



Media Release

24 July 2009

Welcome Increase to Hardship Allowance

TasCOSS Tom Muller today welcomed the decision by Aurora to double and index the funds it allocates under its Hardship Policy.

TasCOSS, Anglicare and the Salvation Army wrote to and met with Aurora to raise concerns about the impact of electricity price rises on households and the inadequate nature of funds provided by Aurora to assist those households in financial hardship.

“The decision to increase funds to assist households in hardship is socially responsible. It will enable the Salvation Army and other community organisations to assist those Tasmanians who just can’t afford the cost of electricity”, said Mr Muller.

While welcoming the increase in hardship allowance, TasCOSS is still concerned about the price increases that Aurora Pay As You Go (APAYG) customers face.

“It is high time that APAYG prices were subject to regulation in the same way as electricity supplied under standard tariffs”.

“TasCOSS also believes that the State Government has got to do more to support households to lower their energy bill”.

“With the current round of price rises and future price rises likely there is an urgent need for the State Government to priorities investing in thermal efficiency initiatives to support low-income households to reduce their energy bills”.

“We know that there are around 150 000 Tasmanians who are just scraping by financially and that increases in energy prices and the introduction of water charges will mean that many people will have to make some very difficult decisions about what essentials they forgo in order to make ends meet”, Mr Muller said.

For further information and interview contact Tom Muller on 0448 310 043