



MEDIA RELEASE – MAY 11, 2016

Ex-SAS Amputee Begins Asia-Australia Charity Ride to Support PTSD Victims

A former Special Air Service Regiment soldier who lost a leg saving a fellow parachutist will tomorrow leave on a 10,000km bike ride from Hanoi to Sydney to raise money for veterans suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder and other injuries.

Laurie 'Truck' Sams, 67, who served with the SAS in Vietnam before losing his left leg in a parachute accident, will take six months to complete the epic ride through Vietnam, Cambodia, Thailand, Malaysia, Singapore and across Australia.

Mr Sams will leave the Australian Embassy in Hanoi carrying an Australian flag he plans to present to the **Australian War Memorial at 11am on Friday, November 11** to mark Remembrance Day 2016 before cycling on to Sydney and a welcome on the steps of **Sydney Opera House on Sunday, November 20**.

A world champion parachutist, Mr Sams was awarded the Star of Courage for the parachute incident in 1995. After learning to walk with a prosthetic leg he led two trekking expeditions along the 315km Thai section of the notorious Thai Burma Railway and has completed a series of charity bike rides around Asia.

He said he set his sights on "the big ride" to Australia as a friendship initiative between Australia and Asia and to support injured veterans.

"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," he said.

"My dad Bill was a prisoner on the Thai-Burma Railway in World War 2 and I lost mates in Vietnam. Many other mates are still suffering terribly, and I want to use the ride to raise money for their treatment and really shine a spotlight on their problems."

The ride will pass through the paddy fields and dense jungle of Vietnam to Ho Chi Minh City before striking west through Cambodia and Thailand and skirting the Gulf of Thailand south to Malaysia and Singapore, where the team will catch a flight to **Perth arriving August 31** for the arduous trans-Nullarbor to Adelaide then on to Melbourne, Canberra and Sydney.

"We're hoping to really interact with locals along the route, especially in smaller communities like Merredin, Kalgoorlie and Cocklebidy in the West, Port Augusta, Port Pirie and Murray Bridge in South Australia, Horsham, Ballarat and Wangaratta and Wodonga in Victoria and Albury, Goulburn and Bowral n NSW," Mr Sams said.

Donations may be made to www.mycause.com.au/events/longridehome. Further details of the ride and route are at www.thelongridehome.com.au

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