



Media Release

20 July 2017

Missing Persons Week: The Salvos Restore Lost Family Connections

To mark National Missing Persons Week 2017, The Salvation Army is urging those who are seeking to connect with a missing family member to contact its Family Tracing Service.

The Salvation Army Family Tracing Service has a 75 per cent success rate in locating missing persons with about 40 successful cases processed every week. The most frequent requests are from adult 'children' seeking their mother, father or sibling.

National Missing Persons Week (30 July-5 August) aims to raise awareness of the issues and impacts surrounding missing persons, and to help reduce the incidence of missing persons in Australia. This year's message, 'Still waiting for you to come home', focuses on families who are left behind following the disappearance of a family member.

"The disappearance of a loved one has a devastating effect on the rest of the family. Unlike other losses, there is no sense of certainty or closure when it comes to missing persons. Responding to this 'ambiguous loss' poses many challenges for families and can be an overwhelming and distressing experience, Emma Ewin, caseworker at The Salvation Army's Family Tracing Service said.

An estimated 38,000 people are reported missing in Australia every year. That's one person every 15 minutes. While the vast majority are found, there are about 1600 long-term (more than six months) missing persons in Australia.

The Salvation Army Family Tracing Service believes in the importance of family and community. It seeks to restore family relationships by tracing relatives and assisting, where possible, with reunion and reconciliation. The service has been operating in Australia since the 1920s and registers 2000 searches each year. It has networks in more than 100 countries and has located thousands of missing persons across Australia.

"Whatever the outcome, families should know there are options available if their loved ones are missing. If you are unable to find them, we urge you to contact us so we can help you. We encourage anyone who has been disconnected from their family to reach out to them or authorities and let them know you are ok," Mrs Ewin said.

For more information about The Salvation Army Family Tracing Service please visit the website at salvos.org.au/familytracing or call 02 9466 3479 in NSW/ACT and 07 3222 6661 in QLD.

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For more information or media comment please contact:

The Salvation Army Media Department – (02) 9466 3143.