



# ANNUAL REPORT 2020

# CareFlight







CareFlight recognises and respects Indigenous Australians as the Traditional Owners of these lands. In the spirit of reconciliation, we acknowledge and pay respects to the Traditional Owners and Elders – both past and present – of all the lands on which CareFlight operates.

## OUR VISION

To be the most advanced integrated aeromedical service trusted by all Australians.

## OUR MISSION

To save lives, speed recovery and serve the community.

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# Chairman and CEO report

## Our mission and ethos

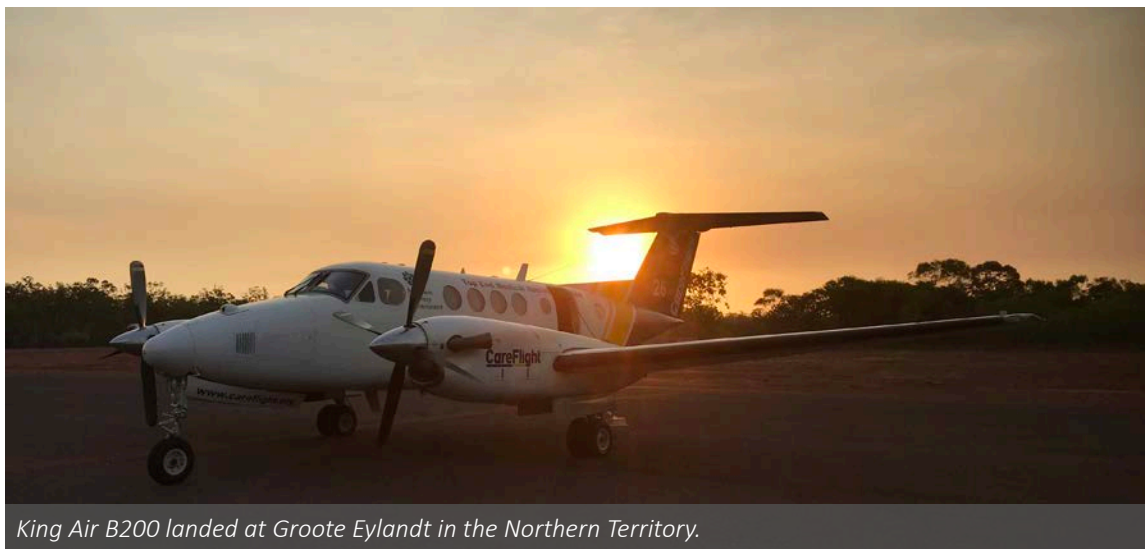
CareFlight's mission is: to save lives, speed recovery and serve the community. We operate in very complex environments, whether it be built-up urban locations or the extremes of regional, remote and inaccessible parts of Australia. Across this wide spectrum, CareFlight delivers the best hope for life-saving support to the people we assist.

Every decision and action we take is focused on achieving our mission: whether it is getting the medical team to patients as quickly as possible to save lives and commence treatment; transporting patients to the most appropriate hospital for their continued care; or upskilling first responders in communities to better equip them to manage medical emergencies.

Through all the diversity and complexity of the services we provide, we are a patient-centric organisation. Not only are our doctors, nurses, paramedics, air crew and engineers highly qualified and trained, they bring the CareFlight ethos of quality and care to every patient we touch and community we serve.

## Strength in adversity

We have certainly been stretched and tested by drought, bushfires and floods, and by the ongoing impact of COVID-19 this year. CareFlight has been able to demonstrate time and again that our people are our true



*King Air B200 landed at Groote Eylandt in the Northern Territory.*

strength, showing determination and resilience to continue to deliver our mission to save lives, speed recovery and serve the community, no matter the challenges faced.

As an organisation we have been able to demonstrate we have strong contingency plans in place; we have been able to secure our operational bases and to protect our staff and patients. We were able to quickly pivot to working remotely and we have been able to leverage technology to help us in many areas across the organisation. We have proven to be both agile and resilient, but most pleasingly we have been innovative in how we have responded to each new challenge. It continues

to be our innovation that sets CareFlight apart, as it has been from our very earliest days.

Sadly we have also been impacted this year by the untimely death of one of our most senior leaders in Fraser Allen. Our thoughts remain with his family and he is greatly missed by all CareFlighters. He was a friend to all, a great mentor and a true gentleman.

## Strategic focus

The Strategic Plan is reviewed annually, and it guides our effort to ensure we can continue to deliver our social purpose. This plan reflects our charitable charter and our status as a for-purpose enterprise, and it provides us



a benchmark against which to measure our progress year on year.

### **Growth and sustainability**

CareFlight's growth in recent years has been critical to ensuring we are a resilient organisation. It has meant we have been well positioned to respond to the crisis events that have impacted Australia during the last 12 months, with sufficient capacity to meet emerging requirements while still ensuring we can deliver our essential services. Our growth ensures we can continue to invest in upgrading our aircraft fleet and our clinical equipment. It ensures that we have the depth in our organisation across Australia to respond when the community needs us most, and this has been demonstrated in our ability to surge our capabilities to provide support to the bushfire emergency and during the current health pandemic of COVID-19.



*Chairman Dr Andrew Refshauge (L) and CEO Mick Frewen (R).*

We do not seek to grow in an aggressive way. We have a very deliberate approach to assessing what aligns with our social purpose and with our core strengths, so that any growth provides a benefit across the organisation in terms of our sustainability and our depth.

### **Diversification**

CareFlight continues to focus on increasing diversification across our revenue streams and in our fundraising channels. This diversification program over many years has ensured CareFlight is resilient to impacts in any one area of our contractual revenue or our fundraising channels, and we have seen how unforeseen events such as the extent of the bushfires, and the sudden emergence of COVID-19 can significantly disrupt forecasted performance. Our deliberate approach to diversification has ensured any impacts have been minimised this year despite the many challenges, and we will continue to look for opportunities in what will prove to be a challenging year ahead.

### **Depth**

A focus this year has been in addressing our capacity and capability. CareFlight combines people, processes and assets to deliver each capability (such as our rescue helicopters or aeromedical jets). To ensure we can respond to increased demand and changing requirements,

## **Board of Directors**

Dr Andrew Refshauge

*MBBS, FAICD*

*Chairman, Independent Non-Executive Director*

Mick Frewen

*BA, MMgt, GAICD*

*CEO, Executive Director*

Patricia Angus

*PSM, MTH*

*Independent Non-Executive Director*

Dr Nicholas Coatsworth

*MBBS (Hons), MintPH, FRACP*

*Independent Non-Executive Director*

Garry Dinnie

*BComm, FCA FAICD, , FAIM*

*Independent Non-Executive Director*

Anna Guilan

*AM, MBA, GAICD*

*Independent Non-Executive Director*

Professor Leonard Notaras

*AM, FACHSM, LLB, BA (Hons), BMed, DSc,*

*DipCom, MA, MHA*

*Independent Non-Executive Director*

Dr Robert Turner

*MBBS (Hons), FANZCA (ANZCA), Dip DHM*

*(SPUMS), Cert DHM (ANZCA), Dip Advanced*

*DHM (ANZCA)*

*Independent Non-Executive Director*

Ian Vanderbeek

*BBus, GAICD*

*Independent Non-Executive Director*

Peter Quayle

*BCom, FCPA*

*Company Secretary*



we have been focused on building up those areas of capacity that have been identified as potential risks. Building depth in our pilot numbers and in our training systems are two examples of how we have increased our capacity during this year. We have also progressed some key projects aimed at renewal of our aircraft fleet.

## Safety and quality

CareFlight is a safety and quality led organisation in the way we approach every aspect of our service delivery. This is driven not only by our duty of care to our employees and patients, but it is also a critical element to ensuring we meet and exceed the requirements of our regulatory licence to conduct air ambulance work.

During the year, we have treated more than 7,900 patients. We have maintained the number of aircraft in operation, and we have flown almost 10,000 hours in our turbo prop and helicopter fleet, and more than 1,200 hours in our jets.

During this financial year, our safety team undertook 120 internal audits to ensure our operations were performing to our own high standards of safety and quality and we also audited 29 of our critical suppliers to ensure the best quality and standards of service are delivered across our operations.

Additionally, third party audits were conducted across a range of our operations, including the Commercial Air Review Board (CARB) audit benchmarking our operations against US Military best practice; and the Northern Territory Environment Protection Authority



CareFlight crew land an RFS helicopter on Colo River, NSW.

against best international environmental practices. These external audits continue to ensure we are assessed against industry and global standards as well as client expectations and demonstrate across this broad range of external parties that we continue to meet and exceed compliance requirements for safety and quality.

During the year we have also committed to ISO9001 (Quality) by attaining recertification and supporting surveillance audits for our National Safety and Quality Health Service (NSQHSS) accreditation, AS4801 (Occupational Health and Safety) and ISO14001 (Environment) certifications.

## Brand and reputation

We are very proud to see the results of the annual Australian Charity Reputation Index survey, which ranks Australia's 40 largest charities by reputation. This year, CareFlight was awarded the top position as most reputable charity, an achievement the whole organisation is extremely proud of. The number one position was an improvement across the year from our second-place standing last year. The poll shows the value and trust the community places in CareFlight's vital patient care and emergency services.

We are very grateful to all our supporters Australia-wide, who work so hard to help us raise awareness of and funding for CareFlight. It's thanks to your continued support over more than 30 years that CareFlight has been able to grow to play such a vital role saving lives, speeding recovery and supporting the community right across Australia.





## Financial strength

During this year we have implemented new processes and worked on improving our contract management and our sustainability. We have also invested in our people by implementing a number of new training courses, and providing additional resources in a new learning management system. We recognise that our staff are CareFlight's greatest asset, and as such, investing in them to strengthen CareFlight is a key part of how we will deliver financial strength over time.

We remain committed to ensuring CareFlight's long-term financial strength. We continue to explore ways that we can grow our revenue, and we have grown our cash reserves. Central to long-term financial strength is our ongoing commitment to cost containment across our organisation, ensuring that we are good stewards of every dollar, and that we are maximising our capacity to deliver the mission.

Given the significant investment we have made this year in building staffing depth and capacity, and the ongoing challenges presented by the bushfires and COVID-19, it is very pleasing to report that we have been able to achieve a net surplus of \$2,453,163, following on from the 2019 net surplus of \$2,542,093. This exceptional performance is a validation of all the hard work from across the CareFlight team and of their commitment to the long-term strength of CareFlight.

We are particularly pleased by the increase in retained surplus from \$16M in FY2019 to \$18.4M in FY2020, an increase of 15 per cent. This provides a stable platform for our future growth.

In order to support future surplus stability, we applied the new accounting standard for leases during the FY2020. This has resulted in an increase in non-current assets and a corresponding increase in lease liabilities.

This surplus will be reinvested into enabling the organisation to deliver our social purpose including supporting the upgrading of our helicopter fleet, growing our cash reserves, and in ensuring that we continue to innovate and lead the industry in aeromedical response.

To all our stakeholders, we offer the assurance of good governance, dedication to service, excellence and a commitment to providing value for money in the delivery of our services. To our donors, we add a return on investment that goes not to their pockets, but to their hearts.

We thank all CareFlight staff – an extraordinarily diverse and talented group of people who go out there every day and make it happen. We also recognise the inter-connectedness and inter-dependence of our team members, and the importance of the contribution that each and every one makes to the whole.

Finally, we acknowledge with gratitude all the members of the community – our donors, supporters and volunteers – who are there for us, and trust that we will be there for them.

**Hon. Dr Andrew Refshauge, Chairman**

**Mick Frewen, CEO**



# The year in highlights

This year was challenging, with extreme bushfires, continued drought, flash floods and COVID-19 all impacting service delivery and our operations. There were also many highlights and achievements to celebrate.



## CareFlight

Annual Australian charity reputation index ranking number one.



In total we have flown almost **10,000** hours in our helicopters and turbo-prop planes and more than **1,200** hours in our jets.



**CHRISTMAS DIRECT AND DIGITAL MAIL CAMPAIGN GENERATED \$459K = \$26K MORE THAN LAST YEAR.**



Our 2019 Top End Christmas Raffle raised more than **\$19K**. Money raised help fund the Top End Rescue Helicopter.



**\$300,000**  
raised at the CareFlight NT Casablanca Hangar Ball.



During the year, our Top End crews flew **744,219km**.



CRRH has flown to **76 missions** involving ladder falls, roof falls and other types of falls.  
**105% increase from previous year.**




**Staff photo competition 2019**  
269 photos submitted by 39 staff.  
*30% were medical staff.*



**Staff engagement survey**  
**90%** of respondents are proud to work for CareFlight.





The crew responding to treat a woman struck by lightning in her garden in Arcadia, NSW.

Staff Photo Competition 2019 - Winner Kurt Pride





# Delivering our services - Eastern

During the year, we maintained full-service delivery of CareFlight's clinical emergency helicopter services despite the disruption caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

We responded to the pandemic quickly and implemented safeguards to protect the health and safety of our staff, patients and the community. We adopted recommendations from government bodies and the World Health Organisation to do our part to reduce the spread of the virus, including the use of personal protective equipment (PPE).

Through the year, we also put additional structures in place to enhance CareFlight's clinical innovation processes. Our medical team created sub-groups to collaborate and coordinate clinical governance across the organisation. These groups met on a regular basis to look at: development and innovation; governance and quality reviews; guidelines; and equipment.

## CareFlight Rapid Response Helicopter Service

Funding from NSW Health greatly assisted in providing our CareFlight Rapid Response Helicopter (CRRH) Service to the Greater Sydney region. Over the last financial year, the service treated and transported 275 patients meaning that our specialised clinical teams provided severely injured patients with hospital-level care as quickly as possible.

During the year, we continued to train registrars and NSW Ambulance Intensive Care Paramedics in CRRH operations. These vital crew members worked with our team of Critical Care Consultants and will remain within our operation for between six to 18 months.



The training we provide ensures our clinical crew provide the best possible care using the most advanced equipment available. Our training establishes a solid foundation for them to further their respective careers. Our operation is often used as a springboard to continue working in the high-acuity pre-hospital care environment.

The year also saw us purchase an Airbus H145 helicopter as our next generation enhanced technology rapid response helicopter. After considerable evaluation, our CRRH working



CareFlight Rapid Response Helicopter missions increased by **33%**.  
2018/19 = 277 missions  
2019/20 = 369 missions



Our **three aircraft** flew more than 1,125 hours during the **nine-month** bushfire crisis.



group recommended this aircraft as the optimal replacement helicopter. We will see the Airbus helicopter transition into service over the first half of the new financial year.

We also trialled next generation portable ultrasound machines to replace those currently in use on our CRRH Service, as well as our other emergency aircraft. In the new year, we will be purchasing up to five Philips Lumify app-based ultrasound machines. This important technology will allow us to diagnose life-threatening injuries on scene.

### **New South Wales Rural Fire Service**

The year was certainly busy for the NSW Rural Fire Service (RFS) and we commenced the second year of our NSW RFS contract to maintain and staff three NSW RFS aircraft.

The aircraft were used to insert Remote Area Firefighting Teams and Remote Area Rescue

Teams, and for fire observation and assisting with flood support.

Our Fire and Flood Response (FFR) Operations team consists of pilots, aircrew officers, engineers, and support services from engineering stores, operations and HelpPoint logistics coordinators.

The 2019/20 fire season was horrendous across New South Wales (NSW), starting early in mid-September with our FFR flight crews being tasked by the NSW RFS to work across areas including the Hunter Valley; Casino in the Northern Rivers region; and Tamworth and Armidale in the New England region.

As the 2019 season progressed, the fires moved to the south and west of the state with the NSW RFS aircraft tasked accordingly, gradually moving down to assist with the Gaspers Mountain, Blue Mountains, Sydney

Water Catchment, and the Central West fires.

In early 2020, the fires had reached the Greater Sydney region before continuing to Southern NSW. Our crews followed, assisting with fires at Picton, Voyager Point, Wollondilly, Canberra, Cooma, Adaminaby as well as intensive fires across the South Coast.

An estimated 10 million hectares of land burnt during the fire season, with many homes destroyed and tragically, 34 people lost their lives.

During this same period, heavy rains commenced in Queensland, moving into Northern NSW resulting in our operation being sent by NSW RFS to assist the New South Wales State Emergency Service (NSW SES) with flood support to Grafton, Ballina, Coffs Harbour, Lightning Ridge and Bourke. We were also tasked by NSW RFS to the fires continuing in the south of the state.

This incredibly busy season resulted in our FFR flight crews spending many nights away working in the most adverse conditions. On numerous occasions throughout the season our engineers were also dispatched into the field to maintain the aircraft.

Our support crews spent many hours, often late into the evening, booking accommodation for the flight crews and flights to allow crew swaps.



*Patient was missing for approximately 12 hours with no food or water. Luckily, he was spotted by a water-bombing helicopter and winched to safety.*

With a total of 1,125 hours flown, the 2019/20 fire season proved to be the busiest on record and major aircraft inspections commenced on the NSW RFS fleet at the end of the year.

We maintain a close working relationship with NSW RFS as they further develop this service and we continue providing the aircraft for NSW RFS crew training in preparation for the next season.

### Medical Services Agreement

Our successful relationship with New South Wales Ambulance helicopters continued during the year, with CareFlight doctors crewing missions on NSW Ambulance helicopters.

Since 2007, this agreement has seen CareFlight supply half of the medical crew on NSW Ambulance helicopters, which are provided and operated by Toll.

Based in Bankstown, Wollongong, Orange and Canberra, the eight large AW139 helicopters are used to conduct a wide range of missions including inter-hospital transfers, calls to the scene of major trauma usually outside Sydney, and search and rescue operations both inland and offshore.

### Patient Transport Service

Our Patient Transport Service (PTS) in Northern NSW continued to be busy transporting patients in regional and rural areas to tertiary hospitals for specialist treatment they need. In the year we transported more than 1,000 patients to hospitals in Sydney and Newcastle.

The devastating bushfires experienced throughout Northern NSW impacted our

ability to access some locations at times and reduced the patient numbers as people deferred non-essential and elective surgery to remain within their communities. COVID-19 restrictions also impacted our overall patient numbers with elective surgeries on hold and a reduction in people seeking treatment, as well as limitations on multi-loading of vulnerable patients.

A promising innovation has been the adjustment to the booking process in conjunction with HealthShare NSW. This allows for an increase in the utilisation of our road and air crews to maximise efficiencies of the service for HealthShare NSW. This was run as a pilot for PTS for six months before being rolled out across NSW.

This past year saw the introduction of a new patient transport vehicle, along with the powered Stryker stretcher loader, into our Newcastle NSW base with the kind donation of the vehicle and equipment from the Newcastle Permanent Charitable Foundation. We have continued to roll out our hydraulic patient loading systems at each of our regional bases to improve patient experience.



**PATIENT TRANSPORT SERVICE**  
Cared for **1,033 patients** in  
Northern NSW within the  
last 12 months.

We are also pleased to share that three of our PTS flight nurses were deployed to support the Australian Medical Assistance Teams (AUSMAT) in Western Australia. AUSMAT is comprised of doctors, nurses, paramedics and logisticians to provide life-saving medical care following a disaster. Our flight nurses were based in Fremantle to provide medical management of a COVID-19 outbreak among the crew and passengers who were onboard cruise ship *Artania*.



## CareFlight Stories

by Dr Ruth Parsell

### What it takes to be a CareFlight Rapid Response Registrar

Dr Ruth Parsell oversees CareFlight Rapid Response Helicopter (CRRH) registrar training.

Ruth has worked in the pre-hospital environment for more than 20 years and completed her own emergency training as a CareFlight registrar in 2017.

*“As an aeromedical organisation that prides itself on delivering a patient-first service, CareFlight is constantly on the lookout for outstanding medical and aviation professionals to crew our aircraft across Australia.*

*The doctors who join our registrar training program are in the final stages of completing specialist training in emergency medicine, anaesthesia, or intensive care. They undergo regular, hands-on training that includes tutorials, Helicopter Underwater Escape Training (HUET), envenomation talks at the Australian Reptile Park and ongoing training in austere environments with manikins and actors.*

*Our registrars accompany our aeromedical crews as an additional doctor, or, when they have accumulated enough experience, as the sole doctor on a clinical team. Our CRRH registrars are the fifth member of a tight-knit team comprising a pilot, aircrew officer, specialist doctor and NSW Ambulance critical care paramedic.*

*In my role, I oversee the registrars in a high-pressure scenario designed to prepare them for the worst possible mission they will face when flying on the helicopter.*

*The scenario begins at CareFlight’s Westmead hangar, when registrars and the aircrew are summoned to their first ‘mission’: Responding by helicopter to a trauma incident in a remote area, the registrars and onboard paramedic navigate their way to the scene of the ‘incident’ where a medical manikin has experienced some form of trauma.*

*The scenario is very realistic – clinicians volunteer as bystanders, ‘relatives’ of the manikins, and paramedics who are already on scene.*

*It is intensely busy, and registrars must deliver high-level care and manage the deteriorating condition of the manikin under the critical eye of their assessors.*

*Once completed, the registrars have a few hours respite before the pressure is ramped up on their second ‘mission’: A scene involving personnel from NSW Fire and Rescue, NSW Police, NSW Ambulance, and other emergency services agencies who are responding to a serious car ‘accident’. It is an immense logistical undertaking that allows first responders to come together in a training exercise and learn how to work best with each other.*

*The activity is intense – fire fighters use the jaws of life to release the manikin from a crushed car; police contain the scene; and teams of paramedics work hard to save the manikin’s life. Amidst this, the registrars are*

*working with the various agencies to treat and stabilise the manikin while it is trapped and extricated from the vehicle.*

*Only the registrars who are the best in their field pass CareFlight’s rigorous assessments. By putting them through realistic and high-fidelity scenarios, we ensure that the doctors who are flying to their rescue are equipped with the necessary skills to save a life after trauma.*

*Once the registrars complete their terms with CareFlight, they are accredited with core training by the critical care medical colleges.*

*The next time you see the CareFlight Rapid Response Helicopter, I hope you can appreciate the calibre of medical expertise that is flying to the rescue.”*

 **READ MORE**



*Dr Ruth Parsell heads off on another CRRH mission.*



# Delivering our services - Top End

CareFlight continued to deliver a comprehensive aeromedical service on behalf of the Northern Territory Government across the Top End of Australia by taking an emergency-department standard of care to sick and injured people in some of Australia's most remote areas.

During the year, our Top End crews flew 744,219km. We transported a range of patients including newborns, infants, children, and adults. Patients from remote Indigenous communities and stations were treated by CareFlight and transported by air to either Katherine Hospital, Gove Regional Hospital or Royal Darwin Hospital.

Patients requiring specialist treatment not available in Darwin were also transferred by our Air Ambulance jets and flown interstate under CareFlight's clinical supervision.



## Our comprehensive response to COVID-19

The arrival of COVID-19 presented unique challenges in the Top End due to the increased risk of health complications among Indigenous Australians, and the large distances we cover that are challenging for our team.

CareFlight secured funding from the Australian Government to prepare for a Northern Territory (NT) surge response to COVID-19 infections.

The funding allows us to increase the assets that can be applied to improve the health system's preparedness to respond to COVID-19 outbreaks.

To keep the NT population informed and up to date about the risks of COVID-19, and to explain our use of personal protective

equipment (PPE), we developed a suite of community engagement tools to share online, via social media, and through key Aboriginal organisations and Aboriginal community-controlled health organisations. We worked alongside the Aboriginal Interpreter Service to create a series of COVID-19 community safety videos that were translated into nine different Indigenous languages.



**PATIENTS TREATED AND TRANSPORTED 6,400+**  
in the Top End this financial year 2019/20.



## Campaigning for care

As part of our ongoing Top End commitment to save lives, speed recovery and serve the community, the year saw us campaign for improvements to enhance CareFlight's NT aeromedical response, including:

### Securing a second helicopter in the Northern Territory

The NT's remote communities rely on just one medical rescue helicopter which, because of the harsh Top End environment, can be grounded for up to one-third of the year for scheduled maintenance. Our medical rescue helicopter is supported by NT Government funding and community fundraising. CareFlight embarked on a community engagement drive to lobby the Australian Government for financial support for this important asset to service the Top End community.

### East Arnhem Land Community Helicopter

Working together with East Arnhem Land communities and key stakeholders, we are developing a proposal for a new helicopter to deliver timely and reliable access to equitable medical care for residents in this isolated region, including the Laynhapuy Homelands and Groote Eylandt.

This helicopter, based in Nhulunbuy, could deliver a multi-role capability, operate over a long range, and conduct the full span of both medical, and search and rescue missions.

This area accounts for 34 per cent of CareFlight's annual NT retrievals.

## Developing Darwin as an aeromedical hub

The aeromedical sector is already a substantial industry in the Top End, delivering vital health care and emergency response services to people and businesses across northern Australia and into Asia. CareFlight prepared a discussion paper on Darwin's potential to become a major regional aeromedical hub, built on existing world-class capability, plus the opportunity to expand services to the resources sector in the NT, Western Australia and South East Asia, and to foreign government personnel in Timor-Leste and Indonesia.



## Our Reconciliation Action Plan

In February 2020 we launched our new Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) 2020-2022.

Following on from our first RAP launched in 2017, our new plan continues our reconciliation journey, embracing the three core pillars of respect, relationships, and opportunities.

Our RAP, which is overseen by a Reconciliation Action Plan Working Group that includes CareFlight staff and local stakeholder representatives, aims to embed reconciliation into every aspect of the organisation.

One key goal is to increase the number of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander staff employed in our workforce to 18 by the end of 2022. Ninety per cent of our retrievals in the Northern Territory are Indigenous patients

from remote communities – we believe that it is vital our organisation better reflects the community we serve.

Over the next two years, CareFlight will continue to develop and pilot innovative strategies to empower Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples from the community we serve and our stakeholders.

### **A Healing Wind across the NT**

As part of CareFlight's commitment to serve the community, in October 2019 we held a special ceremony in Katherine where the local Jawoyn people named one of CareFlight's King Air B200 Air Ambulances, Pamjang Peyintin – Maj Nguluk, which means Healing Wind.

The name was inspired by the healing that CareFlight's aircraft and crew deliver to the people and communities of the NT.



*Naming of King Air B200 PamJang Peyintin - Maj Nguluk (Healing Wind).*



*King Air B200 Air Ambulance at Darwin base.*

### **Top End Medical Retrieval Service**

CareFlight continued to deliver its Top End Medical Retrieval Service (TEMRS), supporting a population of more than 50,000 people, 40 remote health clinics and three hospitals across the Northern Territory.

During the year, we conducted around 3,200 missions, providing both high and low-acuity retrievals and repatriations. Each mission is crewed with a CareFlight pilot, CareFlight nurse, and often CareFlight doctor and flight crew, working together as a fully integrated aeromedical team – effectively bringing the hospital to the patient and providing a 24-hour delivery of equity in healthcare to remote communities.

### **Palmerston Inter-hospital Road Transport**

Service continued to be busy transporting patients between Royal Darwin Hospital and Palmerston Regional Hospital. In the year we transferred around 3,200 patients which is an average of around 266 per month. Our busiest month ever was December 2019 when we transported 328 patients.

### **Australian Maritime Safety Authority**

During the year, CareFlight was tasked by the Australian Maritime Services Authority (AMSA) as part of our ongoing agreement to be on 24-hour call to conduct search and rescue operations.

AMSA is responsible for responding to any emergency beacon activation in Australia's region of international rescue responsibility, including land and sea. Our night-vision capability and winch-equipped helicopters allows us to locate and rescue people in the dark, and from difficult-to-access places.

Over the past 12 months, our AMSA missions involved cruise ships, fishing and working vessels, as well as recreational vessels.

During one challenging AMSA tasking, CareFlight's Top End Rescue Helicopter, with flight doctor and flight nurse aboard, made a 500km round trip to help a male patient on a cruise ship off the coast of Australia. The flight nurse was sent down the wire to assess the patient's condition during this hover and winch retrieval. The patient was successfully packaged up and, with the assistance of all on board the helicopter, winched into the aircraft for the flight to Royal Darwin Hospital.

CareFlight was also available upon request to assist NT Police, Fire, and Emergency Services with land search and rescue.

### **Supporting Defence activities in the Top End**

The CareFlight model of providing a hospital emergency department level of care in the field and during transport to hospital is very





well matched to defence force needs.

United States Marine Corps: our three-year relationship with the US Marine Corps continued during the year, with preparations for 2020 training activities in Darwin and the Top End.

CareFlight is providing aeromedical support in the form of a dedicated helicopter during live-fire exercises.

Australian Defence Force (ADF): we supported ADF operations in the Top End by participating in cross-training personnel in high-hazard operations, and we provide aeromedical support.

### **Working collaboratively**

Our nurses, aircrew and pilots continued to train with external organisations. Interagency

training is vital to ensuring that we are continuously working towards achieving better patient outcomes together.

During the year, we collaborated with Surf Life Saving Northern Territory in a simulated boat rescue involving winch training, and a simulated cardiac event with life-like manikins.

Our Community Relations team visited multiple communities to build relationships with the community at non-mission speed. This ensures we meet regularly with the community to build strong relationships and provide a forum for feedback. We visited Borroloola, Numbulwar, Alyangula, Jabiru and Umbakumba and many other communities in the region where we operate.



*Surf Life Saving Northern Territory in a simulated boat rescue conducted by CareFlight.*



## Kelvin arrived safely in Gove after his ordeal.

### Patient story – Kelvin

In April 2020, in East Arnhem Land in the Northern Territory, Kelvin Guyula, 23, was out with his family, fishing for worms.

It was late afternoon and Kelvin was in waist-deep water on the Glyde River, south east of Ramingining. Without warning, a 1.8m crocodile crept up behind Kelvin and grabbed him by his legs and attempted to drag him into the water.

Kelvin was able to quickly grab onto some nearby mangroves for support.

“I took the tree with my right hand, and I pulled myself to the ground land,” said Kelvin.

Luckily, the crocodile released Kelvin and swam away.

“I came up onto the dry land and said to all of my family to come and help me,” he recalled.

Kelvin escaped serious injury, but the crocodile’s bite left deep lacerations in his upper thigh. To stem the bleeding, he made a tourniquet with his belt.

The fisherman was then transported to the local clinic in Ramingining where his wounds were cleaned and treated.

The following day, Kelvin was transported by a CareFlight B200 King Air Air Ambulance to Gove District Hospital for an additional check up and treatment of his injuries.

Our Air Ambulances are crewed with a CareFlight pilot, CareFlight nurse, and often a CareFlight doctor. This important service brings vital medical care to people like Kelvin, who

live in very remote locations.

The highly experienced aeromedical teams provide a ‘flying hospital’ – a patient retrieval service with a hospital standard of care.

CareFlight’s B200 King Air aircraft in the Top End are equipped to carry the most critical patients. They are fitted with stretcher bases, wide cargo doors, loading systems, oxygen and medical equipment. The aircraft can carry two adult stretcher patients and two sitting patients, as well as the aeromedical crew.

As for going out fishing for worms again, Kelvin said the ordeal hasn’t scared him off.

“I’ll just look after myself better,” he said with a grin.





## CareFlight Stories

Dr Naomi Abdallah, CareFlight Registrar

### CareFlight's first all-female registrar doctor intake

Every year CareFlight employs new registrars as part of its registrar training program with the Top End Medical Retrieval Service (TEMRS). In a first for the organisation, CareFlight appointed an all-female team of new registrars. Dr Naomi Abdallah is proud to be one of them.

*"In February 2019, there was one female in the group of nine new TEMRS registrars starting their six-month rotation with CareFlight. A year later, we're all women.*

*Our role is to care for the critically ill and injured in pre-hospital and inter-hospital aeromedical retrieval environments as well as in rural and remote locations across the Top End of the Northern Territory (NT).*

*We have all previously worked in emergency departments, anaesthetics and intensive care units all over the world including in Australia, Ireland, the UK, Africa and Denmark.*

*I didn't always know I wanted to be a doctor, but it comes down to a love of people and a love of the challenge of solving problems. I studied medicine at the University of Wollongong and I started my training in a busy trauma hospital in an underprivileged part of South Western Sydney. Here, I developed a love of caring for critically unwell people who had often been in accidents and were brought by helicopter retrieval teams to our major trauma centre.*

*I have long been passionate about remote*

*medicine in the low-resource setting and working with people who have minimal access to health care. This prompted a few trips to work in various medical clinics in Latin America and Africa.*

*I also spent time as a medical student in Darwin and was captivated by the rich Indigenous culture, the gaps in healthcare and the incredible landscape.*

*The NT is a special place in that there is so much disparity in access to health care and such great distances to travel that an organisation like CareFlight makes an incredible difference to the lives of people who would otherwise be stuck with terrible ailments, travelling days by car or simply not surviving due to the barriers of distance and geography.*

*Challenges of poverty, language and cultural barriers are similar to where I have worked before; however for Australia they are most pronounced in the NT. CareFlight is able to deliver critically ill Top End patients to gold-standard tertiary hospital care within a relatively short flight, providing life-saving treatment enroute. I am humbled to have the privilege to work in this space.*

*While incredibly rewarding and exciting, working in retrieval as a mother of a two-year-old boy is not without its challenges. Retrieval has erratic shifts and sometimes long hours and as I am also studying for my emergency specialist exams, it's tricky to balance time. I have an incredibly supportive and understanding husband and I wouldn't be able to manage without him.*

*My network of inspiring retrieval doctors and nurses who are also parents and friends is something I am incredibly grateful for.*

*It's only the beginning of my time at CareFlight but so far, I have loved every moment and I am excited to learn and work in this inspiring environment and with CareFlight's incredible team."*



Dr Naomi Abdallah learning the ropes of winching.



## MediSim, training the first responders

Esther Cooper is a third-generation first responder in the Southern Midlands of Tasmania. Like her grandfather and her parents, Esther is devoted to helping save lives.

Based in rural Kempton, 50km north of Hobart, Esther has been with the Tasmanian Fire Service (TFS) for 12 years, and the State Emergency Services (SES) for five years.

“It was just a natural step for me to go into the service,” said Esther, whose younger sister also joined the ranks of first responders last year.

In these roles, Esther is often first on scene at trauma incidents, when those initial minutes can make a life-saving difference.

Last year, Esther and her colleague, Phil Jones, attended CareFlight’s MediSim Trauma Care Workshop – our mobile education training program bringing vital trauma care training directly to first responders in rural and remote communities.

Emergency service agencies and volunteers are often the first to arrive at trauma incidents, particularly in regional and remote communities. We know time is critical so if community members have the essential skills to handle trauma incidents, patient have better outcomes.

The MediSim program is delivered by highly experienced emergency response specialists including doctors, nurses, and paramedics. Participants learn how to manage patient airways, crush injury, burns, spinal injury, and

*Since its launch in 2011, 6,232 first responders have participated in our trauma care workshops.*

haemorrhage; as well as how to fit hard collars, remove motorbike helmets, triage patients in a mass casualty situation, and use standard patient handover procedure.

MediSim also helps ensure first responders have the confidence to manage a trauma scene.

Esther quickly put her MediSim knowledge to use, sharing new skills with her TFS and SES colleagues. She also administered care to a man with a deep laceration to his upper arm, using a new tourniquet technique she had learnt.

Esther’s knowledge is also proving invaluable at trauma incidents.

“The training is giving our first responders the confidence to save a life,” said Esther. “To think, ‘I’m in a situation where this person’s life is in my hands and I know what to do’.”

Last year, Esther was first on scene at a crash where the driver, an older woman, was trapped in her car. Using her MediSim training, Esther quickly concluded that the driver was haemorrhaging due to a suspected crush injury to the pelvis.

Esther radioed Ambulance Tasmania who, based on the seriousness of her assessment, immediately dispatched an air ambulance.

The delivery of our MediSim Trauma Care Workshops is generously supported by our major sponsors and donors. Esther says she is grateful for their support.

“By supporting the training and giving me the opportunity to undertake the training, they’ve saved someone’s life,” she said. “... They’re really making a difference to the wider community.”



Esther Cooper (R) taking part in MediSim’s Trauma Care Workshop.

*In Australia, health resources are stretched in rural and remote areas. Often the first people to arrive on scene at a trauma incident will be a volunteer or from an emergency service agency such as the police or fire and rescue. The actions of first responders can significantly improve health outcomes for patients.*

*By taking our MediSim Trauma Care Workshop to these communities, we can increase skills and knowledge of first responders, build resilience, and help save lives.*



We delivered 70 mobile  
MediSim Trauma Care  
Workshops.







# Caring for 7,900+ Australians a year

1,143 PARTICIPANTS  
70 WORKSHOPS

MediSim Trauma Care  
Workshops and Sick and  
Injured Kids in the Bush

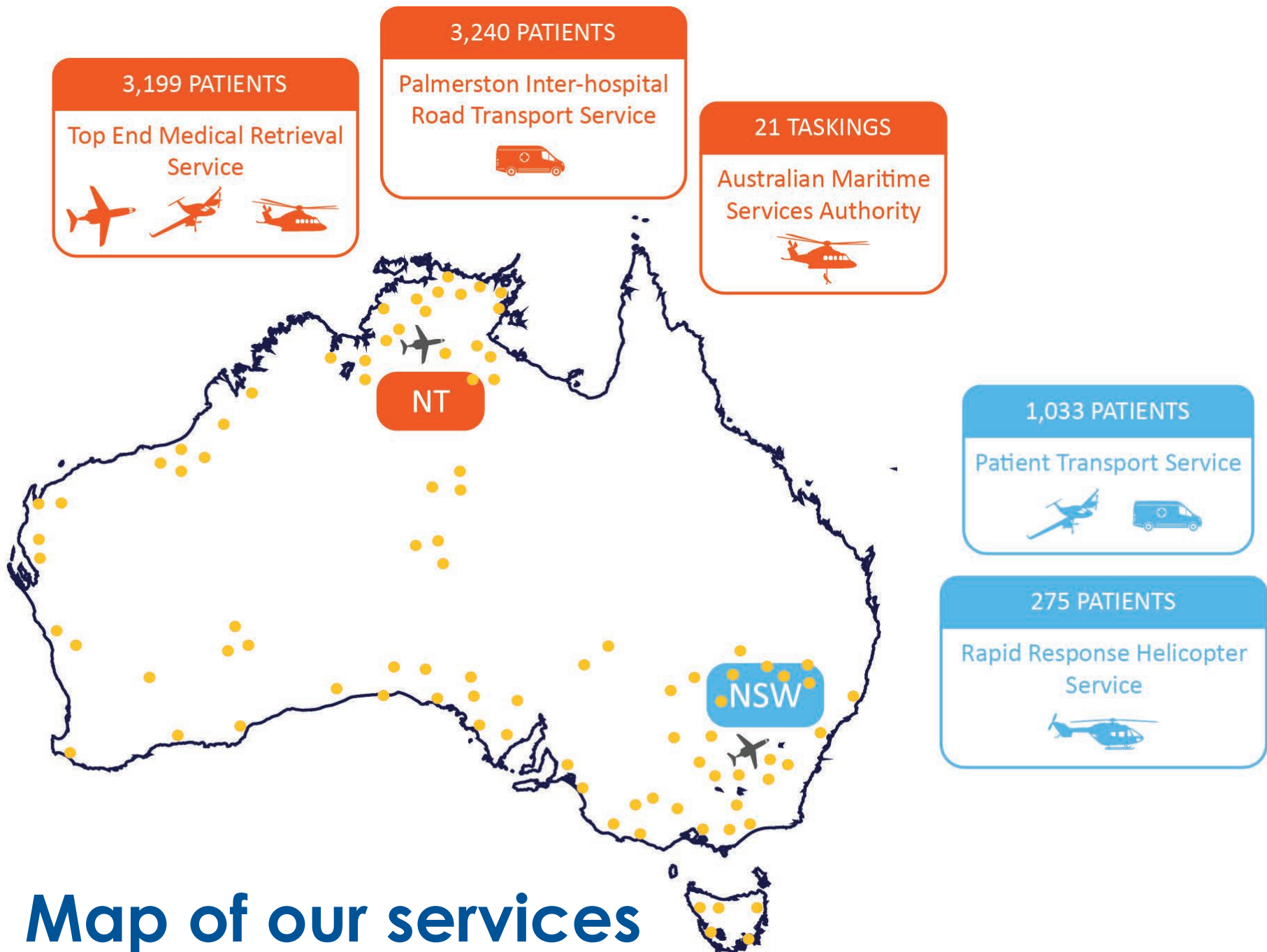
180 PATIENTS

Air Ambulance



- Training and education
- Top End services
- Air Ambulance
- NSW services





# Education and training

Our commitment to continual education and training remained integral to CareFlight's mission to save lives, speed recovery, and serve the community.

CareFlight is both a registered training organisation (RTO) and an accredited training college for specialists in the fields of emergency medicine, intensive care, and anaesthetics.

Our highly experienced education and training team comprises CareFlight specialist doctors, nurses, paramedics, and rescue staff.

During the year, prior to COVID-19 restrictions, we conducted regular education and training programs for medical personnel, first responders, pilots, engineers, aircrew, patient transport vehicle drivers and logisticians.

We invested in the ongoing development and delivery of tailored, free-of-charge training



*Mass-casualty scenario day held at the International Convention Centre in Sydney.*



**MediSim Trauma Care Workshops**  
trained **1,143 participants** at **70 workshops** across Australia.

courses and workshops for first responders, remote community clinicians, down-the-wire medical and first responder personnel, and patient transport.

The team delivered corporate and mass-casualty training, including an extraordinary workshop where 60 doctors were put to the test in a simulated terrorist attack in a night club. Our staff did an incredible job in the preparation and delivery of this event.

We delivered fee-for-service courses to organisations and businesses – this is an important revenue stream for us, with monies raised re-invested back into delivering our social purpose.

The team also created, delivered and evaluated a pilot course with some grant funding from Swiss Re. The workshop, with the working title CareFlight's Crash Course, was a practical session on what to do if you are the first to arrive at a crash scene. It includes relevant first aid for trauma injuries and the steps to follow when you need to call emergency services and provide initial medical support until professional help arrives. The course is aimed

at people who do a lot of driving and could be a course for young drivers prior to them qualifying for their driving licence.



## Training our CareFlight teams

To ensure operational excellence for CareFlight patients, our medical and aviation teams underwent stringent training throughout the year.

Our clinical teams participated in:

- Scheduled formal weekly education days; fortnightly clinical teaching sessions; daily skills sessions practising an allocated clinical skill or procedure.
- Training across the entire lifespan of medicine – neonates, paediatrics, obstetrics/midwifery, trauma, critical care, prehospital medicine, aviation physiology and aviation medicine, aviation safety, emergency procedures and non-technical skills training.
- CareFlight registrars underwent two-week intensive training blocks and completed regular training rotations on our aeromedical and emergency services; they were required to work full-time for CareFlight for six to 18



months and undertook core training to achieve accreditation with the Critical Care Medical Colleges of Anaesthesia (ANZCA), Australasian College for Emergency Medicine (ACEM) and/or College of Intensive Care Medicine (CICM); for helicopter operations, continuing accreditation required a fitness assessment every 90 days, three-monthly static winch currency training, six-monthly live helicopter rescue procedures and two-yearly Helicopter Underwater Escape Training (HUET).

- Allocated training days for flight nurses and midwives; new nursing recruits underwent intensive pre-employment training for a minimum of four weeks; plus, five weeks on-the-job training with a mentor as well as helicopter winch training; all CareFlight nurses are registered nurses.

### **MediSim – Trauma Care Workshops**

We took our mobile Trauma Care Workshops across the country during the year, delivering 70 workshops to 1,143 participants.

These workshops, that are delivered by our highly experienced emergency response specialists including doctors, nurses, and paramedics, are an important part of our growing social purpose in local communities: regional, rural and remote emergency first

responders (EFR) are often first on scene at major trauma incidents. The care that EFRs administer in those first moments can have a huge impact on health outcomes.

Our Trauma Care Workshop teaches EFRs high-quality trauma knowledge and skills, and importantly, gives them the confidence to deal with trauma patients. The program includes utilising CareFlight's CrashSim – a mobile, simulation-based equipment that replicates a motor vehicle accident.

Participants at these free workshops included volunteers from Rural Fire Service (RFS) units, State Emergency Service (SES), NSW Police, St John Ambulance, Surf Life Saving Australia and Airservices Australia, plus many more.

Our Trauma Care Workshops are a great example of CareFlight fostering partnerships and building inter-agency networks to promote our social purpose.



### **Sick and Injured Kids in the Bush Workshops**

Since its development and launch in 2018 in the Northern Territory, our Sick and Injured Kids in the Bush Workshop has continued. This year, our teams trained 119 clinicians at 12 Sick and Injured Kids in the Bush Workshops.



*Registrar training at Faulconbridge in the Blue Mountains, NSW.*

These workshops include theoretical presentations, practical skills, and simulations to educate community health clinicians and health practitioners in isolated and remote regions of Australia, about specific childhood conditions and illnesses that they may not have experienced.

We also ran customised sessions in Indigenous communities to teach residents how to better prepare for the arrival of a CareFlight helicopter or fixed-wing medical team: with knowledge such as this, patients in isolated parts of Australia have better health outcomes.



# Medevacs

## Air Ambulance service

Our team at CareFlight Air Ambulance continued to provide an important national and international aeromedical service for people in need.

Operating out of bases at Kingsford Smith Airport in Sydney, and Darwin International Airport in the Northern Territory, our Air Ambulances assisted people who urgently needed interstate transport for critical treatment due to injury or illness; and also transported overseas patients who needed to be brought to Australia for vital medical treatment.

During the year, CareFlight Air Ambulances completed more than 180 missions. Of these, 46 were international missions from Sydney and 23 were international missions from Darwin.



*CareFlight Air Ambulance in Dili.*

Our mission locations included Timor-Leste, Norfolk Island, Noumea, Bali, Philippines, New Zealand, Fiji, New Guinea, Hong Kong, and the Cook Islands.

CareFlight is the only medical retrieval organisation in Australasia that owns and operates its own fleet of dedicated jets, King Air turbo prop aircraft and helicopters, providing a national and international air ambulance service. We also provide road ambulances when required for transfers from the tarmac to hospital.

Our specialist clinical teams are highly skilled and are trained to work together to provide the best clinical care for our patients. Our doctors are specialists in emergency medicine, intensive care, or anaesthetics. Our nurses are from intensive care and emergency departments and are aviation-nursing trained.

## Medevacs for the oil, gas and mining sector

CareFlight is contracted to provide specialist and dedicated helicopter and jet medical evacuation services during the year for a range of organisations including those operating in the oil, gas and mining industries.

During the year, our teams and aircraft completed 11 helicopter medevac missions on their behalf.

Our Australia-wide network of medical



*Aeromedical helicopter in Western Australian retrieving a seriously ill patient.*

specialists were also available around the clock, providing vital telehealth support to remote and offshore paramedics and workers such as FIFO crews on oil and gas projects.

Our contractual arrangements with oil, gas and mining organisations provide aeromedical evacuation and telehealth support to remote workers, as well as peace of mind by knowing that expert medical help is only a phone call or flight away.

As an aeromedical charity, the revenue raised from these medevac contracts helps to fund CareFlight's social purpose to save lives, speed recovery and serve the community.



## Lighting the runway in Dili, Timor-Leste

CareFlight is regularly tasked to Presidente Nicolau Lobato International Airport (Dili Airport). The current runway is only operable in daylight hours so there can be significant delays for patients needing critical clinical care. As high-acuity patient accommodation is not available in Timor-Leste, this poses a high risk to patient outcomes.

CareFlight is working with local authorities and the Australian Embassy and has proposed temporary lighting on the runway. Solar-powered lights can be laid on the runway when needed and lifted when not in use to prevent damage and theft. A full upgrade to Dili Airport is planned so these lights can be utilised elsewhere in the Timor-Leste aviation network.

The benefits in the community will include:

- A 24-hour airport so patients can access medical attention when needed.
- Increase in financial outcomes for the airport (revenue from all operators, landing fees, etc).
- Employment opportunities for Dili Airport and support personnel.
- Improved health facilities in other parts of Timor-Leste.
- Long-term benefits in tourism and economy for Timor-Leste, giving people confidence in the health care system.
- Improved patient outcomes, with more easily accessible western medicine capability.

## CareFlight Stories

by Dr Toby Fogg

### Flying Australians home after disaster

Dr Toby Fogg is CareFlight's National Medical Director and Retrieval Specialist

*"The world came to a standstill when New Zealand's White Island volcano erupted on 9 December 2019.*

*Among the 47 victims, more than half of them were Australians.*

*On the day after the eruption, CareFlight was put on standby by the NSW Disaster Recovery unit to repatriate two Australians who were injured in the eruption.*

*Our crews worked tirelessly to prepare as many resources as possible, including securing two jets to make the flight across the Tasman Sea.*

*To cover all eventualities, one of our advanced Hamilton transport ventilators – designed to provide mechanical ventilation to the most critical patients – was also urgently brought down from Darwin in the event a patient had sustained severe lung injuries.*

*On the morning of Thursday 12 December, our clinical team comprising a specialist doctor, two nurses, pilot and first officer departed Sydney for New Zealand. As a result of their efforts, the two patients were returned safely to Australia after midnight.*

*I would like to thank every person and agency who played a role in this mission: From CareFlight's HelpPoint team who*

*coordinated and provided full-operational support for the mission, and Air Affairs Australia for making their aircraft available; to our aeromedical crew who retrieved and provided ongoing treatment for the patients; and the members of the Burns Unit at Concord Hospital.*

*This can-do attitude is what underpins the CareFlight family; a family that I am so proud to be part of."*

 **READ MORE**



*Medical Director Dr Toby Fogg, says the can-do attitude underpins the CareFlight family.*



# Safety and quality

Safety and quality continue to inform CareFlight’s mission to deliver operational excellence for our patients.

We focus on exceeding regulatory licence requirements to conduct air ambulance work. We uphold a safety and quality led duty of care for our patients and employees at all times.

## Safety culture

Safety is part of CareFlight’s DNA. Throughout the year, we placed the highest level of importance on promoting our safety culture, ensuring safe practices are inherent in the way our staff think and act.





To strengthen safety leadership, we provided ongoing education to all our staff about the five elements of our Quality, Health, Safety and Environment (Q-HSE) culture, which informs our safety management system.

To support our Safety Committee, we introduced additional Safety Action Groups to act as a source of expertise and advice in identifying hazards and defences; and also to monitor the ongoing effectiveness of safety initiatives to ensure tangible measurable safety benefits are delivered.

Our unyielding stand on safety and quality delivered results: During the year, the number of patients supported by CareFlight grew by more than 20 per cent (6,540 to 7,980); and air

hours flown increased from 9,204.5 to 9,973.4. During this growth, our Lost Time Injuries (LTIs) arising out of workplace-related incidents reduced compared to the same period last year, and still remains well below comparative industry benchmark. Likewise, Lost Time Injury Frequency (per million hours worked) reduced from 5.0 to 3.8; and the Total Recordable Incident Rate (per million hours worked) reduced from 425 to 381.

## Certification and accreditation

Aviation	Medical	Mgt Systems	Training
Air Operator’s certificate CASA	Australian College for Emergency Medicine	 Quality ISO 9001 SAS GLOBAL	CAR217 Part 141/142 CASA
Certificate of Approval CASA	Australian & New Zealand College of Anaesthetists	 NSQHS SAS GLOBAL	Australian Skills Quality Authority RTO
	Australian College of Rural & Remote Medicine	 Health & Safety ISO 45001 SAS GLOBAL	
	European Aeromedical Institute	 Environment ISO 14001 SAS GLOBAL	
	College of Intensive Care Medicine		
	Royal Australian College of General Practitioners		



Personal Protective Equipment worn to keep patients and teams safe.



Our aircraft on its way to retrieve a patient.



# Brand and reputation



## CareFlight announced as most reputable organisation

Building awareness of our brand CareFlight for the work we do remains important for fundraising and for ensuring we secure aeromedical contracts that raise valuable funds for us to continue to deliver our social purpose. As mentioned earlier in this report, we were delighted to receive recognition from the Reputation Institute as the most reputable organisation in Australia for 2019. We ranked second in 2018, so to receive the top accolade a year later is a great acknowledgment for our organisation.

## Sharing our stories

CareFlight delivers multiple services nationally, and it's our people who deliver these services who know what we do best. They have some amazing stories to tell. That's why we created a new section on the website, *CareFlight Stories*,

to share first-hand how we do what we do, and the impact of this for Australians. The section houses blog posts from our teams including Board Directors, CEO, Medical Director and frontline crew.

## Learning more about our community

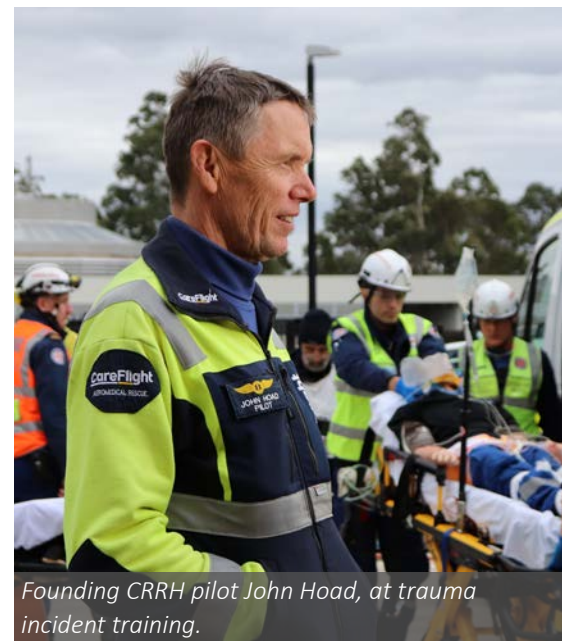
We launched a new Messenger chatbot on the CareFlight website to give our community another way to communicate with us. Through the assistance of Doc the Bear, visitors to the website can ask for help finding what they need, share their thoughts on what information they would be interested in reading about, and be directed to this quickly. In addition to providing navigation support for visitors, the chatbot is giving us direct insights into how and why people engage with CareFlight that will ultimately guide our user experience for a new website.



### CAREFLIGHT.ORG

hosted **144,159** visits over the year.

FY 19/20 most visited pages:  
Home, Careers, Contacts, Bears and Merchandise.



Founding CRRH pilot John Hoad, at trauma incident training.

## MEDIA COVERAGE

FY 2019/20

FY 2018/19



TOTAL MEDIA ITEMS  
= 7,119



TOTAL MEDIA ITEMS  
= 4,777

**49% INCREASE IN COVERAGE**



## CareFlight Stories

by Trish Angus

### Reconciliation: our journey together

Trish Angus is an independent Non-Executive Director at CareFlight.

*“On 13 February 2008, then Prime Minister Kevin Rudd moved a motion of Apology to Indigenous Australians.*

*I was at work in Darwin watching it on television. What I felt is hard to describe: it was a warm feeling that at last the government of Australia, my country, could formally and publicly admit that there were many past policies, programs and practices that tragically, severely and in many instances permanently impacted Aboriginal peoples right across the country.*

*It was moving to watch people both inside and outside parliament openly expressing their emotions with tears and sadness, and also smiles and hugs.*

*I cried for family and friends no longer with us; I cried for those Aboriginal families who suffered more than I and my family did; I cried for those who had their children removed without consent, without explanation, and without any acknowledgement.*

*When I watched that apology, emotions swept through me – I was sad, happy, thrilled, proud, tearful, angry, disgusted, appalled, energised, anticipative, wishful, caring, hopeful.*

*Fast forward to today, and Reconciliation is helping our country’s journey towards a more equitable, just and reconciled nation.*

*Throughout my career, I have watched our country navigate Reconciliation. For more than 40 years I worked in senior executive positions in health, local government, Aboriginal affairs and community services. I also worked in public hospitals and served in the Australian Defence Force. Today I’m a member of several committees and a Director of CareFlight’s Board.*

*In recent decades, I’ve watched as government agencies and other organisations increased their engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians, improved their partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians, and employed more Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians.*

*At CareFlight, our goal is to double our current number of First Nations employees, to continue engaging with First Nations community-controlled organisations, and to always have at least one First Nations person on our Board.*

*As a sector, health has always been ahead in Reconciliation. Health practitioners almost always treat everyone equally and individually – so working in this environment has always appealed to me. Ever since I was young, I had an interest in caring, healing and prevention. Nursing was a natural, rewarding and convenient entry into this field.*

*More recently, CareFlight has worked together with our First Nation communities to stop the spread of COVID-19, especially in the Top End where we know how catastrophic it may have been for our vulnerable populations.*

*In crisis or in Reconciliation, all Australians are on this journey together. And whilst this journey may not always be impeccable or perfect in practice, we are all more reconciled than we have been before.”*

 **READ MORE**



(L-R) CareFlight NT General Manager Philip Roberts, CareFlight Director Trish Angus, and Chairman Dr Andrew Refshauge.



## Patient story - Bayahn

As a doctor, Talal fully understands the dangers of asthma; but nothing could prepare him for the shock of treating his own son, Bayahn, when he suffered in a critical asthma attack.

What began as an ordinary Saturday morning for the Serhan family, quickly turned into a medical emergency when Talal went up to his 13-year-old son's bedroom where Bayahn, an asthmatic, was desperately drawing on his Ventolin inhaler, struggling to breathe and unable to call out to his family for help.

Talal immediately called 000 and performed CPR on his son.

NSW Ambulance paramedics arrived as Bayahn's condition deteriorated: Bayahn lost consciousness and went into cardiac arrest; he urgently needed additional medical treatment.

The CareFlight Rapid Response Helicopter was tasked to the scene at 9.16am, landing in a park near the Serhan's home.

CareFlight's aeromedical crew spent a matter of minutes at the scene where the specialist doctor and intensive care paramedic swiftly intubated Bayahn to stabilise him. They transferred him to a road ambulance and monitored his condition during the trip to The Children's Hospital at Westmead with a police escort.

During the blur of emergency service crews urgently working to save Bayahn's life, it was only days later that the Serhans learnt that CareFlight's aeromedical crew was critically involved.

For CareFlight's aeromedical crew, once the emergency department at a hospital takes over, their contact with the patient ends and they rarely get the chance to check in with the patient.

A few weeks after the mission, the specialist doctor, critical care paramedic, pilot and aircrew officer who flew to Bayahn's rescue, as well as hospital staff, were delighted to be reunited with an almost unrecognisable Bayahn and his family.

CareFlight's crew gave them a behind-the-scenes tour at the helicopter base. It was smiles all round as the aeromedical team recounted how touch-and-go the mission was, and the Serhans gifted them a bouquet of flowers and baklava.

Bayahn's survival was thanks to Talal's quick response, his training in CPR, as well as the seamless coordination of emergency crews with CareFlight.



Bayahn with the crew.

*In the past year, CareFlight treated more than 275 patients from our Westmead helicopter base.*



Bayahn sitting inside the CareFlight Rapid Response Helicopter.





The Rapid Response team responding to a toddler who nearly drowned in Seven Hills, NSW.





# People and culture

CareFlight's growth coupled with increasing external challenges such as extreme drought, bushfire and COVID-19, highlighted the benefits of increased investment in our greatest asset – our people.

The past 12 months saw a significant focus on, and investment in, building depth, capacity, and capability across management and operational staff, providing us with the ability to quickly innovate and respond to unexpected crises, while still delivering our high-quality essential services to patients.

During the year:

- We launched the CareFlight Online Learning Hub in March 2020, providing staff with access to more than 12,000 training courses.
- We established a Leadership Program to provide frontline and aspiring leaders with the soft skills they need to lead their teams. We ran three-day, in-house programs in Sydney and in Darwin to further develop skills in accountability, integrity and authenticity.
- We established a Shadow Executive Committee of senior managers to support our leadership team with strategic insights, and to implement organisational projects.
- We launched the CareFlight Reward and



- Recognition Program in October 2019 – a peer program that recognises and rewards staff performance and contribution across our guiding principles of service, excellence, unity and integrity.
- We formed a Mental Health and Wellbeing Workgroup that created a series of webinars and Zoom meetings on mental-health related topics, and also increased investment in our Employee Assistance

Program (EAP) so staff could confidentially access free services such as counselling, and financial and legal support.

- We completed the 2019 CareFlight Engagement Survey. This is our organisation's fourth biennial employee survey. Highlights included:
  - 93 per cent of respondents believe in CareFlight's founding principles of service, excellence, unity and integrity
  - 83 per cent of respondents believe their manager cares for their wellbeing

COVID-19 also prompted innovative solutions in the people and culture sphere due to our sudden pivot to a work-from-home model, as well as the required implementation of best-practice infection-control methods by our operational staff.





Our hangar in Darwin  
is operational 24/7.



# Fundraising and community engagement

## Funding our mission to save lives

As a charity, CareFlight relies on the generosity of donors, supporters and volunteers to help us fulfil our mission.

During the year, multiple fundraising channels including direct mail and digital appeals, regular giving, events, bequests, selling bears and raffle tickets, raised a combined net revenue of \$6M that we spent in delivering our charitable services – our social purpose.

The year also presented many challenges common across the not-for-profit sector, due to funds being diverted to drought and bushfire causes, as well as the negative economic impact of the COVID-19 crisis that resulted in many of our important fundraising campaigns and events being cancelled.

Our community and outreach programs such as hangar and base visits, school and service club presentations and community engagement sessions were all cancelled to ensure effective social distancing during the pandemic.

Our resilience was fortified by the trust we have built with our donors over the past 30+ years, coupled with the execution of our strategic plan to build a diverse range of fundraising channels.

During these challenging early months of 2020, CareFlight quickly pivoted to develop



new and exciting digitally supported 'virtual events'. Our donors responded by maintaining their generous support, as we continued to operate 24 hours a day, seven days a week during the pandemic.

## Our fundraising programs

- During the year we expanded our CareFlight Rescue Raffle geographically, resulting in more than 3,000 fortnightly raffle supporters representing annual growth of 13 per cent.

Our direct and digital mail campaigns included:

- Tax 2019 Appeal: nine CareFlight missions that occurred during the busy December 18 period were featured in this appeal that showcased the capabilities of the CareFlight fleet.

- August 2019 Appeal: featuring time-critical missions, this appeal focused upon serious accidents and falls which regularly occur in Australian homes, and also provided helpful first aid and safety tips.
- Christmas 2019 Appeal: we highlighted the remarkable two-day mission when CareFlight intervened to save the life of Northern Territorian, Simon Walker, who fractured his spine in a car accident in July 2019. A CareFlight Top End Rescue Helicopter flew Simon, a father of four, to Royal Darwin Hospital for initial assessment and treatment. The appeal had the theme of: "One mission, two aircraft, over 48 hours, six dedicated CareFlight crew and thousands of kilometres flown from the outback to the city."
- February 2020 Appeal: we thanked donors for the amazing support they had given us over the previous year which helped save more lives across Australia.

## Northern Territory fundraising

- The highlight of the Northern Territory event calendar was the CareFlight NT Hangar Ball. With a theme based on the movie *Casablanca*, the event attracted a capacity crowd of 520 and was attended by the Honourable Vicki O'Halloran AO, Administrator of the Northern Territory,



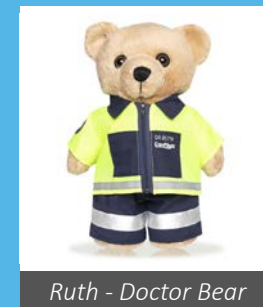
## CareFlight Bears

Our extensive range of CareFlight Bears continued to be popular, with more than 25,000 of our plush toys sold during the year, representing 25 per cent of our donor base.

The iconic CareFlight Bears were introduced to Australia in 1991. Since then, we have created more than 115 bear types and more than two million bears have now been sold generating more than \$100 million in fundraising revenue to help save Australian lives.

This year, we also launched a 'dress your own bear' offer to our faithful bear buyers and by year end, almost 700 people had received their own 'dress your own bear' packs.

Introducing our four newest CareFlight Bears:



Ruth - Doctor Bear



Kylie - Nurse Bear



Marty - Lollipop Bear



Matilda - Toddler Bear

and her husband, Craig O'Halloran, both Patrons of CareFlight Northern Operations. A record \$300K was raised at the event with all funds raised going to NT programs including the CareFlight Rescue Helicopter and MediSim training of emergency first responders. Thanks to all our sponsors and supporters who made the night a success.

- CareFlight attended more than 40 community events across the Top End, raising vital funds and awareness for the life-saving work we do in the region.
- The Darwin Mining Club and Minerals Council of Australia continued to support CareFlight, funding more than \$55K worth of vital medical equipment, bringing the cumulative total to more than \$300K since 2013.
- Funds raised by the Lions Club annual Darwin Lions Beer Can Regatta and the Rotary Club of Darwin North enabled the purchase of three specialist neonatal humidifiers that fit into our fixed wing aircraft.
- The Rotary Club of Litchfield/Palmerston supported CareFlight's 24 days of Christmas events, including gift wrapping at Coolalinga Central shopping centre.
- Elders Real Estate and The Stuart Hotel, plus local businesses in Katherine, ran a fundraiser that raised more than \$37K. Thank you to the community of Katherine.



Darwin Mining Club golf day raised vital funds for CareFlight Top End.



### Thank you to our sponsors and supporters

Our key sponsors and supporters continued to play an important role in helping CareFlight deliver highly trained specialists to the scene giving patients the very best chance of survival.



### National sponsorship and support

#### Major Partners



#### Corporate Partners



#### Community Partners



#### Government Partners



We wish to also acknowledge the following trusts and foundations, clubs and community groups:

- The Carolyn and Michael Gray Foundation
- Foundation for Rural & Regional Renewal
- Humpty Dumpty Foundation
- Perpetual Trustee Company Ltd
- The Profield Foundation Trust
- Federal Parliamentary Press Gallery Midwinter Ball
- Spirit of Tasmania
- Darwin Lions Club
- Allport Bequest
- Swiss Re Foundation
- Collier Charitable Fund
- Northern Territory Community Benefit Fund
- Cecilia Kilkeary Foundation Ltd
- The Pierce Armstrong Foundation
- Budget Direct
- Findex Community Fund
- nib Foundation
- Office of Emergency Management
- Club Condell park
- Wyong Rugby League Club
- The Ary Toukley
- Wentworthville Leagues Club
- Guildford Leagues Club
- Ryde-Eastwood Leagues Club
- City Tattersalls Club
- West Tamworth Leagues Club
- Armidale City Bowling Club
- Newcastle Permanent Charitable Foundation
- The Honda Foundation





## SME Supporter Program

A very special thanks to businesses that supported CareFlight through our SME Supporter Program as platinum, gold and silver-level supporters.

### Platinum

- Pherrus Financial Services

### Gold

- Wagner Group Services
- Tong Li Supermarkets

### Silver

- Deed Consulting
- Don Clarke Tractors
- Supercare Property Cleaning Services
- Brett's Automotive
- Robson Civil Projects
- Priority Towing Service
- DJM Wood Products
- Absolix Pty Ltd
- Grech Melons
- Pickles
- Ruby
- Byrne Consultants
- Bikes to Fit
- Venture North Safaris



# Financial performance

The following is a summary extracted from CareFlight's audited financial statements for the year ending 30 April 2020.

This information is available at [careflight.org](http://careflight.org)

<b>Consolidated statement of surplus or deficit and other comprehensive income</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2019</b>
	\$	\$
<b>Revenue</b>	<b>95,837,234</b>	<b>94,224,134</b>
<b>Expenditure</b>		
Operations and administration - costs of personnel	(54,815,776)	(51,818,589)
Direct costs of aeromedical operations	(16,502,884)	(16,886,779)
Costs of fundraising - donations and sponsorship	(3,117,818)	(3,320,297)
Costs of fundraising - merchandising and events	(2,198,793)	(2,635,659)
Depreciation - property, plant and equipment (including other right-of-use assets)	(6,357,042)	(6,864,259)
Depreciation - right-of-use assets – land and buildings	(2,614,399)	-
Insurance	(963,111)	(763,135)
Support costs	(4,478,680)	(7,370,527)
<b>Total expenditure before net finance expense</b>	<b>(91,048,503)</b>	<b>(89,659,245)</b>
<b>Surplus before net finance expense</b>	<b>4,788,731</b>	<b>4,564,889</b>
Finance income	111,355	132,876
Finance expense	(2,446,923)	(2,155,672)
<b>Net finance expense</b>	<b>(2,335,568)</b>	<b>(2,022,796)</b>
<b>Net surplus for the year</b>	<b>2,453,163</b>	<b>2,542,093</b>
<b>Other comprehensive income/(expense) items that may be reclassified to surplus</b>		
Revaluation of investments	(208,133)	73,058
Revaluation of non-current assets	(808,590)	863,749
<b>Total comprehensive income for the year</b>	<b>1,436,440</b>	<b>3,478,900</b>



## Consolidated statement of financial position

	2020 \$	2019 \$
<b>Current assets</b>		
Cash and cash equivalents	13,383,182	10,686,705
Trade and other receivables	9,340,886	9,718,260
Inventories	599,753	626,651
Investments	2,060,632	2,203,860
<b>Total current assets</b>	<b>25,384,453</b>	<b>23,235,476</b>
<b>Non-current assets</b>		
Property, plant and equipment (including other right-of-use assets)	48,590,048	52,777,638
Right-of-use assets – land and buildings	11,045,621	-
<b>Total non-current assets</b>	<b>59,635,669</b>	<b>52,777,638</b>
<b>Total assets</b>	<b>85,020,122</b>	<b>76,013,114</b>
<b>Current liabilities</b>		
Trade payables	5,946,188	6,773,672
Income received in advance	6,110,661	6,709,574
Lease liabilities	17,200,095	3,490,275
Employee benefits	4,546,324	3,841,974
<b>Total current liabilities</b>	<b>33,803,268</b>	<b>20,815,495</b>
<b>Non-current liabilities</b>		
Lease liabilities	25,312,104	30,974,849
Employee benefits	1,180,199	934,659
<b>Total non-current liabilities</b>	<b>26,492,303</b>	<b>31,909,508</b>
<b>Total liabilities</b>	<b>60,295,571</b>	<b>52,725,003</b>
<b>Net assets</b>	<b>24,724,551</b>	<b>23,288,111</b>
<b>Equity</b>		
Reserves	6,314,741	7,331,464
Retained surplus	18,409,810	15,956,647
<b>Total equity</b>	<b>24,724,551</b>	<b>23,288,111</b>





# CareFlight

[www.careflight.org](http://www.careflight.org)

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*Front cover caption*

*(L-R) Dr Dervia McGrann, Dr Danielle O'Brien, Dr  
Alexandra Clarke, Dr Naomi Abdallah*

