

# Mining, Exploration and Geoscience Quarterly Performance Report

**Quarter One 2023**

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# Executive Summary

## Quarterly Wrap-Up

During Quarter 1 2023, Mining, Exploration and Geoscience (MEG) finalised 109 measured title actions. Of these matters, 90% were determined within target timeframes.

Consistent with the previous quarters, MEG has made a concerted effort to resolve matters on hand that were received prior to the introduction of the new end-to-end Service Delivery Standards (SDS), particularly matters that have come off ‘Stop-the-Clock’ due to outstanding information or matters being finalised with applicants.

A higher than usual number of matters are currently on ‘Stop-the-Clock’. This is due to the legislative changes affecting exploration licence renewal applications that commenced on 1 March 2023. MEG is prepared to address anticipated flow-on impacts with a view to continuing to achieve strong results against target timeframes.

MEG continues to progress outstanding matters to clear the number of applications on hand since 2020. The finalisation of these matters will continue into the coming Quarters with impacts reflected in overall performance against SDS, particularly for coal matters.

Performance against matters received since the introduction of end-to-end reporting SDS (Q1 2022) , continues to achieve strong results.

The Ageing Dealings Project has completed a total of 412 of 662 identified legacy matters up to the end of Quarter 1 2023. These matters are reported on Page 11. An increase in the rate of determination of aged dealings will occur leading up to the completion of the Ageing Dealings Project (30 June 2023), including those matters for which assessment has been impacted by exploration licence renewal legislative amendments that commenced on 1 March 2023. MEG will continue to liaise with Industry on the Aged Dealings Project. MEG is separately undertaking a root cause analysis to ensure issues that created the historic backlogs will not arise again after the Project’s completion.

## 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 1 2023 (1 January 2023 to 31 March 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:

<https://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.

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# Quarter One 2023

## Performance Overview

The following chart (Table 1) details the performance of decisions as measured against the target dates for Quarter 1 2023. 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:

- 38 exploration licences were granted
- 34 exploration licences were renewed
- 4 mining leases were granted
- 21 mining leases were renewed
- 10 transfers were registered
- 2 partial transfers were registered

Of these, **90 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 for Quarter 1 – 1 January 2023 to 31 March 2023 |               |                 |                    |                       |
|---|---------------|-----------------|--------------------|-----------------------|
| Application type  | Total Matters | Met Target Date | Missed Target Date | Service Performance % |
| <b>MINERAL</b>  |               |                 |                    |                       |
| Exploration licence applications                                    | 38            | 38              | 0                  | 100%                  |
| Exploration licence renewals  | 29            | 28              | 1                  | 97%                   |
| Assessment lease applications                                       | 0             | 0               | 0                  | N/A                   |
| Assessment lease renewals   | 0             | 0               | 0                  | N/A                   |
| Mining lease applications   | 2             | 2               | 0                  | 100%                  |
| Mining lease renewals   | 8             | 7               | 1                  | 88%                   |
| <b>COAL</b>   |               |                 |                    |                       |
| Exploration licence applications                                    | 0             | 0               | 0                  | N/A                   |
| Exploration licence renewals  | 5             | 3               | 2                  | 60.00%                |
| Assessment lease applications                                       | 0             | 0               | 0                  | N/A                   |
| Assessment lease renewals   | 0             | 0               | 0                  | N/A                   |
| Mining lease applications   | 2             | 2               | 0                  | 100.00%               |
| Mining lease renewals   | 13            | 8               | 5                  | 61%                   |
| <b>OTHER</b>  |               |                 |                    |                       |
| Transfers   | 10            | 9               | 1                  | 90%                   |
| Part Transfers  | 2             | 1               | 1                  | 50%                   |
| <b>Total</b>  | <b>109</b>    | <b>98</b>       | <b>11</b>          | <b>90%</b>            |

## 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

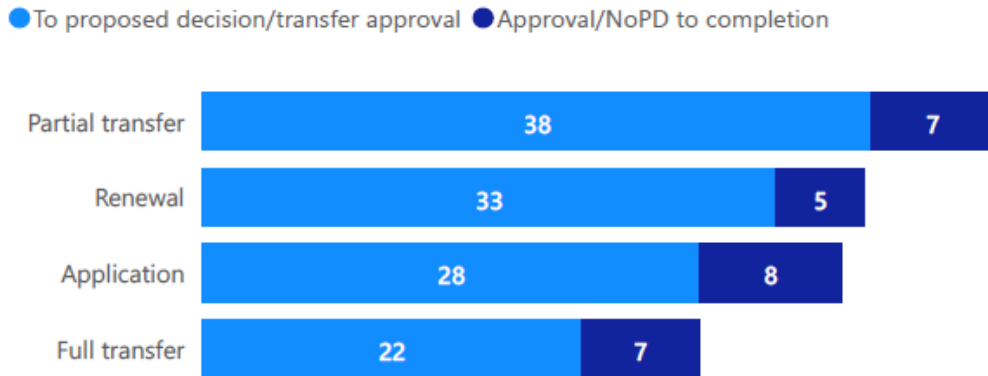


Figure 2 – Average processing days for mineral exploration titles by application stage

### Coal Exploration Licences

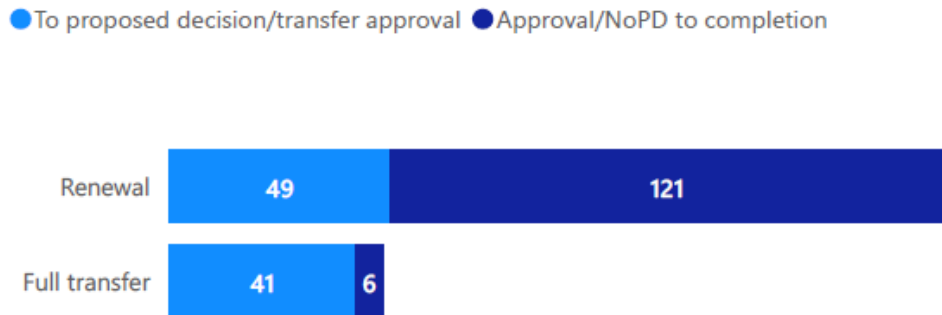


Figure 3 – Average processing days for coal exploration titles by application stage

### Mineral Mining Leases

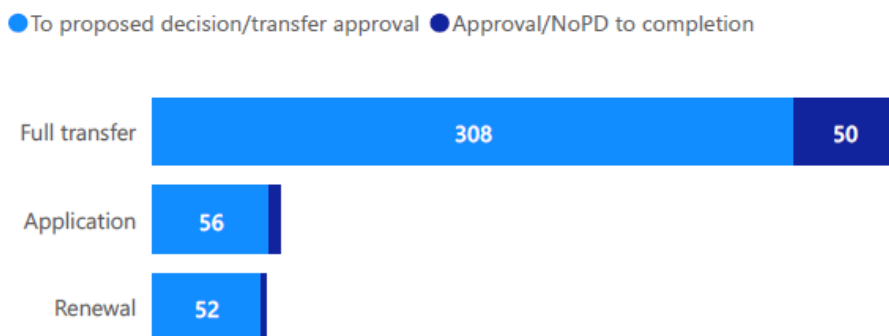


Figure 4 – Average processing days for mineral mining titles by application stage

## Coal Mining Leases

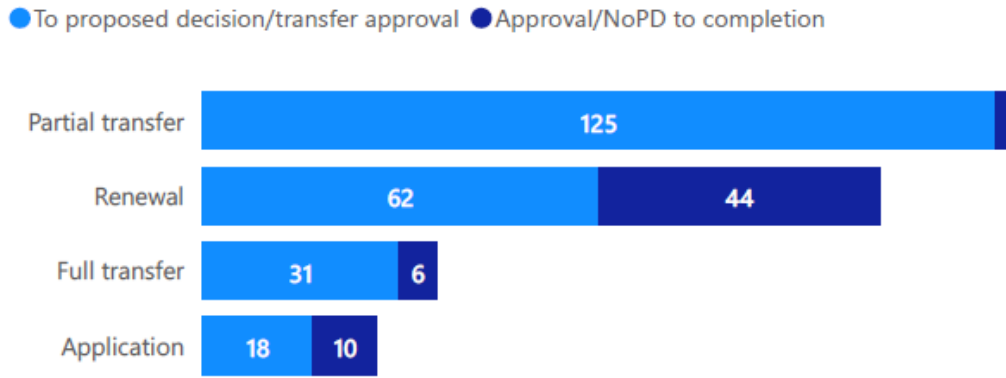


Figure 5 – Average processing days for coal mining titles by application stage

## 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

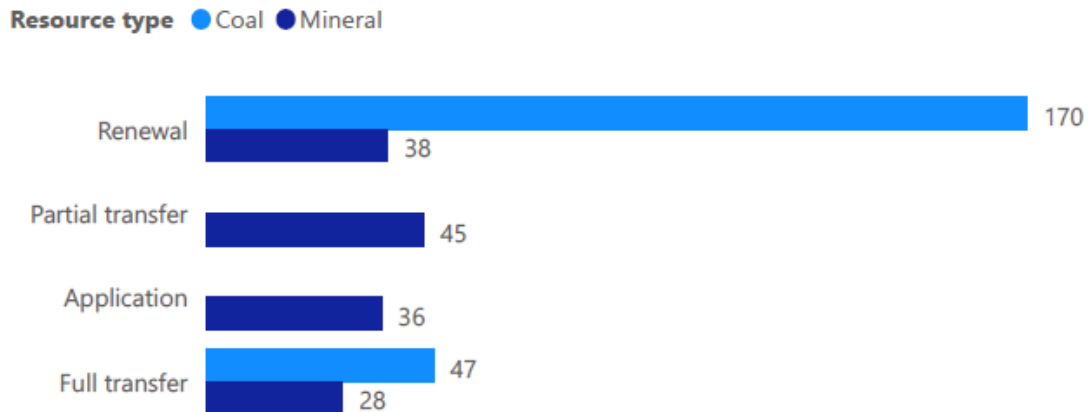


Figure 6 – Average processing days for exploration titles by resource type



## Mining Leases

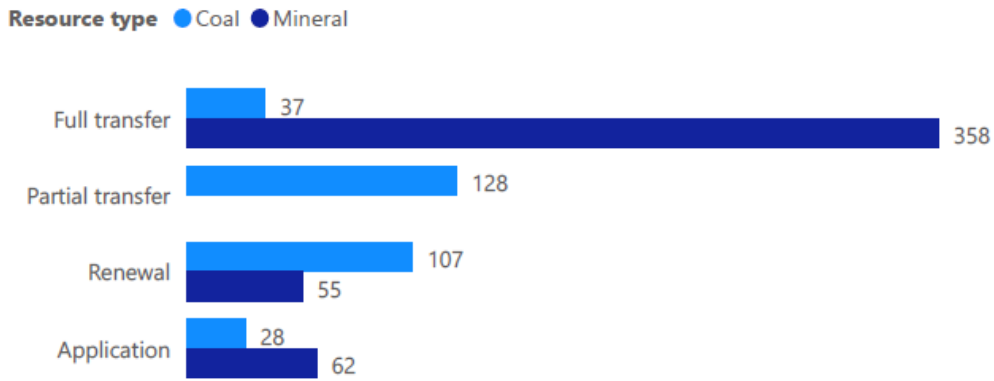


Figure 7 - Average processing days for mining titles by resource type

## Remaining 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 MEGs ageing dealings project (applications received prior to 1 January 2020). These are reported separately.

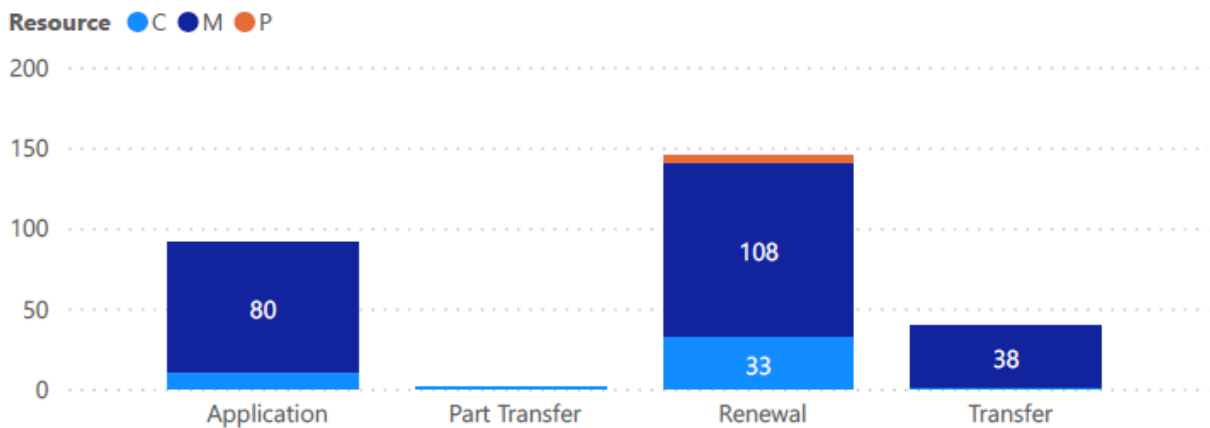


Figure 8 – Remaining pending applications by type and resource



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.

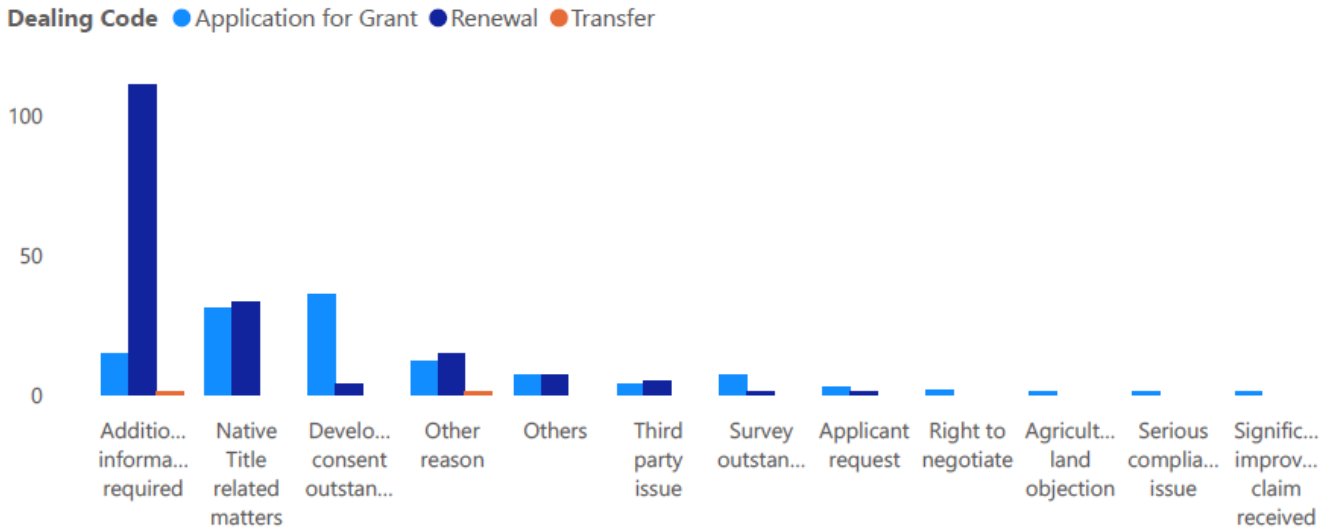


Figure 10 – Current clock stoppages by category

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

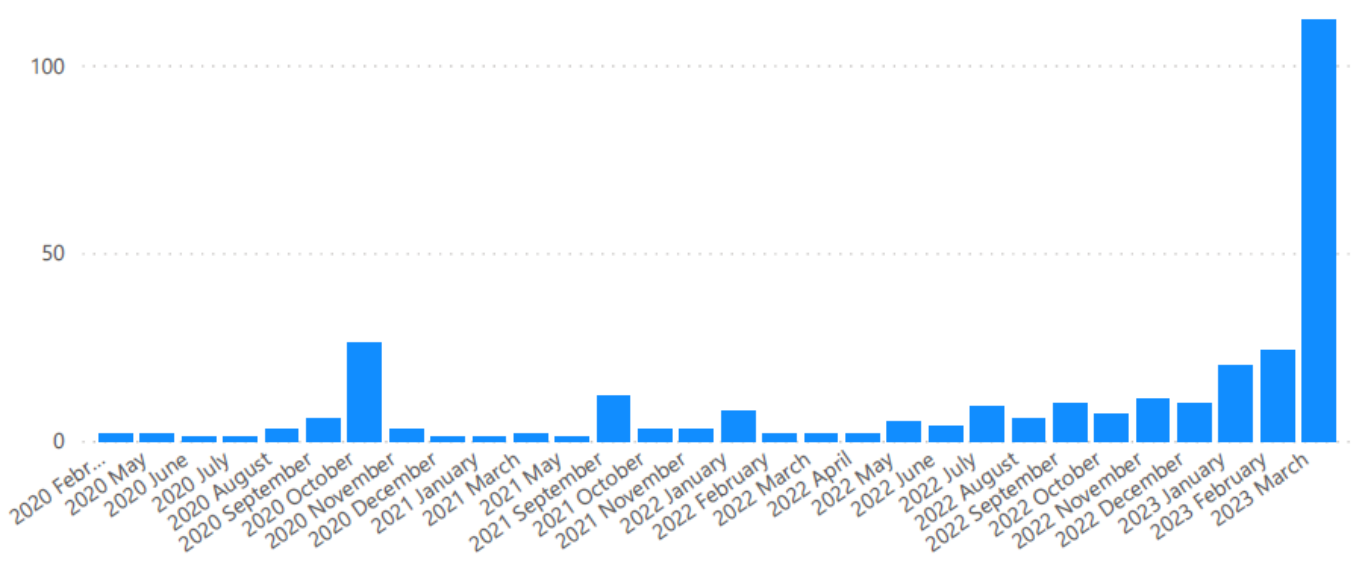


Figure 11 – Current clock stoppages by stoppage date

# Ageing Dealings Project

The Ageing Dealings Project reviews and finalises 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 are 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 communicates with industry to prioritise assessments according to operational need.

There were 662 matters within scope of this project.

At the end of Quarter 1 2023, 412 matters had been completed.

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.

## Dealings completed by month

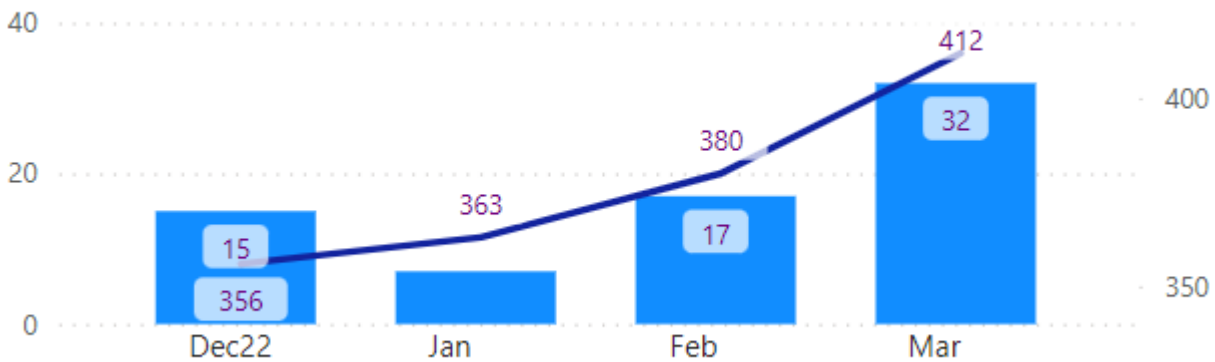


Figure 12 – Ageing dealings project items completed by month

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).

## Remaining Dealings

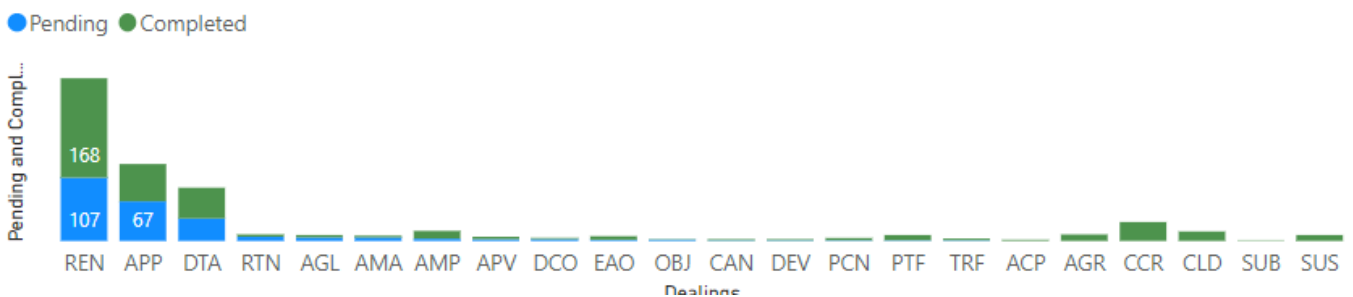


Figure 13 – Ageing Dealings Project dealings remaining

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

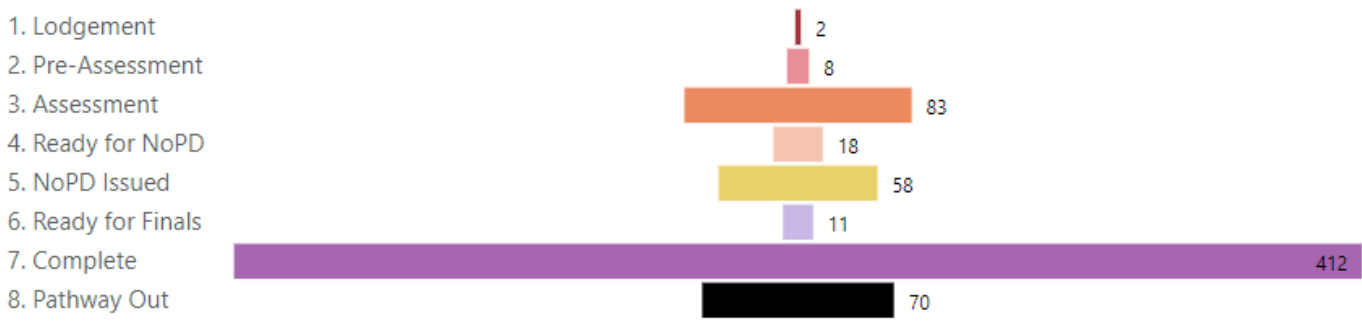


Figure 14 – Ageing dealings project items sorted by processing stage

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.

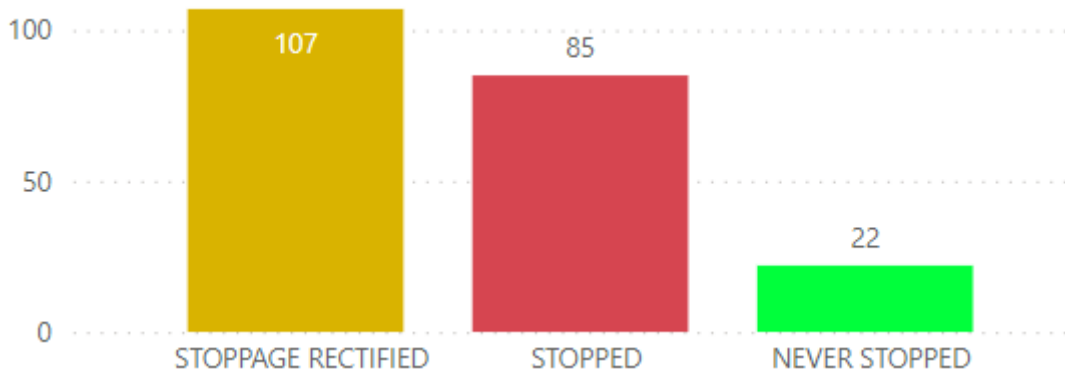


Figure 15 – Ageing dealings project items ‘clock’ status

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