

Westpac and MBA Australia produce documentary 'Air Rescue'

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Westpac Life Saver Rescue Helicopters to star in new Channel 7 series

Westpac has taken their longstanding partnership with the Westpac Life Saver Rescue Helicopter Service (WLSRHS) to a new level, commissioning an observational documentary (ob-doc) TV series on the Service which will draw national attention to this iconic Australian community service.

'Air Rescue', a collaboration between Westpac, [MediaCom Beyond Advertising \(MBA\)](#) and Fredbird Productions, captures the dramatic rescues performed by the WLSRHS, which this year celebrates its 40th year of partnership with Westpac.

Air Rescue follows the brave, life-saving work of the pilots, air crewmen and intensive care paramedics of the Service, who come to the rescue of everyday Australians in crisis, whether they're fishermen in trouble on the rocks, injured farmers, flood victims, or holidaymakers in the wrong place at the wrong time.

The Air Rescue series, made up of six 30 minute episodes, will air at 8pm on Channel Seven beginning this evening (Monday, 4 November 2013).

Viewers are taken behind-the-scenes to witness the intense and dramatic world of a rescue helicopter crewmember and the bringing to life their remarkable rescue stories. Air Rescue captures the vast range of emotions felt by the crew, from the humour and mateship shared by crew at the base, to snapping into action and showcasing their skills under pressure just minutes later, to the emotions and candid moments shared between crew member and patient.

"Westpac has been a very proud supporter of the Westpac Life Saver Rescue Helicopter Service for 40 years. The dramatic and captivating stories highlight the remarkable and quite literally, lifesaving work which the Westpac Life Saver Rescue Helicopter Service performs in the community, making the production of Air Rescue a very natural extension of our partnership," said Lisa Ronson, Head of Mass Marketing Services, Australian Financial Services.

"MBA has been an integral part of this collaboration. They understood our vision for the show, respected the deep partnership with the Service and brought the concept to life. The series will be aired in a prime time slot during a survey period on one of Australia's highest rating networks, Channel Seven,

which is a credit to all involved. We are proud that Air Rescue has captured the true bravery, helpful nature, authenticity and skill of the crew of this iconic Service."

MBA is the first media agency in Australia to create a fully ad funded ob-doc series that will run on a free-to-air channel during peak time and in a survey period. Gemma Hunter, Executive Creative Director and Head of MBA, said "It was fantastic to work with Westpac on such a unique opportunity. The inherently dramatic and emotional work performed by the Westpac Life Saver Rescue Helicopter Service offered compelling content to work with.

"MBA delivers the most compelling, engaging and entertaining brand stories possible for our clients. To do this, it's vital we understand what audiences find entertaining, what our network partners find appealing and deliver something that only that particular brand could.

"Air Rescue delivers on those promises by taking the ob-doc genre to the next level through a cinematic shooting style, mixed with unique point of view angles and composition to achieve a high-end look. We've heightened the drama through an original composed soundtrack and a soundscape that captures the environment head on."

Kurt Burnette, Chief Revenue Officer, Seven West Media, said "As the leader in Australian Television, Seven Network takes great pride in the programming we run and the quality of those programs. We believed in the vision and work from MBA (MediaCom Beyond Advertising) and coupled with the brand integrity of Westpac, saw a great opportunity to give Australia an engaging and emotional look into the heroes of Air Rescue.

"We've had our best producers work with the team at MBA, along with our promotional team, on the promotion and support across our Seven West Media assets. The process has been best in class which should ensure the outcome is the same."

In addition to the TV series, MBA has worked in partnership with the series' production company, Fredbird, to produce 15 compelling webisodes, which allow viewers to emotionally connect with the crew, patients and history of the Service on a more personal level.

The Westpac Life Saver Rescue Helicopter Service is the longest serving civil search and rescue helicopter in Australia reaching 84% of the population during its peak time in summer. Westpac has supported the Service since its inception in Sydney in 1973. Over the past 40 years, no one has ever paid to be rescued by the Service with partner support ensuring it remains a free community service. There are now 15 helicopters and 12 bases in the national fleet.

Air Rescue is narrated by Martin Sacks.

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