



## **Fruit & Vegetable Retailers Advisory Committee**

**MMA Boardroom, Epping**

**11 September 2019**

**10:00am – 11:00am**

**In attendance:** Leon Mugavin, Graham Gee, Tony Mecca, Andrew Forbes, Mark Maskiell, David Whitchelo, Bryan Coyne, Malcolm Lum, Lauren Kitchener & Georgie Christerson (Minute Taker).

**Apologies:** David Power, Dean Lamb & Jacinta Carboon.

**Confirmation of Minutes from Previous Meeting:** MMA CEO welcomed all committee members to the third Retailers Advisory Committee Meeting for 2019. Minutes from the previous meeting on 29 May 2019 were confirmed as accurate and correct.

### **MATTERS ARISING**

- Nil

### **OPERATIONS**

- **Line Marking:** Line marking works have commenced in the market, with the re-painting of the white lines to a more visible yellow paint. This will be beneficial for visibility purposes, in the rain & where there is low light. All zebra walkway crossings have been re-painted also.
- **Breezeway – Railing, Pedestrian Access & Forklift Highway:** The current hand railing is due for removal within the next 2 weeks, and new Armco hand railing will be installed, to ensure better visibility & provide safer conditions.
- **Update on Proposed New Carparking Roof & Solar Energy:** MMA explained to the Committee of the location for the new roofing canopies in the market. The MMA continues to experience resistance from SP Ausnet, who are the Northern Region energy grid and infrastructure owner, who still have not approved the MMA's proposed grid protection and export solutions. The majority of carparking bays will be operational whilst the canopy works commence, which will occur during the day, to avoid market trade. Ideally, the MMA would like the canopies installed prior to Winter 2020.
- **Drug & Alcohol Policy:** MMA distributed a FAQ document to the Committee prior to the advisory meeting for review. The MMA have engaged an external independent expert drug and alcohol tester, Fit4Duty to conduct the random testing. The testing involves 2 types of tests - a non-invasive mandatory swab test and a breathalyser test for drugs and alcohol respectively. The testing will occur in a clearly marked 'testing' van, and an fit4duty staff will be randomly selecting market users for testing. Initially there will be a focus on high risk areas including but not limited to forklift and buggies. There will be several forms to be completed by each person undergoing a test including; consent forms and a medical declaration. The medical declaration is a statutory declaration which the person declares that they have been taking prescription medication in accordance with prescribed instructions / doctor's orders and they declare themselves fit to remain onsite.

The alcohol test is very similar to the breathalyser police use. If a non negative reading is returned, the swab will be sent to a laboratory for confirmatory testing, typically taking up to 3 days. As a separate but related initiative, the MMA is installing breath testing stations across the market for Market users to test their BAC to ensure adherence to the Market Operating Rules.

Formal education & FAQ's will be provided to Business Principals prior to the testing commencing. The reason for the testing is to keep the market a safe workplace and to ensure our market users return home safely each day. All employers owe their employees a duty of care, and the feedback in the market community has been positive for this initiative.

The MMA also informed the Committee that a breath testing machine will be located at Gate 1, used predominantly for transport companies requiring access to the market. If a drug or alcohol test has a non negative or positive reading respectively, the MMA will require a negative reading for each before the offender is permitted to return to the market to ensure they no longer pose a risk to the market community. The MMA recommends employers to send any drug or alcohol affected employer to an EAP (Employee Assistance Program) to ensure the person(s) will be fit to return to work.

Committee were positive about introducing the testing, and the MMA are hoping for a smooth transition. MMA will circulate the Drug & Alcohol policy after today's meeting to all committee members.

### **MARKETING & BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT**

- **A Better Choice - Green Grocer National Brand Program:** The Victorian 'A Better Choice' program currently has 176 members, being the highest of all States nationally. Fresh State and the MMA are fully committed to working together on the program and have a combined base budget of \$170,000 per year. However, it was noted that additional funding is required to maximise the outcome of the program.
- The MMA will be introducing a contribution fee of \$20+GST (per access card) in October 2019 for an initial 6-month period (Nov-Apr). In 2020, to coincide with access card renewals, all access card holders will be invoiced the standard access card fee of \$40+GST. The MMA are continuing to market this campaign (i.e, global billboards, Facebook, Instagram, social media etc) to increase social media followers through the A Better Choice branding & further marketing campaigns. This will be aimed at assisting independent greengrocers to further increase their businesses.

### **GENERAL BUSINESS**

- **Warehouse 7:** Construction works have commenced on Warehouse 7, for a completion date of March 2020. There is small format warehousing space still available for any interested parties and the MMA will provide further information upon request.
- **Early Buyer Access permit:** The Early Buyers permit is due for renewal, although the MMA confirmed the permit will not be renewed. The MMA are aware of people obtaining access into the market, having not paid for the early buyer access permit. Committee discussed the main issues around this topic and therefore it is confirmed that it won't be continuing. The deregulation of hours was discussed by the MMA and Committee members, which could be an option to be suitable to market users.

The Credit service provided within the market was highlighted as an issue. MMA have confirmed they will investigate the issues. MMA will add this item to the next Advisory committee agenda for further discussion.

- **CCTV:** The MMA have amended the current policy to clarify the MMA is only interested in external footage (as opposed to footage inside a store or warehouse). The policy has been revised and will be circulated to the market community.
- **Digital Transformation:** The implementation of the new CRM system, Salesforce into market operations is on track, with the release of the Alpha phase by 30 September, followed by the Beta phase later in the year. The MRO's will now carry I-pads for operational purposes. The new system will overhaul the current financial system, and ease interaction between the MMA and tenants, particularly in terms of transactions, paying invoices and viewing accounts online via the portal.
- **40 Year Market Service Award:** MMA advised the members of the recent 40 Year Market Service Awards/ nominees. Several nominations have been received by the MMA and are encouraging more market tenants to apply. Once approved, the MMA will present the nominee with a Gold Access card (free market access), and complimentary parking each day after 7am, together with receiving their award.
- **Buggies:** Committee asked why buggies are not permitted in the flower market as they are in the buyers trading floor. The MMA confirmed there are no designated buggy or forklift access routes within the flower market to separate the pedestrians and are therefore not allowed.
- **Next Advisory Committee Meeting:** MMA confirmed the next Advisory meetings will be a combined meeting for all committees. MMA to contact each Chair to decide on a suitable date for all.