

MEDIA ALERT

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BUSINESS LEADERS TO SELL *THE BIG ISSUE* MAGAZINE

MORE than 100 senior business leaders and politicians are selling street magazine *The Big Issue* next week. The national campaign will shine a spotlight on the magazine's homeless and disadvantaged vendors, who are working to improve their lives.

ANZ CEO Shayne Elliott, Perpetual CEO and Managing Director Geoff Lloyd, REA Group CEO Tracey Fellows and Telstra CEO Andrew Penn are among the high-profile CEOs hitting the streets from 6-10 February.

They join senior executives including ABN Group Managing Director Dale Alcock and SEEK Australia and New Zealand Managing Director Michael Ilczynski.

The initiative celebrates International Vendor Week, which raises awareness for the 10,000 people who sell street papers in 35 countries around the world.

In Australia, *The Big Issue* magazine has provided opportunities for homeless and disadvantaged people to earn an income for more than 20 years. Vendors buy copies of the magazine for \$3.50 and sell them to the public for \$7, earning a meaningful income.

The Big Issue CEO Steven Persson said teaming up with business leaders highlighted vendors' work to improve their lives.

"More than 500 vendors sell *The Big Issue* around Australia and they are working to earn an income. Vendors buy copies of the magazine in advance for half the cover price, so every sale puts money directly in a vendor's pocket. We hope selling alongside prominent business leaders will help vendors forge new connections in their community and encourage the public to support their local vendor."

The Big Issue hopes to boost sales to put \$100,000 into vendors' pockets for the edition coinciding with International Vendor Week.

More than 6500 men and women have earned \$24 million through selling *The Big Issue* since it launched in Australia in 1996. Vendors sell the fortnightly, general interest magazine in Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane, Adelaide, Canberra and Perth, as well as some regional centres.

International Vendor Week is run by the International Network of Street Papers (INSP), which supports 110 street publications in 35 countries.

Visit www.thebigissue.org.au for updates on the full list of guest sellers. For further details on international events and the INSP, please visit insp.ngo.

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