



Media Release

March 1, 2007

A \$50,000 cheque has been presented by Wellard to the Royal Flying Doctor Service, to support the RFDS' important contribution to rural Western Australia.

The funds were raised at the Wellard Christmas Party and Charity Auction late last year, and Wellard Rural Exports Managing Director Steve Meerwald thanked Wellard's clients and business associates for their contribution to such an important cause.

In the past three years the Wellard Charity Auction has raised \$200,000 for the Royal Flying Doctor Service and the Children's Leukaemia and Cancer Research Foundation.

Mr Meerwald said the RFDS provided increasingly important services to rural WA, and therefore Wellard clients.

"Whether treating accidents or illnesses, the RFDS is always there in times of need, and we are proud to be able to help support the services it provides," Mr Meerwald said.

"Health and family are two of the most important priorities in life. And many rural West Australians owe their lives and their health to the Royal Flying Doctor Service."

Royal Flying Doctor Service Chief Executive Officer Tim Shackleton said that with an operating budget in excess of \$36 million per year, the RFDS was reliant upon the generosity of both the corporate sector and the general public to continue to provide this vital medical service.

"Without the support of individuals and companies such as Wellard, the Service would find it very difficult to take to the skies each and every day, to provide this "care in the air", Mr Shackleton said.

The RFDS Service provides one of the most extensive aeromedical services in the world. Covering an area as vast as Western Europe, it operates from 20 bases across Australia, 24 hours a day, every day of the year. The Flying Doctor

provides fast, reliable medical emergency and health care services to those people outside of the metropolitan area and in particular, to people living in the sparsely-populated outback.

Each year in Western Australia more than 55,000 patients are attended by the Royal Flying Doctor Service, from as far away as Derby in the North West or as close to the metropolitan area as Rottnest Island or Bunbury. RFDS aircraft fly over 5.2 million kilometres in WA each year utilising a fleet of 11 aircraft rotated among the five bases located at Jandakot Airport, Derby, Port Hedland, Kalgoorlie and Meekatharra.

Picture:

Royal Flying Doctor Service Chief Executive Officer Tim Shackleton is presented with a \$50,000 cheque by Wellard Rural Exports Managing Director Steve Meerwald.

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