

To the Committee/ Research Director,

My name is [REDACTED] and I am currently working at Caval Ridge Mine, Queensland. I am a FIFO worker and I would like to offer my view and experience of FIFO for Queensland mines for your consideration going forward.

I have worked in Queensland coal mines for 8 years with the past 1.5 years doing FIFO with Caval Ridge. I have a 7 on and 7 off roster. Prior to this (6.5 years), I lived locally for a while and have also done Drive In/Out (DIDO) and also fly to Mackay and then DIDO.

I like to read/watch medial reports about FIFO in mines because I am interested. However, I find that only the negative is reported. This is what the general public see. I don't think the media presents a good picture of all FIFO arrangements.

Most of the media appears to show FIFO workers for mines in Western Australia or Northern Territory. The rosters used as examples are often the ones that have the worker at the mine for a long time with a short time for days off. E.g 2 or 3 weeks on and 1 week off or worse. The workers usually have a long way to travel from their residence to the mine – remote mines. I am concerned that a study of FIFO for the purposes of having it in Queensland will only be based on these mines and reports.

I feel very lucky to have my FIFO organised by my employer. I love my work roster and work life balance. However, I do not feel that I am biased towards FIFO. I believe in a balanced approach.

I do not believe that all mines should be FIFO for obvious reasons (local workers and local businesses support the local area) and I believe in supporting local communities and spreading the benefits that come with the mining industry.

I believe there are also benefits from having some FIFO workers as part of the balance. FIFO organised by the employer takes tired workers that drive to and from the Bowen Basin area off the roads which improves safety for all road users. Many people that I have worked with in the Bowen Basin area, drive themselves in and out from all sorts of areas – I know people that live in Townsville, Ayr, Innisfail, Brisbane, Gold Coast, Rockhampton and Mackay. Many of these people drive themselves back to their place of residence after only a few hours' sleep, if any. They say that they will pull over and have a rest/sleep if they need to. I think that if you live more than an hour or 2 away from your mine then travel to and from the mine organised by the employer is better than shift workers driving themselves. I think that the majority of mine workers are

DIDO workers (I don't know the figures though). This is where organised FIFO is a positive.

A FIFO roster of 7 on and 7 off is great. I would not like to see FIFO rosters that are used in Western Australia because I agree that this amount of time away from family and friends would be detrimental to a happy life. A roster similar to my roster also encourages more females to the mining industry which assists greatly with diversity in the workplace which is a known benefit.

I am not sure about this (for the costs etc), but I don't know if it is easier for an employer to organise it so that one mine might have all FIFO workers while another one they own next door has workers from the local/regional area. My point being, we may not want 100% FIFO for the region, but 100% (or a large %) for a mine here and there might be ok, while the rest are local. It might be cost effective and easier to organise for the employer that way. I don't think that the immediate local area has enough workers to support all the mines in the area, and not everyone wants to live in the immediate area (that is why a great percentage will continue to DIDO even when given the choice to live locally). I agree that if a person wants to live local and have their family close by, then they should be able to have this choice, it would just mean that they work at any one of the numerous mines that do not have organised FIFO at this time. It is about having a balance.

My experience with FIFO while working at Caval Ridge is great. I have an even time roster with only a week away from home and a whole week at home with family and friends for my days off. I work long hours and hard while I am at work, but my accommodation and travel to and from work is set up and organised so well that I feel fresh for work every day and for my days off. The accommodation that I stay at for my week at work is quiet so I can sleep well. I don't have the neighbours mowing their lawns or dogs barking as I did when I lived locally. There are a couple of gyms that most of our employees utilise. The facilities are good. The people that I work with live in South East Queensland or Cairns. This also adds to the diversity to our workplace and allows some of the miners income to be spread around our state.

In summary, I think that the type of FIFO that I experience is good. Not all FIFO is like it is portrayed in the media or happens in Western Australian remote mines.

Thank you for your consideration. I would be happy to answer any questions you may have.

Have a good day.

I have just read the website where it explains about submissions being made public or confidential. I do not give my permission for my name to be used as part of this submission if to be made public. Please take it out if the submission is going to be made public. Thank you.

Regards,

[REDACTED]