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alliance
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MEDIA RELEASE

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Australian Alliance to End Homelessness urges for better disaster resilience response to support people experiencing homelessness

Communities from across Australia met this week to discuss how to better prepare for natural disasters and extreme weather events to ensure people experiencing homelessness are accounted for and provided with adequate support.

14 communities across Australia are working towards ending homelessness as a part of the Advance to Zero campaign, which is coordinated by the Australian Alliance to End Homelessness (AAEH) and based on the same methodology used by communities around the world that have successfully ended homelessness. Representatives from these communities met on June 14 to discuss how to better prepare for disasters as Australia continues to face the effects of extreme weather events.

A central part of the Advance to Zero campaign is knowing the name of every person experiencing homelessness in a community through the use of a frequently updated Quality By-Name List. A community in the flood-affected Northern Rivers region recently used data from its Quality By-Name List to assist with identifying the needs of people experiencing homelessness, including their underlying health and mental health issues, housing needs and even their location. This assisted the community in identifying over 300 people experiencing homelessness due to the floods who had not accessed emergency response camps.

David Pearson, CEO of the AAEH, said that such examples highlight the importance of having data-driven systems in place to assist with emergency responses.

“People experiencing homelessness are among the most vulnerable in our communities, and when disaster strikes or cold weather bites, communities need to do more to prepare.

“One of the key things that we’re learning in the work of the Advance to Zero campaign is that ending homelessness and building disaster resilience are interconnected. When we identify the names and needs of everyone in a community, we can connect them with the services they need and ensure we can adequately support them in times of disaster.

“This is an important lesson given that most Australian communities do not know how many people are sleeping rough in their area, let alone who they are and what their individual needs are. This needs to change, and we can achieve this by implementing a Quality By-Name List in communities across the country,” said Mr Pearson.

The AAEH has been calling for the Australian Government to commit to developing a national housing and homelessness plan with a focus on ending homelessness around the country using the Advance to Zero methodology.

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MEDIA CONTACTS:

- Jemimah Taylor on 0478 924 425 or jemimah@fiftyacres.com
- Lex La Sala on 0466 258 343 or lex@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, we 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.