

**THE SALVATION ARMY AUSTRALIAN TERRITORIES
POSITIONAL STATEMENT**

RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE ENVIRONMENT

The Salvation Army believes that:

As people made in the image of God (Genesis 1:27), we have a responsibility to use the resources of the earth in a way that ensures that people in this and future generations do not suffer from poverty or injustice. This is part of our stewardship of the earth and our love of others. In the modern world, Christian stewardship implies large scale and permanent changes in attitude and behaviour towards God's creation, so that we begin to 'replenish the earth' (Genesis 1:28)

Responsibility was given to humanity to 'cultivate and keep' the earth (Genesis 2:15.), but humanity has destroyed or is destroying much of God's creation (Isaiah 24: 4-5).

God's instruction to 'subdue' the earth and rule over every living thing (Genesis 1:28) cannot be interpreted to justify exploitation. God gave His people rights and privileges, but these included duties and responsibilities.

Given the finite resources of the world and its expanding population, together with the impact of industrial and rural activities, development must take account of the need to preserve the earth — an exercise in responsible stewardship.

Therefore Salvationists believe the following principles:

- i. Concern and regard for all life forms, not only human life.
- ii. A striving for a more responsible lifestyle in order to do less damage to the environment.
- iii. Investment in regeneration, taking a long term view rather than short term expediency in thought and action.
- iv. Care for those who become the victims of the need for environmental stewardship, or who are the victims of environmental vandalism.

Salvationists are encouraged to consider seriously their personal responsibility for the environment by taking practical steps to regenerate and conserve God's creation.

Approved by the General, March, 1992.