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## Inventor's on a roll

### Aubin puts wheels in motion with his ingenious Bog Out

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A SIMPLE but effective device to rescue stranded vehicles in all manner of situations is set to go global.

Inventor and manufacturer Paul Aubin is making the first 500 Bog Out award winning vehicle recovery systems himself before it goes into mass production. Mr Aubin told Businessweek it was the world's most reliable and economical vehicle recovery device.

"It's simple to use, compact and has been likened to a continuous snow chain," he said. "Essentially, it's a very strong harness designed to turn a vehicle's wheels into winches."

It is a 4.5m long, four-tonne harness that attaches to a wheel that has lost traction and then to an anchor point to simply drive out of trouble.

"Bog Out allows off-road users the independence of self-recovery, removing the need for expensive, heavy machinery like winches, jacks or even other vehicles," he said.

"Bog Out works equally well forward or reverse, by using the front or rear wheels. Mud, sand or snow makes no difference."

Mr Aubin said he invented, developed and tested the device in the Far North after getting bogged on a "goat track" near Bamaga 10 years ago.

He said he was 60 to 70km from help, with the winch at the wrong end of the vehicle to get him out of trouble.

A hand winch and other



**SIMPLY GREAT:** Bog Out inventor Paul Aubin demonstrates how it rescues vehicles from sticky situations.

Picture: ANNA ROGERS

methods failed and it was only by sheer luck that another vehicle came along which enabled him to get out of a creek bed in heavy rain with the level quickly rising and a nearby lagoon full of crocodiles.

Mr Aubin said the situation got him thinking and over the years he finetuned Bog Out to the stage it was now in production.

He is hoping prisoners at Lotus Glen Correctional Centre and possibly other centres will produce the Bog Out using

materials imported from South Africa's Narrowtex, the world's largest maker of seat belts.

Mr Aubin plans to start making about 1000 a month in the first year and doubling production the year after.

He said if he was unable to strike a deal with the Justice Department then he might turn to Narrowtex in South Africa or China but he preferred to have Bog Out produced in Australia where he can keep a close eye on quality control.

Mr Aubin, who sells the

product online, said the next stage was selling the device to the Australian Defence Force with the aim of opening up links with the US and UK military through a tripartite supply agreement.

He said it had cost him about \$50,000 to get to the production stage and he planned to start applying for patents in various countries, which was a costly exercise.

Mr Aubin has lived off and on in the Far North since 1979 and has an electrical back-

ground. He also has worked in hospitality on Hamilton Island and in the Far North's tourism and fishing industries.

In recent years he has been a champion for recreational fishers with Carefish.

He will launch Bog Out with a Father's Day special of \$129 (normal price \$159) at Carnival on Collins on Sunday.

His ingenious device won the 2014 TNQ20 innovation excellence award, where it beat three other finalists from 20 entries.



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