

HOW DO AUSTRALIANS MAKE MAJOR APPLIANCE PURCHASES FOR THE GREEN TRANSITION?

Marianne Campbell
Senior Researcher
CONSUMER POLICY RESEARCH CENTRE

AN INVESTIGATION OF CONSUMER PURCHASING BEHAVIOURS IN A COST-OF-LIVING CRISIS



WHY ARE WE HERE?

CPRC received a grant from Energy Consumers
Australia to explore the consumer purchase journey
of large home appliances as part of Australia's
journey to electrification.

This report showcases findings from Stage A - Information Audit and Mystery Shop, designed to capture information at the point of sale when shopping for a fridge, washing machine, clothes dryer, electric oven, electric heater or split system airconditioner.









STUDY AIM

To understand the consumer decision-making process of buying a large household appliance, when faced with a plethora of information and marketing at the point of display/purchase.





OUR HYPOTHESIS & RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Consumers find it difficult to navigate information when purchasing a large home appliance









Information audit

What information is at the point of sale of large home appliances? What are retail assistants telling consumers?

Consumer decision-making

How do consumers make purchase decisions? What inputs do they use? How do consumers interpret and respond to these inputs?

Potential to mislead

Where does energy-efficiency, sustainability and durability information fit? Are consumers being misled when buying large home appliances?

Information gaps and needs

What do consumers need to make more informed purchase decisions?



WHAT'S NEXT?

STAGE A STAGE B STAGE C REPORT RELEASE



STAGE A. MYSTERY SHOP [COMPLETE]



STAGE B. QUALITATIVE RESEARCH



STAGE C. QUANTITATIVE RESEARCH



REPORT RELEASE MID 2025

STAGE A. WHAT INPUTS DO CONSUMERS HAVE TO NAVIGATE?

MYSTERY SHOP

An information audit of the point of display of large, energy-intensive home appliances.





MYSTERY SHOPPING OVERVIEW

What did we want to know?

What information are consumers exposed to at the point of display when purchasing large, energy-intensive home appliances?

What could have the potential to mislead consumers?

What did we do?

An information audit of the point of display of large, energy-intensive home appliances.

We conducted a mystery shop of 120 energy-intensive home appliances across 5 states as well as a series of online shops.

How did we do it?

- 1. Asked sales assistants to help them find an appliance that was good for the environment and energy bills
- 2. Recorded details of information provided, and
- 3. Photographed information at the point of display.



NEEDS AND CHALLENGES

BREADTH OF STORES & APPLIANCES



WE WANTED DIVERSITY IN STORE TYPE, SIZE & LOCATION, WHILE MAKING SURE ALL STORES HAD RELEVANT STOCK

SALES ASSISTANT INTERACTIONS



WE NEEDED TO STANDARDISE THE
GUIDANCE PROVIDED TO EACH MYSTERY
SHOPPER & SEMI-SCRIPT THE
CONVERSATION WITH THE SALES ASSISTANT

INFORMATION COLLECTION



WE WANTED STANDARDISED RECORDING OF ALL INFORMATION TO MAKE SURE ALL SHOPPERS CAPTURED RELEVANT INFORMATION IN DETAIL



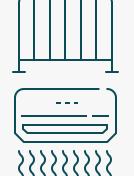
120 APPLIANCES MYSTERY SHOPPED











 fridges washing machines clothes dryers 15 electric ovens electric heaters split system air-conditioners

	Harvey Norman	Good Guys	JB Hi-Fi	Betta Home Living	Bing Lee	Bi-Rite	Other smaller stores	TOTAL
Adelaide	13	6	5	-	-	-	2	26
Brisbane	4	4	1	2	-	2	6	19
Melbourne	8	4	-	1	-	-	6	19
Perth	6	4	2	2	-	-	2	16
Sydney	4	4	-	4	6	2	-	20
Online	2	2	2	-	2	2	10	20
TOTAL	37	24	10	9	8	6	26	120

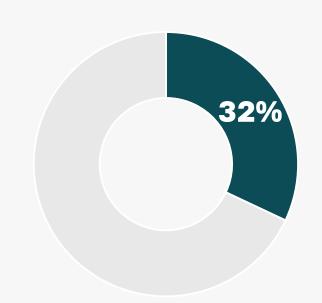


WHAT WE FOUND

SHOPPERS FACED MISLEADING SALES TACTICS FROM SALES ASSISTANTS



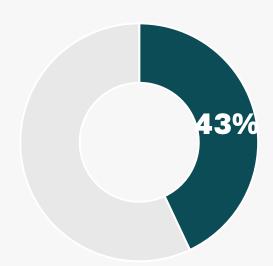
USED VAGUE GREEN CLAIMS



"The sales assistant referred to the fridge as being good for the environment.

They said that the fridge was eco-friendly and good on power."

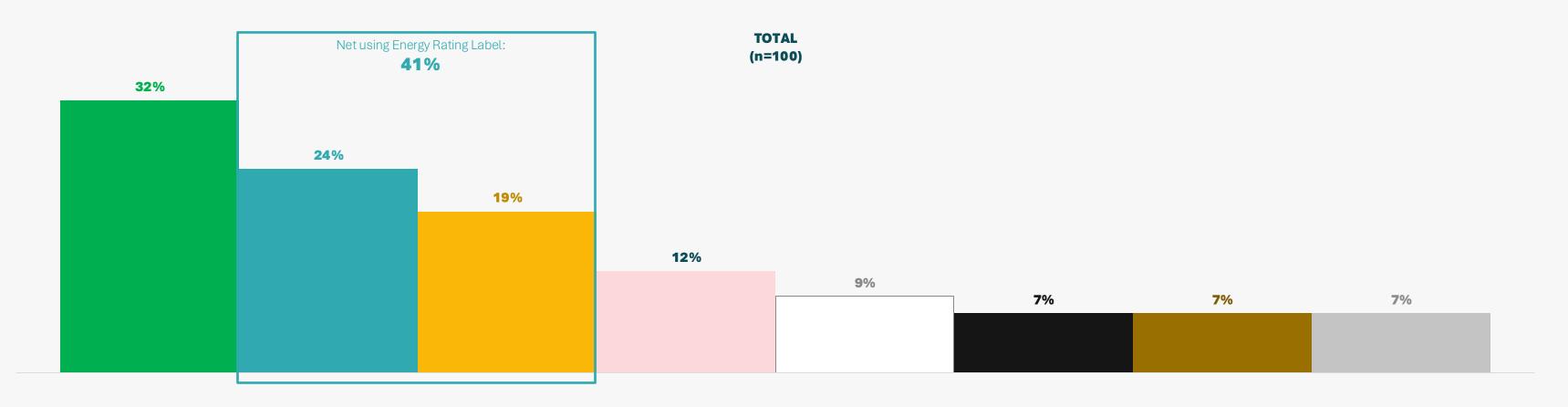








SALES ASSISTANTS MOST OFTEN RELIED ON THE ENERGY RATING OR USED VAGUE TERMS.



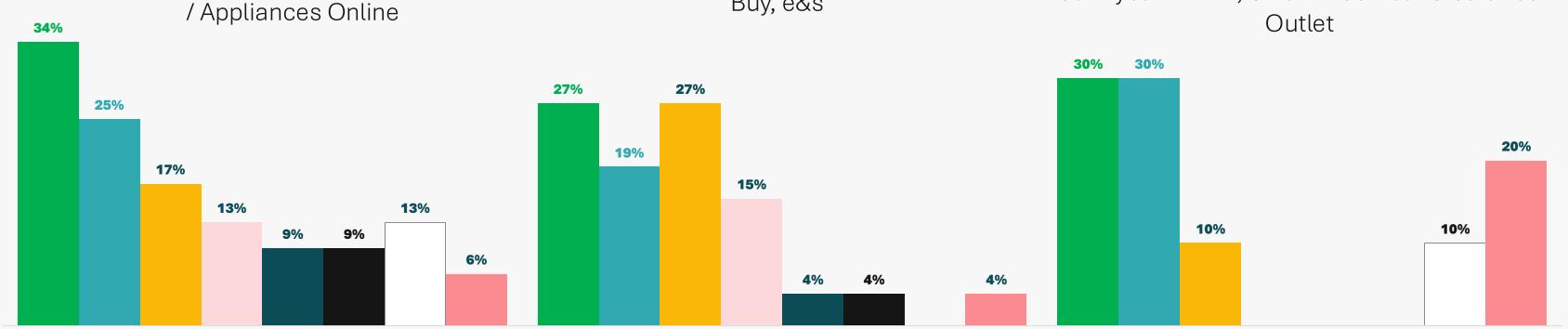
- Vague terms used, e.g. Good for environment mentioned / eco-friendly / efficient / saves energy (inc "Green certification")
- Referred to / compared energy (or water) consumption (kWh)
- Referred to / compared energy star rating
- Brand referred to as "best", most energy efficient
- ☐ Referred to advanced technology
- Environment not mentioned, e.g. good machine / good quality
- Did not know / confused
- Chose not to comment / no eco ratings on oven / depends on use



SALES ASSISTANTS MOST OFTEN RELIED ON THE ENERGY RATING OR USED VAGUE TERMS.



Mid tier state specific: Bing Lee, Betta Home Living, Bi-Rite, Retravision, Best Buy, e&s **Small independent:** Electrical Whitegoods Centre, Brisbane Whitegoods Factory Outlet, Sunnybank Hi-Fi, Smart Electrical Clearance Outlet



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39% OF APPLIANCE DISPLAYS SHOWED VAGUE GREEN CLAIMS

MOSTLY FOUND:

- Large national stores
- Online marketplaces

LARGE NATIONAL STORES TENDED TO HAVE MORE MARKETING ON DISPLAY COMPARED TO SMALL INDEPENDENT STORES. ONLINE MARKETPLACES WERE OVERLOADED WITH INFORMATION.

Large national: Harvey Norman / JB Hi-Fi / Good Guys / Appliances Online



Mid tier state specific: Bing Lee, Betta Home Living, Bi-Rite, Retravision, Best Buy, e&s

Rated 10 stars for energy efficiency

Super Energy Efficient



Noirot

W Spot Plus Heate

Split System Airconditioner. Its efficient cooling and heating capabilities provide optimal climate control. With advanced features and eco-friendly R32 refrigerant, this air conditioner offers performance and sustainability.

We Won't Be Beaten on Price

FREE DELIVERY

BONUS DIGITAL PRE-PAID MASTERCARD

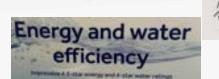
Make the switch to sustainable appliances and reduce your

Designed to lower the wash temperature and energy used on

your cycle, the Eco wash option helps you get the laundry done with less impact on the environment.

the Whirlpool 313 litre Bottom Mount Fridge is the perfect choice for those seeking a reliable, energy-

efficient and stylish refrigerator



Al Energy Mode Activates cool water, saving on energy consumption3

THE PLANET

repressive 4.5 star everys

Ausclimate EcoSmart Pro 1500W Panel Heater - Grev







Small independent: Electrical Whitegoods Centre, Brisbane Whitegoods Factory Outlet, Sunnybank Hi-Fi, Smart Electrical Clearance Outlet





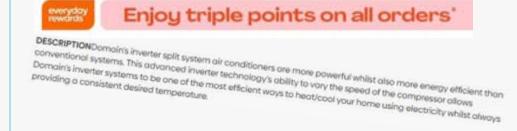




Online marketplaces: Kogan, MyDeal, Catch of the Day

Peaceful and efficient cooling

Whisper-quiet at 43 decibels, this fridge doesn't just keep your food cold--it keeps your home calm. Paired with pinpoint LED illumination, grabbing a midnight snack or pre-dawn bite is hassle-free. And with its stellar 4-star energy rating, expect to see your energy bills shrink, while your storage options expand.





HIGH EFFICIENCY, HIGH DURABILITY, LOW NOISE

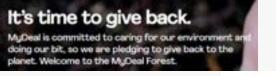
Don't stress about your energy bill or give yourself a headache every time you wash your clothes. Thanks to a brushless motor design, ProSmart" offers energy efficiency, lower sound levels and higher durability all in a single machine. All so you get the most from your washing machine without disturbing your monthly budget or piece of mind.

100% energy saving LED technology.



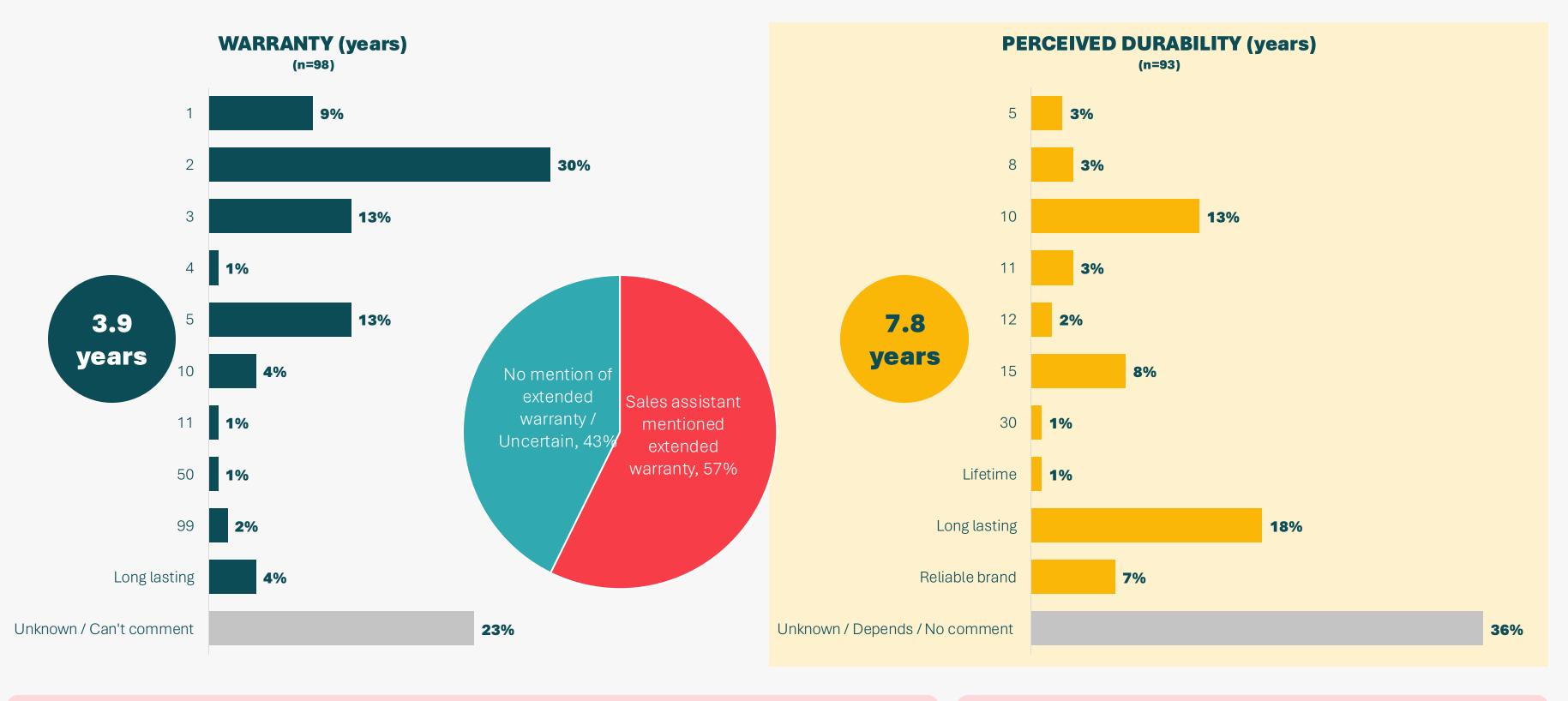


Efficient, economical heating





WHEN ASKED HOW LONG THE APPLIANCE SHOULD LAST, MORE THAN HALF OF THE SALES ASSISTANTS MENTIONED AN EXTENDED WARRANTY.



"They said the fridge should last much more than the warranty. They said Hisense was a reputable brand from China and they made good quality fridges."

"Tim advised that both were of long-lasting quality and that they were reliable brands."





WHAT'S NEXT?

STAGE B. QUALITATIVE DISCUSSION GROUPS

8 focus groups with consumers in Adelaide, Melbourne, Newcastle and Cairns to unpack purchase behaviours and responses to mystery shop materials collected.

STAGE C. QUANTITATIVE DISCRETE CHOICE EXPERIMENT

Deriving importance of purchase decision criteria and information among N=1,500 Australians.

REPORT RELEASE & WEBINAR

Mid 2025



VISIT US

CONTACT US

Level 6,

179 Queen Street

Melbourne VIC 3000

Australia

+61 3 9607 7101

office@cprc.org.au

www.cprc.org.au





