

To whom it may concern,

The cost of living in Burketown causes immense financial hardship due the cost of living and day to day expenses. I could sit here and type the price list of items and the comparison of them in Woolworths and Coles but I am not. But I will give you my overall opinion.

For anyone reading this you must remember the wages are low as there is not many places of employment so unemployment is high also. I am employed fulltime with the council and also my husband and I own a cattle property.

As an owner of a cattle property to transport goods especially since we are in a drought (no wet season that we normally have) the transport of the fodder and lick to keep the cattle alive killed us financially.

The cost of living has gone up just with the day to day of groceries items that you can buy from your local shop while you live in Mount Isa / Cloncurry. But then we have to add on the transport costs \$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$.

So for instance last weekend I did a grocery order from Woolworths Mount Isa which is \$406.25. Now add on \$220 for the pallet and pick up costs / freezer costs. So instead of it just cost me \$406.25 it is going to cost me approx. \$700.00 to stock my shelves and freezers. And this is why you are always have your ear on the grapevine to see who is coming to town from Mount Isa or Cloncurry to see if they can bring goods up with them.

Transport costs from Mount Isa:

- 1 small box \$40
- 1 standard size pallet dry good \$220 - \$330
- Oversized pallets (common with loads of hay) cost can be \$330 - \$440

Transport from Brisbane – 1 pallet \$550 plus

Pick ups can cost from \$40 to \$100 depending on what it is and where.

Then if you have freezer that comes on truck (this is not added to the pallet) you are charged another price on them.

To get a small medical parcel onto Rex Flights minimum cost is \$35.

Travel to Mount Isa with our own truck it costs \$1000.00 one way! Travel to Mount Isa in personal car is approx. \$400 one way.

The cost of fuel is a nightmare.

We have only one fuel supplier in town. No specials. No discounts. No days to fill up and save like you see on the TV for the city! Usually unleaded is around \$1.76 and diesel is \$1.84 per litre.

So we do use the other transport companies as it does minimise the wear and tear on our own truck and cars.

Why you may ask apart from the fuel costs – we only have one mechanic in town and they are overloaded most of the time. And of course you always run out of groceries which lead to the extreme cost of having to purchase items during your pay week to get you out of trouble till the next truck arrives. One bottle of coffee which you can buy in Woolworths for \$14 it is \$36 here. Fruit and vegetables are very expensive and of course do not last as long as they have had to be transport further. All bread is \$6 and that is frozen.

Only fresh bread has been recently from our local takeaway store which is \$5.

If you do want to travel to town to shop - just to cover the fuel cost and then also to purchase fodder/groceries/medical supplies etc you had better make sure your bank balance is very full. And most families just can't manage it so they have to shop here or go out to Doomadgee which is 1 ½ hrs away.

If you want to purchase online you have to search to try to find places that send it out this way which is a lot of the times really hard to find. And then check the delivery costs I have paid up to an extra \$90 to have an urgent item sent. And then you have to check for it to be delivered to our family home in Mount Isa to find the delivery charges \$10.

To get a parcel brought up from Cloncurry on the Mail truck it can cost you from \$20-\$50 and this can only be dry goods.

Transport costs are a killer to anyone from being a business to your personal financial state.

We do not get anywhere the choices as the city or even some country towns – yes we choose to live here but this can be made so much easier financially.

No choices for Fuel / Transport / Electricity / Phone Coverage / Food.

People in the bush need to be able to survive and thrive. The lifestyle is good but wouldn't it be great if you could make it better by assisting the rebate of tax / assisting with transport / grocery subsidy