



Navigating Economic Pressures: Building Confidence & Resilience in Challenging Times

While the Australian economy continues to face elevated inflation, higher interest rates and global uncertainty, there are growing signs of resilience and opportunity for both businesses and households. The Reserve Bank of Australia's actions to manage inflation are designed to restore long-term economic stability, while businesses and families across the country continue to adapt, innovate and adjust to a more disciplined financial environment.

Impact on Businesses

For businesses, the current conditions highlight the value of strong fundamentals. Although borrowing costs and operating expenses have risen, many organisations are responding by improving efficiency, strengthening cashflow management and sharpening their strategic focus. History shows that businesses that prioritise productivity, customer value and financial discipline during tighter economic cycles often emerge stronger when conditions stabilise.

Energy and fuel price volatility has encouraged renewed focus on efficiency, alternative suppliers and smarter logistics. At the same time, moderating inflation over the medium term is expected to support more predictable input costs and consumer confidence.

10 Business Tips to Consider

- Review supplier contracts and renegotiate where possible.
- Improve energy efficiency to reduce exposure to fuel price volatility.
- Tighten working capital management and debtor collections.
- Reassess pricing strategies and margins.

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Kista Finance acknowledges the Wadawurrung People as the Traditional Owners of the land and waters on which we live and work and pays respect to Elders past, present and emerging.

Important dates for April, 2026:

- 03_06Apr26 – Easter Weekend
- 21Apr26 – Monthly BAS & IAS
- 25Apr26 – Anzac Day
- 28Apr26 – Quarterly BAS for non-electronic lodgers
- 28Apr26 – "Cleared" SG contributions
- 01Jul26 – *Payday Super commences*

Interest Rate Outlook

Australia's interest rate outlook for the remainder of 2026 is being shaped by a complex mix of persistent inflation, a resilient labour market, and heightened global uncertainty. Inflation remains above the Reserve Bank of Australia's target band, with underlying measures proving slower to moderate than previously expected. At the same time, unemployment remains low, signalling continued capacity pressures in the domestic economy and limiting the scope for early policy easing.

Geopolitical developments in the Middle East have added a further layer of risk, particularly through higher energy prices that could lift inflation in the near term while weighing on global growth. Against this backdrop, financial markets and many economists view monetary policy as needing to remain restrictive for longer.

Continued below.....



Self-Care Tip for the Month..... (Courtesy of Yarn Me Calm)



10 Business Tips to Consider (cont'd)

- Defer non-essential capital expenditure.
- Explore alternative financing or refinancing options.
- Invest selectively in productivity-enhancing technology.
- Monitor inventory levels to avoid excess stock.
- Scenario-plan for further interest rate or cost increases.
- Seek professional advice to stress-test business sustainability.

Impact on Households

Households are also navigating higher mortgage repayments and everyday expenses, but many are taking practical steps to regain control of their finances. Budgeting, refinancing opportunities and increased financial awareness are helping families adapt to the current environment. Importantly, strong employment levels continue to provide income stability for many households, supporting confidence despite cost pressures.

10 Household Tips to Consider

- Review household budgets and prioritise essential spending.
- Shop around for better mortgage, insurance and utility deals.
- Build or maintain an emergency savings buffer.
- Reduce discretionary spending where possible.
- Consider energy-saving measures at home.
- Seek advice on refinancing or fixed-rate options.
- Plan ahead for higher education, childcare and transport costs.
- Avoid taking on unnecessary new debt.
- Use government and community support services if needed.
- Focus on long-term financial resilience rather than short-term fixes.



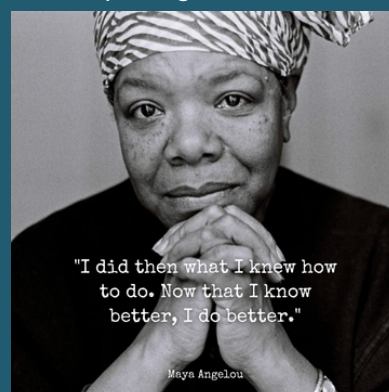
Interest Rate Outlook (cont'd)

The most widely held expectation is that the RBA may yet deliver one additional rate increase, most likely around mid-year, before settling into an extended holding pattern through to December. Be on notice however that murmurs of additional interest rate increases are starting.

Rate cuts this calendar year appear unlikely unless there is a marked deterioration in economic conditions.

Quote of the Month.....

For whenever we hear "but its always been that way", it's time to tap into the poetic brilliance of Maya Angelou :





Final Thoughts

Periods of economic adjustment can be challenging, but they also create opportunities to strengthen financial foundations and build resilience. For businesses, this is a time to refine operations, invest wisely and position for sustainable growth. For households, greater financial awareness and proactive planning can provide confidence and stability. While uncertainty remains, Australia's economic history shows that disciplined decision-making, adaptability and a long-term outlook can help both businesses and families not only manage current pressures, but emerge better prepared for the future.

Community.....

2026 Geelong & Bellarine Yarn Show

For all things Yarny, get to the inaugural GABYS show at the Deakon University Waterfront Campus in Geelong on 18 April, 2026.

2026 ANZAC Day Dawn Service & Wreath Laying

Portarlington & St Leonards RSL
Saturday, 25 April, 2026 @ 6.30am
The Cenotaph, Newcombe Street, Portarlington, 3223

<https://rslvic.com.au/events/portarlington-st-leonards-rsl-sub-branch-anzac-day-2026/>

Portarlington Football Netball Club - Opening Round

Help the Footballers & Netballers start the season off in spectacular fashion by getting down to Howard Harmer Oval in Barwon Heads on 4 April, 2026.

We will need to wait another couple of weeks to watch our brand new womens football team run out for their first game of the season, also at Howard Harmer Oval in Barwon Heads on 18 April, 2026.

Our best wishes for all of the Portarlington Footballers & Netballers for the 1st round and the season to come.

Joke of the Month.....

Q: What do you call an accountant without a spreadsheet?

A: Lost

