



SUBMISSION NUMBER: 46
DATE RECEIVED: 6/10/2011

**Shire OF
Wiluna**

Scotia Street
PO Box 38, Wiluna 6646
T 08 9981 8000
F 08 9981 7110
reception@wiluna.wa.gov.au
www.wiluna.wa.gov.au
ABN 48 828 074 872



The Committee Secretary
House of Representatives Committee on Regional Australia
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Sir/Madam

Inquiry into Fly-In, Fly-Out (FIFO), Drive in Drive out Mining Operations

The Council of the Shire of Wiluna considered the Terms of Reference of the above Inquiry at its meeting on the 28th September 2011. Council resolved that the following matters be brought to the attention of the committee for consideration:-

- * Mining operations in many locations throughout Western Australia have continued over a significant period of time and the existing communities (small towns) where FIFO occurs do not develop like areas where there is no or very little FIFO i.e. Tom Price, Newman, Karratha and Boddington are examples. Tom Price was built when there was no FIFO and there is now a significant town and vibrant community. If FIFO had been an option at the time mining commenced in this area it is most unlikely there would be a town there today. Western Australia is a very large state and most of the population is residentially based either in Perth or on the coastal strip from Geraldton to Augusta. Wiluna in the 1930's had a resident population of about 10000 people when the gold mine adjoining the town was first established. The same mine is still operating and now all the workers FIFO. There are several other large mining operations within 70kms of the Town that also use FIFO. If these workers and their families were accommodated in the town the population would be in the vicinity of 4000 to 5000 people. To allow FIFO to continue will do nothing to ensure that Western Australia's vast land area is populated and relieve the environmental pressures on the coastal strip.
- * With small populations the opportunities are limited for the expansion of commercial and social facilities within isolated towns and for residents to have equality of services with people living in larger populated areas. With a greater resident population within a town there will be improved commercial, social and recreational opportunities and an improved quality of life in small towns like Wiluna. If FIFO continues then it is not likely that the situation will change. The Meekatharra Wiluna Road (Goldfields Highway) would now be sealed if the population of Wiluna was greater.

- * Equality in taxation treatment of travel and isolation cost. Is FBT payable by mining companies on air/vehicle travel to mine sites? We believe this is not payable. On the other hand someone that chooses to live in a rural town close to Perth and travels by car to their work place in the Metropolitan area each day is not able to claim a tax concession for their travel costs.

- * No long term direct community benefits for the people living in mining areas from the high economic mining resource. What do the Mining companies leave or create for the town. After the mining ceases all that remains is generally a large hole in the ground. Mining royalties derived from the mining activity in the Shire of Wiluna are significant and there should be some consideration given to creating incentives for mining companies to locate their work force in the town.

- * Consideration needs to be given to the usage of aircraft and its impact on Carbon pollution. The number of aircraft movements used for FIFO workers to various mine sites each year must be considerable.

Whilst the above are some of the issues that need to be considered during the review Council has requests that representatives from the Shire be given the opportunity to address the committee in person on the above and other matters.

Yours sincerely

Tony Doust
Acting Chief Executive Officer

6th October 2011