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MEDIA RELEASE

Anniversary of a WA Icon – Royal Flying Doctor Service turns 90

Today, the Honourable Kim Beazley AC, Governor of Western Australia and Deputy Premier, Roger Cook joined RFDS Chief Executive Officer Rebecca Tomkinson to celebrate the 90th Anniversary of the Royal Flying Doctor Service and launch a state-wide fundraising campaign; 90for90.com.au

Representing the many faces of the Flying Doctor Story, event guests from across WA included former patients, leaders in the health and aviation sectors, government, business and community.

Current and former RFDS staff were acknowledged for their contribution and commitment to the service across the generations and regions of Western Australia.

CEO Rebecca Tomkinson called upon Western Australians for their support of the 90for90 campaign. The funds will help raise an additional \$9M required to innovate and deliver the service across Western Australia.

Comments attributed to Ms Tomkinson:

“I would like to extend my gratitude to all West Australians for their continued support in enabling us to deliver an essential service that belongs to anyone who lives, works or travels across our state.

“I am proud to be leading the next generation of RFDS. In partnership with government, industry and community, we will continue to innovate and support WA’s health service infrastructure well into the future.

“So many people have a Flying Doctor story to share. It’s a unique service that can engender so much heartfelt pride and connection across every walk of life.”

Comments attributed to the Hon. Kim Beazley AC, Governor of Western Australia:

“Over the past 90 years, we have been privileged to witness and benefit from the evolution of the RFDS into a world-class aeromedical service, inspired by innovation and advancement in technology and medical expertise, to deliver patient outcomes.

“The sustainability and success of the RFDS highlights the significance of community, government and the corporate sector working in synergy to support the delivery of emergency and essential primary healthcare across our State.’

Comments attributed to Deputy Premier; Minister for Health and Mental Health the Hon. Roger Cook:

“I am a proud Western Australian and have grown up appreciating the importance of the Royal Flying Doctor Service to people in rural and remote WA.

“Providing healthcare across country WA is a team effort, involving a number of key partners to deliver quality healthcare to our communities. The Royal Flying Doctors are an essential part of that delivery.”

ENDS

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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

RFDS BASES

- Jandakot, Kalgoorlie, Meekatharra, Broome, Port Hedland

FACTS and STATS

- Each year in WA RFDS will fly the equivalent of 200 times around the world.
- RFDS assists approx 70,000 people a year through emergency medical retrieval, rural and remote GP and dental clinics and tele-health services.
- RFDS responds to approx 25 patients a day in locations as near to Perth as Rottneest and as far north as Kununurra.

CURRENT FLEET

- 16 x PC-12 Turbo Prop Aircraft
- Each aircraft with world class aero medical fit out to support in-flight emergency medical treatment.

HISTORY (WA)

1917	Death of Jimmy Darcy
1928	First Flying Doctor Service flight (Cloncurry QLD)
1929	The invention of the pedal-radio (to call the Flying Doctor)
1931	The service officially begins in Western Australia
1935	The first Tiger Moth aircraft used from WA's first base in Port Hedland
1935 (to 1989)	Wyndham base
1935	Port Hedland base
1937	WA Goldfields Base - Kalgoorlie
1945	Meekatharra base
1955	Flying Doctor Service receives its Royal warrant from Queen Elizabeth the second
1955 (to 2018)	Derby base
1960s	Robin Miller "The Sugar Bird Lady" was a lauded West Australian pilot and Royal Flying Doctor Service flight nurse who brought modern medicine to north-western Australia while breaking down barriers for women in aviation.
1964	Jandakot base and new headquarters for RFDS WA.
1977 (to 1989)	Geraldton Base
1980s	Greatest advancements in aero medical fit out. The interior of RFDS aircraft become 'intensive care units' in the sky.
1994	Reverend John Flynn featured on the Australian \$20 note
2016	Broome base