



**RSL**  
Queensland

**aaeh** **australian alliance**  
to end homelessness

**MEDIA RELEASE**  
**Wednesday, March 10, 2021**

## **New event series to shed light on how ending veterans rough sleeping homelessness in Australia is possible**

**On March 18, The Salvation Army, RSL Queensland and the Australian Alliance to End Homelessness (AAEH), will together launch a new event series to drive awareness and understanding of how to end veterans rough sleeping homelessness.**

We are excited to announce a collaboration between leading agencies in the homelessness and veterans' support in Australia to deliver this new events series.

David Pearson, CEO of the AAEH, has explained that "the unfortunate reality is that we don't know exactly how many people sleeping rough in Australia are veterans – we are running this events series so that we can change that."

Mr Pearson added: "Through this series, we want to better understand the issues, but ultimately we want to answer one simple question: what will it take to end veterans' homelessness in Australia, so it is brief when it occurs and rarely experienced at all?"

The event will explore how communities around the world are demonstrating that ending homelessness is possible and will showcase speakers from communities in the United States and Canada that have ended veteran's homelessness. In the USA, twelve communities have now ended veterans rough sleeping homelessness and have achieved an overall 50 percent reduction in veteran homelessness since 2010.

By exploring the tools and methods implemented in these communities, the events will also assess issues more broadly in Australia. Subsequent sessions will focus on specific communities, including a stand-alone event on Aboriginal veterans' homelessness.

As described by Robert Skoda, RSL Queensland General Manager of Veteran Services: "One of the most basic needs we have is for a roof over our heads. Sadly, some veterans are lacking that. Homelessness isn't just sleeping rough – people may be living in their car or couch surfing, or living somewhere unsuitable and unsafe, like a squat or illegal campsite.

The shared learnings from this event series will further enhance RSL Queensland's tailored approach to veteran homelessness, centred around each veteran's individual circumstances and focusing on overcoming the root causes that have led to them becoming homeless." Livia Carusi, The Salvation Army's National General Manager in Homelessness, has said that "the Salvation Army is absolutely committed to helping to end homelessness in Australia – this new events series is one way in which we are helping to make this happen."

“Only last week the first community in Canada announced that they had ended veterans rough sleeping, we know Canada and the US experiences are different to Australia, but we want to learn more about what it would take to start ending veteran’s homelessness in Australian communities”, Ms Carusi said.

The series has been launched in response to the issues raised in the Council of Homelessness Persons’ Parity Journal, focused on veterans’ homelessness in Australia and released in 2020.

The AAEH, The Salvation Army and RSL Queensland are all hopeful that these events will lead to further awareness and understanding of what it would take to end veterans rough sleeping homelessness across Australia.

To attend these free events, further information and registrations can be made here:

<https://aaeh.org.au/events>

**-ENDS-**

#### **MEDIA CONTACTS:**

- Alexandra La Sala on 0466 258 343 or [lex@fiftyacres.com](mailto:lex@fiftyacres.com)
- Dasha Romanowski on 0416 144 959 or [dasha@fiftyacres.com](mailto:dasha@fiftyacres.com)

#### **About the Alliance to End Homelessness**

The Australian Alliance to End Homelessness (AAEH) is an independent champion for preventing and ending homelessness in Australia – starting with rough sleeping homelessness. The AAEH supports Australian communities to individually and collectively end homelessness. Specifically, they work with local communities at all levels to ensure everyone has access to safe and sustainable housing services and that any incidents of homelessness that do occur are rare, brief and non-recurring.

#### **About the Salvation Army**

The Salvation Army is the largest provider of homelessness services across the country. We provide services to adults, families with accompanying children and veterans. Our philosophy is that every person is afforded dignity, respect and quality of service and that no one should be without a safe, affordable and secure home. We recognise that homelessness can affect anyone - it doesn't discriminate.

#### **About RSL Queensland**

RSL Queensland has stood shoulder to shoulder with Queensland veterans and their families since 1916. It is the largest ex-service organisation in Queensland, providing practical support, assistance, advice and camaraderie to current and former Australian Defence Force members and their families across the state. RSL Queensland comprises 230 Sub Branches across 10 Districts. The organisation is run by veterans for veterans and its 32,000 members span all ages, genders, ethnicities and service backgrounds. RSL Queensland is a registered charity and receives no government funding. It generates 95 per cent of its revenue from the RSL Art Union. Visit [rslqld.org](http://rslqld.org)