



MEDIA RELEASE

New website to help combat unemployment

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The region's business community has launched a new website www.bayofconnections.com, aimed at minimising the negative impacts of the recession in the Bay of Plenty.

The Bay of Connections website is a direct response to the recommendations from the recent Job Summit held in Rotorua. It provides information on business mentoring and training, opportunities for businesses to share resources and work together, as well as information about the Regional Economic Development Strategy, which is aimed at job creation projects.

"The website is just one of the ways businesses, economic development agencies and local government are working together to combat some of the impacts of the recession on employment in our region," Gerard Casey, President of the Whakatane Chamber of Commerce said.

"We are also looking at ways to address issues such as financial literacy and numeracy skills and enhancing business and training collaboration across the Bay of Plenty region."

The Bay of Connections has been involved in national discussion to support and extend seasonal migrant worker scheme, following on from the Job Summit.

"It is promising to see more Maori involved in local business networks so that their needs and interests can be recognised. I am also really pleased to see a joint approach to the challenges we face as a region from business service providers, government and non-government," Mr Casey said.

Regional Governance Group Chair, Mr John Cronin said "I'd like to acknowledge the support and contributions of all of the Chambers of Commerce, Economic Development Agencies and other Business and Government Agencies in developing this web site.

The Regional Governance Group consists of people from business, economic development agencies in the Bay of Plenty and a representative from local government. Bay of Connections is the group's economic development strategy.

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For more information please visit www.bayofconnections.com or contact Cheryl MacGregor, Senior Advisor Regional Development, Environment Bay of Plenty on (021) 224 1371.