

## Trip Report HFoZ Camping Weekend 28/29 March 2009.

By Ron Moorhead

The inaugural users meeting of HFoZ East Coast members was held at Coopernook State Forest and hosted by Doug Taylor and Mark Gillette.

Members attending (in Selcall order) were:

|                            |      |
|----------------------------|------|
| Doug Taylor & Colleen Gabb | 0014 |
| Bob Humphrey               | 1023 |
| Steve Parker               | 1573 |
| Ron Moorhead               | 1918 |
| Peter OSullivan            | 2588 |
| Mark & Louise Gillette     | 3389 |
| Rick & Tania Bush          | 3458 |
| Peter & Sue Lobach         | 4862 |
| Monty & Elfin McLachlan    | 5224 |

The trip for Bob and Ron started at Buladelah for lunch before continuing north aiming at the map reference for the camp site and thankfully loaded into my GPS. A few wrong turns, a puncture for Bob and a u-turn through a hillbilly's front yard and we finally found the camping ground. Monty and Elfin were there to greet us.

A great camp site, all over grass, lots of room and excellent phone and radio reception.

Friday night was spent getting to know each other, giving Mark a hard time for his trip instructions and quoting Kevin Rudd, having several "cups of tea".

The remaining troops arrived around lunch time Saturday and Doug and Mark explained the history of HFoZ and the features of the new network. The programming and documentation for the radios were updated and we practiced between vehicles and onto the server.

The ability of a user to track the position of another was impressive from a safety standpoint. It was also noted that transmission of SMS data is more reliable than voice in weak signal conditions.

The email feature is in progress and should be available soon.

For myself and other infrequent HF users, it was an opportunity to share experiences, build confidence and move beyond the sched position reporting system onto the SMS and GPS system.

It was decided that we will monitor the HFoZ voice network nightly between 5.00 and 6.00pm allowing group discussion and this could expand to an important safety feature.

Saturday night was spent at the campfire with Doug demonstrating the ancient art of very slow cooking and Bob eating a complete pavlova without exploding. Several bottles of red and a good night's sleep.

Sunday morning was a recap practice on SMS, GPS and Selcall vehicle to vehicle comms and we broke for group photos about midday.

I think I can speak for all in saying that we enjoyed the weekend and each other's company and look forward to future events.

Ron Moorhead - 1918