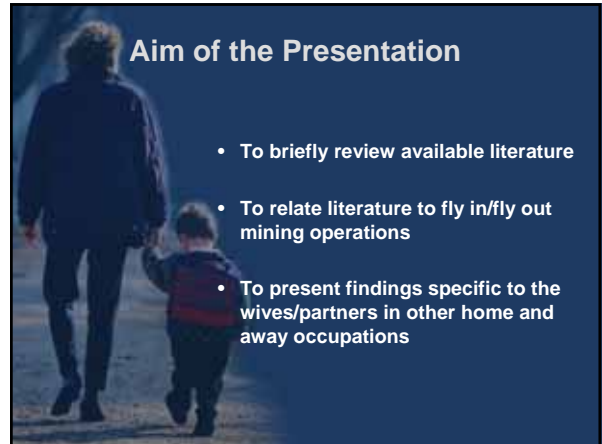




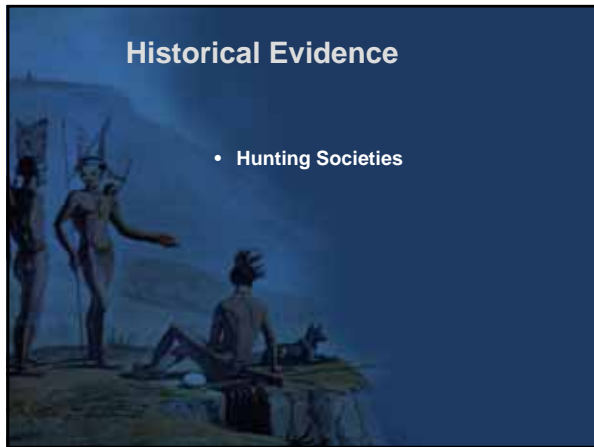
The Intermittent Husband - Impact of Home and Away Occupations on Wives/Partners

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Aim of the Presentation

- To briefly review available literature
- To relate literature to fly in/fly out mining operations
- To present findings specific to the wives/partners in other home and away occupations



Historical Evidence

- Hunting Societies



Home and Away Occupations

- Military
- Transportation (road, rail, air and sea)
- Construction
- Sales
- Corporate travellers (executive and middle management)
- Mining/Exploration



Incidence of Work Related Absence

- Australia - estimates 1 million
- US - 33% of workforce



Intermittent Husband Syndrome



TRIAD OF SYMPTOMS

- Anxiety
- Tension
- Depression



(Morice J & Taylor R, 1978, New Society)

Intermittent Husband Syndrome





PARTING
Anxiety, tearfulness, depression

REUNION
Anxiety, tension, anger, recrimination

(Morice J & Taylor R, 1978, New Society)


Fly – Drive In/Out Mining



Fly – Drive In/Out Mining

- 1960's oil fields (Moomba)
- 1980's gold
- 1991 WA 26 mines 4220 workers
- 1998 WA 41 mines 11300 workers
- 2001 WA 47
- 2001 QLD 10, NT 5, TAS 1

(Storey, 1990)




Fly – Drive In/Out Mining

FACTORS ENCOURAGING:

- Substantially reduced capital expenditure
- Quality and costs of communication
- Lower staff turnover & absenteeism
- Access to larger labour pool
- Preference for metropolitan living

(Storey, 1990's)



Fly – Drive In/Out Mining

Factors inhibiting town construction

- Costs of building new resource towns
- Long lead time for town approvals
- Administrative implications of managing mine and town
- Environmental implications

(Storey, 1990)



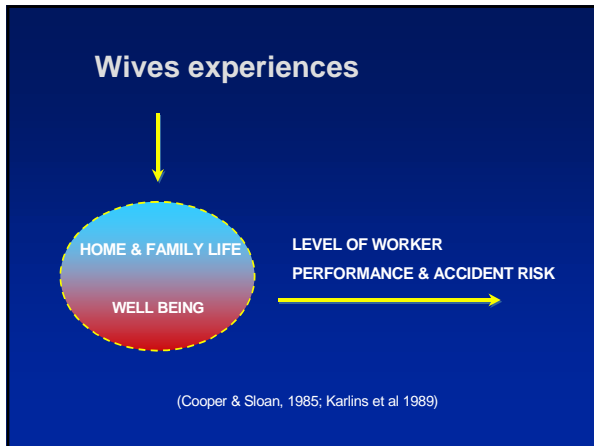
Fly – Drive In/Out Mining

Regional Issues

- Little economic benefit to region
- Lower regional employment and income
- Regional population decline
- Absence of government policies for regional development

(Storey, 1990)





Evidence from mining

NEGATIVE

- Increased family responsibility on wives
- Being a one parent family
- Resentment and marital conflict
- Readjustment on return of husband

(La Forte, 1991; Houghton, 1993)

Evidence from mining

POSITIVE

- Quality time with family
- Family relocation not required
- Financial rewards
- Wives pursue own career

(La Forte, 1991, Houghton, 1993)

Evidence from mining

- Regular partings and reunions require continual readjustment in daily routines and family roles
- Household responsibilities of all parties constantly changing
- Technological advances in communication but still difficulty contacting husbands

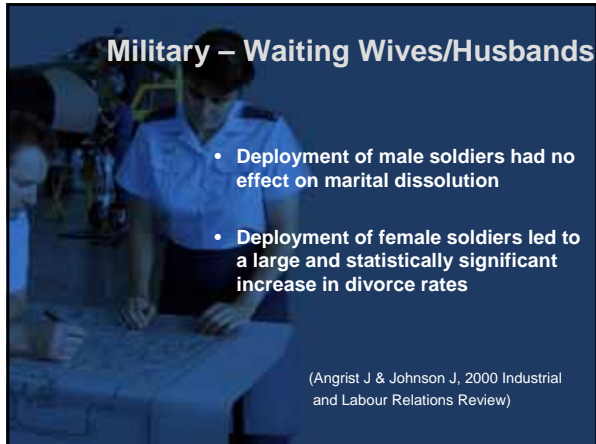
A Sibbel, Edith Cowan University, Australia's Mining Monthly, July 2002

Evidence from other occupations

Military – Waiting Wives

- Commonly identified feelings:
 - Increased demands of caring for children
 - Increased number of illnesses
 - Anger
 - Frustration over absent husband

(Abe et al, 1986; Bey & Lange, 1974, Rohall et al 1999; Angrist & Johnson, 2000)



Military – Waiting Wives/Husbands

- Deployment of male soldiers had no effect on marital dissolution
- Deployment of female soldiers led to a large and statistically significant increase in divorce rates

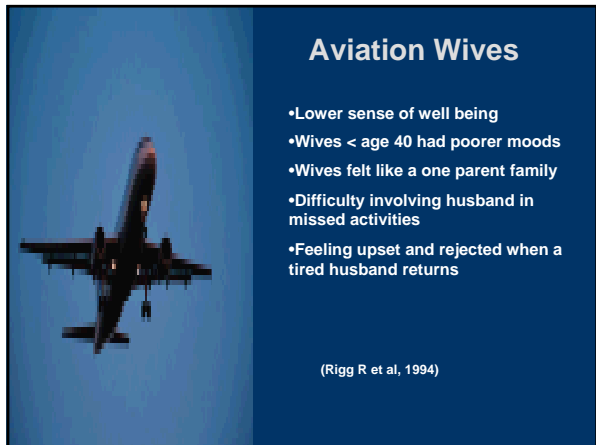
(Angrist J & Johnson J, 2000 Industrial and Labour Relations Review)



Military – Organisational Support

- Younger officers vs older officers
- Soldiers morale
- Satisfaction with resources to communicate with home
- Perceptions of leader/management support for family difficulties

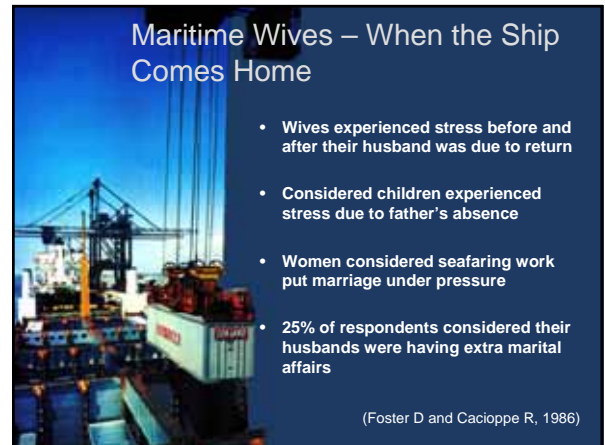
(Rohall D et al 1999, Journal of Political and Military Sociology)



Aviation Wives

- Lower sense of well being
- Wives < age 40 had poorer moods
- Wives felt like a one parent family
- Difficulty involving husband in missed activities
- Feeling upset and rejected when a tired husband returns

(Rigg R et al, 1994)



Maritime Wives – When the Ship Comes Home

- Wives experienced stress before and after their husband was due to return
- Considered children experienced stress due to father's absence
- Women considered seafaring work put marriage under pressure
- 25% of respondents considered their husbands were having extra marital affairs

(Foster D and Cacioppe R, 1986)



Australian Seafarers

Missing Home

- *"Being unable to contact family, worry about family sickness or difficulties with childrens' schooling."*

Home Work Interface

- *"Readjusting to fitting into home life again on returning home and readjusting returning to sea. This adjustment takes the first week on returning home and a similar period on returning to sea."*
- *"Feeling like an outsider on returning home."*

The project was supported by the Australian Maritime Safety Authority



SOCIAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL IMPACT OF HOME AND AWAY OCCUPATIONS ON WIVES AND PARTNERS OF GREAT BARRIER REEF PILOTS

The project was supported by the Australian Maritime Safety Authority



Great Barrier Reef Pilots Wives

- Sample (n=35 wives, response rate 60%)
- Approximately 50% of wives were aged <50 years
- Mostly married, Well educated
- 70% of the sample currently employed
- 20% had children < 18 years old

(Parker et al, 1999)

Great Barrier Reef Pilots Wives

- Majority experienced stress at least "some of the time"
- 60% reported difficulties coping with stress – altered eating coping mechanism
- 14% were anxious at the time of the study
- 9% considered depressed
- Substantial number of wives perceived a lack of emotional or informational support

Great Barrier Reef Pilots Wives

NEGATIVE

- Last minute changes to schedules
- Transition between home and sea and vice versa most difficult
- Impact greater when they were younger with young children
- Making decisions in partner's absence
- Difficulty with teenage family problems

Great Barrier Reef Pilots Wives

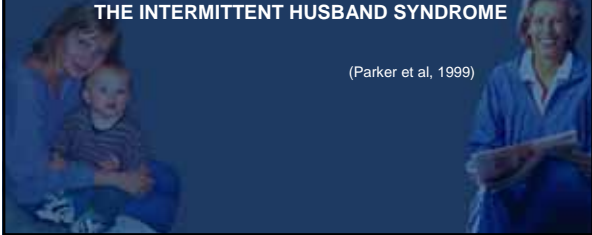
POSITIVE

- Quality time with husband during breaks at home
- Able to pursue own interests/career

Conclusions

- A substantial number of Great Barrier Reef pilots wives appeared to be experiencing symptoms of anxiety, stress and depression consistent with **THE INTERMITTENT HUSBAND SYNDROME**

(Parker et al, 1999)



Recommendations

- Family support groups
- Email for communication
- Family use of industry counselling services
- Eliminate last minute roster changes
- Educational approach to work/family issues
- Companies to be proactive in the family support process



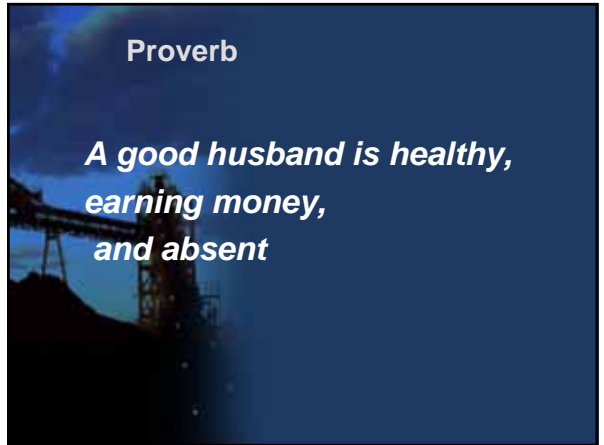
Future directions – Mining industry

- What are the experiences of mining wives in Queensland?
- Does the industry have a support program in place?
- What is the utilisation rate of support services?
- What are the 'best practice' options in terms of family?
- Does successful family coping increase worker productivity?



Proverb

*A good husband is healthy,
earning money,
and absent*



OUT RESEARCH UNDERGROUND COAL MINING



Functional fitness

Survey of policies, practices & safety of




Work-rest arrangements
focus on FIFO and 12 hour
shifts



Fly – Drive In/Out Mining



The slide features a dark blue background with a photograph of a large mining conveyor belt system on the left side. The conveyor belt is illuminated, showing its structure and the flow of material. The rest of the slide is a solid dark blue color.

Mining Issues

- Divorce rates
- Working wives
- Remoteness
- Communication
- Structure of industry – cyclic boom/bust
- Large international companies