



NAB Business Insights

What's keeping SME's awake at night & what are they doing to ease their worries?

In a challenging year for many SMEs, cashflow and profitability have become more pressing concerns. But businesses are becoming increasingly resilient. In response, 1 in 2 will cut costs & seek better supplier terms, 4 in 10 plan to increase their marketing efforts, and 3 in 10 will review their cashflow & working capital processes, invest in new training, talent & people, change their pricing strategy and improve customer communications & management.

Q1 2025

Summary

What's keeping SMEs awake at night?

There's been some notable shifts over the past year in the top concerns of Australian SMEs. In a challenging year for many, cashflow was rated the number one factor keeping business owners & managers awake at night, and for a significantly higher number than at the same time last year (43% of SMEs in Q1 2025 vs. 34% in Q1 2024). Profitability was also more challenging for considerably more SMEs (38% vs. 30%). Inflation & cost of doing business rounded out the top 3 risks, but with inflation easing over the course of the year, it kept slightly fewer SMEs business owners & managers awake than the same time last year (30% vs. 33%).

A relatively large number of SMEs are still experiencing challenges arising from staff turnover & labour shortages (29% vs. 35%) and Government policies & regulations (27% vs. 35%). However, both these risks have fallen considerably compared to a year ago, when they were identified as the top concern. Among other key changes over the past year, a somewhat higher number of SMEs identified finding customers & customer demand (23% vs. 19%), while following the rate cut earlier this year, there's been a relatively large decline in the number who saw interest rates as a risk to their business (10% vs. 16%), as well as fuel prices (2% vs. 6%).

Compared to a year ago, cashflow was highlighted by noticeably more SMEs in NSW (46% vs. 33%), VIC (44% vs. 38%) and WA (43% vs. 34%). Staff turnover & labour shortages was the most prominent risk according QLD SMEs, but by far fewer than at same time last year (39% vs. 51%). In SA, most identified inflation & cost of doing business (45% vs. 37%). Among the key changes, profitability is now a much bigger risk in SA (42% vs. 28%) and WA (40% vs. 25%) but was unchanged and lowest by some margin in QLD (24%). Risks associated with staff turnover & labour shortages were much lower in most states bar WA (34% vs. 35%) and VIC (30% vs. 29%).

Business risks stemming from inflation & cost of doing business (19% vs. 39%) and Government policies & regulations (30% vs. 43%) also fell significantly in WA. In SA, finding customers & customer demand was much more problematic (30% vs. 21%) but fuel prices much less so (3% vs. 14%). Business risks arising from interest rates fell in all states but still ranged quite widely from 5% in QLD to almost 3 times more in VIC (14%). Business continuity featured more among SME business owners & managers in QLD (14%) compared to other states, while cyber-attack was a greatest concern in VIC (12%). WA was the only state to report a higher number of SMEs who saw work-life balance as a key risk (21% vs. 17%) and by far the highest of all states.

By industry, cashflow was highlighted as the biggest concern for SMEs in Construction (55%), Business Services (50%), Retail (48%) and Manufacturing (42%). Inflation & cost of doing business was a greater concern in Accommodation & Hospitality (50%) and Wholesale (45%), while staff turnover & labour shortages featured more prominently in Health Services (53%) and Transport & Storage (43%). Government policies & regulations was the biggest risk in the Property Services sector (38%) and profitability (46%) and Government policies & regulation, in the Finance & Insurance sector (46%).

Though most SME business owners & managers typically identified many of the same issues, some factors weighed much more heavily on specific industries. The most obvious included well above average numbers in Manufacturing (41%) and Business Services (37%) who said finding customers & customer demand was their key risk, in Property Services interest rates (31%), and in Finance & Insurance cyber-attack (42%). Also a much higher number of SMEs cited work-life balance in the Property Services sector (21%), business continuity in Transport & Storage (14%) and Construction (11%), and fuel prices in Transport & Storage (11%). Around twice as many SMEs in Property Services said nothing was keeping them awake at night (14%), with the next highest sector, Finance & Insurance (8%).

Some of the key risks have also changed quite drastically within individual industries over the past year. In Manufacturing, concerns over profitability have increased sharply (39% vs. 26%), while worries over staff turnover & labour shortages (19% vs. 32%) and interest rates (3% vs. 13%) are well down. In Construction far more cited cashflow (55% vs. 32%) and profitability (46% vs. 31%) as key risks, but far fewer staff turnover & labour shortages (27% vs. 40%) and fuel prices (1% vs. 12%). In Retail, Government policies & regulations were much less problematic (28% vs. 40%) and in Wholesale customer retention (15% vs. 23%). Though far more SMEs in the Transport & Storage sector saw cashflow as a key risk (36% vs. 23%), far less were worried by Government policies & regulations (29% vs. 43%), fuel prices (11% vs. 23%) and cyber-attack (4% vs. 17%).

Key risks in the Finance & Insurance sector varied more widely. Though a substantially higher number saw risks stemming from profitability (46% vs. 33%) and cyber-attack (42% vs. 31%), a much lower number worried about inflation & cost of doing business (8% vs. 22%), customer retention (8% vs. 22%), Government policies & regulations (46% vs. 58%), cashflow (17% vs. 28%) and finding customers & customer demand (8% vs. 19%).

In Business Services, far more worried about finding customers & customer demand (37% vs. 16%) and profitability (47% vs. 27%), but far fewer interest rates (0% vs. 11%) and Government policies & regulations (27% vs. 37%). In Property Services, considerably more SMEs saw customer retention as a key risk for their business (17% vs. 5%), but far fewer access to finance (7% vs. 17%).

In the Accommodation & Hospitality sector, a much higher number over the past year now worry about cashflow (45% vs. 29%), customer retention (20% vs. 7%) and inflation & cost of doing business (50% vs. 39%). However, there was also a very steep fall in the number now worried about staff turnover & labour shortages (20% vs. 46%) and utility costs (10% vs. 21%).

In Health Services, a considerably higher number highlighted cashflow (37% vs. 17%) and customer retention (21% vs. 11%, but a much lower number Government policies & regulations (16% vs. 27%).

How are SMEs Planning to Ease These Concerns?

Planning for risks and risk mitigation is critical for survival and growth for SMEs as well as a key building block for business success and longevity. Managing and mitigating risks helps businesses identify, analyse and minimise potential threats to their business. It can also help them navigate uncertainties with confidence and position help them for sustainable growth and longevity. And SME business owners & managers will sleep better at night!

When asked how they planned to ease their concerns, 1 in 2 (50%) said cutting costs where possible & seeking better supplier terms. Almost 4 in 10 (37%) plan to increase their marketing efforts, while 3 in 10 will review their cashflow & working capital processes (29%), invest in new training, talent & people (28%), change their pricing strategy (28%) and improve customer communications & management (27%). 1 in 5 (20%) plan to explore new market segments or locations. Around 1 in 8 plan to improve payment cycles (13%) and investigate new supplier arrangements (13%), and around 1 in 10 will invest in AI (10%), partner with other businesses (10%), invest in cybersecurity defences (9%), investigate government programs, grants etc. (8%) and review interest rate and exchange rate strategies (8%). 1 in 20 however plan to adapt energy usage (solar, battery) and 3% make fleet & machinery greener.

By state, a somewhat higher number of SMEs in VIC are planning to increase their marketing efforts (46%) and investigate new supplier arrangements (19%), in QLD (38%), SA (36%) and WA (34%) invest in new training, talent & people and in NSW (32%) and SA (30%) change their pricing strategy. Considerably more SMEs in QLD also plan to adapt energy usage (10%) and make fleet & machinery greener (8%), while significantly more in SA will seek to improve customer communications & management (33%) and review their interest rate & exchange rate policies (21%). A much lower number in WA are planning to cut costs where possible & seek better supplier terms (34%) and in QLD explore new market segments & locations (15%) and partner with other businesses (6%).

By industry, much larger number of SMEs are planning to ease their concerns in the Accommodation & Hospitality sectors by cutting costs & better supply terms (75%) and changing their price strategy (60%), in Business Services by investing in new training, talent & people (53%), in Wholesale by increasing their marketing efforts (54%), in Construction by reviewing cashflow & working capital processes (40%) and in the Finance & Insurance sector by investing in cybersecurity defences (29%) and partnering with other businesses (21%).

A somewhat higher number of SMEs operating in Manufacturing (42%) and Accommodation & Hospitality (40%) sectors plan to improve customer communications & management, in Construction (20%) and Manufacturing (17%) investigate new supplier arrangements and in Finance & Insurance (30%) and Business Services (29%) invest in AI.

Refer to Appendices 1 & 2 for detailed charts comparing all industry responses against the SME average.

Risks to Your Business Keeping You Awake at Night

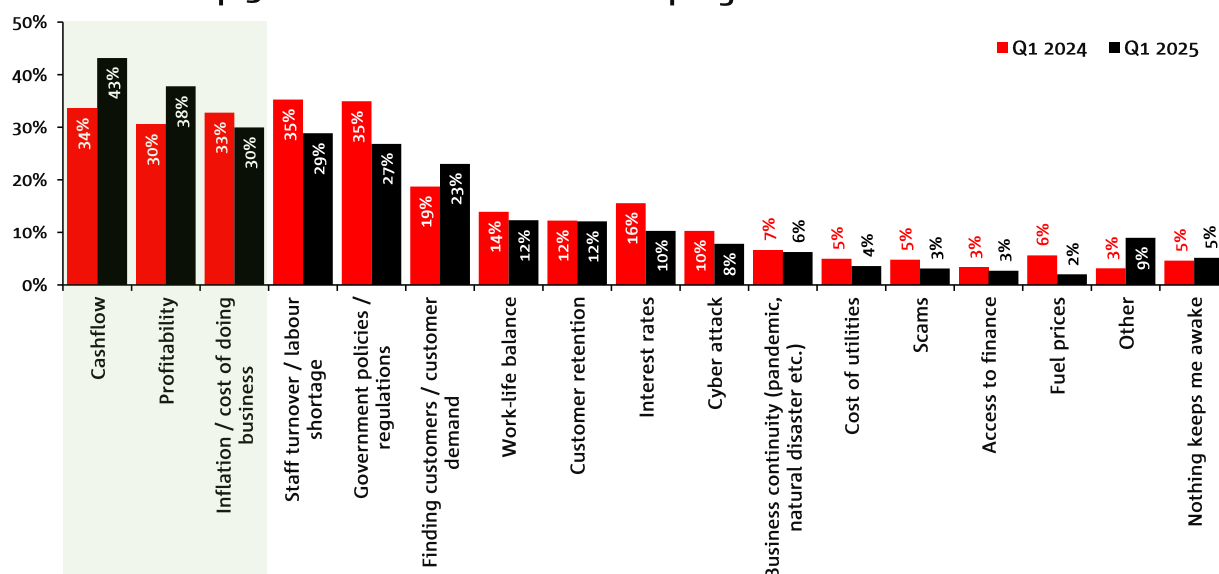
Business risk can be defined as the exposure a business has to things that could lower its profits or lead it to fail. Many factors can converge to create risks, and businesses may not be able to completely avoid them, especially as many of these risks are external. NAB first asked Australian SME business owners & managers to nominate the top 3 risks to their business that keeps them awake at night in the first quarter of 2024. One year down the track and only 1 in 20 still report nothing keeps them awake. But as the economic and political landscape continues to change and evolve, there have been some quantum shifts in the risks now keeping them awake.

In a challenging year for SME businesses, cashflow was rated the number one risk by most SME business owners & managers, and for a significantly higher number than at the same time last year (43% vs. 34%). Profitability was also more challenging for considerably more SMEs (38% vs. 30%). Inflation & cost of doing business rounded out the top 3 risks, but with inflation easing over the course of the year, it kept slightly fewer SMEs business owners & managers awake than at the same time last year (30% vs. 33%).

A relatively large number of SME business owners & managers still reported being kept awake by staff turnover & labour shortages (29% vs. 35%) and Government policies & regulations (27% vs. 35%) in the March quarter of 2025. However, both these risks have fallen considerably since the March quarter 2024 when they were identified as the top risks keeping business owners & managers awake at night.

Among other key changes over the past year, we noted a somewhat higher number of SME business owners & managers kept awake by finding customers & customer demand (23% vs. 19%) and 'other' things (9% vs. 3%). However, following the rate cut earlier this year we also counted a relatively large decline in the number who saw interest rates as a risk to their business (10% vs. 16%), as well as fuel prices (2% vs. 6%).

Top 3 Risks to Your Business Keeping You Awake : All SMEs



Business Risks Keeping You Awake at Night: States

Though cashflow, profitability and inflation & cost of doing business were the 3 biggest risks on average in Q1 2025, this was not uniform across the main states. Cashflow was highlighted as the biggest issue by noticeably more SME business owners & managers than at the same time last year in NSW (46% vs. 33%), VIC (44% vs. 38%) and WA (43% vs. 34%). Staff turnover & labour shortages was the most prominent risk according to most SME business owners & managers in QLD but by far fewer than at same time last year (39% vs. 51%). In SA, however most identified inflation & cost of doing business (45% vs. 37%).

What keeps SME business owners & managers awake has also changed noticeably across states over the last year. Among the biggest changes, profitability is now a much bigger risk in SA (42% vs. 28%) and WA (40% vs. 25%) but was unchanged and lowest by some margin in QLD (24%). Risks associated with staff turnover & labour shortages were much lower in most states bar WA (34% vs. 35%) and VIC (30% vs. 29%). Business risks stemming from inflation & cost of doing business (19% vs. 39%) and Government policies & regulations (30% vs. 43%) also fell significantly in WA. In SA, finding customers & customer demand was much more problematic (30% vs. 21%) but fuel prices much less so (3% vs. 14%).

Business risks arising from interest rates fell in all states but still ranged quite widely from 5% in QLD to almost 3 times more in VIC (14%). Business continuity continued to cause significantly more lost sleep among SME business owners & managers in QLD (14%) than other states but cyber-attack in VIC (12%). WA was the only state to report a higher number of business owners & managers who saw work-life balance as a key risk to their business over the past year (21% vs. 17%) and also by far the highest of all states - see table below.

Business Risks Keeping You Awake at Night: States

	AUS		NSW		QLD		SA		VIC		WA	
	Q1 2024	Q1 2025	Q1 2024	Q1 2025	Q1 2024	Q1 2025	Q1 2024	Q1 2025	Q1 2024	Q1 2025	Q1 2024	Q1 2025
Cashflow	34%	43%	33%	46%	32%	37%	30%	39%	38%	44%	34%	43%
Profitability	30%	38%	34%	40%	24%	24%	28%	42%	35%	43%	25%	40%
Inflation/cost of doing business	33%	30%	33%	31%	30%	27%	37%	45%	32%	29%	37%	19%
Staff turnover/labour shortage	35%	29%	30%	23%	51%	39%	42%	27%	29%	30%	35%	34%
Govt policies/regulations	35%	27%	31%	25%	39%	33%	33%	27%	33%	25%	43%	30%
Finding customers/ demand	19%	23%	20%	22%	13%	15%	21%	30%	24%	27%	15%	19%
Work-life balance	14%	12%	12%	12%	18%	13%	12%	6%	13%	10%	17%	21%
Customer retention	12%	12%	14%	14%	12%	13%	5%	6%	12%	11%	12%	13%
Interest rates	16%	10%	17%	12%	7%	5%	12%	9%	21%	14%	14%	6%
Cyberattack	10%	8%	12%	8%	9%	4%	12%	6%	10%	12%	6%	6%
Business continuity	7%	6%	7%	7%	11%	14%	7%	0%	4%	3%	0%	4%
Cost of utilities	5%	4%	5%	3%	2%	6%	5%	3%	7%	3%	6%	0%
Scams	5%	3%	4%	4%	6%	4%	9%	3%	3%	2%	8%	2%
Access to finance	3%	3%	4%	1%	3%	4%	5%	6%	2%	3%	5%	2%
Fuel prices	6%	2%	6%	2%	6%	5%	14%	3%	3%	1%	6%	0%
Other	3%	9%	3%	7%	2%	5%	14%	18%	0%	7%	3%	17%
Nothing keeps me awake	5%	5%	7%	4%	3%	8%	0%	0%	4%	5%	5%	6%

Business Risks Keeping You Awake at Night: Industry

In the March quarter 2025, cashflow was highlighted as the biggest risk for SMEs in Construction (55%), Business Services (50%), Retail (48%) and Manufacturing (42%). Inflation & cost of doing business was however seen as the main risk by most SME business owners & managers in Accommodation & Hospitality (50%) and Wholesale (45%) sectors, but staff turnover & labour shortages by most in Health Services (53%) and Transport & Storage (43%). Government policies & regulations was the biggest risk in the Property Services sector (38%) and profitability (46%) and Government policies & regulation in the Finance & Insurance sector (46%).

Though most SME business owners & managers typically identified many of the same issues keeping them awake at night, we did note some factors that weighed much more heavily in specific industries.

The most obvious included well above average numbers in the Manufacturing (41%) and Business Services (37%) sectors who said that finding customers & customer demand was a key risk to their business, in the Property Services sector interest rates (31%) and in the Finance & Insurance sector cyber-attack (42%).

Also apparent was the much higher number of SME business owners & managers kept awake at night by work-life balance in the Property Services sector ((21%), business continuity in Transport & Storage (14%) and Construction (11%) sectors and fuel prices in the Transport & Storage sector (11%).

Around twice more SME business owners & managers in the Property Services sector said that nothing keeps them awake at night (14%) than in the next highest sector, Finance & Insurance (8%) - see Table below.

Business Risks Keeping You Awake at Night: Industry (Q1 2025)

	ALL	MFG	CON	RET	WHL	TS	FI	BS	PS	ACCOM	HEA
Cashflow	43%	42%	55%	48%	37%	36%	17%	50%	34%	45%	37%
Profitability	38%	39%	46%	38%	34%	25%	46%	47%	24%	40%	26%
Inflation/cost of doing business	30%	25%	26%	34%	45%	18%	8%	17%	28%	50%	47%
Staff turnover/labour shortage	29%	19%	27%	34%	22%	43%	29%	40%	21%	20%	53%
Government policies/regulations	27%	29%	25%	28%	17%	29%	46%	27%	38%	30%	16%
Finding customers/customer demand	23%	41%	20%	21%	25%	18%	8%	37%	14%	20%	11%
Work-life balance	12%	14%	9%	16%	8%	14%	13%	10%	21%	15%	11%
Customer retention	12%	14%	5%	10%	15%	11%	8%	13%	17%	20%	21%
Interest rates	10%	3%	11%	9%	5%	18%	13%	0%	31%	20%	16%
Cyber attack	8%	5%	3%	5%	5%	4%	42%	13%	10%	5%	16%
Business continuity	6%	5%	11%	4%	6%	14%	4%	3%	3%	0%	5%
Cost of utilities	4%	7%	2%	4%	5%	0%	4%	0%	0%	10%	5%
Scams	3%	0%	2%	3%	5%	4%	8%	7%	3%	0%	5%
Access to finance	3%	5%	3%	3%	2%	0%	0%	0%	7%	0%	0%
Fuel prices	2%	3%	1%	3%	2%	11%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Other	9%	7%	9%	16%	8%	11%	8%	3%	7%	10%	0%
Nothing keeps me awake	5%	5%	7%	0%	5%	7%	8%	3%	14%	5%	5%

Top 3 risks

1

2

3

Some of the key risks keeping SME business owners & managers awake at night have also changed quite drastically within individual industries over the past year.

In Manufacturing, those citing profitability as a key risk increased sharply (39% vs. 26%) but fell considerably for staff turnover & labour shortages (19% vs. 32%) and interest rates (3% vs. 13%). In Construction far more cited cashflow (55% vs. 32%) and profitability (46% vs. 31%) as key risks but far fewer staff turnover & labour shortages (27% vs. 40%) and fuel prices (1% vs. 12%). In Retail, Government policies & regulations were much less problematic (28% vs. 40%) and in Wholesale customer retention (15% vs. 23%).

Though far more business owners & managers in the Transport & Storage sector saw cashflow as a key risk (36% vs. 23%), far less were worried by Government policies & regulations (29% vs. 43%), fuel prices (11% vs. 23%) and cyber-attack (4% vs. 17%).

Key risks in the Finance & Insurance sector varied more widely. Though a substantially higher number saw risks stemming from profitability (46% vs. 33%) and cyber-attack (42% vs. 31%), a much lower number worried about inflation & cost of doing business (8% vs. 22%), customer retention (8% vs. 22%), Government policies & regulations (46% vs. 58%), cashflow (17% vs. 28%) and finding customers & customer demand (8% vs. 19%).

In the Business Services sector however, far more worried about finding customers & customer demand (37% vs. 16%) and profitability (47% vs. 27%), but far fewer interest rates (0% vs. 11%) and Government policies & regulations (27% vs. 37%).

In the Property Services sector, considerably more saw customer retention as a key risk for their business (17% vs. 5%), but far fewer access to finance (7% vs. 17%). In the Accommodation & Hospitality sector, we counted a much higher number over the past year that worried about cashflow (45% vs. 29%), customer retention (20% vs. 7%) and inflation & cost of doing business (50% vs. 39%). However, we also counted a very steep fall in the number now worried about staff turnover & labour shortages (20% vs. 46%) and utility costs (10% vs. 21%).

In Health Services, a considerably higher number highlighted cashflow (37% vs. 17%) and customer retention (21% vs. 11%) as key risks to their business, but a much lower number Government policies & regulations (16% vs. 27%) - see Appendix 1 for individual Industry charts.

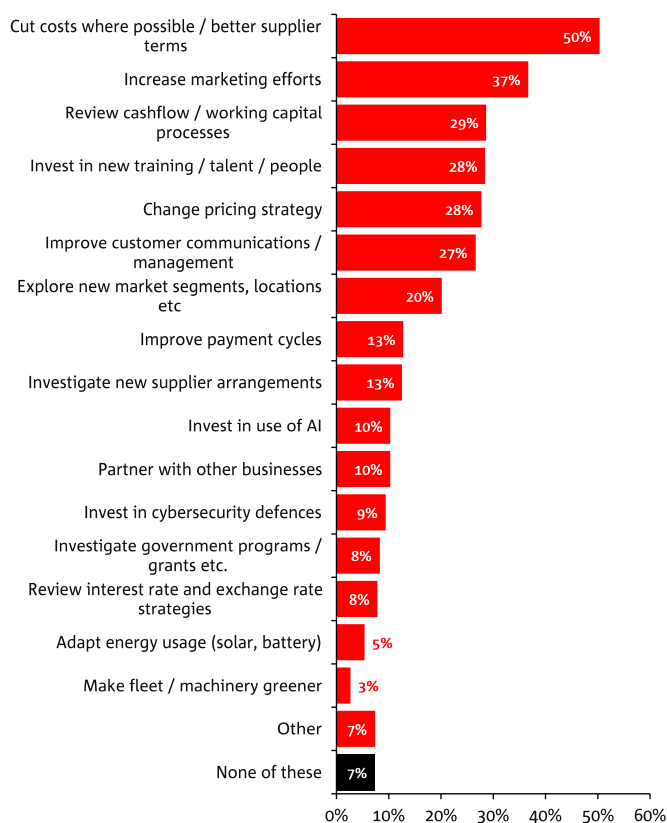
How is Your Business Planning to Ease These Concerns

Planning for risks and risk mitigation is critical for survival and growth for SMEs as well as a key building block for business success and longevity. Managing and mitigating risks helps businesses identify, analyse and minimise potential threats to their business. It can also help them navigate uncertainties with confidence and position help them for sustainable growth and longevity. And SME business owners & managers will sleep better at night!

In this survey, we asked SME business owners & managers how their business is planning to ease concerns about the risks keeping them awake. 1 in 2 (50%) planned to so by cutting costs where possible & seeking better supplier terms. Almost 4 in 10 (37%) plan to increase marketing efforts, and 3 in 10 review their cashflow & working capital processes (29%), invest in new training, talent & people (28%), change their pricing strategy (28%) and improve customer communications & management (27%). 1 in 5 (20%) plan to explore new market segments or locations.

Around 1 in 8 plan to improve payment cycles (13%) and investigate new supplier arrangements (13%), and around 1 in 10 invest in use of AI (10%), partner with other businesses (10%), invest in cybersecurity defences (9%), investigate government programs, grants etc. (8%) and review interest rate and exchange rate strategies (8%). 1 in 20 however plan to adapt energy usage (solar, battery) and 3% make fleet & machinery greener. Only 7% don't plan to do any of these.

How SMEs Are Planning to Ease Concerns



How SMEs Are Planning to Ease Concerns: States

	All SMEs	NSW	QLD	SA	VIC	WA
Cut costs where possible / better supplier terms	50%	55%	48%	52%	52%	34%
Increase marketing efforts	37%	35%	32%	39%	46%	30%
Review cashflow / working capital processes	29%	30%	28%	30%	28%	23%
Invest in new training / talent / people	28%	24%	38%	36%	25%	34%
Change pricing strategy	28%	32%	22%	30%	28%	26%
Improve customer communications / management	27%	27%	24%	33%	27%	28%
Explore new market segments, locations etc.	20%	20%	15%	24%	23%	19%
Improve payment cycles	13%	12%	13%	15%	11%	19%
Investigate new supplier arrangements	13%	11%	14%	6%	19%	9%
Partner with other businesses	10%	10%	6%	15%	13%	11%
Invest in use of AI	10%	11%	10%	15%	9%	9%
Invest in cybersecurity defences	9%	8%	9%	9%	10%	15%
Investigate government programs / grants etc.	8%	6%	13%	6%	9%	11%
Review interest rate and exchange rate strategies	8%	7%	4%	21%	8%	9%
Adapt energy usage (solar, battery)	5%	4%	10%	3%	4%	4%
Make fleet / machinery greener	3%	1%	8%	3%	3%	2%
Other	7%	5%	9%	6%	8%	13%
None of these	7%	8%	9%	6%	3%	13%

How SME business owners & managers plan to ease their concerns about the risks they identified did however vary somewhat across the main states. In particular, we counted somewhat higher number of SMEs in VIC planning to increase their marketing efforts (46%) and investigate new supplier arrangements (19%), in QLD (38%), SA (36%) and WA (34%) invest in new training, talent & people and in NSW (32%) and SA (30%) change their pricing strategy.

Considerably more SME business owners & managers in QLD also planned to adapt energy usage (10%) and make fleet & machinery greener (8%), while significantly more in SA planned to improve customer communications & management (33%) and review their interest rate & exchange rate policies (21%).

We also counted much lower numbers in WA planning to cut costs where possible & better supplier terms (34%) and in QLD explore new market segments & locations (15%) and partner with other businesses (6%).

How SMEs Are Planning to Ease Concerns: Industry

	All SMEs	MFG	CON	RET	WHL	TS	FI	BS	PS	ACCOM	HEA
Cut costs where possible / better supplier terms	50%	56%	48%	54%	55%	32%	17%	50%	59%	75%	47%
Increase marketing efforts	37%	37%	26%	35%	54%	25%	29%	40%	48%	35%	37%
Review cashflow / working capital processes	29%	31%	40%	31%	22%	21%	4%	27%	28%	35%	21%
Invest in new training / talent / people	28%	24%	26%	26%	26%	32%	25%	53%	34%	20%	26%
Change pricing strategy	28%	31%	28%	29%	32%	14%	13%	27%	7%	60%	37%
Improve customer communications / management	27%	42%	15%	19%	35%	21%	8%	30%	34%	40%	32%
Explore new market segments, locations etc.	20%	27%	24%	15%	31%	25%	13%	10%	17%	0%	11%
Improve payment cycles	13%	12%	17%	14%	15%	7%	0%	20%	7%	5%	11%
Investigate new supplier arrangements	13%	17%	20%	11%	15%	4%	4%	3%	3%	15%	11%
Partner with other businesses	10%	14%	8%	5%	15%	14%	21%	13%	7%	5%	5%
Invest in use of AI	10%	5%	7%	5%	6%	7%	29%	30%	17%	15%	16%
Invest in cybersecurity defences	9%	8%	8%	4%	11%	7%	29%	17%	10%	0%	16%
Investigate government programs / grants etc.	8%	14%	7%	9%	6%	7%	0%	7%	10%	5%	21%
Review interest rate and exchange rate strategies	8%	3%	11%	8%	11%	7%	4%	10%	10%	0%	5%
Adapt energy usage (solar, battery)	5%	3%	3%	5%	6%	11%	0%	3%	10%	10%	11%
Make fleet / machinery greener	3%	2%	1%	0%	5%	7%	0%	3%	10%	0%	5%
Other	7%	7%	9%	8%	5%	21%	8%	10%	0%	0%	5%
None of these	7%	7%	9%	4%	6%	11%	17%	3%	10%	5%	11%

How SME business owners & managers plan to ease their concerns about the risks they identified also varied significantly by industry.

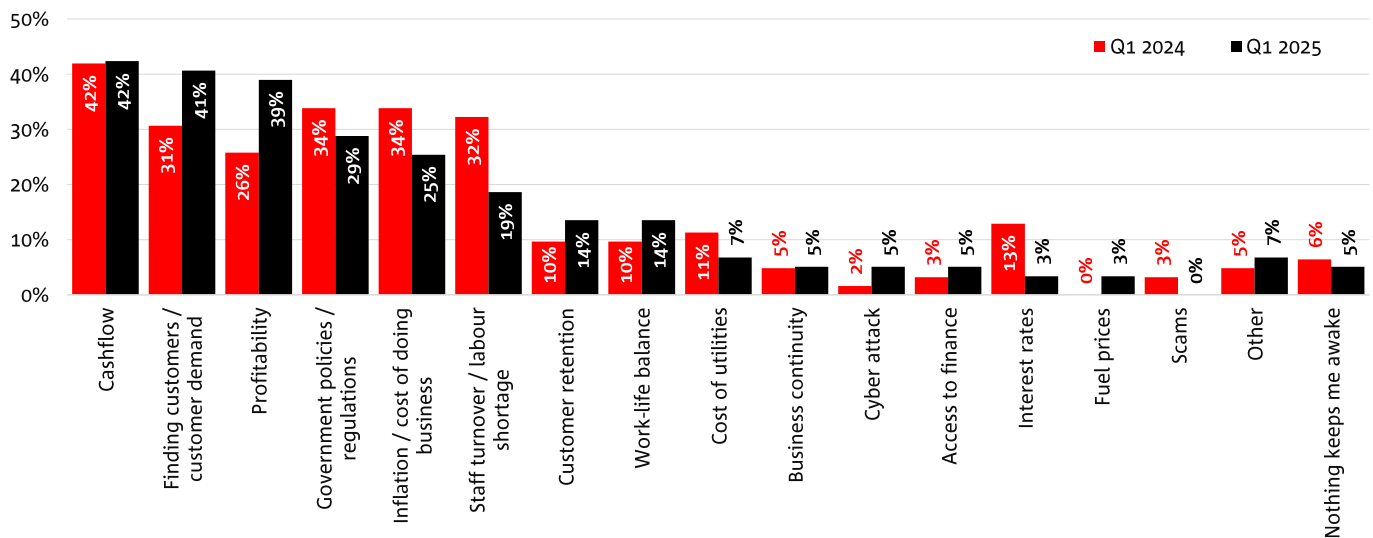
In particular, we noted a much larger number of SME business owners & managers who said they are planning to ease their concerns in the Accommodation & Hospitality sectors by cutting costs & better supply terms (75%) and changing their price strategy (60%), in Business Services by investing in new training, talent & people (53%), in Wholesale by increasing their marketing efforts (54%), in Construction by reviewing cashflow & working capital processes (40%) and in the Finance & Insurance sector by investing in cybersecurity defences (29%) and partnering with other businesses (21%).

We also counted a somewhat higher number of SMEs operating in Manufacturing (42%) and Accommodation & Hospitality (40%) sectors who planned to improve customer communications & management, in Construction (20% and Manufacturing (17%) who plan investigate new supplier arrangements and in Finance & Insurance (30%) and Business Services (29%) invest in use of AI.

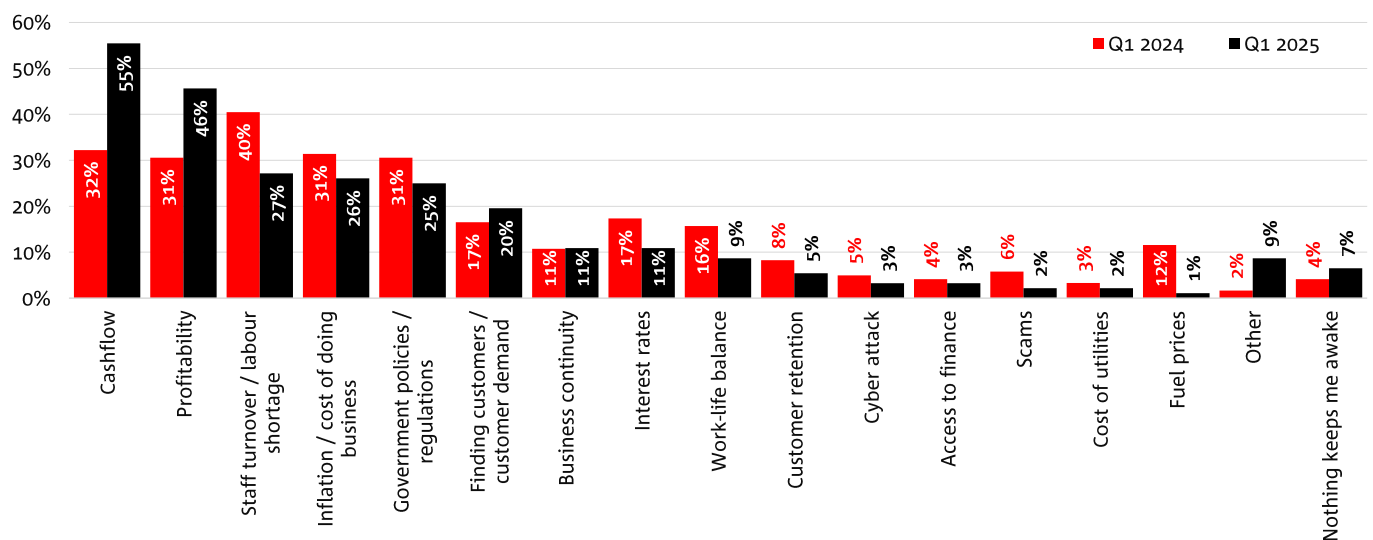
Refer to Appendix 2 for detailed charts comparing all industry responses against the SME average.

Appendix 1: Business Risks Keeping You Awake at Night: Industry

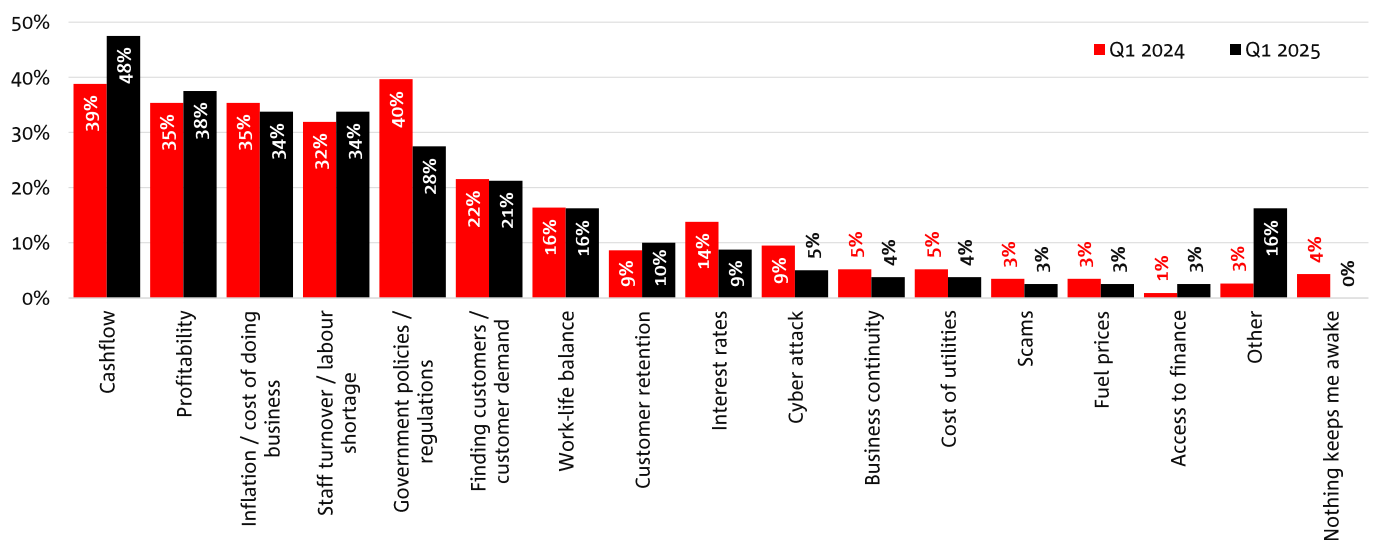
Top 3 Risks to Your Business Keeping You Awake at Night: Manufacturing

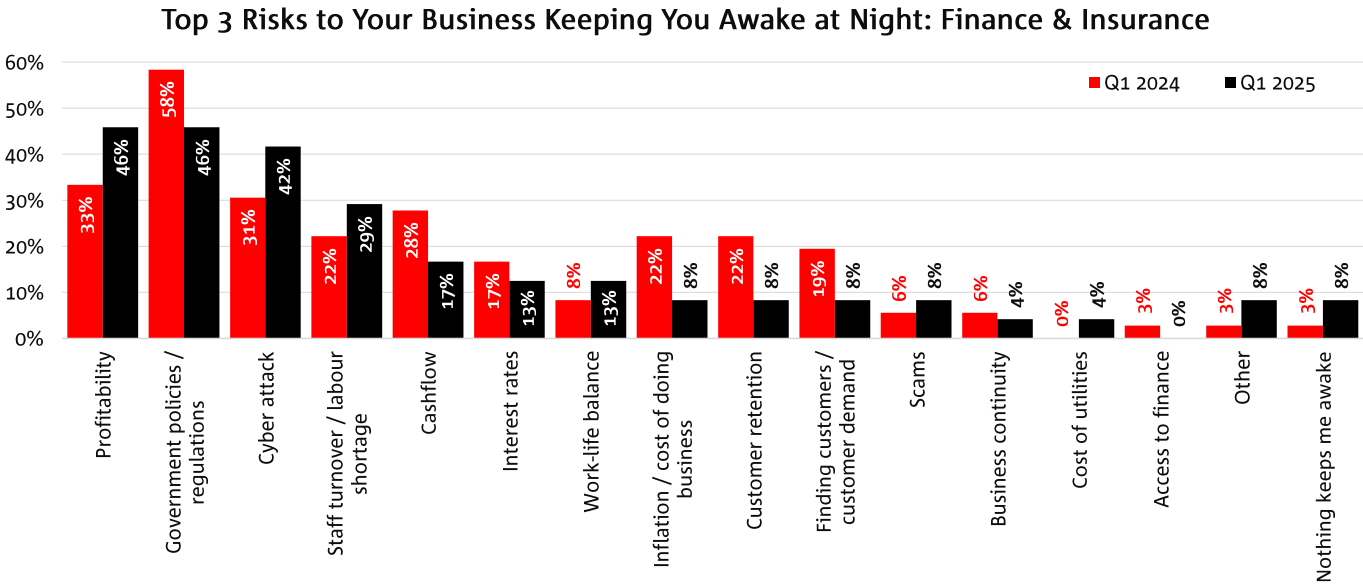
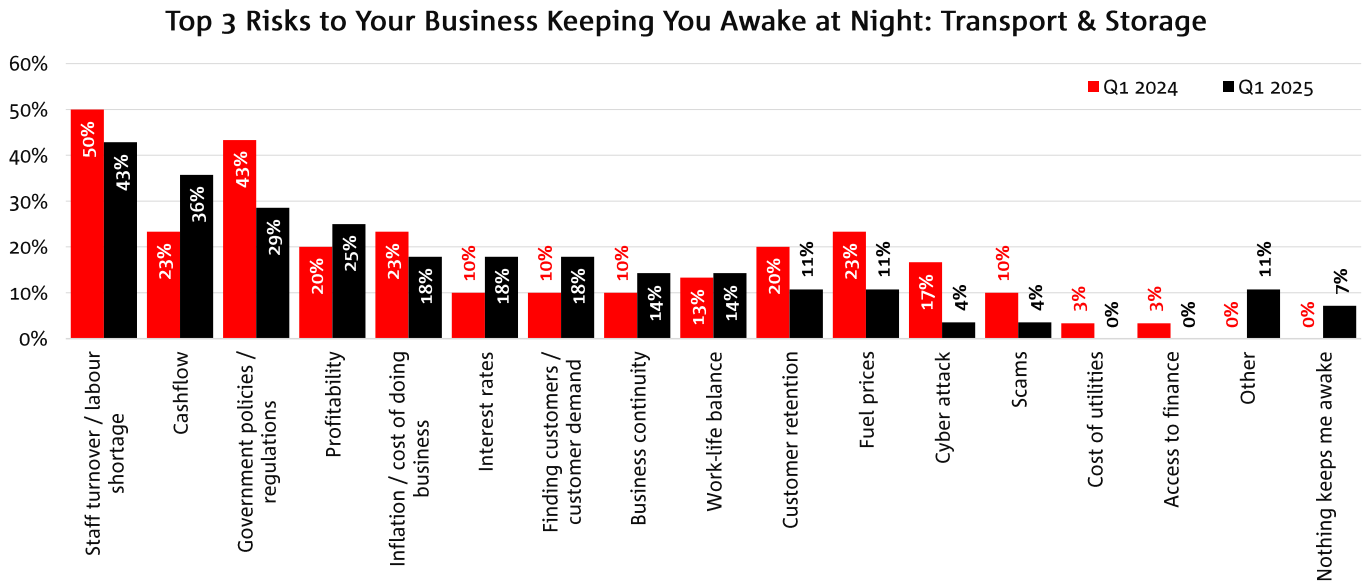
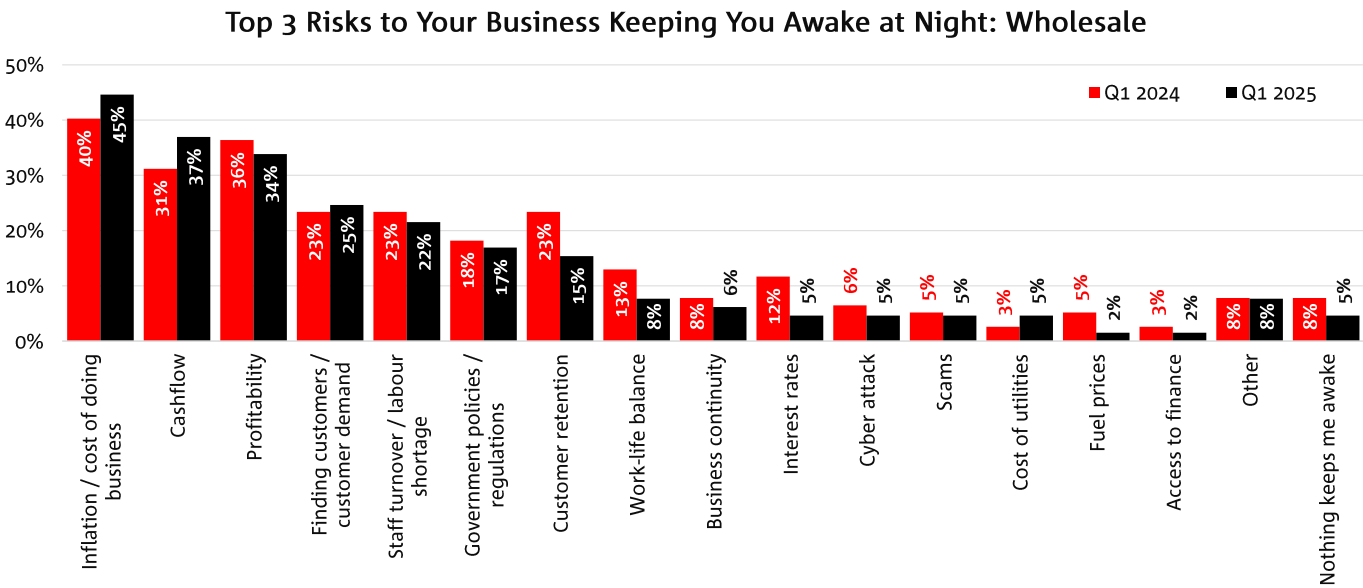


Top 3 Risks to Your Business Keeping You Awake at Night: Construction

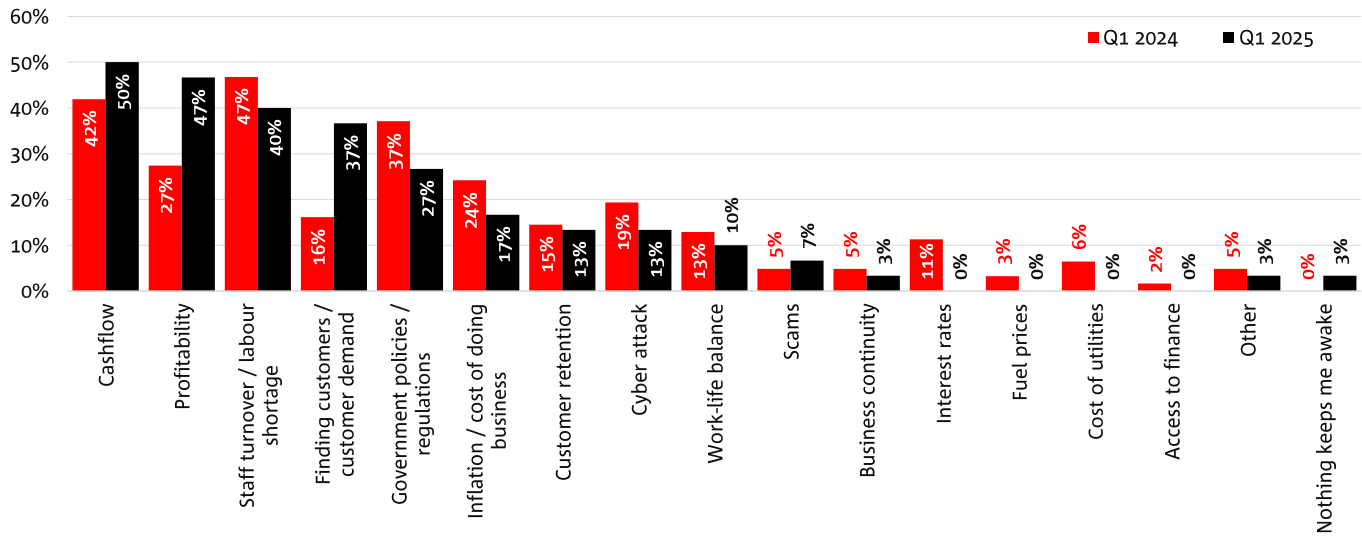


Top 3 Risks to Your Business Keeping You Awake at Night: Retail

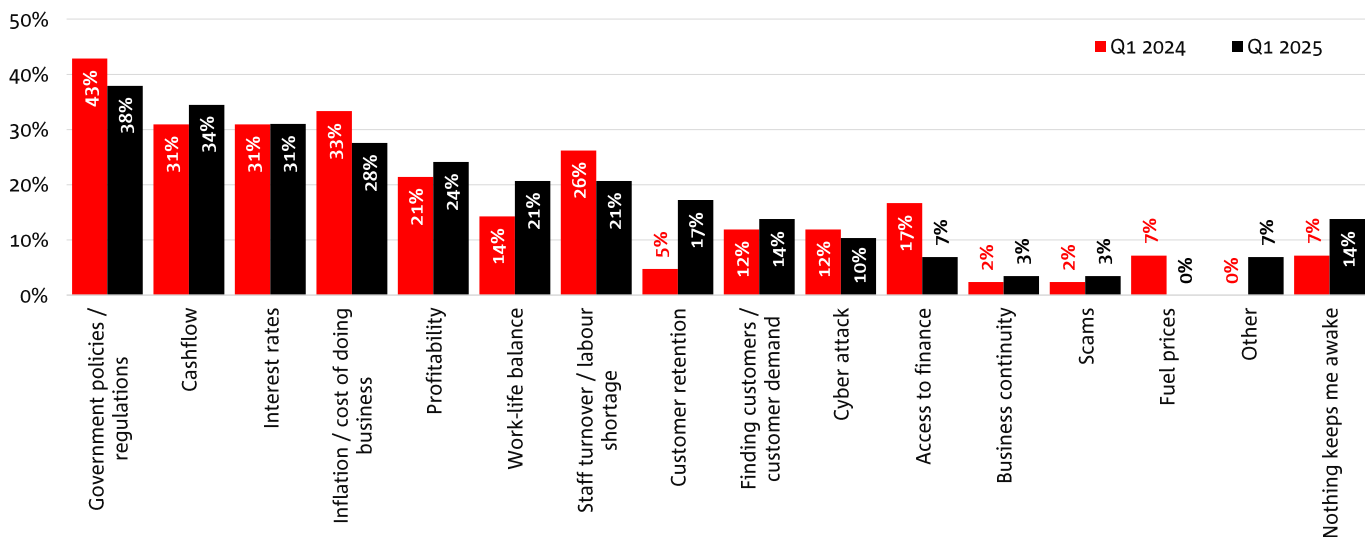




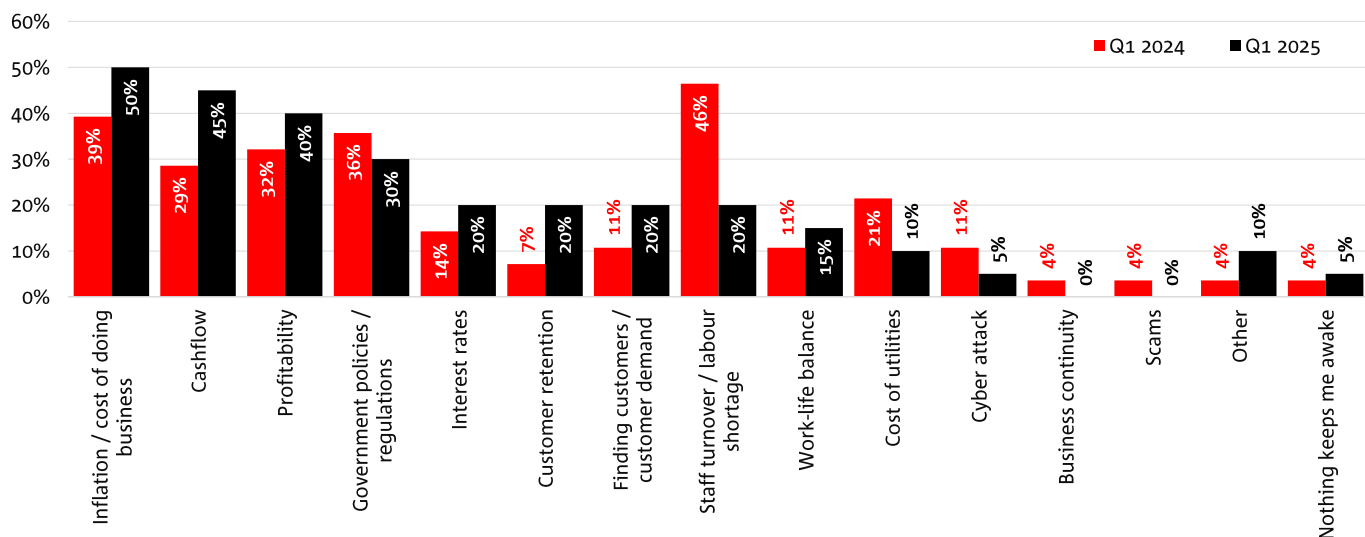
Top 3 Risks to Your Business Keeping You Awake at Night: Business Services



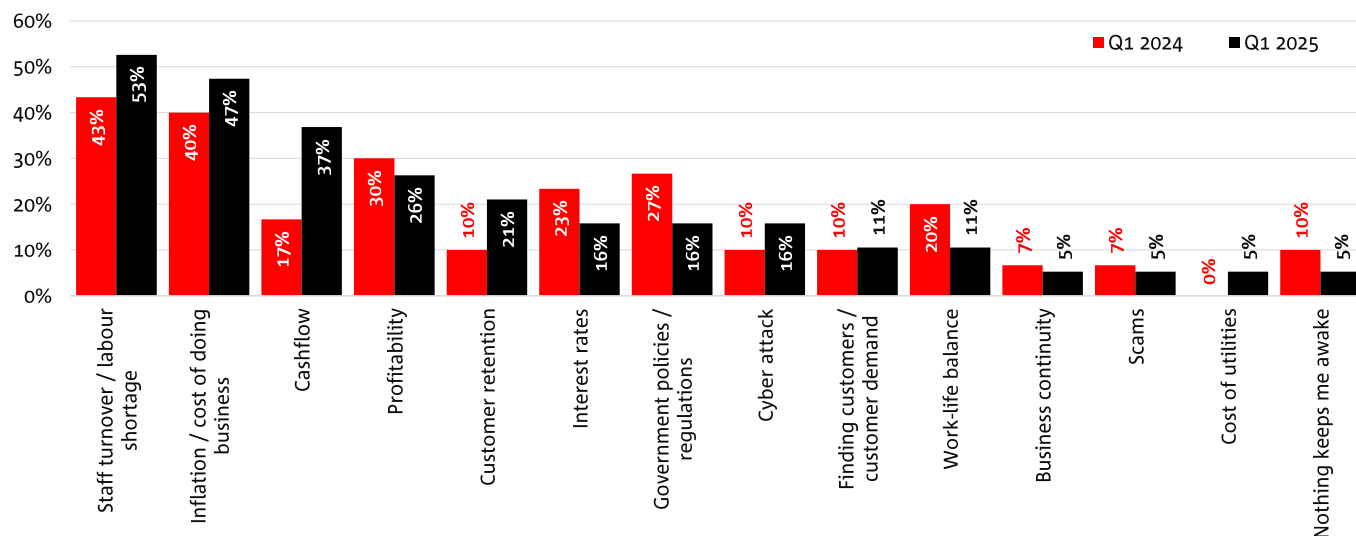
Top 3 Risks to Your Business Keeping You Awake at Night: Property Services



Top 3 Risks to Your Business Keeping You Awake at Night: Accommodation & Hospitality

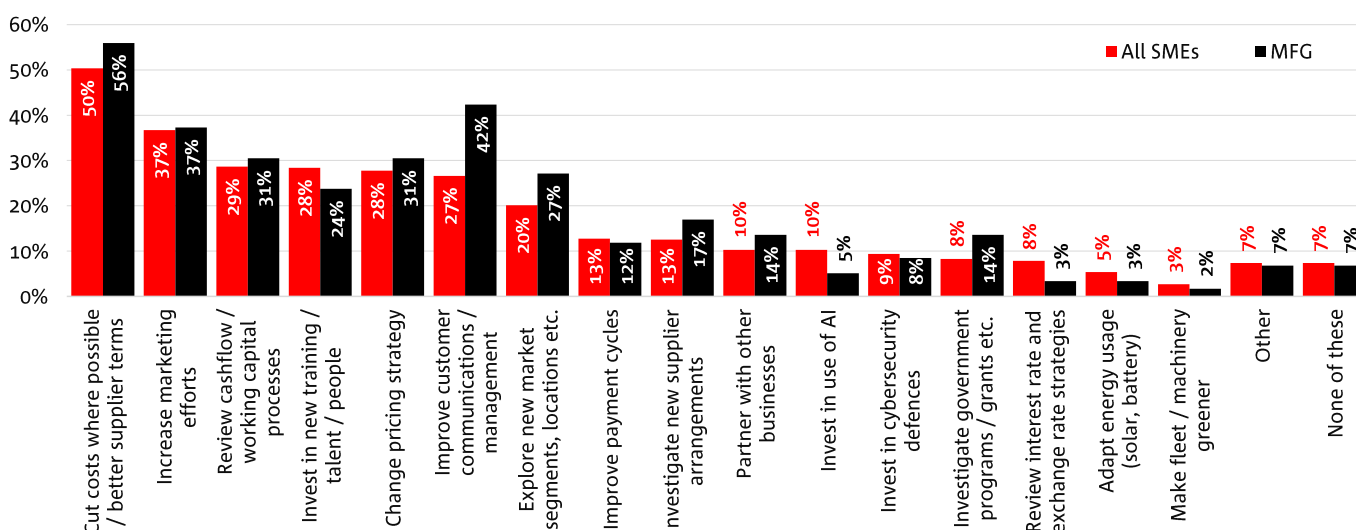


Top 3 Risks to Your Business Keeping You Awake at Night: Health Services

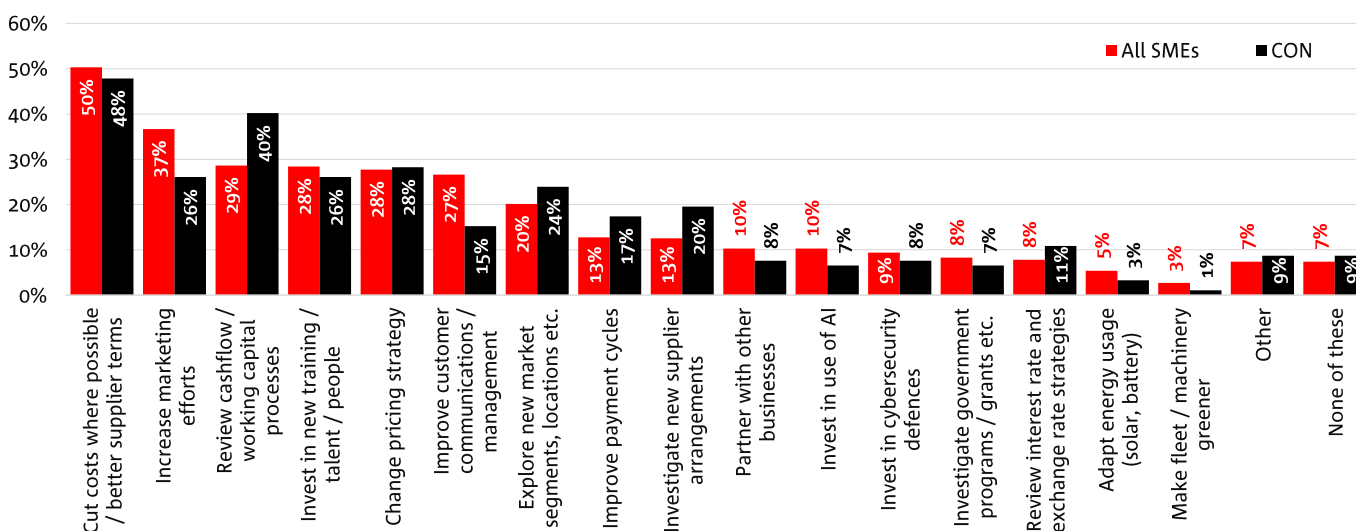


Appendix 2: How is Your Business Planning to Ease These Concerns

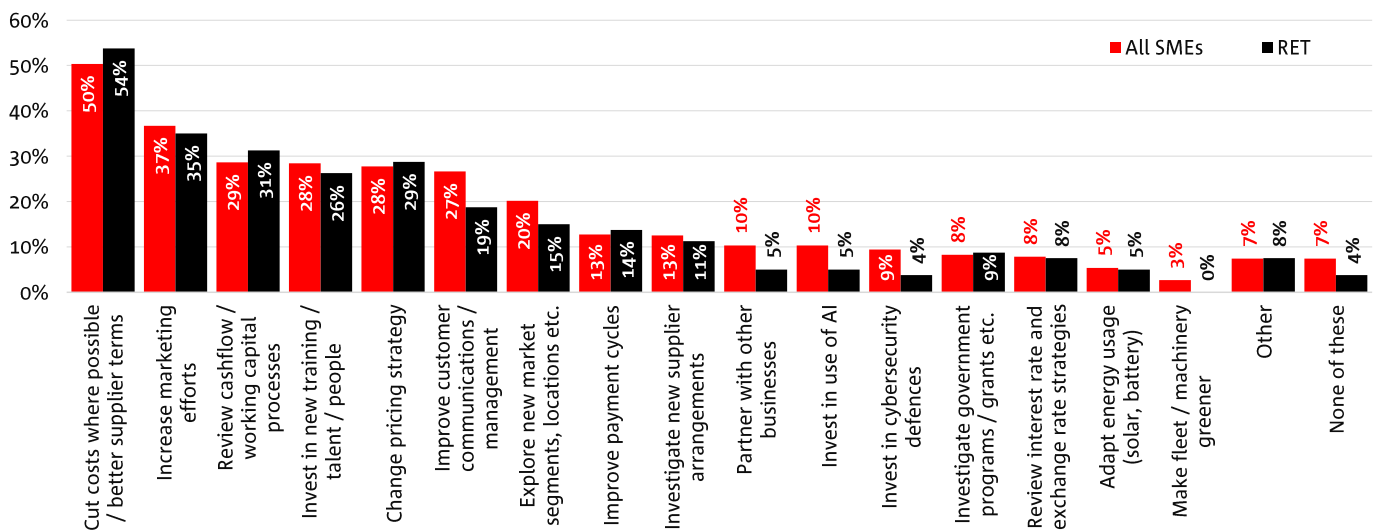
How SMEs Planning to Ease Concerns: Manufacturing



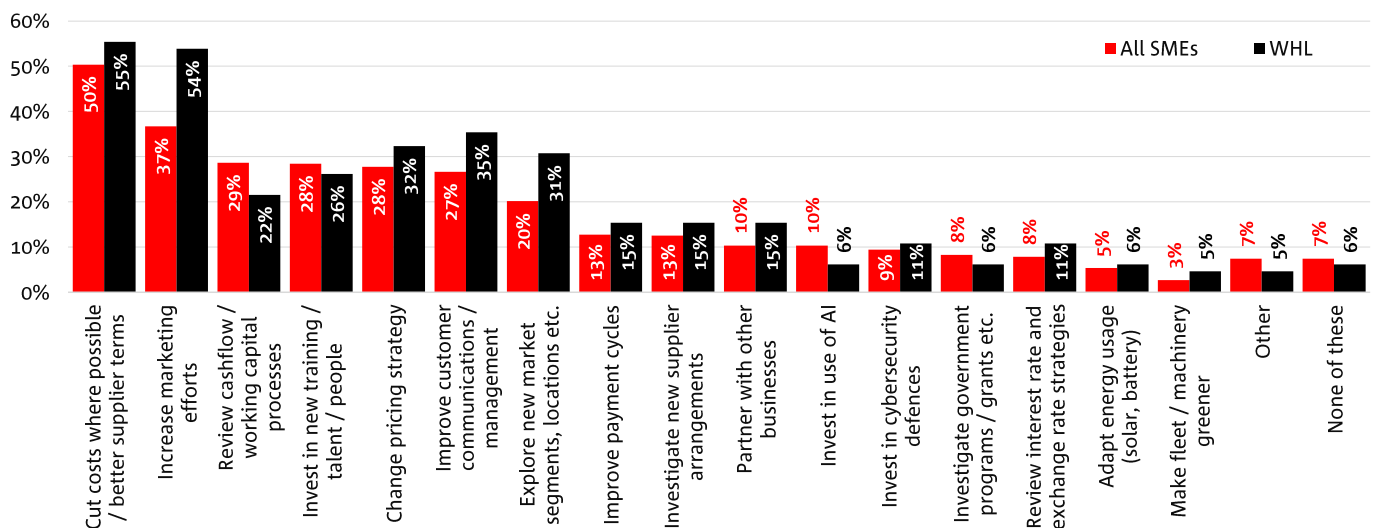
How SMEs Planning to Ease Concerns: Construction



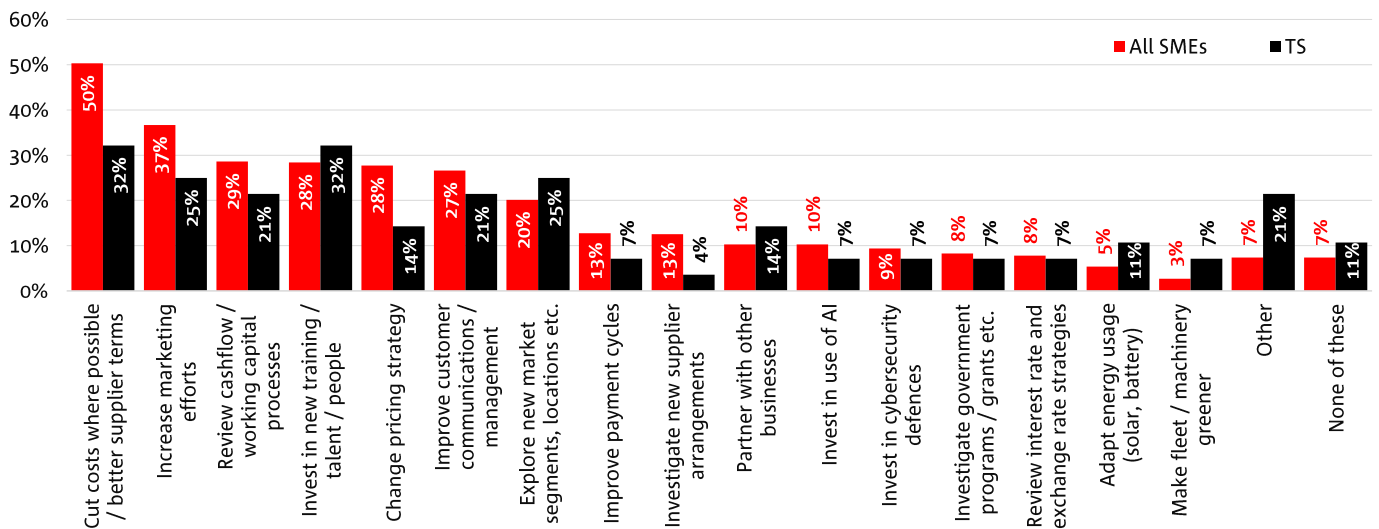
How SMEs Planning to Ease Concerns: Retail



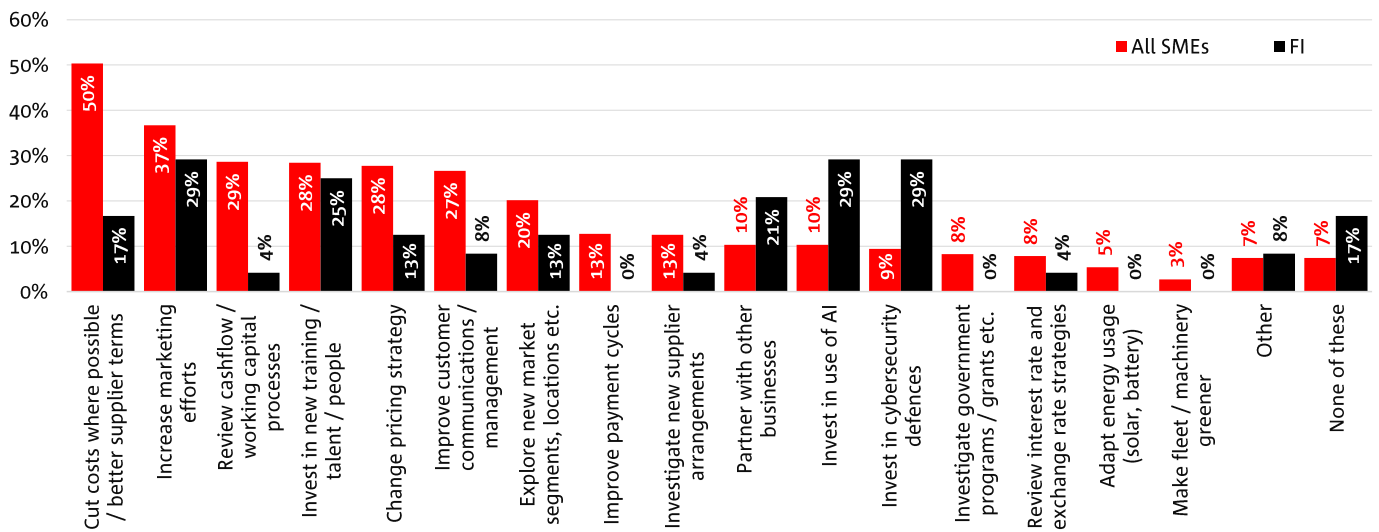
How SMEs Planning to Ease Concerns: Wholesale



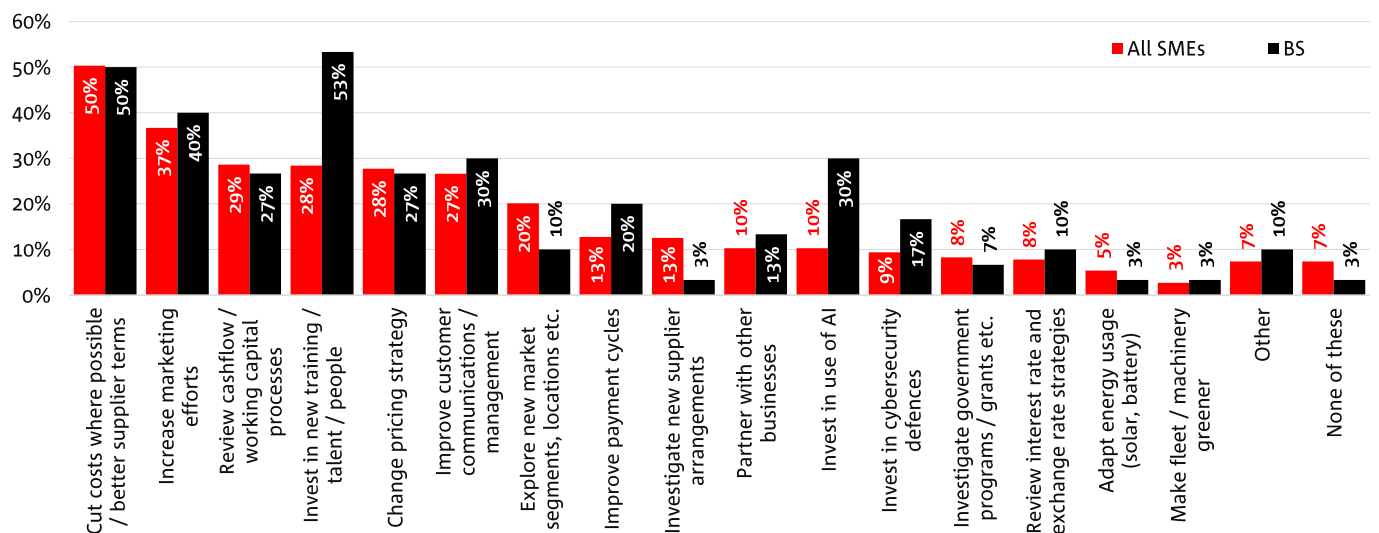
How SMEs Planning to Ease Concerns: Transport & Storage



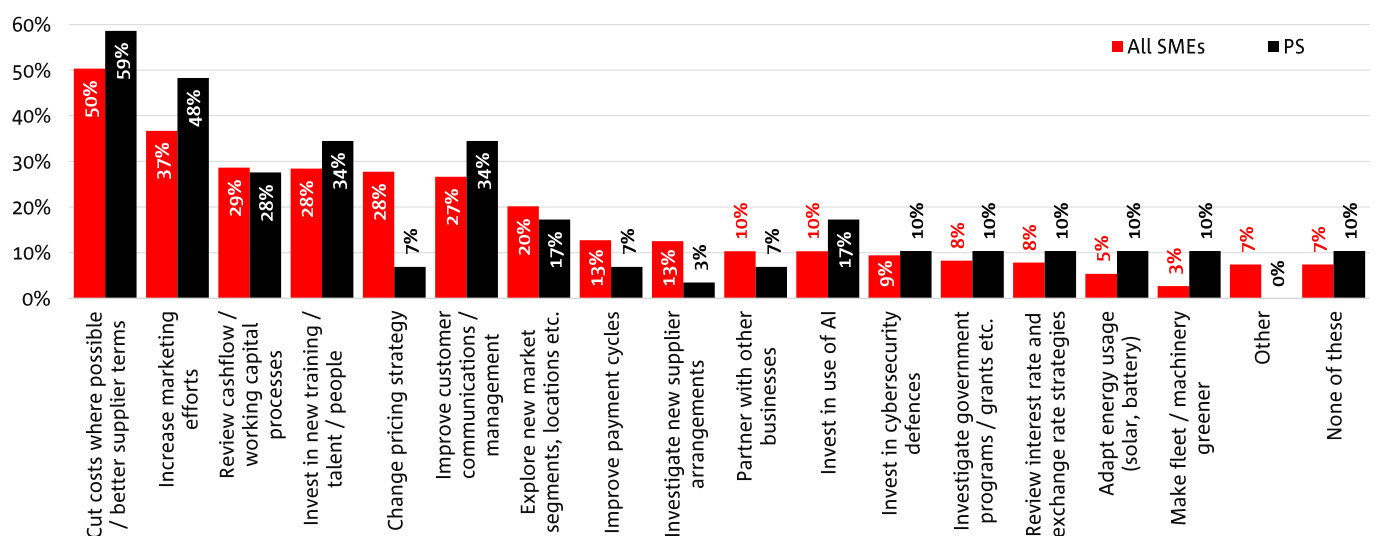
How SMEs Planning to Ease Concerns: Finance & Insurance



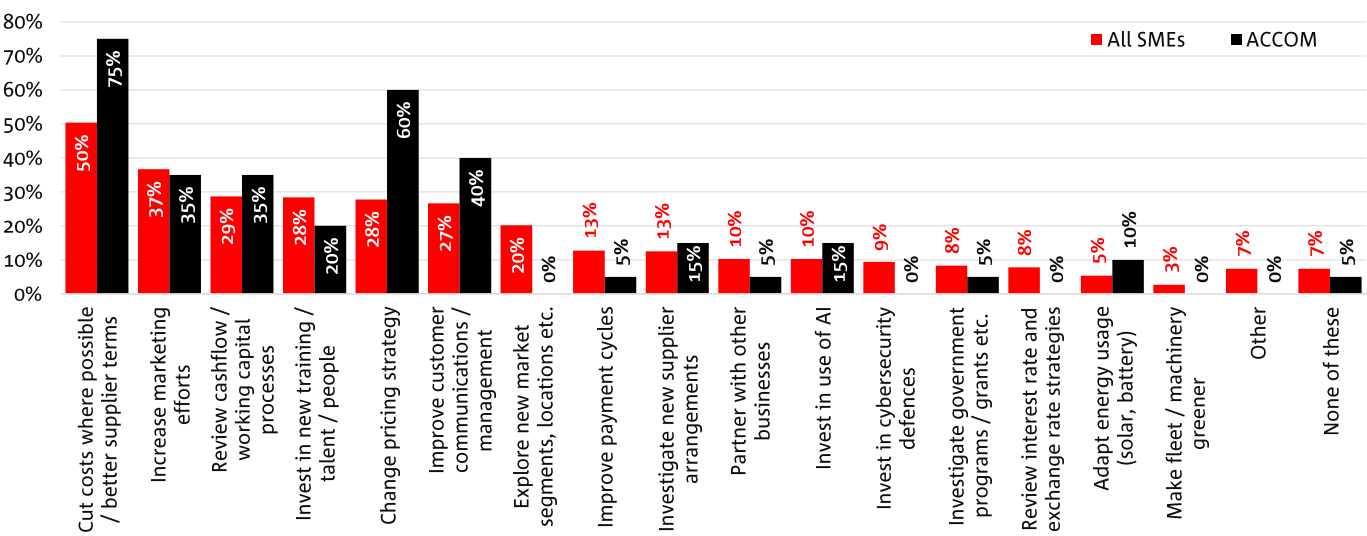
How SMEs Planning to Ease Concerns: Business Services



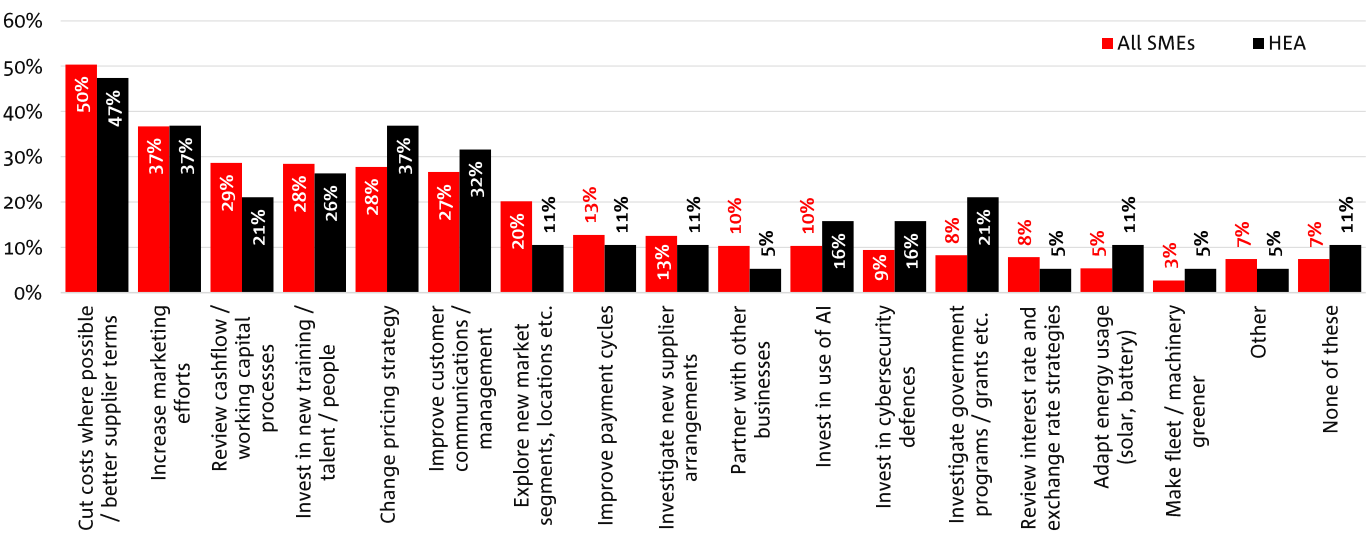
How SMEs Planning to Ease Concerns: Property Services



How SMEs Planning to Ease Concerns: Accommodation & Hospitality



How SMEs Planning to Ease Concerns: Health Services



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