COSBOA COUNCIL OF SMALL BUSINESS ORGANISATIONS AUSTRALIA

ENERGY CONSUMERS AUSTRALIA

Small Business Power Project

The COVID hangover: life in lockdown is even harder when your small business can't do business

Understanding small business hardship

Until now, energy hardship has applied only to individuals and residential households. The COVID pandemic and associated lockdowns changed this. COSBOA's Small Business Power project, funded by Energy Consumers Australia Limited (energyconsumersaustralia.com.au), demonstrates that energy hardship has real financial and personal costs for small business owners.

What we found

1 in 3

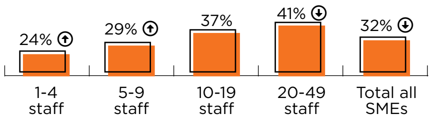
small and medium enterprises experienced energy hardship as a direct result of the pandemic

1 in 5

small business owners have an energy service debt from the lockdown period which they are still paying off

Small businesses employing 10-49 staff were the **worst affected**.

SMEs experiencing energy hardship by size of business



Base sample n=408

40%

of small business owners are in a worse personal financial situation because of the pandemic economic shock

During COVID, some industries were more affected by energy hardship than others:

Hair and Beauty (80%)*	Childcare (75%)*	Retail (52%)	Hospitality, food, accommodation and tourism (40%)
Information & ICT (41%)	Manufacturing (40%)	Transport and logistics (36%)	*small sample size (under n=20), indicative only.

A third of small business owners delayed paying their energy bills.

1 in 5 (21%) used their personal credit card to pay energy bills.

For more information on how you can be involved please contact projects@cosboa.org.au or partners@cosboa.org.au