

LOCAL GOVERNMENT — RATES DECREASE — FLY IN, FLY OUT CAMPS

4441. Mr D.A. Templeman to the Minister for Local Government:

I refer to the decision by the Government to reduce rates on Fly-In Fly-Out (FIFO) mining camps, and ask:

- (a) what consultation with the Local Government Authorities affected, such as the City of Karratha, did the Minister undertake;
- (b) what meetings and consultation was held with the Industry regarding their demand for a decrease in the set rate;
- (c) what reasons does the Minister, and/or the Industry, give for the reduction in rates;
- (d) did the Minister consider the impact on Councils and therefore ratepayers in a reduction of rates? If yes, what explanation does the Minister give to ratepayers in Western Australia for the cost shift? If not, why not; and
- (e) Is the Government planning to compensate cities such as the City of Karratha for the reduction of rates granted for FIFO camps?

**Mr A.J. Simpson replied:**

Local governments are responsible for determining the rates that will be charged on FIFO camps. It is only when a local government wants to set a rate that is more than twice the lowest differential rate that Ministerial approval is required. This year, the City of Karratha originally sought to impose a rate on TWA camps that was more than twice the rate for last year and was four and a half times greater than its lowest proposed rate for this year.

This rate would have meant significant increases in rates imposed on mining camps that have experienced significant decreases in valuations - some as much as halved in valuation. A result of revaluations of mining properties recently undertaken by the office of the Valuer General.

- (a) My Department of Local Government and Communities has consulted extensively and met with, affected local governments to discuss their proposed rates.
- (b) Local governments are obliged to consult publicly on their rates setting. Industry is able to provide submissions to local governments during that process. During the Department's assessment process, all views are considered, including those of the local government and ratepayers.
- (c) The rate in the dollar for the City of Karratha's Transient Workforce Accommodation/Transient Workforce category did not decrease from 2014/15.
- (d) Yes. When presented with an application for the imposition of differential rates, such as those applicable to TWAs in Karratha, I need to be satisfied that, amongst other things, the proposed rate burden is being fairly and equitably applied to those ratepayers.

In circumstances where I cannot be satisfied, as was the case with Karratha, I am obliged to refuse the application.

- (e) No