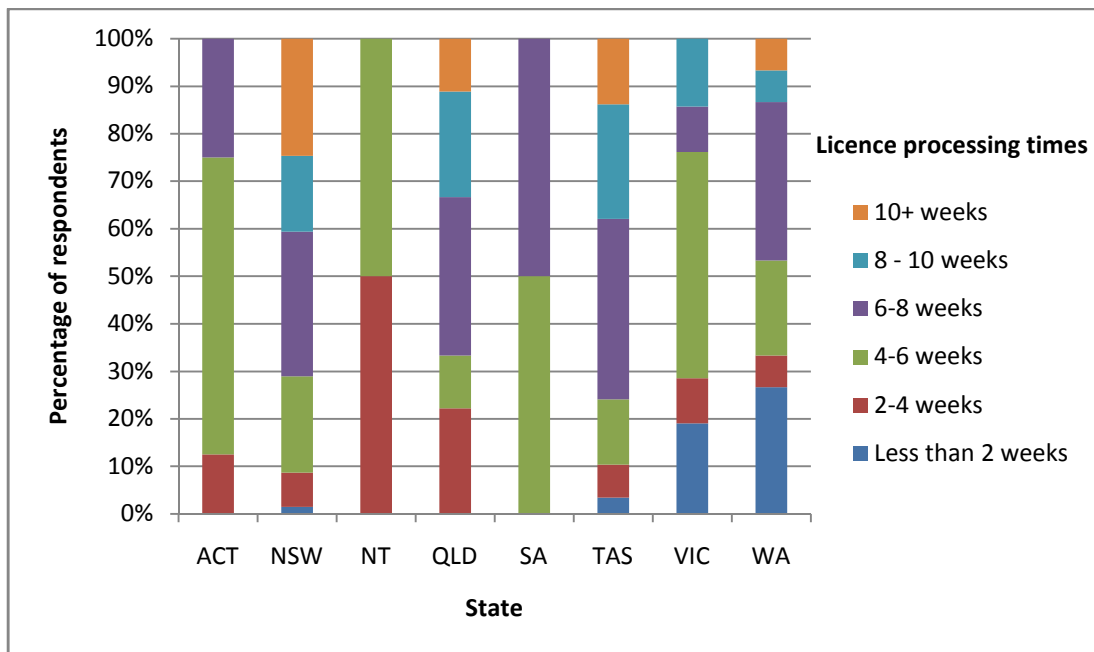


## Improvements needed in licence processing times

A common issue among members is the length of time it takes for new individual security licence applications to be processed and issued. In an effort to gather some quantitative data on the issue, ASIAL conducted an online survey of its members in November 2008.

Based on the 157 responses received, NSW, QLD, and WA were among the worst performing states. In NSW, 71% of individual licence applications took more than 6-8 weeks to process, in QLD the figure was 67%, and in WA 47%.



Source: ASIAL Processing time of security licensing applications, November 2008

A source of frustration for many respondents was the lack of any explanation for the delay in their application, 62% indicated that they were not provided with any explanation.

An emphatic 79% of respondent indicated that the time taken to process licences had impacted on the operation of their business, citing the inability to trade effectively due to a lack of personnel. One respondent commented; “when we advise potential students of the approval times, they change their minds about entering the security industry. We also have various security employers having to turn down contracts as they cannot get staff quickly enough to service the contracts”.

A resounding 92% of respondents believed that licence processing times could be improved through streamlined checks and improved customer service as a starting point.

### So, how long is too long?

The strong message from industry to regulators is that the current licence processing times are too long. Whilst there is broad based support among security operators of the need for thorough probity and background checks of new entrants into the applicants, processing times need to be reduced. Of those surveyed, 47% indicated that a licence processing time of up to 2 weeks was acceptable, with a further 45% stating that 2-4 weeks was acceptable.

ASIAL will continue to monitor this issue and will conduct a follow up survey of members later in the year.