



Wednesday 19 May, 2010

## Owen Zupp's charity flight around Australia reaches Sydney

Pilot Owen Zupp will touch down in Sydney tomorrow as part of his 'There and Back' charity flight around Australia for the Royal Flying Doctor Service (RFDS).

Owen, a Qantas pilot, aviation writer and author, will land at the Passenger Terminal at Bankstown Airport at midday, following a fly over of the Sydney Harbour Bridge in his light aircraft.

Clyde Thomson, executive director of the RFDS South Eastern Section says Owen's flight is designed to mark the 100<sup>th</sup> year of Australian aviation as well as raise funds for the Flying Doctor.

"2010 is the centenary of the first powered flight in Australia, and it's incredible to see how far aviation has come in this time," Mr Thomson said.

"When the Flying Doctor first started, we had one timber and fabric bi-plane that we leased from Q.A.N.T.A.S.

"Today, 82 years later, we have a fleet of 53 state-of-the-art aeromedical aircraft across the country.

"Owen's flight recognises the achievements in aviation and we commend him on his achievement in flying around Australia," Mr Thomson said.

Owen took off from Bundaberg in Queensland on 5 May, and will land back there this Sunday 23 May after visiting 47 locations across Australia, including Darwin, Broome, Perth, Port Lincoln, Adelaide, Launceston, Shepparton, Canberra, Mittagong, Sydney and Toowoomba.

Bundaberg was chosen as Owen's starting point as it is the birthplace of Bert Hinkler, one of Australia's great aviation pioneers. Other stops on the route include Longreach, where Qantas was founded and Julia Creek and Cloncurry, to replicate the first flight of the Flying Doctor.

To date, Owen has raised just over \$7000 for the Royal Flying Doctor Service, but hopes to reach \$10,000 before his flight ends back in Bundaberg this weekend. Donations can be made through his website [www.thereandback.com.au](http://www.thereandback.com.au), on the Facebook 'There and Back' page and through the 'There and Back' iphone application which allows users to track Owen's flight in real time.

Donations can also be made via the RFDS website [www.flyingdoctor.org.au](http://www.flyingdoctor.org.au).

- Ends -

Media are invited to join Owen at the Passenger Terminal at Bankstown Airport tomorrow at midday. For information or interviews, contact Hayley Dean on 0418 561 260 or Ruth Redfern on 0408 476 341.