



Sustainable Economic Growth Regional Australia Conference 2016

Long Distance Commuting and Dispersed Socio-Economic Benefits

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21st Century Higher Education in Remote Western Australia

- Forces driving workforce mobility
- LDC and regional development
- Uneven impacts
- Harnessing the benefits

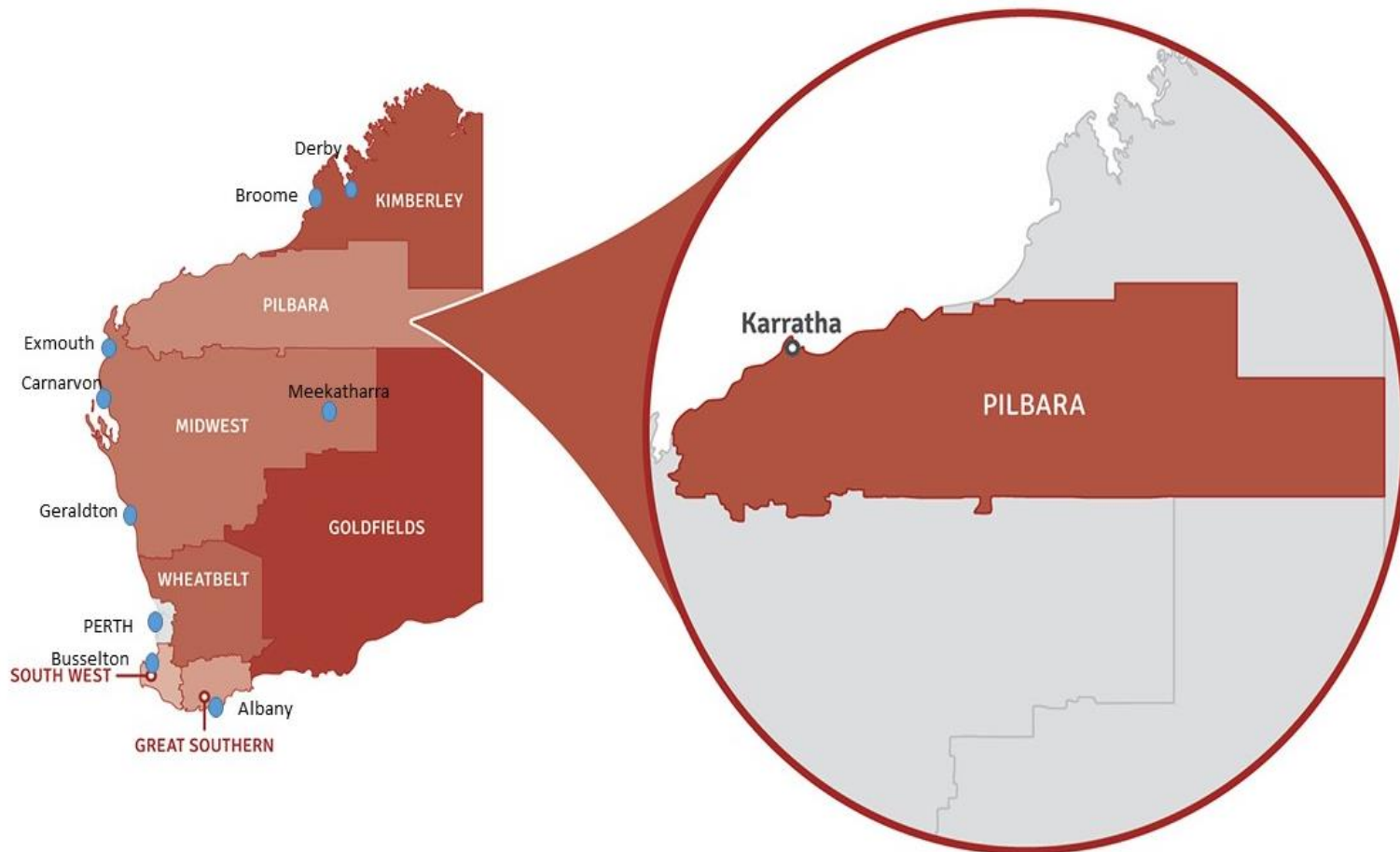
Forces driving workforce mobility

- A long history of Australian workforce mobility
- Compressed work rosters – changing IR laws
- Fringe benefits tax
- Neo-liberal policy frameworks – rationalisation and centralisation of services

Forces driving workforce mobility (ii)

- Construction workforce vs a vs operational workforce
- Technology has enabled shorter mine life (difficult to justify capital outlays)
- Cost of building and maintaining remote towns
- Cost and difficulty closing towns

Source Communities



Why long distance commute?

- Opportunity for families to live where they want
- Limited work opportunities 'at home'
- On site – its work, at home – its family and leisure

Is FIFO all bad?

- It depends who you are ...
- *Host* communities – the risk of ‘fly-over’ and ‘hollow economies’
- *Source* communities – repatriated benefits, stable population and economic multipliers



Harnessing the Benefits:

Regional Source Communities

- Maintenance of local populations
- Repatriation of wages and salaries
- Local expenditure and investment
 - Housing
 - Local businesses
 - Family businesses
- Volunteering
- Self esteem and status



Messages for *source* communities

- FIFO/DIDO workers have many attributes
- They are often ‘high value’ and good spenders
- They are not necessarily ‘cashed-up’ bogans
- They often want to be part of the community
- Their work keeps people in the community

Further information?



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