

29 January 2015



Dr GG Jacobs MLA  
Chair, Education and Health Standing Committee  
Parliament House  
PERTH WA 6000

Dear Dr Jacobs

**INQUIRY INTO MENTAL HEALTH IMPACTS OF FIFO WORK ARRANGEMENTS –  
'SHINING A LIGHT ON FIFO MENTAL HEALTH' DISCUSSION PAPER**

Thank you for the opportunity to appear before the Committee on 3 November 2014 and to provide comment on the Discussion Paper.

In response the following comments are made:

1. AMEC notes that mental health is a complex and extremely sensitive matter, and one that is prevalent throughout the whole community.
2. AMEC supports the Inquiry's finding that there is a lack of quality research on the impact of FIFO on the mental health of the workforce.

The outcomes from relevant and robust research will increase awareness and provide a greater understanding of the issues, and provide a base from which to develop any associated remedies.

At this point AMEC remains of the view that incidents of self-harm are no greater in the mining industry than in the general community. The broader impact of mental health within the community is highlighted by the Commonwealth Government requesting that the National Mental Health Commission undertake a review of mental health services and programmes across all jurisdictions.

When undertaking any research it is crucial that there is delineation between the mining the petroleum sectors; predominantly in view of the significant differences in:

- roster duration,
  - site location (onshore / offshore), and
  - operation size.
3. Consideration should also be given to the increased role of third party contractors providing services during the project construction phase. It is AMEC's

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understanding that the majority of fatalities attributable to the mining industry over the past few years have involved third party contractors.

4. Industry is extremely concerned with the implication that there may be some degree of under reporting of self-harm fatalities.

AMEC is of the view that mining companies acknowledge and diligently report serious occurrences, including all fatalities. Delegated mine site managers have a statutory responsibility to do so, and face severe penalties for non compliance.

Industry cannot reasonably be expected to take any form responsibility in instances where a self-harm event has occurred outside of the workplace. The employer may not even be aware of the incident due to family privacy requirements.

5. Despite the concerns expressed in the Discussion Paper, AMEC remains of the opinion that no specific changes need to be made to legislation, regulations or policies in relation to mental health issues at this point in time. Further prescriptive regulation is unnecessary and costly.

As a key stakeholder AMEC looks forward to assisting the Inquiry in its future deliberations with industry, Government, mental health professionals and the community.

If you have any further questions please do not hesitate to contact me direct.

Yours sincerely



**Simon Bennison**  
Chief Executive Officer