



# Media Release

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## RAC supporting guardians in the sky

The RAC is pleased to be confirmed as the sponsor of the State's dedicated 24 hour emergency rescue helicopter, RAC Rescue, based in Perth.

RAC Group CEO Terry Agnew, said as a Western Australian mutual organisation the RAC has reinvested its profits for the benefit of its members and the community for more than 100 years, and is proud to have supported the service since 2003.

"The RAC exists to benefit its members and the broader community, and sponsoring the emergency rescue helicopter is one of the ways we can help make a real difference," Mr Agnew said.

"During this time the helicopter has flown more than 3,750 missions and helped save hundreds of lives.

"The helicopter provides a vital service to help people in need, particularly in regional areas where medical assistance is not immediately on hand.

"In 2013, the majority of missions flown by RAC Rescue were to regional areas. The number of missions flown as a result of motor vehicle and motorcycle crashes increased significantly last year, illustrating the continued need for this vital service."

As well as attending critical care incidents such as car and motorcycle crashes, the emergency rescue helicopter also provides essential transfers and search and rescue support.

The RAC is committed to saving lives, and improving Western Australia's road and vehicle safety. This commitment reflects the harsh reality that 20 years ago, when compared nationally, WA had one of the lowest fatality rates of any Australian State, now it is consistently the highest.

"By any standard, Western Australia's road safety record is unacceptable."

So far this year, 52% of WA's fatalities have occurred on country roads, even though less than a quarter of the State's population live there, and the Wheatbelt fatality rate is more than four times the State rate.

Research indicates that the time saved by using helicopters to retrieve patients with major trauma injuries often reduces patient recovery time, the likelihood of long term serious injury and in many cases even death.

The service is funded by the WA State Government with the assistance of RAC sponsorship and managed by the Department of Fire and Emergency Services (DFES).

**Media Contact: Kylie Bonkowski 0401 703 719**