Satisfaction with a fly-in/fly-out (FIFO) lifestyle: Is it related to rosters, children and support resources utilised by Australian employees and partners and does it impact on relationship quality and stress?

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Bachelor of Psychology (Honours)

This thesis is presented in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Bachelor of Psychology (Honours), Murdoch University, 2012
I declare that this thesis is my own account of my research and contains as its main content work which has not been previously submitted for a degree at any tertiary educational institution.

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Wendy Voysey
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Abstract

The phenomenal growth currently being experienced in the Australian resources industry has seen unprecedented interest in the practice of fly-in/fly-out (FIFO) work practices. This study explores a number of factors that have been previously identified as having possible negative impacts on those involved in FIFO. A sample of 314 FIFO partners and 245 workers were surveyed on roster satisfaction, roster length, relationship quality, children, perceived stress and perceived social support. Resources and supports were also examined to determine awareness, utilisation and usefulness to partners and workers. This study found that overall workers were satisfied with their rosters and relationships, including those on longer rosters. Partners however, were less satisfied with rosters and relationships, particularly those who had children between six and twelve years of age, although roster length was not a factor. Children’s ages did not influence partners’ perceived stress however partners without children reported higher perceived stress than those with children. Less than half of the partners were aware of Employee Assistance Programs (EAPs) however personal supports, such as family, friends, co-workers, and FIFO specific support websites, had a positive effect on partners’ perceived stress. When compared to other resources, both partners and workers rated personal support as the most useful.

Keywords: FIFO; rosters, relationships; children; stress; support
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Satisfaction with a fly-in/fly-out (FIFO) lifestyle: Is it related to rosters, children and support resources utilised by Australian employees and partners and does it impact on relationship quality and stress?

The current resources boom being experienced in Australia, and particularly Western Australia, has resulted in unprecedented interest into relevant work practices and social impacts from government, industry, media and the community alike (House of Representatives Standing Committee on Regional Australia 2011; Rickard, 2012). Through initiatives such as the recent Federal government inquiry into fly-in, fly-out (FIFO) and drive-in, drive-out (DIDO) work practices in regional Australia, the need to gain a better understanding of the issues involved in these operations have been recognised (House of Representatives, 2011). In particular, the effects of FIFO on workers and their families, warrants closer scrutiny due to the large amount of negative speculation and anecdotal evidence surrounding this lifestyle (Hampson, 2008; Potts & Potts, 2003; Quartermaine, 2006). Apart from information provided through such avenues as inquiry submissions, increased empirical research into the various issues surrounding FIFO is paramount in order to produce an accurate picture of current FIFO impacts. Such findings assist governments and industry at policy and practice level, and in turn may reduce turnover rates of workers and ultimately, associated costs. It is also important to investigate the effects that FIFO may have on partners and families at a psychosocial level due to the influence of the work/home interface (Kelloway, Gottlieb & Barham, 1999; Morrison & Clements, 1997; Sibbel, 2010; Venables, Beach & Brereton, 2002). This study explores aspects of FIFO that have been implicated in impacting on individuals, from both the worker’s and at-home partner’s perspective. Key areas that have been identified in previous research include rosters, couple relationships, perceived stress and perceived social support (Beach, 1999; Clifford, 2009; Gent, 2004; Sibbel,
In addition, a number of resources and supports available to FIFO workers and families were identified and appraised on their utility to participants.

Current Australian resources statistics

Australia is currently experiencing phenomenal growth in the resources industry with projects estimated to be more than $500 billion. These include ventures already being undertaken as well as those pending approval and cover the sectors of mining, oil and gas (Knight, 2012). The workforce currently engaged in these areas is approximately 250,000 with another 750,000 employed indirectly via associated industries (Australian Mines & Metals Association, 2011). The largest proportion of these projects is located in Western Australia (41%) and Queensland (39%) with New South Wales seeing increasing growth (17%), (AMMA, 2011). Many of the mining sites are located in remote and previously uninhabited regions of these states, or offshore in the case of gas and oil.

FIFO

In order to service the demand for workers in these industries, the use of Fly-in/fly-out (FIFO) work practices has been established. The remote locations of many worksites have lead to an increasing number of employees commuting to their place of work from home. They work a set number of days (and/or nights) and then return home to have a set number of days off. This commute arrangement is commonly referred to as fly-in/fly-out (FIFO). FIFO operations can be defined as “those which involve work in relatively remote locations where food and lodging accommodation is provided for workers at the site but not for their families. Schedules are established whereby employees spend a fixed number of days working at the site, followed by a fixed number of days at home”
(Storey, 2001, p. 135). The majority of workers commute from cities, regional or coastal communities to their work sites by aircraft while others who reside in many of the larger regional centres may drive to their place of work in either company or private vehicles. This latter mode is termed drive-in/drive-out (DIDO). This study’s reference to FIFO will include DIDO as the issues being investigated are deemed to pertain to both.

Accurate statistics for the number of workers employed under FIFO arrangements nationally are difficult to ascertain, partly due to the often transient nature of the work, particularly contract work, and the fact that employees can work up to six months or longer away from their usual place of residence (Chamber of Minerals and Energy of WA Inc, 2012). In Western Australia, approximately 100,000 people are employed in the resources industry, with 52% of those under FIFO arrangements. The demand for a FIFO workforce within Australia is expected to double within five years (CMEWA, 2012).

Past research

Up until the last decade, most of the research on FIFO came from overseas studies with much of it qualitative, anecdotal and based on offshore, married male workers employed by large companies, on fixed work schedules (Clark, McCann, Morrice & Taylor, 1985; Parkes, Carnell, & Farmer, 2005; Shrimpton & Storey, 2001). Australian research on employees who travelled away from their home base for long periods of time was defined by specific groups such as military personnel or those employed in the merchant navy (Morrison & Clements, 1997; Foster & Cacioppe (1986). The differences that exist within these previously researched groups to Australia’s FIFO workforce today include the physical work environment, employment conditions, roster profiles, work hazards, communication resources, accommodation, and supports offered to employees and their families. In addition, much of the earlier theorising was based on negative
assumptions surrounding the impact of FIFO on workers and their families such as increased marital breakdown and higher divorce rates (Collinson, 1998). Gender role expectations and family dynamics have also changed since that time, with most of the earlier research based on ‘traditional families’ in which the married female partner often remained in the home full-time to care for children (Clark et al., 1985; Sibbel, 2010). Today’s families encompass more diversity in their composition with an increase in defacto and divorced couples, blended families, and more women in fulltime paid work (ABS, 2011), including FIFO employment (Bianchini, 2012). These combined factors support the argument that past findings cannot be confidently applied to a contemporary Australian based FIFO workforce.

Current Australian FIFO studies

Rapid growth has seen technological and cultural changes occur within the Australian resources industry in the last decade. Many remote sites that once had limited communication facilities have been enhanced with greater internet and mobile phone coverage. Accommodation and leisure facilities have been improved at many locations along with increased flight schedules to and from major cities and regional towns (CMEWA, 2012). Along with these changes, community attitudes and expectations have played a part in altering the dynamics of FIFO and its social impacts, with the associated lifestyle becoming an increasingly viable and attractive option for many. The most commonly reported reasons for undertaking FIFO are, improved financial situation, and increased quality time spent with family and friends (Shrimpton & Storey, 2001; Torkington et al., 2011). At the same time, FIFO has generated a lot of negative discourse, and been held responsible for marriage breakdowns, increased substance abuse, and mental health issues (Hampson, 2008; Quartermaine, 2006; Storey, 2001; Turner, 2011). FIFO workers report concerns over illnesses or emergencies while they
are away, missing important occasions, and difficulties in forming and maintaining relationships (Gent, 2004; Torkington et al., 2011; Watson, 2008). Subsequently, the need for continuing, up to date research, targeting FIFO within an Australian cultural context is necessary.

Previous Australian research on FIFO has also produced contradictory results regarding some of the impacts FIFO may have on individuals and families. Gent (2004) found negative impacts of FIFO on job, relationship, and life satisfaction overall. These impacts were more pronounced in those workers whose rosters kept them away from home for more than two weeks, and those who had pre-school aged and/or teenage children. These claims however have been heavily refuted by more recent studies which found no significant differences between the FIFO participants and the general population with regards to relationships (Clifford, 2009; Sibbel, 2010) and family functioning (Sibbel, 2010).

A review of the literature has identified a number of key areas that FIFO workers and/or partners have reported as impacting on their satisfaction with the FIFO lifestyle. Rosters, relationships, stress experienced and support received (Beach, 1999; Clifford, 2009; Gallegos, 2006; Gent, 2004; Kaczmarek & Sibbel, 2008; Sibbel, 2010; Torkington, Larkins & Gupta, 2011; Watson, 2008).

Rosters

The use of non-standard or compressed work schedules has been a common work practice in the offshore oil and gas industry as well as the land-based mining industry for many years (Beach, 1999; Clark et al., 1985; Gillies, Wu, & Jones, 1997; Heiler, 2000; Shrimpton & Story, 2001). They are more economically viable as well as practical for companies, by reducing the costs and logistics involved in transportation and
accommodation of employees, between the work site and home (Shrimpton & Storey, 2001). These work schedules are more commonly referred to as rosters or ‘swings’ and are defined by specified periods of work and leave. Compressed rosters are schedules where the periods of working hours are divided into shifts and either extended from a traditional eight hour work day, or scheduled consecutively, and can involve both day and night shifts (Keown, 2005). Compressed rosters provide for the hours worked to be concentrated into fewer days or nights, allowing for longer leave periods (Clifford, 2009). Rosters are generally referred to by the number of days and/or nights worked and the number of days off, such as ‘14/7’ (14 days on/7 days off). They can range considerably, from ‘5 days on/2 days off’ to ‘13 weeks on/1 week off’, (Story, 2001) with Venables et al. (2002) reporting “64 different work patterns” identified within the mining industry (p. 3). Rosters with an equal number of days/nights worked to days on leave are called symmetrical rosters and those with an unequal number are termed asymmetrical. The most commonly worked roster is 14/7 with twelve hour shifts being the standard practice (Hartley, Creed, Gilroy & Todd, 2004).

Rosters have also been identified as one of the biggest issues impacting on satisfaction with FIFO (Beach, 1999; Clifford, 2009; Gallegos, 2006; Gent, 2004). Evidence has shown that extended working hours and intense schedules, which are a common feature of many FIFO rosters, contribute to increased fatigue along with stress and other health related issues for workers (Beach, 1999; Clifford, 2009; Hartley et. al., 2004). For companies, roster length is often attributed to turnover rates (Beach, Brereton & Cliff, 2003). Difficulties are also reported on the home front when workers return and leave, with the transition periods being a heightened time of conflict (Clifford, 2009). The combined effects of fatigue for both worker and partners can be amplified, particularly if there is not enough recovery time for workers before the next swing, as in
the case of some asymmetrical rosters such as 28/7 (Beach, 1999). Likewise, those partners with spouses on short rosters, such as 5/2 (days), reported experiencing difficulties with emotional reconnection. (Gallegos, 2006; Sibbel, 2010). Clifford (2009) found that those on short rosters reported as high on roster dissatisfaction as those on long rosters.

Relationships/children

FIFO has continually been targeted as a cause of infidelity, relationship breakdown and divorce (Gibson, 2006; Hampson, 2008; Quartermaine, 2006; Torkington et al., 2011). There is debate however about whether these claims are purely anecdotal, given the limited amount of research that has been done on relationships among FIFO workers and their partners. According to Marion Dunn (2012) from Relationships Australia, these claims are “exaggerated in FIFO relationships”. One of the main factors contributing to relationship difficulties in this group according to Shrimpton and Storey (2001) is the constant partings and reunions which can lead to unresolved issues. Clifford (2009) however, found that although workers and partners believed FIFO had a negative effect on their relationships, this was not reflected in the results. Sibbel (2010) also found that relationship satisfaction among workers and partners was no different to that of the general population. It was indicated that the intimate and family relationships of FIFO workers and partners can actually be enhanced by the circumstances. For instance, Sibbel found that communication between couples was better than the general population, due to the possible increased awareness of potential challenges, with couples developing strategies to overcome these. Gent (2004) states that FIFO workers scored significantly lower on relationship satisfaction measures than a normal sample but also scored significantly higher on measures of affectional expression ie. affection and sex, than a normative sample.
In spite of these past mixed findings, relationship issues were a major concern expressed at the Federal Government’s FIFO inquiry in Perth recently. Evidence submitted from the Australian Medical Association (2012) claims that relationship strain is being experienced not only by workers, but also by their partners and children. A number of studies have also found that the presence of children in the home of FIFO workers and partners increases the risk of relationship stress. Presser (2000) found that couples where one spouse worked a non-standard work schedule were more likely to separate or divorce within five years if they had children. Gent (2004) supports this finding, stating that FIFO couples with children under five years of age reported “more tension and less affection in their relationship than those with older children”. Couples with children aged 13-17 also experienced impacts but to a lesser extent.

The impact of FIFO on the homebound partners of employees has also received little attention in spite of research that supports the connection between job characteristics and partner distress (Morrison & Clements, 1997). Diamond, Hicks, and Otter-Henderson (2008), found that the effects of romantic partners’ work-related separations and reunions was significant for the homebound partner. Partner impact has also been expressed as an area of concern by employees themselves (Torkington, Larkins & Sen Gupta, 2011).

**Stress**

Stress refers to “an individual’s cognitive, behavioural or physiological responses to situations considered to be personally important, taxing, challenging or threatening” (Clifford, 2009, p. 35). These situations can be negative or positive with the most significant cause of stress being a result of change. While a certain level of stress can be
functional and is often necessary to motivate us, prolonged stress can lead to exhaustion, leaving the body susceptible to illness and disease (Westen, Burton & Kowalski, 2006).

FIFO employment requires many adjustments due to the unique challenges experienced. While some of the impacts of FIFO are positive, such as the increased financial rewards and quality time spent with family and friends, other impacts can lead to increased stress. Concerns over illness or emergencies in the family while the worker is away and missing significant occasions and celebrations are among the most commonly reported situations that could lead to workers or partners feeling stressed (Torkington et al. 2011; Watson, 2008; Clifford, 2009). The inability for workers to communicate regularly with family can increase stress, particularly for those with children (Shrimpton & Storey, 2001; Gent, 2004). The most stressful time for both workers and partners is around transition times, being more pronounced when the worker is preparing to leave and return to site (Gallegos, 2006; Parkes et al. 2005), although interestingly, Clifford (2009) found that participants did not perceive themselves to be stressed at that time, even though cortisol measures taken from saliva samples indicated otherwise. Extended working hours and night shift schedules have also been linked with greater psychological distress (Keown, 2005) although Clifford (2009) found no association between stress and rosters or compressed work schedules.

Little research has been conducted on the effects of FIFO on the homebound partners of workers, particularly relating to stress. The FIFO lifestyle appears to be more stressful for the partner (Clifford, 2009), especially if they have the care of young children (Gallegos, 2006; Kaczmarek & Sibbel, 2008; Sibbel, 2010). According to Folkman, Lazarus, Pimley, and Novacek (1987), being a parent of young children is “probably among the most pervasive source of daily stress” experienced (p. 181). If the parenting role is undertaken by one person for an extended length of time it can lead to
what Sibbel (2010) refers to as “sole parenting fatigue” (p. 148). Cooklin, Giallo and Rose (2012) found significantly higher fatigue reported in mothers when compared to fathers and in sole parents compared to couples. Higher fatigue was also significantly associated with higher parenting stress for parents with at least one child under five years. Kaczmarek and Sibbel (2008) compared FIFO mothers to military mothers and a community sample of non-FIFO/military mothers, and reported that the FIFO mothers were found to have significantly higher levels of stress. Further results from the Cooklin et al. (2012) study found that inadequate social support was associated with higher fatigue.

**Social Support**

According to Cohen and Wills (1985), stress can be buffered by the potential mechanism of social support. This can be either directly, through close, personal relationships, or social networks. This type of social support benefits everyone, regardless of the presence of stress. For those who are experiencing a particular stressful event, the buffering model of social support is deemed to be provided through such forms as practical assistance, information or companionship.

Clifford (2009) defined social support as “the availability of people who an individual can trust and rely on, to help them feel cared for and valued, and, and to provide assistance during times of need” (p. 38). It can also be provided in the form of information, advice and material resources (Cohen & Wills, 1985). Apart from physical health benefits, social support has been shown to reduce perceived stress levels (Fresle, 2010; Winnubst, Marcelissen & Kleber, 1982). Pierce and Sarason (1991) determined that there are two levels of social support – general and relationship specific – with each form being distinct but related. General perceived social support comes from the belief
that support from within a particular ‘community’ can be sourced and developed, before specific individual relationships have yet been established, such as when moving to a new area or starting a new job. When that support comes from someone who has a close, personal relationship with the recipient (i.e. relationship specific), greater psychological benefits are experienced.

Just how FIFO workers and partners perceive social support for their lifestyle remains unclear. There appears to be mixed public reaction to FIFO challenges, as evidenced through the media (O’Connor, 2012; Randell, 2012; Weir, 2012), with claims that those who choose FIFO need to “toughen up” (Randell, 2012, p. 22). A lack of accurate information regarding FIFO can lead to negative community attitudes and a sense of isolation for many (Sibbel, 2010). Clifford (2009) found that those who were highly dissatisfied with FIFO also reported lower levels of social support. The home-bound partners in particular, report the need for greater emotional support and connection with others who understand their situation. Access to support for their partners is also important to workers (Watson, 2008). While support for workers and families has generally been available through Employee Assistance Programs (EAPs) it seems that the service is being under utilised, either through lack of awareness or reluctance to seek help (Keown, 2005; Shrimpton & Storey, 2001; Torkington et al. 2011). Within the last decade and particularly the last few years, the importance of social support for FIFO workers and families has been increasingly recognised, perhaps as a result of the phenomenal growth of FIFO industries.

**Resources/Supports**

Gallegos (2006) determined that when workers were rostered on, partners sought support from a number of areas, with extended family and/or childcare being utilised the
most. Playgroups, neighbours and family GPs were also regarded as sources of support. More recently, FIFO specific social networking websites have been developed. They appear to play a vital role in connecting FIFO people across Australia, particularly mothers, through online chat rooms and Facebook groups such as Mining Family Matters (MFM) (www.miningfm.com.au) and FIFO Families (FF) (www.fifofamilies.com.au). Through these sites, local groups of FIFO families and single FIFO partners are being formed at a rapidly growing pace to enable people to connect with others who understand and share their experience. A number of publications have also been produced to inform and assist FIFO management and personnel on the practical aspects of this employment type (Western Australia. Department for Communities, 2011; MFM, 2011). In Western Australia, both Relationships Australia and Ngala have developed FIFO specific workshops aimed at assisting couples and families to adjust to the FIFO lifestyle.

Limitations of existing studies

There appear to be three main limitations of existing Australian FIFO research which highlight the need for this particular study. Small sample sizes (Beach, 1999; Fresle, 2010; Gallegos, 2004; Kaczmarek & Sibbel, 2008; Taylor & Simmonds, 2009; Torkington et al. (2011); participants recruited from one specific geographical area (Fresle, 2010; Sibbel, 2010); and participants recruited from one specific industry sector (Clifford, 2009), or one specific roster schedule (Beach, 1999; Sibbel, 2010). No Australian studies to date have addressed all these limitations. This study intends to be national, with larger sample sizes from a variety of industry sectors and roster schedules.

Present Study background

As the growth of employment within the resources sector continues to increase (ABS, 2010) so too does the need to understand the impacts of the FIFO lifestyle, not
only from an economic perspective but from a social perspective. This vital information can assist employers, relevant government departments and agencies, in how best to support employees and their families. The development of policies that increase satisfaction, and subsequently motivation for FIFO can also assist in reducing turnover and ultimately, costs.

Within the last five years, a number of resources in the form of booklets, websites and workshops have been specifically developed to provide information and support to the FIFO community eg. Department for Communities (WA), MFM (http://www.miningfm.com.au/), and Ngala (Parents working away workshop). Prior to this time, the main resources and supports provided to FIFO employees and their families were in the form of Employee Assistance Programs (EAPs) accessed through FIFO employers. Traditional forms of support by family, friends, co-workers, health professionals, and religious organisations, are also acknowledged.

Present Study aims

Based on previous research and the recommended future directions of FIFO investigations, a number of objectives have been identified. This study will compare workers’ and partners’ levels of roster satisfaction with relationship quality and roster length, and explore the association that children’s ages may have on roster satisfaction for FIFO partners. It will also compare workers and partners who are aware of, and have utilised, specified resources and supports within the last six months, against those who have not, and investigate the level of usefulness reported for the resources/supports, by those who have used them. Finally, the perceived stress levels and perceived social support levels of partners will be investigated.

The following research questions and hypotheses have therefore been developed:
Rosters

Research Q. 1. Is there a significant difference in roster satisfaction between workers and partners?

H¹ - Partners would report lower rates of roster satisfaction than workers.

Research Q. 2. Which roster length produces the highest level of roster satisfaction for partners and workers?

H² - Partners and workers on a medium roster length will report higher levels of roster satisfaction than those on a short or long roster.

Rosters & relationships

Research Q. 3. Is there a significant difference between relationship quality for partners and workers?

H³ - There will be no significant difference in relationship quality between partners and workers.

Research Q. 4. Is roster satisfaction associated with relationship quality for partners and workers?

H⁴ - Roster satisfaction will be significantly positively associated with relationship quality for partners and workers.

Research Q. 5. Is roster satisfaction associated with days rostered on for partners and workers?
H5 - Relationship quality will be significantly lower for partners and workers on long (21+) rostered days on.

Research Q.6 Is relationship quality associated with days rostered off for partners and workers?

H6 - Relationship quality will be significantly lower for partners and workers on short(<=6) rostered days off.

**Rosters & children**

Research Q. 7. Is there an association between roster satisfaction and children’s age range for partners and workers?

H7 - Partners and workers with children < 6 years will report lower levels of roster satisfaction

**Children & stress**

Research Q. 8 Do partners with children report higher perceived stress levels than partners with no children?

H8 – Partners with children will report higher perceived stress levels than partners with no children.

Research Q. 9. Do partners with children in particular age ranges report higher perceived stress levels?

H9 – Partners with children < 6 years will report higher perceived stress levels
**Stress & Social support**

Research Q. 10. Is there a correlation between perceived stress and perceived social support for partners?

H10 – There will be a strong, positive correlation between perceived stress and perceived social support.

**Resources & supports**

Research Q. 11. Which resources/supports are partners and workers more aware of?

Research Q. 12. Which resources/supports are used more by partners and workers?

Research Q. 13. How useful did partners and workers rate resources/supports?

Research Q. 14 Are there significant differences between perceived stress, usefulness of websites (Mining Family Matters/FIFO families), and personal support (family/friends/co-workers) for partners?

H11 - There will be a significant positive difference between perceived stress and website usefulness, and perceived stress and personal support.

It is anticipated this study will have a number of outcomes. Firstly, that it will add to the growing body of research on FIFO and its impacts on Australian workers and partners. Secondly, the information may assist those involved at government, industry, and agency levels in developing best practice policies around FIFO for employees and
families. Thirdly, that it will raise awareness among the FIFO community of resources and supports currently available.

Method

This cross-sectional study examined associations between roster satisfaction, relationship quality, FIFO rosters, and children’s age ranges, of two naturally occurring, unrelated groups of FIFO workers and partners nationwide. It also investigated the awareness and utilisation of resources and supports for workers and partners. Thirdly, it compared the perceived stress and perceived support of partners with available FIFO resources and supports.

Participants

Participants were 245 FIFO workers and 314 FIFO partners, giving a total of 559 participants. The workers ranged in age from 20 to 64 ($M = 38.02$, $SD = 10.99$) and partners ranged in age from 19 to 61 ($M = 35.12$, $SD = 7.95$). Gender and age data were missing for 19 workers and 56 partners. FIFO workers included in this study came from Australian land-based and offshore industries. Occupational levels of the FIFO workers and the partners’ FIFO workers included managers, supervisors and general workers and varied between contractors and permanent employees. Job descriptions of the FIFO workers included project manager, geologist, driller, Occupational Health and Safety advisor, rigger, crane operator, civil and mechanical engineers, psychologist and administrator among many others. Job descriptions of FIFO partners included administrator, journalist, public servant, teacher, psychologist, radiographer, photographer, and architect. Length of time involved in FIFO for workers ranged from one month to 30 years ($M = 6.05$, $SD = 5.49$) and for partners, less than one month to 35 years ($M = 5.22$, $SD = 5.52$). The average roster worked was 14 days on/7 days off.
For participants in a relationship, the average length was approximately 11 years for both workers ($M = 10.79$, $SD = 8.83$) and partners ($M = 10.92$, $SD = 6.76$).

Once ethical approval had been obtained from the Murdoch University Human Research Ethics Committee, participants were recruited Australia wide between May and August 2012. The study was advertised nationally to employees and partners as part of a larger research project, through company or industry contacts, two FIFO support websites, two family and relationship support organizations, six Perth schools (primary and secondary), (Appendix A), and personal contacts of the researcher. Participants were also informed of the study via media interest generated in the research topic. Informed consent was deemed to have been given through the return of either a hard copy survey or online electronic submission of the survey.

**Materials**

Participants took part in one of two surveys depending on whether they identified themselves as a FIFO worker or FIFO partner. The surveys were available through an online website or paper copy with pre-paid envelope.

The partners’ survey (Appendix B) included demographic questions such as their age and gender as well as their respective FIFO worker’s age and gender. The partners were also asked about the length of relationship with their respective FIFO worker as well as the age ranges of any children.

The workers’ survey (Appendix B) included demographic questions such as age, gender, along with work-related questions such as job description, and length of employment. The survey also included questions specific to those in relationships, such as relationship status and length. Those with children were asked the age ranges of their
children. As the workers’ questions formed part of a larger survey, those measures not relevant to this study have been omitted.

**Rosters.** Both workers and partners were asked to identify how many days ‘on’ and ‘off’ were typically experienced in their respective FIFO roster. With 64 different roster combinations identified within the mining industry alone (Venables, et al., 2002), the responses for days ‘on’ were grouped by dividing the days of the month into three even groups resulting in short, medium, and long roster types. Days worked on site of 10 days or less, are referred to as a short roster; 11-20 days on, referred to as a medium roster; and 21+ days on, referred to as a long roster. Days off were grouped using visual binning in SPSS to determine the three most frequently occurring groups. The result was <=6 days, 7 days, and 8 days or more.

A modified version of the Roster Dissatisfaction Scale (Clifford, 2009), containing eight items, was used to determine the level of satisfaction with the current roster experienced for employees and partners. The modification was necessary to ensure brevity of the overall survey. The scale was also renamed the Roster Satisfaction Scale because the items retained, reflected satisfaction more than dissatisfaction. The original Cronbach’s Alpha for the partners’ scale was 0.63-0.72 and for the workers’ was 0.66-0.74. Likert scale responses for the partners’ survey ranged from Strongly Disagree (1) to Strongly Agree (5) with item 6 reverse scored. The workers’ scale originally ranged from Strongly Disagree (1) to Strongly Agree (7) as it was part of a larger measure in the overall survey. Responses were rescaled to match the partners’ response scale. Research shows that “5- and 7- point scales produced the same mean as each other, once they were rescaled” (Dawes, 2007). Items in the workers’ survey included, “It takes one or two days to ‘fit in’ to the lives of those close to me eg. (partners, kids, relatives, friends) again at the beginning of my leave periods”; “I am in
a bad mood during my last one or two leave days”; “My roster causes me to miss important events with those close to me (eg. birthdays, Christmas, kids’ milestones, anniversaries)” The Partner’s survey items were worded similarly but related to their respective FIFO worker eg. “It takes one or two days for my partner (FIFO worker) to ‘fit in’ to my life again at the beginning of their leave periods”. The statements were designed to determine perceptions of stress, dissatisfaction and disruption due to the current FIFO roster experience. Responses were averaged to determine a total mean Roster Satisfaction score. Higher scores were indicative of greater roster satisfaction.

*Relationships.* Relationship quality was determined by measuring current levels of conflict (with a partner), support (from a partner), and depth (of the relationship) using a modified 12 item version of the Quality of Relationship Inventory (QRI), (Pierce, Sarason & Sarason, 1991). The modification was necessary to ensure brevity of the overall survey, with a reliability analysis showing Cronbach’s Alpha to be .882. Likert scale responses ranged from Not at all (1) to Very much (4). Items 5-8 were reverse scored. Items included, “How much do you argue with this person?”; “To what extent can you turn to this person for advice about problems?”; and “How significant is this relationship in your life?”. Responses were averaged to provide a total QRI mean score with higher scores indicative of increased relationship quality.

*Stress.* The Perceived Stress Scale (Cohen, Kamerck, & Mermelstein, 1983) was used to assess the perception of stress in FIFO partners by asking questions relating to thoughts and feelings during the last six months. Likert scale responses ranged from Never (1) to Very Often (5). Items 4-7, 9, 10 and 13 were reverse scored. The 14 items were then averaged to give a total mean score. Higher scores indicated greater perceived stress. Cronbach’s Alpha for this scale in the present study was 0.88 which was similar to the original of 0.84-0.86 (Cohen, Kamerck et al., 1983). Items included
“How often have you been upset because of something that happened unexpectedly?”; “How often have you felt confident about your ability to handle your personal problems?”; and “How often have you felt that you could not cope with all the things that you had to do?”.

**Support.** A 16 item Perceived Social Support scale (Clifford, 2009) was used to investigate how supported FIFO partners felt by family, friends, co-workers and supervisors, over the previous six months. Likert scale responses ranged from Strongly disagree (1) to Strongly agree (7) with Not applicable items coded as ‘0’. Item seven was reverse scored. Responses were averaged to provide a total mean score with higher scores indicating higher perception of support. Cronbach’s Alpha for the present study was 0.88 which was comparable to the original reported at 0.74-0.92 (Clifford, 2009). Items included: “I can talk about my problems with my friends”; “I get the emotional support I need from my family”; and “I experience hostility and conflict from my co-workers”.

The four measures used above have been labeled in their respective sections of the surveys for the reader, but were not visible to the participants.

**Supports/resources.** A list of currently available resources and supports was developed to ascertain whether FIFO workers and partners were aware of each resource/support and whether they had utilised any of the resources/supports. The list included employee assistance programs (EAPs); FIFO specific publications; FIFO specific online support groups; FIFO specific workshops; personal resources and supports such as family, friends and co-workers; health professionals; and religious clergy/organizations. There was also an option for participants to add other resources and supports not listed. These items were analysed and reported descriptively to
illustrate the percentage of each resources/support that participants were aware of and had used. A likert scale to measure the level of usefulness of the resources/supports used was also developed with responses ranging from Strongly disagree (1) to Strongly agree (2). The responses were analysed and reported graphically to illustrate how useful participants found it met their needs.

**Procedure**

Participants were instructed to read an information and consent page before proceeding. Contact details for myself, the researcher, and my supervisor were made available at this stage for any questions. Participants were instructed that the study was anonymous and confidential and that they could withdraw at any point during completion of the survey. Once they submitted a survey either electronically or by post however, their data could no longer be withdrawn due to the anonymous nature of the surveys. The list of resources and supports contained within the surveys was made available for participants to print off at the end of the online surveys, or tear off the back of the paper copy, for their own use.

**Results**

Data was downloaded from the online site and analysed using SPSS v.17.0. Data was screened initially for complete sets of missing data. Five sets were deleted from the Partners’ survey and 42 sets from the Workers’ survey at this stage leaving 314 partners and 245 workers. Parametric tests were used to explore the research questions and accompanying hypotheses. Some normality tests in the following analyses were significant, which is often evident in large sample sizes, and as such is not considered problematic (Field, 2009; Pallant, 2007). This same assumption was carried throughout the analyses. In these cases, distribution of scores was examined visually using
histograms and scatterplots and interpreted for normality accordingly. Alpha levels were set at .05 unless otherwise specified. Descriptive statistics and specific details of each analysis are provided in line with each research question and accompanying hypothesis.

Due to the modification of the Roster Satisfaction Scales, principal components analyses were conducted using the data collected from 313 partners and 245 workers. Prior to running the principal components analysis, examination of the partners’ data indicated that not every variable was perfectly normally distributed. Given the robust nature of factor analysis, these deviations were not considered problematic (Allen & Bennett, 2010). Furthermore a linear relationship was identified among the variables. Two factors (with Eigenvalues exceeding 1) were identified as underlying the 8 survey items (see Table 1). In total, these factors accounted for around 50% of the variance in the survey data. Cronbach’s alpha for the 8-item modified Partner’s Roster Satisfaction scale was .738.
### Table 1

**Varimax Rotated Component Structure of the Eight Item Roster Satisfaction Scale (Partners)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Loadings</th>
<th>Factor 1ª</th>
<th>Factor 2b</th>
<th>Loadings</th>
<th>Factor 1ª</th>
<th>Factor 2b</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. I wish my partner was more involved in my daily life when he/she is working</td>
<td>.659</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. My partner feels tired and needs to rest during their first 1 or 2 days of leave</td>
<td>.756</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. My partner gets in a bad mood during their last 1 or 2 days of leave</td>
<td>.660</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. It takes 1 or 2 days for my partner to ‘fit in’ to my life again at the end of their leave periods</td>
<td>.788</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. My partner’s roster makes it hard for me to participate in community events and/or team sports</td>
<td>.601</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. My partner spends ‘quality’ time with me during their leave periods</td>
<td>.729</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. My partner’s first 1 or 2 days of leave are stressful (eg. difficult, demanding, tense)</td>
<td>.592</td>
<td>.440</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. My partner’s roster causes them to miss important events (eg. birthdays, Christmas, kids milestones, anniversaries)</td>
<td>.546</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Percentage of Variance:**

- Factor 1ª: 30.46%
- Factor 2b: 19.75%

*Note.* 1ª = “emotional”; 2b = “involvement”.

Prior to running the principal components analysis, examination of the workers data indicated that not every variable was perfectly normally distributed. Given the robust nature of factor analysis, these deviations were not considered problematic. Furthermore a linear relationship was identified among the variables. Two factors (with Eigenvalues exceeding 1) were identified as underlying the 8 survey items (see Table 2). In total, these factors accounted for around 64% of the variance in the survey data. Cronbach’s alpha for the modified 8-item Worker’s Roster Satisfaction scale was .828.
### Table 2

*Varimax Rotated Component Structure of the Eight Item Roster Satisfaction Scale*

*(Workers)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Factor 1ª</th>
<th>Factor 2b</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. I wish I was more involved in the daily lives of those close to me (eg. Partner, kids, relatives, friends) on days when I’m working</td>
<td>.331</td>
<td>.709</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. I feel tired and need to rest in my first 1 or 2 days of leave</td>
<td>.730</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. I’m in a bad mood during my last 1 or 2 days of leave</td>
<td>.814</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. It takes 1 or 2 days to ‘fit in’ to the lives of those close to me (eg. partner kids, relatives, friends) again at the beginning of my leave periods</td>
<td>.830</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. My roster makes it difficult for me to participate in community events and/or team sports</td>
<td>.378</td>
<td>.695</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. I spend ‘quality’ time with those close to me during my leave days</td>
<td></td>
<td>.656</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. The first 1 or 2 days of leave are stressful (eg. difficult, demanding, tense)</td>
<td>.838</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. My roster causes me to miss important events (eg. birthdays, Christmas, kids milestones, anniversaries)</td>
<td>.318</td>
<td>.745</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Percentage of Variance: 37.36% 26.61%

*Note.* ª = “emotional”; b = “behavioural”.

**Rosters**

Preliminary assumption testing revealed two outliers in the Workers roster satisfaction sample which were removed after inspection of the histogram. A visual inspection of histograms for both groups revealed a normal distribution for the partners and a slightly negatively skewed distribution for the workers. According to Tabachnik and Fidell (2007), skewness will “not make a substantive difference in the analysis” if sample size is large (p. 80). An independent samples *t*-test, was used to compare roster
satisfaction between workers \((n = 243)\) and partners \((n = 313)\). Using Levene’s equality of means for equal variances not assumed (Welch’s \(t\)-test), the \(t\)-test was statistically significant, with the workers \((M = 3.75, SD = .70)\) reporting roster satisfaction 0.46 points higher, 95% CI [-.58, -.35], than the partners \((M = 3.29, SD = .69)\), \(t(513.85) = -7.76, p < .001\), two-tailed, \(d = 0.67\). This effect size is medium to large.

This finding supports the hypothesis \((H^1)\) that partners would report lower rates of roster satisfaction than workers.

The means and standard deviations of roster satisfaction was calculated for short, medium and long rosters and compared with FIFO status.

Table 3 presents the descriptive statistics that correspond to roster length for partners and workers.

Table 3

*Descriptive statistics of roster satisfaction for each roster length*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FIFO status</th>
<th>Roster length</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>Roster length</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>n</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ON</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>OFF</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partners</td>
<td>&lt;=10</td>
<td>3.36</td>
<td>7.11</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>&lt;=6</td>
<td>3.42</td>
<td>.69</td>
<td>92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>11-20</td>
<td>3.36</td>
<td>.66</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3.24</td>
<td>.69</td>
<td>106</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>21+</td>
<td>3.23</td>
<td>.67</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>8+</td>
<td>3.33</td>
<td>.64</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>3.32</td>
<td>.67</td>
<td>251</td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>3.32</td>
<td>.68</td>
<td>251</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workers</td>
<td>&lt;=10</td>
<td>3.67</td>
<td>.69</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>&lt;=6</td>
<td>3.68</td>
<td>.72</td>
<td>117</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>11-20</td>
<td>3.71</td>
<td>.74</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3.84</td>
<td>.73</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>21+</td>
<td>3.93</td>
<td>.68</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>8+</td>
<td>3.94</td>
<td>.63</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>3.77</td>
<td>.71</td>
<td>223</td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>3.77</td>
<td>.71</td>
<td>223</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
As Table 3 indicates, the mean roster satisfaction for partners was lower than workers, across all roster length groups.

A factorial between groups ANOVA was used to investigate the effects of FIFO status (ie. worker or partner), and number of days rostered on, on roster satisfaction. An inspection of the respective histograms revealed normally distributed samples. The Levene’s test was used to evaluate the assumption of homogeneity of variance and was found to be non-significant.

The ANOVA revealed a statistically significant main effect for FIFO status on roster length on ($M = 15.04$, $SD = 7.46$), $F(1,468) = 50.18$, $p < .001$, $\omega^2 = 0.09$. This effect size is small. A statistically significant interaction indicated that the effects of FIFO status on roster satisfaction depend on the number of days rostered on, $F(2,468) = 3.52$, $p = .030$, $\omega^2 = .009$. This effect size is very small. The nature of this interaction is illustrated in Figure 1.
Simple effects analyses were used to further examine the interaction between FIFO status and roster length on. These analyses indicated that FIFO status has a statistically significant effect on roster satisfaction for those on rosters <=10 days on, $F(1,468) = 8.145, p < .01$, 11-20 days on, $F(1,468) = 10.604, p < .01$, and 21+ days on, $F(1,468) = 36.538, p < .01$.

A factorial between groups ANOVA was used to investigate the effects of FIFO status and number of days rostered off, on roster satisfaction. An inspection of the respective histograms revealed normally distributed samples. The Levene’s test was used to evaluate the assumption of homogeneity of variance and was found to be non-significant.

The ANOVA revealed a statistically significant main effect for FIFO status and rostered days off ($M = 7.77, SD = 5.52$), $F (1,468) = 50.93, p < .001, \omega^2 = 0.09$. This effect...
size is small. A statistically significant interaction indicated that the effects of FIFO status on roster satisfaction depend on the number of days rostered off, $F(2,468) = 3.49$, $p = .031$, $\omega^2 = .009$. This effect size is very small. The nature of this interaction is illustrated in Figure 2.

![Estimated Marginal Means of Roster Satisfaction](image)

*Figure 2.* The effects of days rostered off and FIFO status on roster satisfaction.

Simple effects analyses were used to further examine the interaction between FIFO status and roster length on. These analyses indicated that FIFO status has a statistically significant effect on roster satisfaction for those on rosters $\leq 6$ days off, $F(1,468) = 7.23$, $p < .01$, 7 days off, $F(1,468) = 30.57$, $p < .01$, and 8+ days on, $F(1,468) = 17.54$, $p < .01$.

Consequently, partners reported lower levels of roster satisfaction, for both days on and off, on short, medium and long rosters when compared to workers. The
hypothesis (H²) that partners and workers on a medium roster length will report higher levels of roster satisfaction than those on a short or long roster was not supported.

**Relationships**

An independent samples t-test was used to compare relationship quality (QRI) between partners and workers. Tests of normality were significant however this is quite common in larger samples (Pallant, 2007). The Levene’s test for equality of variances was also significant, consequently Welch’s t-test was used to compare the partners’ average QRI score ($M = 3.24$, $SD = 0.50$) to that of the workers ($M = 3.37$, $SD = 0.45$). The t-test was significant, $t(400.02) = -2.84$, $p = .005$, two-tailed, $d = 0.27$, 95% CI [-.21, -.04]. Consequently, partners reported lower relationship quality than workers with the effect size being small. The hypothesis (H³) that there will be no significant difference in relationship quality between partners and workers was not supported.

A multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) was used to examine the effect of FIFO status on roster satisfaction and relationship quality ($N = 475$). The Shapiro-Wilk test of normality for relationship quality was statistically significant for partners, $W(299) = .949$, $p = .001$, and workers, $W(176) = .944$, $p = .001$. The Shapiro-Wilk test for roster satisfaction was also statistically significant for partners, $W(299) = .985$, $p = .003$, and workers, $W(176) = .968$, $p = .001$. This is not considered problematic, as MANOVA is considered robust with respect to univariate non-normality when group sizes exceed 30. A boxplot of this distribution revealed six outliers for workers QRI scores however MANOVA is sensitive to outliers (Pallant, 2007) and the departure from normality was considered mild. The remaining assumptions of no multivariate outliers, no multicollinearity, and homogeneity of variance-covariance matrices were satisfied.
The MANOVA was statistically significant for FIFO status on the combined dependent variables, $F(2,472) = 45.30, p = .001, \eta^2 = .161$. This represents an effect size of 16% between the partners and the workers on roster satisfaction and the QRI. Analysis of the dependent variables individually showed roster satisfaction was statistically significant at a Bonferroni adjusted alpha level of .025, $F(1,473) = 56.38, p = .001, \omega^2 = .10$. This effect size is small. Quality of relationship was also statistically significant at a Bonferroni adjusted alpha level of .025, $F(1,473) = 8.71, p = .003, \omega^2 = .016$. This effect size is very small. The FIFO partners reported significantly lower levels of roster satisfaction ($M = 3.28, SD = 0.04$) and significantly lower levels of relationship quality ($M = 3.24, SD = 0.03$) than the FIFO workers with roster satisfaction ($M = 3.78, SD = 0.05$) and QRI ($M = 3.37, SD = 0.03$). The hypothesis (H4) that roster satisfaction will be significantly positively associated with relationship quality for partners and workers was supported.

A factorial between groups ANOVA was used to investigate the impact that roster length on had on relationship quality and FIFO status. Histograms and box plots for both groups revealed a number of outliers (three for partners and five for workers) which were removed. Subsequent assumption testing revealed a further seven outliers in the workers group however it was decided that given the reasonably normal distribution evidenced in the histograms and the previous disclaimer regarding sensitivity in large sample sizes, it was decided to proceed with the analysis.

The ANOVA revealed a significant main effect for FIFO status and QRI, $F(1,416) = 8.54, p = .004, \omega^2 = 0.02$, however no significant main interaction occurred for roster length on $F(2,416) = .456, p = .634, \omega^2 = -.002$. Furthermore, there was no
statistically significant interaction between FIFO status and roster length on, \( F (2, 416) = 1.535, p = .217, \omega^2 = .003 \). These effect sizes are all very small.

Therefore, whilst partners reported lower relationship quality than workers this was not associated with short, medium or long term rosters of days worked on site. Subsequently, the hypothesis (H5) was not supported.

A factorial between groups ANOVA was used to investigate the impact that roster length off had on relationship quality and FIFO status. The ANOVA revealed a significant main effect for FIFO status and QRI, \( F (1,416) = 6.97, p = .009, \omega^2 = 0.01 \), however no significant main interaction occurred for roster length off \( F (2, 416) = .536, p = .586, \omega^2 = -.002 \). Furthermore, there was no statistically significant interaction between FIFO status and roster length off, \( F (2, 416) = .039, p = .962, \omega^2 = -.003 \). These effect sizes are all very small.

The partners’ reported lower relationship quality than workers however this was not associated with short, medium or long term rosters of days off site therefore the hypothesis (H6) was not supported.

**Children**

A factorial between groups ANOVA was used to investigate the effects of children’s age range on roster satisfaction and FIFO status. Tests of normality for roster satisfaction and FIFO status, and roster satisfaction and children <6 and 6-12 were significant, however there were >100 in each group therefore it was deemed an acceptable violation. The Levene’s test was not significant therefore the assumption of homogeneity of variance was accepted. The main effect of children’s age ranges on roster satisfaction was not significant for children <6 years, \( F (1,531) = .048, p = .827 \),
\( \omega^2 = -0.00; \) 12-18 years, \( F(1, 531) = 1.11, p = .292, \omega^2 = 0.00; \) or 18+ years, \( F(1, 531) = .087, p = .768, \omega^2 = -0.001. \) These effect sizes were inconsequential. Roster satisfaction was statistically significant however, for partners who had children 6-12 years, \( F(1, 531) = 4.53, p = .034, \omega^2 = 0.006, \) although this effect size is very small. A statistically significant interaction also indicated that the effect of roster satisfaction and having children in the 6 to 12 year age range depends on FIFO status, \( F(1, 531) = 7.78, p = .005, \omega^2 = 0.01. \) This effect size is small. The nature of this interaction is illustrated in Figure 3.

![Estimated Marginal Means of Roster Satisfaction](image_url)

**Figure 3.** The effects of children 6 to 12 years and FIFO status on roster satisfaction.

Accordingly, partners reported lower levels of roster satisfaction if they had a child in the 6 to 12 age range, when compared to workers. Subsequently, the hypothesis (H7) that partners and workers with children less than six years will report lower levels of roster satisfaction was not supported.
Due to this unexpected finding, a further analysis was conducted incorporating a long roster length to determine if this might have an effect.

A factorial between groups ANOVA was used to investigate the effects of roster satisfaction for partners and workers, with children in the 6-12 age range, and who experience a roster length of 21+ days on. The Levene’s test was not significant therefore assumption of homogeneity of variance was accepted. The ANOVA revealed a statistically significant main effect for roster satisfaction and FIFO status, $F(1,461) = 58.39, p = .001, \omega^2 = 0.10$, which is a large effect, and a statistically significant main effect for roster satisfaction and children 6-12 years, $F(1,461) = 7.39, p = .007, \omega^2 = 0.01$, which is a small effect. There was also a statistically significant main effect for roster satisfaction and roster length on, $F(2,461) = 4.56, p = .011, \omega^2 = 0.01$, which is a small effect. However, there was no interaction between roster satisfaction, FIFO status, roster length on, and having a child in the 6-12 age range, $F(2,461) = .121, p = .886, \omega^2 = -0.001$. This effect size is inconsequential. Therefore, a long roster length of days on does not influence roster satisfaction for either partners or workers with children in the 6-12 year age range.

**Children/Stress**

A one-way between groups ANOVA was used to investigate the impact of having children, or not, on perceived stress for partners. Inspection of histograms and boxplots for each of the groups (0-4+ children) revealed one outlier in the no children group and was removed. Levene’s statistic was non-significant, $F(4, 242) = .126, p = .886$ therefore assumption of homogeneity of variance was not violated. The ANOVA was statistically significant, indicating that partners’ perceived stress was influenced by the number of children they had, if any, $F(4, 242) = 2.88, p = .023, \eta^2 = .04$. Post hoc analyses were
conducted using Gabriel’s procedure ($\alpha = .05$) which has greater statistical power when group sizes are unequal, which these were. The analyses revealed that partners with two children ($M = 2.66, SD = 0.06$) had significantly lower levels of perceived stress than partners with no children ($M = 2.96, SD = 0.07$). The effect size for this comparison was $d = 0.83$ which is large. However, there was no significant differences between the perceived stress scores of partners with one child ($M = 2.72, SD = .09$), three children ($M = 2.77, SD = .08$), or 4 or more children ($M = 2.90, SD = .15$) in combination with the no children and two children groups, or each other. Therefore the hypothesis (H8), that partners with children will report higher perceived stress levels than partners with no children was not supported.

To further evaluate the impact of perceived stress on partners with children, a one-way between groups ANOVA was conducted using all the possible combinations of age ranges of children (< 6, 6-12, 12-18, 18+). The assumptions of normality and homogeneity of variance were not violated, and the F test was not significant, $F(11, 255) = .939, p = .504$. It should be noted however, that $\eta^2 = .04$, which can be characterized as small to medium. The hypothesis (H9), that partners with children < 6 years of age will report higher perceived stress levels was not supported.

**Stress/Support**

To assess the size and direction of the linear relationship between perceived stress and perceived social support for partners, a bivariate Pearson’s product-movement correlation coefficient ($r$) was calculated. The bivariate correlation between these two variable was negative and weak, $r(267) = -.150, p = .014$. Prior to calculating $r$, a visual inspection of the scatterplot confirmed that the relationship between these variables was
linear and heteroscedastic. The hypothesis (H₁₀), that there will be a strong, positive correlation between perceived stress and perceived social support was not supported.

**Resources & Supports**

Figure 4 summarises the percentage of FIFO partners and workers who were aware of, and had used, specific resources and supports in the past six months. As the graph shows, EAPs were rated the highest for awareness by workers (69%) and partners, however less than half (39%) of partners were aware of the availability of EAPs.

![Figure 4. Percentage of partners and workers who were aware of specified resources and supports.](image)

Figure 5 summarises the percentage of FIFO partners and workers who used the specified resources and supports in the past six months. As the graph shows, friends were rated the most used support for partners (36%) and workers (21%), while less than 5% of both groups had used EAPs.
Figure 5. Percentage of partners and workers who used the specified resources and supports

Figure 6 summarises the mean usefulness of the specified resources and supports, by the partners and workers. As the graph shows, workers agreed that family support had proved most useful for their needs, followed closely by co-workers and friends. Partners however, agreed that other resources/supports not specified had been most useful to their needs followed by friends, family, and FIFO specific websites, Mining Family Matters (MFMweb) and FIFO Families (FFweb).
Scores from usefulness of MFM website and FF website were combined to create a new variable, ‘Websites’. Scores from the usefulness of family, friends and co-workers were also combined to create a new variable, ‘Personal support’. A repeated measures ANOVA was used to compare perceived stress with usefulness of websites and personal support. $F_{\text{max}}$ was 2.33 demonstrating homogeneity of variance and Mauchly’s test indicated that the assumption of sphericity was not violated.

The ANOVA results show that there were significant differences between perceived stress, usefulness ratings of websites, and personal support, $F(2, 126) = 117.46, p < .001$, partial $\eta^2 = .651$ which is a large effect size. Pairwise comparisons reveal that perceived stress ($M = 2.82, SD = 0.53$) was rated lower for higher website usefulness ($M = 4.06, SD = 0.71$) and higher personal support ($M = 4.31, SD = 0.622$). Personal support usefulness also rated significantly higher than the websites (MFM and FF). Therefore the hypothesis (H11) that there will be a significant difference between
perceived stress and website usefulness, and perceived stress and personal support, was supported.

**Discussion**

In this study I have investigated a number of key areas that have been previously identified as impacting on FIFO partners and workers satisfaction with the FIFO lifestyle. Roster satisfaction has been explored in relation to FIFO status, roster lengths and relationships along with the effect of children’s age range. For partners, numbers of children, if any, and their age ranges have been compared with perceived stress. Perceived support was also compared with perceived stress for partners. Finally, the awareness and utilisation of resources and supports has been identified and their usefulness rated by partners and workers. I would like to acknowledge once again at this point that whilst the majority of FIFO workers were male and the majority of partners, female, a small proportion of workers identified themselves as female and a couple of partners identified themselves as male. Being a small representation in the larger sample sizes, and the fact that I did not break the partners and workers down into gender for my analyses, I do not claim to generalise my findings across all of these groups.

**Rosters**

The hypothesis that partners would report lower rates of roster satisfaction than workers was supported. This finding was across each of the three roster lengths. Previous research has focused primarily on workers, with roster length being an important factor in roster satisfaction. The greatest anomaly between this study and previous findings however, was that the workers reported higher roster satisfaction for the longer roster lengths. This finding is inconsistent with that of Clifford (2009) who found that those on long rosters were just as dissatisfied as those on short rosters. The current study results
could be due to the fact that over half of the participants (partners and workers) experiencing rosters of 21 days or more on site have at least two weeks off, with one third of those experiencing 28 days or more at home. I propose that the workers may focus on this longer period of leave, which could explain their higher levels of roster satisfaction. The partners on the other hand, may be more focused on the longer time their respective worker is absent from home. This extended separation places increased burden onto the partner in the form of domestic and family responsibilities which may lead to lower roster satisfaction.

**Relationships**

I did not expect to find a significant difference in relationship quality between partners and workers based on previous FIFO research (Gent, 2004; Clifford, 2009; Sibbel, 2010). My analyses however, showed a small but significant difference, with partners reporting lower relationship quality than workers. When this finding was combined with roster satisfaction, partners continued to show a difference when compared with the workers. This difference however, was not reflected in roster length suggesting that the time spent apart was less of an issue than perhaps the actual partings themselves. This supports Diamond and Hicks et al. (2008), who found that the homebound partner was more affected by work-related separations and reunions.

**Children**

I also investigated the effect of children’s age on roster satisfaction for partners and workers. My hypothesis that partners and workers with children less than six years of age would report lower levels of roster satisfaction was based on previous studies which reported negative impacts of FIFO for couples with children, particularly partners with pre-school children (Fresle, 2010; Gent, 2004; Presser, 2000;). Roster satisfaction, for
partners and workers, was not affected by having children less than six, 12 to 18 or over 18. Surprisingly though, I found that partners having a child in the 6 to 12 age range reported significantly lower levels of roster satisfaction than workers with child in this age range. Further analyses showed that a long roster length of days on did not influence roster satisfaction for partners or workers with children in any of the age groups.

I theorise that the finding of low roster satisfaction for partners with children 6 to 12 years may be due to the increased extra-curricular activities generally engaged in by this group which require increased parental involvement and time demands. This primarily involves transporting children to activities and time spent by parents as spectators and volunteers. It may also extend to extra help required with homework and even discipline issues. The more children in this age range requiring this level of involvement, the greater the burden if only one parent is available. Some of these issues, such as transportation and homework assistance, would be less of a challenge for parents with children under school age or with teenagers, who are generally more independent.

*Children/Stress*

The finding that partners with two children had the lowest perceived stress levels when compared with those who had none, one, three, four or more children was quite surprising. What was perhaps more unexpected, was that partners with no children had significantly higher perceived stress levels than those with two children, with the effect size being large. It may be that those with no children lead more stressful lives in a way that is different to those with children. For example, they are more likely to be in full-time employment and may perceive themselves to be more stressed, particularly when their FIFO worker is away, due to lack of intimate companionship. It may also be that
those with and without children perceive stress differently as a group. Further investigation is required to determine what other factors may be involved.

Another unexpected finding was that partner’s perceived stress levels did not yield significant results when compared with age ranges of children. This is contradictory to previous research that found the FIFO lifestyle to be more stressful for the partner, particularly if they had the care of children (Beach, 1999; Fresle, 2010; Gent, 2004; Gallegos, 2006; Kaczmarek & Sibbel, 2008; Sibbel, 2010). The strongest argument for this turn of events could be that since these previous studies were conducted, resources and supports in the form of online social networking groups, such as FIFO Families and Mining Family Matters, have been established and have grown in popularity considerably since they began in 2010. Members can not only access information on the sites, but they can ‘chat’ with psychologists and other professionals, as well as network with other members. FIFO families has established numerous social groups throughout Perth suburbs, as well as further afield in Western Australia and interstate, where FIFO people can physically meet, interact and ultimately, support one another. The groups have expanded to include single people and those whose children are grown.

**Stress/Social support**

I expected to find a reasonably strong relationship between perceived stress and perceived social support for partners however this was not the case. Whilst partners’ ratings of stress reduced as social support increased, the association was quite weak. If it is the case that partners are feeling more supported, perhaps due to the increase in the online and social support groups mentioned above, I would still have expected to find a strong correlation. It could possibly be the case as Clifford (2009) found, that people may
not consider themselves to be stressed even though physiological responses indicate otherwise.

**Resources/Supports**

This study is the first of its kind to evaluate current resources and supports available to Australian FIFO partners and workers. The majority of workers were aware of EAPs, which are designed to assist workers and their families with personal issues that may impact on their employment, personal wellbeing and productivity. Most organisations promote this service to their employees, however based on comments in the ‘other’ option in this section of the survey, along with comments on the FIFO websites and related social networking sites, it seems many of the partners are unaware that this service extends to them. This may explain the fact that less than 40% of the partners were aware of EAPs. I would therefore strongly recommend that organisations ensure partners and families are made aware, through direct means, of employee entitlements that extend to them, such as EAPs.

Friends and family were reported by participants overall to be the most used form of support with partners using this form of support more than workers, who also sought support from co-workers. The FIFO Families website was the third most used resource/support for partners, followed closely by Ngala. The high level of access reported for these two resources may have been influenced by the study originating in Western Australia where these two organizations also have their base.

When it came to rating usefulness of the specified resources and supports, the workers indicated that family, co-workers and friends respectively, had provided for their needs. Interestingly, partners rated other options highest in level of usefulness. These included a South West WA FIFO/DIDO support group and accompanying Facebook
group; a FIFO playgroup; Buggy buddys website/social group; the Disability Services Commission (WA); and employment of an Au Pair. Partners indicated that friends and family along with the FIFO websites, Mining Family Matters and FIFO families, were the next group of most useful resources and supports.

When the usefulness ratings of the personal supports (family, friends, co-workers) and the websites (Mining Family Matters and FIFO families) were compared with the perceived stress score of partners, it was found that these supports and resources had a large, positive effect.

Altogether, these findings show that relationship specific support in the form of family, friends and co-workers along with general perceived support in the form of the websites and associated social groups, plays a vital role in supporting those living a FIFO lifestyle. As Cohen and Wills (1985) stated, the social support gained from close personal relationships and/or social networks benefits everyone regardless of the presence of stress.

*Strengths of this study*

This study is one of the largest conducted in Australia to date, targeting partners and workers associated with a variety of FIFO organisations. It included people involved in land based and offshore employment, covering the sectors of mining, oil and gas and the employees comprised of contractors and permanent staff, managers and general workers. There was a mix of single participants and those in relationships. A particular strength of the research was the focus on partners and the impacts of FIFO on their psychosocial wellbeing. The most effective aspect of this study I believe however is that it has raised awareness of the resources and supports available to people living the FIFO lifestyle, particularly the partners.
Limitations

As the survey questions involved in this study formed part of a larger survey it was not practically possible to extend the stress and support questions to the workers. I also considered it more important to focus this aspect on the partners as they have been under represented in previous Australian research. More information on children, such as specific age, gender and numbers in each family, may have given more insight into the impact of parenting on partners. Also a number of the specified resources (eg. workshops), were only available in Western Australia, therefore I would have incorporated a question asking for participants’ residential postcode to determine which state they resided in. This would have enabled more clarification when comparing awareness to use, as some participants stated via social networking that they were aware of some of the resources but were unable to access them as they lived in another state.

Future research

Longitudinal research to track changes in groups over time in FIFO could help in identifying emerging issues. Secondly, comparative studies using non-FIFO participants may assist in determining impacts that are FIFO specific. Thirdly, investigation into time load on partners with primary school-age children to clarify the reduced roster satisfaction finding. Research also, into FIFO impacts on partners with no children to further investigate the higher reported perceived stress among this group. Finally, analysis of exit interview data from employees may prove useful in identifying common reasons for leaving FIFO. These responses could be compared to ‘FIFO survivors’ and may assist companies in reducing turnover rates.
Conclusion

The FIFO industry is currently attracting unprecedented interest in the Australian community. As more and more people opt for this lifestyle to provide them with increased financial income and more leisure time, concern is continually being expressed at the impact this employment option is having on couples, families and the wider community. This study found that overall workers were quite satisfied with their rosters and relationships, including those on longer rosters. Partners on the other hand were less satisfied with relationships and rosters, particularly those who had children aged six to twelve years. Partners with no children reported the highest levels of perceived stress than those with children. Apart from EAPs, less than 50% of participants were aware of the array of resources and supports available, and even less had utilised them. Personal supports however were deemed the most effective, with FIFO websites, the best rated resources for usefulness. Personal supports and websites also had a large, positive effect on partners’ perceived stress. It is anticipated that the findings contained in this study will add to the growing body of research on FIFO and its impacts on Australian workers and partners. Secondly, that it may assist those involved at government, industry and agency levels in developing best practice policies around FIFO for Australian employees and their families. Finally, it is hoped that this research has raised awareness of the vast array of resources and supports currently available to the FIFO community.
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www.csrm.uq.edu.au/docs/TURNBrief_FINAL.pdf


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FIFO Research Request for Participants

Do you work in FIFO? Are you a partner of a FIFO worker?

Some people working in the FIFO workforce and partners of those working in a FIFO capacity may find that the lifestyle impacts on various aspects of their lives. This is due to the changes which occur due to their swing/roster.

Our research team is going to explore adjustment to FIFO work, workers commitment to their company, resources and supports FIFO workers and their families use, and how FIFO may have affected relationships with partners. The aim of this research is to discover more about FIFO workers and their families and the challenges they may face with this lifestyle. The knowledge we hope to gain may help facilitate companies to tailor policies which may improve support from your supervisors, improve access to relevant resources and services and also make it easier for employees to adapt to the FIFO lifestyle. The research may also identify useful and effective resources for FIFO workers and their partners which they can use to improve their work and family situations.

To achieve our aim we would like to invite FIFO workers and/or their partners to complete a short 20 minute anonymous online survey. The data collected is NOT shared with any organisations. Overall findings from the research will be available to participants via the Murdoch University Psychology Results page at [www.psychology.murdoch.edu.au](http://www.psychology.murdoch.edu.au) and selecting the Current Results Research link. It is expected these will be available from November 2012.

How can I participate?

1) Go to [www.fiforesearch.com](http://www.fiforesearch.com)
2 ) Select either the FIFO employee survey or the FIFO partner survey
3) Read the Information Letter and Consent Form
4) Complete the Survey!

If you have any questions we would be very happy to discuss these with you in more detail either by phone or in person. Please contact one of our research team via the contact details below with any questions.

Kind Regards

Dr Graeme J. Ditchburn (CPsychol, AFBPsS) graeme.ditchburn@murdoch.edu.au or (08) 9360 2775

Mrs Libby Brook (BPsych, MAppPsych – Occupational) l.brook@murdoch.edu.au or (08) 9360 2637

Matthew Walford (Masters of Organisational Psychology Student) matthewwalford@yahoo.co.uk or 0406 672 177

Daniel Funston (Masters of Organisational Psychology Student) funston.daniel@gmail.com or 0438 100 197

Alexei Behr (Psychology Honours Student) alexeibe.hr@gmail.com

Wendy Voysey (Psychology Honours Student) wvoysey@yahoo.com.au

This study has been approved by the Murdoch University Human Research Ethics Committee (Approval 2012/073). If you have any reservation or complaint about the ethical conduct of this research, and wish to talk with an independent person, you may contact Murdoch University’s Research Ethics Office (Tel. 08 9360 6677 or e-mail ethics@murdoch.edu.au). Any issues you raise will be treated in confidence and investigated fully, and you will be informed of the outcome.
Dear (Principal)

A research project is currently being undertaken at Murdoch University, Perth, investigating a number of issues relevant to FIFO employees and their families. Two short surveys have been designed, one aimed at the FIFO worker and the other at the FIFO partner.

The knowledge we hope to gain may help facilitate companies to tailor policies which may improve support from supervisors, improve access to relevant resources and services and also make it easier for employees to adapt to the FIFO lifestyle. The research may also identify useful and effective resources for FIFO workers and their partners which they can use to improve their work and family situations.

The purpose of this contact is to invite your school to participate by promoting our surveys to FIFO parents in your school newsletter.

The surveys will be available online at www.fiforesearch.com and responses will be anonymous. Approval has been given by the Murdoch University Human Research Ethics Committee (Approval 2012/073). Results are expected to be available by November 2012 and can be found at http://www.psychology.murdoch.edu.au/researchresults/research_results.html. A summary of the findings will be also provided to the Catholic Education Office,WA.

The study is being undertaken by Psychology Honours students, Wendy Voysey and Alexei Behr and Organisational Psychology Masters students, Matthew Walford and Daniel Funston, under the supervision of Dr Graeme Ditchburn and Mrs Libby Brook.

We look forward to hearing from you and hope you will support our endeavours to learn more about what makes FIFO work for individuals and families.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me on 0412185385 or wvoysey@yahoo.com.au; or my supervisor, Libby Brook at l.brook@murdoch.edu.au or on 93602637.

Kind regards

Wendy Voysey
Bachelor of Psychology (Honours) student
Murdoch University
APPENDIX C

Is your partner working in FIFO?

- How does FIFO impact on relationships with partners?
- What support do FIFO workers and their families use?
- How happy are FIFO partners with rosters/swings?

Please turn the page to find out more!
About the study

15 minutes where you can tell us about:

- What support services are important to you and your family;
- The impact of the FIFO lifestyle;

You will be asked some information about your current circumstances as well (e.g. sex, job, status in organisation, roster types). The survey is anonymous and your responses will be treated in the strictest confidence by the researchers. Data collected is NOT shared with any organisations. Only people over 18 should complete this survey.

It’s only through people who complete surveys like this one that we can build a better picture of what organisations and people can do to help support you and your family get the best from the FIFO lifestyle.

Once you have completed this survey, you will need to send it back to us via post in the pre-paid envelope provided.

You can withdraw your consent at any point while you complete the survey. However, once the survey has been submitted we will be unable to withdraw your data due to the anonymous nature of the survey.

---

Important Information

This research is being undertaken by Dr. Graeme Ditchburn and Mrs Libby Brook with Honours Students Alexei Behr, Wendy Voysey, and Masters Students Daniel Funston and Matthew Walford. Results are expected to be available by November 2012 and can be found at [http://www.psychology.murdoch.edu.au](http://www.psychology.murdoch.edu.au) and clicking on the Current Research Results link.

This study has been approved by the Murdoch University Human Research Ethics Committee (Approval 2012/073). If you have any reservation or complaint about the ethical conduct of this research, and wish to talk with an independent person, you may contact Murdoch University's Research Ethics Office (Tel. 08 9360 6677 or e-mail ethics@murdoch.edu.au). Any issues you raise will be treated in confidence and investigated fully, and you will be informed of the outcome.
Survey

Section 1: Your Partner’s Roster

Instructions: Please describe your opinions and/or experiences of your partner’s current roster during the last 6 months (or since your partner began this roster within the last 6 months). Choose the most appropriate response for each statement below.

(Roster Satisfaction Scale, Clifford, 2009)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Undecided/Neutral Feelings</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I wish my partner was more involved in my daily life on days when he/she is working</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>My partner feels tired and needs to rest during their first 1 or 2 days of leave</td>
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<td>My partner gets in a bad mood during their last 1 or 2 days leave</td>
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<tr>
<td>It takes 1 or 2 days for my partner to ‘fit in’ to my life again at the beginning of their leave periods</td>
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<tr>
<td>My partner’s roster makes it hard for me to participate in community events and/or team sports</td>
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<tr>
<td>My partner spends ‘quality time’ with me during their leave periods</td>
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<td>I find my partner’s first 1 or 2 days of leave are stressful (e.g. difficult, demanding, tense)</td>
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<tr>
<td>My partner’s roster causes them to miss important events (e.g. birthdays, Christmas, kid’s milestones, anniversaries)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
**Instructions:** Please describe your current relationship with your FIFO partner by choosing the most appropriate response for each statement.

*Quality of relationship Inventory, Pierce, Sarason & Sarason, 1991*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Not at all</th>
<th>A Little</th>
<th>Quite a bit</th>
<th>Very Much</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To what extent can you count on this person to listen to you when you are very angry at someone else?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>To what extent can you turn to this person for advice about problems?</td>
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<tr>
<td>To what extent can you really count on this person to distract you from your worries when you feel under stress?</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>To what extent could you count on this person for help with a problem?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How angry does this person make you feel?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How upset does this person sometimes make you feel?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How often does this person make you feel angry?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How much do you argue with this person?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How significant is this relationship in your life?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How much do you depend on this person?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How close will your relationship be with this person in 10 years?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>How positive a role does this person play in your life?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Instructions: The following statements describe ways in which people may support you. Choose the response that best describes how much you agree or disagree with each of the following statements.

(*Perceived Social Support Scale, Clifford, 2009*)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree Slightly</th>
<th>Neither agree or disagree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Not applicable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>My co-workers care about me</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I can talk about my problems with my friends</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My family really tries to help me</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When things go wrong at work, I can talk it over with my co-workers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I get the emotional help and support I need from my family</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My friends really try to help me</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I experience hostility and conflict from my co-workers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I can count on my friends when things go wrong</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My supervisor pays attention to what I’m saying</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I can talk about my problems with my family</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My supervisor gives me credit for things I do well</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My family is willing to help me make decisions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My supervisor backs me up if there is a problem</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have friends with whom I can share my joys and sorrows</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My co-workers are helpful in getting the job done</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My supervisor is concerned about my welfare</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Instructions: The following questions ask you about your feelings and thoughts during the last six months. Please describe how often you felt or thought in a certain way by choosing the most appropriate response for each of the statements below. Responses range from Never to Very Often.

(Perceived Stress Scale, Cohen, Kamerck & Mermelstein, 1983)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Never</th>
<th>Almost Never</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>Quite Often</th>
<th>Very Often</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>How often have you been upset because of something that happened unexpectedly?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How often have you felt that you were unable to control the important things in your life?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How often have you felt nervous and stressed?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How often have you dealt successfully with irritating life hassles?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How often have you felt that you were effectively coping with important changes that were occurring in your life?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How often have you felt confident about your ability to handle your personal problems?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How often have you felt that things were going your way?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How often have you found that you could not cope with all the things that you had to do?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How often have you been able to control irritations in your life?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How often have you felt you were on top of things?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How often have you been angered because of things that happened which were outside your control?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How often have you found yourself thinking about things that you have to accomplish?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How often have you been able to control the way you spend your time?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How often have you felt difficulties were piling up so high that you could not overcome them?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Section 3: Support Resources

The following section looks at the resources and supports you and your family may be aware of and used in the past to support you. Please indicate below the resources which you are aware of, have used, and how well they met your needs if applicable.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Resources and Support</th>
<th>I am aware of this resource</th>
<th>I have used this resource in the last 6 months</th>
<th>If I have used this resource, I found it useful for my needs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Employee Assistant Programs (EAP’s)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support programs for employees to speak with professionals about a large range of issues such as relationships, work-place issues, drug and alcohol abuse etc.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support for Families When a Parent Works Away</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Publication produced by the Department for Communities, Government of Western Australian</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Survival Guide for Mining Families</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Publication produced by Mining Family Matters organisation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Publication produced by Mining Family Matters organisation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mining Family Matters Website</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Website for mining families in Australia (<a href="http://www.miningfm.com">www.miningfm.com</a>)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FIFO Families Website</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Website for mining families in Australia (<a href="http://www.fifofamilies.com.au">www.fifofamilies.com.au</a>)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parents Working Away Workshop</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workshop developed by NGALA (Western Australia Only)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fly In Fly Out Workshop</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workshop developed by Relationships Australia</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The use of family members for support around issues and problems related to the FIFO lifestyle</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friends</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The use of friend for support around issues and problems related to the FIFO lifestyle</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Co-Workers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The use of Co-Workers and their families for support around issues and problems related to the FIFO lifestyle</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doctors/ Health Professionals</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The use of Doctors and Health Professional for issues and problems related to the FIFO lifestyle</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religious</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The use of religious individuals and institutions for issues and problems related to the FIFO lifestyle</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Organisations</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other support (please indicate)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Will you seek out more information about any of these resources? Yes ☐ No ☐
Section 4 – Only a few more minutes!

You have almost completed the survey! In order for us to really understand your responses we need to collect some information about you so we can compare responses between different groups of people. You will not be personally identifiable from the information you complete.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>About You</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Q1</strong> What is your age? __________________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Q2</strong> What formal education have you completed (e.g. high school, TAFE, University)? __________________</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **Q3** Sex:  
| Male □  
| Female □ |
| **Q4** What country were you born in? __________________ |
| **Q5** Length of Time Living in Australia  
| Years ______  
| Months ______ |
| **Q6** Are you currently employed?  
| Yes □  
| No □  

*If yes, what is your current job?* __________________ |

*And what is your employment status?*  
| Full-Time □  
| Part-Time □  
| Casual □ |

*And is your job in a FIFO capacity?*  
| Yes □  
| No □ |

*And how long have you been employed in your current position?*  
| Years ______  
| Months ______ |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>About your FIFO partner</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Q7</strong> What is your partner’s age? __________________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Q8</strong> What formal education have your partner completed (e.g. high school, TAFE, University)? __________________</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **Q9** Sex:  
| Male □  
| Female □ |
| **Q10** What country was your partner born in? __________________ |

*If not Australia, then how long has your partner lived in Australia?*  
| Years ______  
| Months ______ |

**Q11** What is your partner’s current job? __________________ |

*And, what level are they?*  
| Manager □  
| Assistant-Manager □  
| Supervisor □  
| Shift-supervisor □  
| Deputy □  
| General Worker □ |

*And, what is their employment status?*  
| Full-Time □  
| Part-Time □  
|
And, are they a contractor or a permanent employee? Permanent □ Contractor □

And, how long have they been continuously employed in a FIFO capacity including their current job? Years _______ Months _______

Partners Roster/ Swing

Q12 How many days does your partner typically work AWAY? How many days is your partner AT HOME?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Working Away (Circle)</th>
<th>At home (Circle)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 7 8 9 10</td>
<td>6 7 8 9 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 12 13 14 15</td>
<td>11 12 13 14 15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16 17 18 19 20</td>
<td>16 17 18 19 20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21 22 23 24 25</td>
<td>21 22 23 24 25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26 27 28 29 30</td>
<td>26 27 28 29 30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31 31+</td>
<td>31 31+</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q13 Would you prefer your partner to work a different roster/shift? Yes □ No □

If yes, which roster would you prefer them to work?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>5 on / 2 off □</th>
<th>8 on / 6 off □</th>
<th>14 on / 7 off □</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6 on / 3 off □</td>
<td>7 on / 7 off □</td>
<td>21 on / 21 off □</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 on / 14 off □</td>
<td>28 on / 28 off □</td>
<td>3 months on / 3 months off □</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

About Your Relationship and Family

Q14 How many children, if any, do you have? 0 □ 1 □ 2 □ 3 □ 4+ □

If you have any children, what age bracket(s) do they fall in to? For each age group indicate if they reside in the home you return to after your swing.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Group</th>
<th>Have in this age bracket</th>
<th>Reside at the home your partner returns to?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>YES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less than 6 years</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 to less than 12 years</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 to less than 18 years</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than 18 years</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q15 Approximately how long have you been in your current relationship Years _______ Months _______
End of Survey

Thank you for completing the survey! Your time is very much appreciated and your responses may help improve the lives of FIFO workers and their families.

Please place your completed survey into the prepaid envelope provided and drop it into a post-box.

Results and feedback are anticipated to be available from November 2012 on the Murdoch University Psychology homepage (www.psychology.murdoch.edu.au) and clicking on the current research results link.

A list of resources complied by the Department of Communities Western Australia for FIFO workers and their families is provided for you on the next page. We have also put the list of resources we identified in this survey. Please tear these pages off for your own record.

Again thank you for your input!

The Research Team!

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Mrs Libby Brook (BPsysch, MAppPsych – Occupational) l.brook@murdoch.edu.au
Matthew Walford (Masters of Organisational Psychology Student) matthewwalford@yahoo.co.uk
Daniel Funston (Masters of Organisational Psychology Student) funstondaniel@gmail.com
Alexei Behr (Psychology Honours Student) alexeibehr@gmail.com
Wendy Voysey (Psychology Honours Student) wvoysey@yahoo.com.au
FIFO SPECIFIC SUPPORT RESOURCES

Employee Assistant Programs (EAP’s)
Please contact your FIFO company’s Human Resources Department for further information.

Support for Families When a Parent Works Away
Publication produced by the Department for Communities,
Gordon Stephenson House
140 William Street
PERTH WA 6000
T: (08) 6551 8700
F: (08) 6551 8556
W: www.communities.wa.gov.au

The Survival Guide for Mining Families
Publication produced by Mining Family Matters organisation

Publication produced by Mining Family Matters organisation

Mining Family Matters Website
Website for mining families in Australia
www.miningfm.com

FIFO Families Website
Website for mining families in Australia
www.fifofamilies.com.au

Parents Working Away Workshop
Workshop developed by NGALA (WA only)
T: (08 9368 9368 (Metro)
T: 1800 111 546 (Country)
www.ngala.com.au

Fly In Fly Out Workshop
Workshop developed by Relationships Australia
T: 1300 364 277
www.relationships.com.au
**Resources**

**Telephone Support Services**

**Parenting WA Line**
A free 24/7 telephone information and support service for parents with children up to 18 years.
t: 1800 654 432 (free call)
e: parentingwaline@communities.wa.gov.au

**Ngaia Helpline**
Provides parenting information, strategies and referral for parents with children up to six years.
t: (08) 9368 5368 (Helpline)
t: 1800 111 546 (Country callers)
e: info@nngia.com.au
w: www.ngaia.org.au

**Anglicare**
Provides a range of services and counselling to individuals and families.
t: (08) 9325 7033
w: www.anglicarewa.org.au

**Kinway**
Provides counselling and relationship education programs and a telephone counselling service.
t: 1800 812 511
(Phone: Counselling Service)
t: (08) 9263 2050
w: www.kinway.org.au

**beyondblue: the national depression initiative**
Provides information and support to people living with depression.
t: 1300 224 635
w: www.beyondblue.org.au

**National Perinatal Depression Helpline**
t: 1300 726 306
w: www.panda.org.au

**Red Cross**
Provides practical support for women who suffer from postnatal depression.
t: (08) 9225 8808
w: www.redcross.org.au/wha

**Wanslea**
Provides child care and parenting support services.
t: (08) 9361 8277
w: www.wanslea.asn.au

**Support and Counselling**

Relationships Australia
Offers a range of family and support courses, including courses that explore the challenges facing families where a parent works away.
t: 1300 364 277
w: www.relationships.com.au

Centrecare
Counselling, support, mediation and training services.
t: (08) 9325 6644
w: www.centrecare.com.au

**Parenting Support**

Department for Communities
Parenting WA Line is a free 24/7 telephone service for information. Parenting WA staff support parents of children from pre-birth to 18 years of age by helping them gain knowledge, skills and confidence in their parenting. Support may be provided by telephone, information resources, individual sessions, home visiting (not available in all areas), presentations, workshops, groups or community activities. Services are located throughout the State.
t: 1800 654 432 (free call)

**Playgroup WA**
To find your nearest playgroup.
t: 1800 171 882
w: www.playgroupwa.com.au

**Ngala**
Supports parents in the early stages of parenting (0-6 years).
t: (08) 9368 9368 (Metro)
t: 1800 111 546 (Country)
w: www.ngala.com.au

**CLAN WA**
Offers a range of services, including home visiting services to support families with children up to the age of 12 years.
t: (08) 9228 9086
w: www.clanwa.com.au

**Community Child Health Nurses**
Community Child Health Nurses can assess children's health and development and provide information about many aspects of parenting, maternal and family health and healthy lifestyles.
w: www.health.wa.gov.au/services/

**Children's Sport and Recreation**

The Department of Sport and Recreation
Go online to find a sport or recreation club and download the Active Kids Holiday Calendar.
w: www.dsr.wa.gov.au

**Local Council**
Your local council's website will provide information around a wide variety of activities and services.
Are you a FIFO worker?

- How does your organisation support you?
- How do people successfully adjust to the FIFO lifestyle?
- What support do FIFO workers and their families use?

Please turn the page to find out more!
About the study

15-20 minutes where you can tell us about:

- What support you get from your organisation and supervisor;
- What support services are important to you and your family;
- The impact of the FIFO lifestyle;
- How you have adapted to the FIFO lifestyle.

You will be asked some information about your current circumstances as well (e.g. sex, job, status in organisation, roster types). The survey is anonymous and your responses will be treated in the strictest confidence by the researchers. Data collected is NOT shared with any organisations. Only people over 18 should complete this survey.

It's only through people who complete surveys like this one that we can build a better picture of what organisations and people can do to help support you and your family get the best from the FIFO lifestyle.

Once you have completed this survey, you will need to send it back to us via post in the pre-paid envelope provided.

You can withdraw your consent at any point while you complete the survey. However, once the survey has been submitted we will be unable to withdraw your data due to the anonymous nature of the survey.

Important Information

This research is being undertaken by Dr. Graeme Ditchburn and Mrs Libby Brook with Honours Students Alexei Behr, Wendy Voysey, and Masters Students Daniel Funston and Matthew Walford. Results are expected to be available by November 2012 and can be found at http://www.psychology.murdoch.edu.au and clicking on the Current Research Results link

This study has been approved by the Murdoch University Human Research Ethics Committee (Approval 2012/073). If you have any reservation or complaint about the ethical conduct of this research, and wish to talk with an independent person, you may contact Murdoch University’s Research Ethics Office (Tel. 08 9360 6677 or e-mail ethics@murdoch.edu.au). Any issues you raise will be treated in confidence and investigated fully, and you will be informed of the outcome.
Your Consent

- I have read the information about the nature of this survey.
- I agree that by submitting the survey via post I give my consent for the results to be used in the research.
- I am aware that this survey is anonymous. No personal details are collected or used.
- I acknowledge that once my survey has been submitted it is NOT be possible to withdraw my data.
- I understand that all information provided is treated as confidential by the researchers and will not be released to a third party unless required to do so by law.
- I understand that the findings of this study may be published and that no information which can specifically identify me will be published.

Survey

Section 1

Instructions: Please tick the box which indicates the degree to which you agree or disagree with each statement.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree Slightly</th>
<th>Neither agree or disagree</th>
<th>Agree Slightly</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(Roster Satisfaction Scale, Clifford, 2009)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Work and Family</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I wish I was more involved in the daily lives of those close to me (e.g. Partner, kids, relatives, friends) on days when I’m working</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>I feel tired and need to rest in my first 1 or 2 days of leave.</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I’m in a bad mood during my last 1 or 2 leave days</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It takes 1 or 2 days to ‘fit in’ to the lives of those close to me eg. (partner, kids, relatives, friends) again at the beginning of my leave periods</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My roster makes it difficult for me to participate in community events and/or team sports</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I spend ‘quality time’ with those close to me during my leave days</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The first 1 or 2 days of leave are stressful (e.g. difficult, demanding, tense)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My roster causes me to miss important events with those close to me (e.g. Birthdays, Christmas, kids milestones, anniversaries)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
What is your current relationship status?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Single</th>
<th>With Partner</th>
<th>Married</th>
<th>Divorced (If with another partner select With Partner)</th>
<th>Widowed</th>
<th>Other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

IF YOU ARE CURRENTLY SINGLE, DIVORCED OR WIDOWED PLEASE GO TO NEXT PAGE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>If you are with a partner or married, does your partner work?</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No (go to *)</th>
<th>Not Applicable (go to **)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Do they work in a FIFO capacity?</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What is the employment status of your partner?</th>
<th>Full-Time</th>
<th>Part-Time</th>
<th>Casual</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>*Approximately how long have you been in your current relationship?</th>
<th>Years</th>
<th>Months</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

** Instructions

IF YOU ARE WITH A PARTNER OR MARRIED: Please describe your current relationship with your partner by choosing the most appropriate response for each statement. Responses range from Not At All to Very Much.

*(Quality of Relationship Inventory, Pierce, Sarason & Sarason, 1991)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Not at all</th>
<th>A Little</th>
<th>Quite a bit</th>
<th>Very Much</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To what extent can you count on this person to listen to you when you are very angry at someone else?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To what extent can you turn to this person for advice about problems?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To what extent can you really count on this person to distract you from your worries when you feel under stress?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>To what extent could you count on this person for help with a problem?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How angry does this person make you feel?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How upset does this person sometimes make you feel?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How often does this person make you feel angry?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How much do you argue with this person?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How significant is this relationship in your life?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>How much do you depend on this person?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>How close will your relationship be with this person in 10 years?</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>How positive a role does this person play in your life?</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Section 3: Support Resources

The following section looks at the resources and supports you and your family may be aware of and used in the past to support you. Please indicate below the resources which you are aware of, have used, and how well they met your needs if applicable.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Resources and Support</th>
<th>Aware of this</th>
<th>Used in the last 6 months</th>
<th>If I have used this resource, I found it useful for my needs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Employee Assistant Programs (EAP’s)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support programs for employees to speak with professionals about a large range of issues such as relationships, workplace issues, drug and alcohol abuse etc.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Support for Families When a Parent Works Away</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Publication produced by the Department for Communities, Government of Western Australia</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>The Survival Guide for Mining Families</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Publication produced by Mining Family Matters organisation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Working Away: A Survival Guide for Families</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Publication produced by Mining Family Matters organisation</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mining Family Matters Website</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Website for mining families in Australia (<a href="http://www.miningfm.com">www.miningfm.com</a>)</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>FIFO Families Website</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Website for mining families in Australia (<a href="http://www.fifofamilies.com.au">www.fifofamilies.com.au</a>)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Parents Working Away Workshop</strong></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Workshop developed by NGALA (Western Australia Only)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Fly In Fly Out Workshop</strong></td>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workshop developed by Relationships Australia</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Family</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The use of family members for support around issues and problems related to the FIFO lifestyle</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Friends</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The use of friends for support around issues and problems related to the FIFO lifestyle</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Co-Workers</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The use of Co-Workers and their families for support around issues and problems related to the FIFO lifestyle</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Doctors/ Health Professionals</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The use of Doctors and Health Professional for issues and problems related to the FIFO lifestyle</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Religious</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The use of religious individuals and institutions for issues and problems related to the FIFO lifestyle</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Other Organisations</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Other support (please indicate)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Will you seek out more information about any of these resources?  

Yes ☐  No ☐
In order for us to really understand your responses we need to collect some information about you so we can compare responses between different groups of people. You will not be personally identifiable from the information you complete.

### General Information

| Q1 | What is your age? | ________________ |
| Q2 | What formal education have you completed (e.g. high school, TAFE, University)? | __________________________ |
| Q3 | Sex: | Male □ | Female □ |
| Q4 | What country were you born in? | ______________________ |
| Q5 | Length of Time Living in Australia | Years: _______ Months: ______ |
| Q6 | How would you rate your English speaking ability? | Poor □ | Minimal □ | Acceptable □ | Proficient □ |

### Tenure Related

| Q7 | How long have you worked in a FIFO capacity? | Years: _______ Months: ______ |
| Q8 | How long have you worked in your current job? | Years: _______ Months: ______ |

### Job Role and Responsibility

| Q9 | What is your current job? | __________________________ |
| Q10 | What level are you? | Manager □ | Assistant-Manager □ | Supervisor □ | Shift-supervisor □ | Deputy □ | General Worker □ |
| Q11 | Employment Status | Full-Time □ | Part-Time □ | Other □ |
| Q12 | Are you a contractor or a permanent employee? | Permanent □ | Contractor □ |
| Q13 | What sex is your immediate supervisor? | Male □ | Female □ |
| Q14 | Is your immediate supervisor usually on-site? | Yes □ | No □ |

1 minute left
Roster/Swing

Q15. During your swing/roster, how many days do you typically work ON and OFF site?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>On-Site Days (Circle)</th>
<th>Off-Site Days (Circle)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 7 8 9 10</td>
<td>6 7 8 9 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 12 13 14 15</td>
<td>11 12 13 14 15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16 17 18 19 20</td>
<td>16 17 18 19 20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21 22 23 24 25</td>
<td>21 22 23 24 25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26 27 28 29 30</td>
<td>26 27 28 29 30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31 31+</td>
<td>31 31+</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For example, if you work 7 days on, 7 days off, circle 7 On-site days and 7 Off-site days.

If you work an irregular roster (for example 4 on, 3 off, 3 on, 4 off) please state the maximum days you work ON and OFF.

Q16. What day do you normally START and FINISH your roster/swing?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>START</th>
<th>FINISH</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Monday</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuesday</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wednesday</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thursday</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Friday</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saturday</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sunday</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q17. Would you prefer to work a different roster/shift?  Yes ☐ No ☐

If yes, which roster would you prefer?

| 5 on / 2 off ☐ | 8 on / 6 off ☐ | 14 on / 7 off ☐ |
| 6 on / 3 off ☐ | 7 on / 7 off ☐ | 21 on / 21 off ☐ |
| 14 on / 14 off ☐ | 28 on / 28 off ☐ | 3 months on / 3 months off ☐ |

Q18. What days would you LIKE TO START and FINISH your roster/swing?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>START</th>
<th>FINISH</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Monday</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuesday</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wednesday</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thursday</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friday</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saturday</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sunday</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Relationships and Family

Q19. Which of the following members of your family, if any, are living in Australia?

- Partner ☐
- Children ☐
- Parent(s) ☐
- Sibling(s) ☐
- Other ☐

Q20. How many children, if any, do you have?

0 ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4+ ☐

If you have any children, what age bracket(s) do they fall in to? For each age group indicate if they reside in the home you return to after your swing.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Group</th>
<th>Have in this age bracket</th>
<th>Reside at the home you return to?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Less than 6 years</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>YES ☐ NO ☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 to less than 12 years</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>YES ☐ NO ☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 to less than 18 years</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>YES ☐ NO ☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than 18 years</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>YES ☐ NO ☐</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

No more items to complete!