

Subject:

Fwd: A submission regarding Fly in Fly out Workforces and its affect on our communities

Date:

Sunday, 24 May 2015 1:17:33 AM

---

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

**From:** "Hamilton, Glenn" [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

### **and its affect on our communities**

To whom it may concern,

I have lived in Blackwater for approximately 45years ie. all my schooling ,an apprenticeship and working as a tradesman Diesel Fitter at a mine in Blackwater (current) and consequently married to Vicky, with four adult children (two born in Blackwater)all schooled and raised in Blackwater.

I ve been through about 4 cycles of coal industry boom and bust and simply tightened the belt to keep going.

I believe all of the fifo and dido began with the introduction of the 12 hour shifts, which was introduced (we were told )to eliminate one shift change (ie day shift ,afternoon shift and night shift..all 8 hour shifts) to two shifts day and night (more efficiency). Little did we realise what it would do to our small thriving, prosperous ,friendly, welcoming town, and future permanent job prospects for our local children and local community. Not to mention immensely stifling the junior sport and father children time together.

In a short time people chose to move partners and family to the coast ,to the far north ,to the far south ...and even oversees. This was embraced by companies , government bodies and various councils who saw an avenue, where they were able to share the wealth of people working in the rich resource industry, and cash in on trying to be a travel hub for the fly in and fly out....their excitement was sickening for me to watch them actually embrace this ANTI FAMILY behaviour, all for greed, self benefit and no regard for the broken marriages, family separation and single parent children the scourge would cause ....for mine, they (children) grow too quickly as it is, without missing out on more than two thirds of their lives by trying to make a living. More importantly, no father figure guidance while dads away working for full weeks and in some cases months. I know of fellow workers who are contractors whose roster is 28 days on 7 days off or worse still, the endless roster ie.just keep working, which is rampant in the labour hire business because its not policed . The shift lengths can vary from 12 to 14 hours, then there is traveling back to the accommodation (can be up to an hour away) ,a quick bite and a short sleep, before the routine starts again, no wonder they are so fatigued and brain frazzled,

be clear on this, this is expected by their employers ,and if they complain, they don't have a job.

Another downside to the dilemma is once they are dismissed for trying to get a fair go ,who do they go to, to plead their case?, Fair Work Australia ? By the time they get their hearing in court they ll be mighty broke and still have no work. That said' I'm not surprised when I hear that suicide is the option some people have taken. Unfortunately we are just starting to see the sad repercussions and fall out, which I believe will become increasingly worse a few years down the track, if something isn't done now. I guarantee you won't see the promoters of FIFO, DIDO put there dirtied hands up to take some blame .....I have a saying "You live Apart You Grow Apart' .....FIFO DIDO is definitely anti family and definitely anti community

With its inception, FIFO,DIDO has had a detrimental affect on our small businesses too, where local small business supported the town because people lived in town, it created a comfortable lifestyle for all, and coastal areas, while they claim they were doing it tough ,were well supported when people holidayed , travelled away or visited for speciality items or care (doctors /dentists)

Many years ago I had the privilege to go to a state government summit In Rockhampton where they were promoting decentralisation ,the idea being that the bigger cities were choking up and they wanted people moving to outer areas to live which I thought was a good idea ie more people more community more small business (ultimately more jobs) a good country lifestyle for all. Well how that idea changed small businesses have gone to the wall because people who FIFO DIDO don't normally purchase from the locals ,they bring all their requirements from home, even the single persons quarters or " Camps" don't purchase from locals, it all comes in in trucks.

Another problem that fifo /dido creates, is the number of" Dongas" required to house the travelling workforce. I know in Blackwater, we have three of the seven a large "camps" at entrances to the town, which makes the town unattractive to prospective families, because it looks like a transient community..... I wonder if it would be tolerated if just one 1000 person "camp" would be tolerated at the entrance to Noosa or Surfers Paradise .....I think not. The visual amenity is an eyesore too, as the dongas don't do much to promote or enhance the landscape of our town. It s my belief that the camps should be managed and kept on the mine sites ,not in the towns and it needs to be legislated by government that way, to give the small town communities a chance to survive. Some mining companies actually frown upon workers bringing the family to Blackwater to live normally TOGETHER so much so that they are happy to pay \$1200 per person per week to feed and accommodate at the camp but not subsidise in any way shape or form, housing for the family in the town. When you hear the ridiculous situation in Moranbah with the 100% FIFO with no jobs for locals or people having to travel via Brisbane or Cairns to get back to home to Moranbah or Mackay well it just defies belief the best explanation I've heard is POSTCODE APARTIDE... it saddens me that governments embrace and allow this discriminatory behaviour and practise to continue let alone be introduced ITS WRONG and a lose lose situation.

I'm lead to believe that the reason camp type accommodation is so attractive to the large companies, is that they get a large tax break by having a transient workforce living away from home in single persons quarters.

As it happens I have been involved with emergency services for the last 20 years ie Qld Fire and Emergency Services as auxiliary Captain (approx. 10 years).

Out of our 110 incidents per year most of our 'work' is attending high speed Road Traffic Crashes where people have appeared to have been sleeping or in a hurry while driving, with catastrophic consequences.....think about it, they 've just finished a twelve and a half hour day or night shift, possibly driving heavy machinery for the last 5 to 14 days and get in the car and travel between two and ten hours to get home, not even interstate "truckies" are allowed to do that, of course its not policed by the companies, once they've left site they are on their own, sleep debt and all. To be fair some companies supply a bus for workers who live within two hours of their employment

Something that hasn't been thought about is why drugs like "ICE" and methamphetamine is so rampant now. I am anti drugs ...but I can see "time poor" people indulging in illicit drugs to stay awake to get home or travelling back to work. We know the down downside of using "uppers" is the onset of depression which can certainly lead to the suicidal tendencies and thoughts ..... I hear the politicians quiz" why are the illicit drugs getting around these western mining areas" ? tired people travelling all over the states to work...bit of a" no-brainer" to me ,they can sell the drugs and make a few extra dollars on the side to pay for their travel ,not only to fellow workers but introduce it to the smaller communities.....another problem!

How would I fix it?

A step in the right direction would be to legislate that resource companies are supportive of the communities they use ,at least 50% of the workforce should be persuaded to live locally or at least make it attractive to live locally, possibly subsidised rental, (the staff do) and give workforces the choice to have family with them if they desire. Make rosters that limit nightshifts to a maximum of three (the most as per recommendation from a professor from Melbourne university) so peoples circadian rhythm doesn't out of kilter and create a health risk ,family friendly rosters where 5 days is the maximum amount of twelve hour shifts. If "Camps" are necessary for a turn around workforce they should be built on and managed on the minesites. For the workers who insist on travelling, more education with regards to fatigue ,use of illicit drugs, driving tired and personal health advice.

Yours in community and safety

Glenn Hamilton



---

This message and any attached files may contain information that is confidential and/or subject of legal privilege intended only for use by the intended recipient. If you are not the intended recipient or the person responsible for delivering the message to the intended recipient, be advised that you have received this message in error and that any dissemination, copying or use of this message or attachment is strictly forbidden, as is the disclosure of the information therein. If you have received this message in error please notify the sender immediately and delete the message.