

Cheryl Rosiak

Education & Infection Prevention & Control Lead

Royal Flying Doctor Service South-East Section

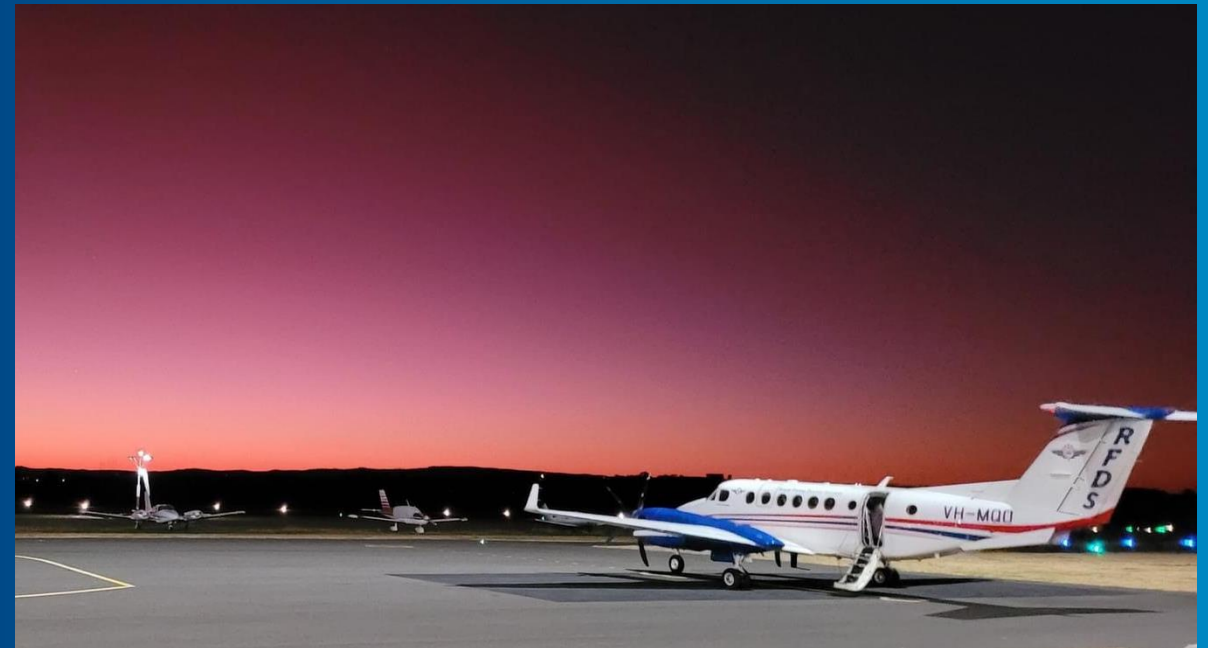


Royal Flying Doctor Service

Infection Prevention & Control in the RFDS

Rewards and Challenges

November 2024



Royal Flying Doctor Service – Federation



Royal Flying Doctor Service

Facts and figures 2023

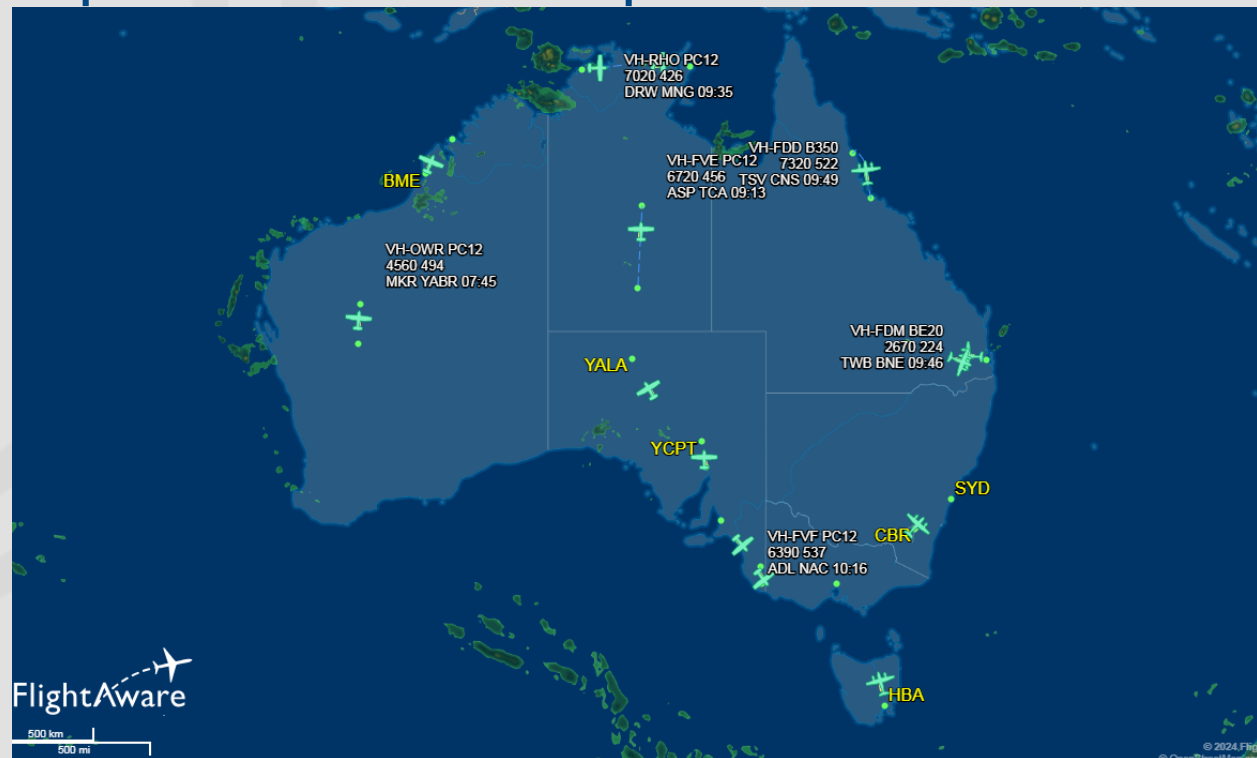
| | | | |
|-------------------------------------|---------|----------------------------------|-------|
| Total patient contacts | 336,316 | | |
| Nurse/GP Clinics | 24,889 | | |
| Telehealth Services | 71,704 | | |
| Immunisations | 4,770 | | |
| Face-to-face Primary Care Consults | 137,995 | | |
| Face-to-face Mental Health Consults | 19,946 | | |
| Episodes of Dental Care | 10,881 | | |
| | | Fleet of Aircraft | 81 |
| | | Aero Bases | 23 |
| | | Healthcare Service Road Vehicles | 294 |
| | | Medical Chests | 2,370 |





27,475,543 Km flown last year

That's the equivalent of 34 trips to the moon and back!



Live flight operations at
10:30am 30/10/2024

National service footprint

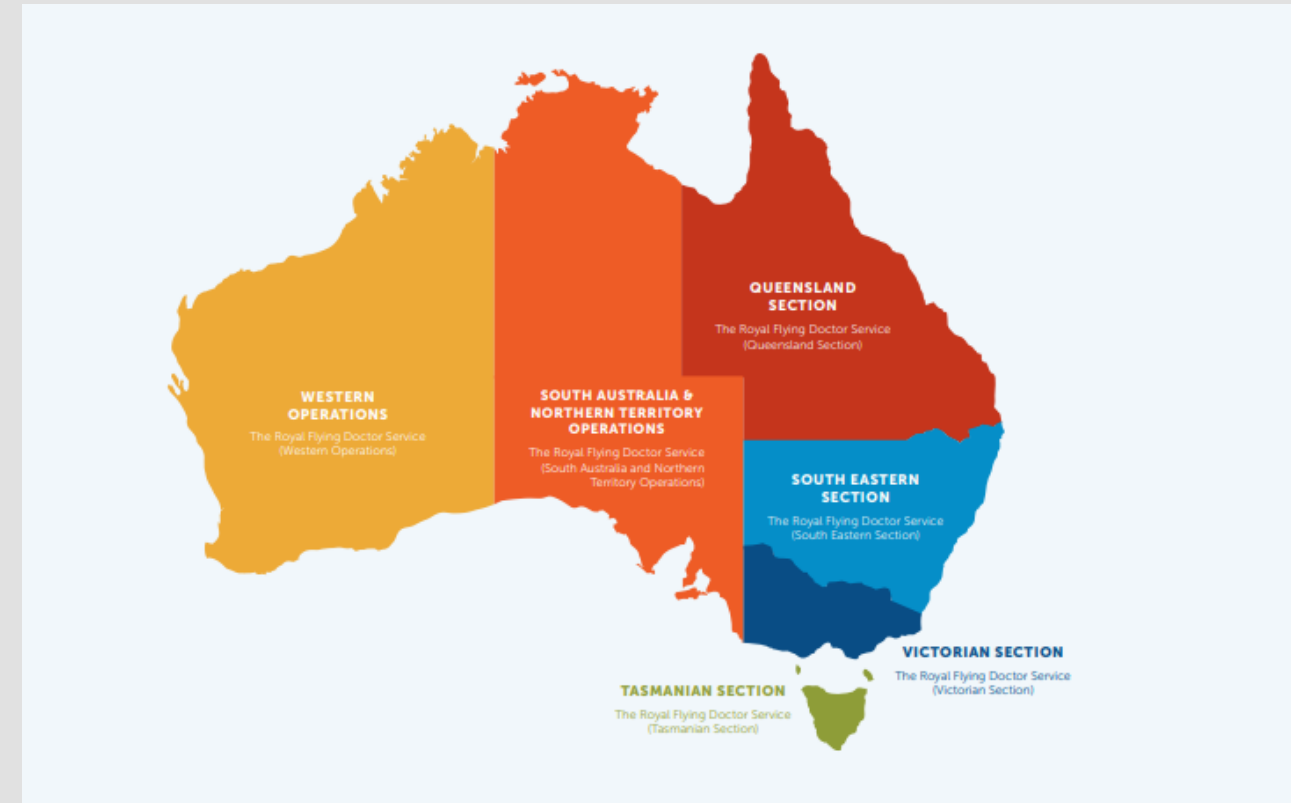
The Royal Flying Doctor Service is a federation of companies, working to bring vital health services across Australia.



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Infection Prevention and Control arrangements in the independently operated sections:

| | |
|-----------------------|----------------------------|
| Western Operations | 1 x 0.6 FTE IPC Specialist |
| SA & NT Operations | 1 x 0.8 FTE IPC Specialist |
| Queensland Section | 1 x 0.5 FTE IPC Specialist |
| South Eastern Section | 1 x 1.0 FTE IPC Specialist |
| Victoria | Clinical Governance role |
| Tasmania | Clinical Governance role |



Covid-19 Response



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Aeromedical transfers of suspected/confirmed patients with COVID-19

- Many issues related to application of transmission-based precautions in the aeromedical setting

COVID-19 Vaccine Clinics – Co-ordinated by Federation

- 95 organisations (mainly indigenous) requested vaccine services
- Nearly 79,000 vaccines administered Australia-wide by RFDS in 2021 (29,000 doses by South Eastern Section)
- 1/3rd of these were to people who identify as ATSI (ATSI 3.3% of Australia's population)
- In addition, we delivered 118,000 doses of vaccine by air and road to other providers

Challenges

- Logistics
- Vaccine hesitancy
- Language & cultural barriers
- Availability of ground transport
- Accommodation
- Cold Chain
- Staffing surge
- Navigating adverse Stakeholders - Uniforms

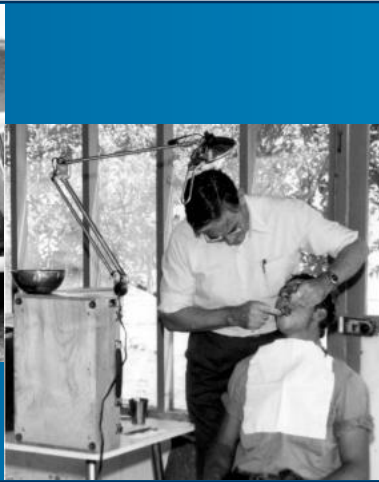
Vaccine Clinics

- | | | | |
|------------------|--------------------------|-------------------|---------------|
| • Pubs | • Marquees | • Homes | • “Vaxi Taxi” |
| • Shearing Sheds | • Outside grocery stores | • Cattle Stations | • Under Trees |
| | | • Mines | |

PROUDLY SERVING THE BUSH FOR 95 YEARS



Royal Flying Doctor Service
SOUTH EASTERN SECTION



1920-30s

- > Rev. John Flynn starts the Australian Inland Mission Aerial Medical Service
- > Alfred Traeger invents the first pedal radio
- > Broken Hill Base opens

1940-80s

- > The Inland Mission renamed 'The Flying Doctor Service'
- > The first Flying Sister, Myra Blanch, begins work
- > Flying Dentist service established

1990s-2023

- > Dubbo Base opens
- > Satellite communications established
- > 400 staff, multiple services delivered via aircraft, road, in-community, telemedicine

Royal Flying Doctor Service South Eastern Section



Royal Flying Doctor Service

We are on the ground in regional NSW and ACT, on standby 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

We provide lifesaving outback emergency aeromedical retrievals and hospital transfers, as well as providing over 68,000 occasions of care through on the ground GP and nurse appointments, dental care, mental health care, alcohol and other drug counselling, vaccinations, chronic disease management and telehealth.



Almost 2 million people call regional, rural and remote NSW home.



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They experience significantly poorer health outcomes, greater incidents of chronic disease, and greater premature deaths when compared to their metropolitan counterparts.



SNAPSHOT OF OUR 2022-23 YEAR



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SOUTH EASTERN SECTION

Provided over

68,000 occasions
of care

28,700

occasions of care provided
at 4 GP clinics – Clive
Bishop Medical Centre,
Warren, Gilgandra and
Condoblin.

18,895

occasions of care
delivered at over 2,169
primary care clinics.

24/7

Our specialist doctors
and flight nurses
provide emergency
aeromedical retrievals.

8,189

Telehealth
consultations.

4,609

Inter-hospital
transfers of patients
ranging from low to
high-acuity.

91

Emergency
retrievals

15 aircraft have flown more than

3,000,000km





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Lord Howe Island

- Primary Health Clinic
- Remote Area Nurses on site
- GP Medical Practices
- Dental and Oral Health
- Mental Health and Alcohol and Other Drugs support services
- Wellbeing Places
- We've Got Your Back (WGYB) – Far West Region
- Guiding Rural Outback Wellbeing (GROW)
- Emergency retrieval service – provided to all regions within the state of NSW
- Inter-hospital transfers including Air Ambulance locations
- Non-Emergency Patient Transfers (NEPT)
- Rural Aerial Health Service (RAHS)
- Contracted Aeromedical Service Delivery
- South Eastern Section Bases
- Support office

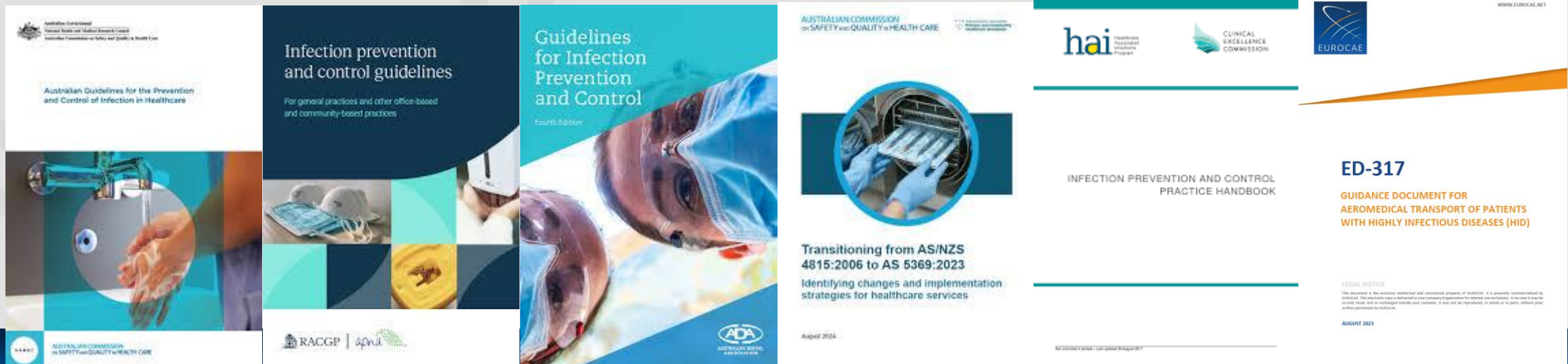
WHERE WE WORK

How do we deliver an effective infection and control program?



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- Australian Guidelines for the Prevention & Control of Infection in Healthcare (2024)
- RACGP Infection Prevention & Control Guidelines (2024)
- Australian Dental Association Infection Prevention & Control Guidelines (2024)
- AS 5369:2023 – Reprocessing of reusable medical devices and other devices in health and non-health related facilities
- Clinical Excellence Commission – Infection Prevention & Control/Healthcare Associated Infections program
- EUROCAE Guidance document for aeromedical transport of patients with highly infectious diseases (2023)

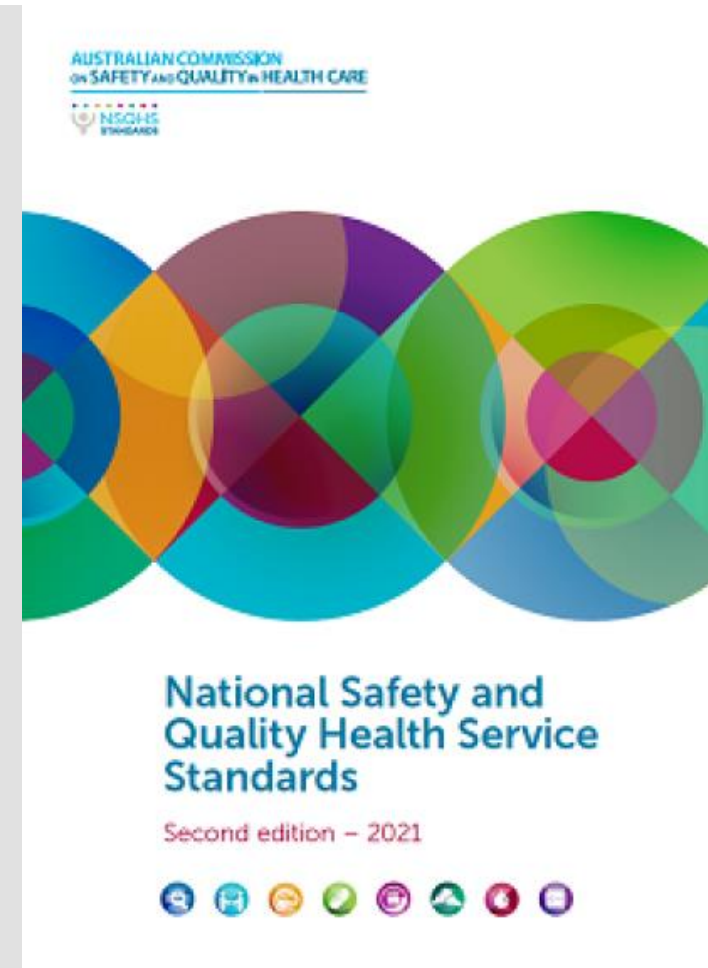


How do we know we are delivering an effective infection and control program?



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- Audit Program
- Surveillance
- Feedback
 - Patients
 - HealthShare Partners
- Compliance monitoring
 - Infection Prevention and Control Committee
 - Patient Safety and Quality Committee
 - NSW Health/HealthShare
 - Western and Far Western Local Health District
 - AGPAL
 - ISO 9001
 - ACSQHS Standards



Challeng



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n
dangerous goods

Aviation Related Challenges



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The Civil Aviation Authority (CASA) operates within a Legislative framework made up of acts, regulations, associated legislative instruments and guidance material:

➤ **Civil Aviation Act 1988**

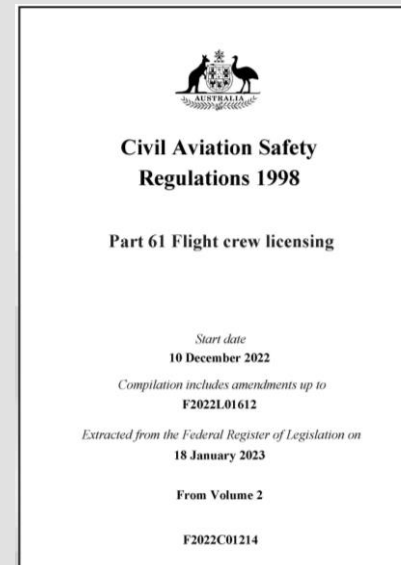
➤ **Civil Aviation Regulations 1998**

- **Medications hazardous in aviation**

- Aviation related duties should not be undertaken for 24 hours after receiving a vaccination/immunisation

- **Dangerous Goods**

- Hand sanitiser is a dangerous good because of its high alcohol content. Quantities >500ml must be notified to the pilot and recorded on the flight manifest



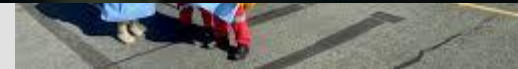
Aviation Related

Challenges

- Using Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) on aviation

- PPE
- Contamination control
- You
- Contamination
- Masking
- Rapid
- Flight
- Avoid
- Proper

- Avoid components which may catch on equipment or otherwise impede egress in an emergency



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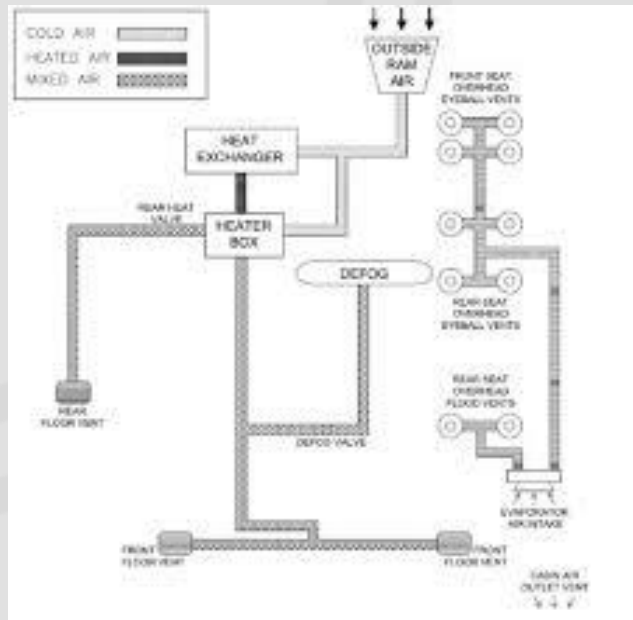
Aviation Related Challenges



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KingAir B200 & B350 cabin air handling

- Air exchange rate up to 24 times per hour with the flow packs set to normal
- Fresh air inlet in cockpit with vent at the back of the cabin, therefore airflow front to back – multi-patient transfers



Cleaning Products

- Products and techniques used for cleaning/disinfecting the interior of an aircraft are critical
- Use only cleaning/disinfecting products that have been specifically approved for use on aircraft
- Chlorinated solvents or detergents are NOT to be used as they can cause stress corrosion cracking in stainless steel and some aluminium alloys
- Due to the confined nature of interiors within the aircraft, only approved (generally non-flammable) products should be used

Aviation Related Challenges



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- **Insects**

- Mosquito-borne diseases
 - Japanese encephalitis
 - Ross River virus
 - Murray Valley encephalitis
 - Kunjin virus
 - Barmah Forest virus
- Aviation approved insecticide sprays
 - Cost!!



Rewards



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- Working for Australia's most reputable charity
- Contributing to the wellbeing and health of rural and remote communities
- Delivering health services to isolated communities who would otherwise have limited access to basic health services
- Connecting and engaging with communities and feeling part of the community
- Working with a diverse team of professionals
- Continuous learning
- Travel
- Great team to work with
- Wearing the RFDS uniform with pride



Rewards

The view from the office



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Rewards

Engaging with the community and meeting new people



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Rewards

Working with a great team



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Rewards



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No traffic jams on the way to work



....maybe the occasional one!

Rewards

And no traffic lights



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Except for this one.....



And red on the way home.....



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Questions





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