



Media Release

14 October 2014

## **Flying Doctor to get Food For Thought at Tuppal**

The Royal Flying Doctor Service (RFDS), South Eastern Section have been chosen as a charity partner by the Tuppal Food and Fibre Festival, to take place at North Tuppal Station, some 250 kms south-west of Wagga Wagga, from 17-19 October. The organisers describe their goal as: *“To inform the young generations and the city people where their food comes from.... and what a vital role the farming communities of Australia play in their lives.”*

Producers and exhibitors from Southern Riverina, Murray and the Goulburn Valley will be showing-off their wares in the Food and Fibre, Paddock to Plate or Field to Fashion categories. Attractions include: a Foodbowl Farmers market, 165 variety stalls, a country food court boasting real farm tucker, a Schools Education Expo featuring careers in agriculture, sheep dog demonstrations, animal nurseries, a wood chopping competition and music.

“The RFDS are delighted to have been chosen as charity partner and are looking forward to attending the Food and Fibre festival for the first time,” said Greg Sam, Chief Executive Officer of the RFDS South Eastern Section.

“A good diet is vital to our overall health and well-being and the RFDS is keen to support healthy eating and sustainable food production, but we are also keen to connect with our constituents, the people of rural and remote Australia.”

“After 86 years of service, providing vital emergency retrieval and clinical services, we like to say the RFDS is “more than a service, part of the community.” We engage with locals through various community and fundraising events right across New South Wales, Southern Queensland and North Western South Australia.”

“The old hands are more familiar with our work, but it is important that the younger generations are aware of the many services we offer for people of all ages.”

Visitors will also be able to experience what it’s like on board a Flying Doctor aircraft and learn more about this Australian icon by visiting the RFDS educational simulator, which has proved a big success with show crowds all across New South Wales.

At 9.1m long, 2.4m wide and 3m high, it is a full-sized replica of the cockpit and fuselage of a RFDS King Air B200 aircraft, complete with flight deck and full aeromedical fit-out. For many this will be as close as they ever get to a real Flying Doctor aircraft.

“The Simulator is primarily a health promotion and educational tool,” said Mr Sam.

“It helps us promote the vital work we do and that we need to raise additional funds each year to deliver and grow our range of healthcare services and emergency retrieval work.”

Visitors will be able to experience what it’s like to be a pilot, flight nurse, or flying doctor when they board the simulator. RFDS staff will be on hand to explain the aircraft’s capabilities, what the medical equipment in these ‘flying intensive care units’ does and share some real-life rescue stories.

The guided tour through the simulator is open to the public for a suggested gold coin donation.

“While the show is a fun day out we will also be highlighting the realities of life in rural and remote areas where many struggle to get access to the health services taken for granted in the cities,” said Mr Sam.

“The RFDS is trying to redress the health access imbalance between rural and metropolitan areas. Demand for RFDS services is higher than ever. There has been a recorded 26% growth in national activity since 2006.”

**What: Tuppal Food and Fibre Festival.**

**Who: The RFDS educational simulator, RFDS staff.**

**When: 17- 19 October, 2014**

**Where: North Tuppal Station, Tuppal Rd (off Riverina Highway) Tuppal, NSW 2714**

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For more information or photographs, contact:

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## **ABOUT THE ROYAL FLYING DOCTOR SERVICE**

The not-for-profit Royal Flying Doctor Service has been taking the finest care to the furthest corners of Australia since 1928. The service provides 24 hour emergency cover to 90% of the Australian continent, via a modern fleet of specially equipped aircraft. In the past year, the South Eastern Section flew the equivalent of 6.25 round trips to the moon as it conducted over 5,000 clinics, took over 6,000 telehealth calls, had over 53,000 patient contacts and transported almost 8,400 patients.