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BENDIGO BUSINESSES UNITE TO CREATE FORMIDABLE TRAINING ORGANISATION

Two of Bendigo's leading not for profit community organisations will join forces to strengthen the options for people wanting to undertake vocational education and training in the region.

Continuing Education Bendigo (CEB) and Bendigo Access Employment (BAE) will work together to provide a strong TAFE alternative for people wanting to further their studies.

Under the plan, BAE will manage the training organisation which will bring together CEB with BAE's existing training arm Victorian Occupational Training Educational Services (VOTES).

Merging the two training organisations will create a stronger and more efficient company, well placed to meet the needs of the local community.

The merger would bring CEB's 40 years of experience in providing training and education in Bendigo together with strength of BAE's operations over the past 20 years.

CEB's Chief Executive Officer, Jeremi Moule, said that changes in the vocational education and training market in recent years had been challenging, but there were great opportunities to provide valuable training to central Victorians.

"By bringing VOTES and CEB together under the broader management of Access Employment we will have a more robust and efficient training organisation that is able to continue to deliver quality training," he said.

"Vocational training helps people achieve employment or improve their current work circumstances," he said.

BAE's Chief Executive Officer, Michael Langdon, said both organisations had a similar ethos and were keen to ensure that central Victorians had a range of options to undertake vocational training.

"We'll have a training organisation which can provide a range of nationally accredited courses in areas of high employment demand, meet the training needs of local businesses and continue to focus on people who need additional support to undertake training," Dr Langdon said.

"The strength of the training will be the focus on the individual, which has always been an important part of the way BAE and CEB have operated," he said.

CEB has been a reputable adult education and training provider since 1973 – delivering special interest short courses; non-accredited training; nationally recognised certificate and diploma qualifications; training for people with a disability and tailored training packages for businesses.

BAE is an internationally accredited organisation (ISO), which provides Disability Employment Services; education and training services; accident and injury management services and is an Australian Disability Enterprises provider.

The joint training organisation will be known as CEB and will become one of the business units of Access Employment. By bringing the two training businesses (CEB and VOTES) together and operating as part of BAE, the cost of administrative operation will be reduced, making the training organisation stronger and more sustainable.

Work on the merger will start immediately and be in place by the start of 2014.

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