



MEDIA RELEASE

May 8th 2006

OUTBACK TRIP PROMOTES REGIONAL & RURAL LIFE

The Governor-General, Major General Michael Jeffery and His Honour Mr. Ted Egan AO, Administrator of the Northern Territory in his capacity as National Patron of Year of the Outback 2006, are packing their swags for an outback trip to encourage more Australians to cross the Great Divide.

Joining up with Year of the Outback 2006 Chairman, Bruce Campbell to promote rural and regional Australia, the party will travel in a 4WD convoy leaving Adelaide for Birdsville on May 10. From there they will fly to Charleville and Longreach where the trip will wind-up on May 16.

The theme for the venture *Back to the Bush, Bridging the Divide*, reflects the fact that 85-percent of Australians live within 50 kilometres of the coast, and of those, two-thirds live in a capital city.

The Governor-General says he will be concentrating on the many good things happening in the bush, the vital role of the rural sector in the national economy, new options for young people and urban dwellers looking for a change of pace or a fresh environment.

General Jeffery who was born in the mining town of Wiluna, several hundred kilometres north of Kalgoorlie, will also highlight the tourism industry, growth potential for conferences and seminars, indigenous culture, water and the environment.

Bruce Campbell welcomed the Governor-General's participation saying the *Back to the Bush, Bridging the Divide* trip symbolically represents His Excellency's return to Australia's heartland.

"The presence of the Governor-General and Northern Territory Administrator Ted Egan will 'shine the spotlight' on this 'Year of the Outback', our regional and rural communities and the array of amazing individuals, innovations and wonderful attractions", Mr. Campbell said.

'Youth in front' is the theme for Year of the Outback 2006 and two 'Ambassadors for Youth' from Lead On, a growing community based program, will be travelling to expand on community based projects for people who don't want to go to the cities.

The trip will also recognise the role of the early explorers in opening-up Australia's vast inland.

Back to the Bush, Bridging the Divide is being generously supported by Four Wheel Drive Hire service, South Australian Tourism Commission, Tourism Queensland and Bendigo Bank.

Major Sponsor, Southern Cross Pumping and Irrigation support all Year of the Outback 2006 activities.

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MEDIA CONFERENCE Information: @ 2.15 pm sharp Monday May 8th

A 15 minute Media Conference to launch of *Back to the Bush - Bridging the Divide* will be at the RFDS hangar on James Schofield Drive at the Adelaide Airport at 2.15 pm on Monday May 8th

The Governor General's aircraft will be positioned near to the RFDS Hangar and he and his party will be driven across the tarmac to the RFDS hangar. NO CAMERAS ALLOWED ON THE TARMAC (Adelaide Airport)

The Governor-General and Mrs. Jeffery will be met by NT Administrator Ted Egan in his capacity as Patron of the Year of the Outback 2006, Year of the Outback Chairman Bruce Campbell and RFDS CEO John Lynch.

When the Governor General arrives at the hangar, he'll be introduced to Board Members of the RFDS, Director of the SA Museum Dr Tim Flannery, Lead On Youth Ambassadors Bryce Tomlinson and Felicia Carboon and Birdsville Track mailman, 92 year old Tom Kruse and wife Valma.

The Governor-General, Year of the Outback Chairman Bruce Campbell and RFDS CEO John Lynch will speak at the Media Conference.

Following the Media Conference the Governor General will then speak informally with an RFDS aircrew positioned next to an RFDS aircraft.

NB## *A copy of the DVD The Back of Beyond Collection, which tells the life story of Birdsville Track mailman Tom Kruse contains sequences involving a number of the locations and people being met by the Governor General during his trip. The DVD will be provided for TV crews attending the Media Conference by the RFDS.*

More Information: Ian Doyle 0417 819 189