

## **Roughing It for a Reason - Lejo Hopes to Raise \$10,000 for Homeless Australians**

In mid-June, many of Australia's leading business people will be homeless – not because of an impending collapse (again) of the world's financial systems but because they will be participating in the **Vinnies CEO Sleepout**, a charity initiative to raise funds and awareness of homelessness in Australia.

The event challenges business and community leaders to experience homelessness first-hand for one night, raise important money, and with fresh insight go on to effect change in social opinions on this serious issue. All money raised goes directly towards the ongoing provision of Vinnies' homeless services across the country.

Participating in this year's sleepout on **Thursday 16 June** is **Lejo Ouwendyk**, Managing Partner of successful mid-tier accountancy firm, Kennerlys, who, like over 700 of his peers Australia-wide, will be forgoing his creature comforts to spend a night without a roof over his head, just like over 100,000 homeless Australian's do every night.

Mr Ouwendyk said it was distressing to think that in a thriving first-world country such as Australia, so many people have to sleep on the streets every night. "In WA alone, almost 14,000 people are homeless – either living rough on the streets or jumping to and from temporary accommodation on a regular basis," he said. "What's even more upsetting is the fact that over a third of these people are young adults or even teenagers."

Mr Ouwendyk is no stranger to charity work, having this year - with help from his family and the team at Kennerlys - raised enough money to fund the building of a 40-bed dormitory wing at an orphanage in Kenya, which was recently completed.

"I think it's very important that individuals and businesses that are in a position to give back to the community, do so at every opportunity," Mr Ouwendyk said. "Whether that means helping to fund a community project in another country or forgoing a comfortable night sleep to raise money for WA's homeless, I certainly encourage all my associates in the business community to do so - they can start by going to the website at [www.ceosleepout.org.au](http://www.ceosleepout.org.au) and making a donation!"

The Vinnies CEO Sleepout will once again be held at the WACA ground, Perth, where at the time of writing 66 local CEO's, MD's, MP's and Company Directors had signed up, including Andrew Forrest, Australia's richest person. Last year, 99 West Australian business and community leaders braved the cold and slept rough for a night in winter - their efforts raised a total of \$474,185.

In what is his first CEO Sleepout, Mr Ouwendyk hopes to raise \$10,000 on behalf of himself and Kennerlys.

### **About Vinnies CEO Sleepout**

The Vinnies CEO Sleepout began as a local community venture in Sydney's Parramatta in 2006. Since then, the event has raised important funds for Vinnies Homeless Services across NSW.

In 2010 the event was launched nationally and exceeded expectations, attracting almost 700 CEO's in 7 cities nationally and raising \$2.9 million to directly assist people experiencing homelessness. The money has funded new projects and assisted with the provision of existing homeless services.

At the last Census, 104,700 Australians were counted as homeless (Australian Bureau of Statistics 2006) with 50,256 Australian's on the street, every night. The growing incidence of homelessness has not been accompanied by an increase in services to meet demand.

The aim of the Vinnies CEO Sleepout is not only to raise funds, but raise awareness of homelessness and not just to service the homeless, but to bring about an end to homelessness.

**To Make a Donation to the Vinnies CEO Sleepout Please go to [www.ceosleepout.org.au](http://www.ceosleepout.org.au)**

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## **About Kennerlys**

Kennerlys has been supporting and providing services to prominent and successful Perth business people since its inception in the 1970's.

Specialising in Taxation, Superannuation and Enterprise Development services Kennerlys are dedicated to helping clients achieve both their business objectives and personal ambitions. Kennerlys prides itself on delivering services within a professional, approachable and caring environment where team members have the opportunity to work with clients to truly become part of their clients businesses.

The Kennerlys team is currently headed up by Lejo Ouwendyk who has been Managing Partner since 2006, and this year was a finalist in the coveted WABN "40-under-40" business awards, and Sue Peterson who is a Senior Associate and has been at Kennerlys since the 1970s. Supporting Lejo and Sue are a dedicated team of professional & administration staff.