



ACT
Government

Environment and
Sustainable Development

Review of the Plastic Shopping Bags Ban



APRIL 2014



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Director-General, Environment and Sustainable Development Directorate, ACT Government,
GPO Box 158, Canberra, ACT 2601

Telephone: 02 6207 1923

Website: www.environment.act.gov.au

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Purpose of the review

The *Plastic Shopping Bags Ban Act 2010* (the Act) came into effect in the ACT on 1 November 2011 following a four-month transition period. The objective of the Act is to restrict the supply of single-use, lightweight plastic shopping bags in the Territory and encourage the up-take of re-usable shopping bags.

The Act was implemented with a comprehensive community and retailer engagement and education campaign to ensure a smooth transition to the ACT Plastic Shopping Bags Ban (the ban) and ensure behaviour change.

The Act specifically bans the supply of single-use shopping bags made of polyethylene (referred to as plastic) with a thickness of less than 35 microns (a micron is 1,000th of a millimetre). These bags were primarily supplied by supermarkets, grocery stores and take-away food outlets. The Act does not ban the supply of biodegradable shopping bags, barrier bags used to separate fresh fruit, vegetables and meat products or bags that are an integral part of a product's packaging.

Section 9 of the Act, refer Appendix 1, requires that the Minister review the operation of the Act as soon as practical after the end of its second year of operation. This report fulfils that commitment, providing a review of the ban's effectiveness in:

- changing consumer behaviours and attitudes in the ACT
- achieving a net reduction in plastic bag use and waste generated in the ACT, after substitution (e.g. heavier reusable bags and bin liners) is considered
- reducing the presence of plastic bags in the ACT's litter stream.

This review also assessed retailer compliance with the Act.

Key findings from review of the ACT Plastic Shopping Bags Ban

This information analysed for this review indicates that the Plastic Shopping Bags Ban has been successful in reducing the amount of plastic bag waste in the Territory.

The survey data shows that the ban has had a positive impact on consumer attitudes and behaviour. The survey indicates ongoing acceptance of the ban by ACT consumers, with shoppers continuing to take reusable bags on a regular basis. Overall, ACT consumers feel that the ACT Plastic Shopping Bags Ban has had a positive impact on the environment and they continue to support the ban on light weight plastic bags, but do not want to see it extended to cover all plastic bags.

Retailer compliance with the ban remains high and has provided suitable shopping bag alternatives including low-cost boutique bags. Bin liner sales have not increased to the extent projected in the 2012 interim review. There has been a significant overall reduction in the supply (quantity) of plastic bags to ACT retailers.

The ban has reduced the plastic bag material going to landfill during the six months to November 2013 and has been successful in reducing the incidence of plastic bags as litter.

This difference is directly attributable to the behaviour changes made possible by the ban (legislation) with retailer compliance and an effective community information campaign.

However ACT residents keep a home supply of plastic bags for multiple uses and a rise in sales of heavier weight boutique plastic bags, as a substitution for the lightweight bags, would be an adverse unintentional outcome of the ban.

To ascertain the longer term net reduction of plastic bag use as an outcomes from the ban, requires longer term monitoring of both the types of plastic bags used and waste streams.



Terms used in this report

The ban applies to single-use shopping bags made of polyethylene with a thickness of less than 35 microns (a micron is 1,000th of a millimetre). It does not ban the types of bags described below.

- i) Compostable (or biodegradable) bags: bags that meet the Australian Standard 4736-2006 criteria.



- ii) Integrated packaging: A plastic bag that constitutes an integral part of the packaging in which the goods are sealed prior to sale.



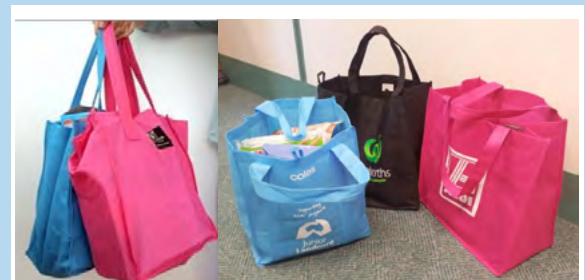
- iii) Barrier bags (tear-off-the-roll bags): for perishables such as fruits, vegetables and meat.



- iv) Boutique bags: heavier style reusable plastic bags – the type generally branded and used by stores such as department stores, clothing and shoe outlets.



- v) Reusable (woven) shopping bags: strong and durable bags designed for multiple use, manufactured from a range of materials such as nylon, polypropylene or PVC.





Plastic bag bans elsewhere in Australia

Three other Australian jurisdictions have a ban on light weight single use plastic shopping bags.

In May 2009 the South Australian Government's *Plastic Shopping Bags (Waste Avoidance) Act 2008* came into effect. The data continues to show a substantial reduction in plastic shopping bag litter in South Australia since the ban was introduced.

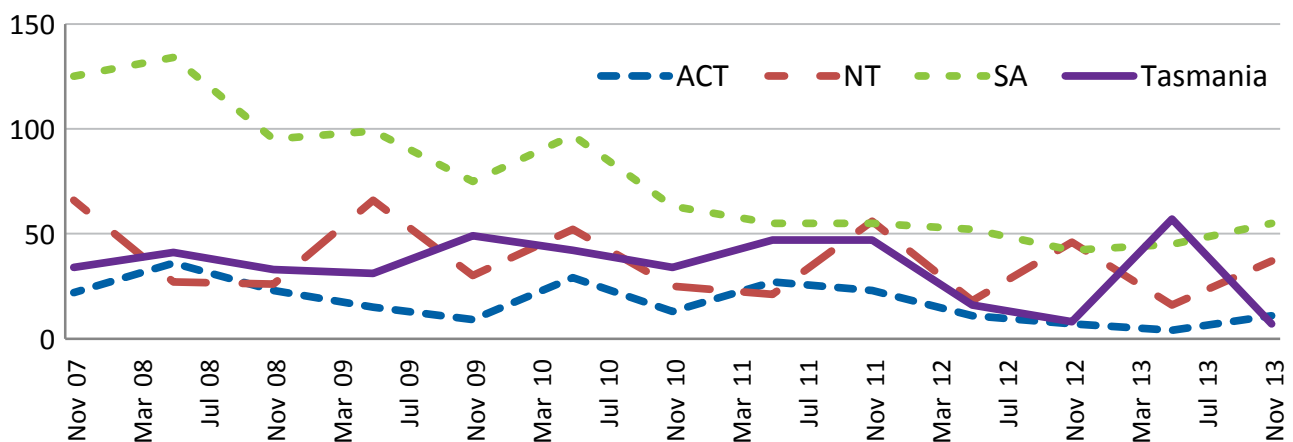
A review of the South Australian legislation in November 2012, found that the ban on lightweight single-use plastic bags has been highly effective at reducing the supply of lightweight single-use plastic bags from South Australia and changing consumer behaviour to alternatives to plastic shopping bags.

In September 2011 the Northern Territory *Environment Protection (Beverage Containers and Plastic Bags) Act* came into effect following a four month phase-out period, to prohibit the sale or supply of lightweight, single-use, non-biodegradable plastic bags.

The audits conducted since the ban came into effect, have recorded a reduction in plastic shopping bag litter. However the results are highly variable so that it cannot be determined that the Northern Territory ban has had an effect in reducing plastic bag litter.

On 1 November 2013 the Tasmanian *Plastic Shopping Bags Ban Act 2013* came into effect. While there has been a reduction in plastic bag litter recorded in the most recent audit, it is still too early to tell whether this reduction is a result of the implementation of the Act. And as with the Northern Territory's experience, the incidence of plastic bag litter in Tasmania prior to the introduction of the ban was variable.

Figure 1 - KAB audit data for the ACT, South Australia, Tasmania and Northern Territory 2007 to 2013 (Bags – supermarket type lightweight shopping bags)



Source: Keep Australia Beautiful National Litter Index 2007 to 2013.

2012 Interim Review findings

An interim review of the Act was released in November 2012, a year after the ban was implemented.

The interim review found that the ban was well received by ACT consumers, with a majority of consumers indicating they used reusable bags more frequently than prior to the ban. Retailers generally cooperated constructively with the ban and provided suitable alternatives, including the introduction of low-cost boutique bags that can be used multiple times.

From the data available, the ban appeared to have reduced the plastic bag material going to landfill in its first six months of operation and decreased the number of bags distributed. However, it was determined that it was still too early to make definitive statements in this regard.



The interim review indicated there were fewer plastic bags in the May 2012 ACT litter audit, despite overall litter going up. While there was insufficient data to draw any conclusions for the ACT litter stream, a ban on lightweight shopping bags in South Australia (introduced in 2009) has resulted in a significant reduction of plastic bags in their litter stream.

The ACT interim review indicated that the two year review of the ban may be able to draw more definitive conclusion as more post ban data would be available.

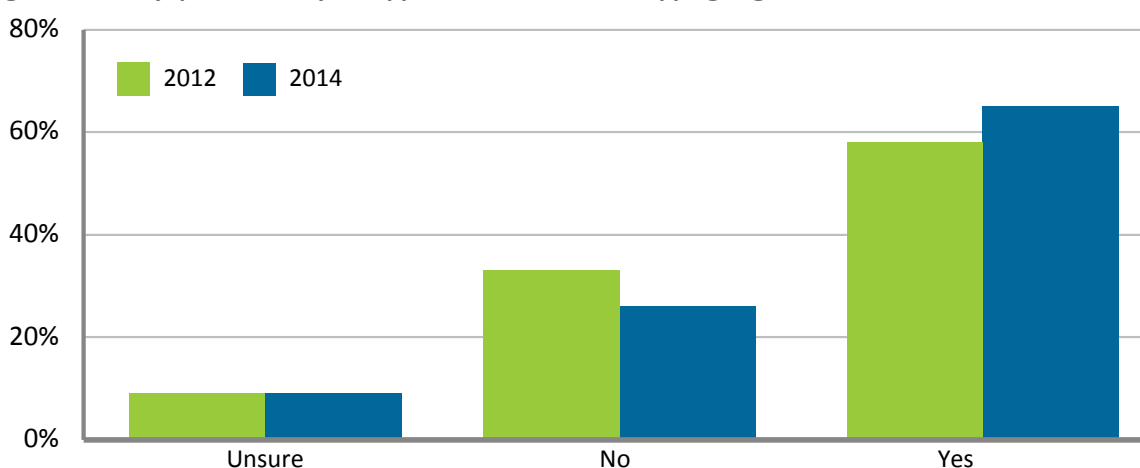
Consumer attitudes towards the ACT Plastic Shopping Bags Ban

In February 2014 the ACT Government procured the services of Piazza Research Pty Ltd to survey consumer attitudes towards the ban and determine if consumer behaviour has changed as a result of its introduction. Piazza Research also conducted a survey of consumer attitudes in September 2012 as part of the interim review. This 2014 survey replicated the 2012 survey so that results could be compared.

Piazza Research conducted telephone interviews with 602 individuals identifying as primary shoppers during March 2014. The results have a statistical error margin of +/- 3.6% for questions that cover all 602 respondents. The full survey report is at Appendix 3.

The survey results indicate that consumers have increased their support for the ban, increasing to 65% from 58% in the 2012 survey. Accordingly, those against the ban have fallen from 33% to 26%, while those unsure about the ban have remained constant at 9%. Concerns about the environment remained the primary reason for people supporting the ban, with a small fall of support for this consideration (see figure 2).

Figure 2 - Survey question- Do you support the ACT Plastic Shopping Bags Ban?



Source: Survey of Consumer Attitudes to the ACT Plastic Shopping Bags Ban, Piazza Research, 2014.

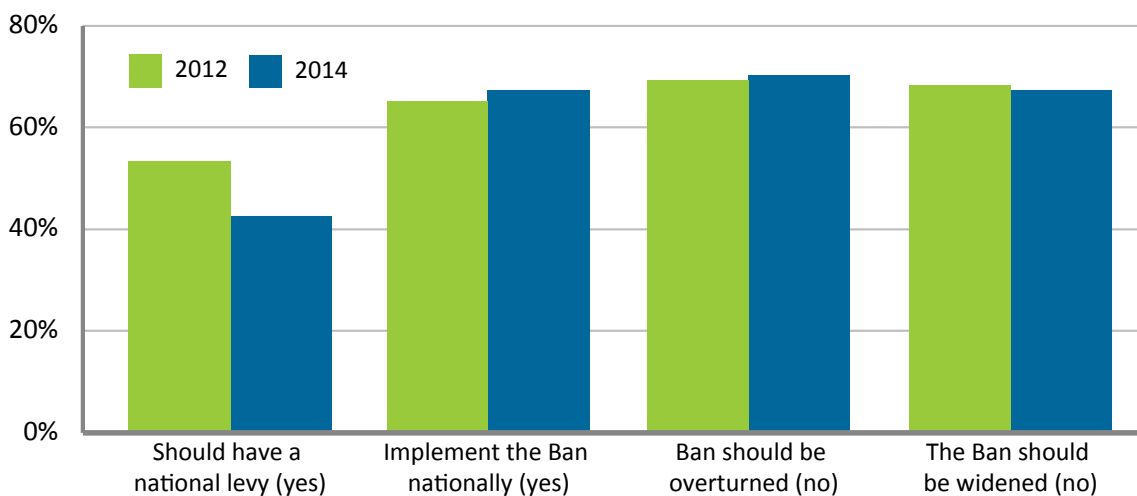
Of those people who objected to the ban, the reasons given were that it was not effective in reducing the incidence of plastic bags in the waste stream, or it was inconvenient, or they objected to having to purchase bin liners to replace the shopping bags they previously used. These considerations reduced in percentage from 54% collectively in 2012 to 34% in 2014.

When asked if they would prefer to have the ban overturned, 71% of grocery shoppers said no, which is consistent with responses from the 2012 survey. Support for national implementation of the ban increased marginally from 66% to 68%.



Significantly, 68% of survey respondents indicated they did not want the ban extended to cover all plastic bags, which is consistent with results from the 2012 survey (see figure 3).

Figure 3 - Support for changes to the ACT Plastic Shopping Bags Ban

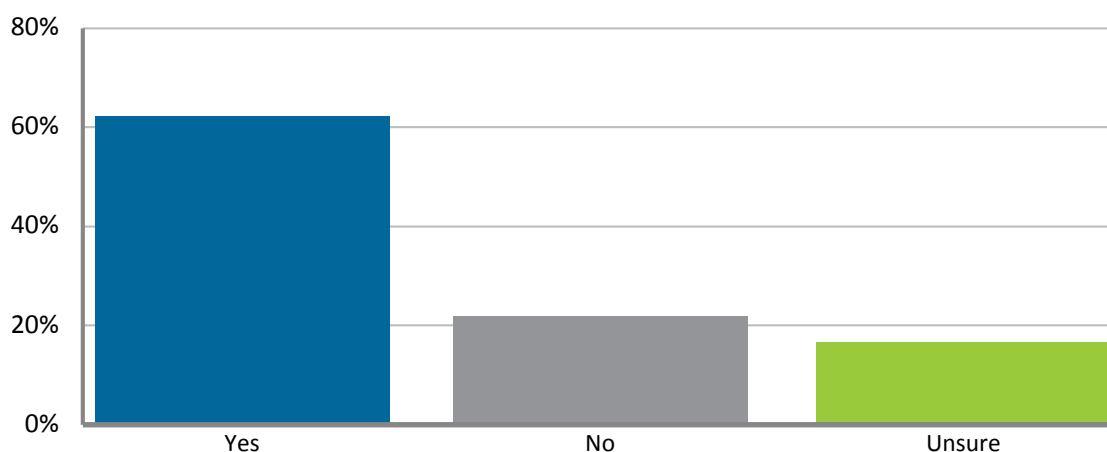


Source: *Survey of Consumer Attitudes to the ACT Plastic Shopping Bags Ban, Piazza Research, 2014.*

The survey found that the number of people who 'always' or 'most of the time' brought reusable bags with them to go shopping, decreased from 84% to 79%. Those bringing reusable bags 'sometimes' increased from 13% to 17% and those 'never' bringing reusable bags increased from 3% to 4%.

Generally survey respondents were unconvinced of the effectiveness of the ban in reducing the amount of plastic being sent to landfill or reducing litter around Canberra. However, a majority of respondents agreed that the ban has had a positive effect on the environment (see figure 4).

Figure 4 - Survey question – Do you believe the plastic bags ban has had a positive effect on the environment?

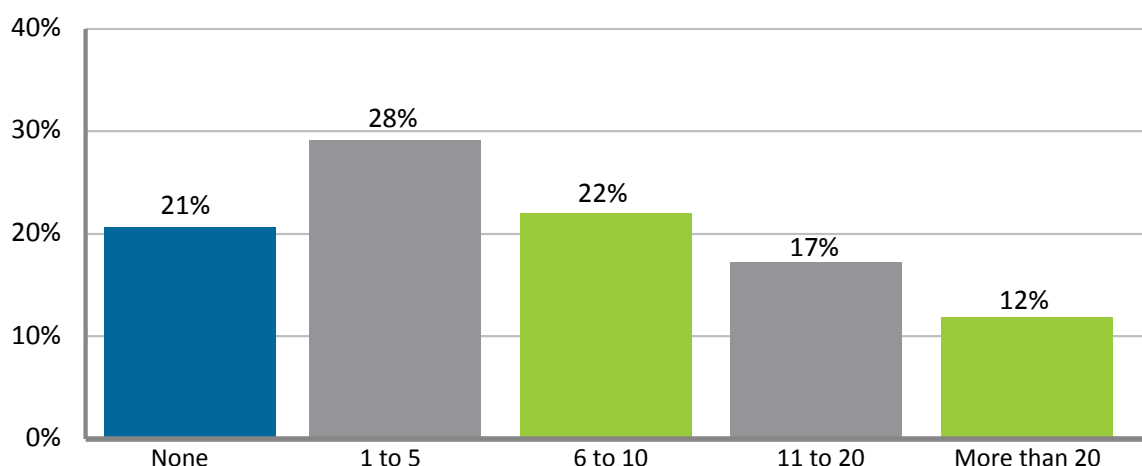


Source: *Survey of Consumer Attitudes to the ACT Plastic Shopping Bags Ban, Piazza Research, 2014.*

The survey also found that Canberrans maintain a stock of plastics bags at home. Although the number of bags fluctuates, residents commonly maintain between one and ten bags at a time. It is assumed that these bags can be used for any number of purposes, including as a bin liner for household rubbish to go to landfill (see figure 5).



Figure 5 - Number of reusable bags retained by a household



Source: Survey of Consumer Attitudes to the ACT Plastic Shopping Bags Ban, Piazza Research, 2014.

Calls to Canberra Connect

Canberra Connect is the ACT Government's portal to government services. It operates a call centre that allows the Canberra community to connect to government services, make payments or bookings, or lodge complaints regarding government functions and operations. The call centre receives around 29,000 calls a month on average.

Data attained from Canberra Connect indicates that since the introduction of the ban, the service has received 26 responses to the ban. Of these responses, 15 were received in the first year of operation and 11 in the second year; 16 were received via the telephone while 10 were received via the on-line feedback service. Of these latter 10 responses, 8 were of a complaint nature.

The data suggests that, on average, Canberra Connect received 1.1 responses to the ban each month between November 2011 and October 2013. It can also be seen that most of these calls occurred within the first year of the ban's operation, accounting for around 1.25 responses a month. In the second year of operation, responses to Canberra Connect have fallen to less than one response a month.

Considering the number of calls fielded by Canberra Connect on a monthly basis, this comparatively small number of calls regarding the ACT Plastic Shopping Bags Ban would indicate that Canberrans have generally accepted the ban and are coping with the changes the ban has brought about.

Plastic Bags Advisory Group

Prior to the implementation of the Plastic Shopping Bags Ban in November 2011, the ACT Government convened the Plastic Bags Advisory Group (PBAG), comprising retailers, peak retail bodies and local associations in the Territory.

The role of the PBAG was to provide a forum to address potential issues concerning the implementation of the ban and to work closely with retailers to raise awareness of the ban and help retailers and consumers adjust in the lead up to its implementation. The PBAG also met following the introduction of the ban to discuss ongoing issues.

PBAG members highlighted issues associated with the introduction of the ban, particularly an increase in the number of lost, stolen or abandoned shopping trolleys following the ban's introduction. Retailers reported staff seeing some shoppers leave stores with trolleys full of un-bagged groceries rather than bringing reusable bags or purchasing reusable bags at the point of sale. Retailers similarly reported an increase in the misplacement of plastic shopping baskets. No data was available to empirically analyse this issue.

Members of the PBAG also reported receiving complaints from customers concerning the overloading of reusable bags. However, retailers reported that bag packing was an issue discussed in staff induction sessions. Furthermore, retailers indicated that no staff injuries had been reported as a result of the ban. Customer complaints also included objections to having to pay for reusable bags at the check-out.



The impact of the ban on waste generation

Analysis of retailer's data

This review analysed the effectiveness of the ban in reducing plastic generation with the assistance of major shopping centre retailers in the Territory.

Not all retailers provided data, however this review can be considered representative for major centres, which is a significant proportion of retail activity that could generate plastic bags. Those retailers that responded provided data on a 'commercial in confidence' basis. Retailer's data has been analysed from for three periods: 1 May 2011 to 31 October 2011, 1 November 2011 to 30 April 2012 and 1 May 2013 to 31 October 2013.

In the six months prior to the ban taking effect in November 2011, the estimated number of single-use light weight plastic bags distributed in the Territory was 26 million. In the corresponding period to November 2013 the number of boutique bags purchased (from respondent retailers) was estimated to be just over 4 million.

A sample of bags from each participating retailer were purchased and weighed to enable a comparison of the quantity of plastic being generated for supermarket shopping bags before and after the ban. The categories of bags have been identified as: single-use plastic bags, boutique bags, reusable bags and bin liners.

Reusable boutique bags

As was anticipated, there was a significant increase in sales of boutique bags immediately prior to the implementation of the ban in 2011. The quantity of sales appears to have been sustained in the six months after the implementation of the ban and also within the current period (May – October 2013). The analysis conducted for the 2012 interim review assumed that 70% of reusable bags were retained for further use while 30% were sent to landfill. However, as the time since the ban's introduction has increased, it can be assumed that all of these bags finally end up in landfill after their useful life. As such, this review estimates that around 114 tonnes of boutique bags were sent to landfill in the period 1 May 2013 to 31 October 2013, compared to an estimated 182 tonnes of single-use plastic bags in the period 1 May 2011 to 31 October 2011.

Reusable woven bags

There was also a significant increase in sales of reusable woven bags prior to the implementation of the ban. While increased sales were maintained into the first six months following the ban's implementation, sales quantities have subsided to around pre-ban levels in the most recent period (May – October 2013). This indicates that many consumers initially increased their personal stock of woven bags and continue to use these at high rates, discarding them after multiple uses. For the purpose of this analysis, it is assumed that there is low turn-over of these types of bags and only 30% is sent to landfill. As a result, it is estimated that 4.6 tonnes of reusable woven bags were interred in landfill in the period 1 May 2013 to 31 October 2013.

Bin liners

The 2012 interim review forecast an overall increase in bin liners sales as household replacements for the previously used single-use plastic shopping bag. While an overall increase was initially observed, this was found to be less than anticipated. The sales of bin liners have largely fallen to pre-ban levels.

The ban has been successful in reducing the quantity of plastic bags going into landfill.

The analysis indicates that in the six months prior to the ban an estimated 266 tonnes of plastic bags (including single-use plastic bags, reusable plastic bags, bin liners and a proportion of reusable woven bags) was sent to landfill. However, for the period 1 May 2013 to 31 October 2013 this appears to have decreased to an estimated 171 tonnes, a reduction of around 36%.

Prior to the ban, single-use plastic bags accounted for around 182 tonnes of plastic in landfill. The increase in heavier boutique style plastic bags has not increased sufficiently to fully offset the impact of the single-use bags.



While sales of plastic bags, particularly the heavier boutique bags, have increased following the ban, there is still an overall reduction in the weight of plastic bags going into landfill.

The fact that sales of boutique bags have remained high while bin liners sales have moderated could indicate that households are now substituting excess boutique bags for bin liners, although it is uncertain how many times these bags are reused before finally being discarded. This conclusion is supported by the survey data showing that most people retain between one and ten, or up to 20 bags at home. If boutique bags are still being bought at a high level then there must be a reasonably high turnover of these bags in the home if household supplies are held low.

Plastic shopping bags as litter in the ACT

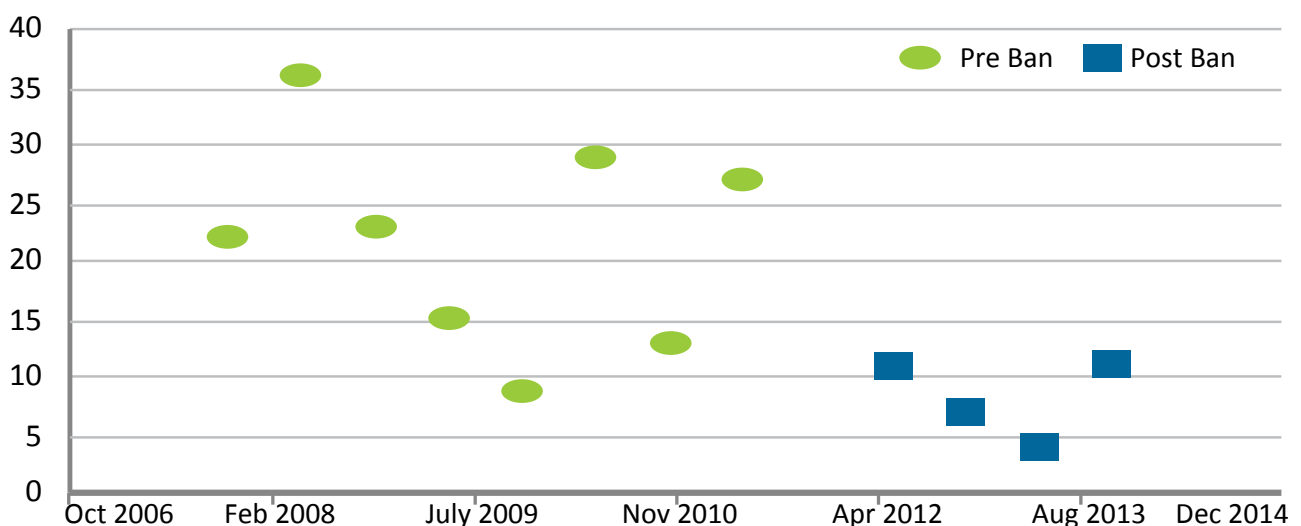
Keep Australia Beautiful

The Keep Australia Beautiful (KAB) network conducts comprehensive biannual litter audits across all Australian states and territories each year in May and November. The audits are collated into an annual National Litter Index that is released around August each year. These audits provide consistent information on litter accumulation in each jurisdiction that can be compared against other jurisdictions or the national average.

The ACT Government analysed data from KAB National Litter Index audits from 2007 to 2013, including interim data for November 2013 (Figure 5). This analysis shows a consistent reduction in plastic bag litter since November 2011. In the four KAB audits conducted since the ban was implemented, an average of less than 9 plastic bags were found, compared to the pre-ban average of 22 bags.

The KAB litter audits do not provide greater detail on the types of plastic shopping bags found in the litter stream. While the audits indicate that plastic shopping bags remain present in the litter stream, whether the plastic bags found are compliant or non-compliant with the ban, or of a biodegradable nature, is not considered in the analysis. It should also be noted that with the ACT sitting entirely within NSW, where no ban is in place, there is a chance that some of these bags can be imported into the ACT (see figure 6).

Figure 6 - Incidence of plastic bag litter in the ACT 2007 to 2013

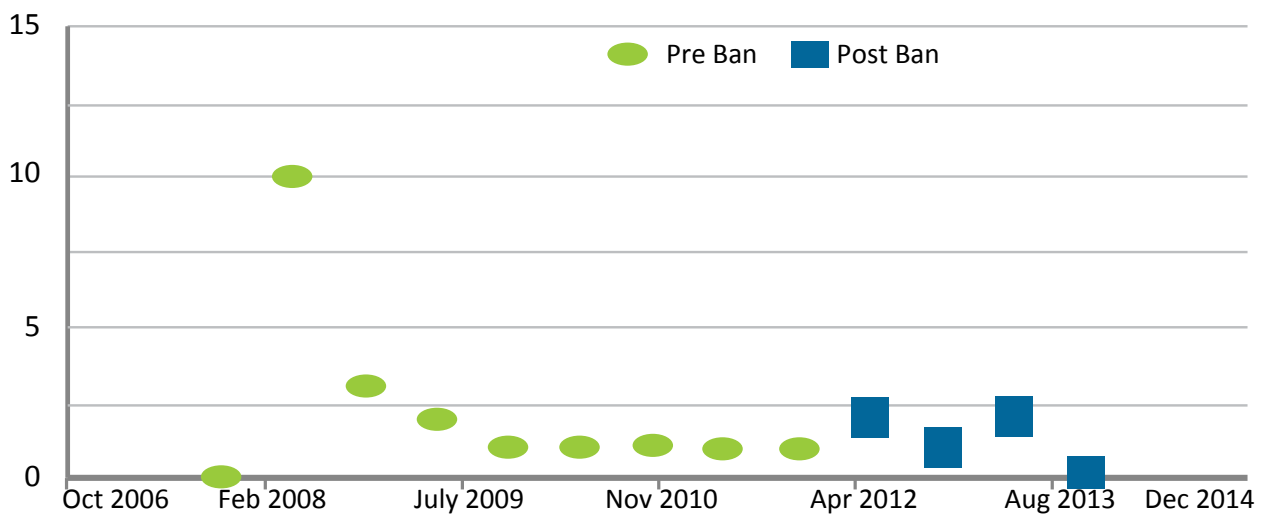


Source: Keep Australia Beautiful National Litter Index 2007 to 2013.

A similar comparison of the incidence of heavy boutique bags in the ACT litter stream indicates that while sales of these types of bags have substantially increased in the post-ban period, their presence in the litter stream has remained largely unchanged. This may be a reflection of the increased value placed on these types of bags where there is a financial cost involved (see figure 7).



Figure 7 - Incidence of heavy glossy bag litter in the ACT 2007 to 2013



Source: Keep Australia Beautiful National Litter Index 2007 to 2013.

Litter in waterways

The ACT stormwater network maintains a series of Gross Pollutant Traps (GTPs) that act as a barrier between stormwater channels and the Territory's waterways and wetlands. These GTPs intercept a range of natural and man-made items following heavy rain events, e.g. large tree branches and shopping trolleys. The GTPs are periodically inspected and emptied, with the resulting litter and debris sent to the ACT's landfills. Discussions in March 2014 with a waste removal contractor indicated that prior to the ban the incidence of plastic shopping bags found in GTPs, as either individual items or as containers of household waste, was common. Subsequent to the ban the incidence of plastic bags, including boutique bags, appears to be substantially reduced and their occurrence in the traps is considered rare. Currently, the most common types of litter removed from GTPs include plastic drink bottles (PET type), balls (particularly tennis balls) and drink cans. No specific data on items found in GTPs is collected.

Retailer compliance

Under Section 7 of the Act, a retailer commits an offence if the retailer supplies a plastic shopping bag to a customer to carry goods bought from the retailer. The Magistrates Court (Plastic Shopping Bags Ban Infringement Notices) Regulation 2011 (the Regulation) set penalties payable by individuals and corporations for infringements against the Act. Currently a penalty payable by a liable party is \$110 for an individual and \$385 for a corporation.

Inspections for compliance to the ban are carried out by the ACT Government Office of Regulatory Services (ORS), within the Justice and Community Safety Directorate. The ORS undertook 1,734 inspections in the period 1 July 2011 to 31 October 2011, prior to the commencement of the ban, to determine if retailers were preparing for the ban and to educate retailers with regards to their responsibilities.

From the introduction of the ban on 1 November 2011 to 31 October 2013, the ORS undertook a further 714 inspections. Of the retailers inspected since the introduction of the ban there have been four breaches detected in contravention of s. 7 of the Act. Two businesses were given verbal warnings and two were given formal written warnings. No infringements have been issued.



The ORS advised they had acted upon a number of complaints from consumers regarding the issue of non-compliant plastic bags. In these instances the ORS found that the offending businesses were primarily newly established without, or with limited knowledge of, the legislation. The ORS's preferred approach in these instances has been to provide education to the offending businesses and assist them in complying with the legislation. The ORS advised that no repeat offences had been recorded.

The ORS also reported responding to several instances where retailers provided degradable bags that were not compliant with the Act. In responding to these issues, the ORS continues their approach of providing assistance through education as opposed to issuing infringement notices.

It can be concluded that there has been a high level of retailer compliance with the Act and that this has contributed to the ban's relatively smooth implementation and high level of community acceptance.

Recommendations

This review makes the following recommendations to the ACT Government:

- That the ACT Government continues the operation of the *Plastic Shopping Bags Ban Act 2010* in its current form;
- That the ACT Government investigate options to further reduce plastic waste being interred in landfill; and
- That the ACT Government conducts a further review of the Act in 2017 to monitor the ongoing effectiveness of the Act to reduce plastic waste.



References

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Piazza Research, 2012, *Survey of Consumer Attitudes to the ACT Plastic Bag Ban*.



Appendix 1

Plastic Shopping Bags Ban Act 2010

Section 9 Review of Act

- (1) The Minister must review the operation of this Act as soon as practicable after the end of its 2nd year of operation.
- (2) The Minister must present a report of the review to the Legislative Assembly within 6 months after the day the review is started.
- (3) This section expires 3 years after the day it commences.

Appendix 2

In February 2014, the Plastic Bag Advisory Group was re-convened to discuss issues associated with the Ban and the proposed approach to the review. Representatives from the following organisations were invited:

- ALDI
- ACT Chamber of Commerce
- Capital Region Farmers Market
- Coles
- David Jones
- Fyshwick Fresh Food Markets
- Kmart
- Metcash/IGA
- Myer
- Shopping Centre Council of Australia
- Supabarn
- Southside Farmers Market
- Target
- Woolworths



Appendix 3

Survey of Consumer Attitudes to the ACT Plastic Shopping Bags Ban Piazza Research 2014

Source: Survey of Consumer Attitudes to the ACT Plastic Shopping Bags Ban, Piazza Research, 2014.

BACKGROUND AND METHODOLOGY

On 1st November 2011, the ACT government introduced the Plastic Shopping Bag Ban (the ban) after a 4 month transition period commencing 4th July 2011. The ban has become a high profile issue in the ACT, and the attitudes and reactions of shoppers towards the ban are important and of interest to the ACT. The Environment and Sustainable Development Directorate (the Directorate) of the ACT government is conducting a follow-up review of the ban, to monitor changes in consumer shopping behaviour and responses from the community.

The Directorate selected Piazza Research, an independent ISO 20252 quality certified market and social research firm, to conduct a survey of consumer attitudes to support the review process.

Methodology

A telephone survey was used as it provided the most reliable option to sample a wide range of shoppers across Canberra.

Questionnaire design

The interview questionnaire was designed based on input from Directorate management and in collaboration with Piazza Research consultants. The survey was designed to be succinct to minimise respondent burden and could be administered by phone in 3.5 to 5 minutes. Most questions were 'closed' (or tick-box) format with one question allowing for respondents to elaborate on their answer.

Data collection

Piazza Research conducted the survey from its data collection centre, between Wednesday 26th February and Thursday 6th March 2014. Calls were made on weekday evenings as well as on a Saturday to capture a diverse demographic.

Sample Design

A random sample of residents across the ACT was selected based on an electronic telephone directory available to the research industry. The primary grocery shopper of each household was interviewed.

A total of 602 responses were achieved. For the 95% confidence interval, results to this survey are calculated to be accurate to within +/- 3.6% margin of error.

Quality Assurance System – This project complies with the ISO 20252 Market, Opinion and Social Research Standard.

Data Processing and Analysis

Interviewers entered responses directly into a CATI database at the time of interviewing. Piazza Research used its own statistical software and Q (version 4.7.1.0) to analyse survey results. Software validation and post data-entry checks were conducted to ensure data integrity before analysis.

A descriptive analysis was performed to produce graphs, tables and frequency counts.

Results were also presented with a breakdown by age category of respondents.

Treatment of open-ended question – Open-ended (or free form) responses were analysed for content, then summarised. Consultants developed a coding frame for this question, sorting similar types of answers into descriptive categories. These groupings were then statistically analysed.



Rounding error – Percentage results have been rounded to the nearest whole per cent. Percentages in some graphs may total slightly more or less than 100%.

Please note: Breakdown results for age category ‘under 25’ may be less reliable due to lower number of responses (8 responses), the written commentary does not include ‘under 25’ due to low reliability.

SUMMARY OF MAIN FINDINGS

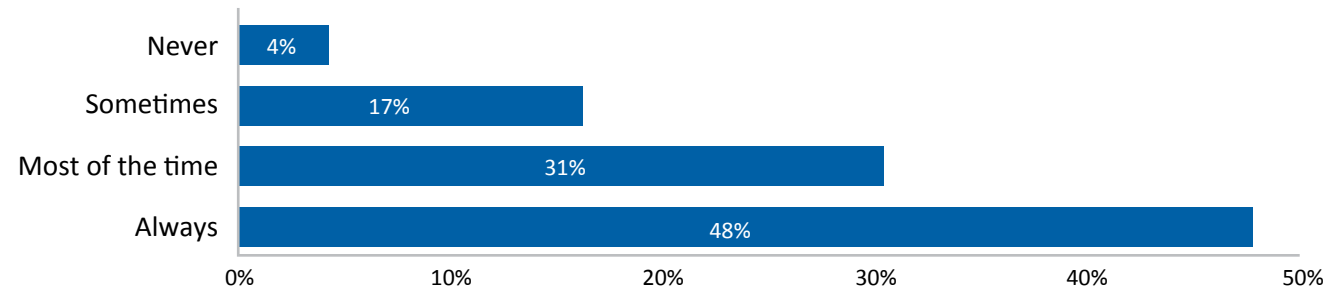
- A total 79% of primary shoppers reported taking reusable bags always (48%) or most of the time (31%), and 4% never did. There is a trend that the more senior respondents are, the more likely they take reusable bags (starting from the category of “25 to 30”, the percentages are 64%, 74%, 83%, 88%, 86%, respectively). 10% of “25 to 30” never take reusable bags, being the largest portion in all groups.
- 90% of primary shoppers consider taking their bags more often is a result of the ban. This is consistent across all age groups, with the lowest being 86%, and the highest, 100%.
- Even with the ban in place, 70% of primary shoppers do not plan their trips. This phenomenon is most significant among the “41 to 50” category (76%).
- 59% of primary shoppers did not use their own shopping bags before the ban. This is consistent across groups (53% to 64%).
- 25% of consumers still do not use reusable bags, and buy bags as they see necessary. The younger respondents are more likely to not take reusable bags, with the category “25 to 30” being the highest (40%).
- 65% of primary shoppers support the ban, 26% do not and 9% are unsure. Percentages are similar across age groups.
- 71% of shoppers prefer the ban staying. While being supportive, 68% do not wish to widen the ban to include all plastic bags. 68% though wish to expand the ban nationally.
- The idea of placing a national levy on plastic bags to use the money for litter reduction around the country received mixed opinions; most though disagree (57%). A breakdown by age showed the more senior respondents are, the less they support a national plastic ban levy.
- 59% all respondents believe banning plastic bags would help the environment, and make the surroundings look better. 34% do not, and consider having plastic bags are more convenient, and the ban as not efficient in reaching its purpose.
- 79% of all consumers keep various numbers of unused reusable bags at their homes; 51% store more than 5.
- 49% of respondents believe the ban would reduce the amount of plastic going to landfill, and 44% think the ban reduces litter in the Canberra region.



Question 1. Are you the primary groceries shopper in your household?

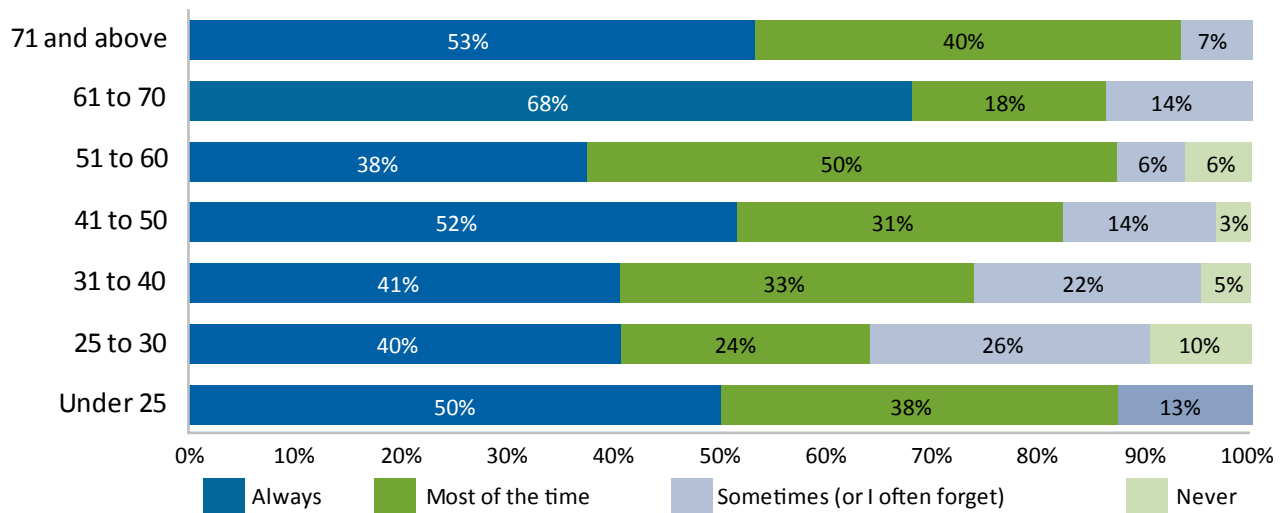
NOTE: This question was not analysed as it was a filter question to target the most relevant population sample.

Question 2. How often would you say you take reusable bags when you go shopping?



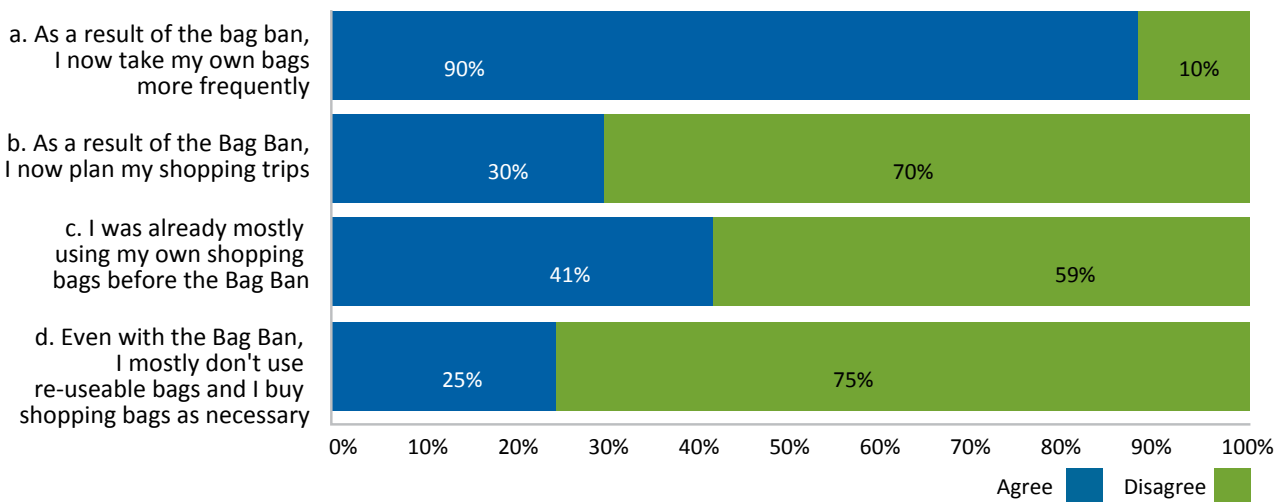
Base= 601

Question 2 by age categories.



Base MIN= 8, Base MAX= 302

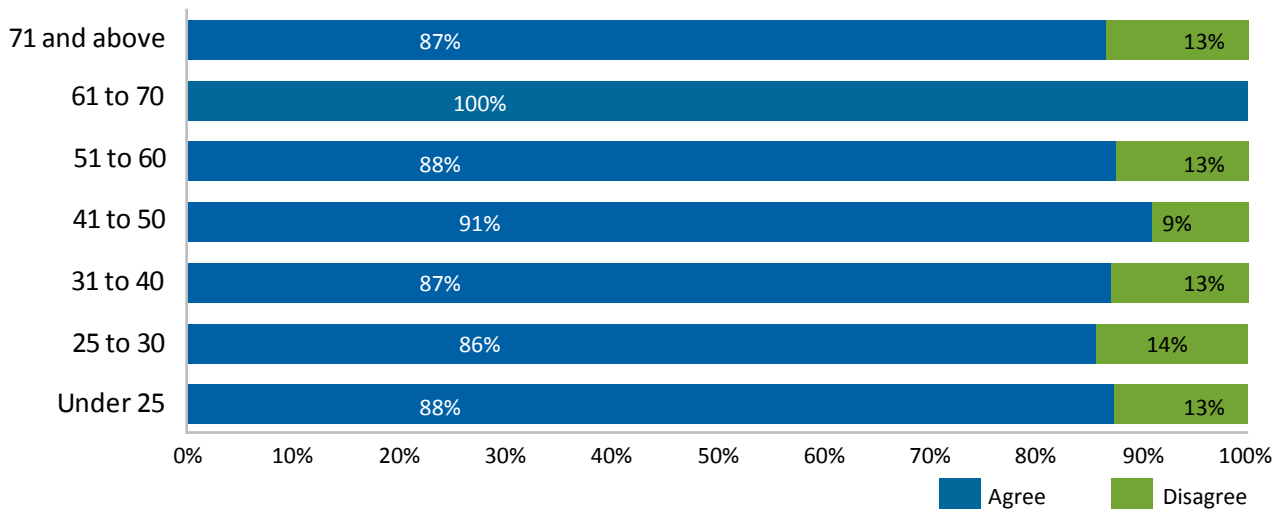
Question 3. Can you please tell me whether you agree or disagree with the following statements about the way the Plastic Bag Ban has influenced the way you shop?



Base MIN= 599, Base MAX=602

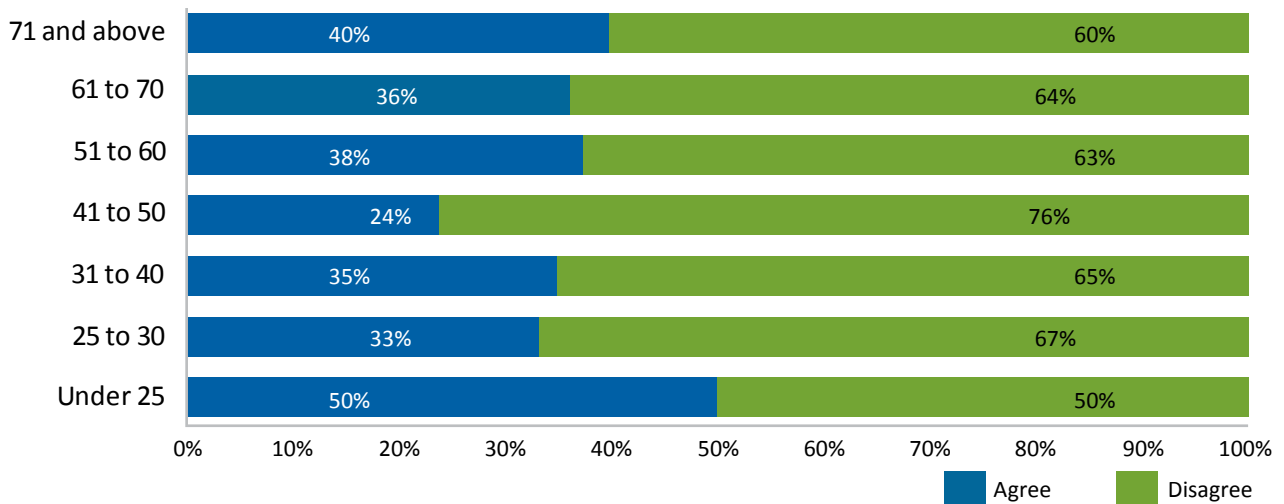


Question 3a by age categories. As a result of the bag ban, I now take my own bags more frequently.



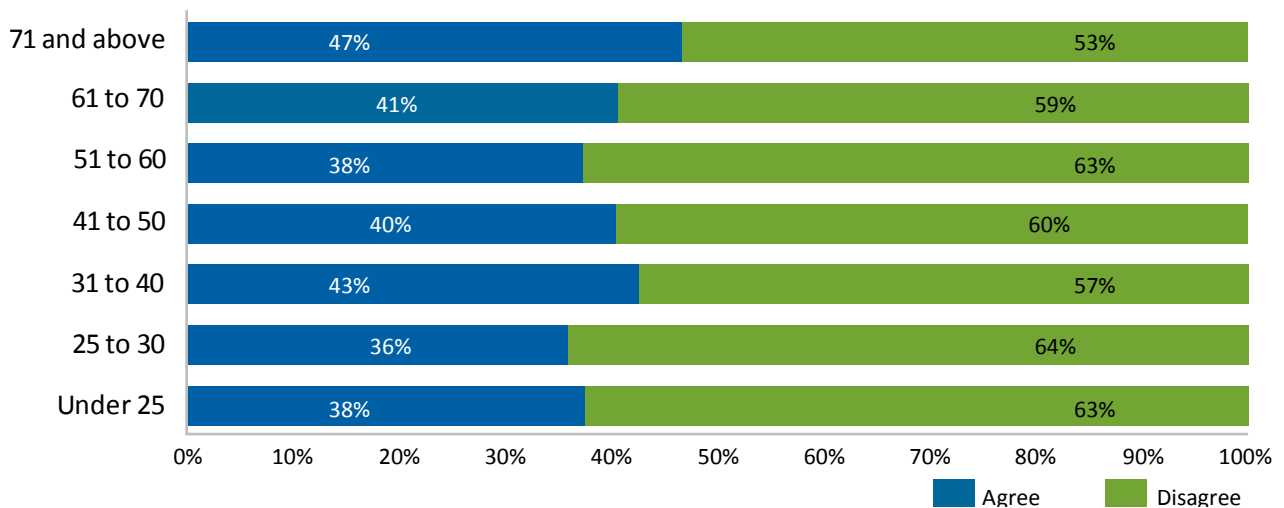
Base MIN=8, Base MAX=303

Question 3b by age categories. As a result of the bag ban, I now plan my shopping trips.



Base MIN=8, Base MAX=303

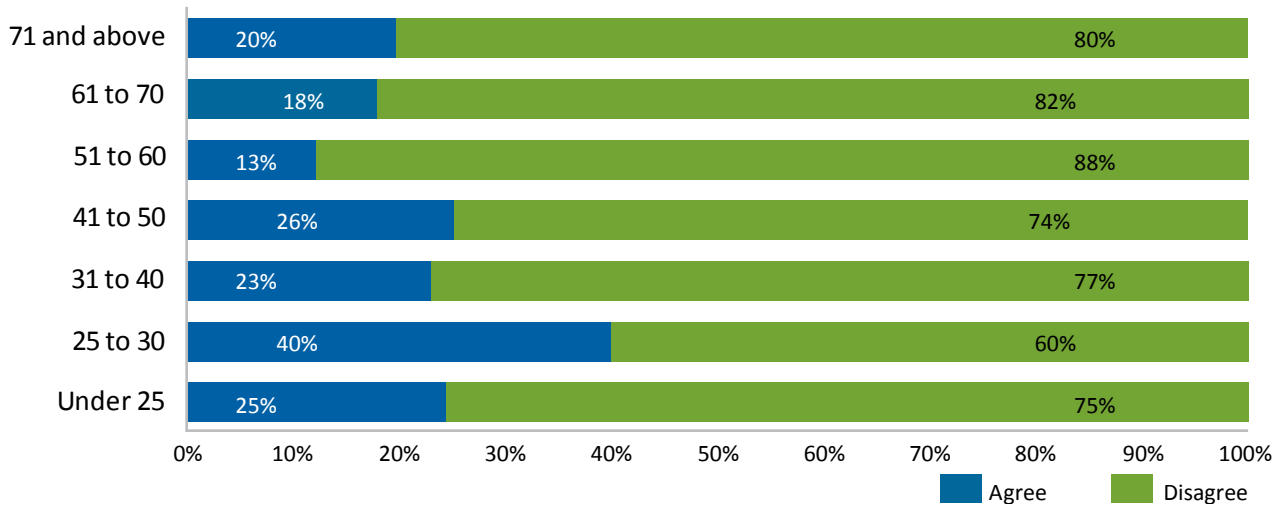
Question 3c by age categories. I was already mostly using my own shopping bags before the bag ban.



Base MIN=8, Base MAX=303

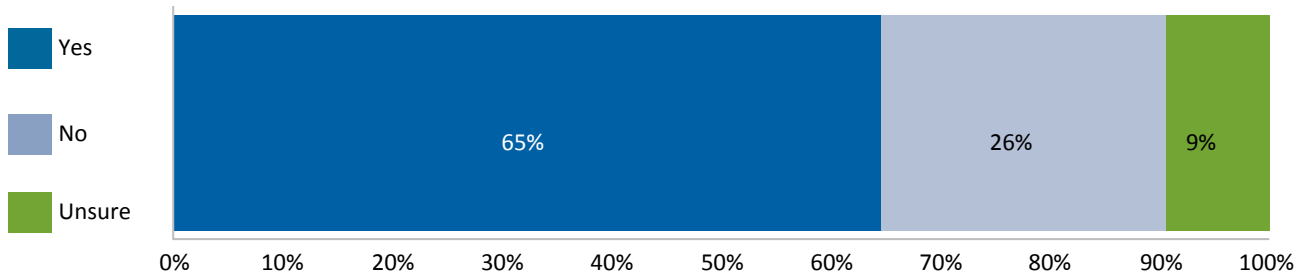


Question 3d by age categories. Even with the bag ban, I mostly don't use re-useable bags and I buy shopping bags as necessary.



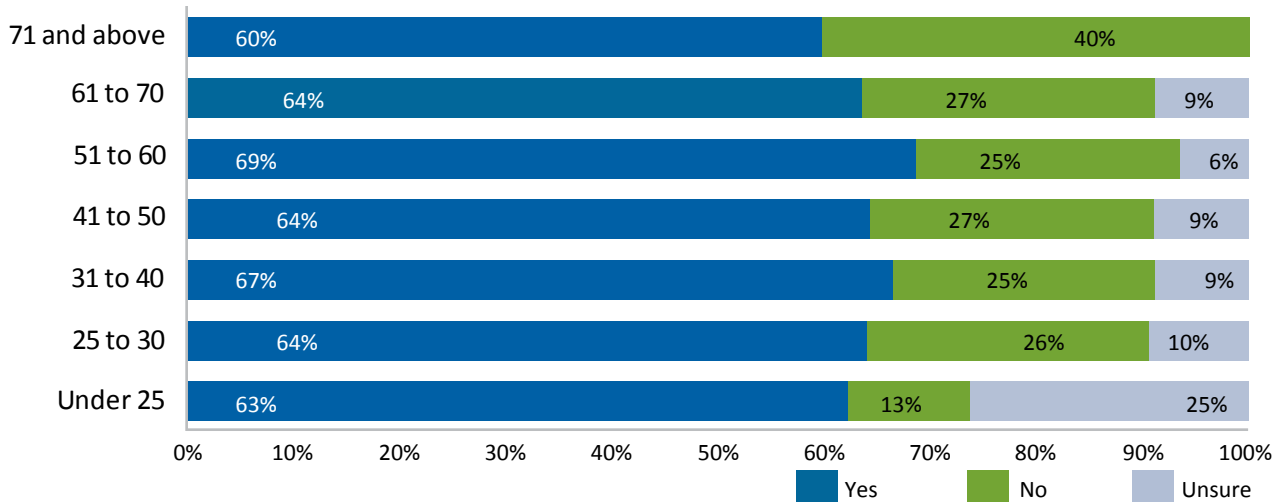
Base MIN=8, Base MAX=303

Question 4. Do you support the ACT Plastic Bag Ban?



Base= 602

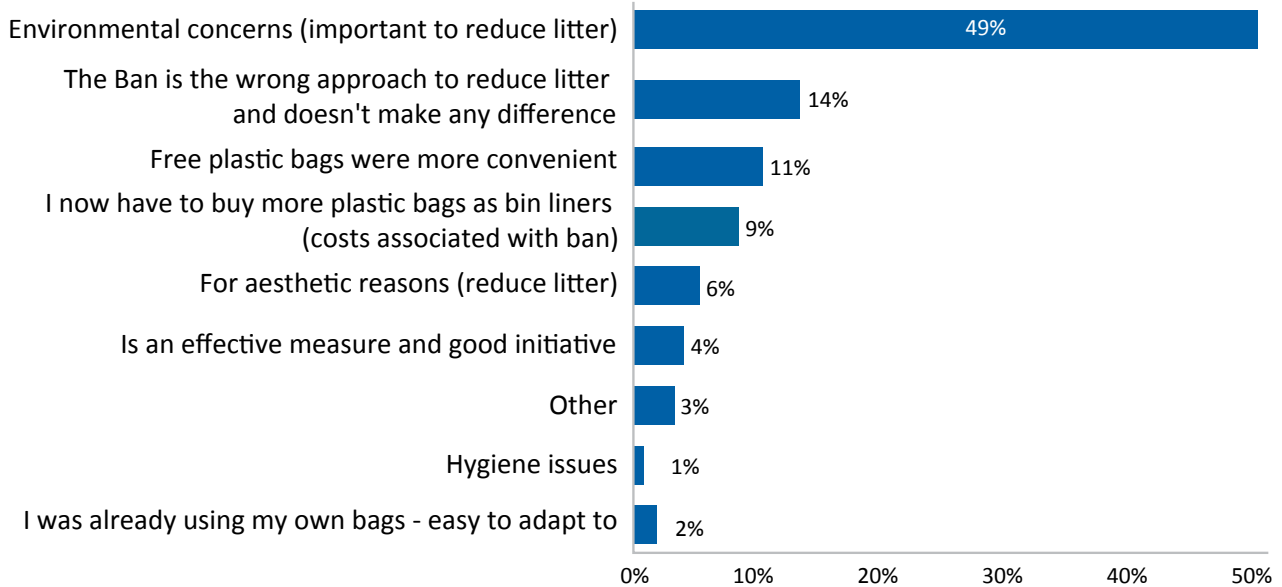
Question 4 by age categories



Base MIN=8, Base MAX=303

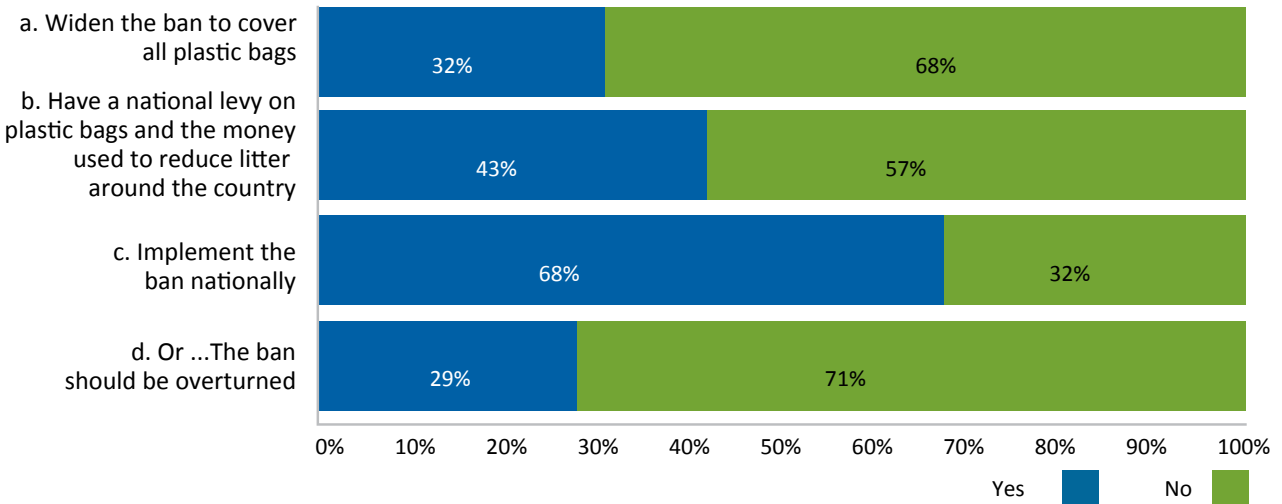


Question 5. What is the main reason for your answer?



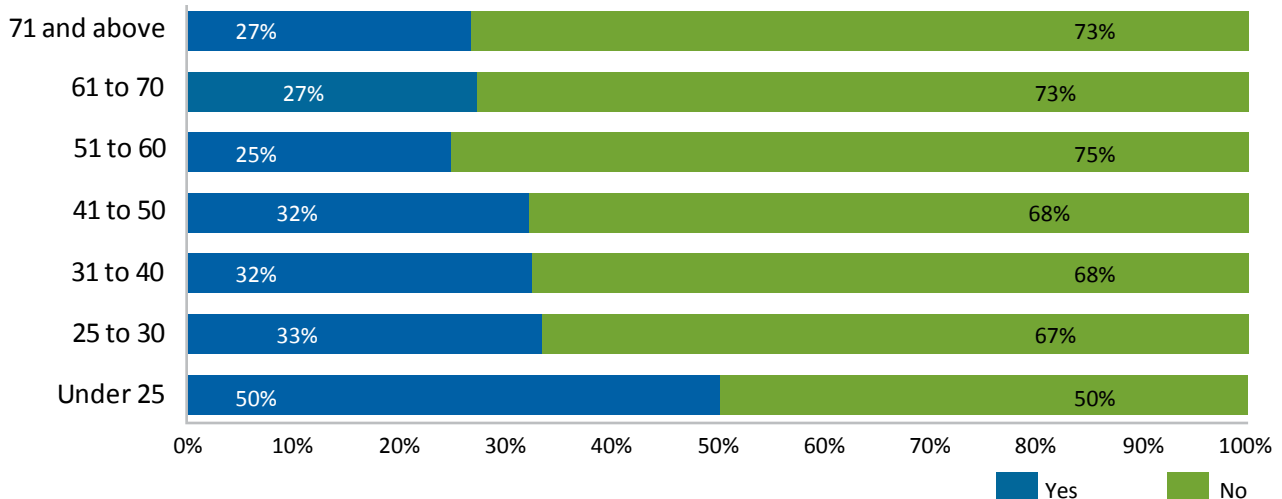
Base= 579

Question 6. Would you want to see any of the following changes to the current Plastic Bag Ban?



Base MIN=516, Base MAX= 601

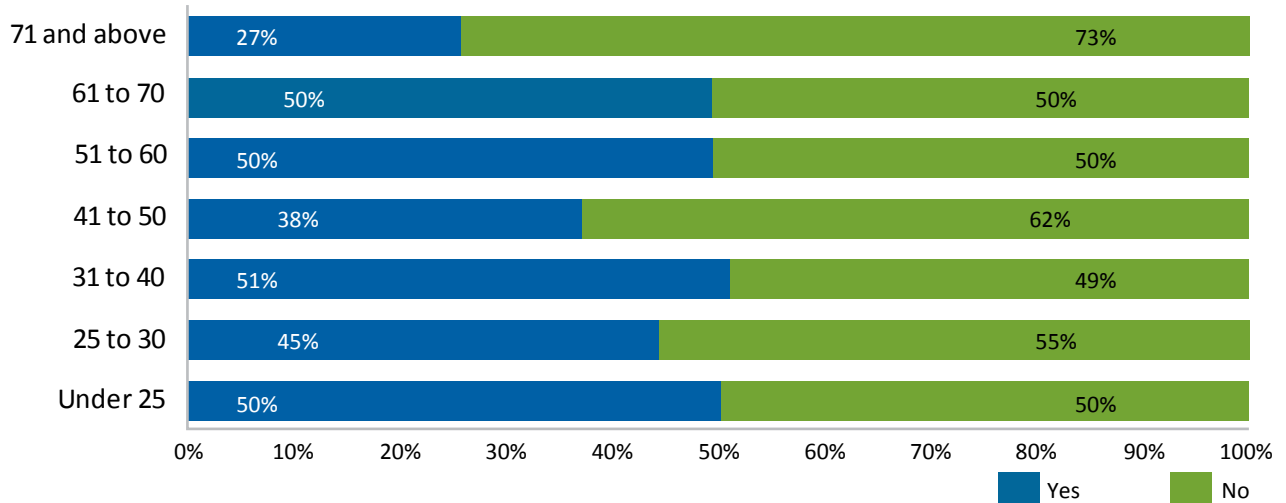
Question 6a by age categories. Widen the ban to cover all plastic bags.



Base MIN=8, Base MAX=302

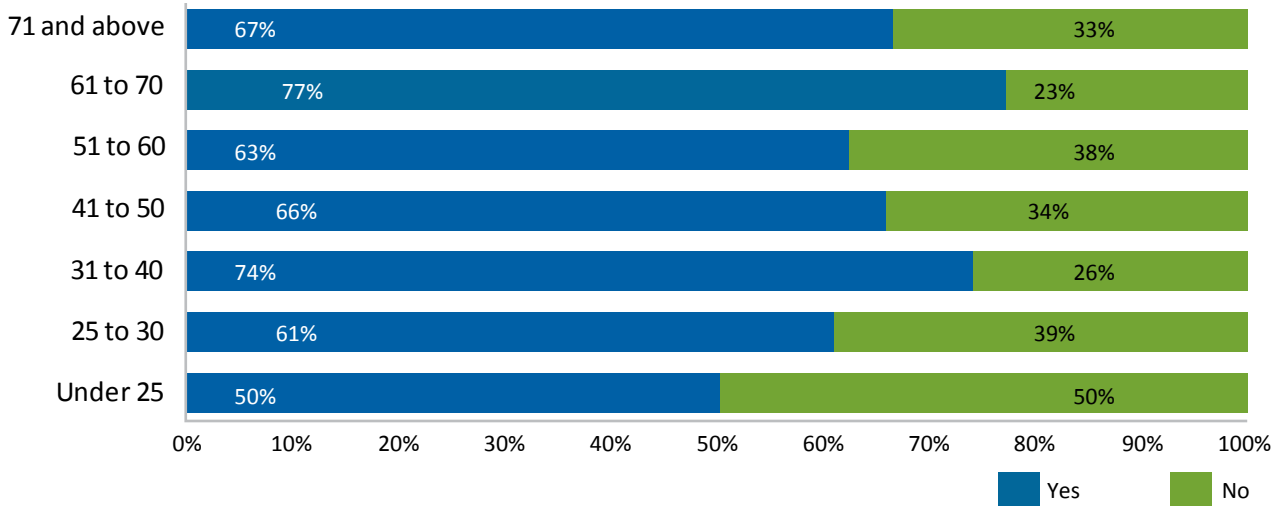


Question 6b by age categories. Have a national levy on plastic bags and the money used to reduce litter around the country.



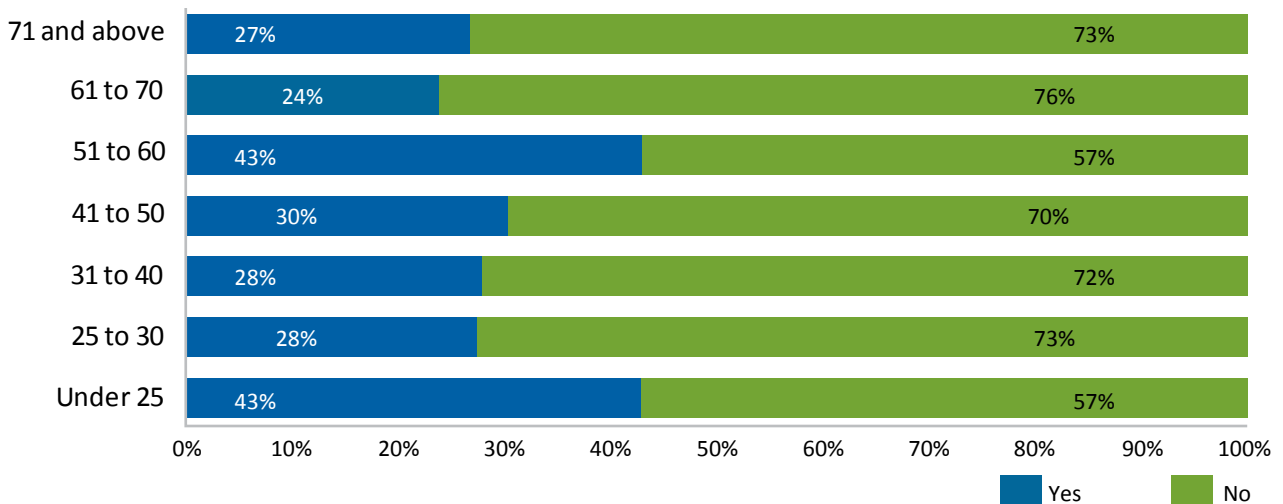
Base MIN=8, Base MAX=302

Question 6c by age categories. Implement the Ban nationally



Base MIN=8, Base MAX=302

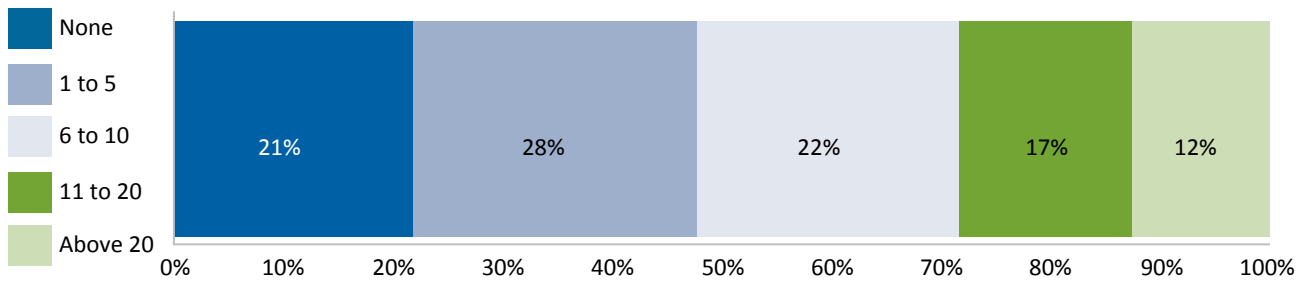
Question 6d by age categories. Or ...The Ban should be overturned



Base MIN=8, Base MAX=302

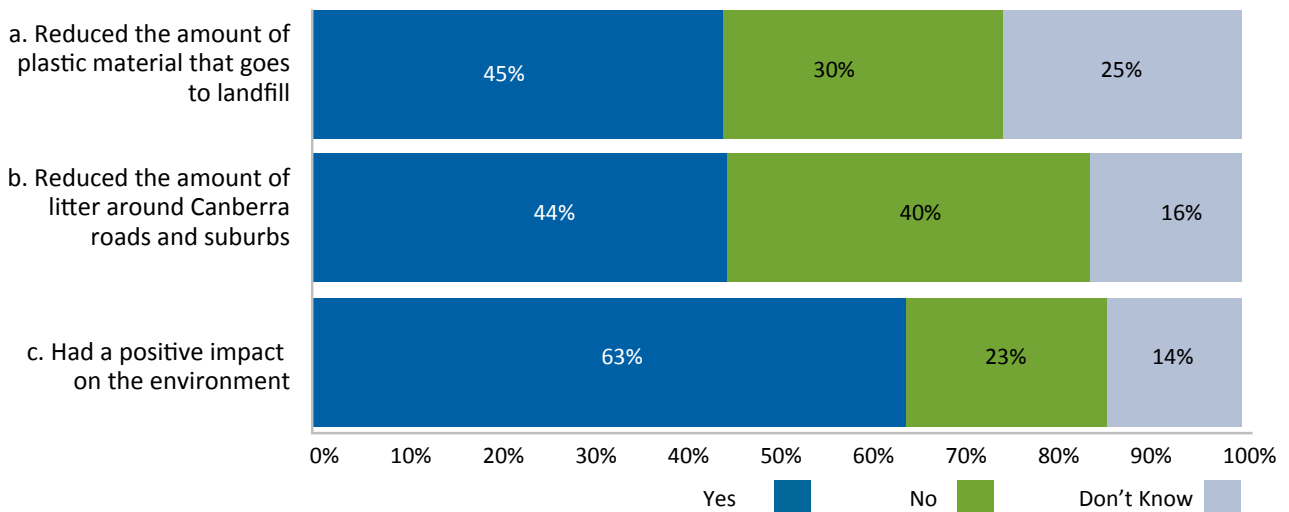


Q7. Supermarkets sell durable, re-usable plastic bags for people who forget or don't have their own shopping bags. About how many re-useable plastic bags do you have stored at home, that you don't use for grocery shopping? (estimate as a single number)



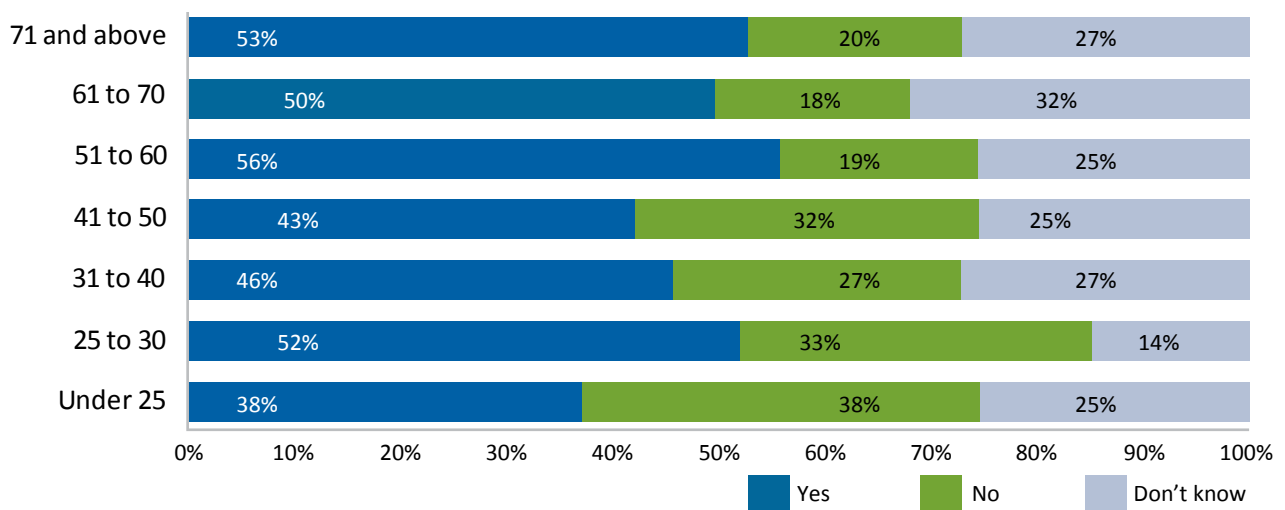
Base = 602

Q8. Do you believe that the Plastic Bag Ban has: ...



Base Min = 601, Base Max = 602

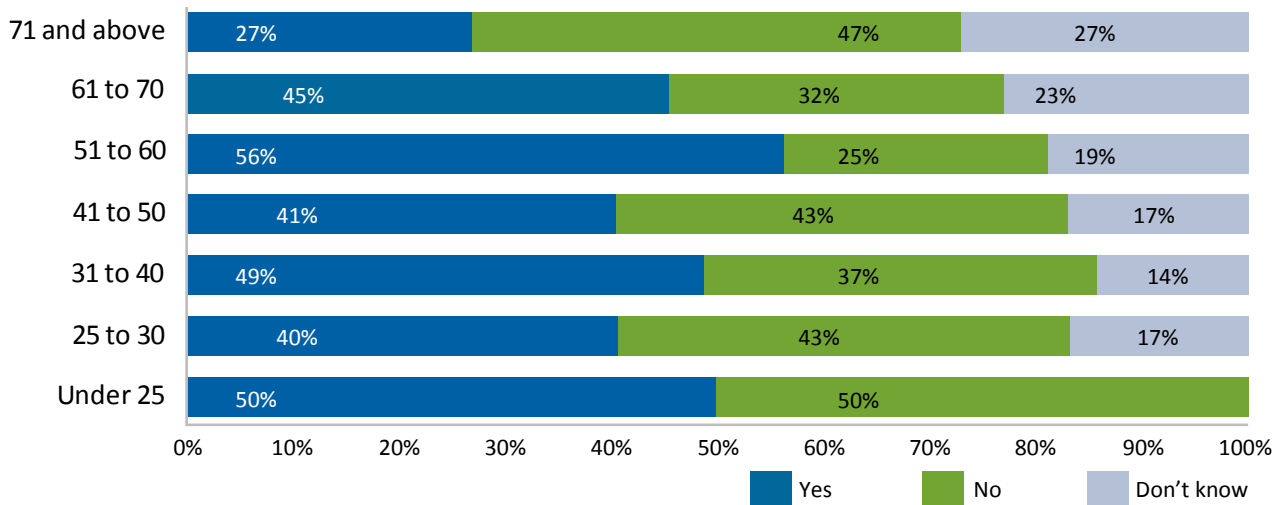
Question 8a by age categories. Reduced the amount of plastic material that goes to landfill



Base MIN=8, Base MAX=303

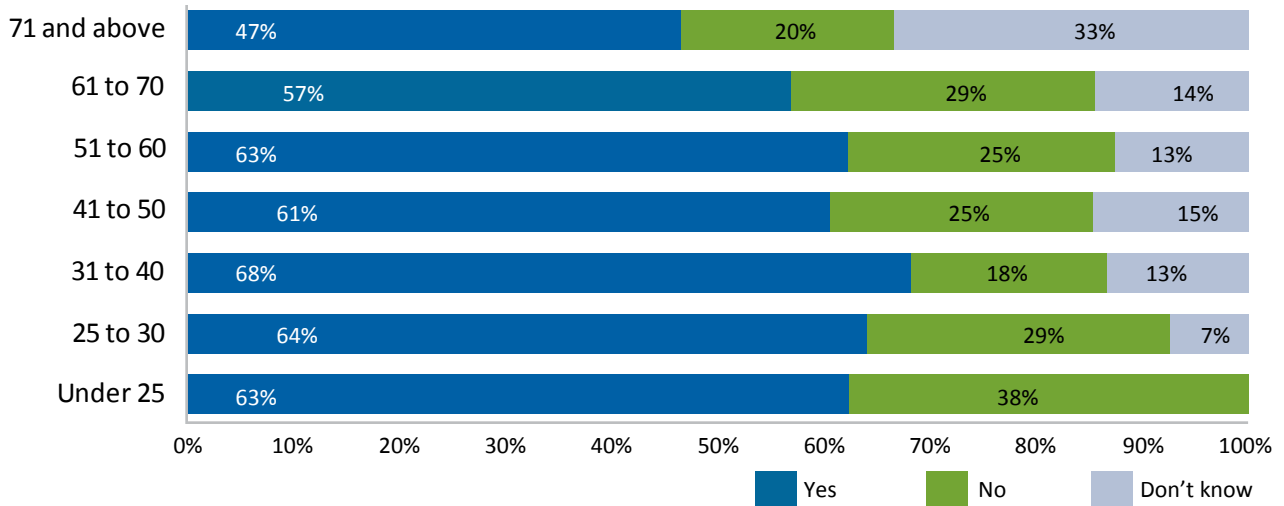


Question 8b by age categories. Reduced the amount of litter around Canberra roads and suburbs



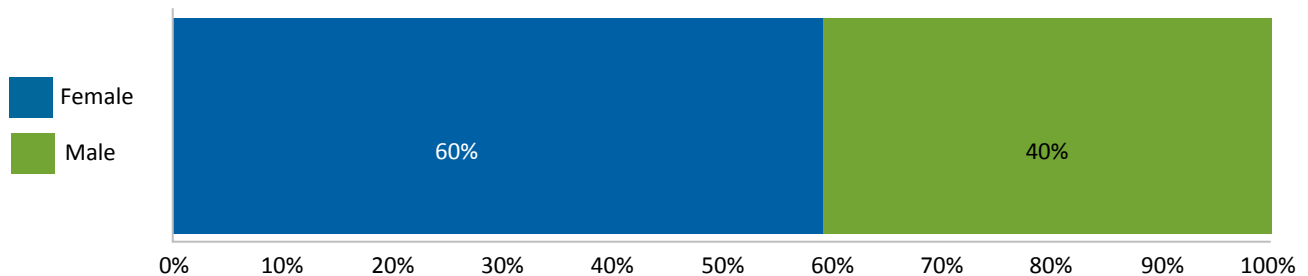
Base MIN=8, Base MAX=303

Question 8c by age categories. Had a positive impact on the environment



Base MIN=8, Base MAX=303

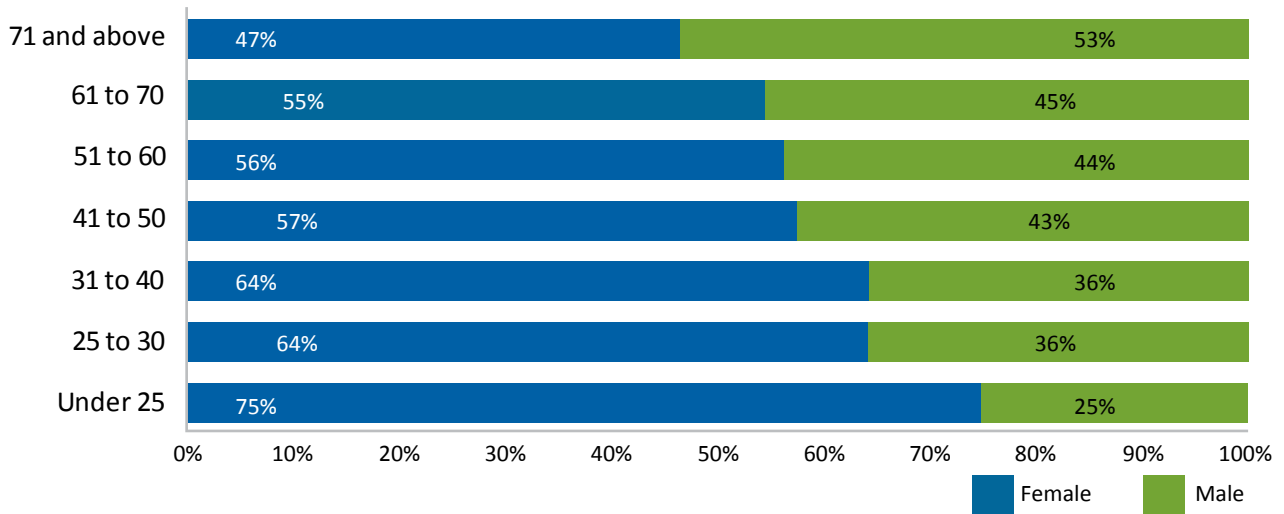
Question 9. Customer gender profile.



Base= 602

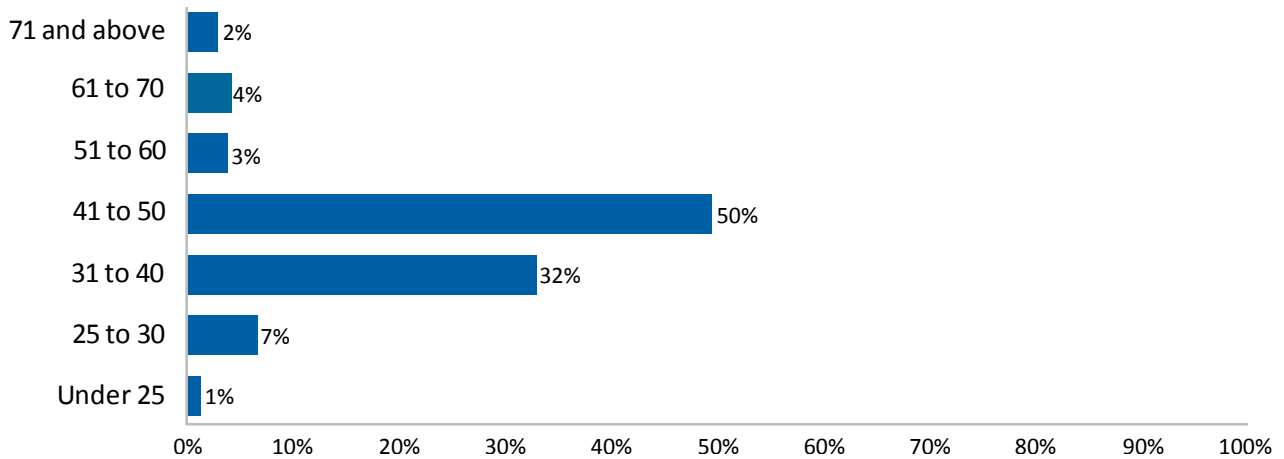


Question 9. Customer gender profile by age categories.



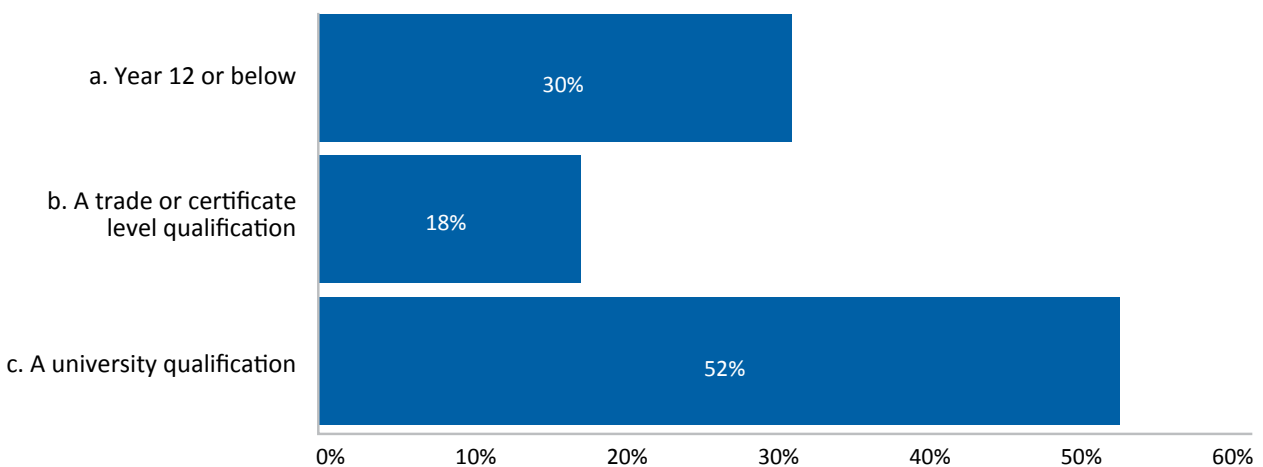
Base MIN=8, Base MAX=303

Question 10. Customer age profile.



Base= 593

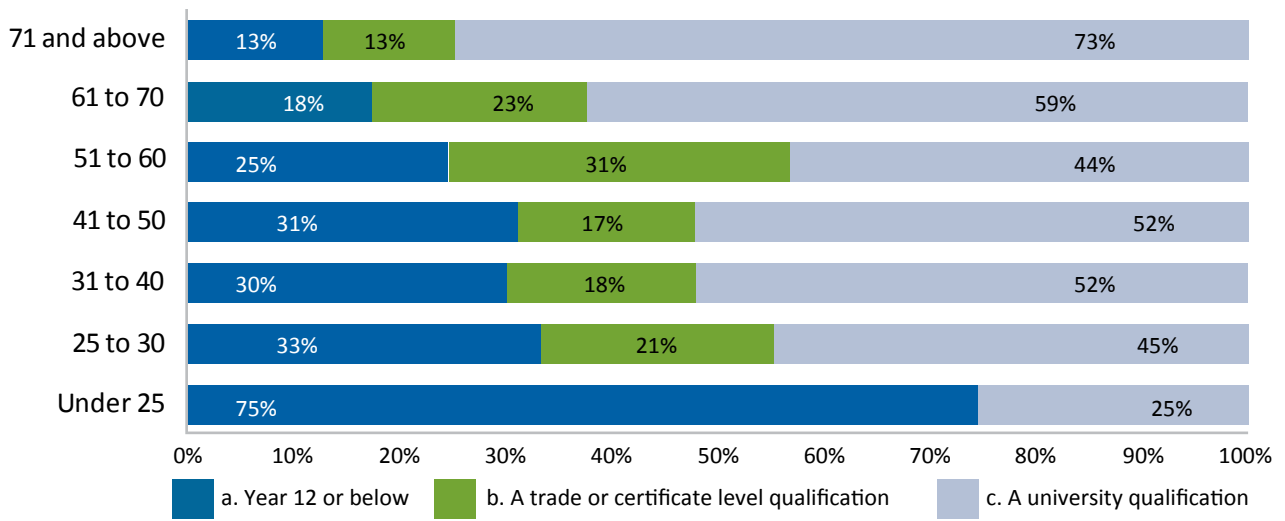
Question 11. Customer education profile.



Base= 601



Question 11. Customer education profile by age categories.

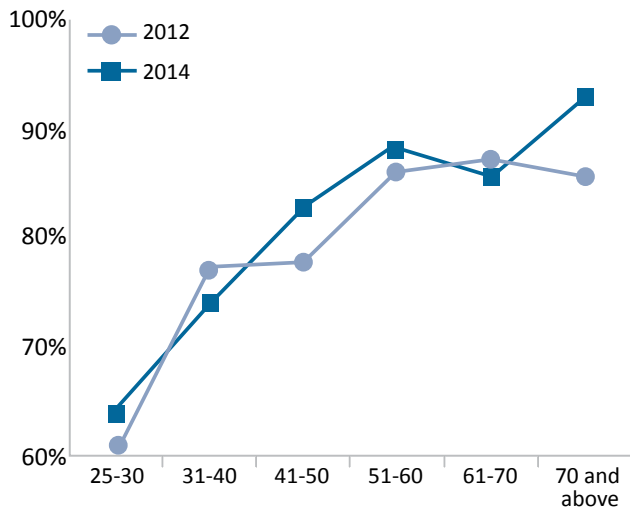


Base MIN=8, Base MAX=303

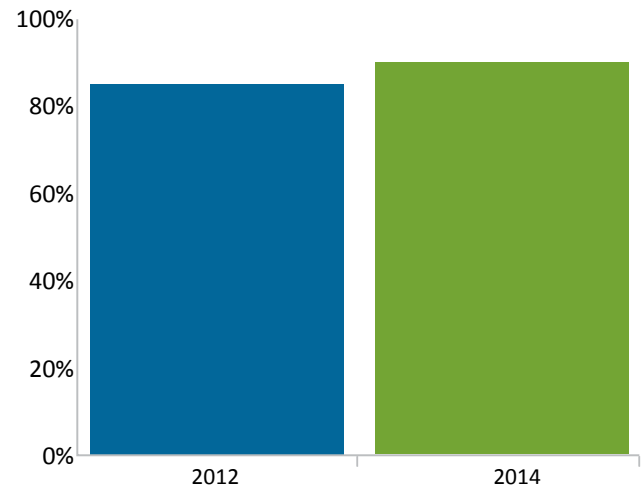


Data comparison between 2012 and 2014

Percentage of people who “always” and “most of the time” take their own bags.

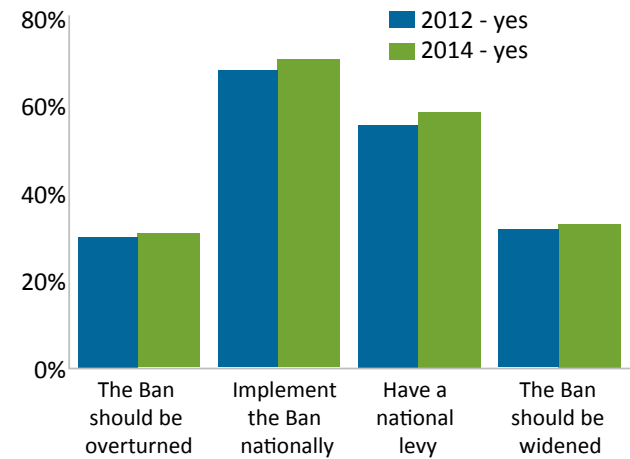


As a result of the Ban, I now take my own bags more frequently

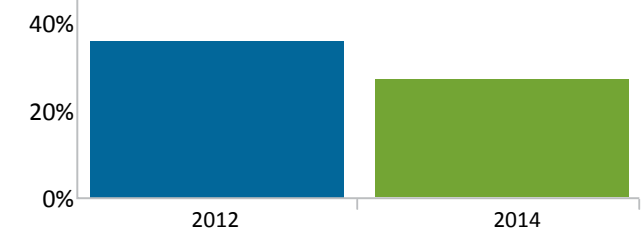


This trend shows :

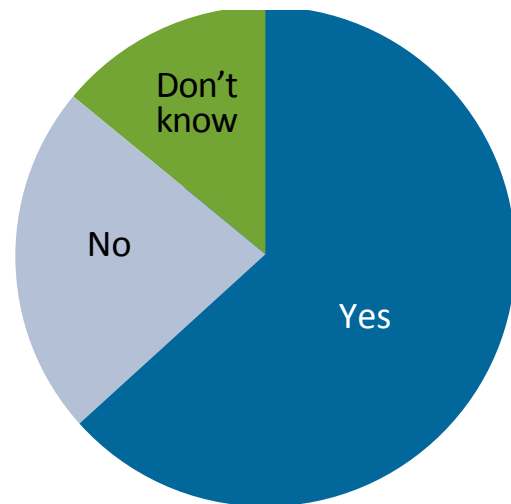
1. the more senior the respondents are, the more likely they take their own re-useable bags for shopping.
2. Though the change is small, from 2012 to 2014, shoppers are now more adapted to this policy.



Even after the Ban, I mostly don't use re-useable bags and I buy shopping bags as necessary



The Ban had a positive impact on the environment





Attachment 1: Questionnaire

Introduction

Hello, my name is [FULL NAME] from Piazza Research calling on behalf of the ACT Government I wonder if you can help me.

1. Are you the primary groceries shopper in your household? ☐ Yes ☐ No

The ACT Government is conducting a review of the Plastic Bag Ban that came into effect in the ACT on 1 November 2011. Could you help us by answering some survey questions? This survey takes about 3-4 minutes.

2. How often would you say that you take reusable bags when you go shopping? (Would you say...)

☐ Never ☐ Sometimes (or I often forget) ☐ Most of the time ☐ Always

3. Can you please tell me whether you agree or disagree with the following statements about the way the Plastic Bag Ban has influenced the way you shop:

- | | | |
|--|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| a. As a result of the Bag ban, I now take my own bags more frequently. | <input type="checkbox"/> Agree | <input type="checkbox"/> Disagree |
| b. As a result of the Bag Ban, I now plan my shopping trips. | <input type="checkbox"/> Agree | <input type="checkbox"/> Disagree |
| c. I was already mostly using my own shopping bags before the Bag Ban | <input type="checkbox"/> Agree | <input type="checkbox"/> Disagree |
| d. Even with the Bag Ban, I mostly don't use re-useable bags and I buy shopping bags as necessary. | <input type="checkbox"/> Agree | <input type="checkbox"/> Disagree |

4 Do you support the ACT Plastic Bag Ban? ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Unsure

5 ...Thank you. And what is the main reason for your answer?

6 Would you want to see any of the following changes to the current Plastic Bag Ban?

- | | | |
|--|------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| a. Widen the Ban to cover all plastic bags | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| b. Have a national levy on plastic bags and the money used to reduce litter around the country | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| c. Implement the Ban nationally | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| d. Or ...The Ban should be overturned. | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |

7 Supermarkets sell durable, reusable plastic bags for people who forget or don't have their own shopping bags. About how many re-useable plastic bags do you have stored at home, that you don't use for grocery shopping? (estimate as a single number).

Other Perceptions

8 Do you believe that the Plastic Bag Ban has:...

- | | | | |
|--|------------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| a. reduced the amount of plastic material that goes to landfill? | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> Don't know |
| b. reduced the amount of litter around Canberra roads and suburbs? | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> Don't know |
| c. had a positive impact on the environment? | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> Don't know |

Demographics

Thanks you for your answers, we're almost finished...Now we need to collect information about the types of people who have answered the survey.

9 Record gender ☐ Female ☐ Male

10 How old are you?

11 Which is the highest level of education you have achieved?

- ☐ Year 12 or below ☐ A trade or certificate level qualification
☐ A university qualification (Advanced diploma, Bachelor Degree, Grad. Diploma, Post Grad Degree)

Survey End.

OK – That was the last question. Thanks very much for your time. This research is important to the ACT Government and they'll be using it to evaluate the ACT Plastic Bag Ban. Thanks again....Good bye.

