

MEDIA RELEASE

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New aircraft to expand Flying Doctor fleet and boost aero medical service in Western Australia

Western Australia's Royal Flying Doctor Service has expanded its fleet with the arrival of a new Pilatus PC-12 turboprop aircraft.

The aircraft is a \$7.9 million investment made by the State Government in 2016 to assist with RFDS' growth and change in patient demand across the State.

Today, Health Minister Roger Cook joined RFDS Chief Executive Officer Rebecca Tomkinson for the unveiling of the new aircraft.

Ms Tomkinson highlighted that RFDS aircraft require specialised aero medical fit-out and technology to operate as an intensive care unit in flight. RFDS doctors and nurses must have a range of qualifications including emergency care and, undergo comprehensive training for treating patients in flight.

The new aircraft boosts the Flying Doctor fleet to 16 PC-12s alongside the Rio Tinto Life Flight Hawker jet. The increased fleet capacity will support emergency response time for multiple cases across the state.

RFDS responds to an average of 25 patients each day in locations as near to Perth as Rottnest and as far north as Kununurra; in any weather, 24 hours day, every-day.

Comments attributed to Ms Tomkinson:

"The Flying Doctor is an essential service to daily life in WA. It continues to evolve with population growth and change across the state.

"WA has one of the largest aero medical service areas in the world. The new PC-12 aircraft will progress our operational capacity to respond to multiple cases in different regions at any time.

"The Flying Doctor is a critical asset to WA's health infrastructure. We rely on the continued support of Government and value working in partnership to benefit the safety and well-being of all Western Australians."

Comments attributed to Minister Cook:

"The McGowan Labor Government continues to support WA's Royal Flying Doctor Service to ensure it provides important aeromedical inter hospital patient transport throughout the State.

"RFDS is an essential service for all Western Australians. People who become seriously injured or ill rely on its critical in-flight care and coordination with hospitals across the state.

"The McGowan Government puts patients first and ensures quality healthcare is delivered throughout WA."

ENDS

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