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Woolworths bag phase out – major step

The Boomerang Alliance has welcomed today's announcement by Woolworths that they will phase-out their 15 cent heavyweight plastic bags within 12 months. These slightly thicker bags remain a waste and litter problem, and are unnecessary in Australia, the group said.

'We welcome this announcement, and we commend Woolworths for taking this major step; and encourage them to move quickly on their intention to remove all bags like single use paper ones, that don't meet a genuine reusable standard,' said Jeff Angel Director of the Alliance of 55 groups.

'The Boomerang Alliance (BA) has put forward proposals for a national Reusable Shopping Bag Standard, and we urge Woolworths to adopt this by providing bags that meet this standard.'

The BA standard requires that all bags sold should be designed to be reused at least 125 times for the purposes of shopping. They should be durable; able to carry a certain weight for a set distance; have a minimum recycled content; and able to be collected at supermarkets or shops for recycling at the end of their useful life.

'Woolworths have pushed past Coles which intends to keep supplying the slightly thicker bag,' Mr Angel said.

'We are now calling on all state and territory governments to regulate the use of shopping bags by adopting a Reusable Bag Standard that ensures only genuinely reusable bags are available for consumers and greenwash is outlawed.'