

Life FM – CEO's Annual Report 2018



Hi everyone,

It's such an exciting opportunity to have a local Christian radio station broadcasting a message of hope across the airwaves to our region! The ability to speak words of life to Gippsland, to provide content for growth in faith, to reach out and connect with the non Christian community, to broadcast the voice of the local church and to share testimonies of lives changed by the power of God is an inspiring vision.

In my role as General Manager over the last 12 months I have been very impacted by the belief and commitment of so many of you who share this vision and have chosen to partner with us to see it come to pass. We thank God for the opportunity to bring Life Changing Radio into homes, workplaces, cars and communities across our region to see hearts touched and lives impacted.

The last 12 months have seen two different, but related, processes occurring at Life FM.

Firstly, the board and management have considered some fundamental strategic questions around the purpose and direction of Life FM moving into the future. This resulted in some key outputs such as the establishment of our 4 key values of Family, Community, Future and Partnerships. These values are not so much new ideas, but a clearer explanation of the purpose of Life FM, our priority's and the way we relate and interact with the community around us in Gippsland.

This has directed several of Life FM's key operations over the last 12 months including the programming review and subsequent adjustments to the tone and message of our broadcast. The focus on relating and connecting with the community around us was seen as a priority and this saw for the first time in many years the introduction into our programming of local messages and testimonies from Gippsland church's and members

The second key focus over the last 12 months has been on our internal administration processes. Planning how to create a more sustainable and efficient business where we minimize manual administration, increase our ability to capture information, increase customer service and maximize our available resources through the implementation of new technology and processes has driven many changes. These changes included things such as a new employee portal, and a new integrated approach for our membership, finance and website software, resulting in a significant reduction in staff and volunteer administration time required to manage these processes, increased the accuracy of our record keeping and provided members the ability to access and customise their own accounts.

Implementing these internal changes has required significant investment of time and energy by everyone in the organization, but was clearly necessary to add the internal infrastructure to equip Life FM with the capacity for future growth. I'm confident that moving forward the

efficiency gained will repay the investment many times over.

A special thanks to volunteers Michelle Poole and Lynne Wain for their hard work in entering all the data during the implementation of the new system and appeals.

An equally big thanks to our Production Coordinator Nicole Lonsdale and Bookkeeper Helen Rowell, who had the challenging task of maintaining current operations, while also trying to incorporate significant change. If you've ever lived in a house while renovating it you will have some idea of what life was like for these guys this year! Nicole showed amazing leadership by stepping into the Programming role for a season when it was required and despite a lack of training or support, applied her skills and determination and found a way to make things work. Helen helped usher in the new changes by learning and maintaining two different financial software systems for most of the year and implemented a range of process improvements along the way. Its great to have ideas for new innovations, but without people like this on the team to implement them they would never happen.

Emily Duncan stepped up this year into the role of Community Service Announcement Coordinator and now prepares her own scripts, manages the incoming CSA requests, then records and submits them for inclusion into the broadcast. Thanks also goes to volunteers Libby Siebel who now produces our dynamic looking newsletters, and Joy Churchill who has managed the design and scheduling of our professional looking Facebook posts.

Several other highlights of the year included the June appeal that saw so many people give their time, energy and finances so generously. This resulted in us being nominated for the Community Broadcast Association of Australia "Best Station Fundraising Campaign" Award (result pending!). The encouraging sign in this appeal was the number of local businesses and people such as local government Councilors who became involved who have not been involved with the station previously. We also had 50% of donors who were new donors to the station from recent years, showing the community of Life FM supports was growing.

Our newly developed partnership with Lifeline Gippsland and subsequent media coverage in several Gippsland papers was a positive sign that we were demonstrating our heart to care for and support people and groups in our local community. We also successfully applied for a grant from the Community Broadcast Foundation for ongoing operations.

Moving into 2018-19, the critical, urgent and ever present concern for Life FM is the development of a more sustainable financial model and the generation of consistent revenue. This will require some strategic decision making to create the ability within the organisation to develop this area.

We have achieved a lot in 12 months and the level of positive feedback from a range of people and groups throughout the community indicates we are positioning ourselves well to see more of our vision fulfilled. Thank you to the board for their commitment to the vision of Life FM and for their input, direction and guidance during the year.

We thank God for all our provision this year. We are also thankful for the grace to discern the next steps to keep moving forward, and the ability and connections to implement them.

Looking forward to speaking with you soon. Regards,

Michael Rowell
General Manager