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St Vincent de Paul Society NSW calls on both sides of federal government to recommit to halve homelessness targets

As published in today's edition of the Daily Telegraph the St Vincent de Paul Society NSW CEO, Michael Perusco has called on both the Labor and Coalition federal governments to recommit to the 2008 white paper targets to halve homelessness by 2020.

Mr Perusco said: "An enormous amount of work has been done and it will be devastating if the incoming government in September, Labor or Coalition, walks away from the targets. Ultimately this will only push more Australians into homelessness and the despair that brings."

"It is a shocking reality that in Australia today there are more than 105,000 homeless people. This figure demonstrates there is a lot of work to be done to address homelessness and that far too many Australians are being pushed to the margins of society; struggling to find a way out and rebuild their lives."

In NSW, 28,190 people are either sleeping rough or living in unsafe or insecure housing such as boarding houses, tents or caravan parks, with a significant and growing number living in overcrowded housing.

It is also shocking that 56 per cent of people experiencing homelessness in NSW are under 35. At a time that should be the prime of their life, they are instead trapped in a devastating cycle of homelessness and social disconnect.

The St Vincent de Paul Society is using this year's Vinnies CEO Sleepout as a platform to call on both sides of federal government to make an unwavering commitment to the white paper's targets to halve homelessness by 2020.

St Vincent de Paul Society NSW CEO, Michael Perusco is available for interviews, newsgrabs and comment.

The opinion article can be found in full on page 23 of today's The Daily Telegraph.

Media contact: Yolanda Saiz | 0417 446 430 | yolanda.saiz@vinnies.org.au