



## **MEDIA RELEASE**

# **Channel swimmer appointed Actuary of the Year**

**31 August 2009, SYDNEY** – The Institute of Actuaries of Australia (the Institute) has honoured the first actuary to swim the English Channel, Kaise Stephan, with the award of Actuary of the Year 2009.

The Actuary of the Year award recognises an individual who has made a key contribution to business, the community, government or the profession. Mr Stephan - who is Chief Actuary at Munich Re - swam the English Channel in 12 hours and 34 minutes, raising over \$160,000 for the oncology unit at The Children's Hospital at Westmead.

Institute President Trevor Thompson described Kaise as an outstanding example of personal values, strength of character and selfless dedication. "In pursuing a goal that will bring a benefit to the whole community, Kaise has demonstrated the best attributes of our profession," he said.

Kaise's commitment to The Children's Hospital is close to his heart. In 2005, his 13 year old cousin was diagnosed with leukemia and underwent treatment at The Children's Hospital. As a regular visitor to the hospital, Kaise came to appreciate its important work and the vital need for further research to improve recovery rates.

"Thirty years ago, one child in four survived cancer. Research has improved that survival rate to three in four – but there's more we can do to improve these rates even further," Mr Stephan said.

Kaise followed a grueling training regime for two and a half years before attempting the Channel crossing, including waking at 4.30 am every morning to swim two hours, lunch swims, weekend ocean swims and long distance (over 25km) swims. By the time he embarked on his extraordinary channel crossing, he had swam the distance of Sydney to Perth, plus 400 kilometres.

Commenting on his appointment to Actuary of the Year, Kaise said: "It's a great honour to be recognised in this way. The Actuary of the Year award will spur me to ongoing contribution to society and to the Actuarial profession which I am very proud to belong to."

**ENDS**

## **About the Institute of Actuaries of Australia**

As the sole professional body for actuaries in Australia, the Institute of Actuaries of Australia (Institute) represents the interests of its members to Government, the business community and the general public. Actuaries assess risks through long-term analyses, modelling and scenario planning across a wide range of business problems. This unrivalled expertise enables the profession to comment on a range of actuarial-related issues including enterprise risk management and prudential regulation, retirement income policy, finance and investment, general insurance, life insurance, health financing, and climate change.

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