



**INFRASTRUCTURE,
PLANNING AND NATURAL
RESOURCES COMMITTEE**

Chair

Jim Pearce MP

Deputy Chair

Michael Hart MP

Committee Members

Glenn Butcher MP

Shane Knuth MP

Brittany Lauga MP

Lachlan Millar MP

Correspondence to:

Infrastructure, Planning and
Natural Resources Committee
Parliament House
George Street
Brisbane Qld 4000

Tel: (07) 3553 6621

Fax: (07) 3553 6699

Email:

ipnrc@parliament.qld.gov.au

Web:

[http://www.parliament.qld.gov.
au/ipnrc](http://www.parliament.qld.gov.au/ipnrc)

MEDIA RELEASE

**Parliamentary committee into FIFO makes
recommendation to create choice for workers**

A Queensland Parliamentary Committee reported on its inquiry into fly-in, fly-out work practices in regional Queensland today making a recommendation to amend anti-discrimination legislation.

The Committee Chair, Jim Pearce MP said, "We have recommended the government consider making changes to the anti-discrimination legislation to stop local workers being discriminated against on the basis of where they live for work."

"The message to the committee was loud and clear – all people should have a genuine choice of where they live for work."

"The committee was concerned about some resource companies only sourcing workers from Brisbane or Cairns and did not want to make retrospective recommendations that could create sovereign risk," Mr Pearce said.

Mr Pearce said the committee was determined to find a solution to manage the impacts of non-resident workforces.

"We have also made recommendations to strengthen the monitoring of compliance with the Coordinator-General's conditions on resource projects."

"The committee's recommendations were made with bipartisan support. I am proud of the hard-working committee members who endeavoured to find fair and reasonable solutions to some of the issues caused by non-resident workforces."

"The government has committed to developing a whole-of-government framework for managing the impacts of FIFO work practices."

"A ministerial response to the committee's recommendations is required to be tabled in Parliament within three months."

A list of the committee's recommendations are attached. A full copy of the inquiry report is available from the committee's website.

[ENDS] 9 October 2015

For media comment contact:

Jim Pearce MP

**Chair, Infrastructure, Planning and Natural Resources Committee
(Mobile 0419 778 401)**

The committee generated its recommendations after making the following determinations:

- **The committee considers that all people seeking employment, in particular in the resource sector, should have a choice of where they live for work.**
- **The committee is not against long distance commuting practices.**
- **The committee recognises that some resource operations would require total FIFO workforces due to their remoteness or during construction.**
- **The committee has considered the impacts of FIFO work practices in the context of long-term operational workforces.**
- **The committee's recommendations also apply to labour hire companies, contractors and sub-contractors.**
- **The committee acknowledges that the resource industry is in a downturn.**
- **The committee has no intention of impacting the job security of current FIFO workers.**
- **The committee does not support retrospective recommendations to current project approvals.**
- **The committee acknowledges that matters relating to taxation and industrial relations rest within the jurisdiction of the Australian Government and was therefore limited in making recommendations for change.**

Recommendation 1

The committee recommends the social impact assessment process for major projects be prescribed by legislation.

Recommendation 2

The committee recommends the social impact assessment guideline provides a specific framework for assessing a resource project's application of the principles of a social licence to operate.

Recommendation 3

The committee recommends the Minister reinstate the cross agency reference group or similar, as part of the social impact assessment process.

Recommendation 4

The committee recommends the Queensland Government review all resource project approval processes (including under the *Environmental Protection Act 1994*) and the process for granting a mining lease, to:

- (a) determine how the assessment of potential social impacts (including cumulative impacts of multiple resource projects) could be included or enhanced
- (b) ensure that commitments made by proponents during the environmental impact assessment process form part of the conditions of approval, and
- (c) determine how the participation of local governments could be enhanced.

Recommendation 5

The committee recommends the *State Development and Public Works Organisation Act 1971* be amended to provide that the Coordinator-General must demonstrate consideration of submissions received on a draft environmental impact statement and change application in the associated reports.

Recommendation 6

The committee recommends the Queensland Government provide additional resources to expand the Office of the Coordinator-General to establish a compliance and engagement unit to undertake:

- (a) proactive and detailed assessment of compliance with conditions and recommendations
- (b) engagement and liaison with resource communities
- (c) the collection of adequate baseline data in order to accurately assess compliance with conditions set in relation to the numbers of non-resident workers, and
- (d) the assessment of complaints made in relation to a proponent's compliance with conditions and recommendations (which would include the establishment of a formal complaints process).

Recommendation 7

The committee recommends the Queensland Government assist local governments to undertake additional compliance checking relating to temporary accommodation villages to determine whether any villages are operating outside of their conditions of approval.

Recommendation 8

The committee recommends as part of the development of a whole-of-government policy framework for managing FIFO impacts, the Queensland Government include minimum standards for the provision of substantial temporary and permanent accommodation for FIFO workers that include:

- (a) room design that provides for adequate protection from noise and light to aid with fatigue management
- (b) permanent private spaces for each employee and storage facilities
- (c) reliable access to communication services in a private space
- (d) access to health services, including social activities and gyms
- (e) recreational areas to encourage socialising, and
- (f) a variety of healthy food options, and

that the standards advise against the practice of 'motelling' or 'hot-bedding'.

Recommendation 9

The committee recommends the Minister include best practice principles for commuting, rostering and fatigue management in the whole-of-government policy for managing the impacts of FIFO work practices and that the policy emphasise that resource companies have a duty of care to workers for ensuring their safety and well-being when travelling for work.

Recommendation 10

The committee recommends the Queensland Government investigate options for providing independent mental health support services for FIFO workers.

Recommendation 11

The committee recommends the Minister for State Development, in consultation with the Office of Industrial Relations and Queensland Mental Health Commission, progress the FIFO workers mental health project and undertake additional research to examine and identify strategies to address:

- (a) the characteristics that promote resilience within FIFO workers
- (b) effective workplace programs or external programs to prevent mental health injuries in FIFO workers

- (c) effective family support programs, and
- (d) the presence of suicide risk and protective factors.

The information gathered from this project should be used to contribute to the whole-of-government framework for managing the impacts of FIFO work practices.

Recommendation 12

The committee recommends the social impact assessment process consider the mental health of workers and that accommodation standards include measures addressing mental health needs and access to effective workplace health initiatives.

Recommendation 13

The committee recommends the Queensland Government makes further representation to the Australian Government to include non-resident population numbers in the census data.

Recommendation 14

In the event that the Australian Government does not support the inclusion of the non-resident population being captured in the census data, the committee recommends the Queensland Government ensures that planning for essential services in resource communities is based on the data collected by the Queensland Government Statistician's Office on the non-resident population.

Recommendation 15

The committee recommends the Minister investigate the issue of notifying local governments about accommodation villages on a mining tenement in further detail with a view to amending the mining legislation to provide more effective notification of accommodation villages and their capacities to the relevant local government.

Recommendation 16

The committee recommends the Queensland Government consider amending the *Anti-Discrimination Act 1991* to include location as a prohibited ground of discrimination with the intent of ensuring that all workers are provided a choice of where they live for work.

Recommendation 17

The committee recommends the whole-of-government framework for managing the impacts of FIFO work practices highlights the importance of offering local apprenticeships and traineeships in the resource industry and that the Queensland Government explore options for providing resource companies with additional incentives for employing local apprentices and trainees.

Recommendation 18

The committee recommends the Queensland Government's policy position sets out that project proponents are required to source accommodation for operational workforces from the local community where possible, and that the proponent would be required to demonstrate the need for alternative accommodation.

Recommendation 19

The committee recommends the Minister:

- (a) review the effectiveness of industry led programs to determine whether such programs are maximising the procurement opportunities for small local businesses
- (b) consider whether the Charter for Local Content should apply to private sector projects, and
- (c) evaluate the current procurement gateways including the effectiveness of the Industry Capability Network in providing procurement opportunities for small local businesses.