



Media release

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Mission Australia to provide accommodation support for young offenders in Riverina Murray

Mission Australia has been selected for an important accommodation support service in the Riverina Murray region aimed at helping young offenders with a history of homelessness gain independent living and stay out of custody, said John Hubby, Chief Executive, Juvenile Justice, Department of Human Services NSW, today.

“After a thorough tender process, the Supported Accommodation Service contract was awarded to Mission Australia for services in the Riverina Murray region.

“Mission Australia provided excellent value for money, and demonstrated vast experience and expertise in delivering similar services in the Riverina Murray. The contract provides more than \$1.5 million to the organisation for the next three years,” said Mr Hubby.

“The service will target young offenders aged 13 to 18 years with complex needs and a history of homelessness.

“It is important for the service to reach young people leaving detention, particularly Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander young people and those under 16 years old.

“The most recent survey of young people in custody revealed that six per cent were residing in unsettled accommodation or had ‘no fixed place of abode’, with young women representing 18 per cent. More than one-quarter (27 per cent) had moved two or more times in the six months prior to custody, and this was more for Aboriginal young people at nearly a third (32 per cent).

“By providing the Supported Accommodation Service, the Department of Human Services NSW is aiming to ensure lasting change in the life of a young offender with a history of homelessness, and assist in their reintegration into community living.

“Mission Australia will provide accommodation support to the young people including long term independent living options and social housing. They will develop individual case plans with the young people addressing offending behaviour, and deliver support services to improve their integration back into the community,” said Mr Hubby.

Support services to be offered include:

- Improving a young person’s social and community living skills;
- Providing vocational, educational and training opportunities;
- Linking young people to counselling; and
- Active involvement in the young person’s family and support network.

“Accommodation services for young offenders with a history of homelessness will help to reduce the risk of them coming in and out of the criminal justice system,” said Mr Hubby.

The Supported Accommodation Service is an initiative of the NSW Homelessness Action Plan. It is funded through the Commonwealth Government's 'National Partnership Agreement on Homelessness' whereby Commonwealth and States and Territories are working together to significantly reduce homelessness by 2013. The Supported Accommodation Service will also be delivered in South West Sydney and the Mid and Far North Coast of NSW.

To access the NSW Homelessness Action Plan, visit the Housing NSW website:
www.housing.nsw.gov.au

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