



## Media Release

6 August 2015

### **The Salvation Army Welcomes Westpac Decision to cut ties with Payday Lending Industry**

The Salvation Army welcomes the decision by Westpac to cut ties with the payday lending sector – an industry which is known to exploit some of the most vulnerable and desperate people in society.

The Salvation Army, through its Moneycare Financial Counselling Service, is one of the largest providers of financial counselling services in Australia and sees the devastating impact payday lenders have on its clients on a daily basis.

The head of The Salvation Army Moneycare, Tony Devlin, says it is astonishing the amount of damage payday lenders inflict on desperate and vulnerable people.

“It’s a very common occurrence for our financial counselling, no interest loans (NILS) and emergency relief services to see people who have debts with pay day lenders, which causes them extreme hardship,” Mr Devlin said.

“We would encourage anyone who is suffering the consequences of having gone to one of these predatory lenders to contact a financial counsellor who may be able to assist in alleviating hardship.

While welcoming the announcement by Westpac, Mr Devlin says he would hope that these predatory lenders won’t simply turn to other players in the finance industry to help them out.

“The entire finance industry needs to say no to these payday lenders who prey on and exploit vulnerable people in desperate situations,” Mr Devlin said.

“The Commonwealth and State governments also have a role to play by actively regulating the payday lending sector so that citizens are fully protected from these operators.”

Financial counsellors and no interest loan schemes (NILS) are alternatives to payday lenders with many not-for-profit organisations, including The Salvation Army, providing these much needed services. People seeking financial counselling should call 1800 007 007 and those who may require a no interest loan are encouraged to call the NILS hotline on 13 64 57

**ENDS**

**For more information or to organise an interview with Tony Devlin, please contact:**

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