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The Committee Secretary
House of Representatives
Standing Committee on Transport and Regional Services
PARLIAMENT HOUSE
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Secretary,

CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS: FLY-IN, FLY-OUT WORKERS INQUIRY

The Northampton Shire Council takes this opportunity to comment on the above inquiry.

We see the practice of fly in fly out to continue for many years to come and believe that due consideration should be given to alternative areas for employees to reside elsewhere in the state other than the metropolitan area.

Kalbarri is one of the premier tourist destinations in Western Australia and at present there are many vacant lots available for purchase for the construction of residences either by mining companies to rent to their employees at a lesser cost than being experienced in the northwest of the state, or to be owned by the employees themselves.

Further with the downturn in the tourism industry many unit developments that once housed tourists are now not being utilised to their fullest extent and again provide a suitable opportunity to house workers.

Kalbarri has all the modern facilities, doctors (1.5), medical centre, primary and high school (now up to year 12), modern shopping facilities, top class restaurants, hotel motels, 18 hole fully grassed golf course, sporting facilities and much much more, the best fishing and the best weather and lifestyle any family could ask for.

Kalbarri has an all weather sealed aerodrome, with a runway length of 1600m and can be expanded without any constraints, has a modern terminal and associated facilities and lighting. A perfect place for FIFO to operate from.

Within the shire there are also the towns of Northampton and Horrocks. Northampton with its rural atmosphere and Horrocks providing another coastal environment.

We believe that providing the above style of lifestyle for families better improves their social and family life. Reason being is that the distance to mine sites is shorter, therefore less travelling hours, less congestion at the Perth Aerodrome, the elimination of the need for many workers to catch another flight or drive up to 500km to return to their family home.

The Council has in the past encouraged mining companies to consider towns within our shire to house workers but have received no response. We are also of the firm opinion that the government does have a role to play and encourage the mining companies to give shires like ours due consideration.

By housing FIFO workers in city areas will only place additional pressure on services and infrastructure whereas in rural areas this is not always the case.

We hope your Committee will give due consideration to our comments.

Yours faithfully

GARRY L KEEFFE
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

20/09/2011