

# NZOIA QUARTERLY

ISSUE 55

NEWSLETTER OF THE NEW ZEALAND OUTDOOR INSTRUCTORS ASSOCIATION

## HOW MANY CREDITS IS THIS WORTH, MISTER?

High ropes, Wellington, J. Hirsh.

Joel Hirsh



All aboard! Team building with polytech group, J. Hunt.

Some people say golf gets in the way of a good walk. I feel assessment gets in the way of a good outdoor experience. Assessment of unit standards in secondary school outdoor education programmes can, I believe, have an impact on student and instructor experiences, safety management, and on programme focus.

Students are credit-focused. *"How many credits is this worth, Mister?" "What level is it?"*

Teachers are credit-focused. *"Could you include another unit standard on the programme?"*

Centre management staff are credit-focused because after all, the funding is derived from credits.

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### NZOIA QUARTERLY

ISSUE 55: March 2011

ISSN 1175-2068

#### PUBLICATION

The NZOIA Quarterly is published four times a year by:  
New Zealand Outdoor Instructors Association Inc.  
PO Box 11-090  
Manners Street  
Wellington 6142  
New Zealand

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#### SUBSCRIPTIONS

\$20 annually. The NZOIA Quarterly is distributed free to members of NZOIA.

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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.

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NZOIA gratefully acknowledges the financial support of the following organisations:



Member Organisation





Year 13 Wellington Girls, ABL programme 2010, J. Hirsh.

A school I work with has decided not to include caving this year as it is only worth one credit at level 1. **“We can’t justify the expense. Is there not a higher level caving unit?” “Yes, but the special notes say the students must participate in five caving trips.” “Too expensive!!” “Okay, we could go caving, get them to tramp to the cave. The cave has abseiling and some bouldering. This will require spotting, and they have to work as a team... so that is Unit 467, part of 425, 20152 and 20210.**

**And there might be others we could include!”** After all, you can get a unit standard for just about anything: *Conversing with others, Exercising informed choice in deciding on a major goods or service purchase, Applying a problem solving method to a problem.*

Programmes have an assessment procedure focus today. The assessor/ instructor must ensure candidates are fully informed and are aware of the performance criteria. He/she must ensure the assessment is fair, is signed by the candidate, and that all the boxes are ticked and comments recorded. Furthermore, a reassessment opportunity must be given. I believe this analysis and process is a distraction from ensuring enjoyment and safety of the outdoor education programme.

Could students simply learn from outdoor experiences without the need to meet a national standard? Or, if there must be a unit standard, could the unit standard simply be *participate in outdoor experience/s*? The essence of a good outdoor programme is to provide opportunities for positive and new experiences, to give students opportunities to push through perceived boundaries, and to encourage a feeling of camaraderie through mutual support of each other. For example: *is an assessment such as ‘Unit 467 Demonstrate personal and social development through participation in ABL’ too focused on measurement? One performance criteria is ‘personal goals are set that are specific, measurable and achievable’, but some goals are simply achieved or not achieved, and some students may not have a specific goal. Another performance criteria is ‘The candidate initiates communication on at least three occasions’.* This means the instructor must (for a group of 10) record at least 30 suggestions and then decide if they were initiated by the learner and communicated clearly, constructively and in a timely manner. Additionally, students must be able to describe an interaction that impacted on themselves and the group and identify safety requirements for two activities.

Earlier this year I sent out a survey to try and gauge how my fellow instructors felt about assessment in experiential outdoor education programmes for secondary school students. I wanted to gain an external provider perspective. Unfortunately I had little response to my survey, and, surprisingly to me, so far the results are inconclusive. My hypothesis is that assessment impacts in many ways, not just on the instructor and student experience, but also on risk management. I believe that having to assess to meet best practice assessment standards and, at the same time having to manage risk, is an accident waiting to happen.

I was prompted to do this research after several near misses when I was too busy focusing on gathering evidence and not being where I needed to be, that is, observing the big picture. Research in psychology confirms that the human mind performs much less efficiently under multi-tasking environments. During one experiment viewers were asked to watch a short video clip and count the number of times three basketball players pass the ball. During the clip a person in a gorilla suit strolled onto the court, but approximately 50% of viewers did not notice the gorilla. As we all know, it is now illegal to talk or text on a cellphone while driving. I believe you cannot do two important things effectively at the one time.

The Independent Review Team’s report into the Mangatepopo disaster inferred a possible link to a clouded decision-making process. The instructor felt the gorge trip was going to be a good place to collect evidence for Unit 467 and that this would take pressure off assessing the next day on the overnight camp.

For me, assessment of experiential outdoor education programmes creates a dichotomy. On the one hand, I want to achieve and be focused on the non-assessment goals. But on the other hand I want to feel that I am assessing to the required standard, that I am gathering enough data to make my decisions that will stand up to external moderation, and that I am maintaining my integrity around assessment.

So perhaps it is (almost) time I retired from the rock face and let in someone younger with lots of energy (like I used to have); someone who is not tired of ticking boxes and answering the question **“How many credits is this worth, mister?”**

*However, I still need to tick a few more boxes myself and I would really appreciate more data for my own research. Please copy the link below and complete the 3 - 5 minute survey, or email joel.hirsh@weltec.ac.nz and I will forward you the link. Tell me what you think. To encourage a better strike rate this time I am offering a bribe. By completing the survey you have the chance to win one of two \$30.00 vouchers from Bivouac. (Those who completed the survey last year will be included in the draw.)*

Survey link: <http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/AssessmentInExperientialOutdoorRecn>



*In his work life Joel shares his passion for the outdoors with polytech and secondary school students as a tutor for Wellington Institute of Technology. He has been tutoring in outdoor education for 15 years. After hours he now accommodates family life by surfing more than kayaking, and mountain biking more than heading off on skiing and rock climbing trips.*

# Editor's Page

Hi all,

Well the summer is well and truly upon us. Dare I say it, perhaps it is passing. Driving over the Gentle Annie saddle just a bit before Nelson, coming from Picton, there was snow on the ground! On the 06th March! I am a born and bred North Islander and didn't realise that such phenomena happened in March in New Zealand.

It's hard to know what to say to the many, many people that have been affected by the most recent Christchurch earthquake. It feels trivial to say my thoughts are with all of those that have experienced loss due to this tragedy. But they truly are. In particular, to those NZOIA members that have felt a loss, Kia Kaha, be strong. It certainly puts life into perspective. Out of this heartbreak there has come some good. Every person I have spoken to has talked about a sense of pride in how New Zealanders have come together, amazement at the international offers of help and the sense of community that has been undeniable. A united front. The manpower that has been offered, the financial contributions and the many people that have given in any way they could. Even when they are struggling themselves. The goodness and generosity of our community has made me proud to be a part of this country.

Another community that I have been privileged to be a part of recently is the outdoor community. As part of my sabbatical from work I wanted to visit numerous workplaces, schools and polytechnics and observe. Professional development for myself. I am very aware of how inconvenient observers can be. That they require thought, they ask questions and sometimes get in the way! (They bring positives too I know!). Every single organisation and individual I have approached to observe has gone out of their way to be helpful. I have felt extremely fortunate to be part of professional conversations, share in others intellectual property, receive feedback and generally be included 100% and welcomed with open arms into another's workplace. So thank you very much to all the individuals that have proven the sense of community that I knew the outdoor industry had. I haven't been a part of a NZOIA revalidation refresher course yet, but from talking to people that have, it seems that this sharing is happening here too.

On the theme of sharing, I want to take this opportunity to thank all those that share their thoughts and knowledge through the forum of the NZOIA Quarterly. You are providing a professional service and adding value to our industry. The December Quarterly which was dedicated to the Mangatepopo tragedy was made possible through individuals and organisations sharing their thoughts and learnings. A special thanks to all contributors to the Mangatepopo edition. This edition features an article about the National Incident Database, a very valuable tool for recording and analysing our outdoor incidents.

Steve Chapman has taken the time to write in and offer his thoughts on the article titled 'Getting Hitched', featured on the front cover of the September Quarterly. I remember learning at teachers college that it should be taken as a compliment if someone chooses to comment on something that you have said. Firstly it means that they took the time to listen to/ read what you had to say. Secondly, they comprehended and absorbed what you were saying, and thirdly, they again took the time to offer comment on it. Cheers Steve.

There are plans afoot for the Quarterly. Constantly looking to improve from my perspective. Improve how the Quarterly caters for our members needs as well as NZOIA's needs and how we can get more quality contributors. There will be a membership survey out soon that will request your input. And another thank you to all that have given feedback about editions of the Quarterly. It is always welcomed and I appreciate receiving it.

Enjoy the remainder of the summer, keep sight of all that is important.

Ajah Gainfort, NZOIA Quarterly Editor

## Letter to the Editor:

Dear editor,

### Re Technical articles in the Quarterly

Matt Barker's recent article 'Getting Hitched' raises a number of issues. The one I find most concerning is how the article has been perceived by current and want-to-be kayak instructors. I have overheard, and been asked, is this the new NZOIA way? No, it is not. There is no NZOIA way; there are numerous ways and tools to assist in a kayak rescue.

Matt's article simply offers a number of rescue options and highlights issues around being attached to someone or something in a river environment. You do not have to learn or use all the ways Matt suggests to pass your Kayak One assessment. The rescue aspect of a kayak assessment requires you to be able to rescue clients and gear efficiently and safely; using a range of methods.

My challenge is instead of accepting these Quarterly articles as the 'new way', I encourage instructors to be critical of these articles, ask questions, read literature, try them yourself, and go on a training course. The use of a sling is not new; in fact, it is older than the use of a releasable towline. The advent of the towline I believe has superseded the sling. It is more convenient and effective, but do not just take my word on that, find out for yourself.

Remember, attaching yourself to a rope or sling in moving water requires training, practice and the use of judgement. You need to understand the benefits, limitations and the risks, before you attach yourself. You should only attach yourself if you feel comfortable doing so and are sure you can release yourself from the connection. I have never been hung-up using a towline, why, because I only use it where appropriate, and anticipate a release before I might capsize. Practicing a towline release capsized is sensible so you know what to do if this eventuates; the reality for most kayak 2 instructors is they have never been hung-up with their towline – they either release their towline early or clip onto a kayak only when they consider it safe to do so.

Steve Chapman

## Editor's Response:

Hi Steve,

As mentioned in my editorial, thanks for taking the time. Responses such as yours are very valuable to the industry to bring about thought, discussion and experimentation of different methods and techniques. Surely this can only result in safer and better quality delivery of our programmes. It is a valid challenge that you bring to the table "to be critical of these articles, ask questions, read literature, try them yourself, and go on a training course." This is a challenge that NZOIA sees as part of any instructors professional development and currency. The article 'Getting Hitched' spoke of a similar thing, "The best thing to do is try different methods out in a safe and controlled environment (before you need to use them for real)! Ensure you are with a team that can manage the results and discover the pros and cons for yourself. Even better, enrol in a Whitewater Rescue Course and practice this (or re-practice) with professional guidance."

One step further in this learning process would be to encourage readers to respond about technical articles, as Steve has done, sending in further thoughts on a topic to the editor. I acknowledge that this takes time to do, and we are all undoubtedly busy, but the potential learning and discussion to arise from this is perhaps invaluable.

**A point to note, all articles submitted that relate to the NZOIA syllabi are required to be peer reviewed. The current process is that articles are sent through to the NZOIA Technical sub-committee (TSC), who then select usually a minimum of two people deemed to be of a high technical expertise in the relevant area, to review the article. Feedback is then provided to the author and a decision made whether to publish the article. There is no NZOIA way. There are numerous ways to meet the end goal and the purpose of these articles is to share, prompt discussion and encourage further research and learning. All articles published should be a starting point for learning rather than an end point.**

Ajah Gainfort, Editor

## Author's Response:

I whole heartedly agree with Steve's comments. The more well practiced and thought through techniques that are in an instructors toolbox, the more likely it will be that when the need arises they will pull out an appropriate and efficient one. As Steve says, don't take our word for it, go out and try the rescue harness cow's tail and sling for yourself. You might just learn something useful for when you really have to use them. Safe paddling,

Matt Barker

# President's Report

## NZOIA Executive – What a job!

Positions are restricted; it can be dangerous; no pay; you have to be sharp; there are political dragons; and, there is travel involved... well, at least to Wellington on a windy day most times!

There are many reasons you would want to be on the NZOIA Executive! I know there are twice as many reasons why not... time, energy, but, believe me, it is interesting and an insightful position to be in. More importantly, if you want to make a difference to the outdoor industry, it's a great place to be. So, here is what your Executive should be doing and consist of:

## What is the NZOIA Executive made up of?

The Executive is elected at the AGM by the members who are present. As such, they are the chosen representatives of the membership. This body is made up of the President and six (6) elected members with additional co-opted members assigned to special tasks.

## What is the NZOIA Executive's mandate?

The NZOIA Constitution instructs the Executive to "... manage the affairs of the Association."

This is very broad but basically comes down to two main jobs the Executive members are required to do. They are:

1. Provide governance to the Association. This entails setting the strategic direction for the Chief Executive and his staff, and also making key strategic decisions for the Association. These decisions are made with the best interests of the Association and its wider membership in mind and sometimes reflect broader goals within the outdoor sector as a whole. With a diverse membership of almost 800 individuals, our decisions may not always suit every member.
2. Undertake a facilitation role or manage one or more projects that are required for the Association's success. With limited resources and staffing the Executive need to be willing and interested in picking up specific projects, either as a governance function or through direct management.
3. The President's role is to ensure the Executive is being as productive as possible, communicate and meet with industry organisations, liaise with the CE regularly, set agendas and run the Executive meetings, AGMs .... and more!

## What should the NZOIA Executive be doing for you?

Taking on board your feedback during the year; surveying to gain input on specific issues; analysing feedback from surveys; providing sound governance and direction that enables the NZOIA staff to get on and do the work required; and, ensuring we are meeting our strategic goals and following the NZOIA strategic plan.

## What can you do to be a part of this?

Call a member of the Executive to discuss with them any issues you have. Let them know what you think and offer constructive solutions that may help. Keep up with the issues and try to be proactive not reactive if you can.

## Who is NZOIA?

NZOIA is an association of individuals. If you are a member, then you are an owner of the Association. As a member you are able to attend the AGM and elect the Executive to represent you and run the Association on behalf of you and all members. Sometimes members say "NZOIA is doing this" or "NZOIA is doing that". You are NZOIA and if you have an opinion or concern then you should get in touch and talk to us about it. If you feel strongly about a particular issue, then speak up at the AGM and put yourself forward for the Executive. If others share your views, you'll get their vote!

So, if you are a member, you are NZOIA. If you talk about NZOIA doing that and NZOIA doing this, you are talking about yourself and others who make up the Association.

## Why be on the NZOIA Executive?

It is fantastic! Amazing people to work with; keeps you up with industry developments; and, you get to contribute to making a positive difference for the New Zealand outdoor and adventure industry. Positions may be restricted; it may be dangerous; and, there may be no pay. Sometimes being sharp is about being blunt, political dragons may exist, and landings may be rough - but it's all worth it! The positives outweigh the negatives – that has to be good!

Keep in touch, keep talking!

*Andy Thompson, President, NZOIA*



## EMAIL COMMUNICATION WITH MEMBERS



We send out occasional emails to all members, on matters like:

additions/changes to the Course Calendars – Training, Assessment and Refreshers, requests for model students for level 2 assessments, new jobs on the Job Board and recently, on courses scheduled in the Christchurch area.

If you are not receiving occasional emails from NZOIA, then we either don't have your current email address, or the email address in your membership account is incorrect.

**PLEASE check the email address in you membership account, as email is the main method of regular communication with members.**

# Executive Update

## Ministerial Risk Management and Safety Review

The Minister of Labour has directed the Department of Labour to provide funding for the Tourism Industry Association and Outdoors New Zealand to coordinate and work with outdoor sector and government bodies to deliver the following initiatives that were recommended in the report presented to Cabinet late last year:

1. establish an industry-led entity to strengthen the safety management framework for the adventure tourism sector;
2. develop a generic practice guide for the adventure tourism sector (other than for adventure aviation activities, commercial jet boating and rafting);
3. develop additional guidance to better inform operators about their current responsibilities, particularly activity specific guidance;
4. ensure that better and more consistent information on the adventure tourism sector is collected, and that its collation is improved; and,
5. investigate whether instructors and guides should be required to hold qualifications and work only within the scope of their qualifications for some activities.

Concurrent with these initiatives, the Department of Labour is working to implement the Government directive to establish registration and audit schemes for commercial operators.

ONZ, TIANZ and the Department of Labour are in the initial stages of establishing the 'entity' described in the first initiative above and NZOIA has been invited to be a part of this. The proposition is that this will be an alliance of existing bodies rather than a new organisation, though its structure and our role within it has yet to be clearly defined. NZOIA supports this initiative and has indicated to DoL our strong desire to be fully involved in the process. It is of some concern however, that only limited funding has so far been made available by Government, and that a thorough scoping exercise to exactly determine the size, implications and cost of all of the above initiatives has yet to take place. While establishing robust standards and audit systems is essential to meeting the changing expectations of the society we live in, it is equally important that the government accepts responsibility for supporting businesses through the process of achieving these new standards. Our sector is characterised by many small 'lifestyle' businesses that collectively contribute a great deal to the economy and without which our tourism industry would fundamentally change. NZOIA is working to ensure that the standards set are in alignment with international best practice, and we are lobbying hard for the new systems to be supported at a level that will avoid excessive financial burdens on small businesses. Initiative Five above is of particular interest to NZOIA because of its implications for us and you as members; our position being that qualifications are a good thing and an essential element within an overall quality and safety management system. To this extent we see the outdoor sector as no different to the aviation, health, education, construction etc industries where qualifications are accepted and generally mandatory. On this basis we question the need to 'investigate whether' and we are advocating for a more decisive and positive approach.

## Increasing sector skill levels by building sector capability

NZOIA aims to increase skill levels through training, recognise this through qualifications, and by doing this substantially increase the proportion of instructors and guides who are qualified. The development of the leader qualifications was a deliberate strategy to provide entry level qualifications that enable people working at this level to do so on the basis of having achieved a nationally recognised standard of competency, rather than working unqualified. Enabling trained assessors to deliver these qualifications within their workplace reduces barriers to assessment and has the added benefit of increasing capability within those workplaces. That in turn should build career pathways and thus assist staff retention; a positive development augmented by the reduction of the assessor prerequisite from Level 2 to experienced Level 1 instructors.

Our assessor recruitment and training programme has added 41 new assessors to the pool; an increase of over 100%. These new assessors are mostly workplace or polytechnic-based and will primarily deliver the new leader level qualifications. NZOIA is now enabling the tertiary education sector to embed the leader qualifications within their full-time programmes so that students have the opportunity to graduate with several leader qualifications in addition to their diploma or degree.

If you wish to become an assessor, you are welcome to apply at any time, and further training courses will be run periodically. Please contact [tsc@nzoia.org.nz](mailto:tsc@nzoia.org.nz) for further details.

## Office move

We have now moved premises from Education House on Willis Street and are sub-leasing space within the Skills Active office at 180 Taranaki Street. This better enables Scotty and Kim to work collaboratively and, since most of our business activity around qualifications is now with Skills Active, makes that aspect of my work far more convenient. In addition we gain the benefit and economy of a number of shared services and a more pleasant working environment. Our thanks to Skills Active for welcoming us to their place.

## ICT Project

Over the coming months our website, information, database, communications and financial systems will be completely redeveloped and become entirely web-based. The result will be an IT hub at the centre of our organisation that links all aspects of running NZOIA and that enables staff to access information and resources without being head office or desk-based. This is particularly pertinent as we employ a Field Officer and as my role becomes more focussed on nationwide relationship management, each requiring mobile office capability. Our aim is that the hub will drive office efficiency by linking our membership, event management and financial systems, each of which is currently paper and spreadsheet-based and very labour intensive. As members you can expect an entirely new interface through the website that will enable you to access information and services in a far easier and user-friendly way.

## Staffing

NZOIA is pleased to welcome Chris Burtenshaw to the staff team as Technical Field Officer. Many of you will know Chris through his work on the Executive, as a rock assessor, and as past convener of the Technical Sub-committee. Chris will also take on the role of Convenor of our proposed Annual Training Symposium, the first of which is scheduled for 2012. Chris is hoping to be based in Christchurch and his varied role will include visiting workplaces nationwide, providing on-site revalidation of members, assisting workplace assessors, and the important task of assessment moderation. A profile of Chris is in this Quarterly and in our next edition Chris will present information about the services he can offer as he travels around, and also information about the national training symposium. Chris is looking forward to his new role and to meeting you as he travels around the country.

As I write this update I'm staying in a badly damaged home in Christchurch... three aftershocks so far this evening! Yesterday I met with a member of CPIT staff at a cafe in Hornby because the polytechnic campus remains cordoned off, and later visited Horizons Unlimited after driving damaged roads and seeing firsthand the ruined buildings and liquefaction debris and dust in the area below the Port Hills. Like CPIT, Horizons have suffered severe disruption to some of their Term 1 educational

programmes, and this is only a small representation of the many members in Christchurch whose lives have been affected by the devastating earthquake. NZOIA has many members in Christchurch and we are aware that amongst them some have lost homes and others have experienced huge property loss and damage; our heartfelt best wishes to you all as you rebuild your lives and homes.

By now some of you will have been contacted because of course cancellations in the Christchurch region as a consequence of the earthquake. This situation has been exacerbated by the need to reduce our demands on the many Christchurch based assessors, many of whom are preoccupied with managing family and work life in extremely strained circumstances. We are endeavouring to reschedule these programmes and run them at alternative locations and your patience and understanding in these matters is appreciated.

Again, our sincerest best wishes to the many members, assessors, colleagues and friends in the Christchurch area, and particularly to those who have suffered loss through this tragic event.



**Matt Cant, Chief Executive, NZOIA**

## \*\*\*\*\* Congratulations \*\*\*\*\*

**Congratulations to the following members who recently gained NZOIA Qualifications:**

<b>Alpine 1</b>	Stewart Dempsey	<b>Bush 1</b>	Jason Fellingham
<b>Abseil Leader</b>	Christopher Knight, Simon Mangan, Mathieu Sabas, Freya O'Donoghue, Justin Kent, Scott Bray	<b>Cave 2</b>	Matthew Bennett, Doug Sowerby
<b>Bush Walking Leader</b>	Christopher Knight, Simon Mangan, Mathieu Sabas, Freya O'Donoghue, Justin Kent, Scott Bray, Lachlan Josland.	<b>Kayak 2</b>	Daniel Jimmink, Shanan Miles, Graeme Swift
		<b>Rock 1</b>	Michelle Todd, Greg Allum, Magnus Hammarsal, Paul Hunt, Trif Sitnikoff

## Advertise in the Quarterly

Avertisement	Format / Size	Cost
Half-page advertisement, black & white only	horizontal 186 mm wide x 132 mm high	\$100 + gst
Quarter-page advertisement, black & white only	vertical 90 mm wide x 132 mm high	\$70 + gst
Third-page advertisement, black & white only	horizontal 186 mm wide x 86 mm high	\$70 + gst

Advertisements should be in black & white PDF file format. No 'bleed' advertisements accepted. Colour files can be converted to black & white but tonal contrast may alter. Please enquire for affordable advertisement design rates. Send your advertisement to:  
The Editor, NZOIA, PO Box 11-090, Manners St, Wellington 6142 Email: [ao@nzoi.org.nz](mailto:ao@nzoi.org.nz)

## TELL MERIDIAN THE MOKIHINUI IS TOO PRECIOUS TO DAM!

Meridian plans to drown one of our most pristine rivers, the West Coast's Mokihinui, by building an 85-metre-high dam.

Forest & Bird visited Meridian's Wellington office to ask the state-owned electricity generator to save this wild river and the 16 threatened bird species that call it home.

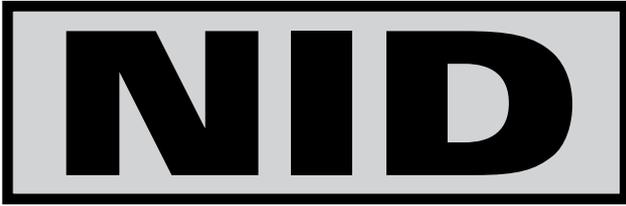
The Department of Conservation opposes this destruction of 330 hectares of rainforest and river-bed on public conservation land – land DOC administers on behalf of all New Zealanders – but Meridian won't take no for an answer.

Meridian Energy is owned by New Zealanders, for New Zealanders.

Forest & Bird believes electricity companies should look for environmentally responsible, innovative ways to generate electricity.

**YOU can help protect the Mokihinui River.**

For more information on what you can do to help save this precious resource contact Debs Martin: [d.martin@forestandbird.org.nz](mailto:d.martin@forestandbird.org.nz)



# Not if, but how we record incidents in the outdoors

**Annie Dignan**

The National Incident Database (NID) is a standardised system of recording outdoor incidents in New Zealand. In this article, Annie Dignan highlights how individuals, organisations and the outdoor sector as a whole can benefit from using the NID. Annie is the Research and Evaluation Programme Manager for the Mountain Safety Council and, as a part of this role, she manages the National Incident Database.

Hopefully the title of this article is a well placed assumption, based on the fact that professional outdoor instructors and the organisations that employ them, already understand the need to record, track and analyse their outdoor incidents.

In fact, recently, there have been an increasing number of calls from many sectors for organisations to learn from their incidents. Most recently this expectation has been conveyed by the Department of Labour (DOL) review into commercial and adventure activity and the reviews of the OPC tragedy, as well as a requirement of health and safety legislation.

The National Incident Database was established in 2004 to assist organisations track their incidents, to standardise the recording of outdoor incidents across the sector and analyse the data collected. Unsurprisingly, given New Zealand’s outdoor instruction context, but still quite remarkably, **the innovation of the NID did not come into existence via some top down, bureaucratic pronouncement, but rather from the commitment of individuals and outdoor organisations with the aim of maximising the opportunity to identify significant issues and learn lessons from undesirable events.**

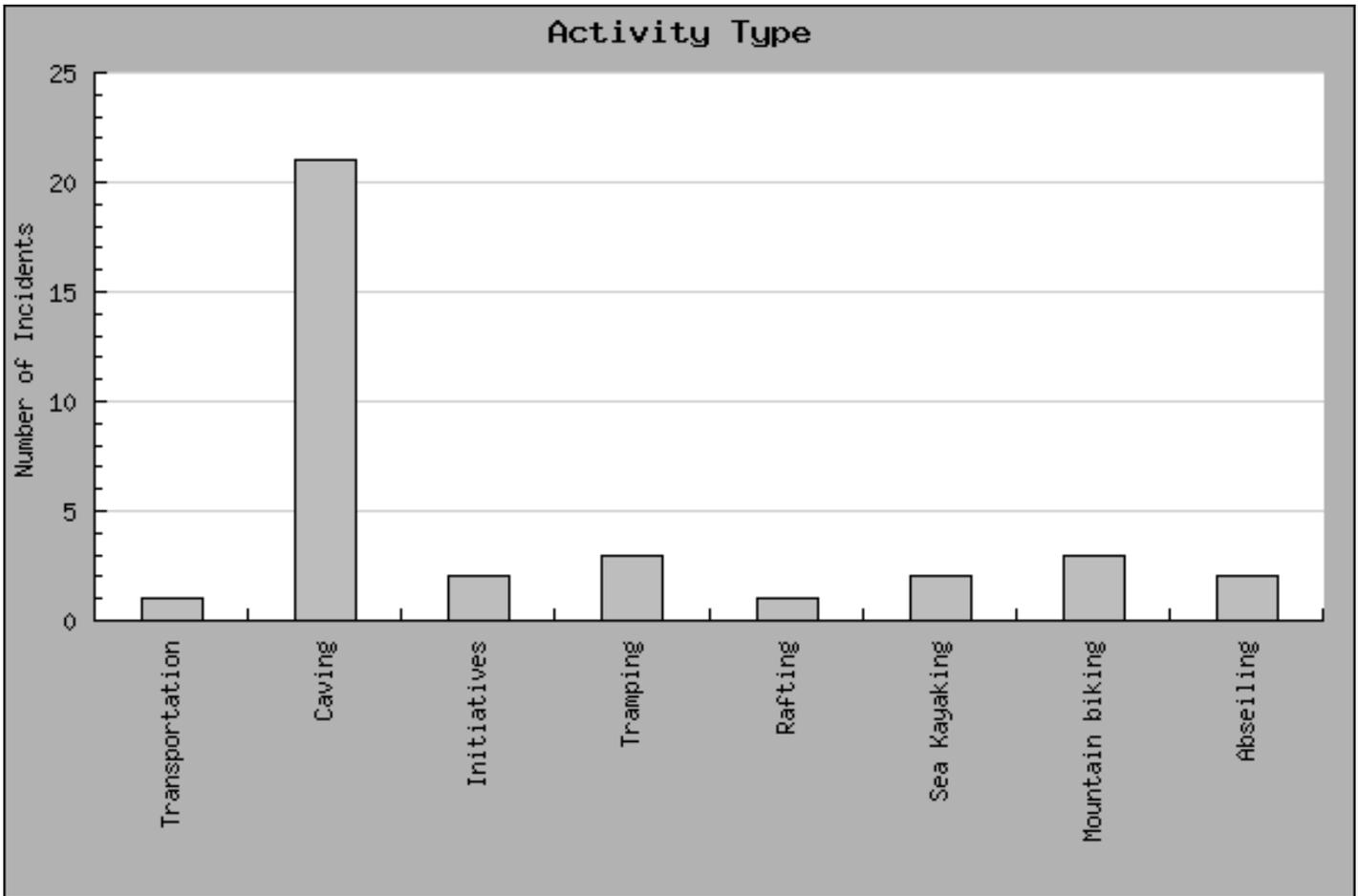
After much discussion and a few meetings, the NID was created via a partnership between key organisations in the outdoor sector. Current NID partners include the NZ Mountain Safety Council (who look after the day to day management of the NID), Outdoors New Zealand, New Zealand Outdoor Instructors Association, Tourism Industry Association, NZ Snow Sports Council, Ministry of Education and Education Outdoors New Zealand.

**The NID is a world first and, as far as we know, still the only one of its kind in the world, which is something the NZ outdoor sector should be very proud of.** Indeed, recent conversations with similar organisations in Australia and the US indicate they are envious of what we have achieved in New Zealand, but find the bureaucratic structures and sector politics in their own country too large a barrier to surmount.

## **Exploring the benefits: Why your organisation should be using the NID**

The NID is a FREE online database, which allows registered users to quickly and easily enter their outdoor incident data in a standardised format. The registered organisation can retrieve their information in a variety of report formats.

Continual updates to the workings of the system have ensured that the usability of the reporting functions is simple. It is literally a ‘tick the box’ system to input data and once captured, filters such as ‘time of day’, ‘weather’ or ‘severity’, can be used to create meaningful reports and graphs. These reports can then be used in general terms to analyse your incidents and create an understanding



**Graph 1:** This shows the number of outdoor incidents by activity type recorded for the fictional organisation.

of what events have occurred within your organisation. They can also make valuable contributions to your staff training, hazard identification and safety audits.

Examples of some of the reporting features and how they might be used by an organisation are illustrated below. *Please note that this is a fictional organisation and the data has been manipulated to provide examples specifically for this article.*

Graph One show that the organisation recorded 35 incidents across a range of activities. Whilst caving is clearly indicated as having the most incidents, this may be because it is their primary activity. This factor is taken into consideration within the NID via the calculation of participation day rates. Participation day rates are a simple calculation of the number of activities an organisation engages in and the number of participants involved in that activity. This is entered on an annual basis.

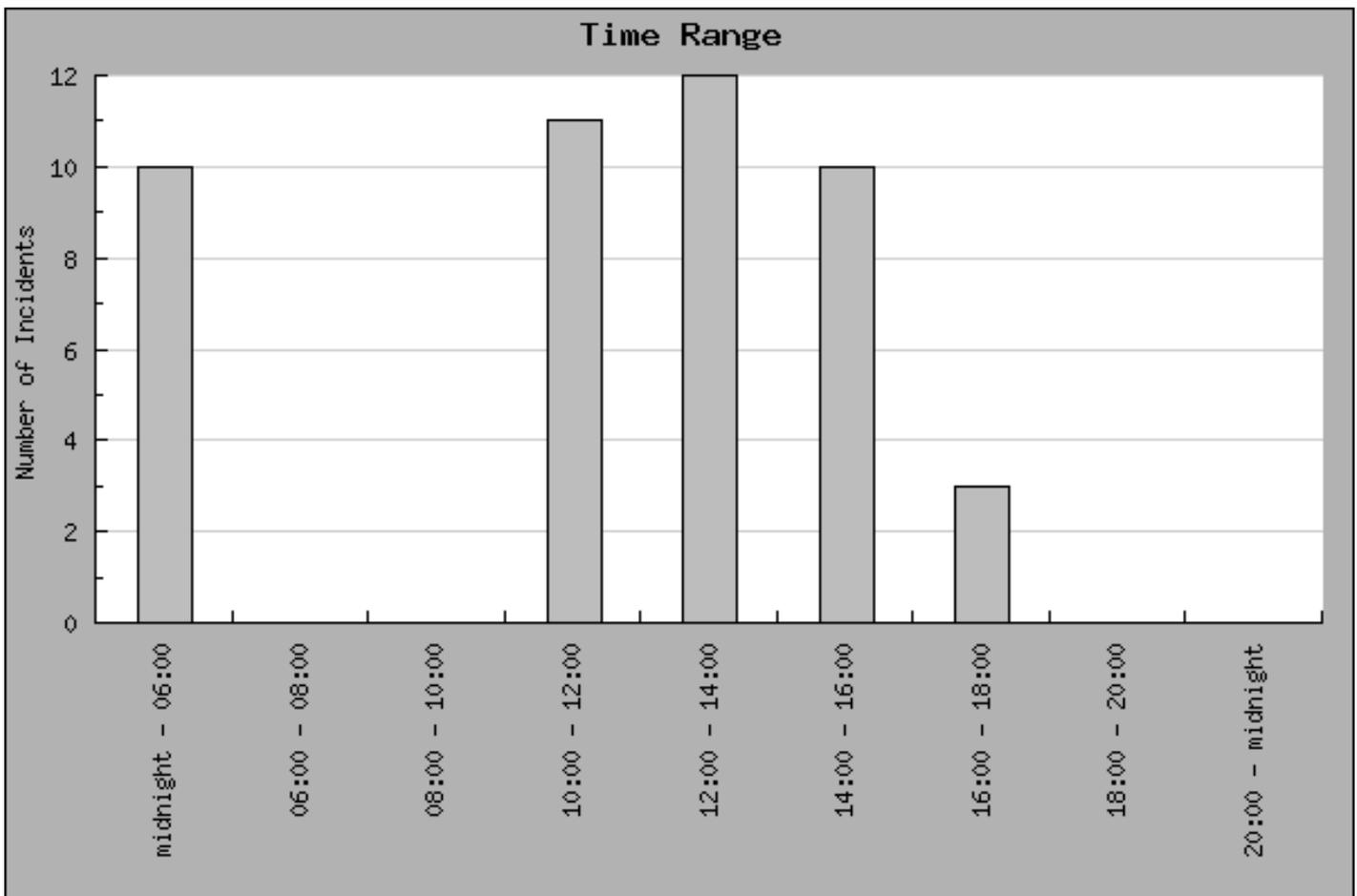
The second graph utilises the same fictional incidents and illustrates the time of day that the incident occurred.

Another benefit of the NID, in addition to being able to track your own organisation’s incidents, is a unique feature that no other ‘off the shelf’ incident reporting package can offer. Because all of the registered

organisations are contributing their data into the one centralised database, the data can be collated and analysed to create a sector-wide annual report. This can be used for benchmarking purposes and can also highlight incidents that, while low in number, are still worth being aware of. **For example: your organisation may have reported a single incident of a burn injury which occurred while refuelling a camp cooker. However, nationally, the data shows that there were five other similar incidents, which could have implications for your practice.**

The security of this sensitive information is taken extremely seriously and is critical to the success of the NID. Hence, registered users are only able to access their own data. The only person who has access to any identifying features within the collated registered incidents is myself. The data remains confidential at all times.

The NID is evolving, and in addition to the existing features, it is hoped to upgrade the technology and introduce more functionality. The partners involved with the NID are currently exploring technical possibilities and funding options, and early investigations have highlighted some exciting potential features. So, watch this space!



Graph 2: This shows the time range in which the outdoor incidents occurred for the fictional organisation.

## What now? How does my organisation become a registered user?

Future success of the project depends on the buy-in of individuals and organisations within the outdoor sector to ensure they are actively using this excellent tool.

If your organisation has already registered to use the NID, make sure you are using it to the maximum potential. Obviously it is not enough to be simply registered, organisations need to be actively using this tool. Recent canvassing of registered users showed that quite a number had not been actively recording incidents and, in some instances, the registered user was no longer employed by the organisation and the registration details had been lost. OutdoorsMark auditors have also reported this occurrence.

If your organisation is not registered, please visit [www.incidentreport.org.nz](http://www.incidentreport.org.nz) to find out more information. Remember: For qualifying individuals and organisations, accessing and using the NID is completely free of charge.

To conclude: **recording and analysing incidents is your professional obligation; sharing these lessons with others could be argued to be your moral obligation as recording incidents on the NID enables lessons to be learnt across the sector.**

Collectively we can really make the NID a world leader. NZOIA members could play an important role in achieving this objective.

*For further information regarding the National Incident Database, please contact Annie Dignan at the Mountain Safety Council:*

***annie.dignan@mountainsafety.org.nz***



*Annie is the Research and Evaluation Programme Manager for the Mountain Safety Council and, as a part of this role, she manages the National Incident Database. Prior to coming to MSC Annie was a lecturer at Otago University where she managed the extensive outdoor education applied theory and practice programme. Annie has had long term involvement in the NZ outdoor sector with her role in a number of organisations and various on the ground jobs in NZ and overseas.*

# PROFILE: Otago Polytechnic



## Walk in the door; get a smile.

**Great to know you're not a number here! Otago Polytechnic staff pride themselves on making students and staff feel welcome. From senior level management to the cleaner, all of us converse and I think should try to remember we are just as human as each other.**

Based in Dunedin, with satellite campuses in Central and North Otago, Otago Polytechnic hosts up to 300 staff and 4000 – 16000 students per year. The Otago Institute of Sport and Adventure (within Otago Polytechnic and commonly referred to as 'OISA') runs a two-year Diploma in Outdoor Leadership and Management Level 5 programme. This is an adventure outdoor training programme that advances people wanting to work in the outdoor and adventure industry, instructing and guiding.

Staff are required to be NZORB-registered and qualified instructors, who strive to develop their professional, academic and practical knowledge. Knowing that qualifications are only the start point to a career, coupled with their experiences makes for a strong team. The short of it is that they are passionate about the outdoors, what they teach and how they impart this to others.

OISA is an NZOIA Assessment Centre with OutdoorsMark certification. Students in their second year are privileged to gain free associate membership to New Zealand's leading outdoor association - NZOIA. They also can sit their Leader or

Level 1 qualification as part of their course and, if successful at the practical exam, they gain full membership of NZOIA for a full year for free. The OISA programme runs an intensive course that helps integrate students into the industry by work experience. This all adds up to a recipe for success at the conclusion of their Diploma qualification.

This programme is learner-focused and comments from students reflect this:

**"Wow this is what I actually do for a job! I have an office up on Mt Arthur and get to help others through fun activities".** She is grateful for her lecturer's support and "welcoming, open-door" policy. **"They are passionate people who are excellent at what they do. They have so much knowledge and skills to share with you but they are also your friends and mentors."** *Holly Officier*

**"What I enjoyed most was the people. We spent quite a bit of time in some tricky situations, and it was amazing to have such great mates around. Our teachers not only helped with course work, but if we needed some help outside the programme they would do whatever they could to make life easier. They never stopped teaching us."** *Arron Price*

Based in Dunedin the Diploma in Outdoor Leadership and Management Level 5 is appealing to those who study here for many of the above reasons. It hosts many students, making this a fantastic student-centred main centre. Dunedin is more of a town than a city being friendly and easily negotiated. Learning about the environment, adventuring and enjoying New Zealand's South Island rugged terrain, it's a must and a great investment in education. The friendly atmosphere at the Polytechnic, great qualification and industry opportunities makes it a great place for people to get started in the outdoor industry.

For more information see: [www.otagopolytechnic.ac.nz](http://www.otagopolytechnic.ac.nz)

# SITTING KAYAK II

Jo Parsons

**Kayak II had been on my list for a number of years. It oscillated in priority from “Yip – train hard, sit at the end of this season”, to “Maybe - when I get a bit better”, to “Yikes no way – too hard” and back again many times.**

I sat and passed Kayak II in April 09, 10 years after I sat and passed my Kayak I. Why did I wait so long before taking the step up??

A number of things had put me off sitting it;

- Uncertainty about the standard – everyone I knew who had sat in recent years was either of legend status (and passed), or winging it (and deferred). There'd been no “bench mark” candidates I felt could compare myself to.
- The syllabus is very prescriptive and reels off a huge breadth of specific skills you need to be able to demonstrate (particularly in playboating).
- Did I really NEED Kayak II? Theoretically I was still working within the scope of my Kayak I (with added logged requirements), my pay wasn't going to change and I had more than enough work.

I think the intrinsic challenge of ‘Can I achieve it?’ was what really drove me to sit it in the end.

I had thought my personal kayaking would be my weak point – I didn't really have a slalom background and I'm not much of a playboater. So a couple of months out from the assessment I embarked on a dedicated training regime. I promptly got spanked on the Arahura, ending up with whiplash, some unfortunate looking facial ‘carpet’ burn, a broken paddle and another swim to add to the tally. My hard core training regime was reduced to writing lesson plans and taking Ibuprofen. This turned out to be a blessing in disguise as in hindsight this was exactly where my energy needed to go and I saved myself from burning out.

Come assessment weekend, in my (all legal) drug induced state I blitzed through the playboating session (with extra points for trying hard). It felt like “the standard” required you to have a knowledge of how to perform all of the listed skills, but not necessarily be able to demo them perfectly. Having a teaching progression for these skills also helped here. Buoyed by this success I thought I could relax into easy street. Not so.

When setting up our slalom course there was dissension in the candidate ranks about which rapid the assessors intended us to use (they were sipping tea at the campground at this stage). Our slalom guru swayed us to the Grade 3 rapid. Of course he looked great ripping up those moves while the rest of us struggled to make the eddy, let alone the gates. The discreet smiles on the assessors' faces told us we had indeed overestimated what they were asking of us. So at 6pm four scratchy candidates were re-stringing the lines on a Grade 2 rapid in order to demonstrate that we were not actually as numpty as we had just shown. Needless to say Mr Slalom Guru was not a popular man that evening.

Our biggest curve balls came trying to strike a balance between ‘teaching’ and ‘assessment’. Trying to “just teach as you normally would to meet the clients needs” and having to demonstrate certain skills or jump around in your teaching progression as required for the assessment felt like a tricky mix at times. Dilemmas such as; should we give each candidate a mixed ability group so as to better showcase their wide repertoire of teaching skills, or should we ability split the clients and swap them around, or ability split and stick with one group??

A highlight of the weekend (and highly recommended strategy) was coming back to base camp where ‘Camp Mum’ had fully cooked lunches and dinners ready and waiting (much to the envy of the assessors who had spent the last 2 hours discussing our progress and eating takeaways). This totally took the stress out of the end of our day and meant we could spend valuable time planning for the next day/session and still get a reasonable amount of sleep (thanks Mum!!).

All in all the assessment was a positive experience. Stressful? Yes. Under pressure? Yes. A fair process? Yes. Did the assessors accurately pick up on our strengths and weaknesses? Yes. Do I want to do it again next weekend?

No thanks.



Photo by Jo Parsons.

## A FEW MORE TIPS AND TRAPS

### Pre Assessment

Kayak 2 doesn't happen very often, sometimes not for several years. If you want the assessment to happen – make it happen! Find the other candidates (bully, bribe whatever) then train and plan together if you can – swap ideas and techniques.

Plan a 'pre-assessment training' weekend well in advance - the pool of people who can run these is limited.

Get as much, varied instruction as you can at the intermediate/advanced level. Try to work with and observe as many different instructors at that level as you can. Get feedback from folks working at that level (preferably assessors) to get an idea of where you're at and how realistic your chances are.

Brush up your weak areas. Brush up your strong areas.

### On the day

Pool sessions – have a video camera. Video feedback is so commonly used now you should be savvy with this. But DON'T fall into the 'too much telly talk' trap. Have your own gear – having to share with another candidate, no matter how well you plan, is going to screw your session up.

Communicate and clarify expectations with your assessors. Nice as it sounds, it's very hard to match 'just

meet the client's needs' with 'demonstrate the skills the assessors need to see'. It's got to look like it's all about them, when really it's all about you.

If you are given leeway by your assessors to plan your programme, triple check with them that this meets their needs too. As the weekend progresses, what they wish to see from you will evolve as they identify your strengths and weaknesses. What sounded like a great plan on Day 1 may not be what's required on the afternoon of Day 3.

Have lesson handouts for your clients. You'll have done them anyway and putting them in hand out form forces you to clarify and condense your thoughts and sequences.

Don't be flustered if you make a small (or large) blunder in your assessment. It's unlikely to be the end of the world (or your assessment) unless you stress out and lose your mojo. Part of the big picture is being adaptable, creative, confident and performing under pressure. How you deal with a mistake is probably more influential in an assessor's eyes than the mistake itself.

Anytime in the presence of an assessor is an opportunity to show what you know – and the more snapshots you give them the better their impression will be. Give them good snapshots. Consciously keep rolling when they sidle over and don't let their presence throw you.

Go into feedback sessions prepared. Identify what you did well and head them off at the pass with anything constructive you think could have gone better. Explain your take on the scenario, why you did what you did, what you'd normally have done, what other options you had and why you chose not to do them. It's a much better look to display good self analysis than to try and bollock your way through a cock up.

Don't try out a new technique on assessment day – something that worked magically for one instructor will flop for another. This is a particular trap if your 'Pre training' is close to your assessment, or you share ideas the night before and realise with horror that someone is teaching something far more 'cutting edge' than you. Just do what you do and do it well – experiment on your own time.

Get a 'Camp Mum' – seriously!



*Jo Parsons started her kayaking career at high school in a bright blue Turbo and a purple polar fleece jacket. An advanced course at NZKS (when really she was a strong beginner) had Mick shaking his head saying No No No Nooo with his Yorkshire accent and giving her a job boat slaving as he couldn't beat the bad habits out of her in 4 short days. Jo now tutors at Tai Poutini Polytechnic in Greymouth when she's not attending NZOIA Exec meetings or gallivanting elsewhere.*



What does Te Ngahere mean to you? Share your knowledge, perspectives and ideas here in our regular feature. Te Ngahere can be translated as the bush or forest, but contributions about lake, river, cave, rock, mountain and sea environments are welcome. The aim is to raise awareness and knowledge about the sites we use for our instruction. To contribute an article about the natural and cultural history of Aotearoa New Zealand please email the editor at [editor@nzoia.org.nz](mailto:editor@nzoia.org.nz)

## A Wider Landscape



There are as many different ways to appreciate and understand the land as the land has features to understand. Presented in the right way, both myth and science can be fascinating, magical. They are both facets of the same story; both elements of a wider view of the landscape.

This holistic view of the land is related to the Maori concept of whakapapa, which combines the elements of history, geography, mythology and culture. Whakapapa establishes, with a genealogy as a foundation, a relationship between the people and the land, through their shared history. It is also a link back to earth as a god, Papatuanuku, acknowledging the land, even as we see it today as more than a static thing.

You only have to look beneath the grassy slopes of Auckland's hills, behind the air in Rotorua, on the skyline in New Plymouth, at the waterfront in Taupo, in the ground in Canterbury, and around the ancient waterways of Otago and Manawatu to find the evidence of that, sometimes hidden, volatility which makes New Zealand what it is. It is difficult to live here and not have a relationship with

the land. From this relationship come the tales and the explanations, and the land becomes, with these, more than just material.

We look around at active vents and dormant volcanoes, at fault lines, mapped and unknown. There are hillsides slipping, rivers flooding, caves opening and collapsing, mountains rising, and glaciers moving towards the sea. Amidst all this action, what is what we call *our land* really created from? Is it what we see, what we touch, what we remember?

I like to think this country is not just formed from the minerals on which we rest our lives. It is not simply what we see in the present. It is made up of all the exploits upon it and all the impressions of it, together with the position and potential of the land itself.

So, the mountains of the Southern Alps exist as rock and ice and cloud, but another part of their being is surely formed from all the senses we have of them. Each photo we revisit, each melting crampon mark, each decaying snow anchor, each scenic flight, all combine to make the greater story of the Alps.

They are the rising outcrops of unpredictable tectonics. They are the growing and crumbling second cousins of the earthquakes that rock the South Island. They are the frothing waters of the ocean, from which they once rose (Ka Tiritiri o te Moana), the hardened bodies of the sons of Raki of the sky and their upturned vessel. They are the upturned hull of the waka from which Maui fished up

the great beast whose remains formed the North Island. For some they may be the view from the summit of Mt Teichelmann (the younger brother of Aoraki); for others they may be the view from The Hermitage.

Equally, they may be embodied in 500 kms of lateral movement we can see in the Alpine fault, represented by rocks and more than 20 species of plants and insects that are found only in Fiordland and western Otago in the south, and in Nelson in the north, or by the grieving tears of Hine Hukatere (the glacier girl) which froze to form the Franz Josef Glacier.

New Zealand has spent 65 million years isolated from the rest of the world and countless millions before that drifting the seas between the South Pole and the sub-tropics. It has evolved plants and animals seen nowhere else, and preserved many that have elsewhere disappeared. These are stories, like ours, that are inseparable from the land.

The kiwi, with its marrow-filled bones and downy fur-like feathers, is an honorary mammal to science. To some Maori it is an emissary from the underworld. DNA records suggest that the 10 kg Haast eagle's closest genetic relation is an Australian eagle weighing only 1kg, implying that, in about a million years, it increased its body mass by 10 times! It is said that one of the great limestone outcrops you can see from state highway 73, as you drive through Canterbury's Castle Hill basin, was once a giant eagle's nest, where a colossal bird reared its young and

preyed on moa, and on the people who dared to pass by.

New Zealand challenges you to be engaged with it. Here is an active land with a wealth of myth, and a colourful natural and social history. Find and tell your stories when you're out there. Find some local flavour in legends, in science, in geography. Find some magic. There is something to captivate every imagination, to whet every appetite and, perhaps, to broaden every mind.

## References

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*Maori Myths and Legendary Tales* – A.W.Reed, 1999 – New Holland Publishers

*The Rise and Fall of the Southern Alps* – Glen Coates, 2002 – Canterbury University Press

*The Encyclopedia of New Zealand* – [www.teara.govt.nz](http://www.teara.govt.nz)



*Simon Goodwin studied philosophy in London. One day he found himself at work in the Kalahari and decided he quite liked the Great Outdoors. He moved to New Zealand in 2004 and is currently studying the fishing grounds of the upper Coromandel.*

*All photos in this article credited to Simon.*

## Kayak Instructor Training

### Funding subsidies still available!

We still have funding available from Water Safety NZ to subsidise any sort of kayak, sea kayak, or canoe leader / instructor training or safety / rescue workshop. If you have a group of three or more people please get in touch asap and we'll endeavour to meet your needs. Courses may be run midweek or weekends.

### Course costs

\$80 per person for a 1 day course, \$160 per person for a 2 day course.

**This is a 50% subsidy!**

## 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 Training and Assessment Coordinator 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: [assessment@nzoi.org.nz](mailto:assessment@nzoi.org.nz)**

**Phone: 04 916 4373**

## NZOIA Merchandise

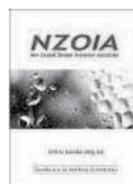
### Waterproof Notebooks

Mud, rain or shine, this waterproof notebook loves tough working conditions. Lead pencil or ballpoint pen can be used under all conditions, even under water. NZOIA branded.

### Cost (inc. gst)

Members: \$6.00 Non-Members: \$7.50

Bulk Order: \$5.50 minimum purchase of 6



### Thermal Mugs

highly durable and light weight thermal mug in NZOIA colours.

Cost (inc. gst)

\$14.50



### NZOIA T-Shirts

Size - XL only available - grey

Cost (inc. gst)

\$10.00

**SOLD OUT!!**

# An Exploration into Females' Perceptions of the New Zealand Outdoor Instructors Association: Are Changes in Need?



**Cat Kearsley**

*Cat Kearsley is the first recipient of the NZOIA research award. This award provides financial support into sector research. To find out further information or apply for this award, please email [ao@nzoi.org.nz](mailto:ao@nzoi.org.nz)*

***Live your life each day as you would climb a mountain. An occasional glance toward the summit keeps the goal in mind, but many beautiful scenes are to be observed from each new vantage point. Climb slowly, steadily, enjoying each passing moment; and the view from the summit will serve as a fitting climax for the journey.*** *Anonymous*

At the beginning of 2010 I embarked on a journey; one I approached with the intent of exploring women's experiences in outdoor education careers, and with NZOIA. Unexpectedly, that journey redefined for me both the current existence, and future of, women working in the outdoor education sector.

Recently, I was on a different journey; strolling along the Abel Tasman Coastline with a large group of tourists, all from different walks of life. One man approached me and highlighted the fact I was the only female guide on the trip. As true as this was, it was also ironic given that more

than half of our guides are female! Of course, it didn't take long to get me in full swing discussing women's careers in outdoor education and before you know it I had an audience of about fifteen tourists totally interested in the trials and triumphs us ladies experience working in outdoor education. As I began to speak of the research I had done, and the connections women have with NZOIA, they began to ask questions. Many of the questions they asked are those I have pondered for a long time, and I figured it was about time I put them out there for you to ponder, discuss, argue if you will!

We'll start from the beginning. Take a look at your career. (Both men and women)! What are some of the highlights? How did you get to where you are today? What challenges did you face? Would you change anything if you could? These are some of the questions I asked six highly regarded women who are currently working in the outdoor education sector. Each had a variety of NZOIA qualifications both at level one and two and a couple were heading down the NZOIA assessor's pathway.

Following the theme of journeys, it was apparent that career development is much like a journey. According to the women I spoke to however, NZOIA was perceived primarily as an assessing body and so in terms of a journey it would seem NZOIA are placing great emphasis

on the destination (becoming qualified), as opposed to embracing the journey we are on. This focus on the destination has many implications for a variety of areas in women's career development, and it would seem broadening that focus may well encourage greater success among women working in the outdoors.

NZOIA's role in the outdoor education sector, skills, combining a family with a career, and women's career development were four prominent themes that arose. NZOIA's role in outdoor education and skills were two umbrella themes that had great influence over the ability for women to combine having a family with their outdoor education career and women's career development fullstop.

NZOIA (2010) state their key objectives are "to retain and grow our professional membership, to promote and safeguard standards of professional practice, to provide sequential training and assessment for outdoor leaders, representing the interests of our membership by fostering relationships within the outdoor community and to be actively involved in the enjoyment and conservation of our environment" (para. 2). The participant's identified however that their experiences with NZOIA, for the most part, were limited to assessments and becoming qualified. The women discussed that it was important to have assessments and qualifications for outdoor instructors, and these are highly valued in the industry. It was recognised that assessments and qualifications maintain a high level of competency amongst instructors as well as provide the opportunity to learn and develop. On the other hand however there were aspects of NZOIA assessments and qualifications that drew concern for women working in outdoor education.

NZOIA adopt a summative style of assessment which involves making a judgement based upon one given performance. Essentially this limits the skills that can be assessed. This style guarantees the assessment of technical skills, as it is possible to make a valid judgement of these over a short amount of time. Other skills outside of the technical classification such as empathy, flexibility and relating to clients are difficult to assess in any given amount of time, therefore are not emphasised to the same extent as technical skills on a three day assessment. According to the participants, within the outdoor education industry, great value is placed upon NZOIA qualifications and this ensures that the NZOIA assessment process is one that most outdoor education instructors will go through. The values that are expressed through NZOIA assessments and qualifications are indirectly considered as important due to the value placed on NZOIA qualifications. The skills NZOIA are assessing therefore become crucial for outdoor education instructors to display. This is where significant tension exists between the skills being assessed by NZOIA, and those women perceive as important and how these skills relate to gender.



*Photos on these pages by Cat Kearsley.*

What skills do you think NZOIA are placing importance on in instruction? How do they match up with what skills you think are important for instructors to adopt? Are there any gaps? The consensus among participants was that NZOIA assess a wide variety of skills, however safety/risk management (eg rescues), and technical skills seemed to be assessed to a much higher standard in comparison to inter-personal skills such as empathy, flexibility and people management. Should this draw concern? Is there anything wrong with placing emphasis on technical skills? Sure they are important, necessary perhaps; where would we be without them? The question is however, should we be placing just as much emphasis on inter-personal skills as we currently do on technical skills? The participants seemed to think so. They perceived that the skills required of an outdoor instructor were many and varied, most with similar level of importance. They certainly thought inter-personal skills were essential in outdoor instruction. This is where the tension between skills emphasised through NZOIA assessments/qualifications and what participants perceive as important exists. As stated previously, because NZOIA is so influential and highly regarded in the outdoor education industry, the skills they are placing importance on become what is important to the industry itself. As a result of this, participants identified that one must adopt technical skills to a high standard to be successful. It was noted that generally participants thought men could adopt technical skills more readily than women, and generally women were more associated with the use of inter-personal skills. Gender aside, it would seem that the NZOIA assessment pathway is one set up that currently supports individuals who can implement technical skills to a high standard and not so much for those who display strong inter-personal skills.

So what are the implications of this for women hoping to combine having a family and maintaining an outdoor education career? "It's hopeless, absolutely hopeless" one woman stated. Essentially, during and after pregnancy the ability of a woman to maintain physical and technical competence becomes highly difficult. How is it possible therefore to re-validate NZOIA awards without that high standard of technical competence, let alone maintain the days required to do so? It's not! The participants discussed openly the implications of taking ►



Photo by Alex Frost.

time out from their outdoor education career. Through the loss of their technical skills they perceived they would then lose their instructional currency and profile within the outdoor education industry. It would be difficult to successfully re-validate their NZOIA qualifications with such a reduction in technical competence. It was perceived as highly difficult to recover from this. It was even suggested as the reason for the lack of female representation at the higher end of outdoor education. It seems unfair that the importance placed on technical skills would be a barrier for women continuing a career they say they are highly passionate about. However we must, again, consider where we would be without this technical competence in our instructors. Perhaps it is plausible for NZOIA to implement a programme designed to re-connect women with the outdoor education industry after they have had time away from it?

The absence of female representation at the higher end of outdoor education supported the participant's perceptions that outdoor education is still very much a male-dominated industry despite the rise in female participants over the last few years. Participants spoke of times when they felt they had to prove they had the technical skills to warrant working in the outdoors, and often they felt they had to prove they got a job because of their skills and not because they were female. The paradox that exists here however is women were grateful for the lack of females working in the industry as it was easier to get work, however they desired higher female representation in the industry as well. The lack of women working at the high end of outdoor education was perceived as a suggestion that it was difficult and perhaps unachievable for women to get to that level. If inter-personal skills had greater emphasis placed on them through NZOIA assessments and qualifications, maybe more females would successfully negotiate the NZOIA assessment pathway, thus increasing the number of women working at the high end of outdoor education, therefore giving the perception it is achievable to get to that level. Certainly an increase in ease for women gaining NZOIA qualifications would encourage this.

While NZOIA qualifications seemed to be really valuable for women getting work in outdoor education, there were

other factors that certainly contributed to their success as outdoor education instructors. Knowing people in the industry was perceived as being one of the most valuable things to have in terms of attaining work. The participants spoke of the lack of connectedness they felt with other NZOIA members that seemed to limit any form of support network within outdoor education instruction. By overlooking the value of a support network in the industry NZOIA could be perceived as neglecting the value of people on our journeys through our careers. Closely related to the previous discussion surrounding women working at the top end of outdoor education is the concept of role models. The participants spoke highly of female role models in the industry, and with an increase in connectedness between NZOIA members would be and increase in possibility of younger women working in outdoor education being mentored by the more experienced women, creating an environment that fosters the development of younger female instructors.

Essentially, through making a few changes, NZOIA has the potential to support and develop women's career development in outdoor education. Through changing their focus from the destination to the journey as well as altering the skills they place great significance on, NZOIA could greatly influence the ease at which both men and women develop as outdoor instructors. I believe NZOIA is in a place where even the slightest of change has the power to bring about great change for all of us working in the industry and I encourage everyone to both, seek ways in which this can happen and support positive change in our industry.

For now I will leave you with words that guided me during the time I was doing my research and I dedicate them to my six amazing participants, without whom this research never would have come together. Your stories have inspired me, and I hope they can inspire others too...

***We are so often caught up in our destination that we forget to appreciate the journey, especially the goodness of the people we meet along the way. Because, while it is good to have a destination to journey toward; it is the journey that matters in the end.*** Ursula LeGuin



*Cat has recently completed a Bachelor of Outdoor Education and Adventure Recreation with Distinction through Christchurch Polytechnic. After spending a summer working in Abel Tasman she now has her mind set on nailing Bush 1, Rock 1 and Kayak 1 as well as continuing with further research. She is currently working on getting bigger guns before doing this!*

Please feel free to contact me with any queries or responses to my research at: [catriona.kearsley@gmail.com](mailto:catriona.kearsley@gmail.com)

The full research report is available by email request. Resource: NZOIA (2010). About us. Retrieved from [http://www.nzoia.org.nz/about\\_us/index.asp](http://www.nzoia.org.nz/about_us/index.asp)

# Revalidation Reminder!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

Who needs to come in for revalidation this year?

## Qualifications gained before 30 June 2006

Not yet revalidated one of your qualifications? You need to contact NZOIA as you have missed the 31 December 2010 deadline.

## Revalidated one or more qualifications already?

You need to attend a revalidation refresher workshop for all remaining qualifications at any time BEFORE 30 June 2012

## Qualifications gained 1 July 2006 to 30 June 2007

You need to contact NZOIA if you have not yet attended the relevant revalidation refresher workshop.

## Qualifications gained 1 July 2007 to 30 June 2008

You need to attend the relevant revalidation refresher workshop before 30 June 2011

## Exceptions

- Overseas or heading overseas for an extended period? Contact us.
- Work with or know an assessor in the relevant discipline who can sign you off? Talk to them directly.
- Work as a trainer for NZOIA? You are automatically revalidated for the qualifications we employ you to train others in.
- Work as an assessor for NZOIA? You are automatically revalidated for the qualifications we employ you to assess in.

**Book early so we can plan ahead and so you get a place on a workshop.**

For revalidation dates for qualifications gained at other times or for any general information check out the website, read through the booklet 'A Guide to NZOIA Qualification's Revalidation and Registration December 2010', or contact us.

Members can check the date(s) by which they need to attend refresher workshops for their qualifications by logging into the members only section of the website and viewing the qualification record. Direct link is:

**[http://www.nzoia.org.nz/member\\_only/your\\_details.asp#qualifications](http://www.nzoia.org.nz/member_only/your_details.asp#qualifications)**

Contact the NZOIA office directly if you are unsure of how to log into the members only section.

# 2011 Revalidation Refresher Workshops

## Workshop Course Costs

LAND based workshops cost \$160. WATER based - Kayak /Canoe/ Sea Kayak - cost \$80 (with Water Safety subsidy)

**The Revalidation Refresher Workshop calendar is now published only on the NZOIA website and is separate to the training calendar**

**[http://www.nzoia.org.nz/refresher-workshops/training\\_calendar.asp](http://www.nzoia.org.nz/refresher-workshops/training_calendar.asp)**

**You will be informed by email each time it is updated**

**In addition we will inform you of any unscheduled events that have spare places**

## Applying for a refresher workshop

Applications for enrolment can be made online or by contacting the NZOIA Office. Applications need to be received at least six weeks before the actual course date. However, applications will be accepted beyond the closing date until the course maximum is reached. Places on courses are allocated on a 'first-in (with completed application form and course fee), first-accepted' basis.

Course cancellation – if minimum numbers are not achieved the course may be cancelled and a full refund given. You will be advised of this soon after the closing date for applications.

## Refresher Workshops by special arrangement

It is possible to run workshops on other dates, either by special request or if sufficient candidates and trainer / assessors are available. Workshops can be run at other locations, including your workplace. Please contact the Training and Assessment Coordinator to register your interest. **Email: [assessment@nzoia.org.nz](mailto:assessment@nzoia.org.nz) Phone: 04 916 4373 or 0508 475457**

## NZOIA EXECUTIVE PROFILE: Heather Rhodes

“ I’ve been on the NZOIA Executive since September 2010 so I guess it’s time I at least introduced myself...



I currently instruct for the Army Adventurous Training Centre, having also worked at OPC Tongariro, Outward Bound and overseas. I’ve been part of NZOIA since I gained Rock 1 and Kayak 1 over a busy March back in 2006. I’ve since also gained Bush 2 and Alpine 1, and am now keen to contribute to NZOIA as well. Rock 2 is on the agenda, but finger injuries and earthquakes are currently getting in the way of this goal!

At the moment I am really valuing opportunities to instruct with and learn from others in the industry who’ve been involved for a long time - both at the AATC, as well as getting out with polytechnics and other groups. I do have about a billion questions about the outcomes of outdoor education - can it really be life changing? And really, is there any environmental benefit? Or do outdoors people just buy more gear and use more petrol...?? Perhaps we are just giving people a good time in the outdoors? And if we are just involved in getting people outdoors... is that a good thing in itself? Etc etc etc...

In the meantime though, I feel privileged to instruct: I love sharing amazing adventures with people, and being a part of those people learning real things about themselves and how they interact with the world. Latest personal adventure: climbing the West Ridge of Malte Brun, which reminded me of what alpine starts and long days are all about (and reminded me that I definitely interact with the world on more positive terms once the sun comes up!).

Back in Christchurch, in-between earthquakes, I’m very interested in the role of a professional body of outdoor instructors (that’s all of us...) in shaping society’s norms for instructed/guided outdoor activities. I’m particularly interested in the interaction between professionals and volunteers, and how to best acknowledge the needs and qualities of both groups; and I’m interested in your views on these things. You may find a Members Survey heading your way soon...”

## NZOIA TECHNICAL FIELD OFFICER PROFILE: Chris Burtenshaw

*Chris Burtenshaw has recently been appointed as the NZOIA Technical Field Officer. More information about this role and how it could assist you or your organisation can be found in the CE report within this Quarterly.*



“ I grew up in Timaru and on leaving school I did a Fitting and Turning apprenticeship. While I was doing this I discovered rock climbing.

I was ambitious through my ‘20’s wanting to climb well and become an active instructor. Gaike Knottenbelt, got me involved with NZOIA, and helped motivate me to become ‘qualified’. Since then I’ve been on the Exec as Convener of the TSC.

I’ve worked in a wide variety of fields; a lot of time as a freelance instructor and assessor (I went by the name Lizzard Climbing and I also resoled climbing shoes). I’ve been a guide for Hiking New Zealand, a Safety Officer for Full On at the Italian site (a hard job to give up!). Boyle River Lodge and Whenua-Iti are other places I’ve worked. Most recently I worked for two years in Sydney as a rope access technician, mainly on the Sydney Harbour Bridge. I’ve had no real planned pathway in my career. The only philosophy has been to not work at things I don’t like!

I love working with people and something I’ll really enjoy about my new job is getting out and meeting the wonderful people in this industry and helping break down barriers in their professional training pathway. I think New Zealand and the Outdoor Instructing industry has some challenging times ahead of it and I’m pleased to be on board assisting in ensuring the industry continues to move forward.

When I’m not working, climbing, tramping, sea kayaking or road-riding, you may find me on the dance floor at an outdoor music festival (Electro-Funk & Progressive-Trance are my thing).

I don’t drive a Subaru, but have a car totally unsuited to most folk’s idea of an outdoor lifestyle car; I have a two seat Mazda MX-5 convertible. Highly recommended! I met my fiancée Tam at Canaan Downs Festival three years ago and we’re getting married in December!”

## KAYAKING IN THE POUAKAI TARN-EGMONT NATIONAL PARK: A FIRST...?

Ian McAlpine



The Tarns, Jeremy Beckers.

The idea came about really when a group of us were on the way to the South Island to climb Tapie last September. To my surprise the group said they were in for helping get the kayak in place. At the time I planned to get a light kayak, but in the end took one of my plastic boats.

Over the following months, we took turns towing the beast up hill along the Mangorei Track up to the Pouakai Plateau. A distance of some five kilometre's and an altitude lift of 500 metres. This was achieved by Christmas but due to a busy summer and

not being able to get our group (Jeremy Beckers and Glenys Grant) up to the Pouakais on fine weather it took another four months before the photo shoot.

As kayakers know, dragging kayaks around is no fun, let alone up hill! It is easier when you keep thinking of the end result. On the day that I towed it past the Pouakai Hut, two Auckland women stood very wide eyed watching. They had struggled up to the hut earlier in the day. Of course they asked 'what the hell are you doing with kayak up here?'. I had had plenty of time while towing to think up plenty of answers. 'Why haven't you heard there is going to be a hell of a flood?' Or, 'I am training for a crossing of the Antarctica'. Anyway just above the hut is Pouakai Plateau the high point at 1200 metres, then down hill to the Tarns. On the day of the kayaking photo shoot (the kayak was hidden in the scrub), we towed it down to the tarns. It was a beautiful clear fine day. Within fifteen minutes of taking the photos it was total white out.

Kayaking in these tarns is not a white water kayaking adventure but hey, what a spectacular back drop and a first.

### ANYONE WISH TO SET UP KAYAKING TOURS THERE???

Ian McAlpine, mountain guide for Mt Taranaki Guided Tours, NZOIA Kayak 1, Bush 2, and Alpine 2.

## TRAINING, CONFERENCES & EVENTS

### THE OUTDOOR FORUM

28-29 October 2011, Wellington

Run by Outdoors NZ, this is a big get-together for everyone involved in the outdoor recreation, outdoor education and adventure tourism sector. Registration details, including 'early bird' special available by emailing: [keri@outdoorsnz.org.nz](mailto:keri@outdoorsnz.org.nz)

### THE FEDERATED MOUNTAIN CLUBS OF NZ 80<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY CONFERENCE

11-12 June 2011, Te Papa, Wellington

1981: FMC 50th conference "Wilderness Recreation in New Zealand" at Rotoiti, Nelson Lakes. Today: the concept of "wilderness area" is part of the Conservation Act 1987 and nine large areas are managed for their wilderness values.

1991: FMC 60th conference "Backcountry Recreation 2000" at Rotoiti focusing on regulation and public access. Today: concessions have stood the test of time and the Walking Access Act 2008 establishes a Commission to improve access to public land.

2011: What will the future for public conservation land look like? How

do we protect what we value? This is your chance to be part of debate and dialogue that will shape that future.

Political party spokespeople will outline their vision and policy; as will conservation and recreation NGOs.

Registrations will open in April 2011. The indicative cost is \$100 (including GST) for both days including food.

More information at: <http://www.fmc.org.nz/conference/>

### 2011 ASSOCIATION OF OUTDOOR RECREATION AND EDUCATION (AORE) CONFERENCE San Antonio, Texas, USA, November 3-5, 2011

The AORE annual conference brings outdoor recreation professionals and students together for networking, professional development and information sharing activities and opportunities.

The conference includes educational sessions, skill workshops and certifications, keynote addresses and peer networking opportunities at a unique conference site each fall. The AORE annual conference is the premier event for current professionals, students and vendors to interact and stay on top of this dynamic and growing field.

For further information see: <http://www.aore.org/>

### EOTC GUIDELINES WORKSHOPS "BRINGING THE CURRICULUM ALIVE"

This series of workshops brings the new Ministry of Education (2009) EOTC Guidelines document in schools alive, highlighting key components of the Guidelines. Workshop One in May 2011 includes a range of activities to explore how these Guidelines can support you to provide EOTC opportunities for your students. The activities are designed to generate discussion in your organisation that will help you to deliver relevant learning opportunities safely for your students. Workshop Two in May 2012 will examine current best practice from your experiences in local clusters.

Location	Workshop One 2011
Auckland - Botanic Gardens Manurewa	Tuesday, 10 May
Auckland - Unitec (Mt Albert)	Thursday, 12 May
Tauranga - Winderemere Campus	Wednesday, 25 May
Napier - Napier Cricket Pavilion, Nelson Park	Tuesday, 17 May
Wanganui - 151 On London	Wednesday, 11 May
Wellington - Mana Education Centre	Tuesday, 10 May
Christchurch - Uni. of Canterbury - to be confirmed	Tuesday, 17 May
Dunedin - Otago University College of Education	Tuesday, 24 May
Invercargill - Ascot Hotel	Thursday, 26 May

**Who should attend?** Senior leaders, EOTC coordinators, those with responsibility of EOTC, sports coordinators, teachers using or wishing to use EOTC. This course is relevant to those who have been using Safety and EOTC; A good practice guide (2002) to update your knowledge and understanding of learning safely in EOTC and also to those who are new to using EOTC to enrich learning.

**Cost:** FREE and morning and afternoon tea will be supplied.

**Timetable:** All workshops will run from 8.45am to 4.30pm.

**Venues:** to be confirmed.

**Enrolment:** Please email [eonz.eo@clear.net.nz](mailto:eonz.eo@clear.net.nz) ("EOTC Workshop" in the subject line) for an enrolment form. Enrolments close **15 April 2011**.

### ALERT!! PETZL COUNTERFEIT GEAR

There is a possibility some counterfeit Petzl products originating in China may get into NZ. Further details:

<http://www.petzl.com/en/outdoor/news-1/2011/02/12/warning-regarding-presence-counterfeit-versions-petzl-products>

# Assessment Calendar

The assessment calendar is now published only on the NZOIA website [http://www.nzoi.org.nz/qualifications/assessment\\_calendar.asp](http://www.nzoi.org.nz/qualifications/assessment_calendar.asp)

You will be informed by email each time it is updated. In addition we will inform you of any unscheduled assessment events that have spare places.

## Assessment Fees

Climbing Wall	\$265	Sea Kayak 1 upgrade	\$265
Bush Walking Leader		Abseil Leader	\$495
Kayak Leader		Rock Climbing Leader	
Cave 1		Rock 1	
Canoe 1			\$665
Bush 1 + Bush 2		Rock 2	
Alpine 1		SKOANZ Sea Kayak Guide	
Cave 2		Sea Kayak 2	
Kayak 1		Kayak 2	\$845
Alpine 2			

### BOOKING FOR AN NZOIA ASSESSMENT

1. Complete the prerequisites as detailed in the syllabus - all available on the website
2. Submit an application form available from the website or NZOIA office by the closing date together with the required fee, a copy of your logbook and a copy of your current first-aid certificate
3. Applications close SIX weeks before the assessment date
4. Places are allocated on a first-in with fully completed application and fees, first-accepted basis
5. After the closing date we will confirm that the assessment will run
6. If we cancel the course we will refund all fees
7. Refunds are generally not provided where a candidate withdraws after the six week closing date irrespective of the reason (see website for full details of refund policy)

## Assessments by special arrangement-

It is possible to run assessments on other dates, either by special request or if sufficient candidates and assessors are available. Please contact the Training and Assessment Coordinator to register your interest.

If you are getting ready for assessment, do let the Administration Officer and Assessment Coordinator know! We may be able to run a special assessment if we have sufficient numbers or include you in an unscheduled assessment that does not appear on the calendar.

Email: [assessment@nzoi.org.nz](mailto:assessment@nzoi.org.nz) Phone: 04 916 4373

[http://www.nzoi.org.nz/qualifications/assessment\\_calendar.asp](http://www.nzoi.org.nz/qualifications/assessment_calendar.asp)

# Training Calendar

The training calendar is now published only on the NZOIA website and lists courses run both by NZOIA and other providers:

[http://www.nzoi.org.nz/training/training\\_calendar.asp](http://www.nzoi.org.nz/training/training_calendar.asp)

You will be informed by email each time it is updated. In addition we will inform you of any unscheduled training events that have spare places.

## Training Course Costs

All courses run by NZOIA are discounted for members; this includes full, associate and student members. If you are not already a member it is probably worth joining to access discounted training.

All water based courses including kayak, canoe and sea kayak are supported with Water Safety NZ funding.

Course Duration	NZOIA members	Non - members
1 day courses	\$80	\$160
2 day courses	\$160	\$320

All other courses including bush, alpine, rock and cave

Course Duration	NZOIA members	Non - members
1 day courses	\$160	\$265
2 day courses	\$320	\$425

## Further information

Details of courses run by NZOIA, prerequisites, application forms and online payment are all available on our website. Where courses are run by other providers you will need to contact them directly.

## Who are the courses for?

Instructor training courses are designed for people who have already developed their personal skills in a particular activity; have begun leading and instructing others under supervision; and who wish to train and qualify with NZOIA as instructors. Your technical skills should be close to the standard expected on assessment (see individual qualification syllabi on the website). The instructor training course, while generally following the qualification syllabus, will be tailored by your trainer to meet the specific needs of the group to ensure everyone gets best value. It will provide you with new skills and knowledge and assist you to identify any gaps that you will need to fill before successful assessment.

## Training courses by special arrangement

It is possible to run training on other dates, either by special request or if sufficient participants and trainers are available. We are happy to run courses at any level, at other locations or in your workplace; and will be pleased to discuss your individual or organisational needs. Please contact the Training and Assessment Coordinator to register your interest. Email: [assessment@nzoi.org.nz](mailto:assessment@nzoi.org.nz) Phone: 04 916 4373

[http://www.nzoi.org.nz/training/training\\_calendar.asp](http://www.nzoi.org.nz/training/training_calendar.asp)



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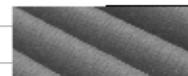
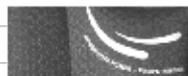
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\*R-value = Relative Warmth.  
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Photo contributions are welcomed for the back page series 'Planting the Seeds of Adventure'  
Please submit as files of no less than 700 KB in jpg format.

