

# Media Release

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## IPART Decisions on Council Special Variation Applications

The Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART) has approved 9 applications from NSW councils to increase their general income by more than the rate peg, and two applications for a minimum rate increase. The Tribunal did not approve one special variation application.

IPART Chair Carmel Donnelly said the Tribunal approved special variation applications from Ballina Shire Council, Blacktown City Council, Central Coast Council, Glen Innes Severn Council, Hawkesbury City Council, Ku-ring-gai Council, Muswellbrook Shire Council, North Sydney Council and Uralla Shire Council. Minimum rate increases were also approved for Glen Innes Severn Council and North Sydney Council.

The Tribunal did not approve the special variation application from Cessnock City Council.

"Our decisions reflect a thorough review against the criteria set by the Office of Local Government, while carefully considering stakeholder feedback received during the submission period," Ms Donnelly said.

"It is now up to elected councillors to decide the next steps. Councils have significant flexibility in how and when they implement approved rate increases. This includes the possibility of deferring these changes for up to ten years, as well as deciding how rates are set for different categories of ratepayers."

IPART sets a rate peg annually for each of the 128 councils in NSW which caps each council's increase in the income they collect from ordinary rates. For 2026-27, the core rate pegs range from 2.5% to 4.2% across NSW.

Reports on each of the 10 council special variation decisions, 2 minimum rate decisions, and related documents are now available on the IPART website.

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Table 1 IPART's decisions on metropolitan councils' special variation applications

Council	Application	Decision	Approved Special Variation			
			2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	2029-30
Blacktown City Council	Permanent SV of 37.39% over 3 years (16.64% in 2026-27 and 8.53% in each of 2027-28 and 2028-29)	Approved	16.64%	8.53%	8.53%	Rate peg
Central Coast Council	Permanent SV of 12.8% over 1 year in 2026-27	Approved	12.8%	Rate peg	Rate peg	Rate peg
Hawkesbury City Council	Permanent SV of 39.41% over 4 years (8.66% in each of 2026-27, 2027-28, 2028-29 and 2029-30)	Approved	8.66%	8.66%	8.66%	8.66%
Ku-ring-gai Council	Permanent SV of 29% over 1 year in 2026-27	Approved	29%	Rate peg	Rate peg	Rate peg
North Sydney Council	Permanent SV of 52.66% over 3 years (23% in 2026-27, 14.58% in 2027-28, 8.32% in 2028-29)	Approved	23%	14.58%	8.32%	Rate peg

Table 2 IPART's decisions on rural and regional councils' special variation applications

Council	Application	Decision	Approved Special Variation			
			2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	2029-30
Ballina Shire Council	Permanent SV of 26.25% over 4 years (6% in each of 2026-27, 2027-28, 2028-29 and 2029-30)	Approved	6%	6%	6%	6%
Cessnock City Council	Permanent SV of 39.9% over 1 year in 2026-27	Not Approved	Rate peg	Rate peg	Rate peg	Rate peg
Glen Innes Severn Council	Permanent SV of 48.3% over 3 years (21.5% in 2026-27, 12.0% in 2027-28, 9.0% in 2028-29)	Approved	21.5%	12.0%	9.0%	Rate peg
Muswellbrook Shire Council	Permanent SV of 29% over 1 year in 2026-27	Approved	29%	Rate peg	Rate peg	Rate peg
Uralla Shire Council	Permanent SV of 58.06% over 2 years (28.5% in 2026-27, 23% in 2027-28)	Approved	28.5%	23%	Rate peg	Rate peg

Table 3 IPART's Decision on Minimum Rates Applications

Council	Application	Decision	
Glen Innes Severn Council	<b>Residential</b> 2025-26 (Current): \$637 2026-27: \$774 2027-28: \$867 2028-29: \$945	<b>Business</b> 2025-26 (Current): \$637 2026-27: \$774 2027-28: \$867 2028-29: \$945	Approved
North Sydney Council	<b>Residential</b> 2025-26 (Current): \$743.85 2026-27: \$970.72 2027-28: \$1,116.32 2028-29: \$1,216.79	<b>Business</b> 2025-26 (Current): \$743.85 2026-27: \$970.72 2027-28: \$1,116.32 2028-29: \$1,216.79	Approved