



# HSA Survey 2019

## - Changes to Lift Passes

**Audience:**

Hotham Stakeholders

**Author:**

The Hotham Ski Association (HSA) Committee

December 2019

Version 1\_0

# Introduction

- The Hotham Lift Company was purchased by the Vail Group in 2019
- The Hotham Lift Company during 2019 announced changes to the existing lift pass products, where they have been replaced by a Vail Group aligned set of products
- This resulted in unrepresented feedback and requests for action by the HSA
- The HSA discussed these changes with the Hotham Lift Company and other representative bodies over the past 3 months
- The HSA has developed this survey to gain additional data for further discussions and general awareness of impact of the changes

## Notes:

- The HSA has requested a simple table to map previous existing lift pass products to the newly introduced products. To date this has not been forthcoming
- The HSA has collated the survey data – without change and being to the participants of this survey

# Conclusions

The survey highlights the following:

- There were 332 individual responses
- The majority of responses were in the mid to higher age demographic
- The majority of responses ski less than 10 days per season at Hotham
- Just over 50% purchase Hero passes
- The majority find the Hero pass good value and would prefer to maintain the Hero pass
- The majority do not find benefit in the new Epic pass – unless they ski overseas using Vail Group resorts / lifts
- The vast majority do not believe the changes to the over 70 years group is reasonable
- Regardless of the changes, the majority will still ski at Hotham and not change their mountain
- There was a surprising low response from locally based skiers to Hotham who receive discount lift passes

# Direct Quotes – The Positive (1)

- I love Hotham! Its my favorite mountain in OZ
- I will travel to North hemisphere so I may get some benefit from the epic pass but I don't think the majority of season pass holders would travel
- All hail Vail, at last Hotham is owned by a ski resort company. What did Merlin do for the last seven years?
- Since I live in the ACT I find the Epic seasons pass very worth while for choices of ski locations within Aust. It is a shame that certain privileges have been removed for certain people but for others there has been a financial and/or convenient gains.

# Direct Quotes – The Negative (1)

- It is sad to think I have skied my last run at Heavenly.
- Would be nice to have some sort of prior advice or say. At least this survey asks for opinions
- The process of announcement of this substantial change has been very poorly managed by ski lifts. We can only assume that ski lifts were trying to minimize skier pushback and negative publicity. Some more open honesty is required. Just that it seems we are now part of a global organization who don't respond to emails and does not have telephone number to contact them. Seems like we are small fish in a very large ocean now
- Having supported the development of Hotham for half a century I am disgusted that a National Park (owned by all Victorians, not just politicians) is being used for extracting our money with minimal input for future development and no recognition of past input
- Lack of loyalty by lift company
- Will no longer ski at Hotham nor will my family
- I think that some creative special offers like a few special vouchers would ultimately be of significant benefit to the ski company. It is miserly to cull those and short sighted
- USA & Canada have a tiered age pass: 60+ and a 75+ . Also, you missed the change in kids. 'Free' for young kids has been reduced by a year!

## Direct Quotes – The Negative (2)

- This year was pretty messy for Hotham users, not knowing if the Epic pass was available for them or not. Also there was different information provided through the season and personnel about what vouchers were currently available and valid. The info online was confusing. Hopefully that will be clearer in coming years
- New operators should be seen as looking after their clients. This approach indicates they are only concerned about profit. Lowering the prices of tickets means more people may come up to ski
- Too expensive for an old small lift system and lift queries
- Stop being greedy corporations, look at numbers properly and see the real \$\$\$\$. Perhaps stop wasting money at the top end of management and pass them down the line to the everyday person trying to enjoy a costly sport at the best of time. It's just not dollars - I spend up to 420 hours minimum travelling to the resort before the corporation starts draining my money
- What are the planned upgrades of the resort, to justify the price? Is there an increase in the charges the state of Victoria are charging? After living over seas and regularly skiing in France and Austria, where there are much better services, I am a little hesitant to continue using your service
- Drop the prices including car passes and you'll attract more people. We know lots of people who have stopped going due to high prices

## Direct Quotes – The Negative (3)

- Not surprised, global company more interested in driving activity to their other resorts, removing local flavor so they are all the same wherever you go
- No, just design a better survey next time. Lift tickets are stupidly expensive, especially for the quality of lifts on offer, a little bit of padding and a pull over cover for heavenly chair should be a minimum upgrade
- We have one less lift with removal of playground double chair yet higher costs. I don't want my Hotham season pass to impact on where i choose to ski overseas
- Increasing lift ticket prices will definitely put off people coming to Hotham if they are in the marginal bracket. They will go & spend their money elsewhere instead of going to the snow
- Becoming too expensive for more average snow conditions and overcrowding
- I am disappointed that there has been no communication about benefits and additions to Hotham under new management and yet they are removing previous benefits whilst increasing price. Where are the economies of scale for running the resorts together?
- Yes I believe they are going to charge for 5 year olds where previously they were free
- We know why Vail Group bought the resorts its to funnel you to their resorts OS so I say resist

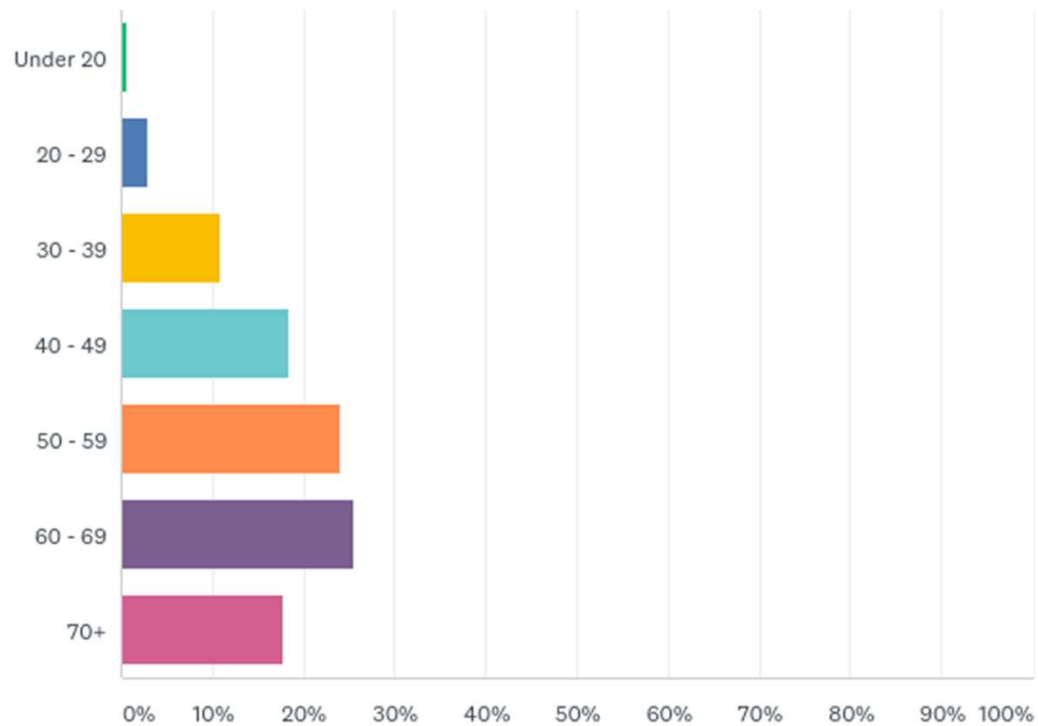
# Direct Quotes – The Negative (4)

- Removing locals pass is terrible, especially for kids. many local families only ski a few times a year, not justifying a season pass. this will no doubt result in many giving up alpine skiing. I don't know what is proposed for school sport days. I would hate to think that alpine skiing was too expensive for school programs to continue. in the longer term this could also reduce the number of locals wanting to work on the mountain
- Put people before profits
- The lift are becoming more expensive, less reliable and more over crowded. The mountain needs additional lift capacity to match the increased accommodation capacity. I am seriously considering selling my lodge membership and skiing overseas from now on
- The strategic plans for Hotham have had focus on making skiing available to a wider section of the community. By charging higher prices (season or day prices), it inevitably limits the availability to many people
- To ensure the future of the resort, Hotham needs to target new skiers, especially kids from the local Valley. Take a look at the early bird Mount Hutt (NZ) season pass pricing for 2019 (2 weeks ago they had the busiest October day on the mountain ever) Very smart operators. Hotham needs to introduce a cheap locals pass and look at bargain lift prices and mountain entry for June and September. Skiing in Australia is bloody expensive, no wonder so many people are now only skiing overseas.



# Q1: What is your age group?

- Answered: 332 Skipped: 0



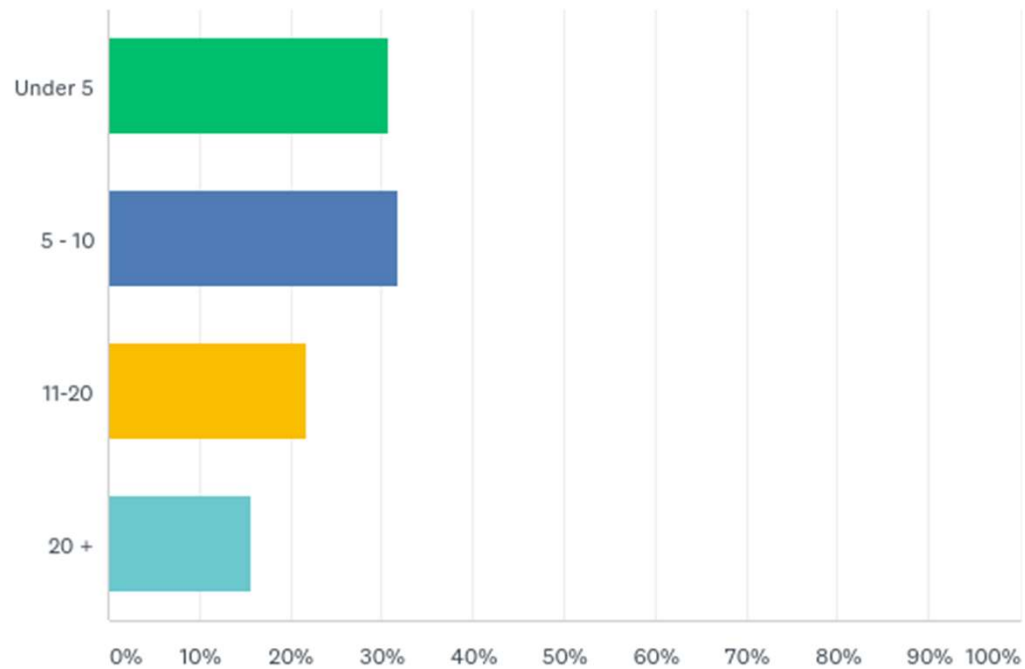
# Q1: What is your age group?

- Answered: 332 Skipped: 0

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Under 20	0.60%	2
20 - 29	3.01%	10
30 - 39	10.84%	36
40 - 49	18.37%	61
50 - 59	24.10%	80
60 - 69	25.60%	85
70+	17.77%	59
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>332</b>

# Q2: How many skiing days did you ski at Mt Hotham this year (2019)?

- Answered: 326 Skipped: 6



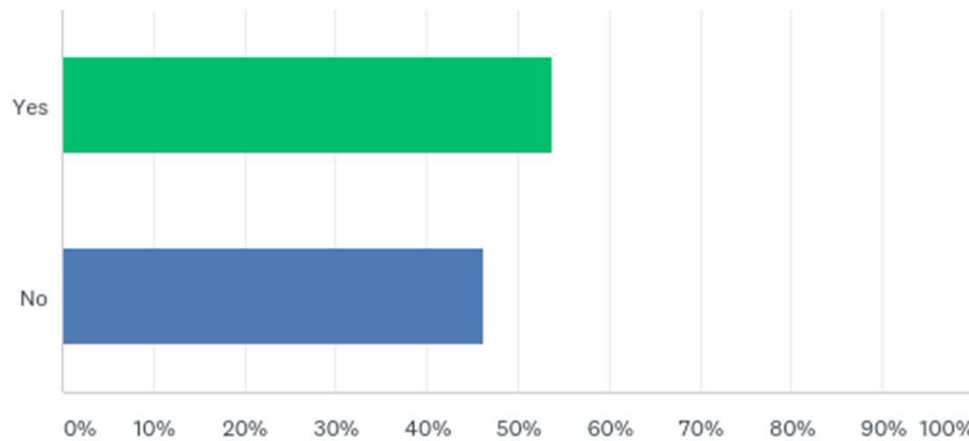
# Q2: How many skiing days did you ski at Mt Hotham this year (2019)?

- Answered: 326    Skipped: 6

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Under 5	30.67%	100
5 - 10	31.90%	104
11-20	21.78%	71
20 +	15.64%	51
TOTAL		326

# Q3: Have you purchased a Hero Pass in recent years?

- Answered: 312 Skipped: 20



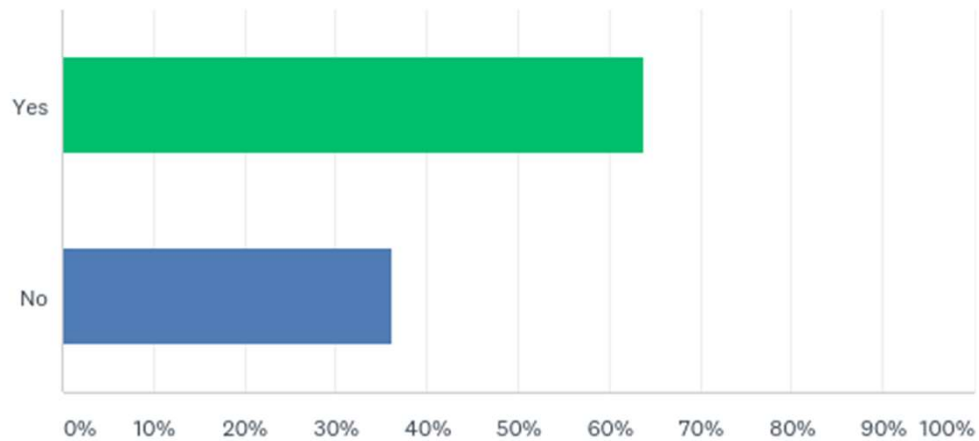
# Q3: Have you purchased a Hero Pass in recent years?

- Answered: 312    Skipped: 20

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	53.85%	168
No	46.15%	144
TOTAL		312

# Q4: Did you find the Hero Pass good value?

- Answered: 307 Skipped: 25



# Q4: Did you find the Hero Pass good value?

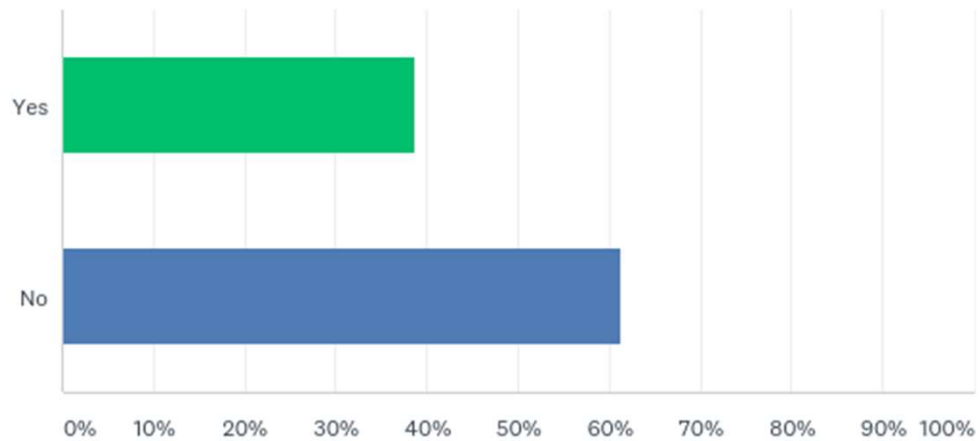
- Answered: 307    Skipped: 25

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	63.84%	196
No	36.16%	111
TOTAL		307



# Q5: Did you use the additional benefits of the Hero Pass?

- Answered: 295 Skipped: 37



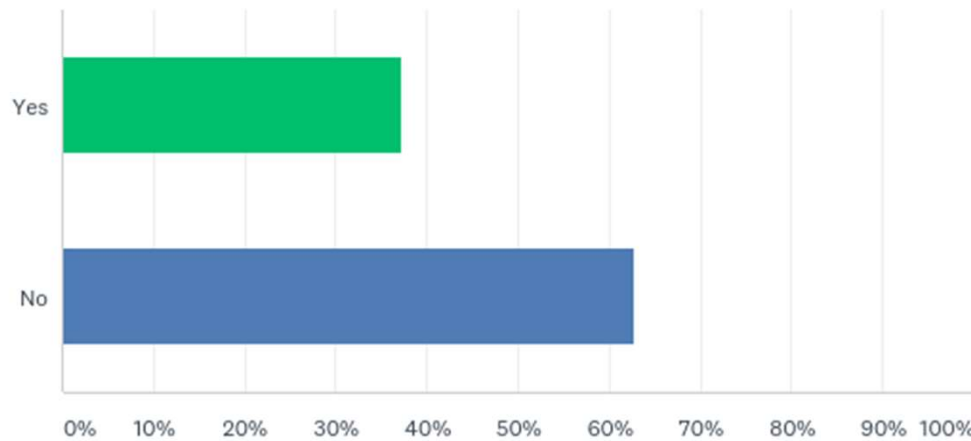
# Q5: Did you use the additional benefits of the Hero Pass?

- Answered: 295    Skipped: 37

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	38.64%	114
No	61.36%	181
TOTAL		295

# Q6: Do you see any extra usable value in the benefits offered by the Epic Australia Pass?

- Answered: 284 Skipped: 48



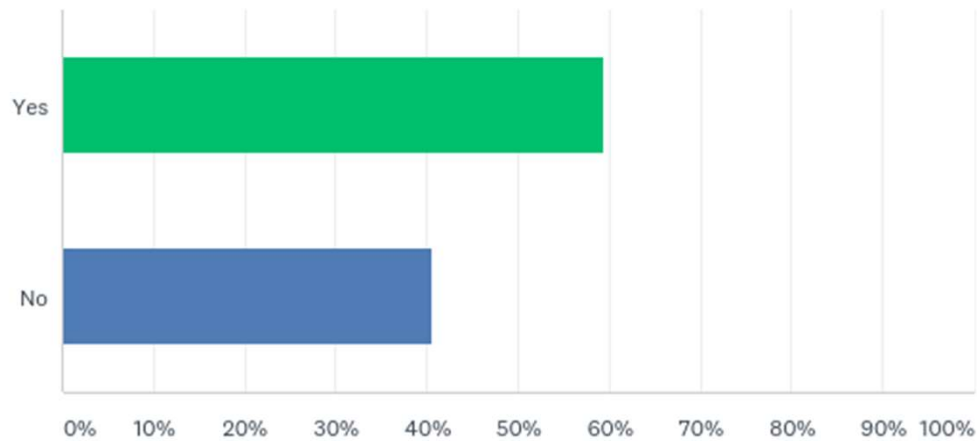
# Q6: Do you see any extra usable value in the benefits offered by the Epic Australia Pass?

- Answered: 284 Skipped: 48

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	37.32%	106
No	62.68%	178
TOTAL		284

# Q7: Would you have preferred an option of staying with the Hero Pass?

- Answered: 271 Skipped: 61



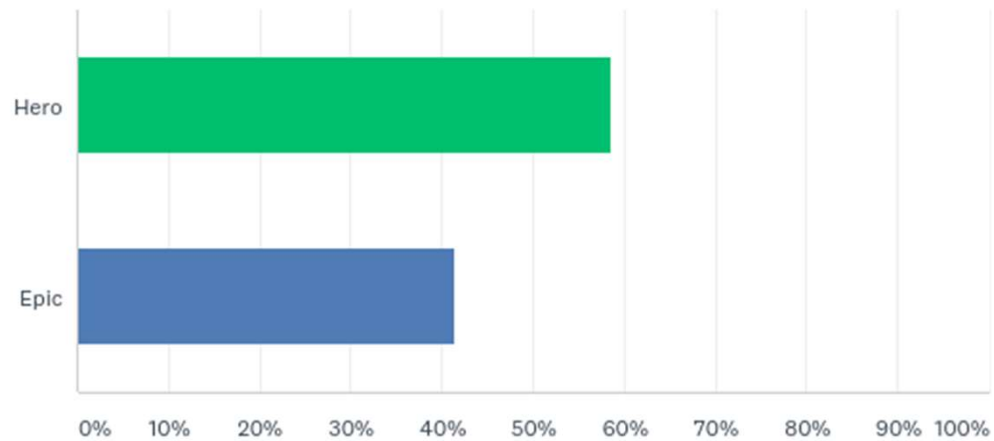
# Q7: Would you have preferred an option of staying with the Hero Pass?

- Answered: 271    Skipped: 61

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	59.41%	161
No	40.59%	110
TOTAL		271

# Q8: Which pass do you think offers the best value?

- Answered: 244 Skipped: 88



# Q8: Which pass do you think offers the best value?

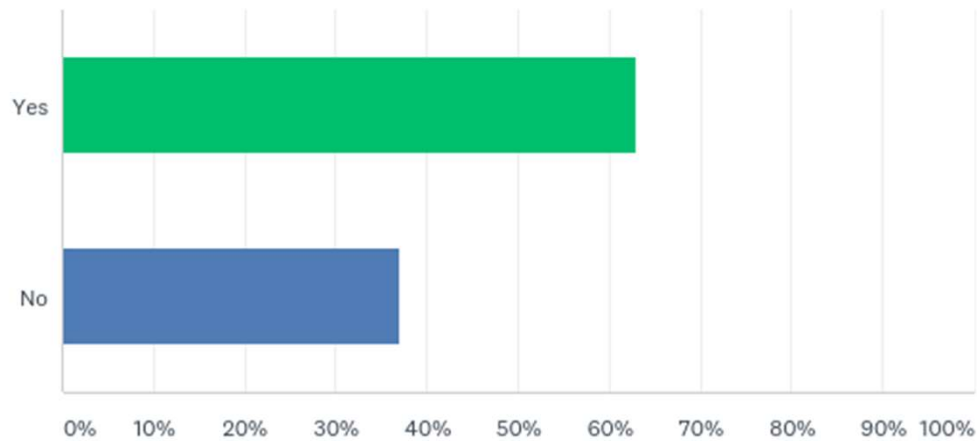
- Answered: 244    Skipped: 88

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Hero	58.61%	143
Epic	41.39%	101
TOTAL		244



# Q9: Are you aware that some of the Hero Pass benefits have been removed with the Epic Australia Pass?

- Answered: 240 Skipped: 92



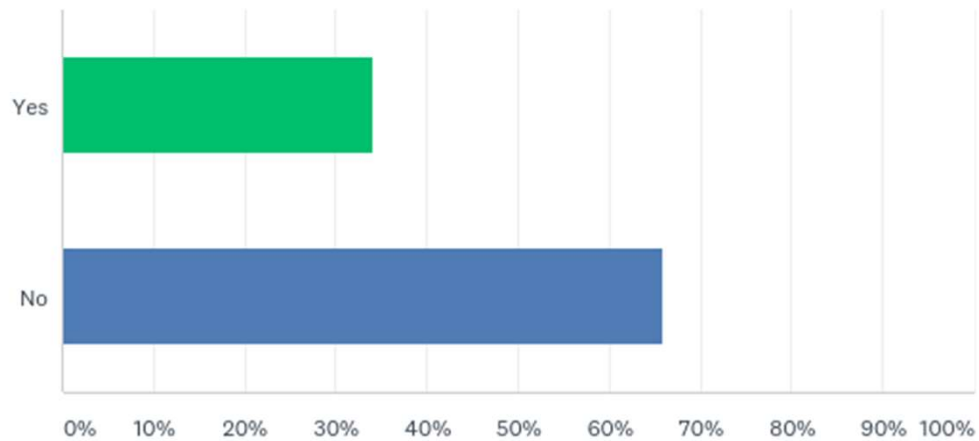
# Q9: Are you aware that some of the Hero Pass benefits have been removed with the Epic Australia Pass?

- Answered: 240 Skipped: 92

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	62.92%	151
No	37.08%	89
TOTAL		240

# Q10: Do you think the proposed \$199 season pass for 70+ skiers is reasonable?

- Answered: 237 Skipped: 95



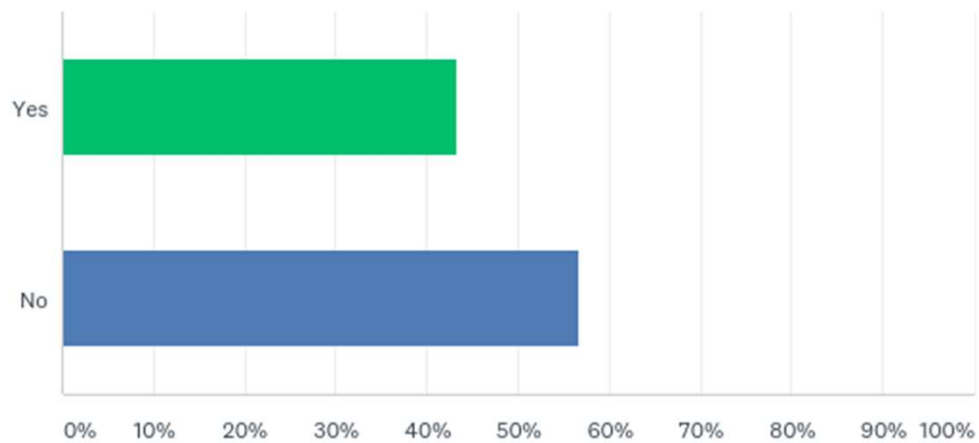
# Q10: Do you think the proposed \$199 season pass for 70+ skiers is reasonable?

- Answered: 237 Skipped: 95

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	34.18%	81
No	65.82%	156
TOTAL		237

# Q11: Will the removal of the free 70+ skiers season pass affect your skiing at Hotham?

- Answered: 233 Skipped: 99



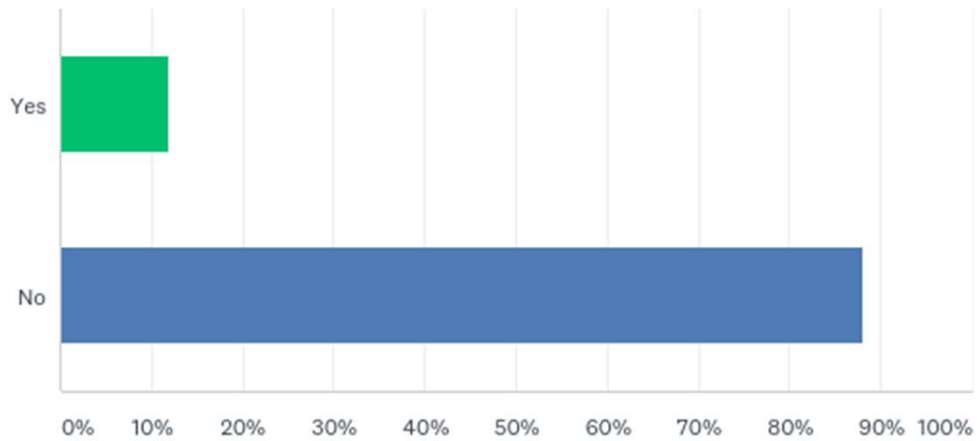
# Q11: Will the removal of the free 70+ skiers season pass affect your skiing at Hotham?

- Answered: 233    Skipped: 99

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	43.35%	101
No	56.65%	132
TOTAL		233

# Q12: Do you qualify for the local skier concession?

- Answered: 233 Skipped: 99



# Q12: Do you qualify for the local skier concession?

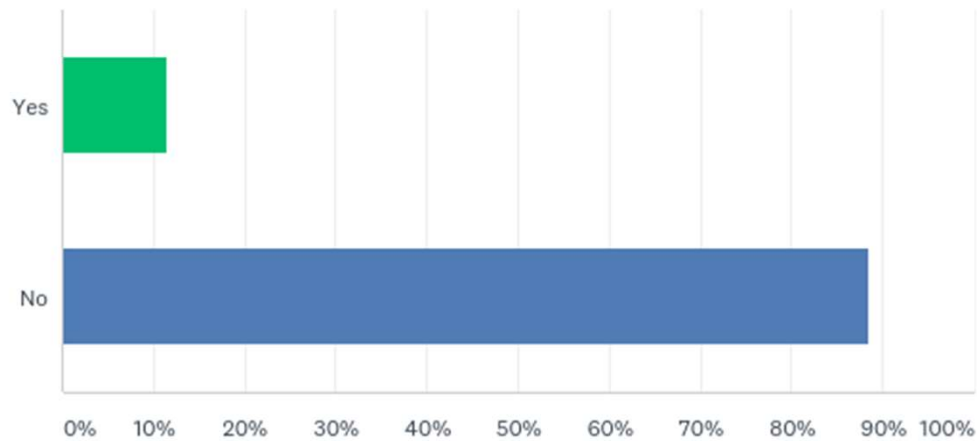
- Answered: 233    Skipped: 99

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	12.02%	28
No	87.98%	205
TOTAL		233



# Q13: Will the removal of the local skier concession affect your skiing at Hotham?

- Answered: 233 Skipped: 99



# Q13: Will the removal of the local skier concession affect your skiing at Hotham?

- Answered: 233 Skipped: 99

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	11.59%	27
No	88.41%	206
TOTAL		233