

GUIDE FOR APPEA MEMBERS ON MOVEMENT OF CRITICAL OIL AND GAS PERSONNEL (AND FAMILIES) INTO AND OUT OF (AS WELL AS WITHIN) WESTERN AUSTRALIA GIVEN CURRENT COVID-19 BORDER AND TRAVEL RESTRICTIONS

Last updated 5 April 2020 to clarify movements of workers interstate and intrastate following several measures announced by the WA State Government this week. Note that with ongoing announcements and refinements to the process of moving workers, companies and employers should always check the Government [web site](#).

This “guide” is split into the following sections:

- 1. Background to Western Australian border controls for interstate arrivals*
- 2. Western Australian border controls in relation to interstate FIFO workers entering and leaving the State*
- 3. Process to follow for interstate FIFO workers entering and leaving the State*
- 4. Current border control measures in other Australian States and Territories*
- 5. Movement of marine crew, either FIFO or not, into / out of Western Australia*
- 6. Background to Western Australian intrastate movement restrictions*
- 7. Process to follow for movement of intrastate FIFO workers (except the Kimberley)*
- 8. Movement of intrastate FIFO workers into the Kimberley*

1. Background to Western Australian border controls for interstate arrivals

- The Western Australian Government has implemented new restrictions to travel to and from Western Australia from other Australian States and Territories - by road, rail, air and sea - in response to COVID-19.
- **After 11.59pm AWST on Sunday 5 April 2020**, the WA Government is enacting its [“hard border” measures](#) which means people (even WA residents) will no longer be able to enter Western Australia without an exemption. There will also be exemptions for FIFO workers and their families, however unless they are entering the State for an emergency reason (eg emergency response requirement or urgent maintenance to maintain operations or safety, with skills that cannot be found in Western Australia) then **strict 14-day quarantine measures will need to be followed when they enter the State.**
- The WA Government updates its management of COVID-19 and measures taken to protect the health of the community at a dedicated [page](#) on the www.wa.gov.au website. This page lists the “directions” that detail the rules and exemptions for various measures the Government has announced on COVID-19 under the State’s *Emergency Management Act 2005*. **Employers must ensure they comply with these directions in their movement of personnel.**

2. Western Australian border controls in relation to interstate FIFO workers entering and leaving the State

- Many companies have temporarily relocated or are currently relocating as many interstate FIFO workers as possible to Western Australia for the coming months, including their families. However, this is not possible for all the FIFO workers we need to maintain operational capability and safety of our facilities, so some regular FIFO movements will still be required.
- It is important to note that incoming FIFO workers (either regular FIFO coming and going or those temporarily relocating with their families) **have to undertake 14-days quarantine which is organised, managed and paid for by the company that employs the FIFO worker.**
- The quarantine facilities and the protocols surrounding this process are required to be approved by the Government, however the requirements of this and what employers and companies need to provide has not yet been determined. **In the interim, it is vital that interstate workers being housed by companies in quarantine do not interact with the community.**
- The “hard border” measures are detailed in the Government’s [Quarantine \(Closing the Border\) Directions](#).
- Under the “hard border” measures, the requirements for the different FIFO scenarios for our industry, and their families if they are moving to WA to support the worker, would be as follows:

Scenario	Quarantine requirements	Comment on required process
1. A “regular” FIFO worker who works in WA and who cannot relocate to WA from interstate who needs to enter and leave the state for regular shifts.	14 days of quarantine upon arrival into WA at the expense of the employer of the FIFO worker, each time they enter the State.	There will be an interim process until an electronic approval system can be set up. See section 3 below.
2. A “specialist” FIFO worker, who is required to enter the State for one-off critical work such as emergency response/critical maintenance.	Exempt from quarantine requirements and can move direct to work site but needs strong COVID-19 protocols in place to limit interaction with WA workforce and traceability of where they have been and with whom they have been in contact.	See Section 3 below.
3. A FIFO worker relocating to WA for the foreseeable future.	14 days of quarantine upon arrival into WA at the expense of the employer of the FIFO worker.	There will be an interim process until an electronic approval system can be set up. See section 3 below.

4. A family member of a FIFO worker relocating to WA for the foreseeable future, entering the State at the same time or different time (before/after) the FIFO worker.	14 days of quarantine upon arrival into WA at the expense of the employer of the FIFO worker.	Family members have exemption to join the FIFO worker on compassionate grounds. There will be an interim process until an electronic approval system can be set up. See section 3 below.
5. A FIFO worker who works in another state or territory but lives in WA.	14 days of quarantine upon arrival into WA at Government-managed quarantine locations (eg hotels).	They will be able to leave the state and return as needed for their job but cannot bypass quarantine on return to WA. See section 3 below.

- As many oil and gas facilities are in Commonwealth waters off Western Australia, it is important to note the following:
 - If all workers on the facility are WA residents, or are interstate FIFO but have completed 14 days of quarantine in WA prior to travelling to the facility, then WA workers returning from a shift will not have to complete 14 days of quarantine once they return; and,
 - If some of the workers on the facility travelled to the facility direct from another jurisdiction (eg Darwin) and did not complete 14 days of quarantine in WA before arriving at the facility, then any WA worker returning from that facility will need to complete 14 days of quarantine once they return (in a Government-managed quarantine accommodation facility).
- If a WA-based worker FIFOs to another state or territory for work, returns to WA for their break and is on a roster shorter than 14 days off, i.e. 7/7, then the following is expected to apply:
 - They would be placed in government-managed quarantine;
 - There is nothing stopping the person leaving WA in a period shorter than 14 days however companies will need to apply to the WA Police to allow the worker to move from the government-managed accommodation back to the airport; and,
 - Workers would only be able to quarantine at home instead of a government-managed facility if it could be justified on compassionate grounds and could only be agreed on a case-by-case basis.

3. Process to follow for interstate FIFO workers entering and leaving the State

- The process for receiving exemption for your workers will be overseen and enforced by the WA Police or a nominated Responsible Officer. In coming days FAQs will be uploaded on the Government [web site](#) for the exemptions to people movements. If employers are experiencing issues, they should check these FAQs, and if the query is not resolved, they can then contact the **WA Police hotline number: 13 COVID (13 26843)**
- All interstate arrivals into Western Australia that originated from a place within Australia outside of Western Australia will be required to complete an arrival form. This will be the

same or similar to the current [Arrival Form](#). In addition to this, workers will need to provide various documentation to establish them as an exempt person to enter Western Australia. We recommend companies have a Company representative to meet workers at the airport to assist and troubleshoot if required.

- In the first few days of the hard borders in Western Australia, there is an interim process similar to what has been required for intrastate movement controls that have been in place since 11.59pm on Tuesday 31 March 2020. It is expected that the Government will move to an electronic system of obtaining the exemption to travel across WA borders in the next week or so, similar to what is being attempted for the intrastate travel restrictions.
- During the interim process, it is important that the documentation is brief and to the point and as consistent as possible with other FIFO to make it easier for those checking arrivals. To that end, please stick to the template letters/documents as much as possible:

Scenario	Required process and documentation
1. A “regular” FIFO worker who works in WA and who cannot relocate to WA from interstate who needs to enter and leave the state for regular shifts.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Letter from the employing company (see template in attachment A) • Health declaration (see template in attachment B) • Photo identification (driver’s licence/passport) • The Company-issued travel itinerary showing where the employee is travelling to • Is wearing company-issued uniform or company-branded clothing
2. A “specialist” FIFO worker, who is required to enter the State for one-off critical work such as emergency response/critical maintenance.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Letter from the employing company (see template in Attachment A) and will require written authorisation from the State Emergency coordinator to say they are a specialist, urgently needed worker and are therefore exempt from 14-days quarantine (<i>this is a case-by-case exemption process</i>) • Health declaration (see template in attachment B) • Photo identification (driver’s licence/passport) • The Company-issued travel itinerary showing where the employee is travelling to • Is wearing company-issued uniform or company-branded clothing
3. A FIFO worker relocating to WA for the foreseeable future.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Letter from the employing company (see template attachment A) • Health declaration (see template in attachment B) • Photo identification (driver’s licence/passport) • The Company-issued travel itinerary showing where the employee is travelling to • Is wearing company-issued uniform or company-branded clothing

<p>4. A family member of a FIFO worker relocating to WA for the foreseeable future, entering the State at the same time or different time (before/after) the FIFO worker.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Copy of letter from the employing company provided to the FIFO worker (see template in attachment A) • Health declaration (see template in attachment B) • A completed spouse/partner/other of a FIFO worker form (see template in attachment C) • Photo identification (driver's licence/passport) • The Company-issued travel itinerary showing where the individual is travelling to
<p>5. A FIFO worker who works in another state or territory but lives in WA.</p>	<p>Process yet to be determined, but suggest:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Letter from the employing company (see attachment A) modified to state that worker is either leaving WA to work or returning to WA for rest • Health declaration (see template in attachment B) • Photo identification (driver's licence/passport) • The Company-issued travel itinerary showing where the employee is travelling to • Is wearing company-issued uniform or company-branded clothing

4. Current border control measures in other Australian States and Territories

- Interstate FIFO workers returning to their home state/territory after working in WA may be required to self-isolate or enter quarantine on return, depending on the current requirements of that jurisdiction. APPEA is working on this as a matter of urgency with the Federal Government and state/territory jurisdictions to see if we can get reciprocal arrangements in place so that workers are exempt from quarantine requirements whether they are arriving in WA for work, returning home to WA for rest, or returning home to other state/territories for rest. However, as we have seen of late, most jurisdictions are not focusing on being aligned nationally at this stage.
- Known border controls by other State/Territory as at 5 April 2020, are as follows:

State / Territory	Current status of border restrictions for cross movement of oil and gas workers (i.e. this is not advice for general public people movements)	Links for more information
NT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Into the territory for work: exempt from 14 days quarantine. • Returning to the territory for rest: 14-days quarantine required. 	https://coronavirus.nt.gov.au/community-advice/border-controls
Qld	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Into the state for work: Restrictions preventing interstate FIFO workers (except for certain positions in certain resource industries) apply from 11.59 pm Saturday 4 April 2020. From that time, only critical resource sector employees 	https://www.covid19.qld.gov.au/government-actions/border-closing

	<p>will be allowed to enter Queensland from interstate to work. These are employees critical to the ongoing operation of a resource activity or the resource supply chain which are detailed on the Queensland Health website.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Returning to the state for rest: Qld residents returning home do not have to quarantine unless they have travelled internationally or been to a COVID designated hot spot in which case a 14-day self-isolation period is required. 	https://www.covid19.qld.gov.au/government-actions/border-closing#exempt-person
SA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Into the state for work: exempt from 14 days quarantine. • Returning to the state for rest: subject to meeting health criteria (no symptoms/no contact with COVID-19 cases), FIFO workers are exempt from self-quarantine requirements when they return to the state for rest. 	http://www.energymining.sa.gov.au/coronavirus_covid-19 http://www.energymining.sa.gov.au/latest_updates/covid-19_cross-border_travel_update_from_the_chief_executive
Tas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Into the state for work: exempt from 14 days quarantine. • Returning to the state for rest: 14-days quarantine required for all non-essential traveller arrivals, whether residents or not, in a Government-operated facility. 	https://dpiwwe.tas.gov.au/biossecurity-tasmania/biosecurity/biosecurity-forms/covid-19-important-information-for-travellers
NSW	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No border controls at this stage. 	https://preview.nsw.gov.au/covid-19/travel-and-transport-advice
Vic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No border controls at this stage. 	https://www.dhhs.vic.gov.au/victorian-public-coronavirus-disease-covid-19
ACT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No border controls at this stage. 	

5. Movement of marine crew, either FIFO or not, into / out of Western Australia

- Contrary to earlier advice, in the [Quarantine \(Closing the Border\) Directions](#) marine crew will be considered under paragraph 27(r) which requires the State Emergency Coordinator, or a person appointed by them to approve the movement of workers in writing.
- This means that this State requirement needs to be considered alongside the current Australian Border Force advice for marine crew (see Attachment D).

6. Background to Western Australian intrastate movement restrictions

- The WA Premier [announced](#) on 27 March that from midnight Tuesday night, 31 March (12am Wednesday morning), restrictions will be placed on travel within the entire State of Western Australia, with Western Australians not be permitted to leave their regional boundary except for work, to attend medical appointments, and for compassionate grounds.
- Oil and gas workers are therefore still permitted to move between [regions of WA](#) if they have to, either by road (eg from Perth metropolitan area to the Wheatbelt or Mid-West regions to work on Perth basin onshore activities) or by air (eg Perth to Karratha, Onslow, Broome, Exmouth). These movement restrictions are detailed in the [Prohibition on Regional Travel Directions](#).

7. Process to follow for movement of intrastate FIFO workers (except the Kimberley)

- There is currently an interim process in place until the Government can establish an electronic capability for checking people movements. It was earlier expected that this electronic system will be in place by 10 April 2020.
- Under the interim process, workers should have documentation with them to ensure they can justify the transit across regional boundaries, whether travelling by road or plane for checking by WA Police or the Responsible Officer:
 - A company letter confirming their details, that they are an essential worker, the regions they must travel from / to and if applicable, regions for transit only and a company contact phone number that will be answered if WA Police contact the company from the Check Point to clarify any details – see Attachment A;
 - A health declaration that they have not travelled internationally in the last 14 days, and are not exhibiting symptoms – see Attachment B.
 - Individual photo ID (eg: Driver’s Licence);
 - Be in uniform, or company-branded clothing; and
 - If a spouse/partner is travelling with the worker (i.e. to take them to the airport) then they should also fill in the spouse/partner of FIFO worker form – see Attachment C.

8. Movement of intrastate FIFO workers into the Kimberley

- The WA Minister for Aboriginal Affairs [announced](#) on 21 March 2020 that nearly all access to Remote Aboriginal Communities within Western Australia is to be stopped with only essential services (such as health services) allowed to travel to these areas. The associated [Directions](#) give more details on this in which oil and gas worker movement is not exempted. To request a special exemption for travel into the area, approval has to be given by Police Commissioner Dawson on a case-by-case basis in writing (as per 4.(f) of the Directions document).
- The WA Minister for Aboriginal Affairs [announced](#) on 26 March that the Kimberley (along with the Shire of Ngaanyatjarraku; parts of the Shire of East Pilbara that encompass the

communities of Jigalong, Martu homeland communities and Kiwirrkurra) would have particularly stringent travel restrictions into and out of the region from 9pm on 26 March. This action was put in place under the national Biosecurity Act 2015, and the [Determination](#) details the requirements and any exemptions. Oil and gas is defined as an essential activity so workers are still allowed to enter the area under very strict conditions with the approval of the Human Biosecurity Officer.

- In addition, following some issues experienced at Broome airport in transferring workers from incoming flights to helicopter transfers to facilities (and not having sufficient social distancing between FIFO workers and the local community) there is further work underway to better manage this with WA Police and Broome airport (including tarmac transfers). As a result, if companies have FIFO workers landing or leaving from Broome airport, please email the flight details (date / time / airline / flight number) and a list of employees at least the day before to: Kimberley.district.office@police.wa.gov.au
- On 2 April 2020 the State Government [announced](#) new movement restrictions in the Kimberley following some confirmed cases of COVID-19 in regional towns. These changes came into effect at 11.59pm 2 April, and new boundaries will be in place across the Kimberley in line with the four local government areas (shires of Broome, Derby West Kimberley, Wyndham East Kimberley, Halls Creek). For more information go to the [Prohibition On Travel Between Local Government Districts In The Kimberley Directions](#) or visit the [web site](#).

Further information

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Ends.