



# QUARTERLY

NEWSLETTER OF THE NEW ZEALAND OUTDOOR INSTRUCTORS ASSOCIATION

ISSUE 89: NOVEMBER 2021

## INSIDE

### Congratulations

#### NZOIA Outdoor Excellence Awards 2021

- Tall Totara: Jen Riley
- Emerging Guide: Tom Groothuizen
- Emerging Instructor: Grace Robertson
- Tertiary Award recipients

#### Advocacy – Recreation Aotearoa

#### Cape Fear – Youth Adventure Race

#### Aotearoa Climbing Access Trust

#### Rescue and Response – Grant Prattley

#### Incident Sharing – Turning Back

#### NOLS

#### Profile: Tai Poutini Outdoor Education



**NZOIA QUARTERLY**  
ISSUE 89: NOVEMBER 2021  
ISSN 1175-2068

**PUBLICATION**

The NZOIA Quarterly is published by:

New Zealand Outdoor Instructors Association Inc.  
PO Box 1620  
Nelson 7040  
New Zealand

**© NEW ZEALAND OUTDOOR INSTRUCTORS ASSOCIATION**

Except where followed by a copyright statement, articles from the NZOIA Quarterly may be reprinted without permission, provided that the name and date of our newsletter are mentioned.

**DISCLAIMER**

Opinions expressed in the NZOIA Quarterly are those of the writers and may not necessarily be those of the NZOIA Executive or the editorial team.

**SUBSCRIPTIONS**

\$30 annually. The NZOIA Quarterly is distributed free to members of NZOIA.

**ADVERTISING ENQUIRIES**

Please contact the editor at: editor@nzoia.org.nz

**EDITORIAL TEAM**

**Editor**  
Jen Riley  
editor@nzoia.org.nz

**Design & layout**

Anne Johnston  
annedesign1@icloud.com

**QUARTERLY CONTRIBUTIONS**

The NZOIA Quarterly welcomes articles from all members. Contact the editor to discuss your idea.

Email:  
editor@nzoia.org.nz or  
admin@nzoia.org.nz

**Or send to:**

Operations Manager  
PO Box 1620, Nelson 7040

Articles should be submitted in Word format. All photos must be supplied individually in jpg format and cannot be used if embedded in a Word document. Submissions may be edited.

**NZOIA Contacts**

**NZOIA BOARD**

**Gemma Parkin**  
Chair  
Great Barrier Island  
Mobile: 021 907 695  
Email: Gemma.Parkin@landsar.org.nz

**Ben White**

Christchurch  
Mobile: 027 934 3086  
Email: whiteykayak@gmail.com

**Tim Wills**

Auckland  
Mobile: 027 245 2692  
Email: tim@adventurespecialties.co.nz

**Travis Donoghue**

Taupo  
Mobile: 021 824 791  
Email: tdonoghue@mtruapehu.com

**Jo Thompson**

Great Barrier Island  
Mobile: 027 415 4103  
Email: jo.thompson2017@gmail.com

**Dallis Parker Waters**

Nelson  
Mobile: 021 446 263  
Email: DallisWaters@gmail.com

**Karlie Clifton**

Auckland  
Mobile: 021 684 892  
Email: kacclifton@gmail.com

**TECHNICAL SUBCOMMITTEE CONVENOR**

**Sash Nukada**

Email: tsc@nzoia.org.nz

**At the office**

**BUSINESS MANAGER**

**Sonya Sutherland**  
Mobile: 027 539 0509  
Email: accounts@nzoia.org.nz

**OPERATIONS MANAGER**

**Penny Holland**  
Ph: 03 539 0509  
Email: admin@nzoia.org.nz

**EXECUTIVE SUPPORT SERVICES**

**Deb Hurdle**  
Mobile: 021 871 199  
Email: debhurdlenz@gmail.com

**ASSESSMENT COORDINATOR**

**Pip Russell**

**ADMINISTRATION ASSISTANT**

**Naomi Dakin**

**Are you getting your weekly NZOIA 4YA?**

If you are not receiving weekly emails every Friday from NZOIA, then we either don't have your current email address, or your membership details need updating.

PLEASE check the email address in your membership account on our website, or contact the NZOIA office if you do not have a username and password.

**Contact Us**

NZOIA, Waimea House,  
74 Waimea Rd, Nelson 7010  
PO Box 1620, Nelson 7040  
Ph: 03 539 0509  
Email: admin@nzoia.org.nz

**Custom & Contract Courses**

**NZOIA courses not being run at a suitable time or location? Want to get all your staff sorted when and where it suits you? Got a group of 3 or more people and a date / location in mind?**

Whether it be training, assessment or revalidation we are happy to run a custom course for you.

Contact the Operations Manager to discuss your needs and we'll do our best to make it happen. Costs may vary from scheduled courses and minimum numbers of participants dependent on the course type will apply.

**Email: admin@nzoia.org.nz Phone: 03 539 0509**

Cover photo: Ned Riley, and his mum, Jen. Credit: Adam Duckworth

**Congratulations**

to the following members who recently gained NZOIA Qualifications!

<b>Bush Leader</b>	Kevin Hoy, William Coulden-Lavers, Ultimate Hikes – Bonnie Burril, Matthew Graham
<b>Bush 1</b>	Chris Harvey
<b>Canoe 1</b>	Matt Barker
<b>Climbing Wall Supervisor</b>	Anton Vestburg, Sim Grigg, Andy Magness, Tammy Magness, Troy Watson, Jamie McCaulay, Rebecca Jackson, Julian Onyszczuk, Kylie Krippner, Zac Pearson, Gerard Hill
<b>CWS – Monitor Lead Endorsement</b>	Andy Magness, Tammy Magness, Julian Onyazczuk, Zac Pearson, Gerard Hill
<b>Kayak 1</b>	Grace Robertson
<b>Mountain Bike Leader</b>	Henare Peta, Sam Durrant, Oliver Baker, Lawrence Turner, Shane Surridge, Trent Norman
<b>Rock 1 – Sport Climbing Endorsement</b>	Mark Chambers
<b>Rock 2</b>	Maika Hemera
<b>Sea Kayak 1</b>	David Fenton



**Thoughts from the Board**

Kia ora koutou,

What the quarter it has been! As again we find ourselves in a position of cancelling, rescheduling and crystal ball gazing, it was great that so many of you took the chance to connect in with your NZOIA whānau. Thank you to the 50+ members and industry partners who joined us online for the NZOIA AGM, it was great to see your faces, recap the year and celebrate this year's award winners.

A massive congratulations to this year's award recipients; Tall Totara: Jen Riley, Emerging Guide: Tom Groothuizen and Emerging Instructor: Grace Robertson. Alongside our tertiary award winners: Astrid Cotterill-Nagels, Shaun Robinson, Sampson Mollan, Matt Hanson and William Wright.

Congratulations also to Ben White on your election to the NZOIA board, we look forward to having you on the team.

45 Assessors also managed to meet up, masks and all, at Glentui for the 2021 Assessor Conference, with a number of refresher workshops still occurring in the days that followed.

Despite the ongoing uncertainty, there were many successes for NZOIA and its members this year:

- 278 additional qualifications were gained representing a 94% pass rate
- 4 disciplines were reviewed

- 150 members attended training and refresher workshops (despite the symposium canceling)
- There was a 100% satisfaction of participants with quality of assessment, refresher and training events

Additionally, we know that NZOIA members played a key role in providing quality outdoor recreation and education experiences to over 250,000 people over the last year, a massive and important contribution to Aotearoa at a time when wellbeing, connection and staying active are so important.

That said, we're looking forward to a much more settled 2022, where ongoing easing of Covid-19 government restrictions and guidelines leave us much more confident we'll see you in person for the 2022 Symposium.

Finally, thank you on behalf of all of us to Matt Barker who stepped off the NZOIA Board at this year's AGM. Matt's been on the board for seven years, contributing his skills and insights particularly around the tertiary and water safety parts of our sector. Matt, we hope you have a little more free time to get out for a hunt now (did we mention that time he bought a gun to a board meeting!?) Thanks for all you've given over the last seven years.

Hei konā mai

Gemma Parkin | NZOIA Board Chair

**We want your story!**

We are looking for contributions from you, the NZOIA members, for the NZOIA Quarterly. Do you have a story to tell? Do you know someone who has thoughts to share?

Articles could be:  
A personal adventure and how your experiences have impacted your instruction/guiding of others.  
/ An incident, near miss or accident that others could learn from.  
/ A personal profile – an interesting tale about how you got to be where you are now in the world of outdoor instructing.  
/ An organisation that is doing innovative and interesting things – with its programme, philosophy, direction and instruction or guiding.  
/ A reflection on any aspect of outdoor instruction/guiding that you think would be educational and beneficial for others to hear.

Contact the editor with your ideas and for guidelines: editor@nzoia.org.nz



Photo: Johnny Johnson



*Awarded to a current instructor or guide who personifies 'excellence in outdoor leadership'. A highly respected role model, someone who has contributed significantly to outdoor education in New Zealand through both work with clients and with aspirant instructors/guides.*

## TALL TOTARA CONGRATULATIONS: JEN RILEY

*"Jen is highly regarded by her peers and her clients/students. Although no longer in front of students full time, as a contractor she is an inspirational role model and valuable mentor to emerging instructors.*

*At the last minute Jen can step in and run a First Aid course for any of the local polytechnic Outdoor programmes, teach white water kayaking or rock climbing for secondary students and tertiary for that matter. She can run a bush or canoe assessment and lead a review of the Canoe Syllabus. She is active and current and maintains a high level of fitness and skill in all her pursuits.*

*She has NZOIA Sea Kayak Guide, Bush 2, Canoe, Kayak 1 and Rock 1 – Sport Endorsement.*

*She is sensible, level headed, has well practiced judgement and first aid skills and is someone that anyone would want on their expedition, journey or weekend warrior adventure.*

*Jen started her outdoor journey with her family as a young, passionate, tough, Southland kayaker. When she wasn't studying towards her Science Degree she was boating. She was and still is a strong, confident, capable kayaker and instructor. Highly organised, which was a challenge in the OUCC community, she had everyone sorted for boats, transport and logistics for weekend boating trips. She was also a voice of reason amongst the craziness in those days.*

*She proves time and time again that she's an amazing educator, organiser, teacher, facilitator, leader and continues to extent herself in the many pursuits she participates in. The latest being adventure racing and mountain biking. Jen has given so much of her time, energy, passionate and ever increasing skill to the New Zealand outdoor industry and is definitely one of my Tall Totara!"*

Anna Hughes

*"I first meet Jen when I moved to the Nelson/Tasman area. Her reputation had preceded her, and I was looking forward to meeting this experienced outdoors woman, who was so highly respected in the outdoor industry. On a professional level I often turn to her to discuss safety management and policy, and she always has an insightful and helpful perspective. Her experience working in so many different outdoor environments and with so many different providers makes her a very knowledgeable source*

*for best practice in the industry. Jen is always ready to support others in the outdoors, whether it is passing on knowledge about a new climbing site or sending through helpful resources for risk management. On my last Bush Refresher, I really valued Jen's professional and positive approach to the day. She manages to combine authority and respect with a joyful and adventurous spirit."*

Hillary McDonald

*"Jen Riley is a deep thinker, hard worker, shows precision and attention to detail, is independent, diligent, supportive, passionate and fun. These traits and a deep understanding of herself and her dogma set her apart from her peers within the outdoor industry. She is a powerful soul!"*

*Jen's incredible traits have touched so many. She has created positive change and influenced people, who have in turn integrated Jen's teachings into their lives creating seismic ripples for more and more people.*

*Jen is the consummate professional. At Nelson Marlborough Institute of Technology Adventure Tourism and Guiding course, Jen has taken a key role in developing the new programme. Throughout the TRoQ process Jen was always enthusiastic, pragmatic and clear in the belief of "doing a good job" and going the extra mile. She never accepts anything but the best from her students and they step up to the expectation.*

*Working with her in the field, her skills and standards again shine. Always on point, bringing a clear insight and quality to the job, and demonstrating her deep foundation in understanding people and education. In hard times or when wacky ideas are flying she is a great sounding board. Her honest and informed decisions have helped shape NMIT.*

*Finally, passion! Jen embodies it, it runs through her veins and seen by everyone she comes into contact with. Not just passion for outdoorsy stuff but for life. She takes the difficulties and works hard to get through them. Jen lives life fully. It has been an honour to work with her and see the family she has created in Nelson with Ducky and Ned."*

Sam Russek

*"I am quite sure 'no' is not in her vocabulary when it comes to making things a reality in complex and diverse contexts. When she is seemingly 'up against it,' Jen examines all avenues and possibilities, exhausting all options to make things that are seemingly impossible, become reality. Tenacious and determined, working for the greater good and the benefit of others.*

*Jen is the epitome of perseverance and determination. If you want something difficult done, Jen will do it. In her teaching, instructing, and personal life, she is passionate and dedicated. Whether we are hanging about on rock faces, paddling, tramping, or sharing laughter, coffee, and conversation, 'Five-Jen' is a mentor, an inspiration, and a true friend. Always understating herself and her achievements, Jen is the consummate professional.*

*A 'Tall Totara' who seeks growth, understanding and knowledge for herself and others. 'Mana wahine'."*

Bridg Janse

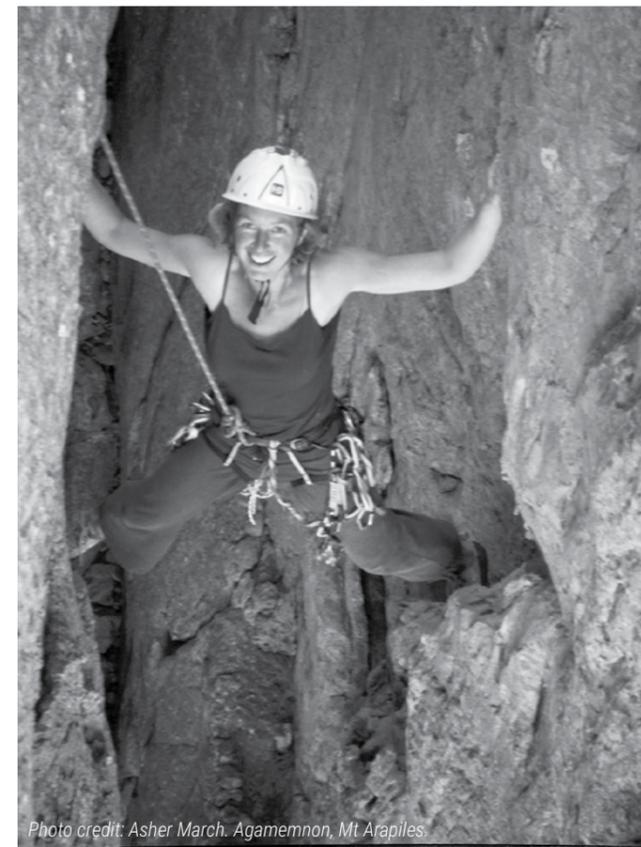


Photo credit: Asher March, Agamemnon, Mt Arapiles.





*Awarded to an emerging guide who displays great potential, talent and commitment to a career in the guiding sector.*

Tom has achieved some outstanding feats at a relatively young age and has an unwavering adventurous spirit and patience.

After successfully biking 50,000 km over the full length of the Americas, Africa and Asia and kayaking 2,850 km down the Danube River, Tom came home to Aotearoa looking for an interesting job. He landed one with Auckland Sea Kayaks, which brought him on board as a trainee. He successfully completed his Sea Kayak Leader qualification within a few months, followed soon by Sea Kayak 1.

Tom has a keen interest in conservation and sustainability. He is constantly working towards Auckland Sea Kayaks' objective of zero single use plastics, lives the principles of Leave No Trace New Zealand, and keeps his workmates informed about changes to Hauraki Gulf Marine Park legislation.

He built his own skin-on-frame kayaks during periods of COVID-19 lockdown in Auckland last year and has planned missions to test his creations out around Great Barrier Island and Northland.

Tom's passion for the ocean, unique perspectives and dedication to providing fantastic experiences for the people he takes into the outdoors are just some of the reasons he is the deserved winner of this year's Emerging Guide award.



# EMERGING GUIDE CONGRATULATIONS: TOM GROOTHUIZEN

*“Tom approached Auckland Sea Kayaks and expressed his interest in a future career guiding in the outdoor industry. We were impressed by his attitude and enthusiasm, and brought him on board as a trainee / intern to learn the ropes. He is smart, keen to learn.”*

*As his responsibilities increased with his experience throughout the season, Tom set his goal of achieving Sea Kayak 1. Tom put in a large amount of practice outside work hours - running instructional sessions with model clients and increasing his knowledge of local flora and fauna to improve the quality of his interpretation. His commitment to this career path and the industry is obvious.*

*When guiding school groups, he loves to include beach cleans and rubbish audits and instils his enthusiasm for the environment with everyone who joins him on the water.*

*Tom wants to progress in the guiding industry and is excited about the prospect of guiding off shore in the New Zealand winter when international travel resumes.”*

Nicholas Mead

*“I have assessed Tom's NZOIA Sea Kayak Leader and Sea Kayak 1 assessment and have worked with him as a fellow sea kayak guide and Instructor at Auckland Sea Kayaks. Throughout this I have found Tom hungry to find new ways to develop as a guide and instructor and has consistently worked towards this.*

*Tom is always early with a cuppa and a weather forecast, keen for a day on the water. While I have been learning the ropes he has been very patient and given me all the resources and support I could need. He brings a unique perspective drawn from his years traveling and passion for the ocean. When he is not working on the water, he will still be on the water.”*

Nick Davies



*Awarded to an emerging guide who displays great potential, talent and commitment to a career in the guiding sector.*

Grace has a number of NZOIA qualifications, completing Rock, Abseil, Kayak and Bush Leader in her second year of studies in 2019, before going on to gain Rock 1 and Kayak 1 over the last year.

Post-study, Grace has contracted to various South Island companies, including her current employer, the Adventure Specialties Trust. Here, she has rapidly climbed the ranks and although young and early in her career, Grace has made big efforts in supporting the next generation by sharing her skills, environmental understanding, and passion for the outdoors.

She always gets positive feedback from clients, staff and students. She works hard, is diligent, and has a strong awareness of health and safety best practice. Colleagues and friends describe Grace's commitment to recreation as "infectious".

Her past tutors, colleagues and peers all look at her with admiration, highlighting exactly why Grace claimed the Emerging Instructor Award.



# EMERGING INSTRUCTOR CONGRATULATIONS: GRACE ROBERTSON

*“I first met Grace Robertson as an aspirant first year student at Ara's Timaru campus in 2018. By the end of her first year and culmination of her class 10-day expedition, (a student led trip linking the West and East Coast of the South Island) cycling the Old Ghost Road, hiking Nelson Lakes National Park, and rafting the Waiua Toa/ Clarence River, there was no doubt Grace would be an impactful role model, an influencer to whomever was a part of her journey and certainly to those who would have Grace as an instructor or educator.*

*Throughout her second year Grace compiled a quiver of NZOIA Leader awards; Rock, Abseil, Kayak and Bush, with ease, her performance, preparedness, enthusiasm, and relentless positivity was admired by the staff and her peers. From even before Grace had graduated, she had become sought after as an employee in various establishments.*

*Grace's commitment to personal recreating is infectious; her NZ topo's pinned to her wall inevitably lead to the next mission and journey conversation.*

*Although young and early in her career Grace has made efforts in supporting the next 'generation' of student by supporting them skills development, environmental understanding, and passion for the outdoors. Through Ara Institute of Canterbury's alumni social media pages, Grace often answers questions, offers opportunity in skill development, and provides advice for those who seek.*

*Does Grace personify the traits of a good role model? A good outdoor instructor or educator? I'd say without a doubt! When your past tutors, your colleagues and peers look at you with admiration in what you are achieving early in your career it shows that you personify what is expected of a NZOIA Emerging Instructor.”*

Curtis Vermeulen

*“Grace has been an exceptional staff member from the day she started. She has always had positive feedback from client staff and students. She builds rapport quickly and students connect easily with and respect her despite her young age. She works hard and is diligent in what she does working towards the best possible experiential and learning outcome for those she engages with. She has a strong awareness of best practice in safety and always hits the mark with this.*

*Grace is super positive, friendly and fun to be around, she thinks deeply about issues and is constantly striving to make our workplace better for all.”*

Andrew Balcar

# NZOIA TERTIARY AWARD RECIPIENTS 2021

This award is aimed at students who have a passion for outdoor instruction and show great potential for further involvement in the industry beyond their studies.

## Astrid Cotterill-Nagels (Wintec)

Astrid was a student in 2018 completing the Certificate in Outdoor Recreation at Wintec and NZOIA leader qualifications in Rock, Abseil and Bush. She quickly picked up employment in Waitomo and local high schools for a couple of years, before returning to Wintec's Diploma programme and setting her sights on Cave Leader, Rock 1 and Bush 1. She has put a lot of effort into ensuring others in her crew are safe and supported. And she is always trying to improve her already massive plants knowledge. An up and coming asset to our industry!

## Shaun Robinson (Nelson Marlborough Institute of Technology)

Recognised for his consistency, maturity and relentless dedication to not only self-improvement, but the improvement of his class. A positive attitude gets him through the tougher times. Shaun always looks at negative situations through a constructive lens maximising learning for himself and his peers. Shaun's dedication to moving the whole team forward shows a maturity beyond his time at polytech and promises great things continuing on his path in outdoor education.

## Sampson Mollan (Tai Poutini Polytechnic)

Sampson was selected based on his recent performances, teaching ability and the calm steady influence he has within the Tai Poutini outdoor programme culture. His level of maturity is high and he presents himself well amongst staff and his peers.

Educating in the outdoors is a path he would like to follow and no doubt he will be snapped up quickly in employment in the industry.

## Matt Hanson (Hillary Outdoors – Tertiary Programme)

Matt has been an outstanding student at Hillary outdoors for the last two years, an enthusiastic kayaker he is always seeking out opportunities to get out and about. Within his peers Matt has demonstrated key leadership skills in ensuring that group tasks are achieved, motivating others to look at challenging possibilities. He has developed a well-rounded set of skills as an instructor, has a keen eye on safety and aware of how to structure experiences for groups to get the most out of their time. Matt is a motivated person and is well set to be an outstanding instructor in the future.

## William Wright (Ara Institute of Canterbury)

Will quickly gained recognition as a competent student amongst his peers and staff, passing convincingly all his courses and meeting the requirements to pass his first NZOIA Leader (Bush) in 2020. He became a role model of professional practice, showing up early, commencing student-based tasks without direction. Contributing positively to class discussions and providing insightful comments to his peers, Will took every opportunity he could. Will shows a great deal of passion for the outdoors and outdoor instruction which will help him navigate these early years of his study and career.



## Outward Bound New Zealand

Recruiting now  
for instructors who are  
passionate about delivering  
life-changing programmes.

Apply online by 31 Jan 2022  
[outwardbound.co.nz/instructors](https://outwardbound.co.nz/instructors)

# ADVOCACY

SAM NEWTON

## Financial relief for Outdoor Education providers effected by COVID

When the country went into lockdown in August, here at Recreation Aotearoa, we realised very quickly that even if it only lasted a few week, many outdoor education providers would face significant financial hardship. Based on information we gathered from our members during the 2020 lockdown and some assumptions we have around the state of cash reserves held in the non-profit sector, we suspected that many providers would be facing insolvency. This prompted us to engage with the Minister of Sport and Recreation (who also happens to be the Minister of Finance) and express our concerns. Thanks to the openness of some of our organisational members, especially in Auckland, we were able to pull together information that showed Sport NZ just how precarious the financial situation is for the Outdoor Education sector and how much would be lost by the young people of NZ, if providers ceased to operate.

To cut a long story short, after some time, we were pleased to be able to announce the Outdoor Education Support Fund. Managed and delivered by Recreation Aotearoa on behalf of Sport NZ, the \$1.5M fund is aimed at outdoor education organisations experiencing short-term financial hardship due to the impacts of COVID-19. The support fund is available to help outdoor education organisations cover fixed operating costs or their loss of revenue in the Delta lockdown period. Applications to the fund closed on October the 29th. At the time of writing, we have received over a dozen applications and are expecting many more. Apart from the obvious benefit of providing financial relief, we hope that the applications will enhance Sport NZ's understanding of the Outdoor Education sector and the huge extent to which it enhances the wellbeing of young New Zealanders.

## Submissions open to the MBIE review of the Adventure Activities

In early September MBIE released its consultation document on the Adventure Activity Regulations. In the document the Government has proposed options for changes to the regime to improve safety in the sector which could:

- increase requirements for how operators, landowners and the regulator manage natural hazard risks,
- change how risk is monitored, assessed, and communicated,
- beef-up WorkSafe's regulatory leadership role, and
- alter the safety audit standard, audit process and guidance and information for the sector.

Submissions closed on November the 5th, so I am really hoping that you or your employer contributed to the public consultation process. If you would like to know more about how these reforms are arrived at and considered, we have a webinar recorded here that explains the lay of the land. <https://vimeo.com/516863553>

## Ngā mihi to NZOIA

As I write this column on a Monday, I reflect back on the weekend in which I would have seen many of you at the NZOIA Symposium at Glentui...if it had not been cancelled. This morning, I read the NZOIA Annual Report and this evening I will attend the NZOIA AGM via Zoom. I just want to take a moment to congratulate the Board and Staff of NZOIA for their great work in what has been a very difficult time. Cancelling the Symposium must have been a heart-breaking, but unavoidable decision. The work that NZOIA and its members do day-in and day-out has never been more crucial to the wellbeing of New Zealanders. In whatever way you contribute, a big thankyou from me!

Recreation  
Aotearoa  
Te Whai Oranga



# ASPIRING

Quality gear since 1981



# ASPIRING.CO.NZ



Photos: Richard Rossiter

# CAPE FEAR YOUTH ADVENTURE RACE

GLEN IRVING

Youth Week 2003 loomed on the horizon. There was nothing on the calendar for Westport so a plan was quickly hatched amongst mates to host a kids adventure race around the Cape Foulwind area to mark the occasion. We'd explored this area a lot with our own tamariki so knew there was potential for a great event that would be full of surprises for those brave enough to do it. In true adventure racing style we handed out maps with the expectation that they would help competitors get around the course, but quickly realised that only a few had any idea what to do with them. It was a blast, full of mostly local kids who had a great time even if it wasn't quite what they had in mind when they entered. Some of the competitors certainly didn't look like they were ready to tackle a 200m section of thigh deep mud on a bike, but they all made it to the finish line with smiles of satisfaction, as has every competitor since.

That first year was good enough to convince us that it was worth a second crack, so in 2004 we once again descended on Cape Foulwind to see if we could iron out some of the course issues that we discovered in the first year, and find some more gems to add to the course. This resulted in a new abseil site, a tyrolean traverse out in the sea cliffs and another 100 kids keen to take on the challenge. Each year since then the course has been tweaked and adjusted to try and improve on the year before, always with an eye to seeing what new twists we can add to the race.

As event regulations and expectations have increased the management of the ropes section of the course became impossible to do with our original crew, so a call was made to Tai Poutini Polytech (TPP) to see if they could help. The response was incredibly positive, and TPP now bring an enthusiastic team of students and tutors to oversee this part of the course, giving them real world experience instructing an abseil or rock climb in sometimes very trying conditions with very tired participants. The involvement of TPP has taken a huge load off us as the event organisers, and has meant that we've been able to focus our efforts on ensuring the rest of the event is as good as it can be.

There were a few key things we put in place in 2003 that are fundamental to the way the event works. Unlike your average youth multisport event, the first was that it had to be raced in teams of two rather than solo. The element of teamwork that this introduces means that no-one is left out on the course to struggle by themselves, and usually the last ones in are last simply because they've been out there enjoying an adventure with their mate rather than racing to the finish line. The second was that parents were encouraged to leave their kids to it - much of the course is beyond the watchful eye of parents, which

means the competitors have to fend for themselves, find their own way around the course and not resort to calling in the parental support crew when things don't quite go to plan. The event is a chance for kids to prove to themselves - and their parents - that they are capable of doing amazing things if left to get on with it.

Volunteers play a key role in the event, and enable us to run it on the smell of an oily rag. Buller Search and Rescue have been providing radio communication across the course since the first event, and our team of over 40 marshals all give up their time and energy because they love what this event is about. It's a genuine community event that gives the people of Westport a chance to showcase why we love living here to those who travel from afar. Competitors now come from as far south as Wānaka and all over the top of the South Island, with many teams making it a staple part of their event lineup for the year. In 2018 the event even managed to pick up the Recreation Aotearoa Outstanding Event Award, which was a great boost for all those involved.



Cape Fear's first year was a gamble. If you'd asked me then if we would still be running it 18 years later I would have said no, but it's got under our skin and we can't imagine abandoning it now. Our next challenge is making sure that we have others to pass the baton on to. Someone once said to me that the real measure of success for anything we do is what happens once we are gone. If it all falls apart then we haven't done our job, so it's time to start bringing some new faces into the organising team to ensure Cape Fear can keep giving our youth a genuine outdoor challenge for many years to come.

Glen Irving



The Aotearoa Climbing Access Trust (ACAT) was formed earlier this year to address the rock-climbing access crisis unfolding around the country. In the past few years we have lost access to incredibly popular crags like Whanganui Bay and The Quarry, and unfortunately there are many more issues on the horizon.

ACAT aims to support, coordinate and represent the climbing community to overcome these challenges, so we can keep climbing areas open for all users. Our mission is to build sustainable climbing access through strong relationships between climbers, communities, and the environment.

In the past 12 months ACAT has:

1. Saved climbing access at Waipari (formerly Froggatt Edge), Ti Point and Maungarei Springs crags.
2. Developed a website, email newsletter and social media channels to provide reliable information and education.
3. Developed a team of committed volunteers to help build ACAT's capacity.
4. Done significant work to protect, improve or regain access at several crags including Wharepapa Rock, Whanganui Bay, and Mt Bradley.

Just last month we succeeded (in conjunction with Recreation Aotearoa) in advocating for climbing to be permitted in the Auckland region under Covid-19 Alert Level 3 Step 1, enabling climbers to safely enjoy their sport after two months of lockdown.

## General Manager

As from 1 October 2021, ACAT is thrilled to have employed Edwin Sheppard as its General Manager to lead the organisation and develop effective strategies to keep climbing areas open. This position is funded by our generous donors and seed funding provided by the New Zealand Alpine Club.

This means that for the first time ever in Aotearoa there is a paid professional who is dedicated to working on climbing access issues around the country. This will enable ACAT to develop more sustainable and enduring relationships with landowners and stakeholders, taking action proactively to address potential issues.

## Access Work

Many of the crags that ACAT has saved or is working on are heavily used by adventure activity operators as well as recreational climbers. Some examples are:

### Maungarei Springs and Ti Point

These crags are both on Auckland Council land and came under threat late last year after an individual contacted the Council,

claiming that it could be liable for any future bolt failures.

In response, we provided the Council with our own analysis of the applicable health and safety law, with support from NZAC, two Auckland-based outdoor education providers, FMC and others. Ultimately the Council accepted our position that the claims were incorrect and rock climbing is an appropriate activity in these reserves.

### Waipari Crag (formerly Froggatt Edge)

Waipari was put up for sale at the end of 2020 and, due to the heavily trafficked nature of the crag, there was a severe risk that a future owner would not accommodate climbers.

After two months of work to find a solution, the farm was successfully purchased at auction by our good friends Karl (Merry) Schimanski and Emma Laken. Our shared vision for the crag includes an ecological restoration project and permanent climber access to the cliffs. We will need to do significant fundraising and volunteer work, but it will be a fantastic resource for the community.

### Proposed new rules for Adventure Activities

We are deeply concerned by some of MBIE's recent 'Keeping it Safe' proposals. The proposal to impose legal requirements on landowners who permit access for adventure activity operators seems likely to result in many closures. We are collaborating with other concerned organisations to ensure a robust response.

### Relationship with the outdoor industry

Historically there has been a lack of communication between the outdoor activity industry and the recreational climbing community. The formation of ACAT creates an opportunity to increase collaboration based on a shared set of goals and values.

Adventure education providers and guides benefit from ACAT's advocacy work, and also support it by maintaining relationships with landowners, teaching respect for the environment, and appreciation for the incredible opportunities available in our natural backyard. We have already worked closely with some outdoor education providers and we are exploring future opportunities for partnerships around environmental projects.

If you want to keep up to date with ACAT's work, please visit: [www.acat.org.nz](http://www.acat.org.nz) to sign up to our mailing list and/or make a donation, and follow us on social media at: [@aotearoaclimbingaccess](https://www.instagram.com/aotearoaclimbingaccess)



# RESCUE AND RESPONSE – BEING PREPARED

GRANT PRATTLEY

When faced with an incident that needs an immediate response, you need to have a well thought out and documented plan before you need it that is well practiced from the detailed actions on the ground, to the incident management and interactions that need to occur from further away.

## PART 1: The thinking part

### 1.1 Prepare and practice for rescue

In the Rescue and Incident Management world we use a concept called Manageable Span of Control. This means we have only have a limited number of people or things (optimum is from 3-7) we can manage effectively at one time.<sup>1</sup>

This Span of Control comes from our brains limited working memory. Working memory is the amount of stored information we can use and manipulate at one time<sup>2</sup>. Working memory is important for reasoning and the guidance of decision-making and behaviour.<sup>3</sup>

“Working memory is like a temporary sticky note in the brain.”<sup>4</sup>

To get around the constraints of the working memory, especially during times of high stress during a rescue, one big thing we can do is gain more experience.

- With more experience we can recognise a wider range of patterns (what’s happening).
- When sizing up an incident we can match one (or combination) pattern from previous experience so we can understand what going on (situational awareness).
- Then respond accordingly – ideally with successful strategies you have used before.<sup>1</sup>

Over time as we gain more experience we have the ability to chunk learned experienced into bigger buckets so we no longer need to think about them. This means when an unfamiliar condition is thrown up there is way less to think about.

### 1.2 So how do you get experience for rescue?

When we don’t do a rescue very often, one way is undertaking preparedness training.

We not only need to regularly practice the skills but also have multiple small rescue simulations where you are put under pressure. This builds our ability to recognise what is happening (patterns) and take an appropriate course of action.

When we train it’s helpful to predict how a rescue could happen and keep the skills really simple in a logical progression.

For example:

- Breaking skills down to progressions (see 2.3 Progression for techniques).
- Based on a particular scenario (see 2.2 Using a progression in a scenario).
- Based on a multi-level response exercise where we focus on the interactions of the incident management, teams and responding agencies (see 2.4 Progression in incident response – the rescue hierarchy).

Included in training is a debrief, reflection and then an active improvement cycle. Otherwise, the gained experience does not have any relevance or is unlikely to have sustained change.

## PART 2: The doing part

### 2.1 Train the way you want to rescue

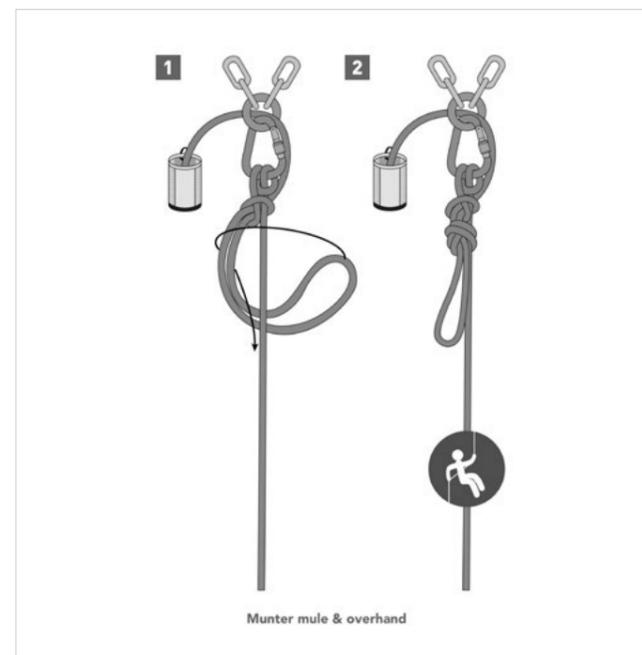
One of my underlying ideas about rescue is that you should use the simplest and most efficient method to get the job done in a safe manner.

- The patient does not care how technical your rescue is, they just want to get out from their position of peril as quickly as possible.
- Therefore, you should train with the simplest methods first. Get efficient in those skills you are likely to use most often.
- Resist the urge to train in the most difficult rescue scenarios first up that are unlikely to occur. Have these more difficult rescues as part of your training but always at the end of the sequence.
- More difficult rescue scenarios are often not more technical but need more coordination. The human skills of keeping calm in a rescue and response, getting good situational awareness, delegating to keep span of control and making suitable decisions give you momentum towards the right outcomes.

### 2.2 Using a progression in a scenario

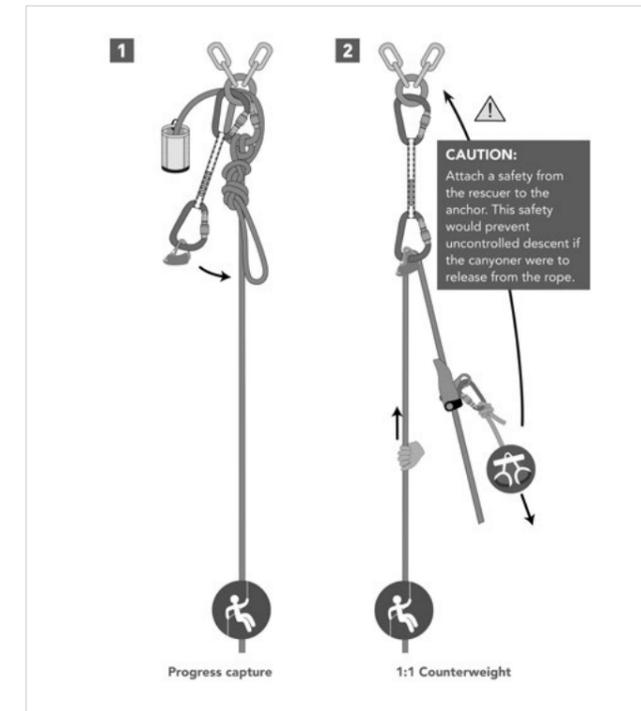
As an example, one canyoning scenario that we think about and train for is someone getting stuck in the waterflow. This is an example of partner rescue (see below).

As I have a releasable system the first option is to lower them if appropriate (see munter mule & overhand) – if I have good comms and know what the problem is e.g. a piece of clothing or hair stuck in the abseil device, jammed abseil device.



If the person on rope has a foot stuck in behind a rock or a bit of gear is snagged on a tree lowering is going to make it worse. A quick changeover to a counter weight may be needed to get the person up to

free them (see progress capture & 1:1 counter weight) – if I have good comms (e.g. their device is locked off) and know what the problem is. They may be able to carry on abseiling or I may need to change over and lower them to the bottom.

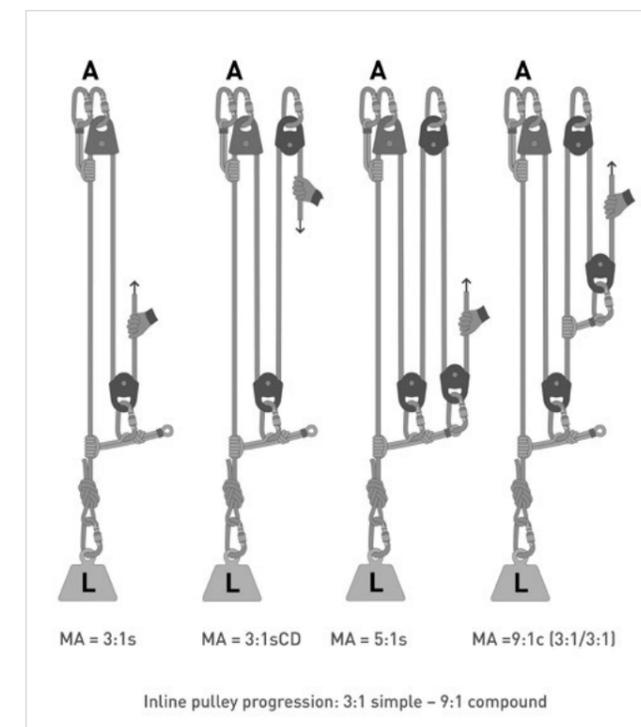


If you can’t resolve the rescue by lowering or raising the next part of the progression is to abseil down to the patient and physically assist them or pick them off onto your system and abseil to the bottom.

### 2.3 Progression for techniques

Some rescue techniques lend themselves really well to training and using as a progression. A good example of this is pulley systems.

- You can go from a mechanical advantage 3:1s (s=simple) to a 3:1sCD (CD=change of direction) to a 5:1s to a 9:1c (c=compound) relatively easily with 4 pulleys.



- When you come to using the pulley systems, you might start with a 3:1s if you think you can haul the load with this.
- However, with experience you learn that, with the given inputs such as a heavy load, friction over an edge or number of haulers, you might choose to go straight to a 5:1s.
- If you have this clear picture of what you are going to use, you can plan the gear you need and have it in a suitable location for when you need it.
- For example, for vertical canyons, clipped to the inside top of the canyoning pack with the pitch rope is:
  - a small Prusik minding pulley
  - two other small pulleys (on the same carabiner) and
  - in combination with this each person or guide has multi-use gear clipped on their harness such rope grabs (x2), carabiners (X4-5) small pulley.

Therefore, any pulley system that is required can be built. Whoever is rigging (pitch leader/canyon guide) has the pulleys at the top where they are needed.

### 2.4 Progression in incident response – the rescue hierarchy

Ideally and almost all of the time we deal with things in the 1-2 range (self-rescue and partner rescue). Train in rescue to look after yourself and partner first as this is the most efficient way with the best outcomes.

Use the rescue hierarchy in your preparation to see if there are any gaps.

All four parts of the rescue hierarchy could be activated at once, depending on the seriousness of the incident. You are better to push your response to a higher level early than wait. You are better to get everyone moving towards you and stand them down if you don’t need them.

1. **Self-rescue** – What can you do for yourself to get out of trouble? Examples, include being able to change over from going up to down a rope and back again and having a knife in an accessible position, teaching clients what to do if they need help.
2. **Partner rescue** – Another guide, instructor or team member helps you out. Examples include in canyoning having a lowerable abseiling rope that can be changed into pulley system if needed. Having an accessible rope end, throw bag or flip line for swiftwater canyons for immediate rescue.
3. **Team rescue** – A wider team on site or close by as the first responders to come and help (instructors, guides, company, organisation, other groups). If your business or organisation has a rescue cache, they are often the ones to be able to grab some gear such as additional medical gear, backboard and stretcher and come to you.
4. **The rescue team** – This is an outside organisation responding to you. For example: when you push the SOS button on the comms device this is who turns up. With modern communication devices and helicopters this could be fast. Remember that a beacon response might not necessarily know what they are responding to, so any additional information you can get out is very useful for responding agencies.
 

The location and weather will affect if a response is timely and possible.

Pre engagement and training with responding agencies is a really good way to get a better response.

### References

1. *Coordinated Incident Management System (CIMS) Third edition August 2019, New Zealand Government*
2. *Klein, Gary. Sources of power. How People Make decisions. 1999. MIT Press.*
3. *Working Memory. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Working\_memory*
4. *Rosen, Peg. What is working memory? https://www.understood.org/articles/en/working-memory-what-it-is-and-how-it-works*

Grant Prattley | overthederescue.com | NZOIA Canyon 2 | LandSAR instructor for Canyon Rescue, Cave Rescue and CIMS

Course	Course fee (NZOIA Members) *
Refresher Courses	\$195 (\$100 1/2 day)
Training Courses	\$415 (\$215 1/2 day)
<b>Assessment Courses</b>	
<b>Leader Assessments:</b> Abseil Leader Bush Walking Leader Canoe Leader Kayak Leader Sea Kayak Leader Rock Climbing Leader <b>Free Range Assessment:</b> Artificial Whitewater	\$150 plus any Assessor fees and costs <b>This fee includes annual membership for new members.</b> Please contact an Assessor directly to arrange an assessment and their fee.
<b>1 Day Assessments:</b> Sport Climbing Endorsement Sea Kayak 1 Upgrade Multisport Kayak Endorsement	\$295
<b>2 Day Assessments</b> Kayak 2 - Class 3 River Mmt Kayak 2 - Skills Instruction	\$560
<b>2 Day Assessments:</b> (plus evening session) Cave 1 Mountain Bike 1 Rock 1 Sport Climbing Instructor	\$595
<b>3 Day Assessments:</b> Kayak 1 Multisport Kayak instructor Sea Kayak 1 & 2	\$760
<b>3 Day Assessments:</b> (plus evening session) Alpine 1 Bush 1 & 2 Canoe 1 Cave 2 Canyon 1 & 2 Mountain Bike 2 Rock 2	\$795
<b>4 Day Assessments:</b> Kayak 2	\$930
<b>4 Day Assessments:</b> (plus evening session) Alpine 2	\$980

[www.nzoi.org.nz](http://www.nzoi.org.nz)

The course calendars for Assessments, Training and Refresher workshops can be found at [www.nzoi.org.nz](http://www.nzoi.org.nz). Members are notified of updates to the calendar via the NZOIA 4YA – our weekly email.

## Booking for an NZOIA Assessment, Training or Refresher Workshop

- Go to [www.nzoi.org.nz](http://www.nzoi.org.nz)
- Check out the Scope and Syllabus, if you are applying for an assessment then make sure you meet all the pre-requisites.
- On the course calendar, find the event you want to apply for (you will need to be logged into your member profile) and select 'Apply'. Upload any prerequisites (i.e. your logbook, summary sheet, first aid certificate and any other required documentation to your application).
- Applications close 6 weeks before the course date.
- After the closing date we will confirm that the course will run.
- If NZOIA cancels a course, you will receive a full refund/transfer of your fee.
- If you withdraw before the closing date, you will receive a full refund of your fee. If you withdraw after the closing date of a course, **the fee is non-refundable**. It is transferable under exceptional circumstances (e.g. bereavement, medical reasons), medical certificates/other proof may be required. Contact [admin@nzoi.org.nz](mailto:admin@nzoi.org.nz) for more details.

## Further Information

Details of courses run by NZOIA, pre-requisites and online payment are all available at: [www.nzoi.org.nz](http://www.nzoi.org.nz)

## Courses by special arrangement

It is possible to run assessments on other dates. You will need a minimum of 3 motivated candidates and the date of when you would like the course to be run. Go to the FAQ page on the website [www.nzoi.org.nz/faq#custom](http://www.nzoi.org.nz/faq#custom) for details on how to arrange a course.

## Course Costs

All courses run by NZOIA are discounted for members and heavily subsidised by external funding.

\*Course fees are for NZOIA Members only unless stated otherwise.

**NZOIA**  
Excellence in Outdoor Leadership



Turning around, with your objective not completed, can be one of the most difficult decisions to make in the mountains. Finding the right balance of risk and reward is a fine art, honed with experience.

For Alastair McDowell, a keen Canterbury-based mountaineer, finding that balance is an important element of every trip. Experience has taught him many things, and as a member of the New Zealand Alpine Team since 2016, he has learnt to identify his limits.

The NZ Mountain Safety Council (MSC) caught up with Alastair after his trip up the classic Canterbury climb, Rome Ridge on Mt Rolleston, to learn more about the process of turning around and why it's such a vital skill.

On a clear late July morning, Alastair, and climbing partner Rose Pearson, set off up the Coral Track. It was Alastair's fifth trip up Rome Ridge, but it was to be the first time he had made the decision to turn around on it.

"We thought climbing conditions might be okay because there had been lots of rain followed by low freezing levels to lock up the snowpack. But we were still uncertain about the snowpack, especially for the descent of the Otira slide, and we did take avalanche gear."

After a 5am start, the pair reached the bush line and noticed the chilly temperatures and the lack of snow at that elevation.

"It was really interesting, every 50m to 100m in elevation gained, the snowpack changed significantly. It was exactly what the NZAA avalanche forecast had described. The fluctuating freezing levels of the past storms had created many layers in the snow. Higher up, fresh powder on top had insulated the wet base preventing a freeze, so we were post-holing down to rocks."

The pair kept going, heading to the lower part of the ridge at an elevation of 1700m.

"We were thinking, this is unpleasant but not dangerous, so we kept going". They paused where the lower Rome Ridge line gained the top of the Crow Valley before a section that requires a traverse of an open snow slope towards "The Gap".

"Crow Valley seemed to be quite loaded with fresh snow, and at that point we realised it was more than just unpleasant, it was potentially dangerous too. Looking up at Rome Ridge, still a long

way to go, a lot of unknown lay ahead, and the travel was going to be slow."

After assessing the conditions, the pair decided to turn back after only a few hours on the mountain.

"You have to be careful because sometimes it's not that easy to turn back once you're there. You've put so much effort into getting there, so you have to be careful of that mentality of 'oh I'll just have a look', and then find yourself in a committing situation.

"If you say to yourself you're willing to turn back, then you actually have to be willing to turn back."

"We were definitely happy with the decision to turnaround. We still enjoyed the morning out, and even got back to work by about 1pm. We'll just try again later in the season."

Alastair says trip research is where it all begins; studying recent and forecast weather and New Zealand Avalanche Advisory (NZAA) forecasts, all to help make a plan.

"At the point we turned around, we decided the reward to risk ratio wasn't quite there and there wasn't any point in continuing."

Rose and Alastair are good climbing partners who know each other's risk tolerance levels and know that there is no ego that will come into play when making these types of decisions.

"It's important everyone develops a mountain philosophy, and they think carefully about their motivations for going into the mountains and about what's actually important. It's not so clear cut as failure or success whether you reach a particular summit or not."

His tip for beginner mountaineers is to compare what you think conditions will be like to what you observe on your trips."Every time you go out, try and create a picture of what it's going to be like based on the weather – precip, wind, freezing levels... and then afterwards compare it to what you actually saw. Over time you get better at predicting when the conditions will be good and safe.

"When you're less experienced you don't have that wealth of knowledge, you do just have to go have a look. You don't learn anything if you don't try. But don't be afraid to turn back."

NZ Mountain Safety Council

New Zealand's largest adventure activity audit provider  
with more than 200 satisfied operators...  
....call us to find out why.

Phone: 0800 394 436  
[adventuremark.co.nz](http://adventuremark.co.nz)

**AM**  
AdventureMark  
SAFETY AUDIT CERTIFIED

# NOLS

CHRISTIAN MARTIN & KAREN BRUCE



Photos supplied by NOLS

NOLS (the National Outdoor Leadership School) has been operating in New Zealand for almost 20 years. The most common question we always get asked is: what exactly do we do when we take 20-days to canoe the Waiiau Toa/Clarence River, or 30-days sea kayaking in the Marlborough Sounds, or 26-days tramping through the Kahurangi? We aim to answer this question here, and share a little of the approach NOLS takes to outdoor education.

## NOLS' Vision

NOLS courses are typically expedition-style endeavours, ranging in length from 7 to 90+ days. For us, long trips provide unsurpassed ability to gain a sense of place, appreciate and understand our natural environment, enhance technical proficiencies, and hone leadership skills. We aim for transformational experiences for our students that will serve them while on course and, more importantly, in their lives beyond NOLS. NOLS has spent the past 55 years refining how to best run expeditions that optimise the student learning experience.

The development of leadership skills is core to what we do at NOLS. Our students are predominantly university aged, between 18 and 22 years old, though we also have students as young as 14 and over 70. Our students hail from high schools and universities, ivy-league MBA programs like Harvard and Cornell, the US Navy Seals, and tech giants like Google. NASA sends every astronaut on a 10-day NOLS wilderness expedition as part of their leadership training. We've found our leadership curriculum builds self-awareness that helps people from all backgrounds understand how to work in diverse and dynamic teams and to improve performance in contexts ranging from a team of astronauts confined to the International Space Station to players on the local high school footy team.

## NOLS New Zealand Expeditions

NOLS ran its first New Zealand expedition in 2003, operating out of a garage in Christchurch. In 2013, we moved to a purpose-built facility in the Aniseed Valley near Nelson. Our course operating

areas stretch from Lake Hawea to Rangitoto ki te Tonga / D'Urville Island. Our most common course in New Zealand is a 77-day semester, where students combine multiple three to four-week expeditions with different skill types back-to-back. We tramp, sea kayak, whitewater canoe, sail, and mountaineer. A semester will usually consist of three of these activities, along with a cultural section in association with Motueka's Te Āwhina Marae.

On all courses, we start by supporting students with learning basic camping and travel skills. We hold them to high standards so they can thrive in the outdoors. The outdoors is our only classroom during a semester program, with theory taught in situ and technical skills taught while travelling; we tune into the weather and the environment as we go, dealing with rain, snow, wind, sun, and terrain while modifying plans accordingly. The distance travelled each day varies. Some days we may do side excursions or have rest days. We enjoy good food. Maintaining energy on a long expedition is essential and we use pantry-style rations that enable all sorts of tasty wonders to be produced on the camp stove, including baked pizza, bread, cakes, pies, and of course, many hot drinks.

Instructors have the flexibility to craft day-to-day activities to meet group needs. While our curriculum is not so different from that covered on many other outdoor programs, the extended journey enables many naturally-occurring learning opportunities rather than relying on contrived scenarios. There are opportunities to fully explore group dynamics and interpersonal relationships, hone effective communication, practice group management, and negotiate interpersonal conflict. Without having a break for a day or two at the base to provide a release valve, students develop and employ the skills to engage with each other to manage actual conflict and to enhance team dynamics. Students make mistakes and learn from them.

When living closely alongside one another during extended expeditions, students need to work through who they are, what they need from others, and explore how best to communicate.

At the same time, every day is different and provides uncertainty that requires resilience to work outside of one's comfort zone and which facilitates valuable individual and group growth. NOLS' curriculum has evolved over the years, and our curriculum increasingly embraces equity, inclusion, and diversity as fundamental to managing group dynamics. Creating an inclusive and positive course culture is vital for every individual to thrive and provides transformational skills for future ethical leaders. NOLS instructors approach group dynamics intentionally, using NOLS' education models to explore self- and situational-awareness to provide life-long lessons for students. To learn these skills and apply them in real situations takes time! Likewise, moving open water canoes laden with expedition gear and food, like we do on our descent of the Waiiau Toa/Clarence River, with students who might start out by holding a paddle for the first time but end being able to move a fleet of canoes through rapids, cannot be achieved in four or five days.

## NOLS Instructors

All NOLS instructors complete a NOLS instructor course before working. Our instructor course is effectively an induction course to NOLS' operating procedures (including maintaining course logs), education models, and intentionality with bringing students together. It is also an opportunity to see if NOLS is a good fit for prospective instructors. Long expedition-style courses are not for everyone.

NOLS maintains an internal instructor qualifications system that is based on skills competency, similar to NZOIA. After completing a NOLS instructor course, NOLS will also recognise relevant NZOIA qualifications as equivalent to NOLS qualifications, enabling these instructors to work multiple skill types for NOLS worldwide. We run an instructor course in New Zealand every year or two, and these courses are between 10 and 25 days in length. All our instructors are qualified Wilderness First Responders and Leave No Trace Master Educators.



The amount that instructors work for NOLS varies. We have some Kiwi instructors who work exclusively for NOLS – between September and April in New Zealand, then in Alaska or Wyoming or some other NOLS location during the New Zealand winter, accumulating 26+ weeks in the field each year. Other instructors work only one three or four-week course every year or two, whenever it can fit between their other work commitments. It's great to be able to cater to the different wants and needs of our

instructors and believe that our instructor body, and student experience, is richer for it. Many instructors take advantage of the ability to work in the international locations in which NOLS operates.

Worldwide, NOLS has a pool of about 800 instructors and employs 600 instructors each year, hailing from all parts of the globe. In New Zealand, we typically have about 20-30 instructors working for us annually. While most of our instructors working in New Zealand are from New Zealand or Australia, we also have a small number of senior NOLS instructors from North America. Our foreign NOLS instructors supplement our local instructors, providing new perspectives for our local staff and ensuring curriculum consistency across all NOLS locations.



## NOLS Worldwide

NOLS has over 55 years of experience running wilderness expeditions since starting out of Lander, Wyoming, in 1965. Since then, NOLS has expanded to have US bases in Wyoming, Washington State, Arizona, Utah, Idaho, New York State, and Alaska, with locations worldwide in Baja Mexico, Chilean Patagonia, Tanzania, Scandinavia, India, and New Zealand. In 2019, across our field-based expeditions and class-room based wilderness medicine courses, NOLS educated about 29,000 people!

An important pillar of NOLS is Wilderness Medicine. Many will have seen wilderness medicine courses offered in New Zealand by NOLS. In New Zealand, NOLS Wilderness Medicine provides courses that include a 16-hour Wilderness First Aid and an 80-hour Wilderness First Responder certifications. While not common in New Zealand, these courses are recognised internationally and are specifically focused on responding to medical situations in remote areas which is perfect for outdoor instructors and guides. Overseas, many employers require a Wilderness First Responder certification to work in a guide or instructor role.

## What's next for NOLS NZ?

While NOLS continues to operate in North America and Mexico, NOLS New Zealand has largely been in a holding pattern since we abruptly pulled courses from the field in 2020 due to COVID-19. Since borders closed, NOLS New Zealand have focused on running wilderness medicine and instructor courses. We continue to explore and develop courses for local students and hope to roll these out in the next six to 12 months.

Demand remains high for international students who want to come to New Zealand once borders open again (who wouldn't want to come to New Zealand!); we aim to be poised to meet that demand when the doors open.

Christian Martin, Director NOLS | Karen Bruce Assistant Director NOLS

# PROFILE: TAI POUTINI POLYTECHNIC OUTDOOR EDUCATION

Outdoor Education training at Tai Poutini Polytechnic (TPP) has been running for 30 years. It was first offered in 1992 and a qualification in Ski Patrol started in 2005. The Outdoor Education Department and its Greymouth based programmes (Ski Patrol is offered in Wānaka) have continued to refine a formula focused on personal and social development, and training work ready employees. Traditionally, TPP has provided graduates to industry with sound technical skills, who are quickly snapped up by the adventure tourism sector.

Many of NZ's experienced outdoor educators have contributed to the legacy of TPP, adding their own flavour and passion. TPP staff have historically been coal face experts working in a dual capacity role as adventure tourism business owners and guides/instructors, which has enabled programmes to stay connected to industry. TPP tutors train the next generation of kaimahi (workers), then facilitate employment opportunities. TPP's ex-graduates, some of decade's past, are repeat visitors on campus, returning 'home' annually in search of good people to hire.

In 2012 TPP's Outdoor Education department further defined its strategic direction and a vision for the future was conceived. These values have defined the programmes' philosophy since:

- Experience – in our staff and for our students.
- Credibility – earned through honesty and integrity.
- Manaakitanga – taking care of our charges and mentoring them.

The implementation of the values has required a persistent effort on behalf of the department's core team. Being friends with aligned values who carpool from Hokitika each day, sharing adventures on rivers, rock crags, riding trails, mountain slopes and beer has been vital to the team's ability to embed its philosophy.

Today TPP's outdoor programmes are in full health with high enrolment numbers across its Level 4 - Certificate in Outdoor and Adventure Education, Level 5 - Diploma in Outdoor and Adventure Education and Level 5 - Certificate in Ski Patrol programme. The department is staffed by Phil Johnstone Coates, Rata Lovell Smith, Andrew Riley, Paula Roberts and Zak Shaw along with a pool of multi-talented contract instructors.

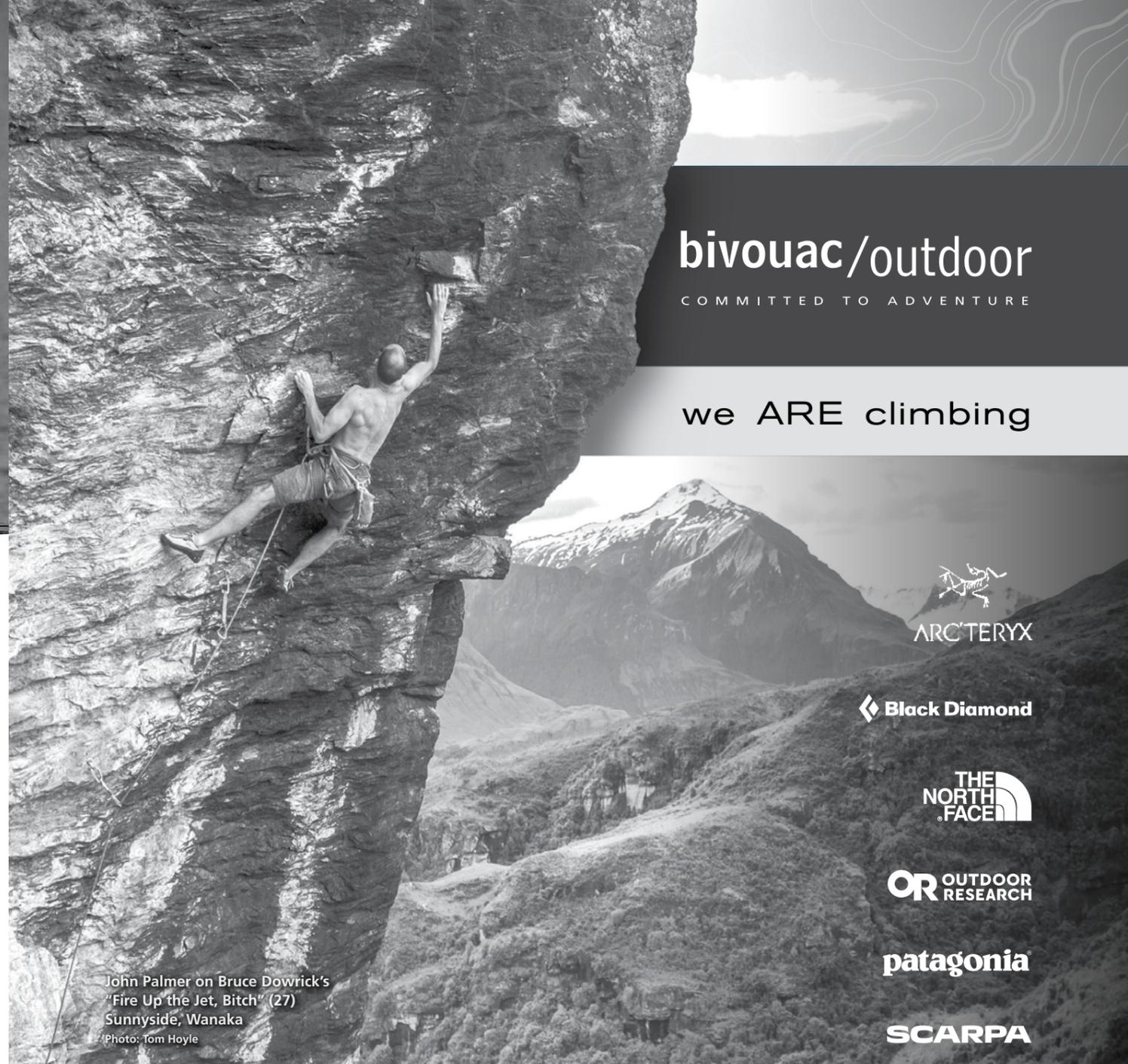
TPP has wide-reaching influence as a provider of education and training on the West Coast, interaction with the community occurring regularly. The team of students facilitates 15 weeks of outdoor activity for the wider Coast community. Schools from Buller to South Westland access outdoor experiences, many of which would simply not be available to youth were it not for the institute's outdoor department.

Local conservation project initiatives sing the praises of TPP groups who lend a hand to re-establish inanga habitat, clear pest control lines and move new traps into position to protect kiwi in the Paparoa National Park. This mahi provides students with opportunities to build a connection to the whenua which encourages an ethic of kaitiakitanga.

Tai Poutini attracts students from across Aotearoa to its West Coast campus; students lured by wild landscapes, adventure and practical hands-on learning in the field. Residential accommodation is offered to students; leaving home, establishing a new whānau, living with peers and growing together have an incredible influence over an individual's maturity and social skill development. Not being able to shy away from social problems and instead develop an ability to build relationships and communicate well with others plays a large role in influencing behavioural change.

Life around student accommodation blends well with the programme's intent of helping people to grow as well as preparing them for successful careers. Although the training is ultimately designed to enable people to gain outdoor industry employment; at the same time staff are acutely aware that learning and skills are highly transferable into an extensive range of careers and life contexts.

The Tai Poutini experience is one of immersion into a programme which provides students with opportunities to flourish and leave as mature professional peers that their tutors would be proud to work alongside. As a result of place responsive learning, students, like staff, often develop a strong sense of identity and connection to the whenua of the West Coast. This place uplifts cohorts of young vibrant people, ready to make their mark on the world.



John Palmer on Bruce Dowrick's  
"Fire Up the Jet, Bitch" (27)  
Sunnyside, Wanaka  
Photo: Tom Hoyle

bivouac/outdoor

COMMITTED TO ADVENTURE

we ARE climbing



For over thirty years Bivouac Outdoor has been proudly 100% New Zealand owned and committed to providing you with the best outdoor clothing and equipment available in the world. It is the same gear we literally stake our lives on, because we are committed to adventure and we ARE climbing.

20% discount  
to NZOIA members

PLUS a percentage of your purchase supports NZOIA.

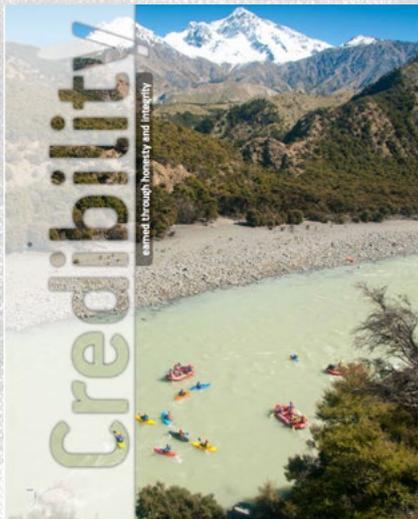
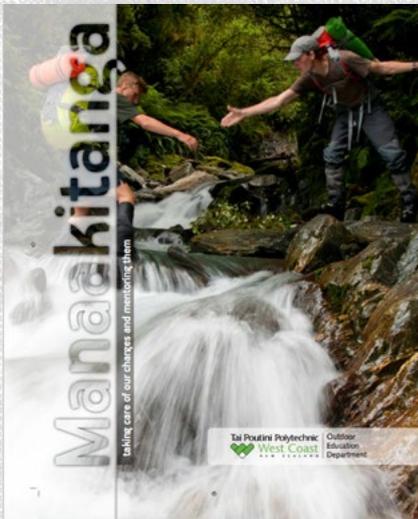
\* Discount is off RRP, not to be used in conjunction with any other discount, special or offer. Some exclusions apply.



STORES NATIONWIDE  
[www.bivouac.co.nz](http://www.bivouac.co.nz)



# PLANTING THE SEEDS OF ADVENTURE



Photos supplied by Tai Poutini Polytechnic, Outdoor Education. All photos taken by Zak Shaw.

Profiles of organisations are welcomed for the back page series "Planting the Seeds of Adventure". Contact [editor@nzoiia.org.nz](mailto:editor@nzoiia.org.nz)



**NZOIA**  
Excellence in Outdoor Leadership