



Media Release

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### **Golfers play a round for a good cause**

The picturesque Leonay Golf Club, nestled at the foot of the Blue Mountains in the Western Sydney suburb of Emu Plains, is today hosting the 21st annual charity golf day in aid of the Royal Flying Doctor Service (RFDS).

Organiser, local Penrith businessman and identity, John Graham of P.F. Formation Sand and Concrete, is hoping to raise \$20,000, which will go to the RFDS in the form of an entry fee for the 27th annual Outback Car Trek.

On Sunday, 5 June, John's celebrated "Cockroaches" team will leave the NSW country town of Narrabri in a specially reinforced 1966 Ford Hurst, one of the 100 pre-1978 cars wending their way through the backblocks towards Port Douglas in northern Queensland.

The Outback Trek has raised over \$23 million for the RFDS since its inception in 1990. Last year's contribution was over \$1.3 million, an amount it hopes to match or even better this year.

"A business associate told me about it over dinner then persuaded my brother to lend me a car. I woke up the next morning to find a signed entry form in my hand. That was 1994. The rest, as they say, is history," recalls John.

"I called up my two good mates, Bruce Carter and Chris Qunlan, and I've been on every Trek since. I'm addicted for life."

"When you travel through the Outback you really get a sense of how vital the Flying Doctor is for these communities. I also love the way the Trek supports small towns and their businesses who I regard as the real spirit and backbone of this country. The arrival of 300 "Trekkies" injects badly-needed money into those local economies and we also do some community fundraising along the way."

The Royal Flying Doctor Service is one of the world's most comprehensive aeromedical organisations, taking emergency and essential primary healthcare services to the people of remote, rural and regional Australia. Last year, the RFDS helped over 292,000 people - that's one every two minutes.

"The RFDS is a not-for-profit organisation. While partially supported by the Commonwealth and State governments, we rely heavily on fundraising and donations from the community to deliver and expand our services and to purchase and medically-equip aircraft and to finance other major capital initiatives," says Brendon Smyth, General Manager, Fundraising and Marketing for the RFDS' South Eastern Section.

"We'd like to thank John and all the Trekkers for their stalwart support over the past 26 years and wish them all the best for the 27<sup>th</sup> Outback Car Trek. Long may they continue."

During the RFDS golf day, which will kick-off at 7am with a sausage sizzle and tee off at

8am, 122 players, of mixed abilities, will battle it out over 18 holes at what will be Leonay golf club's biggest day of the year. Guest celebrity, former Australian Test batsman, Doug Walters, will also be joining the festivities.

"I'd like to thank Doug, all my friends and business associates, who are coming from as far afield as Victoria, Queensland and South Australia, and our Gold sponsors: Australian Cement, Mack Trucks, and Westrac," says John.

"It'll be a great day, but will be tinged with sadness. A couple of years ago we lost one of the original "Cockroaches," Bruce Carter, but he will always be there in spirit."

- ENDS -

For more information or photographs, please 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 provides 24 hour emergency cover to 90% of the Australian continent, via a modern fleet of specially equipped aircraft. In the past year, the South Eastern Section facilitated almost 5,000 clinics, took over 6,400 telehealth calls, had over 53,500 patient contacts and transported almost 8,500 patients.