



SACOSS

*South Australian Council
of Social Service*

Justice, opportunity and shared wealth for all South Australians

Media Release

EFFECTIVE 1am Friday 10 July 2009

SACOSS releases first “Cost of Living” report for South Australia

Today the South Australian Council of Social Service (SACOSS) has released the first in its new series of *Cost of Living Biannual Updates*. This first in a six-monthly series of papers explores the real cost of living in South Australia.

“This report shows that to correctly gauge rises in the real cost of living, a number of key expenses need to be considered alongside the traditional Consumer Price Index (CPI) approach,” says SACOSS Executive Director Karen Grogan.

“The expenses singled out for this study are the basic essentials required to survive – but not necessarily thrive – in contemporary society. The four core essentials covered in detail in this report are housing, energy, food, and transport.”

“The SACOSS *Cost of Living* report shows that for low income households — which comprise around one quarter of South Australia’s population — costs for these key expenditure items have, in the main, risen faster than CPI, with some rising far beyond the limits of household budgeting,” Grogan says.

“It is of particular concern that when other costs of living rise, less is spent on food, directly affecting people’s health and wellbeing. When food costs are rising as well — in particular, fresh fruit and vegetables — the dietary choices and thus the health of low income households are potentially highly compromised.” says Grogan.

Key Findings include:

- CPI cost of living in Adelaide has risen by 8.8% since March 2006.
- Rents CPI has risen by 15%, but additional data shows that median weekly rental costs in Adelaide have risen over 33% for a 1-bedroom unit; just under 30% for a 2-bedroom unit; and over 23% for a 3-bedroom house.
- Electricity CPI has risen by 14.4%
- Gas and other Household Fuels CPI has risen by nearly 20%
- Electricity Supply charges alone have risen by over 21%
- Gas supply charges have risen by over 26%
- Food CPI has risen by over 18%