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The Salvation Army backs new measures to support victims of modern slavery

The Salvation Army welcomes today's announcement by the Federal Government that victims of forced marriage will have access to 200 days of support through the Support for Trafficked People Program, without being required to contribute to a criminal investigation or prosecution.

The announcement was made by Assistant Minister for Home Affairs Alex Hawke at The Salvation Army Freedom Partnership and Walk Free Foundation's modern slavery seminar at Parliament House this morning.

Mr Hawke also reaffirmed the Federal Government will introduce a Modern Slavery Act into parliament to be enacted by the end of 2018.

Jenny Stanger, National Manager at The Salvation Army's Freedom Partnership to End Modern Slavery, says the 12 month trial program will provide greater protection for victims of modern slavery.

"We welcome the announcement regarding de-linking of support for people facing forced marriage. In particular, young people should not have to face the trauma and emotional turmoil of providing statements against their closest family members in order to get support," Mrs Stanger said.

In Australia, there are more than 4300 people enslaved. Through its national initiative to end modern slavery, The Salvation Army has been instrumental in mobilising community, business and government to realise their contributions to modern slavery and take action to eradicate it.

Chairman of the Australian Freedom Network, Commissioner James Condon from The Salvation Army, says today's seminar represented a significant step towards eradicating modern slavery.

"In December 2016 I signed a letter as the Chairman of the Australian Freedom Network on behalf of faith leaders to the Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull calling for Australia to introduce a Modern Slavery Act. We welcome the commitment from government today to make 2018 a landmark year for ending slavery, " Commissioner Condon said.

ENDS

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