

Business and consumer awareness and engagement in product stewardship



**Product
Stewardship
Centre of
Excellence**

Webinar, 20 July 2023

www.stewardshipexcellence.com.au



Product Stewardship Centre of Excellence



@stewardshipAU



Product Stewardship Benefits and Effectiveness study

PROJECT OVERVIEW

- First comprehensive evaluation of product stewardship activity in Australia
- It supports the National Waste Policy Action Plan 2019 Action 3.3:

to evaluate the effectiveness of product stewardship and extended producer responsibility activities across the country, to help inform future efforts

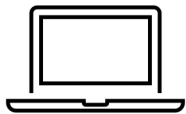
- **Effectiveness** is defined by how well product stewardship initiatives meet their objectives to minimise environmental and human health impacts of products and materials throughout the whole lifecycle

RESEARCH METHOD

The evaluation involved the compilation and analysis of 5 new data sets:

1. Analysis of publicly reported environmental, social and economic performance data (the 'benefits') for ~106 product stewardship initiatives
2. Surveys of 601 Australian businesses
3. Survey of 1001 Australian residents
4. Survey of 89 local governments
5. Interviews with 60 product stewardship actors or experts

Outputs



The Product Stewardship Gateway <https://gateway.stewardshipexcellence.com.au/>



Summary report / five data reports <https://stewardshipexcellence.com.au/resources/#benefits>

Today's speakers



Stuart Clark
IPSOS



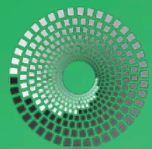
Dr Nick Florin
Research Director ISF, UTS
Director, PSCoE

PRODUCT STEWARDSHIP BENEFITS ASSESSMENT 2022

General population report

23 July, 2023

Stuart Clark
Meredith Daoud
Jules Collin
Gabrielle Schiavone



Product
Stewardship
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Institute for
Sustainable
Futures



GAME CHANGERS



Businesses



18-minute telephone
(CATI) survey



n=601 businesses



6+ employees



- Repair and maintenance
- Construction
- Food and beverage services
- Manufacturing
- Wholesale trade
- Retail trade



21 March – 3 May 2022

Consumers



15-minute online survey



n=1001 Australians



Nationally representative
sample of those aged 18+

Quotas set for age, gender
and location

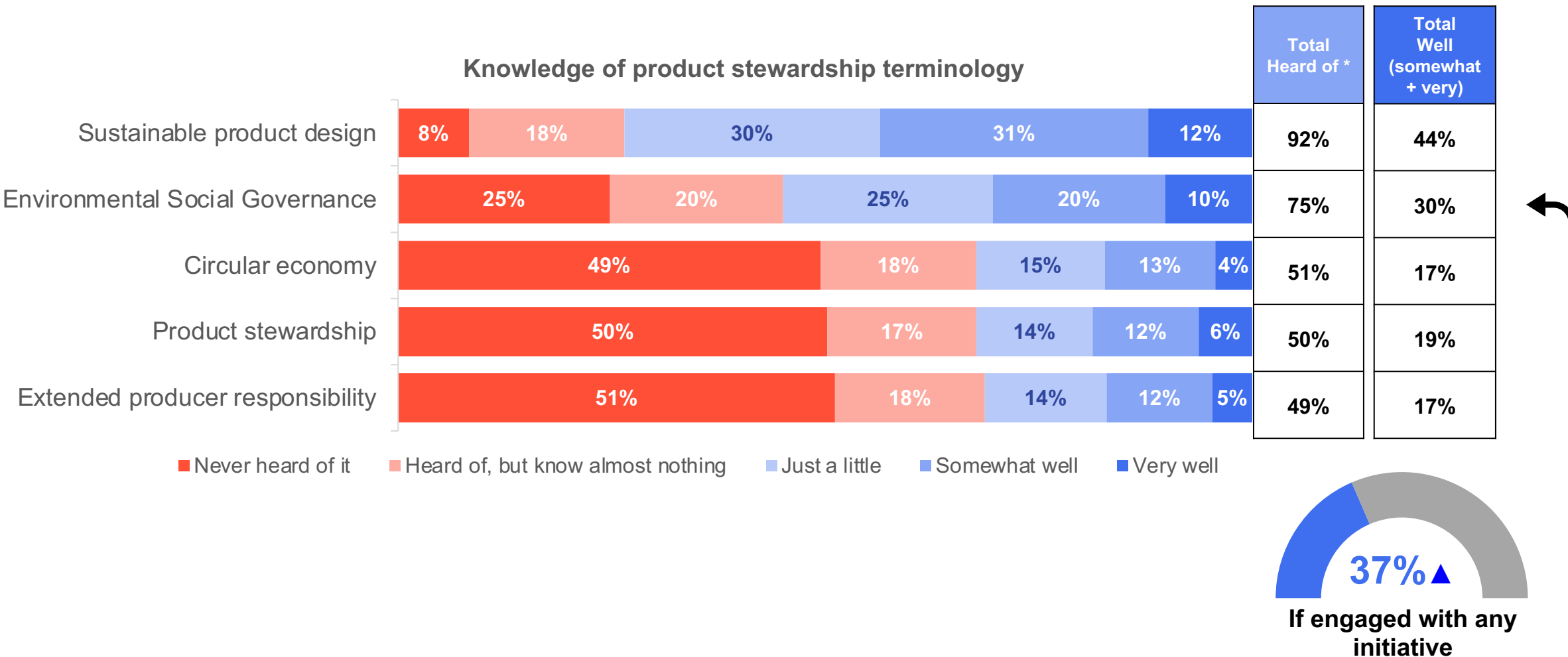


18 March – 1 April 2022

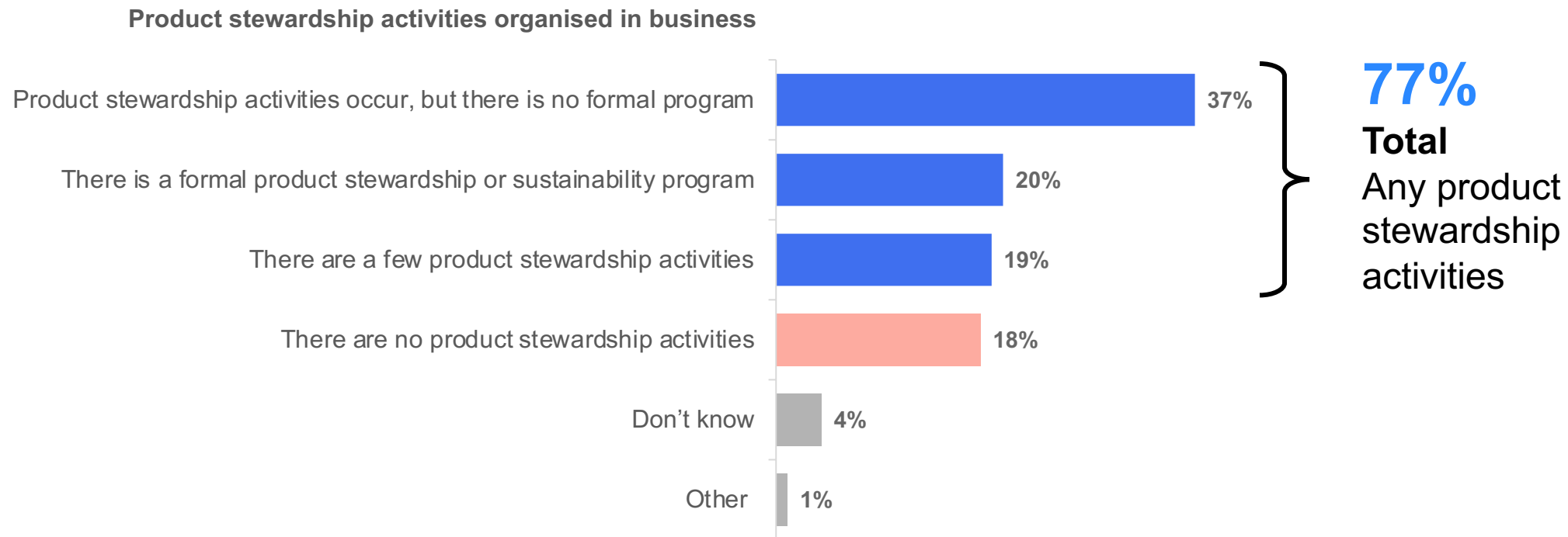
Business findings

Awareness and engagement with product stewardship

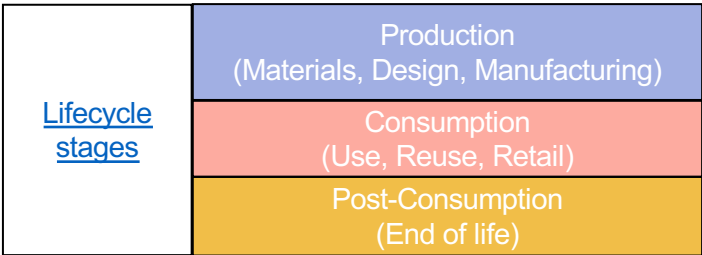
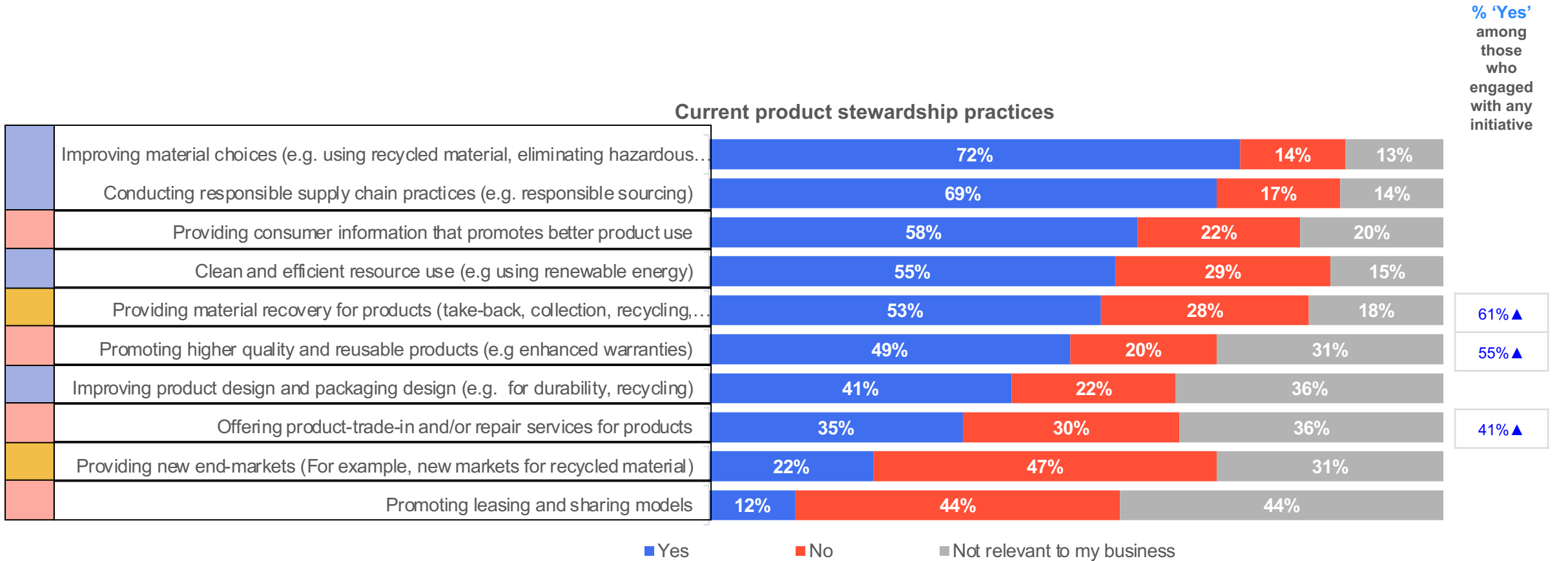
Businesses have mixed levels of understanding of product stewardship



Three quarters of businesses undertake product stewardship activities, with one in five having a formal stewardship or sustainability program



Most businesses actively seek to improve material choices and engage in responsible supply chain practices

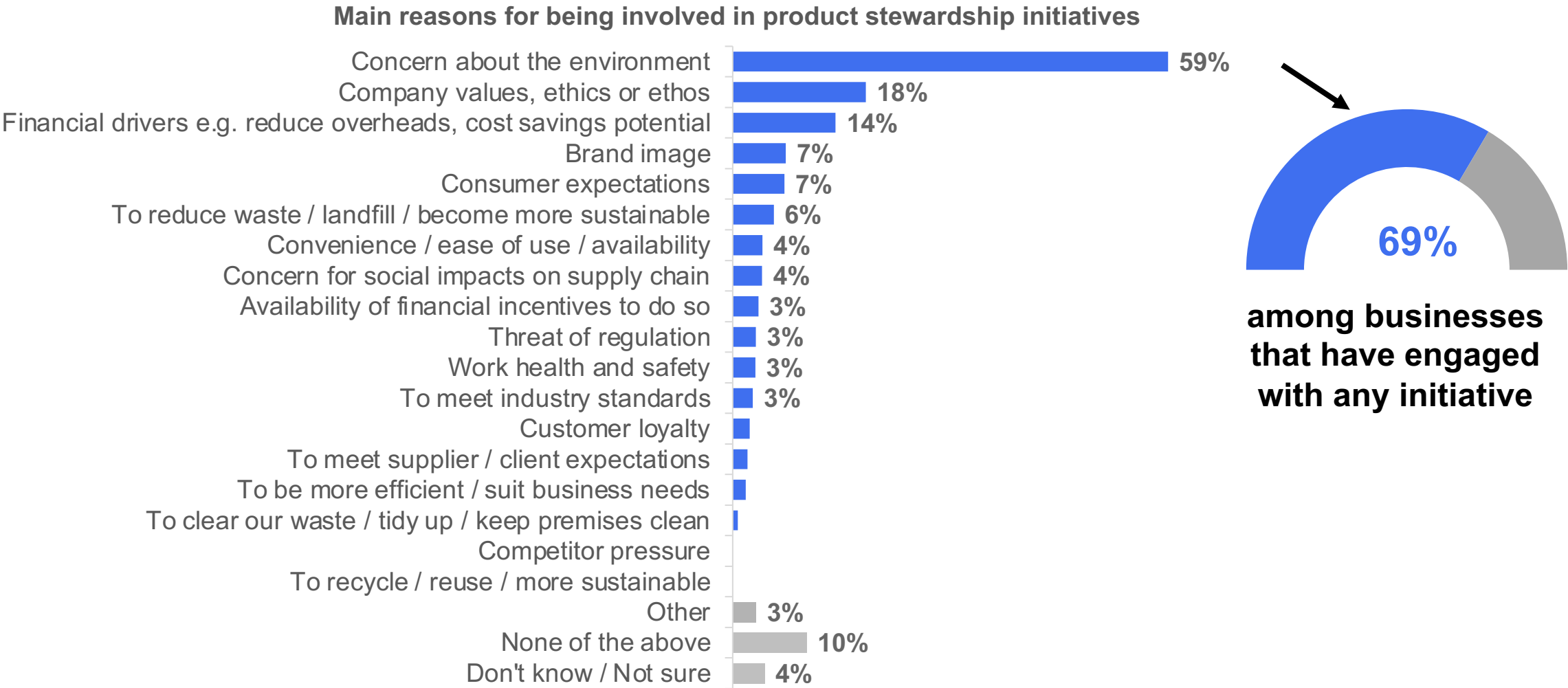


▲ significantly higher or lower than total at 95% confidence level and above



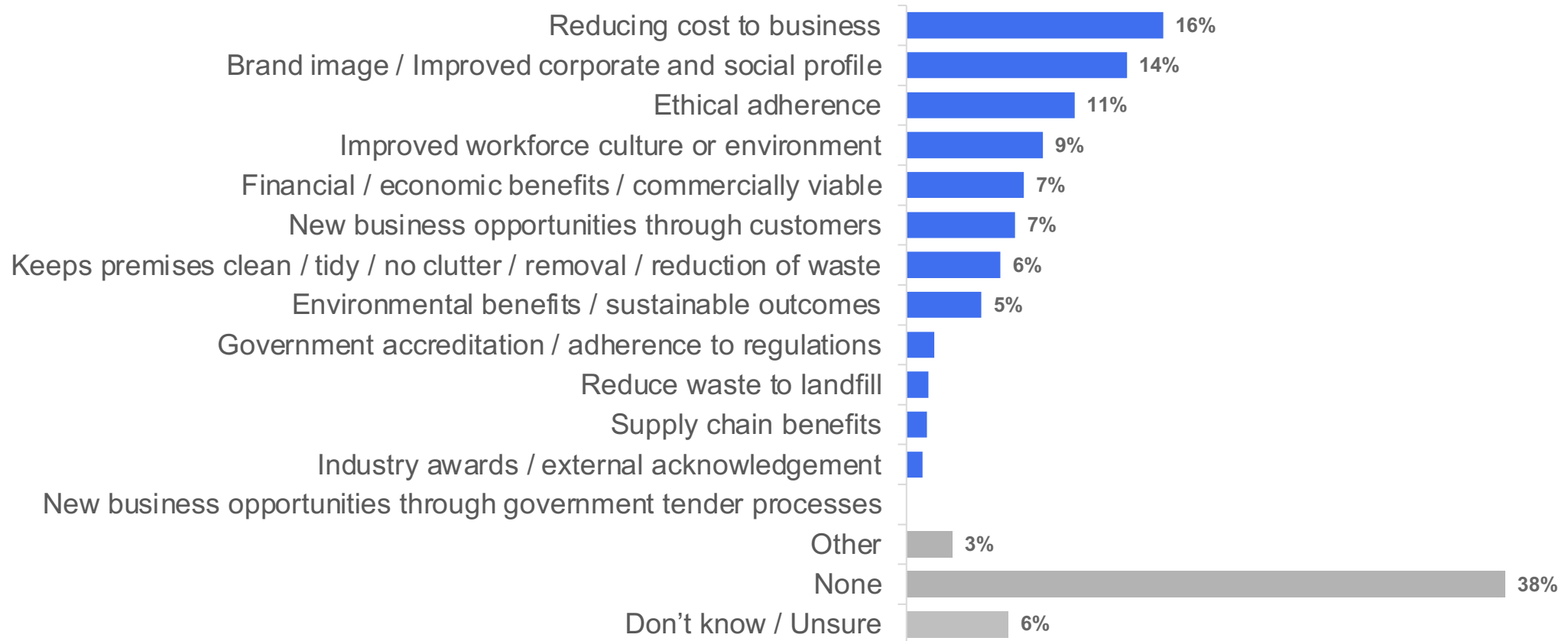
Drivers and barriers for engagement

Concern about the environment is the most common driver for businesses' involvement in product stewardship initiatives



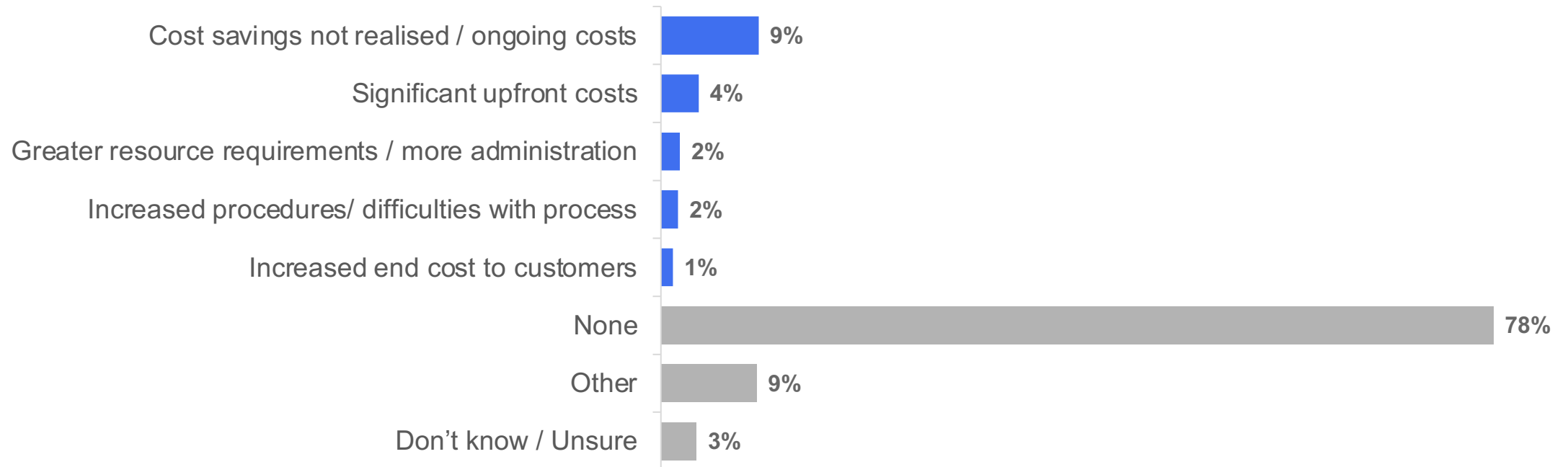
After starting engagement with initiatives, almost 40% of businesses don't believe they receive any direct benefits from their involvement

Benefits from engaging with a product stewardship initiative

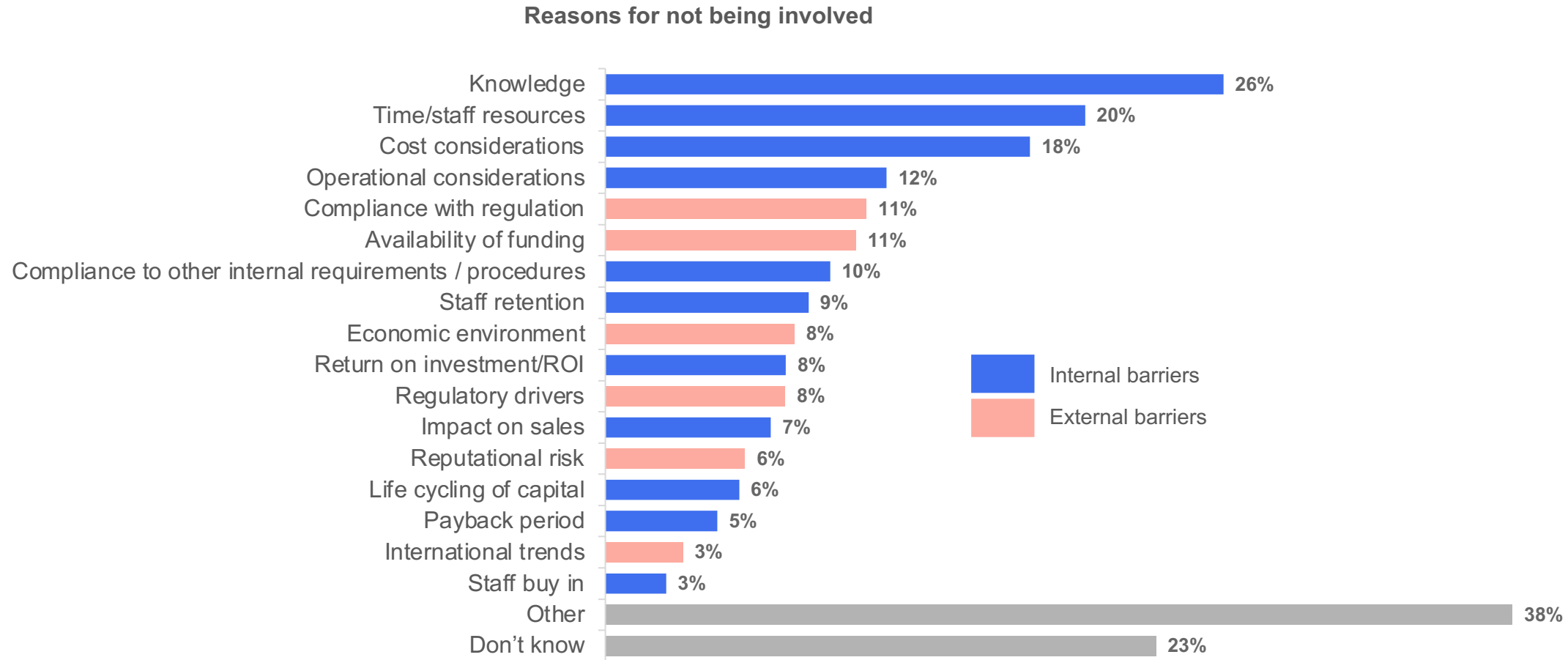


Businesses who engage in product stewardship initiatives don't tend to experience negative outcomes from being involved

Negative impacts from engaging with a product stewardship initiative



Lack of knowledge, resourcing concerns and cost considerations are all key internal barriers to becoming involved in product stewardship initiatives



But lack of perceived options of relevance are also a barrier



“What we produce doesn't involve us in that type of market and doesn't make it relevant for us.”

“It's not spoken about and I don't hear about it being promoted in my channels.”

“No opportunities present themselves in our industry.”

“There is very little available for us for example DrumMuster will not take our chemical drums and the drums are recyclable.”

“Its not made easy. Some toys come in packaging that we cant recycle like foam packaging.”

“Being in a regional area is sometimes an issue. It's not readily available and accessible to us and also a lack of information.”

Consumer findings

Awareness and understanding

Australians have strong positive attitudes when it comes to making a difference and reducing the impacts that waste has on the environment

Repairing and reusing products makes a difference to minimising our impact on the environment

85%

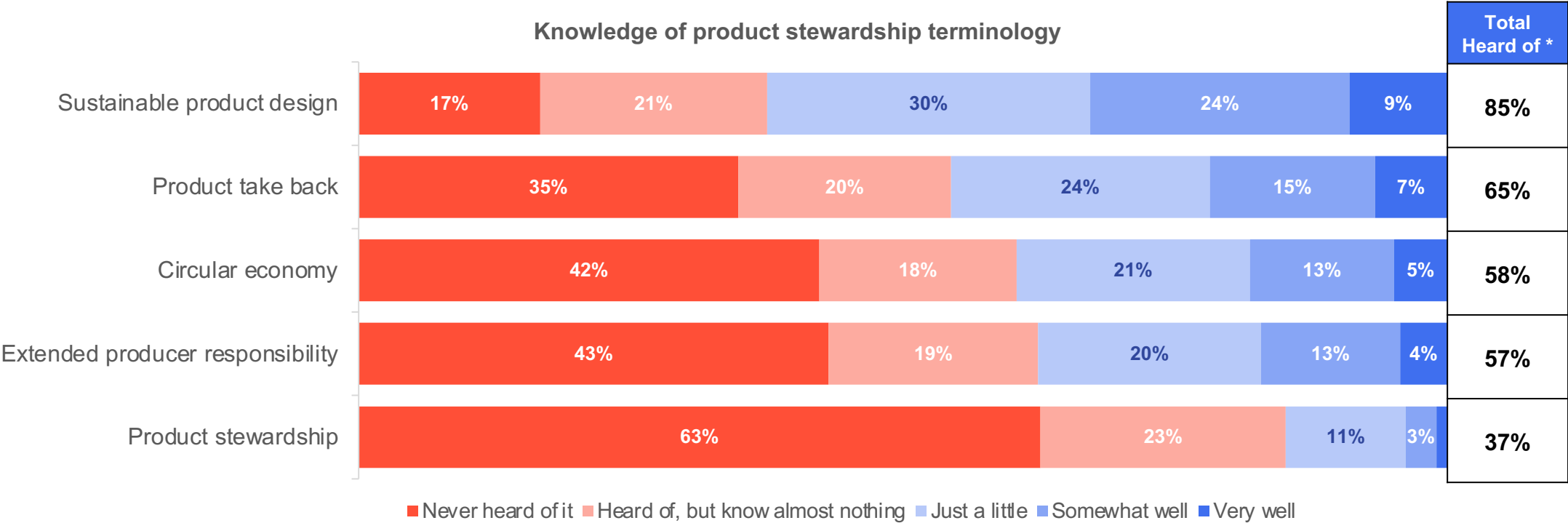
I believe all businesses who make, sell or lease products should provide customers with an easy way to repair or recycle their used products and packaging

79%

I make efforts to stay informed about the impacts of waste on the environment and human health

58%

Knowledge of product stewardship concepts is low in general, with ‘sustainable product design’ the most familiar concept



22 – Product Stewardship Benefits Assessment

Q10. How well do you feel you understand each of the following terms in the context of manufacturing and waste disposal? Asked of all participants.
Q1. How well do you feel you understand the term product stewardship? (Sample size n=1001) Asked of all participants. Note: Product stewardship term data is taken from Q1 instead of Q10 to reduce bias.
*Total Heard of = Heard of, but know almost nothing + just a little + somewhat well + very well



Product stewardship is most commonly linked to the concept of overall management and ownership rather than specific understanding and acknowledgement of the product lifecycle



Has something to do with the creation and materials in a product I think.

Participant from Regional Victoria

I think that it is a responsibility to the environment.

Participant from metro Queensland

Owning a product.

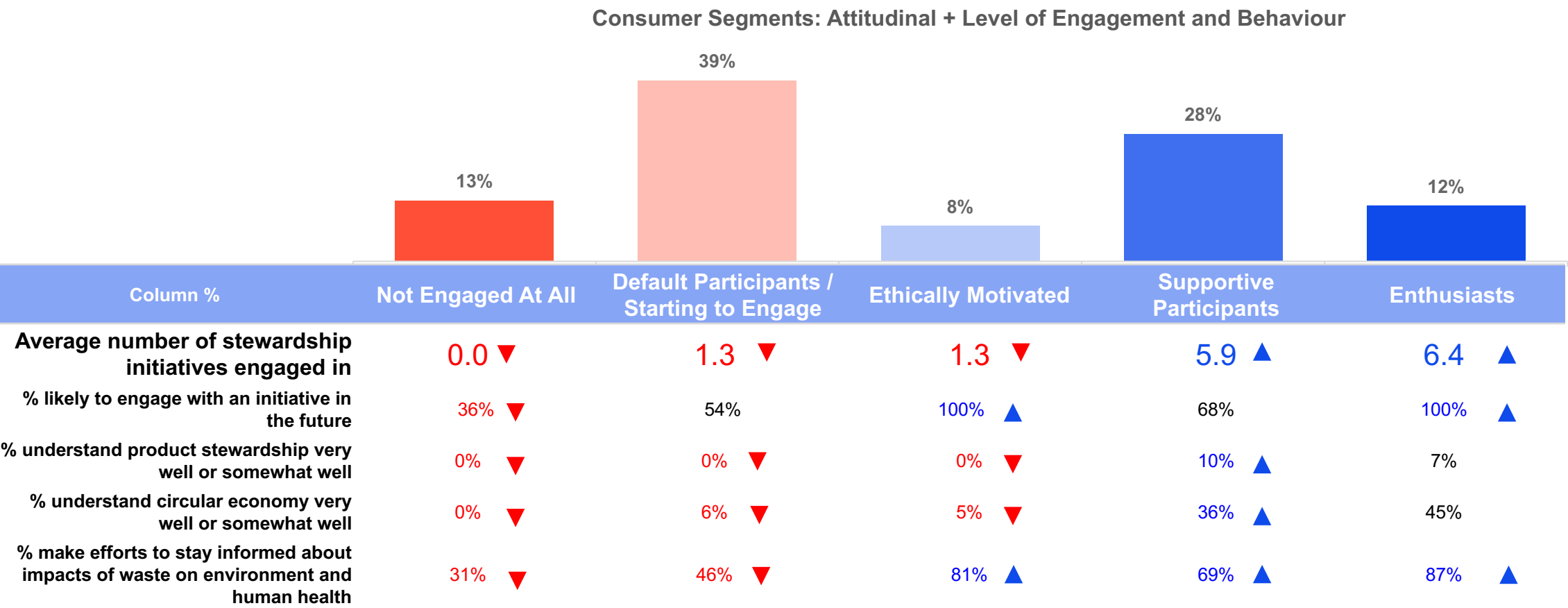
Participant from metro NSW

Actually now that I think about it I don't really understand.

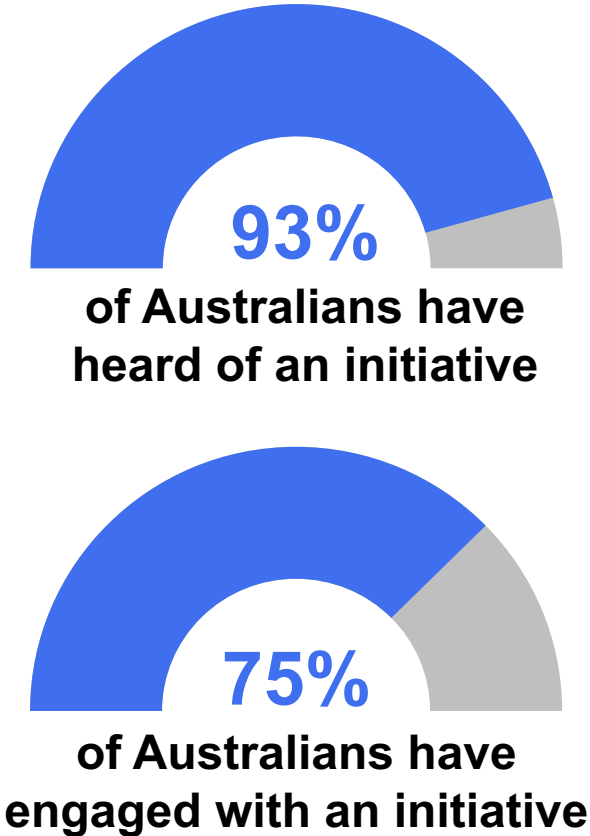
Participant from regional Tasmania

Engagement with product stewardship initiatives

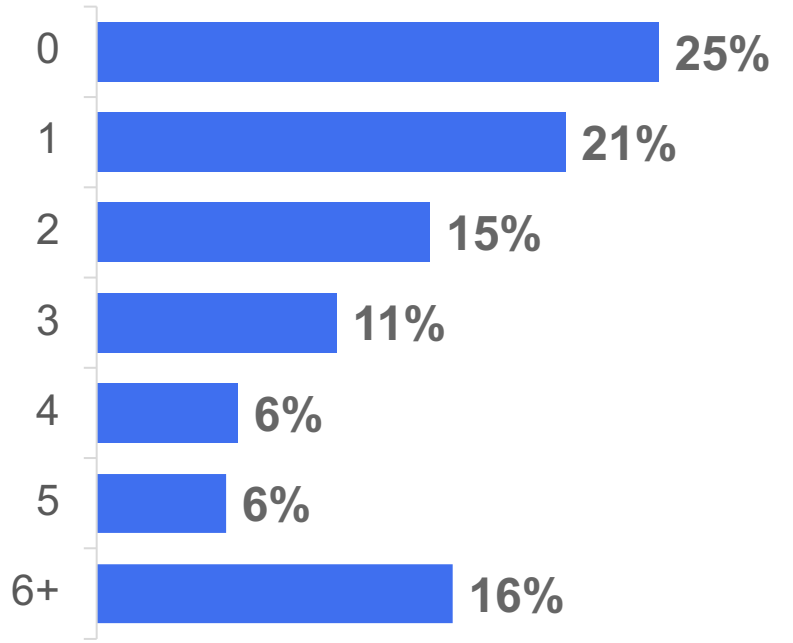
Approximately half of Australians demonstrate limited intentional engagement with product stewardship concepts and initiatives



Overall awareness and engagement across the **breadth** of product stewardship initiatives is low, with the majority of Australians having engaged with two or less



Number of initiatives engaged with



An average of 3.0 initiatives

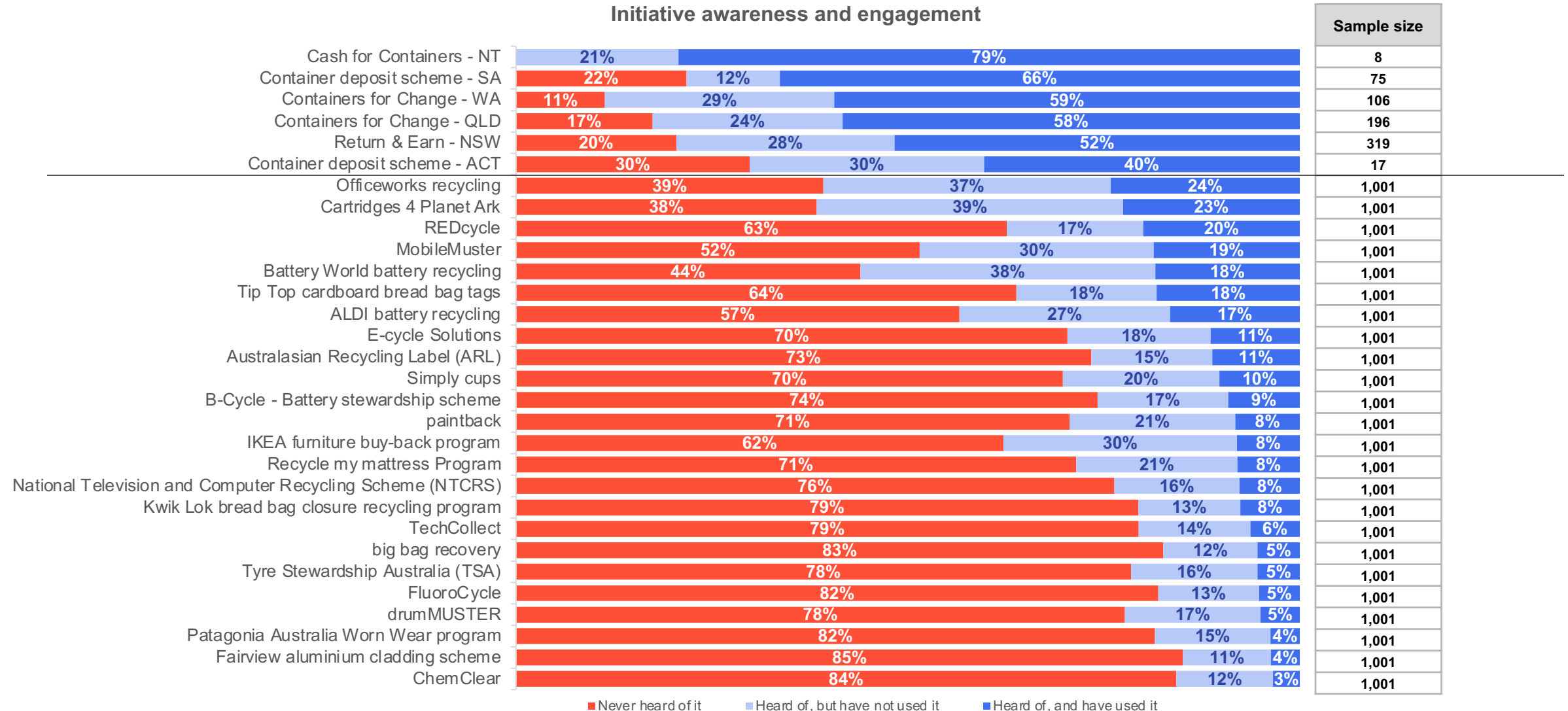
50%+ awareness

- Container Deposit Schemes
- Officeworks recycling
- Cartridges 4 Planet Ark
- Battery World battery recycling

Additional high engagement

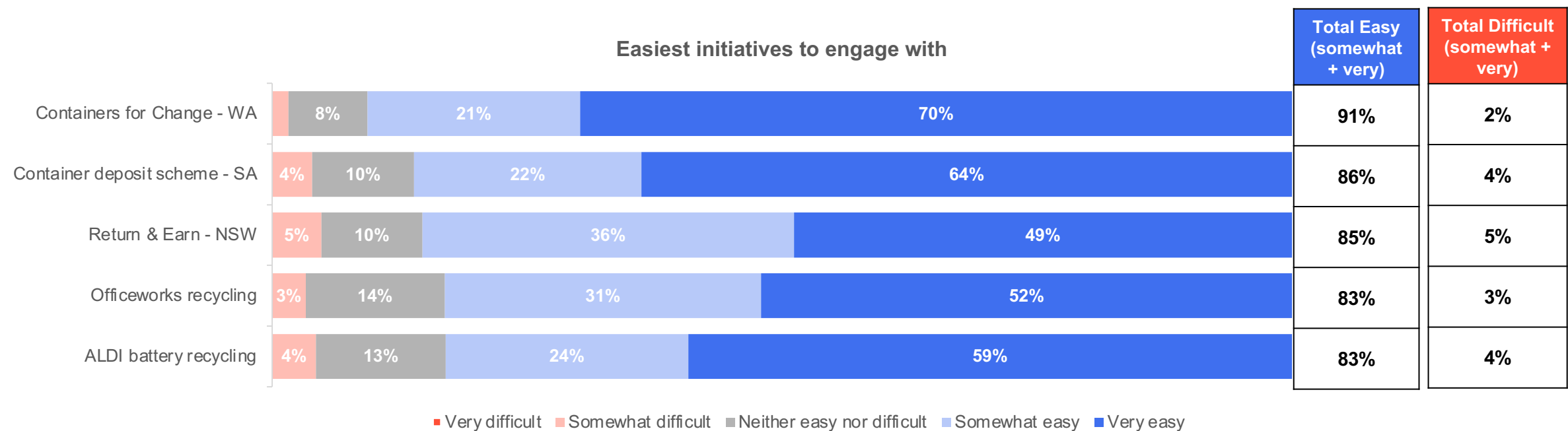
- REDcycle
- MobileMuster
- Tip Top cardboard bread tags

The initiatives that Australians most engage with are state-based container deposit schemes, likely because they have strong promotional profiles



Drivers and barriers for engagement

Container deposit schemes stand out as being particularly easy to engage with*



*Note that participants were only asked about the CDS relevant to their own state or territory, hence each CDS has a separate rating

29 – Product Stewardship Benefits Assessment

Q14. When thinking about your overall experience with [PIPE NAME OF INITIATIVE AND LOOP FOR EACH INITIATIVE USED], how easy or difficult did you find it to use the service? (Sample size n=1001) Asked of those who engaged with any initiative. Results under 3% not shown. Note: Cash for Containers NT and Other initiatives are in the top 5, however are not displayed due to low sample sizes <30. (Containers for change – WA n=63, Container deposit scheme – SA n=50, Return & Earn – NSW n=165, Officeworks recycling n=242, ALDI battery recycling n=166)



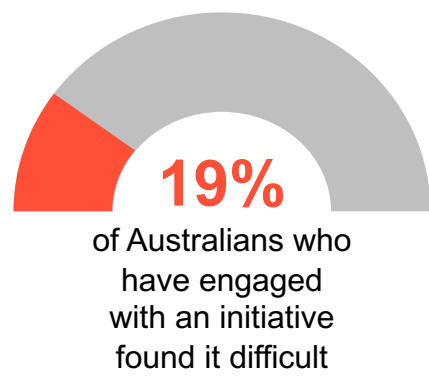
Accessibility, ease and convenience are all critical to making it easy for consumers to engage with an initiative



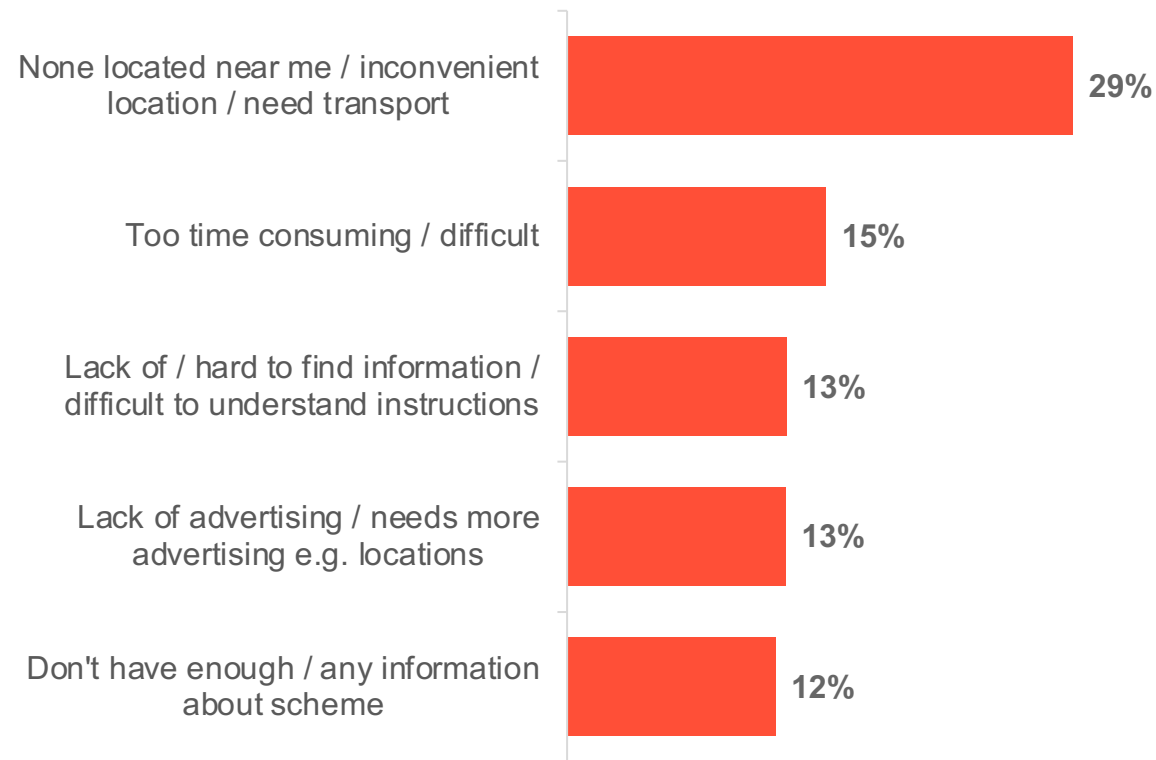
What was easy when engaging with initiatives



One in five Australians who engaged with an initiative found it difficult to use



Top 5 barriers of those who found it difficult engaging with any initiative



One in five Australians who engaged with an initiative found it difficult to use



There is not enough close proximity around local area. As the internet has not many shown.

Was long process and a few people to deal it, it wasn't very simple and easy.

Hard to understand their instructions.

They seem to be not advertised well so I haven't known where to dispose of old phones.

Information related to where drop off point is and not enough places.

Businesses

- Businesses are not highly aware of product stewardship and circular economy
- Business emphasis is on production and consumption stages of the product lifecycle
- Financial incentives and cost savings are likely to yield further engagement
- More extensive engagement with product stewardship is associated with realisation of benefits
- Significant opportunity exists to build greater formality around product stewardship

Consumers

- Consumers have fundamentally supportive attitudes but lack specific product stewardship knowledge
- Product stewardship initiative success factors relate to ease, convenience and accessibility as well as wide spread promotion
- Australians are at early stages when it comes to consciously adopting product stewardship behaviours but there is significant opportunity to increase this

A welder wearing a protective mask and gloves is working on a large metal structure in a factory. Sparks are visible from the welding process. The background shows industrial equipment and another worker in the distance.

Thank you

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You act better when you are sure.



Product Stewardship Effectiveness

Opportunities and Actions
to increase Awareness
and Engagement

INCREASING BUSINESS AWARENESS & ENGAGEMENT

IN FOCUS: Businesses placing products or packaging on the market including designers, manufacturers, importers, distributors, retailers of new and 2nd life

ROLE: Primary responsibility for designing, managing and financing product stewardship initiatives (collective or individual) to minimise the environmental and human health impacts of products across the life-cycle



RESEARCH FINDINGS

Business participation is limited by:

- Lack of awareness
- Limited time and staff resources
- Cost considerations
- Benefits to business unclear

Opportunities:

- Connect product stewardship to more familiar terminology of sustainable product design
- Highlight benefits aligned brand reputation, customer expectations, with best practice operations, adherence to regulation

ACTIONS TO INCREASE BUSINESS AWARENESS AND ENGAGEMENT

WHO:

Government

- Leverage current regulatory frameworks and the accreditation of voluntary initiatives to encourage business participation
- Identify and utilise non-regulatory measures to incentivise industry participation, including procurement strategies

Centre of Excellence

- Provide education and training to improve awareness and engagement, e.g. online training hub, case studies, practice notes, white papers
- Develop standard for data collection and reporting building on the Product Stewardship Gateway & assessment framework

INCREASING CONSUMER AWARENESS & ENGAGEMENT

IN FOCUS: *General public & business users of products and services*

ROLE: Using, repairing, reusing, recycling or disposing of the products and packaging in accordance with producers' instructions to minimise the environmental and human health impacts



RESEARCH FINDINGS

Consumer participation is limited by:

- Lack of awareness
- Limited accessibility or ease of use

Opportunities:

- Address limited consumer awareness of existing initiatives and services through marketing
- Improve accessibility & ease of use of services

ACTIONS TO INCREASE CONSUMER AWARENESS AND ENGAGEMENT

WHO:

PSO & business

- Increase investment in targeted marketing to promote business and consumer awareness and accessibility
- Improve data collection and reporting
- Introduce or extend effective financial incentives to encourage behaviour change

Government

- Deliver national consumer campaign to educate consumers about product sustainability, how to evaluate product claims and cut-through greenwashing

Q&A and Feedback



Got a Question? Please post in Q&A



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