

FLY IN, FLY OUT WORKFORCE

Statement by Member for Kalgoorlie

MR K.M. O'DONNELL (Kalgoorlie) [12.56 pm]: All the talk in my electorate of Kalgoorlie at the moment is about fly in, fly out. We understand that when used correctly, FIFO is a means of getting workers into really remote areas. It is also a safety measure to ensure that employees are not exhausted by having to travel home after a long shift. However, we are experiencing its impact in our established regional towns, both financially and community-wise. Families are separated, mental health issues are on the rise, and not only are moneys earned leaving town, but also are our people. I have even heard from constituents directly that companies that own mines nearby do not employ residents in the town. Instead, they want their workforce to be fly in, fly out. In just under one year, many businesses in several communities have closed their doors. Those businesses range from retail to eateries, homewares and so on. Last week, when our team was in Kalgoorlie–Boulder for the Liberal Party winter conference, the member for Darling Range walked along the main street in town and noted numerous empty shops, too many to count on her fingers alone. I have also heard that procurement officers for mining companies are usually based in Perth, which makes it easier for them to work with suppliers there. I am working in close partnership with Hon Robin Scott, MLC, and the chief executive officer and mayor of the City of Kalgoorlie–Boulder, to try to rectify this situation and increase the residential workforce. I would also like to mention the passing of Don Colgan, a life member and stalwart of Railways Football Club of Kalgoorlie–Boulder for more than 50 years. He was a premiership player, property manager, committee member and bingo master. He will be sadly missed by the people of Kalgoorlie–Boulder and his beloved football club. Thank you.