



GOVERNMENT AND INDUSTRY SUPPORT FOR SMALL BUSINESSES

1 April 2026

On Wednesday 1 April 2026, the Treasurer the Hon. Jim Chalmers, the Assistant Treasurer the Hon. Daniel Mulino and the Minister for Small Business the Hon. Anne Aly announced that the Albanese Government is coordinating action with industry and regulators to ease the economic cost of the war in the Middle East for small businesses.

This follows Prime Minister Anthony Albanese's announcement on Monday 30 March 2026, of a three month halving of the fuel excise tax and a temporary removal of the road user charges for heavy vehicles in order to assist in easing the cost of fuel and the broader supply chain. The National Cabinet also announced a coordinated response to supply and distribution challenges and to establish contingency plans. Further details can be found [here](#).

Tax System Flexibility

The Government announced that changes will be made to the tax system, with the ATO providing temporary relief to businesses that are unable to meet their tax obligations as a result of fuel supply issues. The Treasurer noted that the ATO has *"agreed to provide temporary relief for businesses unable to meet their tax obligations due to fuel supply issues, where that's appropriate"*.

It will include payment plans, remission of interest and penalties and support for PAYG instalments in cases where there has been a downturn in taxable income. A specific channel will be established dedicated for businesses to access the relief provisions.

Small Business Credit

The Government will additionally extend the Small Business Responsible Lending Obligation exemption for a further 10 years to assist small business in accessing easier and faster credit.

Broader Industry Support

Australian banks and peak industry have announced that they have put in place specialist teams in order to support small business, farmers and communities who

are facing supply chain disruptions. With support measures involving temporary payment deferrals, emergency credit limits increases and loan restructuring.

They have announced that temporary payment deferrals, loan restructuring and emergency credit limit increases are available to some customers.

The Australian Banking Association will begin a campaign *Don't tough it out on your own – banking support when it matters most* to assist in raising awareness around the available options to customers. The ABA's Financial Assistance Hub can be found [here](#).

With the Customer Owned Banking Association and Australian Finance Industry Association (COBA) also asking customers to get in contact to discuss their options.

Members of the Business Council of Australia have taken actions including paying suppliers more frequently to improve cash flow, ensuring higher fuel costs are being reflected in what suppliers are paid and providing targeted support including concession discounts, bill pauses and reviews to reduce cost.

The Insurance Council of Australia (ICA) has committed to working with members to support consumers seeking assistance and encouraging small businesses to talk to their insurer regarding adjustments to premiums during this period.

The Prime Minister Anthony Albanese will deliver an address to the nation at 7pm on 1 April, to outline the government's response to the crisis in the Middle East. Ahead of the federal budget on 12 May, the Treasurer has flagged that there are a wider range of economic scenarios being considered.

The Government's full media release can be found [here](#).

The Australian Banking Association's (ABA) full media release can be found [here](#).

The Customer Owned Banking Association's (COBA) full media release can be found [here](#).

The Insurance Council of Australia's (ICA) full media release can be found [here](#).

Further Information

For more information, please contact Hawker Britton's Partner [Emma Webster](mailto:emma.webster@hawkerbritton.com) on emma.webster@hawkerbritton.com

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