

# CareFlight

Annual Report 2011



celebrating  
25 years of saving lives



## Our vision

is to be Australia's most trusted rapid response critical care service.

## Our mission

is to save lives, speed recovery and serve the community by providing the highest standard of rapid response critical care.

## Our values

- Caring for our patients
- Accountability to the community
- Respect for each other
- Excellence in what we do
- Fairness in all our dealings
- Loyalty to our organisation
- Integrity as our anchor
- Growing our people
- Holding true to our charitable purpose
- Teamwork with our partners

## Contents

- 1 Looking back over 25 years
- 3 A message from the MAA
- 4 From the Chairman and CEO
- 7 Eastern Operations
- 11 Northern Operations
- 14 Western Operations
- 15 Medical Education and Research
- 18 Community Engagement
- 21 Fundraising
- 23 Board and Management
- 24 Financials



1) Opening of the Westmead hangar, stage 1, in 1989: Dr Ken Wishaw, Ian Badham, John Hooad, Dr Blair Munford, Dr Luis Gallur, Rick Mailey, Dr Fran Smith and Peter MacCormick. 2) Ian Badham.

Accidents happen. People get sick. And we help. Flying critical care trauma teams directly to the patient. Saving lives and bringing hope for a better recovery.

Thank you for helping us help people for 25 years.

# Looking back over 25 years...

It was the determination to establish a new clinical standard for an Australian aeromedical service which drove us to set CareFlight apart back in 1986 – and that same drive continues to define our charity 25 years on from those early days in Sydney.

Founding medical director Dr Frances Smith and inaugural chief pilot John Hooad set high standards in establishing

the foundation on which CareFlight has grown from a single helicopter, daylight only service to a national aeromedical 24 hour service with doctors flying from eight bases to destinations around Australia and beyond.

Fran Smith insisted CareFlight have a medical director with both specialist qualifications and extensive trauma/aviation experience. John Hooad, who

came from a medical technician background and was relatively new to rescue-medical helicopter services, brought in pilots like Alain le Lec who had vast helicopter experience.

Keenly helping Fran and John get the fledgling CareFlight in the air, were experienced rescue helicopter crewmen Rick Mailey, Peter Gard and Peter MacCormick; doctors Luis Gallur,

Ken Wishaw and Jenni Saunders; and people with administration, fundraising and rescue experience such as Peter Pearce and myself.

From the outset CareFlight set an operational standard, with external accountability, to meet membership requirements of the US-based international Association of Air Medical Services.

Our Aerospatiale AS 350B helicopter was delivered in its medical-rescue configuration in late June and CareFlight went on line on Saturday 12 July 1986. We waited in our small office on the then vacant third floor of Westmead Hospital, the helicopter parked on the grass at the far end of the Westmead Hospital cricket oval, as the weekend came and went - and no requests came in from a hospital or emergency service.

The first patient mission came on the third day of duty. Dr Paul O'Connell, pilot Alain le Lec and Wayne Vardanega flew back-to-back missions to transfer a young brother and sister – Andrew and Heidi Withers who had been injured in a car crash near their

Bathurst home – from Lithgow Hospital where they had been taken by ambulance, to Westmead Hospital.

Innovation continued as a hallmark of being CareFlight – becoming Australia's first medical-rescue helicopter to go on full 24-hour duty; acquiring a twin-engine helicopter which would allow safer performance and adverse weather flight on instruments; gaining medical college teaching accreditation; inventing the world's first 'stretcher bridge'; obtaining approval for GPS approaches to helipads; leading the way for emergency helicopters to use night vision goggles; and making a significant contribution to research into trauma, disaster and transport medicine for which the Head Injury Retrieval Trial (now under final follow-up analysis) is commanding strong international interest.

Asking donors to give financial support has allowed enhanced clinical treatment, innovation, research and education. This community engagement through businesses, individuals and the news media has helped CareFlight champion the art

of retrieval medicine – the relatively inexpensive glue which holds together a vastly more costly hospital system. Retrieval means we send expert care to the site where patients are injured, and to smaller hospitals from where patients will do so much better if, when they are transferred to major hospitals, they are transported by skilled teams under full intensive care treatment.

CareFlight continues to reach out to the world through developments in patient transport and treatment; through membership of, and active participation in, national and international air medical organisations, conferences and exchanges; and through fundraising.

With further opportunities being created by those who lead, serve with and support our charity, future patients of all ages will benefit from the vision and determination of those who dared to dream 25 years ago, and put CareFlight on the Australian and world aeromedical map.

**Ian Badham OAM**  
CareFlight Co-founder and Executive Director

# 1986



**May:** CareFlight is incorporated as a public company.

**June:** CareFlight commissions its first helicopter, a Squirrel AS350B (VH-HCF).

**July:** Andrew and Heidi Withers, a 14-year-old boy and his 11-year-old sister, become CareFlight's first helicopter patients, following a car crash. They are flown from Lithgow to Westmead and both make a full recovery.

**September:** The CareFlight service is officially opened by Premier Barrie Unsworth, MP.

# 1987



**January:** CareFlight becomes the first non-hospital organisation in Australasia to be granted accreditation for specialist training in anaesthesia (later extended to the other critical care fields of intensive care and emergency medicine) and implements our registrar training scheme.

**March:** Multi-mode retrieval – helicopter, fixed wing and road ambulance – commences.

**May:** CareFlight becomes the first emergency helicopter service in NSW to go on 24-hour duty.

## A message from the Motor Accidents Authority (MAA)

The MAA supports CareFlight's objective to provide high quality care, especially the vital role CareFlight plays in bringing specialist medical care to critically injured people in NSW, many of who have been injured in motor vehicle accidents. 25 years of operations is a proud achievement and is testament to the support that CareFlight receives from a broad group of stakeholders within our community.

The MAA monitors and supervises the Compulsory Third Party (CTP) or 'Green Slip' Scheme for all motor vehicles registered in NSW. The MAA works to provide a Scheme that is affordable, fair and accessible, minimising the impact of motor vehicle accidents.

An important consideration of the CTP scheme is ensuring that injured people achieve optimal health and social outcomes. This is best achieved when the components of the care and recovery continuum are working effectively. CareFlight's role in retrieval and pre-hospital medicine is a vital aspect of the patient journey from injury to recovery. Pre-hospital medicine is a complex and challenging area of clinical practice. It is important that expert care is delivered at the earliest opportunity post injury in association with rapid transportation to the most appropriate hospital.

The MAA has committed \$7 million over

seven years to fund the expansion of CareFlight's Head Injury Retrieval Trial (HIRT). The results of this study will assist the MAA and others to make evidence informed policy decisions that will benefit the CTP scheme and more broadly the NSW community.

Being part of research of this nature, which has the potential to save lives and significantly improve people's health outcomes, is fundamental to the MAA's corporate objective which is to minimise the social and economic impact of motor vehicle accidents.

**Andrew Nicholls**  
Acting General Manager  
Motor Accidents Authority of NSW

CareFlight's role in retrieval and pre-hospital medicine is a vital aspect of the patient journey from injury to recovery.



CareFlight Dr Alan Garner and an Ambulance Service paramedic prepare to transfer a patient to hospital by helicopter after he was injured in a car crash on the NSW Central Coast.

## From the Chairman and CEO

The year 2011 marks CareFlight's 25th anniversary.

From small beginnings in 1986 as a single helicopter operation undertaking a handful of missions each month, CareFlight has grown to become a national and regional aeromedical service. Today, within the Australian aeromedical landscape, CareFlight ranks only behind the long established Royal Flying Doctor Service in the scale of our operations.

### Top End Aero Medical Service

The single largest and most transformational growth spurt in the history of our organisation occurred in FY2010/11, driven by our success in winning a major contract in the Northern Territory. This contract - the Interim Top End Aero Medical Services Contract - started on 1 July 2010. Initially for a period of six months, the contract was extended for a further six-month period ending 30 June 2011.

On 16 June 2011 the NT Government announced that CareFlight has been awarded the long term Top End Aero Medical Services Contract. The contract covers provision of a totally integrated service to the people of the Top End - doctors, nurses, pilots, aircrew, fixed wing aircraft, helicopters, engineering and logistics coordination. It will be the only completely integrated medical transport service in Australia covering all platforms. Discussions are currently underway with the NT Government regarding transition from the interim to the long term service.

In terms of growth, the impact of the Interim Contract on CareFlight is apparent from the following chart, which shows the near trebling of our patient numbers over a single financial year.

The transformational impact of the Interim Contract can be seen at three levels:

- In less than a year, CareFlight's fixed wing turbo prop operation in the Top End has gone from start-up operation to become the dominant component of CareFlight's aviation operations.

	FY 2009-10	FY 2010-11
Rotary wing hours	1,370	1,261
Fixed wing turbo prop hours	-	3,698
<b>Total hours</b>	<b>1,370</b>	<b>4,959</b>

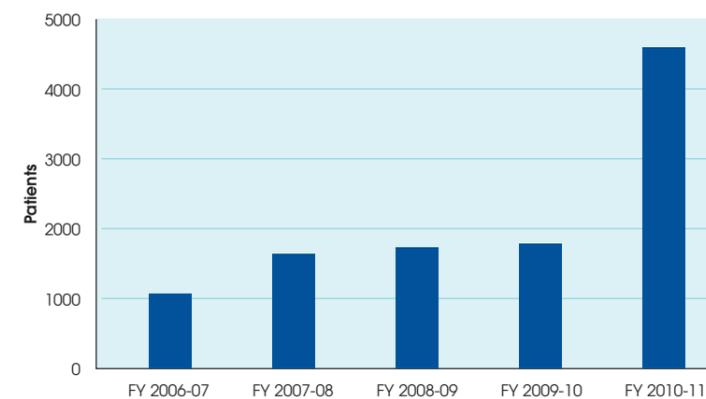
- CareFlight has added a significant nurse component to our historically doctor based clinical workforce.
- CareFlight has developed a significant new logistics co-ordination capability.

### NSW operations

In February this year we brought to a close the patient recruitment phase of our long running Head Injury Retrieval Trial (HIRT). The clinical data for the last group of patients is presently being collected and collated. That process is expected to be completed by the end of September, after which detailed statistical analysis of the data will commence. The outcome of the trial is likely to be published in early 2012.

In the meantime, CareFlight has entered into a Temporary Operations Agreement with the Ambulance Service of New South Wales, under which the HIRT operation has effectively transitioned to an interim

### Patient numbers



## 1988

**December:** Fisherman Peter Hickie is rescued at night after being blown off a cliff ledge in Manly. Amid crashing waves, pilot Alain le Lec and aircrewman Wayne Vardanega winch down Dr Luis Gallur who wades through breaking surf to the seriously injured man so that he can be stabilised before being rescued. Dr Gallur (far left) receives a bravery award for the rescue.



**August:** The CareFlight Stretcher Bridge, the world's first fully integrated mobile intensive care module, enters service.



**August:** Rugby League footballer Greg Buckley sustains terrible head injuries while playing for Canterbury. CareFlight Dr Blair Munford intubates him at the scene. Despite a grim prognosis, Greg makes a fantastic recovery and qualifies as a registered nurse. Greg is one of the inspirations behind the HIRT study.



**October:** CareFlight commissions the Dauphin SA365C-2 helicopter.



At any one time CareFlight has a pipeline of registrar recruits stretching more than two years ahead.

service. At an operational level, the only material differences between the trial and the service are:

- Instead of CareFlight directly activating missions based on '000' data streamed live to our crew on-site at our Westmead Operations Base, tasking is now via the Ambulance Service's Rapid Launch Trauma Coordinator.
- Randomisation has ceased.

The longer term future of the service will be determined in consultation with the Ambulance Service, having regard not only to the analysis and interpretation of the trial data, but also to a pragmatic assessment of the cost/benefit of CareFlight continuing to provide a rapid response critical care service across Greater Sydney.

Currently the service is provided by CareFlight at no cost to the Ambulance Service. The service is funded by community support via CareFlight's fundraising activities and by a grant from the MAA.

The other major component of our NSW Operations remains the recruitment, induction, training and deployment of doctors under our long-term Medical Services Agreement with the Ambulance Service. Our team delivered a virtually flawless performance under this contract, easily meeting all our KPIs. Reflecting the success of this part of our business, and the power of our brand, at any one time CareFlight has a pipeline of registrar recruits stretching more than two years ahead.

**Medical services**

Our Medical Division has become increasingly adept at identifying emerging business opportunities and winning new work. Participating in a consortium led by Cubic Corporation, a US based provider

of simulation training services to military organisations, CareFlight was successful in winning a substantial contract to provide medical training services to the Australian Defence Force (ADF) over the next three years. We see medical training and education services as being a growth area, holding enormous potential for CareFlight. A number of commercial training opportunities are currently under evaluation and development.

The growth of our Medical Services Division over the last few years, and the complexities of managing this growth with a part-time medical workforce, prompted us to commission an external review of the management structure of our Medical Division. The key recommendation to emerge from the review was that CareFlight recruit and appoint a General Manager Medical Services with a commercial background to manage the business side of the Medical Division. That recommendation was accepted by our senior doctors and approved by the Board. At the time of writing, the recruitment process for the new General Manager Medical Services is still underway. We expect that position to be filled within the next few months.

**International**

As will be apparent from the chart on the right, mission numbers were down. However despite lower mission numbers, flying hours were up, translating into increased revenue.

The decline in mission numbers was largely attributable to aircraft availability issues as we transitioned from our former jet charter provider to new service providers. We took advantage of the change-over in service providers to also change our business model, moving from an ad hoc charter model to a standing charge model. This has ensured improved aircraft availability.

**Fundraising**

Our Fundraising Department continued to deliver the reliable revenue stream that underpins our charitable services.

Highlights of the Fundraising Department's performance were:

- rapid growth in our regular giving program, which now delivers income fast approaching \$1 million per annum, with minimal overhead cost
- our direct mail campaign, the most successful in our history
- another excellent year for bequest income (a total of \$438,159)

Total fundraising revenue (including corporate sponsorship) amounted to \$11,197,470.

**Financial overview**

Driven largely by the newly won Top End Aero Medical Services work, total revenue grew by \$14,611,936, from \$33,581,626 to \$48,193,562. The net surplus for the year was \$305,083, compared with a net surplus of \$1,378,494 in FY 2009-10. Last year's result reflected a capital grant of \$2.2M from the MAA.

Details of the financials can be found in the Finance Report on pages 24-26.

**Thank you**

As we look back over the past 25 years, we acknowledge all those whose commitment to and support of CareFlight have made it possible for us to carry out our mission - to save lives, speed recovery and serve the community.

We take this opportunity to thank the MAA for their generous grant of \$1 million, part of a seven year commitment to CareFlight.

As always, we thank our exceptionally talented and energetic staff for their unstinting dedication to CareFlight. They are the people who, through their daily work and willingness to go the extra mile, are taking us towards our vision to be Australia's most trusted rapid response critical care service.

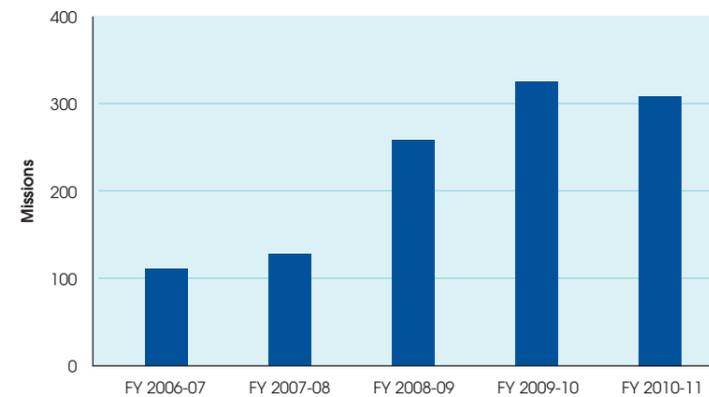
And finally the community, who for 25 years has stood behind us and beside us - our wonderful sponsors, donors and volunteers - we thank you for your loyalty and unwavering support. Your generosity and faith in us have allowed us to grow from a single helicopter one doctor operation caring for a handful of patients a month, to a national aeromedical service that brings help and hope to over 5,000 sick and injured people each year.



Chief Executive Officer Derek Colenbrander and Chairman Dr Andrew Refshauge.

We thank the community whose generosity and faith in us have allowed us to grow into a national aeromedical service that brings help and hope to over 5,000 sick and injured people each year.

**International mission numbers**



1989

**December:** CareFlight intensive care specialists fly to an horrific coach collision at Kempsey, in which 35 people are killed and 41 injured. They stabilise patients who are then flown to hospitals in Sydney, Newcastle and Coolangatta. CareFlight Clinical Supervisor, Dr Fran Smith, acts as disaster co-ordinator.



**May:** SCAT (Special Casualty Access Team) Paramedics from Ambulance Service join CareFlight.

1990

**January:** CareFlight provides medical and communications support following the Newcastle earthquake.



**February:** The Westmead operations base is opened by Health Minister Peter Collins.

**March:** CareFlight conducts its first international retrieval, transporting a patient from Penang.

**October:** Kerry Packer has a heart attack and is transferred from Liverpool hospital to St Vincents Hospital on a CareFlight portable intensive care module, in the care of CareFlight's Dr Howard Roby.

# Eastern Operations

## Sydney Helicopter Operations

This year the Westmead based head injury and paediatric trauma helicopter service responded to 374 cases. 125 of these responses were to severely injured children. Disturbingly, CareFlight attended 34 drowning incidents in this period, mostly involving children. This is a significant rise compared with previous years and we sincerely hope it represents an aberration rather than a trend. In response to the alarming increase, CareFlight ran a well-publicised campaign around toddlers and water safety and reminding people of the importance of learning CPR.



1) Sydney crew members, left to right: pilot Greg Ohlsson; Dr Blair Munford, CareFlight doctor for 23 years; pilot John Hoad, CareFlight Co-founder and inaugural Chief Pilot; Ambulance Service paramedic Aaron Davidson and aircrewman Scott Chaney. Photo courtesy Lithgow Mercury/Len Ashworth. 2) Chief Medical Officer Dr Alan Garner, Human Resources Manager Jude Pettitt and Deputy Chief Medical Officer & Supervisor of Training Dr Peter Clark.



## There was a disturbing rise in drowning incidents this year, mostly involving children.

During the year the head injury and paediatric trauma operation transitioned from trial to service. It is due to the generosity of the community, business and the MAA that CareFlight can continue to provide this highly specialised and very valuable service to metropolitan Sydney, the Southern Highlands, Blue Mountains and Central Coast.

## Medical Services for Ambulance Service

This year marks the fourth year of CareFlight's Medical Services Agreement with the Ambulance Service of NSW. Under the agreement, CareFlight supplies critical care specialists and registrars to provide

pre-hospital and medical retrieval services, throughout NSW, on Ambulance Service helicopters, road retrieval ambulances and fixed wing air ambulances from bases at Bankstown Airport and Orange.

For people living in rural and remote regions, even a broken ankle is a serious problem. The Ambulance Service helicopter based at Orange can make the difference between a 20 minute flight and a two hour journey by road ambulance. Having a doctor on board means that patients who are severely injured or ill can receive specialist medical attention at the scene of the incident and en route to hospital.

Again this year, CareFlight doctors working on the Ambulance Service

helicopters based in Orange cared for patients across the Central West. Missions included treating and transporting people injured in car, motorbike and quadbike crashes; people with suspected snake bites; people injured by falling trees; people with injuries sustained while working with horses and cattle; people with heart problems; and a number of patients who needed to be transferred under doctor management from small regional hospitals to major hospitals for more advanced treatment.

During the year CareFlight doctors working with Ambulance Service performed 1087 missions from Bankstown Base and 270 from Orange – an average of nearly four per day. To provide this service CareFlight had 15

## Little girl knocked down by utility

Riverstone

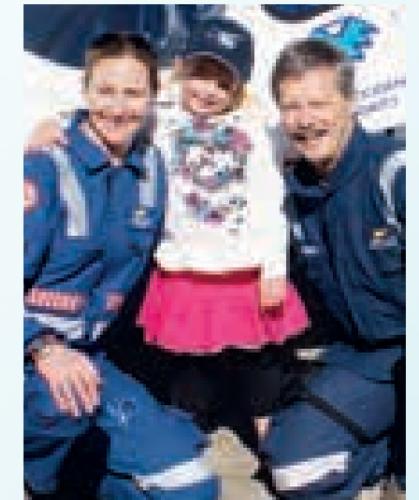
Dr Bernie Hanrahan and paramedic Annmarie Delahunty were delighted to see healthy five-year-old Grace when she visited the CareFlight base seven months after being knocked down by a ute in the driveway of a neighbour's home.

Grace suffered critical head injuries when the tray top of the reversing ute struck her head, knocking her unconscious. Grace's mother, a St John Ambulance volunteer, immediately performed spinal alignment, keeping the little girl still and her airways clear, while bystanders called '000'.

The CareFlight helicopter, crewed by pilot Greg Ohlsson and aircrewman Ben Inglis, landed minutes later in a

park behind the home, and Bernie and Annmarie quickly began treatment. Grace was non-responsive and had a dilated right pupil indicating possible brain injury, as well as facial fractures and decreased chest sounds. The medical team anaesthetised and ventilated Grace before flying her to Westmead Children's Hospital where a surgical team was waiting.

Grace's injuries were so severe that it was thought that if she survived, she would probably have long term damage and require lifelong care. However, after nine weeks in hospital, during which she made remarkable progress, Grace went home, and she is once again her bright, bubbly self.



Grace visits paramedic Annmarie Delahunty and Dr Bernie Hanrahan.

## Horse fall

Camden

CareFlight and Ambulance Service paramedics worked together to save the life of 17-year-old Tara when her 450kg horse rolled on top of her after she fell while jumping a 1.5m fence.

The CareFlight flying trauma team of Dr Shane Trevithick, paramedic Aaron Davidson, pilot Ian Smart and aircrewman Grant Waddups rushed to the accident at the Bicentennial Park Equestrian Centre in Camden, landing in a nearby paddock.

Tara had been knocked unconscious from the fall, then crushed across the chest and abdomen when the horse landed on her. Ambulance Service paramedics immediately initiated treatment, administering full spinal precautions. Shane and Aaron sedated Tara who had had a seizure



CareFlight works with ambulance paramedics to stabilise Tara.

and was now in a fluctuating state of consciousness. They then put her in an induced coma so they could control her breathing and prevent possible secondary brain injury.

Tara was taken to Liverpool Hospital by road ambulance under full intensive care. She was discharged after four days, having made a full recovery.

1991



July: CareFlight's 2,000th patient, six-month-old Nathan Isedale, is flown to Camperdown Children's Hospital after being admitted to Bowral Hospital with viral pneumonia.

1992



February: CareFlight International retrieves 'Iceman' James Scott from Nepal. James survived six weeks in the Himalayas, with only two chocolate bars for sustenance.

March: Chief Pilot John Hoad receives the HAI Bravery Award for rescuing a rock climber from Bungonia Gorge. In the dark, John manoeuvred the helicopter into position in the narrow, 300m gorge, so that the injured man could be winched to safety.

July: NSW Fire Brigade's first HazMat deployment of CareFlight, to a truck and freight train crash at Condobolin.



October: CareFlight responds to a bus crash at Linden which leaves one person dead and 38 injured. Medical teams triage and administer treatment at the scene, while the critical are airlifted to Nepean Hospital.



Dr Phil Hatch and paramedic Aaron Davidson treat Ben at the scene of the crash.

“When they intubated him straight after the accident they saved his life.”  
Steve, Ben’s brother.

### Motocross accident Appin

A jump gone wrong had serious consequences for 23-year-old Ben, a keen motocross rider.

Ben was riding at the Macarthur Motorcycle Club dirt track when he fell during a jump which lifted him about five to 10 metres in the air. His motorbike landed heavily on his face, knocking him unconscious. He then began a prolonged seizure.

Ambulance officers called to the scene administered medication to stop the seizure. When the CareFlight trauma team arrived, Ben had a GCS of 3. (The Glasgow Coma Scale, a neurological scale, records the conscious state of a patient. It has a range of 3 to 15, with 3 indicating deep unconsciousness.)

CareFlight Dr Phil Hatch and

paramedic Aaron Davidson gave Ben a general anaesthetic, intubated him and placed him on a ventilator to control his breathing. They applied a cervical collar to protect his neck and a pelvic binder in case of pelvic fractures. Pilot John Hoad and aircrewman Ben Inglis flew Ben, accompanied by the medical team, to Liverpool Hospital where a trauma team was waiting for him.

Ben spent four days in intensive care and a further five days in the general ward. He had multiple lacerations and abrasions as well as an extremely serious head injury, and only his helmet and full protective gear saved him from even further injury.

Five months after his accident, Ben is almost completely recovered.

### Car crash Heathcote

Retired school principal Frank was lucky to survive a crash which had him trapped in his car for 45 minutes while emergency services worked to free him.

CareFlight landed at the scene to find Frank in a fluctuating state of consciousness, with facial and chest injuries, a fractured pelvis and multiple leg and arm fractures sustained when his car hit a power pole. Such was the force of the impact that the pole had penetrated the cabin of the car, trapping Frank in the wreckage.

Ambulance paramedics managed to apply a cervical collar and insert an IV to administer fluids and morphine, while Fire Brigade officers cut away the side of the car and part of the dash.

As soon as Frank was extricated from the vehicle, CareFlight Dr Rob Bartolacci, Dr Liz Shewry and paramedic Aaron Davidson gave him an emergency blood transfusion, administered an anaesthetic and placed him on a ventilator. He was taken to Liverpool Hospital by road ambulance, receiving a further blood transfusion on the way.

Frank underwent extensive surgery and spent over 12 weeks in hospital and rehabilitation. Some months later he visited the CareFlight base where Rob was very happy to see him so well recovered from his ordeal.



Frank with Dr Rob Bartolacci.



1) Logistics Coordinator CFIAA Samantha Jeffries, Medical Director CFIAA Dr Steve Walker, National Manager CFIAA Paul Smith and National Nurse Manager CFIAA Andrea Delprado. 2) CareFlight registrars, August 2010. CareFlight trains critical care registrars who work on Ambulance Service helicopters, road ambulances and fixed wing aircraft.



critical care specialist doctors working between the bases, and 23 critical care advanced registrar doctors working for six months at a time from each base.

The Medical Services Agreement was managed with greater than 99% compliance to all KPIs for the entire year.

### CareFlight International Air Ambulance: Sydney and Cairns bases

People who fall critically ill or suffer serious injury in the south western Pacific Islands need to travel to Australia or New Zealand for advanced medical treatment. CareFlight’s Sydney and Cairns based medi-jets are well placed to transport patients from the regions within the arc from Micronesia through the Polynesian Islands down to New Zealand.

A regular route for our Sydney based medi-jet is the Sydney Noumea flight. Patients who need transporting under specialist care for high end critical care treatment not available in New

Caledonia are flown to Sydney by CareFlight. Typically, these patients require neurological or cardiac surgery, and many are on life support or ECMO (heart lung) machines. Their medical care is funded by the French Government, New Caledonia being a territory of France.

We conducted a number of extremely long range missions during the year. Logistics management and flight planning for these missions are very complex. Fuel stops need to be factored in and second pilot crews and medical teams pre-positioned at points along the return leg to overcome fatigue factors so the medi-jets can fly continuously.

Long range missions this year included bringing an elderly woman who suffered a stroke in Tahiti home to hospital in Brisbane, transferring a critically ill man from China to Auckland and retrieving a man with a life-threatening infection from Micronesia to Melbourne.

### Life-threatening infection Micronesia to Melbourne

Earlier this year CareFlight International Air Ambulance was called to retrieve a young Melbourne man who had suffered severe injuries from a coral reef while surfing off a remote Micronesian island halfway to Hawaii.

When the Sydney-based team of Dr Angela Stahlhut and RN Justin Treble arrived, the man’s condition was extremely serious and he continued to deteriorate on the flight home. The medical team decided to take advantage of a planned refuelling stop in Cairns to transfer him to Cairns Hospital, a wise decision as it transpired that he had contracted a life-threatening infection. He immediately underwent extensive lifesaving surgery.

Over the next couple of weeks the patient remained in a critical condition and needed several more operations. He responded well to treatment and gradually stabilised. He was then evacuated, along with other patients, to hospital in Brisbane to avoid cyclone Yassi.

After a month of treatment in the Brisbane hospital, his condition improved sufficiently for him to be flown home to Melbourne, accompanied by another CareFlight team. He is receiving further treatment in Melbourne and is expected to make a full recovery.

## 1993



**February:** A man is flown to Royal North Shore’s spinal unit suffering spinal injuries after felling a tree.

## 1994



**October:** CareFlight co-founder Ian Badham receives the international Association of Air Medical Services Marriott-Carlson Award.

**December:** The Bell 412HP helicopter arrives at the CareFlight base.

## 1995

**January:** The new Bell helicopter undertakes its first mission to a hang glider crash in the Blue Mountains.

**February:** The CareFlight helicopter lands on the Sydney Opera House forecourt – a first for a helicopter promotional.



## 1996

**April:** CareFlight introduces the first helicopter intra aortic balloon pump transport in Australia.

# Northern Operations

## NT Government support

Over the past three years, CareFlight has had an increasing presence in northern Australia.

It started as an ad hoc arrangement to supply a helicopter to the NT Government because the fixed wing aeromedical service into Katherine was being disrupted by wallabies on the runway at night, preventing planes from landing and putting patients at risk. Helicopters don't require a runway for landing.

In July 2010 this informal arrangement became an interim aeromedical services contract under which CareFlight provides a helicopter, four fixed wing aircraft, aviation crew, flight nurses and logistics coordination to the NT Government. Within half an hour of start-up of the service, CareFlight had three planes and a helicopter in the air, crisscrossing the territory in the delivery of patient care.

The interim service operates 24 hours a day out of bases in Darwin, Katherine and Nhulunbuy/Gove and transports patients both in to and out of Darwin, as well as between communities as far south as Tennant Creek.

The year has not been without its challenges. Higher than predicted patient transport numbers, asylum seeker riots necessitating the hasty evacuation of our Logistics and Coordination Centre, and Cyclone Carlos forcing us to relocate our planes to Katherine, all put immense pressure on our crews and aircraft. However, dealing with emergencies is what we do so contingency plans were implemented and operations continued without interruption to patient care.

From next year, under the 10 year contract, CareFlight will provide a fully integrated aeromedical service, including the supply of doctors, to

meet the medical needs of Top End communities. According to the NT Department of Health, demand for aeromedical services in the NT has increased by 25 per cent over the past six years and around 3,000 patients are now transported annually.

CareFlight's commitment to save lives, speed recovery and serve the community in the Top End has meant a significant expansion to our fleet of aircraft and many more people coming on board to support our mission.

## Helicopter operations

CareFlight has two BK117 helicopters permanently stationed in the Top End. These aircraft primarily serve the needs of the community in the Northern Territory, conducting inter-hospital patient transfers and transporting ill and injured people to and from remote locations to hospital. The helicopters are staffed by CareFlight nurses and by doctors seconded from Royal Darwin Hospital.

This highly specialised aeromedical service is a lifeline to the far flung communities of the Top End. Missions during the year ranged from airlifting a young jackaroo who sustained a spinal injury when he fell off the back of a truck south of the Delamere Range, to retrieving a pregnant woman who needed medical treatment, from remote Kildurk Station to Kununurra Hospital when severe monsoonal rains closed airstrips across the Top End, preventing the use of fixed wing aircraft. Many of these missions are flown at night, using night vision goggles, in round trips that can take up to six hours and cover 1,200 kilometres.

The two NT based helicopters accumulated a total 878 flying hours in support of the NT Government, ADF and

## Four wheel drive rollover

Mataranka

It took a team effort and three aircraft to save 52-year-old Warren when his topless four wheel drive rolled in the middle of the bush in rural Mataranka near Flying Fox Station 400km south east of Darwin, pinning him down by the head. His passenger was thrown clear and suffered only minor injuries.

Darwin's CareFlight rescue helicopter, with a specialist doctor from Royal

Darwin Hospital and a CareFlight nurse on board, responded immediately. A CareFlight plane was dispatched at the same time to the nearest airstrip which was at Ngukurr, over 100km from the incident.

The distance meant it was going to be a long wait for the specialist help to arrive. Fortunately, there were people in another vehicle in the vicinity who used a jack to lift the four wheel drive off the injured man while Flying Fox Station sent a mustering helicopter and pilot to the nearest remote clinic to bring a local nurse back to the scene of the accident. The nurse provided spinal protection and pain relief until the CareFlight helicopter arrived.

Warren had a severe head injury as well as internal abdominal injuries. The CareFlight team performed immediate emergency surgery and stabilised him before flying him to Ngukurr airstrip where the CareFlight plane was waiting. His passenger was flown to Ngukurr in the Flying Fox Station helicopter and then transferred to the same CareFlight plane bound for Royal Darwin Hospital.

Warren has made a complete recovery.

## The highly specialised aeromedical service is a lifeline to the far flung communities of the Top End.



1) The scene of the rollover. 2) The RDH doctor and CareFlight nurse perform on scene emergency surgery.

## Stockman fall

Remote cattle station

A teenage stockman suffered serious chest and facial injuries when he fell from his horse and crashed into a tree on a remote cattle station over 150km from Darwin.

Darwin's CareFlight helicopter, with a Royal Darwin Hospital doctor and CareFlight specialist retrieval nurse on board was launched, and two nurses from a local clinic and a paramedic from a nearby mine were also called.

The local nurses and paramedic arrived first and stabilised the young man who was semi-conscious and having difficulty breathing. He had fluid in his lungs which needed draining urgently so when the CareFlight team arrived they carried out the critical care procedure at the scene. He was then put in an induced coma, placed on the portable ventilator and monitors and flown directly to Royal Darwin Hospital under full intensive care.



## Within half an hour of start-up of the service, CareFlight had three planes and a helicopter in the air, crisscrossing the territory in the delivery of patient care.



Part of the team behind the successful startup of the NT operation: Aviation Business Manager Steve Hughes, General Manager Northern Operations David Mann, Chief Financial Officer Rajini Surendran, Chief Pilot Jeff Konemann and Chief Engineer Luke Bradshaw. Photo courtesy Lauren Bradshaw.

AusSAR, with our very able aviation teams flying under some extremely challenging circumstances and weather conditions.

## Fixed wing operations

Four leased B200 King Air turboprop planes, staffed by CareFlight specialist flight nurses, were added to the CareFlight aviation fleet this year. These planes fly thousands of kilometres to bring medical help to sick Territorians and Top End visitors

isolated by the vast distances across northern Australia.

The first few months of operation saw mission numbers exceed all expectations. After just nine months of service, the fixed wing fleet clocked up 3,698 flying hours transporting patients in urgent need of medical attention.

CareFlight achieved a milestone when our northern operation, under

the guidance of Fleet Manager Fixed Wing Richard Sandford and Aviation Compliance Manager Dave Chapman, gained certification with CASA to operate under our own Air Operators Certificate (AOC). CareFlight is one of very few operations in Australia to operate fixed and rotary wing aircraft on a single AOC.

In another milestone, CareFlight purchased our first fixed wing aircraft in

**March:** Two-year-old Jared sustains a bump to his head which causes a life-threatening bleed into his brain. Doctors at Gosford Hospital, under telephone instruction from a Sydney neurosurgeon, drill into his skull to relieve the pressure. CareFlight flies him to Westmead Hospital under full intensive care. Jared has extensive surgery, and makes a complete recovery.



**June:** CareFlight receives the Royal Humane Society's commendation for the difficult rescue of an injured man at Glenbrook in the Blue Mountains.



**July:** Young Colin Seidler is critically injured when the car in which he is a back seat passenger crashes into a telegraph pole. CareFlight arrives to find him barely alive and literally bleeding to death. Dr Rob Bartolacci accesses Colin through the back window of the car and, while rescue services work to free him, intubates him and gives him 15 litres of blood and 8.5 litres of saline fluid - twice his original blood volume. He is flown to Nepean Hospital where he spends 51 weeks. He grows up to lead a full life.



**September:** CareFlight is called to Bowral Hospital to retrieve 16-year-old Eliza Stankovic who is suffering from meningococcal disease. Dr Alan Garner spends 1 1/2 hours fighting to keep ahead of the spreading infection and stabilise her for transport. Eliza has both legs amputated below the knee, as well as some of her fingers, but goes on to become a paralympian. She is one of 18 meningococcal patients transported by CareFlight during the year.



1) Flight nurse Amanda Quinn cares for a young patient. 2) Fleet Manager Fixed Wing, Richard Sandford. 3) Two of CareFlight's B200 King Air turboprop planes.



April 2011, with another three aircraft purchased during May and June.

### Search and rescue

Increasingly, we have been called on to conduct helicopter search and rescue work, particularly at night due to our night vision goggle capability.

The wet season brought devastating cyclones which battered northern Australia, and had CareFlight flying to some very remote areas to locate and rescue stranded fishermen and motorists. We also evacuated a number of crews who suddenly fell ill, from commercial vessels at sea.

Australian Maritime Safety Authority (AMSA) is obligated to call out search and rescue units to resolve any emergency beacon activation in Australia's region of international rescue responsibility which extends 52.8 million square kilometres into the Indian, Pacific and Southern Oceans. CareFlight, with our versatile medical rescue helicopter and skilled crew has proved a great resource for AMSA to call on.

### ADF support

Each year the ADF conducts a series of military training exercises across northern Australia. Under a teaming agreement with InternationalSOS and CareFlight Queensland, we provide medivac support to the ADF. Our NT based helicopters, staffed by a doctor and paramedic, are well placed to provide this support during training in Mt Bunday.

### Aircraft maintenance

The coming year will see a growing engineering team as CareFlight assumes the responsibility of maintaining both our rotary wing and now fixed wing fleet of aircraft. Luke Bradshaw, CareFlight's Chief Engineer, is supervising the introduction of fixed wing engineering services into CareFlight, a momentous undertaking.

Maintaining a diverse fleet of aircraft across several states and varied operations is a huge task. It is due to the hard work and skill of our engineers that we have achieved almost 5,000 flying hours across our rotary and fixed wing fleets for our first year of combined operations. This is a fourfold increase on any previous year's activity.

### CareFlight International Air Ambulance: Darwin base

Darwin is our busiest base. Our medi-jet covers the region from the Cocos

Islands north west of Australia, across the Indonesian Archipelago to Papua New Guinea north east of Australia. The Darwin jet's most common destinations are Timor, due to the Australian military/police presence there, and Bali, because of the number of Australian tourists who visit the island.

In addition to the international missions conducted from the Darwin base, we conduct a number of domestic missions, particularly between Darwin and Adelaide. Because of the historical links between these cities, high acuity patients in the NT have traditionally been flown to Adelaide for certain specialised medical treatment.

The Darwin based jet also provides a valuable backup to our Top End Aero Medical Services Contract with the NT Government. It was used on a number of occasions during the year when we experienced unscheduled maintenance with our turboprop aircraft.



Engineers John McMaster, Luke Bradshaw, Mait Middleton, Geoff Kubler, Steve Jones and Adrian Legassic. Centre, Engineering Administration Assistant Viva Thomson. Photo courtesy Lauren Bradshaw.

# Western Operations

### CareFlight International Air Ambulance: Perth base

In November we positioned a dedicated medi-jet in Perth after servicing this base from Darwin for some months. The doctors are provided by Joondalup Hospital.

Our Perth medi-jet services the region from Cocos/Christmas Islands to the western part of the Indonesian Archipelago, including Bali. Because the Bali/Australia run is one of CareFlight International Air Ambulance's busiest, there is some crossover between the region covered by the Perth and Darwin jets.

The Perth jet also undertakes interstate neonatal transfers for newborns requiring very highly specialised surgery only available in the larger capital cities on the eastern seaboard. Most of these critically ill babies are taken to Melbourne for treatment. CareFlight provides the medi-jet, pilots and logistics support, and the transferring hospital provides specialised neonatal medical teams.

### Road Ambulance Service

Although CareFlight is primarily an aeromedical organisation, we have a long history in the area of inter-hospital critical care patient road transport -

moving critically ill patients by road ambulance from small metropolitan hospitals to major tertiary facilities where they can receive higher levels of care.

Drawing on our knowledge and experience in this area, we have teamed up with St John Ambulance to provide an inter-facility critical care road ambulance service in Perth. The doctors who staff the service also come from the registrar pool at Joondalup Hospital.

### Respiratory failure India to Perth

During the year CareFlight International Air Ambulance conducted a particularly complex mission to transfer an ill woman from India to Perth.

The woman was travelling in Asia when she developed Guillain Barre Syndrome, a fairly uncommon condition that can follow an otherwise unremarkable viral infection. All the nerves that control the muscles are affected, leaving the patient paralysed. The patient was taken to hospital in India where she was placed on a ventilator as she was no longer able to breathe for herself.

CareFlight planned the journey so that the return leg would include a fuel stop in Phuket where a second medical team and pilot crew would be pre-positioned to take over so the patient could be flown continuously without having to stop for crew rest breaks.



1) The plane refuels while oxygen tanks are refilled in Jakarta. 2) Nurse Danni Phillips cares for her Guillain Barre patient on the flight to Perth.



The plan was underway and teams in place when the first attempt had to be cancelled due to weather conditions. Much of India was affected by severe fog and smog and, because the patient was ventilated and would require oxygen for the flight home, CareFlight could not risk the extensive delays that would almost certainly mean running out of oxygen while on the ground at the airport in India.

When the weather began to improve, the plan was set up again. Dr Jen

Upton and RN Andrea Delprado flew to India to take the ill woman on the first leg of her transfer, while Dr Ian Maddox, RN Danni Phillips and a second flight crew were sent ahead to Phuket to take her on the second leg.

The retrieval went smoothly and the patient was brought home to Perth where she was admitted to hospital for ongoing treatment. Fortunately her condition is reversible, though recovery generally takes months.

# 1998



**April:** Friday night football is interrupted for 31 minutes as the CareFlight helicopter lands on Brookvale Oval to airlift two Parramatta Rugby League players with suspected spinal injuries, to hospital.

**June:** CareFlight is called to the Sydney Olympic Stadium during construction to retrieve an injured worker.



**August:** 13-year-old Tenelle Bolte is rescued from the flooded Nepean River seconds before she is swept over a weir. The CareFlight crew of pilot Keith Stewart, aircrewman Graeme Fromberg, paramedic Ian Stewart and Dr Tim Skinner are later recognised for their bravery with a number of prestigious international awards.



**December:** CareFlight rescues seven sailors from the stricken yacht Business Post Naiad during wild storms in the Sydney-Hobart yacht race. The crew of pilot Dan Tyler, aircrewman Graeme Fromberg and paramedic Murray Traynor later receive the Prince Philip Award and other wide recognition for their rescue efforts.



# 1999

**February:** CareFlight receives the 1998 Award for Aviation Safety Excellence in the AOC category.

**January:** CareFlight's 7,000th patient, Victoria Friend, is rescued from a crashed aircraft near Merriwa.

**June:** CareFlight signs an affiliation with Charles Sturt University for teaching and pre-hospital medical research.

# Medical Education and Research

The past year has been an incredibly busy but productive year for the Medical Education Division.

We thank all those 30 doctors, nurses, paramedics and logisticians who have given of their precious time, energy and knowledge as educators to make our projects successful.

## Education and training

### MediSim

The MediSim project is a groundbreaking CareFlight initiative that brings expert trauma training and education to historically under resourced rural and remote clinicians, and additional knowledge and skills to 'first responder' volunteers at accident scenes. The initiative is in line with the Federal Government's priority to

improve health outcomes and save lives in rural and remote communities.

Thanks to donations from individuals and businesses, the program is accessible at no or low cost to those who may not have the time or funds to travel to education centres in capital cities to receive further training.

The simulation-based training is delivered in MediSim, a custom built mobile trauma training classroom which is transported to regional centres by truck. Participants practise skills on life-like simulator manikins in scenarios that they don't regularly encounter,

learn how to function in stressful environments and train in teams in the way that they will actually work in an emergency situation.

The project was launched in March 2011 in Kempsey, chosen because of the funding allocated by Kempsey Macleay RSL Club and the generous support over the years from the Mid North Coast community through the region's 'Local Heroes' IGA initiative. Dr Ken Harrison and nurses Justin Treble and David Ball taught the inaugural Community Volunteer TraumaCare Workshop which is offered to 'first responders' such as the Rural Fire



Registrars train to retrieve patients from remote and difficult to reach locations.



1) MediSim. 2-3) Participants practise skills on simulator manikins. 4) Dr Ken Harrison and nurse educators Justin Treble and David Ball teach volunteer 'first responders' at the workshop held in Kempsey.

## Medisim brings expert trauma training and education to rural and remote communities.

Service, Volunteer Rescue Association (VRA) and State Emergency Services (SES) in rural centres. These people are often the first at accident scenes in rural and remote areas and are sometimes required to look after casualties with life-threatening injuries in those vital minutes before specialist medical help arrives.

MediSim is also being used in conjunction with the NSW Institute of Trauma and Injury Management to teach the Trauma Assessment, Resuscitation and Transfer Program and Trauma Team Training to clinicians in regional centres. This is a very exciting development in education for rural and remote practitioners and the scope for improving the knowledge and skills of the medical and pre-hospital workforce outside of large cities is enormous.

MediSim can be turned into an operational single resuscitation bay or

theatre in the event of a mass casualty situation.

### Registrar training

Our fortnightly training with the CareFlight registrars has continued well over the past year. Highlights from this include the Cliff Edge Day and the Navigation Day, both run by Dr Ken Harrison. The registrars all valued the opportunity to apply their knowledge in a less controlled environment and appreciate the limitations and challenges of treating a patient in a remote location.

### Consultant Clinical Catch-ups

An exciting development over the past year has been the institution of 'Consultant Clinical Catch-ups'. The need to maintain current knowledge and evaluate skills and equipment competencies across the consultant workforce had been identified as requiring urgent attention. Dr Andrew Weatherall has taken on the project and



## 2000



**August:** CareFlight's Central West dedicated regional emergency helicopter is launched by Health Minister Craig Knowles at Orange and Premier Bob Carr at Wellington.

**September:** In its first mission, Central West CareFlight flies a patient from Condobolin.

## 2001 2002

**October:** CareFlight doctors retrieve burns patients from Denpasar following the terrorist bombings in Bali.

**February:** CareFlight retrieves its 10,000th patient.

**July:** CareFlight launches the Pre-Hospital Trauma Course.



## 2003

**January:** CareFlight medical teams attend the Waterfall train crash in which seven people are killed, triaging, treating and transporting the injured.



**May:** CareFlight leases the BK117B2 helicopter.



the inaugural 'catch-up' occurred last December. This was open to external participants and was well attended. Professor Danny Cass spoke about paediatric trauma, Dr Weatherall presented on paediatric drowning and Dr Bernie Hanrahan presented on our experience in paediatric trauma with the Sydney Operations. The lectures were followed by skills stations including a scenario that involved our rural fire service colleagues for a dose of realism. It was very well received both internally and externally as a valuable way of maintaining clinical currency and the 'CareFlight culture' by improving face-to-face time. In a follow-up internal session we looked at the Head Injury Trial and the Near Infrared Spectroscopy Trial.

#### ADF education

Perhaps the standout achievement has been the success in winning the tender for the Australian Defence Force education package known as 'Exercise Primary Survey I & II'. We have been involved in delivering this exercise in Albury, Brisbane, Darwin and Townsville and have now secured the tender for the next four years. The training requires conduct of a modified Pre-Hospital Trauma Course, trauma team training and further lectures and workshops for the doctors, nurses, medics and combat first aiders. This forms part of their pre-deployment training for each

HIRT data coordinators Anne Douglas and Elwyn Poynter.



battalion deploying to the Middle East, with the second part occurring just six weeks before departure. We have thoroughly enjoyed being a part of such a valuable training initiative and have received excellent feedback on our training. We look forward to continuing to support the Australian troops in this way over the next few years.

#### Research

##### Head Injury Retrieval Trial

The Head Injury Retrieval Trial (HIRT) is a randomised clinical trial which aims to demonstrate that the speedy delivery of trauma physician management to accident scenes improves outcomes for head injured patients. Patients are followed up to determine how well they have recovered at six months after their injury. Recruitment into HIRT ceased on 14 March 2011, so the last patient will be evaluated in September. The data collected will be collated and analysed, with final results of the trial available in the following months. We have now transitioned to a temporary service model for severe adult and paediatric trauma while we await the outcome of the trial evaluation.

##### Near Infrared Spectroscopy

CareFlight recently commenced a new program of research into the utility of Near Infrared Spectroscopy (NIRS) monitoring in severe head injury patients. The feasibility study has been completed and we are preparing for the prospective observational phase. This study marks new ground for CareFlight research as we are now formally collaborating with similar services in the United Kingdom and Switzerland who will assist with recruitment of patients and with management of the trials.

#### Publications

CareFlight has had five papers published in scientific literature during

the year:

- Dr Chris Jones co-authored a paper, published in Emergency Medical Journal, discussing a case of a paediatric pre-hospital tension viscerothorax and its subsequent management, and the difficulty of diagnosing this condition in the pre-hospital arena.
- Drs Chris Jones and Paul Forest co-authored a paper, published in Current Anaesthesia & Critical Care, which examines the background, logistics and safety of ECMO retrieval in NSW and looks at the experiences of a well established, high volume medical retrieval service and the challenges presented during the recent H1N1 swine flu pandemic.
- Drs Chris Jones, Shane Trevithick, David Helm and James Milligan co-authored a paper, published in Current Anaesthesia & Critical Care, which looks at the retrieval and transfer of bariatric (obese) patients. The paper explains some of the physiological and different co-morbidities found in these patients, as well as some practical advice for their transportation.
- Drs David Murphy, Alan Garner and Rod Bishop co-authored a paper, published in Aviation, Space and Environmental Medicine Journal, comparing respiratory function during four commonly used hoist rescue techniques.
- Drs James Milligan, Chris Jones, David Helm and Blair Munford co-authored a paper, published in Trends in Anaesthesia and Critical Care, looking at the physiology of aeromedical transport, its effects on certain clinical conditions and the equipment used.

With more exciting projects in the pipeline that we hope will come to fruition in the next twelve months, the year to come is looking to be even busier.

# Community Engagement

The community is at the heart of everything that CareFlight does.

The community helped build CareFlight and we continue to work together to raise funds for and awareness about our charity through events, media, visits and talks. As we grow our national footprint, people across Australia are coming on board to help support our work.

#### Woodford to Glenbrook

The biggest ever Woodford to Glenbrook was held at the end of June when 1,100 competitors tackled the 25km Oaks Fire Trail in the NSW Blue Mountains. With the support of the Rural Fire Service, St John Ambulance and National Parks and Wildlife Service, the event has grown remarkably in recent years and is now an outstanding contributor to our fundraising efforts. Together with online fundraising, this year's event raised over \$85,000.

#### Darwin and Katherine shows

The Northern Territory put on two fantastic shows in July at Katherine and Darwin. The CareFlight Rescue Helicopter Simulator was in attendance to give the locals a firsthand experience of flying a mission in the NT. CareFlight Bears and caps proved popular on the merchandise stand and many people took the time to stop and talk with our crew about CareFlight's work in the NT and around Australia.

#### Youth Road Trauma Forum

The trauma of road related accidents can affect everyone and the Youth Road Trauma Forum held in Sydney, NSW, is doing its part to educate our young drivers on their responsibilities as new road users. Held annually, the event is attended by over 10,000 Year



1) The CareFlight Simulator at the Katherine Show. 2) Wisemans Ferry Golf Day. 3) Killara Golf Club Ladies Charity Day.

As we grow our national footprint, people across Australia are coming on board to help support our work.

10 and 11 students who see a graphic and educational re-enactment of a road crash, rescue and recovery operation. CareFlight has been involved in this event since its inception and is proud to be playing its part in spreading the road safety message.

#### Golf days

The NSW community of Wisemans Ferry and surrounds continued their long

held tradition of supporting CareFlight through the annual Police and Citizens Golf Day. Held in November each year, the event attracts over 100 golfers. Congratulations to the volunteer committee members who work tirelessly to see this event raise over \$25,000 each year for CareFlight. Thank you, too, to the organisers of the Wentworth Falls Golf Day and the ladies of the Killara Golf Club for their support.

## 2004

**May:** CareFlight stabilises and then airlifts seven-year-old Tyler Moon to Sydney Children's Hospital. Tyler, with punctured lungs, broken ribs and abdominal injuries sustained in a quad bike accident, walked 2km along a bush track to fetch help for his injured father. He later receives a bravery award.



**May:** The Agusta A109E Power helicopter is acquired for the HIRT project.



**September:** Young bushwalker Patti falls down a 5m cliff, breaking her pelvis and ribs and sustaining probable spinal injuries. Weather conditions are too hazardous to rescue her, so CareFlight winches down Ambulance paramedic Wayne Cannon who spends a -3°C night caring for her and administering pain relief. CareFlight winches them to safety at first light. Patti is flown to Nepean Hospital and recovers, and Wayne earns an Ambulance Service commendation.



**December:** CareFlight's disaster cache is deployed to Banda Aceh in support of the Australian Civilian Surgical Team after the South-Asian tsunami. Two CareFlight doctors are part of the NSW-led team, performing 140 major operations, hundreds of minor procedures and assessing and treating numerous patients over a 10 day period.



## 2005

**March:** CareFlight's Head Injury Retrieval Trial (HIRT) is launched by Premier Bob Carr at Darling Harbour.

**May:** HIRT's first patient is accessed at Kurrajong.

**September:** CareFlight retrieves its 14,000th patient.





1) Tahmoor Community CareFlight Day. 2) Media Manager Ian Badham at the Sussex Inlet Choppers for Charity Weekend. 3) Oktoberfest. 4) Easyriders Motorcycle Club presents a cheque to CareFlight. 5) Life without Barriers Personal Challenge Day. 6) John Hexton from Inghams presents a cheque to CEO Derek Colenbrander at the Narellan Rotary Ball. 7) Venture. 8) Community & Sponsor Engagement Manager Don Kemble and Community Engagement Coordinator John Ebbott.

## Our many volunteers make it possible for us to run our community events.



### Sydney Chinese Lions Annual Charity Ball

The Lions Club of Sydney Chinese Inc held its annual charity ball at Sydney's Darling Harbour and selected CareFlight as this year's beneficiary of the magnificent event. Among the glitz and glamour of the occasion, bidders tussled for exclusive auction items, raffle tickets were exchanged, lucky door prizes were won and good entertainment was enjoyed by all. The event was a wonderful success, raising over \$43,000, and we congratulate and thank the hardworking committee and all members of the Club for their generosity.

### NSW South Coast support

The community of Sussex Inlet and surrounds continued its unwavering support of CareFlight with the annual

'Choppers for Charity' event held in February. Over three days a record crowd participated in barefoot bowls, a nine hole golf ambrose, a dinner parade, market stalls, rides, food and entertainment – all in the name of supporting our charity. A big thanks to the volunteer committee, Sussex Inlet RSL, Chamber of Commerce, Lions Club, Rotary Club, Nippers, Marine Rescue, SES, RFS, local police and many other community members who make this annual event such a success.

### 4WD ventures

A growing and dedicated band of followers attended two CareFlight 4WD Ventures during the year. Participants raised funds for CareFlight in the lead-up to each event, organising car shows, selling bears and merchandise,

placing and collecting donation tins, hosting parties and generally having a good time. The culmination of their efforts was a well organised family weekend away with 25 cars visiting country towns via some exciting and very scenic 4WD trails. Special thanks to all our fundraising Venture families for your efforts.

### Oktoberfest

The annual Oktoberfest Charity Gala at the Lowenbrau Keller Oktoberfest Bier Hall raised more than \$120,000 for CareFlight and Starlight. Over the past 12 years this event has raised over \$1.2 million. Guests dressed up in the traditional Oktoberfest dirndl and lederhosen as they enjoyed 'pure biers' and a sumptuous Oktoberfest spread. We thank longtime supporters and Lowenbrau proprietors John and

Sandy Szangolies for a great night, and Larry Emdur for being MC.

### Business support

We are grateful to the many businesses who have again supported us with both in-kind help and donations. We particularly thank Inghams, who for many years has given generously in recognition of our lifesaving work, this year donating \$75,000, and Harvey Norman who has also been a generous donor over the years.

### Online fundraising

There have been many and varied challenges and activities conducted using the internet over the past year, giving opportunities for people to donate to CareFlight online. 'Kick it for CareFlight' saw people giving up something for a day, a month or for

good, and gaining sponsorship from their friends and colleagues in the process. Other people participated in events such as the City to Surf, Cole Classic, Blackmore's Sydney Running Festival or even our own Woodford to Glenbrook. This ongoing fundraising is easily accessed via the CareFlight website.

### Talk, talk, talk

Our community engagement team continued to travel the country and the city completing a hectic roster of Community Talks. Our talks comprise a comprehensive picture presentation outlining all aspects of CareFlight's work over the past 25 years. Lions, Rotary, Probus, View, Zonta, National Seniors, St John, Apex, Trefoil, Scouts, Guides, Masons and Inner Wheel are just a few of our great community

support organisations. Thank you for your hospitality and ongoing support.

### And to all our supporters...

As always there are too many people to thank individually. CareFlight has enjoyed and benefited from every one of your efforts - Easyriders Motorcycle Club Bike Show, Life Without Barriers Personal Challenge Day, Combined Art Societies of Sydney and Tahmoor CareFlight Community Day, to mention just a few. We also acknowledge the many volunteers without whom we could not run our community events.

Congratulations and thank you, one and all – your contribution is saving lives and will continue to do so for years to come.

# 2006

**February:** Parramatta MP Tanya Gadiel officially opens the Winch Simulator at Westmead.

**May:** CareFlight treats five-year-old burns victim Sophie Delezio after she is hit by a car at a pedestrian crossing, giving her a blood transfusion and placing her on life support before flying her to Sydney Children's Hospital at Randwick.



**June:** CareFlight's rebuilt and enhanced disaster cache is deployed to earthquake devastated Java in support of the NSW/ACT-staffed Australian Medical Assistance Team.

**July:** CareFlight celebrates 20 years of saving lives.



# 2007

**March:** CareFlight International Darwin service is officially launched by Chief Minister of the Northern Territory, The Hon Clare Martin.



**May:** CareFlight's contract to provide helicopter services to the Ambulance Service expires, but CareFlight secures a seven-year contract to provide doctors to the NSW medical retrieval system.

**October:** CareFlight commences first contract to provide helicopter A&E to ADF exercises at Mt Bunday Training Range, NT.

**November:** HIRT operations are extended to the Central Coast.



**December:** The Civil Aviation Safety Authority (CASA) grants approval to CareFlight to fly night operations using night vision goggle technology.



# Fundraising

This past year saw an unusually high number of natural disasters and Australians around the country rallying to help those affected.

The call for donations to support the victims of the disasters, coupled with subdued consumer spending, meant that many charities found it difficult to meet their targets. However, despite these challenges CareFlight had a good fundraising year as once again our generous donors dug deep to help save lives.

Over the past few years we have focused on increasing the diversity of our revenue streams. Consequently, a downturn in one area of our fundraising is often compensated by greater success in another.

## Direct marketing initiatives prove successful

This year we received \$3.8 million net from our three key direct marketing channels – CareFlight Bears, regular giving, direct mail and movie mania – up 51% from four years ago. This represents a net income increase of \$1.3 million.

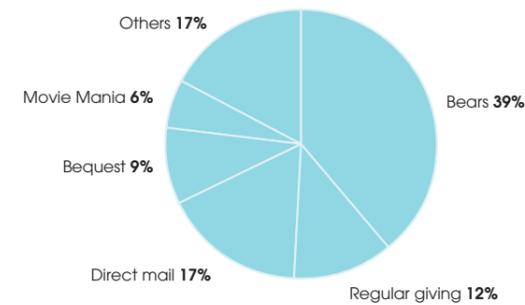
## Regular giving reaches new heights

Our regular giving program continued to grow over the past year. From \$87,000 in net income three years ago, we generated around \$607,000 this past year with continued strong growth predicted for the coming year. The regular support we receive through the program allows us to plan effectively, while the lower processing expenses mean an improved fundraising cost ratio. We thank our regular givers for their ongoing support.

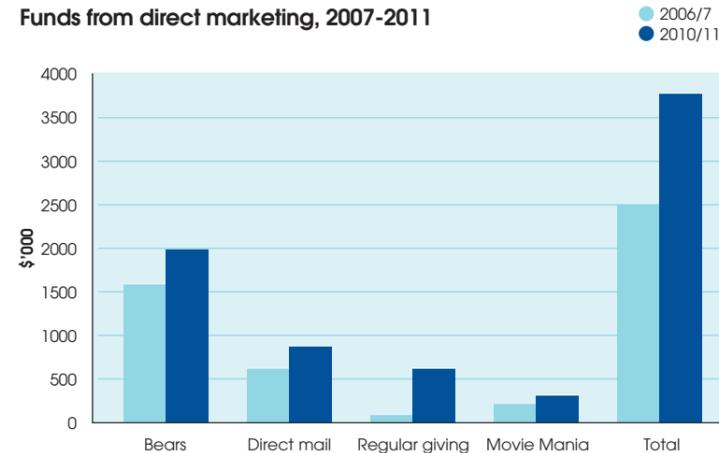
## Bear buzz

CareFlight Bears were as popular as

Fundraising net revenue mix



Funds from direct marketing, 2007-2011



ever, with almost 100,000 bears going to good homes. We also added over 1,500 bear supporters to our regular giving program, with many of these loyal supporters continuing to purchase bears and give generous cash donations as well.

During the year we revamped Doctor Bear, Patient Bear, Supporter Bear,

Helicrew Bear and Engineer Bear. We also introduced promotional Cricketer Bear who proved very popular during the Ashes series over summer. Thank you to all our CareFlight Bear buyers.

## Letters bring returns

Again this year our direct mail appeal letters featured real missions, involving real patients and real doctors, to tell



Once again our generous donors dug deep to help save lives.

Head of Fundraising Trent Osborn, Relationship Development Manager Scott Monaghan, Data Base Supervisor Bernadette Rubio-Pascual, Data Base Manager Jack Yasmineh, Data Base Officer Rita Legimin.

the CareFlight story. Our spring appeal focused on making the home safe for toddlers who too often become CareFlight patients after suffering life-threatening injuries in home accidents.

The community responded generously to our appeal letters and we were also able to add several hundred of our direct mail supporters to the regular giving channel. Thank you.

## Club support

Through the Community Development Support Expenditure (CDSE) scheme, licensed clubs make significant donations to many different community organisations, and CareFlight has been a grateful recipient for many years. This year we received support in the form of funding towards our helicopter missions and towards CareFlight MediSim, our mobile simulation-based trauma program. A special thanks to Kempsey Macleay RSL Club for their ongoing support of MediSim – a three year agreement will see CareFlight deliver training to members of the Mid North Coast Community Volunteer Emergency Services.

## The gift of a lifetime

Our bequest program has gone from strength to strength. This year 33 new donors confirmed that they have included CareFlight in their Will and we received bequests totalling \$438,000. We are especially thankful

to those whose gifts were realised during 2010 - their legacy has helped keep CareFlight at the forefront of aeromedical care.

## Trusts and foundations

During the year, many trusts and foundations made significant contributions to CareFlight projects, particularly medical and training equipment used in our education programs and services. We thank the following for their donations: The Loyal Foundation, Profield Foundation, Hunter Hall, The Corio Foundation, The St George Foundation, The Trust Company of Australia, ANZ Staff Foundation, James N Kirby Foundation, Honda Foundation and Ross Divett Foundation. We also thank the many family trusts that have supported CareFlight this year.

## Sponsorship news

Since our long-term naming rights sponsorship agreement ended at the end of June 2010, we have been actively seeking new sponsors and partners to support our work. We are moving away from a naming rights agreement and are instead looking to partner with a number of non-competitive organisations who will support us in achieving our vision and mission. We are engaged with a number of corporate organisations and expect to formalise some of these relationships over the next year.



# 2008



**February:** CareFlight International flies East Timor's President Ramos-Horta from Dili to Darwin under full intensive care, following a shooting assassination attempt.

**April:** 14-month-old Joseph English nearly drowns in the spa of his family home. He is resuscitated by his father and experienced ambulance paramedics, and then intubated and ventilated by the CareFlight medical team before being flown to Westmead Children's hospital where he remains in intensive care for a week. Despite a grim prognosis, he makes a full recovery.



**April:** CareFlight uses Night Vision Goggles (NVG) in an Australian civilian first when participating in a search and rescue mission to locate a lost plane off the NSW south coast.

**June:** CareFlight International Air Ambulance opens a base in Perth.



**July:** Northern Beaches toddler Charlie Steven falls onto his head from a bunk and goes into cardiac arrest. His mother and ambulance officers give CPR, CareFlight puts him into an induced coma and flies him to hospital under full intensive care. He miraculously makes a complete recovery.

# Board and Management

## Board of Directors

**Andrew Refshauge**  
MB, BS, FAICD  
Chairman  
In office since 18 December 2007

**Ian Badham**  
BSc, OAM  
Executive Director  
In office since 9 May 1986

**Sean Beehan**  
MB, ChB, FANZCA  
In office since 18 July 2002

**David Bowen**  
BA, Dip Law  
In office since 18 December 2007

**Derek Colenbrander**  
BA, LLB  
Chief Executive Officer  
Executive Director  
In office since 19 December 2003

**Garry Dinnie**  
BCom, FCA, FAICD, FAIM, MIIA(Aust)  
Chairman of the Audit and Risk Committee  
In office since 23 February 2010

**Anna Guillan**  
MBA  
In office since 14 December 2010

**John Szangolies**  
FAICD, FCIA  
In office 31 August 2004  
until 28 June 2010

### Company Secretary

**Peter Quayle**  
BCom, FCPA  
In office since 22 July 2004

## Management and Senior Operational Team

### Administration

**Derek Colenbrander**  
Chief Executive Officer

**Ian Badham**  
Media Relations Manager

**David Mann**  
General Manager Northern Operations

**Michelle Martz**  
Manager NT Logistics Coordination Unit

**Glenn McKeown**  
Quality & Safety Manager

**Jude Pettitt**  
Human Resources Manager

**Rajini Surendran**  
Chief Financial Officer

**Gary Williams**  
Chief Information Officer

### Medical

**Dr Alan Garner**  
Chief Medical Officer

**Dr Peter Clark**  
Deputy Chief Medical Officer,  
Supervisor of Training

**Dr Ken Harrison**  
Director Medical Education & Training

**Dr Sam Bendall**  
Deputy Director Medical Education  
& Training

**Dr Shane Trevithick**  
Director NSW Medical Services

**Dr Darren Wolfers**  
Director Medical Workforce Planning

**Dr Andrew Weatherall**  
Director Medical Research

**Dr Bernie Hanrahan**  
Senior Base Doctor, Westmead

**Dr Ian Carter**  
Senior Base Doctor, Orange

**Dr Patrick Liston**  
Manager, Medical Quality Assurance

### Aviation

**Jeff Konemann**  
Chief Pilot

**Greg Ohlsson**  
Fleet Manager Rotary Wing

**Richard Sandford**  
Fleet Manager Fixed Wing

**Luke Bradshaw**  
Chief Engineer

**Steve Hughes**  
Aviation Business Manager

**Dave Chapman**  
Aviation Compliance Manager

**Ian Smart**  
Safety Manager

**John Costin**  
Chief Aircrewman

### CareFlight International Air Ambulance

**Paul Smith**  
National Manager CFIAA

**Dr Steve Walker**  
Medical Director CFIAA

**Peter Murphy**  
Base Manager CFIAA, Darwin & Cairns

**Samantha Jeffriess**  
Logistics Coordination CFIAA

**Andrea Delprado**  
National Nurse Manager CFIAA

### Fundraising and Community Engagement

**Trent Osborn**  
Head of Fundraising

**Don Kemble**  
Community & Sponsor Engagement  
Manager

**Jack Yasmineh**  
Data Base Manager

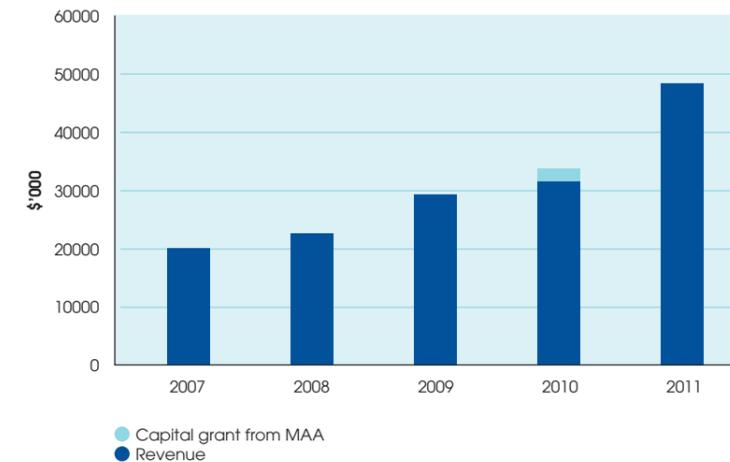
# Financials

Revenue rose from \$33,581,626 to \$48,193,562, an increase of 43.5%. The revenue growth is essentially attributable to our expansion in the Top End. Despite the significant start-up expenditure associated with this rapid expansion, we closed our financial year with a surplus of \$305,083.

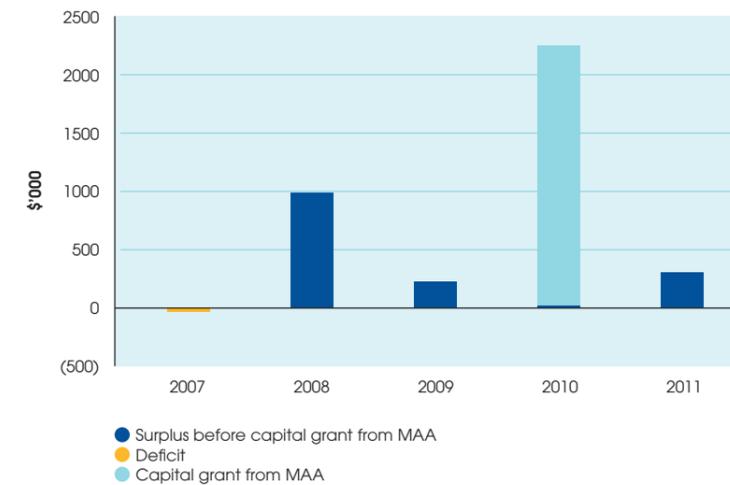


Chief Financial Officer Raji Surendran, accountant Swati Jain and specialist support accountant Weixin Lu.

### Revenue



### Net surplus/(deficit)



# 2009

**January:** Our helicopter service expands as we start providing aeromedical support to the Northern Territory Government.

**May:** CareFlight International Air Ambulance opens a base in Cairns.



**January:** CareFlight conducts its inaugural NVG medical mission when flying a critically ill infant from Katherine to Darwin Hospital.



**May:** 11-year-old Sharveemuel is hit by a wheel which flies off a passing car, and sustains severe head and chest injuries, and a fractured cervical spine. CareFlight races him to Westmead Children's Hospital by road ambulance, stopping briefly en route so he can be intubated. He is rushed into surgery and remains in a coma for three weeks. He then wakes up and makes excellent progress.

**October:** CareFlight moves into new national headquarters, made possible by a generous grant from the MAA.



These summarised financial statements have been derived from CareFlight's Annual Statutory Financial Report for the year ended 30 April 2011, which can be viewed on CareFlight's website [www.careflight.org](http://www.careflight.org).

## Statement of comprehensive income

For the year ended 30 April 2011

	2011	2010
	\$	\$
<b>Revenue</b>		
Ambulance Service of NSW	3,057,954	2,872,596
Motor Accidents Authority	1,000,000	3,200,000
Northern Territory Department of Health and Families	20,110,329	1,914,456
Aero-medical and other retrieval revenue	12,827,809	14,420,209
Fundraising	11,197,470	11,174,365
<b>Total revenue</b>	<b>48,193,562</b>	<b>33,581,626</b>
<b>Expenditure</b>		
Operations and administration – costs of personnel	18,213,401	11,341,510
Direct costs of medical and aircraft retrieval	18,850,897	10,464,896
Cost of fundraising	5,710,041	5,513,650
Depreciation and amortisation	1,377,403	1,213,561
Insurance	459,283	410,713
Professional fees	960,306	798,978
General overheads	1,692,658	1,128,568
Net loss on sale of non-current assets	17,424	26,045
<b>Total expenditure</b>	<b>47,281,413</b>	<b>30,897,921</b>
<b>Surplus before net finance and devaluation of aircraft</b>	<b>912,149</b>	<b>2,683,705</b>
Finance income	83,058	43,791
Finance expense	(519,889)	(461,735)
<b>Net finance income and expense</b>	<b>(436,831)</b>	<b>(417,944)</b>
<b>Net surplus before devaluation of aircraft</b>	<b>475,318</b>	<b>2,265,761</b>
<b>Other comprehensive income</b>		
Devaluation of aircraft	(170,235)	(844,425)
<b>Total comprehensive income for the year</b>	<b>305,083</b>	<b>1,378,494</b>

## Statement of financial position

As at 30 April 2011

	2011	2010
	\$	\$
<b>Current assets</b>		
Cash assets	3,560,482	2,713,317
Receivables	4,235,378	2,897,996
Inventories	163,209	209,513
Investments	1	2
Other	750,774	406,286
<b>Total current assets</b>	<b>8,709,844</b>	<b>6,227,114</b>
<b>Non-current assets</b>		
Aircraft	6,482,996	5,752,688
Land and buildings	2,123,222	2,163,344
Property, plant and equipment	3,273,340	2,647,296
<b>Total non-current assets</b>	<b>11,879,558</b>	<b>10,563,328</b>
<b>Total assets</b>	<b>20,589,402</b>	<b>16,790,442</b>
<b>Current liabilities</b>		
Payables	7,039,611	3,756,839
Interest bearing liabilities	1,204,747	3,173,244
Provisions	1,126,880	710,261
<b>Total current liabilities</b>	<b>9,371,238</b>	<b>7,640,344</b>
<b>Non-current liabilities</b>		
Interest bearing liabilities	3,668,553	1,964,867
Provisions	236,386	177,089
<b>Total non-current liabilities</b>	<b>3,904,939</b>	<b>2,141,956</b>
<b>Total liabilities</b>	<b>13,276,177</b>	<b>9,782,300</b>
<b>Net assets</b>	<b>7,313,225</b>	<b>7,008,142</b>
<b>Capital funds</b>		
Retained surplus	7,313,225	7,008,142
<b>Total capital funds</b>	<b>7,313,225</b>	<b>7,008,142</b>

### Independent Audit Report to the Members of CareFlight

We have audited the summarised statement of comprehensive income for the year ended 30th April 2011 and the summarised statement of financial position of CareFlight as at 30th April 2011, in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards. These summarised financial statements have been derived from CareFlight's Annual Statutory Financial Report.

In our opinion, the information reported in the summarised financial statements is consistent with the Annual Statutory Financial Report from which it is derived and upon which we expressed an unqualified audit opinion. For a better understanding of the scope of our audit, this report should be read in conjunction with our audit report on the Annual Statutory Financial Report.

  
KPMG, Sydney

# 2010



**April:** Michael, 13, sustains a life-threatening throat injury when tackled during a rugby game in Moss Vale. His throat swells and he is unable to breathe. CareFlight administers a general anaesthetic and places him on a ventilator before flying him to hospital. He is back on the rugby field, recovered, a couple of weeks later.

**June:** Four King Air turboprop planes are leased in readiness for provision of fixed wing aeromedical services to the NT Government, under an interim contract.

**June:** CareFlight commences night time HIRT operations using NVG.

**July:** CareFlight commences fixed wing aeromedical services to the Top End.



# 2011



**March:** CareFlight launches MediSim, a mobile simulation-based trauma training program designed to support clinicians working in rural and remote communities.

**March:** The last patient is recruited into the Head Injury Retrieval Trial which transitions from trial to service.

**June:** The NT Government announces the award of the 10 year Aero Medical Services Contract to CareFlight.



**July:** CareFlight celebrates 25 years of saving lives. We now conduct over 5,000 missions per year, flying from eight bases to destinations around Australia and beyond.



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National Headquarters**

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Australia

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Fax: +61 2 9689 2744  
Email: [international@careflight.org](mailto:international@careflight.org)

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