

Media Release

The Hon Jaala Pulford MLC

Minister for Employment

Minister for Innovation, Medical Research and the Digital Economy

Minister for Small Business

Minister for Resources



Thursday, 29 September 2022

INCLUSIVE EMPLOYMENT KEY TO WORKFORCE SHORTAGES

The Andrews Labor Government is looking at more ways to boost employment opportunities in the Central Highlands, bringing together businesses, employers and community leaders.

A forum held in Ballarat today and hosted by Jobs Victoria examined ways the Labor Government, local businesses and communities can work together to identify opportunities and develop new approaches to address workforce challenges.

Local employer Bryan Wethling, owner of Professional Mowing Group in Ballarat, shared his experience of working with Jobs Victoria to take on a young person with disability and fill casual roles in his seasonally-busy business.

Brett Johnston has an intellectual disability and had been out of work since 2016. Through Jobs Victoria, Brett was provided PPE equipment and on-the-job training and support, including weekly check-ins with his Jobs Victoria Mentor.

Since starting with Professional Mowing Group, Brett has gained new skills and is working 20-30 hours per week getting the job done to a high standard and contributing to positive staff morale.

Matching employers with people looking for work who may need extra support, such as people with disability, women over 45, and people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, is a key strategy for Jobs Victoria.

Victoria's labour market is the tightest it has been for a generation, highlighting the resilience of the economy. In August the unemployment rate was 3.7 per cent, and in June one third of all jobs created Australia-wide were in Victoria.

The Central Highlands forum was one in a series of Jobs Victoria forums being held across the state. Feedback from the forums will inform future statewide, regional and local employment strategies.

Jobs Victoria assists people looking for work and connects employers with the staff they need. For more information visit jobs.vic.gov.au or call the Jobs Victoria hotline on 1300 208 575.

Quote attributable to Minister for Employment Jaala Pulford

"The forum was an important opportunity for businesses and job seekers. Anyone in our region that is struggling to find work or workers is encouraged to register with Jobs Victoria."

Quote attributable to Member for Wendouree Juliana Addison

"The job forum was about getting people into jobs across Ballarat, where they're needed most. It was fantastic to hear success stories where local employers had offered someone a job and it had great benefits for the business and the individual".

Quote attributable to Member for Buninyong Michaela Settle

"I'm proud to be supporting people find workforce solutions that are specific to the needs of the Ballarat community."

Quote attributable to Professional Mowing Group employee Brett Johnston

"I'm so happy Ben helped me find this job – it means everything. I love gardening, I've learnt a lot and have so much more self-confidence."

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