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Submission: Issues regarding petrol pricing in Queensland

Rising fuel prices adversely affect all the industries and community members in the Quilpie Shire.

With the increase in fuel prices much of the cost of production to the property owners has had to be absorbed. Continuous drought in this far south west area has brought about the need for fodder harvesting and with this has come major increases in tractor and machinery use thereby doubling diesel fuel usage and costs. Cost of freight for fodder has also increased making it extremely hard for the producer to maintain breed stock numbers of sheep and cattle and also supply feed and supplements necessary with mulga feeding.

Transport costs have increased due to fuel prices and this extra cost is also added to the producer who may need to agist sheep and cattle in other areas. These costs also affect the opal miners who are using machinery and having to transport their rough opal products to market.

With a number of trucking companies based in our Shire the increased prices have brought about increased costs from product to market not only for the graziers but also for the mining, gas and oil industries. Rising market for mining versus declining market for sheep (if the animals are available)

The economic effect of price increase has been felt and this has affected life in the smaller communities like ours due to the distance all have to travel to attend functions, get together and community events. Numbers are certainly down at functions as people have become more conscience of costs involved with travelling. .

Quilpie Shire Council is concerned that the increases have affected their budget in regard to road maintenance and construction and a major increase in costs of local contractors to assist the Shire in the above works. This comes about due to drought and the increase of water carting to maintain and construct vital arterial roads within the Shire so producers can move droughted stock to sale or agistment.

Council cannot pass on costs – these need to be absorbed meaning less maintenance and construction on our roads to balance the budget.

Fuel excise was introduced federally in 1970's primarily for road funding and we feel that only a small percentage of this is directed to road works throughout Australia. Federal and State Governments are not maintaining the costs of increases in maintenance and construction of roads throughout Australia. This has a major effect on costs of transportation through fuel usage within the transport industry.

With the increase of fuel costs air travel in western Queensland has gone beyond the means of the average wage earner. Obtaining medical and dental services are being cut back as members of the community think seriously of making an extra trip to town, or further, just letting their illness go until next time they are in town, sometimes causing serious problems. All these increases affect the cost of living and small towns in inland Australia and our way of life.

We are endeavouring to retain our population and attract families and tourists to our area and the economic and financial consequences due to current high fuel prices does have a detrimental affect on visiting or staying in our Shire.