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MEDIA RELEASE

Homelessness report is a blueprint for action

The National Council of the St Vincent de Paul Society in Australia welcomes the recent release of the Federal Parliament's final report into Housing and Homelessness in Australia.

National President, Claire Victory said the majority of the 35 recommendations in the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Social Policy and Legal Committee's report align with the National Council's position, articulated in a number of submissions to the Commonwealth, including the submission to this inquiry.

'Every day our members and staff come into contact with people whose lives would be markedly different if they had access to the dignity and benefits of safe, affordable housing, including adequate client-centred, trauma-informed support services where and when necessary.

'Our submission lists the growing profile of vulnerable people who've got nowhere safe to call home.

'Vulnerable groups include single parents with children, single mothers with teenage sons, people living with mental health issues, people experiencing family and domestic violence, asylum seekers, people being discharged from hospital, people being released from prison, people living with disability, young people experiencing family breakdown, young people in out of home care, older women and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women.

'The Society has been calling for some time for a ten-year national strategy on homelessness, and a stronger focus on prevention and early intervention.

'The call for more crisis, emergency and transitional accommodation, improvements to data collection and reporting and a new funding model to ensure services are provided to people most in need are all welcome.

'We particularly welcome the focus on intergovernmental cooperation, including the call for all governments to provide funding for additional crisis, emergency and transitional accommodation, and associated support services including pathways to long-term accommodation.

'And the recommended review of Commonwealth Rent Assistance will help to address the housing shortfall and housing stress.

'This report is a solid blueprint for reform that if implemented in full will go a long way to ensuring fuller economic and community participation for some of the most vulnerable people in our community,' Ms Victory said.

'I encourage the Federal Government to provide its response as soon as possible on this urgent and growing issue. The National Council will bring knowledge and insight from the states and territories to work closely with the government of the day on implementing these recommendations.'

The St Vincent de Paul Society in Australia consists of 60,000 members and volunteers who operate on the ground through over 1,000 groups located in local communities across the country.

MEDIA CONTACT

0475 068 209 or media@svdp.org.au

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