



MEDIA RELEASE – June 24, 2016

## **Ex-SAS Amputee on Asia-Australia Charity Ride to Support PTSD Victims**

A former Special Air Service Regiment soldier riding from Hanoi to Sydney to support veterans suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder will be joined on the next five legs of his epic ride by other SAS veterans.

Laurie ‘Truck’ Sams, 67, who served with the SAS in Vietnam in 1970 before losing a leg in a parachute accident in 1995, left Hanoi on May 12 aiming to reach the steps of Sydney Opera House six months and 10,000km later on November 20.

So far he’s ridden his trusty Trek 2500km through the steamy jungles and paddy fields of Vietnam in intense wet season humidity dodging potholes, motorcycles, buffalos and lumbering lorries and has had the ride featured on Vietnam’s English language TV channel VTV4.

But from Sunday Truck will be joined by former corporal Troy Lockyer and ex-Trooper Giles Beresford-Peirse for the 1490km leg from Ho Chi Minh City to Bangkok and the Thai border town of Surat Thani, where former SAS warrant officer Matt Brown will take over co-rider duties for the 1220km leg to Singapore via Kuala Lumpur.

“These guys are younger than me and they’re super competitive, so I’m going to have to pick up the pace a bit from here on,” Truck lamented. “We fly from Singapore to Perth but then there’s the Nullarbor and beyond, probably with another bunch of whip-cracking slave drivers.”

A world champion parachutist, Truck was awarded Australia’s Star of Courage in 2001 for saving his tandem parachute student in the 1995 accident. After learning to walk with a prosthetic leg he led two trekking expeditions along the Thai section of the notorious Thai Burma Railway and has completed charity bike rides right around Asia, especially in Vietnam.

He said he set his sights on “the long ride home” to Australia as a friendship initiative between Australia and Asia and to support injured veterans, adding:

“I’m blown away at the number of vets suffering from PTSD and other injuries, not just from Vietnam but all the conflicts we have been involved in before and since. I lost mates in Vietnam and many others are still suffering terribly, so I’m using the ride to raise money for their treatment and really shine a spotlight on their problems.”

Truck said sponsors were still being sought for the ride and anyone interested in contributing could do so by opening the donations page on the ride website at [www.thelongridehome.com.au](http://www.thelongridehome.com.au).

“We’re passing through some amazing countryside and I’m working with the support team to provide regular video updates available on our blog page at [www.thelongridehome.com.au/blog](http://www.thelongridehome.com.au/blog) or Facebook at [www.facebook.com/thelongridehomeaustralia](http://www.facebook.com/thelongridehomeaustralia).”

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