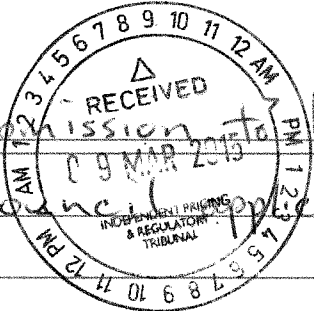


Submission to IART re. Eurobodalla Shire
Council application for Special Rate Variation



I oppose a rate rise for the following reasons

- 1) Council's financial position could be improved by better management.
- 2) Projects promised as a result of higher rates are insignificant and optional and life for ratepayers will have little or no benefit.
- 3) No projects of regional significance are promised.
- 4) Council announced a \$3.5 million surplus in running cost. This with the raft of savings they claim to have made should allow Council to operate as is.

5) Council's failure to consult with the ratepayers has caused deep divisions within the Shire. Consultation involves listening to the community not just lecturing to ratepayers

6) Council has a history of waste and over spending on its own indulgences. Over the last few years we have seen golden handshakes to retiring GM's of over \$100,000. Top of the range salary packages for incoming GM's plus large increases and leave entitlements awarded. We have seen millions of dollars of invested money disappear. Huge personal expenses of our recent Mayors and some councillors. A recent streetscape went well over a million dollars over budget due to poor management. We have seen extravagant walkways erected where very few walk and playgrounds more complex than necessary. Council meetings

are now telecast on the internet at an annual cost of over \$30,000 and watched by a handful of ratepayers. Council is overrepresented at conferences and no money is spared on internal issues.

7. A large proportion of the Eurobodalla's population are retirees. Those on the pension have not had increases above C.P.I. and are struggling to make ends meet. Most of these are too old to get work and will have to cut back on food or heating if the rate rise goes ahead. Self-funded retirees have seen their incomes dive as interest rates are at record lows and falling. Bank interest now on \$1 million dollars is under \$30,000 per year. Increase rates means increased rental prices. This will affect the high number of unemployed and non ratepayers. Half the population do not have the capacity for a rate rise.

Among those who can manage the increase, most are unwilling to pay because of council's performance

record. It hurts to give money to an organization that will not give value for it.

8. The bulk of Eurobodallas ratepayers do not demand more services. Council pushes new infrastructure and community services onto the public to build their own empire. If they would get back to the core roles of local Government there would be money left over at the present rate level.

Thank you for this opportunity,
Bruce Rapkins

