



For immediate release – 16th July, 2008

HIGH-TECH TRACKING FOR ULTIMATE ENDURANCE EVENT

Local residents can track the progress of teams competing in Australia's premier endurance event, the Kokoda Challenge, from the comfort of their home – with a new high-tech tracking system via the internet.

The Challenge will start this Saturday and takes in a gruelling 96kms of rugged hinterland terrain which must be completed within a time limit of just 39 hours. Teams of 4 competitors go through 14 checkpoints throughout the hinterland from Mudgeeraba to Nerang.

“This year friends and family can check on how teams are progressing via a satellite tracking system that will give real-time results via our website – www.kokodachallenge.com,” Kokoda Challenge Association Chairman Doug Henderson said.

“We're excited about this innovation which allows supporters to be involved and keep up to date, in the comfort of their own homes. We're expecting over 1132 competitors to line up at the start line at Mudgeeraba on Saturday – so there will be a lot of family and friends across the nation wanting to check on them.”

Mr Henderson praised the efforts of local company KML Tracks for devising the innovative tracking system and Telstra for providing technical support to allow it to work effectively.

“The Challenge course is through very rugged hinterland areas and it has required a combination of emerging technologies to come up with the tracking system. It's quite amazing. Put simply, each team is issued with an RFID chip, which is scanned at each checkpoint, and the information relayed through the Next G network using blue-tick mobile handsets.”

“Via our website, people can get a fix on where each team is, how fast they are travelling, when they're expected at the next checkpoint, if everyone in the team is still competing...it's a wealth of information and we're just so impressed with KML Tracks and what they've put together for us. It will also be very useful for the support crews of each team, allowing them to get a closer estimate on when to arrive at each checkpoint.”

Mr Henderson said the internet tracking system was yet another improvement to the Kokoda Challenge Event, which has grown incredibly in the past 3 years.

“The Kokoda Challenge is really Australia's premier endurance event, and we have a record number of competitors this year. It is also an incredibly positive event because all teams raise funds for the Kokoda Challenge Youth Program (KCYP). The KCYP revolves around the values of endurance, courage, sacrifice and mateship – which are embodied in the Kokoda legend. We aim to raise awareness of and inspire these young kids with the example that was set by our Aussie diggers on the Track.”

“I believe the Kokoda Challenge Event is a fitting tribute to those brave men who stood firm on the Kokoda Track and displayed those true Aussie qualities of endurance, courage, sacrifice and mateship. And this year we can have family and friends directly involved through the tracking system on the website – where they can also make direct donations to support their team. I encourage everyone to check out this fantastic technology via www.kokodachallenge.com”

For more information or comment contact: Selma Schuller on 0408 077 427