



Business reports about the COVID-19 pandemic, April

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The COVID-19 pandemic began to affect Australia from March 2020, with activity restrictions and business closures introduced in all states and territories through March and April. This crisis is ongoing. Ai Group has provided assistance and advice to thousands of member businesses nationally throughout this period. As part of this process, Ai Group is collecting detailed reports from Australian businesses about their experiences of the pandemic through a range of sources including emails, surveys, web queries, phone calls and (remote) meetings. Ai Group will continue to collect reports from businesses and to provide assistance throughout the duration of this crisis. Tools and advice to help businesses and employers respond to the many challenges presented by COVID-19 can be found on Ai Group's website [here](#).

This report provides a summary of the experiences reported to Ai Group through March and April 2020. These results are not weighted by industry or state and are not intended to be a representative sample. The intent of the published results (see below) are to show what businesses are reporting to Ai Group about the COVID-19 pandemic. Their experiences are grouped into three key themes:

1. What is the impact of COVID-19 on your workplace or business so far?
2. What has been your response?
3. What would help you manage your business response to COVID-19 (e.g. from Ai Group, government, community groups)?

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1. What is the impact of COVID-19 on your workplace or business so far?

Table 1.1: What is the impact of COVID-19 on your workplace or business so far?

What is the impact of COVID-19 on your workplace or business so far?	March	April	Total
% of businesses (multiple answers possible for each business)	%	%	%
Reduced demand from customers	45	57	51
Increased workload due to new OH&S procedures (hygiene)	22	11	16
Increased anxiety levels within workforce (due to uncertainty)	18	2	9
Disruptions to supply, inputs, imports, freight	13	5	9
Increased workload due to new OH&S and HR management policy development*	16	2	9
Increased customer demand	9	7	8
Increased costs (hygiene consumables)	3	5	4
Business closed or not operating	5	3	4
Reduced productivity	1	6	3
Cost increases for inputs, freight	1	2	2
Employees on leave due to illness or childcare	1	1	1

*including new capacity to work from home

Chart 1.1: What is the impact of COVID-19 on your workplace or business so far?

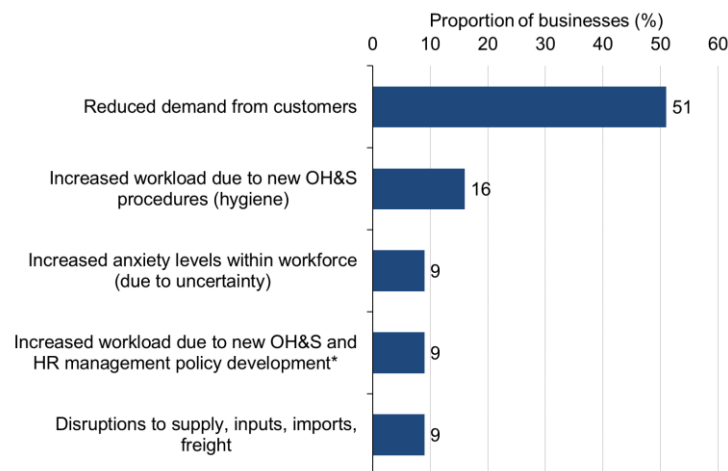


Table 1.2: What is the impact of COVID-19 on your workplace or business so far?

What is the impact of COVID-19 on your workplace or business so far?	NSW	VIC	QLD
% of businesses (multiple answers possible for each business)	%	%	%
Reduced demand from customers	49	49	59
Increased workload due to new OH&S procedures (hygiene)	13	18	24
Increased anxiety levels within workforce (due to uncertainty)	7	13	10
Increased workload due to new OH&S and HR management policy development*	6	7	14
Disruptions to supply, inputs, imports, freight	12	7	8

**including new capacity to work from home

2. What has been your response so far?

Table 2.1: What has been your response so far?

What has been your response?	March	April	Total
% of businesses (multiple answers possible for each business)	%	%	%
Staff work at home / remotely	32	17	24
Reduce staff working hours	8	15	12
Reduce staff numbers	7	9	8
Increased communication	10	4	6
Variation in customer payment terms/payer terms	5	1	3
Reduce costs other than wages	0	3	1
Reduce staff pay	2	1	1
Increased business innovation	2	1	1
Offer services to customers online or delivery	1	2	1
Increased work hours or recruited new additional staff	2	1	1
Offer new or different goods and services to customers	0	1	1
Find new suppliers/customer	0	1	0

Chart 2.1: What has been your response so far?

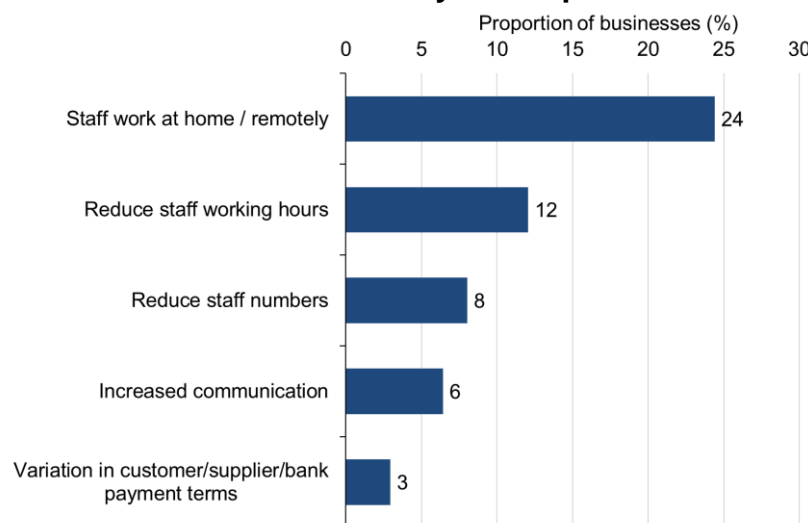


Table 2.2: What has been your response so far?

What has been your response so far?	NSW	VIC	QLD
% of businesses (multiple answers possible for each business)	%	%	%
Staff work at home / remotely	28	24	28
Reduce staff working hours	9	18	7
Reduce staff numbers	9	4	11
Increased communication	7	5	11
Variation in customer/supplier/bank payment terms	5	1	4

3. What would help you manage your business response to COVID-19?

Table 3.1: What would help manage your business response to COVID-19?

What would help you manage your business response to COVID-19?	March	April	Total
% of businesses (multiple answers possible for each business)	%	%	%
Financial assistance	28	28	28
Clear certain instructions and rules	44	8	25
More information	42	6	23
Easing of restrictions/return to normal trading	2	21	12
Assistance with employee management	8	1	4
Improved access to PPE & hygiene products	7	1	3
Assistance with domestic logistics and freight	1	1	1
Future planning/upskilling	0	1	1
Assistance with imports, exports, trade restrictions	0	1	0

Chart 3.1: What would help manage your business response to COVID-19?

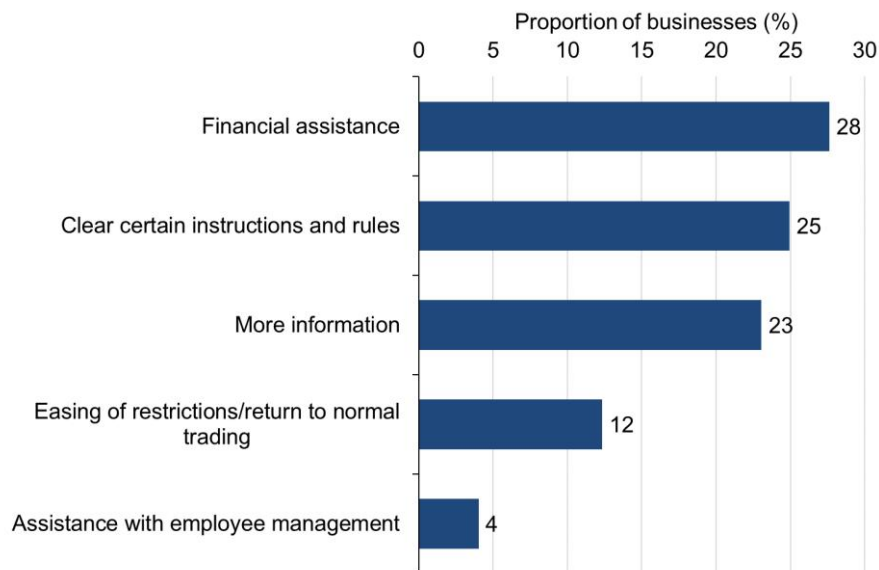


Table 3.2: What would help manage your business response to COVID-19?

What would help manage your business response to COVID-19?	NSW	VIC	QLD
% of businesses (multiple answers possible for each business)	%	%	%
Financial assistance	28	31	24
Clear certain instructions and rules	25	34	18
More information	24	24	28
Easing of restrictions/return to normal trading	13	11	10
Assistance with employee management	3	2	6