

Dear Commissioners

Thank you for taking the time to read and consider my submission in support of the Bowdens Silver Project.

I have been employed by Bowdens Silver since June 2016 on a full-time basis as the Company's Human Resources Manager. During that period, I have received and reviewed well in excess of 2,000 employment applications. At least 300 of these have been from local applicants. I have interviewed, either by phone or in person, more than 200 of those. These are people who are either living locally, or who moved away to find work or study and are searching for jobs that will enable them to return home. I have also met and spoken to numerous others at open days or simply when people approach me when I'm out and about in my Bowdens uniform. I therefore consider that I am well-placed to comment on the employment situation within both the Lue community and surrounds.

I would like to address this aspect of the Project primarily as there were several speakers at the IPC Public Hearing who stated that the region does not need more jobs. They asserted that currently there is a workforce shortage in the region and expressed concerns that the Bowdens Silver Project will only contribute to an already tight job market.

Several of those representations quoted figures from job search websites regarding current open positions in the Mudgee region that cannot be filled. It is always positive to see an increase in available employment opportunities, however I think it important to point out that the figures quoted are misleading for the following reasons:

- Many listings are for the same position and on a scheduled repeat, but each and every entry is included in the site's total number of current open positions for the area;
- Many positions are indeed advertised to the Mudgee area, but are for jobs that are outside the region and not at a commutable distance therefore requiring people to relocate; and
- The number of open positions for permanent, full-time roles is greatly reduced once casual, temporary, out-of-area and repeated listings are filtered out, giving a far more accurate picture.

There is and should be a clear differentiation made between the availability of short term, casual or temporary roles and the availability of roles for long term, stable employment.

Bowdens Silver receives a constant and steady stream of unsolicited but welcome approaches for employment. Recently a large proportion of these are from skilled people within the area seeking roles that will not be available until the Project enters the construction or operation phases. However when we actively advertise positions for entry-level roles which are suitable for recent school leavers, or those whose employment history consists only of short stints in unskilled or temporary jobs, the number of local applications can number in the hundreds.

It is true that some sectors continue to experience difficulty filling positions. The hospitality sector is a prime example of that and is in fact an Australia-wide issue. Employment in that sector does not always provide the security of hours, salary or training that young people need to set them on their career paths and the employment opportunities provided by Bowdens should not be seen as being in competition for businesses looking to fill part-time or casual hospitality vacancies.

Although it may be contentious to point this out, I noted that by far the majority of people who attended the IPC Public Hearing and those who claimed that jobs are not needed, have passed the age bracket where they would be looking to start or build on their own careers. It may be

uncomfortable to contemplate the mining industry if you have moved to a region to seek solitude or a quiet retirement, but these personal preferences or prejudices should not prevent a mature and unbiased assessment of the facts. It is clear that Bowdens will have no impact whatsoever on the amenity of Mudgee and no impact on Mudgee's vineyards, wineries or tourism industries (unless of course members of the negative minority wish to keep loudly and widely proclaiming on social media the falsehood that there's a lead mine planned for Mudgee).

The importance of providing the region's next generations with the same opportunities for economic growth and employment as enjoyed by the previous generations cannot be overstated. We have had people drop by the site office to discuss work opportunities. They do not apply through our website or email us as they don't own computers. They do not bring in beautifully written cover letters and applications, because they did not have the opportunity to complete their education. But these people want to work and have a future and provide for their families. Bowdens will go some way to providing these much-needed opportunities for training and employment and importantly, for young people to be able to carve out meaningful careers while staying in the region close to their families and friends. This will potentially change the towns of Rylstone and Kandos, but in a very positive way.

More than 86% of the current Bowdens team are from the area and many of them have families who have been in the region for generations. The ridiculous statements made by some that Bowdens or its team do not or will not care about what happens in the future as they won't have to deal with any negative consequences is just plain offensive. The team at Bowdens has invested years of their time and experience and have dedicated themselves to consistently working to improve and achieve world's best practice across all aspects of the Project. They are deeply invested in its outcome and its legacy.

I acknowledge that there are those in the community who do not want to see the Project go ahead in any way, shape or form and never will. But I have every confidence in the extensive work conducted by the Bowdens team and technical consultants which over the years has undergone continuous and rigorous scrutiny and peer reviews. I have confidence in the thoroughness of the assessments of the DPE and their independent experts and a strong belief that all measures to ensure strong, appropriate and adaptive processes to address and mitigate any potential negative environmental and societal outcomes are and always will be in place.