



3<sup>rd</sup> March 2019.

IPART NSW

**RE: SRV PROPOSAL PORT STEPHENS LGA**

I wish to make a submission to IPART with regards to the Special Rate Variation proposed by the Port Stephens Council. I am a ratepayer in this Local Government Area and I strongly oppose this proposal by the Councillors on this basis:

- An SRV of 7.5% over 7 years to remain permanently in place is simply unaffordable to ratepayers considering the rising cost of living, fixed income and wage stagnation. This will be a total cumulative increase to rates of 66%. This is unsustainable.
- The Councillors have shown complete disregard to the feedback from the community during the consultation process, with well over 50% of respondents opposing such an exorbitant rate rise.
- This Council has publicly stated that they CAN maintain the current level of service WITHOUT an SRV.
- There was no mention of the Special Rate Variation at the local government election.
- The median weekly income of a person aged 15 or over in the Port Stephens LGA is \$571, with the unemployment rate at 7.2%, according to 2016 Census data. There is a distinct variation between this and the State and National average.
- Several expensive lawsuits have been directed at this Council due to poor and avoidable planning decisions, with the ratepayers left to pick up the legal bills.

Again, I express to IPART my vehement opposition to the exorbitant Special Rate Variation proposed by the Port Stephens Councillors.

Kind regards,

