



SINGLE-USE PLASTICS BAN – Tranche 3

In July 2021, the ACT Government introduced the *Plastic Reduction Act 2021* which aims to reduce the use of plastic in the ACT and the impacts of plastic on the environment, waste management and resource recovery systems.

A number of single-use plastic items have already been banned in the ACT, including:

- single-use plastic cutlery
- single-use plastic stirrers
- expanded polystyrene takeaway food and beverage containers
- single-use plastic straws (with exemptions for those who need them)
- cotton buds with plastic sticks
- all oxo-degradable plastics (these plastics contain additives which cause them to break down into harmful microplastics. They are often used in products like dog waste bags and rubbish bags and can be labelled as degradable.)
- single-use plastic shopping bags at or below 35 micrometres in thickness.

The ACT Government is considering banning more single-use plastic items from 1 July 2023. Before more items are potentially banned via regulation under the *Plastic Reduction Act 2021*, the Minister for Transport Canberra and City Services must give public notice of the proposed regulation and invite public submissions for a 12-week period. We asked for input from the community and key stakeholders on the following items:

- plastic microbeads in rinse-off personal care, cosmetic and cleaning products
- expanded polystyrene products and packaging (with potential exemptions for white and brown goods)
- single-use plastic takeaway containers
- single-use plastic plates and bowls
- heavyweight and boutique plastic bags (greater than 35 microns thick).

THE CONVERSATION

The public notice period ran from 15 September 2022 and ended on 8 December 2022. Community and industry were invited to provide written submissions through YourSay.

The ACT Government received 215 submissions in total during the public consultation period:

- 23 are detailed written submissions
- 23 are shorter email comments
- 168 are emails with substantively the same short message, received through an environmental campaign.

WHO WE ENGAGED

We engaged with major supermarkets, relevant businesses, retail and hospitality associations, a range of ACT Government directorates as well as the broader community.

ACT NoWaste discussed the items proposed for banning with the ACT Plastic Reduction Taskforce (including members from key national and local business, industry and peak bodies). We also held fourteen meetings with individual peak bodies and relevant businesses.



Key insights from the community

General feedback

1. Overall, general support for the continuation of the ban on single-use plastics.
2. Some concern from businesses and industry about the proposed timings for most items as there are logistical challenges in meeting the proposed ban start date. A transition period has been requested.
3. A wide group of stakeholders advocated for more alignment on bans between ACT and other states and territories.

Plastic microbeads in rinse-off personal care, cosmetic and cleaning products

1. Strong support for the proposed ban on microbeads in rinse-off personal care, cosmetic and cleaning products.

Expanded polystyrene products and packaging (with potential exemptions for white and brown goods)

1. Some support for the proposed ban on expanded polystyrene packaging and products with some stakeholders indicating that clarification on the definition and scope of the ban would be required.
2. Industry have suggested alignment of products and timings with the National Expanded Polystyrene (EPS) Roadmap.
3. Businesses requested exemptions for specific items that are fragile and/or where moulded EPS is the only available product to protect large white and brown goods.

Single-use plastic takeaway containers

1. Supermarkets and businesses raised numerous concerns about the proposed ban of single-use plastic takeaway containers, including food safety and contamination risks, alternatives not being fit-for-purpose which would lead to increased food waste and the inability for ACT residents to correctly dispose of alternative compostable containers without a Territory-wide industrial composting service.
2. Numerous stakeholders requested clarification on the definition and scope of a takeaway container.

Single-use plastic plates and bowls

1. Supermarkets and businesses generally supported a ban on single-use plastic plates and bowls though some exemptions have been requested for plastic-lined/polymer-coated paper plates and bowls until November 2024, to be in alignment with surrounding jurisdictions' regulations.

Heavyweight and boutique plastic bags (greater than 35 microns thick)

1. Supermarkets and businesses generally supported a ban on heavyweight and boutique plastic bags but indicated that clarification on the definition and scope of the ban would be required.
2. Industry suggested alignment with the Queensland-led Reusable Shopping Bag Standard, where bags will be required to meet a reusability standard and use 80 per cent recycled material.
3. Other stakeholders advocated that more focus should be placed on encouraging reusable bags.

WHAT'S NEXT?

The ACT Government will consider all feedback in the development of legislation anticipated to come into effect from 1 July 2023.

To find out more, visit [our website](https://ourwebsite) or follow us on [Facebook](#), [LinkedIn](#) or [Twitter](#).



Key Timings

15 September 2022 – 8 December 2022 – Engagement commences with stakeholders and the community

8 December 2022 – YourSay consultation closes

April 2023 – Share what we heard with the community (*we are here*)

March – May 2023 – Development of draft regulation

1 July 2023 – Proposed ban anticipated to commence

THANK YOU FOR YOUR FEEDBACK

215

Written submissions received during
the consultation period

14

Meetings with key stakeholders

2,095

Page views on the single-use plastics
YourSay page