

MEDIA RELEASE

Tuesday 8 May 2018

John Lynch to retire as Chief Executive Officer of RFDS Central Operations

The Royal Flying Doctor Service (RFDS) Central Operations Chief Executive Officer (CEO) John Lynch and the Board have agreed upon his retirement from his role in December 2018.

Mr Lynch joined the RFDS at its Broken Hill Base as Accountant in 1986. He was appointed Chief Financial Officer of RFDS Central Operations (serving SA/NT) in 1991 and assumed the position of CEO in December 2000.

“I have worked with so many incredible people, watching their growth and development both professionally and personally, and for that I will always be grateful,” Mr Lynch says.

“It has been a privilege to hold positions with an organisation that means so much to so many; to be able to go to work with the knowledge that every day someone amongst us will make a difference to someone’s life, somewhere in our vast land, sometime of the day,” he says.

Ms Loretta Reynolds, Chairman of RFDS Central Operations, says John’s 32-year contribution to the RFDS – including 18 years as CEO – has been remarkable.

“John’s passion and commitment to meeting the needs of our patients has been second to none, balanced with his outstanding business acumen which directed unprecedented growth and financial security of the organisation,” Ms Reynolds says.

“On behalf of the Board, past and present, we offer our sincere appreciation to John for his unwavering guidance and support throughout his three decades of service to the RFDS and, ultimately, the communities we serve,” she says.

When John commenced as CEO of RFDS Central Operations it assisted over 38,000 patients every year, including 6,000 aeromedical evacuations, operated 10 medically-equipped aircraft across three aeromedical bases and managed one remote primary health facility.

Today, the organisation conducts over 50,000 patient contacts per annum, including 9,000 aeromedical evacuations, operates a fleet of 18 medically-equipped Pilatus PC12 aircraft across four aeromedical bases, and manages three remote primary health facilities in outback SA.

A succession plan is in place, with Tony Vaughan appointed as Deputy CEO after joining the organisation as Chief Operations Officer in 2014, following 33 years with the SA Ambulance Service, including his final four years as General Manager of SAAS' MedSTAR Emergency Medical Retrieval Service.

Mr Vaughan's transition takes place during a milestone year for the RFDS, as the organisation celebrates 90 years of saving lives in the Australian outback and, more recently, delivering the finest care to injured and critically-ill patients living in regional and metropolitan centres.

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ABOUT THE RFDS

Established in 1928 by the Reverend John Flynn (Australian \$20 note), the RFDS is the largest and most comprehensive aeromedical organisation in the world.

In addition to the aeromedical retrieval of the critically-ill or injured, the RFDS also delivers a broad range of essential primary and preventative health care services, including tele-health, mental health, oral health and chronic disease management.

Today, the RFDS provides the finest care to more than 300,000 Australians each year – equivalent to one person every two minutes.

In addition to assisting those living, working and travelling in rural and remote Australia, the RFDS also delivers critical support to those who live in urban centres. This includes the regular transfer of patients to interstate hospitals for life-saving surgery such as organ transplant and heart surgery on newborn babies.

The RFDS is a not-for-profit organisation. While supported by Commonwealth, State and Territory governments, the RFDS relies on bequests, sponsorships and donations to bridge the gap in its operational funding and to purchase its 'flying intensive care units' at a cost of more than \$7 million each.

RFDS Central Operations is responsible for delivering 24/7 emergency aeromedical and essential primary health care services throughout South Australia and the southern half of the Northern Territory.

It operates four aeromedical bases located in Adelaide, Port Augusta, Alice Springs and Darwin, as well as three primary health care facilities in Marree, Andamooka and Marla in outback South Australia.