



Homelessness Australia

Creating a framework for ending homelessness

MEDIA RELEASE

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Put yourself in their place

Bosses around Australia will be walking a mile in the shoes of people experiencing homelessness as part of the St Vincent de Paul CEO Sleepout this month.

On 16 June 2011, chief executives from around Australia will experience first-hand what it is like to sleep rough for one night, raising money and awareness for homelessness. All money raised goes directly to St Vincent de Paul's homelessness services nationwide.

In the ACT, over 150 CEOs have already signed up, including CEO Ms Nicole Lawder of the peak body Homelessness Australia. The Canberra event will take place outside the National Museum of Australia. All the CEOs will get is a sheet of cardboard, a beanie and a cup of soup.

"Homelessness Australia engages with over 400 services which has given me a good appreciation of the work they do," said Ms Lawder, "but actually experiencing what it is like to spend a night in the cold and dark, adds another facet to my understanding."

In Australia 105,000 people experience homelessness on a given night, including 7,500 families. This includes 12,000 children under the age of 12.

"People have the right to be safe and secure, and a right to shelter. Any of us could be vulnerable to homelessness if we go through a difficult period in our lives. Vinnies is one example of the great work of our member organisations that takes place in our city every day and night to provide shelter for people experiencing homelessness," said Ms Lawder.

St Vincent de Paul operates a range of accommodation and support services for people who experience homelessness, including hostels, women's refuges, soup vans, education programs and family services. It provides crisis accommodation for more than 1000 people every night.

For further information and comment, please contact:

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Photo opportunities: 16 June 2011 at National Museum of Australia, Acton Peninsula.

Visit www.ceosleepout.org.au or www.homelessnessaustralia.org.au