

Transcript

Station: **4BC** Date: **03/04/2009**

Program: **BREAKFAST** Time: **07:07 AM**

Compere: **JAMIE DUNN, IAN CALDER
AND COURTNEY BURNS**

Item: **SARINA RUSSO, EMPLOYMENT SERVICES PROVIDER,
CLARIFIES THAT SARINA RUSSO GROUP IS NOT CLOSING
AGENCIES IN QUEENSLAND, AND STATES HER INTENTION
TO CONTINUE SERVING QUEENSLAND JOB SEEKERS
DESPITE CHANGES TO THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT'S
AWARDING OF CONTRACTS.**

INTERVIEWEES: SARINA RUSSO, SARINA RUSSO GROUP

JAMIE DUNN: On the line I got Sarina Russo. G'day, Sarina.

SARINA RUSSO: Good morning, Jamie. How are you?

JAMIE DUNN: How are you? Lovely to speak to you, really.

SARINA RUSSO: Thank you very much for the opportunity to have a little chat with you this morning.

JAMIE DUNN: Yeah, but I mean, I would have - and you would have, I'm sure - you've had to close eleven of your job agencies...

SARINA RUSSO: [Interrupts] Well, that's not true.

JAMIE DUNN: That's not?

SARINA RUSSO: No, that's not true. I mean, you know, people like to speculate. We're not closing anything. What we're doing is we're having the opportunity to reassess and continue to serve the Queensland job seekers.

JAMIE DUNN: So, what's happened? Did you lose out on this government tender, is that...

SARINA RUSSO: Well, what has happened is that - what is really, really interesting is that as a Queenslander, we have been given enormous success in Victoria, and we're not recognised under the government contract like we have in the last 12 years.

JAMIE DUNN: Yes.

SARINA RUSSO: So, what I want to say to our audience, you know, I'm still in Queensland, we'll still serve job seekers, we'll still educate, we'll still train. You know, maybe a few of our staff will make choices to go to perhaps other job network providers.

Because, what has happened is, this contract is going to dislocate thousands and thousands of job seekers and also dislocate many employers. And so, I want to be strong as a group to be able to avoid all that dislocation, for the pain of the job seekers who, right now, are in pain.

I'm not in pain, my staff will survive; it's the job seekers in Queensland that we're concerned about.

IAN CALDER: So, Sarina...

SARINA RUSSO: And we want to continue helping them, Jamie.

IAN CALDER: So, what's actually happened, Sarina? Is - why all of a sudden is the government tender not coming your way? Or is it...

SARINA RUSSO: Well, that's what you've got to ask. I mean, that's not for me to ask. I am to say that the empi... the umpire has made a decision. We respect that.

JAMIE DUNN: Are we talking State Government or Federal Government?

SARINA RUSSO: No, we're talking about Federal Government, the Rudd Government.

JAMIE DUNN: Mmm.

SARINA RUSSO: The Rudd Government has different policies and you know, they make these decisions and we accept the umpire's decision.

Yes, we're disappointed that in this recessionary period that our services under this contract are not acknowledged the way it is happening in Victoria for us...

JAMIE DUNN: Yes.

SARINA RUSSO: ... but we're still a survivor; we've been going for 30 years. I mean, you're talking to an icon of jobs. And this morning, it's not about us.

This morning is, how can we help one of your listeners remove that pain, and for us to continue on helping them get that job?

JAMIE DUNN: So, you're going ahead full steam?

SARINA RUSSO: Absolutely, Jamie, and I'm delighted that you've given me this opportunity.

I mean, we've actually helped, in this current contract, something like 130,000 jobs - job seekers, 130,000 job seekers. And we've engaged with something like 75,000 employers, so we're strong.

You know, we will continue and we will continue serving Queensland and that's my passion. This is not about me being an angry leader. I'm not angry. You know, we have to be grateful for the things that we have and discipline our hurts and move forward.

JAMIE DUNN: I don't think I've ever seen you...

SARINA RUSSO: And that's what I'm all about, Jamie.

JAMIE DUNN: I've never seen you angry, tell you the truth.

SARINA RUSSO: No, I'm not angry; I'm very, very grateful for Queensland. Queensland's been very kind to us and right now we want to continue, you know, sort of helping these job seekers.

Do you know that unemployment right now is increasing so much? We can't cope with the registrations in our job network offices and we want to help them. It's about them, not about us.

You know, this is not about, you know, any sort of financial risk for us. We are financially strong. It's about continuing our passion and helping job seekers, you know, with the training, with their [indistinct].

JAMIE DUNN: [Interrupts] So, there'll be no closures, there'll just be just refocusing on what's going on.

SARINA RUSSO: Well, what we do is we do a renewal. In life, we all have little hiccups; we all have little bumps in the road. And as I share with my staff, you've got to be able to discipline the pain and say, what can we do here? Rather than focus on the pain, let's focus on the pleasure of helping job seekers, hundreds of thousands of them, right now who need our help.

JAMIE DUNN: All right.

SARINA RUSSO: And nothing has changed, Jamie, nothing.

JAMIE DUNN: Well, thank you for the time this morning, Sarina. And stay well, and I can tell you're going to stay positive.

SARINA RUSSO: And we can continue on helping you to get that job.

JAMIE DUNN: All right. Good on you, thanks, Sarina.

SARINA RUSSO: Thank you, Jamie. Bye.

* * **END** * *
