

**ROYAL FLYING DOCTOR SERVICE SOUTHERN LAUNCH**  
**REMARKS BY**  
**HER EXCELLENCY PROFESSOR THE HONOURABLE KATE WARNER AC**  
**GOVERNOR OF TASMANIA**  
**BALL ROOM, GOVERNMENT HOUSE, TUESDAY 5 FEBRUARY 2019**

**[Vice-Regal Salute is played]**

Good morning and welcome to this Government House event to mark the official launch of the Royal Flying Doctor Service Hobart office.

I begin by paying my respects to the traditional and original owners of this land: the Mouheneener people. I acknowledge the contemporary Tasmanian Aboriginal community, who have survived invasion and dispossession, and continue to maintain their identity, culture and Indigenous rights.

May I acknowledge among you:

- Senator Eric Abetz;
- Senator Carol Brown;
- Senator Catryna Bilyk;
- The Honourable Julie Collins MP, Federal Member for Franklin;
- Malcolm White, Chair RFDS Tasmania;
- John Kirwan, CEO;
- Board Members;
- Council Mayors and representatives;
- Michael Pervan, Secretary, Department of Health;
- And your all-important donors and supporters.

I believe also we have in attendance Dr Peter Evans, one of the true original Flying Doctors who was the dentist for Flinders Island. So we are in venerable company!

Ladies and gentlemen I will be brief in my remarks so that we can get on to the business of the day, which as you will see is both varied and rewarding and very much in the spirit of Australia's Royal Flying Doctor Service. May I just say that as Patron of RFDS Tasmania I am honoured to be able to officiate at what is – let's call it the virtual launch of your new Hobart office at 147 Davey Street, heralding the expansion of your services in the south and along the east coast of Tasmania and giving greater visibility to the RFDS in the south and a better understanding of its work in primary health care.

Although we do in fact have the brass plaque here, which will be affixed to the front of the premises.

In May last year Dick and I hosted a reception to mark and celebrate the 90<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the RFDS. And in the latter part of next year there will be a function here to celebrate RFDS Tasmania's 60<sup>th</sup> birthday. These are both significant milestones, indicative of the longevity and therefore the importance of the work of RFDS.

As Governor I have engaged with RFDS Tasmania in a number of projects and initiatives and doing so has given me insight into just what can be achieved through this remarkable medical and social community service.

I have been particularly interested in the RFDS primary health care program in dental health which seeks to overcome the barriers to oral health care services in rural and remote communities. Visiting our Child and Family Centres around the State I have been struck by the need for more easily accessible dental health care for people from lower socio-economic backgrounds in particular.

So in my briefing with Malcolm White and Caroline Evans in November I was delighted to hear of the success of the RFDS dental outreach services in Circular Head in collaboration with the Circular Head Aboriginal Community. This has provided an amazing 17,507 treatments to 1,504 adults and children with undoubted flow-on effects in preventing hospital admissions – tooth decay being the leading cause of preventable hospital admissions.

But that is enough from me. We'll now hear from your Chairman Malcolm White.