

MODERN SLAVERY STATEMENT

1 July 2023 to 30 June 2024

St Vincent de Paul Society Victoria
ABN: 28 911 702 061
ACN: 646 178 421

43 Prospect Street, Box Hill Vic 3128
Locked Bag 4800, Box Hill Vic 3128

Telephone: 03 9895 5800

Email: info@svdp-vic.org.au
Website: www.vinnies.org.au

1. Introduction

The St Vincent de Paul Society is an international organisation formed of lay Catholics who seek personal and spiritual growth through serving people in need.

The Society was founded in Paris in 1833 by a 20-year-old student named Frederic Ozanam, who was challenged to 'show us your works' and do something to assist the poor who were struggling to survive day-to-day.

Frederic's vision became a worldwide movement and, 21 years later on 5 March 1854, the St Vincent de Paul Society was established in Melbourne, Australia, by Fr Gerald Ward who, like Frederic, also witnessed a changing community following the discovery of gold in central Victoria. Today, through a wide network of members and volunteers the Society's work continues to provide practical frontline support, advocacy and friendship to the most vulnerable members of our community.

Guided by the Society's Governing document, The Rule, and faithful to the spirit of its founders, the Society respects every person's human dignity. The Society seeks out those in need and the forgotten, the victims of exclusion or adversity, and those who are most rejected by society and uplifts them.

The Society's respect for the human dignity of every person underlines our zero-tolerance approach to Modern Slavery.

OUR MISSION

The St Vincent de Paul Society is a lay Catholic organisation that aspires to live the gospel message by serving Christ in the poor with love, respect, justice, hope and joy, and by working to shape a more just and compassionate society.

OUR VISION

The Society aspires to be recognised as a caring Catholic charity offering "a hand up" to people in need. We do this by respecting their dignity, sharing our hope, and encouraging them to take control of their own destiny.

MODERN SLAVERY STATEMENT

HIGHLIGHTS



Source: St Vincent de Paul Society Victoria Impact Report 2023-24

MODERN SLAVERY STATEMENT

2. Reporting Entity

The St Vincent de Paul Society of Victoria (SVDPV) is comprised of three separate but related legal entities, all of which are Australian public companies limited by guarantee:

- St Vincent de Paul Society Victoria Limited (ACN: 646 178 421)
- VincentCare Victoria (ACN: 094 807 280)
- VincentCare Community Housing (ACN: 135 646 687)

St Vincent de Paul Society of Victoria as a group, inclusive of the three legal entities above, are registered charities with the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission (ACNC) and are regulated by the ACNC.

This Modern Slavery Statement does not apply to:

- the international body of the St Vincent de Paul Society, the International Consul General, or any entities owned or controlled by the International Consul General
- the National Council of the St Vincent de Paul Society
- St Vincent de Paul Societies in other Australian states and territories, or any entities owned or controlled by these Societies.

3. Structure, Operations and Supply Chains

GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE

The SVDPV/VCV Board is comprised of:

- Five members from the State Council of the St Vincent de Paul Society in Victoria (the State Council) including the State Council President, a State Council President appointee and three Central Council Presidents; and
- Four independent Directors.

Members of the State Council are either elected or appointed for a four-year term. The four independent Directors are subject to retirement by rotation up to a maximum of 9 years in aggregate.

The thirteen members of the State Council, as individuals, are the members of SVDPV for the duration of their State Council membership. SVDPV is the sole member of VincentCare Victoria (VCV) and Society of St. Vincent de Paul (Victoria). VCV is the sole member of VincentCare Community Housing (VCCH).

The Members of SVDPV have certain reserve powers in relation to SVDPV, as set out in the Company's constitution.

OPERATIONS

The Society conducts its principal activities through a group of specialised entities. The parent entity of the Group, SVDPV, which is primarily funded through its retail network of Vinnies shops and fundraising activities, delivers material aid and companionship to those in need through our home visitations, assistance centres, soup vans and a range of education, no-interest loans and youth programs.

Within the Group, VincentCare Victoria (VCV) was established by the Society in Victoria in 2003 to deliver a range of specialist support services for disadvantaged and vulnerable people, including those experiencing homelessness, or suffering from forms of substance abuse. VCV works to deliver these programs in partnership with government and a wide range of non-government providers.

MODERN SLAVERY STATEMENT

VincentCare Community Housing (VCCH) was established by VCV in 2009 as a registered housing provider to manage a number of social housing properties and to provide tenancy support.

These principal activities support the achievement of the organisation's strategic objectives as set out in the Strategic Plan 2021-2024, with each of the operations of the Society contributing to the overarching goal of *empowering Victorians; giving people the support they need to take control of their lives and reclaim their dignity.*

Strategic priority areas that underpin the strategic plan include:

- **Outcomes Focussed:** Responding to the need for immediate assistance, whilst investing in new areas of work that support people to achieve longer term outcomes;
- **Values Driven:** Attracting people with the right skills, who have aligned values and are committed to helping people. We provide a welcoming, supportive and safe place for everyone;
- **Operationally Excellent:** Improving how we work to enable ease of experience and access for people accessing our services and ease of delivery by our people; and
- **Commercially Smart:** Excelling at being commercially smart without moving away from charitable roots. We maximise our strong, trusted brand and reputation to create greater opportunities for sustainable revenue generation.

Strategic priorities are supported by a series of key performance indicators through which the achievement of strategic objectives can be measured. The organisation's 2023-2024 Impact Report contains details on outcomes achieved.

The St Vincent de Paul Society Victoria's organisation structure is presented below.



MODERN SLAVERY STATEMENT

SUPPLY CHAIN

The Society's funds are used to help relieve the suffering of those in need and must be handled with the utmost care, prudence, and generosity. The Society is committed to best practice procurement, operating according to its vision, mission and values, including contracting principles to ensure responsible stewardship of its finite resources and protection of its reputation in the wider community by:

- a. acting with integrity, probity and accountability;
- b. seeking to obtain value for money;
- c. adhering to responsible financial management and planning;
- d. promoting our Mission and Values through social, ethical, and environmental, objectives and diversity equity inclusion and belonging practices in the supply chain; and
- e. fostering open and fair competition.

The Group's procurement will contribute to advancing our mission and values by integrating strategies aimed at generating social, environmental, and ethical impact, and assessing Suppliers' commitment to shared values of diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging; via direct and subcontracted supply arrangements, while also considering value for money factors such as quality, capability, and price.

The Society reserves the right to refuse to purchase from suppliers that engage in unethical practices, such as Modern Slavery; discrimination/vilification of minority groups or operational or manufacturing practices that significantly damage the environment.

Under the Society's Maturity-based approach, continuing to building collaborative and transparent relationships with our suppliers is critical to ensuring the best outcomes in our work and our commitment to identifying and addressing modern slavery.

An assessment of modern slavery and its associated risks forms a part of our procurement processes when engaging with any large new or potential suppliers. We are continually refining our procurement processes to ensure that this is consistently applied across our diverse organisation.

MATURITY-BASED MODERN SLAVERY APPROACH

St Vincent de Paul Society Victoria's Group Modern Slavery Statement and continued compliance is based on a maturity model that has been developed by the Modern Slavery Working Group. The maturity-based approach reports the current state and activities undertaken to ensure the Group is compliant with the Modern Slavery Act 2018. The Statement will detail current and future progress towards continuing compliance with the Modern Slavery Act 2018.

The following presents an overview of St Vincent de Paul Society Victoria's maturity-based modern slavery approach.

MODERN SLAVERY STATEMENT

12-Month Maturity Roadmap

Action	Status
Appoint a Modern Slavery Working Group to drive initiatives and review and progress the modern slavery maturity roadmap	Completed
Develop and implement a Group Procurement Policy	Completed and implemented 18 June 2024
Develop and implement a Group Modern Slavery Policy	Completed and implemented 18 July 2024
Update Procurement templates to seek modern slavery status from suppliers	Completed and implemented
Continuation of SVDPV's accreditation under the Clothing Reuse Export Accreditation Scheme	Completed and implemented. SVDPV is accredited under the Clothing Reuse Export Accreditation Scheme administered by Charitable Reuse Australia.
Conduct supplier risk analysis to identify suppliers in high-risk categories (security, linen, IT, etc.)	In progress
Supplier engagement about Group Modern Slavery Policy and supply chain initiatives	In progress
Standard contract suite to include modern slavery clauses	In progress
Retain and conduct annual reviews of supplier modern slavery statements	In progress
Review supplier risk profile across SVDPV	In progress

2-year Maturity Roadmap

- On-going monitoring of Group-wide Modern Slavery Policy,
- Update the Group Modern Slavery Statement as SVDPV grows modern slavery maturity (continuous improvement),
- Conduct audits of overseas suppliers,
- Include details of supplier's modern slavery compliance within centralised contract register,
- Mature SVDPV reporting and oversight for modern slavery initiatives,
- Upskill the organisation to build knowledge of modern slavery,
- Implement Group-wide Modern Slavery training,
- Report on Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) impact.

MODERN SLAVERY STATEMENT

4. Risks of Modern Slavery practices

The Society's vision is to offer a "hand up" to people in need. We do this by respecting their dignity, sharing our hope, and encouraging them to take control of their own destiny. At its core, this vision commits us to safeguarding our people, stakeholders and the broader community, in keeping with our respect for human dignity.

In order to ensure the Society is operating in keeping with its Vincentian mission and values, the organisation proactively manages its compliance obligations, particularly employment, work health and safety and whistleblower. The Society minimises the risk of non-compliance via our Group Policy Framework, including our Modern Slavery Policy and Procurement Policy.

The main areas with vulnerability with regards to modern slavery risk resides within our procurement and retail business units. Section 5 details actions taken to assess and address modern slavery risks.

5. Actions taken to assess and address Modern Slavery risks

The following actions have been taken to assess and address Modern Slavery risks:

- Implementation of the Group Modern Slavery Policy.
- Implementation of the Procurement Policy, stipulating that the Group reserves the right to refuse to purchase from suppliers that engage in unethical practices, such as modern slavery, discrimination/vilification of minority groups, or, operational or manufacturing practices that significantly damage the environment.
- Procurement returnable schedules incorporating a statement on modern slavery.
- Implementation of the Group Investment Policy, ensuring that SVDPV will always consider the ethical implications when retaining or purchasing investments.
- The supplier of 'Vinnies Own Range' has submitted their annual modern slavery questionnaire that is under review by the SVDPV Modern Slavery Working Group.
- Modern Slavery discussed at SVDPV/VCV Board, Group Governance and Strategy Committee, and Senior Leadership Team (SLT) meetings.
- Training on the Modern Slavery Policy and identifying, assessing, and managing modern slavery risks to be rolled out.
- Accredited under the Clothing Reuse Export Accreditation Scheme administered by Charitable Reuse Australia.
- Internal Audit program, with projects including review over appropriate use of donated funds, procurement practices and controls, and ethical practices.

St Vincent de Paul Society Victoria has conducted the following in response to modern slavery risks:

- Supplier questionnaires are completed by export service providers – last prepared in October 2024.
- Accredited under the Clothing Reuse Export Accreditation Scheme for FY24-25.
- Independent Report on SCR Group Malaysian sorting facility – prepared in October 2022.
- Sedex virtual assessment (audit tool) over Atlantic Exports Ltd – last prepared March 2022.

MODERN SLAVERY STATEMENT

6. Effectiveness of actions taken

Following formation of the operational SVDPV Modern Slavery Working Group to oversee the action plan and maturity roadmap, we have established a clear line of sight over the effective implementation of the intended actions and roadmap.

In line with the roadmap, the following presents further initiatives to ensure effectiveness of actions taken:

- Established a Modern Slavery Working Group comprised of relevant stakeholders including those from areas vulnerable to modern slavery risk.
- Implemented a review mechanism within the modern slavery maturity roadmap.
- Group Risk Management Framework implemented, including risk identification, risk assessment, and periodic reporting to the Group Audit, Risk, and Finance Committee.
- Reporting to the Group Governance & Strategy Committee, SVDPV/VCV Board and Senior Leadership Team on modern slavery.
- Implemented modern slavery supplier questionnaires to be completed by key export suppliers.
- Supplier audits overseen by Charitable Reuse Australia via tools such as Sedex and other supplier audit tools.

7. Consultation

This Modern Slavery Statement is prepared for the period 1 July 2023 to 30 June 2024. The Statement was reviewed and endorsed by the cross-functional Modern Slavery Working Group, Group Governance and Strategy Committee and Senior Leadership Team prior to approval from the Board of St Vincent de Paul Victoria and VincentCare Victoria.

This Statement is prepared in accordance with the requirements of section 14 of the Modern Slavery Act 2018 (Cth) and approved by the principal governing body of the St Vincent de Paul Society Victoria as defined by the Modern Slavery Act 2018 (Cth) on 13 December 2024.



Director:

Bernard Bicknell – Chair St Vincent de Paul Victoria

Dated: 13 December 2024