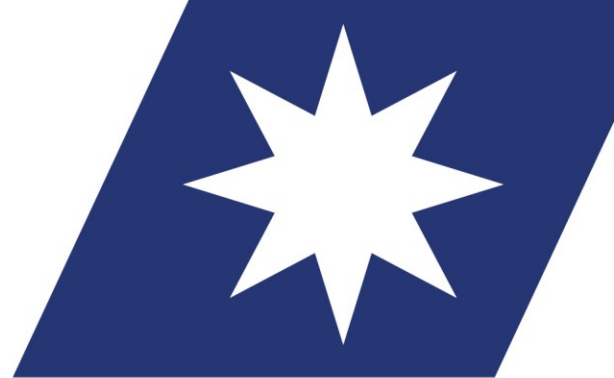


**BOB KATTER**

Katter's Australian Party

**Federal Member for Kennedy**



MEDIA RELEASE

## **Heart of Australia pumping twice as much life in rural Qld**

03 August 2018: KAP Leader and Federal Member for Kennedy Bob Katter today joined Heart of Australia founder, Dr Ralph Gomes, in Burpengary to unveil a second custom-built truck that has been designed and fitted to perform essential health procedures for those in regional and rural Queensland.

By mid-August, the Heart of Australia will have two 'Heart Buses' on the road providing a number of health services on a fortnightly basis including gynaecology, neurology and endocrinology to residents of 16 towns including Dalby, Goondiwindi, Stanthorpe, St George, Charleville, Roma, Emerald, Barcardine, Longreach, Hughenden, Charters Towers and Moranbah.

The addition of the second truck, which was funded by the **incredibly generous donation of one million dollars from the Driscoll family who are passionate about rural health or healthcare to the bush**, will see the service expand to Quilpie, Blackall and Cloncurry.

Mr Katter has been a strong advocate for the Heart of Australia and recently wrote to the Minister for Rural Health and the Minister for Health asking for much-needed funding to support 'Heart of Australia' so the vital health service can continue to deliver for regional Queensland.

In a statement released by the Heart of Australia, Dr Gomes, who also featured on Australian Story, said he was motivated to start the mobile clinic project after being 'confronted by the health inequality facing Australians living in remote areas', and that the second truck will mean doctors are able to maximise treating time spent with patients and reach more locations.

For more information or a comment from Bob Katter, please contact the media phone: 0418 840 243



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He said, "Taking cardiologists to regional and remote towns has helped save more than 250 lives but we know people's health needs extend far beyond heart conditions which is why this second truck is so important.

"The goal is to be able to deliver not only the specialists, but also state-of-the-art medical equipment needed to provide quality care. We say it's about bringing Wickham Terrace to the bush – if you can find the equipment in my Brisbane clinic, you'll find it on the truck."

Mr Katter has long been a prominent advocate for "killing off" the tyranny of distance experienced so often by those living out bush.

Mr Katter said, "Mount Isa and Cloncurry are so far away from anywhere and if there was ever a family that was aware of the tyranny of distance, it is my family. After all, it was the distance from health services that was responsible for the death of my father.

"I ended up in the hospital twice with what was finally diagnosed as a heart attack. I saw three doctors but they didn't have the instruments to test and they didn't have the skills; they said nothing was wrong with me. More pains and was in an ambulance rushing to Townsville. The local hospital just didn't have the gear that's provided by Dr Gomes.

"This wonderful Australian bloke here (Dr Gomes) is conquering the tyranny of distance."

**##ENDS##**