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Almost \$6,000 donated to help Sydney's homeless

Customers, employees, contractors and suppliers of Yokogawa Australia have raised almost \$6,000 by sponsoring Managing Director John Hewitt as a participant in the CEO Sleepout to raise funds for Sydney's homeless.

Last night – a cold and rather wet one in Sydney – John joined 200 other CEOs in the forecourt of Sydney's Luna Park, where they each slept on a sheet of cardboard to mimic the kind of experience that literally tens of thousands of homeless men, women and children go through every night.

The CEO Sleepout, now in its fourth year, is a fund raising initiative of the St Vincent de Paul Society. Money raised through sponsorship of participating CEOs is used to provide relief to the homeless through crisis accommodation, domestic violence support, access to budget counselling, legal advice and education.

“While no one who participated last night thought that we were doing it nearly as tough as the genuinely homeless, it was still a useful experience to have,” John said. “My objective in participating in the CEO Sleepout was to provide a focus for Yokogawa employees, customers and suppliers to help those less fortunate. I signed up with the thought that I might be able to raise \$1,000 – which according to the CEO Sleepout website is sufficient to provide support for a woman and children escaping a situation of domestic violence. I was thrilled that between us we achieved so much more, and I'd like to thank everyone who made a donation.”

In total the event raised more than \$560,000, well in excess of the \$250,000 organisers predicted last month. The money will go towards 37 homeless shelters, including a new purpose-built shelter for families and women, due to open later this year.

Contributions can be made online at the CEO Sleepout website at www.ceosleepout.org.au until August 31. Just type 'Hewitt' in the Search CEOs box.