

NSW PROFILE OF SOLICITORS 2016 FINAL REPORT

19 JULY 2017
PREPARED FOR THE LAW SOCIETY OF NEW SOUTH WALES

URBIS

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| Report | Final Report |



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SNAPSHOT OF SOLICITORS AS AT OCTOBER 2016

| | |
|-----------------------|---|
| Overall | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •As at October 2016, a total of 30,150 solicitors held a NSW Practising Certificate •The profession grew by +4% from 2015 to 2016 |
| Gender | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •For the first time ever, there were equal numbers of men and women in the profession •From 2015 to 2016, more women than men entered the legal profession (+6% and 3% respectively) |
| Age | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •In recent years, the average age of solicitors has slightly increased, from 42.1 years in 2012 to 42.8 years in 2016 •In 2016, the average age for men was 46.3 years, compared to 39.2 years for female solicitors |
| Years since admission | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •In 2016, over two in five solicitors (43%) were admitted for 15 years or longer, followed by 24% admitted for 1-5 years, and 18% admitted for 6-10 years •A majority of men (53%) were admitted for 15 years or longer compared to one third of women (32%) •One in eight (13%) were first admitted outside of New South Wales |
| Location | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •In 2016, nearly half of all solicitors worked in the Sydney CBD (49%), compared to one third (34%) in suburban locations, and 12% in country/rural locations •Since 2014, there has been a decrease in the proportion of solicitors working in the Sydney CBD, and an increase in solicitors working in suburban locations |
| Sectors | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •In 2016, the majority of solicitors worked in private practice (70%), compared to one fifth (19%) in the corporate sector, and one tenth (11%) in government •Between 2010 and 2016, the number of solicitors working in the corporate sector increased by +34%, followed by +26% in private practice and +20% in government |
| Private practice | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •A quarter (26%) of private practice solicitors worked in sole principal firms •Nearly one in five (19%) of private practice solicitors worked as sole practitioners, or for firms with 2 to 4 partners (18%), or for firms with 40 or more partners (18%) •Around six in ten firms (59%) were sole practitioner firms, followed by 27% of firms being sole principal firms |
| Diversity | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Of the one in four solicitors born overseas, 42% were born in an Asian country, followed by 17% in the UK or Ireland •Women solicitors comprised the majority of solicitors working in the corporate sector (58%) and the government sector (65%) •Men comprised the majority of solicitors in private practice (55%) •More women worked part time than men (23% compared to 14%) •One tenth (10%) of female private practice solicitors were principals, compared to 23% of male solicitors |
| Income | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Just over half of all solicitors (51%) earned more than \$100,000 in FY 2014/15 •Corporate solicitors had a higher mean income (\$198,328) compared to the whole profession (\$146,700) •The estimated mean income of female practitioners (\$133,000) was approximately 20% lower than the mean income of men (\$160,300) •When considering age and years since admission, male solicitors continued to earn more than their female counterparts |

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. THE ROLE OF THE LAW SOCIETY

The Law Society of New South Wales is the professional association representing the solicitors of New South Wales. The Law Society has two primary responsibilities: it acts as the licensing and regulatory authority by maintaining professional standards of conduct as well as investigating complaints against solicitors; it also represents the interests of its members. The role of the Society is summarised by the objectives set out in the Memorandum and Articles of Association, which include:

- to consider, originate and promote reform and improvements in the law;
- to remedy defects in the administration of justice;
- to make improvements in administration of legal practice;
- to represent generally the views of the profession;
- to preserve its integrity and status;
- to suppress dishonourable conduct or practices; and
- to consider and deal with all matters affecting the professional interests of members of the Society.

The Law Society is governed by an elected Council. The Council provides policy direction for the Law Society. It is assisted by a network of committees made up of volunteers from the profession and the public. Further information about the Law Society can be found on the Law Society's web page at <https://www.lawsociety.com.au/>.

1.2. OBJECTIVES

The purpose of this report is two-fold:

- to collate and analyse information about the demographic profile of the practising profession in 2016; and
- to identify and monitor any trends in composition and profile by comparing this year's data with information from previous years.

1.3. METHODOLOGY

The information contained in this report is obtained from two sources. The first is the Annual Census Data drawn from the Law Society's database on 12 October 2016.

As the profession fluctuates over the course of the year, the Law Society uses October data to measure the profession for the reporting year, since October is the most stable month. While the Law Society has retained the records of solicitors for many years, this report relies on information collected and stored in the Law Society database since 1988. From that year forward, the coding of information has been reliable and consistent. The data used in this report were drawn from the database on 12 October 2016, comprising a total of 30,150 New South Wales solicitors. This information relates only to those solicitors who held a current Practising Certificate on that day.

There may be many people in NSW who are working in law-related fields (some of whom hold law qualifications and may have been admitted to practice) who do not need to hold a Practising Certificate. Information about people working in these occupations is not collected or reported by the Law Society. The information contained in this report does not include interstate solicitors practising in New South Wales under the national practising scheme.

The second source of information for this report is the Annual Practising Certificate Survey that the Law Society has conducted since 1993/94. Each year, as part of the Practising Certificate renewal process, solicitors are invited to complete a voluntary survey. In addition to collecting a range of demographic data, the survey also gathers information about dominant areas of practice, income, hours of work and other issues relevant to the professional lives of solicitors. Response rates to the survey have typically been

around 35-49% of all practising solicitors in NSW, however in 2016, 18% of all practising solicitors in NSW completed the survey. Some of the results of this survey are described in this report. The Practising Certificate survey and the data collected from it are anonymous. The Law Society does not, and cannot, link the information collected through the surveys to individual solicitors or the organisations for whom they work.

Separate volumes of the Practising Certificate survey reports are available to members of the Law Society on request.

1.4. FURTHER INFORMATION

For further information about this report and other statistical information held by the Law Society, please contact:

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2. GENDER AND GROWTH

As at October 2016, there were 30,150 solicitors with New South Wales Practising Certificates. Between 2015-2016, the profession increased by +4.2%. Since 1996 the profession has more than doubled in size (from 13,199 to 30,150), with an average annual growth rate of +4.2%.

In 2016, there was an even proportion of male and female solicitors (50.0% male and 50.0% female). Since 2015, the number of female solicitors increased by +5.9% and male solicitors by +2.6%. Moreover, between 1996 and 2016, female solicitors showed on average a higher annual growth rate (+7.0%) than male solicitors (+2.4%).

Table 1 provides figures on the number of solicitors in New South Wales by gender, from 1996 to 2016. Figure 1 compares the number of male and female solicitors since 1996, while Figure 2 compares the annual growth rate over the same period.

Table 1 – Gender and growth, 1996-2016

| Year | Male | | Female | | Total |
|-------------|---------------|--------------|---------------|--------------|---------------|
| | n | % | n | % | N |
| 2016 | 15,085 | 50.0% | 15,065 | 50.0% | 30,150 |
| 2015 | 14,705 | 50.8% | 14,230 | 49.2% | 28,935 |
| 2014 | 14,204 | 51.5% | 13,371 | 48.5% | 27,575 |
| 2013 | 13,775 | 52.2% | 12,633 | 47.8% | 26,408 |
| 2012 | 13,463 | 52.8% | 12,030 | 47.2% | 25,493 |
| 2011 | 13,112 | 53.4% | 11,431 | 46.6% | 24,543 |
| 2010 | 12,845 | 54.1% | 10,915 | 45.9% | 23,760 |
| 2009 | 12,516 | 54.7% | 10,347 | 45.3% | 22,863 |
| 2008 | 12,260 | 55.5% | 9,845 | 44.5% | 22,105 |
| 2007 | 11,974 | 56.3% | 9,281 | 43.7% | 21,255 |
| 2006 | 11,712 | 57.6% | 8,618 | 42.4% | 20,330 |
| 2005 | 11,677 | 58.9% | 8,132 | 41.1% | 19,809 |
| 2004 | 11,368 | 60.0% | 7,566 | 40.0% | 18,934 |
| 2003 | 11,112 | 61.4% | 6,980 | 38.6% | 18,092 |
| 2002 | 10,815 | 62.9% | 6,374 | 37.1% | 17,189 |
| 2001 | 10,417 | 64.2% | 5,803 | 35.8% | 16,220 |
| 2000 | 10,060 | 65.4% | 5,322 | 34.6% | 15,382 |
| 1999 | 9,777 | 66.8% | 4,866 | 33.2% | 14,643 |
| 1998 | 9,414 | 67.9% | 4,457 | 32.1% | 13,871 |
| 1997 | 9,310 | 69.4% | 4,099 | 30.6% | 13,409 |
| 1996 | 9,331 | 70.7% | 3,868 | 29.3% | 13,199 |

Figure 1 – Number of solicitors by gender, 1996-2016

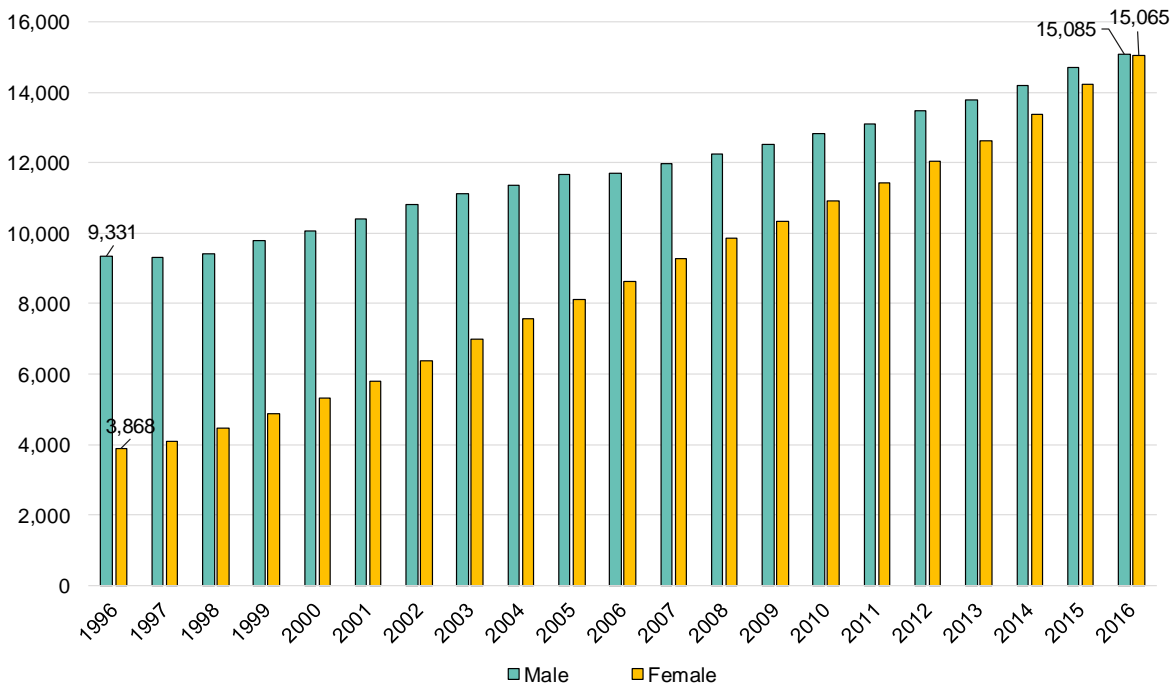
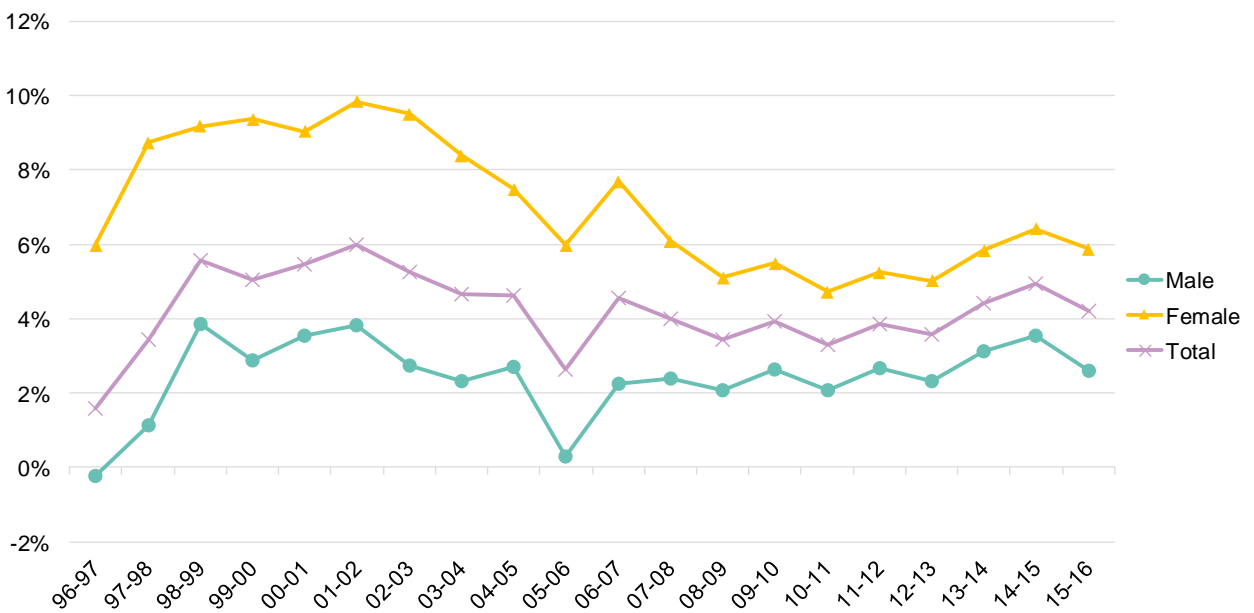


Figure 2 – Annual growth rates, 1996-2016

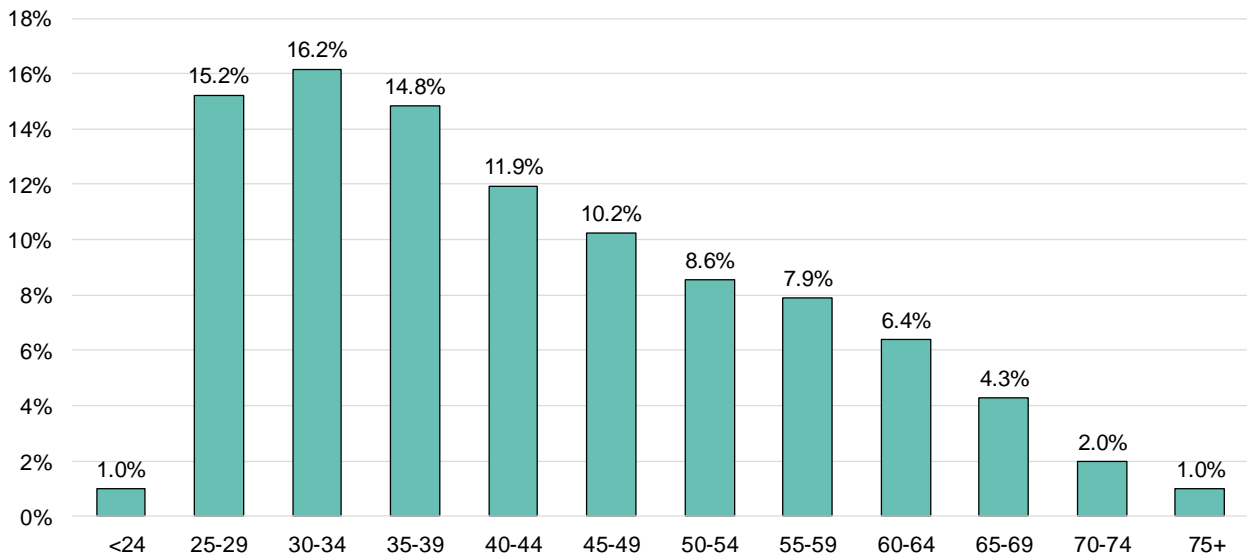


3. AGE

As at October 2016, the average age of solicitors in New South Wales was 42.8 years, and has increased steadily over recent years (42.5 years in 2015, 42.3 years in 2014, 42.2 years in 2013, and 42.1 years in 2012).

Similar to 2015, just under half (47.2%) of all New South Wales solicitors were aged under 40 years (see Figure 3). Consistent with previous years, female solicitors tended to be younger than males, with an average age of 39.2 years, compared to the male average of 46.3 years.

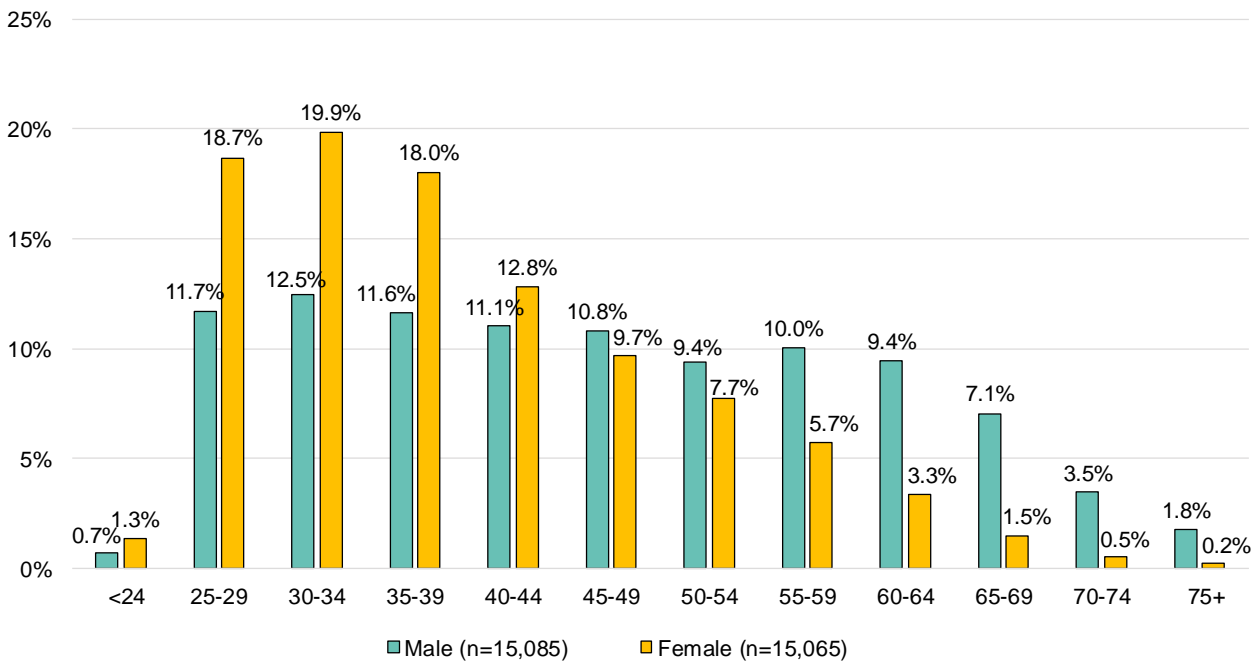
Figure 3 – Age profile of solicitors in 2016



Base: N=30,150

In 2016, around one in five female solicitors were either aged between 25-29 years, 30-34 years, or 35-39 years, compared to over one in ten male solicitors for all three age brackets (see Figure 4). Conversely, age brackets from 45 years and older comprised higher proportions of male solicitors than female solicitors.

Figure 4 – Age by gender

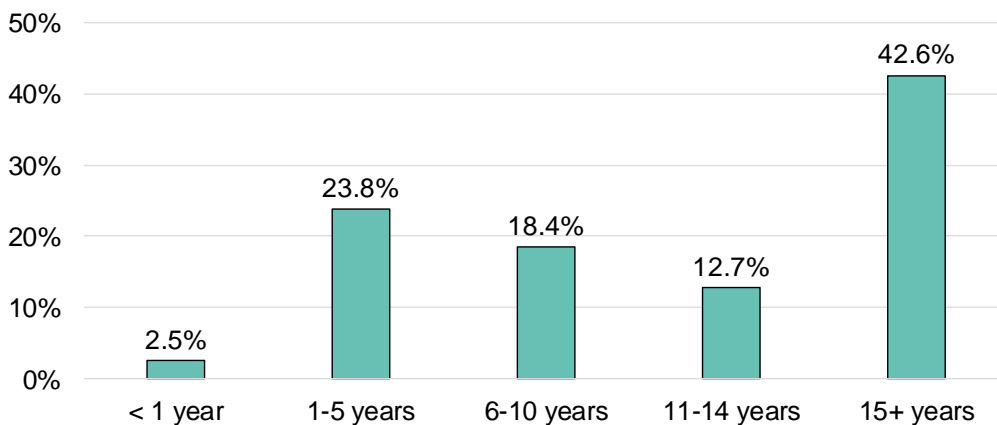


4. YEARS SINCE ADMISSION

4.1. SOLICITORS IN NEW SOUTH WALES AND OTHER STATES

As at October 2016, over four in ten (42.6%) New South Wales solicitors were admitted for 15 years or longer (see Figure 5). Nearly one in four solicitors (23.8%) were admitted for 1-5 years, followed by 18.4% of solicitors admitted for 6-10 years, and 12.7% of solicitors admitted for 11-14 years. Only 2.5% of solicitors were admitted for less than one year.

Figure 5 – Years since admission in 2016



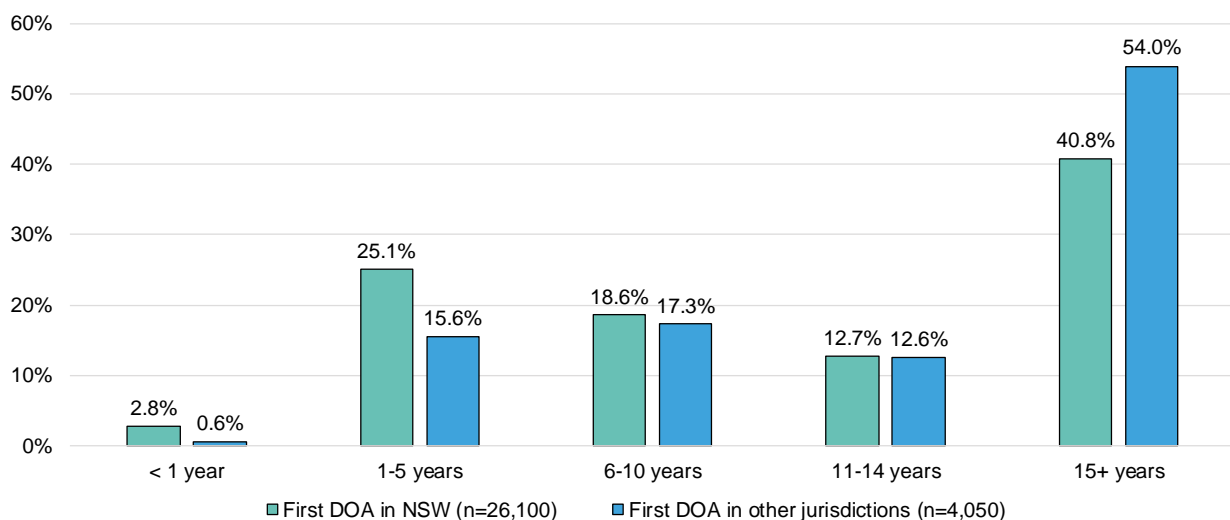
Base: N=30,150

Of all solicitors, 13.4% had a first admission date outside of New South Wales (elsewhere in Australia and overseas). Among this cohort (4,050 solicitors), there was an even split in solicitors admitted in New South Wales:

- within 12 months following their first admission in another jurisdiction (50.2%)
- after 12 months following their first admission in another jurisdiction (49.8%).

As shown in Figure 6, more than half of solicitors (54.0%) who were first admitted outside of New South Wales were admitted for 15 years or longer, compared to 40.8% of solicitors who were first admitted within New South Wales. Conversely, there were higher proportions of solicitors being admitted for less than one year, and between 1-5 years who were first admitted in New South Wales, than those with a first admission date outside of New South Wales.

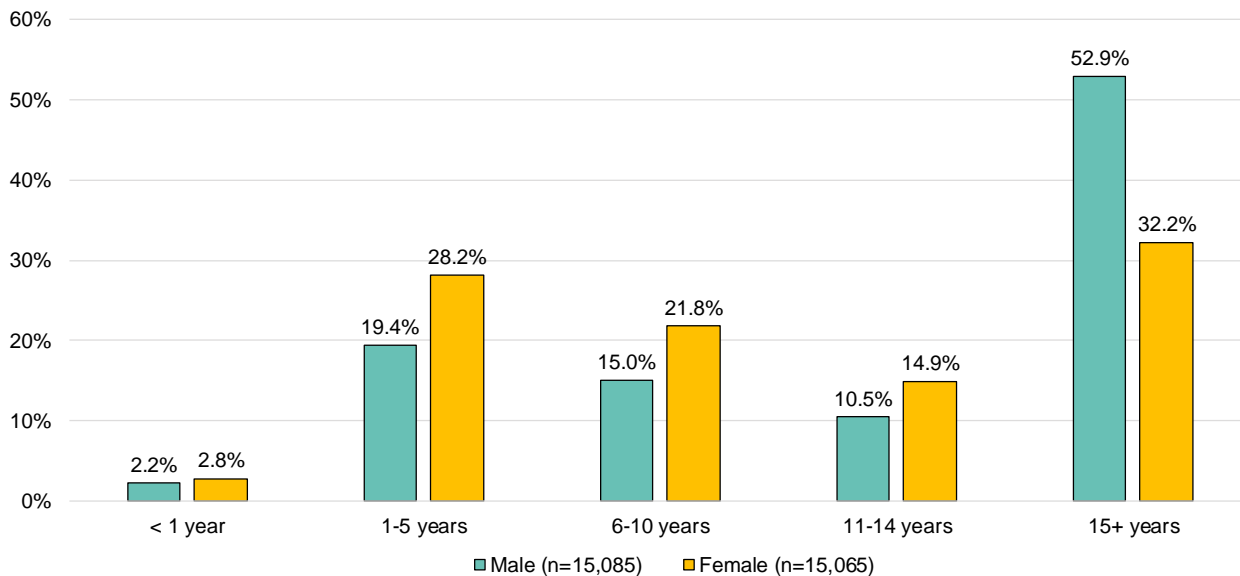
Figure 6 – Years since admission by first date of admission (DOA) in New South Wales and other jurisdictions (incl. overseas)



4.2. YEARS SINCE ADMISSION BY GENDER

The higher mean age of male solicitors compared to female solicitors is reflected in the statistics by years since admission. As shown in Figure 7, more than half of all male solicitors (52.9%) were admitted for 15 years or longer compared to one third of female solicitors (32.2%). Conversely, there were higher proportions of female solicitors than male solicitors admitted for 1-5 year, 6-10 years, and 11-14 years.

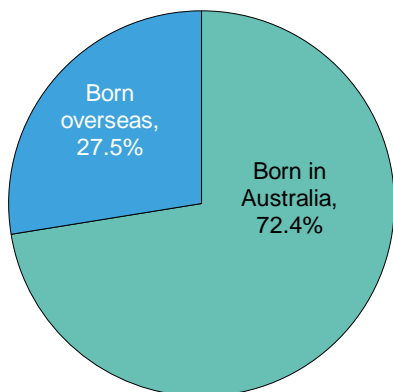
Figure 7 – Years since admission by gender



5. COUNTRY OF BIRTH

As at October 2016, nearly three in four solicitors practising in New South Wales were born in Australia (72.4%), compared to over one in four solicitors born overseas (27.5%) (see Figure 8). These results were similar to 2015 and 2014.

Figure 8 – Solicitors born in Australia and overseas

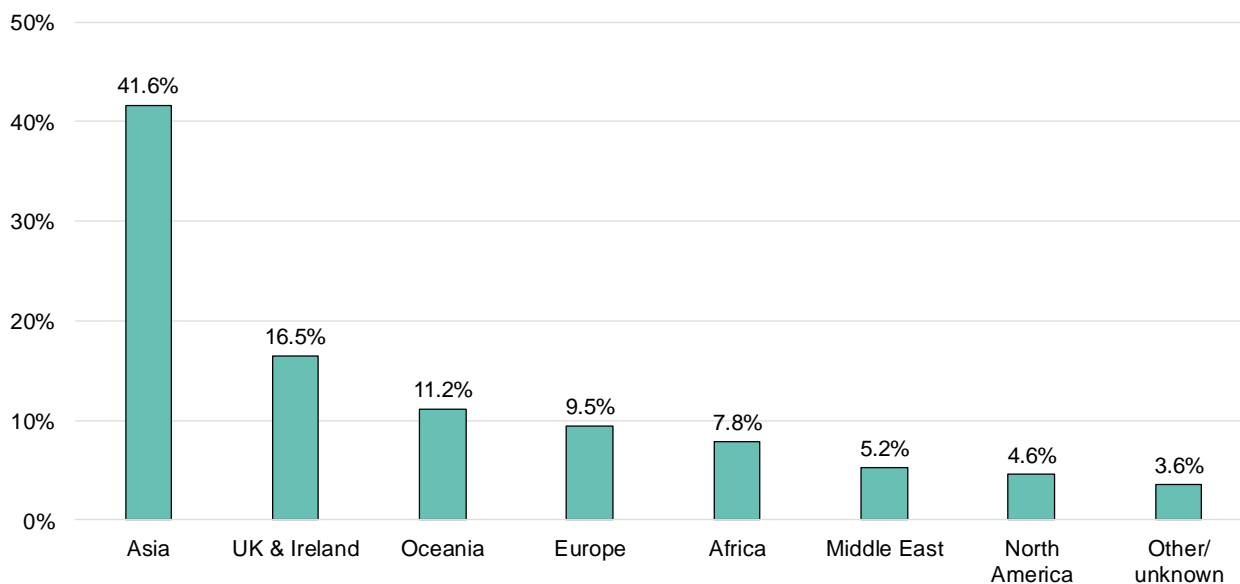


Base: N= 30,150

Please note that for 11 solicitors, country of birth was unknown, equivalent to 0.04% (based on 30,150 solicitors in total).

Of those born overseas, two in five solicitors (41.6%) were born in an Asian country, followed by 16.5% who were born in the UK or Ireland (16.5%) (see Figure 9).

Figure 9 – Country of birth for solicitors born overseas



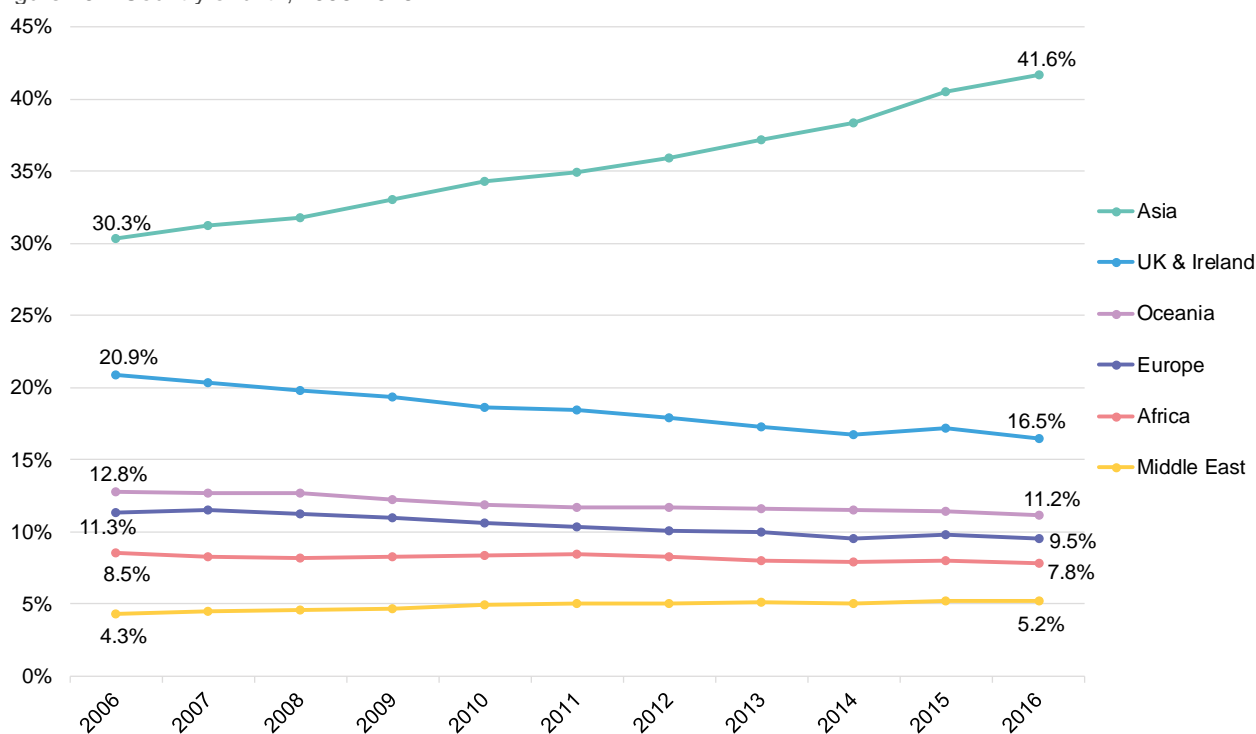
Base: n= 8,315

As shown in Table 2 and Figure 10, the country of birth figures have remained reasonably consistent since 2006. However, there continues to be an increase in the number of solicitors born in Asian countries and an overall decrease in those born in the UK and Ireland.

Table 2 – Country of birth, 2006-2016 (proportion of total born overseas)

| | 2006 | 2007 | 2008 | 2009 | 2010 | 2011 | 2012 | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 | 2016 |
|-----------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|---------------|---------------|
| Asia | 30.3% | 31.2% | 31.8% | 33.0% | 34.3% | 34.9% | 35.9% | 37.2% | 38.4% | 40.6% | 41.6% |
| UK & Ireland | 20.9% | 20.3% | 19.8% | 19.4% | 18.7% | 18.5% | 17.9% | 17.3% | 16.8% | 17.2% | 16.5% |
| Oceania | 12.8% | 12.7% | 12.7% | 12.3% | 11.8% | 11.7% | 11.7% | 11.6% | 11.5% | 11.5% | 11.2% |
| Europe | 11.3% | 11.5% | 11.3% | 10.9% | 10.6% | 10.3% | 10.1% | 10.0% | 9.6% | 9.8% | 9.5% |
| Africa | 8.5% | 8.3% | 8.2% | 8.2% | 8.4% | 8.4% | 8.2% | 8.0% | 7.9% | 8.0% | 7.8% |
| Middle East | 4.3% | 4.5% | 4.6% | 4.7% | 4.9% | 5.0% | 5.1% | 5.1% | 5.0% | 5.2% | 5.2% |
| North America | 4.6% | 4.7% | 4.9% | 4.9% | 4.8% | 4.7% | 4.8% | 4.6% | 4.5% | 4.6% | 4.6% |
| Former USSR & Baltic States | 1.0% | 0.9% | 1.1% | 1.2% | 1.3% | 1.3% | 1.4% | 1.3% | 1.4% | 1.5% | 1.9% |
| South & Central America | 1.4% | 1.4% | 1.3% | 1.3% | 1.3% | 1.2% | 1.2% | 1.4% | 1.5% | 1.6% | 1.5% |
| Unknown | 4.7% | 4.4% | 4.2% | 4.0% | 3.9% | 3.8% | 3.6% | 3.6% | 3.5% | 0.1% | 0.1% |
| Total | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100.0% | 100.0% |

Figure 10 – Country of birth, 2006-2016

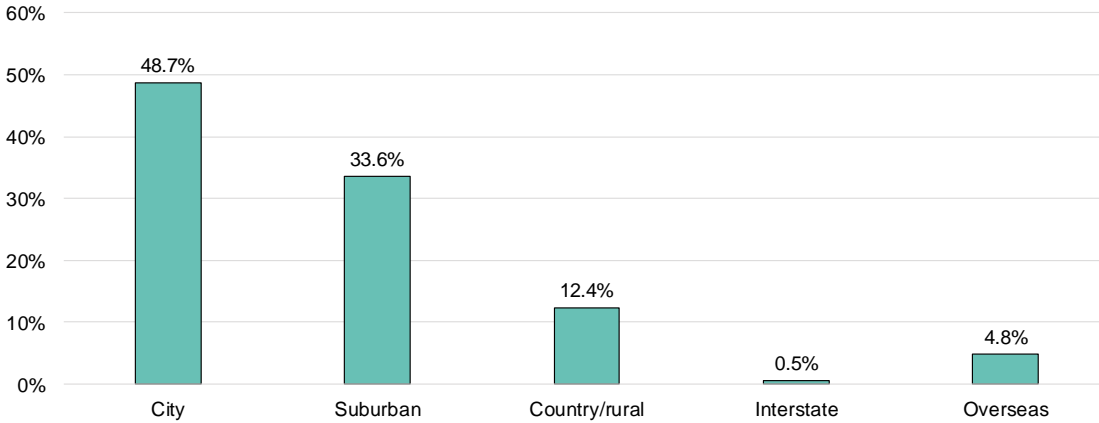


6. LOCATION

6.1. LOCATION WORKPLACES

As at October 2016, nearly half of the profession (48.7%) were practising within Sydney’s CBD, followed by one third (33.6%) of solicitors working in suburban areas (see Figure 11).

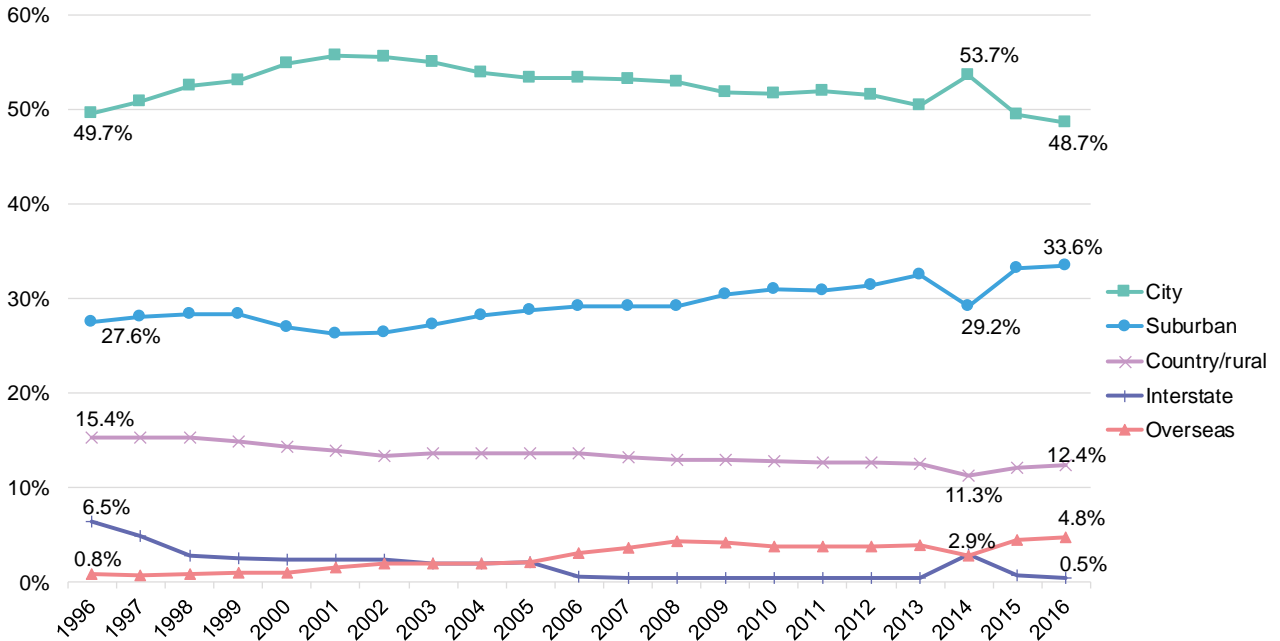
Figure 11 – Geographical profile in 2016



Base: N= 30,150

Between 2014 and 2016, there was a declining trend in the proportion of solicitors working in Sydney’s CBD (‘city’) (see Figure 12). More specifically, the proportion of solicitors working in a city-based location decreased from 53.7% in 2014 to 48.7% in 2016. At the same time, the proportion of solicitors working in suburban locations increased from 29.2% in 2014 to 33.6% in 2016. The proportion of solicitors working overseas also increased from 2.9% in 2014 to 4.8% in 2016.

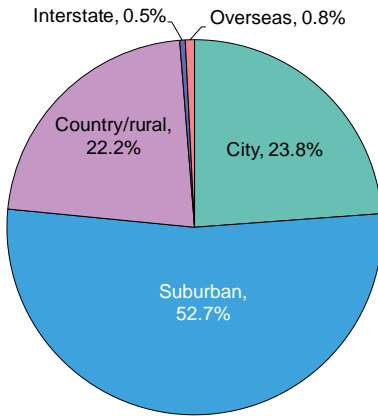
Figure 12 – Location of solicitors



6.2. LOCATION OF PRIVATE LAW FIRMS

As at October 2016, there were 5,847 law firms recorded in the Law Society database. More than half (52.7%) of all law firms were located in suburban areas. Over one in five firms were either located in a Sydney's CBD, or in rural/country areas (23.8% and 22.2% respectively).

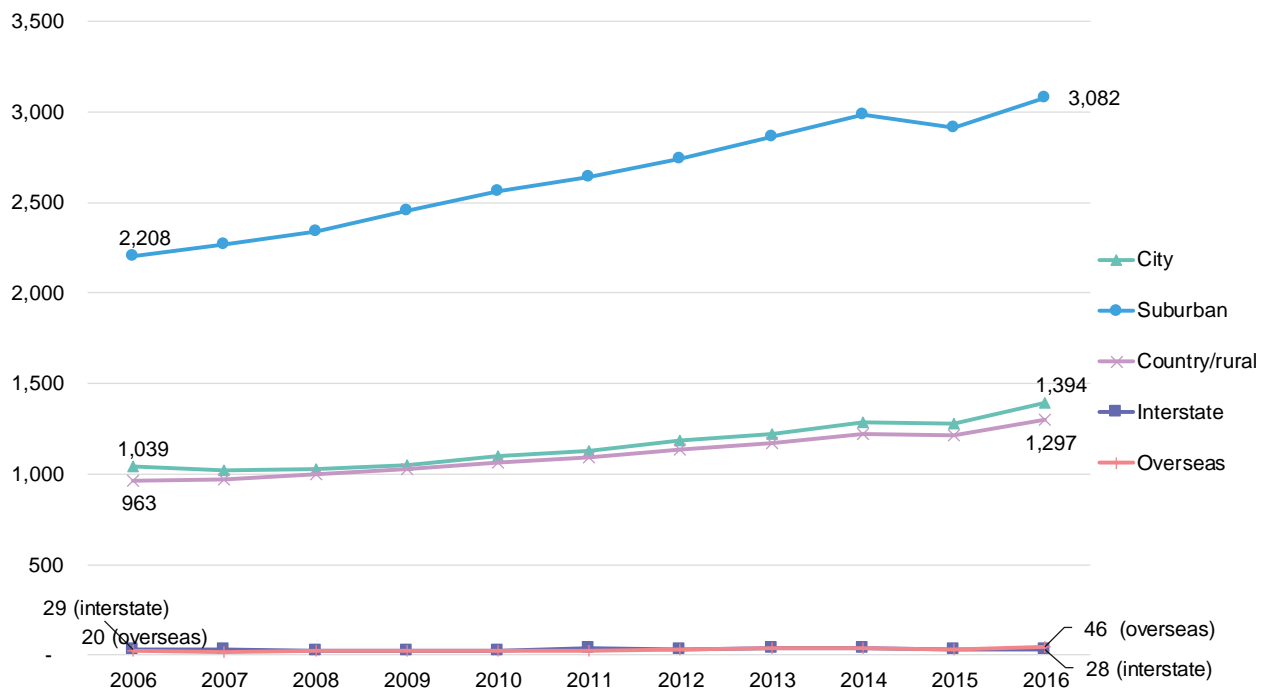
Figure 13 – Law firms in New South Wales



Base: N=5,847 law firms

Over the past decade, there was a +3.2% average annual increase in the total number of law firms (see Figure 14). Between 2006 and 2016, firms located in suburban locations showed on average stronger yearly increase (+3.4%) than city-based firms (+3.0%), and firms located in rural/country areas (+3.0%).

Figure 14 – Location of private firms, 2006-2016

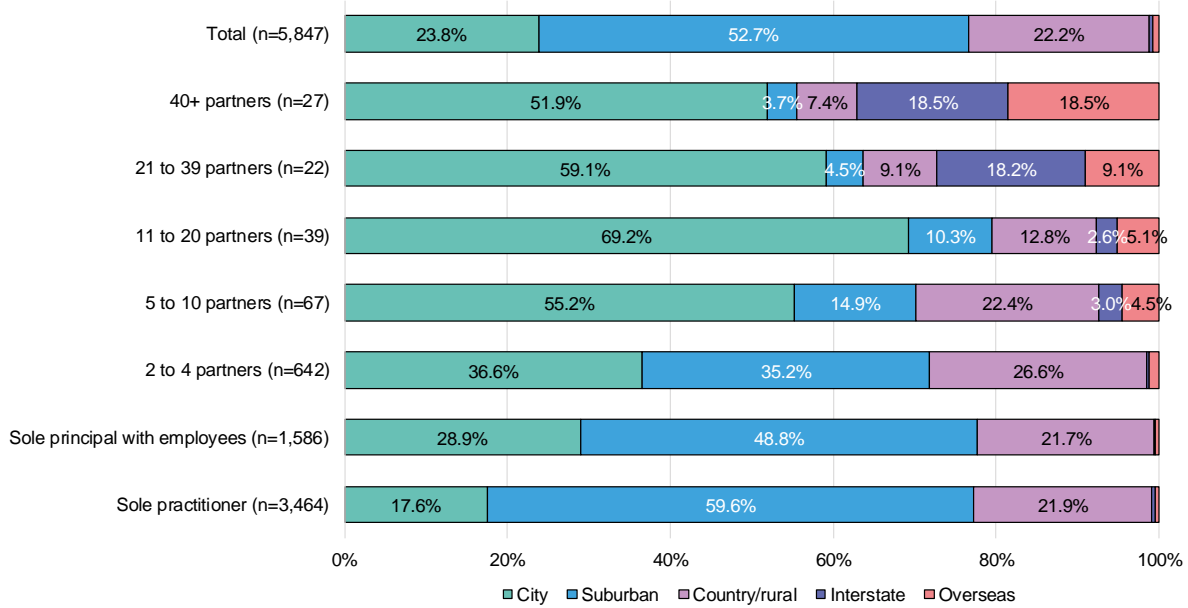


6.3. LOCATION BY FIRM SIZE

In 2016, the distribution in location of private firms varied considerably according to firm size. Smaller firms were predominately located in suburban areas. For instance, six in ten sole practitioners (59.6%) were located in suburban areas, followed by nearly half of sole principal firms (48.8%). Conversely, a majority of firms with 11 to 20 partners, 21 to 39 partners, and with 40 or more partners were located in Sydney's metropolitan area (69.2%, 59.1% and 51.9% respectively).

Moreover, smaller firms were more often located in country/rural areas than larger firms. For example, 21.9% of sole practitioners and 26.6% of firms with 2 to 4 partners were located in country/rural areas compared to 9.1% of firms with 21 to 39 partners and 7.4% of firms with 40 or more partners.

Figure 15 – Location of private firms by firm size



7. EMPLOYMENT SECTOR

Similar to previous years, a majority of solicitors in New South Wales (69.6%) worked in private practice. One in five solicitors (19.2%) worked in the corporate sector, and one tenth of solicitors (11.0%) worked in government. Table 3 provides a snapshot of solicitors working in these three sectors, and it indicates that:

- a majority of government and corporate solicitors were female (64.7% and 58.3% respectively), whereas a majority of private practice solicitors were male (54.7%)
- over half of government solicitors were working in Sydney's CBD (56.1%), compared to 48.8% of private practice solicitors and 44.4% of corporate solicitors
- over one in ten corporate solicitors were working overseas (12.7%), compared to 3.3% of private practice solicitors and 0.2% of government solicitors
- private practice comprised the highest proportion of solicitors aged 60 years and older (16.9%) compared to 9.1% for government and 4.4% for the corporate sector
- private practice also comprised the highest proportion of solicitors aged younger than 30 years (19.2%) compared to 11.5% for government and 8.0% for the corporate sector
- over four in ten private practice solicitors (43.6%) and corporate solicitors (41.6%) were admitted for 15 years or more, compared to 38.3% of government solicitors
- corporate solicitors (\$198,300) reported on average the annual highest income compared to private practice solicitors (\$142,000) and government solicitors (\$131,100).

Further analysis on each of the employment sectors is provided in Sections 9 to 11.

Table 3 – Solicitors in private practice, government and corporate

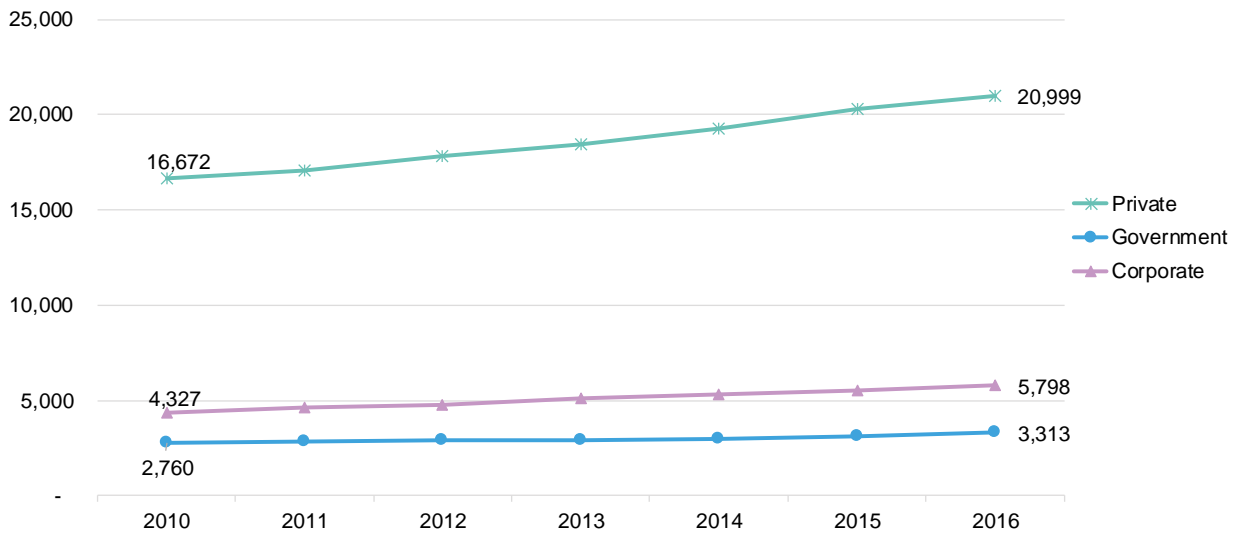
| | Private | Government | Corporate |
|-------------------------------------|----------------|-------------------|------------------|
| Total | 69.6% | 11.0% | 19.2% |
| Gender | | | |
| Male | 54.7% | 35.3% | 41.7% |
| Female | 45.3% | 64.7% | 58.3% |
| Level of employment | | | |
| Full time | 78.9% | 74.6% | 74.1% |
| Part time | 18.8% | 18.4% | 17.0% |
| Other | 2.3% | 7.0% | 8.9% |
| Location | | | |
| City | 48.8% | 56.1% | 44.4% |
| Suburbs | 32.6% | 30.0% | 39.3% |
| Country | 14.9% | 12.9% | 2.9% |
| Interstate | 0.4% | 0.8% | 0.8% |
| Overseas | 3.3% | 0.2% | 12.7% |
| Age | | | |
| <30 | 19.2% | 11.5% | 8.0% |
| 30-39 | 27.6% | 34.7% | 41.3% |
| 40-49 | 19.3% | 24.0% | 31.8% |
| 50-59 | 16.5% | 20.2% | 14.1% |
| 60-69 | 12.9% | 8.2% | 4.1% |
| 70+ | 4.0% | 0.9% | 0.3% |
| Years since admission | | | |
| Less than 1 year | 3.0% | 1.5% | 1.1% |
| 1-5 years | 26.5% | 21.2% | 15.2% |
| 6-10 years | 16.5% | 22.6% | 23.0% |
| 11-14 years | 10.4% | 16.3% | 19.1% |
| 15+ years | 43.6% | 38.3% | 41.6% |
| Estimated mean income (\$k)* | \$142.0 | \$131.1 | \$198.3 |

Source: Law Society Data as at 12 October 2016.

* Data is taken from the 2016-17 Practising Certificate survey. Mean income is estimated by using \$21,875 as the income figure for the lowest category, using \$250,000 as the figure for the highest category, and taking the mid-points of each other income category.

A comparison over time shows that between 2010 and 2016, the corporate sector experienced the strongest increase in number of solicitors. Between these years, the corporate sector increased by +34.0%, from 4,327 solicitors in 2010 to 5,798 solicitors in 2016 (see Figure 16). The number of private practice solicitors increased by 26.0%, followed by 20.0% for solicitors working in government.

Figure 16 – Number of solicitors in major employment sector between 2010-2016



8. FEMALE SOLICITORS

As of October 2016, there was an even proportion of male and female solicitors practising in New South Wales (50.0% female, and 50.0% male). However, between 2015-2016, the number of female solicitors increased by +5.9%, while the number of male solicitors increased by +2.6%.

Table 4 provides further details on female solicitors. It indicates that at October 2016:

- just under a quarter (22.8%) of female solicitors worked part time, compared to 14.1% of male solicitors
- there was a lower proportion of female solicitors working in private practice (63.1%), compared to 76.1% of male solicitors
- conversely, there were higher proportions of female solicitors working in the corporate (22.4%) and the government sector (14.2%) than male solicitors (16.0% and 7.7% respectively)
- a majority of female private practice solicitors (74.6%) were employees, compared to 47.3% of male private practice solicitors
- nearly one tenth (9.5%) of female private practice solicitors were principals, compared to 22.6% of male solicitors being principals
- there were higher proportions of female private practice solicitors working for firms with 40+ partners (18.0%), and for firms without partners (13.9%) than their male counterparts (14.8% and 9.7% respectively)
- there was a lower proportion of female sole practitioners than male sole practitioners (12.1% compared to 19.9% respectively)
- female solicitors were on average younger than male solicitors (39.2 years compared to 46.3 years)
- the estimated mean income of female solicitors (\$133,000) was approximately 20% lower compared to the mean income of male solicitors (\$160,300).

Table 4 – Female solicitors in 2016

| | Female practitioners (%) | Male practitioners (%) | Whole profession (%) |
|--------------------------------------|--------------------------|------------------------|----------------------|
| Total | 50.0% | 50.0% | 100.0% |
| Mode of employment | | | |
| Full time | 65.1% | 77.4% | 71.2% |
| Part time | 22.8% | 14.1% | 18.4% |
| Other | 12.1% | 8.6% | 10.4% |
| Employment sector | | | |
| Private | 63.1% | 76.1% | 69.6% |
| Government | 14.2% | 7.7% | 11.0% |
| Corporate | 22.4% | 16.0% | 19.2% |
| Private practitioners | | | |
| Principal of a law practice | 9.5% | 22.6% | 16.7% |
| Sole practitioners | 12.1% | 19.9% | 16.4% |
| Sole principal firm with employees | 3.8% | 10.3% | 7.3% |
| Employees | 74.6% | 47.3% | 59.7% |
| Total | 100.0% | 100.0% | 100.0% |
| Size of law firm | | | |
| Sole Practitioners | 12.1% | 19.9% | 16.4% |
| Sole principal firm with employees | 22.9% | 23.0% | 22.9% |
| 2-4 partners | 15.8% | 16.7% | 16.3% |
| 5-10 partners | 4.6% | 5.0% | 4.8% |
| 11-20 partners | 6.8% | 5.6% | 6.1% |
| 21-39 partners | 6.0% | 5.3% | 5.6% |
| 40+ partners | 18.0% | 14.8% | 16.2% |
| Firms without partners | 13.9% | 9.7% | 11.6% |
| Total | 100.0% | 100.0% | 100.0% |
| Years since admission | | | |
| Less than 1 year | 2.8% | 2.8% | 2.5% |
| 1-5 years | 28.2% | 28.2% | 23.8% |
| 6-10 years | 21.8% | 21.8% | 18.4% |
| 11-14 years | 14.9% | 14.9% | 12.7% |
| 15+ years | 32.2% | 32.2% | 42.6% |
| Total | 100.0% | 100.0% | 100.0% |
| Age (approximate average)* | 39.2 | 46.3 | 42.8 |
| Estimated mean income (\$k)** | \$133.0 | \$160.3 | \$146.7 |

Source: Law Society Data as at 12 October 2016.

* Data is taken from the 2016-17 Practising Certificate survey. The approximate average age is based on multiplying the total of each age group with each group's midpoint, which are totalled and then divided by the total number of females. Note this figure is an estimate as assumptions have been made with < 25 and ≥ 50 age groups.

** Data is taken from the 2016-17 Practising Certificate survey. Mean income is estimated by using \$21,875 as the income figure for the lowest category, using \$250,000 as the figure for the highest category, and taking the mid-points of each other income category.

9. PRIVATE PRACTICE

As at October 2016, 20,999 solicitors in New South Wales (equivalent to 69.6% of all solicitors) worked in private law firms. This section presents a profile of the profession working in the private sector.

9.1. INDIVIDUALS

Table 5 summarises information about solicitors working in private law firms. It indicates that at October 2016:

- more than half of private practice solicitors were men (54.7%) compared to 45.3% being women
- nearly four in five (78.7%) private practitioners worked full time, with 18.8% working part time
- nearly half of all private practitioners (48.8%) worked in Sydney's CBD, and close to a third (32.6%) in suburban locations
- over a quarter (27.6%) of private practitioners were aged 30-39 years, followed by nearly one in five solicitors aged younger than 30 years, or aged 40-49 years (19.2% and 19.3% respectively)
- over four in ten (43.6%) of private practitioners had practised for more than 15 years, whilst 26.5% had practised for 1-5 years, and 16.5% had practised for 6-10 years
- the estimated mean income of private practitioners (\$142,000) was slightly lower compared to the profession as a whole (\$146,700).

Table 5 – Solicitors in private law firms

| | Solicitors in private practice | | Whole profession |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------|-------|------------------|
| | n | % | % |
| Total | 20,999 | 69.6% | 100.0% |
| Gender | | | |
| Male | 11,487 | 54.7% | 50.0% |
| Female | 9,512 | 45.3% | 50.0% |
| Mode of employment | | | |
| Full time | 2,756 | 78.9% | 71.2% |
| Part time | 656 | 18.8% | 18.4% |
| Other | 82 | 2.3% | 10.4% |
| Location | | | |
| City | 10,244 | 48.8% | 48.7% |
| Suburbs | 6,838 | 32.6% | 33.6% |
| Rural NSW | 3,135 | 14.9% | 12.4% |
| Interstate | 87 | 0.4% | 0.5% |
| Overseas | 695 | 3.3% | 4.8% |
| Age | | | |
| <30 years | 4,030 | 19.2% | 16.2% |
| 30-39 years | 5,795 | 27.6% | 31.0% |
| 40-49 years | 4,044 | 19.3% | 22.2% |
| 50-59 years | 3,462 | 16.5% | 16.4% |
| 60-69 years | 2,700 | 12.9% | 10.7% |
| 70+ years | 847 | 4.0% | 3.0% |
| N/A | 121 | 0.6% | 0.5% |
| Years since admission | | | |
| Less than 1 year | 630 | 3.0% | 2.5% |
| 1-5 years | 5,572 | 26.5% | 23.8% |
| 6-10 years | 3,469 | 16.5% | 18.4% |
| 11-14 years | 2,182 | 10.4% | 12.7% |
| 15+ years | 9,146 | 43.6% | 42.6% |
| Estimated mean income (\$k)* | \$142.0 | | \$146.7 |

Source: Law Society Data as at 12 October 2016.

* Data is taken from the 2016-17 Practising Certificate survey. Mean income is estimated by using \$21,875 as the income figure for the lowest category, using \$250,000 as the figure for the highest category, and taking the mid-points of each other income category.

9.2. FIRM SIZE

As at October 2016, there were 5,847 private law firms operating in New South Wales (see Table 6). Nearly one in six (59.2%) were sole practitioners, followed by 27.1% being sole principal firms. Over one tenth (11.0%) of firms had 2 to 4 partners. All remaining larger firms represented around 1% or less of the total number of firms.

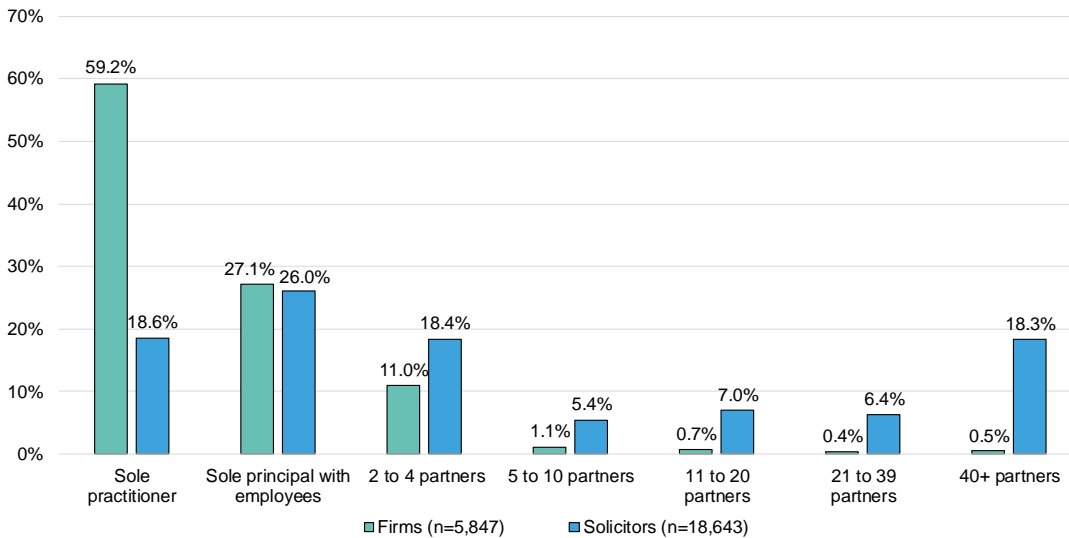
As shown in Table 6 and Figure 17, key outcomes indicate that:

- over one in four private practice solicitors (26.0%) worked for sole principal firms
- nearly one fifth of private practice solicitors worked either as sole practitioners, or for firms with 2 to 4 partners, or for firms with 40 or more partners (18.6%, 18.4%, and 18.3% respectively)
- around 4% of practising solicitors were partners for firms with 5 to 10 partners, 11 to 20 partners, and 21 to 39 partners (4.2%, 4.6%, and 4.3% respectively)
- around one tenth of practising solicitors in New South Wales were partners of firms comprising 40 or more partners (10.3%)
- sole practitioner firms constituted 59.2% of all private firms, followed by 27.1% being sole principal firms
- firms with more than 20 partners constituted 0.8% of all firms.

Table 6 – Firm profile 2016

| # of partners | Firms | | Partners | | Employees | | Solicitors in private practice | |
|-------------------------------|--------------|---------------|--------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|--------------------------------|---------------|
| | n | % | n | % | n | % | n | % |
| 40 or more | 27 | 0.5% | 851 | 10.3% | 2,562 | 24.7% | 3,413 | 18.3% |
| 21 to 39 | 22 | 0.4% | 354 | 4.3% | 831 | 8.0% | 1,185 | 6.4% |
| 11 to 20 | 39 | 0.7% | 377 | 4.6% | 920 | 8.9% | 1,297 | 7.0% |
| 5 to 10 | 67 | 1.1% | 344 | 4.2% | 666 | 6.4% | 1,010 | 5.4% |
| 2 to 4 | 642 | 11.0% | 1,375 | 16.6% | 2,054 | 19.8% | 3,429 | 18.4% |
| Sole principal with employees | 1,586 | 27.1% | 1,538 | 18.6% | 3,307 | 31.9% | 4,845 | 26.0% |
| Sole practitioner | 3,464 | 59.2% | 3,437 | 41.5% | 27 | 0.3% | 3,464 | 18.6% |
| Total | 5,847 | 100.0% | 8,276 | 100.0% | 10,367 | 100.0% | 18,643 | 100.0% |

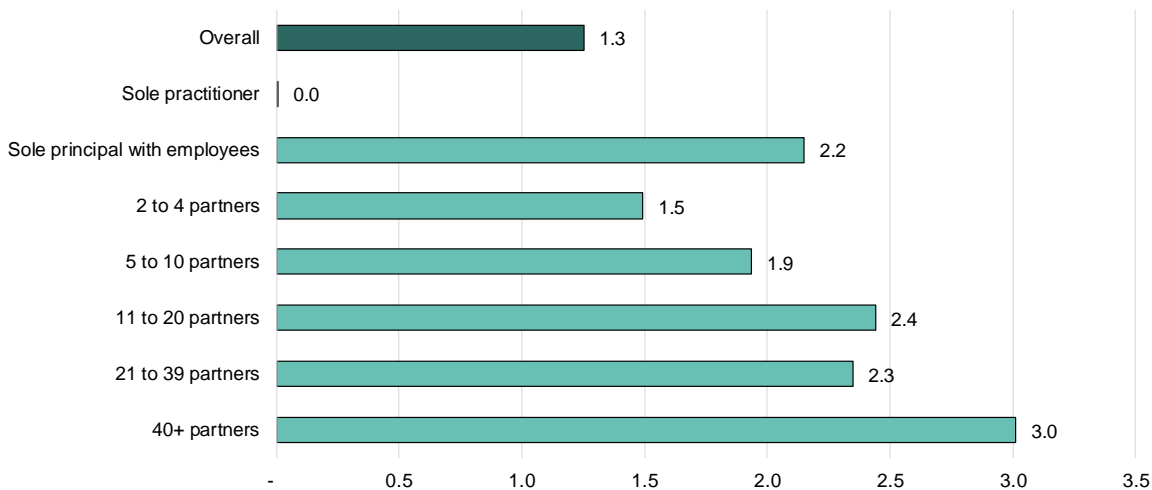
Figure 17 – Employed solicitors by firm size



9.3. STAFF TO PRINCIPAL RATIOS

Staff to principal ratios within the private profession varied by size of firm (see Figure 18). In firms with one principal, there was a ratio of 2.2 employed solicitors, similar to staff to principal ratios for firms with 11 to 20 partners, and with 21 to 39 partners (ratios of 2.4 and 2.3 respectively). Firms with 40 or more partners showed the highest staff to principal ratio of 3.0.

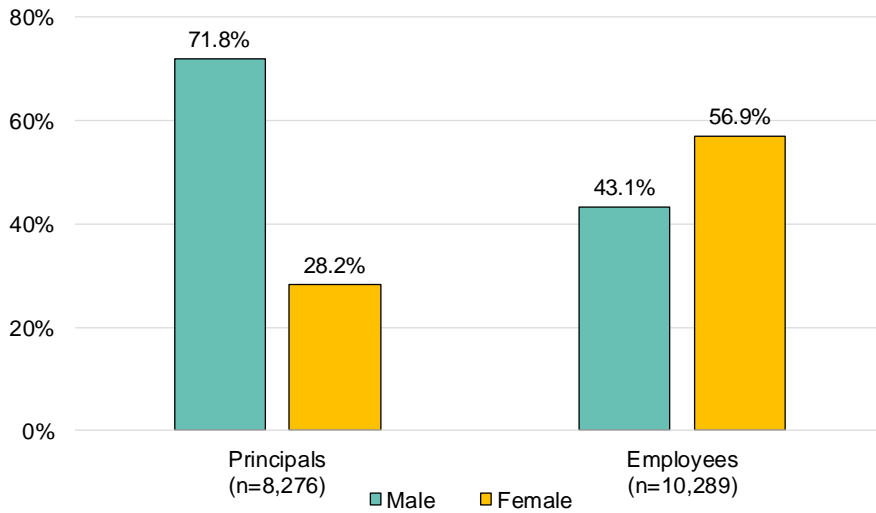
Figure 18 – Ratio of employed solicitors to principals by firms size



9.4. GENDER PROFILE IN PRIVATE FIRMS

Similar to previous reporting years, there was an uneven gender distribution in appointed principals and employees. Of all appointed principals, 71.8% were male, compared to 28.2% being females. Conversely, over half (56.9%) of employed solicitors were females, compared to four in ten (43.1%) employed male solicitors.

Figure 19 – Gender division by principals and employees



The uneven gender distribution is also illustrated in Figure 20 and Figure 21, showing that:

- females represented more than half of all employed solicitors in each type of law firm, which was most pronounced for medium and large-sized firms where females represented around 60% of all employed solicitors
- around three in four appointed firm partners were male, compared to around one in four partners being female
- there were twice as many male sole practitioners (66.4%) than female sole practitioners (33.6%).

Figure 20 – Gender division of all solicitors in private firms by firms size

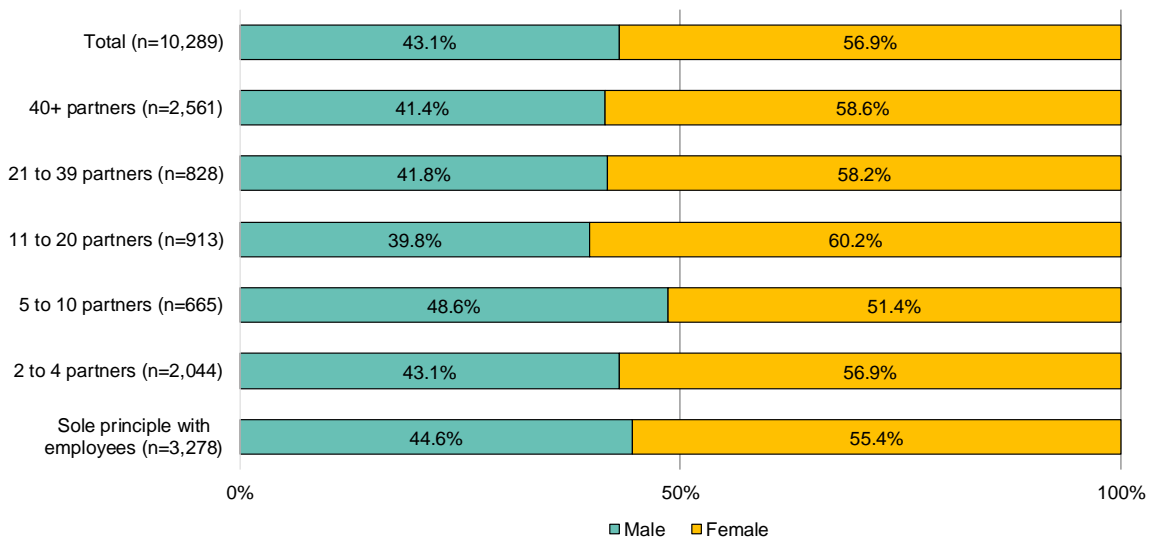
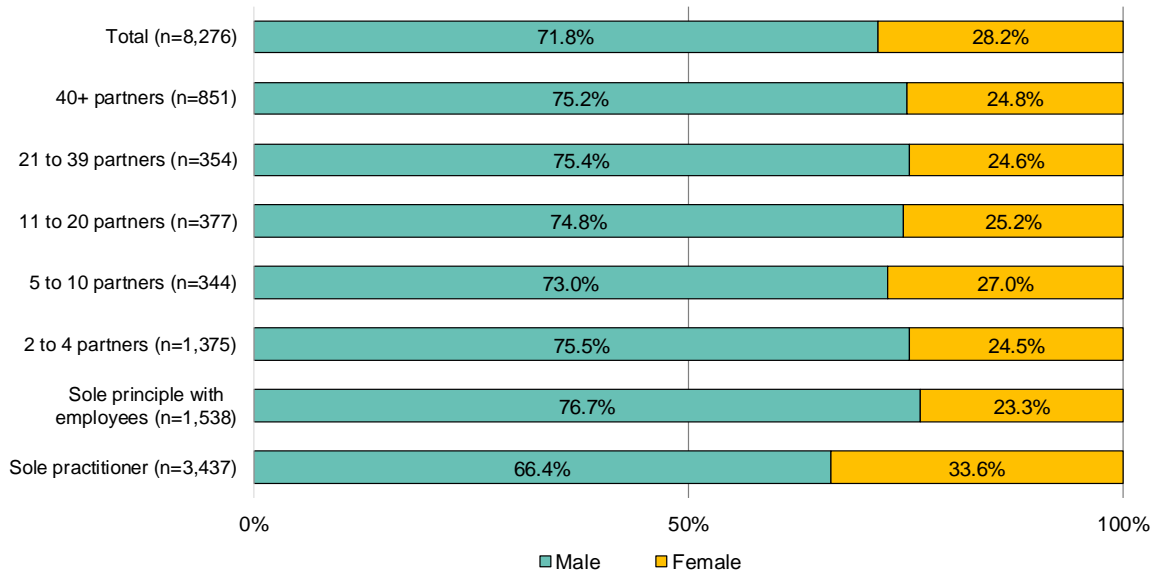


Figure 21 – Gender division of all partners in private firms by firms size

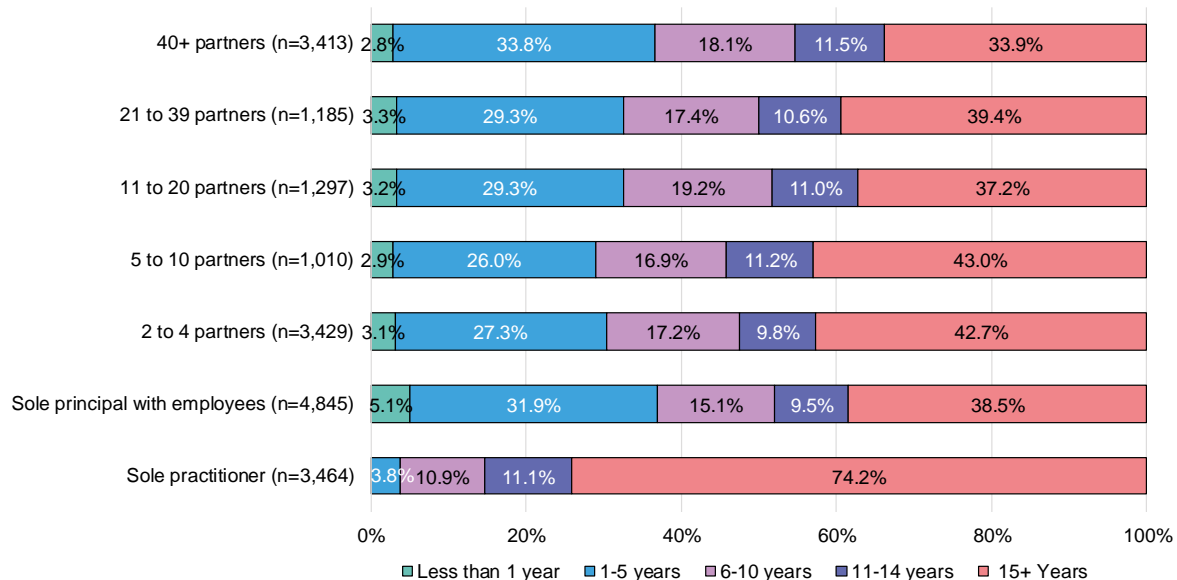


9.5. YEARS SINCE ADMISSION

The years since admission profile of solicitors working in private practice varied according to firm size (see Figure 22). Not surprising, a large majority of sole practitioners (74.2%) were admitted for 15 years or longer, while less than 4% of sole practitioners were admitted for 1-5 years. Conversely, large firms with 40 or more partners comprised the highest proportion of solicitors admitted for 1-5 years (33.8%), and one of the lowest proportion of solicitors admitted for 15 years or more (33.9%).

Sole principal firms had the highest proportion of solicitors admitted for less than one year (5.1%). Across all firms, between 15%-19% of solicitors were admitted for 6-10 years, and around one tenth of solicitors were admitted for 11-14 years.

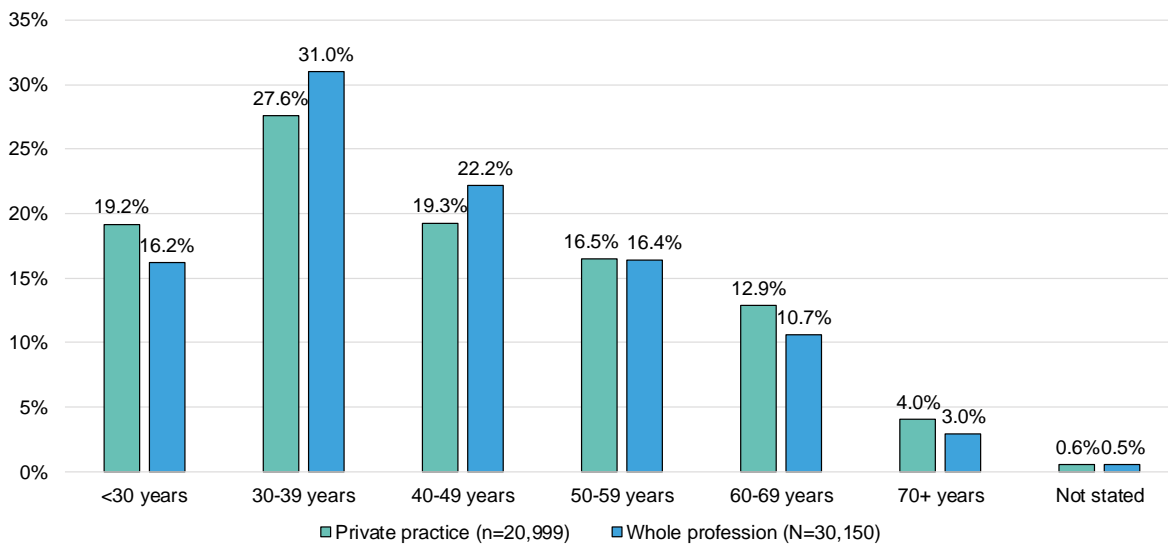
Figure 22 – Years since admission in private firms by firm size



9.6. AGE PROFILE

The age profile of solicitors working in private firms was broadly similar to the age profile of the entire profession (see Figure 23). In 2016, more than half of solicitors in private practice (53.3%) were aged over 40 years, similar to the profession as a whole (52.8%). The proportion of solicitors aged over 60 years was a little higher in private practice (16.9%) than overall (13.7%).

Figure 23 – Age profile of solicitors in private practice compared with the whole profession



10. GOVERNMENT SOLICITORS

As at October 2016, there were 3,313 government solicitors in New South Wales working across 179 government organisations. Information on these solicitors is presented in Table 7.

Table 7 – Government solicitors 2016

| | Government solicitors | | Whole profession |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------------|--------------|------------------|
| | n | % | % |
| Total | 3,313 | 11.0% | 100.0% |
| Gender | | | |
| Male | 1,169 | 35.3% | 50.0% |
| Female | 2,144 | 64.7% | 50.0% |
| Mode of employment | | | |
| Full time | 478 | 74.6% | 71.2% |
| Part time | 118 | 18.4% | 18.4% |
| Other | 45 | 7.0% | 10.4% |
| Location | | | |
| City | 1,857 | 56.1% | 48.7% |
| Suburbs | 994 | 30.0% | 33.6% |
| Rural NSW | 426 | 12.9% | 12.4% |
| Interstate | 28 | 0.8% | 0.5% |
| Overseas | 8 | 0.2% | 4.8% |
| Age | | | |
| <30 | 381 | 11.5% | 16.2% |
| 30-39 | 1,149 | 34.7% | 31.0% |
| 40-49 | 795 | 24.0% | 22.2% |
| 50-59 | 670 | 20.2% | 16.4% |
| 60-69 | 271 | 8.2% | 10.7% |
| 70+ | 29 | 0.9% | 3.0% |
| N/A | 18 | 0.5% | 0.5% |
| Years since admission | | | |
| 1 year or less | 51 | 1.5% | 2.5% |
| 1-5 years | 704 | 21.2% | 23.8% |
| 6-10 years | 749 | 22.6% | 18.4% |
| 11-14 years | 540 | 16.3% | 12.7% |
| 15+ years | 1,269 | 38.3% | 42.6% |
| Estimated mean income (\$k)* | \$131.1 | | \$146.7 |

Source: Law Society Data as at 12 October 2016.

* Data is taken from the 2016-17 Practising Certificate survey. Mean income is estimated by using \$21,875 as the income figure for the lowest category, using \$250,000 as the figure for the highest category, and taking the mid-points of each other income category.

Figure 24 provides details about years since admission for government solicitors in New South Wales, while Figure 25 provides information on their age profile. Key findings show that compared to females, male solicitors were more skewed towards the older age brackets, and those with longer work experience.

For example, 43.7% of male solicitors were admitted for 15 years or longer compared to 35.4% of female solicitors. Moreover, over one third of males (38.5%) were 50 years or older, compared to around one fourth of females (24.5%). Conversely, half of all female solicitors (50.8%) were aged 39 years or younger, compared to over one third of males (37.8%).

Figure 24 – Years since admission profile for government solicitors

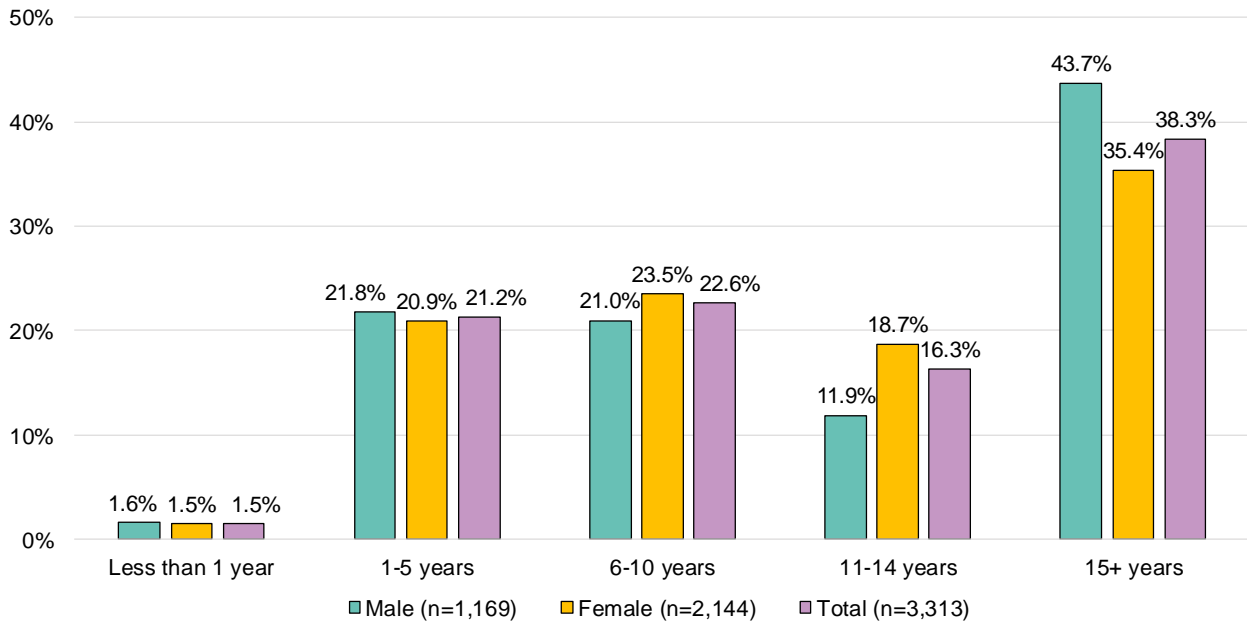
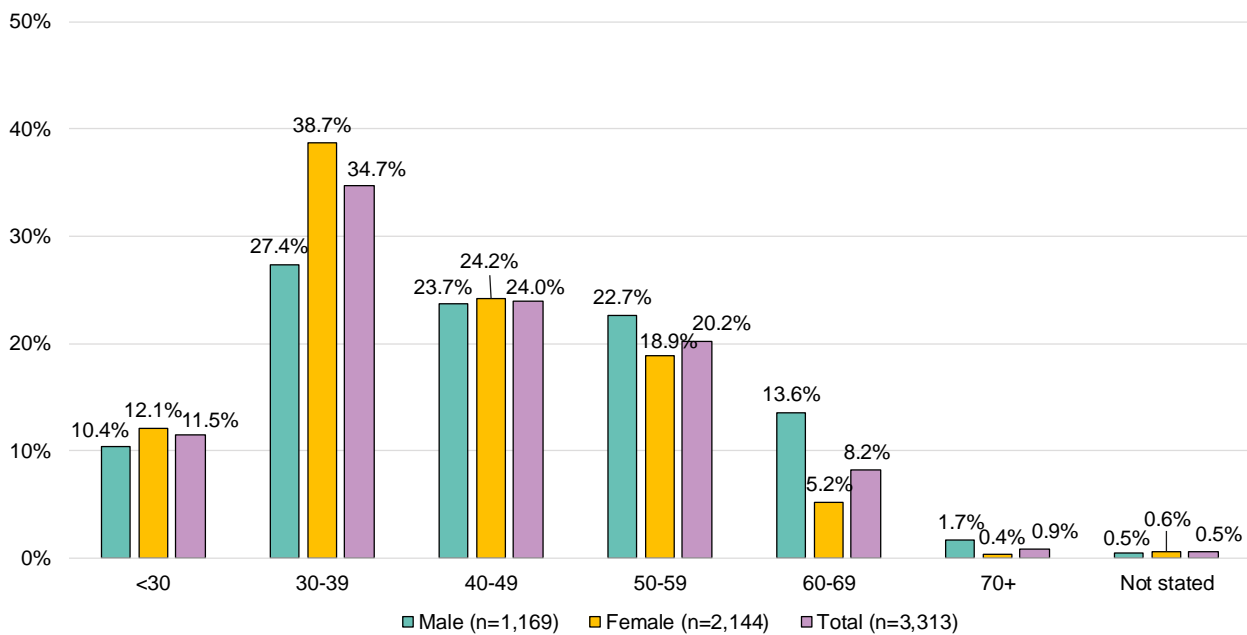


Figure 25 – Age profile of government solicitors



11. CORPORATE SOLICITORS

As at October 2016, there were 5,798 corporate solicitors in New South Wales working across 1,784 organisations. Information on these practitioners is summarised below.

Table 8 – Corporate solicitors 2016

| | Corporate solicitors | | Whole profession |
|-------------------------------------|----------------------|--------------|------------------|
| | n | % | % |
| Total | 5,798 | 19.2% | 100.0% |
| Gender | | | |
| Male | 2,418 | 41.7% | 50.0% |
| Female | 3,380 | 58.3% | 50.0% |
| Mode of employment | | | |
| Full time | 652 | 74.1% | 71.2% |
| Part time | 150 | 17.0% | 18.4% |
| Other | 78 | 8.9% | 10.4% |
| Location | | | |
| City | 2,576 | 44.4% | 48.7% |
| Suburbs | 2,276 | 39.3% | 33.6% |
| Rural NSW | 167 | 2.9% | 12.4% |
| Interstate | 44 | 0.8% | 0.5% |
| Overseas | 735 | 12.7% | 4.8% |
| Age | | | |
| <30 | 466 | 8.0% | 16.2% |
| 30-39 | 2394 | 41.3% | 31.0% |
| 40-49 | 1845 | 31.8% | 22.2% |
| 50-59 | 816 | 14.1% | 16.4% |
| 60-69 | 236 | 4.1% | 10.7% |
| 70+ | 19 | 0.3% | 3.0% |
| N/A | 22 | 0.4% | 0.5% |
| Years since admission | | | |
| Less than 1 year | 66 | 1.1% | 2.5% |
| 1-5 years | 882 | 15.2% | 23.8% |
| 6-10 years | 1,332 | 23.0% | 18.4% |
| 11-14 years | 1,105 | 19.1% | 12.7% |
| 15+ years | 2,413 | 41.6% | 42.6% |
| Estimated mean income (\$k)* | \$198.3 | | \$146.7 |

Source: Law Society Data as at 12 October 2016.

* Data is taken from the 2016-17 Practising Certificate survey. Mean income is estimated by using \$21,875 as the income figure for the lowest category, using \$250,000 as the figure for the highest category, and taking the mid-points of each other income category.

Figure 26 provides details about years since admission for corporate solicitors in New South Wales, while Figure 27 provides information on their age profile. Similar to other major sectors, key findings show that compared to females, male solicitors were more skewed towards the older age brackets, and those with longer work experience. For example, 46.4% of male solicitors were admitted for 15 years or longer compared to 38.2% of female solicitors. Moreover, 24.0% of male solicitors were 50 years or older, compared to 14.5% of females. Conversely, over half of all female solicitors (54.9%) were aged 39 years or younger, compared to 41.4% of males.

Figure 26 – Years since admission profile of corporate solicitors

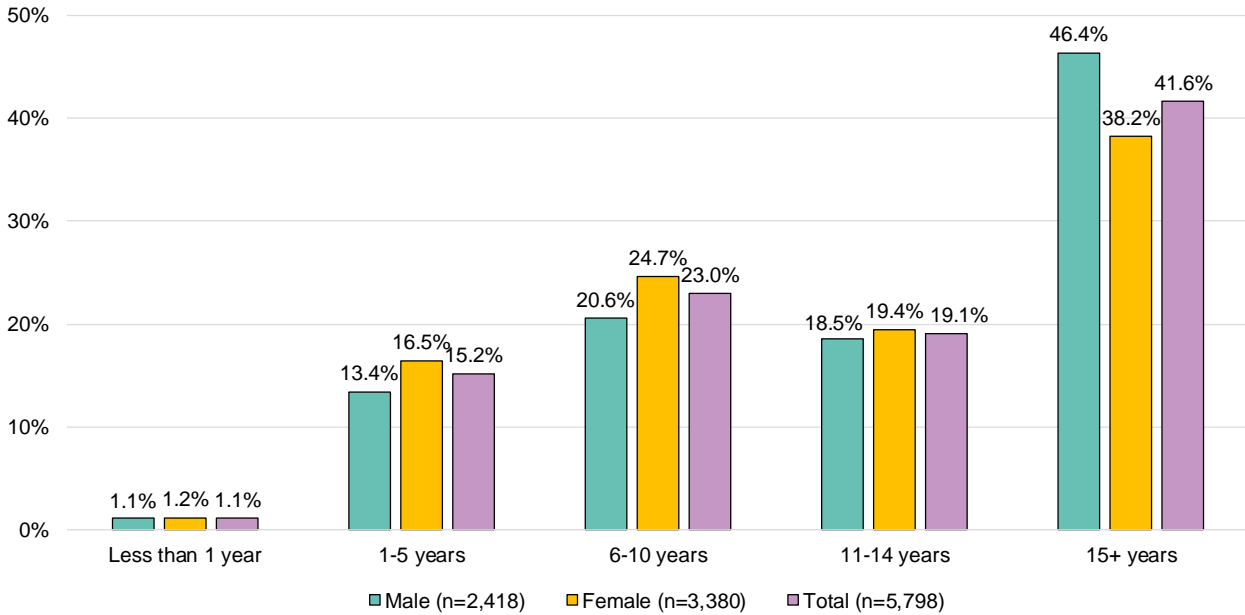
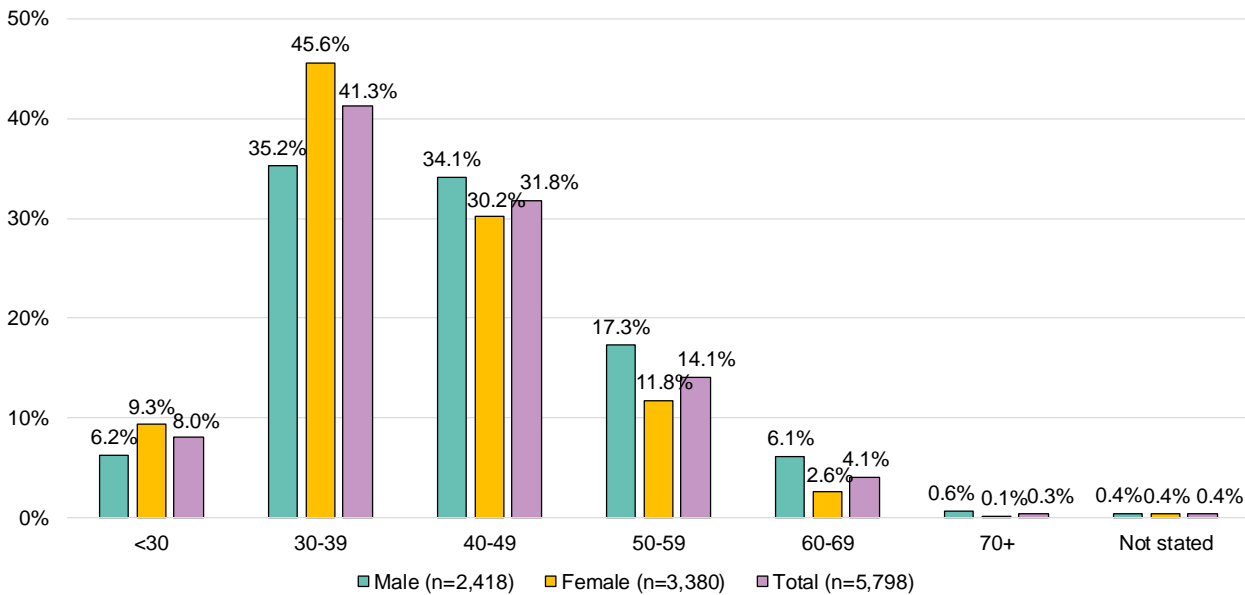


Figure 27 – Age profile of corporate solicitors



12. AREAS OF PRACTICE

Since 1993, the annual Practising Certificate survey has collected information about dominant areas of practice. Prior to 2010, the survey asked that respondents nominate areas in which they usually spent 25% or more of their time. Since 2010, in order to obtain a greater degree of accuracy, respondents were asked to indicate their 'main areas of practice' generally. This should be factored into any comparisons made with previous years' reports.

The Practising Certificate Survey 2016-17 was completed by 5,615 practising solicitors, representing 18% of all New South Wales practising solicitors (based on a total of 30,627 solicitors as at 30 June 2016).

12.1. OVERALL

Table 9 details the dominant areas of practice as reported by practitioners responding to the Practising Certificate Survey 2016-17. Similar to the previous reporting period, *Commercial Law* (32.2%) and *Conveyancing/Real Property* (28.9%) were the most commonly nominated areas of practice, followed by *Wills and Estate* (26.1%), *Civil Litigation* (23.7%), *Corporate Law* (20.2%), and *General Litigation* (20.1%).

A comparison over time shows that:

- compared to reporting year 2015/2016, speciality areas *Wills and Estates* and *Conveyancing/Real Property* experienced the greatest increase in number of practising solicitors (+6.0% and 3.9% respectively)
- compared to reporting year 2015/2016, *Corporate Law*, *Banking/Finance*, and *Commercial Law* experienced the greatest decline in number of practising solicitors (-3.5%, -2.6%, and -2.5% respectively)
- compared to 2006/07, *Corporate Law* showed the greatest increase in number of practising solicitors (+8.2%), followed by *Wills and Estates* (+4.7 %) and *Administrative Law* (+3.9%).

Table 9 – Areas of practice 2006/07 – 2016/17 (multiple responses)

| Dominant areas of practice (reported in %) | 06/07 | 07/08 | 08/09 | 09/10 | 10/11 | 11/12 | 12/13 | 13/14 | 14/15 | 15/16 | 16/17 | Change (%) | |
|--|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|----------------|-----------------------|
| | | | | | | | | | | | | 15/16 to 16/17 | Change 06/07 to 16/17 |
| Administrative Law | 6.4 | 6.6 | 6.7 | 7.2 | 7.7 | 8.1 | 8.0 | 8.6 | 9.6 | 9.5 | 10.3 | +0.8 | +3.9 |
| Advocacy | 6.2 | 5.7 | 6.6 | 6.1 | 6.9 | 6.0 | 6.3 | 6.3 | 7.6 | 7.7 | 8.8 | +1.1 | +2.6 |
| Alternative Dispute Resolution | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 5.6 | - | - |
| Banking/Finance | 8.1 | 8.1 | 8.4 | 7.9 | 8.2 | 10.7 | 11.7 | 11.4 | 10.8 | 11.4 | 8.8 | -2.6 | +0.7 |
| Civil Litigation | 24.4 | 22.1 | 22.0 | 22.1 | 23.4 | 21.2 | 21.9 | 22.9 | 23.3 | 23.2 | 23.7 | +0.4 | -0.7 |
| Commercial Law | 31.3 | 28.4 | 29.3 | 30.5 | 31.2 | 34.0 | 33.5 | 33.7 | 34.4 | 34.8 | 32.2 | -2.5 | +0.9 |
| Conveyancing/ Real Property | 30.0 | 29.0 | 28.7 | 28.9 | 29.5 | 26.7 | 24.7 | 24.6 | 25.4 | 25.0 | 28.9 | +3.9 | -1.1 |
| Corporate Law | 12.0 | 16.6 | 17.8 | 16.7 | 18.3 | 21.5 | 22.9 | 22.7 | 23.4 | 23.7 | 20.2 | -3.5 | +8.2 |
| Criminal Law | 13.4 | 13.0 | 13.5 | 13.3 | 15.0 | 12.4 | 12.0 | 11.8 | 12.9 | 12.7 | 14.2 | +1.5 | +0.8 |
| Debts/Insolvency | 7.7 | 7.0 | 7.4 | 8.3 | 8.5 | 8.7 | 8.1 | 8.3 | 8.6 | 8.3 | 8.0 | -0.2 | +0.3 |

| Dominant areas of practice (reported in %) | 06/07 | 07/08 | 08/09 | 09/10 | 10/11 | 11/12 | 12/13 | 13/14 | 14/15 | 15/16 | 16/17 | Change (%) | |
|--|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|----------------|-----------------------|
| | | | | | | | | | | | | 15/16 to 16/17 | Change 06/07 to 16/17 |
| Employment/ Industrial Law | 8.7 | 7.6 | 7.4 | 7.5 | 8.8 | 9.2 | 9.4 | 9.5 | 10.5 | 10.5 | 11.1 | +0.6 | +2.4 |
| Environmental Law | 3.2 | 3.1 | 3.3 | 3.5 | 3.6 | 3.6 | 3.6 | 3.6 | 3.5 | 3.3 | 3.1 | -0.2 | -0.1 |
| Family Law | 16.1 | 15.4 | 15.1 | 15.9 | 17.2 | 15.2 | 14.5 | 14.1 | 15.2 | 14.5 | 17.7 | +3.2 | +1.6 |
| Immigration Law | 2.8 | 2.8 | 2.7 | 3.2 | 3.4 | 3.6 | 3.6 | 3.9 | 4.2 | 4.4 | 4.2 | -0.3 | +1.4 |
| Information technology/ Telco | n/a | 4.3 | 4.6 | 4.3 | 4.7 | 5.6 | 5.5 | 5.1 | 5.6 | 5.8 | 4.9 | -0.9 | - |
| Intellectual Property | 7.3 | 6.9 | 6.4 | 7.0 | 7.8 | 8.5 | 8.4 | 8.4 | 9.3 | 9.3 | 8.4 | -0.9 | +1.1 |
| Litigation – General | n/a | 18.8 | 17.4 | 19.1 | 19.3 | 19.2 | 19.4 | 20.2 | 21.0 | 21.5 | 20.1 | -1.4 | - |
| Personal Injury | 10.9 | 9.6 | 9.1 | 9.4 | 9.7 | 8.4 | 9.2 | 8.7 | 9.3 | 9.3 | 9.5 | +0.3 | -1.4 |
| Planning/Local Government | 4.1 | 3.8 | 4.0 | 4.0 | 4.2 | 4.0 | 3.9 | 3.9 | 4.1 | 3.8 | 3.9 | 0.0 | -0.2 |
| Small Business | 9.7 | 8.4 | 7.8 | 7.9 | 9.8 | 8.7 | 8.4 | 8.4 | 8.4 | 8.5 | 10.6 | +2.2 | +0.9 |
| Taxation | 3.5 | 3.5 | 3.3 | 3.4 | 3.4 | 4.0 | 4.2 | 4.5 | 4.1 | 4.4 | 3.4 | -1.0 | -0.1 |
| Trade Practices Law | 5.5 | 4.5 | 5.0 | 5.1 | 5.4 | 6.1 | 6.0 | 5.4 | 5.9 | 5.7 | 5.1 | -0.6 | -0.4 |
| Wills and Estates | 21.4 | 20.5 | 20.9 | 21.5 | 23.2 | 21.3 | 19.7 | 19.9 | 20.6 | 20.1 | 26.1 | +6.0 | +4.7 |
| Other | 10.8 | 9.4 | 9.5 | 9.4 | 9.3 | 9.2 | 10.1 | 2.6 | 1.9 | 1.2 | 1.1 | -0.1 | -9.7 |

Source: 2016-2017 Practising Certificate Survey

12.2. EMPLOYMENT SECTOR

The main areas of practice nominated by solicitors varied according to employment sector. As in previous years, there were substantial differences in the responses of private, government and corporate solicitors. As shown in Table 10:

- corporate solicitors most often practised in *Commercial Law* (58.1%)
- private practice solicitors most often practised *Conveyancing/Property* (39.8%)
- government practitioners most often practised *Administrative Law* (44.4%).

Table 10 – Main areas of practice by sector (multiple responses)

| Private | | Government | | Corporate | |
|----------------------------|-------|--------------------|-------|-----------------------|-------|
| Conveyancing/Real Property | 39.8% | Administrative Law | 44.5% | Commercial Law | 58.1% |
| Wills and Estates | 38.0% | Criminal Law | 32.4% | Corporate Law | 53.2% |
| Commercial Law | 32.0% | Civil Litigation | 20.6% | Banking/Finance | 24.3% |
| Civil Litigation | 28.6% | Advocacy | 17.6% | Intellectual Property | 23.1% |

Source: 2016-2017 Practising Certificate Survey

12.3. FIRM SIZE AND LOCATION WITHIN THE PRIVATE SECTOR

Within the private sector, main areas of practice also varied by size and location of firms (see Table 11). For example, *Wills and Estates* was more often practised in suburban and country areas than in Sydney's CBD area. This was also true for *Conveyancing/Real Property*, *Family Law*, and *Criminal Law*. By contrast, General Litigation, Civil Litigation, and Corporate Law were more often practised in Sydney's CBD than in other locations.

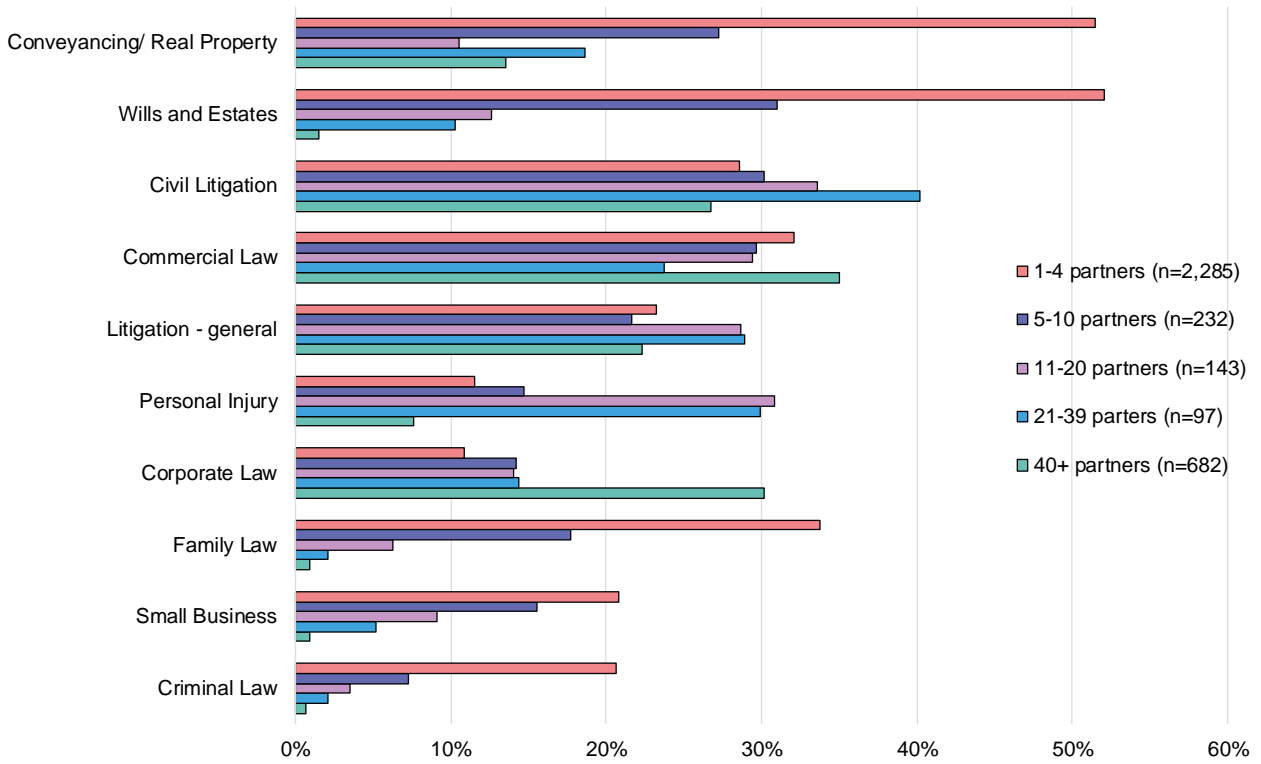
As also shown in Figure 28, firms with 1-4 partners most often specialised in *Conveyancing/Real Property*, *Wills and Estates*, *Family Law*, and *Criminal Law*. *Commercial Law* and *Corporate Law* were most common in firms with 40 more partners.

Table 11 – Most common areas of practice by firm size and location (multiple responses)

| | Firm size - number of partners (%) | | | | | Practice location (%) | | | All private practice (%) |
|-----------------------------|------------------------------------|--------|---------|---------|------|-----------------------|-----------------|----------------------------|--------------------------|
| | 1 - 4 | 5 - 10 | 11 - 20 | 21 - 39 | 40+ | Sydney city | Sydney suburban | Major country city or town | |
| Conveyancing/ Real Property | 51.5 | 27.2 | 10.5 | 18.6 | 13.5 | 24.1 | 52.5 | 53.9 | 39.8 |
| Wills and Estates | 52.1 | 31.0 | 12.6 | 10.3 | 1.5 | 16.1 | 51.7 | 63.3 | 38.0 |
| Commercial Law | 32.1 | 29.7 | 29.4 | 23.7 | 35.0 | 33.7 | 32.7 | 27.3 | 32.0 |
| Civil Litigation | 28.6 | 30.2 | 33.6 | 40.2 | 26.7 | 32.8 | 28.4 | 24.3 | 28.6 |
| Family Law | 33.8 | 17.7 | 6.3 | 2.1 | 0.9 | 9.6 | 34.5 | 39.9 | 24.4 |
| Litigation - general | 23.2 | 21.6 | 28.7 | 28.9 | 22.3 | 25.8 | 23.6 | 18.4 | 23.2 |
| Small Business | 20.8 | 15.5 | 9.1 | 5.2 | 0.9 | 8.7 | 22.5 | 21.0 | 15.7 |
| Corporate Law | 10.9 | 14.2 | 14.0 | 14.4 | 30.2 | 20.4 | 11.7 | 6.8 | 15.2 |
| Criminal Law | 20.6 | 7.3 | 3.5 | 2.1 | 0.7 | 7.0 | 18.0 | 25.8 | 14.6 |
| Personal Injury | 11.5 | 14.7 | 30.8 | 29.9 | 7.6 | 13.0 | 11.7 | 12.7 | 12.1 |

Source: 2016-2017 Practising Certificate Survey.

Figure 28 – Areas of practice by size of firm



Source: 2016-2017 Practising Certificate Survey.

13. INCOME

13.1. INCOME OVERALL

In 2016, respondents who answered the Practising Certificate survey were asked to provide their *gross income* in the previous financial year (FY14/15), either as a raw figure or by selecting an income band. The results from the 2016/17 survey, as well as the previous three years' surveys, are provided in Table 12 below. The 2016/17 income data is also presented in Figure 29.

Over the past four years, the income profile for solicitors has remained relatively similar, indicating that across all four reporting years:

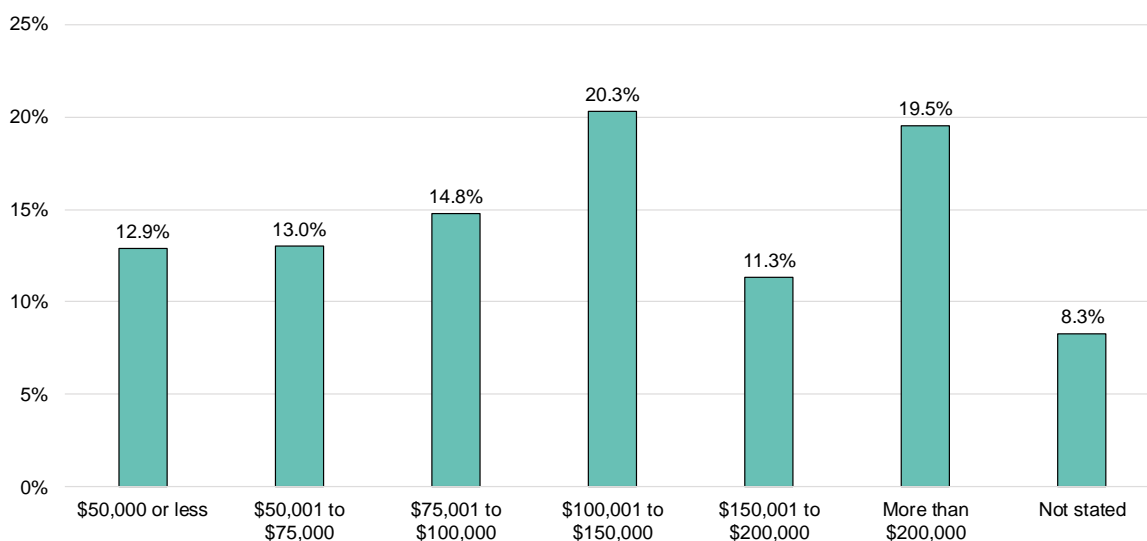
- around 20% of solicitors received an annual income between \$100,001 to \$150,000, or an annual income of more than \$200,000
- around 16% of solicitors received an annual income between \$75,001 to \$100,000
- around 13% of solicitors earned less than \$50,000 annually, or between \$50,001 to \$75,000 annually.

Table 12 – Annual income (FY12, FY13, FY14, FY15)

| | Income FY11/12 | Income FY 12/13 | Income FY 13/14 | Income FY 14/15 |
|------------------------|----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| \$50,000 or less | 12.8% | 13.5% | 12.6% | 12.9% |
| \$50,001 to \$75,000 | 14.0% | 14.4% | 13.3% | 13.0% |
| \$75,001 to \$100,000 | 17.4% | 16.2% | 16.2% | 14.8% |
| \$100,001 to \$150,000 | 21.3% | 20.4% | 19.9% | 20.3% |
| \$150,001 to \$200,000 | 12.0% | 11.7% | 12.1% | 11.3% |
| More than \$200,000 | 19.9% | 18.0% | 19.1% | 19.5% |
| Not stated | 2.7% | 5.9% | 6.2% | 8.3% |
| Total | 100.0% | 100.0% | 100.0% | 100.0% |

Source: 2016-2017 Practising Certificate Survey

Figure 29 – Annual income in 2014-15 financial year



Source: 2016-2017 Practising Certificate Survey

13.2. EMPLOYMENT SECTOR

The Practising Certificate survey reveals differences in solicitors' incomes according to the sector in which they work.

As in previous years, *corporate solicitors* earned more than their colleagues in other sectors, reporting an estimated mean income of \$198,328 (see Table 13). This compares with an estimated mean income of \$141,998 among *private practitioners*, and \$131,123 among *government solicitors*. For practitioners working in *community legal centres*, estimated mean income was \$71,066 and for those in *non-legal employment* it was \$138,334 (see Table 14).

Table 13 – Mean income by sector 2011/12-2014/15

| | Income FY11/12 | Income FY12/13 | Income FY13/14 | Income FY14/15 | Change (11-15) |
|------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| Private | \$125,878 | \$121,330 | \$125,208 | \$141,998 | 11.4% |
| Corporate | \$159,707 | \$161,988 | \$164,526 | \$198,328 | 19.5% |
| Government | \$114,648 | \$115,814 | \$120,479 | \$131,123 | 12.6% |

Source: 2016-2017 Practising Certificate Survey

Table 14 – Reported income bands by employment sector

| | Employment Sector (%) | | | | | All Respondents (%) |
|---------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------|------------|-------------------------------|---------------|---------------------------|
| | Private Practice | Corporate | Government | Community Legal Centres | Non- legal | |
| \$25,000 or less | 6.2 | 1.0 | 1.2 | 11.6 | 4.5 | 5.6 |
| \$25,001 - \$50,000 | 10.0 | 1.6 | 2.8 | 10.5 | 9.5 | 7.7 |
| \$50,001 - \$75,000 | 14.9 | 5.4 | 12.8 | 32.6 | 14.6 | 13.4 |
| \$75,001 - \$100,000 | 15.1 | 9.7 | 21.4 | 27.4 | 16.6 | 15.2 |
| \$100,001 - \$150,000 | 17.6 | 21.5 | 43.9 | 6.3 | 20.6 | 20.9 |
| \$150,001 - \$200,000 | 10.4 | 21.4 | 8.3 | 0 | 13.6 | 11.6 |
| \$200,001 or more | 20.2 | 34.5 | 7.3 | 1.1 | 16.6 | 20.1 |
| Not stated | 5.6 | 4.9 | 2.4 | 10.5 | 4 | 5.6 |
| Total | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| Estimated mean income (\$k)* | 142.0 | 198.3 | 131.1 | 71.1 | 138.3 | 146.7 |

* Note: Data is taken from the 2016-17 Practising Certificate survey. Mean income is estimated by using \$21,875 as the income figure for the lowest category, using \$250,000 as the figure for the highest category, and taking the mid-points of each other income category.

13.3. PRIVATE PRACTICE

In the 2016-17 Practising Certificate survey, solicitors working in *city firms* tended to report higher incomes than those in *suburban* or *country firms*. The estimated mean income of solicitors in city firms was \$169,931 compared to \$117,353 for solicitors in suburban firms.

Moreover, the estimated mean income was lower for solicitors working in smaller firms than their counterparts in larger firms. The estimated mean income reported by solicitors for each firm size were as follows:

- 1-4 partners: \$117,980
- 5-10 partners: \$161,458
- 11-20 partners: \$177,949
- 21-39 partners: \$184,604
- 40 or more partners: \$204,572.

13.4. GENDER

As in previous surveys, male respondents reported higher incomes than females overall. Over one third of men (37.8%) compared to one fourth of women (25.4%) earned \$150,000 and over, while 30.0% of all women, as against 23.3% of men, had incomes of \$75,000 or less.

Care should be taken in comparing male and female salaries due to the fact that they are not equally distributed across the main employment sectors. As reported earlier, female practitioners tend to be younger and more recently admitted than males, and relatively more female practitioners work part time.

One way to more meaningfully assess income parity between the genders is to compare the reported incomes of *full time private practitioners* by *years since admission*. As Table 15 shows, male incomes remain overall higher than female incomes, even taking into account these factors. The largest difference between male and female incomes occurs among those admitted for 2-5 years were men received on average an 18% higher annual income than women.

Table 15 – Income by gender and years since admission (full time private practice only)

| | Years Since Admission | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|-------------|------------|-------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|
| | <1 year | | 2-5 years | | 6-10 years | | 11-15 years | | 16-30 years | | > 30 years | | All | |
| | Male (%) | Female (%) | Male (%) | Female (%) | Male (%) | Female (%) | Male (%) | Female (%) | Male (%) | Female (%) | Male (%) | Female (%) | Male (%) | Female (%) |
| ≤ \$50,000 | 52.6 | 46.9 | 18.8 | 18.3 | 9.3 | 6.5 | 6.5 | 3.1 | 5.8 | 5.8 | 5.3 | 7.1 | 9.4 | 12.4 |
| \$50,001 - \$75,000 | 31.6 | 15.6 | 26.4 | 36.2 | 6.2 | 7.6 | 7.1 | 8.7 | 5.5 | 8.2 | 9 | 1.8 | 11.1 | 20 |
| \$75,001 - \$100,000 | 5.3 | 9.4 | 22.3 | 18.8 | 13.4 | 13.6 | 12.9 | 16.5 | 9.3 | 10.6 | 12.6 | 12.5 | 13.8 | 15.4 |
| \$100,001 - \$150,000 | 0 | 3.1 | 12.7 | 8.9 | 24.2 | 35.9 | 21.2 | 13.4 | 16.6 | 19.8 | 21.4 | 19.6 | 18.4 | 16.7 |
| \$150,001 - \$200,000 | 0 | 0 | 4.8 | 1.1 | 20.1 | 16.3 | 14.1 | 16.5 | 13.6 | 12.6 | 14.1 | 8.9 | 12.7 | 8.2 |
| More than \$200,001 | 0 | 0 | 3.4 | 1.8 | 15.5 | 7.6 | 31.8 | 27.6 | 44.2 | 37.2 | 35 | 41.1 | 28.1 | 14.9 |
| Not stated | 10.5 | 25 | 11.6 | 14.8 | 11.3 | 12.5 | 6.5 | 14.2 | 5 | 5.8 | 2.6 | 8.9 | 6.5 | 12.5 |
| Total | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| <i>Estimated mean income*</i> | 45.6 | 50.7 | 91.4 | 77.4 | 159.8 | 145.1 | 181.4 | 175.9 | 205.5 | 189.5 | 189.4 | 191.1 | 169.5 | 130.1 |

* Note: Data is taken from the 2016-17 Practising Certificate survey. Mean income is estimated by using \$21,875 as the income figure for the lowest category, using \$250,000 as the figure for the highest category, and taking the mid-points of each other income category.

14. HOURS OF WORK

The Practising Certificate survey asked whether respondents worked full time or part time. In previous years, part time work has been defined as 'less than 38 hours a week'. Since 2012-13 survey, this definition was removed to account for practitioners working more than 38 hours a week under a part time employment arrangement (for instance, working a 4-day week). In addition, since 2012-13, respondents have been asked to specify both the number of hours and the number of days they usually work each week as a legal practitioner.

Overall, 71.2% of the 2016-17 Practising Certificate respondents worked full time compared to 18.4% working part time. A further 1.5% indicated they were currently on leave from the profession, and 8.7% were not employed in paid work as a legal practitioner.

14.1. PART TIME WORK

In the 2016-17 Practising Certificate survey, 22.8% of female respondents, compared with 14.1% of male respondents said they worked part time. Part time work was more common among respondents over the age of 35, with 23.1% for those aged 35 to 39 years, 20.4% for those aged 40 to 49 years, and 23.7% for those aged over 50 years.

The percentage of practitioners working part time was similar among respondents working in private firms and among those in non-private practice (18.8% private practice, 18.3% non-private practice).

As shown in Table 16, one in four solicitors (25.1%) in part time employment reported a 31+ hour work week. Around one in five solicitors (20.0%) reported a 26-30 hour work week, and a similar proportion reported a 21-25 hour work week (20.5%). Solicitors in part time employment reported on average a 23.8 hour work week.

Similar to previous years, female solicitors in part time employment worked on average more hours a week (26.1 hours) than their male counterparts (20.0 hours).

Table 16 – Hours worked each week by solicitors working part time

| | Males | | Females | | All respondents | |
|-------------------|-------------------|------------|-------------------|------------|-------------------|------------|
| | n | % | n | % | n | % |
| 1-10 hours | 53 | 13.5 | 42 | 6.5 | 95 | 9.2 |
| 11-15 hours | 43 | 11 | 37 | 5.8 | 80 | 7.7 |
| 16-20 hours | 96 | 24.5 | 68 | 10.6 | 164 | 15.8 |
| 21-25 hours | 58 | 14.8 | 154 | 24 | 212 | 20.5 |
| 26-30 hours | 65 | 16.6 | 142 | 22.1 | 207 | 20.0 |
| 31+ hours | 70 | 17.9 | 190 | 29.5 | 260 | 25.1 |
| Not stated | 7 | 1.8 | 10 | 1.6 | 17 | 1.6 |
| Total | 392 | 100 | 643 | 100 | 1,035 | 100 |
| <i>Mean hours</i> | <i>20.0 hours</i> | | <i>26.1 hours</i> | | <i>23.8 hours</i> | |

Source: 2016-2017 Practising Certificate Survey. Note total does not reflect total of males and females as gender not stated in some cases.

14.2. FULL TIME WORK

Over three in four male respondents (77.4%) to the 2016-17 Practising Certificate Survey were in full time employment, compared to 65.1% of female respondents.

Solicitors in full time employment worked on average 46.3 hours per week, which was 47.1 hours for male solicitors, and 45.3 hours for female solicitors.

Private practitioners worked an average 47.0 hours per week. This was similar for *corporate* lawyers (47.3 hours), but higher than for *government* lawyers (41.7 hours).

Results showed a minor decrease in average full time hours compared to 2015/16, from 47.6 hours in 2015/16 to 46.3 average hours this year.

Table 17 – Average working week of full time solicitors by gender 2005/06-2016/17 (hours)

| | Males | Females | Total |
|-----------|--------------|----------------|--------------|
| 2016/2017 | 47.1 | 45.3 | 46.3 |
| 2015/2016 | 48.4 | 46.6 | 47.6 |
| 2014/2015 | 48.3 | 46.1 | 47.3 |
| 2013/2014 | 48.4 | 46.8 | 47.7 |
| 2012/2013 | 49.0 | 47.2 | 48.3 |
| 2011/2012 | 50.0 | 47.5 | 48.9 |
| 2010/2011 | 49.2 | 46.9 | 48.1 |
| 2009/2010 | 49.5 | 46.9 | 48.3 |
| 2008/2009 | 50.1 | 47.2 | 48.8 |
| 2007/2008 | 50.5 | 47.6 | 49.2 |
| 2006/2007 | 50.3 | 47.0 | 49.0 |
| 2005/2006 | 50.3 | 47.2 | 49.0 |

Source: 2016-2017 Practising Certificate Survey. Note total does not reflect total of males and females as gender not stated in some cases.

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