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## MEDIA RELEASE

### **MAJOR CHURCH PROVIDERS CALL FOR CRISIS RESPONSE NOW**

Major church providers have called for a crisis and recovery fund from the Australian Government to ensure people who are doing it tough due to the impact of the global financial crisis are not further disadvantaged.

A Taskforce of eminent Australians would oversee that spend.

Anglicare Australia, Catholic Social Services Australia, the Salvation Army and UnitingCare Australia made the call at an historic meeting of leaders and decision makers at Parliament House in Canberra today.

Many Australians face a significant period of disadvantage if initiatives are not put in place now to ensure the impact of the global financial crisis is minimised. We need to ensure people who lose their jobs do not lose their homes and slide into welfare dependency.

The group has called for an injection of \$300 million a year for three years in addition to existing money to provide relief for individuals and families facing hardship resulting from the impact of the global financial crisis.

These are unique times which call for a one-off injection of funds to augment existing services to meet the increasing demand.

In addition the group has called for a seat on the Infrastructure Australia Board to ensure the particular needs of low income Australians are central to the Board's deliberations.

Infrastructure must be about more than large, long-term projects like roads, rail and bridges. Infrastructure must also about modest, local projects such as funding energy efficiency measures to reduce the impact of rising energy costs on low-income households.

The group calls for the impact of the global financial crisis on families and communities to be added as an emergency item on this weekend's CoAG meeting agenda, and will be taking a detailed plan to the Prime Minister in the weeks ahead.

Spokespeople from the four major church providers include:

**Anglicare Australia**  
**Catholic Social Services Australia**  
**Salvation Army**

Kasy Chambers, Executive Director  
Frank Quinlan, Executive Director  
David Eldridge, Territorial Social Programme  
Secretary, Australia Southern Territory  
Lin Hatfield-Dodds, National Director

**UnitingCare Australia**

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Contact: Judith Tokley 0408 824 306 / 02 6285 1366