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CITIPOWER AND POWERCOR NOTCH UP A CENTURY FOR APPRENTICE AND TRAINEE RECRUITMENT

CitiPower and Powercor's long term commitment to build a sustainable workforce has reached a significant milestone with more than 100 apprentices and trainees on the business' books for the very first time.

To ensure its business is successful in the longer term, the electricity distribution businesses have welcomed an extra 31 new recruits to the fold – bringing the total number of apprentices and trainees currently in training to 110.

The newest first year apprentices and trainees were officially welcomed to the business at an induction day and forum at Ballarat Lodge. The forum covered important topics including the importance on working safely with electricity and the professional standards expected of CitiPower and Powercor employees.

Through their indoctrination, the new recruits will embark on a comprehensive four year training program designed to provide them with all the skills and expertise they need to build successful careers in the electricity industry.

CitiPower and Powercor General Manager Network Services, Mark Sturgess, said reaching the milestone was an important moment for the business and highlighted the mutual benefits of the program for the company and regional Victoria.

“Our apprentice and trainee program helps to address the skilled labour shortage in our state while giving our business the vital boost it needs to ensure our workforce continues to grow,” Mr Sturgess said.

“Just over a decade ago we launched an important program to address the impacts an ageing workforce was having on our operations. Back then the average age of our field workers was around 45 – now, through dedicated recruitment programs it has returned to 39.

“Under our employee recruitment and development model the more experienced field based employees act as mentors to the new recruits. This ensures that the invaluable experience of our senior employees isn't lost. Additionally, the new recruits learn under the careful guidance of their senior mentors who teach them how to safely build and maintain the electricity distribution system that delivers power to Victoria's homes and businesses,” he said.

While CitiPower and Powercor understand the importance of ensuring its long term success through dedicated recruitment strategies, further recognition came for the business in 2007 when it won a Federal Department of Education, Science and Training award for its apprentice and trainee program.

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“We were honoured to win a Commonwealth Government award for the program and it certainly provided some strong reassurance that we are headed in the right direction. We believe it is essential to build a sustainable workforce, not only for our own success, but also to provide young people with the opportunity to earn nationally recognised qualifications in an industry that places them in high demand,” Mr Sturgess said.

CitiPower and Powercor’s new recruits were selected from a field of more than 550 applicants in 2007 and will work in the electrical trade as lineworkers, electrical fitters, designers, testers and meter technicians.

Four of this year’s 27 Powercor apprentices and trainees will be assigned to Ballarat with the balance working at other regional locations including Bendigo, Mildura, Shepparton, Warrnambool, Horsham, Geelong, Kyneton, and Ardeer in Melbourne’s western suburbs. Additionally, four apprentices/ trainees will be located at CitiPower’s Richmond headquarters in Melbourne.

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