

QR NATIONAL CUTS 500 JOBS



What is QR National? According to the company [they are](#), “QR National is Australia’s largest rail freight operator. Every day we move thousands of tonnes of coal, iron ore and other minerals as well as agricultural and general freight around the nation. QR National operates and manages the Central Queensland coal network made up of approximately 2,600km of heavy haul rail infrastructure. We also provide a range of specialist services in rail design, engineering, construction, management and maintenance.” The company lists an amazingly precise headcount of 9,001, or at least they used to. The company just issued a serious number of layoff notices to its workers. The company is expecting to cut back on more than 500 workers in a bid to restructure the company and bring it back to a place of profitability. The company released a statement today that said some interesting things, things that are contradictory to the layoff notices that the company is said to have sent out. In a release about the changes to the company it was [said](#) that, “The final organization structures and number of redundancies decided upon by QR National will be dependent on feedback received from staff and unions during the consultation process. However, based on the proposed restructuring and previous demand in the last company-wide voluntary redundancy scheme, it is anticipated this would be in excess of 500.” So apparently the company is hoping to get rid of all of its staff without have to give out a single layoff notice. If that idea sounds off to you don’t worry. You are not alone. While the idea of a person choosing to give up their job in the name of their company’s fiscal solvency may sound bonkers at first glance the idea is not so mad. After all if you think that you are going to be put out of a job anyway the idea of getting out first, with a better severance offer may not be so mad. Of course this does not mean that these kinds of plan are always a success. Many companies and other employers have tried these kinds of maneuvers in the past they have not always met with a great deal of success. Some of you may recall our [earlier coverage](#) on just this type of a program being run by the city of Toronto. For those of you who did not catch it the first time around here is an excerpt that will get you up to speed in no time at all, “The City of Toronto tried a voluntary layoff plan this year, which recently ended. The city was hoping that this program would help them to shed 700 positions. If that sounds more than a little pie in the sky to you then you are not alone. The harsh light of reality has come shining in on that number. As the program came to a close the city found that it had not the desired 700 workers lining up to be laid off but instead only 230 employees who were willing to give up their civil service jobs and take part in voluntary layoff program. City Manager Joe Pennachetti, the brains behind the 2012 budget for the city, had hoped to find that the voluntary layoff plan gave the city some substantial savings, but apparently he failed to take a few things into consideration.” So, only time will tell if this program will be a success or go bust.

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