Navshield 2010 - Course Setter's Notes

Welcome to the Bushwalkers Wilderness Rescue Emergency Services Navigation Shield, 2010. This year's course is again set in an area close to Sydney, this time Dharug National Park, named after the Aboriginal people who inhabited the area. The park is on the northern side of the Hawkesbury River near Wiseman's Ferry and covers an area of approximately 140sq km. It features spectacular sandstone cliff lines with interconnecting ridges and deep gullies. Perhaps the park's best known feature is a well preserved convict built section of the Old Great Northern Road which forms part of the park's western boundary.

The park contains two power lines running from north to south which roughly form the eastern and western boundaries of the Navshield course. Each power line is accompanied by a service road, appropriately named the eastern and western commission trails. Both of these roads are locked to public access but a Buddhist retreat on the north western side means that some private vehicles may still be encountered on the western road.

The park includes many aboriginal rock carvings with several well visited sites in the south along with an established 11km walking circuit in the Mill Creek area. Hiking along the western commission trail and particularly the Old Great Northern Road is quite popular but outside these areas, very few encounters with the public should be expected.

These notes form part of the event rules. Any competitor found in breach of the rules may be penalised or disqualified from the event.

Checkpoint Scores: The points value of a checkpoint is the first digit of the checkpoint number, that is: numbers 40 to 49 are worth 40 points, numbers 50 to 59 are worth 50 points and so on.

Water: Recent rains means there is limited water in most creeks but water quality cannot be guaranteed so you are recommended to treat the water. Clean water is available at Base and radio checkpoints Alpha and Charlie but not Bravo.

Late Penalty: The finish time for the one-day event is 19:30, Saturday; and the two-day event is 14:00, Sunday. Any team returning to base after these times will be penalised at 30 points per 5 minutes late, or part thereof. Any team more than 1 hour late will be retired from the event ("DNF" – did not finish). If you are far from base and likely to be more than 1 hour late for your finish time, please proceed immediately to the nearest radio checkpoint so we can drive you back.

Map: The map scale is 1:25000 with a 10m contour interval. The grid squares on the map are one kilometre. The event map is copied directly from a standard topographic map. There are many minor cliffs, which are not marked.

Safety: If you come across a team with an injury or otherwise in difficulty, please assist them if they request. Make sure the members going for help ***write down, the team name, number of the team in difficulty, the nature of the incident and any injuries sustained, your current position and the time the incident occurred***. You can also contact us on mobile phone number 0427 455 897. There is reasonable NextG mobile phone coverage from most ridge tops on the course.

Route Intentions: At the start of the event, we would like you to inform us of your team's intentions for your first 3 checkpoints and the radio checkpoint you intend to use for Saturday. Please write this on the enclosed intentions form. You will receive 10 points if you do this before leaving base on Saturday morning. We also ask you to tell us what vehicles are associated with your team so we can find you at base if we need to.

Terrain: The area is a maze of interconnected narrow ridges and valleys with an average height range of 100 – 230m. Most ridges are of similar elevation with lots of knolls but no prominent features or significant peaks. Apart from the transmission lines in the extreme east and west of the course, which are only visible from the ridge tops, there are very few visually identifiable reference points and precise navigation will therefore be vital. One ridge looks the same as the next.

There are numerous unmarked cliffs throughout the park, many with significant drops but in most cases they have been found reasonably negotiable by moving 50-100m to the left or right. No ropes or climbing aids have been used in setting the course but cliff edges pose a significant risk, particularly in the dark. The sides of most ridges are reasonably steep, particularly in the north.

Vegetation is fairly thick in most areas, particularly in the valleys and eastern side of the course but not as bad as last year. Long pants / shirts are recommended to protect against continuous scratching on exposed skin.

Master Map: In order for you to check the accuracy of the checkpoint locations you have marked on your map, the course setter and a master map showing all checkpoint locations will be available in front of the administration tent, from 15 minutes after the start of the event (at 9am) and competitors will not be allowed to view it before this time.

Radio Checkpoints: are there for your safety. Remember that you have to report to at least one radio checkpoint, each day or a points penalty will be imposed. Teams may report to the administration tent at Base between midday - 4pm on Saturday and between 6am-9am on Sunday to count for a radio checkpoint (and otherwise avoid a penalty) however unlike Alpha, Bravo & Charlie, there are no points scored for this. Note that this is a change in the rules from previous events due to the positioning of base in this years course.

Final Comments: Please note that radio checkpoint Bravo this year is not accessible by road and will be a manned but very basic campsite approximately 2-3 hours hike from base. Bravo is being provided as a known manned safety location from which help can be summoned if required. It is suggested that teams seeking to overnight at a radio checkpoint may find Alpha / Charlie more comfortable