



RESQ

RAPAD EMPLOYMENT SERVICES

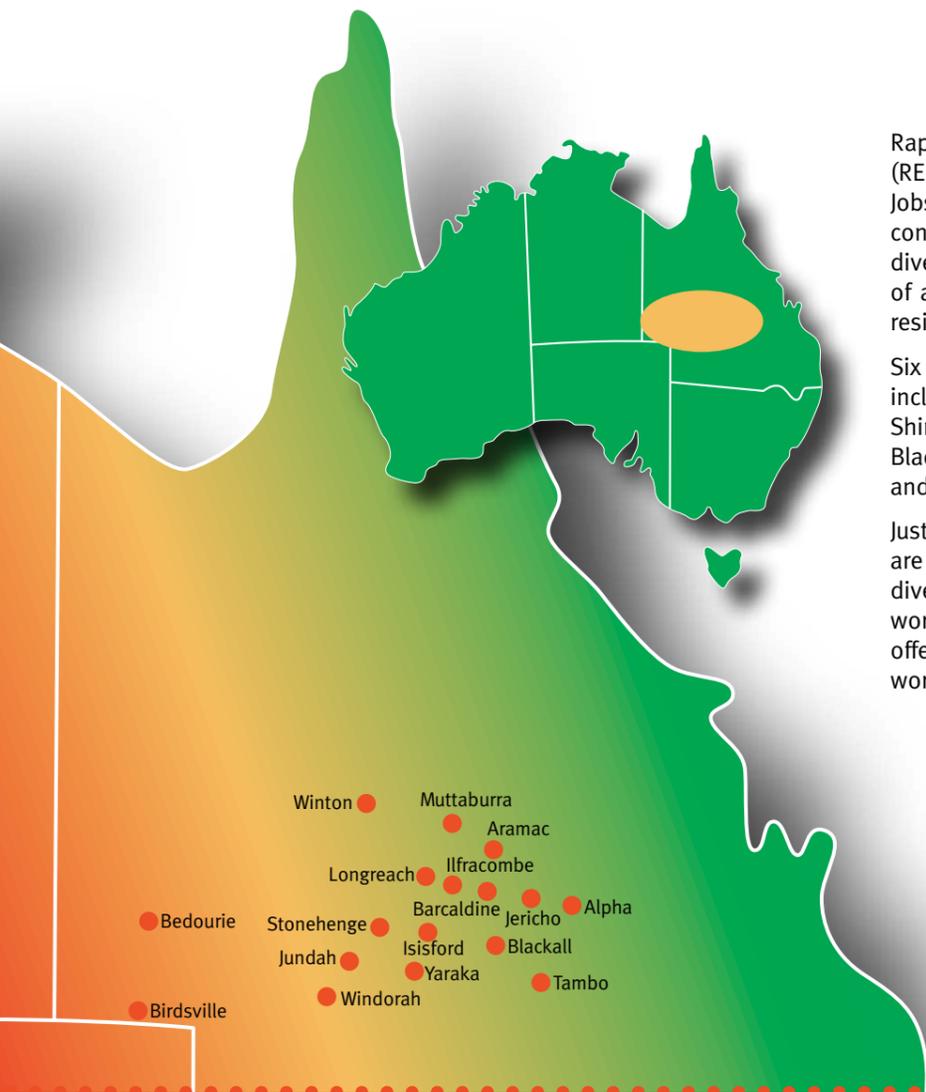
QUEENSLAND



2014 ANNUAL REVIEW



Our Region



Rapad Employment Services Queensland (RESQ) provides one of 60 national Remote Jobs and Communities Program (RJCP) contracts, covering one of the most vast and diverse of the geographic regions with an area of almost 400,000km² and just under 12,000 residents from a variety of backgrounds.

Six Regional Councils support the organisation including Longreach Regional Council, Winton Shire Council, Barcardine Regional Council, Blackall Regional Council, Barcoo Shire Council and Diamantina Shire Council.

Just ten staff (five permanent and five casual) are employed to cover this huge region and its diverse employment and training needs. They worked hard to service their communities, offering programs in 16 communities, and worked with 265 job seekers in the year.

Photography throughout this review generously supplied by Outback Pics Longreach www.outbackpics.com.au



Chairman's Message



Mr Rob Chandler
Mayor of Barcardine, Chairman of RAPAD and RESQ.

The Remote Area Planning and Development Board (RAPAD) in Longreach, in a joint venture with Employment Services Queensland (ESQ), was tasked in 2013 with establishing a successful program to service the Australian Government's Remote Jobs and Communities Program (RJCP) across Central West Queensland.

I am pleased to report RAPAD Employment Services Queensland (RESQ) came alive as the carrier of the RJCP and is effectively meeting the needs of our 15 communities within just one year of operation. For practical reasons Longreach is our operational hub. It's all about improved school attendance, real jobs and safer communities for both indigenous and non-indigenous people of the Central West.

The Board is proud to lead our highly skilled staff, with General Manager Tony Rayner providing the strategic link between our direction and the implementation of RESQ programs and activities.

Our first year of operation has seen us establish a strong well-staffed and well-managed organisation. We have good personnel, financial management and governance. Our newly appointed chartered accountants gave RESQ a clean audit result which reinforces the Board's confidence in the organisation.

As testament to our sound management and good outcomes, we have been continually invited to participate in other programs that aim to grow employment in our communities. I am very proud to see our weed eradication program showing potential to provide strong outcomes for communities, landholders and the environment, across the entire Lake Eyre Basin.

As a Board it is important that we help facilitate solid community programs through healthy partnerships. In 2014 and 2015 we will continue to advocate for consistent long term solutions for training and employment across the Central West and persistently try and educate decision makers on our challenges and needs.



David Arnold

Board Profiles



David Arnold
General Manager, Remote Area Planning and Development Board (RAPAD)

With over 10 years as General Manager at RAPAD, David Arnold brings a wealth of experience in regional development, stakeholder engagement and project management. A well-known Longreach resident, he expands his service to the Central West through his involvement on the RESQ Board.



Chris Martin

Chris Martin
Chief Executive Officer, Indigenous Job Connections (IJC)

Chris Martin has worked in Indigenous service provision across the Northern Territory and regional Queensland for the past 30 years. He is passionate about Indigenous empowerment and for the past six years has led IJC (an all-indigenous led organisation) toward financial and operational independence. IJC's involvement in establishing RESQ is another of those steps for his stakeholders.

Chris Hamilton,
Chief Executive Officer, Employment Services Queensland (ESQ)

An active member of Legacy and ex-serviceman with past operational deployments, Chris Hamilton has extensive skills in governance and strategy, team management, youth engagement, training and employment. He brings these skills with the further experience of leading a major and successful Job Services Australia (JSA) contract provider, ESQ, for the past four years.

Rapad Employment Services Queensland Staff



General Manager's Message



RAPAD Employment Services Queensland (RESQ) has had a heartening response since our formation in July 2013. In just twelve months engagement of our communities, business people, and Councils has been encouraging.

Job Seeker numbers across the Central West Region grew steadily to 200 mid-year and towards the end of the financial Year we were servicing 265 job seekers.

We have invested significant time and resources in our first twelve months building networks and engaging with employers and job seekers to earn their trust.

The core objectives of the Federal Government's Remote Jobs and Communities Program (RJCP) - creating real jobs, improving school attendance and making safer communities - have been activated through RESQ's first twelve months even with challenging social and economic times.

The ongoing drought is having significant impact on regional communities with a decline in real communities and making employment opportunities scarce across all sectors. Entry level jobs are the first to disappear and we have witnessed a very tight employment market as businesses contract and downsize to ride out this poor business period.

With a huge variety of clients from across a huge geographic area including small regional and rural towns under our care, RESQ's team has made sure to tailor care and support for each group to suit their economic, cultural and lifestyle circumstances.

We have successfully placed job seekers in the Retail, Hospitality, Civil Construction, Age Care, Child Care and Agricultural sectors. These placements resulted from developing appropriate career pathways and providing skilling and training aligned to Individual job seeker requirements as well as providing ongoing mentoring and post placement support for job seekers.

The commitment of our team to bring projects to fruition and the enthusiasm of participants to improve their lives, when an opportunity is presented, is impressive.

We have developed a very strong partnership with RAPAD Skilling to ensure that job seekers throughout the Central West Region have ready access to training and skilling delivered at local community level.

The RESQ team have developed and activated a diverse range of Community Projects throughout the Central West. Some big, like the Drought and Weed Project, and others small, like the Birdsville Gazebo and Leatherwork Group. But all delivering outcomes for participants and their communities. You can read about some of these projects in this Annual Review.

Our leadership team will continue in 2015 to represent our region to Government representatives toward finding long term solutions for our community's employment needs. Stable funding and tenure would ensure the success of our employment and training programs. This stability would allow RESQ to invest in longer term projects between job seekers and employers with productive outcomes for the region's future.

Mr Tony Rayner,
General Manager, RAPAD Employment Services Queensland (RESQ)



What to do when your passion is fashion

Young job seeker Fiona Bebb came back to Longreach with time on her hands. She wanted to work in events and fashion, but there is not a lot of opportunity for this passion in the country.

Fiona and her mum came in to see RESQ Employment Consultant Nikki Gay, looking for jobs, courses, anything that would help Fiona find a way to get into the 'game'.

Nikki sat down with Fiona and they worked through what she wanted to achieve.

"Nikki was great," Fiona enthused. "I'd never have found the course I've enrolled in or got the work experience."

"I'm doing my Certificate III in Event Management at TNQ TAFE remotely and I've been really lucky to work on two fashion events locally - the Lizzy Wagner Etiquette Course and the Way Out West Fashion Quest," Fiona explained.

"These events were fantastic. I got to help with co-ordinating the models and outfits, worked backstage to keep everything running smoothly and got lots of fashion tips too."

And it's let me practise what I'm learning at TAFE in the real world."

Nikki spoke with Irvine's Outfitters about possible work and Fiona was lucky enough to win a job in their shop.



Here she sells fashion and also does the merchandising and dresses the windows. All good skills when you are learning the events and fashion industries.

"I'm really busy now with my study and working. Nikki is mentoring me to make sure I stay on track. Studying is harder remotely and I appreciate her keeping me focussed," Fiona said.

"I've got a long way to go but I'd love to land a job in Brisbane down the track."



Blackall Community Mural not for Galahs

RESQ job seekers joined two professional artists, community volunteers and Blackall State School students to transform the western wall of the school's undercover sports area into a colourful mural featuring local plants and animals.

Project partner and manager, Louise Campbell of Red Ridge Interior Qld said the project brought together highly skilled artists with community members and job seekers on a nine day residency.

She explained, "It was great to see people thrive as they got involved in this art and community project".

"The wall was accessible by everyone so lots of people came down from the school and town to see the progress each day. Participants were amazed at the community interest in what they were doing", she said.

"It's fantastic how some appreciation by others can change your outlook."

The job seekers got involved in a variety of activities. They assisted with the daily set up and clean up, but also in helping with the initial mural design, painting on the wall and helping create the 3-D cut-outs.



Louise said the job seekers gained skills in organisation, paint preparation and clean up, and how to work on large space murals/painting.

"Participating as part of a team they started to understand that they had value in a work environment and this gave them confidence toward seeking more work when they returned home", she explained.

"So Blackall got a new permanent public art work, the school got protection from the hot western sun, and our job seekers took home job skills and all important confidence in themselves."

"Our thanks to RESQ for getting involved."

Staff Clinton Hall

Clinton Hall speaks softly but with firm undertones “I’ve been working around the bush all my life and there’s nothing these blokes can do or say, that I haven’t seen or heard before.”

“Most of them have had a hard row to hoe early on, but in the end you’ve got to put yesterday behind you and start today with the future in mind.”

“And I’m really proud that most of the blokes that I keep an eye on, get it after a while and start taking advantage of what’s available to them working with RESQ and me”.

Clinton is one of the supervisor/mentors employed by Rapid Employment Services Queensland (RESQ). He grew up on cattle stations in the Northern Territory, with parents who came onto poorly performing stations and improved them through hard work in weed control, stock management and employing and training top people.

He took much from their work ethic and has been running his own rural contracting businesses since he was 18 himself. Clinton’s skills range from building yards and fences to creating and managing a seed distribution business, being one of Australia’s top live export pregnancy testers and speyers and even sitting on company Boards. But he is still as down to earth as that young boy on the station.

“It all comes down to belief in yourself – and if I believe in these guys then they start to believe in themselves”, he said.

“We get all sorts registering with RESQ - they may never have had a job, maybe they’ve had a series of jobs but not been able to keep one, people with long term health issues or a physical disability or maybe some major trauma has happened in their life...”



But the one thing they have in common is they don’t have the self-confidence to believe they are worth a job.”

“And in my mind everyone deserves self-worth.”

“RESQ doesn’t give up on anyone, unless they give up on themselves” Clinton said. “We have so many options to help people get back into mainstream life.”

“At the moment I’m working with a group of guys learning weed control, which is a great long term skill in the Central West. We’re learning about safe handling and storage of chemicals, weed identification, GPS and grid mapping and lots of other things.”

“But it’s so much bigger than that. We’re learning that each of us makes up and contributes to the team – and if one of us doesn’t show, it leaves everyone else more work to do. We’re learning about appropriate work behaviour and language. About planning what we want to do, and putting enough time aside for work first, and including our social life around work – rather than the other way around!”, he laughed.

“RESQ is there to help – we arrange work gear, tools and PPE; health referrals if needed; contacts for accommodation and transport – overcoming the barriers to get our clients back to work and back into productive lives.”

Clinton has been instrumental in turning around lives with his tough but fair attitude and warm sense of humour.

Tanya Doran

RESQ colleague, Tanya Doran has been similarly successful.

A born carer, Tanya grew up with little to her advantage. A mum at an early age, she raised her two boys alone for 19 years, holding down a job and studying to improve herself at night.

Tanya earned her Bachelor of Learning Management in Early Childcare and began working in kindies and child care centres. She moved out to Longreach in 2010 with her new husband, following the work. With government cutbacks at one stage they found themselves without a job between them.

Tanya said “We weren’t going to let that defeat us, we chased and chased and would do anything to keep our independence”.

“I remember hubby was working at the pub, and I was working behind the counter of a bakery and standing there one day I thought – I’m a qualified teacher what am I doing here? But I already knew the answer – keeping food on the table and the family together.”

Tanya is a giver, she wants to make a difference.

She explained, “When RESQ started up I knew that their outreach program had my name on it. I love every minute as an employment consultant.”

Leatherwork project goes commercial

It started as a ‘Men’s Shed’ activity in Blackall and now the Leatherwork Group has become so popular it has become independent and expanded to Birdsville as well.

A group of long-term unemployed men got together to gain some confidence, practice their social communication and develop new habits toward time management and work routines.

The opportunity to create leather products in a group also created a safe environment for participants to share stories and for mentors to help discuss various barriers that may be interfering with gaining a job.

Along the way they have realised some trade skills, and created a range of leather work commercially in demand.

As their leatherworking skills developed the men approached Louise Campbell from Red Ridge Interior to help them approach Blackall Shire Council and North Queensland Cowboys NRL to purchase handworked leather key rings. They won a contract from each of them!

Now they are looking for new challenges and are practising creating whips and hat bands with fine detail and workmanship.

Recently the group have been taking their work to three different markets and will take commissions for special orders.



The latest plan is to start workshops to teach visitors to their communities how to make something special and unique that they can take home as a memento of their holiday.

Watching this group gain confidence and credibility in their communities and in the business sector is so rewarding for both the men themselves and their mentors.

They are creating real jobs through their own efforts that provide independence and a future.



“I know what it feels like to be unemployed and just how hard getting through each day can be. If I can co-ordinate programs that give people structure and habits for healthy choices, and skills and work readiness outcomes, then I’ve done a good thing.”

“RESQ is so flexible and helpful, including in my small communities where job options are few. Whether it is Muttaborra or Jericho, Blackall or Winton we talk to each of our clients to identify what activities and skills will help them and then find ways to activate them to success”, she said.

“We’ve had great success working in partnership with other groups like Red Ridge Interior. One of our programs started out as a couple of men learning basic leather work skills and now we have two groups – Birdsville and Winton – with Winton producing key rings they have successfully sold in bulk orders. They are now developing a range of products like hat bands and whips.”

“These are blokes who had no confidence, winning business credibility in their communities.”

“These sort of results make it worth the commitment, the patience, all the K’s each week. Brilliant!” she enthused.

RESQ Drought and Weed Project

The biggest impact on our communities' future, the debilitating ongoing drought across the Central West, has provided RESQ job seekers with one of our most popular and successful training and employment programs.

The RESQ Drought and Weed Project is a partnership between RESQ, all our Regional Councils, Desert Channels Natural Resource Management Group, Longreach Pastoral College and rural landholders.

Four groups of job seekers actively participated in the program this year, seeing around 40 students learn skills that can provide ongoing employment locally, with some winning ongoing paid work on properties in the Barcardine and Alpha area.

Project Manager Clinton Hall explained. "Job seekers complete two weeks of residential training and skilling at the Longreach Pastoral College. We encourage them to join in the residential program as it gives them additional time with their mentor away from home distractions to form new work habits."

"They have to commit to at least 20 hours a week in the program in a mixture of classroom, controlled environment and field work."

It's hot dusty work and takes a bit of commitment to stick with it, but the guys, and the girls, seem to understand what a great opportunity for a long term future these skills give them."

Some of the things we make sure they are safe and competent doing include handling and storage of



chemicals, weed identification, GPS and grid mapping," he explained.

"Knocking off a stand of Prickly Acacia, Parkinsonia or Rubber Vine - all nationally significant weeds - feels as good as a high score on your favourite X-Box game once you get your head into it."

Students are taught all the theory in the classroom and then practise the skills around the College in controlled environments.

Once teachers are confident they are safe and are confident with the basic skills, it's off to the long paddock, town common land parcels, graziers' properties and even National Parks, to help battle the weed infestations including locally problematic weeds such as rope and snake cactus.

Bill Chandler from Hillalong Station, Barcardine - one of the project partners - believes weed control is a great long term skill in the Central West.

"Woody weeds are a major economic threat for graziers and well trained and disciplined teams of weed sprayers are a very effective means of controlling and eradicating weeds," Bill said.

"This in turn improves productivity and the long term sustainability of the land."

Bill has had various teams of job seekers undertaking both training and paid work on Hillalong Station and is very pleased with the results and efforts to date.



Heavy vehicle ticket is a ticket to a job for life

When one end-loader costs upwards of \$300,000 to purchase and get operational, you have to be confident before you put a learner behind the wheel.

Managing Director of Suffren Moore Civil in Longreach, Richard Moore, is prepared to take that risk.

"How are they going to learn if I don't give them the opportunity", he said. "Living out here, the jobs are limited, but the good employees are few and far between too - they get stolen by the big towns on the coast."

"I've got to think about capacity building for the community, so I've got a pool of operators coming through. Council is looking for that too."

"One of my guys went back to RAPAD Training and did some upskilling. He came back a better operator."

"By giving these guys a break, I'm potentially giving them a future in the central west", Richard said.

"Keeping a family in town, spending their wages and contributing to the community through having their kids at school," he explained.

"I'm pleased to work with RESQ and RAPAD Training. I give these guys a break and hopefully they give back to me through becoming the next great employee."

"Any extra vehicle capacity we have, we give to the guys to practise", he said. "We do logged hours out at a private quarry so they are competent operators before they get their final hours on commercial jobs."



"You need 80 hours on a grader and 40 hours on a forklift to build the skills for a ticket".

"Everyone wants to drive the graders, but you have to earn the right to work those babies. It's no walk in the park - even if the cabs are air-conditioned these days", he chuckled.

"We have 5-6 men in a work crew and at any time we only allow 1-2 trainees, depending on their skill level. We look forward to continuing our partnership with RESQ and helping the students achieve their heavy vehicle operations licences".



Get all the help you can

Local lady Kayla Smith came home to Longreach after an extended period away for health reasons and had to start again finding a job.

"I was determined to get work and knocked on doors as soon as I got home," she said.

I picked up some casual work at the local caravan park cleaning but I kept looking."

Kayla took a very proactive approach and registered as a job seeker straight away.

"If you're looking for work, it's definitely worth signing up with RESQ - they keep an eye out for you while you're looking," Kayla explained.

"They also helped me get enrolled in a Certificate II Hospitality and while I was studying I did a work placement and applied for the receptionist job at Longreach Motor Inn."

All my efforts came together and I got the job!"

Kayla loves her work at Longreach Motor Inn and they love her too.



Co-Owner Damien Kennedy said Kayla is a very important part of the team.

She has been rewarded for her commitment already, being promoted to Onsite Manager.

"The owners at the Longreach Motor Inn are really nice people, really helpful and encouraging."

"I'd encourage anyone looking for a job to get registered as a job seeker - and make sure everyone knows that you're looking, and what you're looking for - you can never have too much help."

Quiet Achievers

We tend to think of job seekers reading ads, writing applications and attending interviews. But lots of effort goes in behind the scenes before RESQ's clients get to this stage.

Many of our clients have had difficult times in their lives and they have often missed out on things that the rest of us think just 'happen'.

Job seeker Luke Jones told how he didn't realise how complicated just surviving in town would become without being able to read things easily.

"I mucked around a bit at school. I wasn't happy and life wasn't great back then. You know - we think we'll always be able catch up later, but it gets harder as you get older."

"Everything is on a form or on a computer. I really wanted to be able to understand some court documents and I want to read them for myself", he explained.

"I'd registered for work with RESQ and they mentioned they had some literacy support classes. I knew the teacher Brendon from around town, so I thought I'd let him have a go."

"The first time we worked together I felt comfortable, so I've kept coming back."

Teacher Brendon Thorpe provides one-on-one tutoring for literacy with RESQ registered job seekers to help them catch up.

"I was really impressed with Luke's commitment. He's been coming in a couple of times a week and has picked up his reading really well."



"We do exercises and read the paper together - lots of sport results - it's got to be interesting. When you can read well you don't even realise you're doing it, and that's what we're working on together", he said.

"Then Luke can be in control of his life."

Luke really summed it up, "I've grown up on my own and I like when I don't have to count on other people. Getting this reading sorted means I know what's going on for myself and I can be in control."



Birdsville Meeting Place

Small things make a big difference when you are short of confidence and social contacts.

The RJCP community participation projects are designed to help job seekers connect with their community.

Tony Rayner, RESQ's General Manager and the Employment Consultant looking after the Birdsville area, explained when you've been without a job for a long time your confidence and your communication skills can take a beating.

"By providing access to Community and activities that reinforce your worth and let you practise your communication skills, every time you turn up you are taking small steps toward getting that all important job," Tony continued.

"In Birdsville the Meeting Place was out in the open and becoming worn and the Indigenous rock artwork created by local artists required protection from the harsh climate.

RESQ job seekers got together with the community and helped build the gazebo to protect the area and provide much needed shade for gatherings. Our job seekers gained practical building and construction skills while



learning more about local Indigenous history and culture", he explained.

"The group has got motivated to further improve the space, now they're planning a bush tucker and medicine garden to surround it - just fantastic!"

Iningai Health and Art

Garden makes waiting more comfortable

We all know the feeling - waiting. Waiting for a doctor's appointment. Waiting for a visiting specialist appointment. Waiting for our family to be ready to go home. Just waiting...

It can be hot. The traffic keeps going past. People watching you. Wondering what you are waiting for. Nothing to do. No way to relax.

Father Maloney at St Bridget's Church in Longreach thought it was time people waiting for health services nearby had somewhere comfortable, safe and quiet to spend their time.

He approached RESQ, Red Ridge Interior and Longreach Regional Council offering land at the back of the church near the car park for a gathering place.



The partnership thought it was a great idea and so a plan was made to give RESQs job seekers some experience beautifying this community gathering space with gardens, seating, shade and public art.

Longreach Council contributed materials, Iningai Elder Tony Weldon through his involvement with Longreach Aboriginal Association provided advice; and Tony again, with Daryl McLaughlan as local tradesmen, worked with the RESQ participants to do the landscaping and construction needed to make the space beautiful.

Now there is plenty of space for families to gather, talk, play and have a picnic as they wait for health services. People can easily and safely access the health rooms and car park. And it's a pretty space now, where it used to be ignored and dusty.



Putting your hand out, gets you a hand up

The team at RESQ are no strangers to hard work and hard knocks. Most have had their share of difficult times and they use this to help them understand their clients.

"Most of us need some TLC at times" agreed RESQ Employment Consultants Nikki Gay and Tanya Doran.

"And most of us need a kick up the butt on occasion too", they laughed.

Many RESQ participants have not had the advantage of family support to learn personal care and social skills - how to hold your cutlery properly, how to wash clothes, how to shake someone's hand when you meet, and how to join in a conversation with a group, for example.

The men and women who mentor and support RESQs participants try and establish trust and respect so their clients can ask for help without embarrassment and also offer a bit of helpful advice on the quiet to make sure the handy hints don't get missed.



"We live in small communities", Nikki said "getting involved with my clients and their lives is part of life, not just part of the job."

"I'm so proud when I see one of my clients down at the shops, or at a footy game or the fishing comp and they are keeping their lives together. They might have a training course they are doing, or hanging in at school when it's hard".

Nikki's right when she says "It all these little things that add up to make a difference in the end - to getting a job or keeping that job."

