

THE SALVATION ARMY

MEDIA RELEASE



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THE SALVATION ARMY WELCOMES APOLOGY

The Salvation Army today welcomed the Federal Government's apology to members of the Stolen Generations of Indigenous Australians.

In a Statement of Reconciliation in 2000, The Salvation Army recognised "that Australia's Indigenous people have sustained grievous and unacceptable discrimination throughout these latter years of their vast history".

In the same statement the Army pledged "to listen to the voice of suffering, rejection, loss and despair, to acknowledge past failures, and to resolve to work together for the good of all Australians".

Speaking on behalf of The Salvation Army's Australia Eastern Territory and Australia Southern Territory, Commissioner Les Strong and Commissioner James Knaggs said today that the Government's apology opened the door for renewed hope for Australia, particularly for Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians walking and working together towards a much brighter future.

"The separation of Indigenous children from their families last century has been a source of great pain, long-term turmoil and loss of identity for many of our first Australians," said Commissioner Strong from Sydney. "The Salvation Army welcomes the bipartisan commitment of Australia's Federal Parliament on this historic day."

In Indigenous culture, as in any culture, saying sorry means much more than admitting wrong. It helps restore respect and bring healing. It creates an environment for the building of relationship and friendship, and a commitment to relationship and friendship.

"Today is a very significant day in the life and history of Australia, and we congratulate Prime Minister Rudd," said Commissioner Knaggs from Melbourne. "It is The Salvation Army's hope that this apology will result in practical and measurable outcomes."

The Salvation Army recognises the need for more opportunities for the Indigenous community in education, health, socio-economic equality and the celebration of culture. In places such as Moree, NSW, Alice Springs, NT, Swan Hill, Victoria, Ipswich, Queensland, and Murray Bridge, SA, the Army works with the local Indigenous community and its Elders in a range of mentoring and other social initiatives.

SPOKESPERSON

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