

Leaders sleep rough

DANIEL MERCER

More accustomed to the trappings of executive life, some of WA's highest profile business and community leaders will soon don pyjamas and sleep outdoors to support the homeless.

Next Thursday, almost 90 powerbrokers from a variety of organisations will take part in the first St Vincent de Paul Society sleep out in Perth to raise awareness of homelessness.

Among the participants will be James Pearson, from the WA Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Mark de Laeter, from Western Power, Andy Crane, from CBH and Graham Sinden, from the Motor Trade Association.

St Vincent de Paul spokeswoman Lucinda Ardagh said the aim was to

heighten awareness and understanding of an issue that affects up to 14,000 people in WA each night and also raise \$1.5 million for the homeless.

"We've got a number of existing services that we're trying to ensure remain open and we're also looking at new responses to homelessness," she said. "A lot of people in Western Australia don't believe there are issues with homelessness but it's often very well hidden.

"So we've got just on 90 different community leaders and the idea is that they come and have just for one night a sleeping experience of what it might be like to sleep out homeless."

People wishing to sign up to the event or donate should visit www.ceosleepout.org.au. Registrations close on Tuesday.



Ready for bed: Some of the pyjama-clad executives who will be taking part in the sleep out.

Picture: Ian Muir