



Government
of South Australia

Department for Communities
and Social Inclusion

Inner City Rough Sleeper Street Count

August 2016

The twenty-second Inner City Rough Sleeper Street Count was conducted on 30 August 2016. The count located 125 people who were unsheltered or 'sleeping rough', of whom five had a house elsewhere.

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1 Background

The Inner City Rough Sleeper Street Count is a survey questionnaire that monitors the number of people sleeping rough in the inner city of Adelaide. The survey was first conducted in 2007 and provides information about the circumstances and profile of people sleeping rough in the inner city of Adelaide. In mid-2011 the survey was revised to focus definitively upon those who were rough sleeping the previous night, and additional questions were added to try source more relevant data that could be used in analysis.

The survey is a partnership between the Department for Communities and Social Inclusion (DCSI) and thirteen key inner city homeless services, which span across eight different organisations. These services are: Street to Home; Hutt Street Centre (The Daughters of Charity); WestCare Centre (Baptist Care SA); Fred's Van (St Vincent de Paul); St Vincent de Paul Men's Crisis Accommodation Service; Magdalene Centre (Anglicare); Helping Young People Achieve (HYPA) (Service to Youth Council); New ROADS (Uniting Communities); Streetlink (Uniting Communities); Emergency Assistance – Adelaide (Salvation Army); and Towards Independence (Salvation Army), which incorporates the Sobering Up Unit, Supported Accommodation and Recovery Services – East, and Supported Accommodation and Recovery Services – West.¹

1.1 Survey methodology

The survey is a point in time count that aims to monitor levels of rough sleeping in the Adelaide inner city area, as well as provide information about the circumstances and profile of the population. The survey is conducted in the early morning of the day of the count by Street to Home staff who visit the parklands and areas around the city to locate people sleeping 'out', as well as workers from other homelessness services who approach people attending their service that day. Workers from DCSI coordinate data collection at Fred's Van in the evening and approach people visiting this service. If the people approached had slept rough the previous night, they would be invited to participate in completing the survey (see Appendix A for a copy of the survey). This replicates the basic methodology from previous surveys.

¹ Prior to February 2013, the Counts involved four participating homelessness services: Street to Home, New ROADS (formerly Byron Place), Hutt Street Centre and WestCare Centre. Additional inner city homelessness services have been participating since the February 2013 Count.

1.2 Review of methodology

There have been two significant changes to the survey methodology; since the rough sleeper count survey was created. Firstly, in May 2011 the survey was revised with the assistance of the inner city homelessness services, to focus only on people who were rough sleeping the previous night. Secondly, following a forum in June 2012 with a range of stakeholders, a working group was established to provide advice to improve the robustness of the information collected. The working group recommended to:

- Increase the frequency of the Count by conducting an additional Count in the summer months (in addition to the May and August Count).
- Increase collection points by approaching additional inner city homelessness services to be involved in the Count to collect data.

As a result of these recommendations, a revised survey was implemented in February 2013, with nine additional homelessness services participating; increasing the total number of participating services to thirteen.

1.3 Survey timeframe

The inner city rough sleeper count has been conducted 22 times on the following dates:

- 2007 – 19 June and 21 August
- 2008 – 13 May and 12 August
- 2009 – 5 May and 11 August
- 2010 – 4 May and 10 August
- 2011 – 10 May and 13 September
- 2012 – 7 August
- 2013 – 12 February, 7 May and 6 August
- 2014 – 4 February, 6 May and 5 August
- 2015 – 3 February, 5 May and 4 August
- 2016 – 2 February, 3 May, 30 August

2 August 2016 Count

The data reported in this Bulletin was collected from the 30 August 2016 rough sleeper count survey from eight of the thirteen homelessness services listed in section 1. Any comparisons made; are to the previous survey held 3 May 2016.

2.1 Participation

Two hundred and forty-six surveys² were received. Of the people approached to participate in the survey:

- 167 people participated in the survey.
- 67 people either declined to participate, were not capable of participating, or the place they had slept the previous night was not known.
- 12 people had already completed the survey with another service.

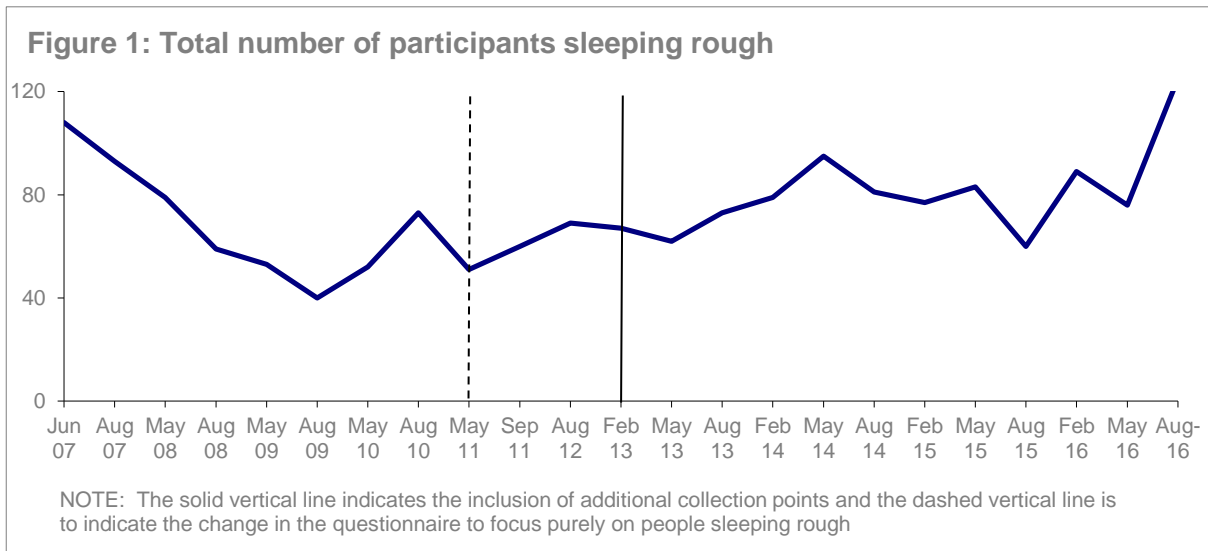
A considerable number of participants who were sleeping rough declined to answer questions surrounding their circumstances (this should be considered when interpreting the results, particularly when comparisons are made with previous surveys³).

2.2 Results

Of the 246 surveys received, 128 participants had slept rough the previous night, of these 3 participants had already completed the survey elsewhere, and five had a house or home elsewhere. It should be noted that 23 of the participants who slept rough the previous night were either incapable of completing the survey or had declined to participate.

This data was a significant increase on the previous survey, in which 149 surveys were received, identifying 77 participants that had slept rough the previous night. Of these rough sleepers, one had already completed the survey elsewhere and two reported having a house or home elsewhere. Furthermore, 41 participants who slept rough were either incapable of completing the survey or had declined to participate. Figure 1 shows that in general, the number of people sleeping rough has been increasing since August 2009. The number of people sleeping rough increased from 76 in May 2016 to 125 in the most recent survey⁴.

² This figure should not be used to infer the number of clients attending at the inner city homelessness services.
³ Non-response varied across questions. Level of non-response is higher to the previous survey (47% compared to 30% previously).
⁴ Figures include participants sleeping rough who have a home elsewhere.



2.2.1 Sleeping rough and having a house elsewhere

In August 2016, five people indicated that although they had slept rough the previous night, they had a home elsewhere. This represents 4% of the total number of people who had slept rough. All five participants indicated they had slept rough in the Adelaide inner city or parklands. When the participants were asked why they had not slept at their own home, a number of reasons were reported: including financial reasons, too intoxicated and issues with neighbours.

The pattern of rough sleeping over the last year varied between these participants. Two indicated they have 'hardly ever' slept rough, while the other three indicated that they have been sleeping rough 'some of the time' or 'most of the time' for up to 4 weeks at the time the questionnaire was conducted.

From this group, two people identified themselves as Aboriginal. One was a female participant, aged 65-74 years who had indicated that she spent the majority of her time interstate over the past year. The other was a male participant, aged between 25-34 years who indicated that he had spent the majority of his time in the Adelaide metropolitan area over the past year. The remaining three participants were all male, non-aboriginal aged between 25-64 who spent most of their time in the Adelaide metropolitan area or country SA.

2.2.2 Sleeping rough without a home elsewhere

Of the total number of participants who had slept rough, 120⁵ people (96%) had slept rough the previous night, with no home elsewhere. Of these 120 people, 70 (58%) had slept rough in the Adelaide inner city or parklands, 8 (7%) had slept in the Adelaide suburbs and 36 (30%) either did not report their location, or slept somewhere other than the Adelaide city, parklands or suburbs.

Table 1 summarises the reasons given for sleeping rough. In line with the previous survey, the most common reason reported by 45% participants was that there was no other option. In line with the previous survey, financial reasons were the second main reason for sleeping rough and were provided by 3% of participants. A small number of participants slept rough out of personal preference. 47% of people who had slept rough did not provide a reason as to why they were sleeping rough, an increase of 17 percentage points from the previous survey.

Table 1: Reasons why people had slept rough

	Total Number	Percentage
No other options	54	45%
Financial reason	4	3%
Personal preference	2	2%
Evicted / kicked out	0	0%
Mental health issue	0	0%
Waiting for other housing options	0	0%
Other	4	3%
Not stated	56	47%
Total	120	100%

Table 2 shows that 39% of participants who slept rough did not attempt to find alternative shelter, a decrease of 16 percentage points from the previous survey. Only 14% of participants attempted to find accommodation elsewhere for the previous night. Of the 16 participants who had tried to find alternative shelter:

- eleven people had sought assistance from support services such as St. Vincent de Paul Accommodation Service and trace a place,

⁵ This figure includes 22 people who did not answer the question as to whether they had a home elsewhere.

- two attempted to use their personal connections (family and friends),
- one tried to source private accommodation through the gumtree internet site, and
- one person stipulated that they tried absolutely everything.

Table 2: Where people attempted to find alternative shelter

	Total Number	Percentage
Sought service support	11	9%
Personal connections	2	2%
Private accommodation	1	1%
Unknown	2	2%
Did not attempt to seek alternative shelter	47	39%
Did not answer the question	57	48%
Total	120	100%

Of the 47 participants who had not attempted to find alternative shelter elsewhere for the previous night, a number of different reasons were reported. Table 3 shows that the most common reason given was that participants had a personal preference to not find alternative accommodation. This differs to the previous count where the most common reason was participants had given up trying to find alternative accommodation.

Table 3: Why people did not seek alternative shelter

	Total Number	Percentage
Financial reason	7	15%
Given up	4	9%
Personal preference	12	26%
Waiting for support options	1	2%
Other	7	15%
Not stated	16	34%
Total	47	100%

The people who were surveyed have been sleeping rough for various lengths of time. Table 4 shows that the majority of participants (15%) had been sleeping rough for more than two years, on par with the previous survey. This figure could potentially be much higher considering that 49% of participants did not provide a response to the length of time they had been sleeping rough.

Table 4: How long people have been sleeping rough

	Total Number	Percentage
1 week or less	3	3%
2 to 4 weeks	5	4%
5 to 11 weeks	5	4%
3 to 6 months	11	9%
7 to 12 months	5	4%
1 to 2 years	14	12%
More than 2 years	18	15%
No response	59	49%
Total	120	100%

In regards to the amount of time spent sleeping rough in the last year, 40% (47 participants) reported sleeping out ‘most’ or ‘almost all of the time’ (Table 5).

Table 5: Sleeping rough pattern over the last year

	Total Number	Percentage
Almost all of the time	32	27%
Most of the time	15	13%
About half of the time	7	6%
Some of the time	4	3%
Hardly ever	3	3%
No response	59	49%
Total	120	100%

Participants were also asked to identify how long it has been since they last had stable housing. Table 6 shows that 43% (52 participants) reported not having had stable housing for three months or more with 26% not having stable housing for over two years. In comparison, when the survey was previously conducted, 53% (39 participants) reported not having had stable housing for three months or more with 34% not having stable housing for over two years.

Table 6: How long since people have had stable housing

	Total Number	Percentage
Currently have stable housing	0	0%
1 week or less	0	0%
2 to 4 weeks	3	3%
5 to 11 weeks	3	3%
3 to 6 months	5	4%
7 to 12 months	4	3%
1 to 2 years	12	10%
More than 2 years	31	26%
No response	62	52%
Total	120	100%

Most participants (46%) stated that they had been primarily based in the Adelaide metropolitan area over the last 12 months. Participants who were primarily based interstate, reported basing themselves in Victoria (Table 7).

Table 7: Area spent the most time in over the last 12 months

	Total Number	Percentage
Adelaide metro	55	46%
Country South Australia	2	2%
Interstate	3	3%
Unknown	2	2%
No response	58	48%
Total	120	100%

The demographic information from the survey is summarised in Tables 8 and 9. On par with the previous survey; males were 2.6 times more likely to be sleeping rough than females. Males sleeping rough were mostly from non-Aboriginal backgrounds, and were 35 to 54 years old. Women who were sleeping rough were predominantly from an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander background and were 35 to 44 years old. These demographics are consistent with the previous survey.

Table 8: Aboriginal status by gender

	Male		Female		Not stated		Total	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander	15	19%	16	64%	1	7%	32	27%
Non-Aboriginal	55	68%	9	36%	1	7%	65	54%
Unknown	1	1%	0	0%	0	0%	1	1%
Not stated	10	12%	0	0%	12	86%	22	18%
Total	81	100%	25	100%	14	100%	120	100%

Table 9: Age (in years) by gender

	Male		Female		Not stated		Total	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Under 18	2	2%	2	8%	0	0%	4	3%
18 to 24	6	7%	0	0%	0	0%	6	5%
25 to 34	11	14%	6	24%	1	7%	18	15%
35 to 44	28	35%	9	36%	1	7%	38	32%
45 to 54	20	25%	5	20%	0	0%	25	21%
55 to 64	8	10%	2	8%	0	0%	10	8%
65 to 74	0	0%	1	4%	0	0%	1	1%
75 and over	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Not stated	6	7%	0	0%	12	86%	18	15%
Total	81	100%	25	100%	14	100%	120	100%

2.2.3 Participation in previous Inner City Rough Sleeper Survey Counts

Participants who were sleeping rough (without a home elsewhere) and provided identifier information made up 43% of the respondents. This information was used to determine the number of participants who had been identified as sleeping rough through the survey in previous rough sleeper surveys. Table 10 shows the number of times participants had been identified as sleeping rough previously.

According to the information gathered from previous surveys, 31% of the people who participated could not be linked to any of the previous rough sleeper surveys, and 13% could be traced to sleeping rough in at least one previous survey.

Table 10: Repeat presentations of those sleeping rough without a home

	Total Number	Percentage
In May 2016 and sleeping rough in no previous survey	37	30.8%
In May 2016 and sleeping rough in one previous survey	12	10.0%
In May 2016 and sleeping rough in two or more previous surveys	3	2.5%
Participant did not provide identifier information	68	56.7%
Total	120	100.0%

3 Appendix A – Inner City Rough Sleeper Survey Questionnaire

INNER CITY AGENCY STREET COUNT

Hi, I'm Have you heard about the count happening today? It's to find out more about people who are sleeping out/rough sleeping and a bit of background information.

It's important for the government to have accurate information about how many people in the inner city have housing problems or are homeless. This tells government what is working or not working with plans and services to help people to get safe and better housing.

Would you mind if I asked you a few questions as part of the count? It will only take a few minutes. It's anonymous, confidential and you can withdraw at any time.

The Department for Communities and Social Inclusion will put together and look after all of the information collected today. No one else will see it. The report they produce will just be total numbers of people and there is no chance that you will be identified in any way. You can see the report when it's done if you want to.

ONLY COMPLETE A SURVEY FOR THOSE:

- have NOT participated in the Rough Sleep Survey today, and
- consent to participate.
- If the person declines record a tally mark on the 'decline to Participate Sheet'.
- Slept out last night

1. Where did you sleep last night?

Slept inside/sheltered

Includes:

- Your own house or unit
- Friend's or family's place
- Hotel/motel
- Boarding house
- St Vincent de Paul Shelter
- Catherine House
- Backpackers
- Caravan Park
- City Watchhouse
- Prison
- Remand Centre
- Detox / Sobering up unit
- Hospital

If the participant slept INSIDE or in SHELTERED accommodation thank them for their participation and conclude the interview.

Slept out *Go to question 2.*

Includes:

- Car
- Park/ street
- Shed
- Tent
- Squat
- Verandah

2. At what location did you sleep out last night?

- Adelaide city or parklands
- Adelaide Suburbs
- Other, please state

3. Why did you sleep out last night? (Please prompt for why they slept out (not where))

.....

.....

.....

4. Did you try and find any other accommodation last night (eg homeless shelter, with friends or family)?

Yes



a) Where did you try to find other accommodation?

.....
.....



b) What happened when you approached this agency/person(s) for accommodation?

.....
.....

No – why not

.....
.....
.....

5. Do you have a house or home somewhere else?

Yes

No



If yes: why didn't you stay there last night?

.....
.....

6. How long have you been sleeping out?

- 1 week or less
- 2 to 4 weeks
- 5 to 11 weeks
- 3 to 6 months
- 7 to 12 months
- 1 to 2 years
- More than 2 years

7. Over the last year have you slept out (read out the following options):

- Almost all of the time
- Most of the time
- About half of the time
- Some of the time
- Hardly ever



8. How long has it been since you last had stable housing?

- Currently have stable housing
- 1 week or less
- 2 to 4 weeks
- 5 to 11 weeks
- 3 to 6 months
- 7 to 12 months
- 1 to 2 years
- More than 2 years

9. What area did you spend most of your time in the last 12 months? (Please tick one box only)

- Adelaide metro
- Interstate (please indicate which state?)
- Victoria
- Tas
- Overseas
- Country South Australia
- WA
- NT
- Qld
- ACT
- NSW

10. What is your age?

- Under 18
- 18 to 24
- 25 to 34
- 35 to 44
- 45 to 54
- 55 to 64
- 65 to 74
- 75 and over

11. Are you Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander?

- No
- Yes, Aboriginal
- Yes, Torres Strait Islander
- Yes, both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander

12. Do you have a child/children under 18 who STAYED with you last night?

- Yes
- No

If yes: How old are they?

13. Gender of respondent?

- Male
- Female

We will be doing this survey again in next year. It would be very helpful for us to have some idea of how many people who were here today are also here when we do the next count, and if their circumstances and housing have changed. It's entirely up to you, but would you mind letting me write down your initials and month and year of birth? This information will be given to the Department for Communities and Social Inclusion who will keep it confidential and safe and will be used for statistical purposes only.

- No Survey completed.
- Yes Fill out boxes below

First Name Initial	Last Name Initial

What is your month & year of birth?

MONTH	YEAR
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SURVEY COMPLETED. THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME.