

## MEDIA RELEASE

Monday, 1 February 2016

### New 1800 emergency number for South Australia

The Royal Flying Doctor Service (RFDS) has introduced a new 1800 telephone number for people needing urgent medical assistance whilst living, working and travelling in rural and remote South Australia.

Calls to the new number, **1800 RFDS SA** (1800 733 772), are monitored and received by staff at the RFDS Port Augusta Base – 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

“From today, anyone living, working or travelling in rural and remote South Australia should call **1800 RFDS SA** when seeking urgent medical assistance,” says Charlie Paterson, General Manager Marketing & PR, RFDS Central Operations.

“**1800 RFDS SA** is designed for people without access to a hospital in their region – they can speak directly with the on-call RFDS Doctor for urgent medical advice and/or request an aeromedical evacuation of someone injured or critically-ill,” Mr Paterson said.

“Importantly, communities with access to a regional hospital and/or local ambulance service should continue to dial 000 to be connected to their local emergency service/s.”

The **1800 RFDS SA** number should be used to:

- alert the RFDS of a medical emergency (illness or injury);
- request advice or seek a patient's urgent evacuation;
- provide an update on a patient's medical condition or confirm RFDS arrival time; or
- request a GP telephone consultation with the on-call RFDS Doctor.

**1800 RFDS SA** is free for callers using a landline telephone however, calls from a mobile or a satellite telephone will incur the usual telephone carrier charges for the caller.

Last year, the RFDS provided emergency aeromedical, telehealth and primary health care services to more than 22,000 South Australians – equivalent to someone every 20 minutes.

“One easy to remember RFDS number serves to streamline our communications throughout South Australia, and reflects our goal of delivering services to the highest standards,” Mr Paterson said.

“**1800 RFDS SA** provides a more direct service to the most isolated areas of our state where reliable and efficient communication can often be the difference between life and death in a medical emergency.

“Whilst a new 1800 telephone number is in use, the following High Frequency (HF) radio frequencies remain unchanged – 4010kHz, 6890 kHz and 8165 kHz,” he said.

## **MEDIA CONTACT**

**Kate Hannon**

Media & Communications Manager

RFDS Central Operations

08 8238 3328

0407 822 510

[media@flyingdoctor.net](mailto:media@flyingdoctor.net)