



THE AUSTRALIAN HONOURS AND AWARDS BRANCH



REPORT

2017-21

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Information about the operations of the Australian Honours and Awards Branch and the Australian honours system more generally is available at the following internet addresses:

Internet home page: www.gg.gov.au

Internet annual reports:
www.gg.gov.au/office-official-secretary-governor-general/annual-reports

Australian honours:
www.dpmc.gov.au/government/its-honour

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Executive Summary and Introduction

Cover: The Governor-General and recipients of honours and awards, Canberra, September 2019.,

This page: State Entrance of Government House, Canberra.

Executive Summary

The Australian Honours and Awards system plays an important role in contemporary Australian society.

The reach and impact of the system is remarkable: in the period considered by this report 79,437 awards or appointments were made. These 79,437 recipients have been surprised, honoured and celebrated by having a spotlight shone on them, their work and the impact that they have on those around them.

The awards and appointments have recognised and highlighted individuals from all parts of the country and from all walks of life. The impact goes further than the individual: the awards have uplifted, inspired and united recipients' loved ones and their broader community.

Collectively, they showcase the best attributes of Australians – as His Excellency General the Honourable David Hurley AC DSC (Retd), said in announcing the Queen's Birthday 2021 Honours List:

“Collectively, they speak to who we are as a nation. There are countless examples of selflessness, commitment and dedication. There is diversity and there are examples of exceptional achievement in almost every field imaginable.”

This report - overview

Administering the Australian Honours and Awards system is both a great privilege and a responsibility that the Honours and Awards Branch (the Branch) approaches with rigour, commitment and professionalism.

This report curates data across the last five years. This is part of an ongoing commitment to transparency and openness – particularly in relation to the gender balance of the system (both in terms of nominations and awards). Throughout the report the numbers are presented without commentary or justification – the results, in a sense, stand for themselves.

The report draws on all available data. It contains a wealth of insights into the outcomes for all facets of the administration of our honours and awards. There are, as the report outlines, some historic limitations to the data available. For example, while gender balance is reported for all awards, other indicators of diversity (for example whether recipients identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander or as having come from a Culturally and Linguistically Diverse background) have not historically been captured. Recent changes to the nomination and sounding forms for the Order of Australia have addressed this data gap and will be reflected in the next report.

The Order of Australia

The report does not include analysis or commentary about the performance of the honours system. Nevertheless, some key indicators are worth highlighting.

The data shows

- steady improvement over the five year period in the number of women recognised (from 33 per cent in 2016-17 to 41 per cent in 2020-21)

- the greatest improvement towards gender balance over the five year period was in the Community, Law, and Disabled categories; the lowest female representation is in the Veterinary Science, Transport, and Surveying and Mapping categories
- the total number of awards for service to multicultural or Indigenous communities
- almost no change in the number of nominations considered for service to multicultural communities (262 in the 2012-16 report to 270 in this report)

In understanding performance or interpreting this data, it is important to understand that the centrepiece of our honours system – the Order of Australia – relies on nominations from the community. Each recipient has been nominated, that nomination extensively researched, before the nomination is considered by the independent Council for the Order of Australia and, if suitable, recommended to the Governor-General.

This is the system's great strength – it is free from influence and equally open to all – but means that nominators must be aware of the system, be motivated to engage with it and be able to access it. It stands to reason that if awareness, motivation and access are not equal there is an ongoing risk that results (in terms of nominations into the system) will not be representative of Australian society.

The Branch is conscious of this risk. Significantly, through the ongoing modernisation of business services systems the Branch continues to make accessing the system as open and easy as possible. Nevertheless, promotion of the Order – that is work to increase awareness or motivate people to engage – is not the responsibility of the Branch (nor is it resourced to undertake this work). The Office and successive Governors-General have sought to highlight the issue publically and encourage nominations (at least in part contributing to the steady increase in nominations for women). Apart from the Governor-General's activity, limited promotion, engagement or coordinated work to improve diversity in nominations is undertaken centrally. Where it has been, the effort and commitment has not been sustained as the work is not hardwired into the administration of the Order. One jurisdiction – Victoria – has independently established a resource within its bureaucracy to increase nominations for women. This intervention, which at least one other jurisdiction is considering, has seemingly been successful and led to an increase in nominations for women from Victoria.

The breadth of Australian society will only be reflected in the outcomes of the Order of Australia if that diversity is represented in the nominations that are received. There is no evidence of inherent bias (conscious or unconscious) in the system: for example, the success rate of nominations for women (72.9%) and men (71.1%) is roughly equal, and more often than not it is higher for women than men. Internal controls mean that the research on each nomination is cross-checked and reviewed before progressing to the Council for the Order of Australia. The composition of the Council has never been as diverse¹ as it is in 2021. The Branch and Office are committed to continuous improvement to ensure that each nomination is considered fairly, equitably and free from bias.

Other awards

Most other awards do not rely on nominations from the community. With the exception of Bravery Decorations, the other awards in this report are substantially or entirely driven from within organisations such as the Australian Defence Force, Police, Ambulance, Fire and Emergency Services, the Public Service and others (each detailed in the chapters below).

The Branch works closely with these organisations to ensure the effective and efficient administration of each.

Finally, I acknowledge the valuable work undertaken by all staff in the Branch and across the Office in support of the Australian honours and awards system. They are motivated by the opportunity to help recognise, celebrate and acknowledge outstanding achievement and service to the community. I thank them for the professionalism and energy they bring to their roles and their commitment to helping optimise our national honours and awards – a system for all Australians.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Paul Singer', with a stylized, cursive script.

Paul Singer MVO
Official Secretary to the Governor-General

22 November 2021

Introduction

In February 2012, following a “Principles, Practices and Protocols” meeting of the Council for the Order of Australia, it was agreed that the Honours and Awards Branch (the Branch) would prepare and publish on the Governor-General’s website a five-yearly report on the Order, the work of the Council and the Office of the Official Secretary to the Governor-General (the Office), which is responsible for the administration of the Order. The first such report, covering the financial years 2011-12 to 2015-16 was published in October 2016.

This report addresses the five financial years 2016-17 to 2020-21 and includes material addressing all elements of the Australian honours system administered by the Office. Within the Office, the Branch is responsible for the administration of the honours system. The first section explains the honours system, its elements, the advisory bodies and the supporting administration.

The second section is devoted to statistics, focussing on the Order of Australia. The majority of the Branch’s work is concerned with nominations in the Order, and it also attracts the most public interest. As with the 2012-16 report, generally only the last five years of statistics have been reproduced in this report. Updates to statistics on longer timescales were largely dealt with in the previous report, and references to that report are made in this one, where appropriate.

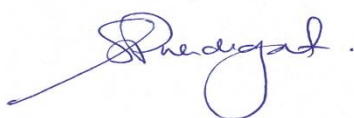
Statistics in this report are mostly for financial years, and any exceptions are noted. Charts labelled “2017-21” represent the financial years 2016-17 to 2020-21, inclusive.

Unless otherwise specified, references to the Order of Australia should be taken to refer only to the General Division. Nominations in the Military Division are initiated, considered and recommended external to the Branch, and this Office only prepares them for final consideration by the Governor-General, and records data in relation to the outcomes.

Although not technically part of the Australian Public Service, the Office is committed to similar principles: to be impartial, committed to service, accountable, respectful and ethical in all its dealings.

There is no right or entitlement to honours. Whilst a merit-based process, it is a necessarily subjective process, judged against broad criteria.

The Office carefully manages honours processes, which are independent in character and free from interference.



Sharon Prendergast LVO
Director, Australian Honours and Awards Secretariat

The Australian honours system

There are detailed introductions to the honours system and descriptions of its elements available elsewhere, notably on the “It’s An Honour” website, www.dpmc.gov.au/government/its-honour. What follows is a précis of the system and its broad elements.

The Australian honours system formally began on 14 February 1975 with the introduction of three main elements:

- The Order of Australia
- The Australian Bravery Decorations
- The National Medal

The Order of Australia is a multi-level “society of honour”, recognising the merit of the service and achievements of its individual members. The Australian Bravery Decorations recognise individual or group acts of bravery. The National Medal is a long service and good conduct medal, awarded to members of recognised government and voluntary organisations which aid people and property in times of crisis. Awards are made after 15 years of “diligent” service, and clasps to the medal may be awarded for additional periods of ten years.

Although the system formally began in 1975, uniquely Australian medals existed before then. Service during World War II by Australians was recognised through the Australia Service Medal 1939-45; and a Vietnam Medal was also established, in 1968. Both medals were created within the British Imperial honours system then in use, but could only be awarded for service by members of Australian armed forces. Even after 1975, the Australian and British systems temporarily operated in parallel. Imperial honours were awarded less often as time went on, until 1992, when it was agreed with Her Majesty The Queen that Australian governments would no longer recommend such awards.

The Sovereign still establishes Australian awards through Letters Patent, exercising the Royal prerogative. However, in all cases except the Victoria Cross for Australia, the Governor-General approves recommendations for appointment or award.

Since 1975, additional Australian awards have been established to enable the recognition of various types of service and achievements to continue while the British counterpart awards were phased out. The Australian honours system has developed to a point at which it is truly unique, and tailored to Australia’s needs.

The broad groups of awards are meritorious, bravery and gallantry, long service and good conduct, operational service, and commemoration.

Meritorious

These awards recognise individuals who have performed service at a level above that which would be expected of someone in their position, or have made significant achievements. The Order of Australia is the pre-eminent member of this group and comprises a General Division for civilians and a Military Division for members of the Australian Defence Force. Honorary awards are also awarded to non-Australian citizens, in both Divisions.

Appointments and awards in the General Division of the Order of Australia are recommended by the Council for the Order. The regulations governing the other meritorious

awards provide for responsible ministers in each state and territory, and the Commonwealth, to recommend awards.

The Branch provides significant support to the Council for the Order of Australia, including receiving nominations, researching them, and preparing them for consideration. The Council's policy is to consider every eligible nomination.

On the recommendation of the Minister for Defence, the Governor-General approves appointments and awards in the Military Division of the Order of Australia to members of the Australian Defence Force.

There are other awards to recognise individuals in specific fields: the Public Service Medal, the Australian Police Medal, the Australian Fire Service Medal, the Ambulance Service Medal, the Emergency Services Medal, the Australian Corrections Medal, the Australian Intelligence Medal, and the Australian Antarctic Medal. These awards entitle recipients to use post-nominals, letters placed after their name which denote a particular award, e.g. "APM", for a recipient of the Australian Police Medal; "AFSM" for a recipient of the Australian Fire Service Medal.

The Distinguished Service Decorations and Conspicuous Service Decorations are specifically military awards which recognise outstanding service in, respectively, warlike operations and non-warlike circumstances. Recommendations for these decorations are made to the Governor-General by the Minister for Defence.

The Branch receives recommendations for all meritorious awards, makes checks for adherence to the provisions of governing documents, and presents them to the Governor-General for consideration. Sounding, announcement, insignia and warrant preparation are also carried out by Branch staff. Meritorious awards are usually announced in the two major honours lists each year, on Australia Day and The Queen's Birthday public holiday, on the Governor-General's website, and publically announced through media. Publication of the list is also notified in the Commonwealth Gazette. However, the Australian Antarctic Medal is always announced on Mid-Winter's Day each year, 21 June. In addition, special honours lists are announced at other times, usually to honour members of groups involved in especially noteworthy events, e.g. participants in the 2018 Thai cave rescue.

Bravery and Gallantry decorations

Bravery and gallantry decorations recognise acts of bravery by individuals or groups. Gallantry decorations were instituted for the purpose of according recognition to members of the Defence Force and certain other persons who perform acts of gallantry in circumstances similar to armed combat or actual operations under military command.

Bravery decorations are for civilians, and members of Australia's armed forces are also eligible under certain circumstances. Bravery and gallantry decorations at all levels except the commendation level, and group citations, come with a post-nominal entitlement.

The Branch supports the Australian Bravery Decorations Council, which is a 14-member body appointed by the Governor-General and includes representatives of each state and territory, two ex-officio members and four community members. The Council meets twice yearly, usually in May and November, to consider nominations and make recommendations to the Governor-General for awards.

As for the Order of Australia, the Branch handles all processes following the Council's meeting, up to preparing insignia and warrants for presentation. Bravery award recipients appear in Bravery honours lists, which are published twice a year on the website and publically announced through media. Publication of the lists is also notified in the Commonwealth Gazette. There is no set timeframe for the announcement of bravery awards, although generally there are two announcements each year during March and August.

Nominations for gallantry decorations are generated in the military chain of command and are recommended for the Governor-General's approval by the Minister for Defence. Gallantry decorations are usually announced in the two major honours lists each year. The Victoria Cross for Australia is approved by The Sovereign on the recommendation of the relevant Minister, and announcements are usually stand-alone events.

Long service and good conduct

These medals recognise the commitment and good service of members of those services which protect life and property, at personal risk to those members. Long service and good conduct medals do not have a post-nominal entitlement.

The National Medal was the first such medal in the Australian system, and was intended to cover all services. It initially included police, fire, ambulance and defence services. Other services have been added to the National Medal in subsequent years, including emergency services, corrective services, surf patrols, vehicle rescue services, and helicopter rescue services.

Separate medals for defence force members were created in 1982, and in 1998 a single, all-ranks long service medal was established to replace them.

In 2010 the National Police Service Medal was established for the purpose of according recognition for the unique contribution and significant commitment of those persons who have given ethical and diligent service as a sworn member of an Australian police service.

The Chief Officer of each eligible organisation makes recommendations for the award of the National Medal and the National Police Service Medal directly to the Governor-General. In the case of defence medals, the Chief of the Defence Force is the formal recommending authority, but this authority is usually delegated.

The Branch receives schedules of recommended awards from Chief Officers, conducts checks for compliance with governing documents, and presents them to the Governor-General. The outcomes are then reported back to each organisation, and insignia for civilian awards are engraved and sent out for presentation by each organisation. Thousands of National Medals and National Police Service Medals are awarded every year. Preparation of defence long service medals is handled by the Department of Defence's Directorate of Honours and Awards. There is no announcement of the award of long service and good conduct medals, and presentations generally occur within the relevant organisations at a local level.

Operational Service

These medals have traditionally been for military service in particular places, at particular times. They represent participation in a defined campaign, as a member of a specified group, considered to be collectively merit-worthy because of the objective and, sometimes, the danger involved in carrying out the mission. Because they are for participation in a collective effort, there is no post-nominal entitlement for operational service medal recipients.

For the military, “campaign medals” are considered a different variety of operational service medal, established for major warlike operations. Australian campaign medals include the Vietnam Medal, the Iraq Medal and the Afghanistan Medal.

The Australian military has had a succession of contemporary and historical operational service medals, which were awarded with a clasp attached to the ribbon to denote the particular deployment on which they were earned. This group comprises the Australian Service Medal 1945-75, the Australian Active Service Medal 1945-75, the Australian Service Medal, the Australian Active Service Medal, and the Australian Operational Service Medal. The “1945-75” medals were created to retrospectively recognise Australian military deployments which had not been recognised at the time, and a distinction was made between non-warlike and warlike deployments. The non-warlike/warlike nature of the deployment is identified in the ribbon design, usually with the inclusion of a central red stripe to denote “warlike”.

The contemporary medals followed the same scheme, and both were replaced by the Australian Operational Service Medal in 2012. There are no clasps for the AOSM: instead, it can be awarded multiple times with different ribbons denoting the deployment for which it is awarded. Multiple deployments in the operational area is recognised through a numeral placed on the ribbon. Qualification is based on service records confirming compliance with criteria based on location, dates and duration. Schedules are prepared by the Defence Directorate of Honours and Awards, for approval by the Governor-General.

A number of civilian operational service medals also exist to recognise members of specified government and voluntary organisations who risk their lives or safety to protect the community.

In 2011 the National Emergency Medal was established to recognise service during declared significant emergencies in Australia, and as a domestic counterpart to the Humanitarian Overseas Service Medal. It is now amongst the most awarded medals each year, attracting thousands of nominations from emergency agencies and community organisations around the country and from overseas. The National Emergency Medal Committee makes recommendations to establish operations and assesses awards for “significant service”. Honours staff assess all applications for “sustained service”, often provided in schedules from organisations containing hundreds of candidates. Anyone can apply directly for recognition but group applications are most commonly made by organisations on behalf of their members.

In 1991, the Police Overseas Service Medal was established, to provide recognition to police deployed overseas on peacekeeping missions. A single medal is issued, with a clasp to denote the operation for which it was awarded. Subsequent awards for different deployments are indicated by additional clasps. The medal is awarded on the recommendation of the Chief Officer of an Australian police force.

The Civilian Service Medal 1939-45 was established in 1994, in response to a recommendation of the 1994 report of the Committee of Inquiry into Defence and Defence Related Awards. The medal recognises members of World War II home-front services which supported the war effort. There are requirements to have served with particular organisations, as well as for minimum duration, place and dates. The Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet receives and assesses applications, although most claims to this award have now been made.

Finally, the Humanitarian Overseas Service Medal was established in 1999, in response to a recommendation of the 1995 Report of the Review of Australian Honours and Awards. The medal recognises service in declared humanitarian operations, by members of groups prescribed for that operation. Service must be in particular places for minimum durations, within a particular date range. Applications are received and assessed by the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, and submitted to the Branch to be prepared for the Governor-General's approval.

Operational service medals are not included in honours lists, with presentation generally occurring at a local level.

Commemoration and other medals

Commemorative medals are issued to mark significant occasions in the life of the nation. There have been four such Australian medals: the 80th Anniversary Armistice Remembrance Medal, issued in 1999 to all 71 surviving Australian World War I veterans; the Australian Sports Medal, issued in 2000, to coincide with the Sydney 2000 Olympics; the Centenary Medal, issued on a broad basis, to commemorate Australia's Centenary of Federation in 2001; and the Anniversary of National Service Medal 1951-72, which was awarded to Australians for their service in post-war national service schemes. Recent amendments to the regulations governing the Australian Sports Medal allow it to be awarded on an ongoing basis, for participation in Australian teams at major international multi-sport events. Commemorative medals do not come with a post-nominal entitlement, and are not announced in honours lists.

The Champion Shots Medal is awarded to the winner of the annual marksmanship competition of each service of the Australian Defence Force, so that a maximum of three may be awarded each year. Bars may be added to the Medal, to indicate a second or subsequent award.

Bodies administering the Australian Honours and Awards system

The Australian Honours and Awards Branch

The Branch is located at Government House, Canberra, with a staff of approximately forty. Over half are employed full-time in supporting the deliberative bodies for the Order of Australia, the Australian Bravery Decorations and the National Emergency Medal – conducting research on nominations and preparing them for consideration by the bodies at their meetings, along with other business as necessary. The Branch also maintains the foreign awards schedule, which is a list of foreign awards which have been pre-approved for acceptance by Australians, should they be offered. Other staff provide reception and administrative support to the Office generally, and facilitate the delivery of other elements

of the honours system. In this report the term “Secretariat” is used to differentiate the task of honours and awards processing from the broader role of the Branch.

The Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet

The Department is responsible for honours policy advice to the government of the day, as well as promoting the honours system, primarily through the dedicated website, www.dpmc.gov.au/government/its-honour. The Department has administrative responsibility for the Civilian Service Medal 1939-45, the Humanitarian Overseas Service Medal, honorary awards in the Order of Australia, and the Public Service Medal (federal).

The Directorate of Honours and Awards – Department of Defence

The Directorate administers most aspects of Australian honours available to members of the Australian Defence Force. This largely involves long service medals, the Australian Defence Medal, and operational service medals, but also includes meritorious awards in the Gallantry, Distinguished and Conspicuous Decorations, and the Military Division of the Order of Australia. The final stages of the meritorious awards processes are administered at the Branch. The Directorate also provides policy advice on military awards to the Defence leadership group and to the Government, in consultation with the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet.

Chief Officers of various organisations

Police, fire, ambulance, emergency and corrective services at all levels of government are responsible for preparing recommendations for long service and good conduct awards, as well as for their respective meritorious awards (e.g. the Australian Police Medal). Most of these organisations have a protocol or ceremonial area which handles these responsibilities, and which liaise with the Branch for advice as required. The service awards are recommended directly by organisations, while meritorious awards have to be submitted to the responsible state, territory or federal minister for recommendation.

The Australian Honours and Awards Branch – five year report

The majority of Branch work supports the three advisory bodies for the Order of Australia, Australian Bravery Decorations and the National Emergency Medal. This report is arranged to firstly focus on those elements of the honours system with which the Branch is most involved. The order of presentation is as follows:

- Order of Australia
- Australian Bravery Decorations
- National Emergency Medal
- Meritorious Awards
- Long service and good conduct medals
- Gallantry, Distinguished and Conspicuous service decorations
- Civilian operational service medals

No further information is included on commemorative medals or the Champion Shots Medal. Commemorative medals are established to mark a particular occasion, and are usually all awarded over a short period of time, with no continuing eligibility. All four Australian commemorative medals were established more than ten years prior to the period on which this report is focused, and none were approved for award in the capture period for this report, the financial years 2016-17 to 2020-21. It is expected that awards of the Australian Sports Medal will recommence in 2021-22. The Office's Annual Report for that year will reflect any such awards, and they will be included in the next five-year report.

Before addressing the various elements of the honours system, there is a brief report on significant developments in the Branch's work in the last five years.

1. Developments 2017-21

Digital documentation

The Australian Honours and Awards Branch has continued to refine and mature the electronic delivery and presentation of papers for advisory bodies.

Beginning with the National Emergency Medal Committee meeting in October 2013, a format for delivering searchable PDF documents on tablet devices, and by cloud sharing, has been developed and is now fully implemented for all three advisory bodies, realising significant budget savings in paper stocks and freight charges. Members of the advisory bodies are now well-adjusted to this arrangement. Other developments in electronic document handling have allowed members to cope with a rising volume of nominations, and to streamline aspects of the consideration process.

Significant advances have also been made in automating correspondence, including nomination and referee comment receipt, congratulatory letters, filing, and storage, allowing branch case officers to focus on higher-level tasks in the nomination process.

Modernisation of business services system

The Office received funding in 2020 for an honours and awards system modernisation project to transform, modernise and standardise the business processes and IT capability to manage foreseeable demands in processing awards. This includes the expected substantial increase in nominations, following the declaration of the 2019-20 bushfires as a nationally significant event for the National Emergency Medal. The current supporting IT systems which are critical to the effective processing of nominations are based on out-dated technology. The system will enhance the ability of the Branch to receive and process nominations and recommendations in a seamless and efficient manner.

The project will be implemented in a staged approach, and is expected to be completed early in 2023. The first stages involve the release of an enhanced system to process operational awards, including the National Emergency Medal.

Secondments

Between 2019 and 2021 the Branch hosted staff from the Department of Defence and the Department of Home Affairs, as a development opportunity and to share knowledge and experience.

New awards

In the period 2017-21 two new meritorious awards were established: the Australian Corrections Medal (ACM), and the Australian Intelligence Medal (AIM). The ACM recognises distinguished service by an operational member of an Australian state or territory civilian corrections service for adults, while the AIM recognises distinguished service that directly contributes to national intelligence priorities, requirements or capabilities. Further information about these medals appears later in this report.

Amendments were also made to the regulations governing the Australian Sports Medal, which was originally established as a commemorative medal to mark Sydney hosting the 2000 summer Olympics. The amendments provide for participants in specified international multi-sport events to be recognised through the medal, on an ongoing basis. The amended

regulations, determination and guidelines are available on the Governor-General's website. No awards were made prior to 30 June 2021, and so no further details are provided in this report. Future annual reports of the Office, and the next five-year report, will include data on the award of this medal.

Criteria for the award of the National Emergency Medal (NEM) in respect of service in the 2019-20 bushfires were approved in the first half of 2021. Guidelines and application forms were issued to participating agencies, promotional activities were undertaken, and over 1,600 awards were approved up to 30 June 2021. Further information about the NEM more generally is provided in section 12 of this report. It is expected that there will be a very large number of recipients of the NEM for the 2019-20 bushfires. Further data will appear in future annual reports and the next five-year report.

Diversity in the honours system

The Governor-General has publically prioritised ensuring that the Order of Australia is, and is perceived by the Australian public to be, the highest form of recognition of the efforts and achievements of Australians. The significant events over the last few years and its challenges reinforces the need for a national system of recognition which is understood, appreciated and embraced by the community.

The Governor-General has acknowledged, as the Office does, that the data shows that historically fewer women have been nominated and recognised through the Order. This report shows that while performance has improved (from 32.7% of appointments and awards to women in 2016-17, to 41.1% in 2020-21) women remain significantly underrepresented.

While precise data has not been available, anecdotally other sections of the community, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians and individuals with a culturally or linguistically diverse background have been similarly underrepresented.

A number of aspects of the honours system have been identified that need to be addressed, which include: increasing the diversity of nominations and outcomes to better reflect Australian society; and improving the public awareness and understanding of the honours system, particularly the Order of Australia. Significant measures have been introduced to improve access, but there is more work to be done.

The Office and Branch is not responsible for, or resourced to undertake, promotion or engagement (these functions have not historically been part of the administration of the Order or broader Honours system) to address these issues. Nevertheless, the Office continues to support the Governor-General to promote greater diversity and encourage nominations from the community.



The Order of Australia

Order of Australia insignia prepared for investiture

2. Order of Australia: Members of the Council

The Council for the Order of Australia comprises 19 members, made up of three groups:

- eight members, one recommended by each of the State Premiers and Territory Chief Ministers
- eight members recommended by the Prime Minister from the broader community (one of whom the Prime Minister recommends to be Chairman of the Council), known as “community members”
- three ex-officio members:
 - the Vice-President of the Federal Executive Council
 - the Deputy Secretary, Governance, of the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet
 - the Chief of the Defence Force

Members appointed in the first two groups serve two-year terms, and may be re-appointed.

Deputies may be appointed for state and territory representatives, and for ex-officio members, to attend if the member is unable to do so.

The Council generally meets twice each year to consider nominations for awards and appointments in the Order, to be announced on Australia Day or The Queen’s Birthday. The meetings occur approximately 5-6 months ahead of the respective announcements, and are usually two full days in duration each.

The current membership of the Council is available through the Governor-General’s website, www.gg.gov.au, and its membership at the time of publication appears in each Annual Report of the Office of the Official Secretary to the Governor-General. From the 2017-18 Annual Report onwards, the attendance of members of the Council is also reported.

The Council applies policies which affect its members during their appointments:

- a current member may not be a nominator or a nominee
 - if a nomination is received for a current member, it is set aside by the Branch until the person is no longer a member
- current members are not consulted as referees for nominations

These policies are intended to avoid conflicts of interest and preserve the integrity of the consideration process. The Council also has a standing arrangement for members to declare a conflict or potential perception of a conflict of interest on particular nominations under consideration, and be excluded from discussion as appropriate. However, the Council may balance this concern with the expertise or perspective that a Council member can bring to a discussion through personal knowledge of a nominee, and this is judged on a case-by-case basis.

Below are statistics on the gender balance and duration of appointment of Council members.

The present membership of the Council is 57.9% female. The following data represents the gender of members who served during the capture period, but does not represent attendance at meetings.

Chart 1: OA All Council members by gender, 2017-21

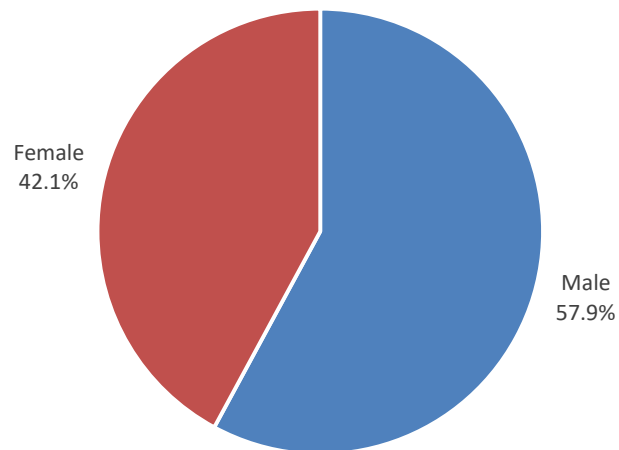


Chart 2: OA Council: ex-officio members by gender, 2017-21

Council members by virtue of other appointments. See page 15 for details.

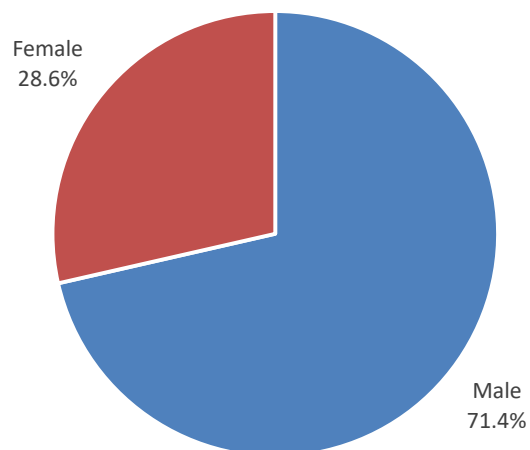


Chart 3: OA Council: state/territory members by gender, 2017-21

Council members appointed on the recommendation of State Premiers and Chief Ministers.

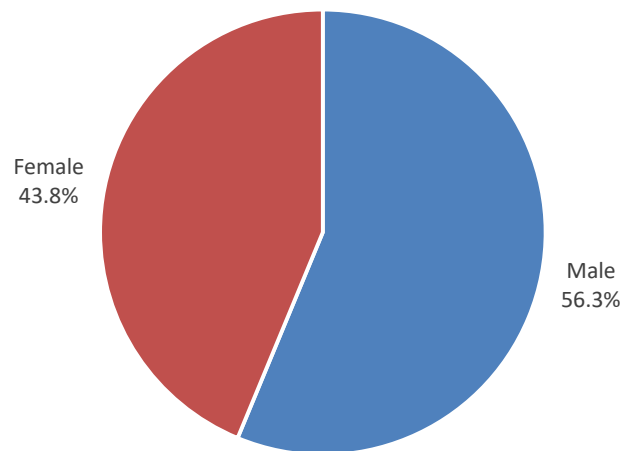


Chart 4: OA Council: community members by gender, 2017-21

Council members appointed on the recommendation of the Prime Minister.

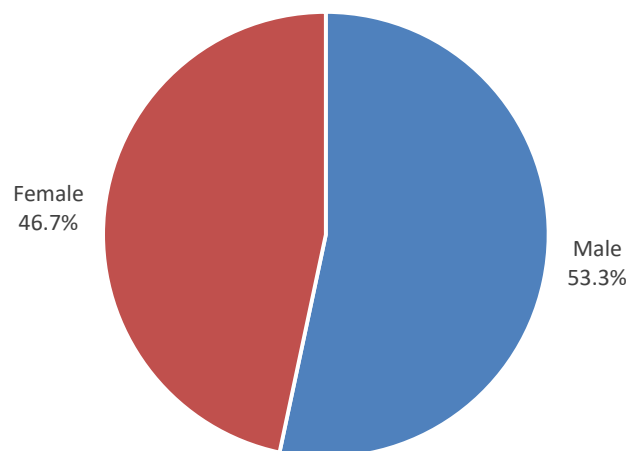
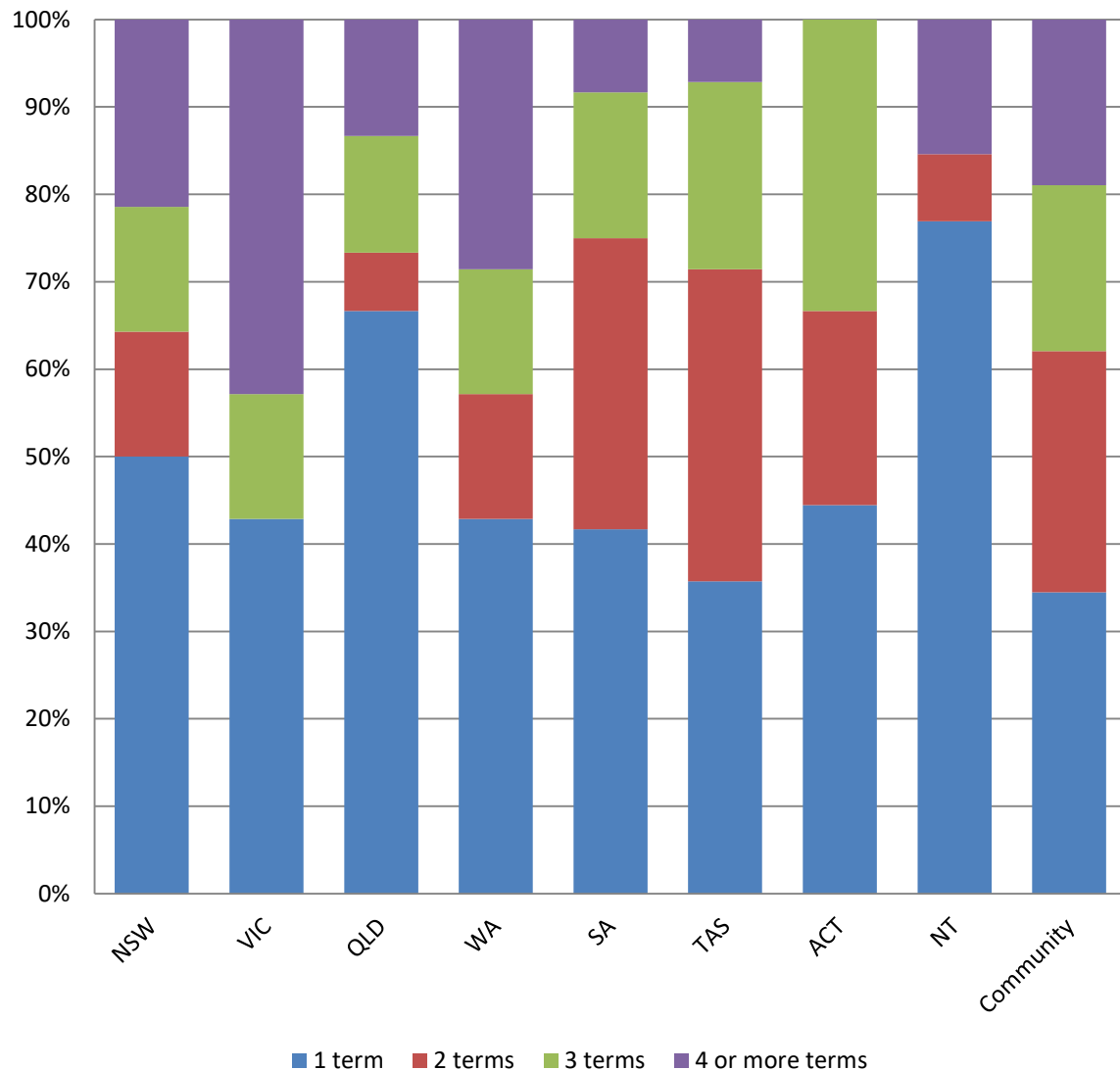


Chart 5 gives a proportional comparison of the length of appointment of members from the states, territories, and of community members, since 1975. Each column illustrates the proportion of members appointed for one, two, three, or four or more terms.

Chart 5: OA Council: comparative length of appointments, by role, 1975-2021



This data does not include deputies or ex-officio members. Noting that appointments are for two years duration, and that there are usually two meetings per year, a single term represents service over 4 meetings. However, as noted above, this data is not intended to represent actual attendance.

The raw number of members since 1975, from each state or territory, and appointed as community members, is as follows:

Table 1: OA Council members by role, number since 1975

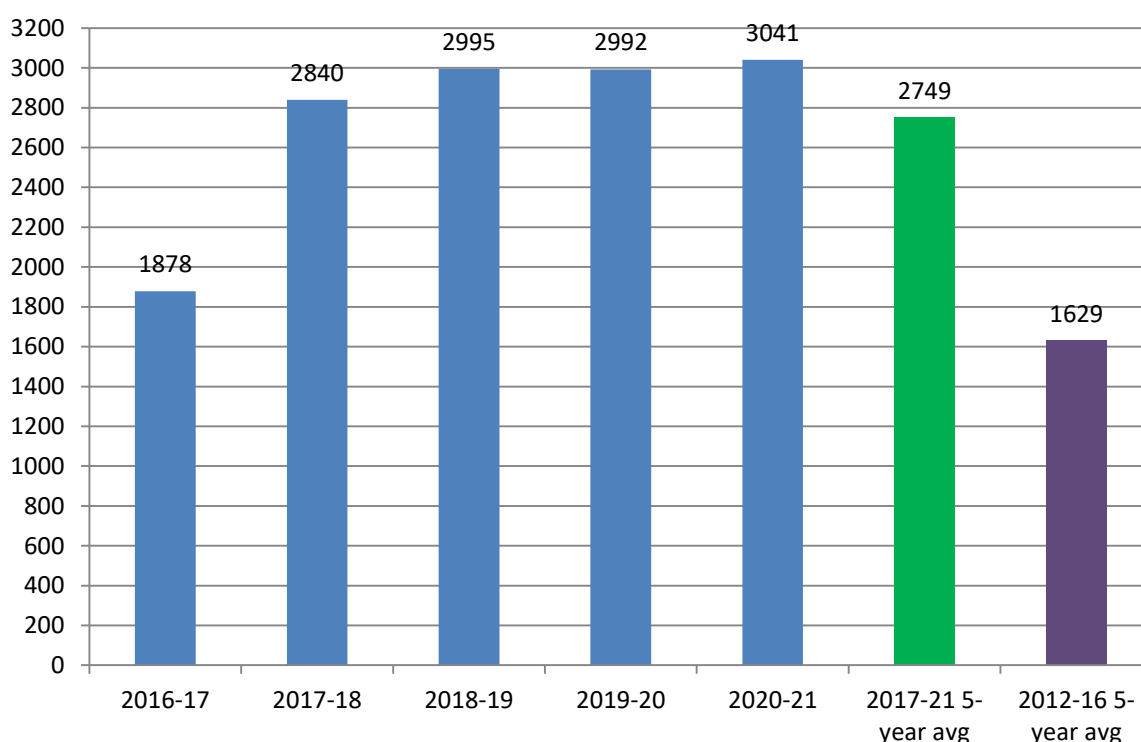
NSW	VIC	QLD	WA	SA	TAS	ACT	NT	Comm
12	7	15	7	12	14	10	13	58

3. Order of Australia: volume of nominations received

Anyone can nominate a member of the community for an award in the General Division of the Order of Australia. There are no closing dates for nominations, and they are received at the Australian Honours and Awards Secretariat throughout the year, overwhelmingly using the online form.

Nominations are generally processed in order of receipt and the nomination process usually takes between 18 months and two years, sometimes longer, from receipt of the nomination to the announcement of an award. Monitoring the flow of eligible nominations received so that they are researched and presented for consideration by the Council, without major fluctuation in numbers, is a core task of the Secretariat. The number of nominations received in each of the most recent five years to June are shown in the following charts.

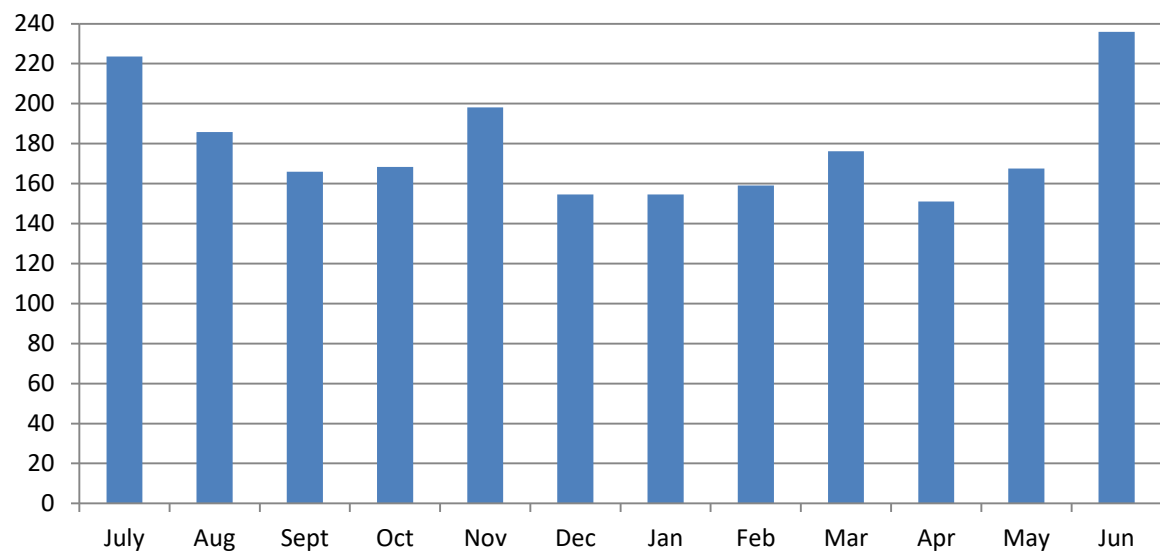
Chart 6: OA nominations received, annual volume 2017-21



In the five years prior to 2016-17 there was natural variation around an average of approximately 1,600 nominations received per year (see 2012-16 average per year, purple column in **Chart 6** above). This translated to approximately 800 nominations considered at each meeting of the Council. The step-change in volume, in 2017-18, is directly attributable to the introduction of a fully-functioned online nomination form, in January 2018. With the removal of significant barriers to submitting a nomination, the volume of nominations received by the Branch increased by approximately 50% within 12 months. An average of 1,100 nominations have been considered at most of the Council meetings following introduction of the new form.

The actual number of nominations considered at each meeting, and the resulting success rate, is provided to media outlets as part of the embargoed information supplied prior to each honours list announcement. The same data is published as an annual figure in each Annual Report of the Office of the Official Secretary to the Governor-General. ²

Chart 7: OA nominations: average received per calendar month, 2017-21



Consistent with the pattern reported in the previous five-year report, the volume of nominations received per month tends to increase after each honours list announcement – Australia Day (26 January) and The Queen’s Birthday (second Monday in June). The volumes for 2017-21 are uniformly higher than in the previous report.

4. Order of Australia: gender balance in recipients and nominees

On average, over the past five years, women received 38.0% of all awards (see **Chart 9**). In the last honours list in this period, announced on The Queen's Birthday 2021, women received approximately 44% of all awards and appointments in the General Division, the highest proportion in the history of the Order of Australia.

Chart 8: OA proportion of female recipients 2017-21

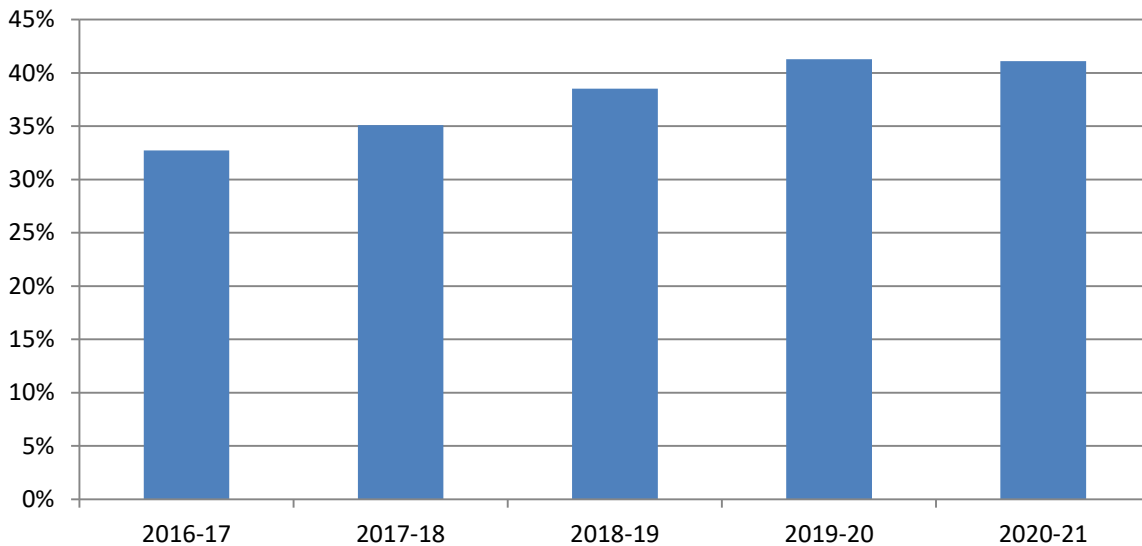


Chart 9: OA gender balance, all recipients 2017-21

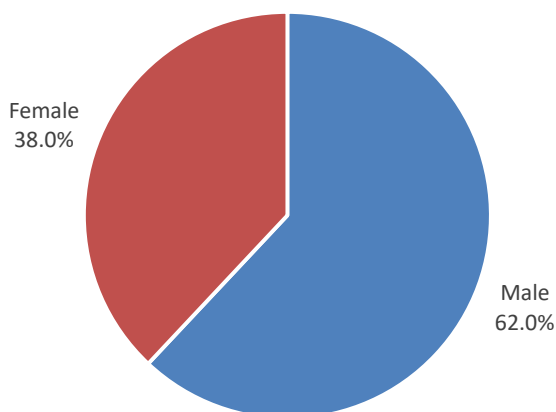
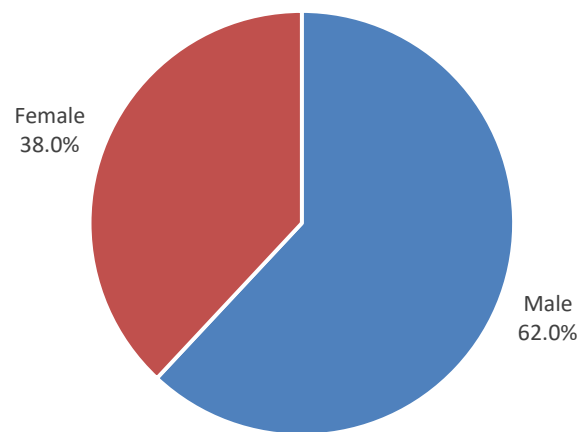


Chart 10: OA gender balance, all nominees 2017-21



5. Order of Australia: nomination and award trends by category

In preparing nominations for consideration by the Council, the Secretariat groups them according to category of service. There are thirty major categories, and most have sub-categories, as well as an “other”, and/or a “general” category, to be able to accommodate unusual or new types of service or achievement. Grouping nominations in this way assists the Council to consider like nominations together. Categories also serve as a means to monitor participation in the honours program by various industry and community sectors. However, categorising nominations does not create an advantage for any group or sector. The Council’s approach is to consider each nomination on its individual merits.

The following pages include charts illustrating volumes and trends for each major category, by gender and award level. The introductory text lists any included sub-categories. There is also a description of volume. For this report, a volume of under 100 for the five years is described as “small”, between 100 and 500 is “medium”, and over 500 is “large”. The description of the volume applies to the volume of nominations received, but does not imply any expectation of future trends. For example, it is possible that a surge of nominations, or a drop, could alter the volume description of a particular category in future.

The data is broken down into individual meetings, giving ten data points for the five years. “ADXX” is data for an Australia Day honours list, while “QBXX” is for a Queen’s Birthday honours list. A financial year figure can be derived by combining the AD and QB figures for a given year.

It is important to note that each nomination counted is the presentation of that nomination at a single meeting. This does not preclude the same nominee being presented at the next or a subsequent meeting, in cases where the Council decides to defer consideration, or where a new nomination for the same person is made at a later date; and this would mean the same nominee appears more than once in this data. Therefore, the volume of unique nominees is actually fewer than the total nominations presented in this data. It follows that a nomination not counted as successful at one meeting (because it was deferred) may be successful at a subsequent meeting. This presentation therefore overstates the number of unsuccessful nominations, though very minimally.

Award level profiles are given for each category, in raw numbers, by gender. Awards at the Knight/Dame level are not included in the data presented in these charts, because no appointments at that level were ever made on the recommendation of the Council. Where applicable, appointments recommended by the Prime Minister, prior to the level being removed in October 2015, were noted in the previous five-year report.

A success trend line by gender is also given for “medium” and “large” categories, but is not a meaningful chart for the “small” categories.

Architecture

This is a small category, with 52 nominations considered in the period 2017-21. It includes two sub-categories: Architecture and Town Planning.

Chart 11: Architecture – nominations and awards by gender, 2017-21

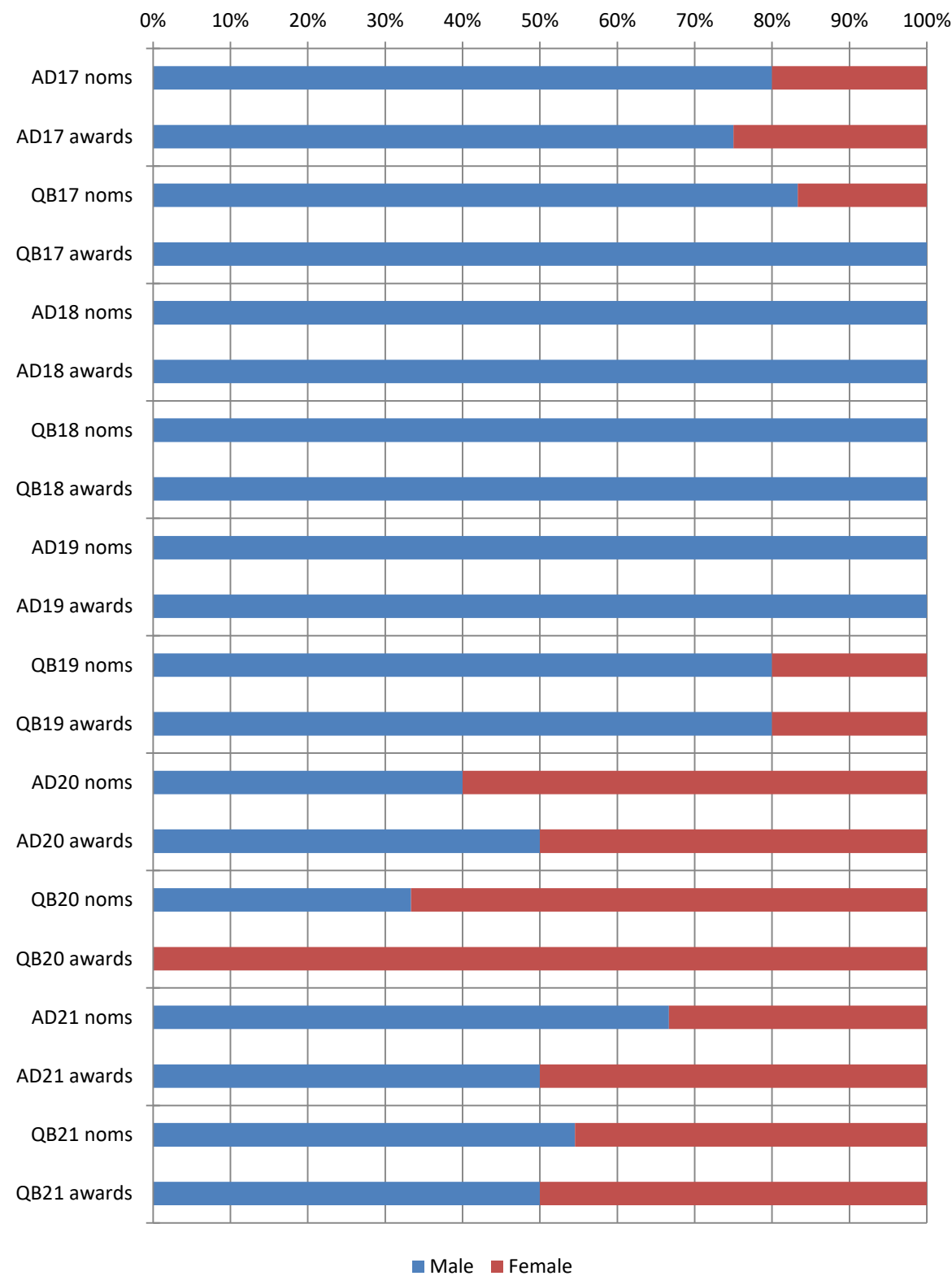
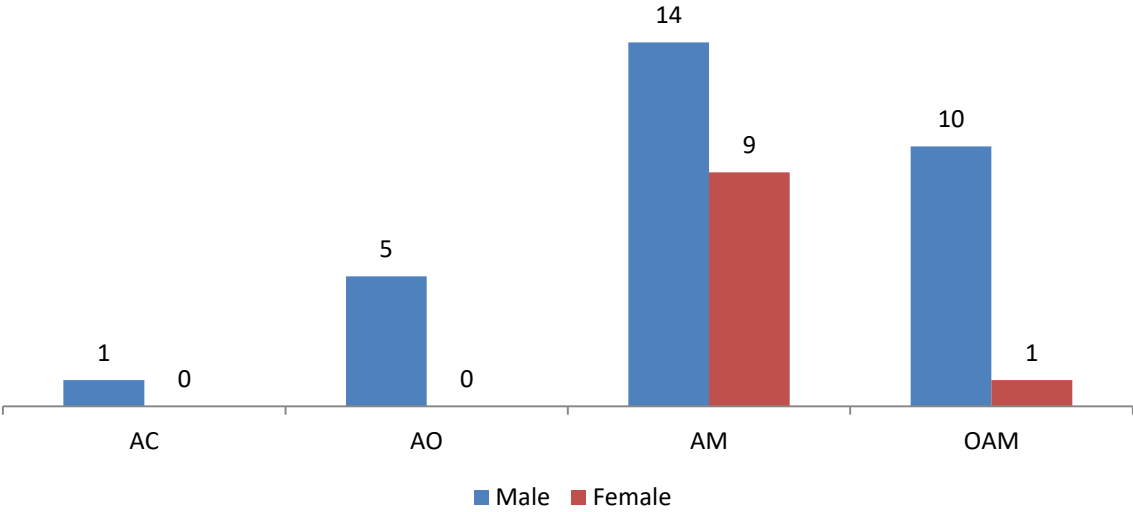


Chart 12: Architecture – awards made, by level and gender, 2017-21



The Arts

This is a large category, with 591 nominations considered in the period 2017-21. It includes the following sub-categories: Acting/Theatre, Administration, Art, Dance, Entertainment, General, Literature, Museums & Galleries, Music, Opera, Photography, Sculpture/Pottery/Artisan/ Crafts/Trades, and Other.

Chart 13: The Arts – nominations and awards by gender, 2017-21

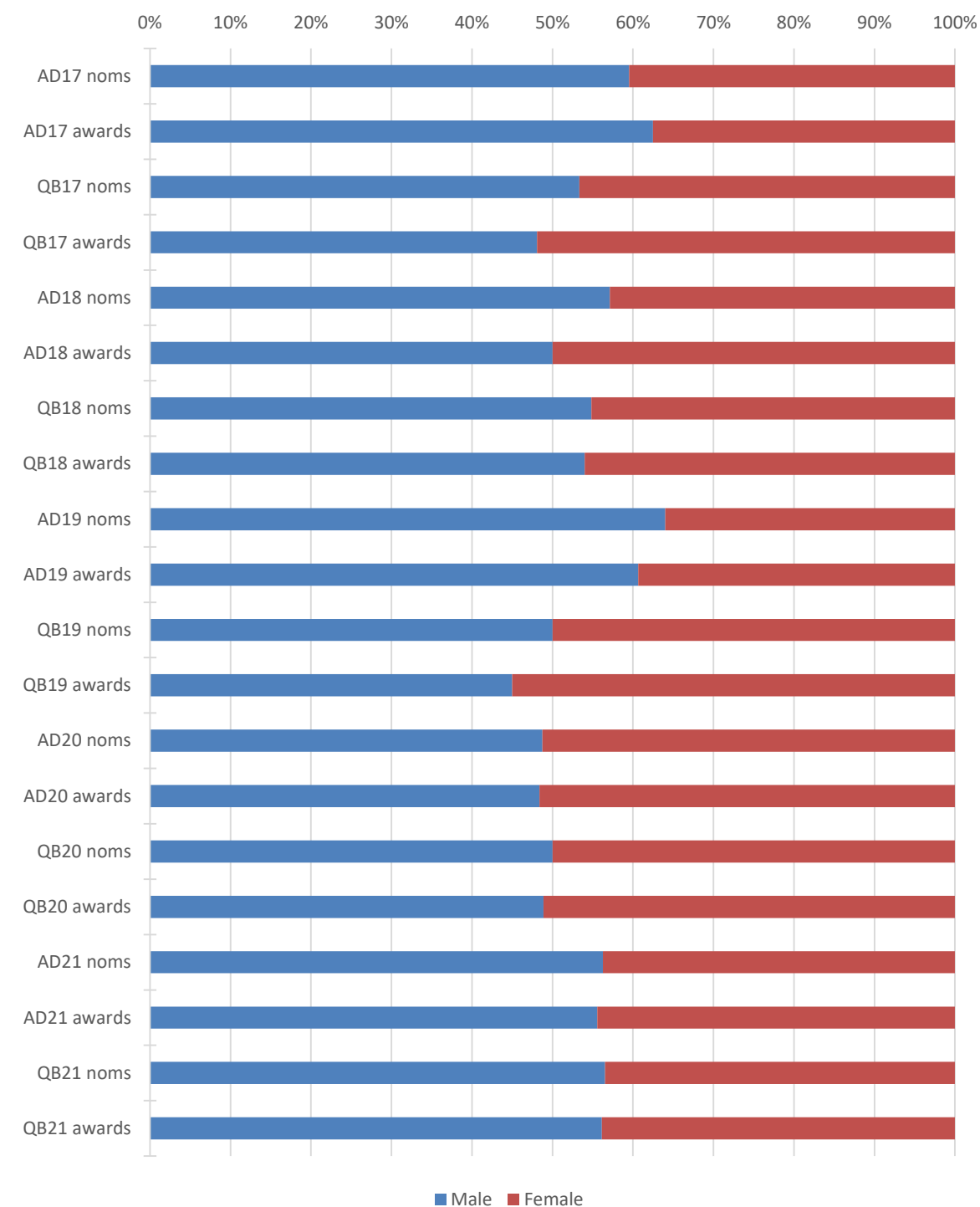


Chart 14: The Arts – awards made, by level and gender, 2017-21

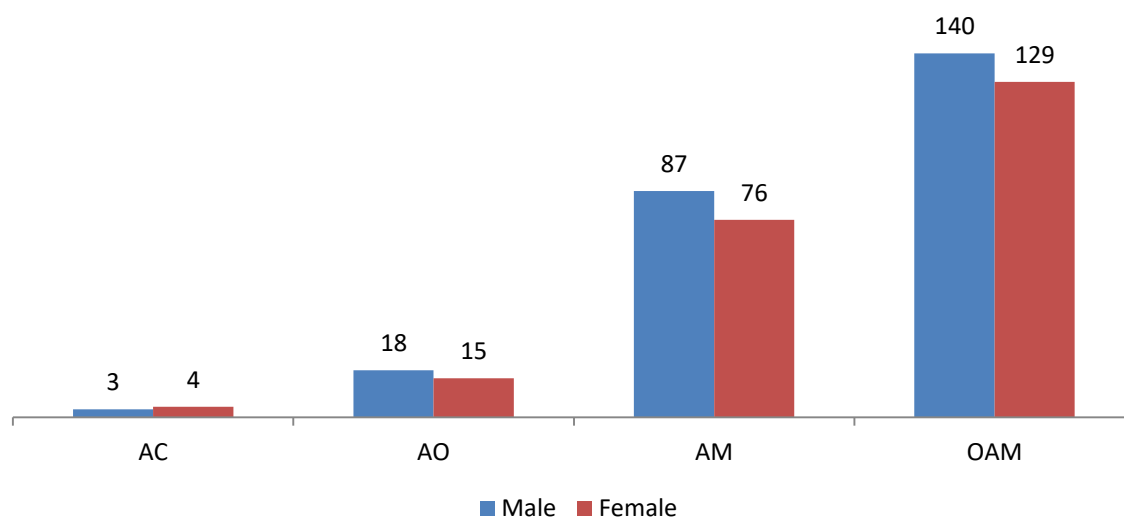
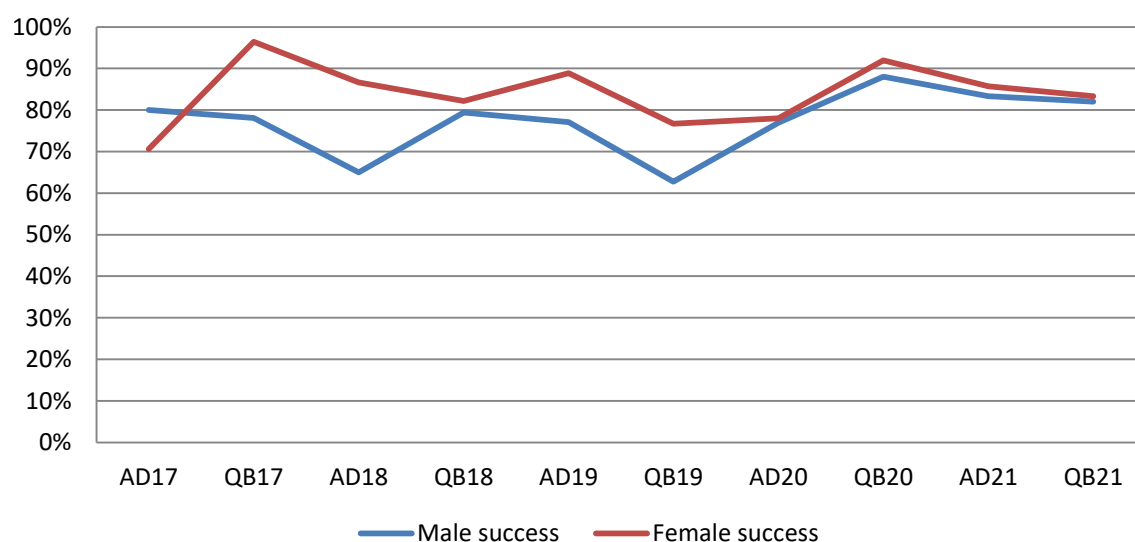


Chart 15: The Arts – success rate by gender, 2017-21



Building and Construction Industry

This is a small category, with 56 nominations considered in the period 2017-21. It has no sub-categories.

Chart 16: Building and Construction – nominations and awards by gender, 2017-21

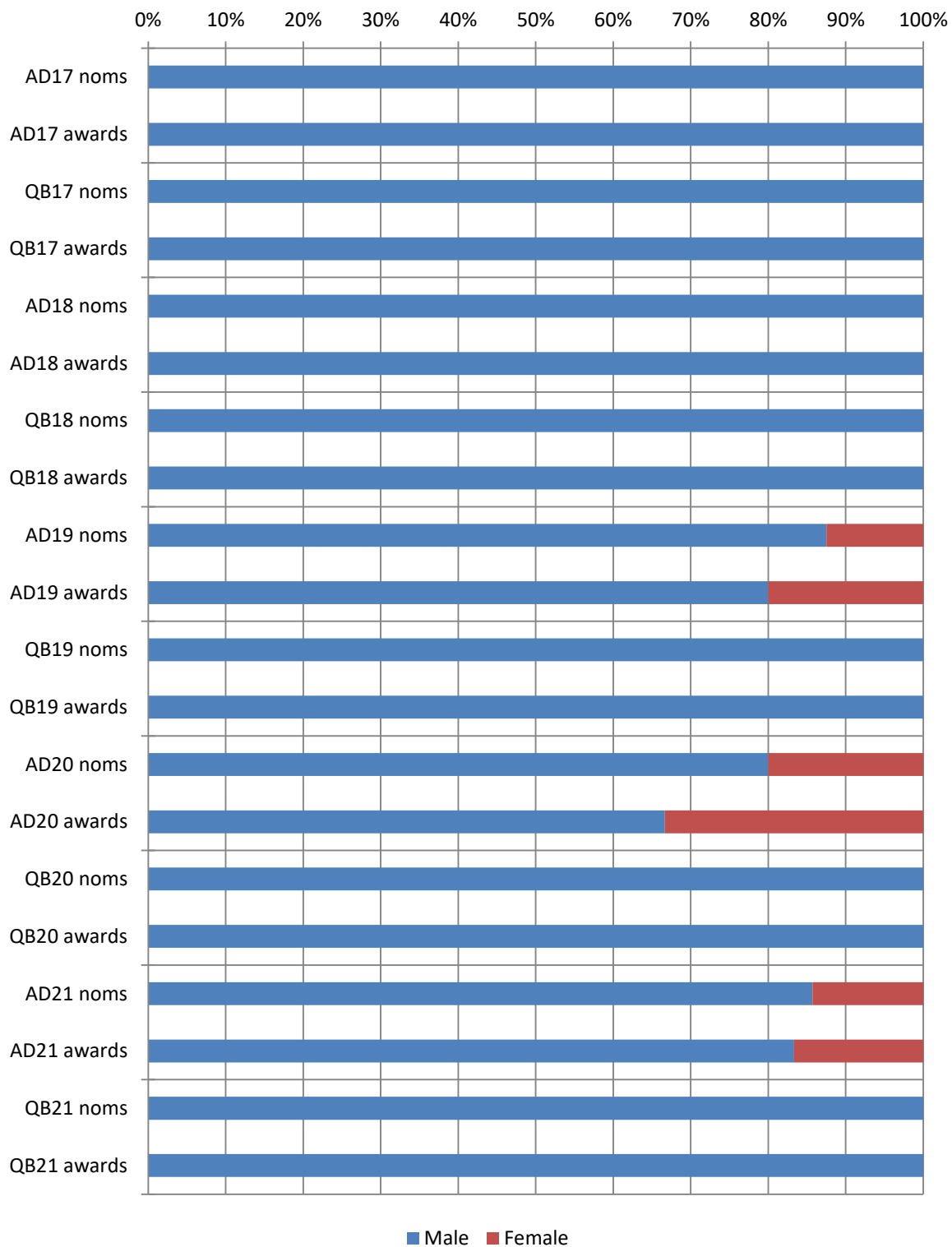
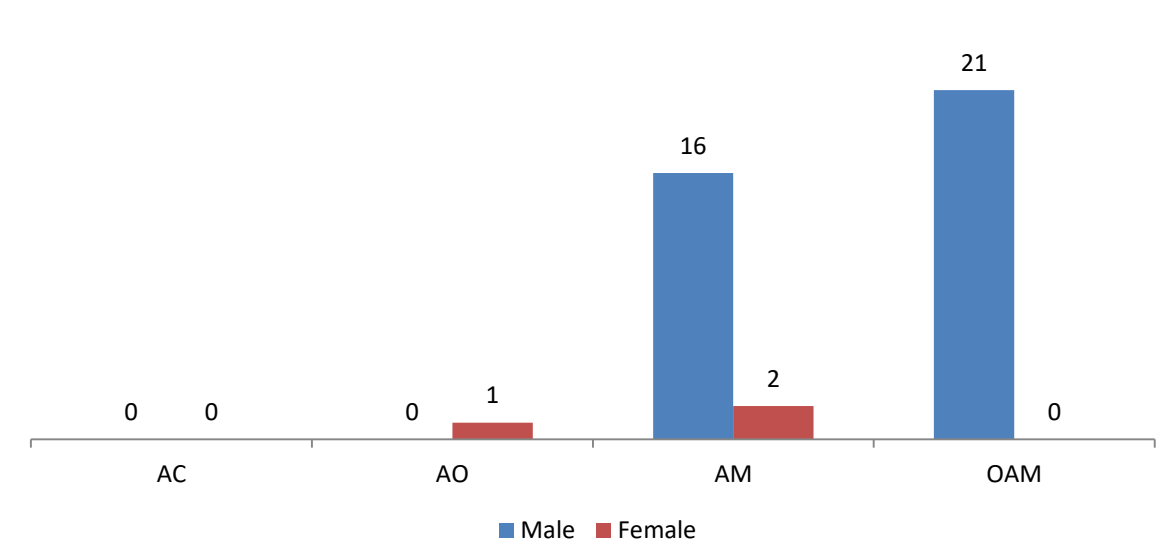


Chart 17: Building and Construction – awards made, by level and gender, 2017-21



Business & Commerce

This is a medium category, with 448 nominations considered in the period 2017-21. It includes the following sub-categories: Accountancy, Finance, General, Industry, Insurance, International Trade, Manufacturing, Real Estate, Retailing, and Other.

Chart 18: Business & Commerce – nominations and awards by gender, 2017-21

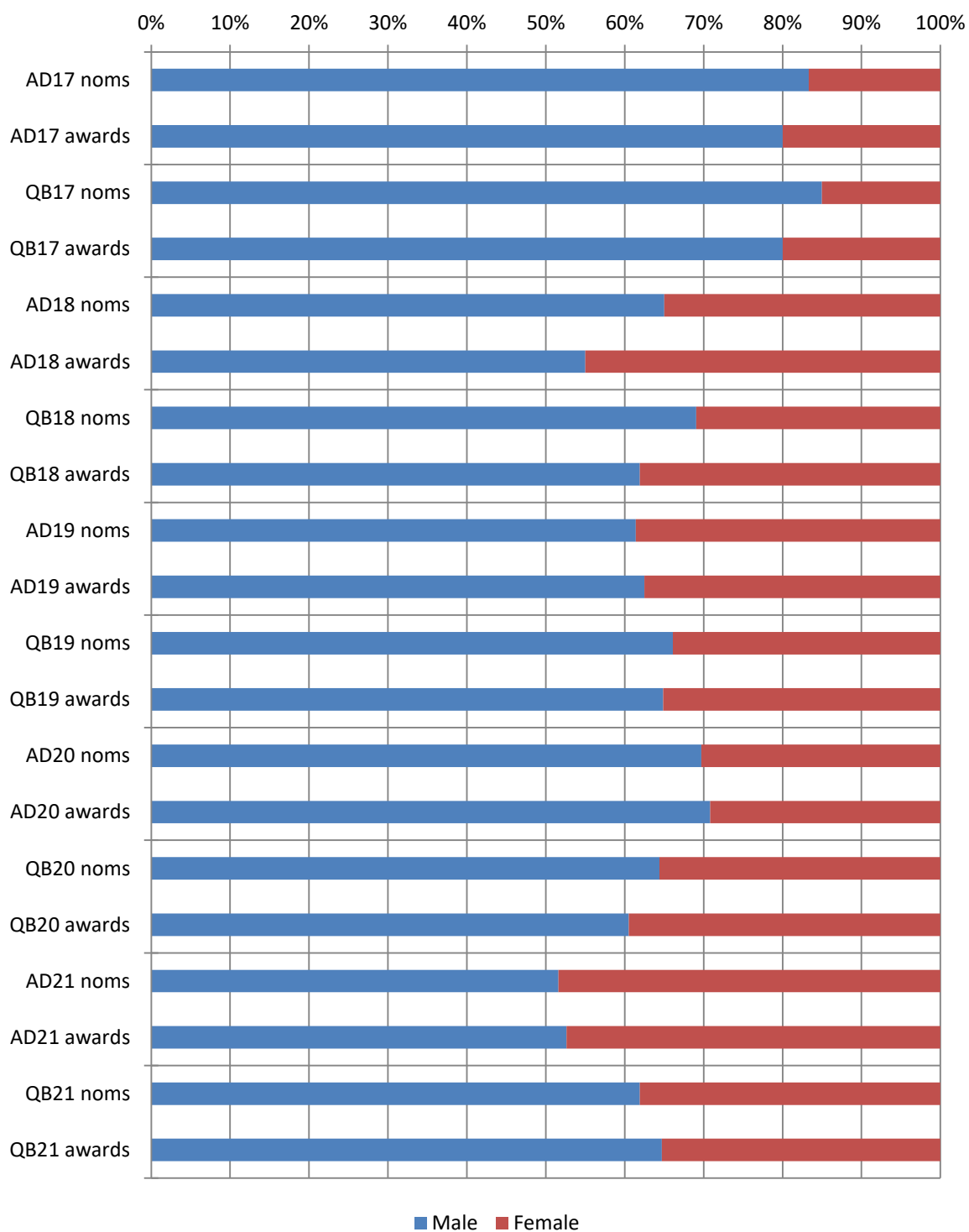


Chart 19: Business & Commerce – awards made, by level and gender, 2017-21

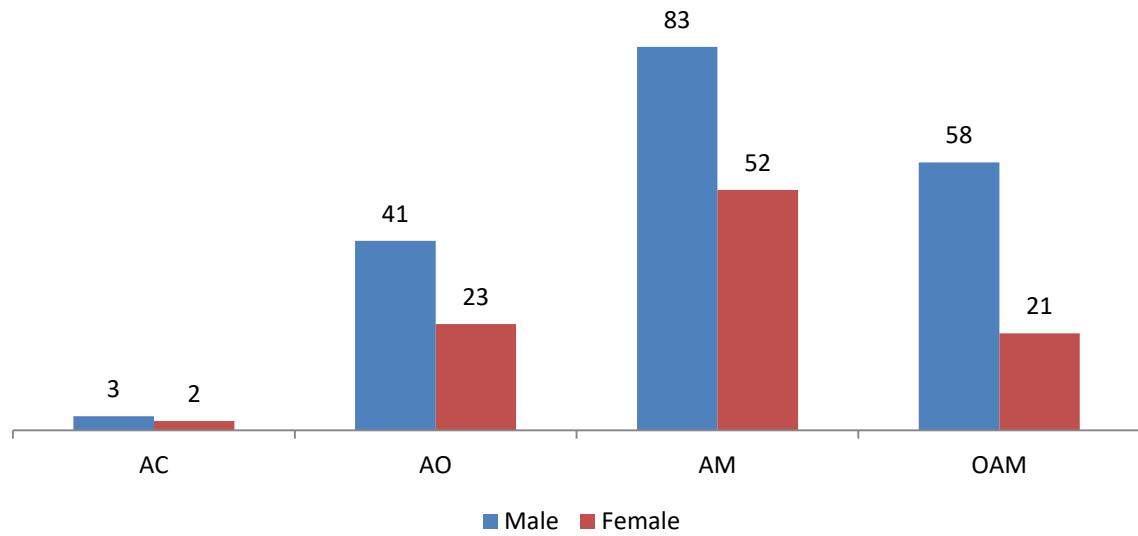
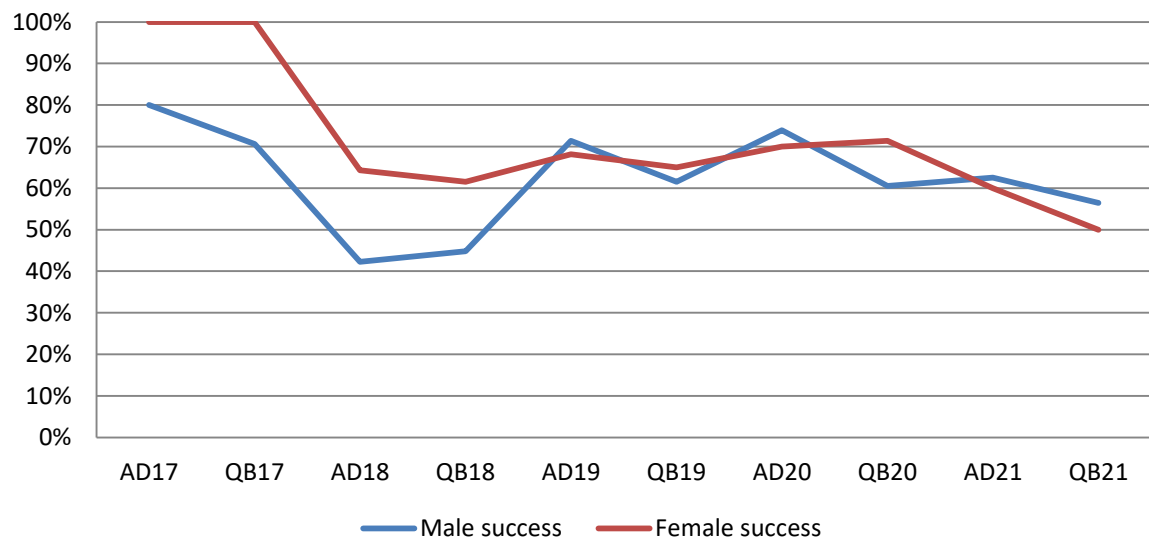


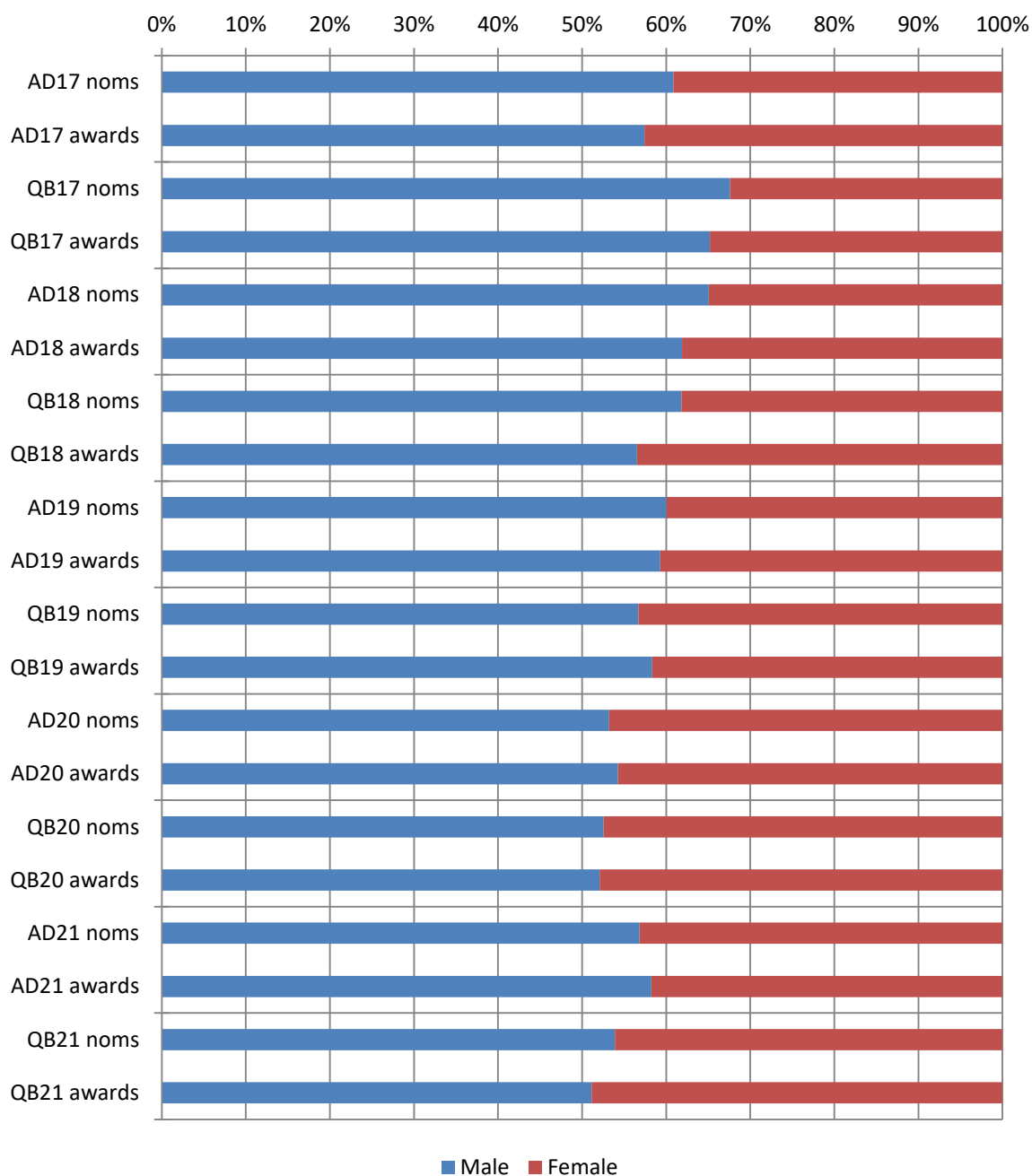
Chart 20: Business & Commerce – success rate by gender, 2017-21



Community

This is the largest category, with 4,940 nominations considered in the period 2017-21. It includes the following sub-categories: Alcohol & Drug Abuse, Aged Welfare, Celebrations, Charitable, Children, Church, Disasters, Ex-Service Welfare, Fire & Emergency Services, General, Health, History, Hospital, Indigenous, Jewish, Local, Music, Peace, Service Groups, Social Welfare, Surf Lifesaving, Women's Affairs, Youth and Other.

Chart 21: Community – nominations and awards by gender, 2017-21



The gender of one nominee for QB19, and one nominee and awardee for QB21, was either specified non-binary or not specified.

Chart 22: Community – awards made, by level and gender, 2017-21

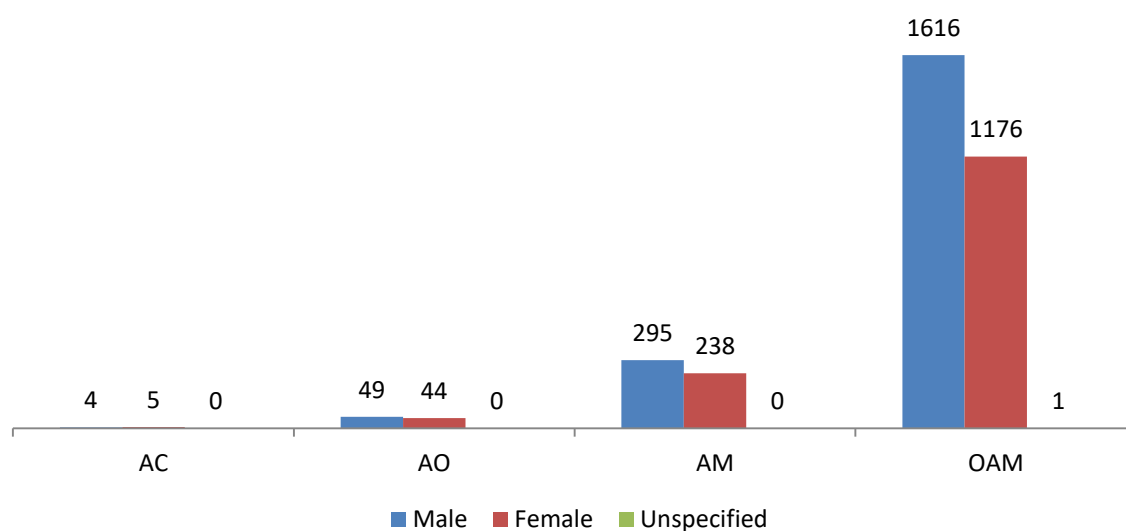
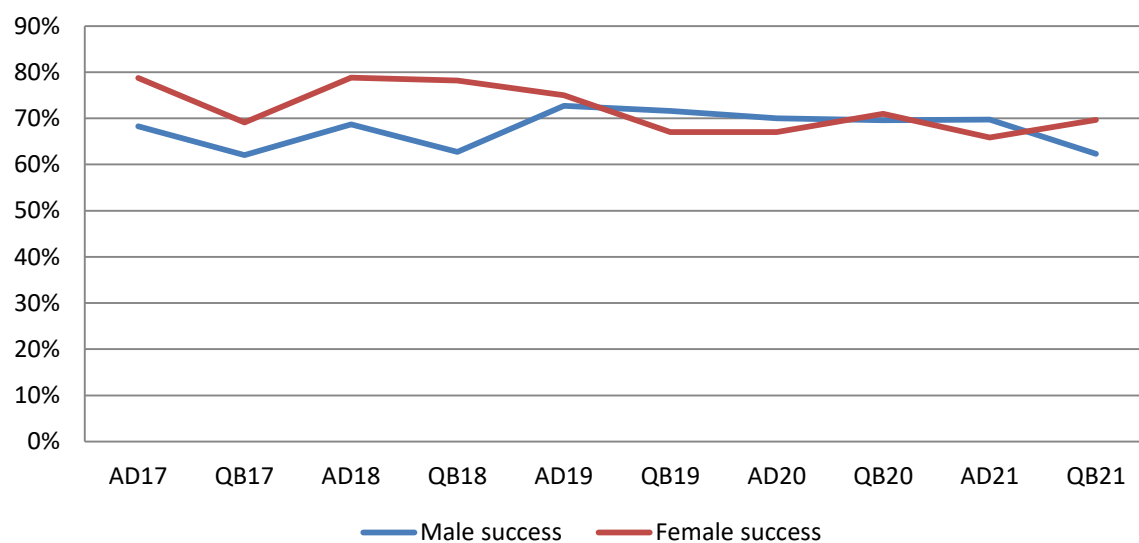


Chart 23: Community – success rate by gender, 2017-21



Conservation and the Environment

This is a medium category, with 258 nominations considered in the period 2017-21. It has no sub-categories.

Chart 24: Conservation and the Environment – nominations and awards by gender, 2017-21

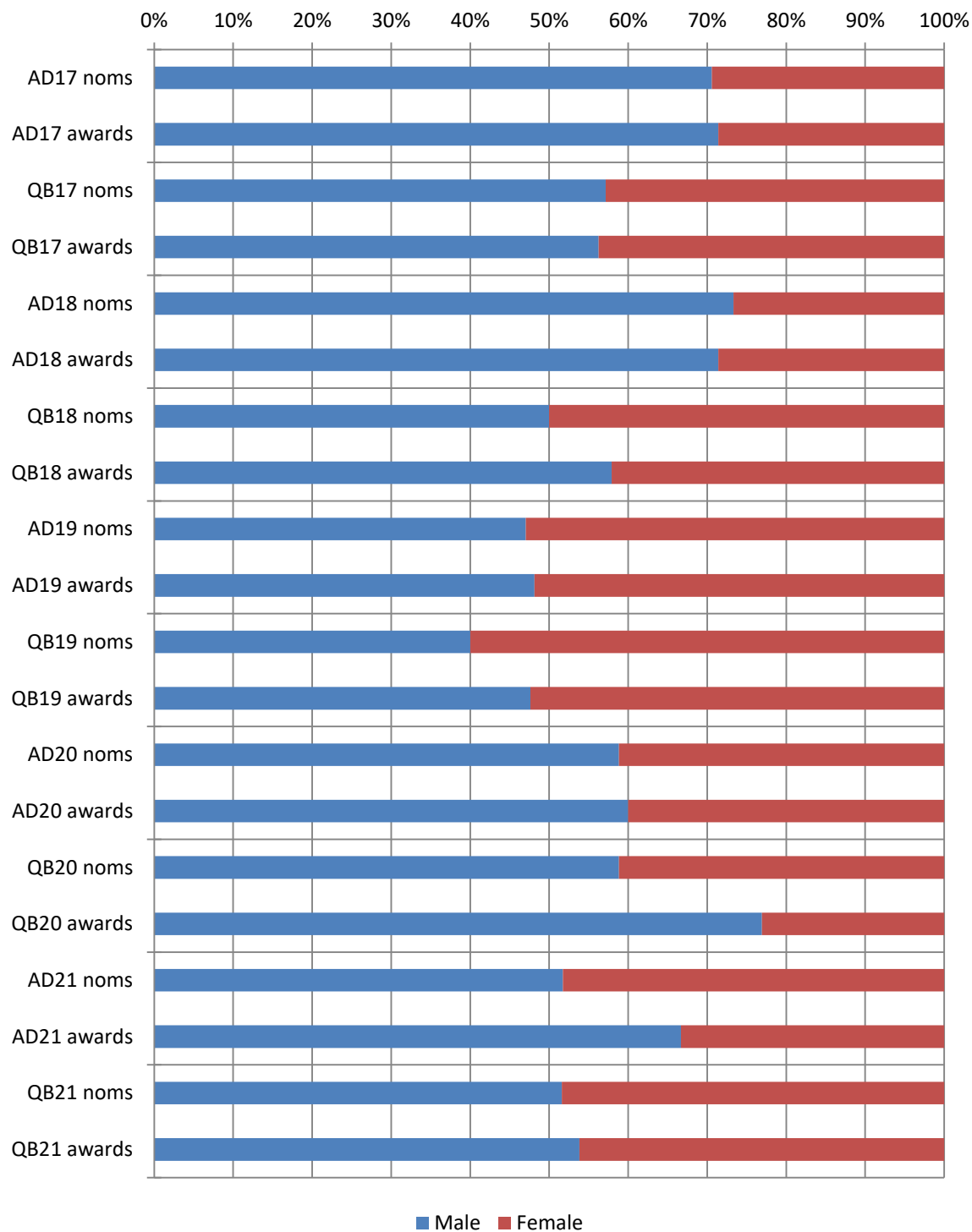


Chart 25: Conservation and the Environment – awards made, by level and gender, 2017-21

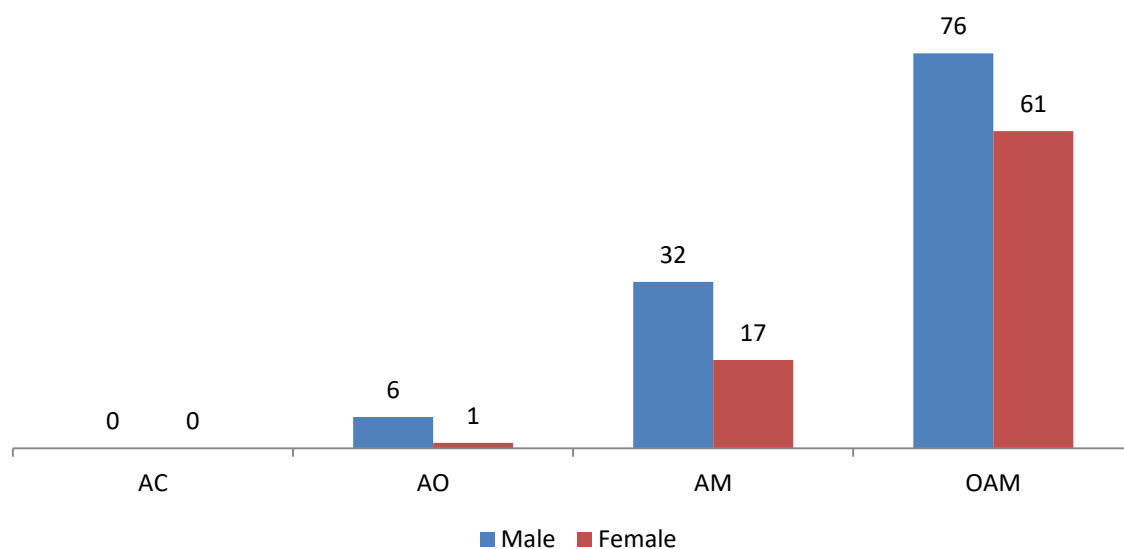
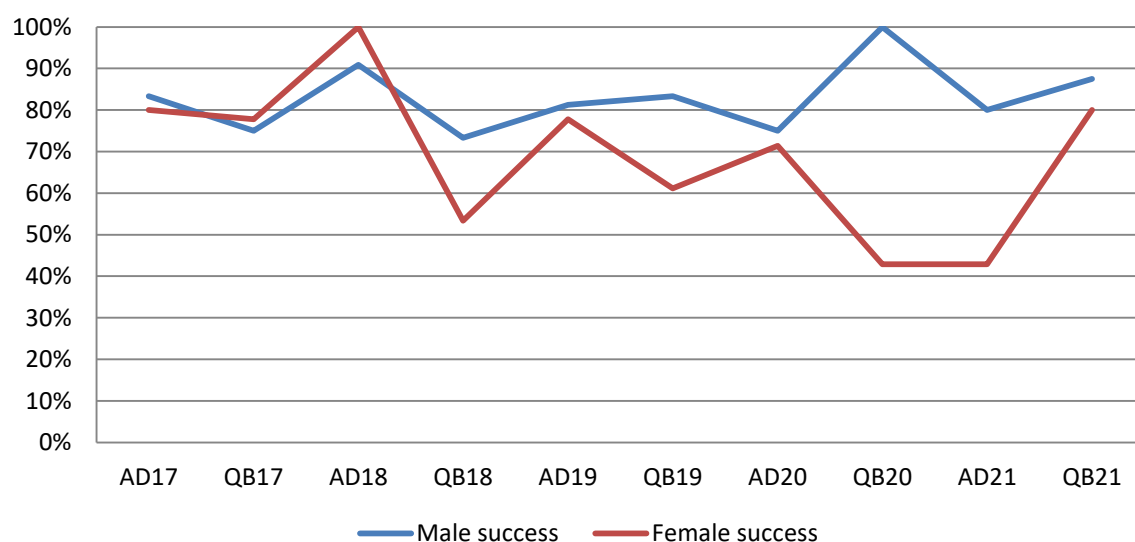


Chart 26: Conservation and the Environment – success rate by gender, 2017-21



Dentistry

This is a small category, with 51 nominations considered in the period 2017-21. It has no sub-categories.

Chart 27: Dentistry – nominations and awards by gender, 2017-21

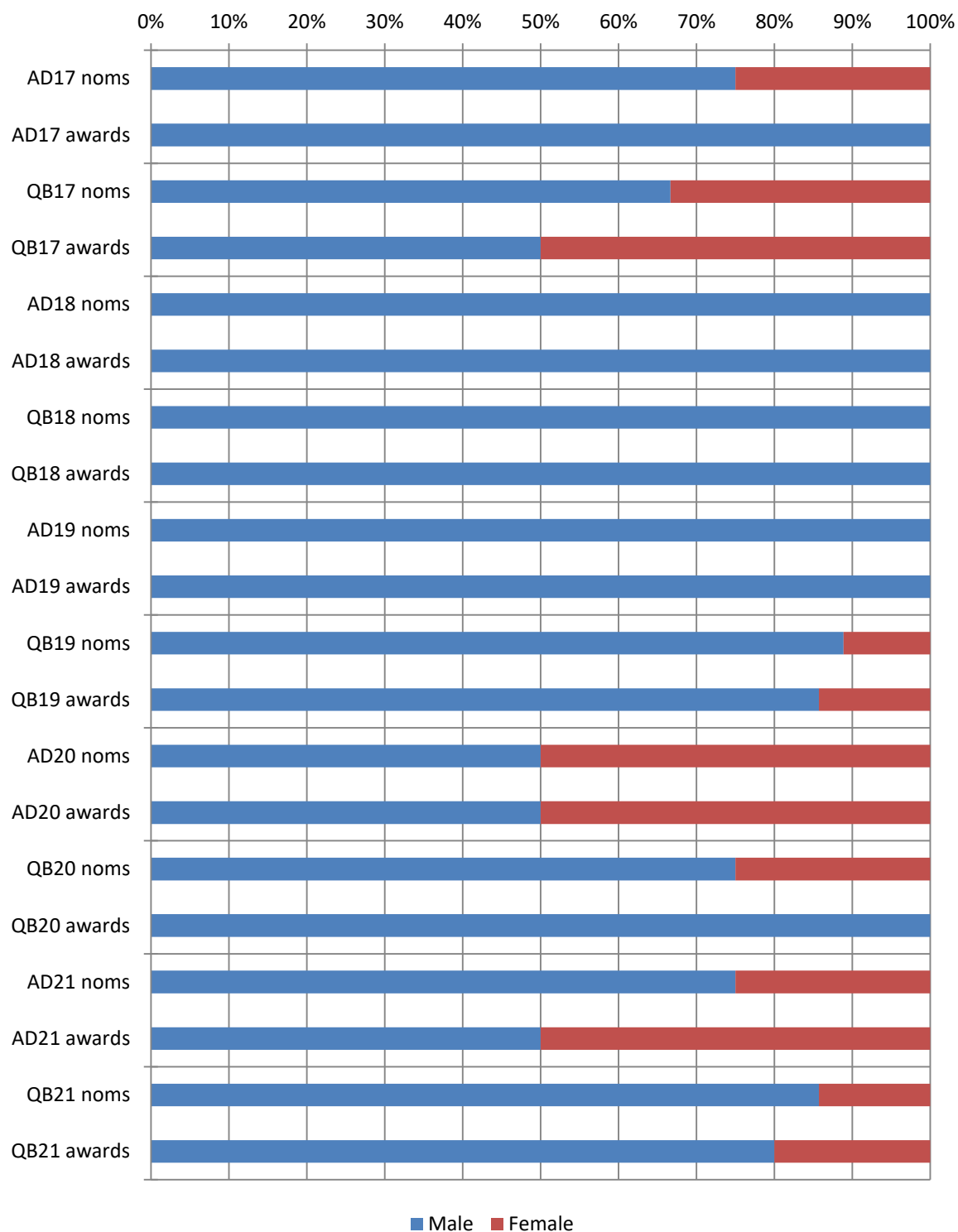
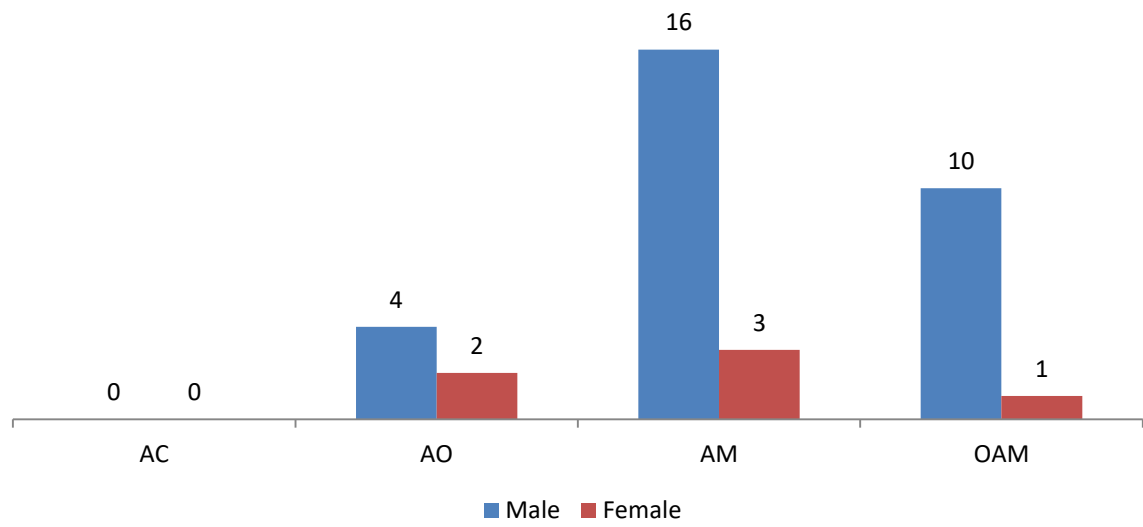


Chart 28: Dentistry – awards made, by level and gender, 2017-21



Disabled

This is a medium category, with 134 nominations considered in the period 2017-21. It includes the following sub-categories: General, Hearing Impaired, Intellectually, Physically, and Visually Impaired.

Chart 29: Disabled – nominations and awards by gender, 2017-21

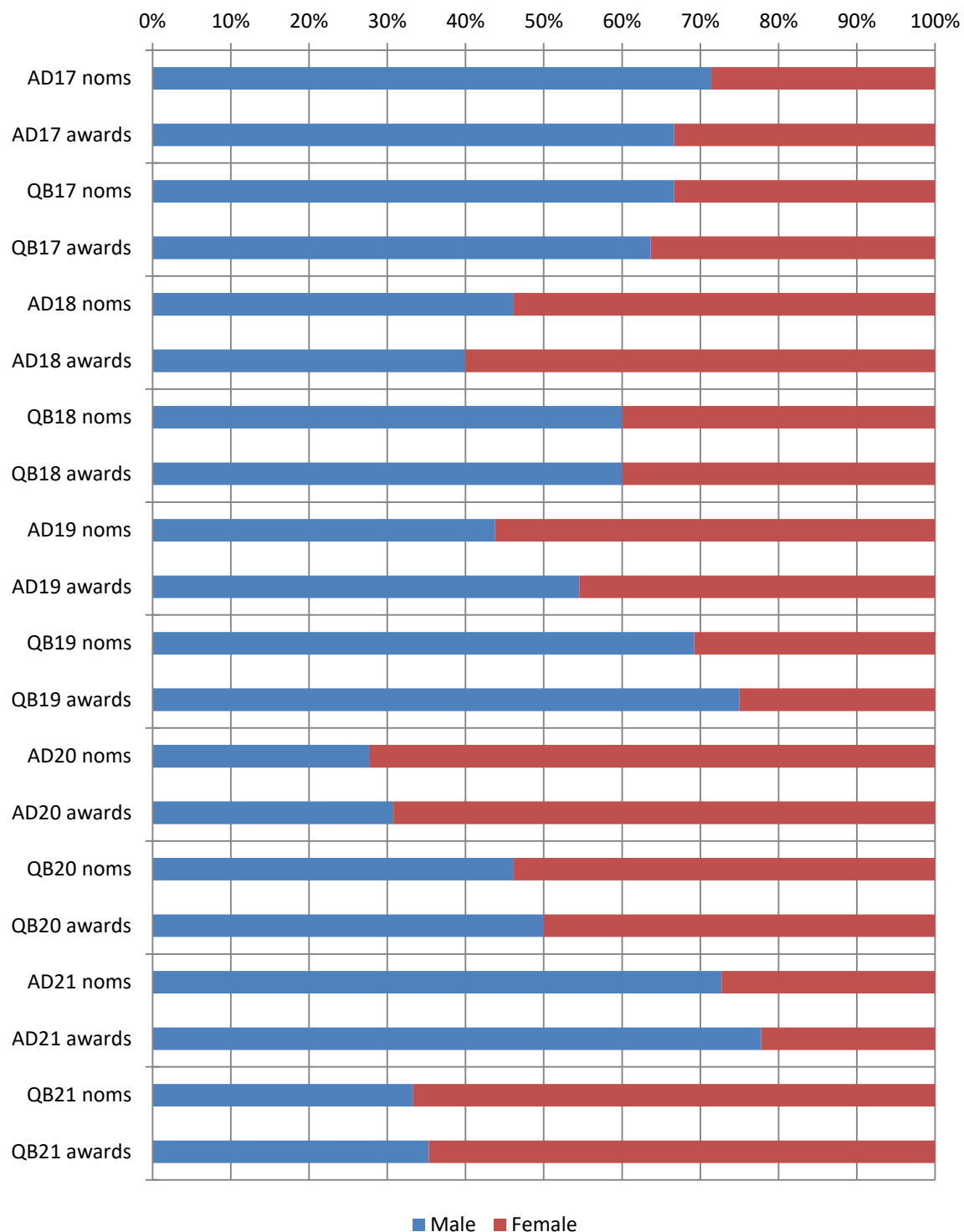


Chart 30: Disabled – awards made, by level and gender, 2017-21

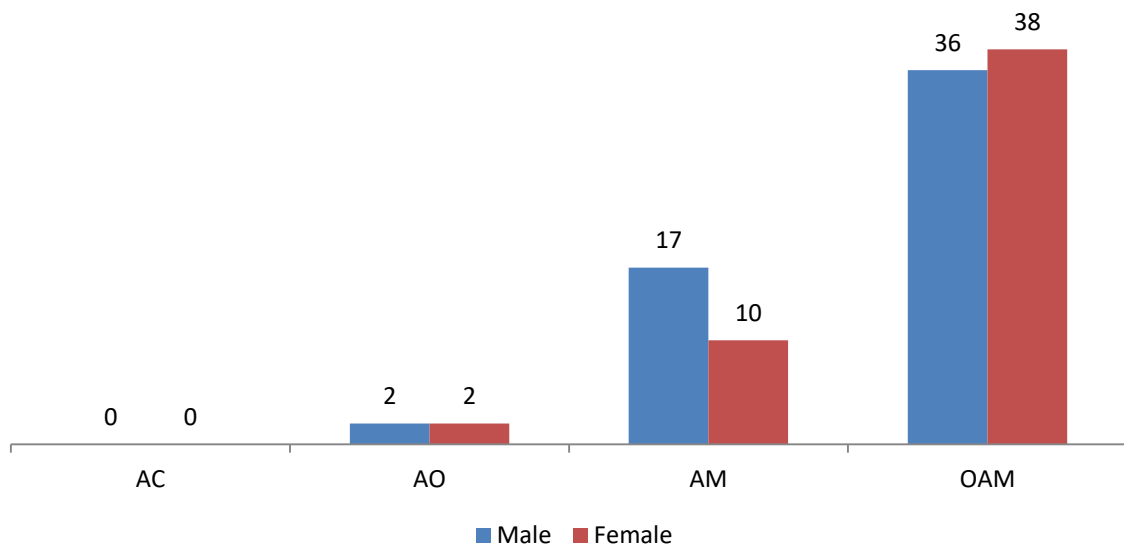
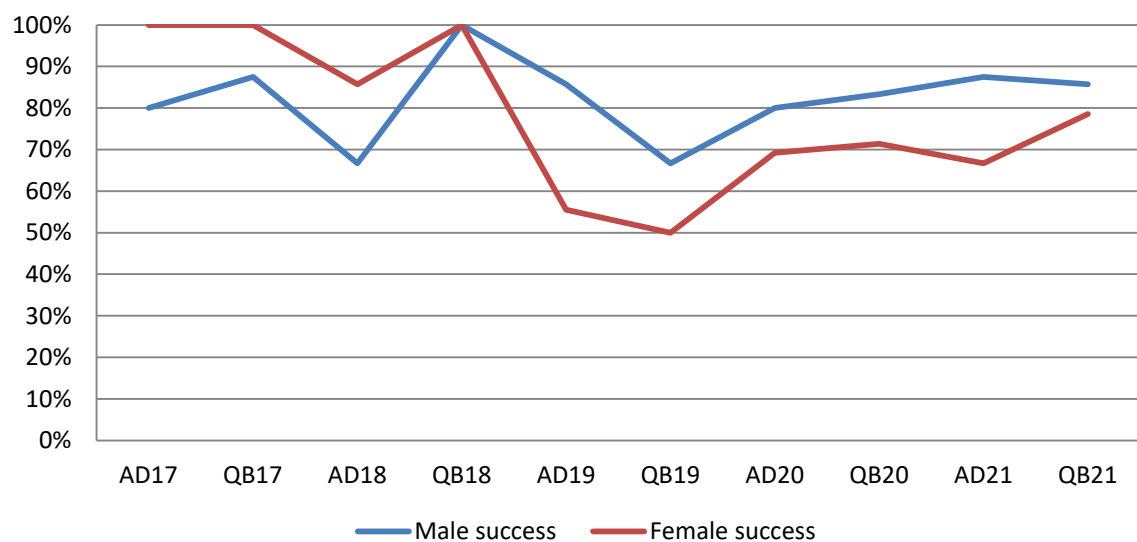


Chart 31: Disabled – success rate by gender, 2017-21



Education

This is a large category, with 572 nominations considered in the period 2017-21. It has no sub-categories.

Chart 32: Education – nominations and awards by gender, 2017-21

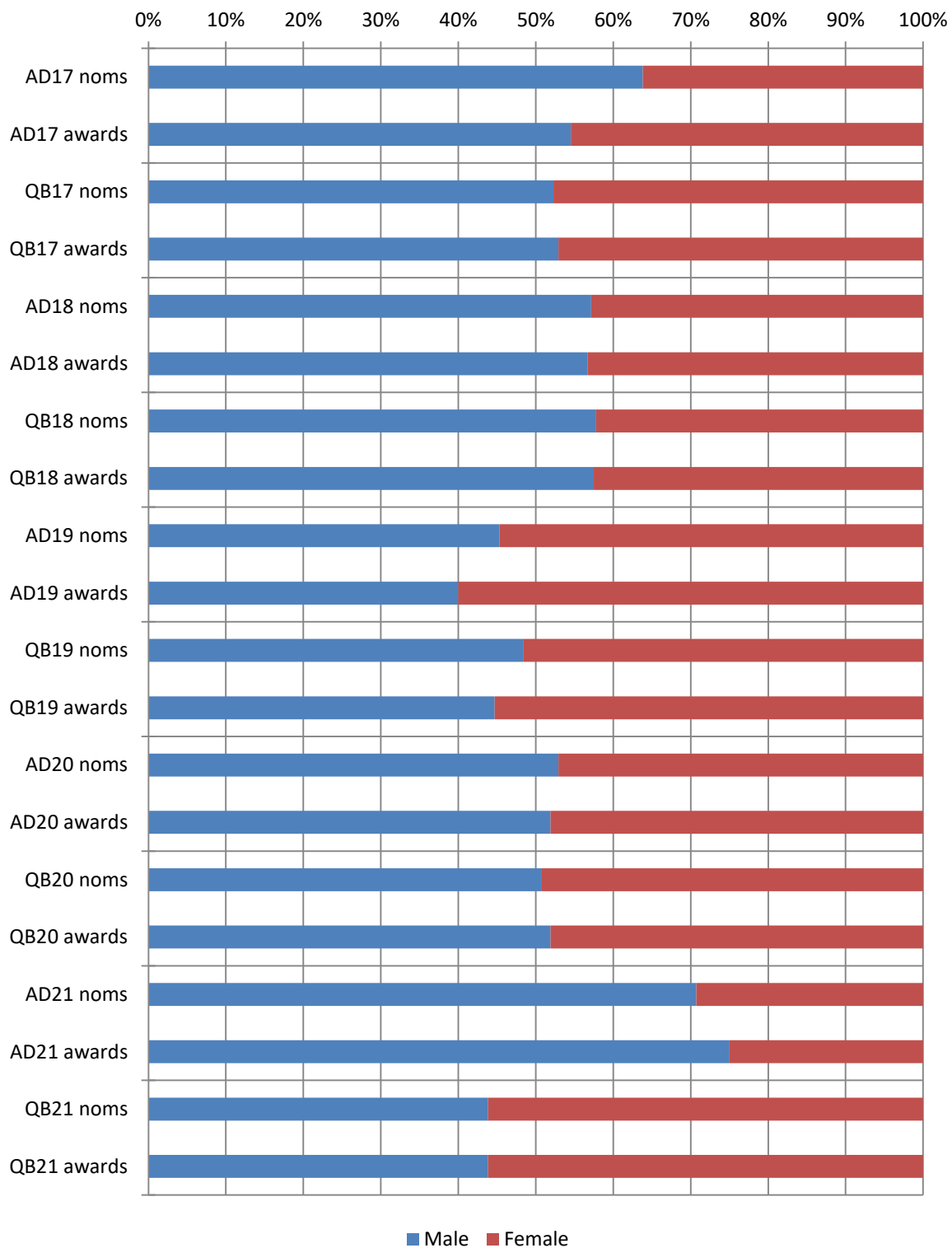


Chart 33: Education – awards made, by level and gender, 2017-21

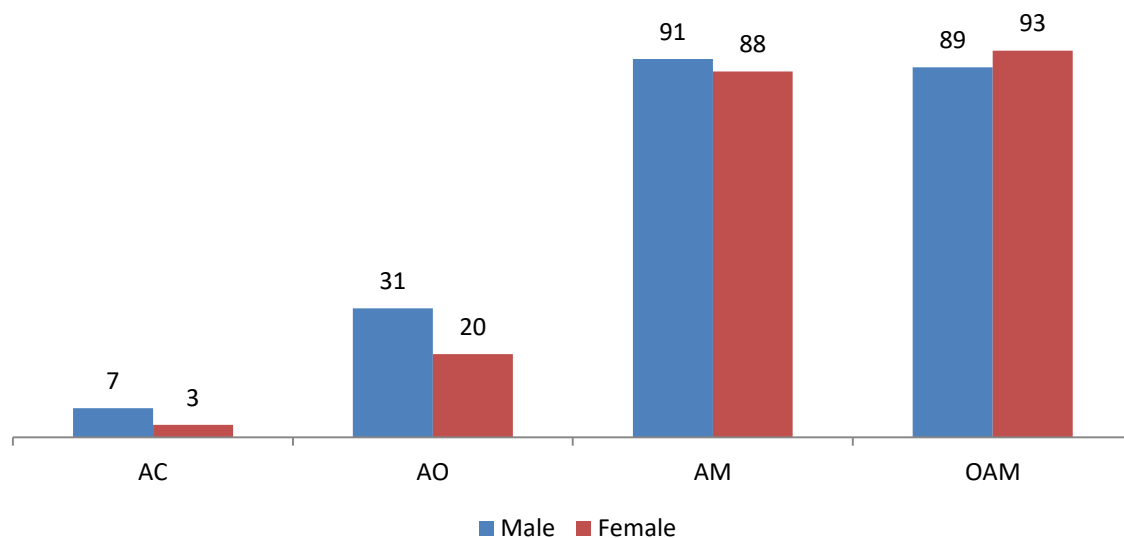
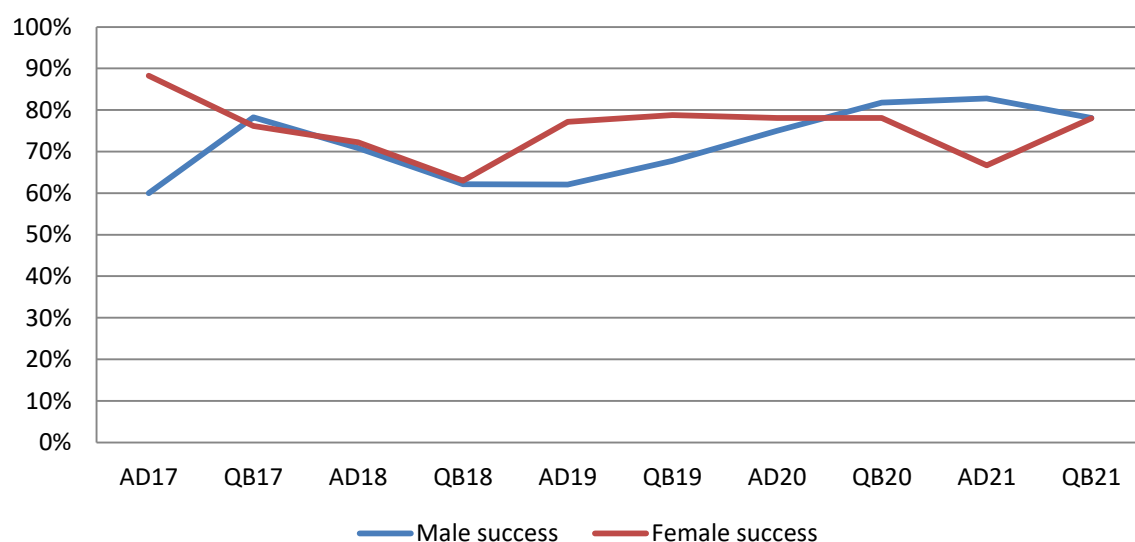


Chart 34: Education – success rate by gender, 2017-21



Engineering

This is a small category, with 93 nominations considered in the period 2017-21. It has no sub-categories.

Chart 35: Engineering – nominations and awards by gender, 2017-21

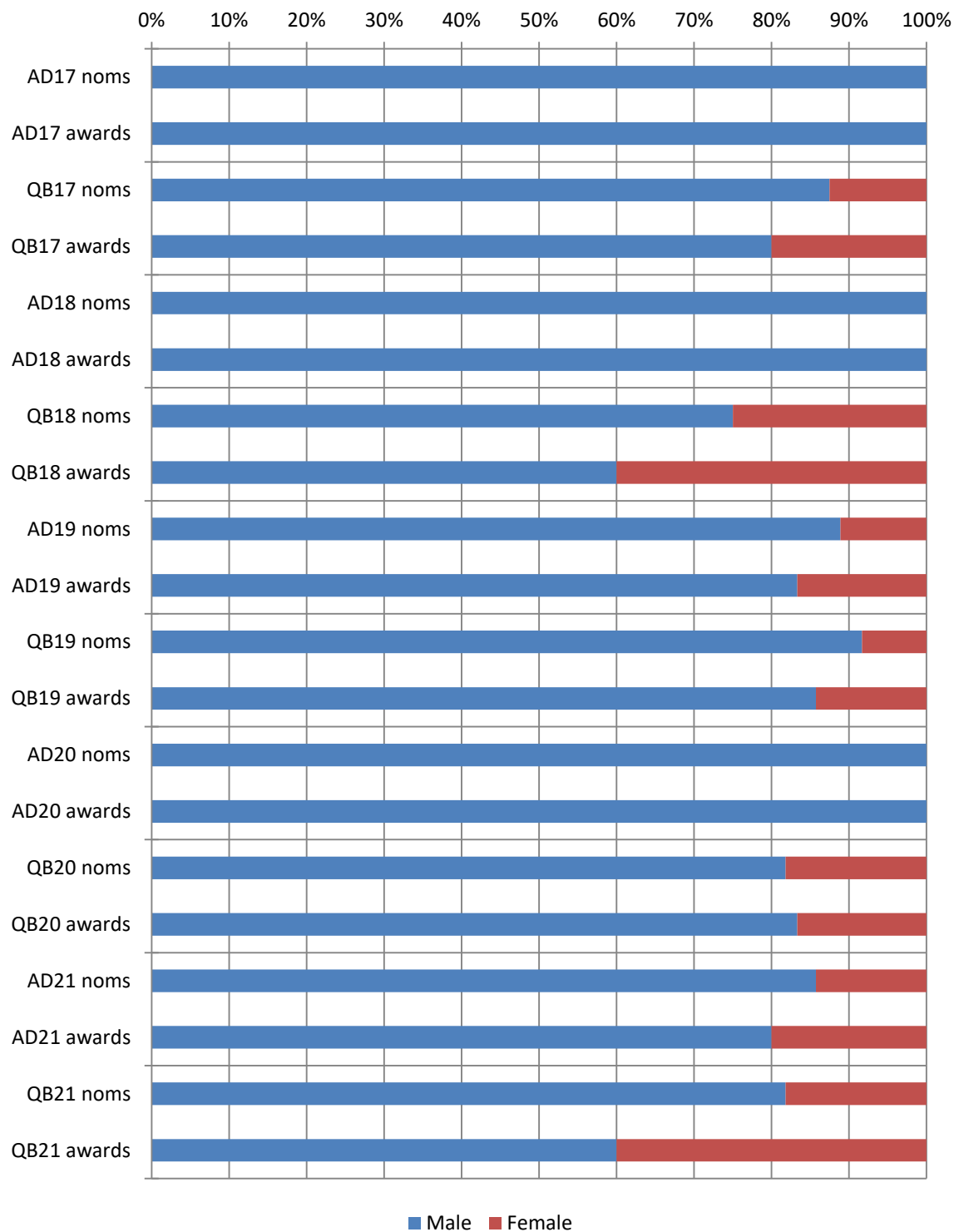
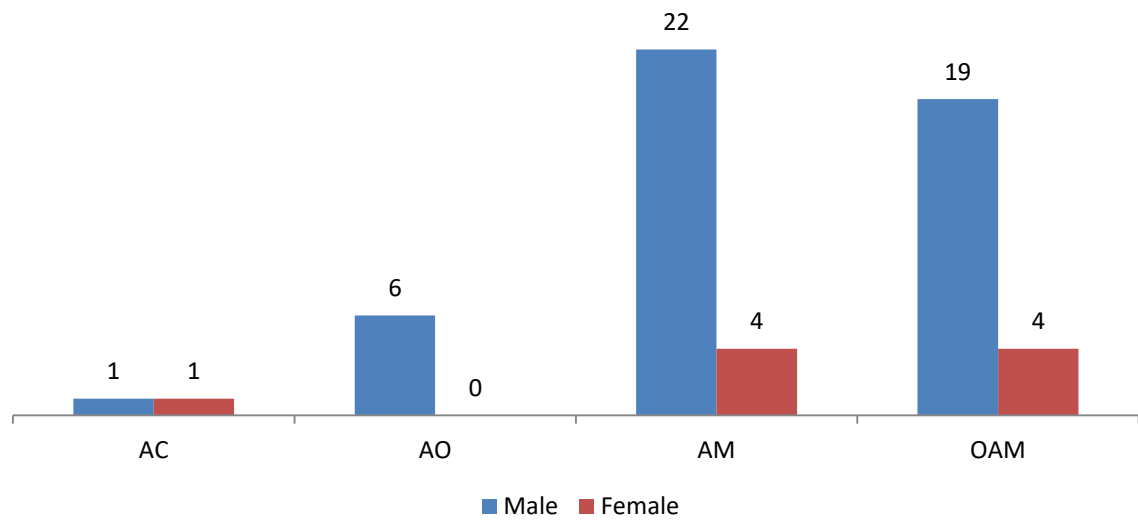


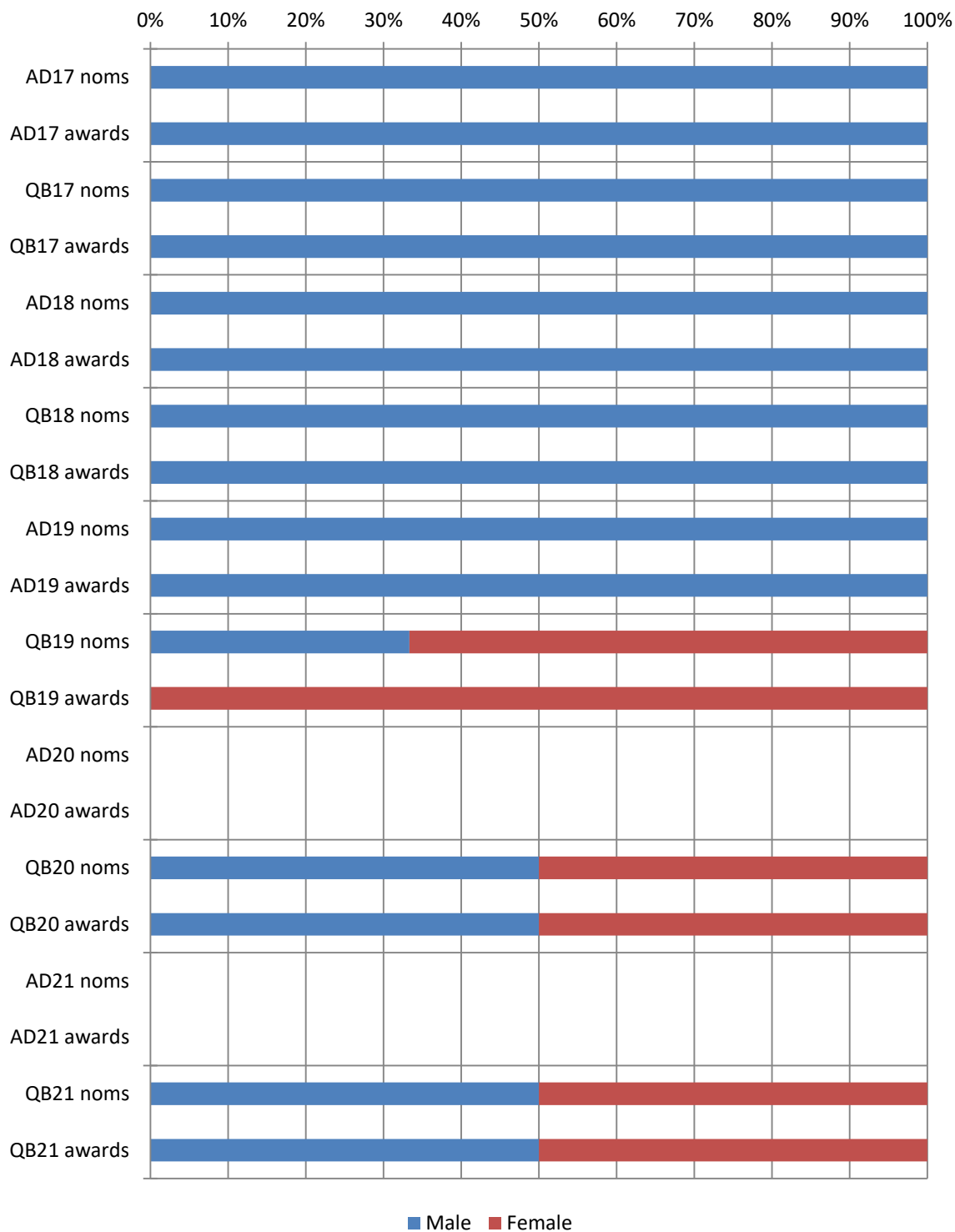
Chart 36: Engineering – awards made, by level and gender, 2017-21



Industrial Relations

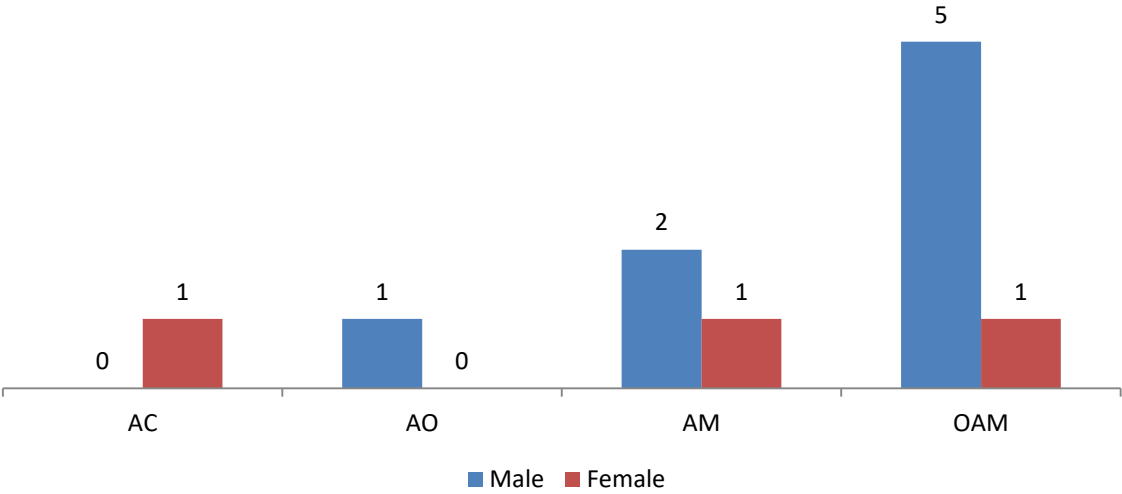
This is a small category, with 15 nominations considered in the period 2017-21. It has three sub-categories: Employers, General, and Trade Unions.

Chart 37: Industrial Relations – nominations and awards by gender, 2017-21



No nominations in this category were considered at the AD20 and AD21 meetings.

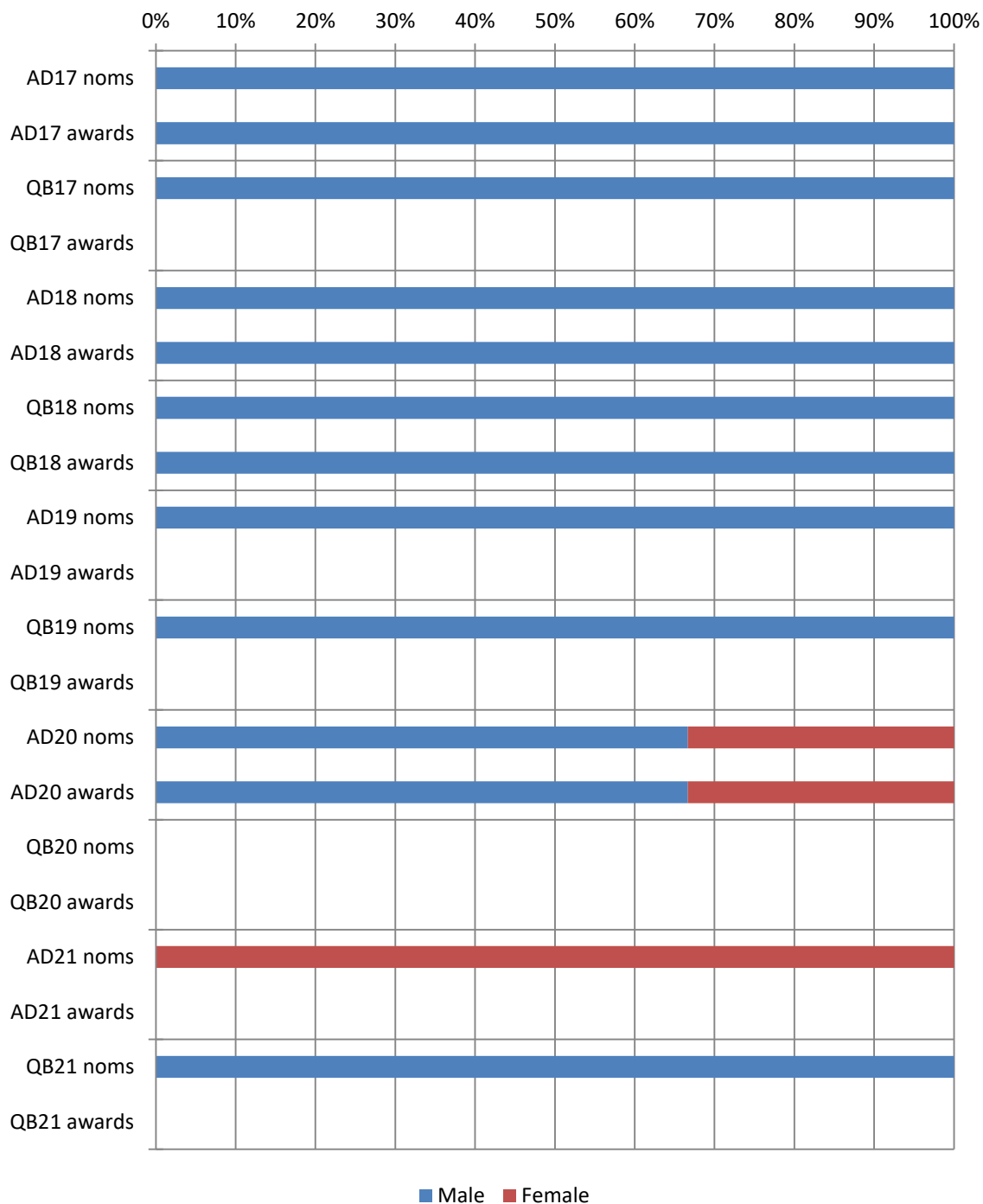
Chart 38: Industrial Relations – awards made, by level and gender, 2017-21



Information Technology

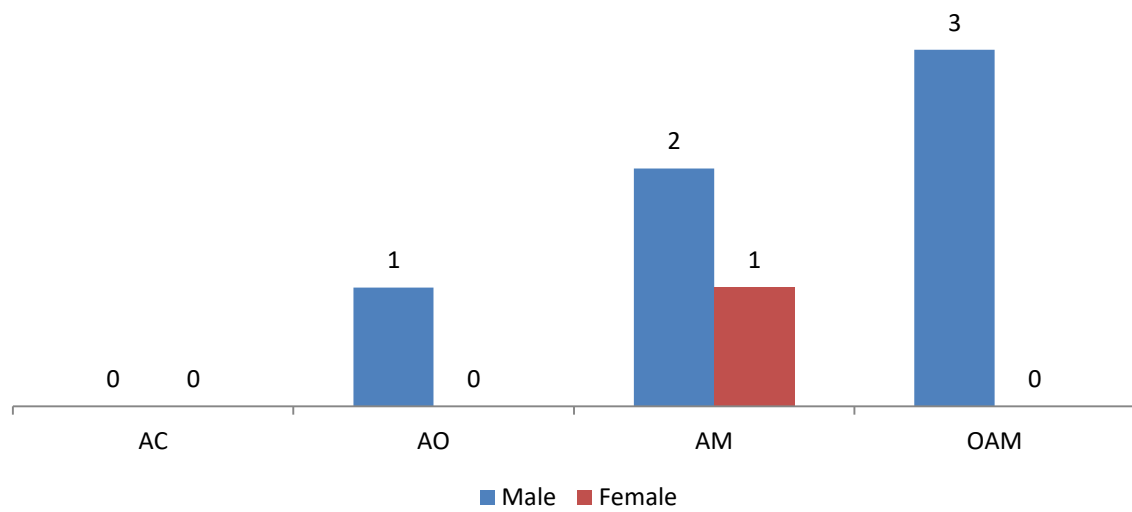
This is a small category, with 20 nominations considered in the period 2017-21. It has no sub-categories.

Chart 39: Information Technology – nominations and awards by gender, 2017-21



No awards in this category were recommended for the QB17, AD19, QB19, AD21 and QB21 honours lists. No nominations were considered in this category at the QB20 meeting.

Chart 40: Information Technology – awards made, by level and gender, 2017-21



International Relations

This is a medium category, with 176 nominations considered in the period 2017-21. It has no sub-categories.

Chart 41: International Relations – nominations and awards by gender, 2017-21

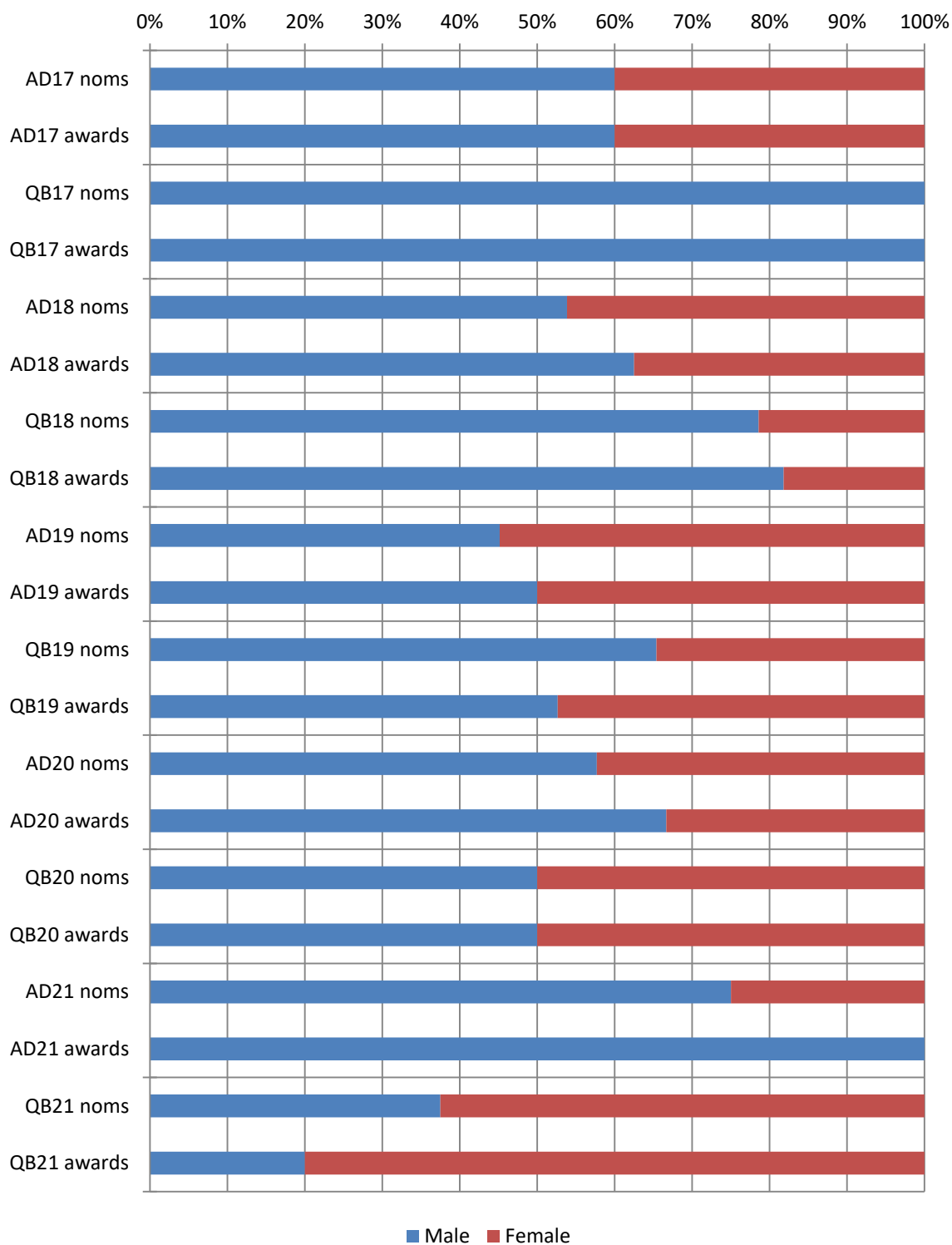


Chart 42: International Relations – awards made, by level and gender, 2017-21

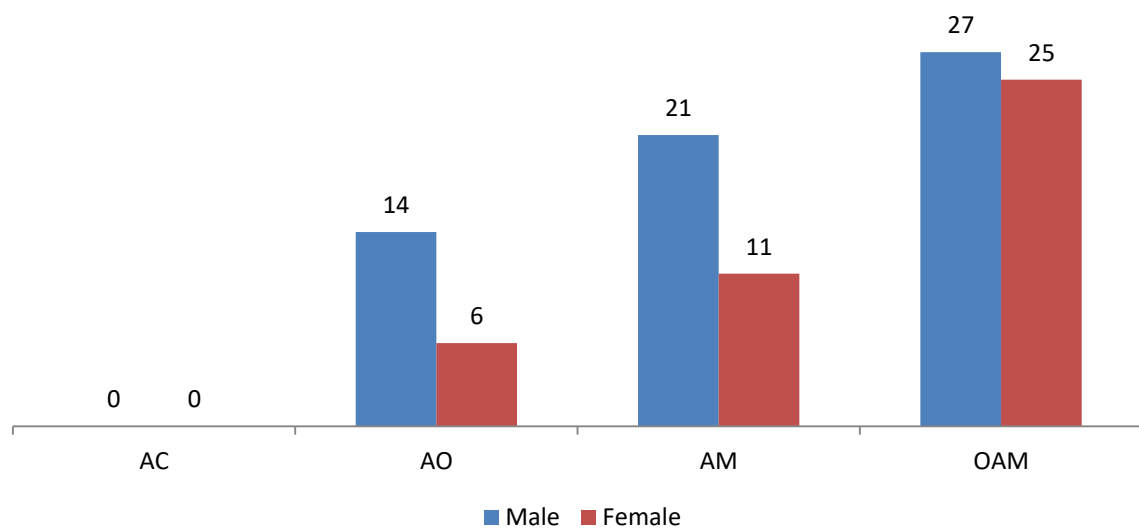
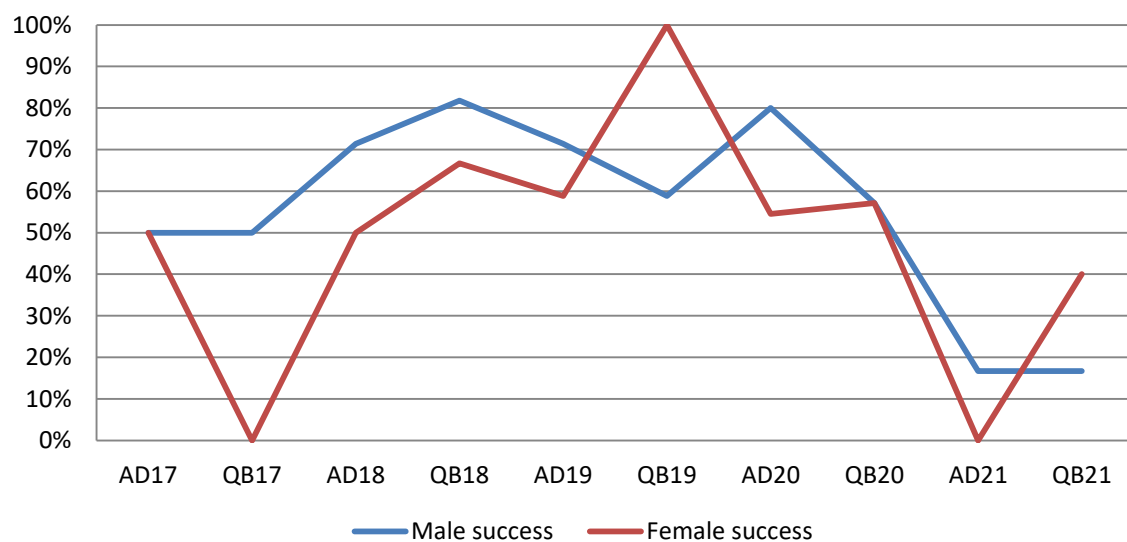


Chart 43: International Relations – success rate by gender, 2017-21



The Law

This is a medium category, with 244 nominations considered in the period 2017-21. It has two sub-categories: High Court Judges and General.

Chart 44: The Law – nominations and awards by gender, 2017-21

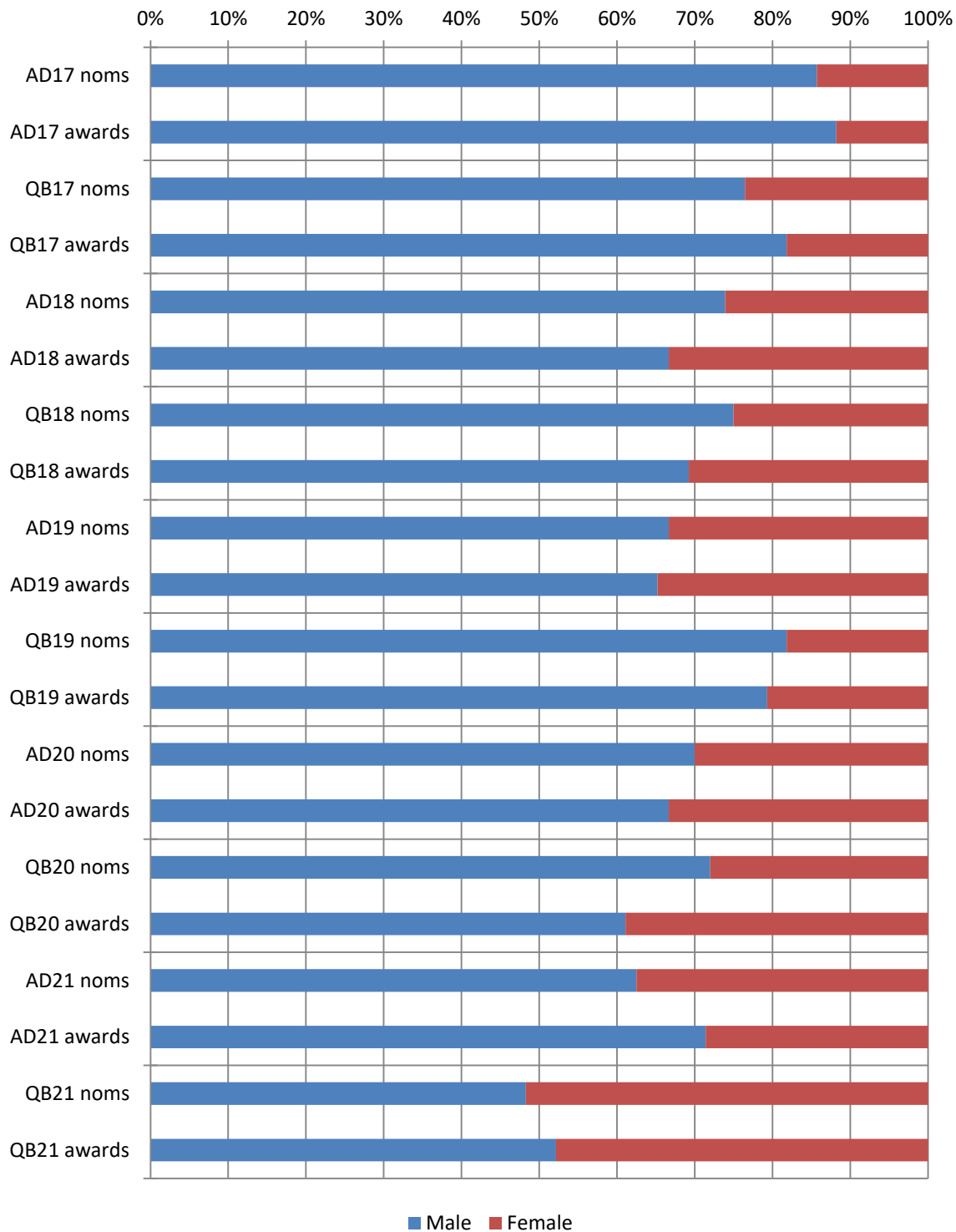


Chart 45: The Law – awards made, by level and gender, 2017-21

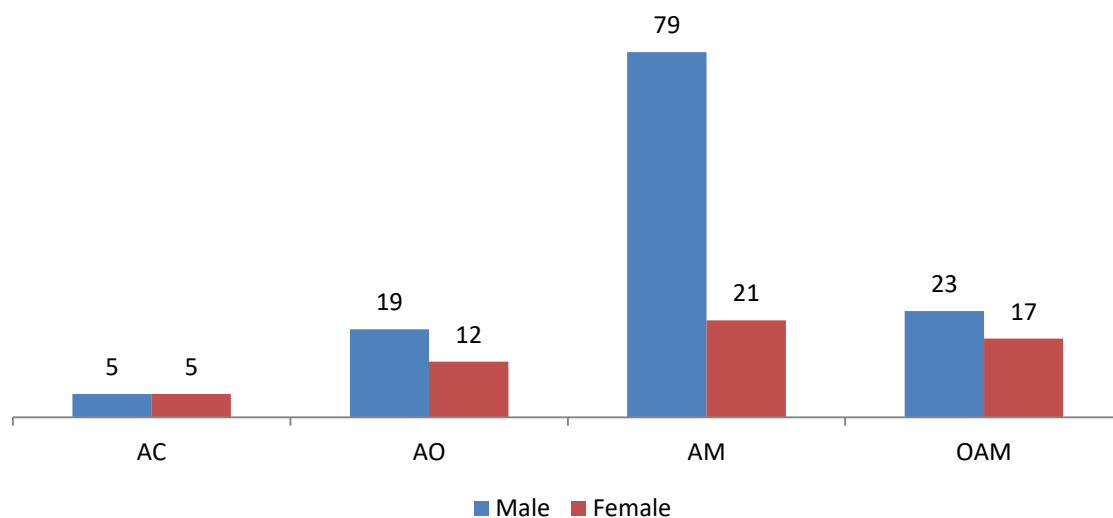
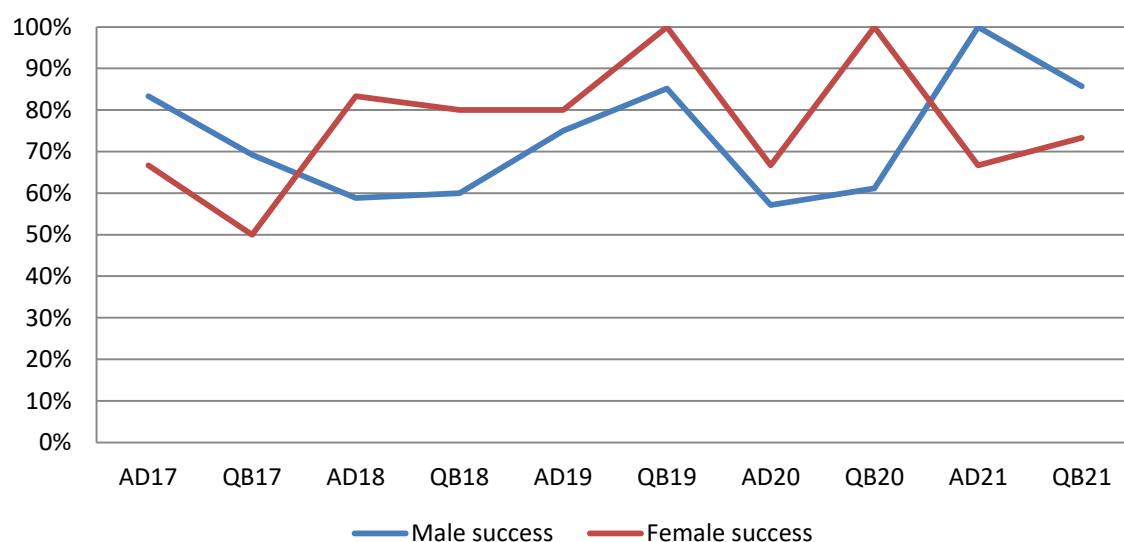


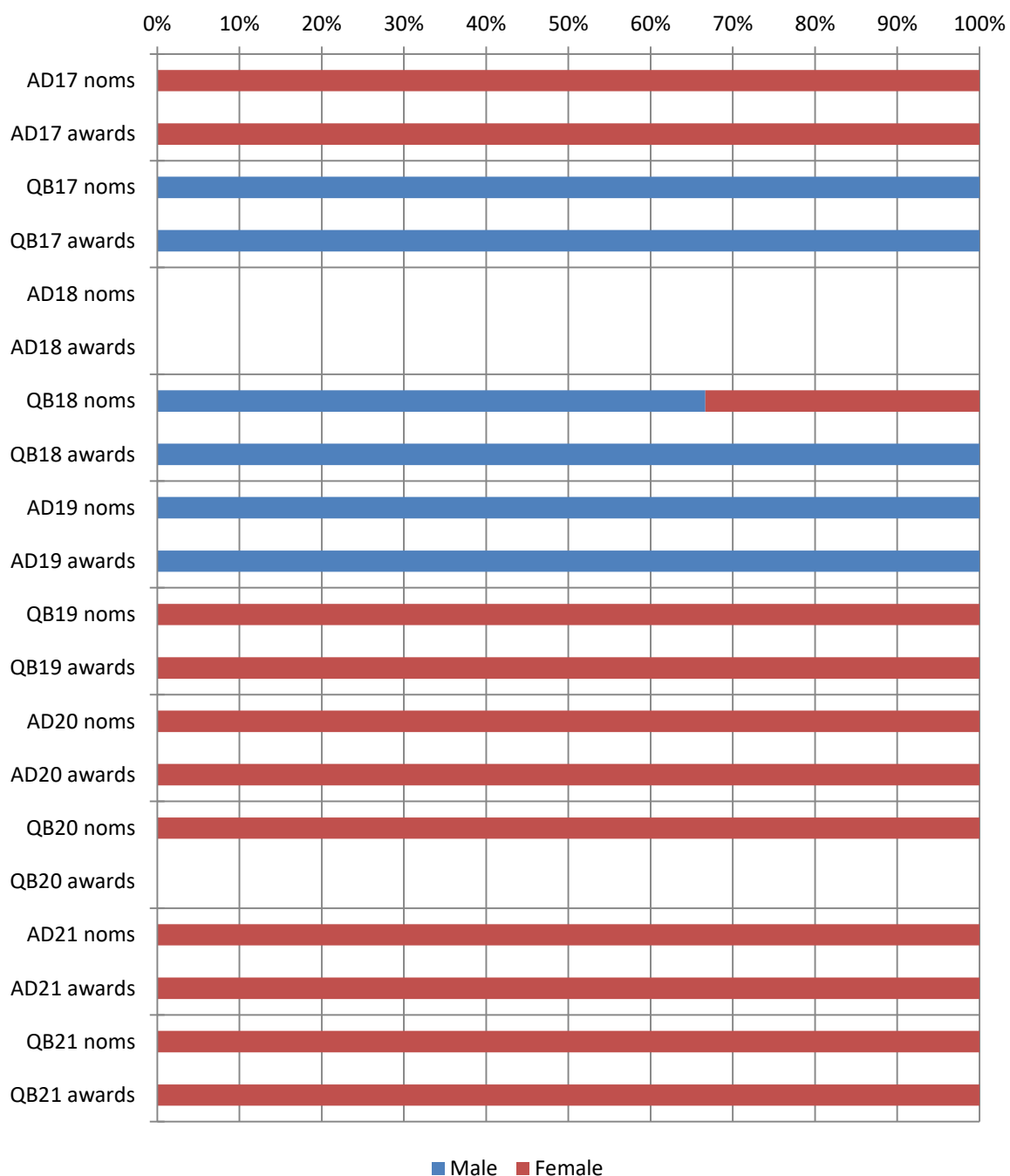
Chart 46: The Law – success rate by gender, 2017-21



Library and Related Occupations

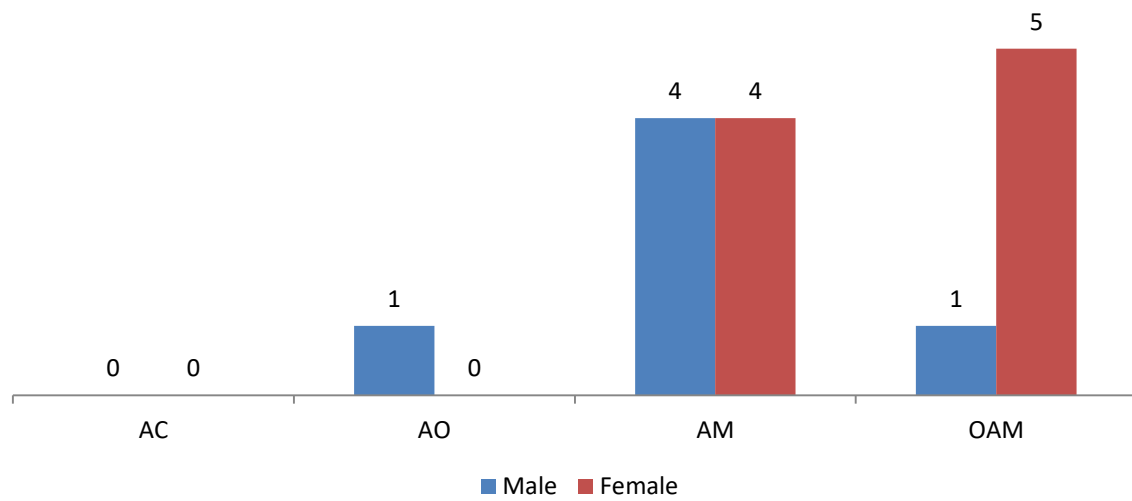
This is a small category, with 18 nominations considered in the period 2017-21. It has no sub-categories. Related occupations include archivists and other research experts who do not more logically belong to another category.

Chart 47: Library and Related Occupations – nominations and awards by gender, 2017-21



No nominations in this category were considered at the AD18 meeting. No awards were recommended in this category for the QB20 honours list.

Chart 48: Library and Related Occupations – awards made, by level and gender, 2017-21



Local Government

This is a medium category, with 173 nominations considered in the period 2017-21. It has three sub-categories: Elected, Employee, and General.

Chart 49: Local Government – nominations and awards by gender, 2017-21

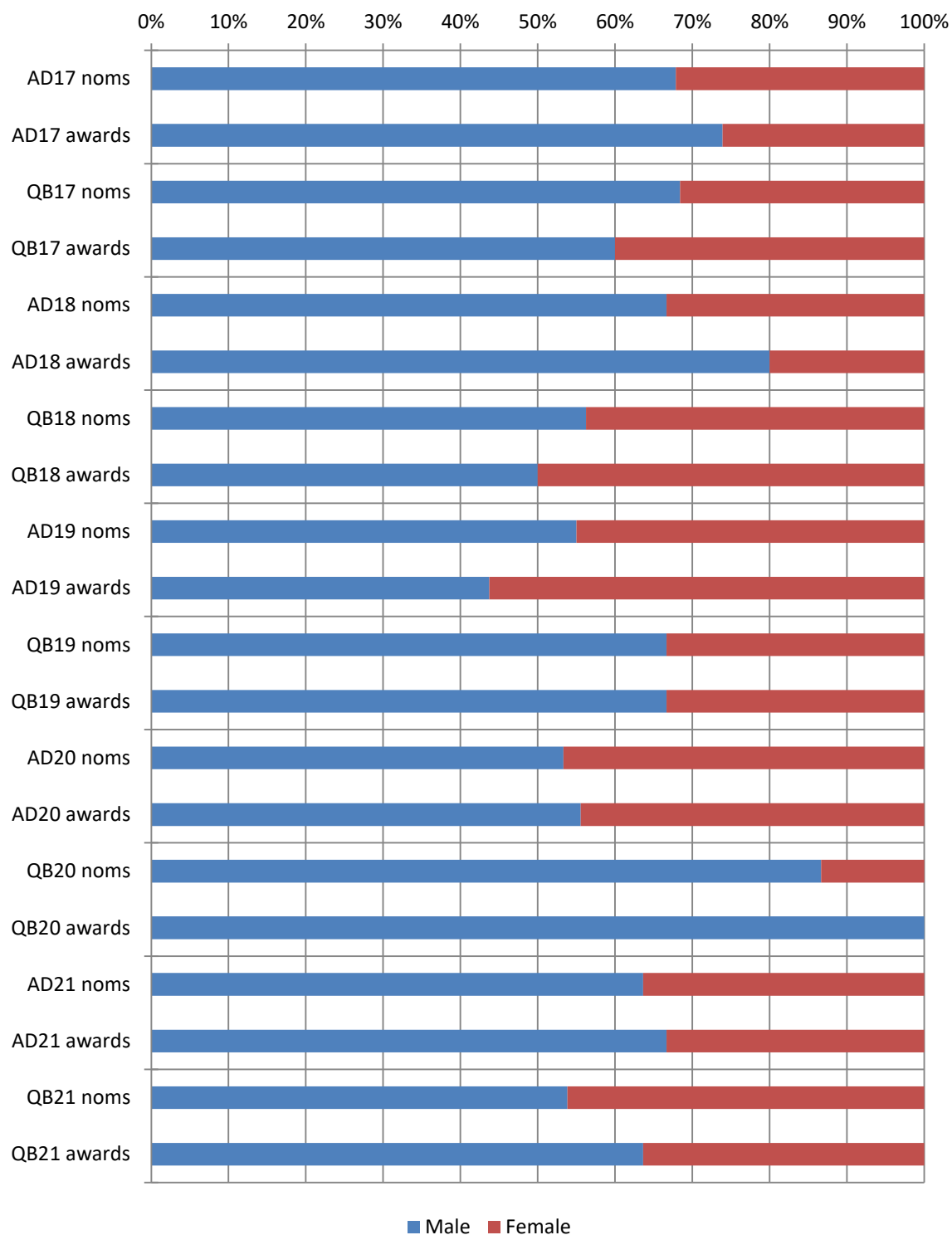


Chart 50: Local Government – awards made, by level and gender, 2017-21

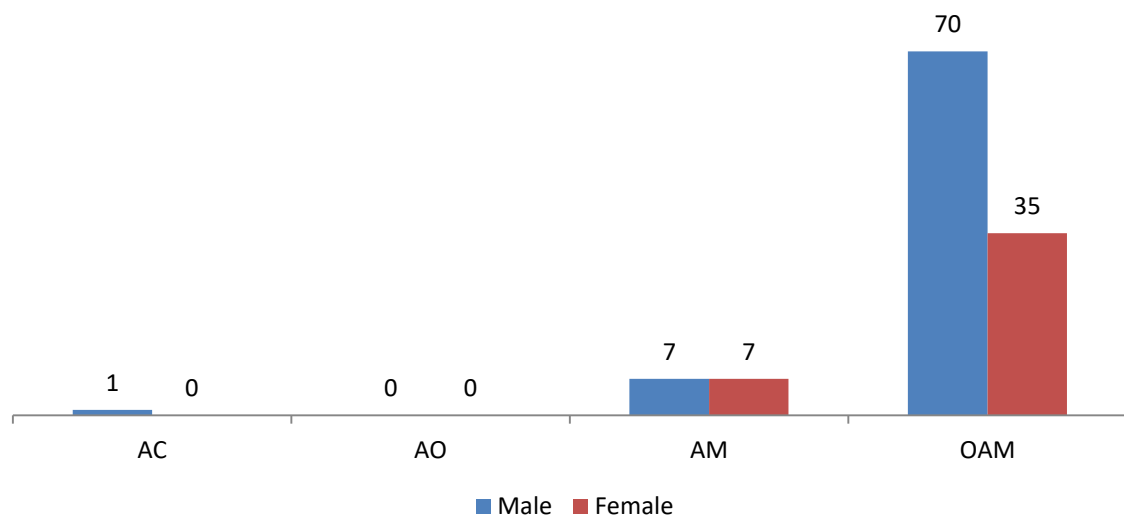
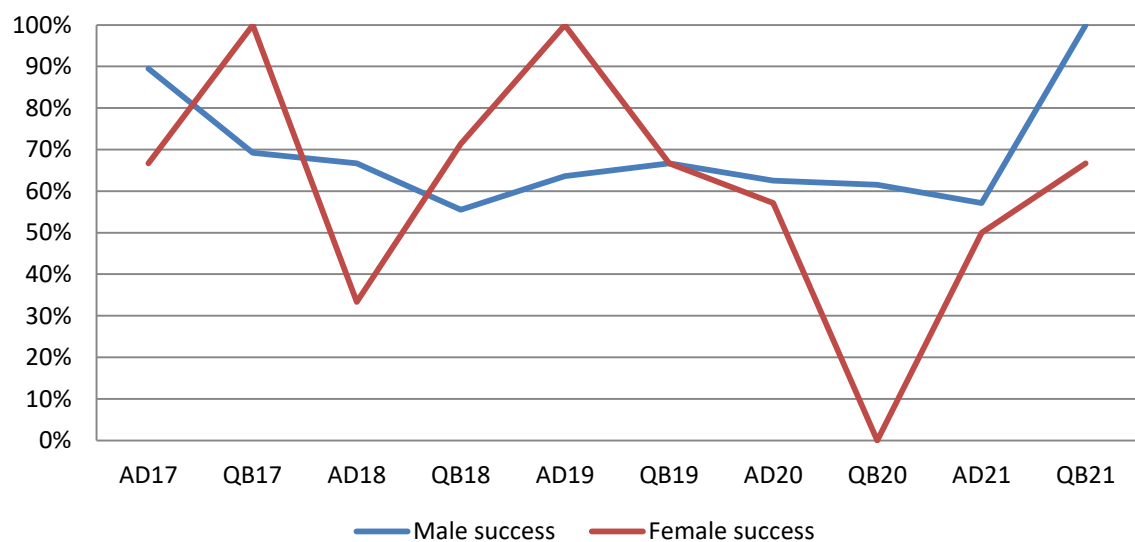


Chart 51: Local Government – success rate by gender, 2017-21



Media & Communications

This is a medium category, with 149 nominations considered in the period 2017-21. It has the following sub-categories: Films, General, Journalism, Print, Radio, Television, and Other.

Chart 52: Media & Communications – nominations and awards by gender, 2017-21

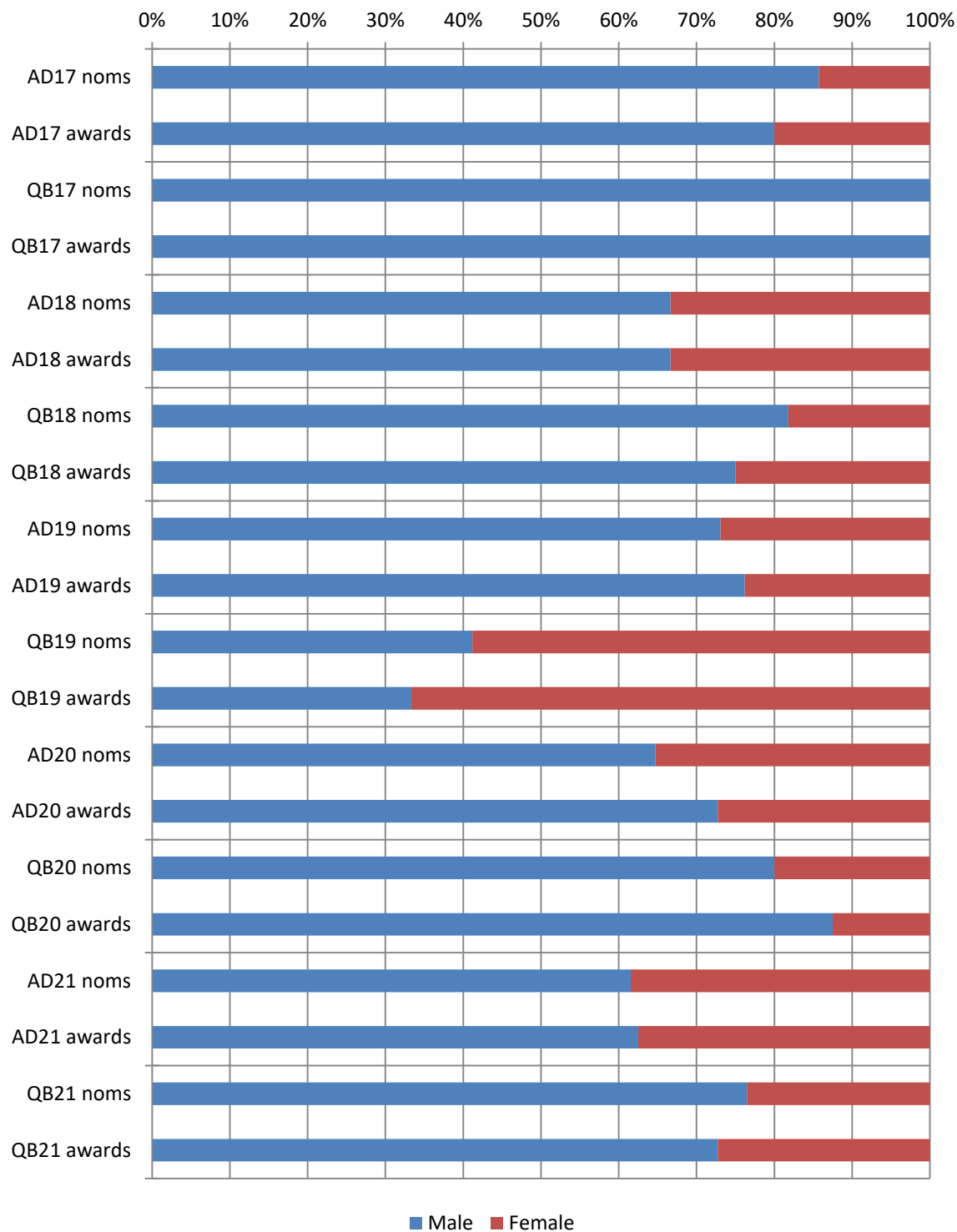


Chart 53: Media & Communications – awards made, by level and gender, 2017-21

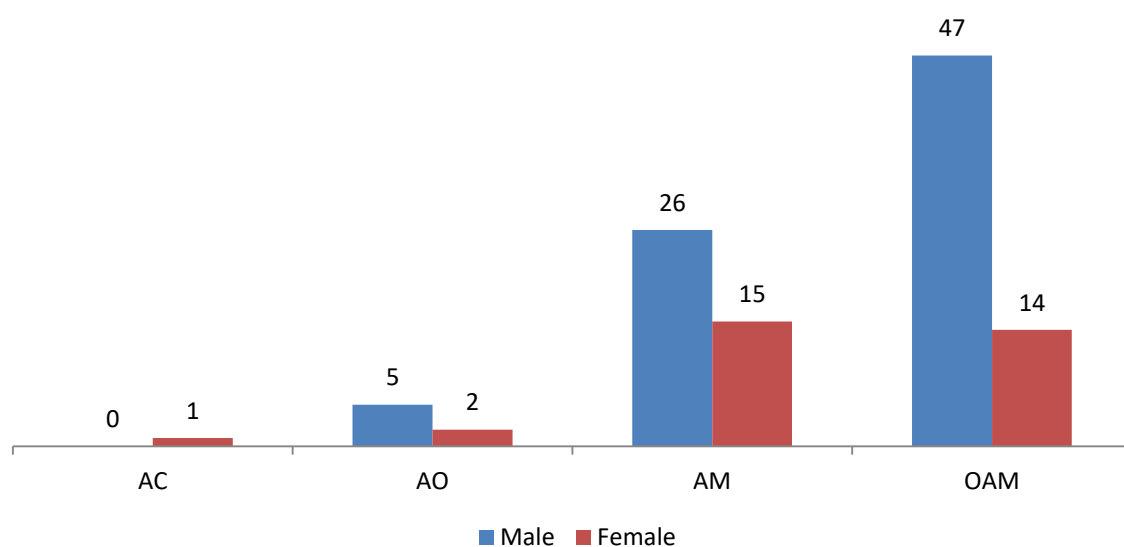
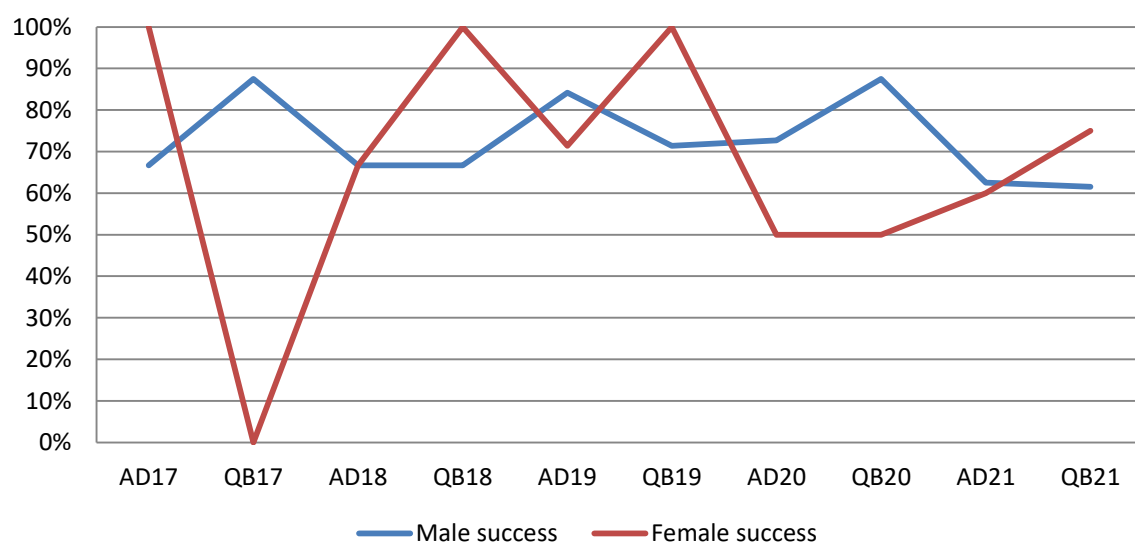


Chart 54: Media & Communications – success rate by gender, 2017-21



Medicine

This is a large category, with 1,007 nominations considered in the period 2017-21. It has the following sub-categories: Administration, General, Nursing, Pharmacy, Research, Specialist, and Other. Specialists include a large range and volume of practitioners across clinical and surgical disciplines, as well as psychology, psychiatry, and other specialisations.

Chart 55: Medicine – nominations and awards by gender, 2017-21

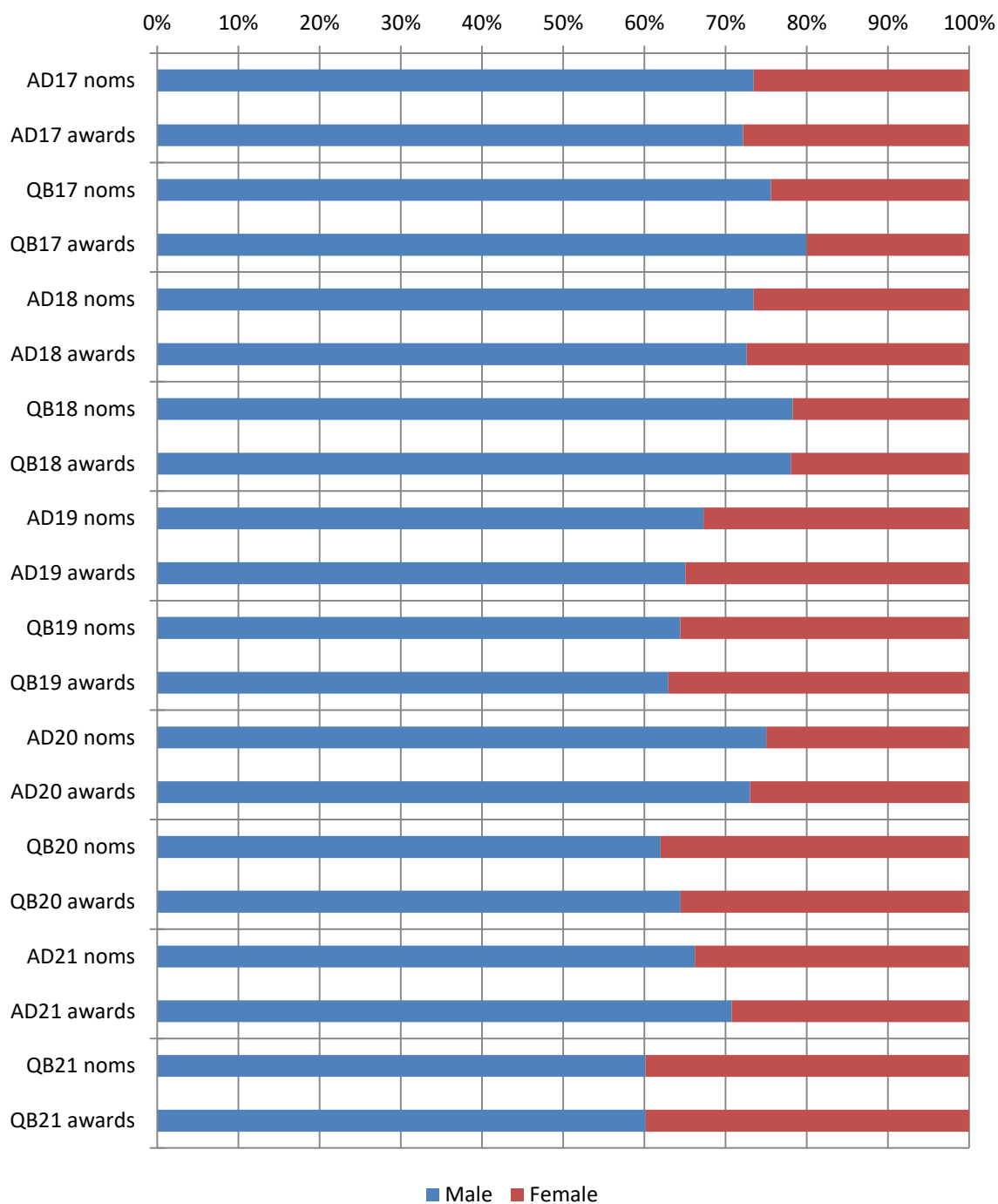


Chart 56: Medicine – awards made, by level and gender, 2017-21

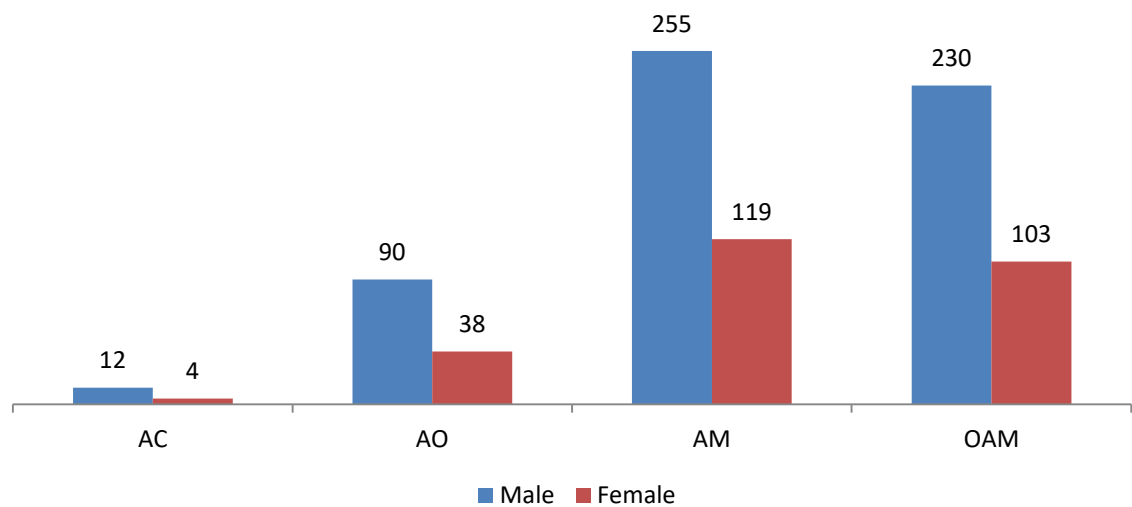
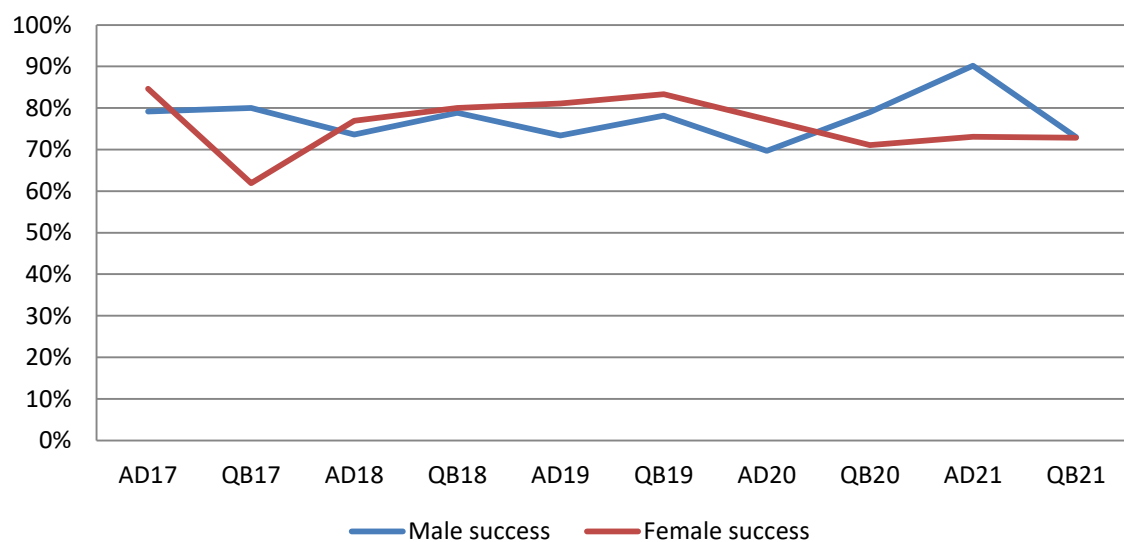


Chart 57: Medicine – success rate by gender, 2017-21



Mining

This is a small category, with 39 nominations considered in the period 2017-21. It has no sub-categories.

Chart 58: Mining – nominations and awards by gender, 2017-21

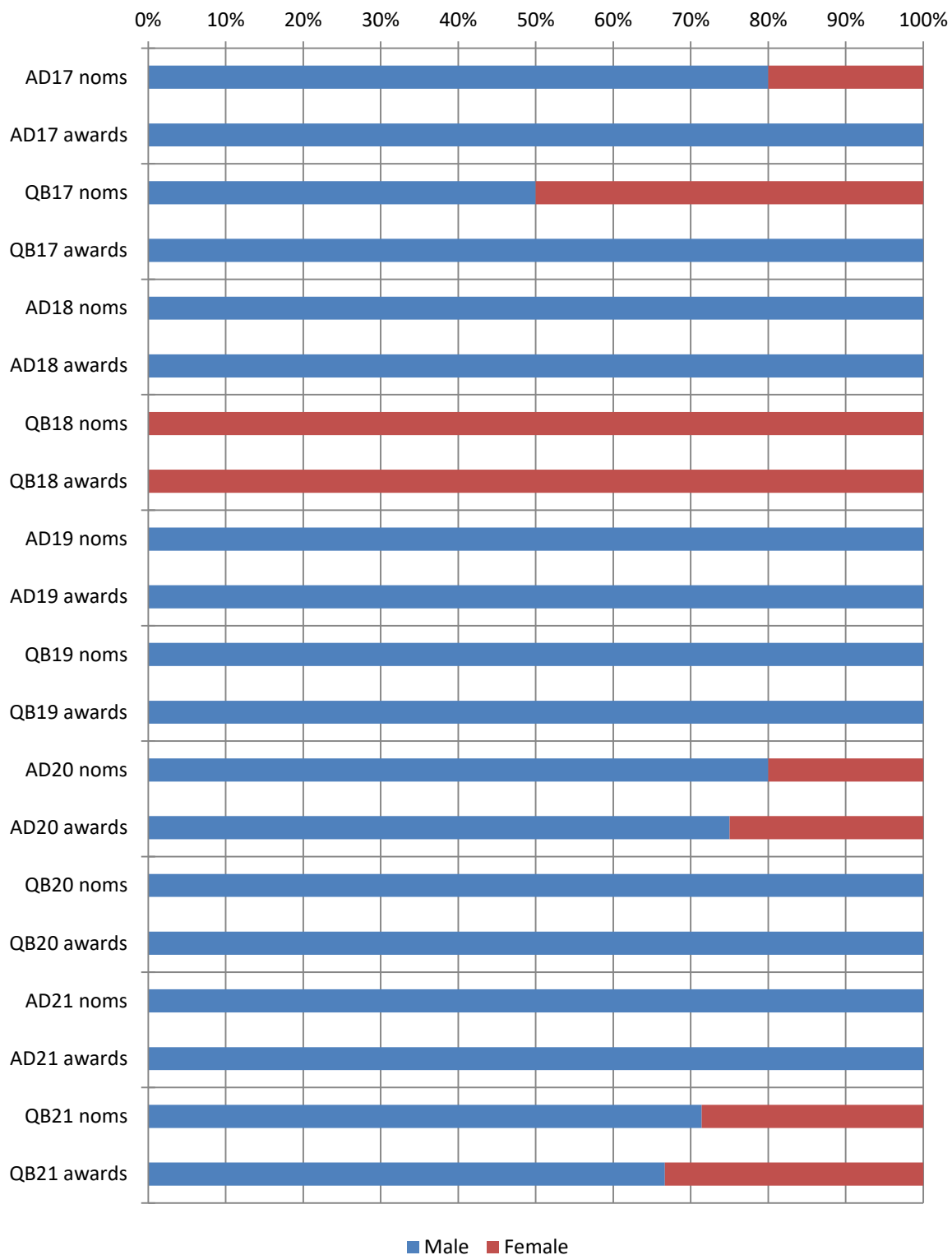
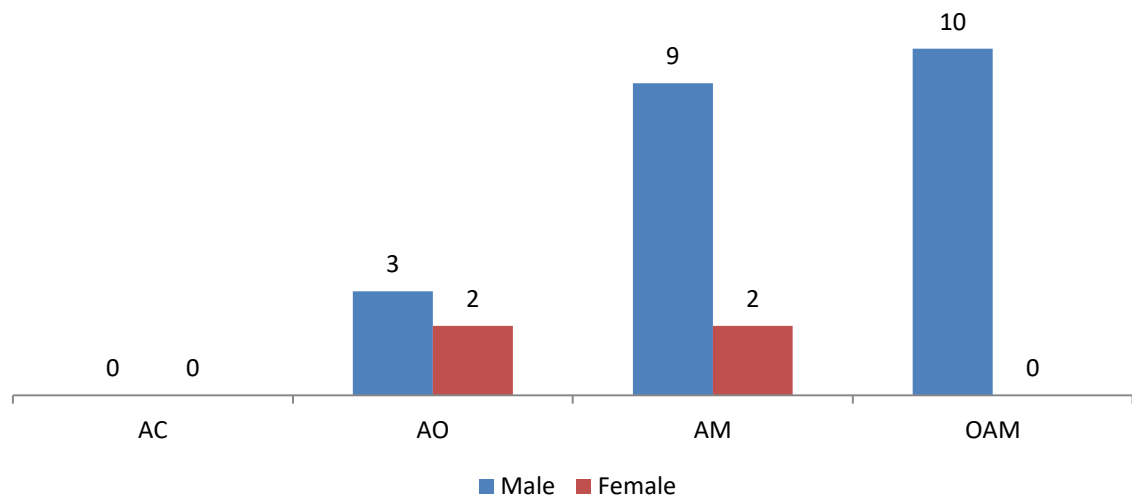


Chart 59: Mining – awards made, by level and gender, 2017-21



Multicultural Affairs

This is a medium category, with 270 nominations considered in the period 2017-21. It includes the following sub-categories: Chinese, General, German, Greek, Hungarian, Italian, Lebanese, Maltese, Polish, Ukrainian, Vietnamese, Yugoslavia, and Other.

Prior to the AD19 honours list, this category was known as “Community – Multicultural Affairs”.

Chart 60: Multicultural Affairs – nominations and awards by gender, 2017-21

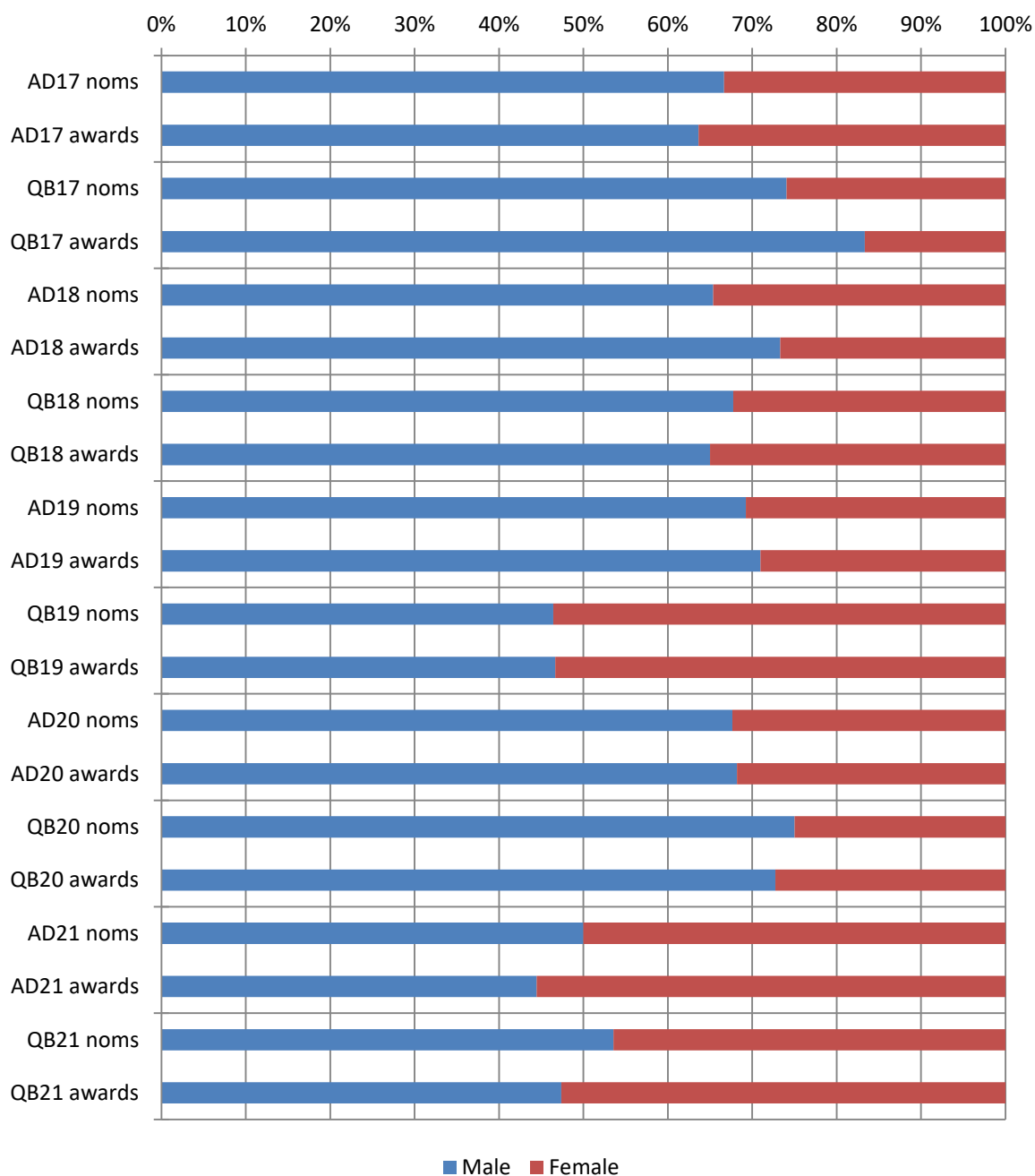


Chart 61: Multicultural Affairs – awards made, by level and gender, 2017-21

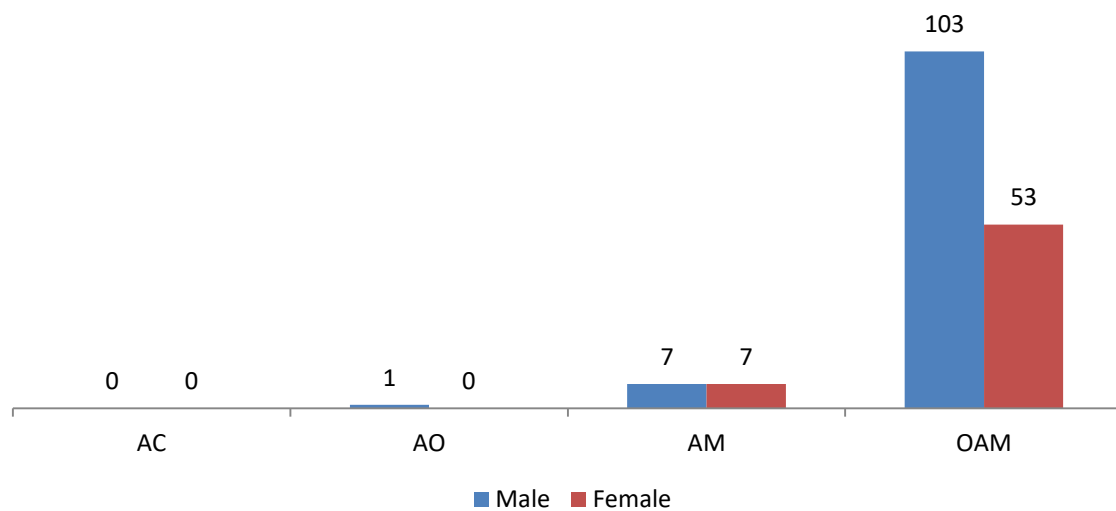
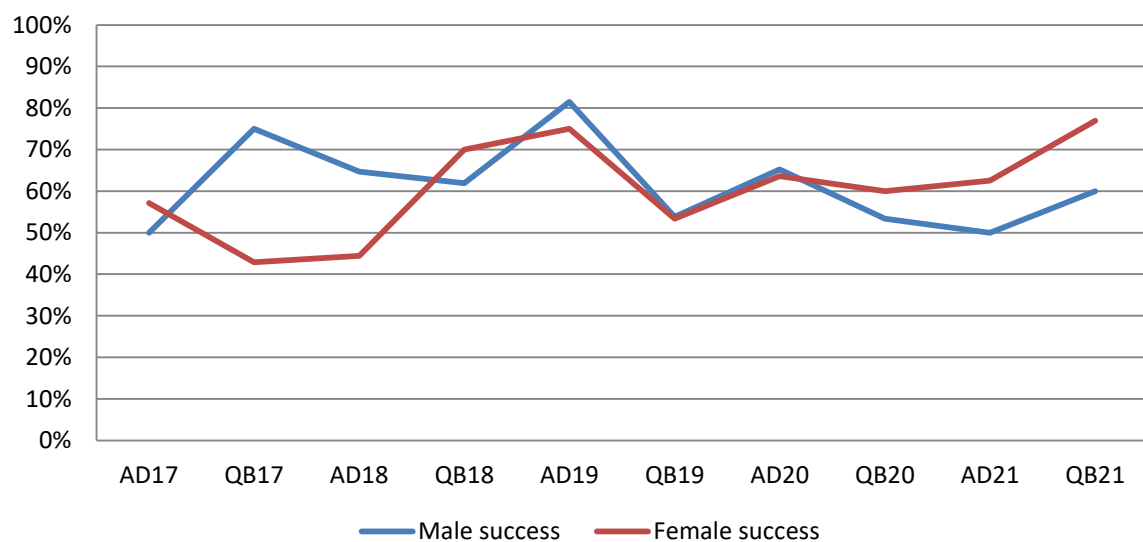


Chart 62: Multicultural Affairs – success rate by gender, 2017-21



Parliament & Politics

This is a medium category, with 143 nominations considered in the period 2017-21. It has the following sub-categories: ACT, Federal, General, New South Wales, Northern Territory, Queensland, South Australia, Tasmania, Victoria, and Western Australia.

Chart 63: Parliament & Politics – nominations and awards by gender, 2017-21

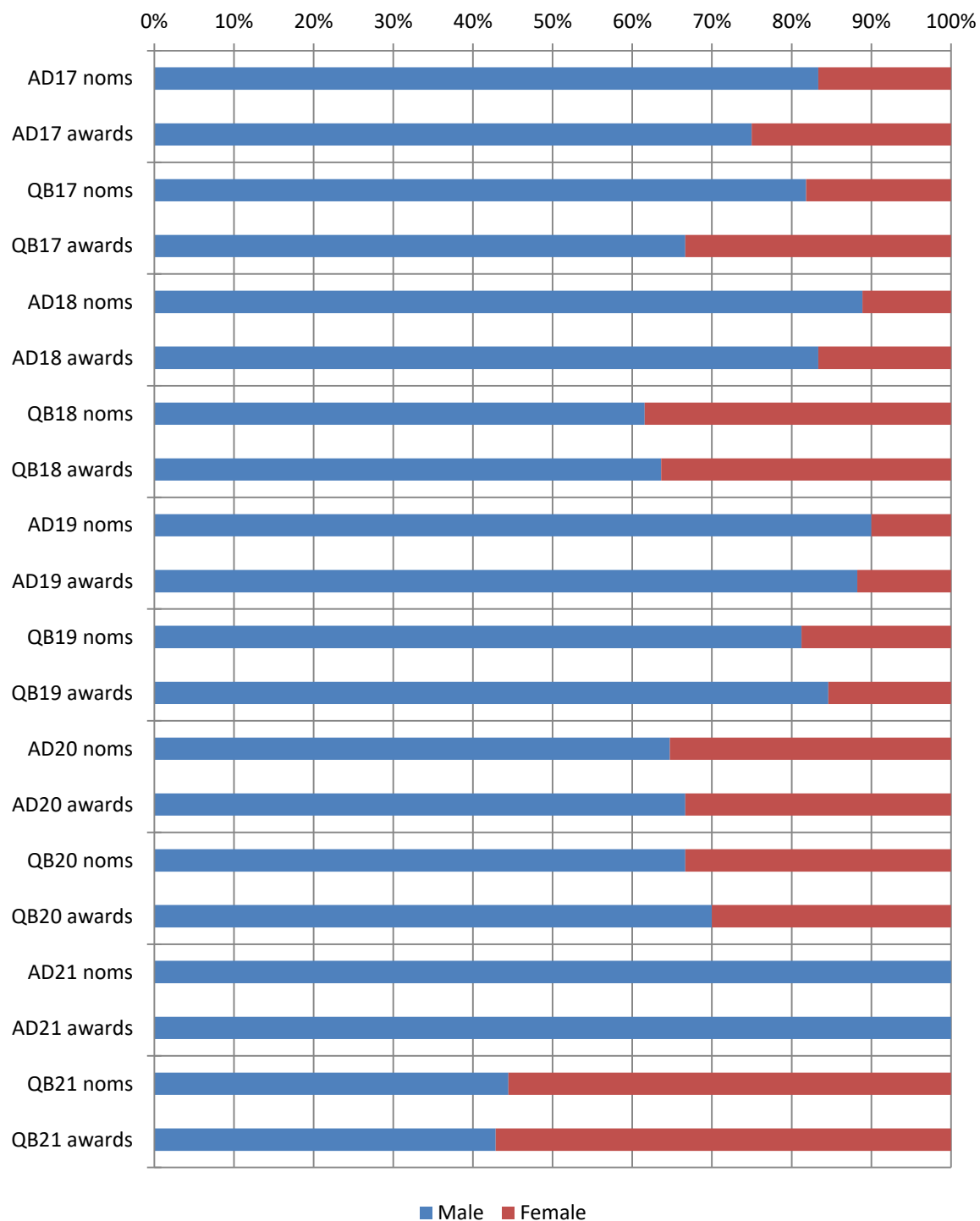


Chart 64: Parliament & Politics – awards made, by level and gender, 2017-21

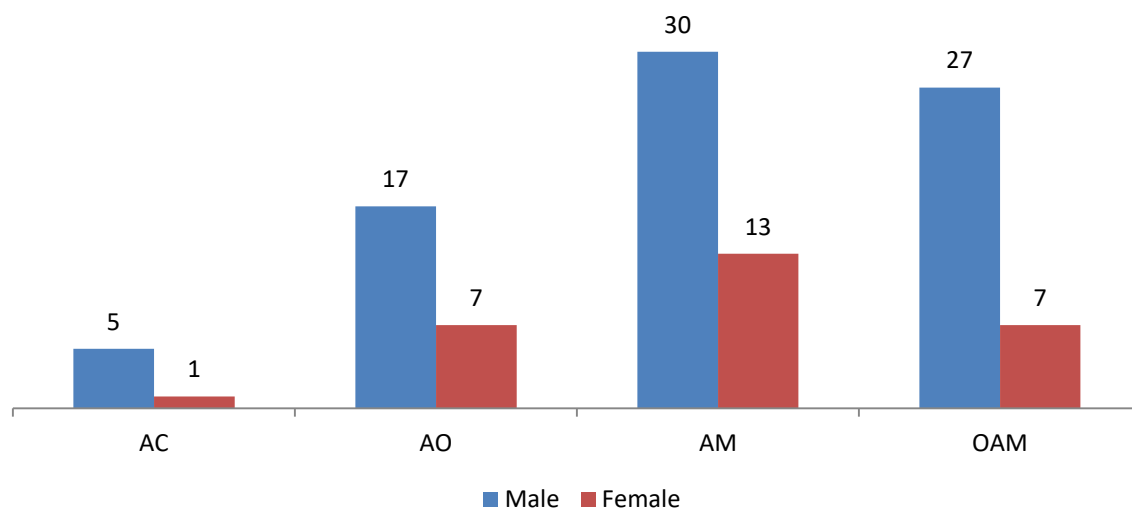
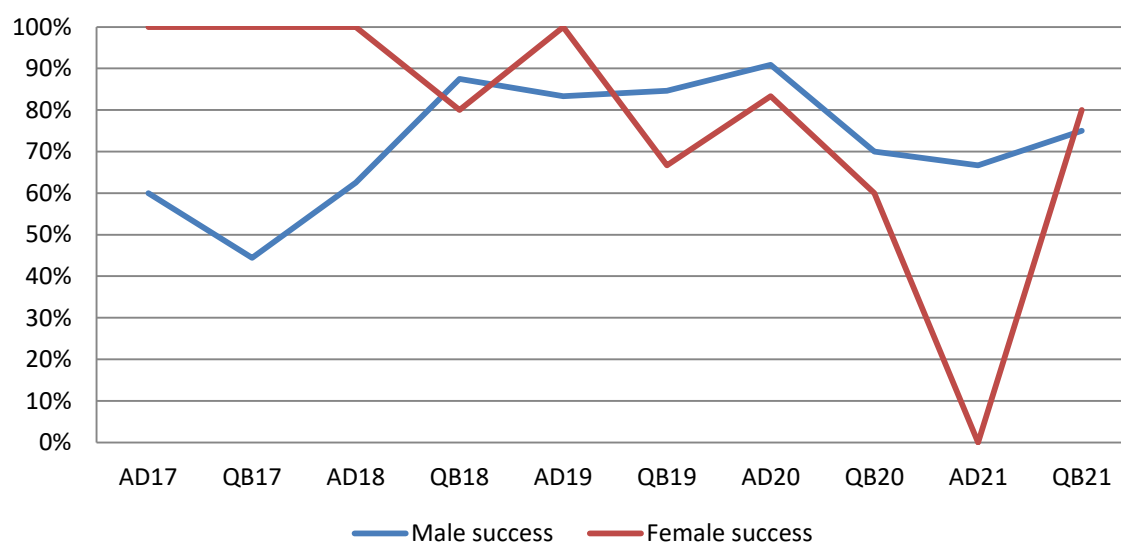


Chart 65: Parliament & Politics – success rate by gender, 2017-21



Primary Industry

This is a medium category, with 154 nominations considered in the period 2017-21. It has the following sub-categories: Crops, Fishing, Forestry, General, Horticulture, Livestock, Oenology, and Wool.

Chart 66: Primary Industry – nominations and awards by gender, 2017-21

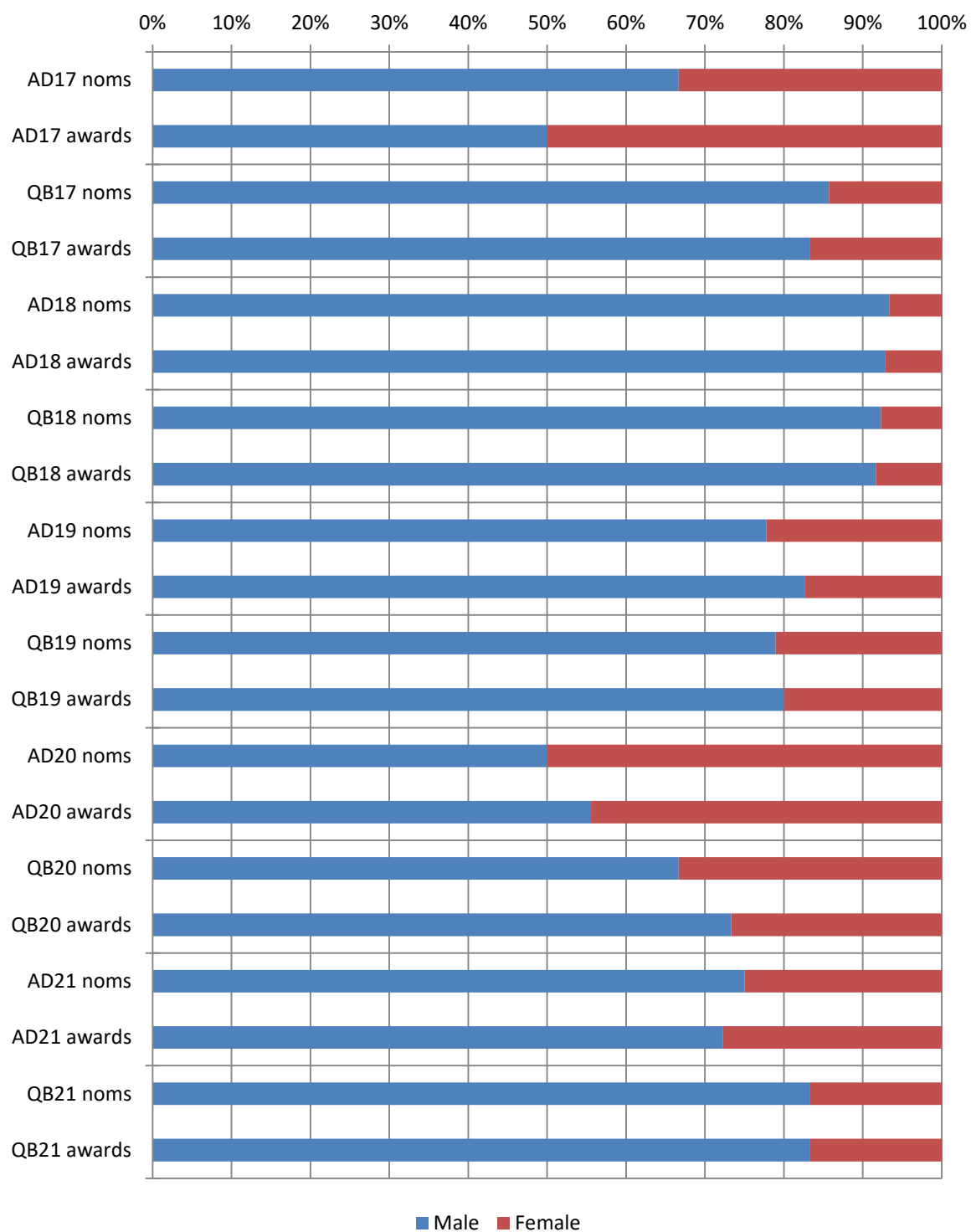


Chart 67: Primary Industry – awards made, by level and gender, 2017-21

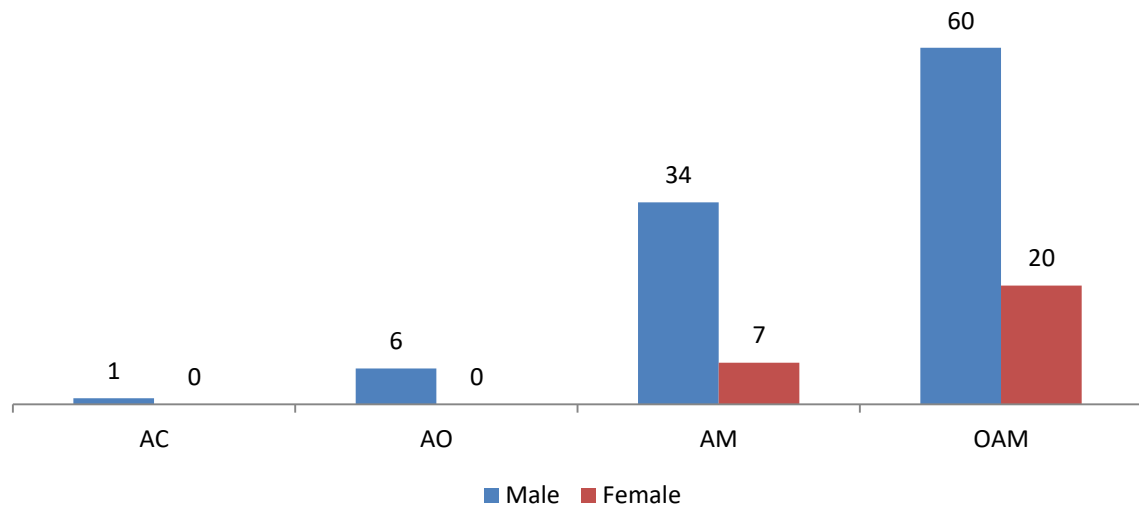
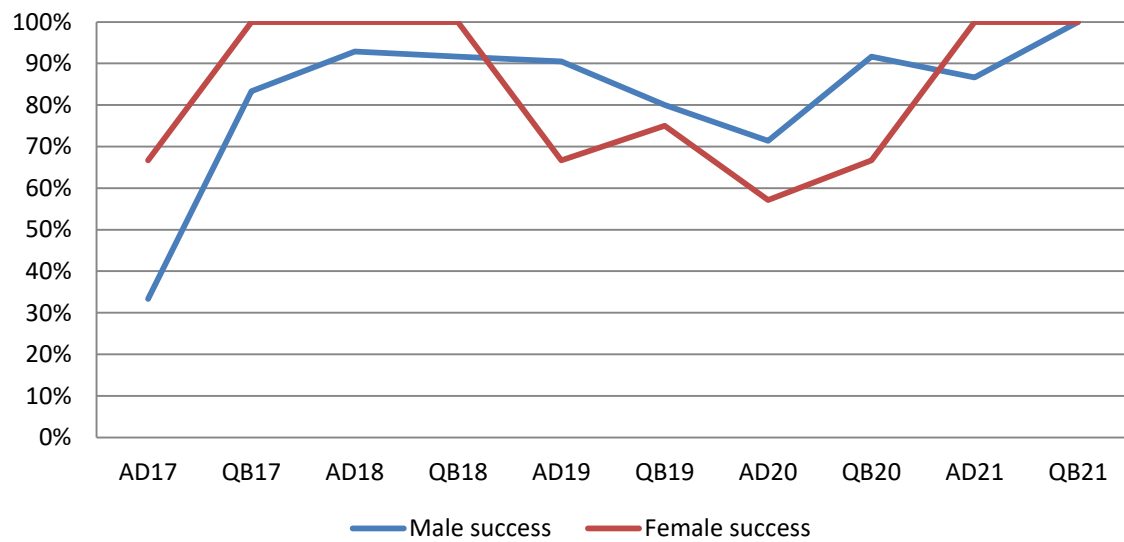


Chart 68: Primary Industry – success rate by gender, 2017-21



Public Service

This is a medium category, with 153 nominations considered in the period 2017-21. It has the following sub-categories: To the Crown, Federal, ACT, New South Wales, Northern Territory, Queensland, South Australia, Tasmania, Victoria, and Western Australia.

Chart 69: Public Service – nominations and awards by gender, 2017-21

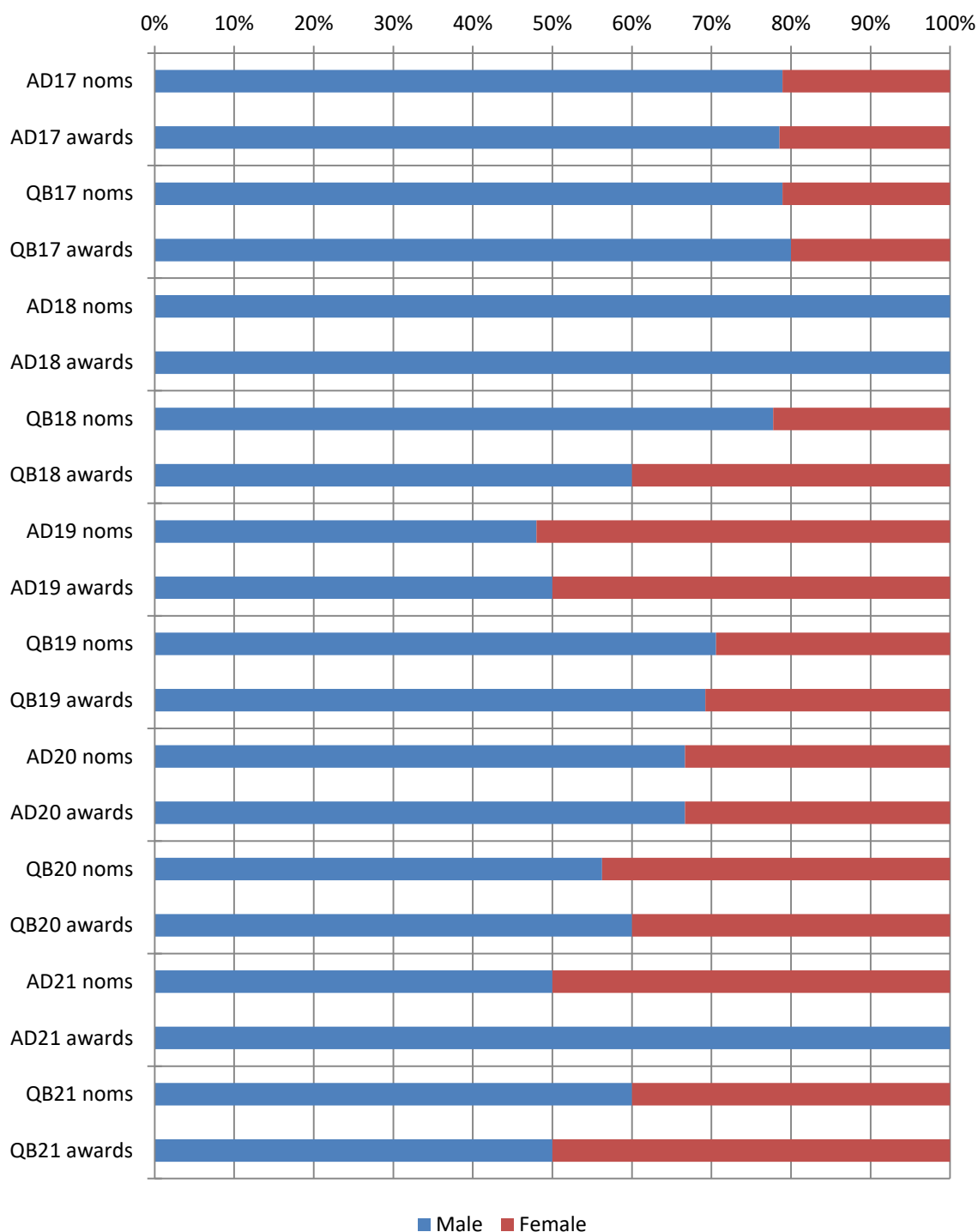


Chart 70: Public Service – awards made, by level and gender, 2017-21

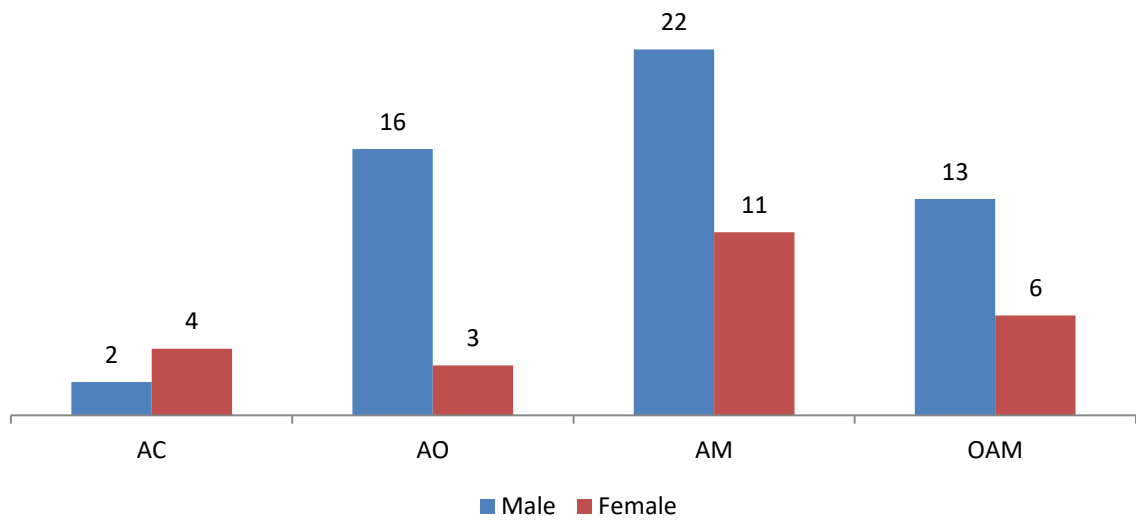
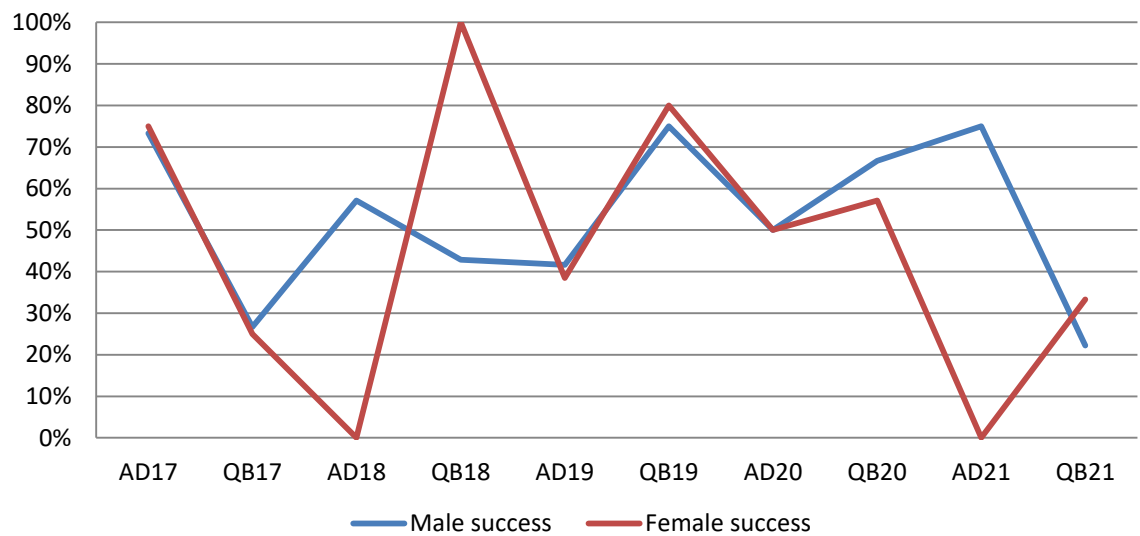


Chart 71: Public Service – success rate by gender, 2017-21



Religion

This is a medium category, with 119 nominations considered in the period 2017-21. It has the following sub-categories: Anglican, Baptist, General, Jewish, Roman Catholic, Uniting Church, and Other.

Chart 72: Religion – nominations and awards by gender, 2017-21

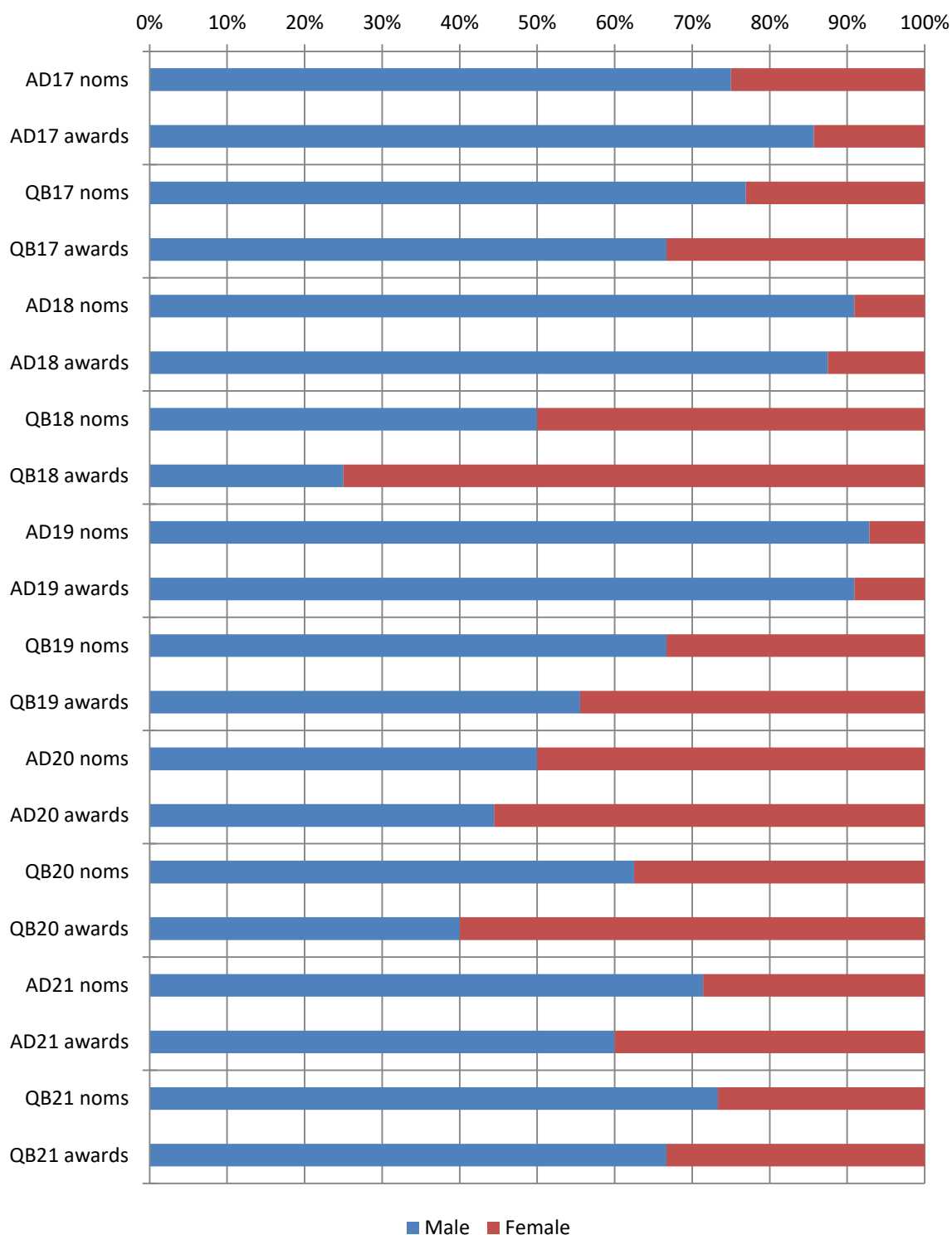


Chart 73: Religion – awards made, by level and gender, 2017-21

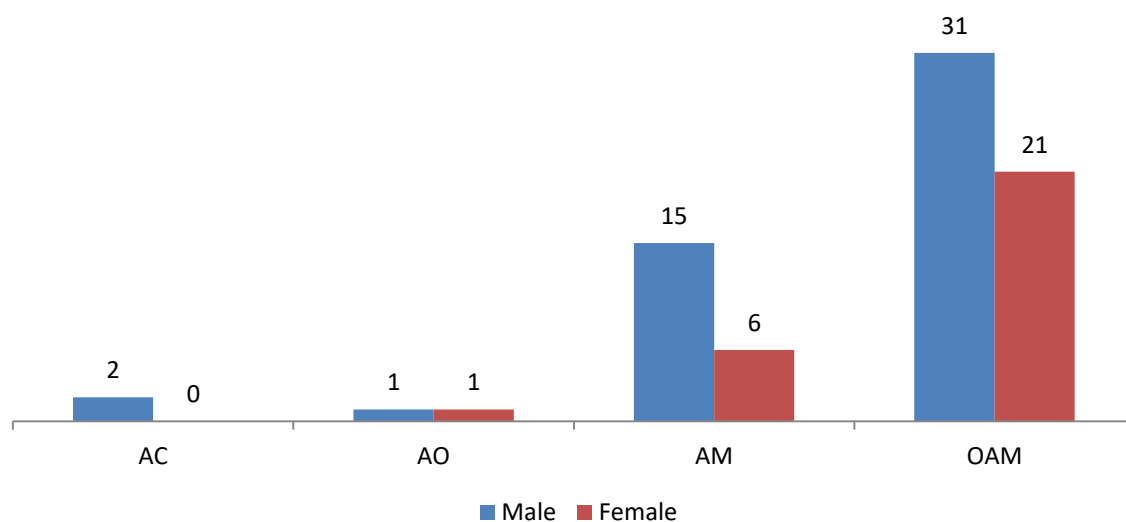
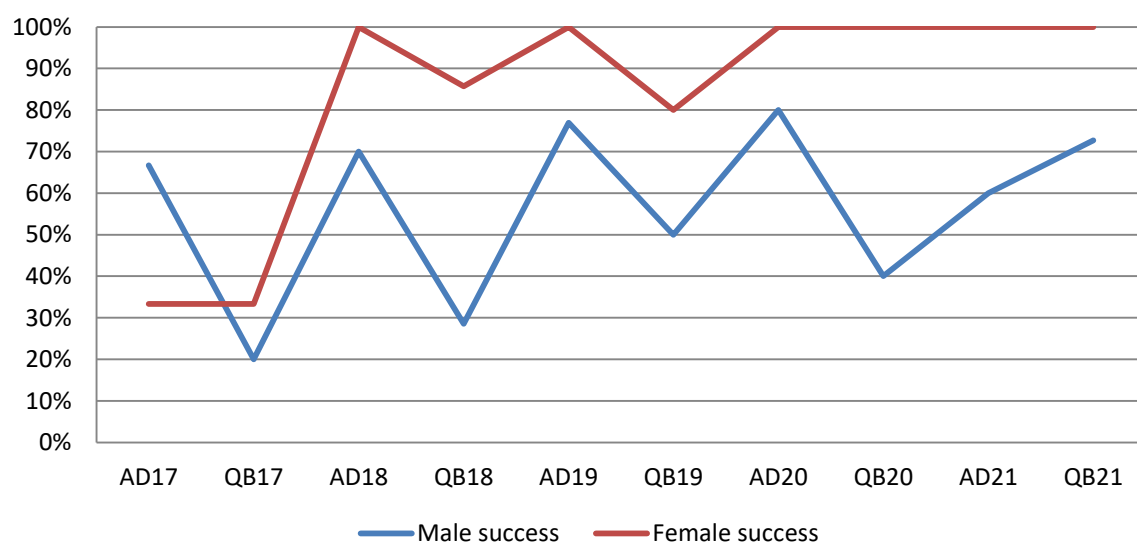


Chart 74: Religion – success rate by gender, 2017-21



Science, Technological Developments, Research & Development

This is a medium category, with 206 nominations considered in the period 2017-21. It has no sub-categories.

Chart 75: Science, Tech, R&D – nominations and awards by gender, 2017-21

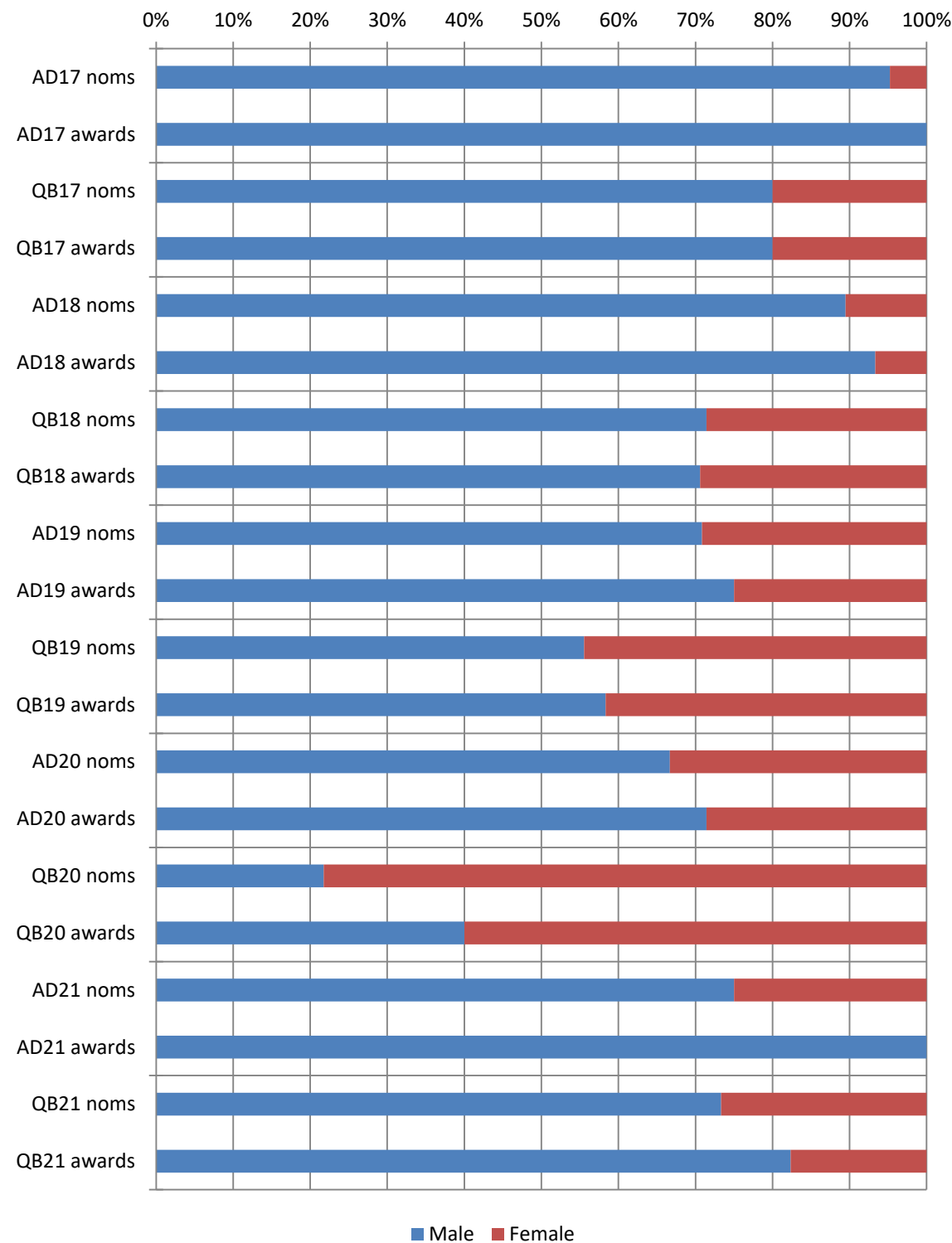


Chart 76: Science, Tech, R&D – awards made, by level and gender, 2017-21

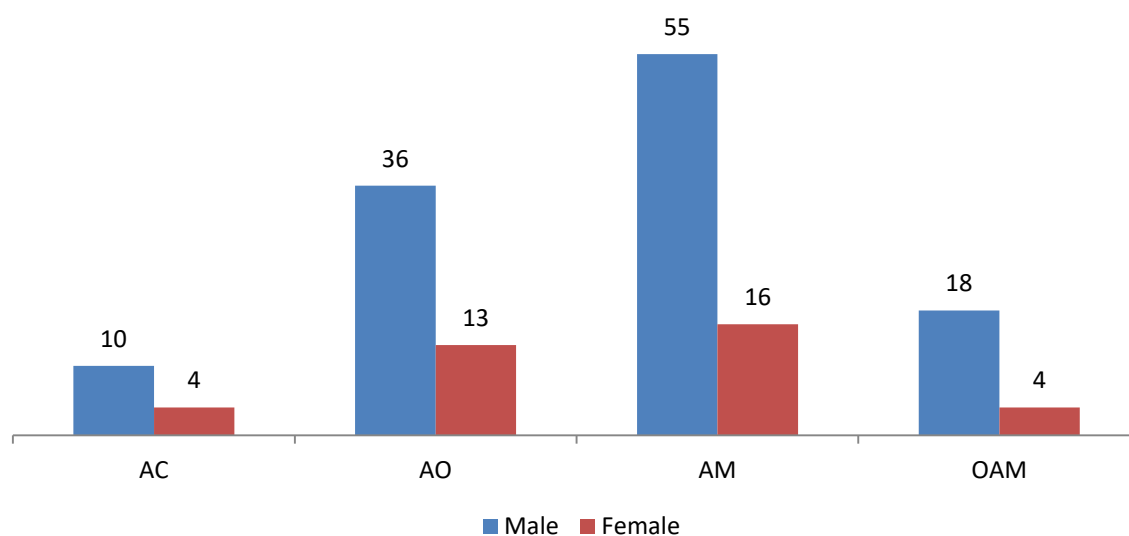
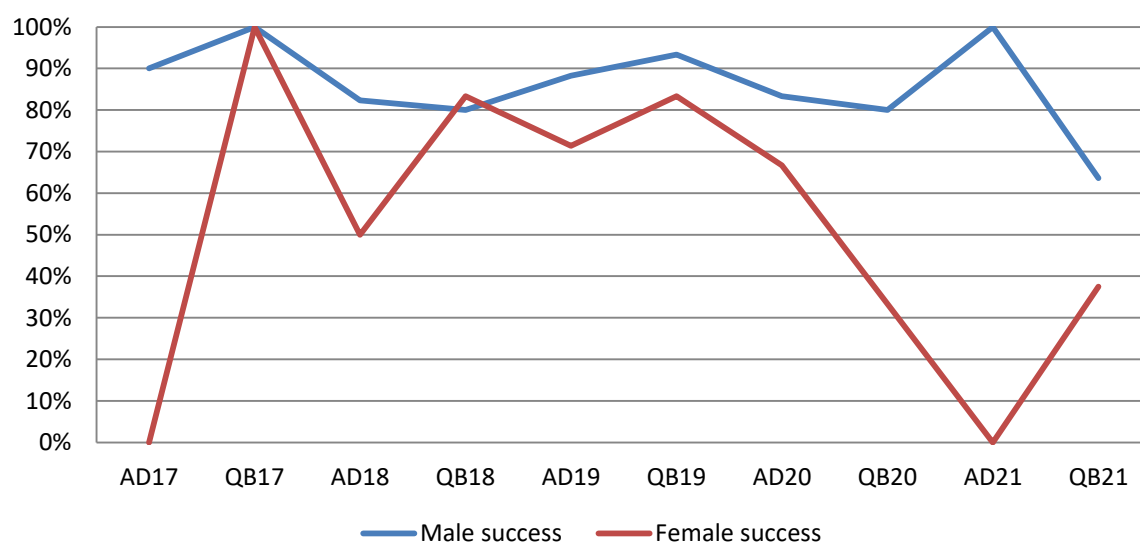


Chart 77: Science, Tech, R&D – success rate by gender, 2017-21



Sport

This is a large category, with 766 nominations considered in the period 2017-21. It has the following sub-categories: Administration, Archery, Australian Rules Football, Athletics, Badminton, Basketball, Boxing, Billiards/Snooker, Cricket, Cycling, Disabled, Fishing, General, Gold Medal Olympians, Golf, Gymnastics, Hockey, Horse Sports, Lawn Bowls, Motor Sports, Netball, Rugby League, Rugby Union, Rowing, Sailing, Shooting, Soccer, Squash, Swimming, Tennis, Weightlifting, Water Polo, Wrestling, and Sport & Leisure.

Chart 78: Sport – nominations and awards by gender, 2017-21

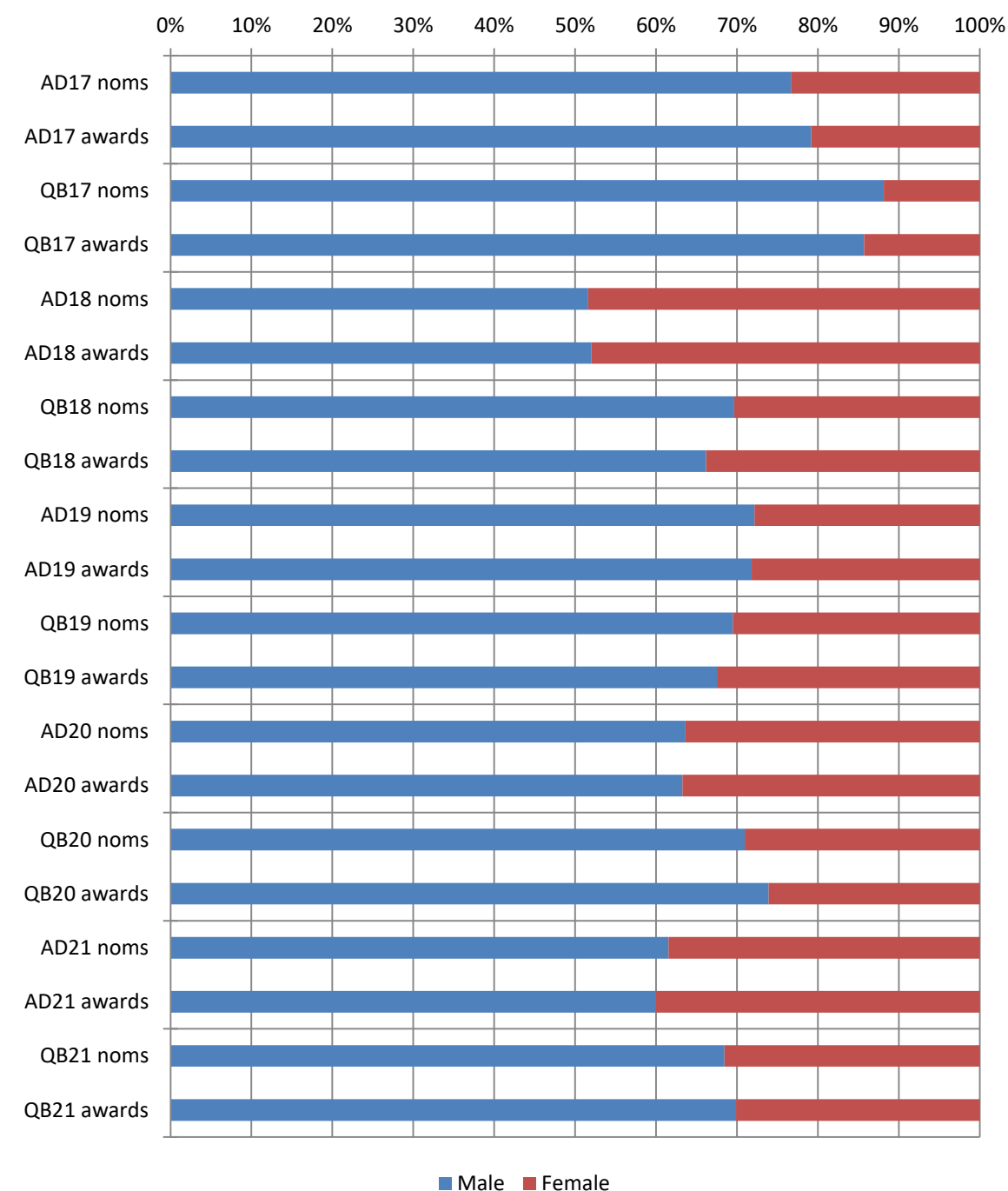


Chart 79: Sport – awards made, by level and gender, 2017-21

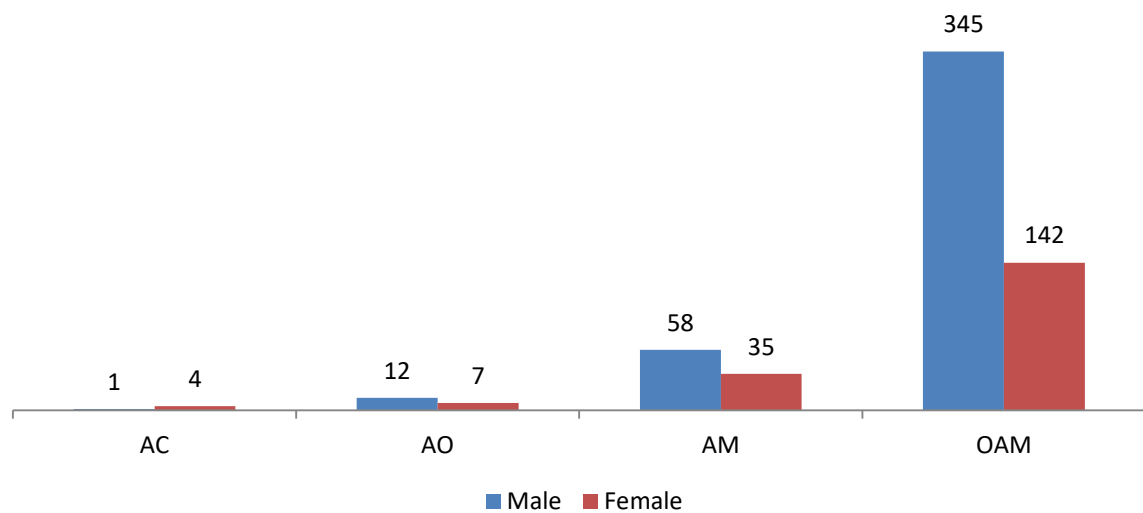
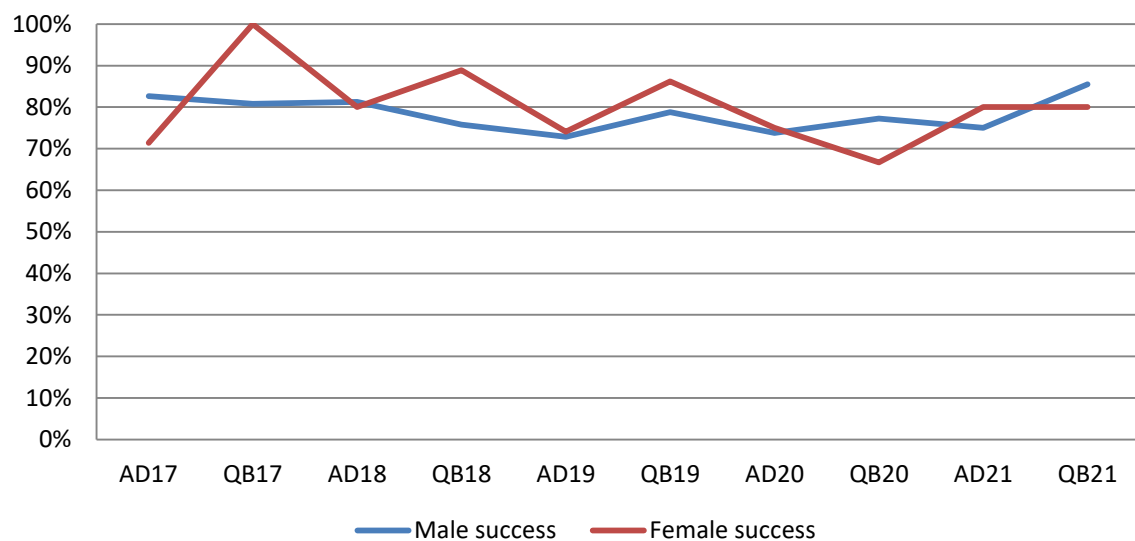


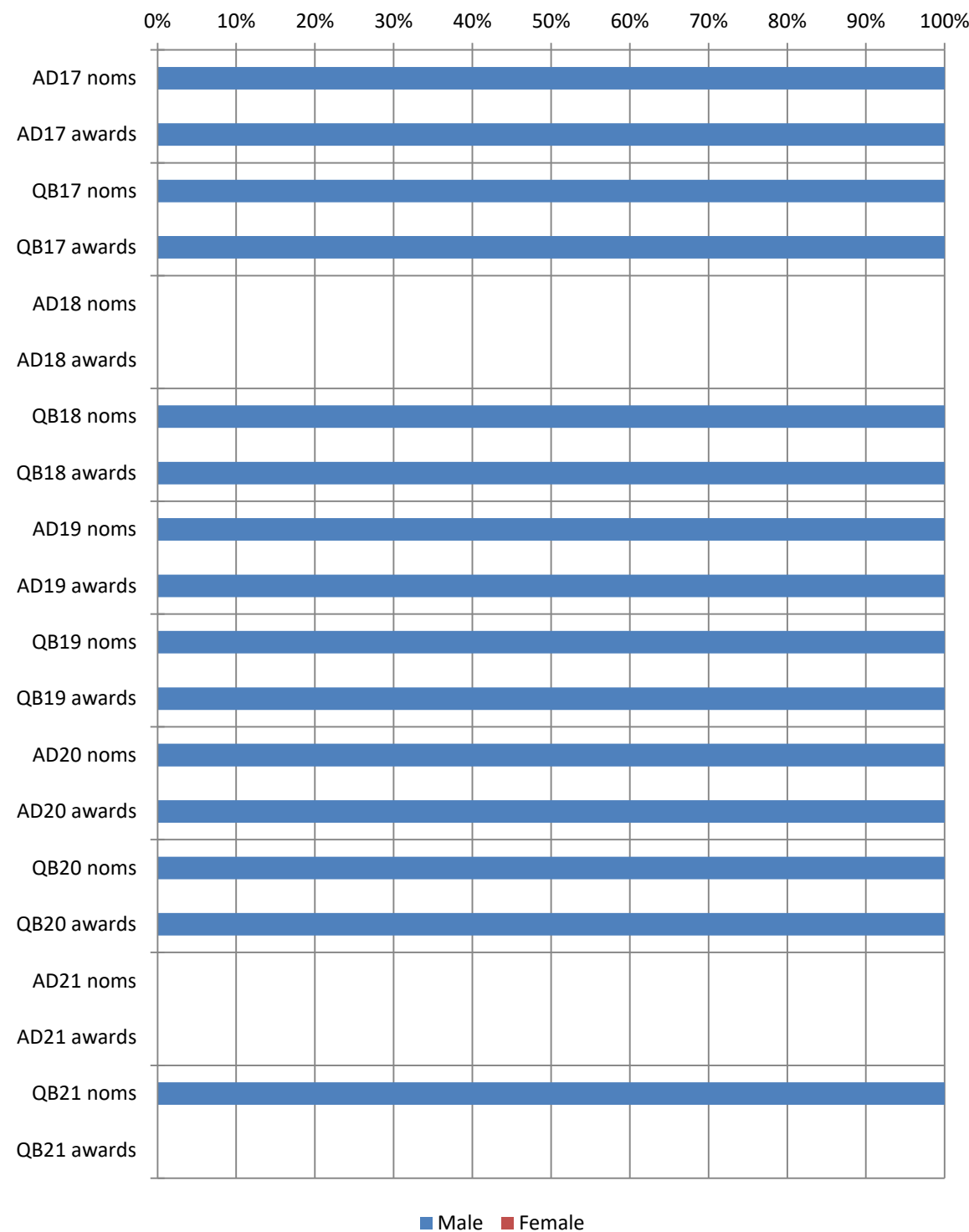
Chart 80: Sport – success rate by gender, 2017-21



Surveying & Mapping

This is a small category, with 8 nominations considered in the period 2017-21. It has no sub-categories.

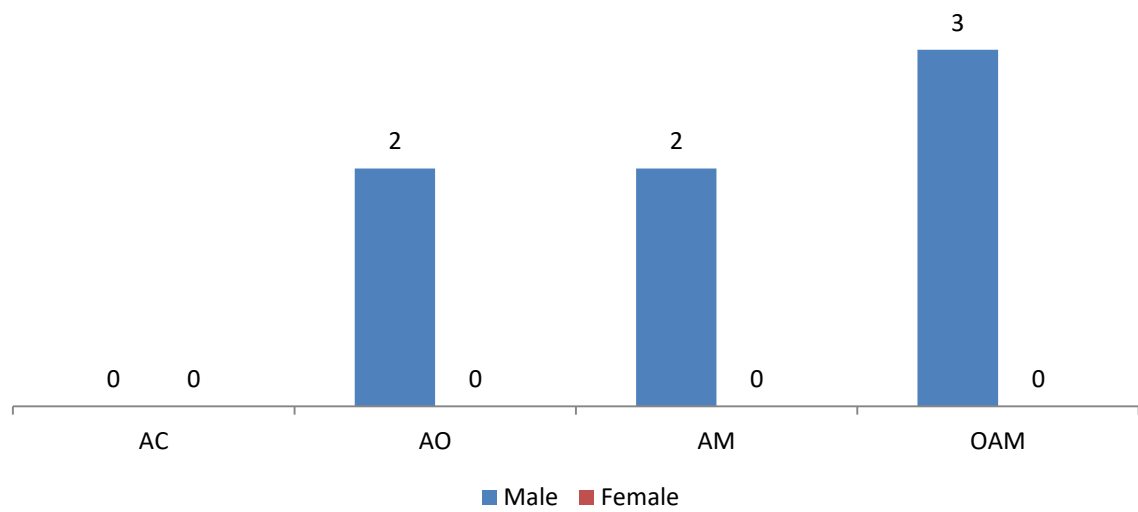
Chart 81: Surveying & Mapping – nominations and awards by gender, 2017-21



No nominations in this category were considered at the AD18 and AD21 meetings.

No awards in this category were recommended for the QB21 honours list.

Chart 82: Surveying & Mapping – awards made, by level and gender, 2017-21



Tourism & Hospitality

This is a small category, with 64 nominations considered in the period 2017-21. It has no sub-categories.

Chart 83: Tourism & Hospitality – nominations and awards by gender, 2017-21

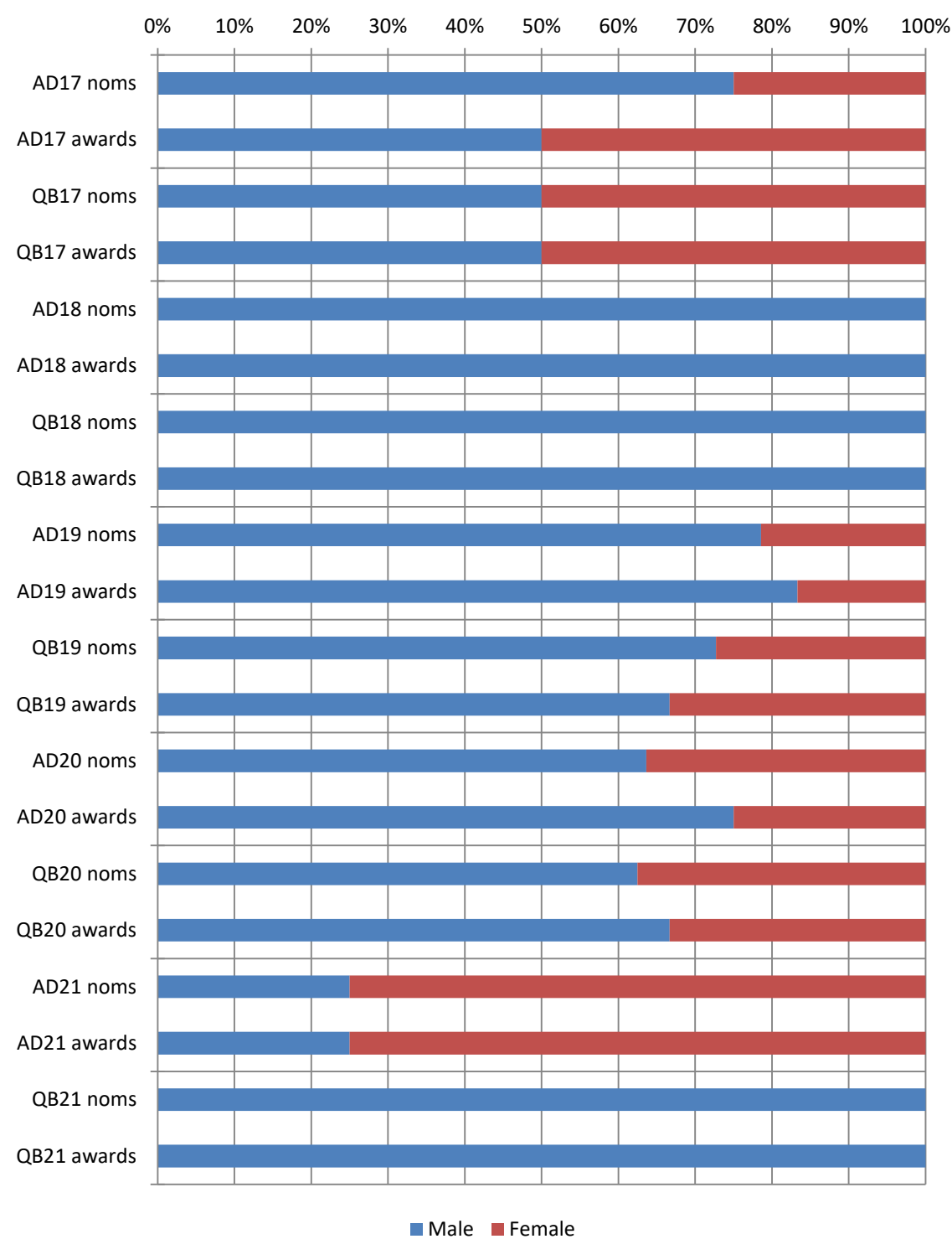
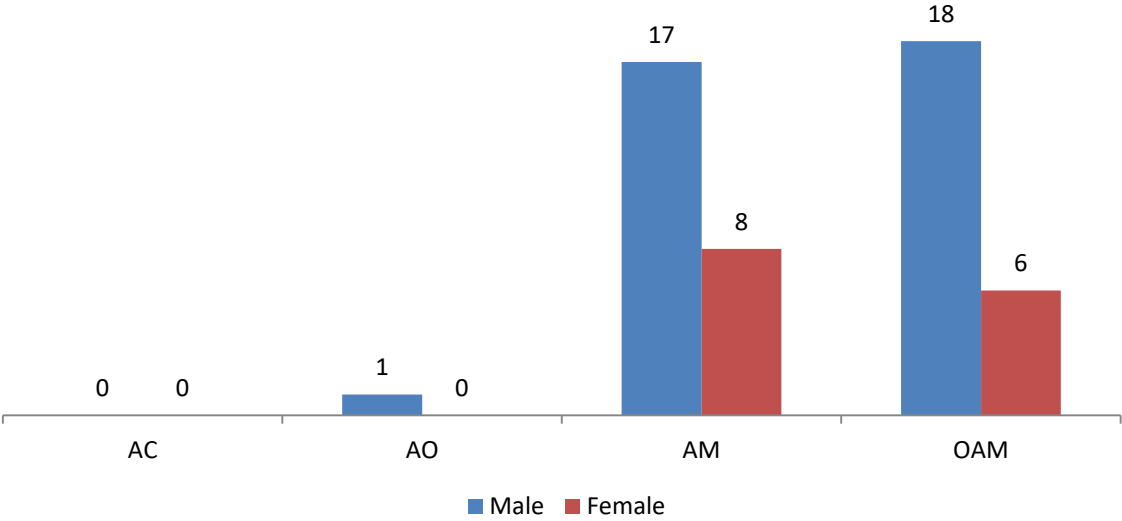


Chart 84: Tourism & Hospitality – awards made, by level and gender, 2017-21



Transport

This is a small category, with 61 nominations considered in the period 2017-21. It has four sub-categories: Aviation, General, Roads, and Shipping.

Chart 85: Transport – nominations and awards by gender, 2017-21

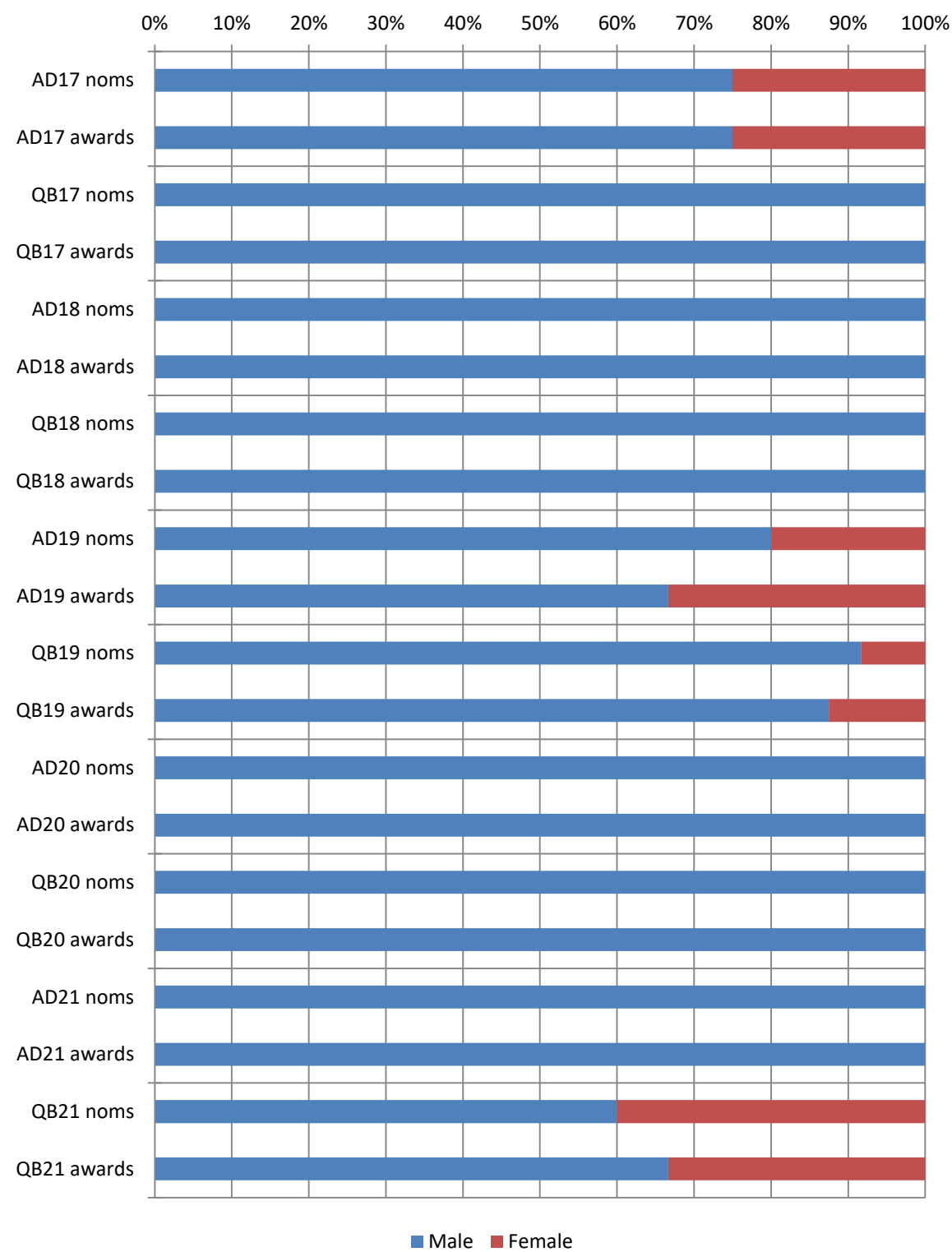
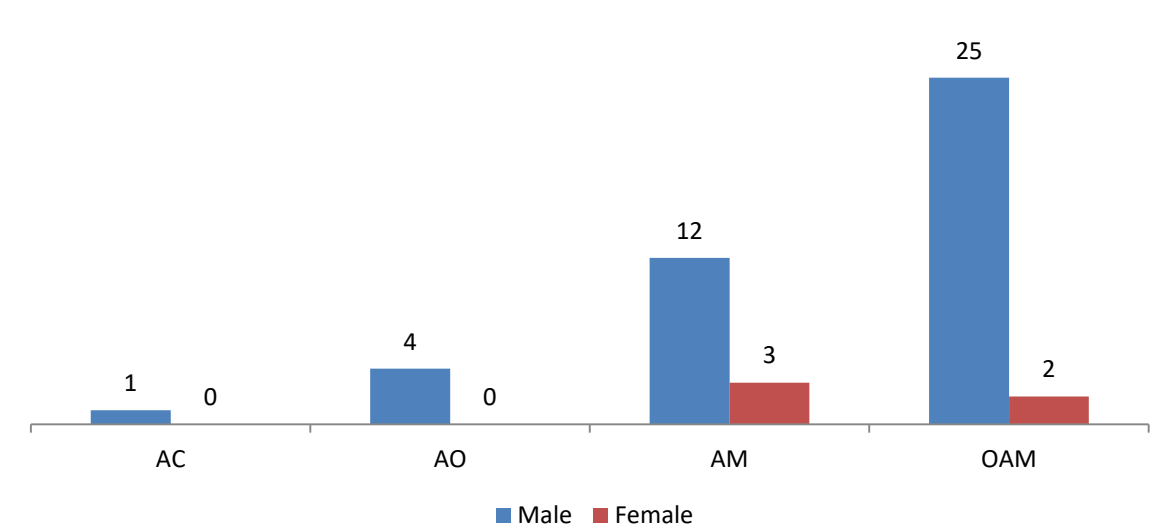


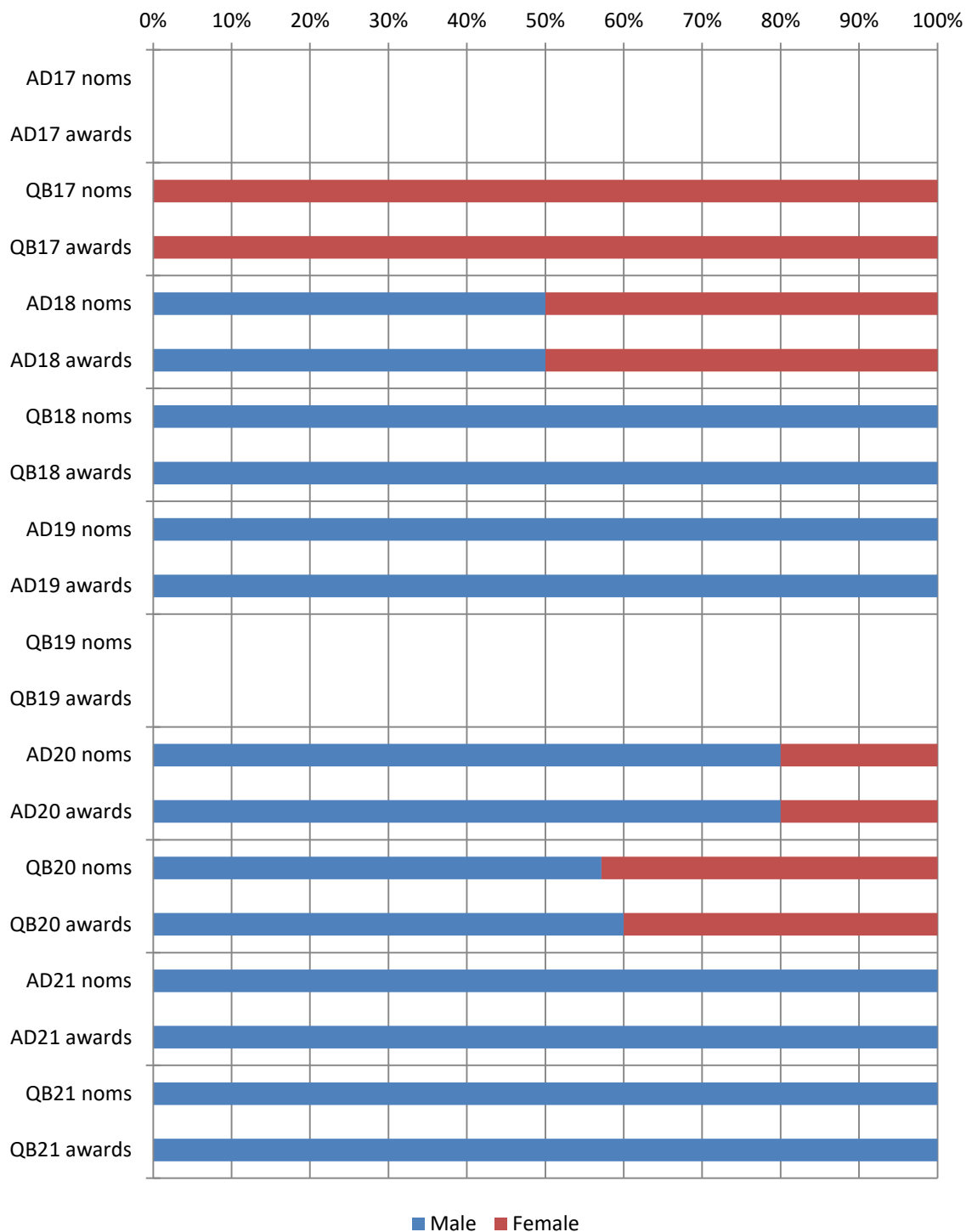
Chart 86: Transport – awards made, by level and gender, 2017-21



Veterinary Science

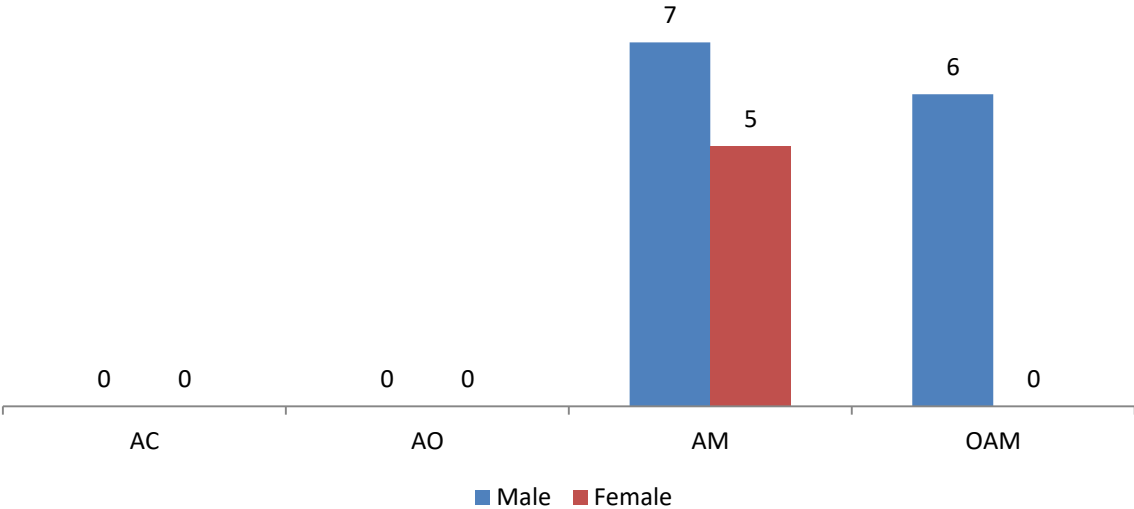
This is a small category, with 23 nominations considered in the period 2017-21. It has no sub-categories.

Chart 87: Veterinary Science – nominations and awards by gender, 2017-21



No nominations in this category were considered at the AD17 and QB19 meetings.

Chart 88: Veterinary Science – awards made, by level and gender, 2017-21



6. Order of Australia – General Division: nominees and recipients born overseas

Information about the cultural diversity of nominees has only been collected from the QB21 honours list onwards. These figures will be related in future reports. However, Australian citizenship is a requirement for eligibility, and where a person was not born in Australia, this information has always been recorded, to enable verification of citizenship.

From 1975-2016, approximately 11% of nominees, and 12% of recipients, were born overseas (see **charts 98 & 99** in the 2012-16 Branch Report). The following charts supplement previously published figures with those for the current reporting period.

Chart 89: OA nominees: born in Australia vs born overseas, 2017-21

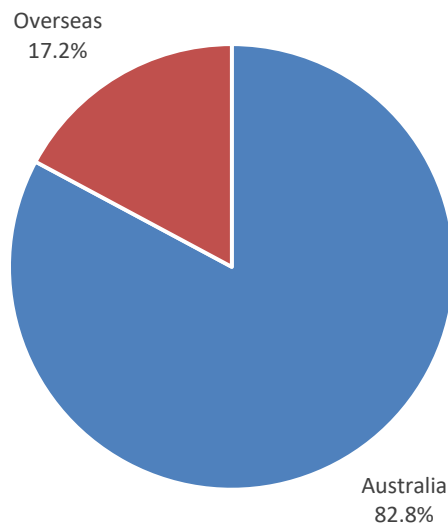


Chart 90: OA recipients: born in Australia vs born overseas, 2017-21

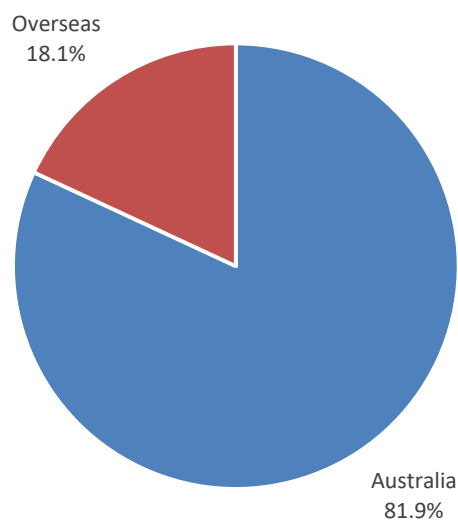


Chart 91 breaks down the outcomes of all nominations of persons born overseas, by the outcome – level of award, or no award recommended (“NAW”). Figures for 1975 to 2016 are provided in **chart 100** in the 2012-16 Branch Report. The following chart provides the figures for the current reporting period.

Chart 91: OA recipients: born overseas, by outcome, 2017-21

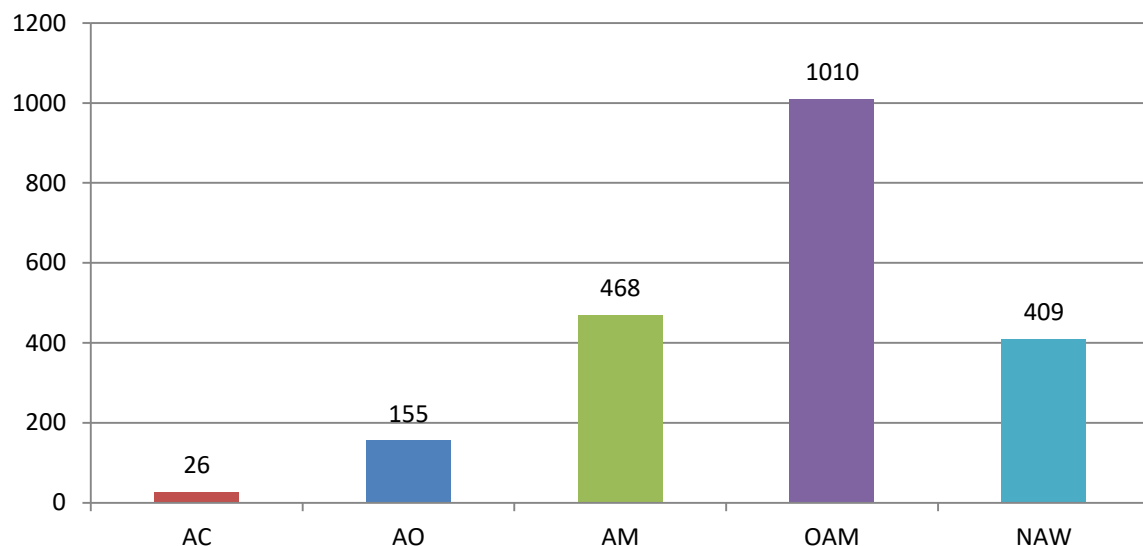
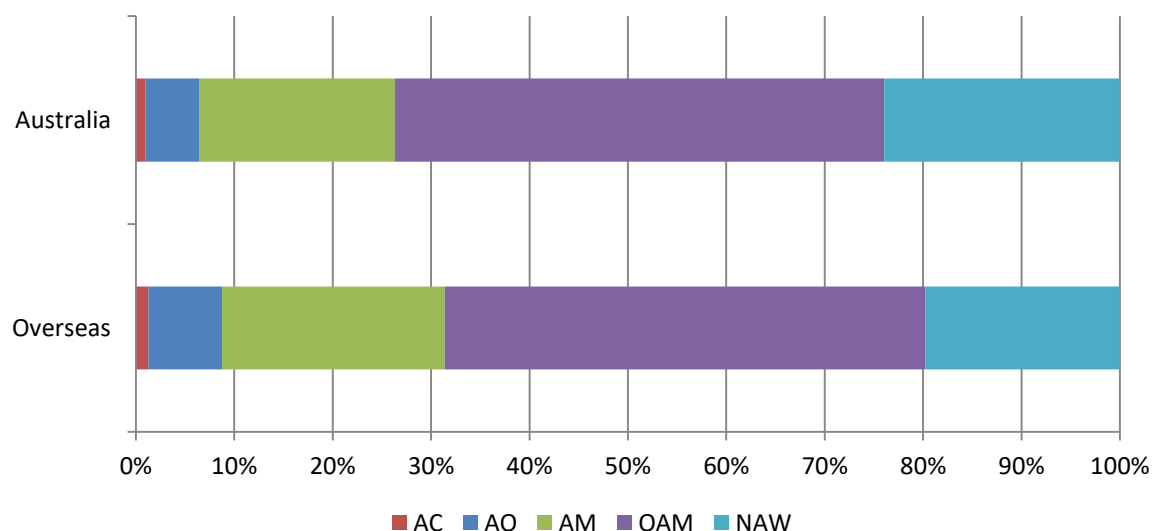


Chart 92 illustrates the distribution of outcomes for nominations of recipients born overseas and in Australia.

Chart 92: OA: recipients born in Australia and overseas, by outcome, 2017-21



Nominees and recipients in the Order have come from 116 countries other than Australia. These have been grouped into regions, and **Charts 93 & 94** illustrate the region of origin for all nominees and recipients born overseas for the current reporting period only. Figures for the life of the honours system up to 2016 are available in the 2012-16 Branch Report.

Chart 93: OA nominees born overseas, by region of origin, 2017-21

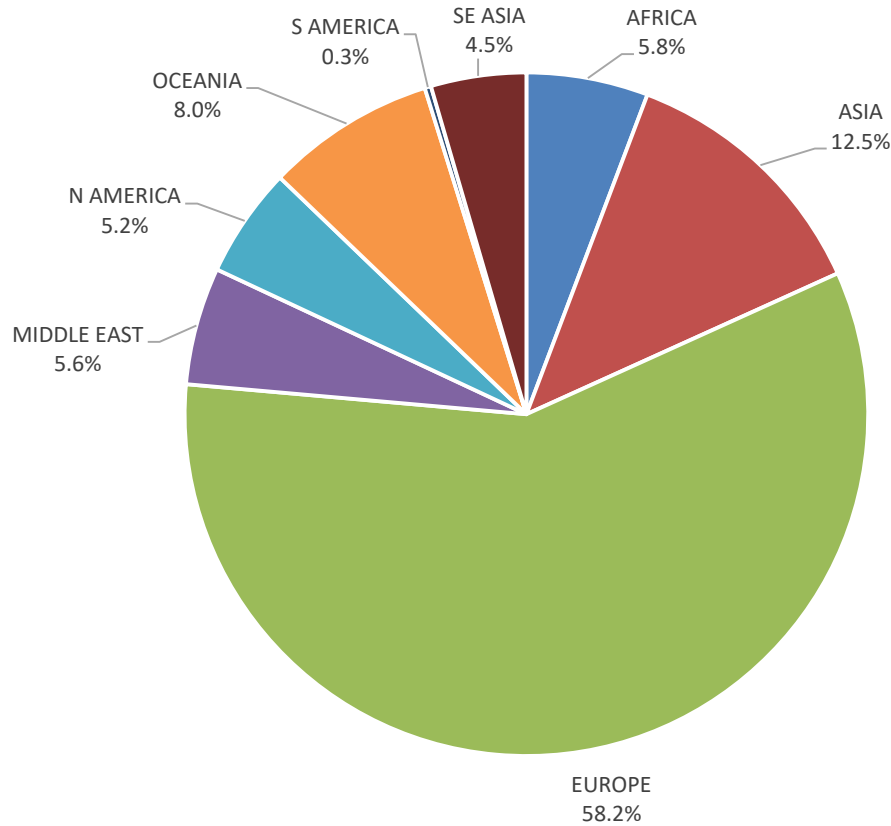
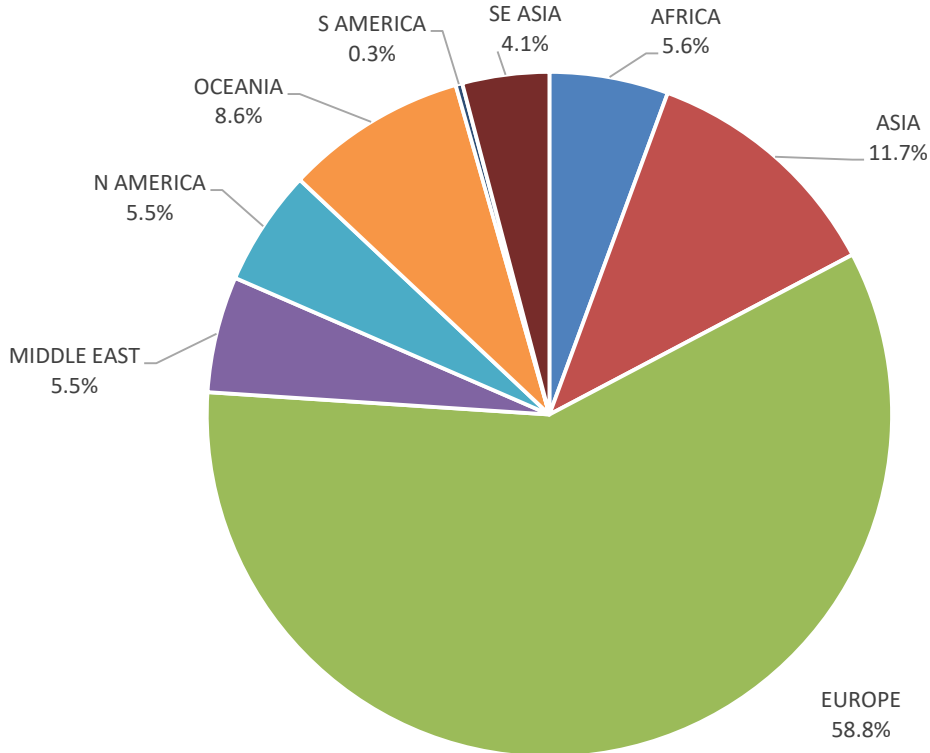


Chart 94: OA recipients born overseas, by region of origin, 2017-21



Taking this data further, **Table 2** provides the top five countries of birth in each region, by number of nominations received.

Table 2: OA nominees born overseas, top 5 countries per region, 2017-21

Africa	South Africa 75	Zimbabwe 9	Kenya 5	Uganda 3	Ethiopia 3
Asia	India 99	China 55	Sri Lanka 40	Hong Kong 17	Philippines 14
Europe	UK 729	Italy 67	Germany 54	Netherlands 50	Poland 37
Mid East	Lebanon 39	Egypt 39	Israel 14	Iraq 9	Iran 3
N America	USA 67	Canada 31	Trinidad & T 3	Jamaica 2	El Salvador 1
Oceania	New Zealand 132	Fiji 16	PNG 9	Palau 2	Tonga 1
S America	Argentina 3	Chile 2	Brazil 1	<i>(Only 3 in this group)</i>	
SE Asia	Malaysia 45	Vietnam 18	Singapore 13	Indonesia 10	Cambodia 3

Note that: “N AMERICA” includes Central America and the Caribbean; and that Egypt is grouped with “MID EAST”.

7. Order of Australia: declined offers of award or appointment

After the Council for the Order of Australia recommends an award or appointment in the Order, but before the recommendation is presented to the Governor-General, the Branch writes to the potential recipient to ask whether, if approved, they would accept the honour. This is known as “sounding”. The material sent to the person includes a summary of the service and achievements on which the Council based its recommendation, and a proposed citation to be announced with the award.

It is open to a potential recipient to decline the offer of award. A person’s reasons for declining remain a private matter, and the Branch does not comment on individual cases.

The figures in this section do not represent financial years. **Chart 95** illustrates offers declined at each level, broken down by gender.

Chart 95: OA offers declined, by level and gender, 1975-2021

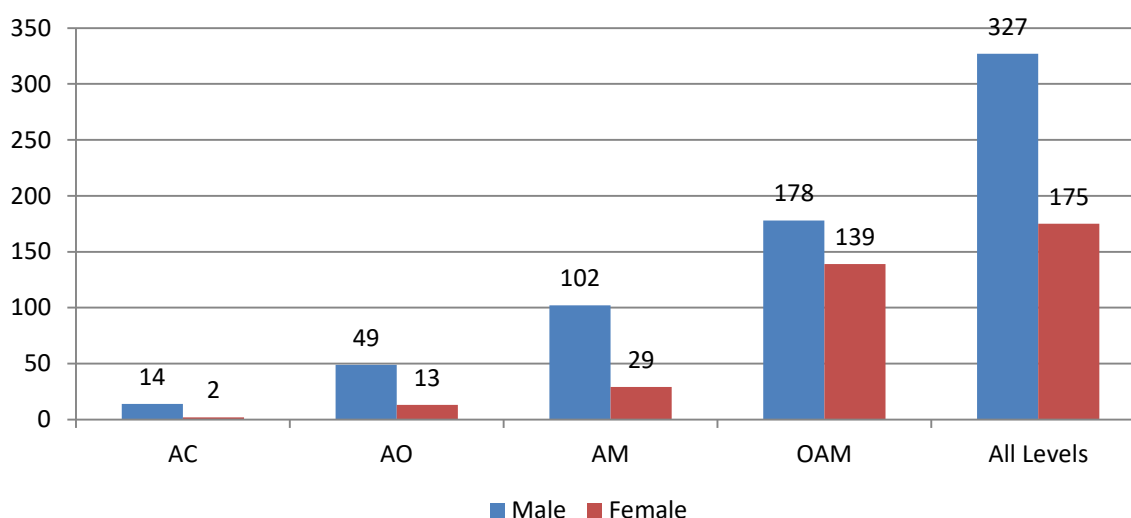
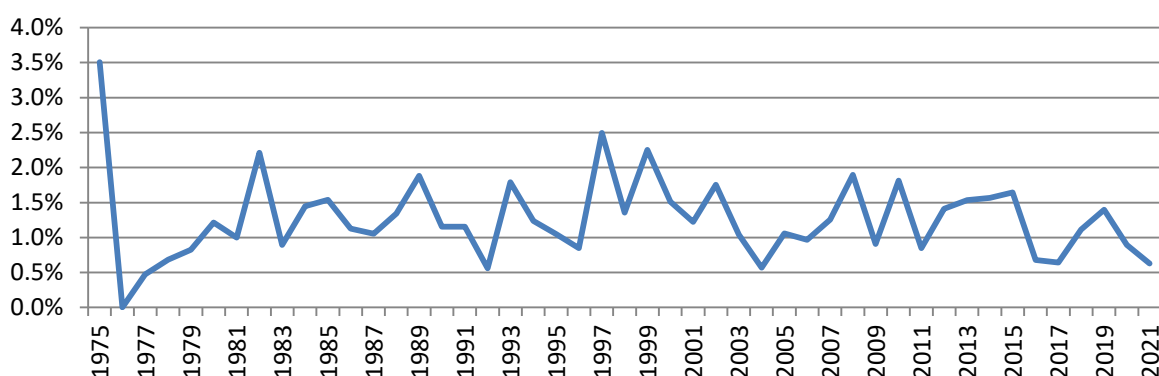


Chart 96 illustrates the number of declines per year as a percentage of all offers of award or appointment in that year. Note that there are two honours lists announced per year, but a single data point is given for each year. Over the life of the honours system, 1.3% of all offers of award or appointment have been declined.

Chart 96: OA declines per year, as a proportion of all offers, 1975-2021

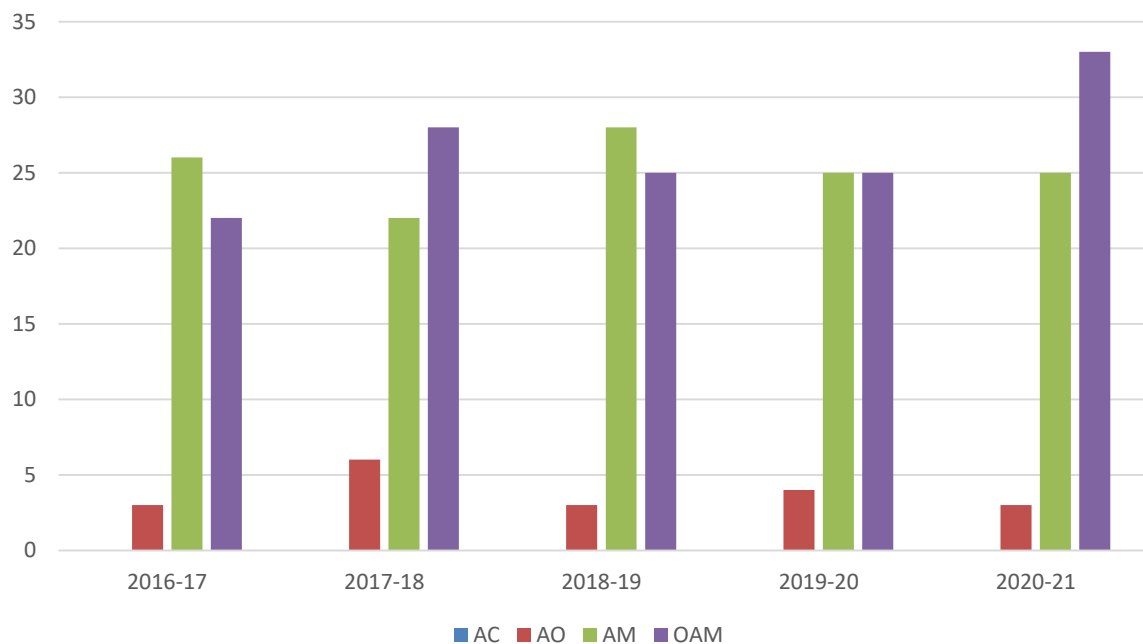


8. Order of Australia: Military Division

Appointments and awards in the Military Division of the Order are administered within the Department of Defence, and are recommended by the Minister for Defence. The Constitution of the Order includes formulas for determining the total number of appointments in the military division that may be made each year, in addition to specifying the maximum number that can be made at the Companion and Officer levels.

The number of appointments and awards at each level made over the last five years in the Military Division is illustrated below. Honorary appointments and awards are included in the “Honorary” section of this report (see section 9).

Chart 97: OA Military Division, all awards 2017-21

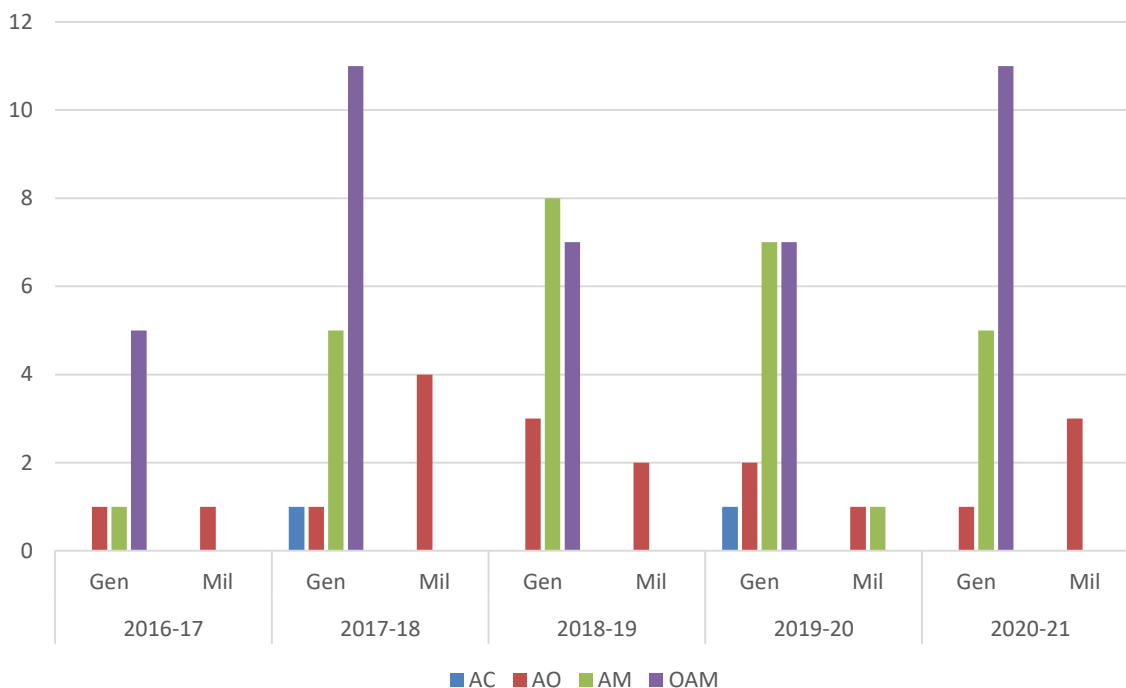


9. Order of Australia: honorary appointments and awards

Australia may honour non-Australians through the Order of Australia, by making honorary appointments and awards in either Division (General or Military), as appropriate. Non-citizens who are permanent residents are considered by the Council for the Order of Australia and recommendations are made to the Governor-General. Any resulting awards or appointments are made in the General Division, and are announced in the regular honours lists. The Prime Minister considers nominations for non-citizens who are not permanent residents, and makes recommendations for honorary awards in the General Division. The Minister for Defence recommends honorary awards for members of foreign defence forces in the Military Division. Honorary awards recommended by the Prime Minister and Minister for Defence may be gazetted and announced at any time.

The following chart illustrates the number of honorary appointments and awards at each level and in each Division made over the last five years.

Chart 98: OA honorary, by Division and level, 2017-21



10. Order of Australia: Terminations, Cancellations and Resignations

Terminations and Cancellations

The Council considers cases in accordance with the “Terminations and Cancellations Ordinance”, made under the Constitution of the Order.³ The Ordinance sets out the grounds on which the Council may recommend termination or cancellation, and the process and timeframes that must be observed in doing so.

The Branch monitors media and other sources of information that may relate to members. The process of reconsideration of a membership is a two stage process. Matters of potential concern are brought to the attention of the Council for discussion and consideration.

The process requires that the member is given the opportunity to respond before a recommendation is made by the Council to the Governor-General. Any response is provided to the Council for consideration. Each termination and cancellation is published as a notice in the Commonwealth of Australia Gazette.

For clarity, appointments are terminated; awards are cancelled. The Knight/Dame, Companion, Officer and Member levels of the Order are appointments, while the Medal level is an award. Despite the terminology differences, the process is identical.

Table 3 provides data on the year, gender, and level of all terminations and cancellations in both Divisions of the Order (General and Military). “Year” is the financial year in which the gazette notice appeared announcing the termination or cancellation. Figures for the last five years, and a total for those years, is given here. A year-by-year break-down of the 1975 to 2015-16 figures appears in Table 3, page 93 of the Australian Honours and Awards Branch Report 2012-16.

Note that there were no terminations or cancellations prior to 1992-93. The Ordinance commenced operation in August 1992, and no cases reached a conclusion before the following year.

Table 3: Order of Australia: Terminations and Cancellations, 1975-2021

Level and gender		1975 to 2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2017-2021	1975-2021
Medal (OAM)	Male	21		1	1	1	2	5	26
	Female	2						0	2
Member (AM)	Male	11						0	11
	Female	0						0	0
Officer (AO)	Male	7						0	7
	Female	0	1					1	1
Companion (AC)	Male	1						0	1
	Female	0						0	0
All levels	Male	40	0	1	1	1	2	5	45
	Female	2	1	0	0	0	0	1	3
	Total	42	1	1	1	1	2	6	48

Resignations

There is also provision in the Constitution of the Order for a person to resign.⁴ The process involves the member writing to the Governor-General saying that they wish to resign, and giving an explanation. If the Governor-General accepts the resignation, it takes effect from that date, and a notice is published in the Commonwealth of Australia Gazette.

Table 4 provides data on the year, gender, and level of all resignations from the Order of Australia. “Year” is the financial year in which the gazette notice appeared announcing the resignation. Figures for the last five years, and a total for those years, is given here. A year-by-year break-down of the 1975 to 2015-16 figures appears in Table 4, page 94 of the Australian Honours and Awards Branch Report 2012-16.

Table 4: Order of Australia: Resignations, 1975-2021

Level and gender		1975 to 2015-16	2016- 17	2017- 18	2018- 19	2019- 20	2020- 21	2017- 2021	1975- 2021
Medal (OAM)	Male	6	2			2	3	7	13
	Female	0					1	1	1
Member (AM)	Male	4					3	3	7
	Female	1					1	1	2
Officer (AO)	Male	1					1	1	2
	Female	1						0	1
Companion (AC)	Male	3						0	3
	Female	0						0	0
All levels	Male	14	2	0	0	2	7	11	25
	Female	2	0	0	0	0	2	2	4
	Total	16	2	0	0	2	9	13	29

When a termination, cancellation or resignation occurs, the Secretary of the Order writes to inform the person of the outcome. Included in that letter is a direction to return the insignia of their appointment or award, and their warrant. They are also instructed to cease using the relevant post-nominal.

A portrait of a man in a dark blue pinstripe suit, light blue shirt, and patterned tie. He is wearing a red ribbon Bravery Decoration on his left lapel. The background is a blurred indoor setting with warm lighting and autumnal foliage.

The Australian Bravery Decorations

Mr Levi Symington BM, invested at Government House, Canberra, May 2021.

11. Australian Bravery Decorations

The Australian Bravery Decorations were introduced as one of the original components of the Australian honours system. There are four levels of individual award, and a group bravery citation, for collective acts of bravery by a group of persons. In order from the most senior, the individual awards are:

- Cross of Valour (CV)
- Star of Courage (SC)
- Bravery Medal (BM)
- Commendation for Brave Conduct (no post-nominal)

The Cross of Valour is the highest Australian decoration a civilian can be awarded.

Anyone can be nominated, and anyone can nominate – awards are not restricted to Australian citizens. The brave act does not have to have occurred in Australia either, provided that the act itself was considered worthy of recognition in the interest of Australia.

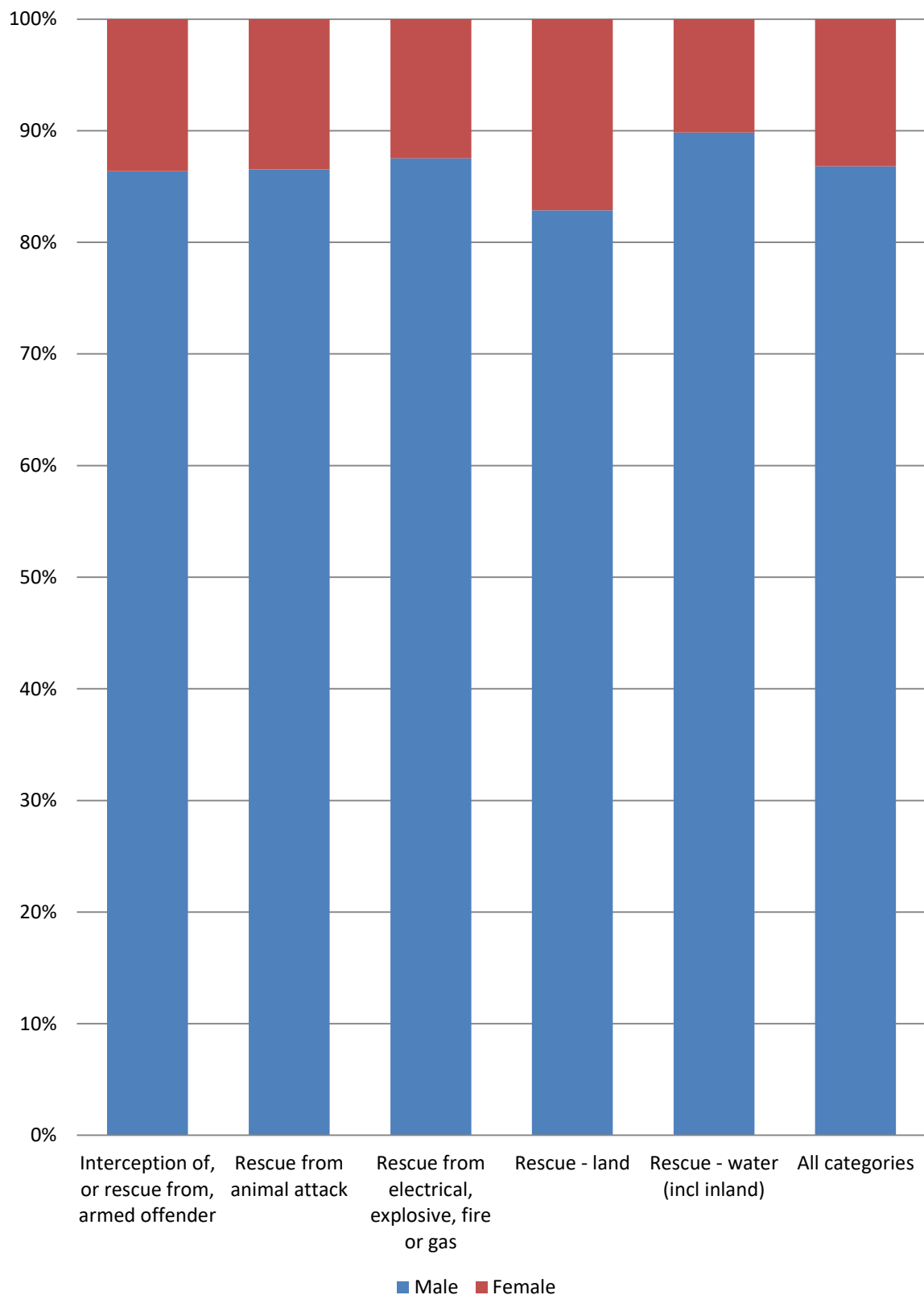
The Australian Bravery Decorations Council meets twice per year to consider nominations, and to make its recommendations to the Governor-General. The approved awards are announced in two bravery honours lists, usually published in March and August. The figures presented below also include the two Stars of Courage and seven Bravery Medals considered and awarded out of session, in July 2018, to Australians who participated in the rescue of children from a submerged cave complex in Thailand.

The Council consists of fourteen members including representatives of each state and territory, two ex-officio members and four community members. The current membership of the Council is always available through the Governor-General's website, www.gg.gov.au, and the membership at the date of publication is included in each Annual Report of the Office of the Official Secretary to the Governor-General.

The Council uses 19 categories of brave acts, to assist with comparative decision-making. To simplify presentation and analysis, the data on the following pages uses five categories, grouping the 19 as follows:

Interception of, or rescue from, armed offender	
Interception of armed offender	Rescue from armed offender
Rescued from animal attack (no grouping)	
Rescue from electric, explosive, fire or gas hazard	
Rescue from electrical hazard	Rescue from explosive hazard
Rescue from fire - aircraft	Rescue from fire - building
Rescue from fire - bushfire	Rescue from fire - motor vehicle
Rescue from fire - other	Rescue from gases, toxic fumes etc.
Rescue - land	
Rescue from heights, cliffs	Rescue from holes, wells or mines
Rescue from path of oncoming vehicle	Rescue from other situation
Rescue – water (including inland)	
Rescue from inland waters	Rescue from water – other
Rescue from water – sea	Rescue from water - submerged vehicle

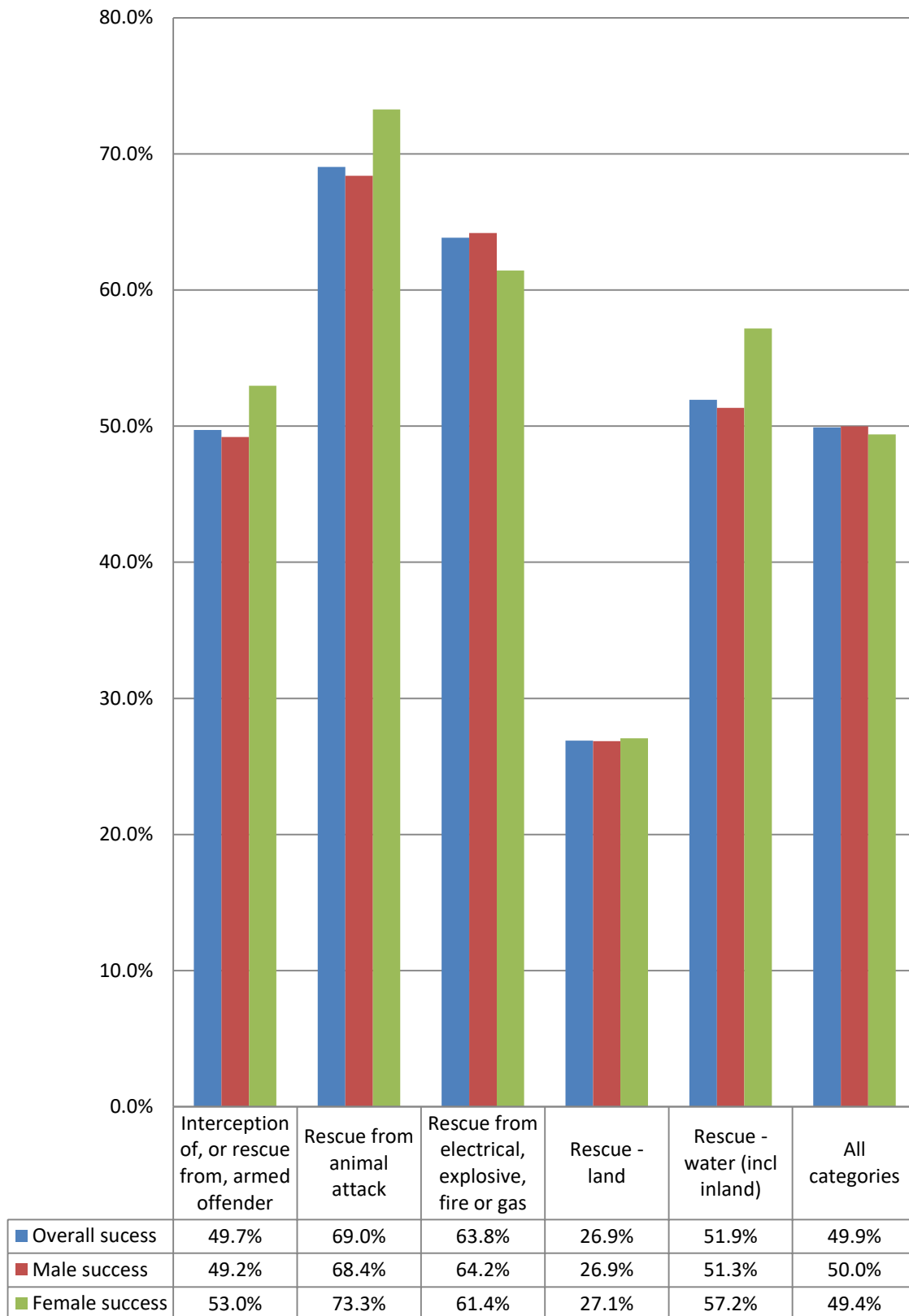
Chart 99: Bravery – all nominations, by category and gender, 2017-21



This data is illustrated in percentages, to eliminate the wide variation in volume between categories.

Chart 100 illustrates the overall success rate of nominations in each of the categories, in total and by gender.

Chart 100: Bravery – nomination success rates, by category and gender, 2017-21



Since Group Bravery Citations comprise multiple recipients, the bravery outcomes are presented two ways. **Chart 101** covers all recipients of an award, including every recipient in each Group Bravery Citation. **Chart 102** only counts each Group Bravery Citation once.

Chart 101: Bravery – all recipients, by category, 2017-21

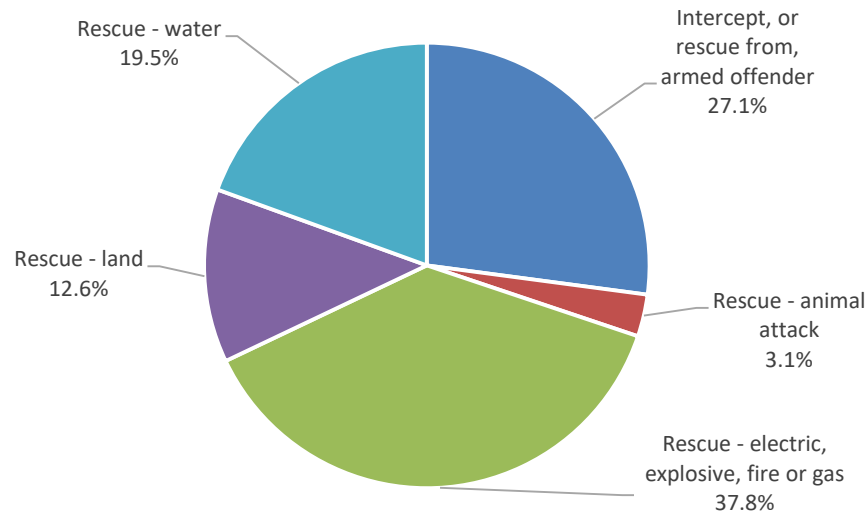
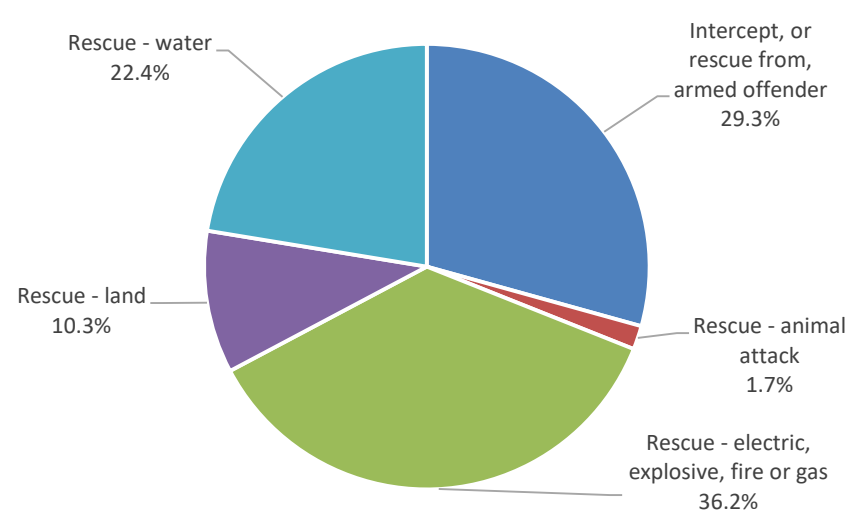
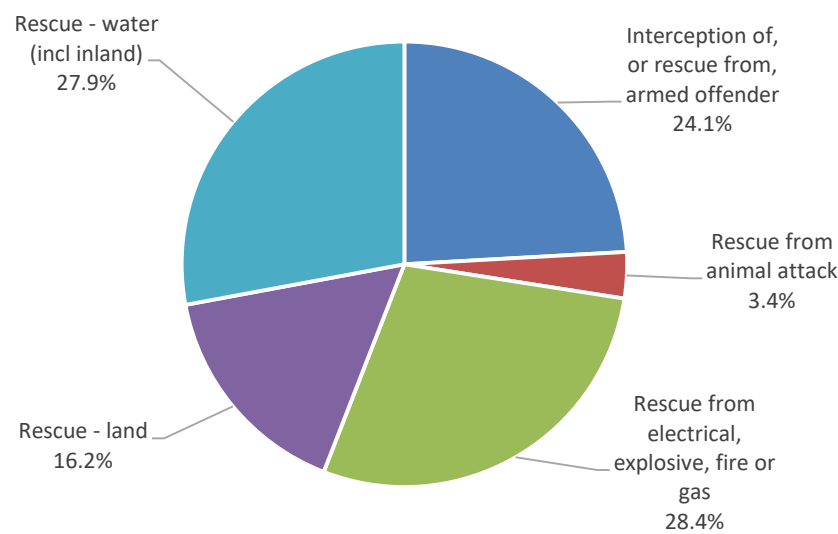


Chart 102: Bravery – all awards, by category, 2017-21



The proportions of nominations received, by category group, are illustrated in **Chart 103**.

Chart 103: Bravery – all nominations, by category, 2017-21





The National Emergency Medal

The Governor-General thanks volunteer firefighters in Bairnsdale, Victoria, 5 January 2020.

12. National Emergency Medal

The National Emergency Medal (NEM) was established in 2011, providing recognition for the committed and courageous efforts of frontline responders, volunteers and community supporters during nationally-significant emergencies in Australia. As an operational service medal, there is no post-nominal entitlement.

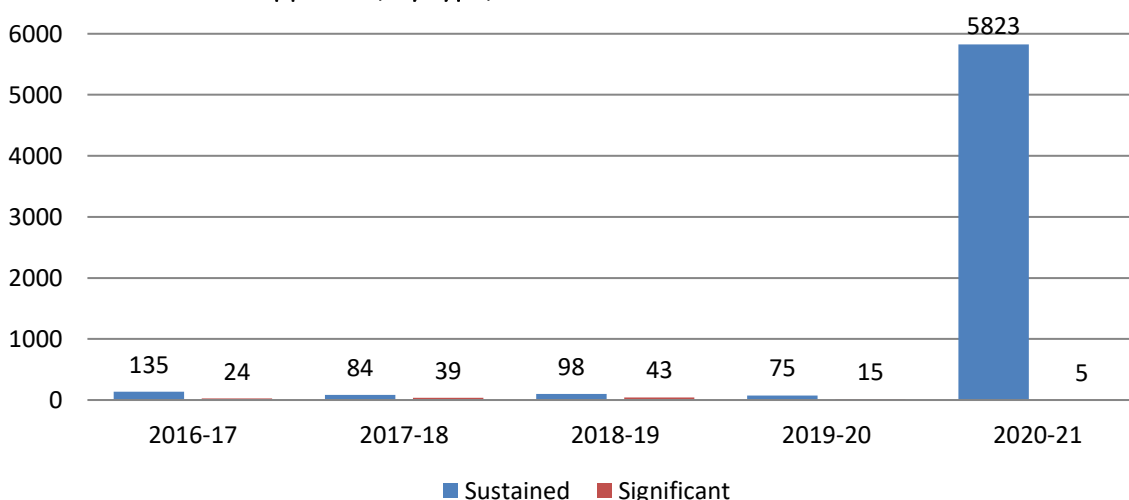
It is awarded to members of identified organisations or individuals who give service in response to nationally significant emergencies within Australia, and there are two ways of qualifying. For “sustained service”, it is awarded to those who render a minimum duration of service in direct response to the emergency during specified dates in specified places. For “significant service”, it may be awarded to those who do not satisfy the “sustained” criteria, but who render extraordinary service in response to the emergency.

The Australian Honours and Awards Secretariat administers the NEM, working closely with emergency service agencies, local councils and community groups to assist with the application process and supporting the National Emergency Medal Committee. The Secretariat verifies all applications for the NEM for “sustained” service, and the Director of the Branch recommends awards for the Governor-General’s consideration. The Committee recommends the declarations for all nationally-significant emergencies and is responsible for determining eligibility criteria and all applications for “significant” service. The Committee also considers some “sustained” cases referred by the Branch, if advice is required to determine whether the criteria has been met. For example, for persons who died during the event or who were evacuated due to injury or illness, before completing the minimum duration of service to qualify.

Five emergencies have been declared for the NEM including the 2009 Victorian Bushfires, the 2010-11 Queensland Floods and Cyclone Yasi natural disasters, the 2017 Tropical Cyclone Debbie, the North Queensland Floods in 2019, and the most recent 2019-20 Black Summer Bushfires.

The overall volume of NEM applications was low for the first four years of the five year capture period for this report, but 2020-21 saw a dramatic rise in volume, as awards were approved for new operations, particularly for the 2019-20 Black Summer Bushfires.

Chart 104: NEM – all approved, by type, 2017-21



A photograph of a woman with short blonde hair, wearing a dark blue V-neck dress and a black beaded necklace, smiling as a man in a dark suit and glasses pins a medal onto her lapel. The man is wearing a watch and has several medals on his own lapel. The background is a blurred interior with framed pictures.

Meritorious service awards

The Governor-General invests Mrs Deborah McGuire PSM, September 2020.

13. Meritorious awards

As noted in the first part of this report, the meritorious group of awards is made up of medals recommended by federal, state and territory ministers, to recognise members of particular services for their outstanding or distinguished achievements. Upon receipt of recommendations, the Branch makes checks for adherence to the governing documents, organises sounding, and presents them to the Governor-General. If approved, the Branch prepares material for publication in the relevant honours list. The Branch is also responsible for preparation and despatch of warrants (a document certifying the award) and insignia (the medal) to the relevant Government House, for investiture.

It should be noted that the numbers of such awards that may be recommended federally, and by each state or territory in a given calendar year, is limited by quota. No comparison has been done between jurisdictions, because the differences are fixed, according to the comparative size of the services concerned. Therefore statistics provided cover the gender split for each award over the total five-year period, and a comparison of total numbers awarded in each of the last five years.

The awards included in this section are:

- Public Service Medal
- Australian Police Medal
- Australian Fire Service Medal
- Ambulance Service Medal
- Emergency Services Medal
- Australian Corrections Medal
- Australian Intelligence Medal
- Australian Antarctic Medal

Public Service Medal

The Public Service Medal (PSM) may be awarded for outstanding service by any employee of a federal, state, territory or local government agency. No more than 100 may be awarded, in total, each calendar year. The number available to each jurisdiction is established in the medal regulations. The number for each state includes awards to local government employees in that state.

Chart 105: PSM by gender, 2017-21

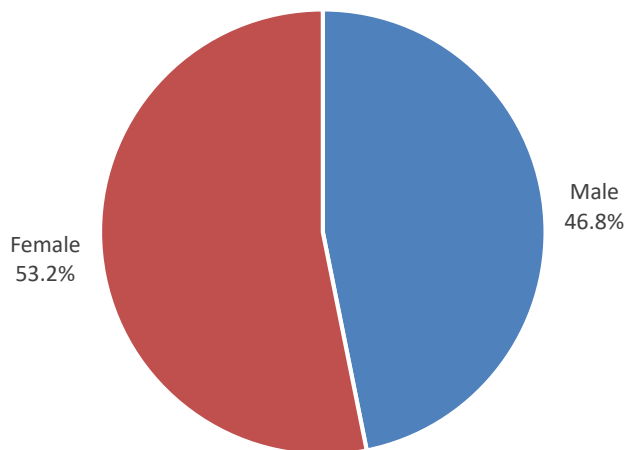
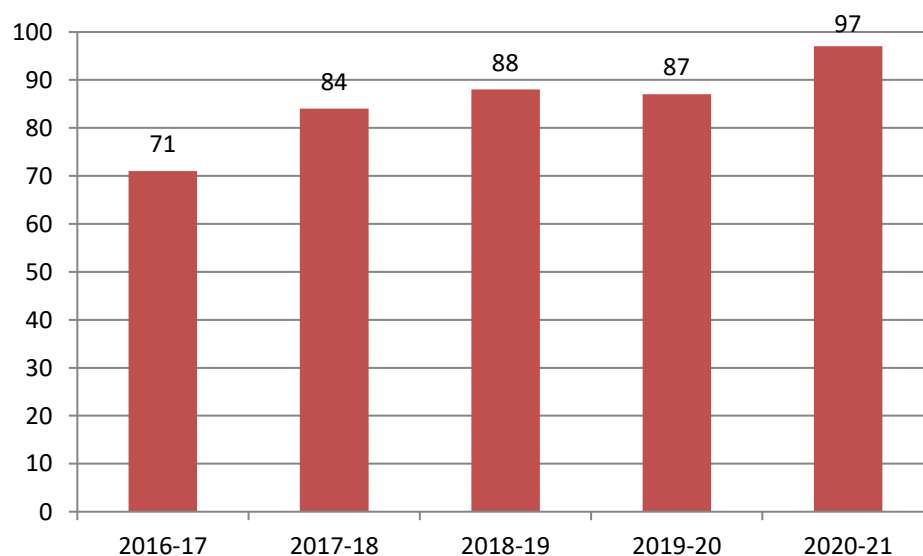


Chart 106: PSM: volume awarded, 2017-21



Australian Police Medal

The Australian Police Medal (APM) may be awarded for distinguished service by sworn members of any Australian police force, including at the federal level. The number that may be awarded in each service in each calendar year is one for each thousand members of the force, or part thereof, plus one.

Chart 107: APM by gender, 2017-21

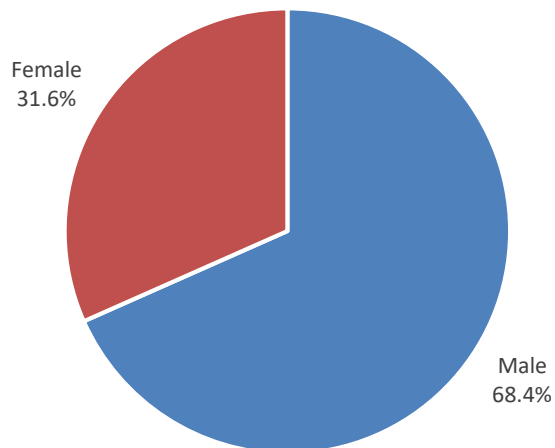
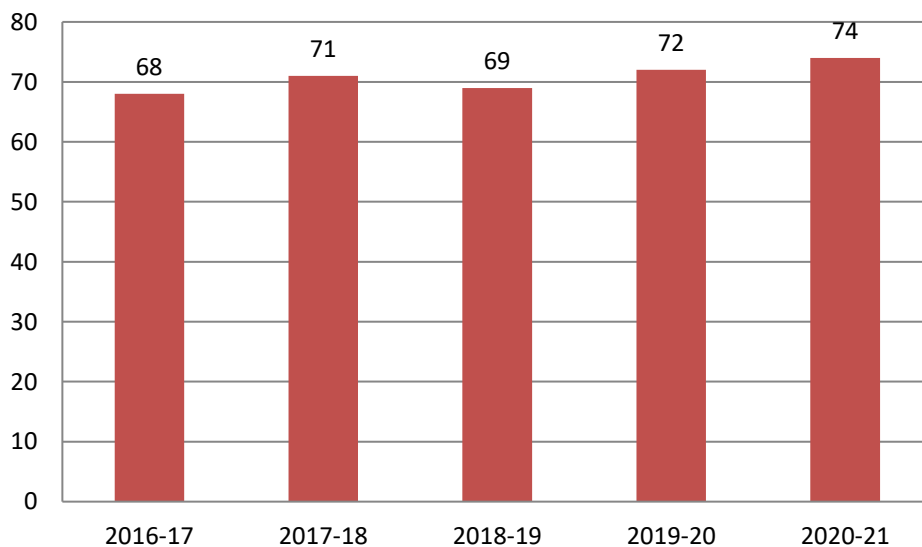


Chart 108: APM: volume awarded, 2017-21



Australian Fire Service Medal

The Australian Fire Service Medal (AFSM) may be awarded for distinguished service by members of any Australian fire service. The formula for calculating each jurisdiction's annual quota is: one award for each 1,000 (or part thereof) full time permanent members of the combined fire services, plus one award for each 5,000 (or part thereof) part-time, volunteer or auxiliary members, plus one additional. One award per year may be made in a Commonwealth fire service, and one for the fire service of an External Territory.

Chart 109: AFSM by gender, 2017-21

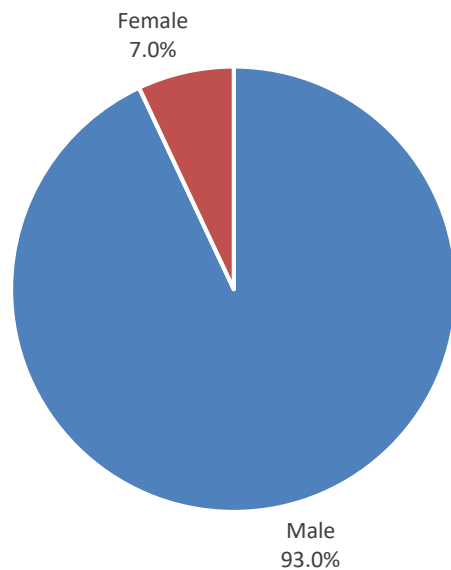
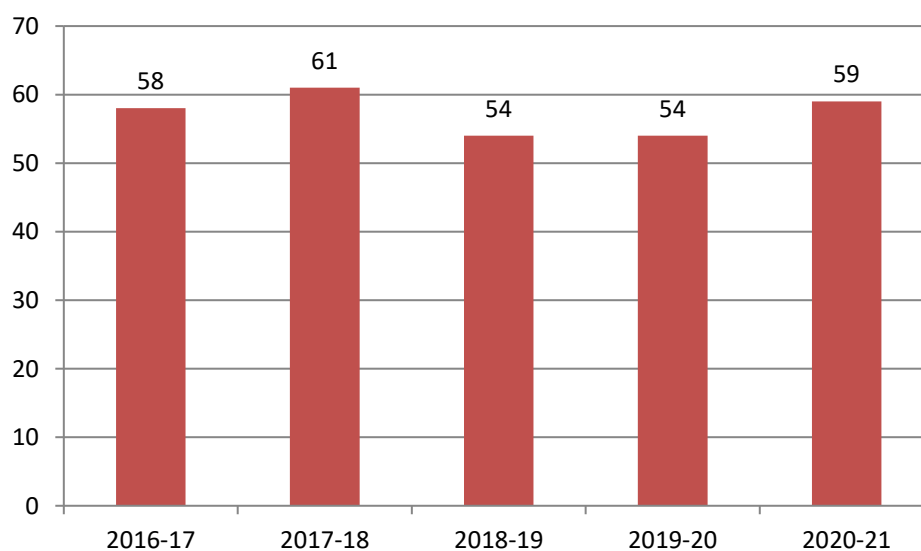


Chart 110: AFSM: volume awarded, 2017-21



Ambulance Service Medal

The Ambulance Service Medal (ASM) may be awarded for distinguished service by members of any Australian ambulance service. The formula for calculating each jurisdiction's annual quota is: one award for each 1,000 (or part thereof) full time permanent members of the combined fire services, plus one award for each 5,000 (or part thereof) part-time, volunteer or auxiliary members, plus one additional. One award per year may be made in each of the Northern Territory, the Australian Capital Territory, and one for all of the External Territories.

Chart 111: ASM by gender, 2017-21

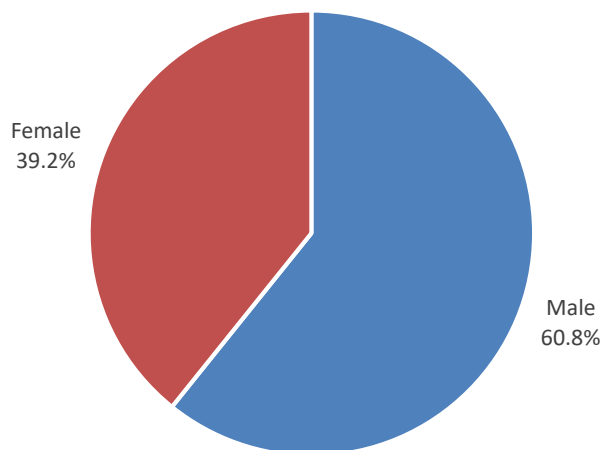
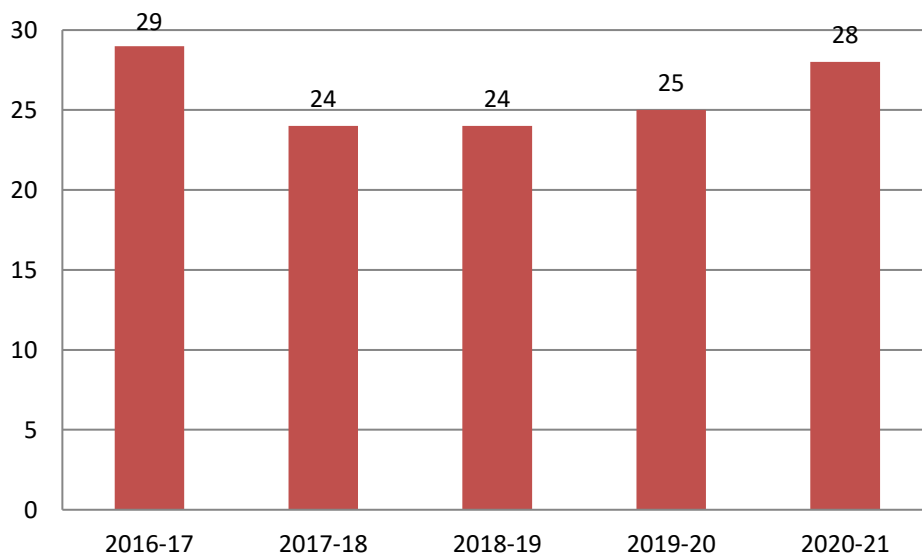


Chart 112: ASM: volume awarded, 2017-21



Emergency Services Medal

The Emergency Services Medal (ESM) may be awarded for distinguished service by members of any Australian emergency service. This includes the SES, independent volunteer rescue services, marine rescue services and surf lifesaving organisations. The formula for calculating each jurisdiction's annual quota is: one award for each 1,000 (or part thereof) full time permanent members of the combined emergency services, plus one award for each 5,000 (or part thereof) part-time, volunteer or auxiliary members, plus one additional. One award per year may be made in each of the Northern Territory, the Australian Capital Territory, and one for all of the External Territories.

Chart 113: ESM by gender, 2017-21

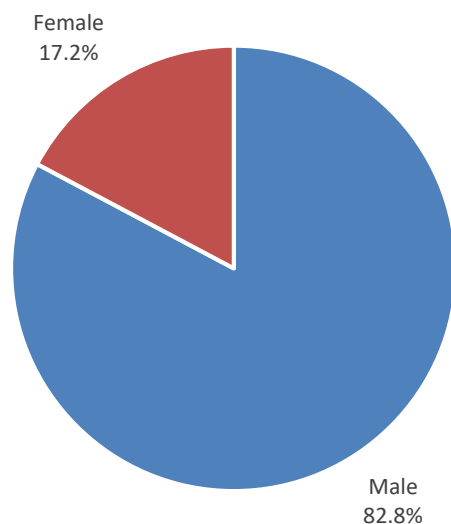
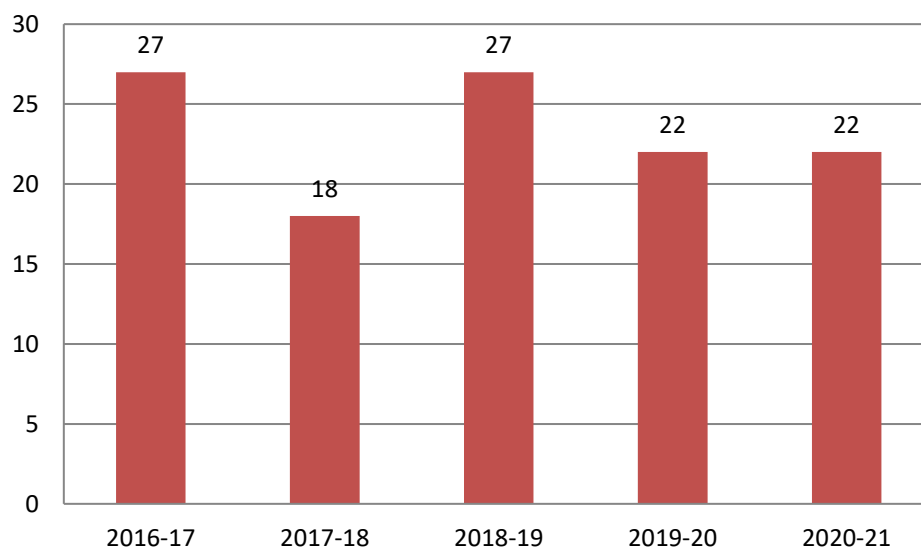


Chart 114: ESM: volume awarded, 2017-21



Australian Corrections Medal

The Australian Corrections Medal (ACM) may be awarded for distinguished service by members of Australian correctional services. This is limited to state or territory civilian correctional services for adults. The formula for calculating each jurisdiction's annual quota is: one award for each 1,000 (or part thereof) full time equivalent correctional services members of the state or territory, plus one if there are more than 1,000 full time equivalent members.

The ACM was established on 19 June 2017, and the first awards were made in the Australia Day 2018 honours list. There are therefore no awards to be reported for 2016-17.

Chart 115: ACM by gender, 2017-21

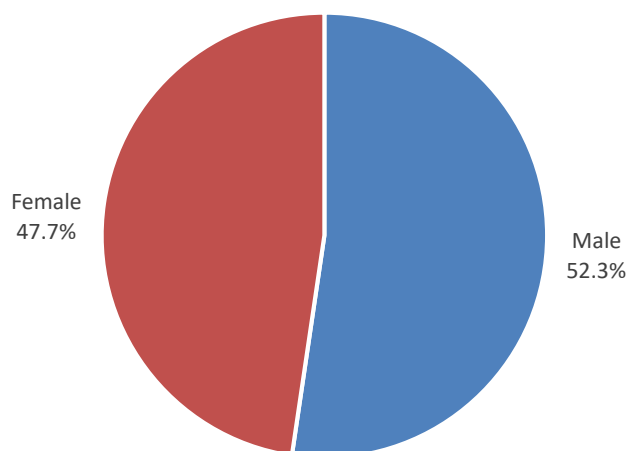
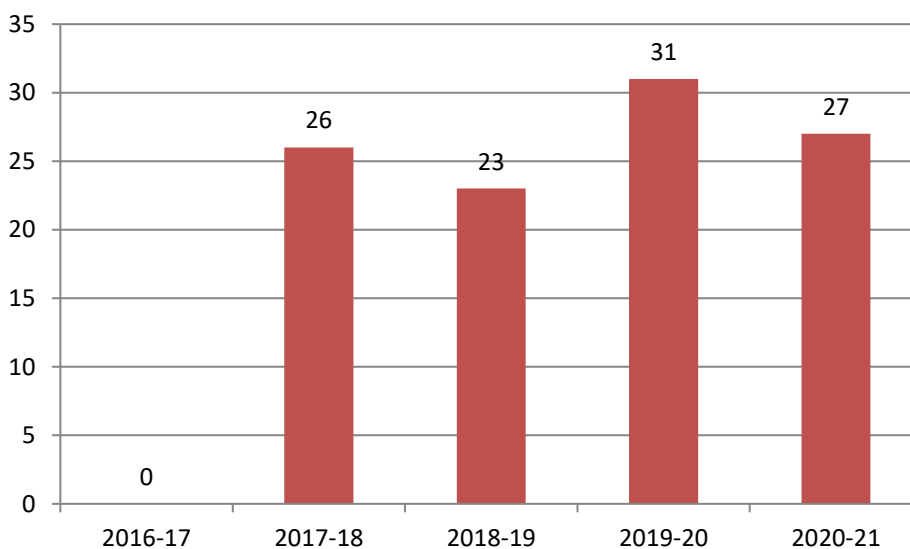


Chart 116: ACM: volume awarded, 2017-21



Australian Intelligence Medal

The Australian Intelligence Medal (AIM) may be awarded to a person who, as a member of the National Intelligence Community, has given distinguished service that directly contributed to national intelligence priorities, requirements or capabilities. The number of awards that may be made in a calendar year is limited to 1 for every 1,000 members, or part thereof, of the Australian intelligence community, plus one additional award.

Recommendations for award are made to the Governor-General by the Australian Intelligence Medal Committee, comprising the leader of each member agency of the Australian intelligence community and the Secretary of the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet. Not all awards are announced, e.g. due to the need to protect the identity of some recipients who are still in service in sensitive positions, but they may be announced retrospectively if circumstances are appropriate. Recipients are entitled to use the post-nominal “AIM” though, if their award has not been announced, they may not use the post-nominal nor wear the insignia of the award until or unless a retrospective announcement occurs.

The AIM was established by Letters Patent issued on 24 January 2020, and began to be awarded from the Australia Day 2021 honours list onwards. Accordingly, this report only includes awards for 2020-21.

Chart 117: AIM by gender, 2017-21

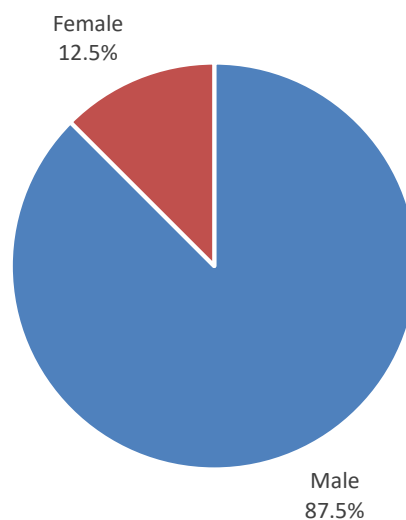
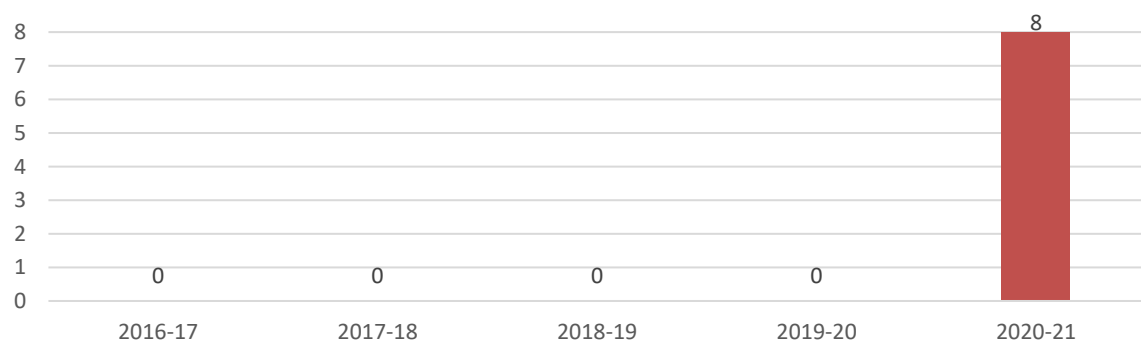


Chart 118: AIM: volume awarded, 2017-21



Australian Antarctic Medal

The Australian Antarctic Medal (AAM) may be awarded for outstanding service in scientific research or exploration, or in support of such work, in the course of, or connected to, an Australian Antarctic expedition. There is no quota. Except in exceptional circumstances, the recipient must have worked at least 12 months in the Antarctic climate, south of 60° latitude, or elsewhere in the Antarctic region where the climate and terrain are similar. Awards are announced annually on Midwinter's Day, 21 June.

Chart 119: AAM by gender, 2017-21

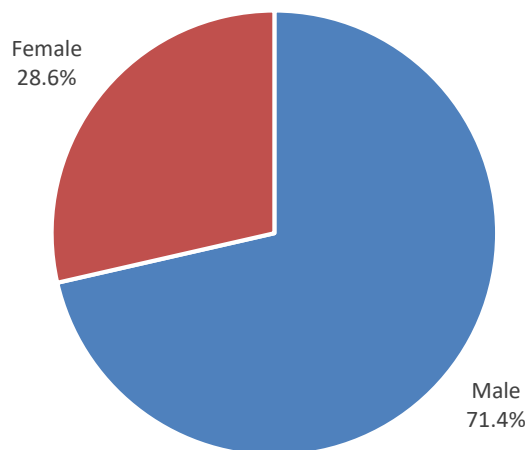
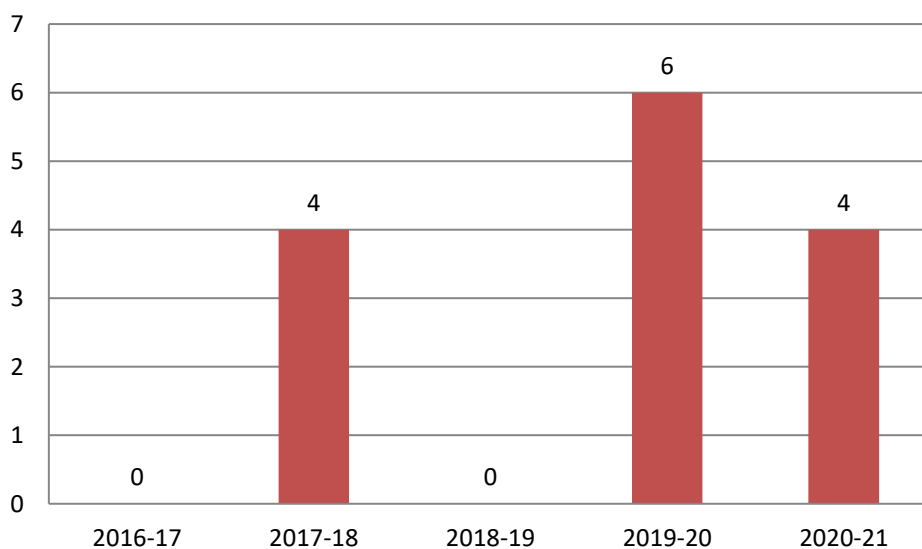


Chart 120: AAM: volume awarded, 2017-21



No candidates were recommended for award of the AAM in 2016-17 or 2018-19.

The image shows the National Medal for Service, a bronze medal with a circular face. The face features a central shield with a cross, flanked by a kangaroo and an emu, and surrounded by a wreath of grapes. The words "THE NATIONAL MEDAL FOR SERVICE" are inscribed around the border. The medal is attached to a blue and yellow striped ribbon.

Long service and good conduct medals

The National Medal

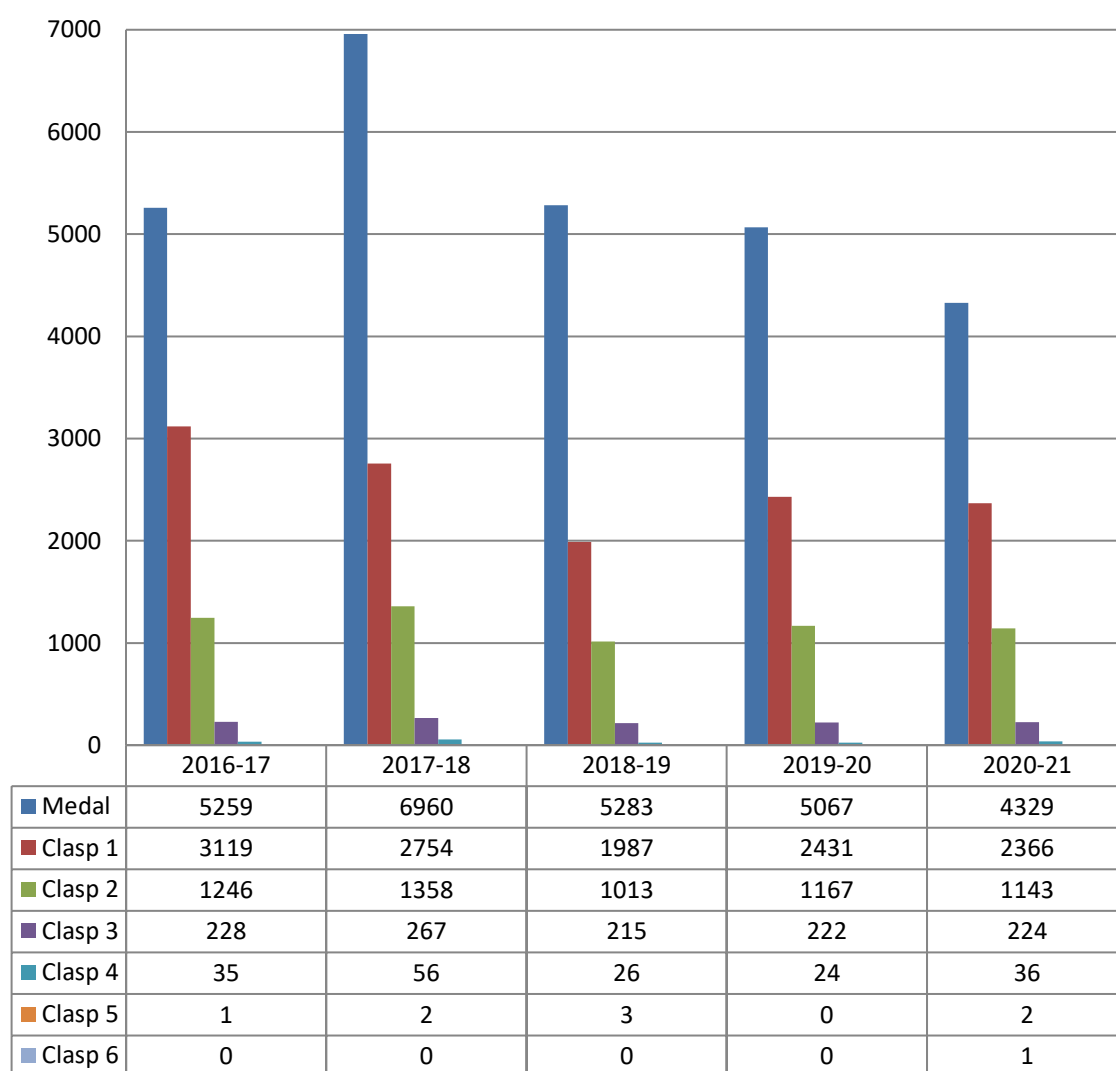
14. Long Service and Good Conduct Medals

The Branch processes two long service and good conduct medals: the National Medal, and the National Police Service Medal. Eligible organisations around the country use their records to determine when eligible staff qualify for these medals, and periodically submit schedules of recommended recipients to the Branch. The Branch checks these against the current register of awards, and scrutinises them for internal consistency, before being submitted for approval.

Since a person either is or is not eligible, the only data presented here is volume, to demonstrate through-put at the Branch.

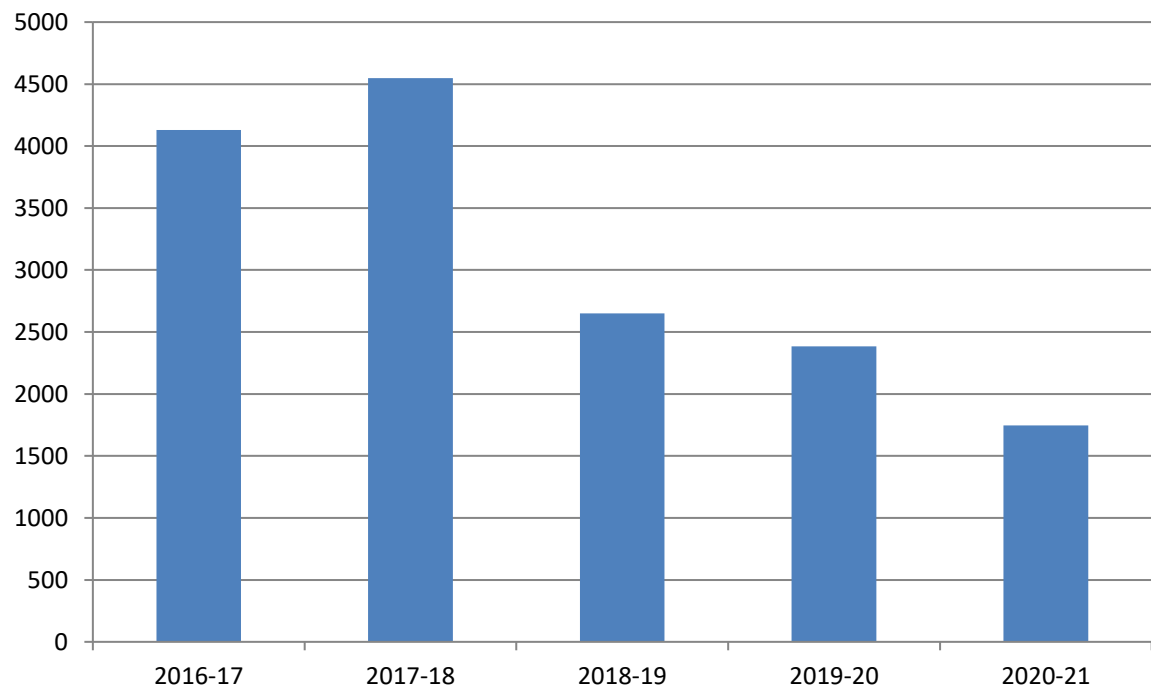
The National Medal is awarded for 15 years of “diligent” service in eligible roles in eligible organisations. A clasp to the medal may be awarded for additional periods of 10 years of diligent service. A person who has been awarded a fifth clasp, for example, has given 65 years of such service. **Chart 121** illustrates the number of medals and clasps processed and approved through the Branch in each year. The National Medal has no post-nominal entitlement.

Chart 121: National Medal – volume awarded, 2017-21



The National Police Service Medal (NPSM) was established in late 2010, to recognise the unique contribution and significant commitment of sworn members of Australian police services. It is awarded on the completion of 15 years of “ethical and diligent” service, and there are no clasps for additional periods of service. It has no post-nominal entitlement. The abbreviation “NPSM” is used in this report only for convenience.

Chart 122: NPSM – volume awarded, 2017-21



This chart clearly illustrates the end of the initial roll-out of the NPSM, with annual volumes approved now representing around an eighth of what it was at the peak in 2014-15, when over 12,500 NPSMs were issued.



Gallantry, Distinguished, and Conspicuous Service Decorations

The Governor-General invests Sub Lieutenant Zul Naim CSC, May 2021.

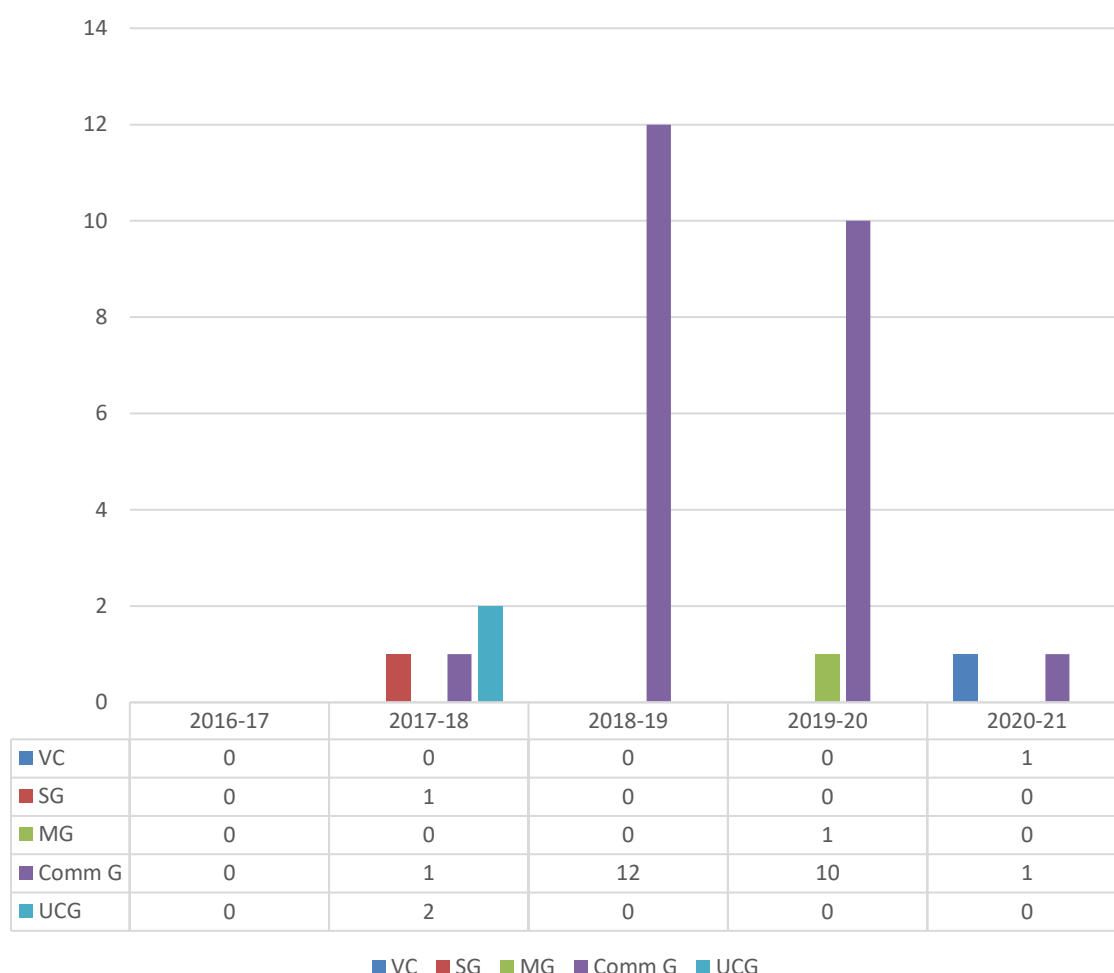
15. Gallantry, Distinguished and Conspicuous Decorations

Gallantry decorations were created for the purpose of according recognition to members of the Defence Force and certain other persons who perform acts of gallantry in action or under fire.

The pre-eminent decoration is the Victoria Cross for Australia, which is approved by Her Majesty The Queen, on the recommendation of the Minister for Defence. The other decorations are approved by the Governor-General. In addition to the Star of Gallantry and the Medal for Gallantry, there is a Commendation for Gallantry, and a Unit Citation for Gallantry.

The following chart illustrates the number of gallantry decorations, commendations and unit citations made in the last five years.

Chart 123: Gallantry decorations, volume awarded, by type, 2017-21



Key:

VC = Victoria Cross for Australia

SG = Star of Gallantry

MG = Medal for Gallantry

Comm G = Commendation for Gallantry

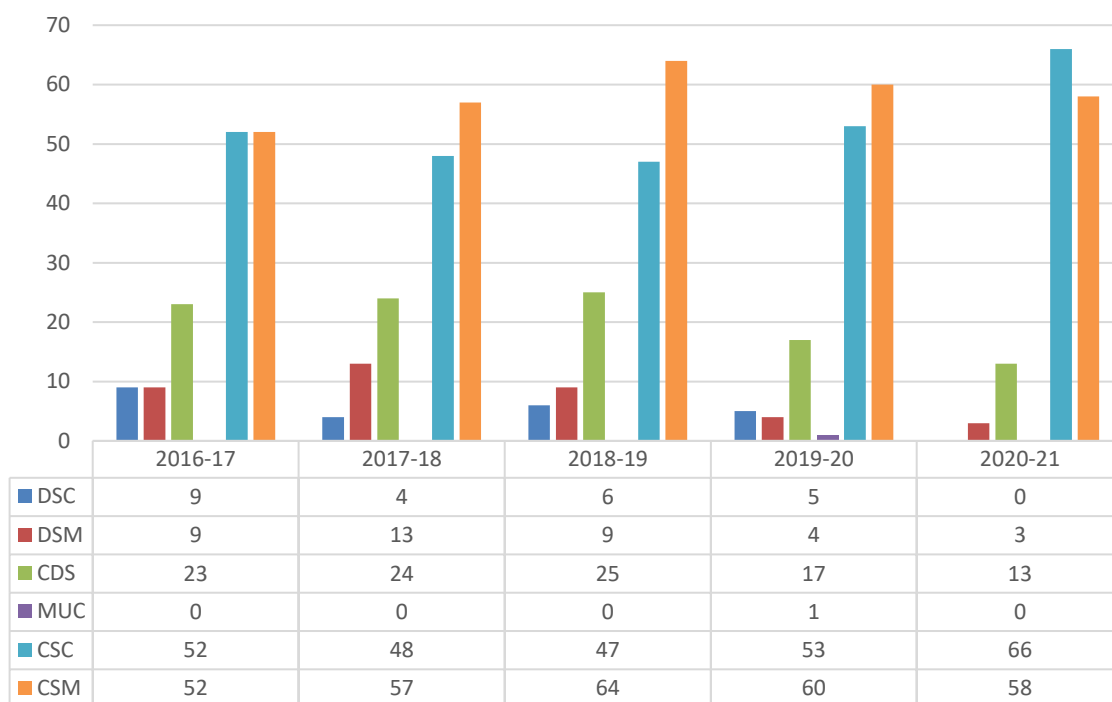
UCG = Unit Citation for Gallantry

The Australian Defence Force has two sets of meritorious awards for recognising outstanding achievements or service.

The Distinguished Service Decorations are awarded for such service in warlike operations, while the Conspicuous Service Decorations are for outstanding service in non-warlike circumstances. Both sets of decorations have a Cross and a Medal, and the Distinguished Service Decorations include a Commendation and a Unit Citation. A bar may be added to the Cross or Medal of both sets, indicating the person has been recognised at the same level a second or subsequent time. The figures in the chart below count the award of any bars as part of the tally for the respective decoration.

The following chart illustrates the numbers of these awards made over the last five years.

Chart 124: Distinguished and Conspicuous decorations, volume awarded, 2017-21



Key:

DSC = Distinguished Service Cross

DSM = Distinguished Service Medal

CDS = Commendation for Distinguished Service

MUC = Meritorious Unit Citation

CSC = Conspicuous Service Cross

CSM = Conspicuous Service Medal



Civilian operational service awards

The Governor-General, Mrs Hurley, and members of Aspen Medical, recipients of the Humanitarian Overseas Service Medal with clasp "West Africa", Government House, September 2019.

16. Civilian operational service awards

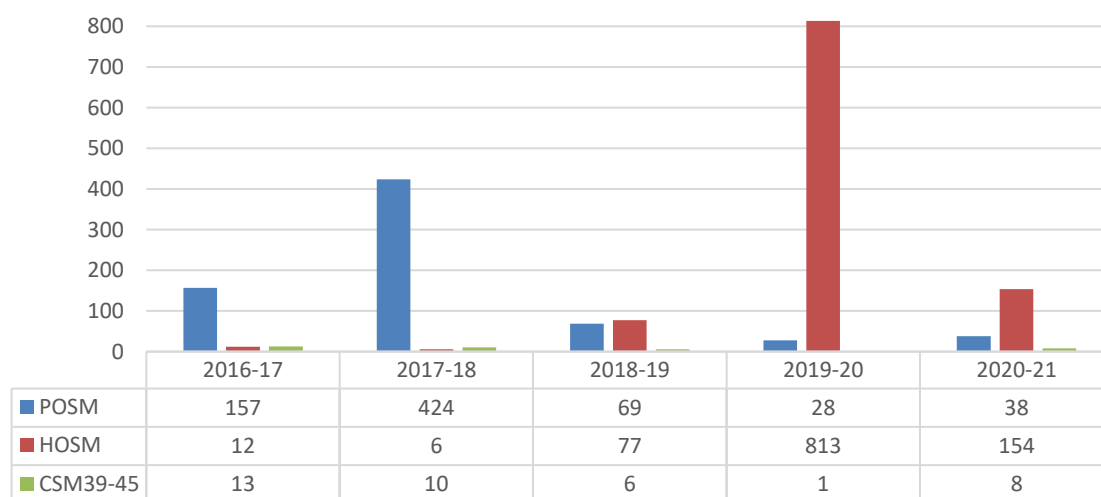
Operational service awards recognise participation in a particular place and time, as part of a collective, meritorious effort. They are awarded in the defence forces to recognise participation in specified deployments, and a small number of awards exist to recognise civilian service in a similar way.

The Police Overseas Service Medal was established in 1991 to recognise operational deployments of Australian police on overseas peacekeeping missions. The medal is issued with a clasp to denote the operation for which the medal was awarded, and awards for subsequent deployments are indicated by the addition of the respective clasp to the ribbon of the existing medal. Awards are recommended to the Governor-General by the Chief Officer of an Australian police force.

The Humanitarian Overseas Service Medal was established in 1999, to recognise service by Australians in overseas humanitarian disasters. Like the Police Overseas Service Medal, it is awarded once, with awards for subsequent deployments indicated by the addition of a clasp. Applications for the award are assessed by the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, and recommended to the Governor-General by the Secretary of the Department, or a delegate.

The Civilian Service Medal 1939-1945 recognises work by Australians during World War II as part of a recognised group, in particular locations. The 38 eligible groups, locations, time frames and duration of service for qualification were determined in 1994-5, and applications for the medal are assessed by the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet. Awards are recommended by the Secretary of the Department, or a delegate.

Chart 125: Civilian operational service awards, volume awarded, 2017-21



Key:

POSM = Police Overseas Service Medal

HOSM = Humanitarian Overseas Service Medal

CSM39-45 = Civilian Service Medal 1939-1945

Four HOSM operations were declared in 2019 – Vanuatu, West Africa, Philippines and Nepal – leading to the surge of awards in 2019-20 illustrated above.

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Endnotes

¹ Membership of the Council is a matter for governments (the Federal Government appoints Community Members and state and territory governments each appoint a representative).

² The Office's [Annual Reports](#) are available on the Governor-General's website.

³ The Terminations and Cancellations Ordinance is on page 42 of the [Order of Australia Booklet](#).

⁴ See paragraph 25 (2) (b) of the Constitution of the Order of Australia, p. 24, *Order of Australia Booklet*, *ibid*.