

Our Employees

The MAC's preference and intention is to recruit locally as this is a key way to benefit and integrate with the local community. Our recruitment processes seek to provide opportunity for locals to become employees of The MAC villages through active and early communication of employment opportunities at a local level.

Positions available at The MAC's villages include; Management, Administration, Guest Services, Kitchen staff, Food and Beverage, Housekeeping and Facilities. Those employees working in Food and Beverage, Housekeeping and Facilities in Queensland and New South Wales fall under state based collective agreements and are paid above award rates. For all other hospitality employees, The MAC pays competitive hospitality salaries. Our current Enterprise Agreement includes fulltime, part time and casual roles, available over a 5/2, 7/7 and 14/7 day rosters that are flexible according to employee preference and operational requirements.

Like many employers in more isolated resource regions, The MAC often faces challenges recruiting locally. This is particularly an issue in some towns in the Bowen Basin, where populations are lower and locals are often drawn to higher paying opportunities within resource companies. Due to these circumstances our employees tend to be sourced from FIFO-hub communities such as Cairns, Mackay, Brisbane, the Sunshine Coast and Gold Coast. Our Narrabri and Boggabri villages are located in North Western New South Wales. This region is more populated, with long established agricultural communities. In these areas The MAC has a much higher proportion of local employees.

THE ROLE PLAYED BY WORKFORCE ACCOMMODATION VILLAGES

The expansion of resource projects and the growth of mining into new resource regions over the past five to ten years has driven an unprecedented demand for accommodation in host communities.

Such accommodation is essential for resource projects to be undertaken due to the high workforce demand over a finite period and the need to source skilled labour that may not be available in proximity to the resource project.

Without adequate accommodation to meet the resource companies' demand profile, these projects have difficulty proceeding. The MAC estimates a potential 4000 to 5000 new resource industry employees will be required in the mid-western region of New South Wales alone in the next three to five years, and approximately 8000 within Queensland's Bowen and Surat Basins.

Impacts on Regional Communities

Many communities are unprepared to deal with the impacts of an increased number of resource projects and expansions in their area, particularly with regards to housing supply and infrastructure. Negative impacts that can occur in unprepared communities include:

- Increased house rental prices often forcing out low to middle income earners;
- Rapid increases in house sale prices limiting housing affordability;
- Local shops and services have difficulty retaining and attracting staff as housing becomes unaffordable;
- Local rental properties become filled with five or six single workers, dramatically impacting the local social fabric;
- Tourist accommodation become unavailable to tourists as mine or mine related workers monopolise facilities;
- Road safety is impacted and fatigue related motor vehicle accidents on local roads increase as mine workers drive long distances to and from mine sites in the early morning and late afternoon periods; and
- Public services infrastructure is often inadequate for the increased population.

A workforce accommodation facility is one of the few forms of accommodation that can respond to increased housing demand in rural and/or developing regions in the short to medium term. Accommodation villages can greatly assist in managing and minimising negative impacts. Essentially, these villages act as shock absorbers in the period where increased new demand exceeds existing local housing supply. As a result, the accommodation villages form part of the accommodation solution for these towns, taking pressure off house and rental prices for local residents, while freeing up local hotels and motels to accommodate tourists visiting the area.

The role workers accommodation plays in meeting housing supply and affordability needs in resource regions that face an influx of workers, is recognised in a number of government planning documents including; the NSW Strategic Regional Land Use Plan for the Upper Hunter and the Strategic Regional Land Use Plan for New England.

Location, Community Benefits, Infrastructure

The MAC works closely with local authorities, particularly local councils, to ensure stakeholder needs are considered. This includes ensuring site selection is suitable for both village development and takes into account Council's planning for the region. Consultation with local Councils often begins up to two years prior to a development application being submitted.

The MAC's villages are usually located on the outskirts of towns, so traffic into the centre of the towns is reduced, but are ideally close enough so the village is able to integrate with the local community. An example of this being able to employ local staff and establish co-operative relationships with local businesses and suppliers for the benefit of the town. Proximity to nearby towns also encourages village guests to integrate by using town facilities and services not provided within the village. The villages are designed with buffer zones and landscaping to improve visual amenity and reduce noise for surrounding property owners.

- **Upgrades to public infrastructure**

The MAC also undertakes upgrades to key infrastructure including roads, sewer and water to ensure capacity. These upgrades can remain as a legacy beyond the life of The MAC village to support future long term growth and possible future residential development of the town.

- **Tailored service provision within The MAC villages to complement the existing services in the adjoining towns**

The MAC consults with local stakeholders to ensure facilities in our villages complement but do not compete with services available in the host community. Following consultation and after gaining an understanding of the business dynamics in individual towns, The MAC has refrained from building residential bars and gymnasiums within some of our accommodation villages where existing businesses within the town are able to provide similar services and benefit from the additional patronage from resource workers. Alternatively, where we may have facilities that include a gymnasium or conference facilities within the village, public access will be granted where there is a potential benefit for the local community. The MAC also operates restaurant facilities that are open to the public.

- **Support local communities and contributing to the region's economic health**

The MAC is committed to being part of the communities in which we operate, helping them to grow and develop. Working closely with local councils, The MAC looks to support health and education, sports and recreation as well as community groups and events. The preference is to use a collective and coordinated approach to ensure sustainable community development, which is why we often look to partner with community groups, local businesses and government

agencies on projects. Our Community Investment Fund looks to provide a range of donations, sponsorships and partnership opportunities in our host communities. This fund in 2013 has invested over \$165,000 across a range of projects including, local sporting clubs, community cultural events and health initiatives.

Currently some of our active community partnership programs include:

Moranbah Health Partnership Group - Bowen Basin residents will have improved access to medical treatment closer to home with visiting health professionals now able to access affordable short-term accommodation at The MAC's accommodation village in Moranbah. All monies raised through the room donation initiative are given back to the Moranbah Community Health Partnership Group to help achieve health goals for the region.

MAC School Mates program – this is our commitment to enhancing learning opportunities for every school, in our host communities, Australia-wide. This program involves working with each school's Principal to offer targeted support. This includes a range of activities from purchasing iPads, computers and electronic whiteboards to contributing towards school excursions and teacher's professional development. We also support high school hospitality programs and offer work experience to encourage those future Masterchefs. In total, this program allocates over \$110,000 annually.

Road safety in the Bowen Basin - The MAC is building on a four year partnership with the Mackay based Road Accident Action Group (RAAG) to deliver an innovative joint campaign to reduce fatigue incidents on the Peak Downs Highway.

Local spend

We have policies in place to give preference to local suppliers and businesses. Our procurement decision-making processes seek to provide opportunity for local businesses to develop relationships with The MAC and become suppliers, subject to satisfying The MAC's relevant qualification requirements including capacity to supply and meeting safety and accreditation standards.

Through this policy, we aim to maximise each village's local expenditure and seek to provide active and early communication of opportunities to service our villages to local businesses. In the last financial year, our total spend in our host communities/regions was over \$41.4 million and our total spend in Regional Australia (including host regions) was over \$63.5 million.

Safety Partnerships

Studies have indicated resource workers are often blamed disproportionately for anti-social behaviour and that police reports in affected regions tend to indicate any increase in crime is proportional to population growth rather than linked to resource workers. This is supported by our positive ongoing relationship with local police.

In addition to this, The MAC has a strict code of conduct for people staying at our villages and non-compliance with the code results in notification to the guest's employer. Incidents of anti-social behaviour by guests staying at a MAC village are extremely rare. In the MAC's experience, our villages allow improved management of behaviour of non-resident workers in comparison to workers staying in the private rental housing.

Labour mobility is an accepted requirement for the labour intensive resources industry, which requires a large number of skilled employees, often for a finite time. The MAC's 17 years' experience in the workforce accommodation industry, servicing this mobile workforce, demonstrates high quality accommodation can bring benefit to host communities and surrounding regions.