

GPS Vehicle Navigation

A Comprehensive Guide for Four Wheel Drivers & other Navigators.

In another life in another State it fell to my lot to try to teach volunteer firefighters the rudiments of map reading and the introduction of GPS receivers into fire appliances added another layer to this task. Robert Pepper came to my rescue in 2003 with the first edition of his excellent book **GPS Vehicle Navigation in Australia** which he updated in 2007. It's been a while since the last publication but, whilst there have been some changes in both the software and hardware available since then, the book's contents are as useful and relevant as ever.

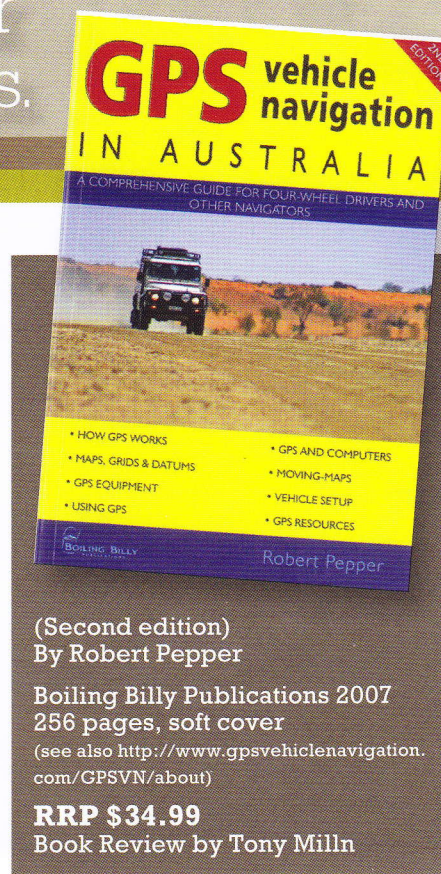
A GPS receiver is only a device for finding your way around, but to get the best out of it it helps to understand the basic principles of navigation. Pepper deals with the fundamentals of how GPS devices work, where the signals come from, and how to relate GPS information to what's actually on the ground. There is a particularly useful section on maps, grids and datums with as clear and simple a set of explanations and diagrams of latitude and longitude and UTM co-ordinates as I've seen.

Moving map software makes it pretty easy to see a location on a small section of a map. However the discerning

navigator still needs to be able to relate the small screen to the overall perspective of a paper map and being able to plot co-ordinates is still an important part of the art of navigation. Indeed, Pepper emphasises the importance of not relying solely on GPS information and the book is full of easily understood details about how this is done.

I suspect that many of us use only a fraction of the capacity of our GPS receivers, but if you want to get the best out of your gear, Pepper explains all the more complex functions of how to set up waypoints, tracks and routes, how to store and retrieve them, how to interface computers with mobile GPS receivers and much more. Once again, these explanations are accompanied by easy-to-follow diagrams. No book would be complete without practical hints (is that a T junction, or more of a Y?) to help the navigator relate GPS and map data to the real world of what's on the ground.

For the tech heads there is a lot of detail about available equipment and how to set it up in a vehicle. This section does show its age a bit in that it doesn't deal with the latest available stuff, but nevertheless the general advice about tooling up won't have changed much. With Pepper's attention to detail you would expect a FAQ section and a comprehensive list



(Second edition)
By Robert Pepper

Boiling Billy Publications 2007
256 pages, soft cover

(see also <http://www.gpsvehiclenavigation.com/GPSVN/about>)

RRP \$34.99

Book Review by Tony Milln

of websites, and he certainly doesn't disappoint.

Overall, this is the most useful, comprehensive and simply explained book on GPS navigation that I've come across and it is a must for anyone who takes their off-road GPS navigation seriously. Every four wheel drive vehicle glove box should have one. **TW**

Thinking of what present to buy for Christmas?

FWDV Gift Vouchers

Why not purchase a Gift Voucher from Four Wheel Drive Victoria. Gift Vouchers are available for any value, and are redeemable on FWDV Training Courses.

Ring the Office 9am-5pm weekdays on 9857 5209 to order one.



Please Note: Gift Vouchers must be used within 12 months of purchase.