

CHC Helicopter crews complete 5000 emergency medical and search and rescue service missions in Western Australia

(Oct 21, 2016)

Earlier this month CHC Helicopter (CHC) crews completed their 5000th emergency medical service and search and rescue (EMS/SAR) mission after 13 years providing the helicopter and crew for Western Australia's Department of Fire and Emergency Services' (DFES) RAC RESCUE helicopter service.

CHC's role has been essential in providing a helicopter service for emergency response in Western Australia since the service's inception in 2003. For the first 12 years of operation, the state had only one dedicated 24x7 EMS/SAR operation servicing a population of 2.6 million people in the jurisdiction of 2.5 million square kilometres (965,300 square miles).

In February 2016, DFES' second EMS/SAR helicopter also operated by CHC commenced operations at a new base at Bunbury, 175km (109 miles) south of Perth to service the growing population in the state's South West and Great Southern regions.

The two helicopters their equipment and crews are interchangeable. Attached to each helicopter crew is a highly qualified critical care paramedic who operates the state's intensive care equipment integrated into CHC's aircraft.

The service now provides aeromedical rescue coverage of 95 percent of the State's population which is concentrated around Perth and the south west. The helicopters respond around the clock to a range of incidents including road crash and farming accidents, marine and land search and rescues, and time-critical hospital transfers. By far the most common incident type was motor vehicle accidents, which account for two thirds of callouts.

CHC is proud to be the operator of the DFES EMS/SAR helicopter since its commencement in 2003, said Nick Mair.

"We have a team of highly experienced, skilled and dedicated people at the Jandakot base in Perth and it was wonderful to expand that team when the Bunbury base opened at the start of this year," said Nick Mair, Regional Director Asia Pacific.

Michael Perren, Pilot and Jandakot Base Manager, expressed how rewarding the job is, "It is a little awe inspiring to sit back and think about all the missions and work that has gone into this service over 13 years to achieve the 5000th mission milestone."

"It is even more gratifying to consider all the lives saved, reduced suffering for the patients transported, and people we've rescued over the years," Michael Perren said.

At the end of 2016, the team at the new Bunbury base will be moving into a new state-of-the-art permanent base, being constructed by DFES at the other end of the airfield.

With over 40 years of operation in Australia, CHC provides offshore transportation to the oil and gas industry, search and rescue, emergency medical services, and

maintenance/overhaul/repair services while striving to ensure our customers can go further, do more and come home safely.

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