

Regional Express training centre approved

PLANS by Regional Express (Rex) to build a pilot and flight attendant academy at Forest Hill airport received development approval yesterday.

The green light for the airline's development application was given by the Wagga planning panel at a special meeting.

The \$10 million project

includes a two-storey building that will house classrooms, lecture theatres, flight simulators, a library, briefing rooms and offices.

Another two-storey building will have 92 college-style single bedrooms.

A third, single-storey building, will include a dining room, laundry and kitchen.

The academy will house a maximum of 92 students across six-month training cycles.

Rex is relocating its training bases in Sydney and Melbourne to Wagga, but no start date for the Wagga investment has been announced yet.

The airline is going ahead with the academy, despite hav-

ing to lay off 20 freight pilots recently because of the economic downturn.

The airline is confident that by the time the academy is built and the first of its trainee pilots graduate, Australia's economy will have improved.

Rex also hopes to train pilots for other airlines.

— Ken Grimson