

**Wednesday April 1, 2015**

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

### **RFDS urges caution during Easter holiday season**

The Royal Flying Doctor Service urges all West Australians to take care as they prepare to enjoy the Easter holiday season.

Royal Flying Doctor Service Chief Executive Officer Grahame Marshall made the call following the release of statistics which show a steadily increasing demand for emergency aeromedical services.

"While the RFDS team is on hand 365 days a year, 24 hours a day, it would obviously be preferable that we weren't needed at all over the Easter period – traditionally a very busy time, particularly on our roads.

Mr Marshall said during the past 12 months, the RFDS retrieved more than 500 patients from around the state as a result of motor vehicle accidents.

Holiday periods unfortunately see more West Australians killed and injured on our roads than almost any other time of the year.

"Many of the people assisted by our team at the RFDS were air lifted from rural or remote areas while it seems a large number of them actually live in the Perth metropolitan area and may not be accustomed to travelling long distances on country roads.

"What we're asking people to do is be mindful of the road conditions, and the additional care needed when driving long distances."

Mr Marshall said the flying doctors, during the past 12 months alone, transported almost 9000 sick and injured patients to hospitals across the state for treatment, and received almost 40,000 telephone calls for medical assistance and advice.

"The RFDS is there to deliver life-saving services to West Australians day and night, wherever and whenever they needs us, but at this time of the year I'd urge the community to do their best to see if they can do us out of a job! We urge everyone to take extra care this holiday season."

The RFDS has provided aeromedical health services to rural and remote areas of WA for 80 years, as of this year. In WA the RFDS provides emergency evacuations; inter hospital transfers from regional hospitals, telehealth consultations, general practitioners and nursing clinics.

ENDS

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