

## Media Release

20 June 2014

### 148 CEOs swap beds for bags for Victoria's homeless

148 leading business and community members participated in the Vinnies CEO Sleepout last night, raising more than \$400,000 for important homeless services in Victoria.

Victoria's event at Etihad Stadium was one of eight across Australia, with 1,041 top executives experiencing the realities of living without secure accommodation for the evening. Participants were armed with only cardboard and sleeping bag, and had a meal from a Vinnies soup van.

More than \$5.3 million was raised across the country.

Rio Tinto Managing Director Australia, Phil Edmands, participated for the first time this year and said how important it was for business and community leaders to raise awareness and funds for the homeless.

"No one sleeps rough every night in the freezing cold unless they are facing extreme hardship," he said.

"Whilst I was very cold and the cardboard bed and concrete base didn't get any softer, thankfully I was free of the home violence, trauma, mental illness and hard times that cause people to sleep rough. And I certainly wasn't vulnerable at Etihad Stadium as so many are every night they sleep rough".

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

Participants included Webjet CEO, David Galt; Rio Tinto Managing Director, Phil Edmands; St Vincent's Private Hospital Melbourne CEO, Ian Grisold; Melbourne Victory CEO, Ian Robson; and Federal MP, Kelly O'Dwyer.

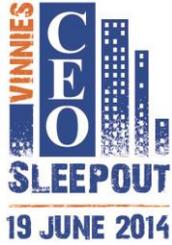
St Vincent de Paul Society Victoria CEO Cam Battaglia said: "The high number of Australians who are in this situation each night is shocking, and the funds raised at the Sleepout help to sustain our homeless services."

There are currently more than 105,000 Australians experiencing homelessness every night, and more than 17,000 of these are children under 12.<sup>1</sup> Vital funds raised through the Sleepout will go towards accommodation, education and training services to Australia's most in need, while also improving access to medical, legal and financial advice.

People can still sponsor Sleepout participants by visiting [www.ceosleepout.org.au](http://www.ceosleepout.org.au). Donations officially close on 31 August 2014.

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<sup>1</sup> Homelessness Australia, <http://www.homelessnessaustralia.org.au/index.php/about-homelessness/homeless-statistics>



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**TOP VICTORIAN FUNDRAISERS 2014**

**[as at 5.30am on 20/6 – visit [ceosleepout.org.au](http://ceosleepout.org.au) for live tally]**

Ian Grisold, CEO, St Vincent's Private Hospital Melbourne - \$18,084.00

Paul Wolff, Director, Porter Davis- \$17,060.00

Anthony Roberts, Managing Director, Porter Davis - \$11,270.00

**-ENDS-**

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