

## MEDIA RELEASE

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### **Mental health initiatives a priority for FIFO employers, AMMA tells government inquiry**

*AMMA (Australian Mines and Metals Association) – The resource industry employer group*

MANAGING the mental health of fly-in, fly-out (FIFO) employees is a key priority of the wider workplace safety and wellbeing efforts of Australian resource employers, AMMA has told a West Australian parliamentary inquiry.

In its [submission](#) to the *Western Australia Legislative Assembly – Education and Health Standing Committee - Inquiry into mental health impacts of FIFO work arrangements*, AMMA is cognisant of objective data suggesting mental illness and self-harm is no more prevalent in the mining workforce than other industries.

However, chief executive Steve Knott says an awareness of mental health as an ongoing risk that must be carefully managed has seen resource employers invest in an extensive range of proactive initiatives to maintain the wellbeing of their workforces.

“One suicide in the resource sector or broader community is one too many,” Mr Knott says.

“Resource employers have implemented a number of initiatives to combat any risks associated with FIFO work practices. They are committed to promoting awareness and embedding fit-for-purpose, risk-based policies and procedures to protect the safety of their workforces.

“While we note from the experiences of employers and employees that there is no causal link between FIFO work practices and mental illness or self-harm, this is an area where we need to remain forever vigilant and continue to improve awareness and communication.”

AMMA’s submission notes that a range of publicly available data suggests there is no evidence that mental health issues are more pronounced in the resource industry compared to other industries. For instance, a recent Safe Work Australia [report](#) attributed 0.6% of all mental stress claims in the Australian workforce to the mining industry.

Notwithstanding this, Mr Knott says there is a range of unique factors to FIFO work that must be acknowledged and managed by employers as part of their ‘whole-of-business’ mental health and workplace safety policies and initiatives.

“Proper mitigation strategies need to be considered to ensure risks to workers are reduced to the greatest extent possible. Other risks such as fatigue and drug and alcohol use are those which employers continuously monitor and address,” Mr Knott says.

“A common theme of feedback is that FIFO work is not for everyone, and resource employers go to great lengths in the recruitment stage to ensure people’s suitability to enter this lifestyle.”

AMMA’s submission also reiterates that FIFO work practices are essential for numerous projects in the Australian resource industry that may otherwise be commercially unviable.

With such working arrangements often suiting both employers and employees, there is a need for sensible and informed policy making in this area.

[Click here](#) to read AMMA’s submission to the WA inquiry into the mental health impacts of FIFO work.

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