



HOMELESS SERVICES WORKING OVERTIME AS WINTER SNAP HITS EASTERN AUSTRALIA

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Member services within the Catholic Social Services Australia network are working overtime as freezing cold weather hits the eastern seaboard and forces homeless people off the streets.

“Life on the streets is hard enough at the best of times but when the temperature plummets people sleeping rough need a safe place to sleep, a warm meal and a hot shower more than ever,” Chair of Catholic Social Services Australia, Francis Sullivan, said today.

“Thousands of people on the east coast have just been through weeks of relentless rain and are now enduring some of the coldest weather we have had for years.

“They are reaching out to homelessness services, many of whom are struggling to find places for them to sleep,” Mr Sullivan said.

The last census had some 116,000 people across Australia classified as homeless with the fastest growing group being women over 55.

“Older women are vulnerable to unexpected events such as the death of a partner, a health crisis or divorce. They often have little or no superannuation.

“These women are the unexpected face of homelessness in Australia.

“The new federal government has made a major commitment to new community and social housing but there is still a major shortfall in places available and demand.

“Sadly, there is never enough funding for emergency housing and shelter, every year places are harder to get and every year the demand for them increases,” Mr Sullivan said.

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