

This study was conducted when ACTF worked under the auspices of the Industry Council for Tangible Assets. The task force is now part of the Anti-Counterfeiting Educational Foundation.



ACTF Coin Dealer Survey

Counterfeit coins & bars

Conducted electronically June 7-14, 2018

Dealer members of ICTA, PNG, ANA

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About the ACTF Survey

How many counterfeit coins and bars are in the U.S. marketplace?

That is the question everyone asks. But, realistically there's no practical way to factually determine the quantity.

Members of the Research Work Group of the Anti-Counterfeiting Task Force decided that one way to begin gathering data would be to survey coin dealers, who are on the frontlines of the battle against counterfeiters of coins and precious metals bars.

The 20 questions contained in this survey were prepared by the ACTF Research Work Group in consultation with individuals who have professional experience in administering surveys designed to gather factual data.

Dealer members of ICTA, the Professional Numismatist Guild, and the American Numismatic Association were selected to participate in the survey. Since many dealers are members of two or more of the three organizations, duplicate names and email addresses were eliminated, thus assuring that no participant would have the opportunity to respond more than once to the survey.

The survey was administered online June 7 through June 14, 2018.

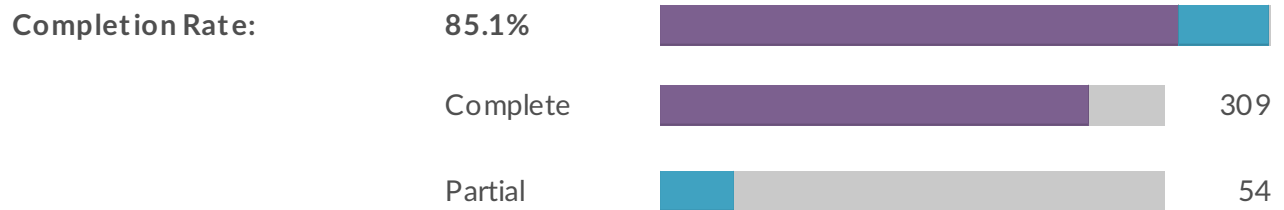
Survey results have been made available to the media and have also been shared with U.S. government decision makers concerned about the impact of counterfeit coins, bars, and packaging materials and with law enforcement officials responsible for enforcing laws against counterfeiting and fraud.

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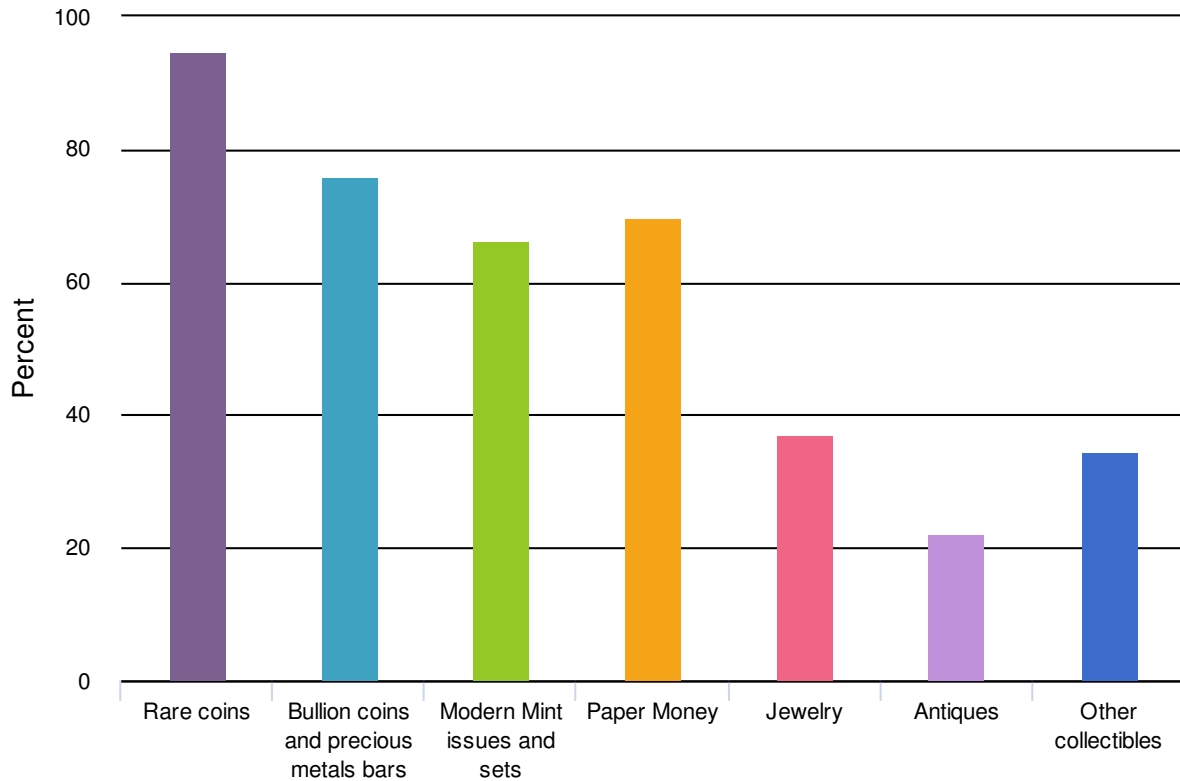
ACTF Dealer Survey Report

Response Counts



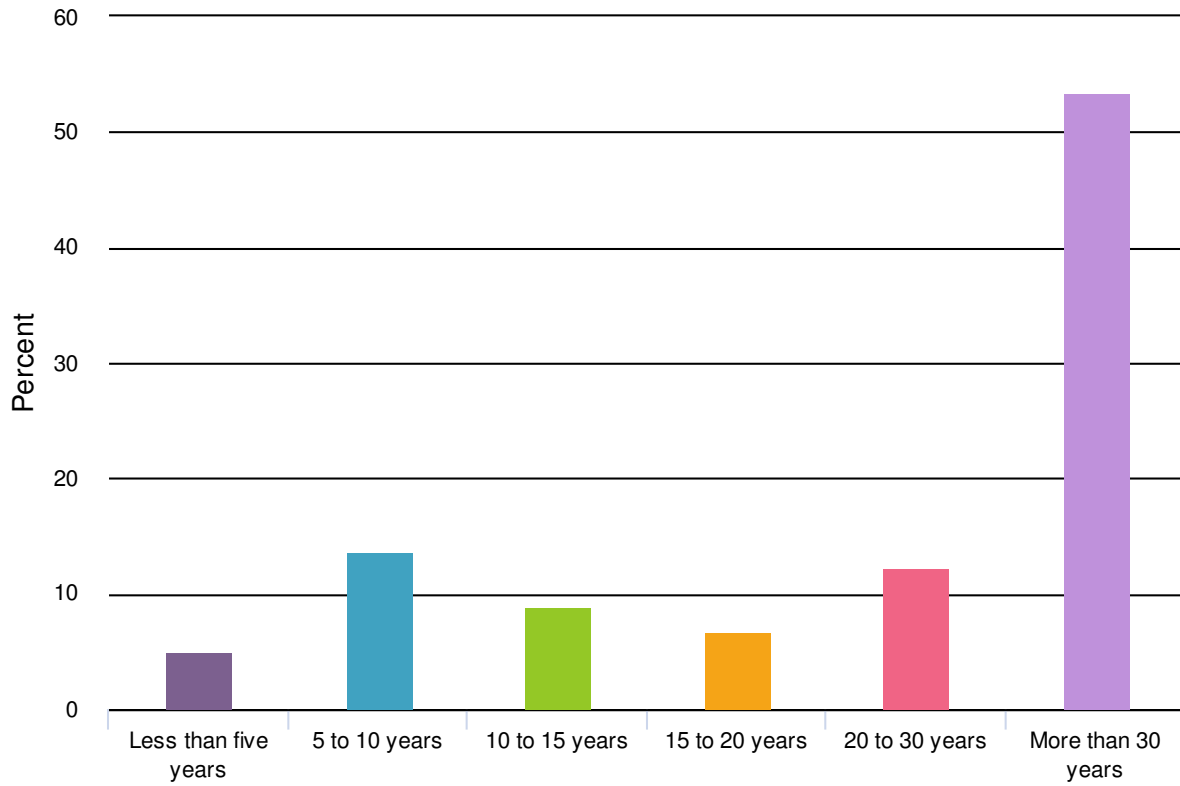
Totals: 363

1. Does your business buy and sell:



Value	Percent	Responses
Rare coins	94.7%	340
Bullion coins and precious metals bars	75.8%	272
Modern Mint issues and sets	66.3%	238
Paper Money	69.9%	251
Jewelry	37.0%	133
Antiques	22.3%	80
Other collectibles	34.5%	124

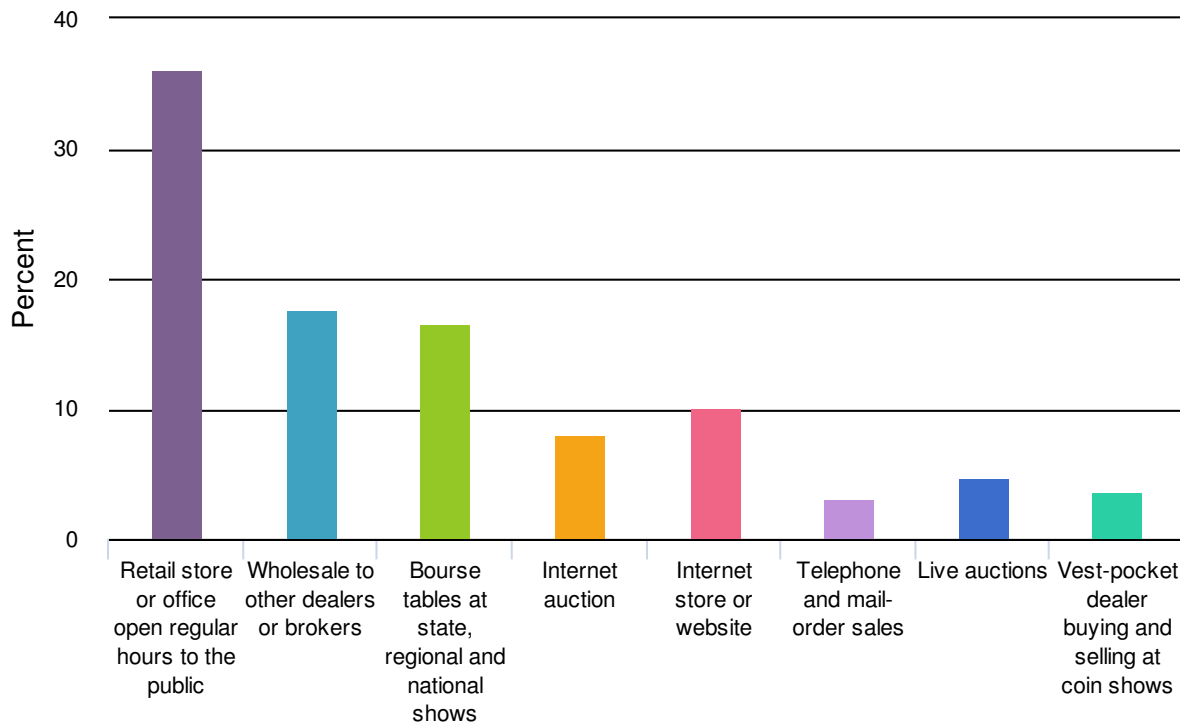
2. How long have you operated a business buying and selling coins?



Value	Percent	Responses
Less than five years	5.0%	18
5 to 10 years	13.6%	49
10 to 15 years	8.9%	32
15 to 20 years	6.7%	24
20 to 30 years	12.3%	44
More than 30 years	53.5%	192

Totals: 359

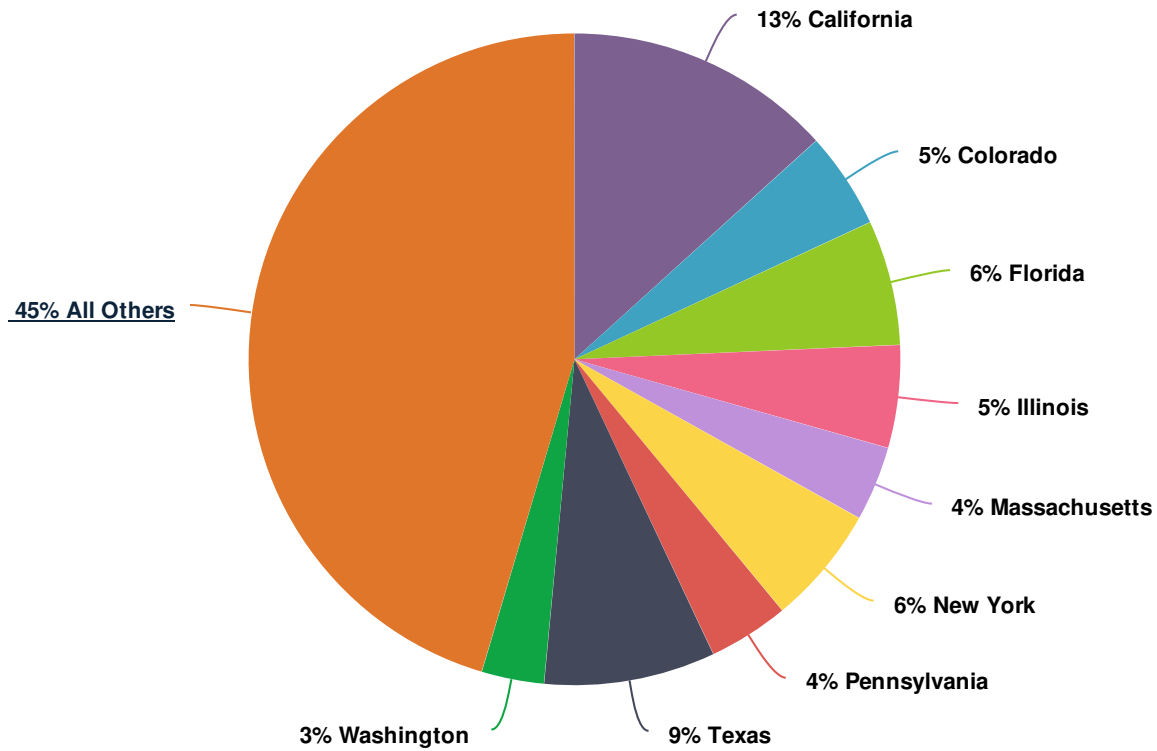
3. Which best describes the primary way you buy and sell coins?



Value	Percent	Responses
Retail store or office open regular hours to the public	36.1%	129
Wholesale to other dealers or brokers	17.6%	63
Bourse tables at state, regional and national shows	16.5%	59
Internet auction	8.1%	29
Internet store or website	10.1%	36
Telephone and mail-order sales	3.1%	11
Live auctions	4.8%	17
Vest-pocket dealer buying and selling at coin shows	3.6%	13

Totals: 357

4. In which state is your business located?

















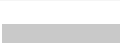

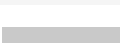


Value	Percent	Responses
California	13.3%	47
Colorado	4.8%	17
Florida	6.2%	22
Illinois	5.1%	18
Massachusetts	3.7%	13
New York	5.9%	21
Pennsylvania	4.0%	14
Texas	8.5%	30

Totals: 354

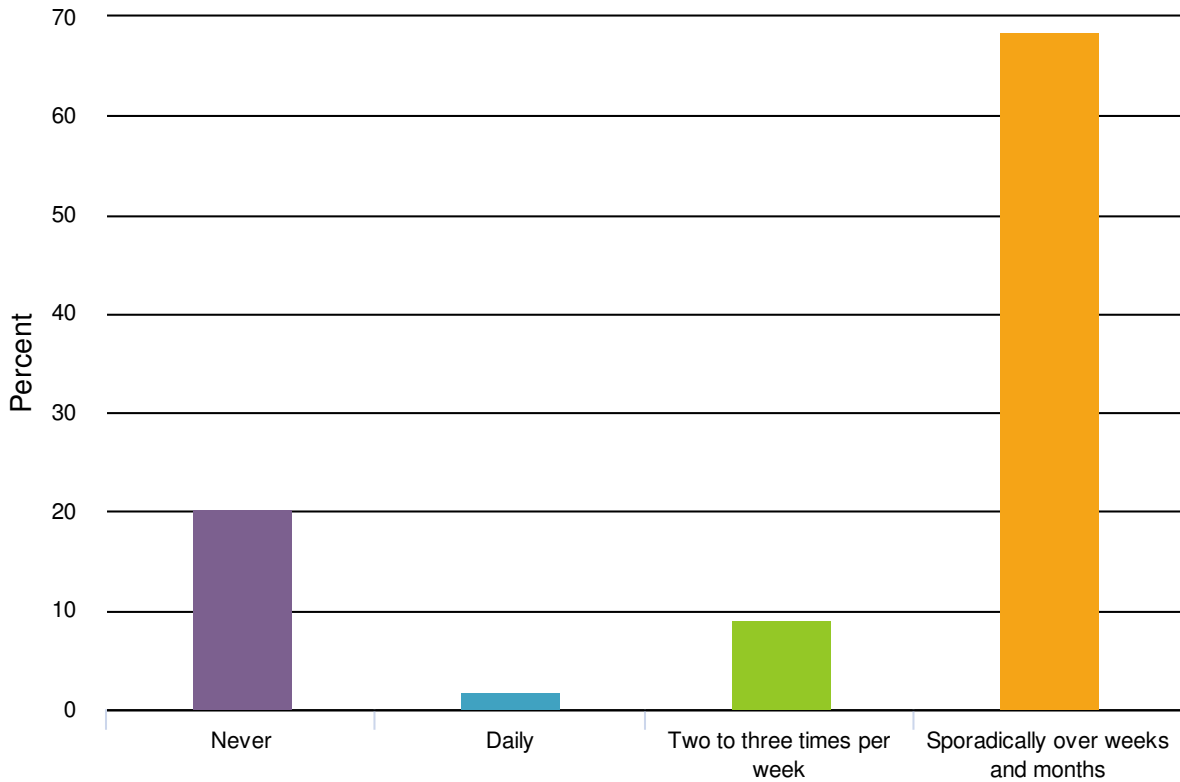
Value		Percent	Responses
Washington		3.1%	11
Alabama		0.8%	3
Alaska		0.3%	1
Arizona		2.3%	8
Arkansas		0.6%	2
Connecticut		2.5%	9
Delaware		0.3%	1
Georgia		2.3%	8
Idaho		1.4%	5
Indiana		1.7%	6
Iowa		0.6%	2
Kansas		1.4%	5
Kentucky		1.1%	4
Louisiana		0.6%	2
Maine		0.8%	3
Maryland		0.8%	3
Michigan		2.5%	9
Minnesota		2.5%	9
Missouri		1.1%	4
Nebraska		0.6%	2

Totals: 354

Value		Percent	Responses
Nevada		1.1%	4
New Hampshire		1.4%	5
New Jersey		2.3%	8
New Mexico		0.3%	1
North Carolina		1.1%	4
North Dakota		0.8%	3
Ohio		2.3%	8
Oklahoma		1.1%	4
Oregon		2.5%	9
Rhode Island		0.3%	1
South Carolina		1.1%	4
Tennessee		1.7%	6
Utah		0.3%	1
Vermont		0.3%	1
Virginia		2.5%	9
Washington, D.C.		0.3%	1
West Virginia		0.6%	2
Wisconsin		0.6%	2
Wyoming		0.6%	2

Totals: 354

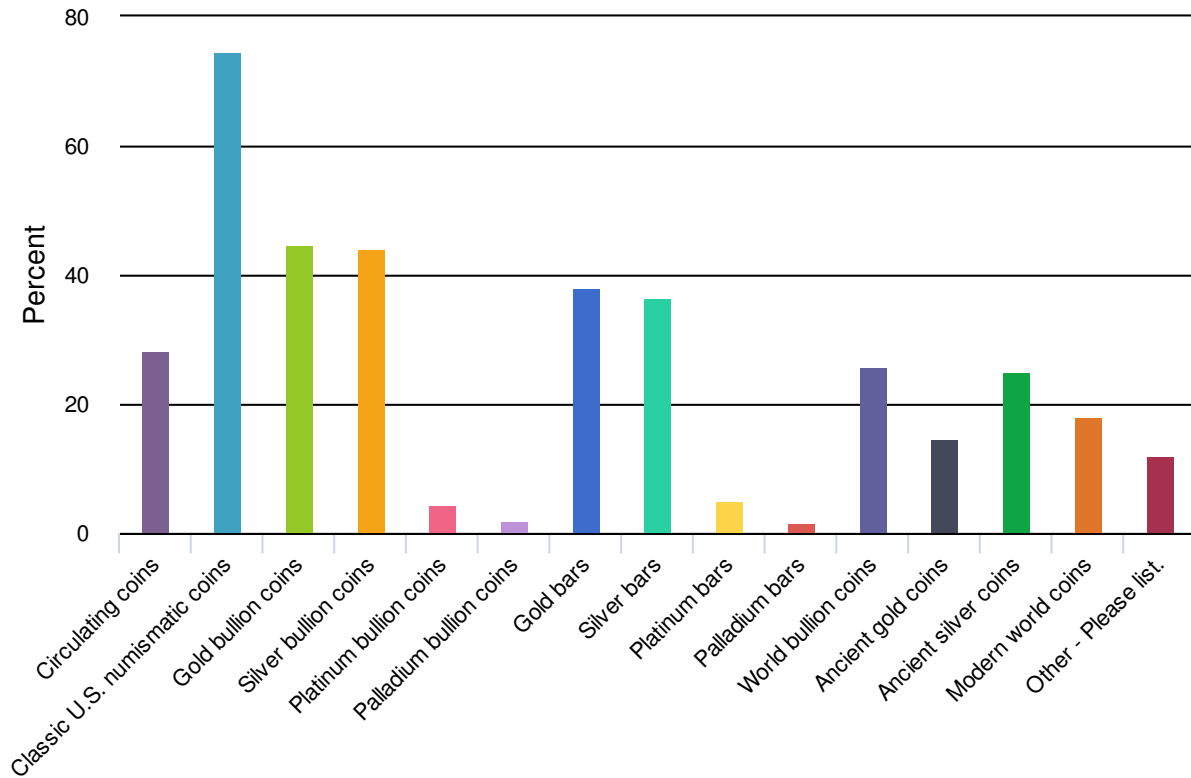
5. How often in the past year has someone offered to sell you or members of your staff coins or precious metals bars that you believe were counterfeit or tests proved to be counterfeit?



Value	Percent	Responses
Never	20.3%	73
Daily	1.9%	7
Two to three times per week	9.2%	33
Sporadically over weeks and months	68.6%	247

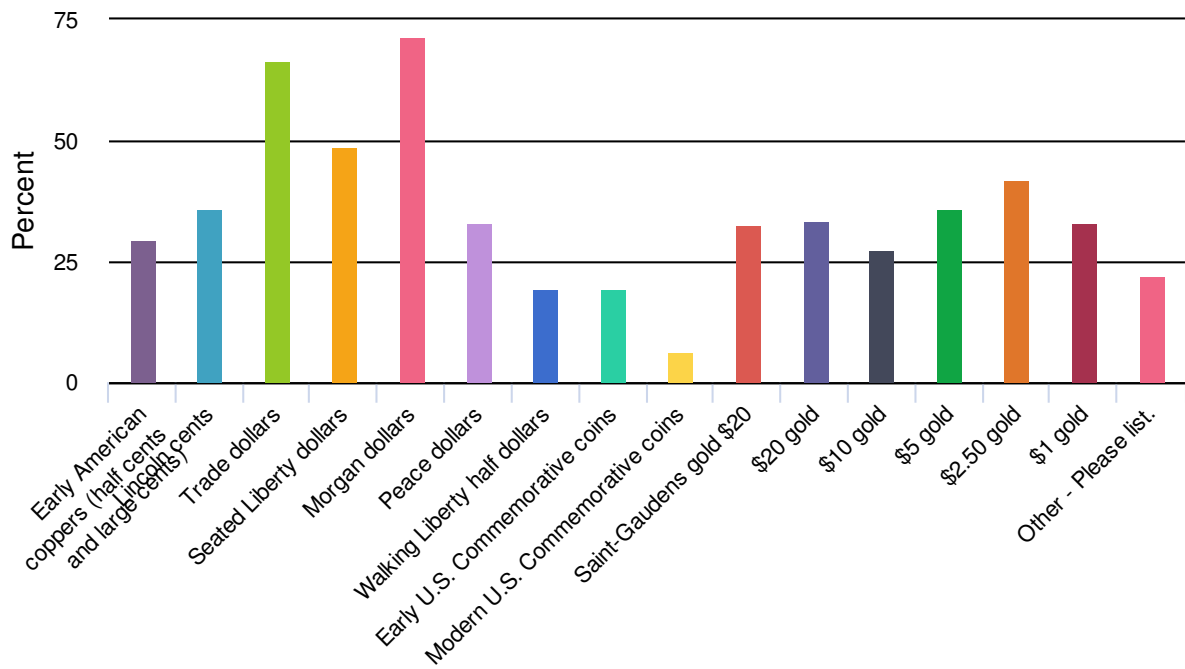
Totals: 360

















6. If someone has attempted to sell you counterfeit coins or bars, please identify types offered to you.



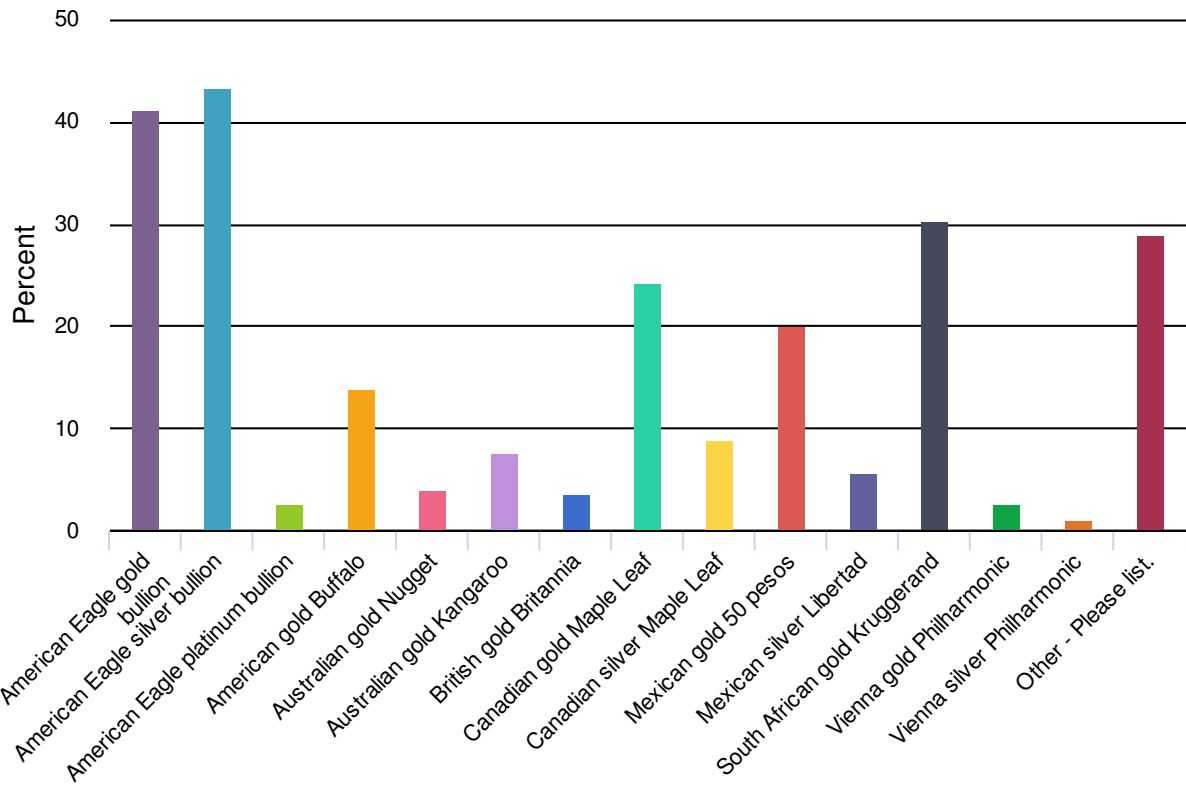
Value		Percent	Responses
Circulating coins		28.4%	86
Classic U.S. numismatic coins		74.6%	226
Gold bullion coins		44.9%	136
Silver bullion coins		44.2%	134
Platinum bullion coins		4.6%	14
Palladium bullion coins		2.0%	6
Gold bars		38.0%	115
Silver bars		36.6%	111
Platinum bars		5.0%	15
Palladium bars		1.7%	5
World bullion coins		25.7%	78
Ancient gold coins		14.5%	44
Ancient silver coins		25.1%	76
Modern world coins		18.2%	55
Other - Please list.		12.2%	37
















7. Please identify counterfeit types of Classic U.S. numismatic coins that have been offered to you for purchase.



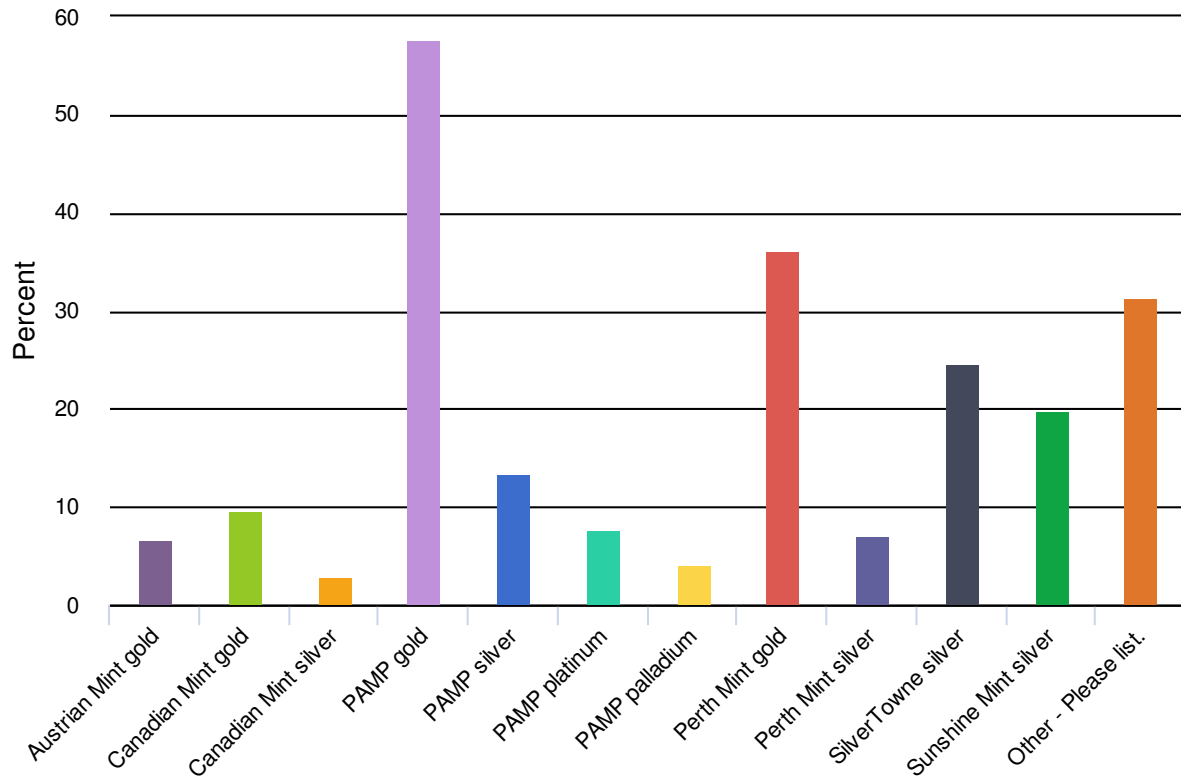
Value		Percent	Responses
Early American coppers (half cents and large cents)		29.7%	86
Lincoln cents		35.9%	104
Trade dollars		66.6%	193
Seated Liberty dollars		48.6%	141
Morgan dollars		71.7%	208
Peace dollars		33.1%	96
Walking Liberty half dollars		19.3%	56
Early U.S. Commemorative coins		19.7%	57
Modern U.S. Commemorative coins		6.2%	18
Saint-Gaudens gold \$20		32.8%	95
\$20 gold		33.4%	97
\$10 gold		27.6%	80
\$5 gold		36.2%	105
\$2.50 gold		42.1%	122
\$1 gold		33.1%	96
Other - Please list.		22.1%	64













8. Please identify counterfeit bullion coins that have been offered to you for purchase.



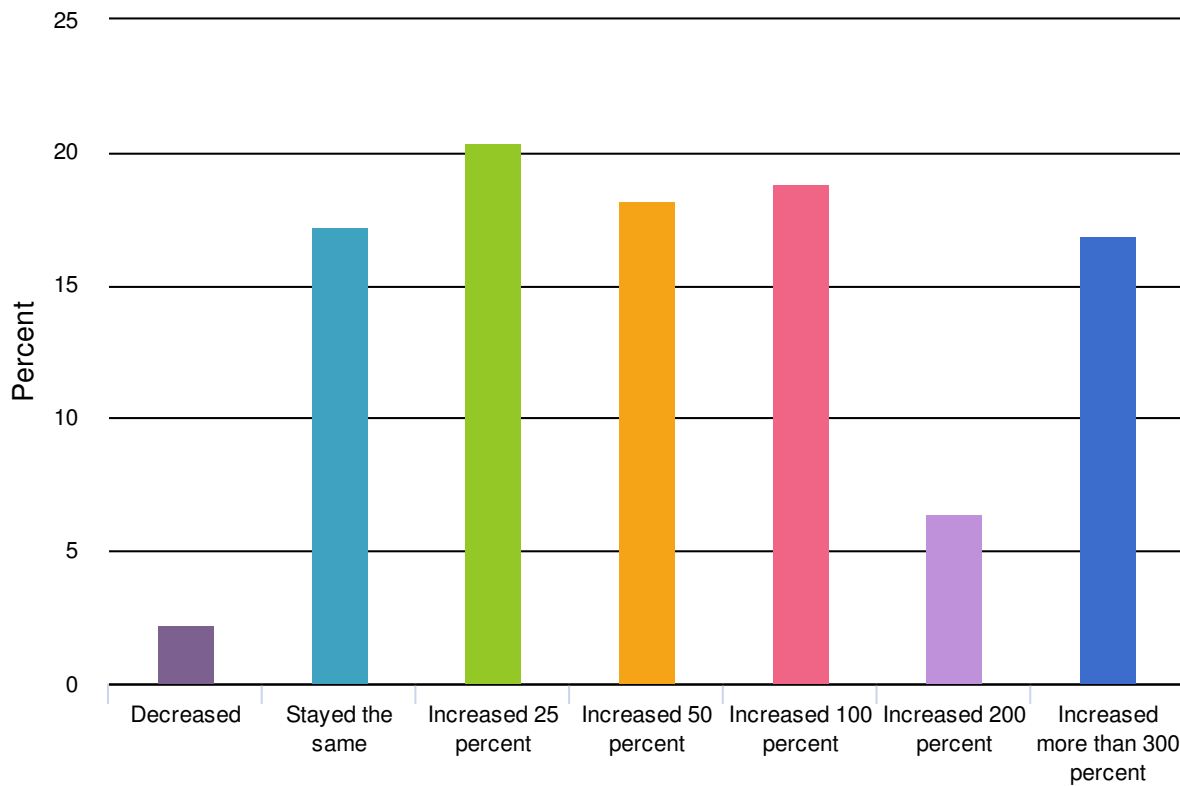
Value		Percent	Responses
American Eagle gold bullion		41.2%	80
American Eagle silver bullion		43.3%	84
American Eagle platinum bullion		2.6%	5
American gold Buffalo		13.9%	27
Australian gold Nugget		4.1%	8
Australian gold Kangaroo		7.7%	15
British gold Britannia		3.6%	7
Canadian gold Maple Leaf		24.2%	47
Canadian silver Maple Leaf		8.8%	17
Mexican gold 50 pesos		20.1%	39
Mexican silver Libertad		5.7%	11
South African gold Kruggerand		30.4%	59
Vienna gold Philharmonic		2.6%	5
Vienna silver Philharmonic		1.0%	2
Other - Please list.		28.9%	56

9. Please identify counterfeit bullion bars that have been offered to you for purchase.



Value		Percent	Responses
Austrian Mint gold		6.6%	11
Canadian Mint gold		9.6%	16
Canadian Mint silver		3.0%	5
PAMP gold		57.8%	96
PAMP silver		13.3%	22
PAMP platinum		7.8%	13
PAMP palladium		4.2%	7
Perth Mint gold		36.1%	60
Perth Mint silver		7.2%	12
SilverTowne silver		24.7%	41
Sunshine Mint silver		19.9%	33
Other - Please list.		31.3%	52

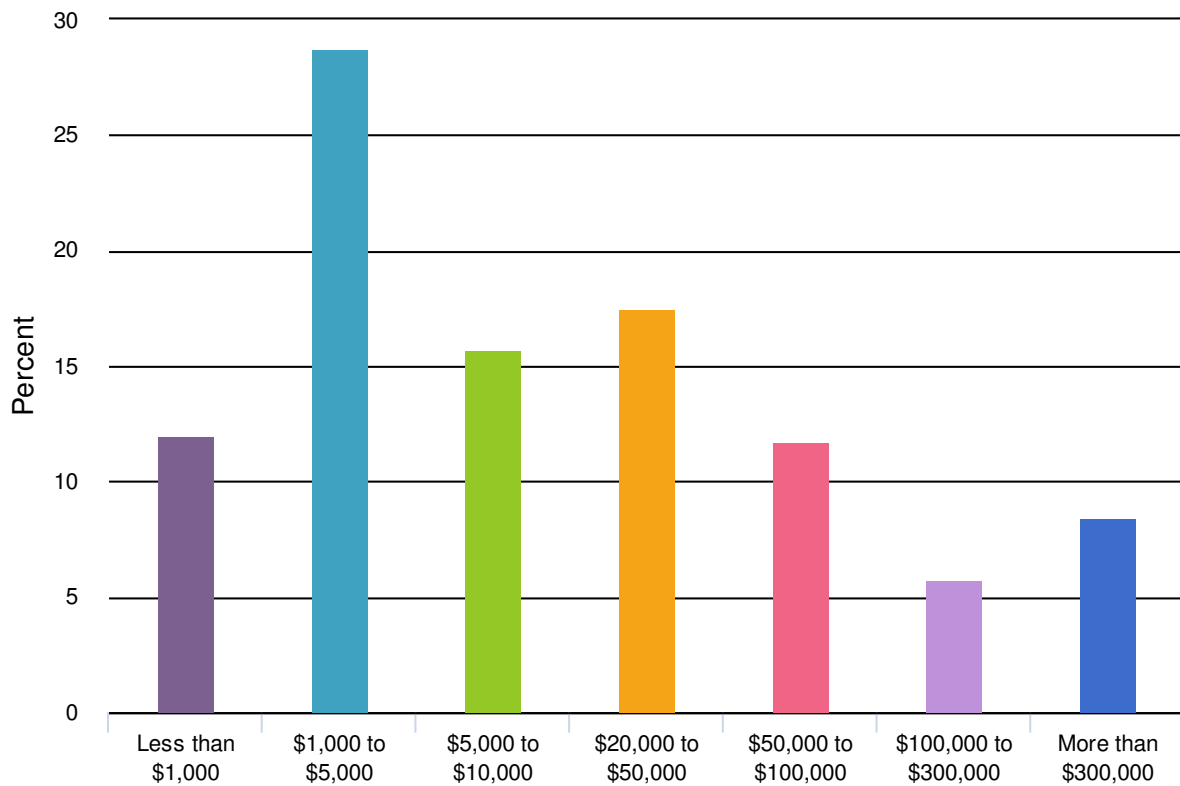
10. Based on your experience, has the rate at which counterfeit coins/precious metals bars enter the United States during the last five years



Value	Percent	Responses
Decreased	2.2%	7
Stayed the same	17.2%	54
Increased 25 percent	20.4%	64
Increased 50 percent	18.2%	57
Increased 100 percent	18.8%	59
Increased 200 percent	6.4%	20
Increased more than 300 percent	16.9%	53

Totals: 314

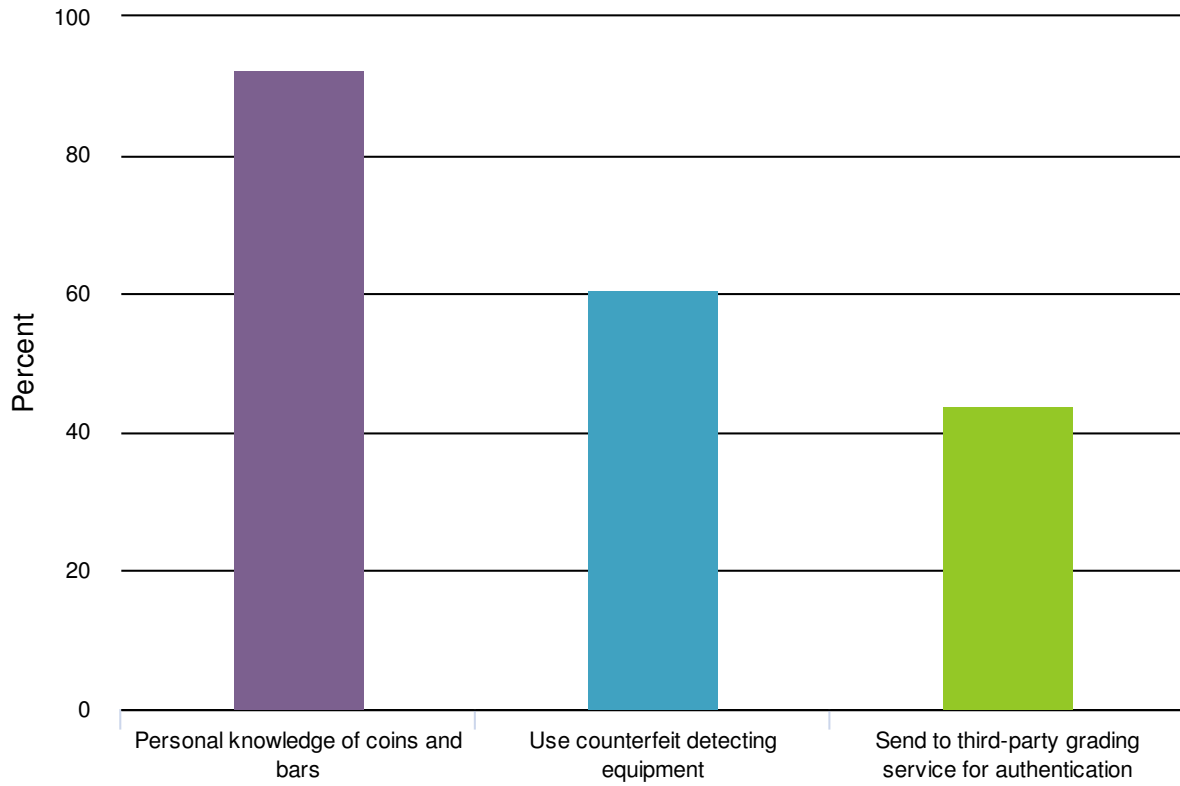
11. If the coins and precious metals bars offered to you during the past year had been genuine, what would have been their retail value?






Value	Percent	Responses
Less than \$1,000	12.0%	33
\$1,000 to \$5,000	28.8%	79
\$5,000 to \$10,000	15.7%	43
\$20,000 to \$50,000	17.5%	48
\$50,000 to \$100,000	11.7%	32
\$100,000 to \$300,000	5.8%	16
More than \$300,000	8.4%	23

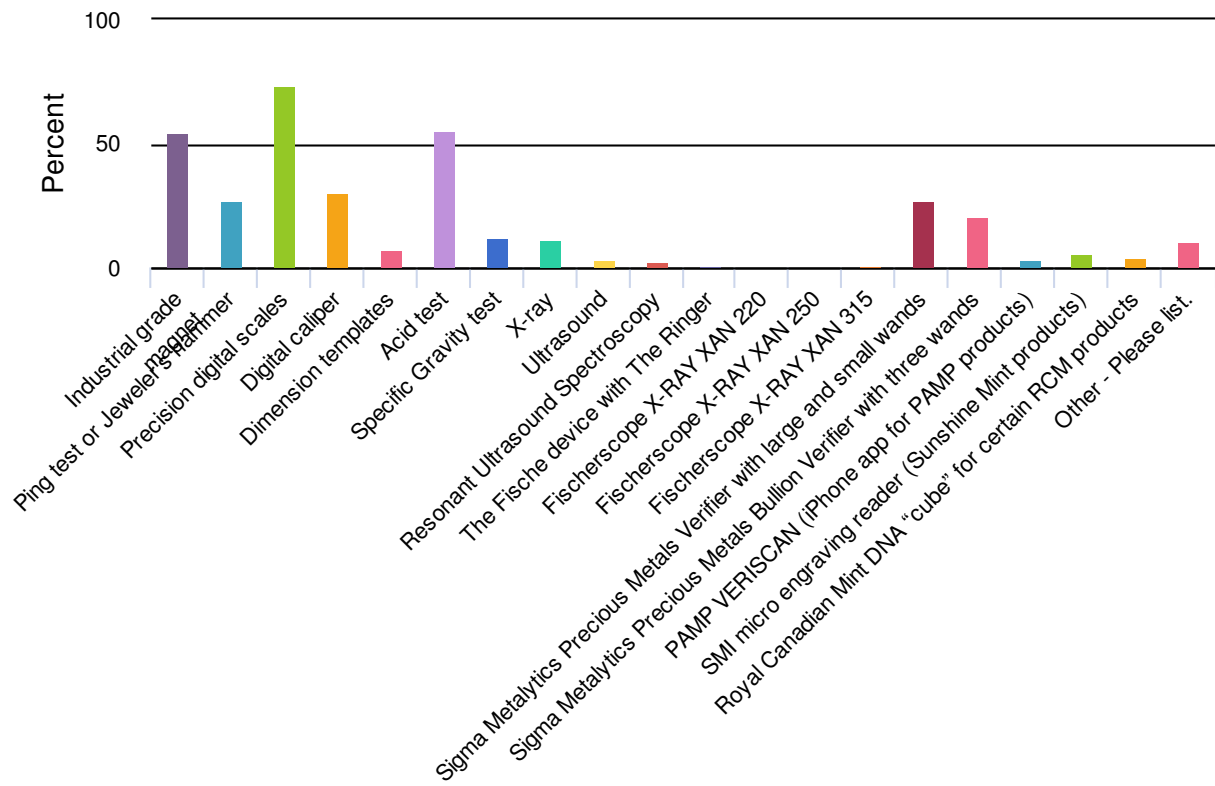
Totals: 274





















12. How do you determine that a coin or bar offered to you is counterfeit?



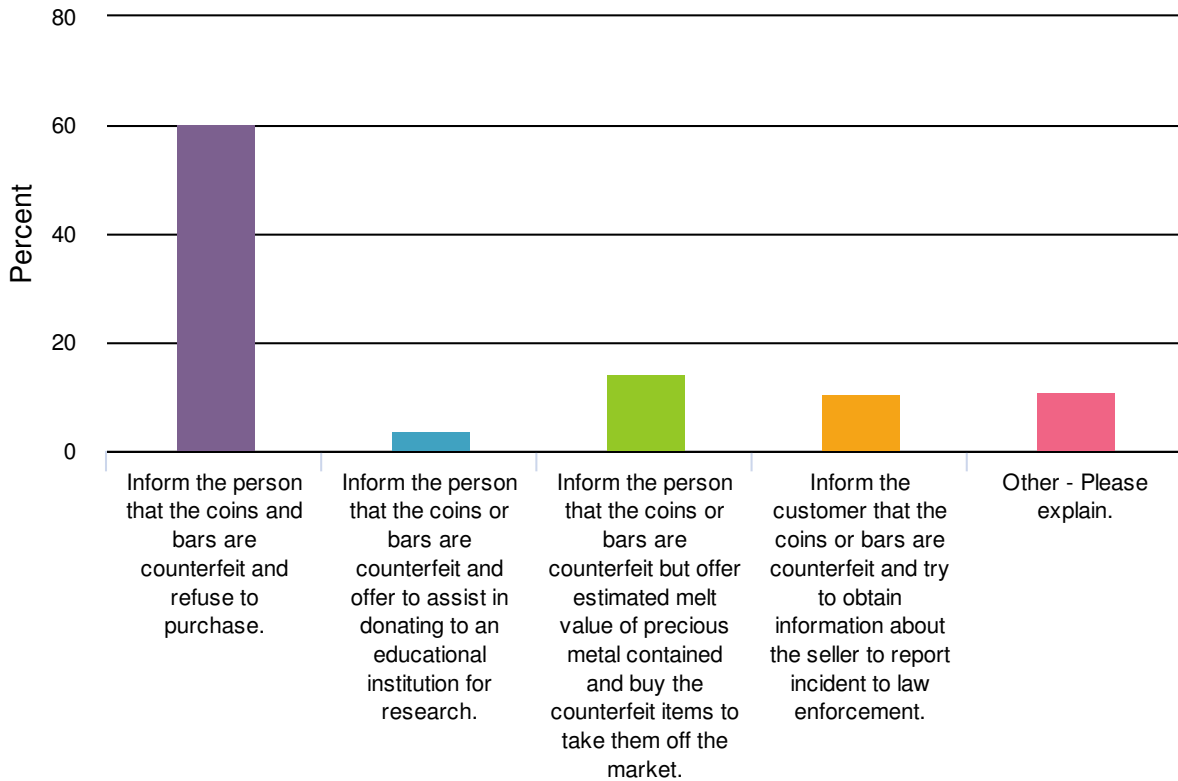
Value		Percent	Responses
Personal knowledge of coins and bars		92.4%	293
Use counterfeit detecting equipment		60.6%	192
Send to third-party grading service for authentication		43.8%	139

13. If you use counterfeit detecting equipment, please identify equipment you have on premise and you use to test coins and bars.



Value		Percent	Responses
Industrial grade magnet		54.3%	134
Ping test or Jeweler's hammer		27.1%	67
Precision digital scales		73.3%	181
Digital caliper		30.8%	76
Dimension templates		7.7%	19
Acid test		55.1%	136
Specific Gravity test		12.1%	30
X-ray		11.3%	28
Ultrasound		3.2%	8
Sigma Metalytics Precious Metals Verifier with large and small wands		27.5%	68
Sigma Metalytics Precious Metals Bullion Verifier with three wands		20.6%	51
PAMP VERISCAN (iPhone app for PAMP products)		3.6%	9
SMI micro engraving reader (Sunshine Mint products)		6.1%	15
Royal Canadian Mint DNA "cube" for certain RCM products		4.0%	10
Other - Please list.		10.5%	26
Resonant Ultrasound Spectroscopy		2.8%	7
The Fische device with The Ringer		1.2%	3
Fischerscope X-RAY XAN 220		0.4%	1
Fischerscope X-RAY XAN 250		0.4%	1
Fischerscope X-RAY XAN 315		0.8%	2

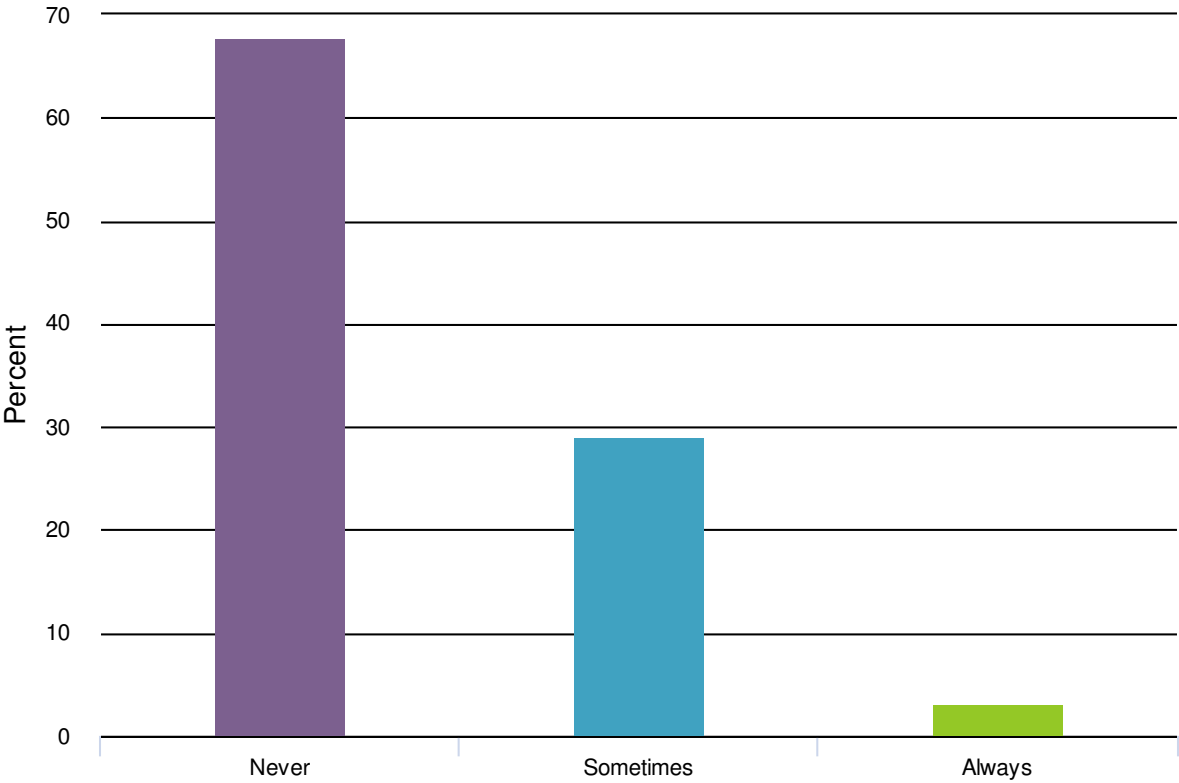
14. What do you do when offered counterfeit coins or bars?



Value	Percent	Responses
Inform the person that the coins and bars are counterfeit and refuse to purchase.	60.2%	186
Inform the person that the coins or bars are counterfeit and offer to assist in donating to an educational institution for research.	3.9%	12
Inform the person that the coins or bars are counterfeit but offer estimated melt value of precious metal contained and buy the counterfeit items to take them off the market.	14.2%	44
Inform the customer that the coins or bars are counterfeit and try to obtain information about the seller to report incident to law enforcement.	10.7%	33
Other - Please explain.	11.0%	34

Totals: 309

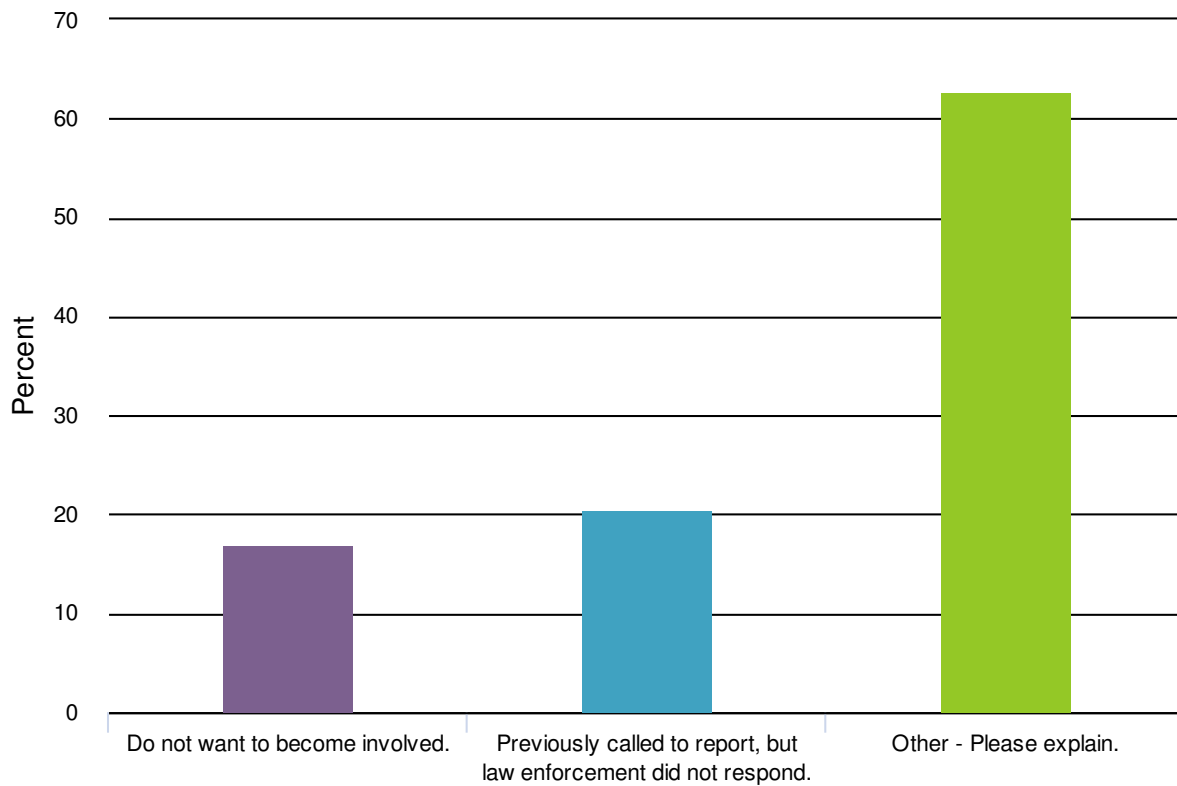
15. Have you reported to law enforcement instances in which someone offers to sell you counterfeit coins or bars?



Value	Percent	Responses
Never	67.8%	215
Sometimes	29.0%	92
Always	3.2%	10

Totals: 317

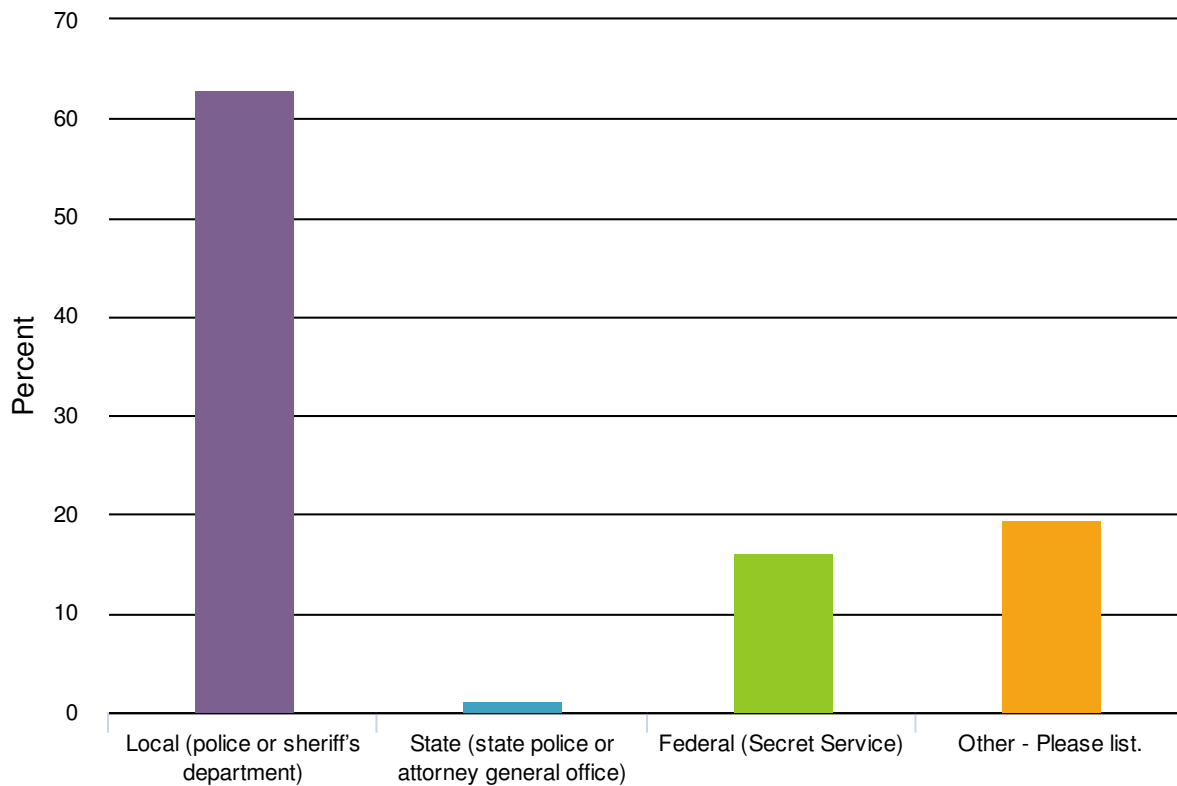
16. If you do not report to law enforcement instance of being offered counterfeit coins or bars, why?







Value	Percent	Responses
Do not want to become involved.	16.9%	44
Previously called to report, but law enforcement did not respond.	20.4%	53
Other - Please explain.	62.7%	163

Totals: 260

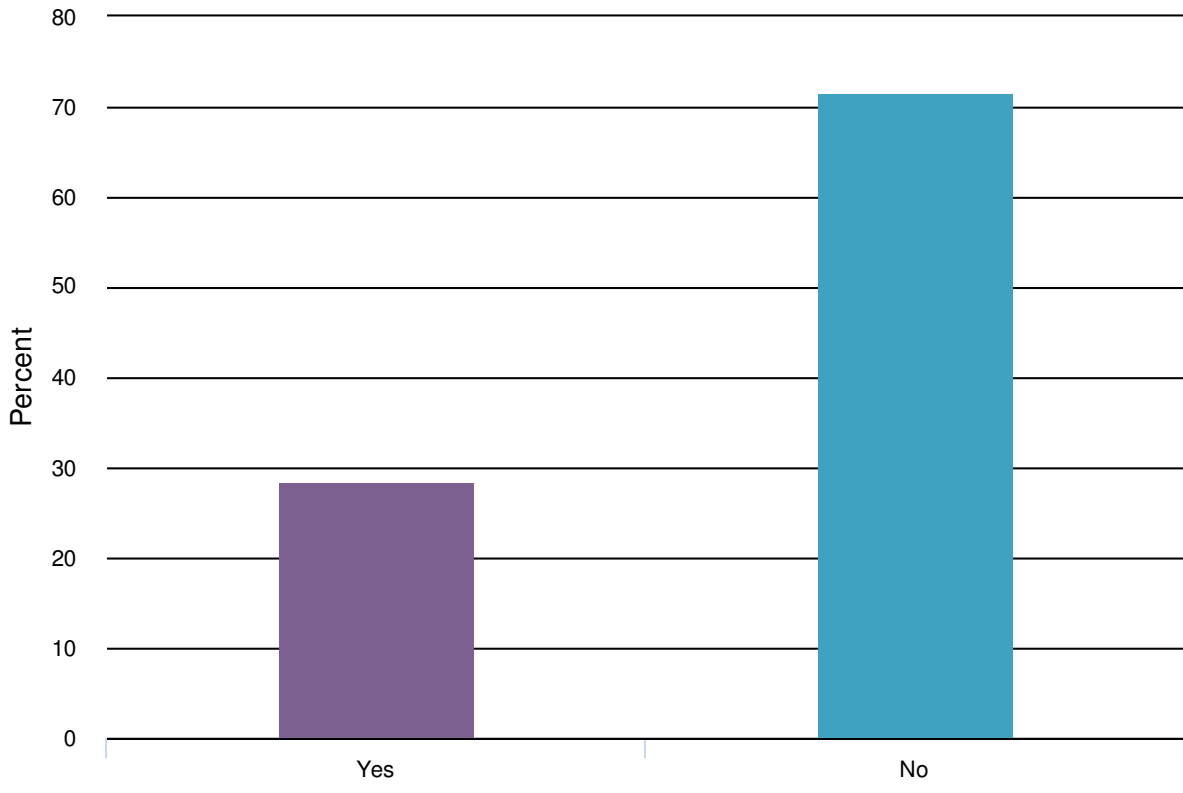
17. If you have reported counterfeits offered to you, which level of law enforcement did you contact?





Value		Percent	Responses
Local (police or sheriff's department)		63.0%	97
State (state police or attorney general office)		1.3%	2
Federal (Secret Service)		16.2%	25
Other - Please list.		19.5%	30

Totals: 154

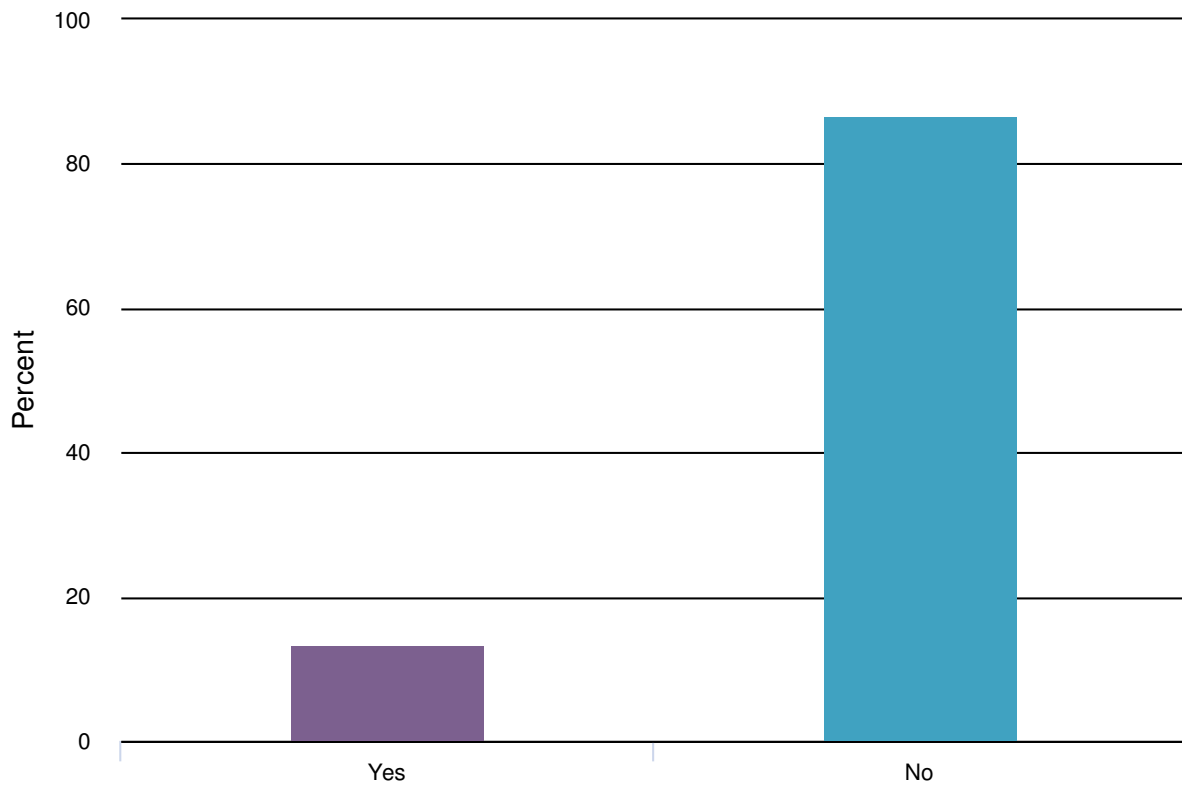
18. For instances in which you reported counterfeits being offered for sale to you, were investigations opened?



Value		Percent	Responses
Yes		28.5%	41
No		71.5%	103

Totals: 144

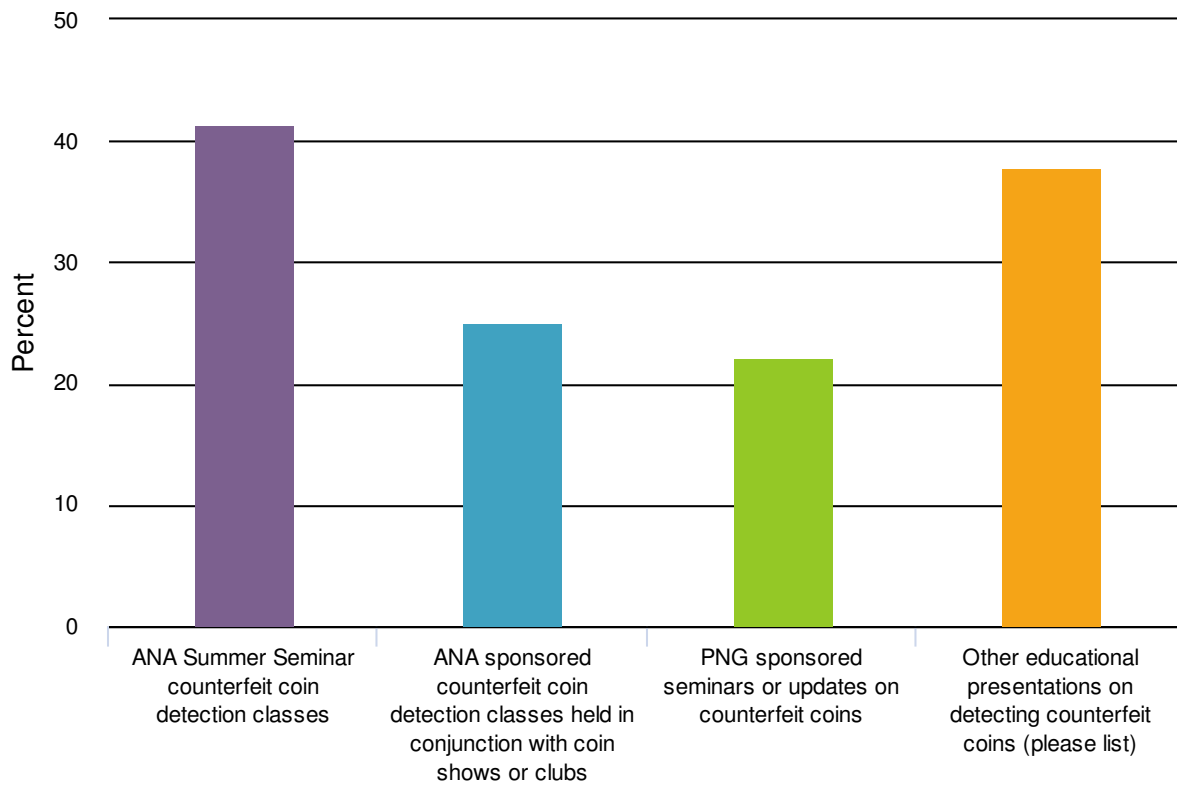
19. For instances in which you reported counterfeits being offered for sale to you, was anyone prosecuted?



Value		Percent	Responses
Yes		13.4%	20
No		86.6%	129

Totals: 149

20. Have you attended or completed any of the following counterfeit detection seminars or classes?



Value	Percent	Responses
ANA Summer Seminar counterfeit coin detection classes	41.4%	58
ANA sponsored counterfeit coin detection classes held in conjunction with coin shows or clubs	25.0%	35
PNG sponsored seminars or updates on counterfeit coins	22.1%	31
Other educational presentations on detecting counterfeit coins (please list)	37.9%	53