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Vinnies to shine a spotlight on female homelessness as it launches 10th Vinnies CEO Sleepout

Leading female CEOs participating in this year's 10th Anniversary Vinnies CEO Sleepout will help shine a light on female homelessness as they launch the event on Thursday 9 April at Sydney's Martin Place.

Female business leaders attending the launch include Alison Watkins, Coca Cola Amatil; Sue Cato, Cato Counsel; Caroline Hong, CH Asia Australia and Penelope Holloway, Hill+Knowlton Strategies. Other female leaders sleeping out include Holly Kramer, Best&Less; Martine Jager, RAMS; Ellie Comerford, Genworth; and Christine Bartlett, Mirvac.

There are over 105,000 people experiencing homelessness in Australia and 44% of these are women, many accompanied by young children. In addition around 60% are under the age of 35 and in the prime of their life.

St Vincent de Paul Society NSW CEO, Michael Perusco says that the issue of female homelessness is intrinsically linked to a lack of social and affordable housing as women cannot find alternative accommodation as they flee situations of domestic and family violence, the leading cause of female homelessness.

"It is crucial that affordable and social housing be made available to people at risk of homelessness or already experiencing homelessness so that we can offer them viable options to lead independent lives. Providing wrap-around services to people in secure accommodation is a far more effective way of ending the cycle of homelessness," he says.

The St Vincent de Paul Society NSW President, Ray Reynolds says, "It is shameful that, in a country as prosperous as Australia, we should have so many people living in such a vulnerable situation. But what is truly shocking is that so many of these people are women and children. The Society and its 6000 members in NSW refuse to stand by and do nothing and we will continue to call for action to be taken in addressing affordable housing and fixing a social housing system that is broken."

The **10th Vinnies CEO Sleepout will take place across the country on Thursday 18 June** in Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane, Perth, Canberra, Hobart, Darwin, Wollongong and Newcastle. The Adelaide event will take place on 25 June.

Launch Details

When: 8.00am, Thursday 9 April 2015

Where: Martin Place (outside Seven studios)

Who: Alison Watkins, Coca Cola Amatil; Sue Cato, Cato Counsel and Penelope Holloway, Hill+Knowlton Strategies

What: Female CEOs will don beanies and sleeping bags to shine a light on female homelessness and launch the 10th Anniversary Vinnies CEO Sleepout

Photo and interviews opportunities available.

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