RAF COLLEGE CRANWELL
“Training Statistics”

1920 - 2019 (WIP)

FIRST REVISION

Version 1.1 28 July 2021 IBM Steward 6GE

“Lies, Damn Lies and Statistics”

When you are fortunate to discover a plethora of training records, particularly ones that have been locked away for many years, the temptation is to analyse them and collate statistics that give an insight into changing trends. So it is with individual flight cadet records, graduation programmes and disposal rolls, stored in the College archive, that record the passage of some 28,000 cadets who have undergone training at the RAF College.

In this album, we offer some insight into the training trends of the world’s oldest independent air academy, from its inception in 1920 to its 100th anniversary. We do not claim that the statistics are wholly accurate, but merely give some indication of training trends through the decades. Some individual records are missing from the archive - perhaps withdrawn for briefings, mislaid or even destroyed over time - but we have collated sufficient information to enable comparisons to be made as life at the College evolved over its 100 year history. We have also been able to verify many of the records by accessing authorised databases in the public domain; Covid restrictions lifting, we are hopeful of completing more verification by accessing national records at Kew.

In the 1920s and 1930s, you will see an analysis of RAF and FCO cadets that graduated from Initial Officer and Pilot Training; those who “withdrew’; those who were killed in flying accidents. In the war years, the College was closed for Officer Training, but many airman aircrew undertook their flying training with the College SFTS (later 17 FTS) at Cranwell. Officer and Pilot training at the College resumed in the 1940s, to which Navigator, Equipment and Secretarial Training was added in the 1950s, and then Engineering and Regiment Training in the 1960s. The recruitment of cadets straight from school ceased with 101 Entry, which graduated in March 1973.

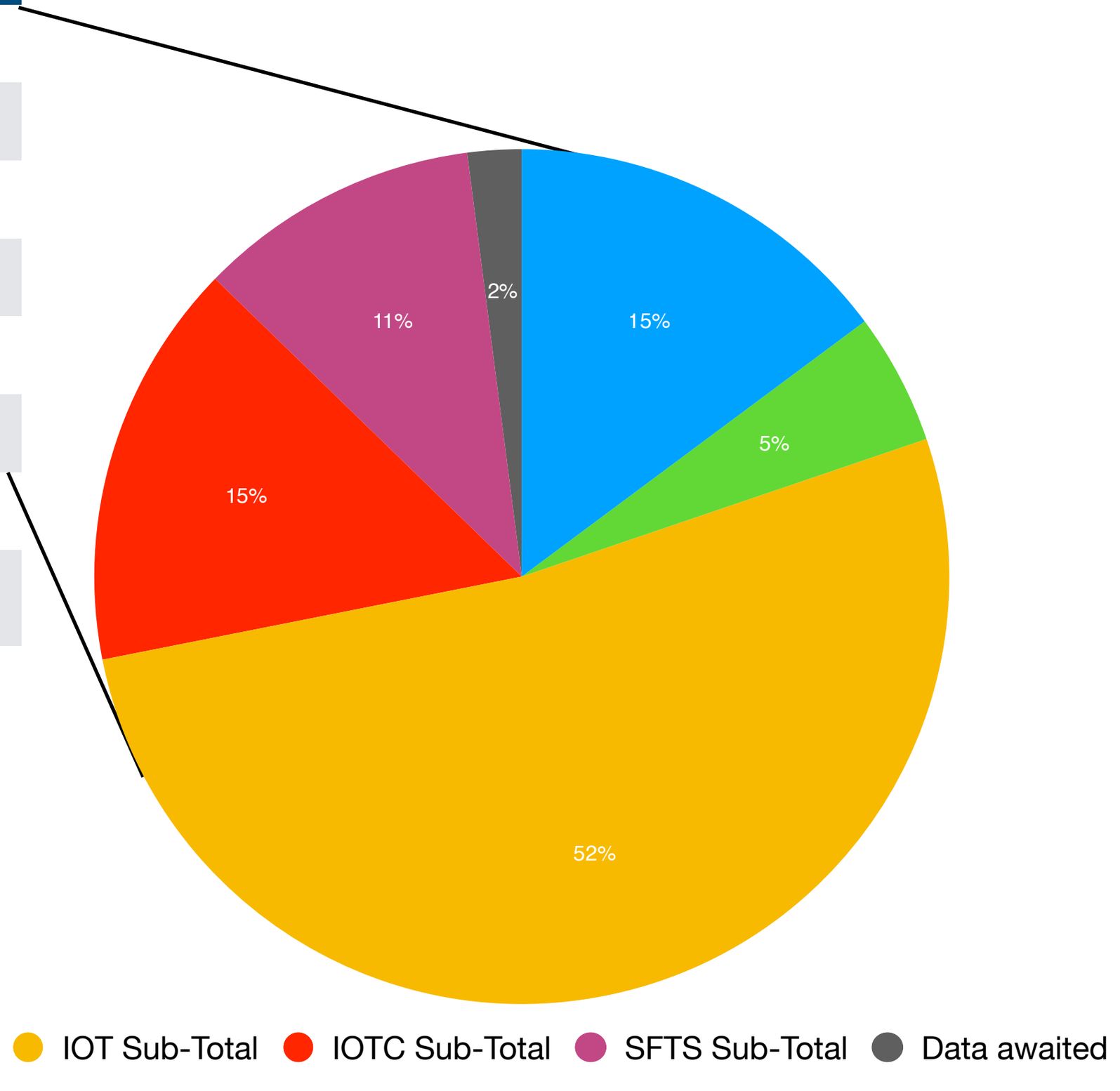
During the 1970s, university graduates received Initial Officer and Specialist Training - Pilot, Engineering, Supply and Secretarial - under the Graduate Entrant (GE) scheme; Navigators completed Initial Officer Training at Cranwell before moving to RAF Finningley (now Robin Hood Airport) for their specialist Navigation Training.

In the 1980s, the GE system ‘morphed’ into the IOT system, with the closure of RAF Henlow and the amalgamation of Officer Training schemes under an initiative known as the Single Gate Initial Officer Training scheme. This scheme and its replacement of July 2016 (IOTC) catered for Initial Officer Training of all branches prior to specialist training conducted at a variety of training bases elsewhere.

So, this album is offered with some circumspection. It is an insight and not a definitive record. Read on.

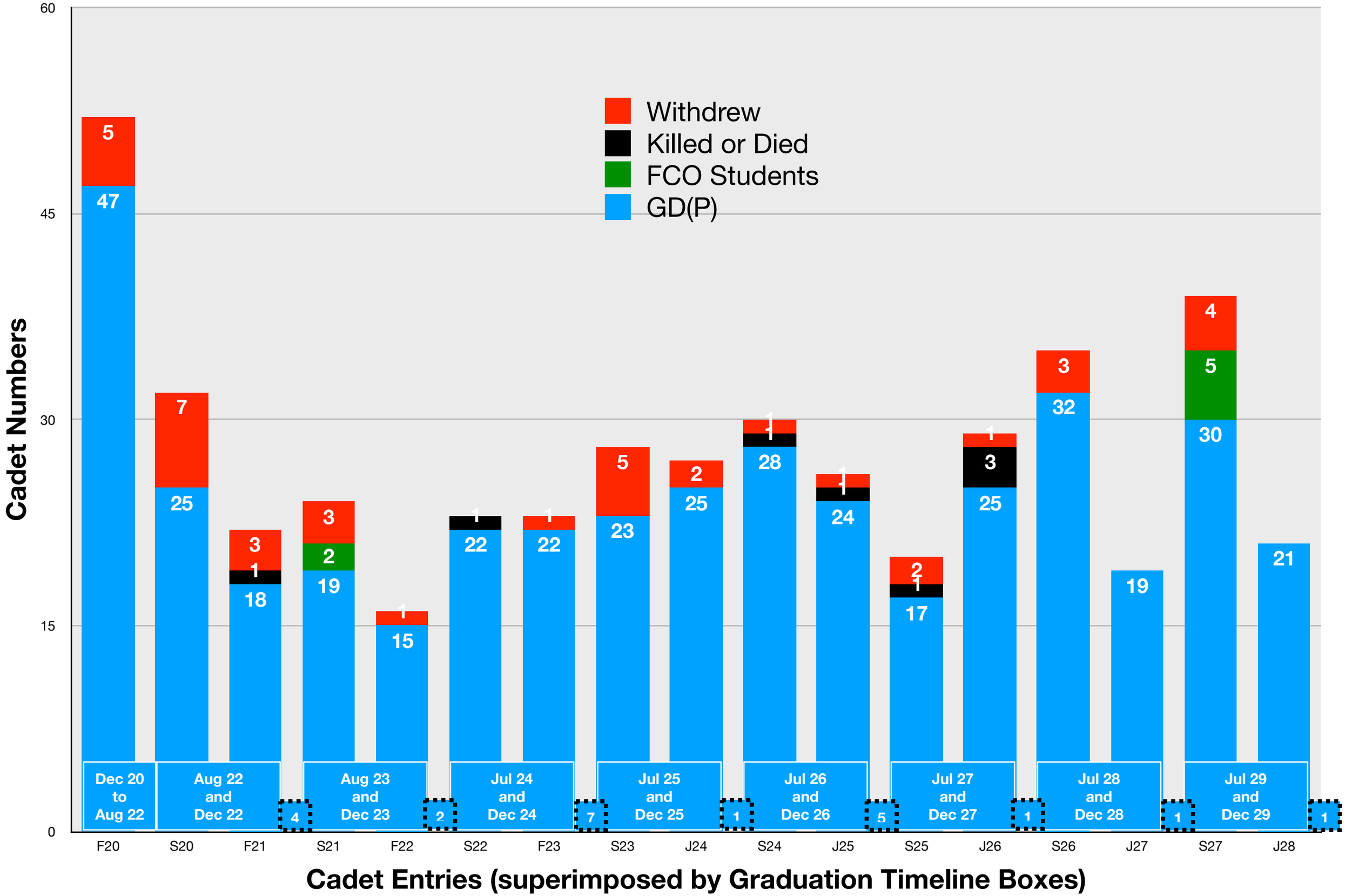
An Overview

Training Scheme	Total Numbers
Flight Cadets	4,354
GE System	1,459
IOT	15,311
IOTC (Verified)	4,520
Total Officer Cadet Records Held	**25,644**
SFTS War Years	3,142
SERE Recorded	428
Projected IOTC/SERE (Data awaited)	630
Total Number Recorded	**29,844**



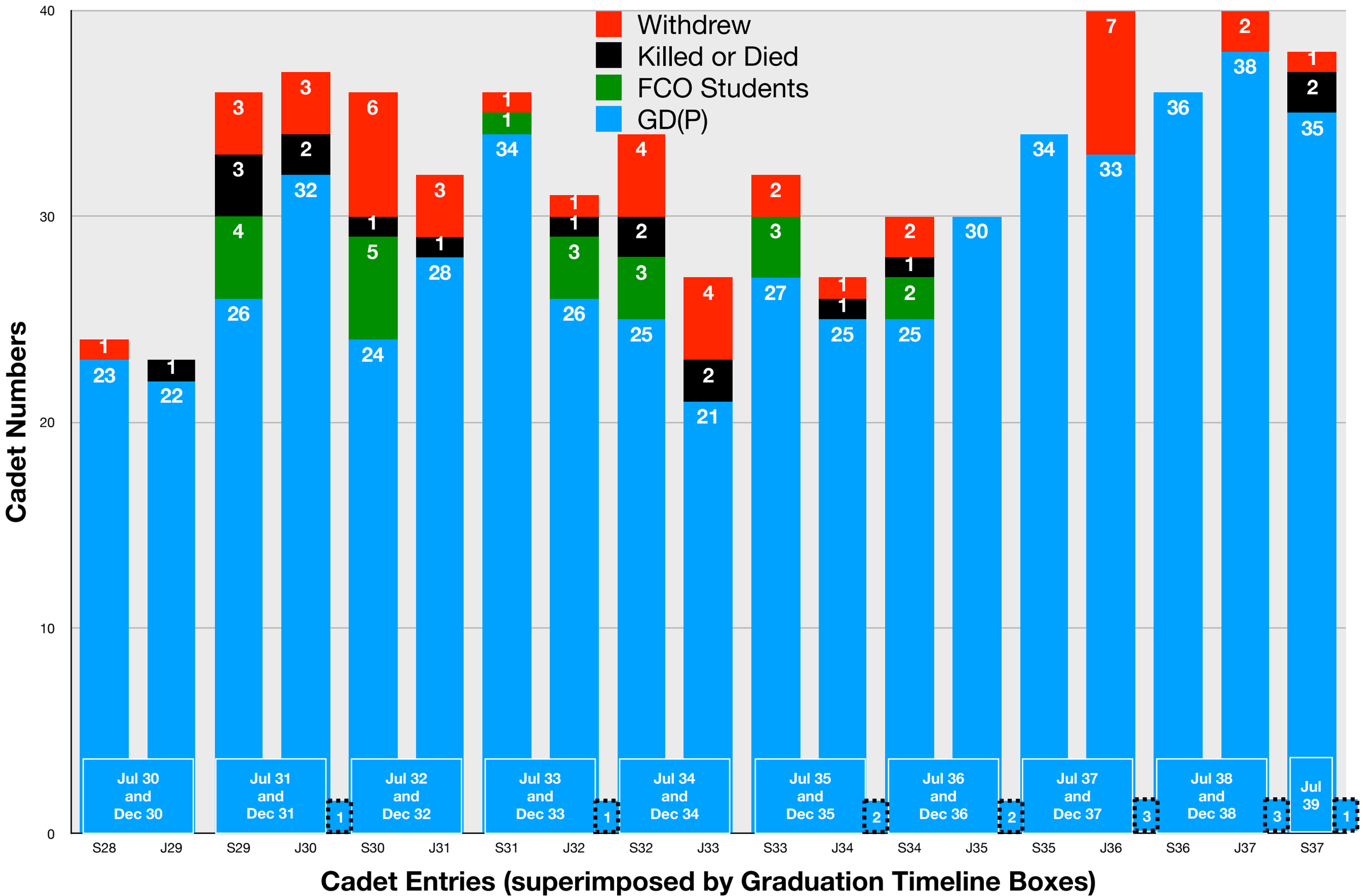
Flight Cadet Era - 1920s Statistics

Cadet Graduations in the 1920s



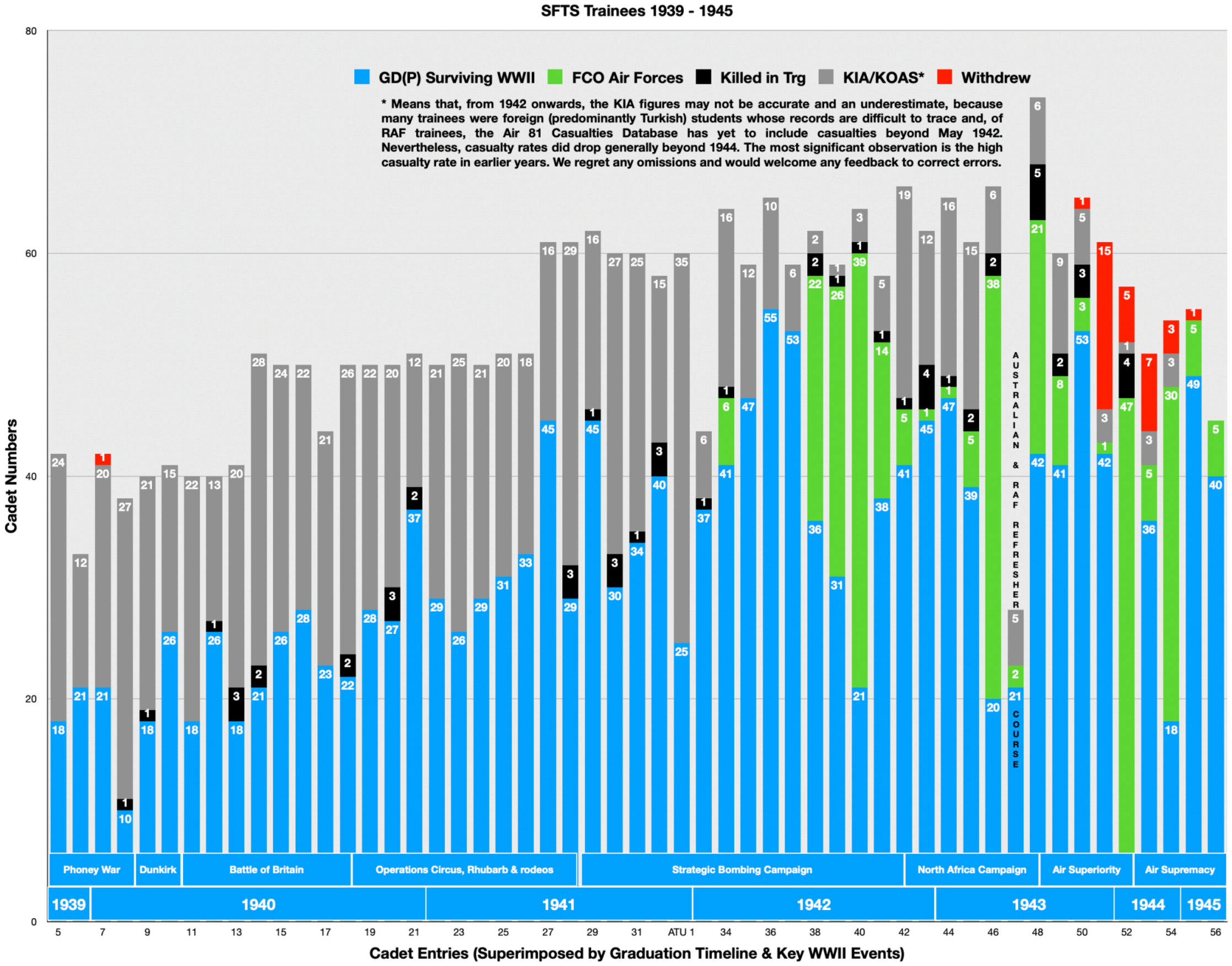
Flight Cadet Era - 1930s Statistics

Cadet Graduations in the 1930s



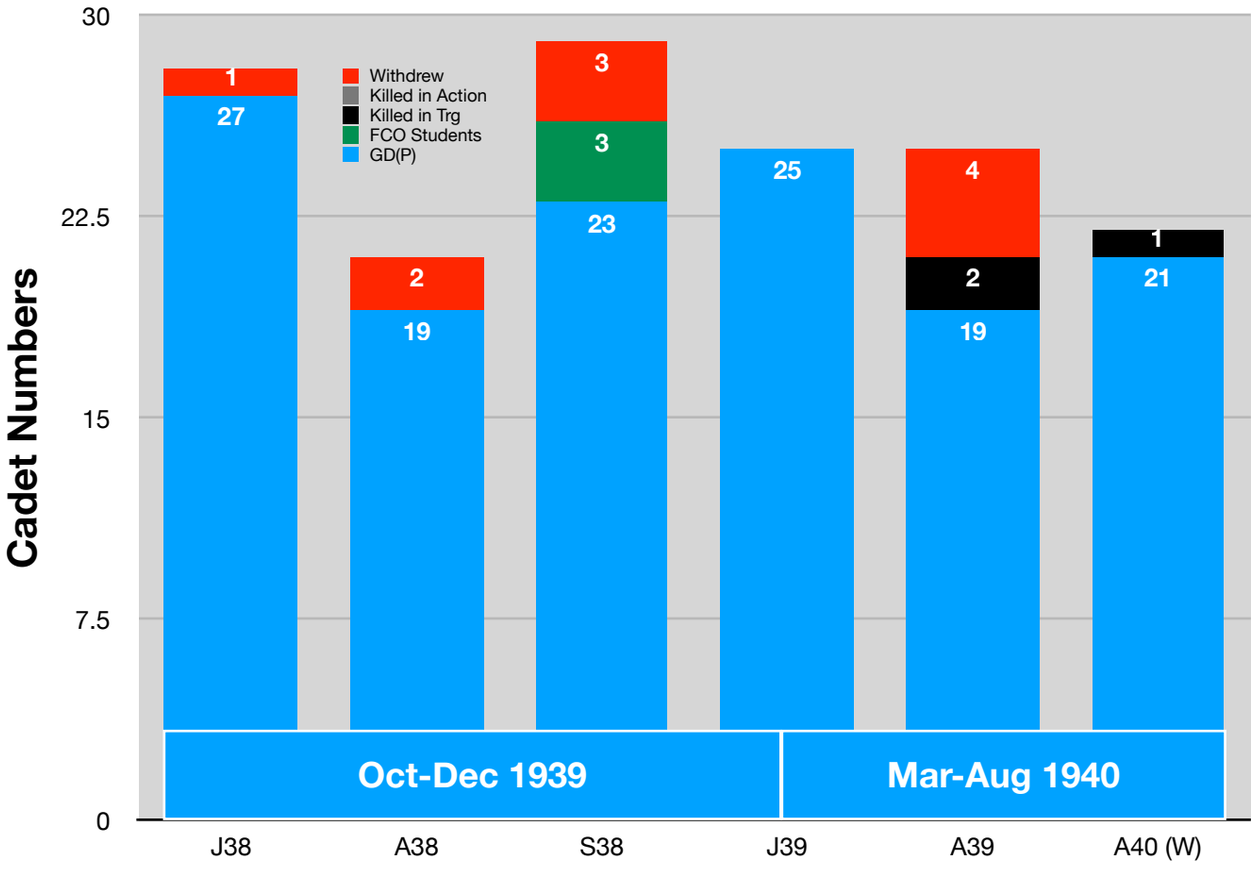
Cadet Entries (superimposed by Graduation Timeline Boxes)

War Years Training Statistics - College SFTS

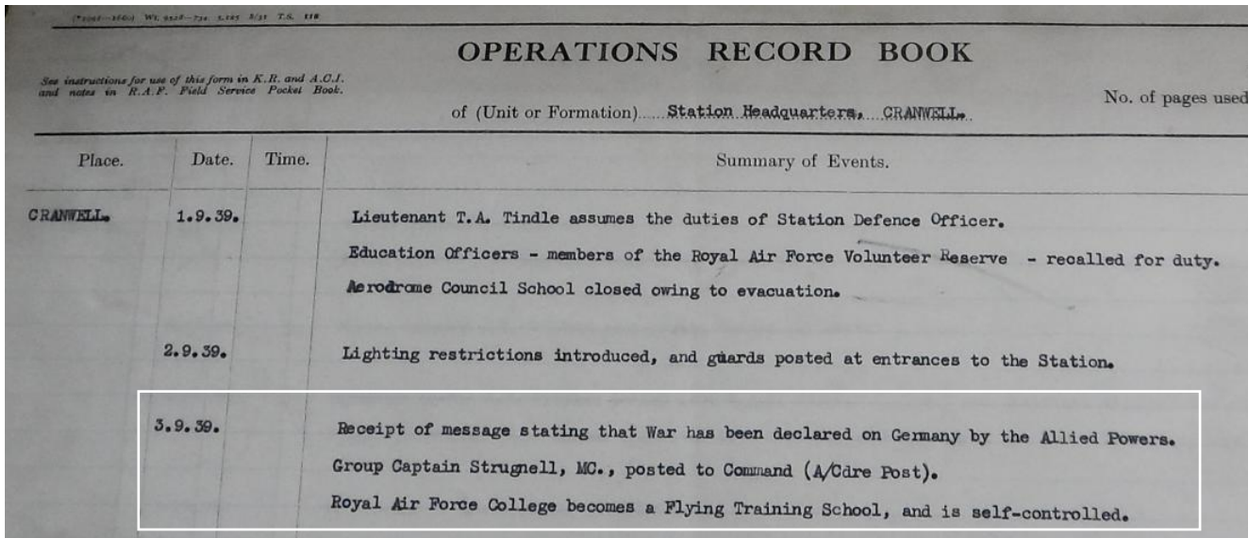


Transition Years - Immediate Pre & Post War Year Training Statistics

Cadet Graduations in the Early 1940s (Merged with Early SFTS Courses (1-4))



Cadet Entries (Superimposed by Graduation Timeline)

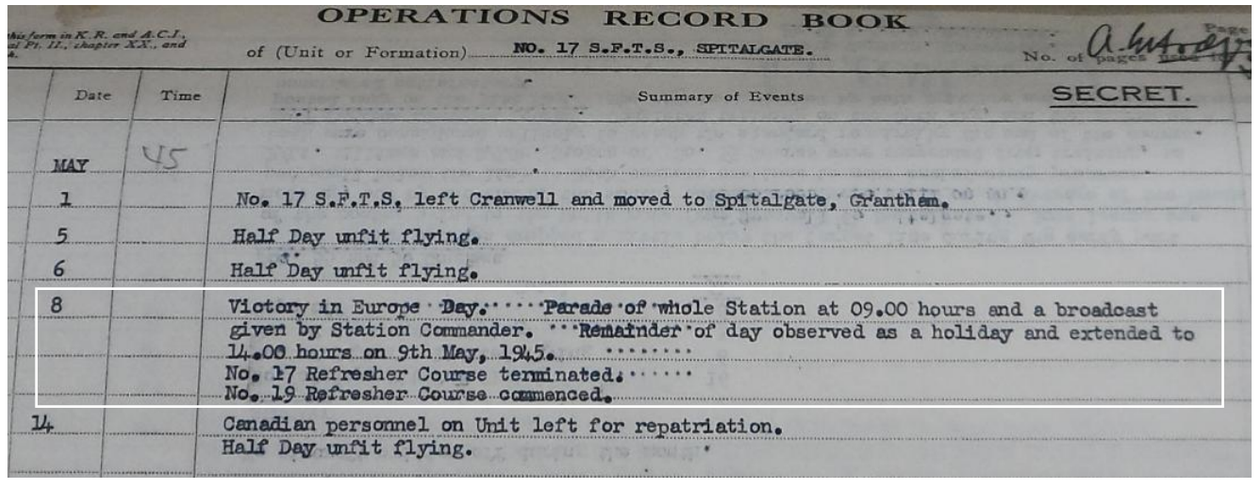


OPERATIONS RECORD BOOK

of (Unit or Formation) Station Headquarters, CRANWELL.

No. of pages used

Place.	Date.	Time.	Summary of Events.
CRANWELL.	1.9.39.		Lieutenant T.A. Tindle assumes the duties of Station Defence Officer. Education Officers - members of the Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve - recalled for duty. Aerodrome Council School closed owing to evacuation.
	2.9.39.		Lighting restrictions introduced, and guards posted at entrances to the Station.
	3.9.39.		Receipt of message stating that War has been declared on Germany by the Allied Powers. Group Captain Strugnell, MC., posted to Command (A/Cdre Post). Royal Air Force College becomes a Flying Training School, and is self-controlled.



OPERATIONS RECORD BOOK

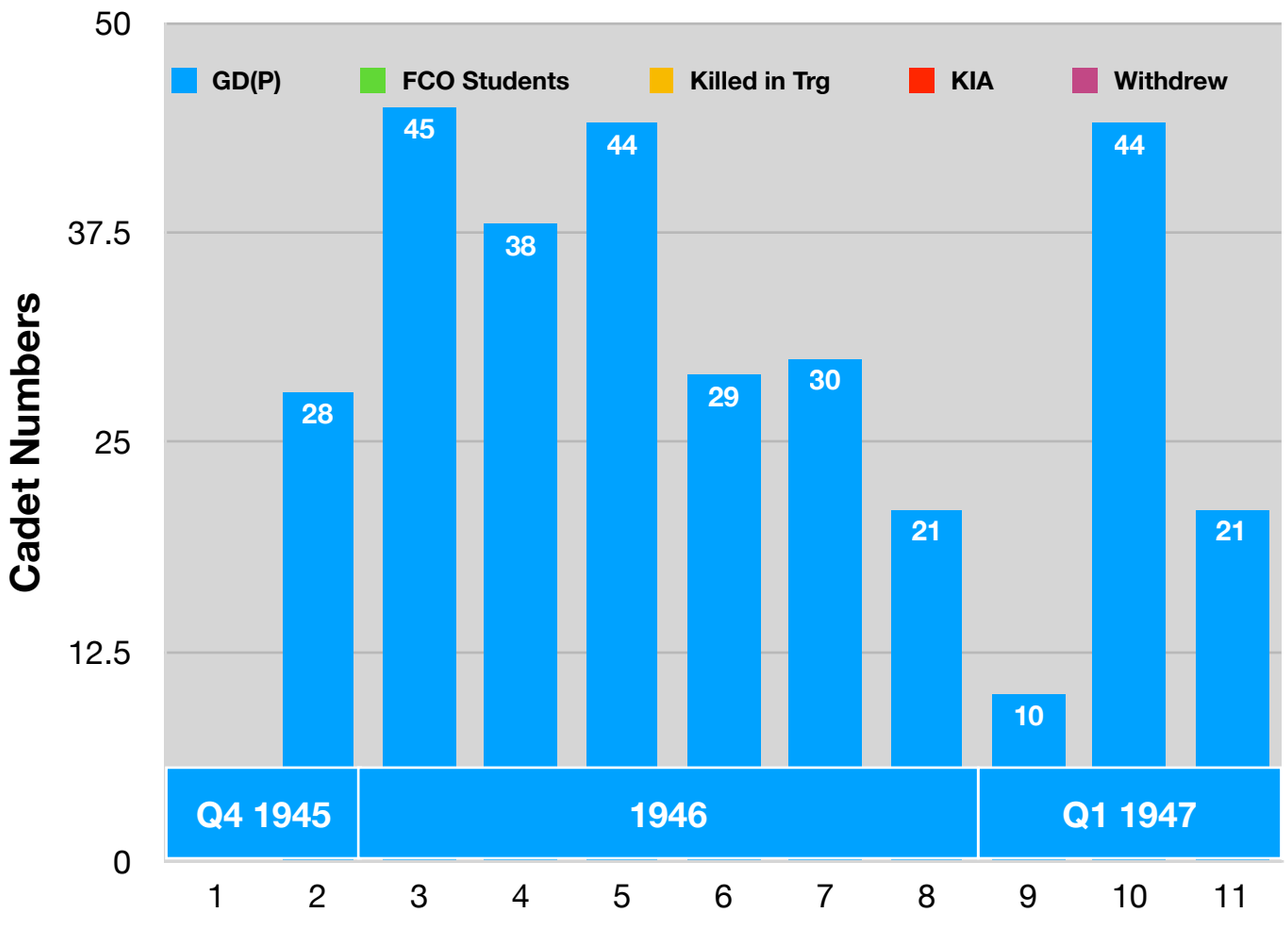
of (Unit or Formation) NO. 17 S.F.T.S., SPITALGATE.

No. of pages

SECRET.

Date	Time	Summary of Events
MAY	45	
1		No. 17 S.F.T.S. left Cranwell and moved to Spitalgate, Grantham.
5		Half Day unfit flying.
6		Half Day unfit flying.
8		Victory in Europe Day. Parade of whole Station at 09.00 hours and a broadcast given by Station Commander. Remainder of day observed as a holiday and extended to 14.00 hours on 9th May, 1945. No. 17 Refresher Course terminated. No. 19 Refresher Course commenced.
14		Canadian personnel on Unit left for repatriation. Half Day unfit flying.

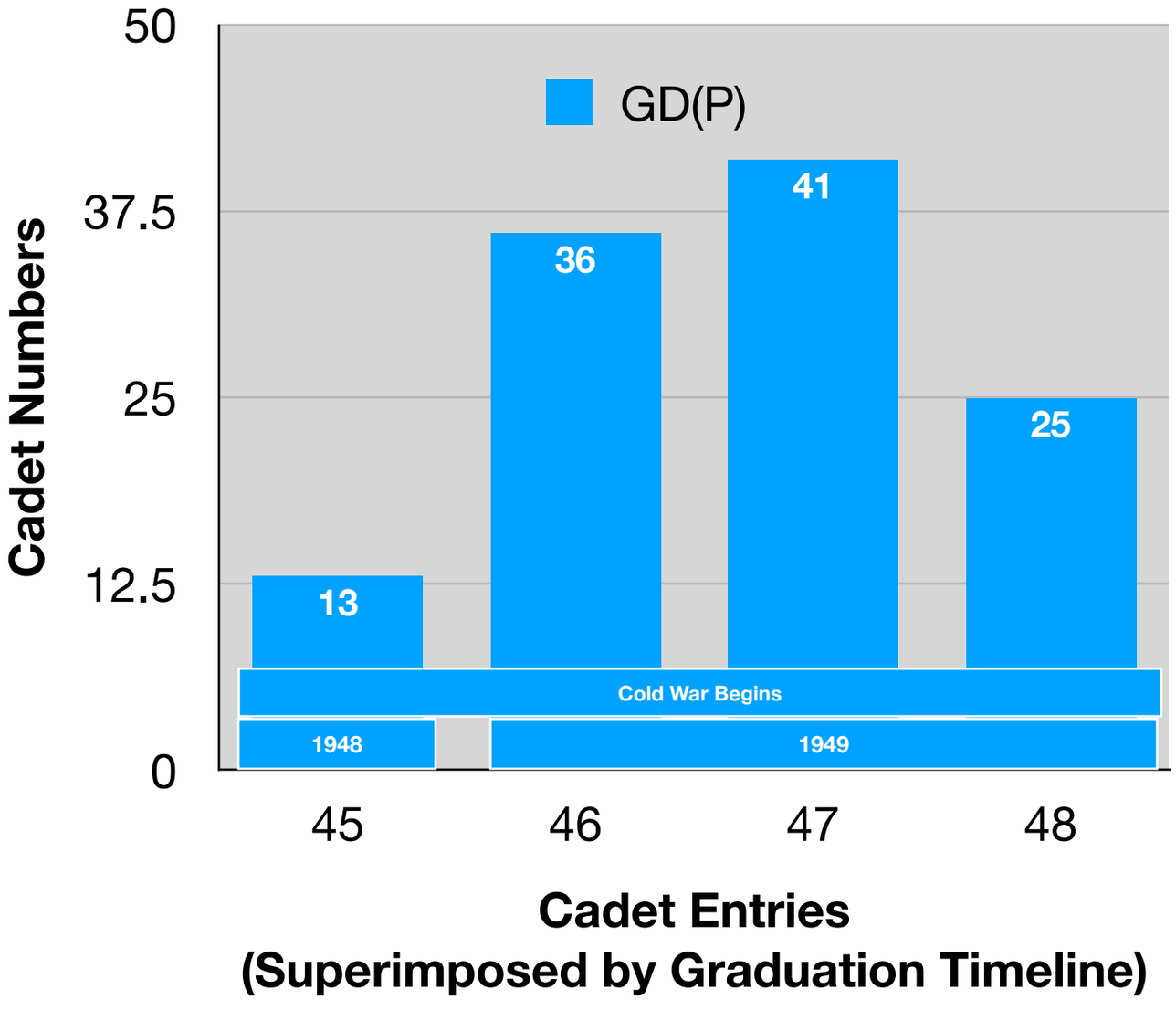
19 FTS Trainees 1945-47



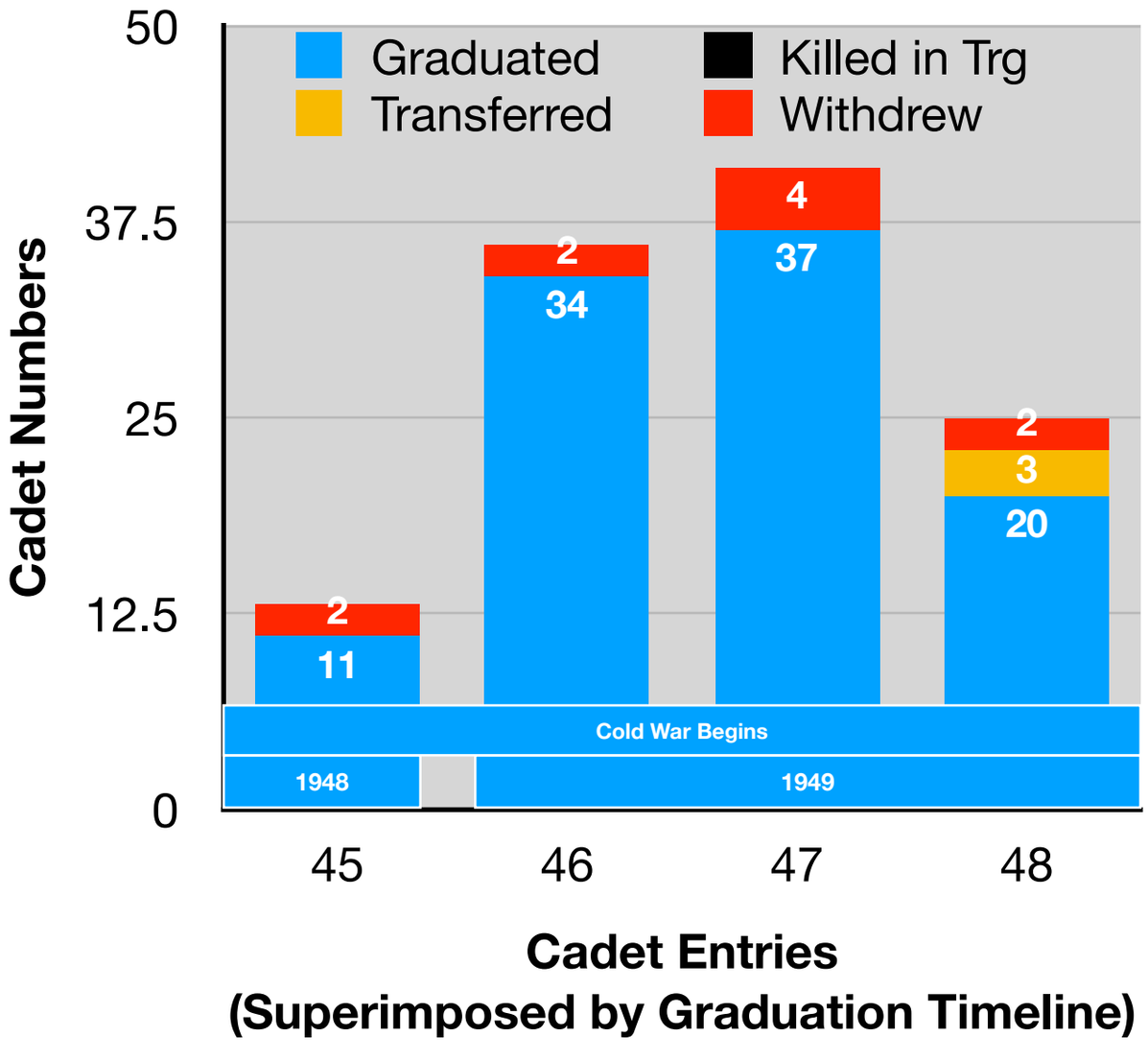
Cadet Entries (Superimposed by Graduation Timeline)

Flight Cadet Era Returns - 1940s Statistics

Flight Cadet Intakes by Branch

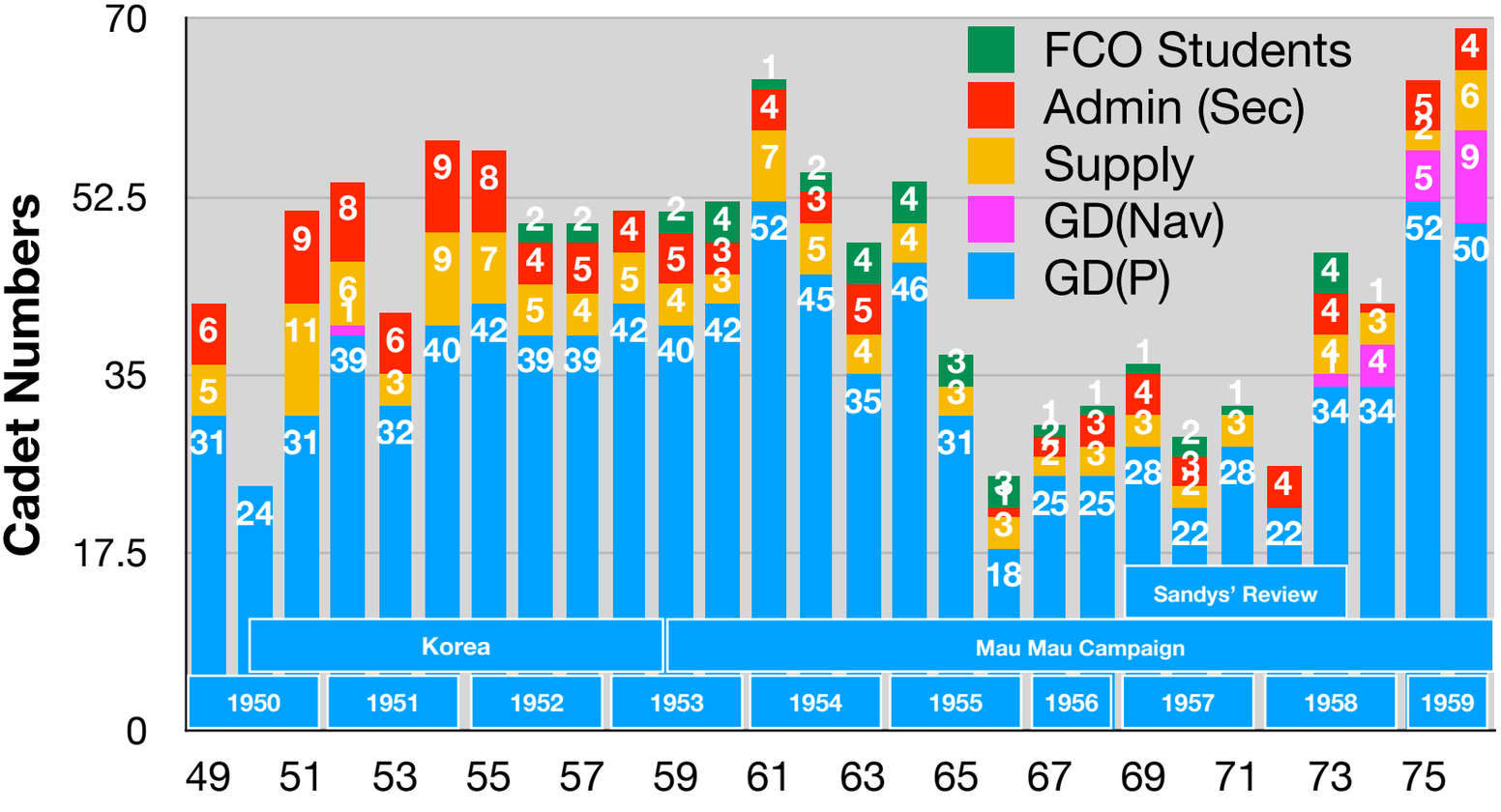


Flight Cadet Outputs



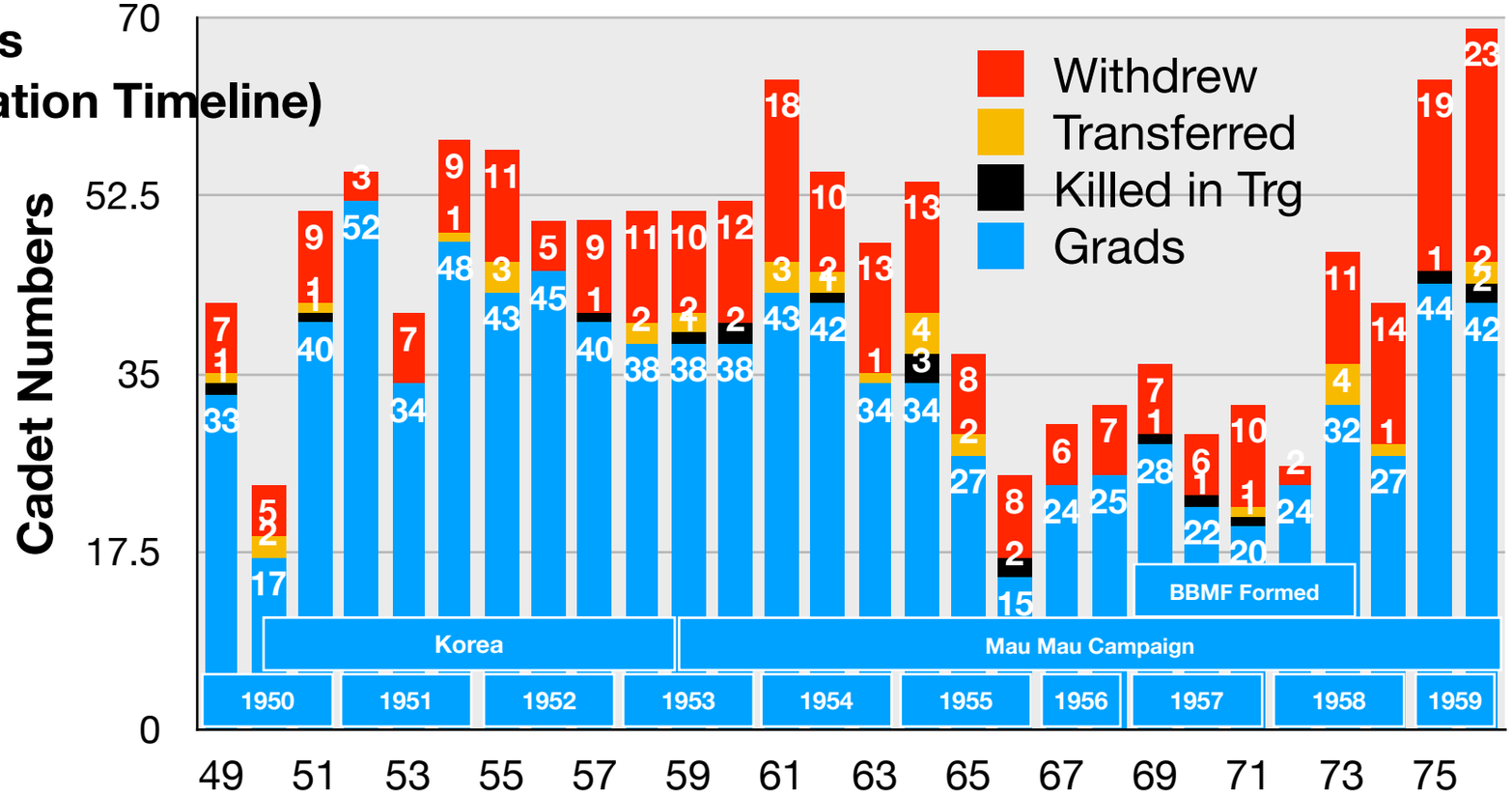
Flight Cadet Era - 1950s Statistics

Flight Cadet Intakes by Branch



Flight Cadet Outputs

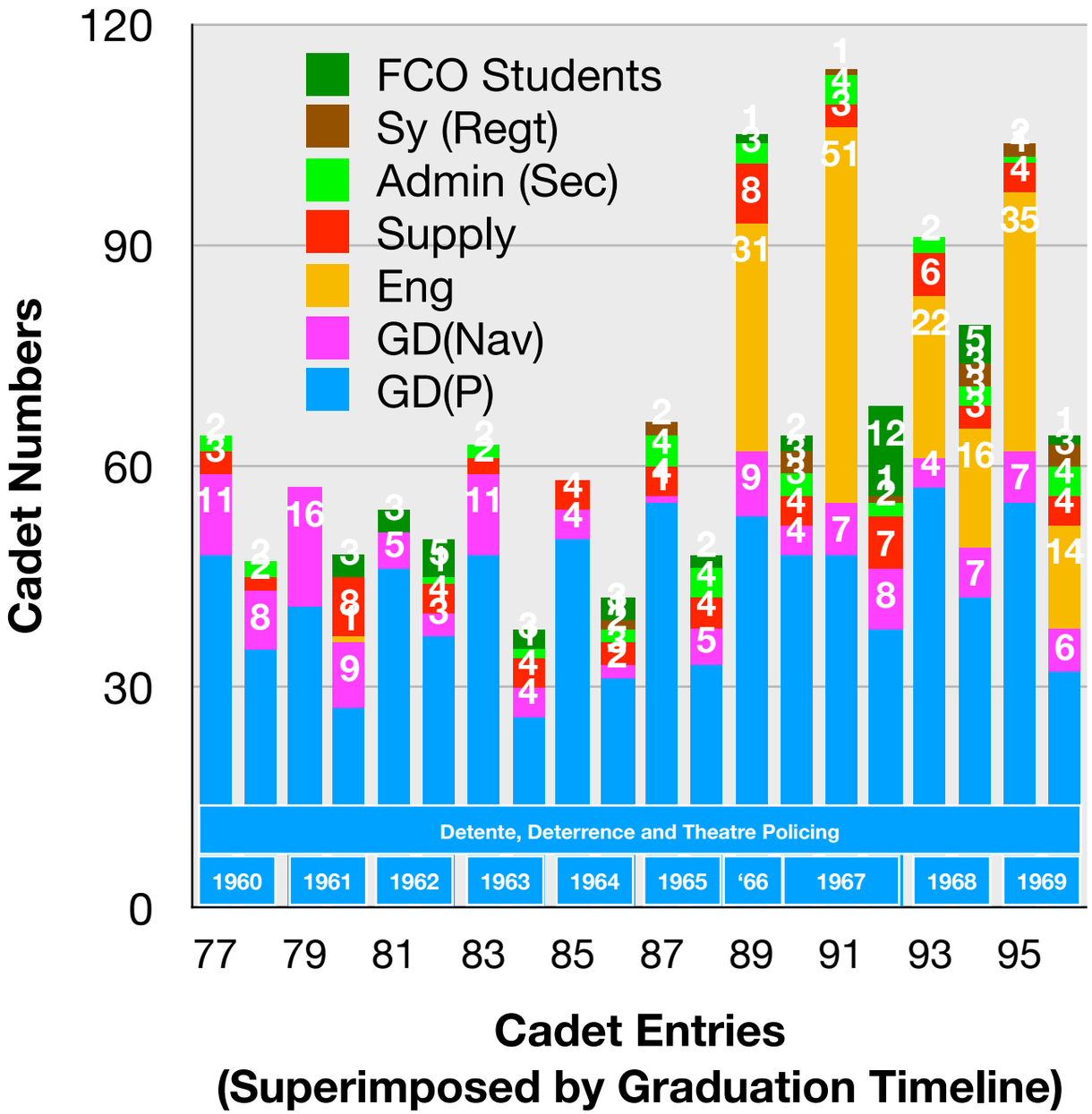
Cadet Entries (Superimposed by Graduation Timeline)



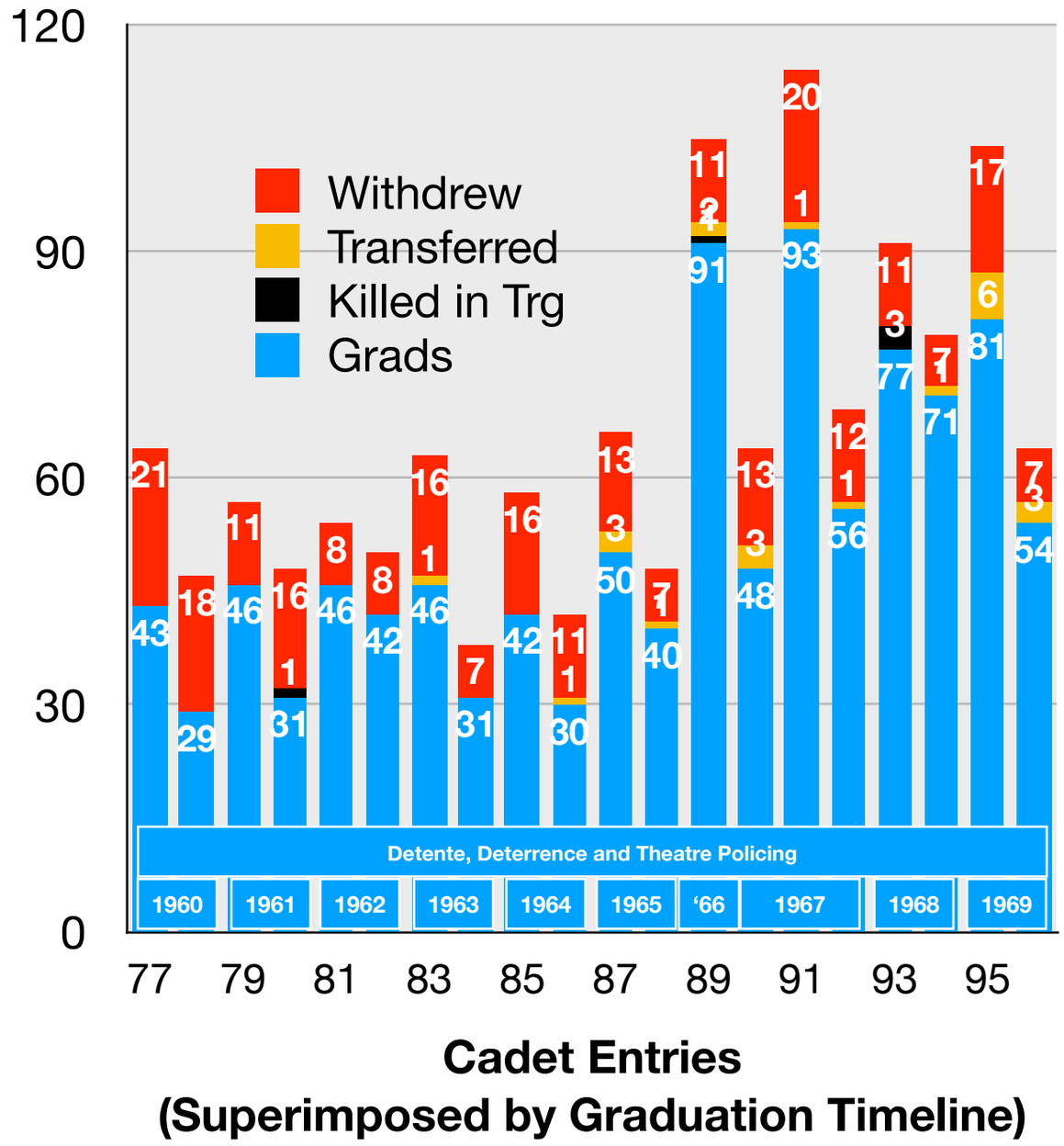
Cadet Entries (Superimposed by Graduation Timeline)

Flight Cadet Era - 1960s Statistics

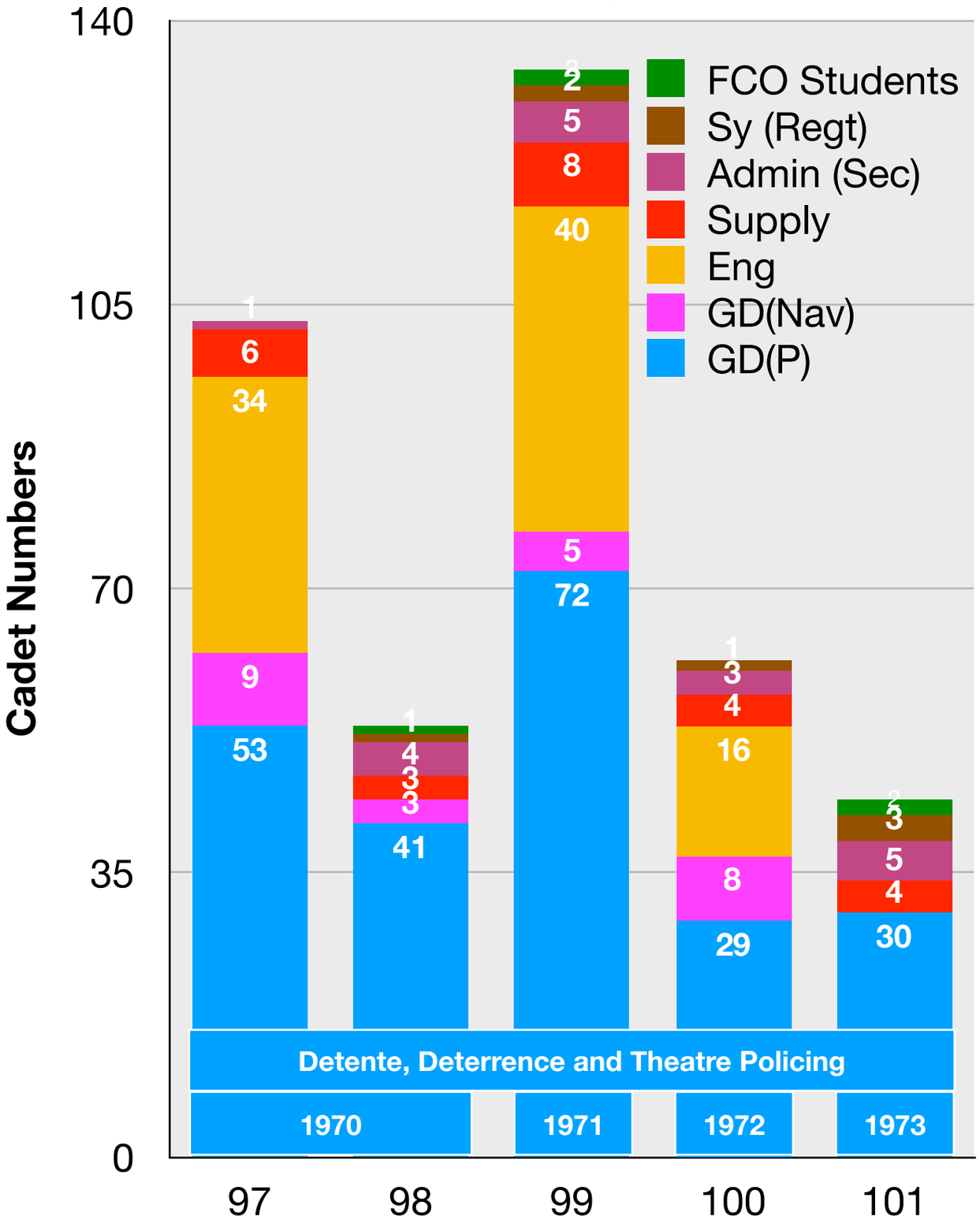
Flight Cadet Intakes by Branch

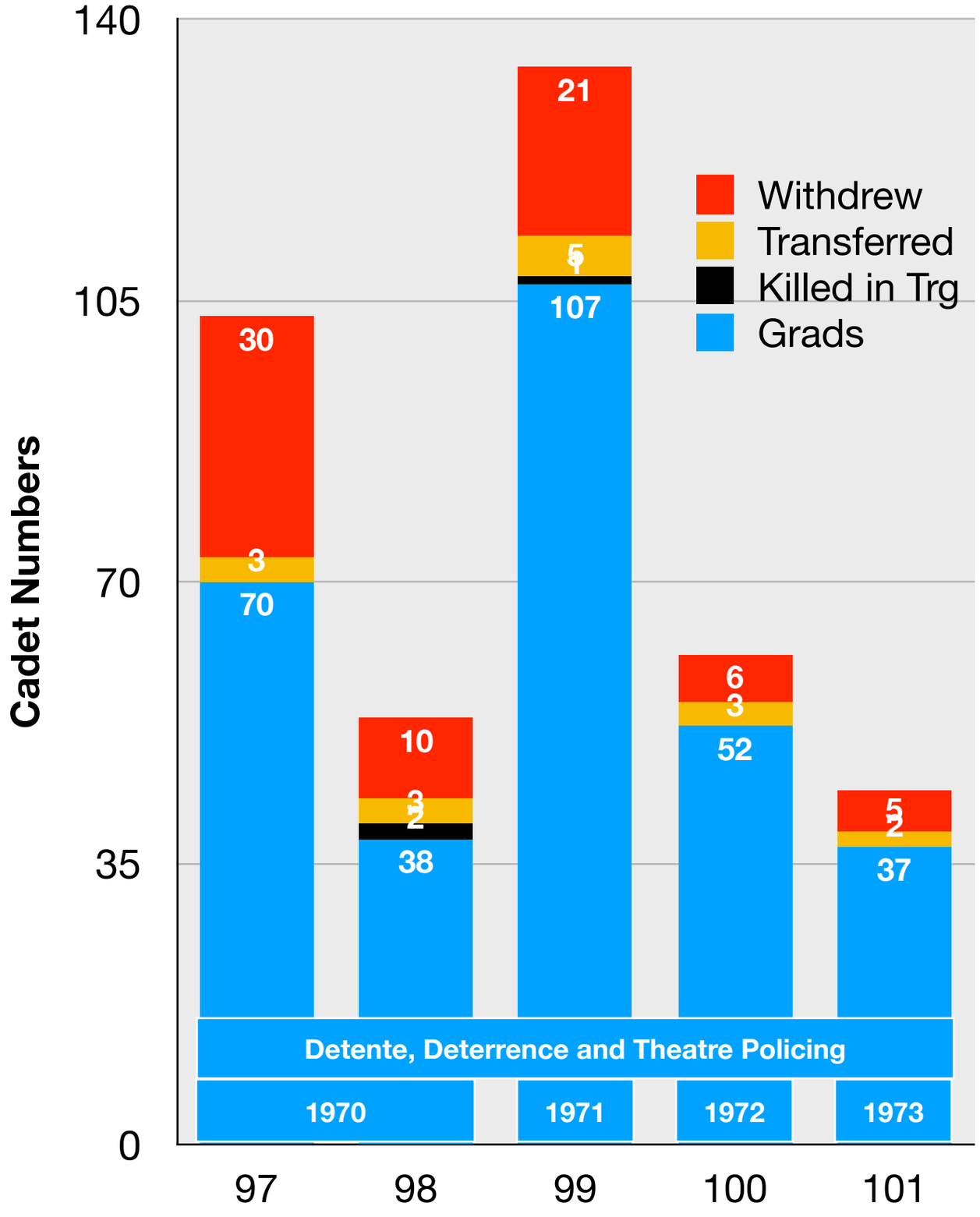


Flight Cadet Outputs

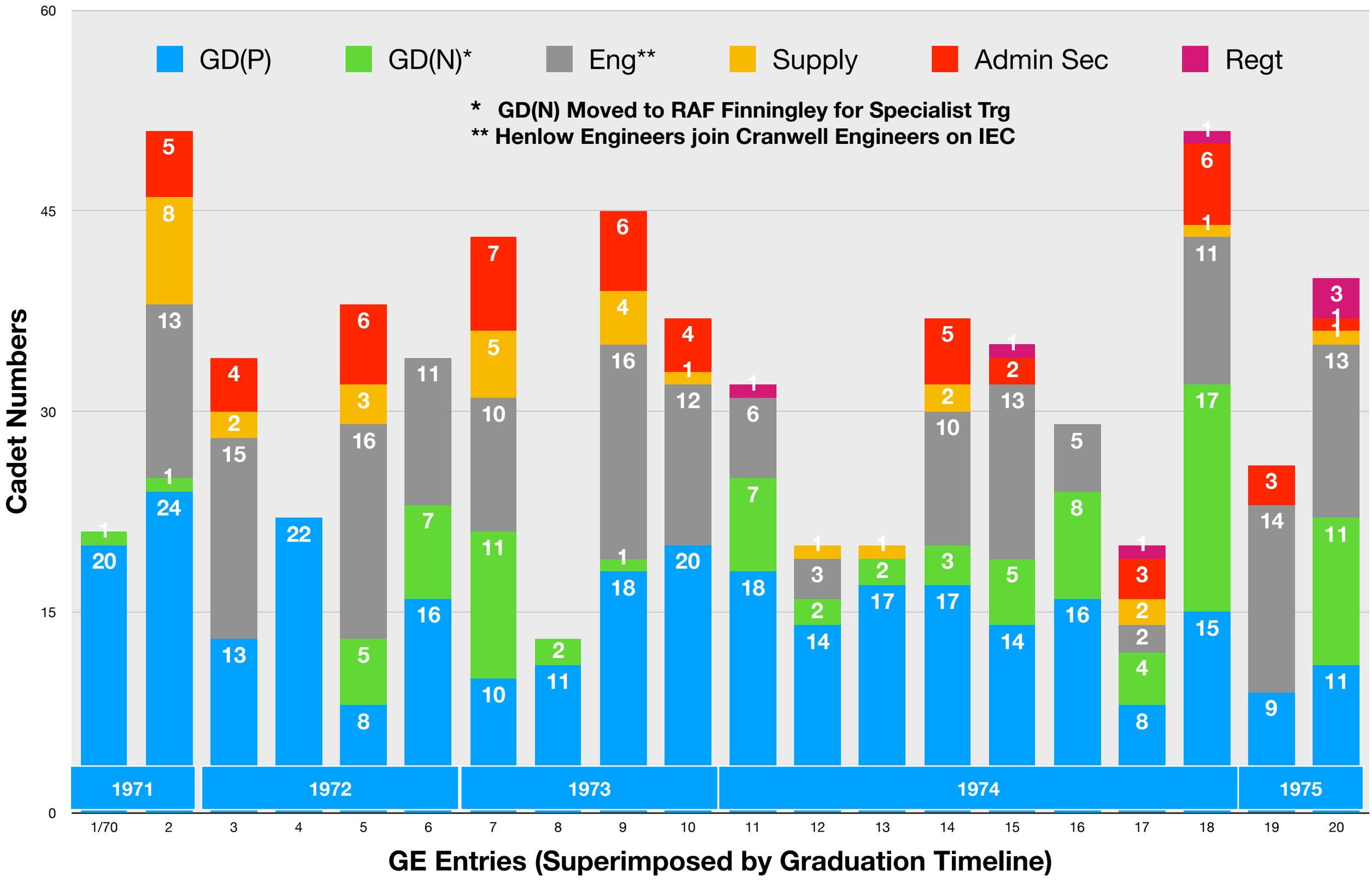


End of Flight Cadet Era - 1970s Statistics

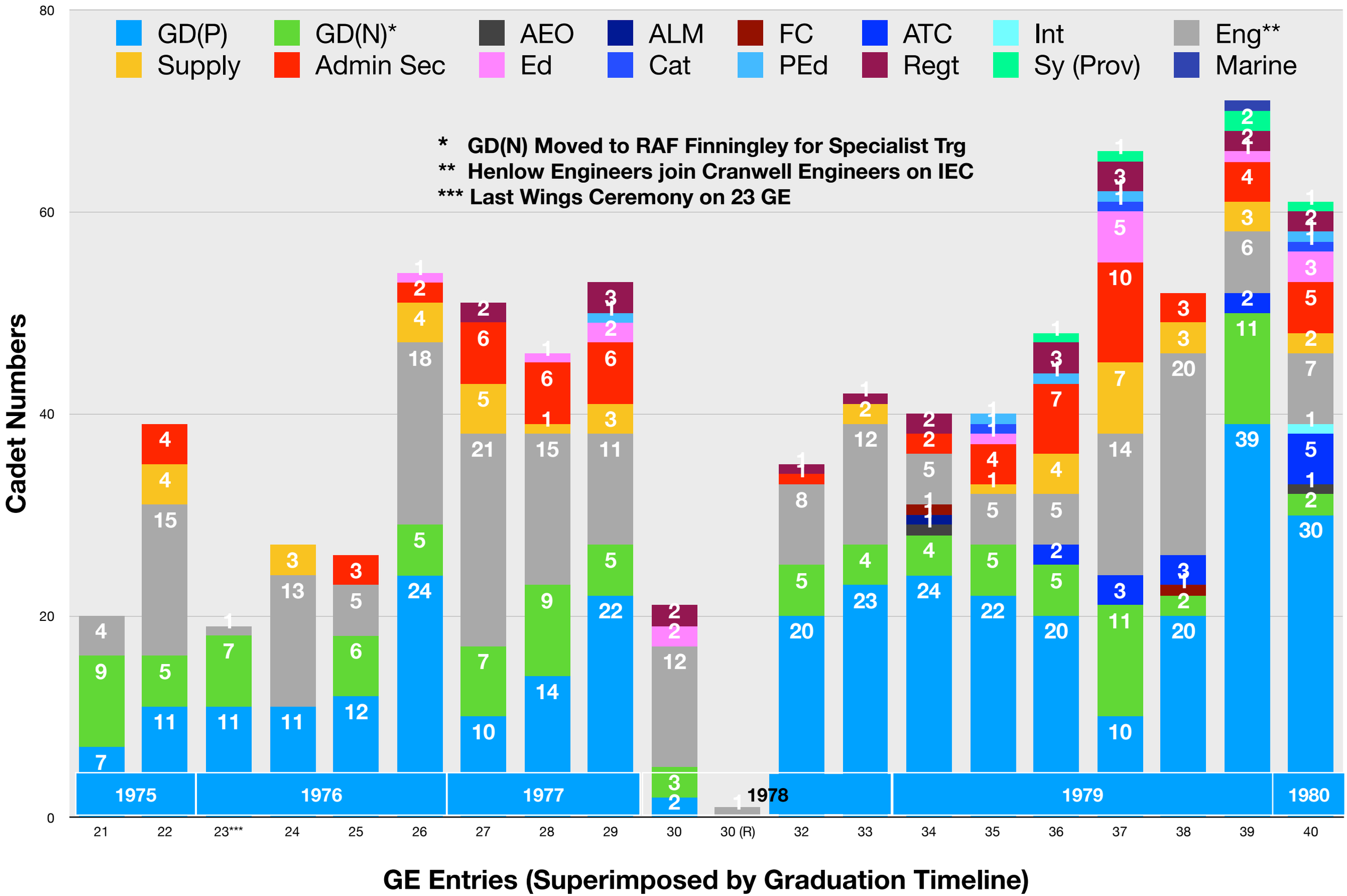




GE Era of 1970s - Phases 1 & 2 Trg (1 GE to 20 GE)



GE Era of 1970s - Phase 1 IOT Only (21 GE to 40 GE)



IOTs 41 to 121 of 1980s - Aircrew

GD(P) GD(Nav) GD (WSO) GD(AEO) GD(Air Eng) GD (ALM) FCO Students

Cadet Numbers

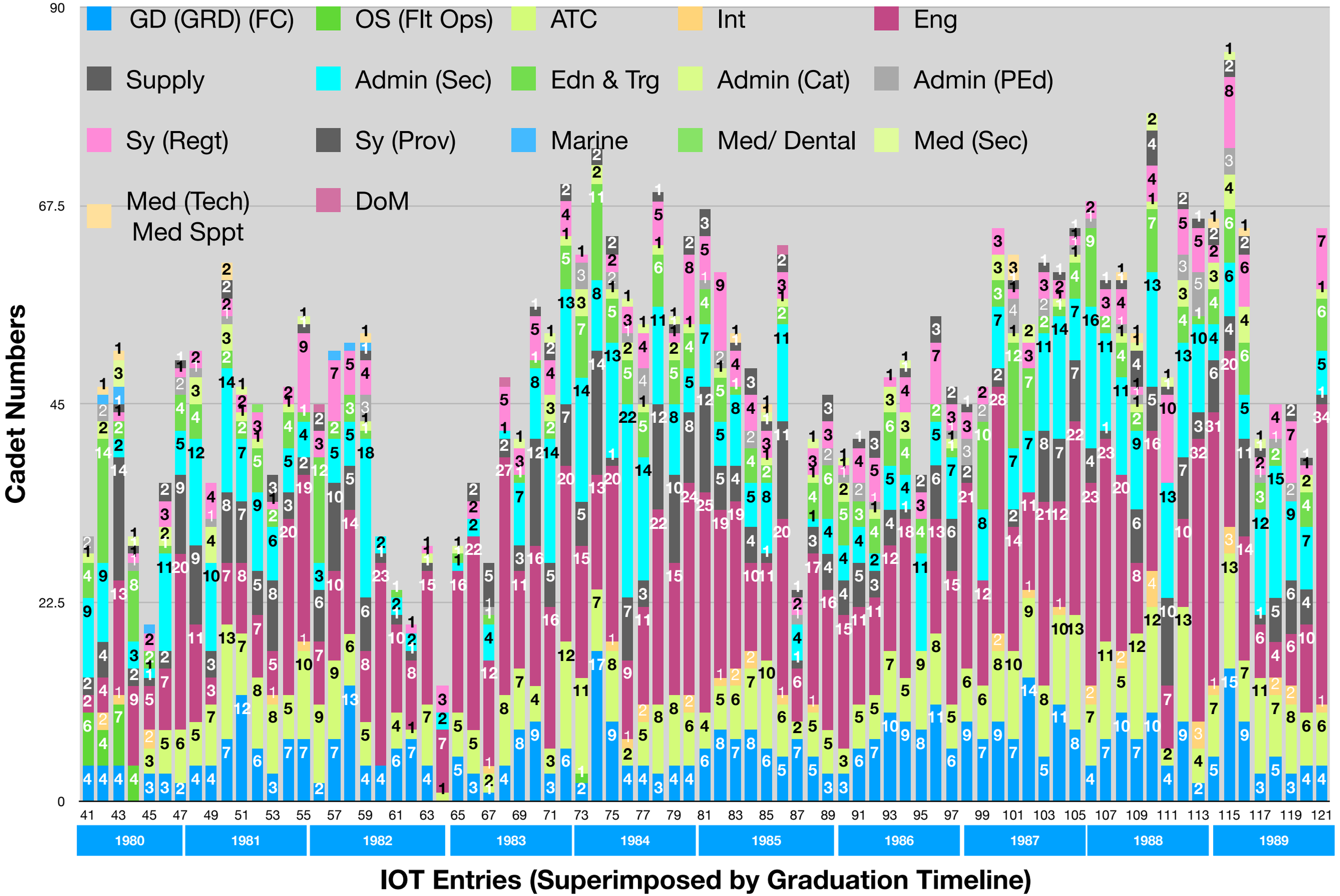
70
52.5
35
17.5
0

1980 1981 1982 1983 1984 1985 1986 1987 1988 1989

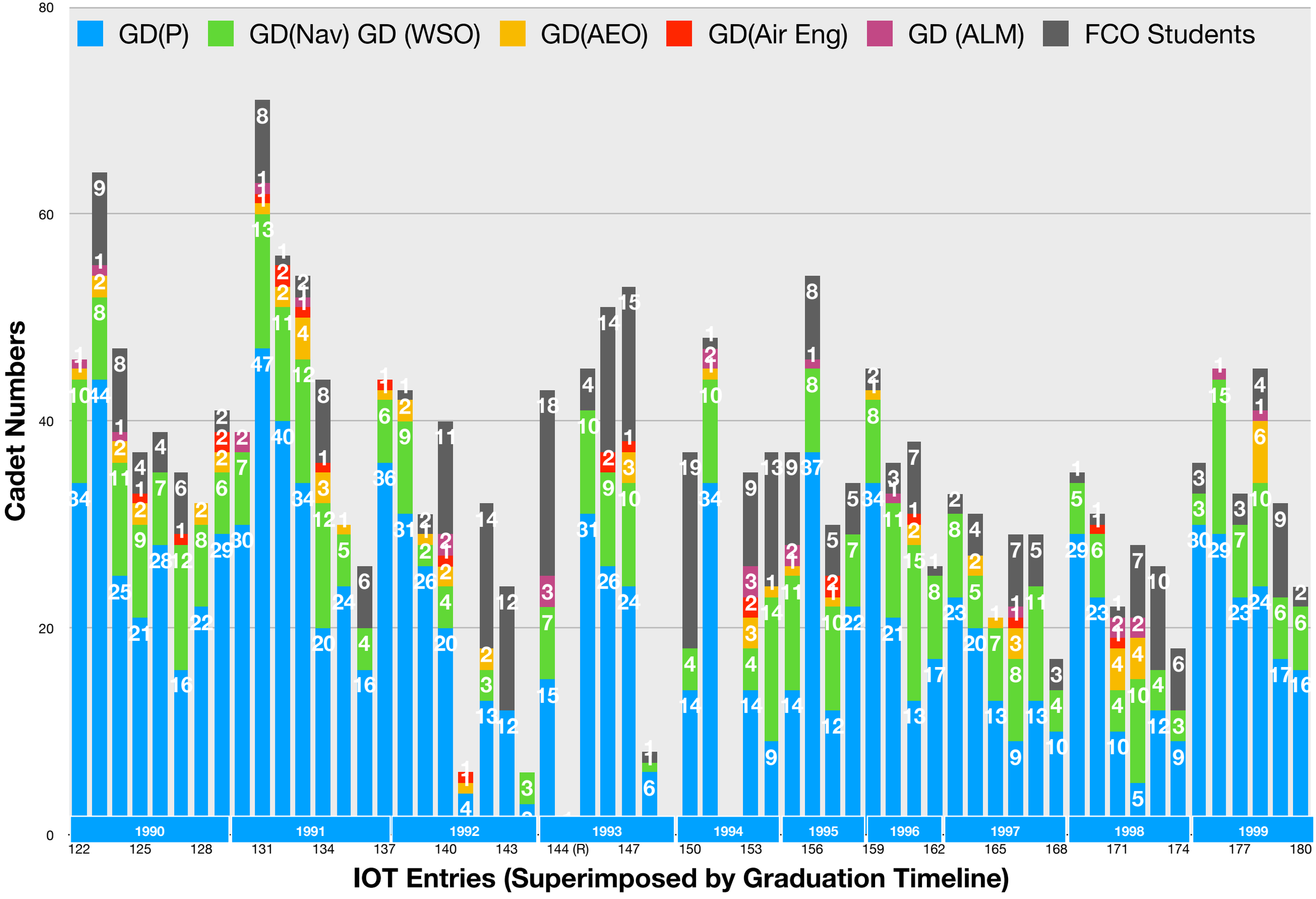
41 43 45 47 49 51 53 55 57 59 61 63 65 67 69 71 73 75 77 79 81 83 85 87 89 91 93 95 97 99 101 103 105 107 109 111 113 115 117 119 121

IOT Entries (Superimposed by Graduation Timeline)

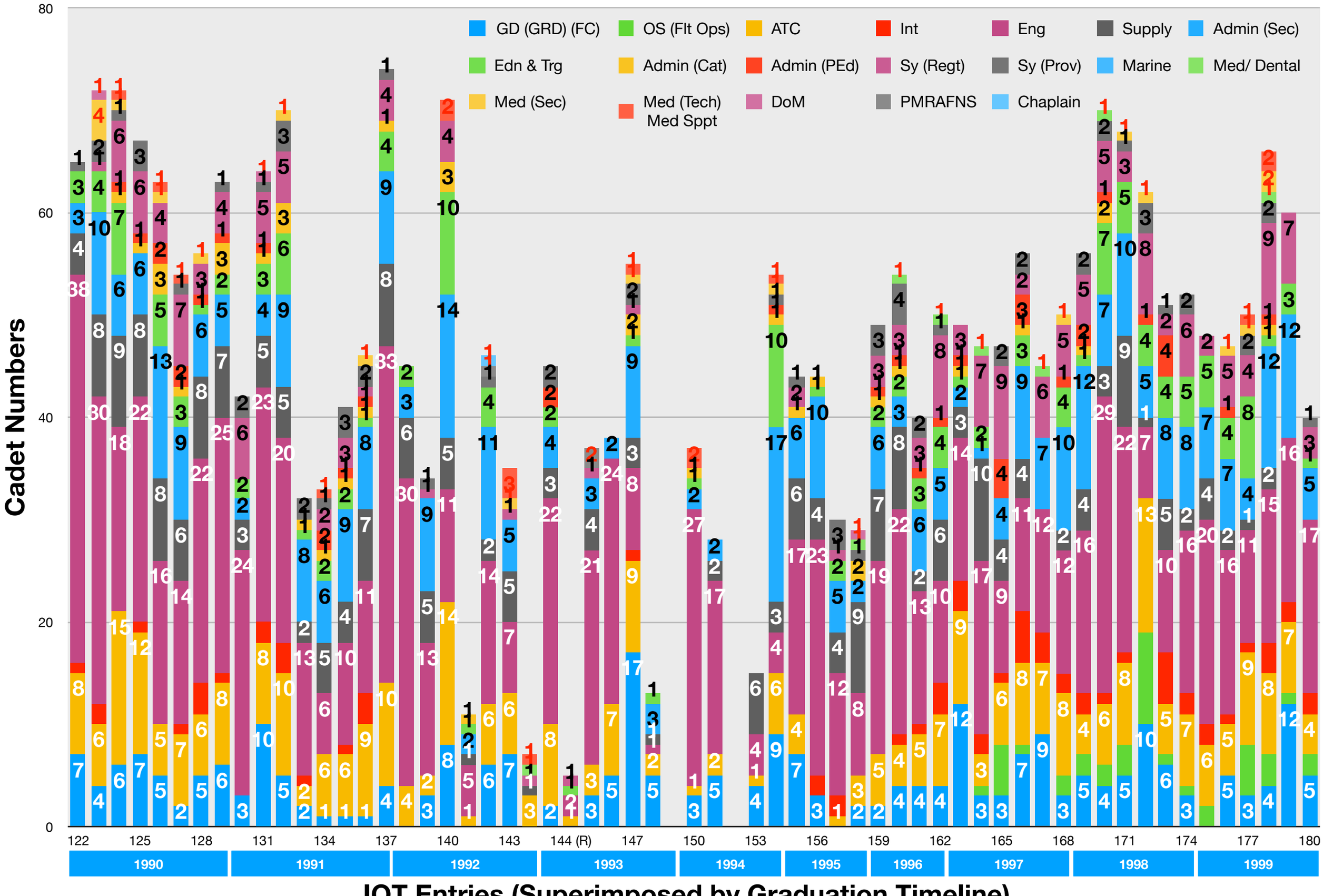
IOTs 41 to 121 of 1980s - Ground Branches



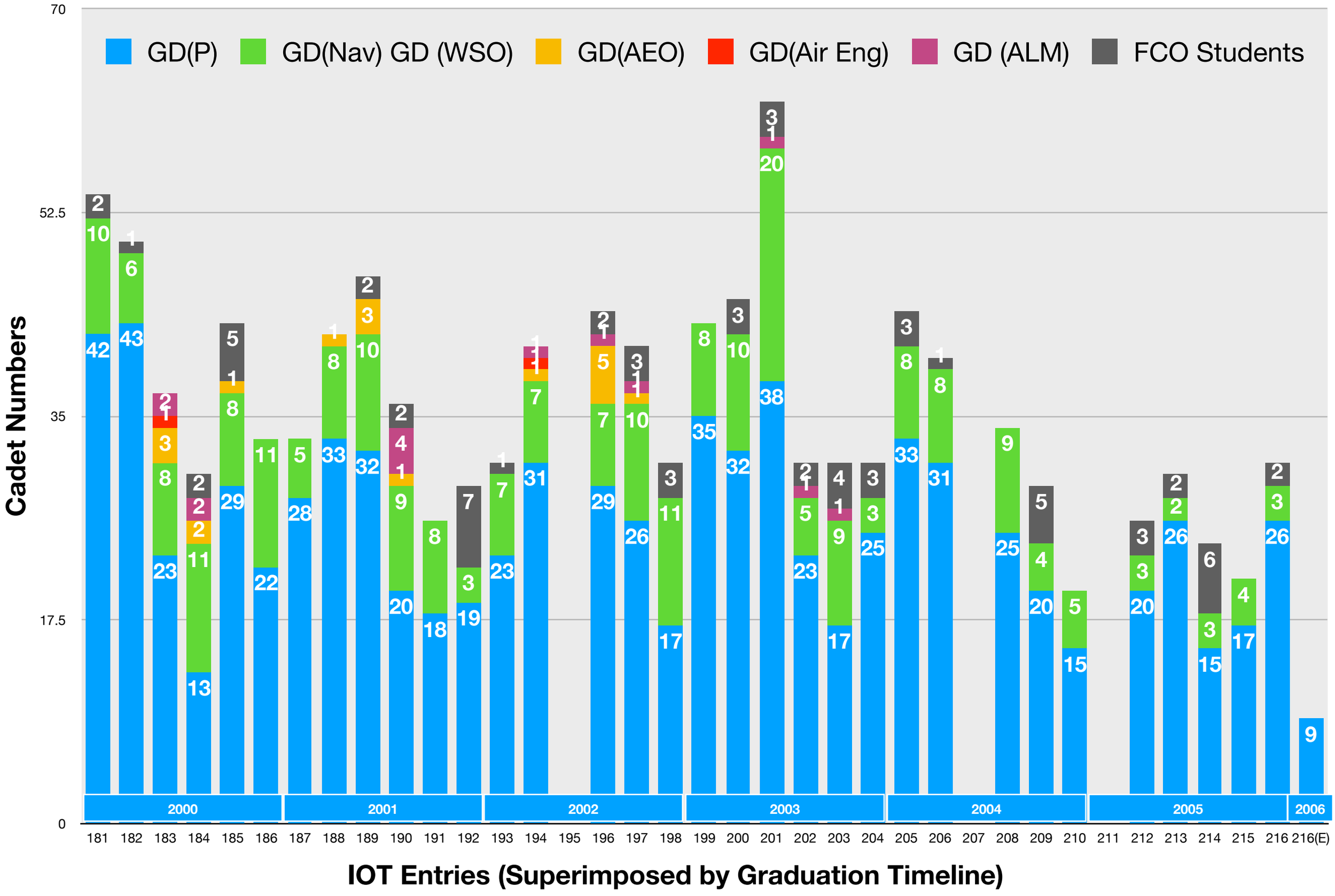
IOTs 122 to 180 of 1990s - Aircrew



IOTs 122 to 180 of 1990s - Ground Branches

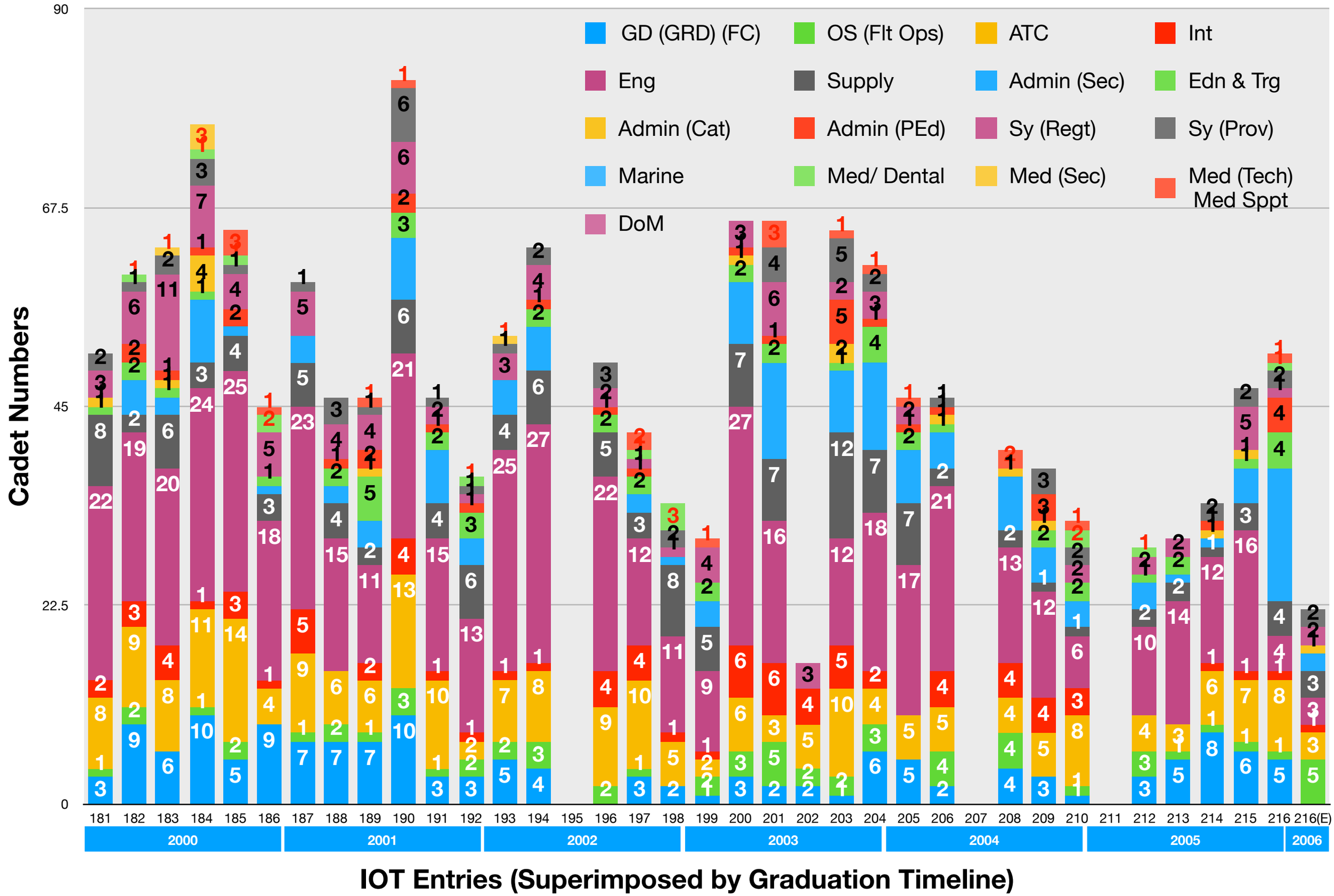


IOTs 181 to 216(E) 2000s - Aircrew

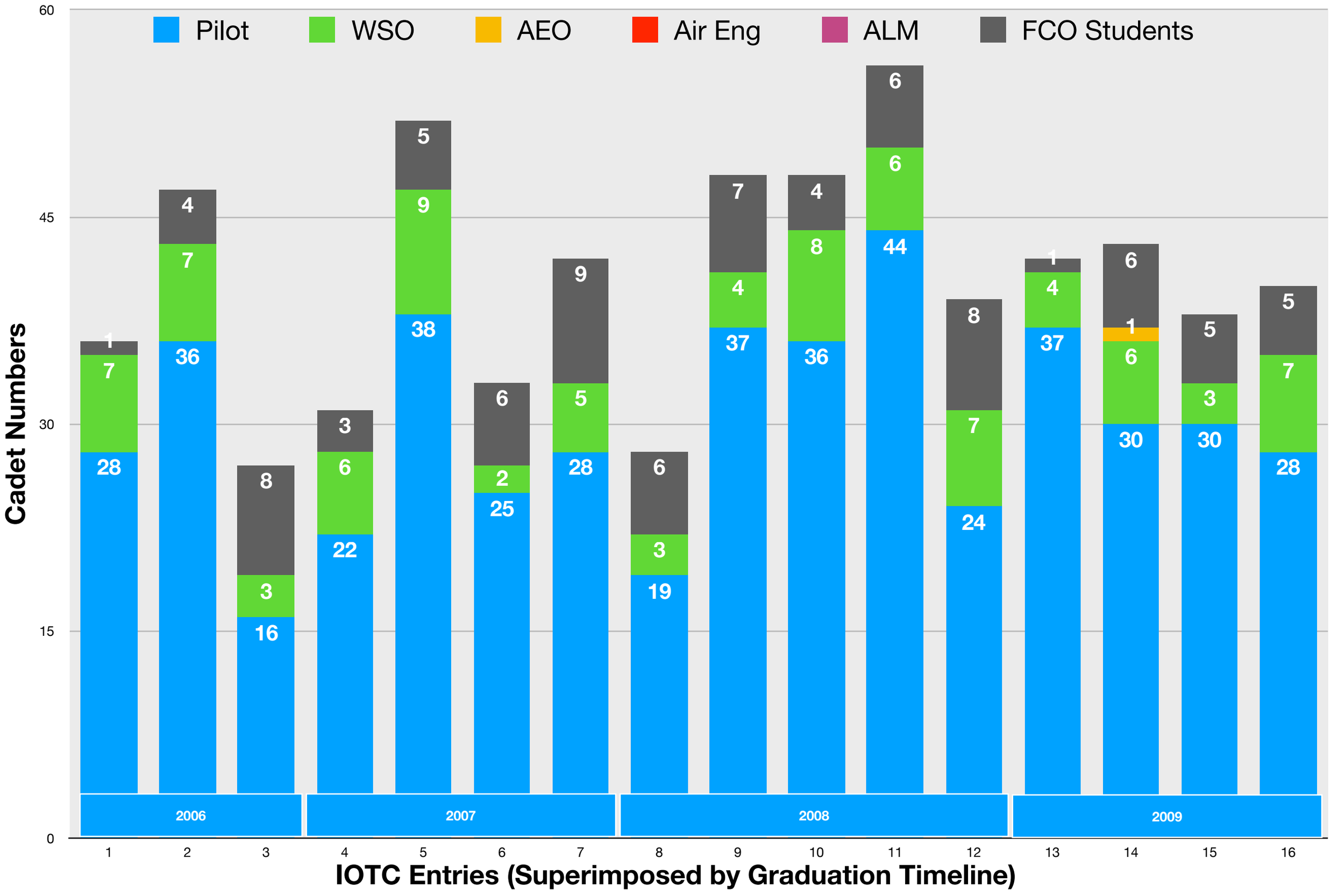


IOT Entries (Superimposed by Graduation Timeline)

IOTs 181 to 216(E) 2000s - Ground Branches



IOTCs 1 to 16 2000s - Aircrew



IOTCs 1 to 16 2000s - Ground Branches

FC
ABM
Supply
Logs
Regt
Flt Ops
Sec
Pers
Provost
ATC
Edn
Trg
Marine
Int
Admin (Cat)
Med/ Dental
Eng
Admin (PEd)
Med (Sec)
Med (Tech)
Med Sppt
DoM

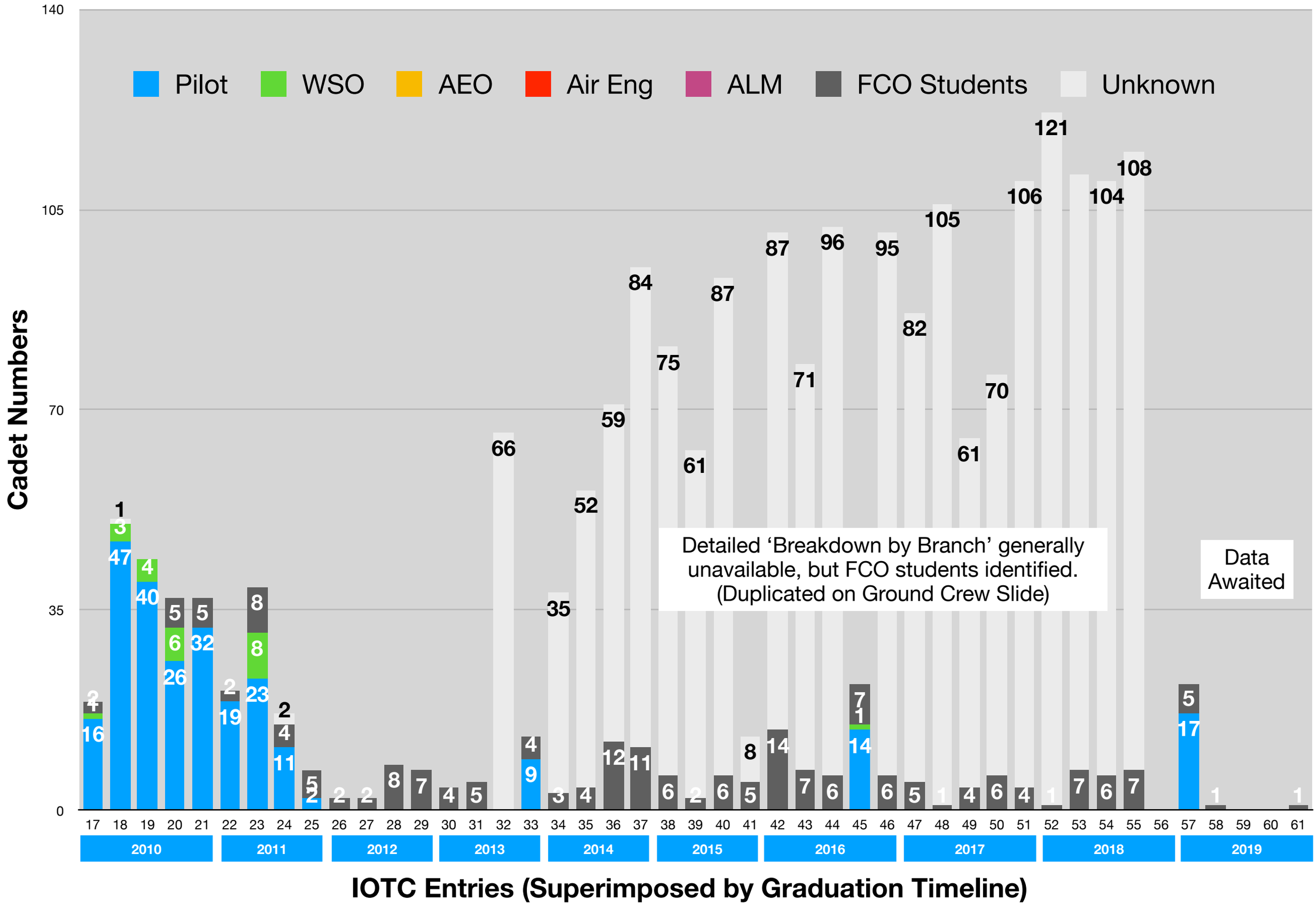
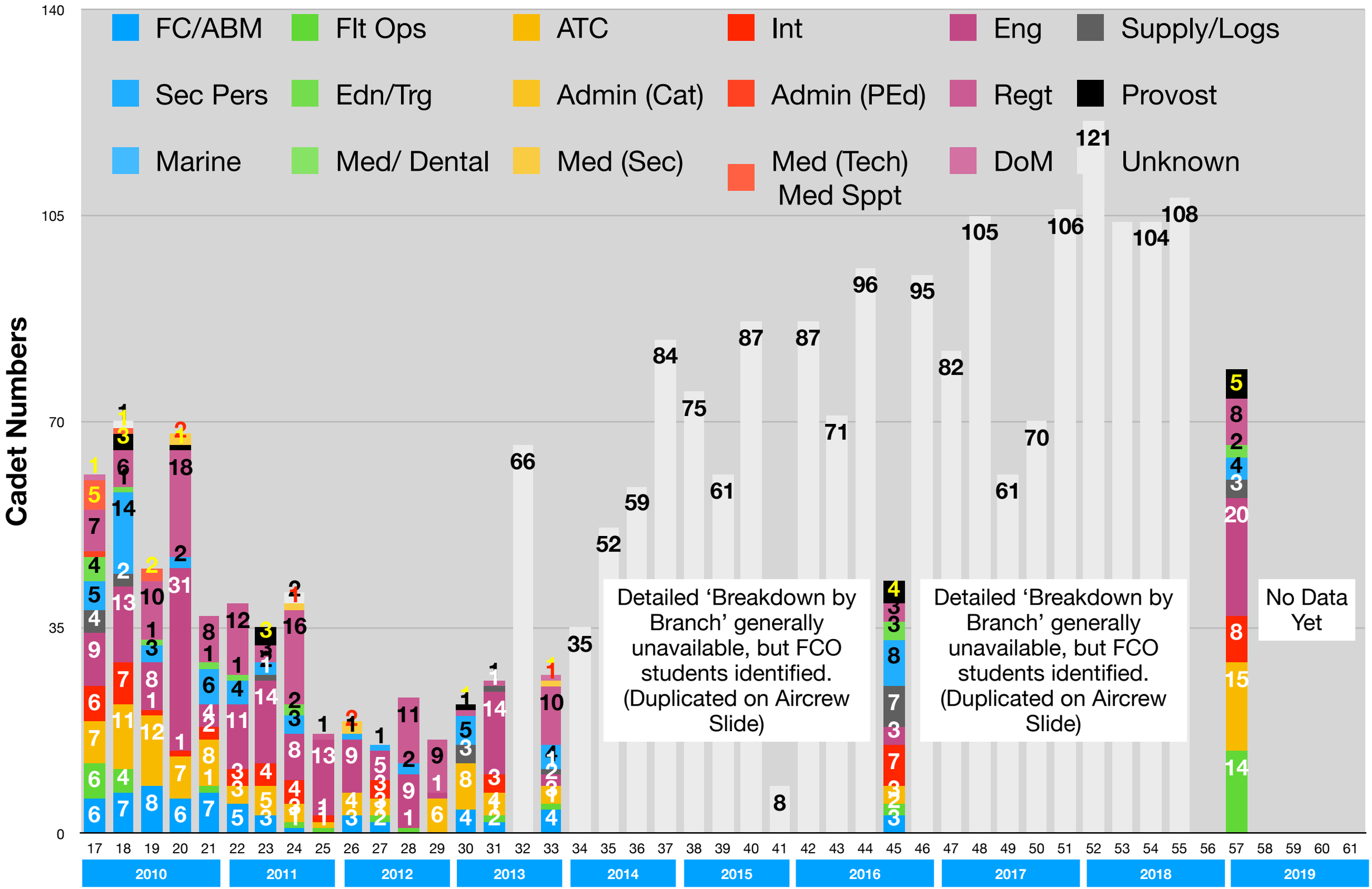
Cadet Numbers

90
67.5
45
22.5
0

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
2006			2007				2008					2009			

IOTC Entries (Superimposed by Graduation Timeline)

IOTCs 17 to 61 2010s - Aircrew



IOTCs 17 to 61 2010s - Ground Branches