



ABN: 28 911 702 061  
RN: A0042727Y

43 Prospect Street  
Box Hill Vic 3128  
Telephone: (03) 9895 5800  
Website: [www.vinnies.org.au](http://www.vinnies.org.au)

## Media Release

24 June 2013

### **More than 170 Victorian CEOs surrendered to chilly temperatures to capture the true essence of state homelessness**

More than 170 leading business and community figures from across the state rose to the Vinnies CEO Sleepout challenge last Thursday to raise more than \$630,000 for important homeless services, bringing the national tally to more than \$5.3 million.

Simultaneous events across Australia, including Victoria's event held at Etihad Stadium, allowed more than 1100 top executives to experience firsthand the realities of living without secure accommodation, if only for one night. The participants were armed with cardboard and sleeping bags, and had a meal from a soup van.

This year's event attracted leaders from sectors across health, entertainment, IT, energy and finance, all donning a beanie for Victoria's fourth sleepout.

Participants included: former Australian of the Year, Simon McKeon; His Excellency the Honourable Alex Chernov, AC QC, Governor of Victoria; TAC CEO, Janet Dore; WorkSafe Victoria CEO, Denise Cosgrove; Nine Network Managing Director, Ian Paterson; Southern Cross Austereo CEO, Rhys Holleran; and Catch of the Day Founder, Gabby Leibovich.

St Vincent de Paul Society Victoria State President Tony Tome said: "It is shocking that so many Australians are in this situation each and every night. It's even more startling that a quarter of children in single-parent families are living in poverty – we just can't rest easy while children are growing up in these conditions."

A recent survey by Household, Income and Labour Dynamics in Australia (HILDA) unearthed an alarming statistic: 1 in 4 children from single-parent families live in poverty.<sup>i</sup>

"Our community leaders were given a small glimpse of what it is like to sleep rough, and have helped shine the spotlight on this national issue. The amount of money raised demonstrates just how much Australians are concerned about homelessness," he said.

There are currently more than 100,000 Australians experiencing homelessness every night, and more than 34,000 of these are children.



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Vital funds raised through the Sleepout will go towards accommodation, education and training services to Australia's most needy, while also improving access to medical, legal and financial advice.

Victorians can still sponsor Sleepout participants by visiting [www.ceosleepout.org.au](http://www.ceosleepout.org.au). Donations officially close on 31 August, 2013.

**TOP VICTORIAN FUNDRAISERS**  
**[as at 7am on 21/6 – visit [ceosleepout.org.au](http://ceosleepout.org.au) for live tally]**

Tony Barber, Deputy CEO, Willis Australia

Neville Moller, CEO, Dorevitch Pathology

Hatem Saleh, Managing Director, Atlantic Group [v] of Companies

For media enquiries, images and interview requests please contact Porter Novelli:

Avignon Paphitis  
[apaphitis@porternovelli.com.au](mailto:apaphitis@porternovelli.com.au)  
03 9289 9555 / 0424 175 643

Lauren Coleman  
[laurenc@porternovelli.com.au](mailto:laurenc@porternovelli.com.au)  
03 9289 9555 / 0413 254 545

<sup>i</sup> The University of Melbourne, Faculty of Business and Economics, *HILDA Survey*, viewed 18 June 2013  
<<http://www.melbourneinstitute.com/hilda/>>