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Military Couple Flies 1972 Piper for Outback Charity Race

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Australian Army Major Matthew Hume and Royal Australian Air Force Squadron Leader Stephanie Hume will pilot a 1972 Piper Cruiser in the Red Planet Software Outback Air Race 2025 to raise funds for the Royal Flying Doctor Service.

From August 22 to September 8, 2025, Major Matthew Hume of the Australian Army and Squadron Leader Stephanie Hume of the Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF) will take to the skies in a 1972 Piper Cruiser Aircraft as Team 19: Atmospherics, competing in the Red Planet Software Outback Air Race 2025. This aviation time trial, stretching from Yulara,

Northern Territory, near Uluru, to Carnarvon, Western Australia, aims to raise funds for the Royal Flying Doctor Service (RFDS), a critical healthcare provider for remote Australian communities. The Humes, both experienced military engineers, are driven by a shared passion for aviation and a commitment to supporting rural medical services, as reported by Defence News on August 1, 2025.

Squadron Leader Stephanie Hume, a qualified flight test engineer at the Directorate of Personnel – Air Force, emphasized the vital role of the RFDS, noting that remote communities rely entirely on its services for life-saving care, according to her remarks to Defence News. Major Matthew Hume, an electrical engineer, will navigate alongside her, leveraging their combined expertise to tackle the challenging 3,000-kilometer outback route. The couple's participation highlights the ADF's broader community engagement, though some on platforms like X have criticized the Labor government for underfunding rural healthcare services like the RFDS, which relies heavily on such charitable efforts.

The Outback Air Race, held biennially, attracts aviation enthusiasts to support the RFDS through entry fees and fundraising. Team 19 is rallying donations, with options to contribute directly or purchase \$20 raffle tickets for a chance to win a \$20,000 holiday for two, offered by the Classic Safari Company, as detailed on the Outback Air Race website. The Humes' retro Piper Cruiser, a nod to aviation heritage, underscores their dedication to blending skill with purpose.

As they prepare for the grueling journey, the Humes aim to raise both funds and awareness for the RFDS's mission. Their flight symbolizes a commitment to service, bridging military precision with community support, and promises to inspire others to back this vital cause.