

Strong and Sustainable Resource Communities Act 2017

The *Strong and Sustainable Resource Communities Act 2017* (the Act) is legislation designed to ensure that residents of communities near large resource projects benefit from the construction and operation of those projects.

What does the Act do?

The Act applies to large resource projects that have a nearby regional community, and:

- prevents operational large resource projects from having a 100% fly-in, fly-out (FIFO) workforce
- prevents discrimination against locals when recruiting and terminating workers, through amendments to the *Anti-Discrimination Act 1991*
- makes an enhanced social impact assessment (SIA) mandatory for large resource projects going through an environmental impact statement (EIS) process
- ensures SIA processes are the same under both the *Environmental Protection Act 1994* and the *State Development and Public Works Organisation Act 1971*
- prioritises recruitment from local and regional communities first, then recruitment of workers who will relocate and live in nearby regional communities, for projects going through an EIS.

Read more about the [list of large resource projects](#) and their nearby regional communities that are subject to the 100% FIFO prohibition and anti-discrimination provisions of the Act.

What is a large resource project?

A large resource project is a project for which an environmental impact statement is required, or a resource project that holds a site-specific environmental authority and has 100 or more workers (or a smaller workforce decided by the Coordinator-General).

What is a nearby regional community?

A nearby regional community is one within 125km of a large resource project and that has more than 200 people (or a greater or lesser distance or smaller population decided by the Coordinator-General).

What is a FIFO worker?

A FIFO worker for a large resource project means a worker who travels by aeroplane, or another means, from a place that is not a nearby regional community to work on the operational phase of the project.

What does it mean to be included on the list of large resource projects?

Projects included on the list of large resource projects must adhere to:

- **100% FIFO prohibition** during operations. Large resource projects have six months from the date of inclusion on the list to transition their workforce to include recruitment of workers from nearby regional communities.
- **Anti-discrimination** provisions ensure that residents of nearby regional communities are treated fairly in the recruitment of future workers to large resource projects and if a worker chooses to live in the nearby regional community they must be allowed to.

How will the 100 per cent FIFO prohibition be enforced?

The Coordinator-General has investigative powers to administer and enforce the Act. In order for the Coordinator-General to determine whether an operational large resource project has a 100% FIFO workforce, the owner or any other relevant persons, may be required to provide relevant information regarding its operational workforce arrangements.

Following an investigation, if the project is contravening the 100% FIFO prohibition, the Coordinator-General can require the owner to submit an operational workforce management plan.

The operational workforce management plan is subject to the Coordinator-General's approval and conditions can be set on it. Monitoring and reporting by the owner, or corrective actions, may be a condition of approval attached to an operational workforce management plan.

How will the anti-discrimination complaint process work?

If a person feels they have been discriminated against during the recruitment or termination process because they are a resident of a nearby regional community, the person may lodge a complaint with the Anti-Discrimination Commission Queensland (ADCQ).

If the person is dissatisfied with the outcome of the conciliation process, the ADCQ may refer the matter to the Queensland Industrial Relations Commission.

Will the legislation apply to construction workers?

The Coordinator-General will decide, during preparation of future SIAs, on the application of the Act to the construction workforce of a large resource project.

What is in the enhanced SIA?

Preparation of a SIA is required for large resource projects when undertaking an EIS. The SIA is informed by stakeholder consultation and includes developing management measures for:

- community and stakeholder engagement
- workforce management
- housing and accommodation
- local business and industry procurement
- health and community well-being.

Workforce management practices must prioritise recruitment from local and regional communities first, then those workers who will relocate to nearby regional communities.

The Coordinator-General has developed a [SIA guideline](#) detailing what must be included.

Key implementation timeframes

Commencement of the Act on 30 March 2018.

Anti-discrimination provisions apply to large resource projects from commencement of the Act.

The 100% FIFO prohibition applies to large resource projects six months following publication of their details on the list.

The new SIA requirements will apply to future projects that go through an EIS process.

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