

## **Submission to the Productivity Commission: Remote Area Tax Concessions and Payments**

**29 April 2019**

I am a resident of Burketown northern Queensland. The settlement of Burketown is the located in the Gulf of Carpentaria. It is also one of the isolated communities located in the Gulf. The population of less than 180 persons live in almost solitude with limited services of the flying doctor and REX airline.

The restrictions imposed on the population include:

- limited visitor access;
- limited educational facilities (kindergarten to year six);
- limited access to groceries and other household commodities;
- limited postal and social services;
- limited telephonic and internet communications;
- limited access to medical facilities (Flying Doctor);
- limited shopping – the community store in comparison to Woolworths prices of Mount Isa; For example the same basic item which would be classed as staple dietary requirement of shopping locally cost \$746.28 compared to Woolworths Mt Isa \$350.00 plus \$100 in freight.
- no public entertainment facilities;
- limited sporting venues and no formal sporting clubs or societies, other than a local fishing club;
- limited motor vehicle service and refuelling facilities; and
- An intermittent power supply.
- Costs of flights in and out are dictated by REX and is ridiculously high

Essentially to do almost anything, that the general public take for granted, necessitates a 624km trip by road, approximately 6 to 8 hour drive to Mount Isa which is the nearest major towns. Some 120km of that road journey is often impassable, roadway in the wet season due to creeks flooding

Ironically, increased wages and salaries, intended to commensurate workers for the privations of working in an isolated location, attract higher tax rates. To date I have seen there is no benefit or taxation measure to counter that convoluted.

The continuing historical failure to review, and increase tax breaks means that while companies pay more, the individual worker gets comparatively less.

More is required to be considered for people to work in isolation and poor opportunities that are taken for granted by every day Australians.

Regards John Juniper