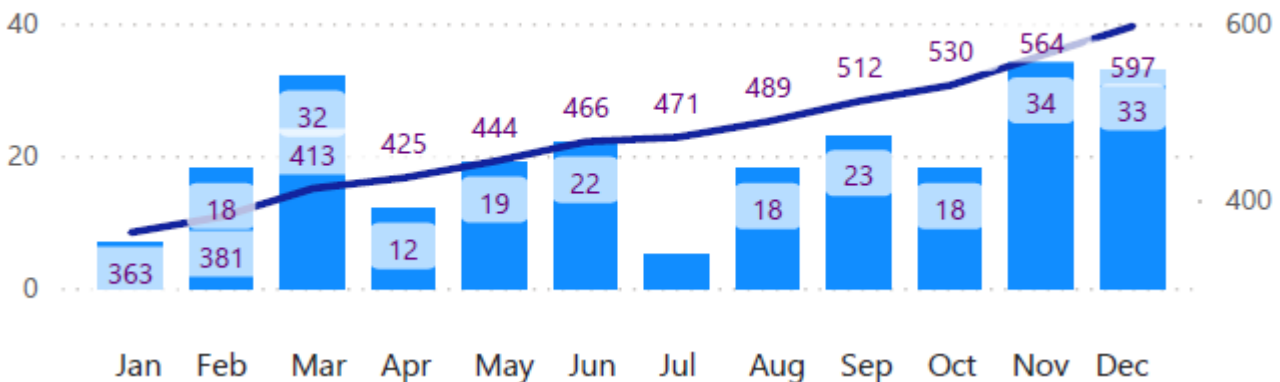


Figure 13 below itemises the matters in the Ageing Dealings Project that have been completed and those that remain to be completed. Most matters to resolve are renewals, grants of new titles, and the finalisation of dead titles (including any related security actions).

Figure 13 – Ageing Dealings Project dealings remaining

Remaining Dealings

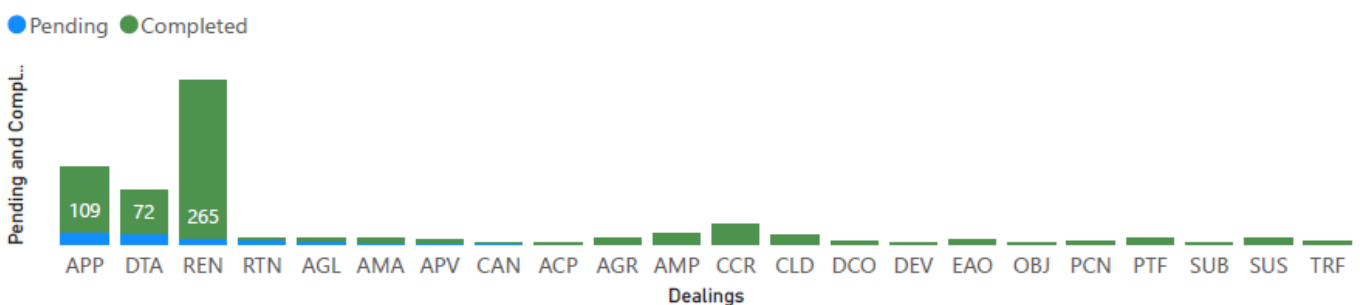


Figure 14 below lists the items in the Ageing Dealings Project by their processing stage (from lodgement through to completion).

Figure 14 – Ageing dealings project items sorted by processing stage

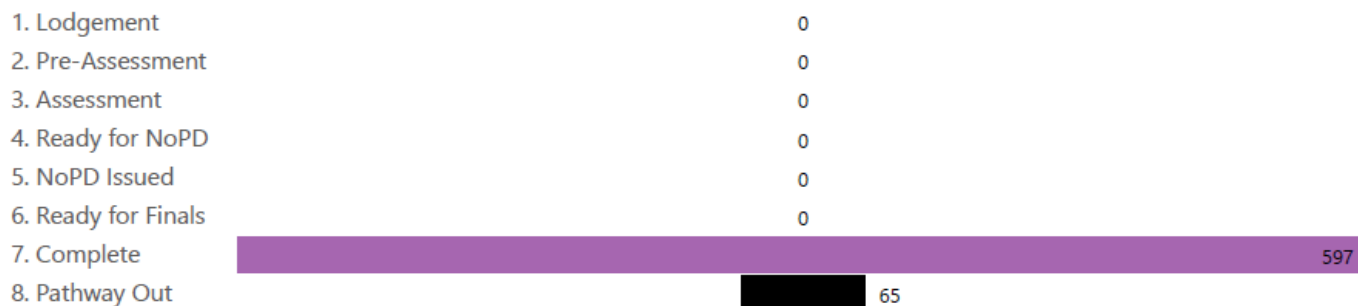


Figure 15 below details the current status of the ‘clock’ for all remaining ageing dealings. It identifies how many items have their processing clock stopped, how many have had previous stoppages but are now running again, and how many have never had to have the clock stopped.

Figure 15 – Ageing dealings project items ‘clock’ status

