

From: VALDA CROSS [REDACTED]
Sent: Saturday, 11 March 2017 2:40 PM
To: Local Government Mailbox
Subject: BALLINA SHIRE COUNCIL SPECIAL VARIATION APPLICATION

**Ladies and Gentlemen,
Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal
2-24 Rawson _Place,
SYDNEY.....2000**

Dear Tribunes

I tried to send the following on your Contact Form, but was not able to get the site to accept it. Therefore, the following submission below (in italics) is sent to you as an e.mail in the hope that the closing date which I understand is 13th March, is complied with. I will further confirm by mailing a copy to your address above.

**Sincerely,
Mrs Valda Cross – 37 Kerr Street, Ballina 2478.**

I wish to make you aware of the outrage I hear nearly every day re the possible Special Rate Variation sought by Ballina Council. As a widow & pensioner in my 79th year, I struggle financially with the affordability of staying in my own home. It goes without saying that the affordability of maintaining a home is also felt by other pensioners, families with mortgages, and so on. I am not alone, but the increases in our rates over the years together with the current massive increase may just be the breaking point for many. To worsen the situation, I am told extra percentages sought by Council will compound annually over a 3 year period from 2017 to 2020. Admittedly, Council did undertake a process of consultation which I am led to believe, they are obliged to do. It was a sham. The result was a majority rejection of the proposed increases. Council ignored the result. Such dishonesty beggars belief. Perhaps an Administrator to investigate this matter should be considered or at the very least, an appointee from IPART who has authority to look more closely at the financial aspect of all sorts of issues. One example is the last rate rise to cover the cost of pool renovations not yet done and estimated at \$8m at the time. It is now stated that \$14m is a more likely cost!

In considering the above comments, would you please also consider that an automatic rate rise will occur in Ballina as a result of a “Notice of Valuation” to each resident in our District. The Notice from the NSW Valuer General to

myself has increased land value by a rise of 29% approximately.. This, of course, will alter the “rateable value” upon which Residential Rates will be calculated. Presumably, other residents will be subject to a similar impost. Additionally, I believe, another \$180 p.a. approx.. will be transferred from Insurance Premiums to Council Rates to cover State Fire Brigade costs. Is this true?

I hope you will adjudicate on this issue wisely.

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