



## JOINT MEDIA RELEASE

### MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS ADVOCATE RECEIVES AUSTRALIA DAY HONOUR

Wednesday 27 January 2010

**Leaders from the multiple sclerosis movement have today congratulated Graham Tribe for being appointed a Member of the Order of Australia (AM) in recognition of his tireless commitment to Australians living with multiple sclerosis (MS).**

The Vice President of Multiple Sclerosis Australia, Ian Pennell, said Graham was one of Australia's most committed advocates for people with MS.

"There has hardly been a major development in the MS movement in over 37 years that Graham has not passionately led or supported.

"His leadership has advanced the delivery of support to those affected by multiple sclerosis and substantially advanced the Australian contribution to the international effort to combat the disease," Mr Pennell said.

Bill Younger, CEO of MS Australia – ACT/NSW/VIC said Graham's work for people with MS had spanned an incredible 37 years.

"Over the years, Graham's unwavering commitment has resulted in many significant developments for people living with this unpredictable disease.

"For nearly four decades, Graham has served on our Boards and spearheaded momentous changes, like the creation of the MS Readathon™ as a national program to increase the money raised for the people that need it most," said Mr Younger.

Amongst many, one of Graham's most noteworthy achievements was the establishment of MS Research Australia (MSRA); a move that revolutionised and accelerated Australian research into multiple sclerosis.

"It was Graham's visionary leadership that that led to this development," said Jeremy Wright, Executive Director of MS Research Australia.

"His personal contribution has guided us to a point now where MSRA is an equal partner with the National Health and Medical Research Council in funding MS research in this country and a real partner with the Australian MS research community in solving this terrible disease."

In fact, through his work, Graham helped multiple sclerosis research increase five-fold in MSRA's first three years. Now researchers can point to a number of world class breakthroughs arising from MSRA funded research.

Over many years, Graham has led the way in providing care and support to the 20,000 Australians who live with MS and through his commitment to the search for solutions, has tirelessly fought for a world free from the disease

## ENDS

Graham Tribe's contributions and achievements in nearly four decades include:

- The conversion of the successful high profile school age MS Readathon program, run separately as State programs for thirty years, to one national program; thereby increasing the return and benefit to people with multiple sclerosis and multiple sclerosis research.
- Implementation of a national brand awareness program to boost fundraising.
- Actively obtaining major fundraising support from donors and state and federal governments.
- Developing and sourcing Government support for the pioneering six hectare Studdy MS Centre complex in Lidcombe (NSW) in 1985.
- Fostering the highly successful concept, formation and development of MSRA which has revolutionised and accelerated Australian multiple sclerosis research on behalf of MSA and people with multiple sclerosis in Australia by:
  - Galvanising the collaboration of scientists in over 37 research institutes and universities across the country with linkages to the international multiple sclerosis research effort.
  - Increasing multiple sclerosis research funding over four years from \$440k in 2003/4 to \$2.1m in 2007/8; i.e. by a factor of five times. In 2009 MSRA raised over \$3.4 million for research and over the last five years can point to a number of "world class" breakthroughs arising from MSRA-funded research.
- Increasing Multiple Sclerosis Australia's participation in the Multiple Sclerosis International Federation, the international alliance of national Multiple Sclerosis Societies, travelling overseas on a number of occasions at his own expense to build relationships with key societies in the USA, Canada and Europe. This has contributed to the exchange of knowledge on the provision of services to people affected by multiple sclerosis and facilitated greater trust and exchange of information on multiple sclerosis research.
- Conducting advocacy on behalf of people affected by multiple sclerosis by leading delegations to governments, including visiting the Australian Parliament to seek support for those affected by multiple sclerosis, to promote research into the cause and prevention of multiple sclerosis, improved treatments and ultimately a cure for multiple sclerosis.

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