



# **Challenges for the FIFO/DIDO Workforce: Impacts on Health, Safety and Relationships**

## **Appendix A**

### **Qualitative Data**

Note: The quotes identified in this document have been transcribed verbatim from the focus groups to maintain the integrity of the data

***Project Objective 1: Understanding more clearly how employee family relationships are affected by the FIFO/DIDO working environment and investigating solutions.***

Communication is minimal especially on this project because the camp has very little phone reception so having private conversations is difficult. Most of the time you can't have a private conversation because you can't get reception in your room and the rooms are not sound proof.

I talk to my kids at 7am and 7pm without fail because if I don't do that they ring and say where are you dad why haven't you called. So you got to make a conscious effort to do that because with day to day activities and responsibilities, my kids are important to me so I make sure I do that.

I think with the younger kids as well, they umm, there becomes a stranger factor as well. When I go back, my niece is two and when I go back my niece has to find out who I am again. Everytime I go back- she says who is this person? So with young kids you can't talk on the phone to them so they don't really understand there is someone on the other end.

I'm the only one on the east coast around here because when you get up they are already at school but when you are finishing work to camp they are just about in bed. My wife wants to spend an hour on the phone during work time but you can't do that.

I think one of the biggest issues where we are based is communication. We are obviously based on a number of real camps and we know when you go back to real camp to you won't have reception. So you can stand outside on the phone and maybe if you are lucky you might get internet in your room and your landline might work if your lucky so I guess that's the biggest thing. If you trying to communicate to your kids or anything like that you can really struggle. You might go nights and nights without contact with them because you don't get any reception.

Reception is really not that great here either. As soon everyone starts using their phones, they are fighting for reception. So sometimes when I ring I can't even get out because ten other people are using the phone at the same time. And the internet...

Because if you have got stuff happening at home, especially when you are up here. Its really hard to deal with because you can't be there to help people and then not having the communication available to speak and stay in contact with those people. I think you feel a bit useless sometimes, a bit helpless.

Also they can't get to you, so its like. Just this morning, I get normally speak to them at 7am but something at the other end meant that I can't speak to them. My little fella was sick last night so he had to go to hospital last night. I just had a call from the mrs like at 10:30 or 10:00 and she has been trying to get me because the morning was too early. So you don't make that 7 o'clock call, I know its only a few hours I guess but if she needed to talk to me, she needs to talk to me...

You touched on the thing before that anything could change with families back home. If you hot water services blow or your something like that happens. Something backs down, the car breaks down and your wife gets stranded somewhere down the road and she doesn't know where she is. You can't do anything about it from here and that is one of the biggest stresses

of being away. It is an option or choice you make. But those sorts of things are the biggest stresses.

The length of the roster. It's affecting so much at home as well. Kids...are having events. Christmas party or their birthdays.

Yeah I have got a 2 year old. I missed her first birthday because I just started this job. I going to be home for her second birthday luckily.

But you miss out on sporting events, like if the kids play weekend, you don't really get the chance to see that.

We basically lead a single man's lifestyle up here in camp and you get home and be a family man again. That's one of the biggest and hardest transitions. It's probably one of my biggest breakdowns.

Your dead right. What happens is, I had a four month period at home last year. It was exactly like that. I had to go back home be the family man every night, working every day getting up early travelling the distance you got to travel to work. You've got to home and all the different things that go along with it. Yeah, it is definitely it is a hard transition when you have been living by predominately a single man's lifestyle here on camps, isn't it. And transition of going back to your family.

Yeah, I definitely enjoy the remoteness, but it's definitely not for everyone. I think there's a better sense of mateship with the fellas, getting together for a drink and an opportunity to let their issues out, have their disagreements, but resolve it and get on with it.

Blokes with young families find it hard. I've got 3 kids of my own, but they're all grown up, so it's a lot easier for me, I suppose. My personal case, I have no problems at all. I've been a lot happier, working away rather than being at home all the time.

I think it's a pretty major factor in the break up of a lot of relationships, I think stress will be incredibly high. But I think construction but not necessarily FIFO even with metro and the long hours can be damaging. But certainly on this project we are aware of marriages and relationships which have broken down.

Well, honestly it's like they have been saying this for a year now. It's like they want to put us through physical screening, medical screening, drug and alcohol screening, all this shit, not many people want to comply with it but I think its about high time they bring in psychological screening as well but..You know, the money we are earning up here, some guys just see the dollar signs and go for it. Like if they haven't done it before, like I said I'm not in a relationship. All my family is back over east so whether I'm here or in Perth, I still feel like I'm the other side of the world from them. But like some guys see the dollar signs and get up here and maybe their Mrs is cheating on them or leaves them or miss their kids suddenly its all too hard. 4 weeks, I mean your back in Perth, I don't know about you guys, 4 weeks for me goes like, whereas up here is like a marathon you know. You will be counting down the last 5 days, like tomorrow.

Being away from your family does cause strain and you have to work harder on communication to keep relationships alive. I didn't.

I think it's dependent on what type of partner you have. Some understands your duties. At the end of the day who puts the roof over your head? Who buys the food on the table? That's what matters. If your partner understands that, it makes life easier for us. We know when we go back home we do what we actually work for. Some partners don't understand that and they end up breaking up.

***Project Objective 2: Investigating the psychosocial health implications for employees in a FIFO/DIDO working environment and seeking recommendations for change.***

**A. Psychosocial Health Implications for Employees**

I think you can have a very high prevalence of depression and undiagnosed depression as well. Because of the lifestyle people are working, it starts to take a toll on them. I think the isolation can really creep up on people without them really noticing. I'm a bit dead inside but actually don't really think about anyone at home while I'm away and that doesn't bother me. I could be a "psychopath" but I think it's different for most people up here because...I go to bed and get up for work the next day but when I look at that objectively that's not really healthy.

I think physically I think a lot of the guys struggle to adjust to the nightshift and they are getting nowhere near the amount of sleep they should. Obviously that triggers a whole of physical health issues and also psychological perspective that really amplifies the isolation factor. A lot of the guys are knocking off at the same time as their crew might have breakfast with them but really significantly cuts down that window of time when they can speak to other people both in person but also speak to people at home. I think they do get sick of seeing the same people, the same group of guys.

I think a lot of it comes from the f\*cking isolation....can't get on Skype. One of the blokes I spoke to, he was having major problems at home and he could not get hold of anyone because his phone..you can only make so many calls in your room and when you are having trouble at home you are making more 10 or 15 calls, you know what I mean.

Isolation is a big deal because you don't meet these people for the whole month and everyone has their own agenda planned. Then you come in and you can't say this is what I have planned, you know. And then you come together and they have their own planned worked out. You're away for the whole time.

...So isolation does magnify a lot of issues.

I do a lot of airport runs and I talk to them about having to go home and go and see their families and kids and flipping from nightshift to day. The first two days they are trying to flip back.

I think rosters is the biggest one. Especially people with young children which are literally home ten weeks in the year. Which is less than once a month. They're just missing a huge chunk of their children's lives. And if they have got wives or partners at home that are left to deal with that as well. I think the biggest positive change to come out of the industry would be more consideration of employees in that regard.

I think on the other hand it makes it worse because if you're able to call home all the time she will be telling you complaints and all this is happening. F\*\*k how am I going to deal with this

... Is anyone there that can help her out? I think the best way is I don't know. If its FIFO lets bring the family together in my family so they know what your going through. If you make a phone call she may not pick the phone so then you would be stressed, scratching your head because you don't know what's going on.

That's what I was gonna say, I find hard is to go home after 4 weeks of being away. I got two young kids, and a lot happens in 4 weeks, shit changes. Last time you left your daughter had cocopops and your son had nutragrain and they'd eat vegemite sandwiches. For me as a family, I want to get in there and help out, the wife is there 24/7 and next thing I know they've moved on to different cereals. I find that frustration purely on the basis of trying to help my wife out to give her a break, and in the end I have to go back to her to get help with these trivial things. It's frustrating not being able to contribute, at home, on a regular basis. You know what you're getting into, when we made the decision to get into FIFO, we spend a great amount of time discussing it from the bigger aspect, but it's the little things you don't think of, the changes at home in that 4 week period that makes you a stranger in your own house.

If they want it, you can't tell everyone. If you gave them the information, FIFO – Fit in or Fuck off. That applies to the home environment too. Eventually they will get pissed off with you. It is a case of, yes, you have to portray that role. But for me, I can walk away from it, we end up back on site after 7 days. But you still have to pick up the pieces. My wife will call me up at night and complain about the kids. You have to be that support system, even when you're up here. You finish work, same as my wife. Her day starts 6am and finishes 9pm. Differences is, I can walk away from it because we work up here. We finish work and you try to do the distance fathering to try and help out. From that perspective, that is a struggle, because you can't physically be there and in the kids faces to discipline them. Even when you're at home you can't be the stormtrooper. Because a, it puts you in a bad light and bad, it creates segregation. So you do have to tread lightly on occasions.

Plus, I think its an effort because you brought up in your family that's better then all of a sudden your position was changed and you go home and you find your wife, someone putting the rules in the family with the kids. You actually don't have much say and if you say... that's kind of what he does give him what he does. This creates fighting and conflict between you and your wife as to who instil the rules because at most of time your not in the house. So your wife is the one in charge of everything.

From Perth to here is alright but some of the guy's travel from Sydney, Queensland and the Eastern States. It a curse for them because financially it's a strain because they are not getting paid from their home to the work site. They're only getting paid from Perth airport. I think, I presume. So they pay their own flights from wherever they come from.

And not only that especially for those in the East Coast, you'll be paying that much money to get the airfare back. You know what I mean. 2 and 1 alright but they expect everyone to come from where they are hired from. They don't want to... because in the past when the economy was better they use to pay for your flights from the East Coast. I was living in Perth I finally moved back to the East Coast. That's where you want to be but there is no work so you want to be FIFO so that makes it's a bit harder.

You can see how some mates are reliant on the money. Loans, party lifestyle, waxing money when it's needless.

I think the young guys are going to spend it no matter what, I mean, we are in one of the drugged f\*cked cities in the f\*cking country a lot of the young guys go back and party you know what I mean. I'm 33. In the last few years, like, I've got to clean my act up and pay my debts off. I think if you put your head down and bum up its an excellent opportunity. But younger guys, I don't know many that sort of work hard and save up. Yeah, I think it sort of comes with age you know. We had a guy who was working out a mulligar who was 18 who had been working in retail for \$600 a week and he got on with John Holland for half week in hand and I taught him after six months and I asked him, like have you got some toys yet or have you been saving...Bali, hookers, Coke. He was like 18 and all of his mates were working sh\*\*ty jobs...take a trip over to Bali or Thailand and I like... Yeah, I don't know. Maybe for some of the older guys may like that help.

The lifestyle comes up with the more money you earn obviously. Then when your not earning it drops and you have your breakdown in your families and everything like that because obviously your family back home is used to living a style. You kids are used to getting what they want. Then all of a sudden it all stops and ....

If you're a casual you have just got to like it or lump it you know. F\*ck if you take this time you might not get asked back you know. I just got approved for an apartment the day before I flew up here, it was like, I too bite the bullet and pack my whole f\*cken life up and it stick in the back of the car. And I had my housemate pick up my car because I couldn't be there to move into the place even though he got everything sorted for me I couldn't do it before I went away. I literally got notified after I finished my training my flight's already booked if I had that freedom I need to move some sh\*t in and come up a day later, you know. They say well f\*ck it we need someone up here now.

It's not even feasible, you know what I mean. F\*ck they could fire me if they don't like the colour of my shoe laces, know what I mean. They don't have to give any explanation. They even explain to us when we come up, it's the same with any labour hire industry. I been doing labour hire f\*cken sh\*t 9 or 10 years now. You just get use to it. We don't get sick days or stuff like that but we do get paid a better rate generally. You get loading, that is sort of meant to take that into account.

F\*ck yeah, I had a bung knee. I was off work for four weeks last year. That was another John Holland project and I was stabbed in the back by the supervisor next day. There was no duties for me he just assho\*\*led me out the door and I wasn't walking for about 4 week s and I was just lucky I'd saved a bit of cash then and got myself through even though it was a fu\*\*er of a situation to be in.

I think with all those negative things with FIFO have stopped me be one step closer from what I have wanted to achieve. Because having a cut of 45% of the earnings you have is a big thing. So having worked for too long in FIFO and earned that money its so hard to give it up. In one way there are also advantages.

Well, you work around town, you make 1400\$ a fortnight. Up bush you make 2600 a fortnight. It's better money, that's why I don't mind it, money wise.

If you don't want to sit outside you can't be social because there is no other spaces to go. You either got the wet mess and that's it and what they call the rec room is actually the

gym. So you can't just sit in there while there is people working out in the treadmill behind you like... there's no other facilities anywhere for people to group together.

And, the "motelling" is a massive thing...Every time you leave camp you have to check out of your room. On all other projects I've worked on you have your own room for the entire project. We basically live up here.

We are up here for three weeks so the space you have got is the 3 by 4 room. It makes such a difference when you can have a photo of your family there, a proper glass to drink out of and a kettle set up so you can have coffee in the morning in your room or a cup of tea if you are not sleeping the middle of the night. That makes such a massive difference.

Even work wise if you move from..as I say my role is up and and down but if I was to move out of my room Camp 2 or Camp 1, I pack everything up and take it with me for two days and then pack it up and bring it back. I like to have a space in my office to put all my dirty clothes in but your office is not meant for dirty clothes and that's ridiculous, how can you be 350k's and not be able to go to the next camp because the driving and the logistics are a nightmare.

We look at red dirt or a computer screen all day. You will get a mine camp all neutral colours. Its ugly. There's no...every single bedspread is the same. You walk in from your shift. Before the whole Motelling came into it we would put photos on the walls and then got told to take them down. Even if they put a pin board in your room so you have photos of everywhere else but the Pilbara. A world does exist.

Lets paint the rocks and put some Aboriginal Art in the Dongas or something. But literally it's just so neutral, from red dirt to a beige wall. It's not stimulating at all.

But you could put a pin board in everybody's room, a full length mirror like, I don't know just something.

Yeah make it your space. Even outside the room, you spend a lot of time just sitting outside. Ultimately your looking at sh\*t. Its all corrugated iron or cement. Like...

This is the first job that I have been on where the motelling. People like to do up their room like their mine. They know when they come back their in that room. They know who their neighbours are. They start relationships. I think motelling is having a negative impact.

Yeah I think it is....why don't they bring a local artist in and umm.. glow in the dark rocks would also look lovely.

Yeah. There's only so much you can do inside your donga but I would be happy like if my whole wall was made out of pin board. Maybe just changing it up like different doona covers. Its all looking the same and the same doonas.

How many times have you gone back to your room and walked into the wrong room because that was the room you stayed in last time.

Even a splash back in the bathroom like that would be lovely.. this is not a permanent camp and the whole thing is beige.... Paint a mural out there. Even those garden lights that are all

solar. Like a few of them wouldn't go astray... they just need to do it. They're not getting any production out of it so why would they bother.

You hear comments from hierarchies, when it suits them they want you to live like home. Like if you order a 30\$ meal, they think you wouldn't eat that at home. But then, they want us to go to these camps, like we don't have any rec equipment. We just sit around and drink ourselves silly (Cairns).

We got a fridge full of beer, that's about all we got. No TV, you get a donger with a plain door. (Cairns)

There's one communal TV, but that's it. That's between 60 blokes.

You probably end up drinking more when you're out on camp, because there's nothing else to do. Your stuck up in the bush and come back.

There's no fitness facilities, or rec rooms like other places.

With the down south area, the dynamics of the camps are a bit different where you have a lot of single guys in one camp as compared to married guys and females. The dynamic is different. Issues more around alcohol related issues. Much more acceptable for some of the blokes to get stuck in to it. The safety advisor down there got a government grant to install a mobile gym too. Gives them something else to do rather than just heading to the pub

Last year, there was talk about making it a dry camp up there, but I don't think it would be a good idea. From a safety aspect, sure it could work. But from a social aspect it wouldn't work. It would decrease morale (Cairns).

Yeah, a happy crew is a happy job increased productivity.

Mateship is really important. We have a beer after our screaming matches to fix it all up. You can't go away from them, so you learn to deal with the issue.

Not really, because you work with these fellas for a while, you become family. You're isolated from your family, but you have workmates there you can talk to and relate with.

The other thing about the shorter days. When you are finished here and you get back to your room you don't feel like do feel like exercising. Because there in lies another problem because like if you don't exercise you don't sleep well and then it gets into your head space a little bit.

Its like basically you have got 24hours in a day. 12 of those is taken up with work and you should have the 6 to 8 for sleeping. So you have got that small time frame left to work out what you want to do. And each day is a sacrifice of something so you are going to sacrifice sleep and sacrifice working out or you are going to sacrifice going to dinner, socialising. You have washing night, so you sacrifice calling home for one night because you are doing something else so for every day up here for 3 weeks or 4 weeks, however long you are up here you have got that much time to work out what you are going to do with your self basically. And being social is really hard because this time of year you get home and the last thing you want to be is outside so you just end up going to your room and so you don't go out again.

At the end of the day we are provided with an adequate amount of sleep. Its not getting enough sleep its just hard to get to sleep you know what I mean. I am a smoker and I have a habit of waking up at the middle of the day for a smoke. I try to sit out there with my eyes closed you know. Its nicotine, its all the stimulants, and so you go back and lay down your watching telly for about an hour and half till you go back to sleep.

If there's a family crisis, time is given to ya. One of the boys is an Australian Champion Bullrider and he is also a grader driver, but if there is no push on, he is given the time off.

Our cycle, we usually try to work 11/12 hours a day. We have a 10 hr break, I'm not a heavy drinker, so I'm usually in bed by 830. Cause I'm up at 430. Those who party hard, they don't get as much sleep. On weekend, we work 10 hr day on Sat and 8.5 on Sunday. On Sunday, I'll have a couple extra beers then go fishing. Other blokes will too. Some go pigging. Those who are heavy drinkers, sit around camp and drink.

We have our weekly toolbox talks as well. If there's anything you want to bring up, you bring it up then. All the managers are there so it's a lot easier to raise things and talk through them then.

You're isolated for sure. You only talk to the guys on the job. Usually, on some of these dirt roads, it's just two of you. Day in, day out. It's pretty good relationships with most blokes here though. If you don't get on, usually there's a transfer involved.

That varies from camp to camp. I think that can have a significant impact on how happy people feel where they are. When its okay or pretty you don't notice but when its really bad and its bad consistently everynight-eating the same thing day after day I think that really does bother some people. It gets a bit frustrating. That's what makes you crave about being back in civilisation. A good pizza or something.

The problem with the food is that everybody's got different tastes. Some people love it some people hate it.

You know its really worse, I've been doing my job for more than forty years and I've seen a trend, you these days its getting harder because these days because they are trying to save money and they seem to stretch the roster even further because there use to be a lot of projects with two and one moving to three and one.

I've done FIFO work for ten years I've always been on a three and one roster but there's but this is the first job where I've twelve hour project work. All other rosters have been 10 hour days and you definitely notice the difference.

Before we tended to fly out on our time and fly-in on work time and now we are flying both ways on our time and I find that really hard because you lose a day.

I'm a single male and 4 and 1 is fine for me.

So they're they get tired, like I don't know but what I hear from them is some of them fly for hours. Days probably from here to Perth. And also when they come in they have got to work, they don't have a rest.

There would be better number if it was financially stable but the good thing with this job is that if you want to get some extra money you work overtime. That's what makes it having extra money, financially stable. If you were working only 8 hours only you would be rather working in Perth then working here.

Yeah, everything changes, and it feels frustrating. I guess the other thing too, is that, family is important to me, but I focus so much on family, that I don't focus on myself. There's been days where I've wanted to do nothing, but the kids want want want the wife too. So you find yourself in a position where you're 100% at work, and you're 100% at home and you just don't have the chill out time. That's to me is an issue.

It's funny, you think 2 days wouldn't make a difference, but you actually have 5 full days off where you don't think about work. The first day you fly home, you still think about work, whether you like it or not. The day you fly back to work, you tend to get back into work mode. That's what I find on the Wednesday morning before I fly out, I shut off and shut everything down. Segregate family, otherwise it makes it hard. You drop your kids off, but everyone knows you're flying out the next day. So they put on a brave face, you put on a brave face, so you tend to go into work mode. That last day, while it's meant to be rnr, it's not. It's stressful for everyone.

I guess the length of the shifts as well does make it difficult with young kids as its like... especially if they are over East their getting up and going to work when their kids are still asleep. And they are getting home when their already in bed. So when the guys are working their long days they have got a very small window which they can actually communicate with their families.

That's a difficult one. I think probably shift duration. Certainly for nightshift the guys working a nine or ten hour shift as opposed to a twelve hour shift. On the flip side of that you get people who are a little unhappy with that because they are dealing with all the negatives of nightshift still but not getting the dollars. So I think a lot of the guys night and days if they are going to be up here and working in this environment they want to make the most out of it as well. So for a lot of them if we tried to cut the hours to 10 hours a day they would be very unhappy and they would walk out the door I think. So its very difficult to find a balance that everyone is happy with.

12 hours is just too long. And your not productive in that last two hours anyway.

I think the boys really like the night shifts because generally there is not a lot of flies around and not cooler. Sometimes its cooler and sometimes its not. Obviously they are up hear for the money and they get paid more...I don't know different circumstances not everyone can do night shift not everyone can do FIFO.

...everyone is worried about job security at the moment given what work do we have coming up next, everyone is looking for the next project. Are we still with John Holland or are we?

...I think it's the construction industry because I been around for 7 years and at the start of every project you wonder where the hell your going. Its only been where I haven't had to take one or two weeks off.

## **B. Recommendations for change**

Yeah. Forward planning in the first place before you get to that level of overspending. Overcapitalising on the income you are earning could be a real defence for all of us. Not just for young guys but also for the older ones as well.

It's the Hollywood lifestyle. I have got a mate who works for BHP. He earns sh\*t loads of money and he just spends it. Absolutely broke all the time. Goes home every couple weeks and does it again.

But if you do this you might find financial planning at the start you have got people who don't really know what they are going to be earning. The financial planner sitting there and saying you are going to be earning this much and your thinking...It not until you get the first couple of packets you think sh\*t I've got all this money. So maybe instead of before started, rather after your first pay packet. Righto, sit down with a financial planner and have a look at it then.

Absolutely. Do the same as BHP they send their supervisors to this supervisor training and you have four psychiatrists in front of you telling you the way to use your head and the way to get the best out of your workers.

I think a financial planner or something, when you come into this job, and they can lay out plans and ideas. You have people who are 20/21 who are getting 3k a week, and just wax it away. But, if someone is there, before you start, who can help you with your money, that would make our futures so much better.

It's a brilliant idea. It's a wee bit off what you were saying, something that my wife and I discussd. When we do get out of this, we will require marriage counselling, purely because, I've never had a job where I've been home for extended periods of time. My old job was 70 hr weeks with one day off, here it's a week off but I'm away 4 weeks. We have never consistently been in each others pockets, and it's something we will struggle with, without doubt. So that's something that needs to be addressed. Rehabilitating people to get out of the FIFO work, that's a real need. It is like jail, when you're in the loop, then you get parole, and it's like 'welcome to the real world'. People can't cope with that change.

Yeah, of course, financial stability is the goal. I want to know that I can support my family. If that means taking a pay cut, well that's the trade off. You'll have your peaks, and your troughs. But, that's coming back to the talk about financial planning, so that you can ride through any of these issues.

Yeah, from the workers. I guess the value of that program decreases significantly depending on what the group gets-whats most beneficial. I really think it's a good program but there is not enough uptake.

It's an awesome program. It helped me out heaps up here but trying to put it between workforce and senior management stuff is stupid. I'm trying to get bloke in home because their not well but management want to know what's wrong with them, who it is and it's got to remain anonymous, you know.

They come in and give us the number and that. We got all the tools at our hands to contact them so you know if it did get to that stage and somebody wanted too. Then yeah definitely. Its there for our use. Its just getting us to use it.

I think hardest thing in being in a temporary camp for me is that they haven't really spent for communication facilities. I don't feel the privacy of having to go out in my donga and speak to my family. And I wish they concentrated more on this.

Even the tv service, you are half way through a movie and that shuts down. We had a week when the phone and tv wouldn't stay on more than 10 minutes of the time. I really frustrates me especially when the Australian open was on.

Even the paper, they don't even have a paper available to read. Its just simple thing you think you should be able to do...

Shorter roster, shorter hours and better camp facilities. The camp facilities have just gone down big time. When I started FIFO work up here, 10 years ago to what it is now it shocking- the beds are shocking, the food is terrible.

They say they provide meals for us so there's no reason for us to cook our own meals, that's the reasoning behind it. I mean a lot of times you eat at a roadhouse, our servo food (Cairns).

It keeps the job fresh too. You can be on the job for 2-3 years. And nothing bores you more than doing the same job over and over again in that time period.

***Project Objective 3: An assessment of the impact of FIFO/DIDO travel on workplace health and safety incidents.***

The EBA was already signed up by the time we got here and I think they overlooked major part of it. We've got guys flying all over Australia and their working up to, what I nine hour day here before they go to the airport before they fly home and they need to try and get home at the other end. If its 12:00 at night and you have got young children at home and your wife is going to get out of your bed and come and pick you up. Most of them will drive after that and that really is not good.

Even when I lived south I would do a full work day and fly home. Land at the airport at 7:30-8:00, depending on what flight your on and then have to drive an hour and half home because there was no other way to get home-there's no trains or buses that go past my house and a taxi would cost me an absolute fortune. That's if I could get a taxi to go there so the only other option is to pay for your carparking for three weeks and drive yourself home at the end of a three week swing after a full work day driving through the bush with roos.

We have quite a few people that are WA based but live three or four hours out of Perth. Obviously before that flight was changed they were getting home very late. Probably driving when they shouldn't as well.

You can always share driving, if we are talking about fatigue. But I am pretty use to it though.

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But the little things like flying in on our time means a couple of hours less at home and that makes a huge difference.

Certainly towards the end of the job it just gets harder and harder as...everyone gets tired and everyone focuses on the negatives, everyone is worried about what's around the corner as the project finishes.

That's been a point of contention on this one in this project, we get people to Perth and there is an expectation that they will manage their own safety. We educate them on fatigue and the fact that they shouldn't be driving and things like that but it was something that a lot of our workforce raised quite vocally when we fly them out. We fly them out on the first morning flight if they choose too on the last day. So there not getting to Perth at say 8:00 and then having to travel three or four hours after that. We also have a lot of people that are based in the eastern states so particularly our staff from Brisbane get the red eye back across. I think people try to stick it through on their first day at home but I sort of get home and 5:30 and surface again 4-5pm in the afternoon. But that cuts in to your R&R but that the choice all of us make to work on this project. Obviously theres a lot up here as well. Its an hour to the closest camp to office here. There's a lot of driving that's always a risk specially when guys are doing that for 28 days straight.

That's one your not going to get a solution to suit everybody. I think people with families would say they prefer and 8 and 6 or they may be really just looking at doing a few years to make the money and prefer longer rosters. Or you have people who like travelling a bit, others who like to work a bit longer and have the longer time off. I think probably the biggest thing is what is too long? I think for the present work force working 4 and 1 is a bit too much. The guys are absolutely shattered at the end of a 4 and 1 swing.

Like I said you can lead a horse to water but you can't make it drink. If they're not going to use the services you have got to look at other options. And other options I guess are the shorter rosters. I know BHP have been looking at them for years but they haven't changed them or anything like that. When I was there they use to make supervisors go to supervisor training and put them into psychologists to treat four and one workers. They are at different stages of the roster, where a persons mind is at that time. You know the first week you have just left home, you miss your family plus you know you have got to start work. As a supervisor you treat them as such. The second week, they know their into it. You push them a bit harder, the way you go everything's all rosy. The third week the rosters starting to get a bit long and temper starting to get a little bit short. You treat them with the processes so you know when to push them. You judge every people on their merit. Other people different you can push them all the way through. Basically, the fourth week you are basically a walking zombie. Your ready to go home. So yeah, you know, you look at incident and accidents the first week or fourth week are usually a lot of those frequent times for those accidents and incidents. Because of those mindsets in those times. So again, with those services not being

used I guess that rosters are those things that should be looked at by these bigger organisations.

The company has the responsibility of that. We can't do much with that. If the company decides that the productivity is not high enough to their profits. They have to required to put machinery to put it there. We can't do much.

Driving home at the end of the week can be difficult. Fatigue management wise. If you're fairly tired, you pull over.

***Project Objective 4: An examination of rosters, shifts, work hours, job design and productivity demands and how to best design a safe, healthy, and productive work environment for FIFO/DIDO employees.***

Salary guys want less hour and wages guys want more.

I've got no problem with the shift work. It's the roster.

That's a difficult one. I think probably shift duration. Certainly for nightshift the guys working a nine or ten hour shift as opposed to a twelve hour shift. On the flip side of that you get people who are a little unhappy with that because they are dealing with all the negatives of nightshift still but not getting the dollars. So I think a lot of the guys night and days if they are going to be up here and working in this environment they want to make the most out of it as well. So for a lot of them if we tried to cut the hours to 10 hours a day they would be very unhappy and they would walk out the door I think. So its very difficult to find a balance that everyone is happy with.

For umm...people who live it Perth 2 and 1 would be good because obviously flights are covered back to Perth. But for eastern staters a 4 and 1 works well because the roster covers flight cost and what so ever. It's our choice that we come over obviously.

It was 2 on 1 it would just be a real good family friendly roster but obviously for Eastern staters it would cost too much in flights going backwards and forwards.

Some of younger people come up here to make their money so they want to do the longer rosters the ones that aren't married and don't have kids.

We are not here because we love the Pilbara. We're here to make money. If you are on even time as well this is my time to spend money not to make money. The cost of living here in Australia is skyrocketing. So you pretty much working to throw life away to have your lifestyle. You know what I mean.

If you break down the 4 and 1 your really only going to see your family 12 times a year.

Employees see productivity as an organizational concern.