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Miners' \$3b region boost

Harvey-Waroona Reporter, Harvey

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JACINTA CANTATORE

A major survey of resource industry companies has found the Peel and South West economies benefited from almost \$3 billion from the sectors, a finding welcomed by the Peel Chamber of Commerce.

According to the data, taken in 2019-2020, these industries contributed \$1.76 billion to the South West and \$1.14b to the Peel region.

A total of 12,351 Peel and South West residents were employed full-time across the sectors, with further spending by the sector adding another 3308 full-time jobs to the South West and 984 full-time jobs to Peel.

The findings come from a Chamber of Minerals and Energy poll of 65 WA resource-sector, oil and gas, energy companies, which contributed nearly \$52 billion to the WA economy and about \$83 billion to Australia's economy.

Peel Chamber of Commerce general manager Andrew McKerrell said the State's resource industries had boosted Australia's economic strength, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic.

"The wider success of our nation can be attributed to our successful WA resources sector and the overall high quality of our product, and given how quickly we have and are recovering from the effects of the global COVID-19 pandemic, this should be acknowledged," Mr McKerrell said.

"The resources sector is of immense importance to the Peel economy, not only directly through large employers such as Alcoa via their various operational sites throughout the entire region, but

also indirectly via the large FIFO worker population who call the Peel home," Mr McKerrell said.

President of Alcoa Australia Michael Gollschewski said the company employed nearly 4000 people across WA in 2020, who were paid \$640 million in wages and benefits.

Mr Gollschewski said he was proud of the company's contribution to community programs.

"In 2020, Alcoa made \$4.3 million in community contributions in the State, with the vast majority of that investment supporting the Peel and South West regions," he said.

Mr McKerrell also underscored the knock-on effects for the economy and for communities.

"Additional flow-on effects include support for grassroots community movements such as sporting clubs, environmental rehabilitation efforts and events, but also thorough subcontracting works and procurement programs," Mr McKerrell said.

"Many smaller businesses who employ locally can and regularly do work within this sector via these subcontracting avenues, providing additional direct positive effects to the surrounding communities."

CME chief executive Paul Everingham said the survey showed how much the WA mining and resources sector underpinned economies and communities around WA, and also across Australia. "Additionally, because this data is collected (from the) 2019-20 financial year we won't yet be seeing the full effects of COVID-19, for example the relocation of workers closer to sites in 2020-21," Mr Everingham said.