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Media Release

1 August 2014

National Missing Persons Week: The Salvation Army reunites 40 families each week

With National Missing Persons Week (3 – 9 August 2014) just around the corner, The Salvation Army is encouraging people who have lost contact with loved ones to connect with its Family Tracing Service.

Each year The Salvation Army Family Tracing Service reunites on average over 40 families every week, with the most frequent requests being from adult 'children' seeking their mother, father or siblings. In New South Wales and Queensland, the service also conducts specific searches relating to adoption cases.

Director of The Salvation Army Family Tracing Service, Major Lyndal Barker, says there is nothing like sharing the good news with an anxious family member that their relative has been found.

"In many cases people have been waiting for years to make contact with their loved ones," she said.

"Each and every reunion is a unique experience in itself, with each of them covering the gamut of human emotions – love, pain and hurt."

The Salvation Army Family Tracing Service has been active in Australia since the 1920s and registers 2,000 new searches each year with offices across Australia.

"We are one of the oldest family tracing (missing persons) services in Australia and with The Salvation Army being a worldwide organisation, the service has networks in over 100 nations around the world," Major Barker said.

"When a relative is finally found, our work continues through the provision of mediation to bring about reconciliation. Each case is complex and it is an experience of working through the past so that there can be an ongoing future for all those involved."

To find out more about The Salvation Army's Family Tracing Service please visit the website at salvos.org.au/familytracing.

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For media requests and interviews with Major Lyndal Barker of The Salvation Army Family Tracing Service, please contact The Salvation Army Media Office: (02) 9266 9820 (diverts after hours).