



Social Justice STOCKTAKE



Climate Change

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The survey results showed that climate change was behind other concerns such as housing affordability and mental health, was that a surprise?

We weren't surprised to see more immediate, day-to-day, social injustices being identified more frequently than climate change. For a lot of people experiencing disadvantage their focus is having a secure roof over their heads, having enough food on the table to feed their family and taking care of their own mental wellbeing. Many of us simply don't have the extra time or energy to think beyond these immediate things.

That said, climate change ranked nationally as the eighth most commonly identified issue with almost a quarter of all respondents identifying it as a social justice issue in their local community. During a period of lockdowns and reports of pandemic related racism, climate change was still identified more frequently than either social isolation and loneliness and racism and discrimination. This indicates a very high level of awareness and also concern around climate change.

Do you believe the COVID-19 pandemic contributed to the result?

It is impossible to tell what impact COVID-19 had on the results of the Stocktake but it may be relevant to consider that COVID-19 brought with it some opportunities to think differently about the way we live our lives. Working from home meant we weren't creating as much car or noise pollution, we were spending more time in our own neighbourhoods and became more aware of the supply chain for many of the goods we take for granted.

How does climate change affect The Salvation Army's works?

Through our work in Australia, especially in assisting with the response to and recovery from natural disasters we see the impact of climate change in both the frequency and severity of extreme weather events. We also see that the effects of climate change are felt disproportionately by those who are already experiencing disadvantage. Climate change is already compounding hardships experienced by disadvantaged people and communities in terms of health, livelihood, and shelter.

Did the 2019/2020 bushfire disaster change Australians' views on climate change and if so, how?

We have found that the devastating fires of 2019-2020 and the more recent floods have changed many Australians' views on climate change and hastened the call to 'act now'.

Nobody wants a repeat of the 2019-2020 fires that resulted in loss of life, the destruction of huge tracts of land and wildlife, and that left homes, properties, businesses and communities devastated.



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What is The Salvation Army doing as an organisation to arrest the effects of climate change?

While the Salvation Army is on the front-line in the aftermath of climate-related disasters, we also focus our efforts on longer-term solutions to support communities and individuals to build resilience and adapt.

Building community resilience against the impacts of climate-related disasters also means supporting communities to adapt to increased risks and to be better prepared for natural disasters when they occur.