



Briefing paper: Board of Directors

Matter for information

Agenda Item:	CEO Report
Date:	14 August 2025
Responsible:	Chief Executive Officer

Purpose

To provide the Board with updates, including key achievements, not otherwise covered in the agenda.

Recommendation

The Board note the Report.

Story of our Impact

Ali*, who arrived in Australia from Afghanistan with his family, is a graduate of Vinnies' Employment Pathways for Refugees (EPRI) program. This program supports refugees and humanitarian migrants living in South West Sydney and Greater Western Sydney through a work training program, and by building confidence, skills and relationships.

Ali was supported by the Vinnies EPRI team to successfully complete his VET course and workplace training, despite his lack of English language skills. Ali made a positive impression with his attitude, disposition and work ethic during the Truck Driving Pathway, where he worked as an offsider.

Prior to this, Ali had been unable to attempt any training or qualifications and had found it impossible to secure a job. The distress of this was impacting Ali's own wellbeing and his family's. The EPRI team found ways to think outside the box and helped to integrate Ali within the team. Following his participation in the program, Ali is now permanently employed at Vinnies where he is a valued team member, and a happy, working dad and husband.

Through the EPRI program, Vinnies has supported approximately 220 refugees through its work training program. 20 have gone on to secure employment with Vinnies and 19 have found jobs externally. 103 participants have completed Vocational Education and Training (VET) qualifications, and 89 people have gained their forklift licenses. You can learn more about participant's experiences with the program by [watching this short video](#), created by one of the participants.

Highlights FY2025

- Built strong relationships with leaders including Premier Chris Minns, Social Services Minister Tanya Plibersek, Minister Rose Jackson, and the Governor-General Sam Mostyn. This included securing a \$2.43 million funding commitment for Rosalie House from Prime Minister Albanese, \$400,000 grant through Homelessness Innovation Fund, for capital works to refurbish the Swansea site.
- Co-hosted events such as the CEO Sleepout launch, the new Vinnies truck launch, the opening of Mercy House, and various McKell Institute events with federal ministers.
- Participated in panels and conferences, including the 5th Financial Inclusion Conference and the NADA Conference, showcasing Vinnies' impact and thought leadership.

- Secured \$2.4 million from the Prime Minister to redevelop Rosalie House domestic and family violence service and \$400,000 from the Homelessness Innovation Fund, for capital works to refurbish the Swansea site.
- Improved employee engagement from 81% to 86% and raised wellbeing scores from 74% to 78% and progress score from 62% to 74%, surpassing all industry benchmarks.
- Expanded our reach in community including securing and standing up Adele House; securing and opening Mercy House and undertaking development of the Swansea site, both for transitional housing for survivors of domestic and family violence; started the AOD Freeman House Hub; started Placed based pilot roll out at Nagle Centre; expansion of Vinnies Vans; and evening services; and piloted the Staying Home, Leaving Violence program.

Other updates – FY26 Q1

- Our tender application to the Federal Department of Social Services (DSS) under the Financial Capability and Wellbeing Program for Emergency Relief & Financial Assistance was successful, bringing our annual base funding from \$2.3 to \$4.6 million. This funding goes to the front-line work of our Members in Conference Assistance Work across the State.
- The weekend of 5 July the State Council, Board Directors and Executive gathered at Mary MacKillop Place in North Sydney for the annual State Council Retreat.
- The Winter Appeal has enjoyed a terrific response with over \$2 million collected over the course of the campaign.
- The Vinnies CEO Sleepout raised \$2.8 million raised in NSW for its 20th year.
- A new and expanded Vinnies Shop opened in Wollongong in June vastly improving results selling four times the product of the previous shop.
- Media coverage remains strong and positive:
 - St Vincent de Paul Society NSW was mentioned 571 times across mainstream media during the month of May, June and July 2025. Specifically in the month of July, Society NSW was mentioned 76 times across mainstream media, generating potential audience reach of 3.3 million views.
 - Society's social media new monthly follower count increased by 72.9%. Meanwhile on the Vinnies Shops Facebook page, the overall follower count doubled, with new monthly followers increasing by 375%.
 - Top coverage has included Vinnies Finds launch, CEOSO, Disaster Appeal, Winter Appeal and One of the many highlights was a positive Vinnies Shops pricing story that we worked on with News.com.au
- On 11 October the Society will hold our first "Good Works Summit" at Bankstown Sports Club, bringing together members, volunteers and employees from across the State to learn and collaborate. This event is a revitalisation of our annual Member Forum, including a larger venue and the invitation of key thought-leaders from Government and other sectors. Board members are encouraged to attend – and registration details will be circulated shortly.
- Two special services were attended by the Society closely aligned to Homelessness Week. One was a Memorial Service in Martin Place with Catholic Cemeteries and Payce Foundation remembering those who lived life on the margins and had passed away through the year. The second service was at Catholic Cemeteries Rookwood in the Charles O'Neill Walkway for the interment of ashes of homeless.
- On 8 August the Executive Director of Mission and Formation attended the official launch of the Christian Alliance Council of New South Wales. The launch was attended by the Premier, Hon Chris Minns and

more than 50 Heads of Churches, Archbishops, Bishops, Presidents, Members of Parliament, other leading Christian charities and organisations.