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MEDIA RELEASE

ABBOTT GOVERNMENT LOSING CONTROL ON EMPLOYMENT SERVICES

The Abbott Government has failed to meet its own deadline to put more than \$5 billion worth of employment service contracts out to tender.

This comes only days after findings by the Government's own members that changes to cut support to young job seekers for six months, will breach human rights.

Before:

Release of the Employment Services 2015-2020 Request for Tender – Late September 2014

Exposure Draft for Employment Services 2015–2020, 28 July 2014

Now:

...the Department expected to release a Request for Tender (RFT) around late September 2014. Please note that the release of the RFT has been delayed.

Employment Services Procurement Information, 1 October 2014

The Abbott Government is expecting employment service providers to deliver their new system from 1 July next year. Yet they still don't have the RFT after being asked to provide feedback on the draft by late August.

Significant issues have been raised regarding the additional requirements being placed on providers and concerns that the number of work for the dole placements required will not be able to be filled.

There have been no answers to these concerns, and no detail on when the RFT will be available.

The draft RFT refers to changes in the *Social Security Legislation Amendment (Stronger Penalties for Serious Failures) Bill 2014*, defeated in the Senate on 3 September 2014 and related legislative instrument changes which were also disallowed.

The Stronger Participation Incentives for Job Seekers under 30 budget measures have yet to be debated in the Senate and the compliance framework has only just been introduced into Parliament.

The Abbott Government clearly hasn't met its own deadlines because it is in disarray over a failed policy approach that has no community or political support.

This is yet another embarrassing bungle in the Abbot Government's attempt to penalise and punish job seekers.

The Abbott Government should spend less time attacking job seekers, sort out the mess they have created and tell employment services providers what is going on.

We need a Government that is focused on creating jobs and supporting job seekers into employment, not one that penalises and punishes those doing it tough.

WEDNESDAY, 1 OCTOBER 2014