



Royal Flying Doctor Service

QUEENSLAND SECTION

MEDIA RELEASE: Thursday 23 September

RFDS to introduce changes to HF radio network

The Royal Flying Doctor Service (RFDS) will introduce changes to its HF radio network in Queensland from Friday, October 1. The changes follow a Telstra decision to terminate the voice grade dedicated lines (VGDL) that have supported the network.

RFDS (Queensland Section) chief executive officer Nino Di Marco said the changes would ensure a commitment to maintaining the service for rural and regional Queensland.

He said the changes would allow people to continue to make contact with the RFDS in the case of an emergency via HF radio.

“In recent years, fewer people have used the HF radio network as technologies such as satellite and mobile phones have become more readily available for people in remote areas,” Mr Di Marco said.

“However, the HF network continues to be an important back up communication system in rural and remote areas and these changes will allow the RFDS to continue to provide the service into the future.”

As of October 1, the best way for HF users to reach the RFDS in the case of an emergency is through the VKS-737 radio network using one of the following Selcall numbers.

	RFDS Cairns	RFDS Charleville	RFDS Mt Isa
Adelaide (Primary)	0614	0615	0616
Adelaide (Secondary)	9614	9615	9616
Alice Springs (Primary)	0814	0815	0816
Alice Springs (Secondary)	9714	9715	9716
Cairns (Primary)	7714	7715	7716
Cairns (Secondary)	8614	8615	8616
Carnarvon	7414	7415	7416
Charleville	8114	8115	8116
Charters Towers (Primary)	8014	8015	8016
Charters Towers (Secondary)	9514	9515	9516
Darwin	9414	9415	9416



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Derby	9214	9215	9216
Meekatharra	7514	7515	7516
Mount Isa	8214	8215	8216
Newcastle	6814	6815	6816
Perth	0514	0515	0516
Port Hedland	7814	7815	7816
St Marys	0714	0715	0716
Swan Hill	8914	8915	8916

As part of the agreement, VKS-737 will also scan current RFDS frequencies to ensure that emergency calls using Selcall on these frequencies will also be relayed.

The main change for users of the HF radio system is that the Emergency Call Detect (ECD) system, also known as the two-tone emergency call system, will no longer be an option due to incompatibility with modern base station equipment.

Mr Di Marco said the partnership with VKS-737 was the best way to maintain the important service without the use of the VGDL.

Anyone who requires advice in relation to the changes to the HF network are urged to call RFDS (Queensland Section) I.C.T. Manager Steve Cunningham on (07) 3860 1100 or contact VKS-737 Administration Manager Steve Johnston OAM on (08) 8287 6222.

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