



Media Release

23 May

Longstanding supporter of the Flying Doctor honoured with aircraft naming.

Mr Michael Crouch AO, longstanding supporter of the Royal Flying Doctor Service (RFDS) South Eastern Section, will be honoured today at a special aircraft naming ceremony at Mascot airport, to be performed by Her Excellency Professor Marie Bashir AC CVO, Governor of NSW.

“Michael has generously supported us through his Chairmanship of “Friends of the RFDS” (The Friends) since 2005 and his patronage of the arts,” said John Milhinch OAM, President, RFDS South Eastern Section.

“During the past decade he has made a significant personal and financial contribution to the Section.”

In addition to its state and Commonwealth grants, RFDS South Eastern Section receives significant support from organisations and individuals. This enables it to deliver and expand its wide range of emergency and clinical health services to those who live and travel in remote and rural Australia.

However, the increasing demand for these services has meant the RFDS has needed additional funds for capital development.

Formed under the leadership of Michael Crouch, “Friends of the RFDS” (The Friends) raised corporate support for the replacement of aircraft as part of a Capital Appeal that ran from 2005- 2009.

“The Appeal raised in excess of \$10million, enabling us to continue to purchase the aircraft and equipment to delivery essential primary and emergency medical care to those across our region who would, in many cases otherwise have no access to these ,” said Mr Milhinch.

After the Capital Appeal Michael continued as the Chair of The Friends and helped to create a corporate and major donor engagement program. Since 2009, The Friends have contributed an additional \$4.7million to the South Eastern Section.

As a patron of the arts Michael also raised additional funds through his staging of musical events celebrating the Outback and the work of our Outback heroes. “My Country Australia” performed in 2012 at the Sydney Opera House, and “King of the Air” in 2014 at the Sydney Recital Hall, written and performed by Gavin Lockley along with the Sydney Symphony Orchestra. Michael Crouch sponsored both events.

The RFDS aircraft, to be named “The Shanny,” in honour of Michael’s wife, will have the call sign VH MWH and be based at the RFDS’ Broken Hill Base.

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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. No patient is more than two hours away from the Flying Doctor's help. In the past year, the South Eastern Section flew the equivalent of 6.5 round trips to the moon as it conducted over 4,700 clinics, took over 5,000 telehealth calls, had over 54,000 patient contacts and transported almost 8,600 patients.