



## E NEWS JUNE 2009

### INDEX

[AFFILIATION](#)

[BUSINESS PLAN](#)

[CAMP HOST](#)

[DSE MANAGEMENT](#)

[FWD SHOWS](#)

[ICONIC DRIVES](#)

[MOU](#)

[MVO](#)

[NUMBER PLATES](#)

[PADDYS SWAMP](#)

[RECOVER ME](#)

[REGIONAL REPRESENTATIVES](#)

[SEASONAL CLOSURE](#)

[SHELL](#)

[TRACK CLASSIFICATION](#)

[TRACK CLEARING](#)

[TRACKS IN TASMANIA](#)

[TRAINING CENTRE](#)

[TREAD LIGHTLY](#)

[VARIETY](#)

Welcome to the June edition of e news and how much has changed in the last 30 days. The appointment of Russell Sturzaker has seen a new excitement and can do 'attitude prevail' at the Association office, I invite all members to join for the ride. The Association will not be standing by and allowing things to happen and it with great pleasure that I advise of the appointment of Fred Farrugia as our new Training Manager. Fred will be known to many of you in his past role of Chair of DTAC. A new and exciting change of direction for Fred and a great bonus for us all. We welcome him to our organisation.

On the same front I have pleasure in advising that we have been appointed as the training company for Melbourne Water having won our first tender. More submissions are in the pipeline

and we expect that a whole new range of courses will become available to members.

### VARIETY CHILDRENS CHARITY

I have also pleasure in announcing that we have entered into an agreement with the Variety Childrens Charity to assist in the running of the Variety 4WD Adventure. This Bi annual event will allow our association to partner with such a terrific charity which does such terrific work for disadvantage children. We will invite members to pan for joining in the fundraising events in the coming months

### BUSINESS PLAN

At the Presidents meeting in November of each year a new business plan is developed and coments made by the club President's about how your association should do business. As reported previously we have set up a new sub committee to review the business plan, incorporate all the recommendations and bring the plan back to members for update. The prcess that is being adopted is two pronged in that the recommendations of the Presidents are picked up and reported on and then a review is undertaken to present to the next President's meeting with recommendations. It is hoped that this approach is more inclusive and will pick up the proposed recommendation and involve a wide membership in the preparation of the new plan. A presentation will be made to the General Meeting this week on the 24<sup>th</sup> June 2009.

### **THE SHELL CARD**

At the General Meeting this week members will be asked to advise if the association should proceed to enter into a contract with Shell for a discount fuel card. The only question that needs to be asked is will members enter into our proposed agreement with all its arrangements. There are some members that will want to have that option to take up the offer and others that will want to stay with the shopper docket. It is that simple. The proposed plan is safe and secure but it all depends on take up. I look forward to the discussion on the topic and to see how clubs respond to the proposed plan.

### **RECOVER ME PLEASE**

A new program is about to get the green light called 'Recover me please'. This program is the ground work of Gordon Morris and the Melton and District 4WD Club and the Trentham Police. The Victorian Police are the end result of a triple O (000) call when someone finds themselves stuck in the forest. As one could appreciate it is not really a good job for police to act as a recovery vehicle. Apart from not having the appropriate vehicle and equipment this usually takes up valuable police time. The idea was born that perhaps a four-wheel drive club could be approved to do the recovery for an approved fee which could include membership of the recovery club including a good bout of driver training. On behalf of the Association we have made an application to the Victoria Police to carry out the recovery function. There are legal, liability and a whole range of issues that need to be addressed and to date we have received very positive responses from Police Command and the Victorian Government Solicitor. This note is just to invite clubs to enrol in this program as we develop it. Please contact Russell at the office for a chat and further information.

### **NUMBER PLATES**

Members will be aware that Vicroads have specialised number plates. We are currently investigating having a

number plate with Association and Club logo made available to members to enable us to promote our clubs and organisation. When we have progressed with the plan further information will be made available about how to apply. What a great way to promote ourselves and what four-wheel clubs do.

### **TREAD LIGHTLY/CARE FOR THE BUSH TRUST**

Tread Lightly Victoria is a special tax deductible trust set up for the benefit of education and research. A meeting of the Tread Lightly Board is being called to approve a schools education program on four-wheel drive touring and camping. The program will be a teaching aid in DVD format to provide information about the terrific Parks and Forests in the State and what is expected when camping.

### **MANAGEMENT VEHICLE ONLY TRACK ACCESS**

The Management Vehicle Track Access policy has had its firsts clubs apply for and use this privilege. According to the Otways Park Ranger the process worked very well. Members will be pleased to know that phase two of the program, that is the review by clubs of the 'No List', has been completed and will now be reviewed by parks staff. Application forms are available on the association web site.

### **VOLUNTEER TRACK CLEARING**

With the roll out of the OH&S policy the framework for track clearing is being developed that will link closely with the regional representatives so the local ranger can call for help and a process will flow. The work of club volunteers in this area has been significant and new chain saw training programs are now a regular feature at FWDV and one does not have to purchase their own equipment to get trained. The association now has 16 chainsaws and safety equipment available for its training programs. If your club would like to create a special course for its members please contact

the office for bookings and advise if you want a special club booking.

#### **TRACK CLASSIFICATION PROJECT**

On the weekend of the 23<sup>rd</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> of May some 30 assessors worked through the Wombat and parts of Lerderderg to complete the first track classification process under the new approved regime. This work will end up on the DSE track network as an overlay so all four-wheel drivers will be able to log onto the DSE explorer site find their section of country and include the classification overlay in their printed map request. Wombat is the pilot program to review and test for roll out across the state. To those volunteers well done and thank you and we look forward to the results.

#### **CAMP HOST PROGRAM**

There were 8 clubs that volunteered for Camp Host Queens Birthday weekend. Each of those clubs will receive \$250.00 for their support to this program. The program is specifically designed to provide clubs with an opportunity to promote themselves carries out the important task of educating the public about the area and the importance of driving in a sustainable environment. Our capacity to provide advice to the public about the flora and fauna and cultural heritage makes a significant difference. If your club does not have a camp host co-ordinator then set one up and take advantage of this program

#### **SEASONAL CLOSURE**

The track seasonal closure list will be available for comment immediately. Clubs need to be aware of the usual closures and the fire closures which are on the list this year. Clubs also have the right to submit to the Advisory Committee that a track should not be seasonally closed. A letter or email to FWDV with a request and supporting comments is all it takes. So far despite the fact that we have this right for our members we have had no requests.

#### **DSE PROPOSED TRACK CLOSURES – SOUTH WEST AREA**

The proposed track closure recommendations around Paddy Swamp has not been received well and the consultation process by DSE was done by way of information not consultation and compromise. The Association sent a letter to Minister Jennings proposing that a new regime be adopted in relation to noise in the urban environment. It is hoped that further work can be done and consensus achieved in relation to noise and the limiting of vehicle use pursuant to the vehicle control regulations.

A meeting with the new Executive Director for Forests and Parks at DSE has been arranged and hopefully some form of compromise can be achieved in this area and perhaps a new set of rules adopted with respect to the Vehicle Control regulations.

Unfortunately it appears that DSE are having trouble in hearing our members and are hell bent on closing tracks. Members may well be asked to get angry about this process and action by DSE. The political process as promoted by the Geelong 4WD Club is available and if all else fails a public demonstration on the issue not dissimilar to Dalesford 1<sup>st</sup> May. Members need to get involved and take an active interest in this issue.

#### **MEMORANDUM OF CO-OPERATION**

A new 10 year agreement has now been signed between Parks Victoria DSE and FWDV. This agreement enhances the relationship between the parties and secures the activities of the Advisory Committee.

#### **PRESENTATION TO TASMANIAN PARKS & WILDLIFE SERVICE**

A meeting is being arranged at the request for the Tasmanian Parks and Wildlife Service to introduce them to the working of the MVO track access policy. It is hoped that we can share this program with Tasmania to improve the quality of track access and maintenance in Tasmania.

## **DSE REPRESENTATION ON COMMITTEE**

Work is being undertaken to enhance the relationship between DSE and FWDV noting that the restructure of DSE will deliver a new management process. As in the past DSE districts have not necessarily followed government policy or department direction, it is hoped that this issue will be resolved, with a dedicated four-wheel drive position inside DSE. The Department has appointed a new Executive Director for Forests and Parks and we look forward to working together developing our plans and relationship.

## **ICONIC DRIVES PROJECT**

As part of the Governments terrific commitment to matters four-wheel drive the Iconic drives project is coming together. The project is to develop and approve a marketing campaign of some 6 to 8 iconic area's and drives in Victoria. The program is designed to promote four-wheel driving in Victoria as a terrific activity. Locations such as the High Country, The Desert Country the Otways and Grampians to name a few. Each district promoting the area and its destinations with 4WD routes classified as Blue and Black to enhance the four-wheel drive experience and promote tourism in the district. This program is just the most exciting new development to promote our recreation and the fantastic tracks we have in Victoria.

## **4WD SHOWS**

Parks Victoria and FWDV will be attending the National Four Wheel Drive Show which, this year, is at the Royal Melbourne Showgrounds from the 4th to 6<sup>th</sup> September 2009. Unfortunately Parks Victoria will be associated with fishing this year, so our stand will be considerably reduced in size, and will be focused more on club membership and training courses. Please note that Leisurefest at Sandown will be on the 1<sup>st</sup> to 4<sup>th</sup> October. Clubs that wish to participate at Leisurefest are reminded that they can have their own stand for free.

Contact needs to be made to the Association office.

## **TRAINING CENTRE**

Our Four Wheel Drive training centre at Bacchus Marsh is progressing through the planning stages and it is expected that it will be up and running by September 2009. A terrific amount of work is now being undertaken by Parks Victoria and their consultants in conjunction with FWDV to get the centre open.

## **REGIONAL REPRESENTATIVES**

The next regional representative meeting will be held in Bendigo on Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> October 2009. Camp Host, Track Classification, Track Clearing and management plans will be the discussion.

## **ASSOCIATION AFFILIATION**

It is with pleasure that I advise that Four Wheel Drive Victoria has been made an associate member of the AAAA and the National Industry Council and in due course our membership of VACC will be formalized. The bodies have direct links to our recreation and it is great that we have been welcomed to join.

Benefits to members will be felt both Statewide and Nationally. On this issue I have reported previously about VSB 14 and the attitude of Vicroads. Work has been done to prove that the recommended level of 50mm by Vicroads is false and tests up to 100 mm have been successfully completed. Members will know personally that vehicles fitted with correct after market lift products usually have better handling and ride properties that when first constructed. Work on the issues are being carried out by the Association strategically.

On another Vicroads front members will be pleased to know that the Bull Bar advertisement in the shape of a coffin has been removed and work is being undertaken by the association and Vicroads staff to develop a new program based on the fact "if you do not need a bull bar don't get one". If on

the other hand you use your vehicle for work, farming or recreation then a bull bar is fine. It is hoped that this new program will encourage city folk to

take notice of the issue and only install a Bull Bar if absolutely essential.

**NOTE I HAVE AMENDED THE HEADER FOR THIS DOCUMENT Nigel**

The last sentence on this page I have taken the liberty to delete the safety issue related to bull bars, I don't think that FWDV needs to draw attention to pedestrian safety!!

Please check the date for the Regional Reps meeting in Bendigo, I've inserted the date Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> September. Nigel

Please also note that four-wheel drive has a hyphen and should be used consistently throughout any document. Four Wheel Drive Victoria is the exception. Nigel