

## CHAIRMAN'S REPORT:

It is again pleasing to report that our organisation continues to grow strongly and cater for the needs of Emergency Food Relief within the Greater Geelong Region. Over the past year we have seen voucher redemption remain strong and a growth of around 14% in Bulk Food Distribution to our welfare partners. The most pleasing features of our service is the value that our clients obtain when shopping with us.

Our CEO, Collin Peebles has continued to be a keen, committed, diligent, and competent leader of our organisation. His dedicated approach has contributed towards the overall growth we have witnessed and in addition to this we have been able to inject close to \$50,000 worth of capital assets into GFRC.

This year much of our focus has been on the possible development of a new Food Hub for Geelong. In October Second Bite notified us that they would be closing their Geelong facility but continuing to collect from Coles stores and therefore required a centre to distribute their collected produce. We indicated our current site would not be large enough to cater for such an expansion. Following discussions with Councillor Pat Murnane we were offered a parcel of land close by that would be appropriate to construct a Food Hub. Slow progress has been made to this stage however we have now been granted funds by the Council to further explore our options and are looking to appoint a firm of Consultants to assist us with the project.

The Lt Smythe Street minimart has now operated for over three years and is trading strongly, doing about 50% of that at Freedman St site. Volunteer numbers have increased to up to five daily in order to assist those in need. Collin keeps an excellent watchful eye on its operation and food supplies are now transferred to our Smythe St minimart daily.

Our transport fleet has again seen us upgrading our Ford Transit van to a new Renault long wheel based van similar to that purchased last year except without refrigeration. The refrigerated Van proved to be a blessing when Food Bank Victoria, due to contractual issues, were not able to deliver refrigerated and frozen product beyond December 2017. This arrangement has meant two trips to Melbourne each Wednesday morning by our volunteers. Thankfully we recently have been notified by Foodbank that a trial delivery to our site will begin in July 2018.

### 2017/18 GRANTS:

We have received various grants throughout the year and for this we are extremely grateful.

Give Where You Live are a constant, and much needed supporter, who provided \$35,000 in grants this year.

Geelong Community Foundation again provided \$25,000 to further assist us with to offset our ongoing operational costs.

The Gandel Foundation provided \$20,000 and Westpac Bank \$10,000 towards the purchase of our new Renault Van.

TAC Geelong continues to contribute \$5,500 to assist with our Support Programs.

Kiwanis Geelong also continues to provide support by arranging bulk food purchases from SPC in Shepparton on a one for one basis. This year they provided \$6,000 towards a total purchase of \$12,000.

To all of the above we express our SINCERE THANKS.

## **BOARD OF MANAGEMENT:**

This year the Board has remained stable. I would like to particularly thank Maurie Anglin for his excellent support and input throughout the year and to Allan Hurley for his expertise in developing a computer program to upgrade our voucher system. Treasurer Norm Phillips also needs special mention for his time and expertise in overseeing our operations finances. Thanks to all Board Members for their ongoing involvement and support.

## **VOLUNTEERS:**

Special thanks must go to our dedicated and hardworking volunteers whose numbers are currently 90 plus due to the additional workloads and the increase in demand for Emergency Food Relief. Without you we would not be able to operate. From our drivers to admin staff, from those serving on the counter and working in the warehouse and our in-house chef Dean, I acknowledge your energy, co-operation, willingness to do 'that bit extra' when required, and the respect and assistance that you provide to our operation and most importantly our clients.

AGAIN, my heartfelt thanks go to you ALL.

## **SUPPORTERS:**

As in past years we continue to have great support from many groups and individuals in the community.

Special comment needs to be made regarding our relationship with Aldi who assist us with the provision of fruit and vegetables on a daily basis. Rescued foods are then sorted by our volunteers and are then provided to our clients.

Foodbank Victoria continues to be an excellent source of a wide variety of food products. It is pleasing to have a close relationship with this organisation.

Margoneet Correction Centre provides vegetables from their garden on a weekly basis.

Fareshare Victoria cooked meals are provided to clients at no cost and prove to be very popular, and also through their relationship with Woolworths the supply of additional fresh food on a twice weekly basis.

Many other groups and individuals donate food on a regular basis but special mention needs to be made of the

Toucan Appeal held by many schools in August.

Close to four tons of food was collected this year. A great result and THANKS YOU ALL.

Geelong Libraries also provide a great supply of food products though their annual "food for fines" program held in December each year.

In conclusion, I would like to pay special thanks to our Chief Executive Officer, Collin Peebles, for his professional manner, commitment, cooperation, communication, and enthusiasm.

We have certainly seen the results of his work in all aspects of our operation.

Again, many thanks Collin.

To our Board, I have been honoured to lead you over the past year and look forward to the time ahead. There are challenges ahead, also the continuation of the planning towards the development of a Food Hub for the Geelong Region and with the completion of a new business plan with assistance of a Deakin Program. This along with working with other agencies in an attempt to better cater for those in need in the provision of vouchers.

It has been a pleasure to have been Chair of our voluntary organisation and thank you to everyone I have worked with over the year for your support and cooperation.

Ross Stephens

Chairperson  
Geelong Food Relief Centre Inc.



**PHOTO:** Dairy/freezer selection at our North Geelong mini-mart