

BUSINESS COSTS · RATES OCTOBER 2026

The RBA Put Rates Up. Here Is What You Can Cut.

The cash rate is 4.60% after the fourth rise of 2026. You cannot change that. You can change the fixed costs that leave your account every month.

On 29 September the RBA lifted the cash rate by 25 basis points to **4.60%**, up a full percentage point since January. The Board said inflation "remains elevated" and it will raise rates "further if needed". **Plan for rates to stay put, and treat a cut as a bonus.**

■ How a rate rise reaches a small business

- **Directly:** variable loans, overdrafts, equipment finance and the owner's mortgage.
- **Illustration only:** a full point on a \$300,000 variable loan is about \$3,000 a year, or \$250 a month.
- **Indirectly:** customers spend less, decide slower and ask for more quotes.
- Ring your lender and ask what has been passed on. Few owners do.

■ Why fixed costs come first

- **A saving repeats.** \$80 a month is \$960 a year.
- **They are easy to find** on last month's statement.
- **They rarely touch customers.**

■ Five costs to review this month

- 1 Software subscriptions and unused seats
- 2 **Phone and internet**
- 3 Insurance renewals (review, do not cancel)
- 4 Finance and merchant costs
- 5 Energy plan or standing offer

Card surcharges are banned from 1 October 2026

Surcharges on eftpos, Mastercard and Visa can no longer be passed on to customers. Compare what your payment provider now charges you.

■ Your phone and internet bill, line by line

On the bill	What to check
Users or lines	Staff who left, lines nobody answers
Handset rental	Handsets you have paid off several times
1300 or 1800 number	Separate bill, rental and per-minute rates
Call charges	Per-call mobile charges, internal calls
nbn plan	Right speed? Promo price quietly ended?

■ Half price nbn for three months (new bundles)

Plan	Months 1 to 3	Then	You save
Home 500/50	\$44.95	\$89.90	\$134.85
Business 250/100	\$49.95	\$99.90	\$149.85
Business+ 500/200	\$59.95	\$119.90	\$179.85
Gigabit 1000/400	\$74.95	\$149.90	\$224.85

What not to cut

Answering the phone. In a tight year callers ring three businesses for a quote, and the one who answers usually wins. Keep follow-up and look after your regulars.

■ Cash flow habits for a higher rate year

- Invoice the same day. Chase at seven days, not thirty.
- Keep a 13 week cash forecast.
- Talk to your lender, and the ATO, before you need to.
- Review prices, not only costs.

■ Ask your lender

- How much of the four rises has been passed on?
- Is there a better product for my loan?
- What does switching cost?

■ Ask your phone provider

- What have I not used in 90 days?
- Has my nbn promo price ended?
- Who owns my numbers?

Offer terms

New nbn orders bundled with a Voice plan on a 12 month contract. Excludes voice charges, usage, add-ons, hardware and installation. Business+ needs FTTP. Subject to availability. Call 1300 881 662.