

Media release

Embargoed to 10am, 1 March 2013

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EnergyAustralia to sponsor Vinnies soup vans

The St Vincent de Paul Society's soup van service in Victoria will be bolstered with a \$150,000 sponsorship from EnergyAustralia to be announced at a launch at 10am today with The Hon Martin Ferguson AM MP, Federal Minister for Energy and Resources.

The sponsorship includes the purchase of a new soup van for the Moe soup van service and a new van for the Fitzroy service which will be used for visits to boarding houses in inner Melbourne.

The EnergyAustralia sponsorship also includes an energy audit of the Fitzroy food van which is a custom-built van used to transport hot food. As a result of the recent audit, modifications will be made to the van to create a more energy efficient heating system, reducing the running costs of the van.

State President of the St Vincent de Paul Society in Victoria, Tony Tome, said "Our soup van service is one of our oldest and most well known projects to support Victorians in need. We're delighted that EnergyAustralia are partnering with us to provide more than 600 people a night with food and companionship".

Reflecting on their sponsorship, Richard McIndoe from EnergyAustralia said "We are proud to partner with St Vincent De Paul and their highly successful soup van program. We are also pleased that our support will play an important role in getting more than 200,000 meals to homeless Victorians every year."

Minister for Resources and Energy, Martin Ferguson, acknowledged this important partnership and said "I commend EnergyAustralia for supporting the St Vincent De Paul Society. This funding will make it possible for the Society to improve and expand their soup van operation which makes a real difference to the lives of thousands of Victorians."

Peter Appleton, one of hundreds of soup van volunteers in Victoria, will also attend the launch and speak about his experiences to give an insight into the operation.

Event details:

Where: 91-111 Melrose St, North Melbourne (Base of the Fitzroy soup van)

When: Today (Friday 1 March), 9.45am for 10am start

Who: The Hon Martin Ferguson AM MP, Tony Tome (St Vincent de Paul Society), Richard McIndoe (EnergyAustralia) and guests.

Morning tea will be served at approximately 10.30am at the close of the formalities. Minister Ferguson, Richard McIndoe and Tony Tome will all be available to talk to media during this time.

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