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25 May 2015

Research Director Infrastructure, Planning and Natural Resources Committee Parliament House George Street BRISBANE QLD 4000

Email: ipnrc@parliament.gld.gov.au

Dear Madam / Sir,

Re: Inquiry into, and report on fly-in, fly-out (FIFO) and other long-distance commuting work practices in regional Queensland.

Arrow Energy Pty Ltd (Arrow) welcomes the opportunity to provide comment to the Infrastructure, Planning and Natural Resources Committee to inform the inquiry into, and report on fly-in, fly-out (FIFO) and other long distance commuting work practices in regional Queensland.

Arrow is supportive of the Queensland Resources Council's submission. Notwithstanding the industry body submission, the attached outlines Arrow's specific responses to the Terms of Reference.

If you require further clarification about our submission, please contact Michael Todd, Government Relations Manager,

Yours sincerely

Leisa Elder / Vice President External Relations and Tenure Management

Background

Arrow Energy (Arrow) is an integrated coal seam gas (CSG) company. Arrow explores and develops gas fields, produces and sells CSG and generates electricity. Arrow has been safely and sustainably developing CSG since 2000 and supplying it commercially since 2004, and now delivers almost 20 per cent of Queensland's gas supply from its five CSG fields in the Bowen and Surat basins, in central and southern Queensland respectively.

Arrow owns and operates Braemar 2, a 450 megawatt (MW) gas-fired power station 35km southwest of Dalby, and has interests in two others – Daandine Power Station (west of Dalby) and Townsville Power Station.

Arrow has 600MW of total power generation capacity, which is sufficient to power up to 800,000 average-sized Queensland homes.

With about 1,200 gas wells, Arrow supplies CSG to the Townsville (235MW), Moranbah (12MW), Daandine (33MW), Braemar 1 (450MW) and Braemar 2 (450MW) power stations, and industrial users in Townsville, Moranbah and Dalby.

Arrow is also working to meet the growing international demand for cleaner burning fuels through gas supply for liquefied natural gas (LNG) export.

Arrow uses its presence in regional Queensland to benefit communities, both economically and socially. With substantial operations based in Dalby and Moranbah, it encourages its residential staff to be active members of their communities.

Arrow is a significant contributor to regional Queensland economies in the Bowen and Surat basins contributing to the local economy since 1997. The 2014 annual approximations include:

- \$160 million in wages and salaries
- \$44 million spent with Central Queensland businesses
- \$420 million spent with Queensland businesses
- \$740 million spent with Australian businesses.

In addition, Arrow contributed approximately \$17.6 million in royalties, taxes and levies in 2014.

Since 2011, Arrow's *Brighter Futures* community investment program has provided more than \$13 million to support health and safety, education and environmental projects across Queensland, especially regional areas.

Arrow is owned by a joint venture company between Shell and PetroChina (50/50).

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Overview

Arrow has been involved in Queensland coal seam gas (CSG) development for more than a decade and has a proven history of recruiting locally and using its presence to benefit the communities in which it operates.

The company recognises the benefit of providing its workforce with the choice of living residentially or participating in long-distance commuting. These employment options provide improved workforce flexibility, assist with attracting the best people for the job, increase Arrow's diversity mix and support workers and their families at different stages of their lives.

Arrow's current regional workforce demonstrates a mixed arrangement, with workers in the Surat Basin being 90 per cent residential and 10 per cent long-distance commuters, while the Bowen Basin is 46 per cent residential and 54 per cent long distance commuters.

Arrow supports a mixed residential and long-distance commuter approach to maximise operational efficiencies and community benefits, while minimising impacts.

The following responses outline the value that Arrow brings to regional communities from operations that employ a mix of residential and fly-in, fly-out FIFO workers.

Responses - Terms of Reference (ToR)

ToR 1 – The health impacts on workers and their families from long-distance commuting, particularly mental health impacts, and the provision of health services in mining communities

Fly-in fly-out (FIFO) literature review

In 2015, Arrow commissioned a literature review to better understand current industry practices and the company's position ahead of the planned Bowen Gas Project (BGP) and Arrow Bowen Pipeline (ABP).

The BGP is a phased expansion of Arrow's CSG production in the Bowen Basin to supply the liquefied natural gas (LNG) export market. The ABP is a high-pressure gas transmission pipeline between the Bowen Basin and Gladstone - the site of the state's new LNG export facilities.

In the wake of a heavy focus on mental health by previous studies, the Arrow study (still under way) is focussing on an adapted PESTLE (political, economic, social, technological, legal and environmental) analysis of impacted communities as well as FIFO workers and their families. Arrow commissioned the work to be undertaken independently through Queensland University of Technology.

Preliminary findings of Arrow's literature review show that long-distance commuting cannot be evaluated as one item. The question of health impacts is complex and based on many contributing factors which need to be considered separately, rather than as a whole (Fridez, 2015). These factors include:

- rosters time 'on' and 'off' can have a large impact on the mental health of workers
- shift length eight hour shifts versus 12 hour shifts depending on the preference and living situation of the worker

- travelling long distances when travel time is not factored into the shift length, adjustment during time 'off' can be difficult
- absence from family and friends missing important family/social events can be emotionally difficult
- living in a geographically remote location feelings of isolation and disconnect can be difficult despite facilities available
- constant transition between male dominated shift work and family life may make development of family relationships difficult.

This study is anticipated to be completed in June 2015 and conclusions will be used to inform planning for Arrow projects going forward.

Projects demonstrating Arrow's commitment to improving health and safety in the communities

Arrow realises its corporate health is tied to the wellbeing of the communities in which it operates, and to its workers in those communities, whether residential or FIFO.

Reflecting Arrow's desire to use its presence to benefit those communities, the company proactively works with them to develop community initiatives of long-term benefit. These programs are mostly driven by community organisations to meet the changing needs of their communities.

Heart of Australia

Cardiovascular disease (CVD) is a major cause of death in Australia, with 43,946 deaths attributed to CVD in Australia in 2013. CVD kills one Australian every 12 minutes and is one of Australia's largest health problems (Heart Foundation, 2013). Australians living in regional areas have a much higher incidence of CVD and are 44 per cent more likely to die from CVD than their city counterparts.

Life saving specialist care is now being delivered to rural and regional Queenslanders under a flagship partnership between Heart of Australia and Arrow Energy. Arrow was the project's foundation partner, and helped turn it from a concept into reality:

- Heart of Australia is the largest, custom-built mobile clinic in Australia, providing city-level cardiac and respiratory care in regional Queensland to people who might otherwise miss it.
- The truck-drawn mobile clinic is fitted with state-of-the-art diagnostic equipment; it is staffed by a team of cardiologists and respiratory specialists and travels Arrow's regions of operation in the Surat and Bowen basins.
- With the new facility, community members have local access to specialist services which would normally require a journey to a city.
- Since launching in October 2014:
 - more than 1000 patients have used the service
 - 49 people were identified as needing urgent treatment
 - nine of those cases were referred for open heart surgery; the remainder for other urgent procedures
 - 237 patients are receiving ongoing treatment
 - the facility has saved an average travel of 513km per patient for each visit
 - detection of issues has saved hospital admissions of 93 days, to date.

The *Heart of Australia* initiative demonstrates an industry response to an issue of great need in regional communities.

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Under Arrow's partnership, Arrow staff (FIFO and residential) referred by their GP to Heart of Australia are treated at no cost.

Partnership with CareFlight Queensland - Surat Basin Gas Industry Aeromedical Retrieval Service

Arrow, Origin, QGC and Santos have invested \$35 million over the last three years, and have recently approved a continuation of this service for the next five years, to minimise the CSG industry's impacts upon public medical services and to provide emergency health care for regional communities.

. This investment provides:

- access to critical care for both local communities and industry (including residential and long-distance commuting workers)
- two helicopter services, one based out of Roma, the other in Toowoomba
- two specialist medical crews.

Since commencement in 2012, these services have flown 399 retrieval missions. Of these missions, 80 per cent were cardiac-related and 20 per cent were for trauma (mostly road incidents).

Moranbah Men's Shed

Arrow supported Moranbah and District Support Services to undertake a feasibility study to establish a Men's Shed in Moranbah. Men's Shed is an organisation that aims to address mental health and social isolation impacts by providing a safe and respectful environment for men to meet, work on collective projects and discuss issues. Men's Sheds are community organised and maintained centres.

The study identified strong community support for the program, with a not-for-profit Men's Shed group being established. The group is gaining momentum, with 141 men registered. The group is actively involved in the community and is exploring funding and location options to build a shed.

ToR 2 – The effects on families of rostering practices in mines using FIFO workforces

Previous studies into FIFO mental health have shown that happiness is more about 'choice' (URS, 2012). Arrow is supportive of relocating a worker with a skillset that is not available in a particular area, if that worker chooses this living situation.

To create more appeal to the concept of relocating regionally, Arrow focuses funding on both social investment and regional supplier development in the regions in which the company operates. This assists to reduce effects of rostering practices on families should workers choose to relocate to the regional community. For example:

- regionally-based employees and long-distance (FIFO) commuters are entitled to additional benefits
- \$26 million spent to date on research and demonstrations undertaken to address coexistence issues, happiness of workers, accommodation facility suitability, sustainable innovations and development and optimisation of operations
- community contributions are made to regional areas in the form of social investment through the Arrow Brighter Futures Program (more than \$13 million to date).

 Arrow invests in projects with local and Indigenous suppliers (~\$450 million to date) to increase their capacity profiles, visibility to industry and provision of opportunities for engagement.

The response to ToR 7 contains more detail on these programs.

Arrow has an Employee Assistance Program (EAP) for issues of any kind such as:

- wellbeing
 - counselling
 - trauma counselling following incidents
 - coaching for managers
 - work life issues
 - financial issues
 - information seminars.
- performance
 - risk and safety
 - stress
 - dignity
 - organisational change
 - conflict resolution
 - personal/professional development.

Arrow staff utilise the EAP at a rate of 4.07 per cent and the service provider has confirmed this usage rate is broadly consistent with all clients (i.e. no elevated usage rate for a CSG company). The majority of Arrow users (53 per cent) contact the EAP for personal issues, with the remainder for work related issues (Davidson Trahaire Corpsych, 2014).

<u>ToR 3 – The extent and projected growth in FIFO work practices by region and industry</u>

The workforce arrangements (FIFO or residential) for Arrow's planned Bowen Gas Project and Arrow Bowen Pipeline will depend on local worker and skill availability and the preferences of workers themselves.

Arrow's Bowen Gas Project planning assumption, at this time, indicates a local operational workforce of up to 20 per cent, with the remainder being long-distance commuters (Arrow Energy, 2014).

Both during construction, and the project's 30 plus year operational phase, there may be a requirement for all workers (long-distance commuters and residential alike) to live in villages (camps) during their shifts. This requirement would be due to Arrow's strict adherence to health, safety and environment (HSE) aspects, such as combined travel/shift time constraints to manage fatigue, safety on the road and the aim to reduce local traffic and negative social impacts on host towns.

The project is spread over a large geographical area – thousands of square kilometres. It may not always be practical or safe for on shift workers to travel to and from their family home to their work site every day.

In summary, it is Arrow's position that the HSE risk has to be a factor in determining FIFO take-up.

ToR 4 – The costs and/or benefits and structural incentives and disincentives, including tax settings, for companies choosing a FIFO workforce

Tax incentives and disincentives are generally irrelevant as an influence upon the FIFO/residential mix.

The dominant influences are the nature of the task and the skills required to execute it, and the local availability of those skills. Local workers may well have the skills for common tasks and would, therefore, be the first choice, if they are available. At the other end of the scale, specialist skills may have to be sourced internationally.

Residential workforces are preferred because the costs of transporting workers to site and accommodating them are, in the main, greater than company tax concessions applicable for long-distance commuters.

<u>ToR 5 – The effect of a 100 per cent non-resident FIFO workforce on established</u> <u>communities; including community wellbeing, the price of housing and availability,</u> <u>and access to services and infrastructure</u>

Arrow's present, domestic operations are conducted with a mix of FIFO and residential workers (see overview section). The mix is largely driven by worker preference, and this varies between locations.

In the main, Arrow offers choice, where workers may live in a village situation with meals provided or live in self contained facilities closer to town. As previously stated, Arrow has a human resources package including additional benefits for employees based in regions in either longdistance commuting situations or as residents.

Planned projects – the Bowen Gas Project and Arrow Bowen Pipeline, for example – will entail large construction workforces and several temporary workers' villages located near work sites. Arrow's projects are likely to be the only CSG projects under construction at that time, unlike the past few years where three CSG proponents have been competing for resources (i.e. workforce, supplies, and accommodation). For this reason, the impact upon established communities, housing, services and infrastructure, will be less under Arrow's project/s than has already been experienced by the community.

Arrow recognises the presence of long distance commuters – whether village based or accommodated in self contained facilities – may impact communities. Not all impacts will be negative – for instance, local businesses stand to benefit from supply contracts to these villages, alleviating the economic downturn they are currently experiencing as a flow-on from the resource industry's global downturn. Likewise, workers' wages will benefit the economies of their home towns, whether Brisbane or a regional centre like Moranbah.

At a social level, Arrow maintains that the contribution made to established communities through *Brighter Futures* assists to create a net positive gain for community wellbeing.

ToR 6 – The quality of housing provided in accommodation villages for FIFO workforces

Arrow actively seeks feedback from staff to assess accommodation villages with the aim to make them as comfortable as possible.

Arrow village accommodation includes the following features:

- health care facilities
- comfortable, well-appointed rooms with quality furnishings
- a wide range of catering options
- a lifestyle co-ordinator and nutritionist to provide healthy living options
- a well-equipped gym
- entertainment areas and facilities to encourage socialising
- on-site corner store with ATM, internet kiosk, newspapers, magazines, snacks, toiletries etc.
- on-site licensed bar with pool tables, outdoor TVs and beer garden area, pizza station and coffee machine.

Feedback provided by Arrow staff demonstrates strong satisfaction with the quality of accommodation, food and amenities.

ToR 7 – Strategies to optimise the FIFO experience for employees and their families, communities and industry

Benefits

Long-distance commuting employees of Arrow are entitled to many benefits beyond those provided to general employees:

- remote annual leave travel benefit claim back travel expenses to and from remote locations for residential workers
- regional locality allowance to assist with the cost of living in a regional location
- remote area housing benefit rental assistance for remote workers.

Research and demonstration

One strategy Arrow and other proponents utilise for optimising the experience for long-distance commuting workers, communities and industry is investment into research and development. Arrow is sensitive to issues that affect its workers, industry and the communities where it operates due to the unique nature of the requirement to coexist with stakeholders. Learnings from research and development are implemented to enable coexistence, better economic choice and improved practises all round.

Some examples include:

- the Arrow commissioned FIFO literature review mentioned in ToR 1
- investment into the University of Queensland's Centre for Coal Seam Gas social performance studies
- research to enhance coexistence though consultative placement of infrastructure and innovative drilling methods to lessen impact on communities (undertaken by Arrow)
- research on sustainable alternatives to conventional methods of placing roads and tracks (undertaken by Arrow)
- research on innovative waste management techniques (undertaken by Arrow)
- research to optimise water production and water use (undertaken by Arrow).

Community contributions

Arrow provides social investment and capacity building activities for potential local suppliers through its Brighter Futures, Whanu Binal and local supplier engagement initiatives. These programs work to provide services that are, quite often, not available in remote locations.

Social investment - Brighter Futures

Since 2011, Brighter Futures has contributed more than \$13 million in social investment to regional community organisations for capacity building initiatives across Queensland. Brighter Futures:

- supports initiatives which enhance the liveability of remote communities, to mitigate the lifestyle impacts on long distance commuting workforces
- focusses on identified areas of concern in established, regional communities, including disability services, education, assistance for young and disadvantaged people, health and safety, and support for essential community services.

Some examples include:

Endeavour respite program – support for disability services

Arrow's partnership with the Endeavour Foundation offers a range of programs and initiatives to enrich the lives of people living with a disability engage families and educate community members in the Bowen and Surat regions.

- Stepping Stones Positive Parenting Program accredited course which helps parents develop strategies to manage their children more effectively and improve coping mechanisms.
- Greater access to professional support Endeavour Foundation's School Holiday Respite Program provides educational activities for children with disabilities during school holidays.
- Waminda Services Children's Development Program enables greater access for children to occupational therapists, speech therapists and psychologists.

These services can support families with a parent away on FIFO duties, as well as any other member of the community.

M-Step - meeting after school care shortages and developing local skillsets

The Arrow *M-Step partnership* delivers after-school care to families in the Moranbah region and skills development for students.

- A partnership between Arrow, Moranbah State High School and Simply Sunshine Day Care was established in 2013 and was designed to meet the severe shortage of after school care in the Moranbah community, which is a benefit to working parents.
- Students participating in the program can receive qualifications (Certificate III in Education or Certificate III in Business), gain apprenticeships, or study further after graduating.

Scholarships

Since 2013, Arrow has provided scholarships to 25 Indigenous university students each year, representing an annual investment of \$220,000.

- Scholarships are provided through six universities three regional and three Brisbanebased, and help build the capability of Indigenous individuals and communities as well as their local communities.
- Valued at \$5,000 and \$10,000, the scholarships are part of a support package that includes mentoring, tutoring, and career development.
- In 2015, the scholarships were offered to part-time students at a pro-rata level, which has increased the current scholarship recipients to 29.
- The scholarships are provided in a range of fields including those related to the resourcesector – such as engineering, geology and science – as well as other fields including education, nursing and paramedic science.
- As well as providing a pathway to employment in the resources sector, the scholarships also build the capacity of local communities through increased nurses, teachers etc.

Arrow also provides ten agricultural scholarships to students in the Surat Basin to continue their education at the Dalby Agricultural College without having to leave the region.

Local skills training

The Calliope Junior Rugby League Club (CJRLC) and Tannum Sands Surf Life Saving Club (TSSLSC) were funded through Brighter Futures to enhance their safety capabilities with up to date first aid equipment and staff training.

- Tannum Sands' coastal safety relies on 113 active patrol members at the TSSLSC who can complete more than 3,500 hours of volunteer patrols in a season.
- New equipment to up skill members as well as provision of community CPR and first aid training (5000 courses) and wider availability of first aid kits.
- Arrow participates in the Industry Schools Partnership in the Surat that encourages students from years 8 to 12 into science, technology, engineering and mathematics disciplines.

These programs and initiatives are a selection of those who have received funding grants and sponsorships through the Brighter Futures Program. More information on the program, community organisations and activities can be found on the Arrow website or in the <u>2014 Brighter Futures</u> <u>Report</u>.

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Whanu Binal – Indigenous business development program

The *Whanu Binal Program* aims to build a pool of capable, qualified Indigenous businesses that are worthy of consideration in the contract and supplier tendering process. These businesses must also meet the conditions of Arrow's seven Indigenous Land Use Agreement (ILUA) commitments across 21 traditional owner groups.

Whanu Binal provides:

- expert third-party support to enable businesses to develop strong systems and procedures, and successfully promote their services
- capability-building support including workshops on key areas such as HSE, governance and business systems, review and development of business's capability statements, and introductions to local supplier networks and major contractors.

The program is targeted at Indigenous businesses in Arrow's areas of operation, and aims to contribute to the economic success and sustainability for the communities in Arrow's operational footprint.

Support is designed to:

- help businesses to pre-qualify to oil and gas standards
- give businesses the skills and knowledge to pursue opportunities in the CSG-LNG industry and the wider resources sector
- link businesses to industry groups and related businesses and industries (e.g. coal, other CSG-LNG proponents) so they can build networks and access opportunities
- enable business owners to set up the processes and procedures needed to navigate the high standards of major projects in the resources industry
- empower Indigenous communities to build businesses that are sustainable and can be trusted to deliver on long-term contracts and agreements.

Local supplier engagement

Arrow recognises the importance of supporting regional businesses and suppliers and, through its Local Content Policy, has demonstrated its commitment to the region with a strong record of contracting with Australian businesses.

Over the last three financial years,

- Arrow has contracted more than 97 per cent of its spend with Australian registered businesses;
- on average, 58.2 per cent of this yearly spend is with Queensland businesses
- 15 20 per cent of the total spend is with regional* Queensland businesses
- 75 per cent of the regional spend has gone to Arrow's key regional locations including the Isaac, Mackay, Rockhampton, Toowoomba and Western Downs regional council areas.

For the planned Bowen Gas Project and the Arrow Bowen Pipeline, Arrow is implementing an Australian Industry Participation Plan (AIPP) approved by the Australian Industry Participation Authority.

- A major component of the AIPP will be the requirement for contractors to provide a Local Content Plan (www.arrowenergy.com.au/careers/suppliers/local-content) which details the specific commitment for local participation including subcontract opportunities and employment positions identified for locals.
- Contractors will be required to report on their outcomes quarterly and regular auditing will be conducted to ensure that commitments are met.

Arrow's ongoing commitment to provide local businesses with opportunities to supply goods and services for its planned projects also includes:

- the publishing of supply opportunities on the ICN Gateway (www.arrow.icn.org.au; www.cloughamecjv bgp.icn.org.au; www.dhl-bgp.icn.org.au). This provides local businesses with a full, fair and reasonable opportunity to register their interest to supply, through an expression of interest process
- providing lower tier suppliers the opportunity to register as a subcontractor or component supplier for all work packages, with these details provided directly to the major contractor as an inclusion to the local content tender schedule.

In addition to providing business opportunities, Arrow will continue to partner local and regional economic organisations to provide education and training opportunities to assist with building the business capability of regional suppliers.

(*'Regional' means any Queensland business whose primary business base is outside the South East Queensland postcode locations).

<u>ToR 8 – The commuting practices for FIFO workforces, including the amount of time spent</u> <u>travelling, the methods of transportation, and adequacy of compensation paid for</u> <u>commuting travel times</u>

Flight and bus costs for FIFO/BIBO workers from Brisbane to the regional community are covered by Arrow. The travel days are also work days for undertaking handover activities. Arrow has a *Journey Management and Driver Safety Procedure* (2013) and a *Fatigue Management Guideline* (2012) which govern the amount of time employees are allowed to travel. The QUT literature review identifies the requirement to travel during private time causes heightened levels of fatigue during shift (Education and Health Standing Committee, 2014).

ToR 9 – The effectiveness of current responses to impacts of FIFO workforces of the Commonwealth, State and Local Governments

Arrow regularly engages with government to ensure transparency on its projects. Arrow endeavours to provide government with information so they are well informed when making pivotal regulatory decisions.

Arrow will continue to engage with stakeholders, including employees, contractors, landholders, community representatives and government stakeholders, to ensure policies and practices in relation to long-distance commuting do not negatively impact the workers or the communities where operations occur. It is vital there is alignment from stakeholders on this issue, and recognition that a one size fits all approach will not necessarily provide any better an outcome.

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ToR 10 – Any other related matter

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To ensure that projects can progress, Arrow must present the best investment proposal to its shareholders who have global portfolios of investment opportunities.

Arrow's planned projects must compete against investment opportunities from around the world. Being competitive does not mean cutting labour costs, but it does meaning increasing the value attained from paying that cost.

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