

Relating autism spectrum prevalence and government policy

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“Just a parent”

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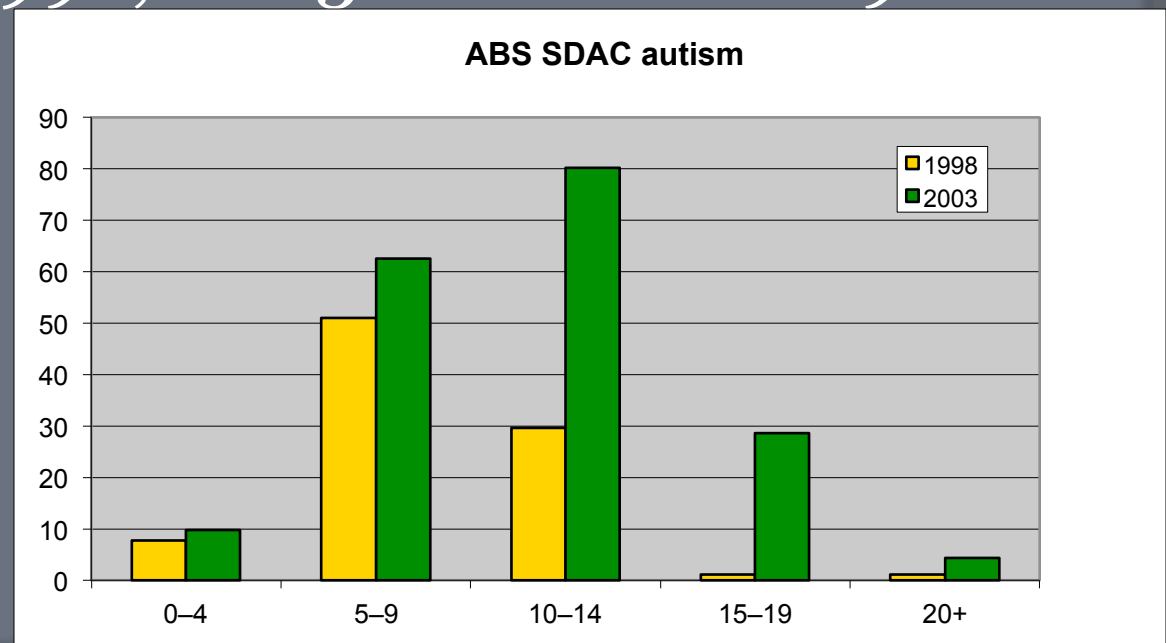


Australia: previous prevalence

- Buckley (2004) *Autism/ASD diagnosis rates in Australia*, Proceedings of Australian Biennial Autism Conference ...

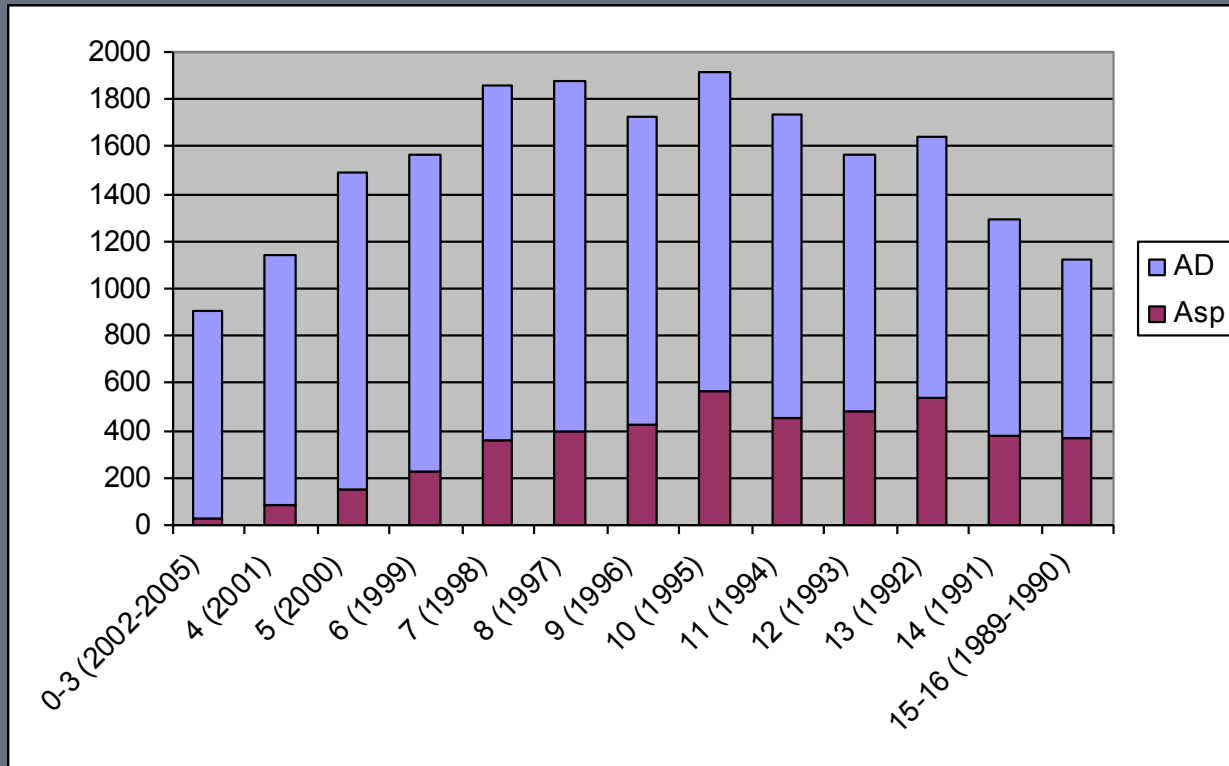
Substantial growth in ASD diagnoses

- ABS SDAC 1998, 2003 ... next is 2009
- AIHW ...



Centrelink: Carer Allowance

- A4 Update Dec 2006
- Australia: diagnosis by age ... no PDD-NOS



Policy issue #1

Ignoring a condition (such as PDD-NOS)
leads to absent data ...
and few diagnoses

Australian ASD Diagnoses

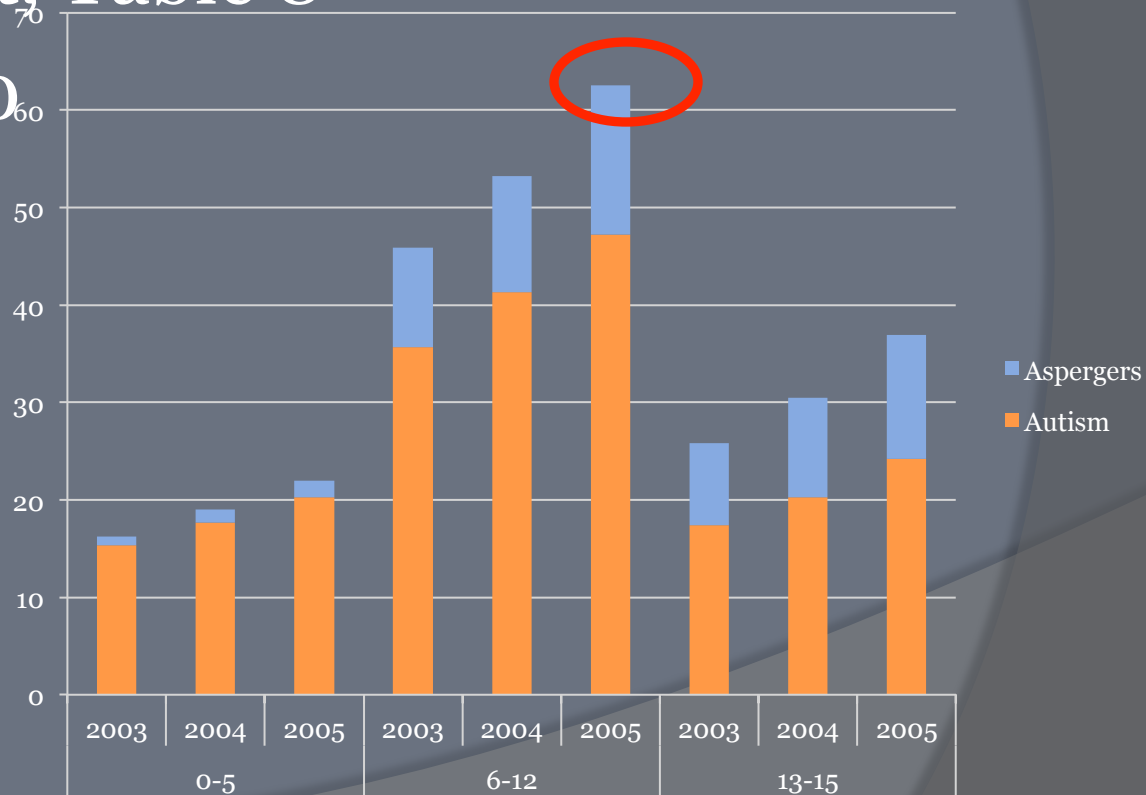
AABASD report based on
Centrelink Carer Allowance data

- Best national data available on ASD
- Autism ... then Asperger's
- Funds carers

Australian ASD Diagnoses

Centrelink data: Carer Allowance,
AABASD report, Table 8

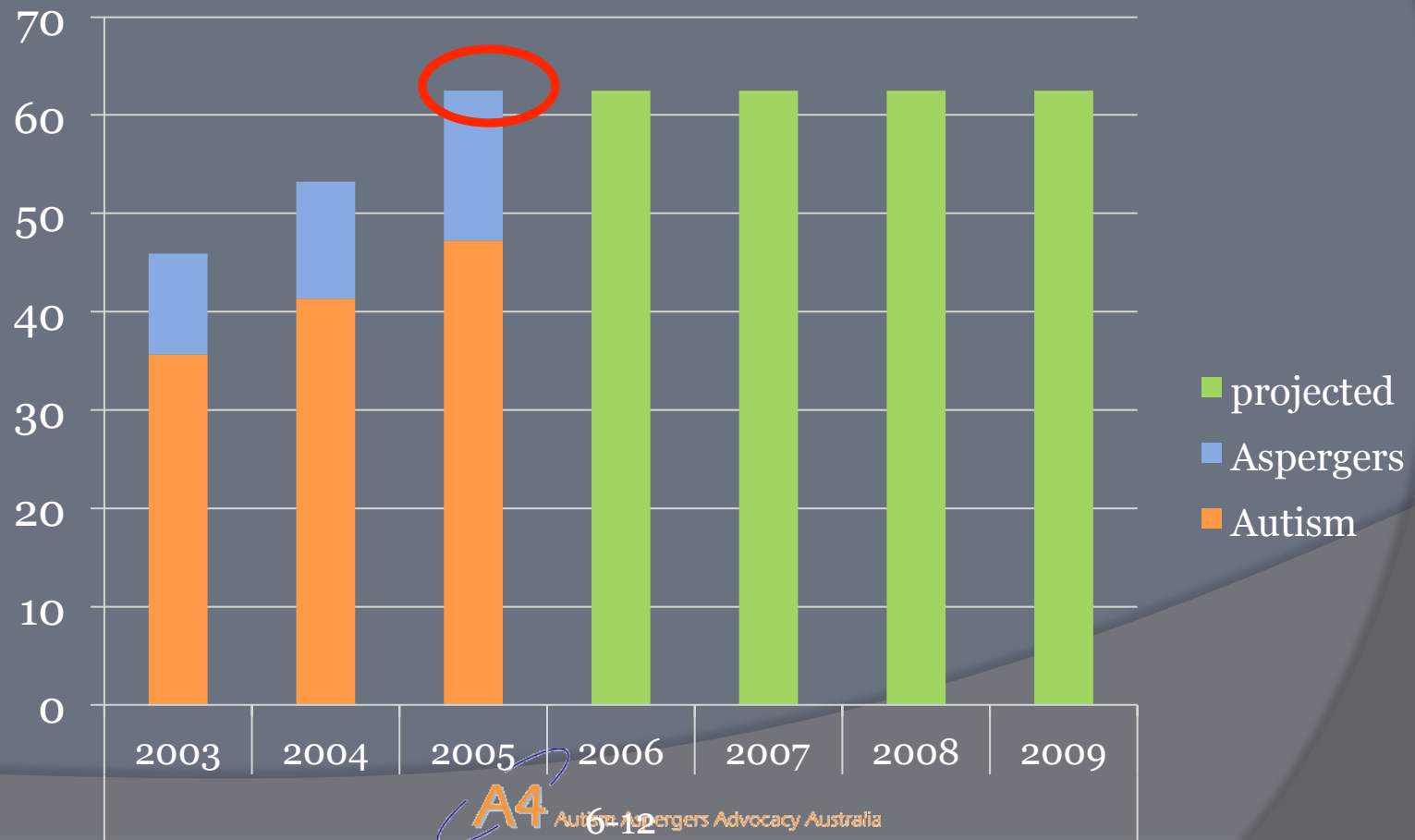
62.5 per 10,000
or 1 in 160



Australian ASD Prevalence

Scientific induction ... future resembles past

Projection: prevalence is 62.5 per 10,000

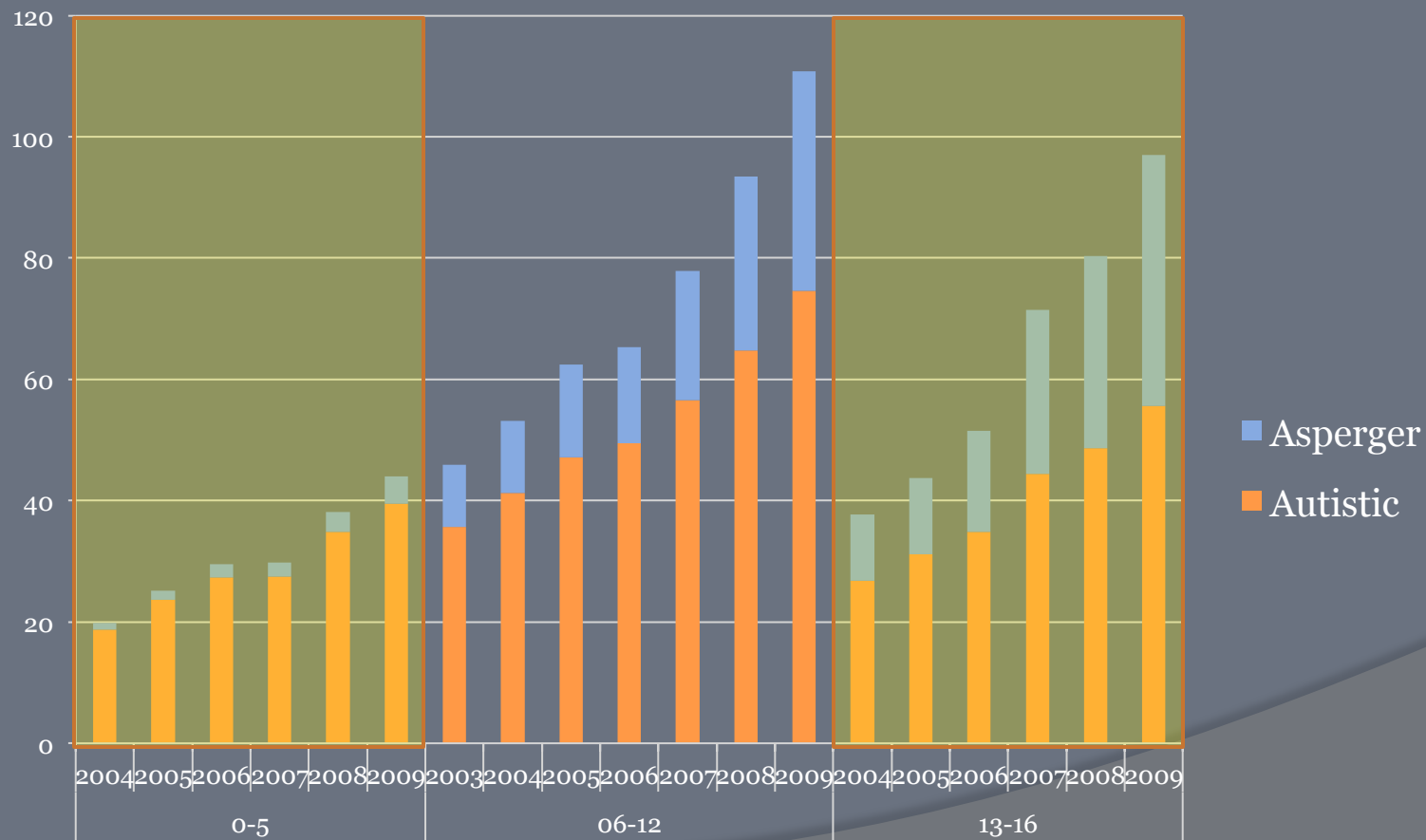


Centrelink detailed data

Thank FaHCSIA ASD Branch for detailed
Carer Allowance data 2004 to 2009

Australian ASD Diagnoses

Australia: data from 2003 to 2009



ASD numbers: 2005 - 2009

Shows a range of increases

Varies with age range and diagnosis

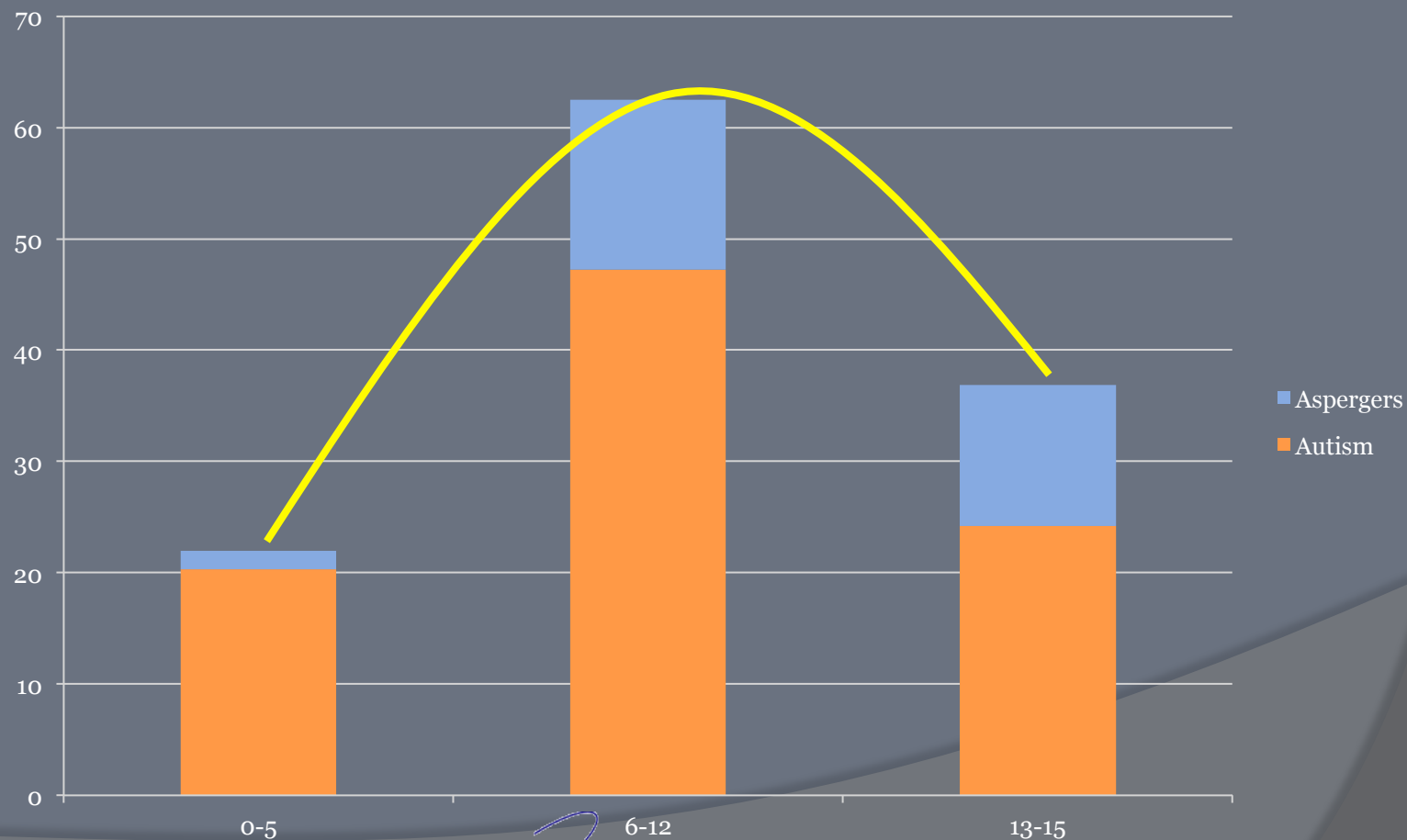
Prevalence in 6-12 year olds:

- 110.85 per 10,000 or 1 in 90
- 1.7 times increase in 3.5 years to 6/09

	Aspergers	Autistic	ASD
2005	15.82	49.46	65.28
2009	36.23	74.61	110.85
increase	2.3	1.5	1.7

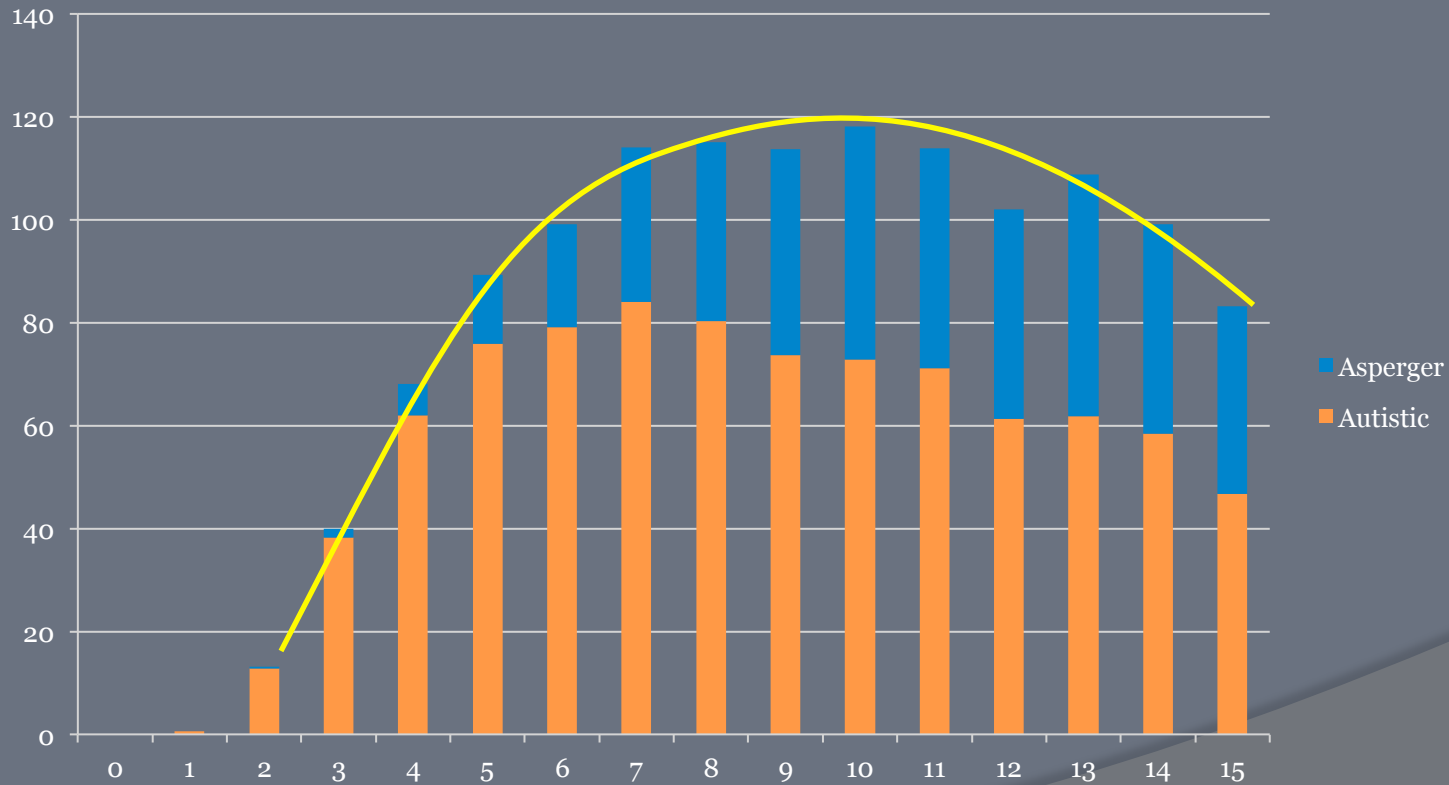
Australian ASD Diagnoses

2005 age ranges ... AABASD report, Table 8



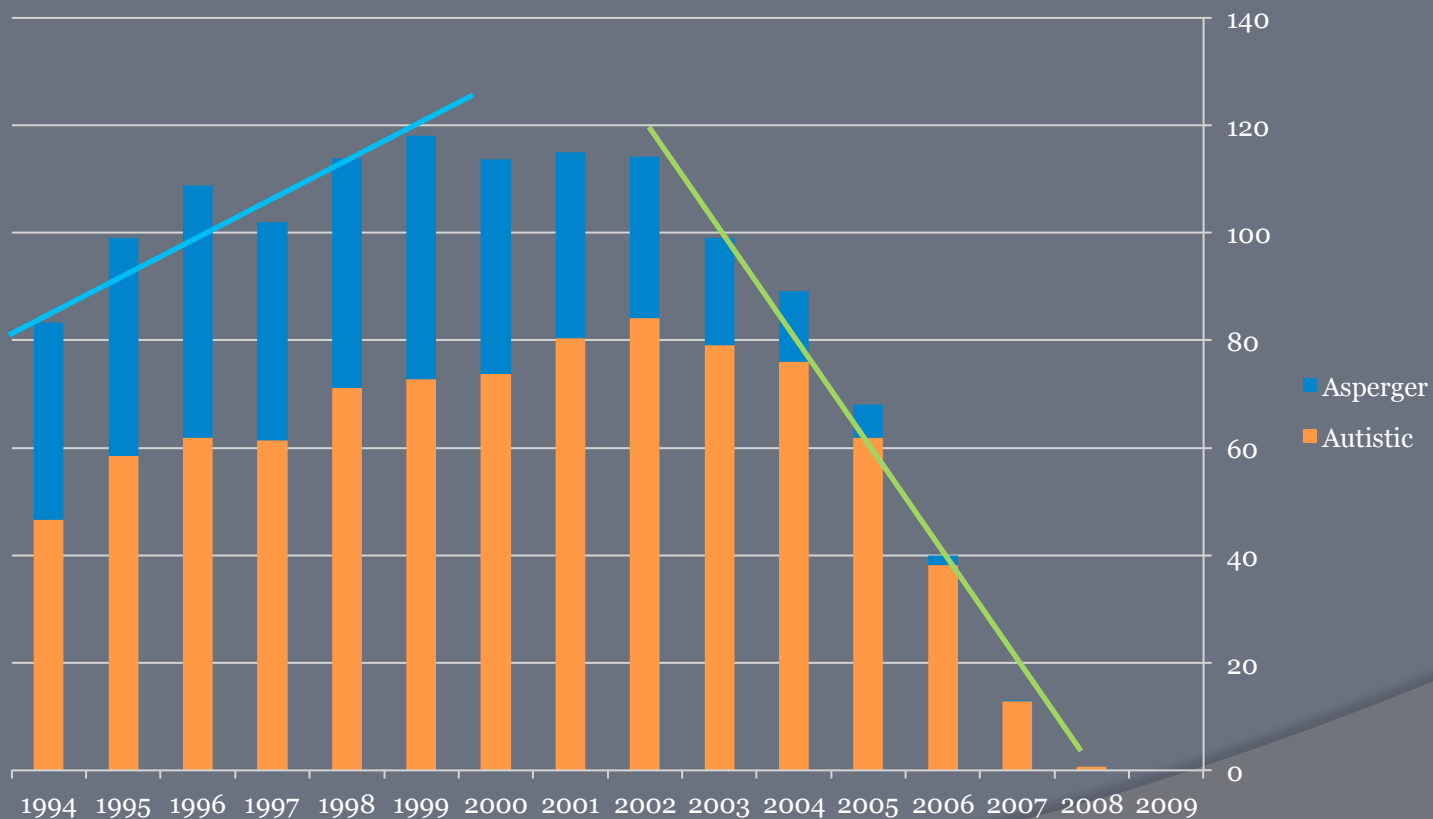
diagnoses by age or birth year

2009 Australia



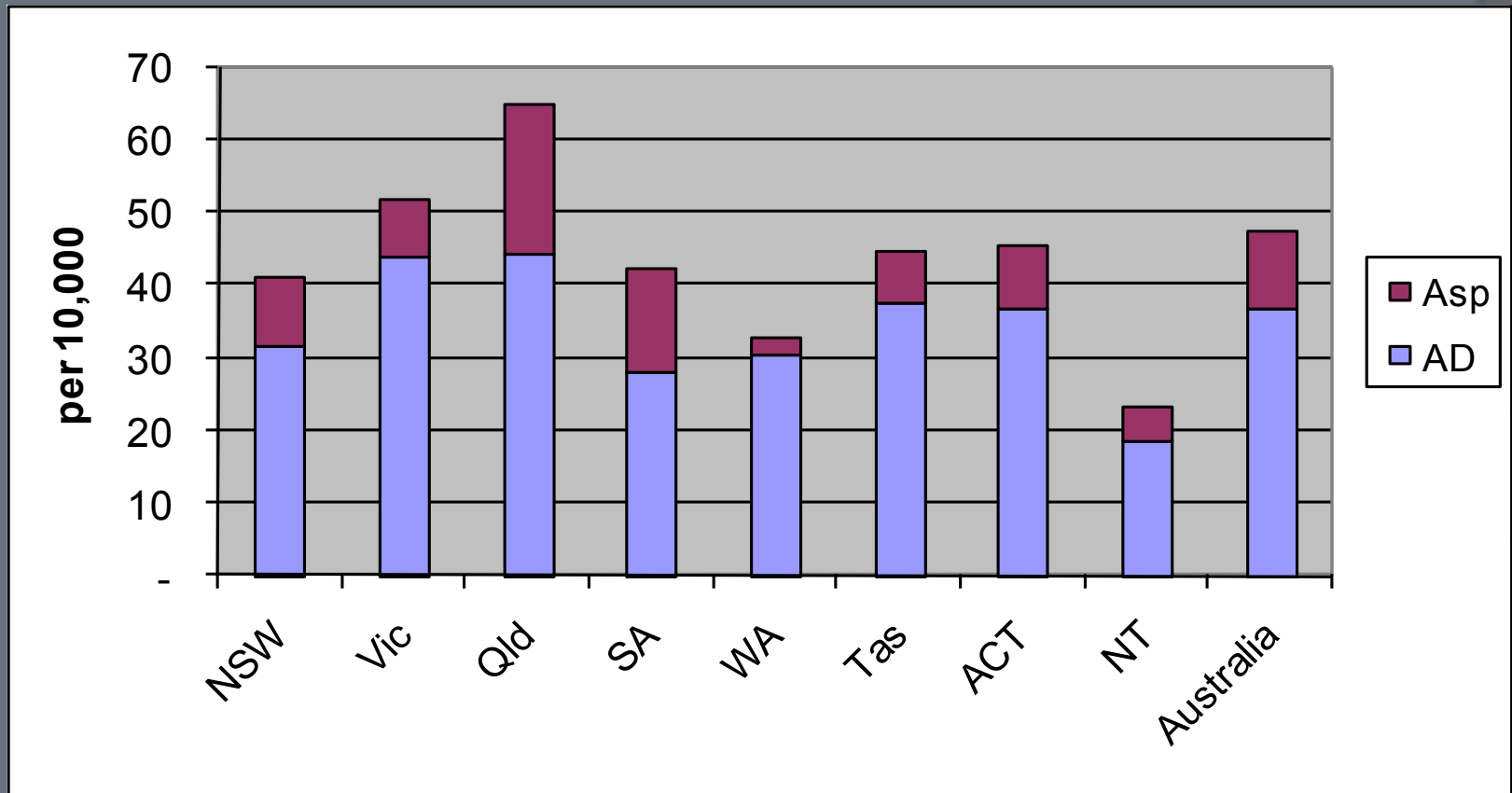
Trends in ASD diagnoses

2009 Australia



Centrelink: Carer Allowance (cont.)

○ A4 Update Dec 2006



US prevalence 2002: 1 in 150

- ◉ data for 14 states
- ◉ 8 year olds with ASD
- ◉ States vary ...
 - Alabama: 3.3 per 1,000
 - New Jersey: 10.6 per 1,000
 - Average: 6.6 per 1,000 (1 in 152)

<http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/ss5601a2.htm>

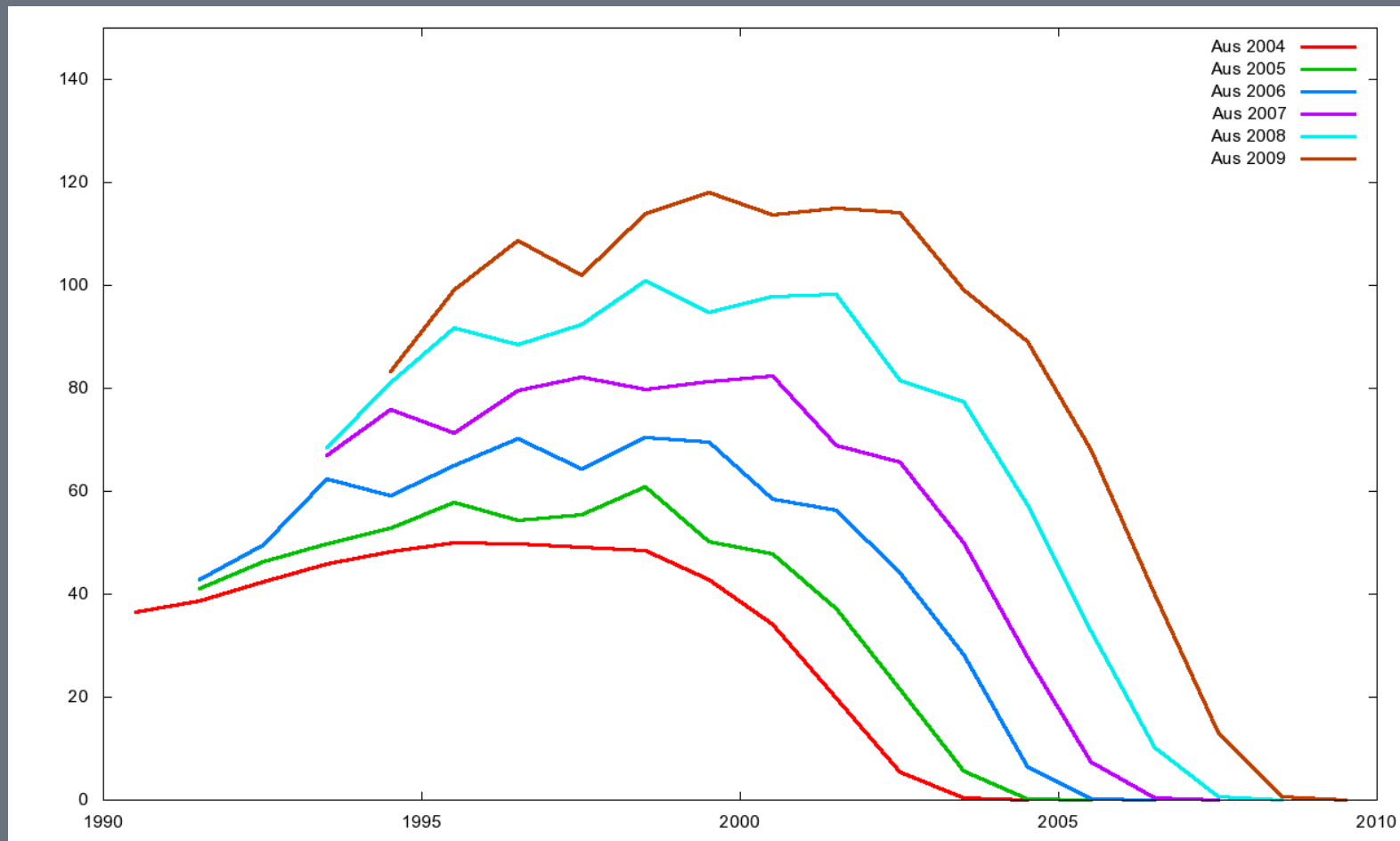
Lack of consistency, regional differences are not particular to Australian states

Policy issue #2

At a state level, service and support policy affects ASD prevalence

ASD policy has *unintended consequences*

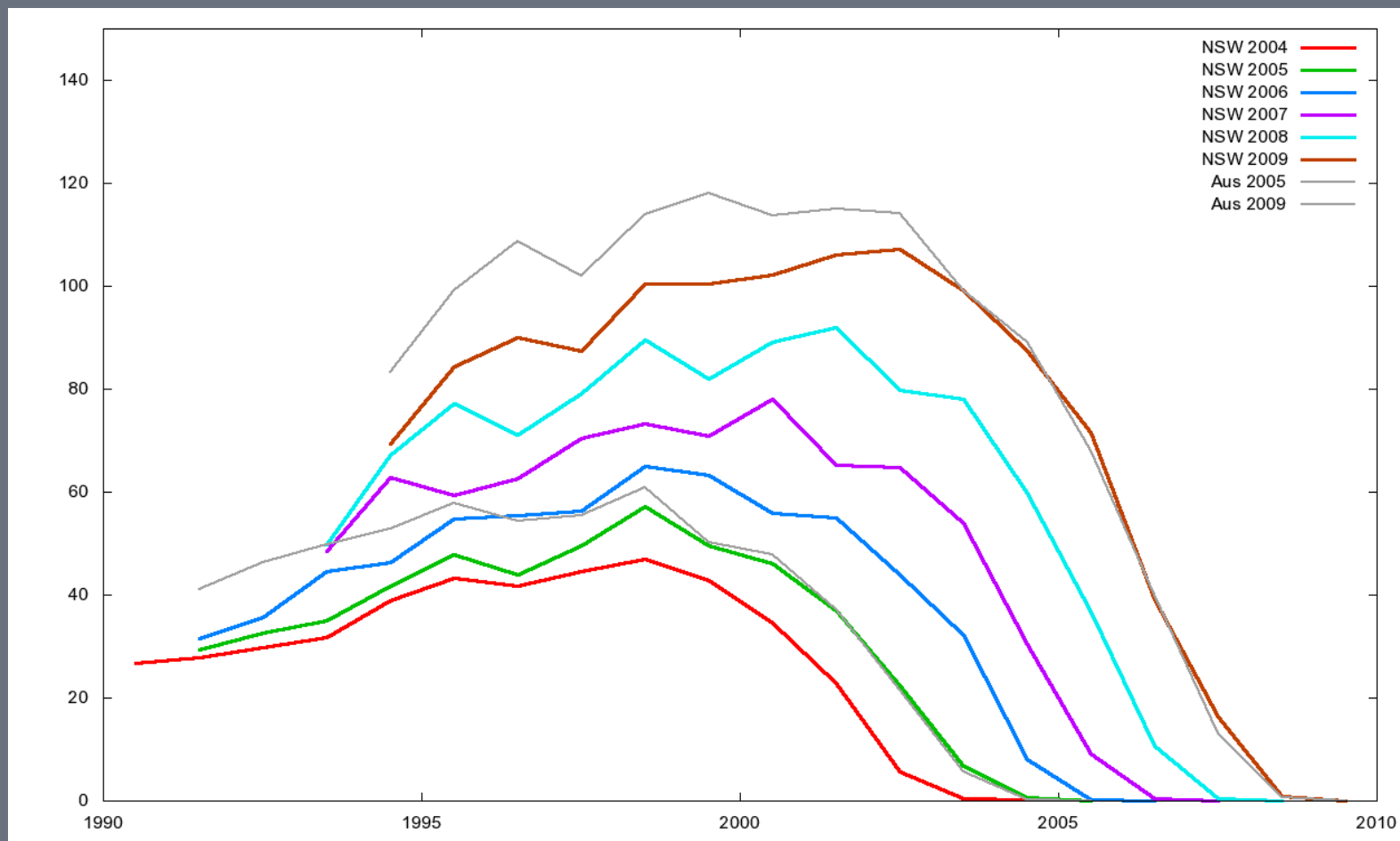
Recent ASD diagnoses



Persistent features

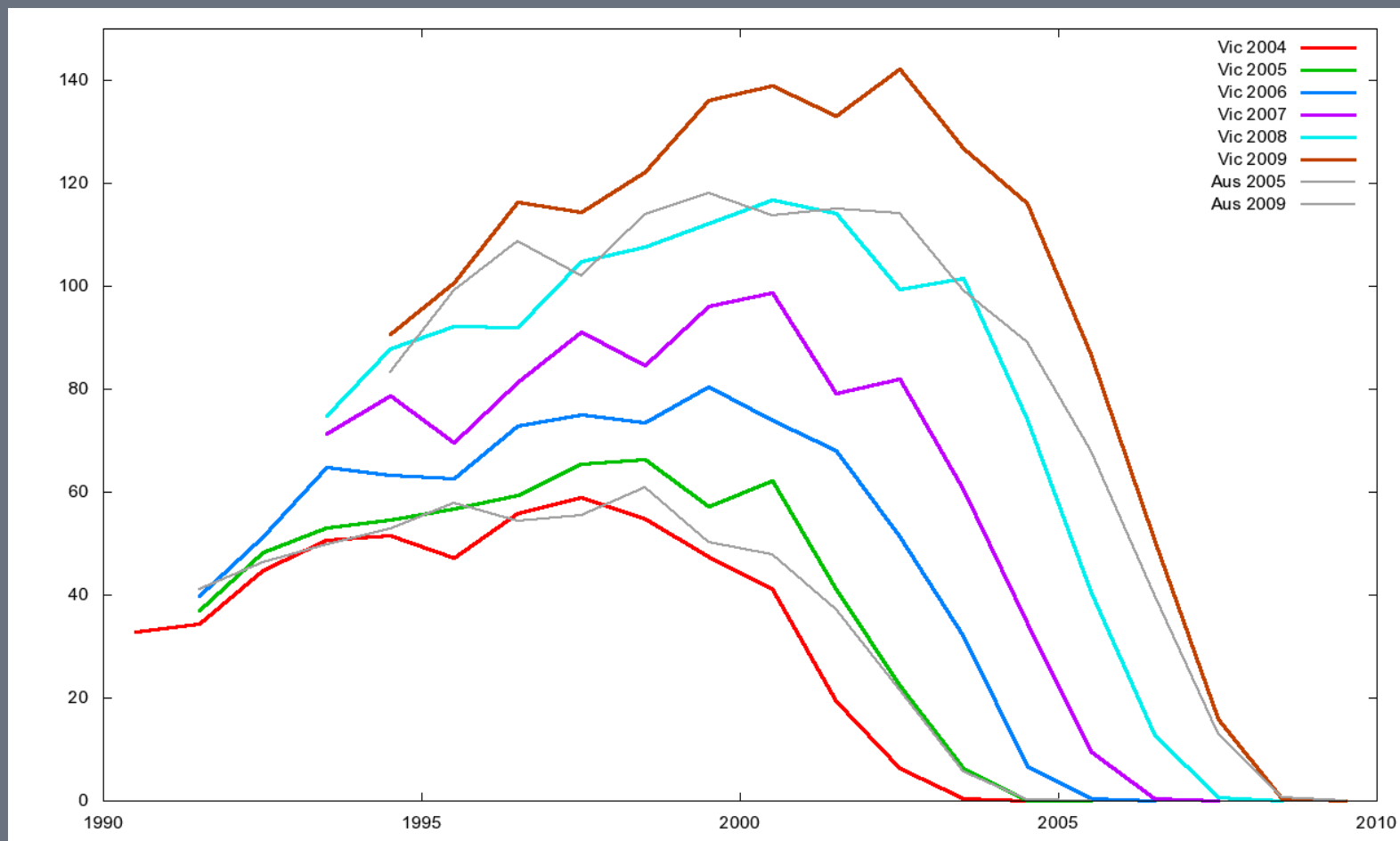
- ◉ Earlier diagnosis
- ◉ Growing prevalence

State patterns: NSW



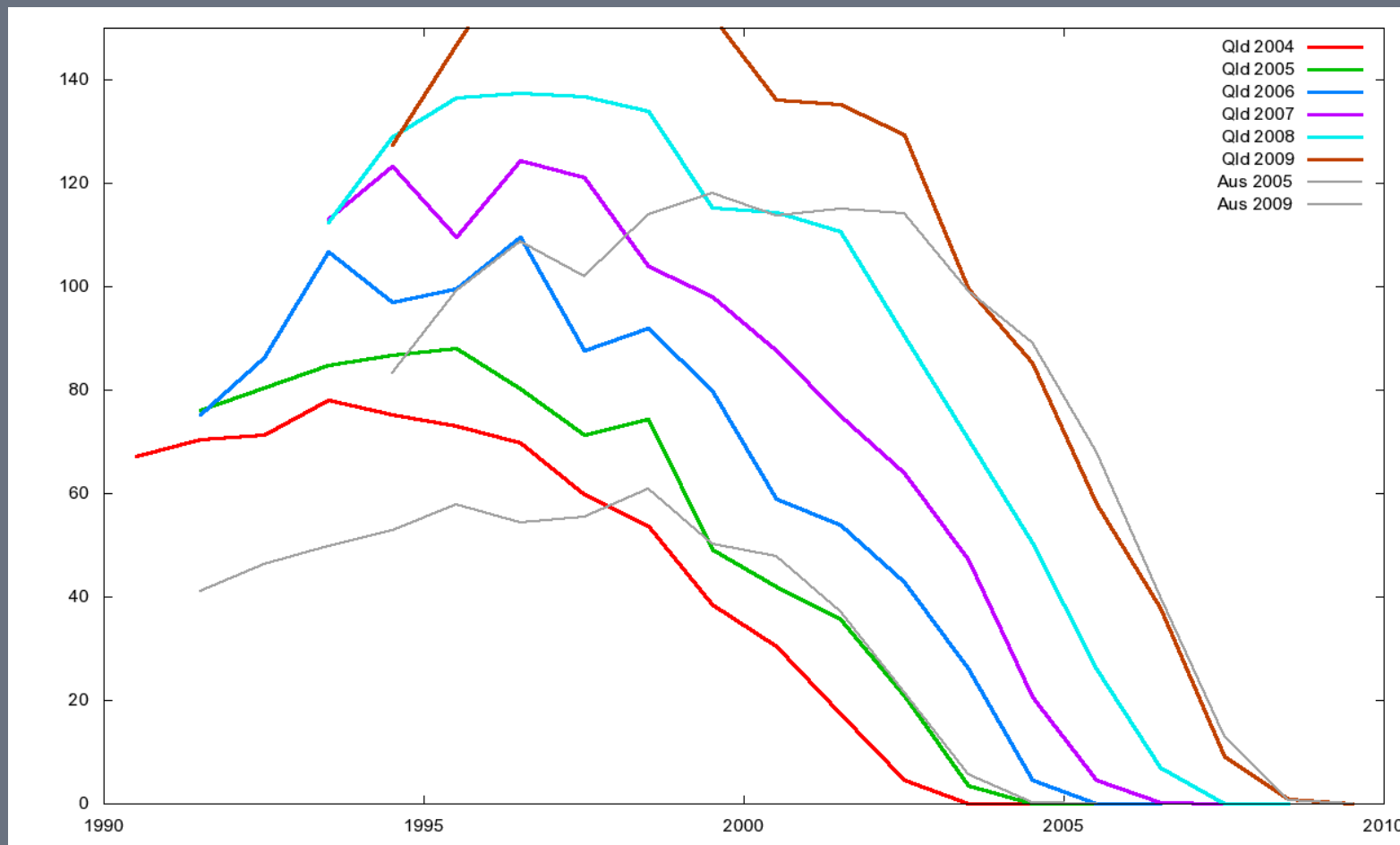
Diagnoses after age 6 years are below the national average

State patterns: Vic



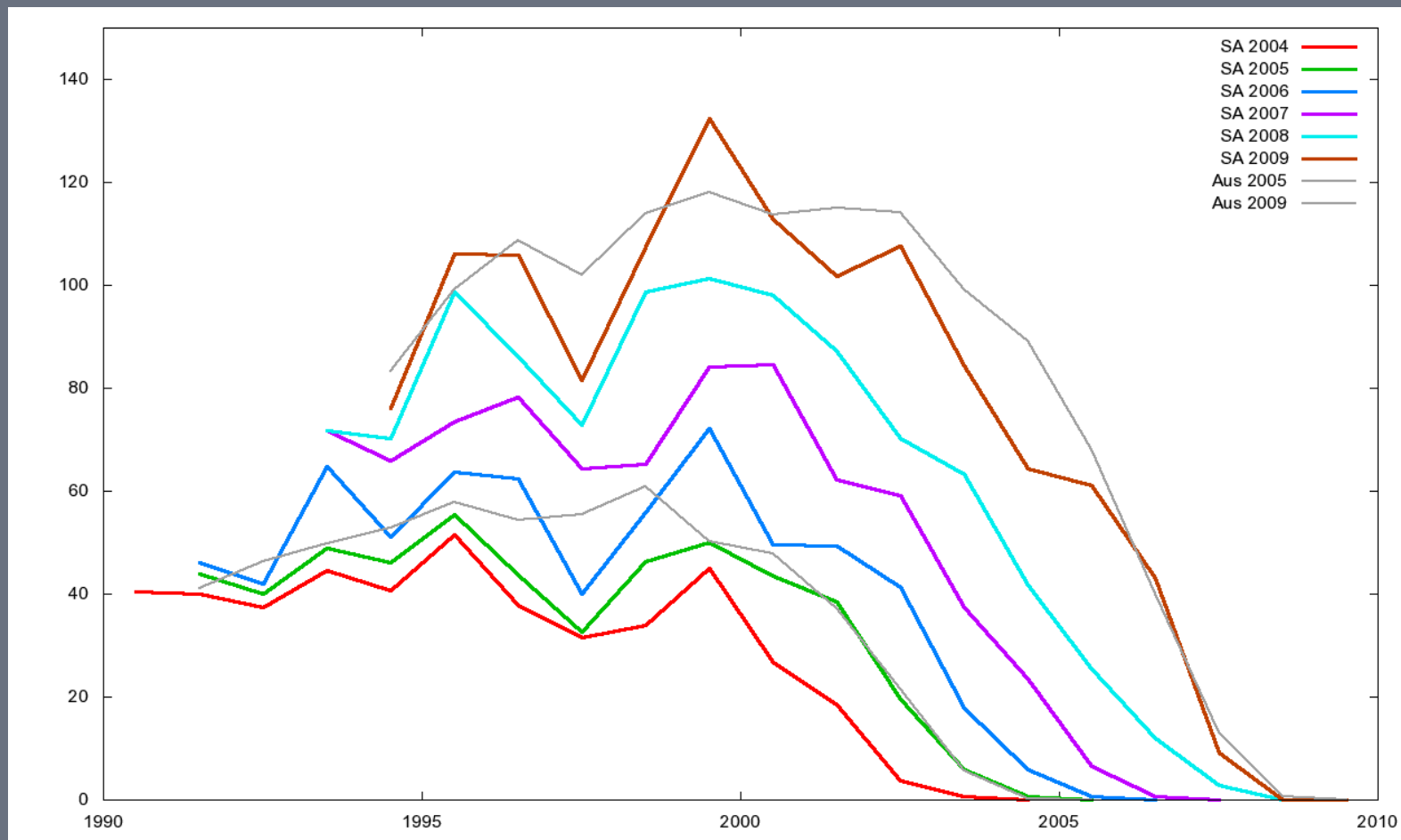
Prevalence increasingly above national average

State patterns: Qld



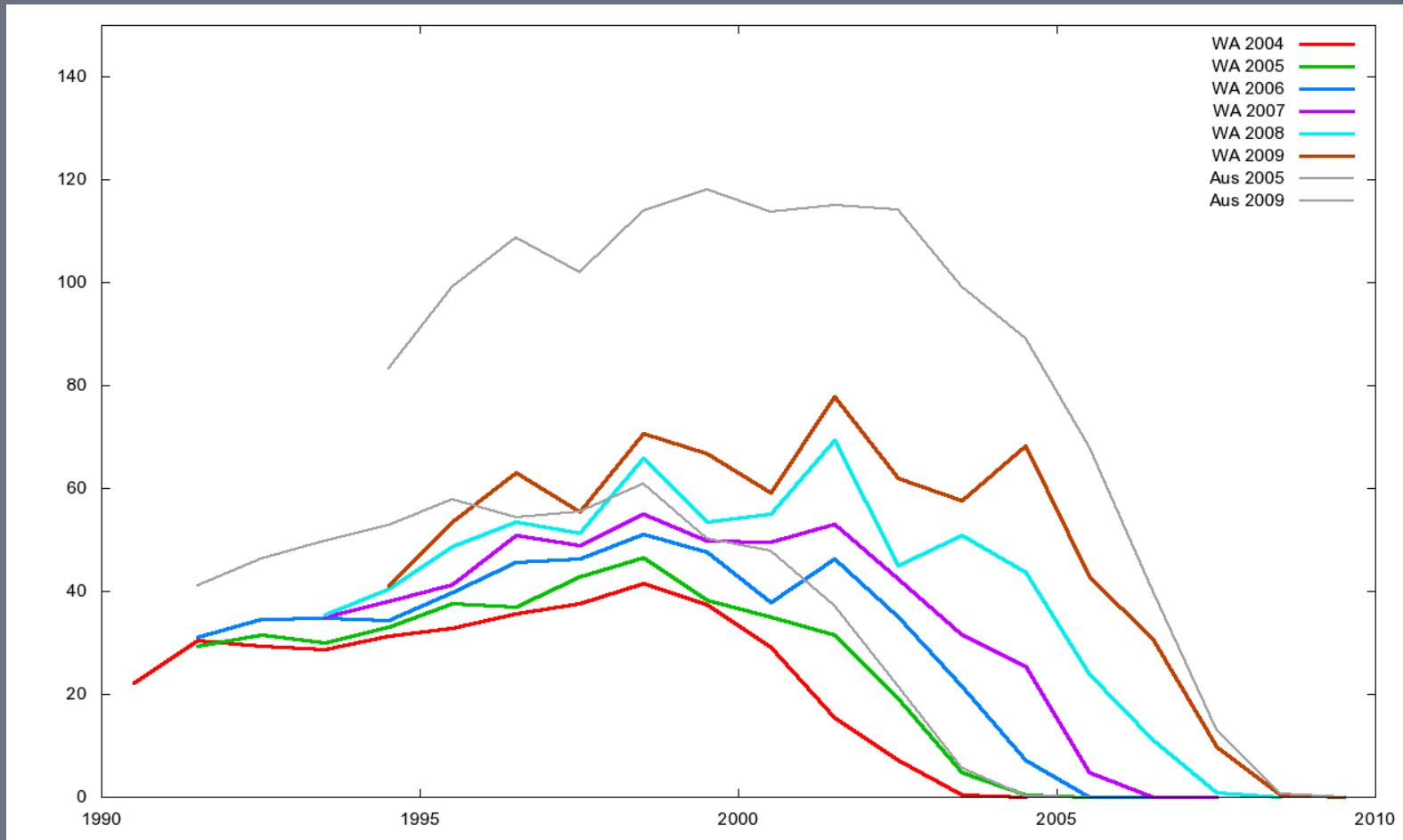
High prevalence above age 6 years

State patterns: SA



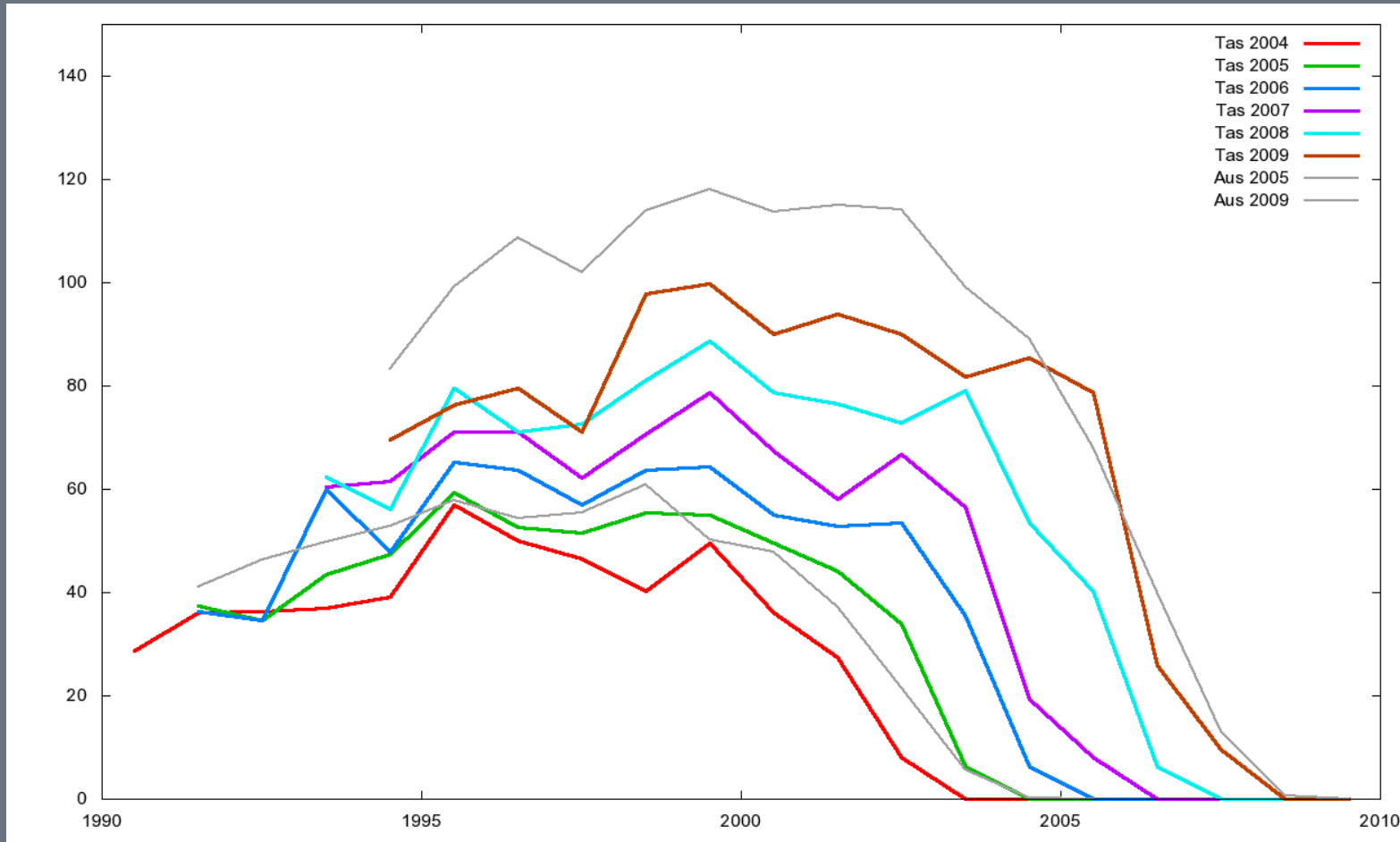
A bit below national average ... and somewhat variable

State patterns: WA



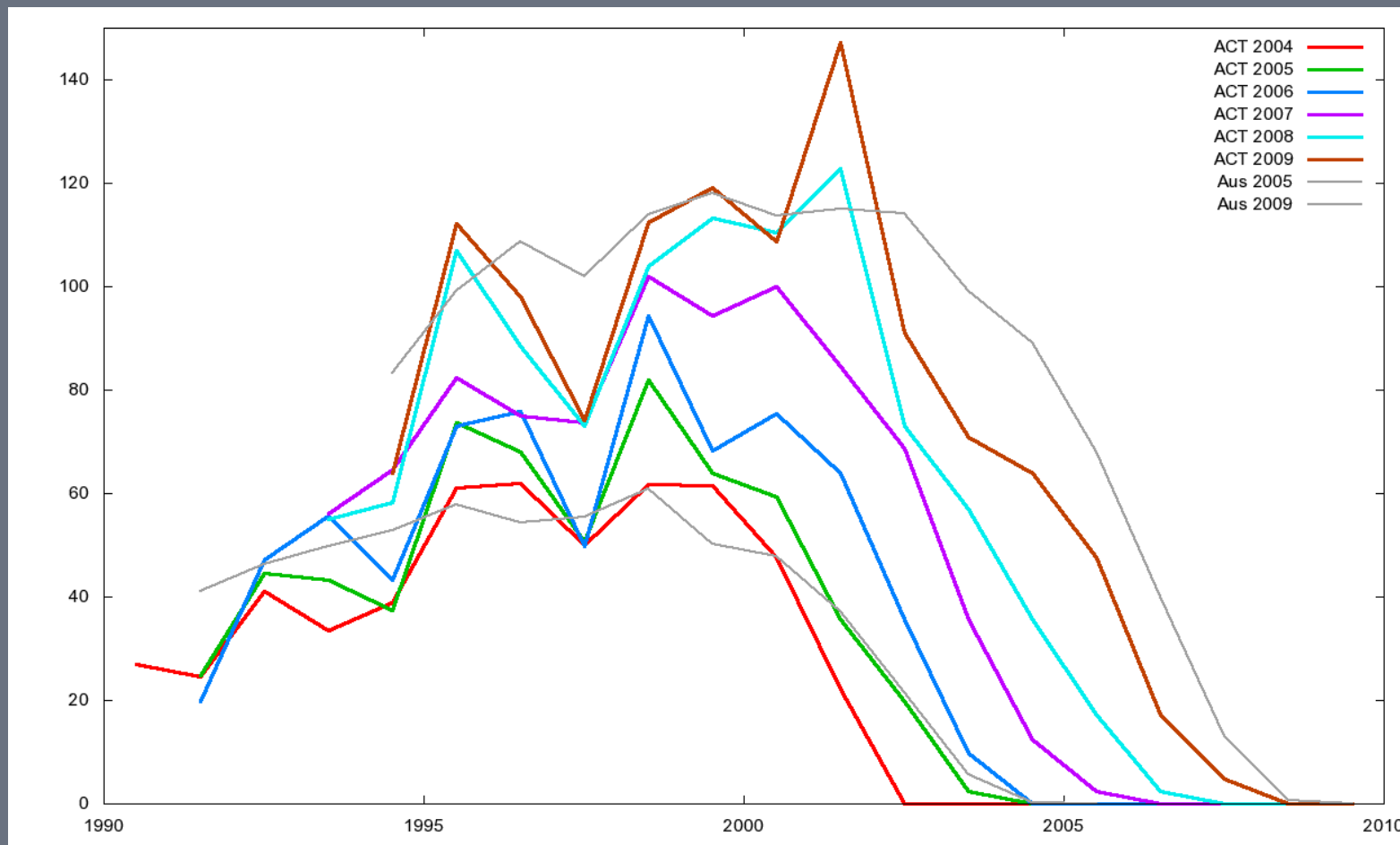
Way below national average ... and variable

State patterns: Tas



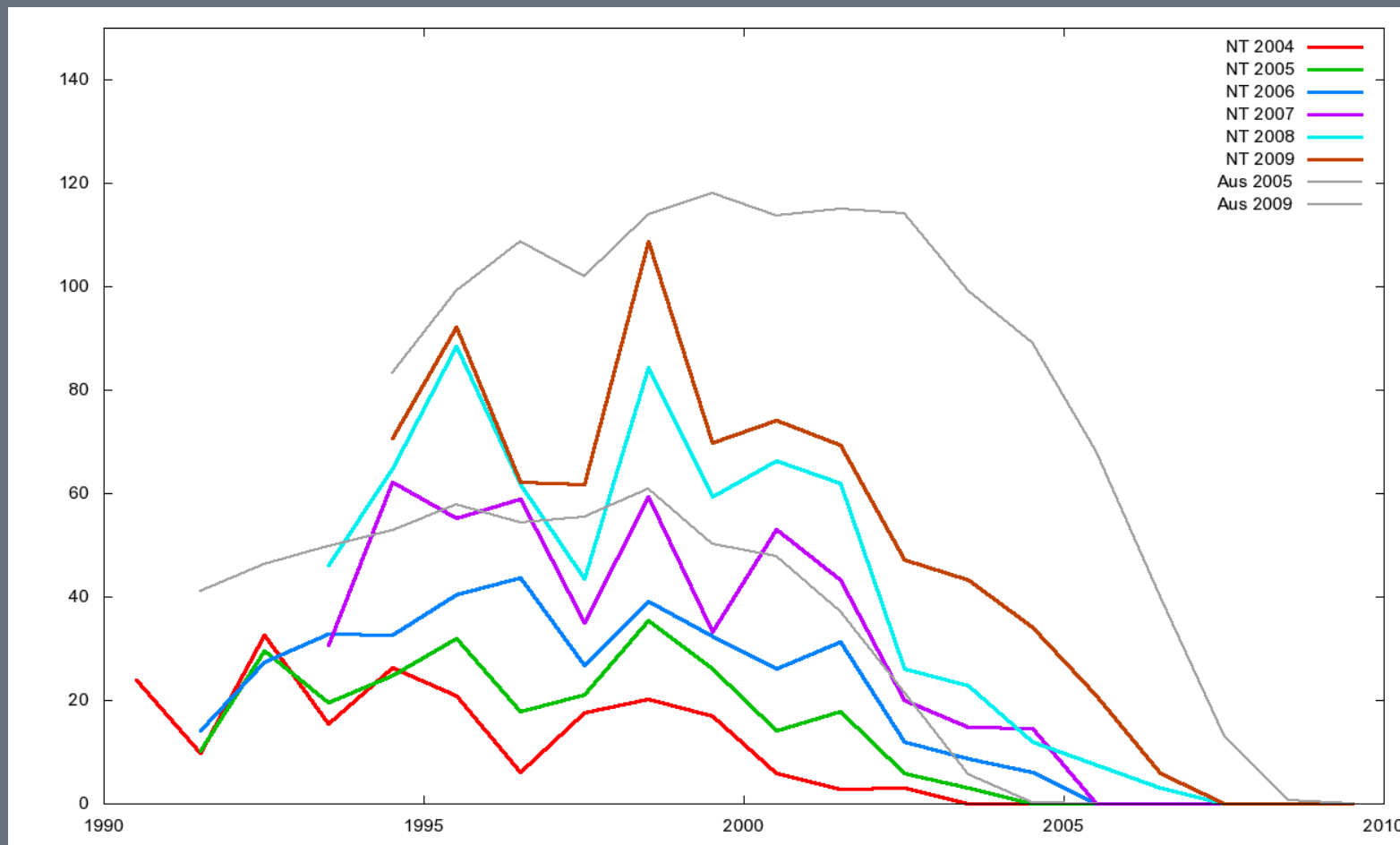
Falling below national average ...

State patterns: ACT



Was high, fell below national average ... and variable

State patterns: NT



A long way below national average ... stabilising

ASD policy challenges

- Accurate consistent diagnosis
- Appropriate treatment, service and support for all with an ASD diagnosis
- ... include PDD-NOS

- Accepting what the data tell us
- Using available data for planning

- 1 in 90 ... that is >1% of children in 2009

Where from here?

ASD Prevalence in Europe

- Detailed studies late 1990s in the UK
ASD ~60 per 10,000
- What about the rest of Europe?
- Is there any longitudinal data?