FREE BRIEFING FOR WA MINING SERVICE PROVIDERS

Working harder, not smarter

Mining productivity has fallen five years in a row. Most of that is at the pit. This briefing is about the part a supplier can fix: its own office.

5 yrs
of falling mining productivity. Mining had the biggest fall of any industry in 2024–25: −3.3%[1]

+5.6%
more hours worked in mining in 2024–25, for 1.1% less output[1]

6–9
separate tools many Australian small business owners juggle just to get basic tasks done[3]

The national picture

The ABS measures productivity as how well an industry turns labour and capital into output. In 2024–25 mining's productivity fell 3.3%, its fifth straight annual fall. Output dropped 1.1% while hours worked rose 5.6%.[1] The Productivity Commission summed up the whole economy in one line: *"we are working harder and longer, but we are not working smarter."*[2]

> **Be clear about the cause.** The ABS puts mining's fall down to weather, maintenance shutdowns and the extra hours needed to get production back. Office paperwork didn't cause it, and a supplier can't fix the pit. What a supplier does control is how many hours its own office spends keeping the work moving.

Why it lands on a supplier's office

People are scarce and expensive. WA's resources sector employed about 143,200 people in February 2026, and the 2026–31 project pipeline needs 8,177 new operating workers on top.[4] 87% of mining employees earn over $1,500 a week,[5] so every office hire you make competes with mine-site pay.

Admin caps growth. 48% of Australian small and medium businesses walked away from a growth opportunity in the past year for lack of time or people.[3] For a supplier, that is the next site, crew or tender.

The work lives in a person. Of 81 WA mining admin ads we read this year, **72%** involve mobilisation or travel, yet only **14%** name any software.[6] The ads list the jobs because one person carries the process.

HOW A 30–200 STAFF SUPPLIER RUNS TODAY

- Each new worker typed into the roster, tracker, matrix and client portal.
- Services on a whiteboard, parts in Excel, purchases by email.
- The client report rebuilt by hand every month.

WHAT THAT COSTS

- One person in the middle of 5–10 systems.
- Errors found at the Tier-1 gate or by the client.
- A new admin hire for every new site.

One system instead of 5–10

Office software put the paperwork on a computer in the 1990s, but a person still carries it from one program to the next. 59% of Australian small and medium businesses say their software runs in silos, costing about **7 hours a week** in re-keying and checking.[7] AI tools on top don't fix it: only 23% of businesses say theirs are fully connected to their other systems.[8]

One record, used by every desk

Desk	Entered once, used everywhere
People & Workforce	Worker details go in once; the mobilisation pack, flights and timesheet use them.
Safety & Compliance	Matrix and expiry alerts from the same record; audit pack ready for WorkSafe (LGIRS).
Operations & Maintenance	A service due becomes a booking, a parts check and a maintenance record.
Commercial & Finance	Client reports build from existing records. Xero or MYOB stays your accounts system.

> **The difference.** A faster keyboard speeds up the hand-offs. One system removes them: AI agents do the paperwork, your team signs off, and you add the next site without the next admin hire.

What it is worth to a 30–200 staff supplier (modelled, per year)

People & Workforce	Safety & Compliance	Operations & Maintenance	Commercial & Finance	All four desks[9]
$169K–$291K	$104K–$251K	$112K–$207K	$170K–$385K	$555K–$1.1M+

Count your systems — tick what your office runs today

- ☐ Paper or Excel timesheets
- ☐ Excel mobilisation / onboarding tracker
- ☐ Training matrix in a spreadsheet
- ☐ Paper pre-start and SOP books
- ☐ Word or paper incident forms
- ☐ A separate login for each Tier-1 client portal
- ☐ Whiteboard or Excel service schedule
- ☐ Parts list in Excel or someone's memory
- ☐ Purchase requests by email chain
- ☐ Paper site diary or WhatsApp group
- ☐ Tender tracker in Excel
- ☐ Client reports built by hand each month

The next step

Ticked 6 or more? Then someone in your office spends part of every day copying between those systems. Email Guy your number and we'll estimate the hours it costs you, on your numbers. Or start a 30-day free trial (no credit card) at app.drilledger.com.au/signup.

Or take the 2-min Scorecard at drilledger.com.au/scorecard.

Guy Kennedy, founder · guy@drilledger.com.au · 08 6244 7100 · DrilLedger is one system for a WA mining supplier's office, built in Perth by a founder who started on the drills.

Sources. 1. ABS, Estimates of Industry Multifactor Productivity 2024–25 (Feb 2026), hours-worked basis. 2. Productivity Commission, Quarterly productivity bulletin, June 2026. 3. Intuit, The Growth Gap, reported in the AFR, Nov 2025. 4. AREEA, Resources and Energy Workforce Forecast 2026–2031 (Oct 2026). 5. Bankwest Curtin Economics Centre, WA's Resources Sector in Transition (June 2026). 6. DrilLedger analysis of 81 WA mining admin job ads, Apr–Jun 2026; see our job-ad brief for method. 7. MYOB, The Digital Disconnection Challenge (2022, 1,531 Australian businesses). 8. Decidr, The state of AI in Australian business (2026). 9. DrilLedger Agent ROI Master (recovered admin labour, not a quote). Figures are modelled, not results from paying customers.