



The Flying Doctor Joins the Iconic Deni Ute Muster

Media Release

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On 3 and 4 October the Royal Flying Doctor Service (RFDS) will be attending the iconic Deni Ute Muster, described by organisers and confirmed by the *Guinness Book of Records* as being *'the largest ute muster in the world.'*

Over the past 16 years the two-day event, held annually on *'...the flattest, most natural plains on earth'* in Deniliquin on the New South Wales/ Victorian border, has grown from a country get-together and barbeque into a celebration of all things Australian including country music, the rural way of life and the uniquely Australian utility vehicle.

"The RFDS are delighted to be a charity partner and looking forward to attending the Muster for the first time," said Greg Sam, Chief Executive Officer of the RFDS South Eastern Section.

"Through 86 years of service, providing vital emergency retrieval and clinical services, the RFDS has become part of the fabric of rural and remote Australia. We engage with locals through various community events right across our constituency of New South Wales, Southern Queensland and North Western South Australia."

"The old hands are familiar with our work, but it is important for the younger generations to be aware of the many services we offer for people of all ages. Last year, the Muster attracted some 20,000 people, 60 per cent of them aged between 18- 44."

In keeping with the Muster's theme, the RFDS' aeromedical educational simulator will be in attendance, which enables visitors to experience what it's like to be on board a Flying Doctor aircraft while learning more about this Australian icon.

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.

Visitors will be able to experience what it's like to be a pilot, flight nurse, or flying doctor. 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.

"It helps the us to promote the vital work we do and also highlights the fact that we need to raise additional funds each year, on top of Commonwealth and state government allocations

we receive, which enable us to deliver and grow our range of healthcare services and emergency retrieval work,” said Mr Sam.

“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.”

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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 not only provides 24 hour emergency cover to 90% of the Australian continent, via a modern fleet of specially equipped aircraft, but also delivers a wide range of primary healthcare to the Outback. In the past year, the RFDS South Eastern Section flew the equivalent of 6.25 round trips to the moon as it facilitated over 5,000 clinics, took over 6,000 telehealth calls, had over 53,000 patient contacts and transported over 8,300 patients.