

KEY INDUSTRY LOCATIONS

Australia's Resource Sector operates across every state of Australia. In particular, Western Australia, Queensland and the Hunter Valley region of New South Wales offer significant opportunities for both Fly In, Fly Out (FIFO) and residential careers and lifestyle.

The following provides an overview of the key regional locations where local employers prefer a mainly residential arrangement for their workforce. Some locations will ALSO offer FIFO opportunities, but the overview is provided for those actually considering a move to a specific location.

To explore the location of mine sites around Australia:
<http://www.miningaustralia.com.au/australiainemap.asp>

QUEENSLAND

Gladstone

Boasting a sub-tropical climate and sheltered by two islands – Facing Island to the east and Curtis Island to the north - Gladstone has recently assumed a prominent place in the Australia Resource Sector with three major LNG projects approved for Curtis Island, about to generate thousands of jobs.

Located about 550kms by road north of Brisbane and 100kms south east of Rockhampton, the city was named after British statesman, William Gladstone.

With a population of about 30,000, the population has increased significantly since the founding of the Queensland Alumina bauxite refinery, the biggest alumina refinery in the world. The Gladstone region is known for its strong economy and employment opportunities and has a strong retail and service sector within the modern urbanised city centre.

Its coastal location means Gladstone is renowned for its marine activities and the Gladstone Marina is frequently used for boating and sailing activities.

Gladstone gives you immediate access to the famed Great Barrier Reef, Heron Island, Wilson Island and Lady Alice Island amongst others.

The city boasts an impressive array of cultural, and sporting facilities and festivals, including Spinnaker Park and Marina, Tondoon Botanical Gardens, wineries, regional gallery and museum, the annual Sunrise Longboard classic surfing competition held in March each year, and the Gladstone Harbour Festival held during Easter each year.

All three major LNG projects will employ a mainly residential operational workforce, presenting an outstanding opportunity to live and work in a pristine location.

Useful links:

<http://www.gladstone.qld.gov.au/web/guest/home>

Mackay

With Airlie Beach - the gateway to the Whitsundays and the Great Barrier Reef - just 130km to the north, Mackay (rhyming with 'sky') is a compelling base for those seeking a career in the industry.

Perhaps more known for producing more than a third of Australia's sugar cane, the mining and oil and gas sectors are rapidly expanding in the area, offering greater opportunities than ever before.



The Mackay Marina

Mackay is based on the eastern coast of Queensland, about 970 kms north of Brisbane in a region referred to as the Mackay – Whitsunday region.

Mackay is also widely recognised as the gateway to the Bowen Basin coal mining reserves of Central Queensland. It is the single largest coal reserve in Australia, with 34 operational coal mines extracting more than 100 million tonnes annually. This represents about 83 per cent of Queensland's coal production, among its most important export commodities. While much of this is used in Australia, Japan and China are the largest export recipients. Although coal was reported to be discovered late in the 19th century, it was not until 1971 that the first coal from Goonyella was produced on a commercial scale.

Over the past 10 years, Mackay has become the location of choice for many mining service companies that supply and consult to the mine operators. This is due to its strategic proximity to the mines, major highways and train lines, and the Hay Point coal terminals. Most of these companies are headquartered in the suburb of Paget, to the city's south.

The region, and Mackay, in particular has had its share of natural disasters. In 1958 and again in 2008 and 2011, major flooding left a trail of significant damage. Mackay was also battered by Tropical Cyclone Ului, a category three cyclone which crossed the coast at nearby Airlie Beach, in March 2010.

Mackay's population of 116,000 is serviced by a number of major shopping centres, including Mt Pleasant Greenfields with 250 specialty stores and a five-screen cinema complex.

The Mackay City Heart, located in the older city centre, is also another thriving part of the city. It is the home of many of the region's banks, law, accounting and other professional service firms.

Useful Links:

<http://www.mackay.qld.gov.au/>

Mount Isa

Mount Isa came into existence soon after 1923 when John Campbell Miles discovered a rich seam of silver-lead. Mining began in the late 1920s, with Xstrata now operating the Mount Isa Mines lease and employing around 4500 people across mining and processing streams, producing copper and zinc-lead-silver.

The town gained notoriety in 2008, when the local mayor suggested that even “not-so-attractive” girls could find a partner in the friendly north-west Queensland town – such was the abundance of single mining blokes.

Given that the nearly half of the district’s population of some 30,000 is female, the statement probably did more harm than good.....but certainly did get the place noticed!

Mount Isa was proclaimed a city in 1968 when the population reached 18,000. Now a major regional centre, Mount Isa is the administrative, commercial and industrial centre for Queensland’s vast north-western area.

The city boasts hospital facilities, retail outlets and all the major sporting codes. Franchises such as McDonalds, K-Mart and Harvey Norman have set up shop, there’s a large taxi service, a cinema and skate park/aquatic centre, and passenger trains, buses and airlines offer regular services.

There are eight public primary schools, three private primary schools and three high schools. There’s also Mt Isa Hospital, an 80-bed facility offering a host of specialist services including anaesthetics, medicine, paediatrics, psychiatry, surgery, obstetrics and gynaecology.

The annual rodeo is a major sporting calendar event and attracts nearly 10,000 visitors every year in August.

Mount Isa is 900km from Townsville and 1900km from Brisbane.

Useful links:

<http://www.mountisa.biz/>

<http://www.queenslandholidays.com.au/destinations/outback/places-to-visit/mount-isa/index.cfm>

NEW SOUTH WALES

Broken Hill

Broken Hill has been called *The Silver City*, the *Oasis of the West*, and the *Capital of the Outback*. Although over 1,100 km west of Sydney, the state’s capital, and surrounded by semi-desert, the town features colourful parks and offers all the regional facilities you would expect from a large regional hub.

With a population of 20,000, Broken Hill is located so near the border of South Australia that it adopts the time zone of that state and gets a great deal of its local news content from Adelaide.



Broken Hill’s population has shrunk by one third since the heyday of the 1970s zinc boom, with the decrease attributed to migration from the closure and consolidation of several mining operations. In

1933 Broken Hill, with a population of 26,925, was the third largest urban incorporated area in New South Wales.

Broken Hill has been and still is a town dominated by the mining industry. The mines founded on the Broken Hill Ore Deposit - the world's richest lead-zinc ore body - have until recently provided the majority of direct employment and indirect employment in the city. The Broken Hill Proprietary Company became Australia's largest mining company, and later became part of the world's largest mining company, BHP Billiton.

First discovered by European explorers in the 1840s, the city has become a popular tourist location with more than 30,000 visitors each year. As one of the very first original 'mining towns', visitors flock to the town to learn more of the history. Temperatures range from the low 30s in summer to the 20s in spring and autumn and down to 12-18c in winter. January and February, in particular, can be very hot with temperatures soaring to the mid 40s for days at a time.

Useful links:

<http://www.brokenhill.nsw.gov.au/>

<http://www.visitbrokenhill.com.au/>

<http://www.perilya.com.au/>

Cobar

With a population of 5,500, Cobar is located in central western New South Wales, some 712km northwest of Sydney.

Copper was discovered in 1870, leading to settlements being founded with Australia's European and Asian gold rush immigrant arrivals. The Great Cobar Copper Mining Company Limited was established in 1878. It and subsequent companies operated a number of light railways carrying ore and similar material, as well as timber for mine supports. Cobar and many mining outskirts accommodated the miners who travelled to the area in the late 1880s.

At its peak, Cobar had a population on 10,000 and its own stock exchange. However, copper mining operations ceased in 1920, and by the 1930s the town's population had dropped to a little over 1,000, only to rise again and stabilise at around 3,500 through the 1970s and early 1980s. In the 1980s, gold, silver, lead and zinc were discovered in the area, which led to a further population increase.

Several fine heritage buildings from the late 1880s/early 1900s settlement are still in existence, including the Great Western Hotel (1898), reputed to have the longest iron lace verandah in the Southern Hemisphere, the Cobar Court House (1887) and Court House Hotel (1895) in Barton Street, as well as the interesting Cobar Heritage and Visitor Information Centre, located in the beautiful former Mines Office (1910). On Hillston Road southeast out of town is Fort Bourke Hill which affords an excellent view of the town, and Towser's Huts, a series of stone miners' cottages dating possibly from as early as the 1870s.

The town's current positive economic development is due to the affluence of the mining boom. Three important mining belts are operational in the Cobar area: The Cobar belt, the Canbelego belt and the Girilambone belt.



City Centre

Many of Cobar's 5,500 residents are associated with the local mines, and the town also provides services for outlying farms. Facilities for children include a swimming pool with water slide, a family park with three age-appropriate play areas, plentiful community and family events and sports clubs. The centre of town is no more than a 15 minutes' walk from every house, so shops, hotels and cafes are easily accessible. There is a community hospital, medical centre and midwifery care.

The larger centre of Dubbo which is only 300kms away, offers a wide range of services and facilities, including a cinema, large chain stores and the Western Plains Zoo.

The Cobar Heritage and Visitor Information Centre overlooking the open cut mine, also offers tours for visitors. The *Festival of the Miners' Ghost*, held during the last weekend in October, is a festival celebrating the spirits of the old miners.

Useful Links:

<http://www.cobar.nsw.gov.au/>

Hunter Valley

It could be argued that there is no more enviable location to reside in the mining industry than in the Hunter Valley. Blessed with one of the world's most renowned wine producing centres in the world, and a mere 310km from Sydney.



Most of the population of 640,000 plus, lives within 25km of the New South Wales coast with 55% of the entire population living in the cities of Newcastle and Lake Macquarie.

Whilst most commonly known as a premier wine growing region, it's most important economic activity is coal mining through major employers such as Rio Tinto and BHP Billiton. The industry is supported by the port at Newcastle, which is one of the largest export facilities for coal in the world, most of which is initially transported via railway.

Together with Queensland, NSW produced around 97% of Australia's saleable output of black coal in 2007-2008, as well as 100% of Australia's black coal exports.

Other industry in the area include electricity generation through coal fired power stations, horse breeding (in fact, one of the largest horse breeding areas in the world), and tourism. The Hunter Valley is the 6th most visited place in Australia attracting more than 2.5 million people annually.

Local Employers include:

- Coal & Allied Industries Limited, managed by Rio Tinto (part of Rio Tinto Coal Australia) and running three mining operations;

- Xstrata Coal NSW, NSW's largest coal producer and a subsidiary of Xstrata. The company operates 10 mining operations in the Hunter Valley.
- Anglo Coal Australia Pty Ltd
- Hunter Valley Energy Coal Limited (a wholly owned subsidiary of BHP Billiton).
- AMCI Holdings Australia Pty Limited
- Bloomfield Collieries Pty Limited
- Camberwell Coal Pty Limited; Centennial Coal Company Limited
- Donaldson Coal Pty Limited
- Gloucester Coal Ltd; Lake Coal (Road Coal Only)
- Muswellbrook Coal Co Ltd
- Southland Coal Pty Ltd
- White Mining Limited.

Useful links:

<http://www.winecountry.com.au/Content/?ids=LocalCommunities>

<http://www.huntermvalleyguide.com/places.php>

VICTORIA

Bendigo

Bendigo is the second largest inland city and fourth most populous city in Victoria and offers easy access to great sporting, shopping and cultural activities just 90 minutes away in the state's capital of Melbourne.

With a population of nearly 90,000 people, the city boasts beautiful heritage buildings and leafy Victorian streetscapes.

Bendigo is most notable for its gold mining heritage. Since 1851, over 22 million ounces of gold have been extracted from goldmines, making it the highest producing 19th Century goldfield in Australia.



City Centre



Queen Elizabeth Oval

The city is serviced by major rail and air links, boasts the largest regional hospital in Victoria, and has a range of public and private schools, including Melbourne's LaTrobe University and Regional Institute of TAFE campuses.

Useful sites:

<http://www.bendigo.vic.gov.au/>

<http://www.bendigotourism.com.au/>

SOUTH AUSTRALIA

Leigh Creek

On the edge of the desert, to the west of the northern Flinders Ranges, Leigh Creek is a coal mining town with just 300 residents, most of who are employed by the local coal mine, operated by Babcock and Brown Power, Australia's largest ASX-listed electricity generation business. Most others either work at the Leigh Creek Area School (catering for about 170 primary and secondary students) or Leigh Creek Hospital, providing 24-hour casualty and emergency facilities.

The current town is actually 13kms further south than the original town – it was moved in 1982 to enable expansion of the Coal Mine. This means that most of the facilities and buildings in the town are only a little over 20 years old, with relatively modern designs.

The coal mine produces more than 2.5 million tonnes to fire its power station at Port Augusta and supplying more than 40 per cent of South Australia's energy needs.

Since the early 1990s, significant changes occurred in Leigh Creek. Massive restructuring of mining operations resulted in the reduction of a workforce of over 750 to about 200. The township also became a lot smaller. The population dropped from about 2500 in 1987 to approximately 300 today. The loss of residents also resulted in the loss of many services.

Whilst quality primary school education is on offer, high school students lack subject choice which has made education at the Leigh Creek Area School not the ideal option for many students. Many parents have to send their children away at 13 years old, to get a good education in Adelaide or regional cities like Port Augusta.

With no major medical facilities in town, a simple medical procedure may require a trip to Adelaide, which means a round trip of about 1200 km.

A note of interest however is that all houses were built facing north and south, together with more than 250,000 native trees and shrubs to counter the impact of temperatures regularly rising past 40C in summer.

Useful Links:

<http://www.users.on.net/~lcvic/>

<http://www.southaustralia.com/FlindersRangesOutback.aspx>

<http://www.oca.sa.gov.au/>

Roxby Downs

Roxby Downs, 570km north of Adelaide in central South Australia, was purpose-built in the late 1980's to service the massive Olympic Dam mine now owned by BHP Billiton.

With a resident population of 4500 and another 900 commuting workers who drive or FIFO, it boasts an average age of 29 years (28 per cent under 15), and one of the highest birth rates in Australia.

Whilst in a very remote location, the town does provide a wide range of community facilities and government services, including:

- One of the largest area schools in South Australia.
- A 10-bed hospital, with accident and emergency, community midwife, doctors, dentist, chiropractor, hearing services and a resident physiotherapist.
- Visiting health services including an occupational therapist, speech pathologist, dietician and podiatrist.
- Two playgroups and two childcare centres.
- Large network of sporting clubs, plus a golf club, tennis and squash courts bowling green and tavern.
- Public swimming pool with toddler pool and water slide.
- Shopping centre with newsagency, pharmacy, a gift, clothing & jewellery store, hairdressers, hardware, furniture, electrical, nursery, auto accessories, video store, photo processing and a Woolworths supermarket.

The town is serviced by a good bitumen road and regular flights to Adelaide. The nearest regional centre is Port Augusta (256km).

Aside from the immediate services and facilities of the township, the majority of employment is generated by the Olympic Dam mine site. The site operates as a residential operation but FIFO is available for those working for sub-contractors. Additionally, some elect to operate on a drive in, drive out arrangement to other locations such as Whyalla and Port Augusta, staying at the camp during shift.

Useful Links

<http://www.roxbydowns.com/>

<http://www.roxbydowns.communityguide.com.au/>

<http://www.tafesa.edu.au/home.aspx>

Whyalla

Located about 400kms north of Adelaide near the top of Spencer Gulf, Whyalla has a population of some 22,000 people and was built on the back of mining, agriculture and manufacturing.

Whyalla was founded in 1901 as a port for shipping iron ore extracted from the nearby Middleback Ranges. BHP had a massive impact on the town's growth, processing natural resources, producing steel and (until the mid 1970s) building ships. The result is a highly skilled workforce and spin-off industries in steel fabrication, manufacturing, construction, hydraulics and more.

The two major resource-related industries in town are steelmaking (OneSteel) and Santos' fractionation plant located at Port Bonython. Liquid hydrocarbons are pumped 659kms from the Cooper Basin oil and gas fields, where they are processed into crude oil, condensate, propane, ethane and butane.

Whyalla has become more widely recognised as a major hub and service centre for the region catering for major contracts, such as the Alice Springs to Darwin railway, the Port Augusta power station and the Olympic Dam copper/uranium mine.

Whyalla is regarded as a friendly, thriving place and also gateway to the pristine coastline and outback wilds of Eyre Peninsula.

Whyalla Hospital has more than 80 staffed beds (including two hospice units) catering for accident and emergency, surgical, theatre, women's and children's and high dependency. Additional services include:

20-bed day surgery unit, community, mental health, domiciliary care, palliative care, physiotherapy, occupational therapy and speech pathology.

There are more than 15 GPs, three pharmacies and a selection of dentists, orthodontists, chiropractors, physiotherapists, optometrists and other specialist health care providers. Whyalla Aged Care employs almost 170 people and offers a range of facilities and accommodation options for elderly residents.

Whyalla Westlands is the largest undercover shopping centre in regional SA, with department stores, popular franchise outlets, supermarkets and a food hall. A number of other shopping strips are also located throughout the city, and Whyalla Cinema shows all the latest releases. Whyalla Leisure Centre has a 25m indoor heated swimming pool, squash and racquetball courts, sports hall, weightlifting facilities and the all-important cafe. Classes include aqua aerobics, circuits, aero boxing, tai chi, and swimming.

There's an array of childcare centres, pre-schools and primary schools, plus four high schools. If you're keen on returning to studies, TAFE SA has a campus here and so does the University of South Australia (attracting students from across regional SA but also as far afield as interstate and overseas). It's the largest uni campus in country SA and home to UniSA's Centre for Regional Engagement, offers fields as diverse as business and accounting to nursing and arid lands technology.

Useful Links:

<http://www.whyalla.com.au/>

WESTERN AUSTRALIA

Geraldton

Geraldton has an enviable coastal location, only 424 kms north of Perth, the state's capital. It has a population of just over 40,000 making it the fourth largest city in Western Australia.

Today, the city is an important centre for mining, fishing, wheat, sheep and tourism, with major infrastructure projects currently under construction generating hundreds of job opportunities. The Oakajee Port and Railway project approved in 2009 by the Western Australian Government, for example, will service the iron ore mining industry and open further expansion opportunities for a number of organisations.

The city boasts mature infrastructure and services including the local Library, open seven days a week and providing free access to the Internet. It is also serviced by most phone companies including Telstra, Vodafone, and Optus who all provide 3G network services.

Other facilities include the Geraldton Regional Hospital (providing 66 acute beds, 24-hour emergency services and acute medical, surgical/pediatric and maternity wards), two public and three private schools, university, TAFE and community education providers.

With a rugged coastline, long sandy beaches, coral reefs and a warm climate, Geraldton residents are drawn to the outdoors with popular pastimes such as fishing, swimming, windsurfing, sand-boarding, sports, diving, and four-wheel-driving.



Local Employers:

Major resources companies include The Midwest Corporation, Murchison Metals and Gindalbie Metals. In 2009 the trio formed an alliance to develop the region's growing iron ore industry.

Useful sites:

<http://www.cgg.wa.gov.au/>

<http://www.geraldtontourist.com.au/>

Kalgoorlie-Boulder

If you've heard the term, 'Eureka' - which these days is typically used to express a 'great find' or 'aha moment' - it has its origins squarely in Kalgoorlie. Paddy Hannan used the term in 1893 when he stumbled upon a large nugget of gold, igniting one of this country's great gold rushes.

Together with his prospecting partners, Tom Flanagan and Dan O'Shea, Hannan filed a Reward Claim, leading to hundreds of men swarming to the area in search of gold and Kalgoorlie, originally called Hannan's, was born.

Kalgoorlie, known as Kalgoorlie-Boulder is a city in the Goldfields-Esperance region of the state and is located 595Kms east-northeast of Perth. Also dubbed the "Golden Mile", it has a population of 28,246, making it the largest urban centre in the Goldfields-Esperance region and the fifth-largest in Western Australia.

Gold and nickel mining have been major industries ever since, and today employs about one-quarter of Kalgoorlie's workforce and generates a significant proportion of its income.

Kalgoorlie also boasts one of the biggest open cut gold mines in the world, which is operated by Kalgoorlie Consolidated Gold Mines and at approximately 3.6 kms long, 1.6 kms wide and 512 metres deep, it is so large it can be seen from space. Dubbed 'The Super Pit', it was created by Alan Bond, who bought up a number of old mine leases in order to get the land area needed. Every now and again the digging reveals an old shaft containing abandoned equipment and vehicles from the earlier mines.



The mine operates 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, and a visitor centre overlooks it. The mine blasts at 1:00 pm every day, unless winds would carry dust over the town. Each of the massive trucks carries 225 tonnes of rock and the round trip takes about 35 minutes, most of that time being the slow uphill haul. Employees must live in Kalgoorlie; it is not a fly in, fly out operation. The mine is expected to be productive until about 2017.

Since 1992, Kalgoorlie is home to the 'Diggers and Dealers' conference, held annually in August. It is Australia's premier international mining conference.¹

A bustling busy regional centre, Kalgoorlie-Boulder offers an extensive network of bus, rail and air services linking through to Perth, the eastern states and the nearby coastal town of Esperance, a major recreational centre called Goldfields Oasis, including a 50m indoor swimming pool, children's pool, multi-purpose indoor and outdoor courts, playing fields and gymnasium, together with sporting associations offering AFL, cricket, netball, soccer, tennis, hockey, swimming, basketball, dancing, bowls, horse racing & trotting and touch football. There are nine primary schools and four secondary schools, Curtin University of Technology, including the Western Australia School of Mines and the Curtin VTEC (Vocational Education Centre).

For its population size, Kalgoorlie is recognized as having more pubs per head of population anywhere in the world – 25 pubs in fact.

There is good shopping along Hannan and Burt Streets with a mixture of retail outlets and shop fronts; supermarket chains Coles, Woolworths and IGA; department stores K-Mart and Target.

Like its other famous gold-rush mining town, Broken Hill in New South Wales, temperatures can be extreme with long stints at 40+ degrees experienced in the January and February months. By contrast winters can be cool with July average maximum and minimum temperatures being 16.5 and 4.8 degrees respectively.

Local employers:

Local employers include Barrick Gold Australia, KCGM Australia and BHP Billiton Nickel West.

Useful Links:

<http://www.kalbould.wa.gov.au/>

<http://www.kalgoorlie.info/>

<http://www.superpit.com.au>

Karratha

Located just over 1,500kms north of Perth and 850kms south of Broome along the North West Coastal Highway, Karratha is a town adjoining the port of Dampier in the Pilbara region.

Developed in the 1960's to accommodate the processing and exportation workforce of the Hamersley Ironing mining company, and later in the 1980's, the petroleum liquefied natural gas operations of the North West Shelf Venture, the town's name means 'good country' or 'soft earth' in the local Aboriginal language.

Karratha's economic base includes the iron ore operations of Rio Tinto, sea-salt mining, ammonia export operations, and Woodside's largest resource development and newest Natural Gas project called Pluto LNG, which is situated adjacent the existing North West Shelf LNG facility.



Located along pristine coastline, Karratha is large and its facilities are modern. The city centre offers take-away food outlets such as McDonalds and KFC, grocery stores Woolworths and Coles and boasts the largest shopping centre in the Pilbara, Centro Karratha. The centre has major food and grocery retailers and department store chains.

Close by, there is a smaller centre called Karratha Village, which has health services including pharmacy, medical and dental practices. There is a hospital in the town also.

Useful Links:

http://www.discoverwest.com.au/western_australia/karratha.html

<http://www.pilbaracoast.com/en/default.htm>

Kununurra

Kununurra is a town in the far northern of the state, located at the eastern side of the Kimberley Region approximately 37 kms from the Northern Territory. It was built on Lake Kununurra, the flooded section of the Ord River valley between the Ord Diversion Dam and the Argyle Dam 55 km upstream.

With 3,748 residents, many of whom are Indigenous Australians, it is the largest town in Western Australia north of Broome and more than 3,000 kms from Perth and 780kms from Darwin by road, so in a word, isolated!

The regional centre however is surrounded by some of the most pristine and stunning country that Australia has to offer with ready access to Kimberley's and the Bungle Bungles.

The largest employer in the industry located here is Rio Tinto, who operates the Argyle Diamond Mine, employing around 750 people on a combination fly in, fly out and residential arrangement. The mine has produces 20 million carats annually since its inception in 1985 and is famous for 'the pink diamond'.

As a resident, you have the following facilities and services:

- Kununurra District High School comprising a primary school and high school teaching up to year 10, and up to year 12 via distance education. It also has a number of additional smaller schools including St Joseph's primary school and the Barramundi School.
- Local hospital, birthing centre, emergency home and community care, dentist, occupational therapy, outpatients, paediatrics, pathology, physiotherapy, radiography, speech therapy and general surgery.
- Library, leisure centre including a 25 metre pool and a range of playgroups.
- Daily and weekly flight services between Darwin, Broome and Perth.

Be aware that the climate can be extreme, with up to four months of high humidity and temperatures above 40 degrees. The other eight months are less so, with minimum temperatures of around 14 degrees and maximum around 30 degrees.

Useful Links:

<http://www.kununurratourism.com/en/default.htm>

<http://www.argylediamonds.com.au/>

Mount Newman

The founder of Mount Newman, Stan Hilditch went off in search of manganese in 1957 and instead discovered one of the largest mineral deposits of iron ore in Australia, located in the West Australian Pilbara region.

Newman is now home to the largest open-cut iron ore mine in the world - BHP Billiton's Mt Whaleback mine, measuring a staggering 5.5km in length.

With a population of 7,000 people servicing the Mt Whaleback mine and smaller nearby mines plus a FIFO workforce numbering around 4000, BHP Billiton Iron Ore exports more than 124 million tonnes of iron ore from the region each year.

Newman is located inland – 458kms south east of Port Hedland and more than 1,000kms north of Perth. Put simply, the town is remote! More than 200 days of the year are about 30C and nearly 30 days on average a year reach past the 40C mark.

As you would expect of a remote residential mine site town, the town is a social hub and great for raising young families.

Not only that, but you have the beautiful Marble Bar and Karajini National Park a short two hour drive away. Karajini National Park is a National Park centred in the Hamersley Ranges of the Pilbara region and is the second largest national park in Western Australia (the largest being Rudall River National Park). Million years of erosion have created the winding jagged gorges and beautiful swimming holes. The National Park has varying levels of hiking difficulty, from easy strolls along spectacular lookouts to paths among sheer rock cliffs crystal clear pools and cascading waterfalls.

Useful links:

<http://newman-wa.org/index.php>

Port Hedland

Located on the coast in WA's Pilbara Region, Port Hedland is a busy industrial hub with all the facilities you'd expect in a town of 15,000 people.

BHP Billiton is the major employer, exporting 70 million tonnes of iron ore annually via its iron ore processing and shipping facilities. The company's massive Mt Whaleback mine, 400km to the south of town, is the biggest single-pit, open-cut ore mine in the world.

Likewise, Dampier Salt produces more than three million tonnes of industrial salt annually for export from solar salt ponds. Smaller companies export manganese, copper and tantalum.

The town's facilities and services include:

- Five pre-primary schools, six public and private primary schools, Hedland Senior High School and two campuses of Pilbara TAFE.
- Port Hedland Hospital, offering a stack of services (see link below).
- The JD Hardie Recreation Centre: indoor and outdoor fitness activities and sports for all ages, a school holiday program for kids and special events during term time.

Local activities include fishing, tennis, golf, whale and turtle spotting.

Useful links:

<http://www.porthedland.wa.gov.au/>

<http://www.phcci.com.au/>

Tom Price

Located just over 1600km north of Perth in the Pilbara region of WA, the 2770 population of Tom Price has a median age of just 29, reflecting the young workforce on Rio Tinto's Tom Price mine and the town's family-orientated community.

Facilities include a good-sized supermarket, bank, GP, hospital, two primary schools, a secondary school, TAFE and several motels and restaurants. There's also a friendly visitor information centre, an Olympic-sized pool, an open-air cinema in summer and a stack of sports on offer, from motocross and speedway to netball and soccer. Flight access is via shuttle bus to Paraburdoo Airport, 70km away.

Mount Tom Price (the town, the mine and the mountain) takes its name from the vice-president of US steel company Kaiser Steel. Mr Tom Price was a major supporter of the opening of the Pilbara region.

The region is also renowned for its explosion of colour during wildflower season each year.

Useful links:

<http://www.ashburton.wa.gov.au/visit-ashburton/tom-price/>