



Fruit & Vegetable Retailers Advisory Committee
MARKET HOURS – FINDINGS PRESENTATION
MMA Boardroom, Epping
26th October 2016

In attendance: Paul Ahern (Chair), John Psarakos, Leon Mugavin, Graham Gee, Tony Mecca, Bill Lewis, David Whitchelo, Matthew Elliott, Jenna Patan (Minute Taker)

Apologies: Mark Maskiell

Methodology & Consultative Process

- Discussion sessions with the market advisory groups & with the Unloaders
- Market floor visit, 25+ phone interviews, 20 email submissions;
- Consultation with industry during other MCKINNA *et al* projects; and
- Survey of business principals.

Gate Entry Data: F&V Buyers

Average visits over the first 12 months of trade indicate that over 2,800 vehicles access the market each week day. Thursday is the busiest trading day so this has been used as the benchmark day throughout this report.

The market services between approximately 450 to 650 fruit and vegetable buyers per day during the week (not including those with on-site warehouses). The vast majority of F&V buyers enter close to official opening. Most leave before 7am to beat the peak hour traffic. 81% of buyers visit at least once a week.

Survey Response Rate

A total of 267 valid responses were received, representing a relatively poor response rate (9%). F&V buyers had the highest number of responses, but storeholders had the highest response rate (23%).

| Business Type | Total businesses | Compliant responses | Response rate |
|---------------------|------------------|---------------------|---------------|
| FV Store holder | 108 | 20 | 19% |
| FV Stand holder | 194 | 35 | 18% |
| FV Buyer | 1242 | 104 | 8% |
| Flower Stand holder | 65 | 13 | 20% |
| Flower Buyer | 728 | 46 | 6% |
| F/FV Buyer | 28 | 2 | 7% |
| Market Related Bus | 162 | 7 | 4% |
| Produce Delivery | 308 | 7 | 2% |
| Total | 2,972 | 234 | 8% |

Survey Results

In the fruit & vegetable market, the general positions remain with buyers and standholders arguing for an earlier start and the majority of storeholders seeking the 6am start option. When the 'no change' and '3.30' options are added together, a more compelling picture emerges with 45% of F&V buyers and 43% of flower buyers within this zone.

Recommendations & Rationale

| RECOMMENDATION: | | RATIONALE: |
|-----------------|---|--|
| 1. | Opening hours to remain the unchanged (3.30am Mon/Thu/Fri and 4.30am Tue/Wed) for fruit & vegetable market and Unchanged (3.30am Tue/Thu) for flower market (excluding Saturday flower market) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consideration was given to the 24 hour fresh produce supply chain and this option provides the best outcome for the customer/consumer need. • The scan data and survey data indicated a strong preference for an early start time and the consultation preference for a same start time everyday was compelling. • Peak hour traffic at 6.30am was a key consideration |

| | | |
|----|--|--|
| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Same time for both markets ensures equal access for flower buyers |
| 2. | Retain 2am entry for country buyers for collection of pre-orders only and with stronger enforcement of penalties for early trade | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enables these cohorts to service their particular customer needs (cafes, restaurants and regional retail outlets) • Reduces peak congestion • Enables time for unloaders to get product to stands / stores |

Key discussion points:

- The 9% response rate is disappointing and could indicate that trading hours are a low priority to market users.
- All agree that there is better efficiency here at Epping and most wish to exit well before 7am.
- The site might be more efficient but an extra 30 mins to collect equipment is valuable to the retailers, which is why 3am is a preference for some. The additional time also means they don't need to rush and can visit more Stands and Stores whilst onsite.
- A 3am start is supported during the summer trading months when there is more produce in the market.
- Whilst most agree that trading hours should be enforced (so an unfair advantage cannot be gained by others manipulating the system) it is NOTED that all areas need to be enforced, such as Wholesalers / Growers out of the parking bays well before trade commences – all rules need to be considered and enforced appropriately.
- Suggestions are made that retaining a 4.30am start is inhibiting buyers from coming in to top up supplies more often during the week (especially in summer).
- Tuesday is becoming a more prominent day in the market for larger purchases as the retailers believe the growers have slowed picking on the weekend so stock is better on a Tuesday.

The Advisory Committee RECOMMENDED the following:

- Preference is for the opening hours to be either 3am OR 3.30 – 7.00am every day for all buyers
- Retain 2am entry for Country Buyers

General Business

- **Children in the Market:** The Advisory thanked the MMA for implementing the trial and advised feedback was very positive. DW advised that Management will consider 2 days, twice a year moving forward.
- **Green Grocer Program:** Currently awaiting the South Australian Produce Market to confirm commitment to the program. A preferred bidder for the feasibility study has been endorsed by all with a number of go / no go decision points embedded into the schedule if a national collaborative approach cannot be reached. The Advisory group will be engaged in the process and we would expect consultation to commence within the next 6 weeks.
- **Potato Pricing:** The advisory REQUESTED marketing support from the MMA and insights into general strategies to help combat a growing consumer problem for the industry.
- **Visitation Data Request:** The advisory REQUESTED visitation data to be tracked for the last 10 months to see any trends. ME to circulate out of session.
- **MMA Engagement:** The Advisory thanked the MMA for their increased presence in the market and general engagement with the retail group.