



## Media release

2 September 2020

### **Vulnerable communities set for increased support as Port of Melbourne extends partnership with Foodbank Victoria**

Victoria's fight against food insecurity is set to receive a much-needed boost, following the signing of a new three-year agreement between the Port of Melbourne and Foodbank Victoria.

The partnership builds on a 2018-19 commitment through which Port of Melbourne employees donated more than 220 hours and distributed nearly 44,000 meals to vulnerable Victorian communities.

Foodbank Victoria CEO Dave McNamara welcomed the partnership as a big step towards his organisation's ambition of ensuring all Victorians have access to healthy and nutritious food.

"With the bushfires and the COVID-19 pandemic more and more Victorians have turned to us when they have nowhere else to go. In the last few months, we've seen demand increase by 20 per cent. And we know that the next few months present even greater challenges as spiralling unemployment and recession begin to take their toll. That's why this agreement with the Port of Melbourne is so significant. It will help us improve food relief efforts right across the state, delivering considerable benefit for so many vulnerable Victorians – now and into the future."

The Foodbank Victoria partnership is part of Port of Melbourne's social impact and sustainability strategy. As well as supporting community groups, each year the Port of Melbourne's operations provide more than \$4 billion in economic benefit to the local government areas surrounding the port.

Port of Melbourne Chief Executive Officer Brendan Bourke said the Port of Melbourne is determined to make a difference for such a critical community priority.

"During the past few months, Foodbank Victoria has seen a growing number of people in need of a helping hand. Many hardworking Victorians are seeking food relief for the first time, finding themselves in situations they never anticipated.

"While our financial contribution will help Foodbank Victoria's reach and impact, the team at Port of Melbourne is also looking forward to rolling up our sleeves to ensure much-needed nutritious food gets to areas it's needed most," Mr Bourke said.

Dozens of Port of Melbourne employees will volunteer their time during the next three years to pick and pack tens of thousands of kilos of food. Others will be deployed to distribution points during food drives associated with emergency response.

Mr Bourke added: "We're attuned to the immediate need for increased support due to the COVID-19 health crisis and are ready to deploy our assistance now to help Foodbank Victoria's pressure

Port of Melbourne



points. We're also here for the long-haul, ensuring we remain a valued partner of Foodbank Victoria all the way through to the end of 2022."

-Ends-

**For more information, please contact:**

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