



Media Release

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Federal Budget Offers Little Hope For Australians Doing it Tough

Whilst welcoming some of the major initiatives in this year's Federal Budget, The Salvation Army says Australia's most vulnerable remain inadequately supported.

Salvation Army National Secretary, Lieut-Colonel Samuel Pho, says "the initiatives in the budget to help young people get work experience and to invest in the development of evidence based programs that tackle long term disadvantage are welcome measures".

"However, both are susceptible to environmental factors that constrain individuals' opportunities to get ahead," he said.

The Salvation Army welcomes the Federal Government's decision to extend critical funding for homelessness programs and financial counselling for people with gambling problems for another year but is concerned that both are left with uncertainty beyond June 2017.

Additionally, The Salvation Army is also pleased to see the Government's plan to revisit superannuation tax structures that currently favour wealthy Australians yet offer little benefit to those on low incomes.

"However, changes to superannuation are of no benefit at all if you are unemployed, and we remain concerned that little has been done to address the underlying causes of poverty amongst struggling Australians," Lieut-Colonel Pho said.

'It's disappointing that tonight's budget puts financial savings measures ahead of helping people who are doing it tough.'

Lieut-Colonel Pho says that savings initiatives aimed at growing costs in Aged Care and Disability Support Pensions will further disadvantage vulnerable people and the programs that seek to help them. Furthermore, there has been no investment in the crucial area of housing affordability.

"Housing affordability has been the most significant issue at the frontline of Salvation Army services across Australia in recent years, so we are extremely disappointed in the lack of policy initiatives to create greater supply of affordable housing options."



“Without structural adjustments in the housing sector through taxation incentives and rental subsidies for people on income support payments, homelessness will remain a serious and urgent issue in this country.”

While acknowledging the budgetary and political challenges faced by the Federal Government, The Salvation Army says that Australia’s support for the poor, both here and overseas, is a moral responsibility that should not be forgotten.

“The Salvation Army is well aware of how generous Australians can be when asked to share their wealth with those who are less fortunate in neighbouring countries. However, tonight’s Federal Budget has again failed to deliver on foreign aid, raising questions about our national commitment to good global citizenship.”

The Salvation Army will continue to work with the Federal Government to encourage investment in services which alleviate poverty, but unfortunately tonight’s budget, as in previous years, overlooks the real needs of those living on the margins.

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For more information or media comment please contact:

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