



MEDIA RELEASE

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Cross-industry initiative to provide one-off \$7.75 million boost for financial counselling services

Australia's financial counselling services will receive a \$7.75 million boost following a donation from a group of organisations from across the banking, finance, insurance, energy, telecommunications and online gambling sectors.

The donation will help the Financial Counselling Foundation deliver a series of important initiatives to support victims of family violence, those at risk of homelessness and First Nations communities.

Australian Banking Association Chief Executive Officer Anna Bligh, speaking on behalf of the contributors, said the funding will provide significant assistance.

"The important work carried out by the Financial Counselling Foundation, and the groups they have determined to receive these grants, is to be highly commended," Ms Bligh said.

"They are making a real, positive impact on the lives of some of society's most vulnerable people."

Financial Counselling Foundation Chairperson, George Brouwer, welcomed the donation and said it will help support a series of important initiatives.

"The \$7.75 million will enable the Foundation to provide additional support to existing grants that are expiring and to implement new projects identified as worthy through our priority assessment and grants-based process," Mr Brouwer said.

"Our current funding priorities include projects to support victims of family violence, tenants at risk of homelessness, First Nations communities and people in prison."

A portion of the donation will be used to support the extension of 10 family violence financial counsellors for a further two years. These positions, overseen by the Family Violence Financial Counselling Agency, are located nationally in predominantly community legal centres to support women who have experienced family violence.

The donation will also allow the Foundation to look at new initiatives. Mr Brouwer said.

"As a result of the contribution, the Financial Counselling Foundation can consider the possibility of a national initiative, in response to research completed by Thriving Communities Partnership, to fund financial counsellors to work within the prison environment and with different cohorts," he said.

Organisations that are contributing to the donation:

AGL

Alinta Energy

Allianz Australia Insurance Limited

Aussie Broadband Limited

Australia and New Zealand Banking Group Limited

Bank of Queensland

Betfair

bet365

Bendigo and Adelaide Bank Group

Commonwealth Bank of Australia

Credit Corp Group Limited

EnergyAustralia

Entain

IAG

Latitude Financial

Liberty Financial

Macquarie Bank Limited

MyState Bank Limited

National Australia Bank

Optus

Origin Energy

Pepper Money

Pointsbet

QBE

Red Energy

Simply Energy

Sportsbet

Suncorp Group

Telstra Limited

The Hollard Insurance Company

Toyota Finance

TPG Telecom Limited

Unibet

Westpac Banking Corporation