



Media Release

17 November 2017

Governor of NSW to honour Flying Doctor icon in aircraft naming ceremony

The Governor of New South Wales, as Patron of the Royal Flying Doctor Service's South Eastern Section (RFDS SE), His Excellency General The Honourable David Hurley AC DSC (Ret'd), will attend the Broken Hill Base on Friday, 17 November for a very special event.

The Governor, accompanied by Mrs Linda Hurley, will name an RFDS SE aircraft in honour of the Reverend Dr Fred McKay, a great supporter and advocate of the Flying Doctor for almost 60 years. Fred McKay succeeded RFDS founder the Reverend John Flynn as Superintendent at the Australian Inland Mission.

"We are delighted to welcome the Governor, Mrs Hurley, local community supporters and Fred McKay's daughters, to share an opportunity to reflect on one man's truly amazing contribution to the Flying Doctor," said Greg Sam, CEO RFDS SE.

"The naming of an aircraft is a rare honour bestowed on patrons, supporters and those who have served the RFDS with distinction. It's a token of our deep appreciation for their support and service.

"The very first RFDS SE King Air aircraft to come into service in 1988 was named 'Fred McKay.' As this aircraft retired a few years ago we are delighted to now continue to honour Fred's name on this next generation aircraft. The original King Air will feature in a future display about the RFDS SE's history."

The Very Reverend Dr Fred McKay became Superintendent at the Australian Inland Mission on Flynn's death in 1951. He became an associate member of the RFDS SE board and continued his predecessor's keen interest in and advocacy for the Flying Doctor until his death in 2000.

Universally regarded as a kind, gentle man who had the courage to speak up for his beliefs; Fred had a deep personal commitment to the spiritual and physical wellbeing of those living in rural and remote areas. He also served as a padre in the Royal Australian Air Force during World War II.

Aircraft Call-sign VH-MSZ will be named 'Fred McKay' on Friday, 17 November. Built in 2014, this Beechcraft King Air B200 is equipped to perform life-saving emergency retrievals. To date, it has flown 2,335 hours and done 2,891 cycles (take-offs and landings).

The ceremony and speeches will be followed by a morning tea which will give the Vice Regal couple an opportunity to meet RFDS SE staff, local supporters and community members.

Event Summary:

Who: His Excellency General The Honourable David Hurley AC DSC (Ret'd), Mrs Linda Hurley, daughters of Fred McKay (Margaret Wheatley, Liz McKay and Ruth Cook), Ruth Sandow, President RFDS SE, Greg Sam CEO RFDS SE.

What: Aircraft naming ceremony in honour of the Reverend Fred McKay

Where: RFDS SE Broken Hill Base, Hangar 2, Airport Rd.

When: ceremony 10.00- 10.30 followed by morning tea and departure at 11.15am

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For more information or photographs, 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.