

MEDIA RELEASE

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Resource industry welcomes FIFO support hotline

AMMA – Australian Mines and Metals Association

THE introduction of a 'Working Away Alcohol and Drug Support Line' for fly-in, fly-out employees in Western Australia is a practical step to further support the mental wellbeing of FIFO workers, their families and the communities in which they live and work, says AMMA.

Scott Barklamb, executive director of the peak body representing Australia's mining, oil and gas employers, welcomes WA Minister for Mental Health, Helen Morton's announcement of the new telephone hotline providing free, 24/7 counselling for people who work away from home and their families.

"This is a great example of the WA Government working with the resource industry to deliver a practical, valuable service to help combat mental health concerns that confront all industries and communities," Mr Barklamb says.

"Resource employers understand that working away from home comes with unique lifestyle challenges that some people need assistance adjusting to.

"The industry offers a range of employee assistance programs which include counselling services, mental health awareness programs, as well as enhancements to onsite facilities to improve the experience of working away from home.

"Any additional initiatives that assist the FIFO workforce are good for employees and their families, good for the industry and good for the broader community."

With increased attention on the mental wellbeing of resource employees, particularly in Western Australia's significant FIFO mining workforce, AMMA is proactively seeking opportunities to engage with relevant authorities and community organisations to support new mental health and wellbeing initiatives.

"Minister Morton is spot-on in that the average FIFO worker – males between 15 and 44 years – are the highest risk group for suicide throughout our community. It is the responsibility of industry and government to put adequate support mechanisms in place for all people who may use drugs and alcohol, or experience mental health challenges," Mr Barklamb continues.

"AMMA would welcome the opportunity to engage with the WA government on further mental health support initiatives that can complement employer efforts to destigmatise and improve mental health in the workplace."

The WA Government's Working Away Alcohol and Drug Support Line can be reached via 1800 721 997 or email workingaway@mhc.wa.gov.au.

Mental health and wellbeing challenges and initiatives in the resource industry will be explored at [AMMA's 2015 Resource People National Conference](#) on Thursday 6th August 2015 in Perth. Complimentary registrations are open to media.

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