

Media release

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SPECIAL RATE VARIATION APPLICATIONS RECEIVED FROM 8 COUNCILS

Eight councils across NSW have officially applied to the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART) to increase their general revenue above the rate peg in 2017-18.

The rate peg for 2017-18 is set at 1.5%. Councils requiring additional revenue are able to apply to IPART for either single year or successive annual percentage increases above the rate peg. These special variations can be permanent or temporary, and are assessed against guidelines published by the Office of Local Government.

The councils that applied are:

Council	% total increase including the rate peg and purpose
Ballina Shire council	17.64% cumulative increase over 3 years to be retained permanently in the rates base, to fund renewal of core infrastructure and actions to improve the health of waterways.
Bellingen Shire council	6% single year increase to be retained permanently in the rates base for new infrastructure investment, to reduce infrastructure backlogs and enhance financial sustainability.
Byron Shire council	33.55% cumulative increase over 4 years to be retained permanently in the rates base, to fund additional asset renewal and maintenance.
Inverell Shire council	22.21% cumulative increase over 3 years to be retained permanently in the rates base, to maintain and renew infrastructure, reduce the infrastructure backlog and improve financial sustainability.
Lockhart Shire council	37.0% cumulative increase over 7 years to be retained permanently in the rates base, to improve financial sustainability, refurbish community infrastructure and repair flood damage to roads.
Muswellbrook Shire council	20.39% cumulative increase over 4 years to be retained permanently in the rates base, to fund new infrastructure investment.
Port Macquarie-Hastings council.	5.39% single year increase to be retained permanently in the rates base to maintain and renew the council's road network.
Shoalhaven City council	29.05% cumulative increase over 2 years to be retained permanently in the rates base, to fund new infrastructure investment, reduce infrastructure backlogs and enhance financial sustainability.

IPART Chairman Dr Peter Boxall said all applications will be determined by IPART by mid-May and could be applied to rates for the 2017-18 year.

“Each application will be carefully assessed against the criteria established by the Office of Local Government with councils required to demonstrate the need for and the purpose of the

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More information is available at ipart.nsw.gov.au

additional revenue, evidence of community consultation and an assessment of the impact on affected ratepayers,” Dr Boxall said.

“As councils must engage with the community when assessing options for a special variation, we expect councils will have sought and considered the community’s views on the special variation.”

“Community members wishing to make submissions directly to IPART can do so until four weeks after receipt of the application, and these submissions will be considered as part of our determination.”

Details about each council’s proposal should be available on their websites, in local media or from councils directly.

Full details about the assessment criteria for special variations, the detailed proposals submitted by each council and how to lodge a submission can be found at www.ipart.nsw.gov.au.

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