

NZOIA QUARTERLY

ISSUE 54

NEWSLETTER OF THE NEW ZEALAND OUTDOOR INSTRUCTORS ASSOCIATION

EXCELLENCE & ACHIEVEMENT CELEBRATED

Following on from Jye Mitchell and Ian Logie receiving the NZOIA Emerging Instructor and the Tall Totara Awards for 2009, we are once again proud to recognise excellence within the Outdoor industry for 2010

NZOIA Emerging Instructor **John Hannam**



It is with great pleasure that we award John Hannam the Emerging Instructor Award for 2010. This award recognises someone who has demonstrated enthusiasm, passion for the outdoors, and excellence in instructional skills and techniques. This person seeks to achieve relevant industry qualifications and continues to personally challenge themselves in their own adventures. John was a clear winner within this category, exceeding all of the criteria set. From the sounds of his nominations, this is a man that we will be hearing about in the future.

NZOIA Tall Totara **Ray Hollingsworth**



The Tall Totara Award was presented to a member who best fulfils the aims and objectives of our association, recognising the outstanding quality of their instruction and their contribution to the development of outdoor education. Ray Hollingsworth was awarded this prestigious award this year, an obvious choice and a very worthy recipient. He has touched the lives of many through his excellent outdoor instruction and professional conversations, both formal and informal. Ray is a strong advocate for NZOIA. He willingly contributes articles to the Quarterly, prompting thought and analysis from within the sector. Ray is an asset to the community that he works within and our industry as a whole.

NZOIA Life Membership **Ray Button**



NZOIA has grown, developed and benefited from the many hours of selfless, longterm dedication from numerous individuals. Ray Button is one of these amazing people that NZOIA feels deserves recognition. He is a long-serving member of NZOIA and known to most within the sector. The article within speaks of the high regard in which Ray is held.

These awards were presented at the ONZ Forum gala dinner in Wellington in September.

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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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From the Editor

Hi all,

The final pieces of this Quarterly have come together on a veranda that looks out into Karaka Bay, Great Barrier Island. Not a bad spot at all! An outdoor mission has been formulating in my mind as I sit here, watching the gannets dive bomb into the ocean (they can get up to 160km per hour I've just been told!), watching the students who are here for the adventure race, completing all sorts of fun outdoor challenges and enjoying the simplicity of life out here. The mission involves the circumnavigation of this island, not a challenge for many out there, but one for me. My partner and I are taking six months leave from our outdoor teaching jobs for the first half of next year to go and live in the South Island, out of the back of our van. Travelling where the adventures call. Working enough to put food in our bellies, diesel in the van and pay for the odd outdoor gear need. The drive for this? We wanted to take time to adventure lots, rather than just on our days off. We wanted time for ourselves as individuals and time as a couple. We wanted to go and experience, through contracting and work placements, what others are doing in their outdoor programmes and learn! All three of these 'wants' are what contribute to making me a safe and fun

instructor. This time spent fulfilling these three 'wants' will contribute to growing my judgement and decision-making. They will mean that hopefully, I continue to make good decisions out there in the outdoors, as I have the lives of sons, daughters, parents, aunts and uncles in my hands. Judgement has been a theme that has come through strongly to me, a young instructor, in this edition of the Quarterly, a skill that is hard to teach and perhaps even more difficult to assess? Thanks so much to all those that have contributed to this edition. There is a wide variety of contributions and opinions and a lot for many of us to think about. A valuable allocation of time. So if I am successful in convincing my partner that sea kayaking is just as much fun as whitewater kayaking, we will head around the Barrier early next year. Judgement will be something that unconsciously happens during this trip, and comes from experiences I have had in the past. There will be learning for me, as we take on whatever the weather throws at us, that I can take away and add to my judgement bank. I hope that every one of you has a safe holiday period spent with family and friends, some relaxation and of course, some adventures. Take care all. Ajah

Ajah Gainfort

NZOIA gratefully acknowledges the financial support of the following organisations:



Member Organisation



NZOIA EMERGING INSTRUCTOR AWARD



John Hannam
Nominated by YMCA Christchurch

In brief, John has been working at the YMCA Christchurch in an outdoor education / leader role since 1998. He is an experienced instructor but in my view he is 'emerging' more recently as a leader and as an inspiration to other up and coming instructors – particularly youth. In a nutshell, John is a quiet striver for good practice, who goes about his work with great integrity and with close regard for ethics. He is very interested in environmental issues, youth work practice, excellence in outdoor instruction, both soft and hard skills.

I am nominating John for this award not because he is young, fresh and new to the world of outdoor instruction as per other recipients. I am nominating him because he is so personally focused on his own development as an instructor, a youth worker, a teacher and a mentor – and as a consequence, goes from strength to strength in his work with young people at the YMCA. He has worked tirelessly (on fairly low wages) fulltime at the Christchurch Y with 'youth at risk', using the outdoors as his main medium to inspire attitudinal changes and improve self-esteem. During this time he has acquired a myriad of qualifications and skills. He has also been a consistent attendee of National conferences/ training event – ONZ, NZOIA, MSC, INVOLVE etc.

In 2008 John received a research grant to study how the use of outdoor experiences and various debriefing methods of groups can enhance self-esteem and resilience in individuals – with a particular focus on young people who may be deemed 'at risk' in terms of their otherwise low educational achievements. This resulted in a DVD that can be viewed on our website and on the website of AKO Aotearoa. It shows John at his humble best – engaging students in the outdoors with a focus on the personal outcomes such experiences can bring to the individuals involved.

John Hannam has worked directly and intensively with an estimated 400 teenagers over the past 10 years. The vast majority of those teenagers would be typified as 'youth at risk' – in that they come from low socio-economic backgrounds, have mental health issues, sometimes with criminal histories, drug and alcohol addictions and poor self-esteem. A criteria for acceptance on John's course is being unemployed and between the ages of 17 – 23 years old. Typically, these young people do not have any school leaving qualifications and most have very poor numeracy and literacy skills.

John sees them all as amazing people with huge potential. It is not uncommon to see him talking and smiling with his group in the YMCA carpark as they load kayaks on the trailer – despite there being a thick frost (or snow!) on the ground. The students at the end of the course commonly make statements at their graduation like: "When I started this course I hated the outdoors, but now I am going to be an instructor...." and "No-one has ever believed in me before like John has" and "this course has saved my life."

He is a one in a million and I would be really delighted to see such a humble but dedicated person be given this honour.

Josie Ogden Schroeder, Chief Executive Officer YMCA Christchurch



“ Becoming an outdoor instructor resulted from a midlife crisis fifteen years ago that saw me walking away from a previous career as it conflicted with my values and beliefs. I saw an advertisement and joined up with the then new Christchurch Polytechnic Institute of Technology (CPIT) Diploma in Applied Recreation (I was told later they took anyone that first year!). While there I worked with some wonderful people, particularly Mike Atkinson, Will McQueen, Dave Irwin, Dave Bailey, Graham Charles and Gareth Wheeler. I found that underlying their teaching in the outdoors was an interconnectedness to greater society and environment. After graduating, I started leading outdoor activities at the Christchurch YMCA. I was really drawn to the organization as it matched my values and beliefs. I was offered full time work on a YMCA initiative that offered outdoor recreation experiences to thirteen – fifteen year olds on first suspension from school. This group was difficult and challenged my traditional standard outdoor recreation practice. I recall once I set up three climbs at Rapaki crag for an awesome day climbing and not one would get out of the van. As a result, I developed a whole array of soft skills to get past F*** you. This has enabled me to communicate and motivate groups more effectively. Also this experience has further encouraged me to look for answers in theories and models to match what I was seeing experientially. About 7 years ago I took over the running of the YMCA conservation corp that was failing due to poor attendance because of the overuse of the traditional community project tasks. Against the tide of research, hard manual labour and boot camps were seen at the time as the best way to develop youth. I disagreed and re wrote the programme so it included a large mix of outdoor recreation that promoted belonging, interdependence and quality relationships. This has evolved into a programme called Venture Quest that takes young people on a journey of development and discovery into our wonderful environment where the learning is quite individual. Seven years and 16 programmes later I received funding to do research with the programme and found the young people had developed in ways of resiliency, personal efficacy, and interdependence. Yes the mountains can speak for themselves. ”

John Hannam

NZOIA TALL TOTARA AWARD



NZOIA LIFE MEMBERSHIP AWARD



Ray Hollingsworth

“ I guess I have always thought that it didn't really matter what I did in the outdoors as long as it was contributing to my knowledge of the outdoors. My initial introduction, beyond family tramps and the occasional deer-stalking foray with my Father, was as a volunteer at Tihoi Venture School in 1986. Later that year I trained at OPC on the Outdoor Educators Course. I was rabidly excited about discovering the alternative universe that was the outdoor world, eventually working at both OPC (1992-93,96) and Tihoi (1988,1994-99). A trip to Pakistan in 1987, as part of an Operation Raleigh Expedition, was the first of many overseas trips that predominantly revolved around rock climbing, in Australia, the western USA, Canada and Britain. North Carolina was home for 18 months, where I worked on a 'youth at risk' programme.

Having started my outdoor career as a mad keen kayaker, I have transmogrified into a broken but enthusiastic multi-day trumper, by way of rock climbing and mountaineering. Traverses of the Fiordland, Kahurangi and Nelson Lakes national parks await a link-up trip, though it is unlikely I will accrue the brownie points that enabled the 57-day epic in Fiordland, as I now have a wife, 2 kids, 2 cats, 2 cars, a fat mortgage and a lonely fish to support.

Brief spells as a canoeing instructor in the USA and a cave guide in Waitomo, were not enough to deter me from my course. Toilet cleaning, bus driving, writing, editing, kokako hunting and building-demolition made for useful additions to my outdoor repertoire. I managed to pass these signposts along the way - NZOIA Kayak 1(1994), NZOIA Rock1(1995), MSC Risk Management Course (1995), Advanced Facilitation Skills (Waiareki Polytech, 2003), NZOIA Rock 2 (2005), NZOIA Bush 2 (2007), Wilderness First Responder (2008) and NOLS Wilderness Instructor (2008).

I am currently studying for a Masters in Education, and employed (since 2000) as a Senior Lecturer on the Outdoors courses offered at AUT University in Auckland, and try to write articles for NZOIA that expand the conversations around outdoor leadership. ”

Ray Hollingsworth is a Senior lecturer at Auckland University of Technology (AUT) in Auckland and was awarded this year's Tall Totara award by NZOIA.

Ray Button

Margaret Pierce left England in 1974 to see the world: soon after, a young gentleman called Raymond Button left England to see Maggie. New Zealand was a double winner. When Ray applied to be an OPC instructor, Graeme Dingle couldn't believe his luck. Ray had instructed at the YMCA and Outward Bound in the UK and brought a calming balance to the exuberance that Ding was building OPC on. His influence was immeasurable and he soon became Chief Instructor, working at OPC until 1984 when he left for the bright lights of the new Mourie & Dingle adventure company in Auckland.

These were pre-NZOIA days and when NZOIA was born Ray played a key role. He already was a qualified mountain guide, and he added NZOIA's Alpine 2, Bush 2, Kayak 2, Rock 2, and Sea Kayak 2, to his collection. These qualifications reflect Ray's wide experience in outdoor activities. Well, almost: not everyone realises that, after Maggie, his main interests are surfing and soccer. Ray has climbed many new crag routes (try *Out with the Missus* at his local crag in Sumner), various new alpine routes at Aoraki / Mt Cook and in the Himalayas, and he was on the first ever whitewater kayaking trip in India.

After Ray worked as a sea kayak guide in Auckland, Ray and Maggie moved to within view of the Sumner surf. When the surf's flat, Ray continues to guide and instruct, working for organisations from mountain guiding companies to polytechs, not to mention applying his vast experience to safety reviewing. But a common theme over the years has been assessing and training for NZOIA.

The calm approach that Ray brought to OPC, he also brought to NZOIA. The high regard in which NZOIA is held isn't accidental. It results from the work of the people who represent it, and Ray has brought his distinctive dry humour and calm, respectful approach to instructing and guiding for 40 years, including the entire lifespan of NZOIA. Many assessment candidates will have taken more away from their courses than a qualification – they'll have absorbed some of Ray's professional and respectful approach to training and assessment.

NZOIA and the New Zealand outdoors sector owe Ray a lot. Granting him honorary life membership recognises what he's done for NZOIA and also what he's done for the wider outdoors sector.

Stu Allan

Executive Update

Ministerial Risk Management and Safety Review

Since the final report and recommendations from the safety review into commercial and adventure tourism activity, the Department of Labour has submitted a paper to Cabinet for their consideration. This paper provides Cabinet with recommendations regarding the implementation of the broader recommendations from the review but is not a public document. It is envisaged that Cabinet will deal with this before Christmas and that we'll be able to advise members accordingly.

Assessor Recruitment

If you wish to become an assessor you are welcome to apply at any time, and further training courses will be run periodically. Assessor selection and the running of these training courses is based on a number of criteria and demand for assessments. Priority is given to a) people within workplaces and tertiary institutes where demand for leader level assessments can be demonstrated, or b) people with potential to assess in areas of regional or activity shortage. Please contact tsc@nzoi.org.nz for further details.

Skills Active

In the last Quarterly I indicated that changes are happening regarding funding within the tertiary sector that will affect Skills Active (and all ITOs), polytechnics and other education providers. It is now clear that Skills Active will receive considerably less funding from the Government during 2011 and will become more focussed and accountable in terms of its outcomes. Similar expectations are being placed on all members of the government funded tertiary education sector. In principle this is a positive change. However, as a consequence, Skills Active is restructuring and many roles are in the process of disestablishment to make way for new positions that will better enable achievement of the Government's targets. Obviously this is extremely unsettling for the staff we work with and will have an impact on them. It will also mean that the way in which Skills Active interacts with industry will change with potentially far more workplace visits.

Qualifications

To date we have convened Technical Advisory Groups to work through the process of rewriting the Level 1 syllabi and equivalent Level 5 National certificates in Rock and Kayak so that they become completely aligned qualifications. Bush, Alpine and Cave will follow soon.

Leader level qualifications are now up and running in some workplaces, particularly in Sea Kayaking where new assessors are getting their staff geared up for the summer season. Some polytechnics are also building the Leader level qualifications into their programmes and the first batches have been assessed at Otago. These opportunities are available to other tertiary institutes who have assessors available to them and an MoU with NZOIA.

Sincere thanks to those of you who took part in the targeted surveys regarding Bush and Alpine qualifications. These results and the decisions regarding syllabi scope and qualification pathways will be made available soon.

Mountain Bike NZ now has the Mountain Bike Leader qualification ready to roll out and assessor training has just taken place.

Canyoning

In September we convened a meeting of canyoning operators and key recreational canyoners in Queenstown. This meeting was facilitated by Water Safety NZ. Several days were spent in the field looking at safety management and this was followed by discussions regarding the formation of an association and development of operational codes and qualifications. As a consequence the canyoners now have a more formalised network but will work within the NZOIA framework and provide a technical committee to deal with standards and qualifications. It is intended that suitable qualifications will be developed and ready for trialling by Easter 2011.

What else is going on?

We are in the process of reviewing and redeveloping our information systems and administrative processes, and our website as an integral part of that. As NZOIA has grown and our activity levels increased we have found our current systems increasingly groaning under the strain. What was efficient for a membership of about 200 is not suitable for 700+. These changes will take a few months to occur and we will inform you of aspects that may alter the way NZOIA interacts with members. In addition we are about to embark on a process of Organisational Development review provided by our major funder SPARC. This too will assist us to improve our operational performance.

Job opportunities with NZOIA

NZOIA is about to employ a full time Technical Officer who will blend a field role with various administrative responsibilities. In addition we are seeking someone to work for us as Convenor of our proposed Annual Training Symposium. Both jobs are advertised in this issue. In addition, we are seeking Expressions of Interest from organisations with accommodation and facilities which would like to partner with NZOIA in hosting the Training Symposium. This is also advertised in this edition.

As some members wind up for the hectic summer season others are winding down as the education sector takes its summer break. Early indications are that tourism is going to be somewhat down this year so I certainly hope members in the adventure tourism sector will fare alright and get the clients they need to sustain profitable business.

Merry Christmas and best wishes for a safe and enjoyable summer.



Matt Cant, Chief Executive

OPC – Learning from the Mangatepopo Tragedy

Belinda Manning and Simon Graney

1. INTRODUCTION

On 15 April 2008, six students and a teacher drowned while trying to escape from the flooded Mangatepopo Gorge.

The trip was part of an Adventure Challenge course at the Sir Edmund Hillary Outdoor Pursuits Centre (OPC). In the two and a bit years since this day, the causes of this tragedy have been extensively investigated and analysed and presented in two main reports:

- The OPC Trust Board instigated an independent investigation into what had happened using three external experts: the Independent Review Team (IRT). This was a thorough 'systems based' investigation.
- The second major report was produced by the Coroner. The Coroner endorsed the recommendations made by the IRT as well as making additional recommendations.

In addition, the Department of Labour (DoL) carried out an investigation and pressed charges against OPC. The Department of Labour did not produce a report detailing recommendations to OPC, however suggestions were proposed during meetings between the two organisations. In addition the DoL staff commented on OPC's own proposals, in relation to meeting their requirements.

There are several commonly used models of accident causation. In general, these present the idea that most accidents have multiple causal factors. The Mangatepopo tragedy was a prime example of this. The reports indicate that there was no single error or occurrence which caused the tragedy. On that day, many factors aligned in the worst possible way.

The IRT's analysis approach 'seeks to comprehensively identify every weakness

or failure in safety systems revealed by an incident'¹. The IRT caution in their Report that this type of analysis 'is inherently negative and exhaustive' and 'quite unlike a safety audit'². This paper aims to summarise this exhaustive analysis as openly as possible.

This paper:

- Provides a summary of the recommendations in the IRT and Coroner's reports.
- Shares some of what OPC has learnt and developed since the tragedy.
- Highlights things which might be of interest to others working with young people in the outdoors.
- Encourages discussion and collaboration between OPC and others in the outdoor industry to ensure continued safety improvements.

OPC have set up a section of our website (www.opc.org.nz/safety/Mangatepopo) within which to share more information. This includes charts detailing the individual recommendations by the IRT and Coroner and OPC's responses to these. We have also developed our own list detailing the learning we have taken from the DoL process. The full report by our IRT is available to the public and can be requested by contacting safety@opc.org.nz. We also encourage people to use this email address to ask questions, or contribute ideas to help OPC's continual safety developments.

2. MAJOR LEARNING AREAS AND DEVELOPMENTS

One of the first recommendations made by the IRT and DoL is that OPC considers their recommendations in the context of all activities. This has been wholeheartedly embraced. Our focus has been on reviewing and redeveloping all of the major safety systems and practices for the whole organisation.

1

IRT Report para 14.3

2

IRT Report para 14.4



a. New Safety Management System

The OPC Safety Management System (SMS) was developed over many years and used RAMS (Risk Analysis and Management System) forms as a core feature. There have been many recommendations around what should be added to policies and RAMS forms, but the following point has also been noted: 'RAMS forms can overwhelm new instructors with detail. In particular, they can bury the imperative to prevent death and serious injury in a mass of less serious material'³. A new SMS needed to address both the requirement for additional information, and the need to be easy to comprehend and assimilate.

The new SMS:

- Divides the analysis of hazards into three tiers to decrease repetition and increase focus on site-specific hazards.
- Includes a tool called FLASH (Factors Likely to Accentuate Serious Harm) which facilitates critical analysis and decision making around the appropriateness of an activity in relation to the instructor, students and conditions.
- Includes a severity ranking of hazards and explicit mention of whether the hazard is eliminated, isolated, or minimised, as required by the DoL.
- Clearly defines the competency level and pre-requisites required by an instructor to operate at a specific site.
- Is directly linked to other relevant systems including staff training, staff assessment and crisis response. The goal is to align and streamline all safety related systems to reduce the risks of conflicting messages or holes appearing.
- Includes learning from past incidents and near misses.

The new system is being introduced stage by stage to staff at OPC Tongariro at the moment. We are also seeking peer review of this system through our external safety advisory committee (see section e) and through discussing the ideas with others in the industry. The system can be viewed on the safety section of our website, www.opc.org.nz/safety.

OPC has also fully reviewed our overarching safety policies and these have been externally

peer reviewed. Policy violation⁴, failure to sign off against important documentation⁵, unclear policy⁶ and requirements not being understood⁷ are all listed as possible contributory factors, or underlying causes by the IRT. The Department of Labour also suggested the need for better systems for checking instructor compliance. In trying to address these we are exploring better ways to communicate policy and to 'test' for compliance.

Wording of generic policy is continuing to challenge us and we are keen to collaborate with others on aligning this with industry standards as well as our own standards. The IRT have suggested that Mangatepopo gorge river level policies should not be open to subjective interpretation⁸. It is very hard to remove interpretation entirely, and any outdoors organisation will rely on judgements that are made in the field.

OPC has also more clearly defined processes and responsibilities for closure of certain activities or sites. This is in response to the finding that a lack of clarity around final responsibility for this was a possible contributory factor⁹.

b. Staff Competence

The level of experience of the instructor who was with the Elim group has been cited as a possible contributory factor¹⁰. The instructor had the experience and training required by OPC at that time for the upstream gorge trip. This highlighted the need to review this set of competencies, and to review all OPC's activity competencies. The DoL also suggested to OPC that reviewing these competencies which be a positive step to take. As part of the new SMS, OPC has redesigned staff induction, training and assessment processes and the resulting 'scope' within which an instructor with certain experience is allowed to operate. Experience and judgement in a range of situations is assessed. This internal review is closely aligning with industry wide developments in this area primarily by Skills Active and NZOIA. Staff induction periods are now longer and levels of supervisions beyond the formal induction period have been increased.

4 IRT report para 355-361

5 IRT report para 320-324

6 IRT report para 392

7 IRT report para 391

8 IRT report para 392

9 IRT report para 290-299 and 383-386

10 IRT Report para 382



A key focus is on training staff to recognise and respond to 'not normal' circumstances. The DoL suggested the need to use realistic training scenarios to test judgment, and OPC has incorporated realistic emergency scenarios into a number of staff training events.

The reports also suggest that the instructor may have been working too close to the limits of her experience and competency to be able to respond adequately to the situation which arose. In addressing this OPC has focused heavily on setting expectations for instructors to be working with a substantial margin of safety and on developing a safety culture based around conservative decision making, shared responsibility for safety and open peer review of decisions. Recent interviews with instructors indicated that they now feel very little pressure to be able to offer certain activities and that staff almost all feel comfortable and able to offer their feedback to other instructors and management.

The IRT have recommended to OPC that we establish a plan to reduce staff turnover and increase numbers of senior staff¹¹. They have also highlighted that internal safety audits going back to 1996 identify this issue¹². OPC addressed this concern immediately after the Mangatepopo accident through an international senior instructor recruitment drive having struggled to recruit enough senior instructors within New Zealand. Improving staff retention has been a long term strategic goal and from discussions with others in the industry seems to be a struggle right across the outdoor industry in New Zealand. OPC will be focusing attention on ways to address this in the second half of this year and hope to be able to share ideas and actions with others in the industry.

c. Weather Forecasting and Response

Much attention has been focused on the weather forecast information upon which the decision to go into the gorge was based. The MetService severe weather warning alerts are now well known and used in the industry and became a part of OPC's weather policies and practices very soon after the tragedy. The external reviews all recommended signing up to the MetService severe weather warning service and accessing more frequent weather updates during the day.

Weather forecasts are sourced from several sites and so is supporting information when appropriate, such as river flows, swell reports

and avalanche advisories. If our satellite internet connection is lost we are able to access back-up forecasts from the weather fax or marine radio channels. One simple tool we are using involves categorising the weather as green, yellow, or red. At 'red' staff all know that certain activities are closed. At 'yellow' staff know to be more vigilant and that they or the Duty Manager may decide to cancel certain activities at any time. If the resulting weather differs significantly from the forecast, the Duty Manager can very simply communicate this to all staff with a colour change and discuss with staff how to respond. Policies for activity closures during severe weather warnings and documentation of these decisions have also been improved in line with suggestions from the Department of Labour.

The flood which resulted in this tragedy was a flash flood. The volume of water measured by Genesis Energy increased almost 200 times in two hours¹³ during the time the group were in the gorge. Data however has also shown that this stream floods to this level on average once every two years: it was not a one in a million flood event. If accidents like this are to be prevented in the future we must get better at predicting when an occurrence like this might happen. As part of OPC's new Safety Management System we are mapping catchment areas for rivers and finding ways to source more detailed local rainfall information to consider with the forecast.

The other big change which has happened is in the staff and management culture: we still get out there and do things in the rain (anyone who has spent much time in the Central North Island will understand that rain is a big feature in our daily lives), but more conservative decisions are made around the choice of activities and the concept of closing an activity site is well accepted and regularly used.

d. Management Restructure

Some of the possible contributory factors identified by the IRT included a poor handover and distractions to the Field Manager who had just returned from holiday¹⁴. A clearer handover process was also suggested by the DoL. Lack of role clarity was also identified. Since the tragedy OPC has spent quite a bit of time considering alternative management structures and roles and the Tongariro Centre has been restructured. The most relevant change is the implementation of a Duty Manager system. This role rotates between

11 IRT report para 526 + 67-70

12 IRT report para 451-458

13 IRT report para 96. The flow increased from 0.089 cumecs at 1400 to 17.2 cumecs at 1610. $17.2/0.089 = 193.3$

14 IRT report para 272-274



management and specifically trained senior instructors. The Duty Manager's primary focus during this period is on managing and supporting the safety of groups and instructors in action during that time. A clearly defined handover process has also been devised, documented and is in action. Keeping a clear log of intentions, events and decisions is an important part of this role and responds to some of the Department of Labour's suggestions.

The new structure also divides the responsibility for management of instructors between three managers, decreasing the load on any one individual. New instructors are now all managed by the Training Manager who is able to invest a much greater degree of time and attention to them.

e. Learning from the Past and from Others

OPC has one of the most comprehensive incident histories of any outdoors organisation in New Zealand and yet failure to learn from previous incidents is cited as a possible contributory factor in both reviews, and feedback from the DoL. 'OPC had changed policies and procedures following ... incidents, but the circumstances of the incidents were not being used as a learning tool for instructors.'¹⁵ The new SMS includes a booklet of historic accidents and incidents which aims to better capture this information for current and future OPC instructors.

Internal safety committees have played an important role in analysing incidents for many years. Recently OPC has set up a Safety Advisory Committee (SAC) to supplement our internal committees. This committee discusses safety issues from both Centres and OPC policies and procedures. Industry experts have been employed to give an external view point and peer review at these meetings and to physically review activities at the Centres to help avoid complacency. We believe this external viewpoint is vital considering that, despite analysis of the gorge trip through OPC's safety systems and many discussions within the internal safety committee, the IRT found that there was a 'general failure to adequately comprehend the hazardous nature of the upstream gorge trip'¹⁶. The trip involved walking upstream into a gorge approximately 200 meters then turning around and coming out the same way. This was seen as much lower risk by staff than a fully committing downstream gorge or canyon trip would be seen. The assumption being that you could turn around at any time and leave the way you had come.

15 Coroner's report section 3.5
16 IRT report para 319

f. Financial Constraints

From staff interviews the IRT concluded that financial pressures may have been a root cause of the tragedy¹⁷ and recommended that 'where a substantial margin of safety in a programme cannot be funded direct that the programme be not offered'¹⁸. The OPC Trust and Chief Executive are emphatic that finance has never been a factor when it came to the need for safety and, of course, that is the case today.

Finances do continue to be a hot topic at OPC though as they are across the globe during this time of recession. As part of our programmes review we will be looking closely at how to provide the best quality, safest opportunities for young people to take part in outdoor education at affordable prices.

g. Crisis Response

Both reports comment on the crisis response to the Mangatepopo tragedy and make recommendations. The IRT comment that they do 'not consider that any different approach to the emergency response would have resulted in the saving of any lives'¹⁹. The Coroner however felt that vital time was lost in confirming that there was indeed a crisis occurring due to poor communication²⁰. This has been partly addressed through refinement of policy and procedures around instructor intentions and requirements for updates and communication during the day. Further communication challenges are discussed in section 11.

OPC's Crisis Management System (CMS) is currently being redeveloped. We are adding response plans for high complexity sites like the Mangatepopo gorge to the existing plans for specific events. Simple systems for both internal and external communication are also being set up. This has involved building stronger relationships with other local bodies, such as the police, search and rescue and local ski patrol during winter at Tongariro. This will enable OPC to seek support and advice from a wider group of experts as soon as it becomes apparent that there may be a crisis occurring and will reduce time lost in any handover of responsibility. The goal is that everyone who may be involved in the response to a crisis will be trained in a response plan specific to them.

17 IRT report para 459-464
18 IRT report para 511
19 IRT report para 506
20 Coroner's report section 3.9



In the last year, OPC has developed our seasonal group training blocks for all instructors and crisis management training and scenarios have been a focus of this. Considering what could go wrong and practising and reviewing the decisions people make under pressure is important. The gorge incident highlighted an example of an instructor instigating a whitewater towing system that did not follow any established practice – clearly a decision made under pressure. Practising scenarios stimulates discussion around the limitations of rescue procedures such as throwbagging, avoiding people ‘over relying’ on their ability to rescue rather than avoiding the situation in the first place²¹.

h. Review of OPC’s Programmes

The IRT have recommended to OPC that we review the Adventure Challenge course to ensure it is ‘driven by educational aims’ and to ‘incorporate a substantial margin of safety’²². Before the release of the IRT report OPC was already working on aligning our school programmes to the objectives of the 2010 New Zealand Curriculum. We also made changes to the way the programme is structured and described, for example removing the concept of a ‘water day’ which may have resulted in instructors feeling pressurised to do a water-based activity despite adverse conditions.

As the Adventure Challenge course is such a fundamental part of OPC’s history and principles, we have extended the suggested review to be a full review of all of our programmes beginning with those for schools and youth. This review will involve us considering many challenging questions. The review team note that ‘all of the educational aims espoused by OPC can be achieved in relatively safe environments.’²³ The role of risk in learning is an area we will be looking at closely. We also expect to explore what is viewed as acceptable levels of risk²⁴. We will involve experts from outside of OPC in this review process. As a pre-cursor to this external review, we have visited schools and talked to teachers about the value they perceive in outdoor education and OPC. Our increased commitment to research is indicated by the establishment of a new position in the organisation – Research and Projects Manager.

i. Solo instructing

Both reports discuss the increase in risk posed by a solo instructor working with a group²⁵. Although there was a teacher and an instructor with the group in the Mangatepopo gorge, the teacher was for all intents and purposes a participant in the activity as he was not trained to manage the safety of a group in that environment.

The FLASH system defines certain sites and activities, in certain situations, as not being suitable for a solo instructor. In these situations, a second trained instructor is necessary, or in some situations two groups may work together. The decision is based on:

- The overall level of risk
- Level of risk in key areas including water, height (IRT recommend two instructors when these risk factors are present²⁶) and speed
- Group factors
- Environmental conditions
- Instructor experience
- The impact of either the instructor becoming incapacitated or the risk to the rest of the group while an incident involving one student is being managed
- Activities such as the Mangatepopo upstream gorge trip are permanently classed as two instructor activities as recommended by both the IRT and Coroner²⁷ while others are only classed as needing two instructors when additional risk factors come into play.

It should also be noted that there are other types of risk, such as risk shift (assuming the other person’s responsibility and control of the situation), which could be associated with having more than one instructor with a group. OPC is also considering how to best manage these risks when two instructors do work together.

j. Informed consent and information sought from parents

The IRT comment that ‘in light of the tragedy, some parents might believe that information provided to them about OPC was inadequate’²⁸ and recommend revising information to ‘ensure that parents are able to make an informed judgement about their child’s participation’²⁹.

21 IRT report para 363-372 and Coroner’s report section 3.10

22 IRT report para 509

23 IRT report para 435

24 IRT report para 423-429

25 IRT report para 314-318, 437

26 IRT report para 519

27 Coroner’s report section 4, bullet point 11

28 IRT report para 263, 376 and 377

29 IRT report para 513



OPC have revised this information, in particular our medical and consent form, and have had positive peer review from our SAC. We do however recognise that it is not possible to educate all parents and participants to a level where they can make a fully informed decision. Risk disclosure has always played a key role in OPC's safety systems, but it is hard for any person to truly understand the degree of risk without considerable experience in an environment. The goal here has to be to provide as much information as is practical for a prudent parent to digest and understand. Information will be available on the website and on CD to enable participants and care-givers to be better informed.

An area we have identified where can continue to improve information given to parents and students is in the way we use and explain 'challenge by choice' and voluntary participation. The use of 'challenge by choice' on the day of the tragedy is questioned by the IRT³⁰. One of the most powerful outcomes for students of taking part in an OPC programme is overcoming perceived barriers and so realising that they can achieve more than they originally thought possible³¹. Encouragement plays a big role in this. The 'challenge by choice' philosophy ideally leaves the final decision to participate and the degree of participation to the student. One of the questions we will be re-visiting during our programme review is how much encouragement is too much, resulting in students not feeling able to really choose.

The IRT and the Coroner also question information sought from parents about swimming confidence,³² which failed to identify one student's 'fear of water' and another's 'slight physical impairment'³³. The IRT comments that OPC 'tended to regard swimming ability as relatively unimportant for the gorge activity ...they need to be able to float (with) a wetsuit and PFD'³⁴. With our SAC we have spent quite some time exploring the idea of practical swimming tests and have developed one for the Great Barrier Island Centre. Next steps will be working out how to define when a practical swimming test is necessary before an activity and what options to offer to students who may not be able to take part in a water-based activity.

30 IRT report para 325-326

31 As observed by teachers interviewed during a recent survey of schools

32 IRT report para 265, 275-277, 379 and 387

33 Coroner's Report section 3.6

34 IRT report para 387

k. Wilderness Communication

The Coroner carefully considered the communication challenges posed by the gorge environment³⁵ and made nine related recommendations³⁶. These include that 'there be adequate radio communication between OPC instructors in the Mangatepopo gorge and OPC Tongariro base (and if necessary a repeater be installed)' and that 'OPC further investigate a fall back method of communication of distress'. The DoL has also suggested that OPC better document policies for managing radio dead zones.

Wilderness communication is an ever developing industry, but does not yet provide the technology to allow instant communication from all wilderness sites. The challenge comes when we try to extrapolate this recommendation to other settings. Any number of repeaters will not allow radio communication from within a cave for example. OPC uses a wide range of wilderness communication depending on the locations in questions: VHF radio (local area communications through our own repeaters and DoC channels), mountain radio, satellite phone, cell phone and personal locator beacons. We also try out new technology as it comes onto the market and have recently bought booster aerials for our VHF radios. We have also been working hard to build better pictures of how and where wilderness communication can be used and to train staff in how to get the best from communication. This includes mapping of areas where different forms of communication are effective.

3. FUTURE USE OF THE MANGATEPOPO GORGE BY OPC

OPC is working hard on responding to the various safety recommendations resulting from the tragedy, and achieving best practice safety systems. When we can confidently say that we have systems in place which address these recommendations and which will prevent any future groups from becoming trapped in the gorge during a flash flood, then re-opening will be considered. Any such decision to take groups into this magical learning environment will be externally reviewed, and discussed with key parties.

35 Coroner's Report section 3.8

36 Coroner's Report section 4 bullet points 9, 10, 12-18

4. SHARING THE LEARNING AND MOVING FORWARDS

The IRT comment that 'it hopes the (OPC) Trust will see fit to share the conclusions herein fully'³⁷. We hope that this paper and the safety section of our website go some way to meet this recommendation. Moving forwards, we will continue to focus on addressing the recommendations as part of an ongoing process of continual review and improvement.

Belinda Manning and Simon Graney, in collaboration with OPC staff and Trust Board members 9/8/10.



Belinda has worked for OPC for three and a half years as an instructor and as part of the Head Office Management team. She has spent 2010 supporting the Centres to implement and communicate changes following the reviews into the Mangatepopo tragedy and is just about to take up a role as the Business Development Manager at OPC's new office in Auckland.



Simon Graney is the Centre Manager at the Sir Edmund Hillary Outdoor Pursuits Centre on Great Barrier Island. He sits on the Executive Committee of NZOIA and is a ROSA auditor.

37

IRT report para 507.2

Belinda Manning and Simon Graney

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@nzoia.org.nz

Phone: 04 916 4373

Revalidation Reminder * * * * *

Who needs to come in for revalidation this year?

Qualifications gained before 30 June 2006

- You need to attend a revalidation refresher workshop for **ONE** of these qualifications **BEFORE 31 December 2010**
- 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 attend the relevant revalidation refresher workshop **BEFORE 31 December 2010**

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? Contact us for the forms they will need to fill in.
- 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 or contact us.

Reflections on the Mangatepopo tragedy from Outward Bound

Rob MacLean

So what has Outward Bound learned (and relearned) from the Mangatepopo tragedy? This was the question that the Editor of the Quarterly asked me. I say relearned because it is important to note that Outward Bound has had its share of tragedy over the years too and it is hard to separate out where we learned what.

Here are some thoughts:

1. Match the risk to the context – here at Outward Bound we are not running a high altitude mountain guiding company or a deep-sea diving operation. Our context is outdoor experiential education programme, which serves people who may not necessarily have aspirations for further outdoor adventure or a desire to become guides or instructors. Our stakeholders are not participating in the anticipation that someone may die. Irrespective of whatever risk disclosure we put in front of them, we know this to be true. In our current context, fatalities are simply not acceptable, irrespective of the potential benefits of the activity we are running. There is certainly real risk at Outward Bound, but we need to ensure that it is dialed to a level in line with stakeholder expectations. We accept that this context is not the same for all operators in our industry but it is important that each of us knows and remain aware of exactly where we stand.
2. Keep looking for blindspots. Constantly and constructively challenge accepted institutional practice. Just because we have done something one hundred times doesn't necessarily make it good practice; it may just mean we have been lucky. The best way to pick up a blind spot is to change our perspective (e.g. how would another programme or a different industry manage this hazard and why? How do they do this overseas?). Ultimately, the best way to change our perspective is to get someone with a different viewpoint to look at the same thing and tell us what they think. Audits are good.
3. If you are going to change an accepted practice or system, make sure you fully understand why you are making the change. Try to understand what the broader implications may be and be ready for unanticipated effects. Systems are funny things and react to tinkering in unexpected ways.
4. Encourage judgment. Standard Operating Procedures or Policy support but can not replace judgment. Judgment emerges not necessarily from making mistakes but from reflection on practice. As institutions it is important that we create the space for reflection (through effective debriefing for example). For me personally, the most important reflective element in developing judgment is the self-awareness to fully understand all the factors that influenced my decision making in a given situation – particularly social or other pressures irrelevant to the environmental conditions that I was dealing with at the time. These factors can also include heuristic traps. This reflective process helps me learn to control these extraneous influences on my thinking in future situations.
5. Encourage robust debate and honest feedback. Create and maintain a culture where disparate viewpoints and perspectives can be heard, but in a constructive and supportive fashion. A culture that fosters negativity and 'piss taking' can be just as oppressive of healthy debate as a culture of silence and mute compliance. Healthy debate fosters self reflection.
6. Don't have too tight a programme. Be a loosely coupled system. The natural environment is our workplace and our classroom. By definition it is not an engineered environment and not consistently predictable. Therefore our programming should have enough slop built into it to allow for the unforeseen. Catching a flight should not depend on making a major river crossing the day before. Contingencies for delay or alternatives should be feasible at any point of a programme.
7. Keep looking up, keep looking around, don't lose track of what the environment is doing (sea state, wind, river level, snowpack, precipitation etc). Don't be overly reliant on advance warning (such as forecasts)

of impending environmental changes; instead always be ready to respond to the unexpected.

8. Honour the stories of past dramas and disasters and keep the knowledge alive by keeping their stories alive in staff consciousness. One way we do this at OB is to immortalise our more amusing and less salubrious moments in posters on the staffroom room wall. More serious incidents get different acknowledgement either through 'required reading' for staff or 'lessons from our past' reminders at safety meetings.
9. Practise for the day when it goes wrong. Keep your emergency and crisis response skills and systems up to date and keep them sharp through ongoing scenarios, practices and in response to minor incidents and evacuations.

At a personal level, when I heard the news of the tragedy in the gorge three years ago my initial honest reaction was 'there but for the grace of fortune go I'. After all, the analysis of the Mangatepopo tragedy is complete, I still feel the same. I guess it is a truism of getting older that your cloak of invulnerability starts to fray and you are less inclined to dismiss accidents as not likely to happen to you. It could happen to me. I believe that acceptance of this fact is a critical first step in actively working toward the goal of avoiding fatalities.

Rob MacLean, School Director, Outward Bound. Previous to working for OB New Zealand, Rob worked for 11 years for the US based National Outdoor Leadership School.



Outward Bound

Instructors

Combine your passion for people, learning and the outdoors into one unique job.

Outward Bound New Zealand is looking for some exceptional candidates to join our instructing team in 2011

We are looking for applicants who:

- Are passionate about working with and developing people
- Have experience, qualifications and skills in a range of outdoor activities
- Are committed to their ongoing professional development

Outward Bound offers a very competitive employment package including; salary and employment conditions, accommodation, challenging and rewarding work, excellent staff training and development opportunities.

All positions are based at Anakiwa, in the beautiful Marlborough Sounds.

Applications for our next 5 day staff selection course close 21 January 2011

Information and application forms can be found on our website, www.outwardbound.co.nz or from David Mangnall, Training Manager, Outward Bound New Zealand. Private bag 403, Picton 7372. Ph: 03 520 8290 Email: dmangnall@outwardbound.co.nz



2010 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.nzoi.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@nzoi.org.nz Phone: 04 916 4373 or 0508 4754557**

UPON READING THE ELIM/OPC CORONER'S INQUEST

In my tiny world of kayaking when you get the seemingly inevitable phone call that best friend, paddling partner, fellow paddler, colleague has drowned, then the first question I always ask is HOW? I need to know how to make sense of it, to try and learn from it and to try and stop it happening again. I don't want the same accident to happen again because of the incalculable grief it causes.

If seven people die tragically then it is our professional obligation to squeeze every last drop of learning from the event with the view of making sure it never happens again. The Coroner's recommendations are very thorough but essentially extremely site specific to OPC and its organisational structure.

DEATHS IN SIMILAR WHITE WATER IN NEW ZEALAND

Simon Mclearie drowned on the Tongariro River in 1987. He was trapped in the hydraulic formed at the base of the Poutu intake structure.

Matt Link drowned on the Whakapapa intake in 1989. He ran the intake structure in a Dancer kayak, which hit a piece of reinforcing bar in the concrete bed. The kayak forced the rebar into a hoop and the kayak did a pitchpole pin leaving Matt facing downstream in the 4 cumec current and unable to exit the boat.

Tresa Emmanuelson drowned on the Taramakau River in 1996 pinned on a tree in a Dancer kayak.

Matt Daley drowned on the Roaring Meg stretch of the Kawarau in 1998. He flushed into an undercut in his kayak.

Robin Dodd drowned on the Hokitika River in 1999. He drowned when he ran a class five drop in a Dagger Redline kayak. The kayak was then pinned underwater in such a way that Robin could not exit.

Guenther Schuppen drowned on the Nevis River. He was drawn into a sieve when the class five river was running at 40 cumecs.

Niamh Tompkins drowned at Fulljames on the Waikato River. She was swimming on the boil line without a buoyancy aid.

Rod Banks drowned on the class four stretch of the Hokitika River in 2001. He was probably pinned by his foot

and hung downstream long enough for his buoyancy aid to wash off. The subsequent class four swim probably caused him to drown.

Tim Jamieson drowned on the class three stretch of the Buller River in 2002. He was pinned on a log and gradually slipped underwater as his strength failed.

Zephlyn Vhahovich drowned on the class one stretch of the Kawarau River in 2003. He was apparently trapped in a reversal /hole/hydraulic jump formed by the weir between the Kawarau bridge pylons.

James Acton drowned on the class four/five stretch of the Waikaia River in 2003. He was pinned in a Dagger CFS in a narrow channel on river right. He could lift his head periodically to get air but eventually succumbed to the cold and the strength of the flow. The desperate rescue efforts of his two friends resulted in him being swept into the immediate downstream sieve where he drowned.

Eleanor Rutter drowned on the class five stretch of the Crooked River in 2004. She swam out of her kayak after a failed roll attempt and was pinned underwater in a narrow slot. Because of the gathering twilight her paddling companions failed to see her.

Dennis Squires died in 2007 on the class four stretch of the Waikaia River. He was trapped underwater by a tree and died of traumatic injuries (broken neck) sustained during the entrapment.

Kyle Stidham drowned on the class four stretch of the Kaituna River in 2007. He was trapped underwater in his kayak when it became wedged between two trees.

Emily Louise Jordan drowned on the Class three stretch of the Kawarau River in April 2008. She was pinned underwater between two rocks.

How did Anthony Mulder, Floyd Fernandes, Natasha Bray, Portia McPhail, Tara Gregory, Tom Hsu, and Antony McClean drown on the Mangetopopo River on April 15th 2008?

According to the Coroner "Post mortem examinations conducted on Anthony Mulder, Floyd Fernandes, Natasha Bray, Portia McPhail, Tara Gregory, Tom Hsu, and Antony McClean confirmed their deaths occurred by drowning."

They drowned by drowning?

HOW did seven people wearing wetsuits, helmets and “personal flotation devices” drown? What was the mechanism that caused them to drown?

What grade of white water was the Mangetopopo at seventeen cumecs?

What was the water temperature at seventeen cumecs in April?

Did any of these people sustain any injuries that might have incapacitated them?

What kind of “personal flotation devices” were the students wearing?

Did their “personal flotation devices” (Coroner’s words) stay on all of the bodies?

What kind of helmets were they wearing?

Did all the helmets stay on the students?

Did one of the helmets break?

Was all the equipment used on the day tested afterwards? What buoyancy did the wet suits provide against the negative counterweight of boots?

Were the buoyancy aids/personal flotation devices tested?

What forces are required to break a helmet? It is not a normal event. Outside the context of seven drownings, it would be one of the major issues in any accident investigation.

Did the police or OSH impound any of the equipment as evidence?

What does the phrase “I therefore clipped the students on with a looped sling and a carabena but did not do them up” mean?

Were any of the paired swimmers found with the slings wrapped around rocks or strainers?

Did anybody test the weir at a seventeen cumec flow to see how long a mannequin wearing wetsuit, buoyancy aid, helmet, boots etc would be retained in the hydraulic created by the Genesis structure?

If not, why not? The weir is the major suspect in this tragedy.

Was a professional hydrologist interviewed to at least computer model the hydraulic on the day of the tragedy?

Were the behaviours, body positions, and timing of Sarah

Brooks and Kish Proctors in their descents of the weir in any way different from that of the rest of the party who died?

Did the wire rope on top of the dam make the critical difference in the speed of the descent of Sarah Brooks and Kish Proctor?

Would a diagonal safety wire have served the victims better given that in all cases they couldn’t hang on given the flow of water?

Is there a technical report extant that hasn’t been published?

ANALYSIS

None of the fifteen victims above listed in “deaths in White Water” died in the process of merely swimming down rapids graded up to class five. In each case there was a primary mechanism that held them underwater.

Nine of the victims were trapped in their kayaks.

Two victims were “swimming” without their kayaks or river boards. Both were trapped underwater by rocks.

One victim, Rod Banks, was the only person who was moving down the river after the event that caused him to leave his kayak. However, he had lost his buoyancy aid at some point and might have drowned whilst being pinned.

One victim, Niamh Tompkins, who was an expert kayaker, was swimming without a buoyancy aid.

The only genuine similarities are Zephlyn Vhahovich, who drowned in the weir between the two bridge pillars on the Kawerau bridge after exiting his kayak and Simon Mclearie, who drowned in a similar hydraulic on the Tongariro River.

Three of these victims drowned on man-made structures.

The Mangetopopo River below the weir has already been “swum” in flood flows by an OPC instructor, Quentin Mitchell in 1981. Quentin tried to kayak this piece of water and ended up swimming the stretch. He lived.

Swims on class four and five whitewater are relatively common in New Zealand, both in the recreational kayaking world and in the commercial rafting world. They rarely end in fatalities unless some other mechanism is present.

TRAGEDIES ON A SIMILAR SCALE

We have to look overseas for precedents on this scale:

March 2000, thirteen people drowned whilst on a commercial tubing trip on the Storm River in South Africa. They were wearing wet suits and helmets but not life jackets. Eight people survived. The cause was a flash flood, which occurred when a two metre wall of water came down the class one river.

July 1999, twenty-one people drowned in the Saxeten Bach in Switzerland on a commercial canyoning trip. The cause was a flash flood where a wall of water came down the gorge. The victims were wearing helmets, wet suits and lifejackets but many were "battered beyond recognition".

August 1997, eleven people drowned on a Trek America guided trip in a flash flood in Antelope Creek, USA. The creek rose 15.2 metres. The clients were not wearing helmets, wetsuits or lifejackets. The guide survived but had all his clothes stripped from him. One body was found further down the canyon. Eight bodies were found in Lake Powell and two bodies were never recovered.

None of these events bear detailed comparison with the Mangetopopo Gorge. In each case the cause was a flash flood, a rain event or a natural dam collapse upstream of the accident site, which caused a sudden and devastating wall of water to funnel down the downstream gorge. As the Coroner has stated, flows of seventeen cumecs were relatively commonplace on the Mangetopopo and the NIWA evidence does not suggest a flash flood.

We have to move into another sphere of activity to seek out a real precedent.

July 1993, the River Inn, Switzerland. A private raft trip of seventeen people missed the take out on the River Inn and mistakenly ran a weir/low head dam. One raft was a self-bailer but the two older rafts were badly deformed by the hydraulic pressure of the weir. Nine people were drowned in the weir. They were wearing helmets, wet suits and lifejackets. The causal sequence of this accident is entirely different but the mechanism of injury is identical to the Mangetopopo event. The mechanism of drowning was the hydraulic caused by the weir.

DROWNING MACHINE

Excerpt from a tract by Kim A. Elverum and Tim Smalley, working for the Boat and Water Safety Section of the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources:

"In spring and during periods of heavy run-off, however, they (dams) become very dangerous. Torrents of water pouring over the dam create a churning backwash or current. This "hydraulic" as it is often called, is really a re-circulating current. The roiling current takes an object – including a person – to the bottom of the stream, releases it to the surface, sucks it back to the face of the dam and pushes it back to the bottom. This cycle can continue indefinitely.

In addition to the current, other hazards are inherent in most low head dams:-

- Both faces of the dam usually consist of a vertical concrete abutment. Even if a victim struggles to the edge of the structure chances are poor that he or she will have enough strength to climb the wall.

- Branches and other debris trapped in the hydraulic pose an additional hazard to the victim.
- Temperature of the water at times of high run-off is usually cold, which decreases survival time.
- Finally, air bubbles mixing in the water decrease its buoyancy by one third. The victim has a hard time staying afloat even with a personal floatation device (lifejacket).

In sum, these factors combined with the hydraulic current create a nearly perfect drowning machine."

Elverum and Smalley have probably never been to New Zealand, let alone the Mangetopopo River but they have just described the Mangetopopo Dam in detail.

An unknown number of people have drowned in low head dams in the USA and in Europe. The actual number is hard to assess because the United States Coastguard classify deaths by the type of craft involved in accidents. Statistical bases vary from state to state and country to country. Rubber tubes, airbeds, children's swimming pools etc often aren't classified as craft. However my "feeling" from reading twenty five years of accident reports is that the number would be in the "hundreds" rather than the "scores".

CONCLUSION

I strongly believe that the cause of the "deaths by drowning" in the OPC/Elim event was the Genesis structure in the Mangetopopo Gorge. The hydraulic at the base of the weir at seventeen cumecs was re-circulating strongly enough to retain some of the victims until they drowned. The Coroner has hinted at this. "While I am aware of the issue that the design of the dam itself may have contributed to the deaths of persons going over the dam, the dam and intake were designed for Genesis Energy purposes. If OPC intend to continue using the gorge and the dam as part of its operations, it should consider discussing with Genesis or whoever else is responsible for the dam, whether it is appropriate for changes to be made to reduce the likelihood of fatalities." In his opening statement he says "These findings explain how the deaths occurred and recommend changes to policies or practices at The Sir Edmund Hillary Outdoor Pursuit Centre with a view to reducing the likelihood of deaths occurring in similar circumstances in the future."

He does not address the issue of weirs. Organisations, executives, managers, engineers, instructors, police officers, inspectors and lawyers come and go. Weirs are silent killers that outlast the memories of each generation.

The real acid test is this: How many people, wearing wetsuits, helmets and buoyancy aids, would have died in the Mangetopopo River at seventeen cumecs if the weir hadn't been there?



Photo of a newer (survivable) weir on the Branches Scheme outside Blenheim.

If we accept that the Genesis weir was the cause of death, then the Coroner's recommendations might include the **ELIMINATION, ISOLATION OR MINIMISATION** of said cause both in the Mangetopopo River and **NATIONALLY**. Eighty percent of New Zealand's rivers have hydro-electric schemes on them. The remaining twenty are the targets of future hydro electric schemes. If a tragedy of this nature does not result in a review of the design and construction of dams and weirs, then what event will?

As it stands at the moment the vast majority of New Zealanders still think that the Elim students and their teacher died "canyoning". The Water Safety Council has their deaths listed as Canyoning.

At least ten people have died on structures in New Zealand rivers and nine of these ten people have died on Genesis structures.

A FEW LAYMAN'S QUESTIONS OF THE LAW

In his decision on the death of raft guide Tor Moen Prestmo, delivered on 21st December 2009, the Taihape District Court judge decided that the raft guide died in River Valley's "place of work". Because River Valley had some control of access to the Rangitikei River and had provided some stewardship of the river, therefore the Fulcrum Rapid was a "place of work" and the company was "in control" of the said rapid. The ongoing legal

ramifications of this decision are yet to be seen. Are other raft companies working on the Rangitikei River in River Valley's "place of work"? Are all rapids "places of work"? Are outdoor instructors and raft guides "in control" of them?

Was the Genesis structure a "place of work"? Did Genesis Energy have control of it? They certainly have more control of the design of a man made weir than River Valley has of the components of Fulcrum Rapid. Was Anthony Mclean working that fateful day, albeit in somebody else's (Genesis) work place? The Taihape judge decided that Tor Prestmo was working because he had been receiving board and lodging at River Valley. Antony Mclean was a salaried teacher.

On a daily basis outdoor instructors are obligated to **IDENTIFY, then ELIMINATE, ISOLATE or MINIMISE HAZARDS**. Are the Department of Labour, Genesis and other hydro companies obligated to identify, then eliminate, isolate and minimize the dangers from weirs and similar hazards as of the 16th April 2008? Or do they only operate in hindsight in individual cases? Had the Genesis weir and similar weirs on other schemes been faulty components in a helicopter or commercial airplane crash would they have been withdrawn and re-designed immediately?

The death of Emily Louise Jordan, two weeks after the Elim/OPC tragedy resulted in a Prime Ministerial enquiry into the whole New Zealand Adventure Tourism industry. The deaths of seven people on a Genesis structure have not produced any safety recommendations.

Have the Department of Labour, Genesis Energy and the Coroner done everything in their power to prevent people from dying on man made structures built in riverbeds all over New Zealand?



Mick Hopkinson, long time kayaker. Paddled Europe, Ethiopia, Nepal, Pakistan, USA, Canada, Australasia.

Nearly died on a weir on the River Aire, Bradford, Yorkshire in 1967, aged 19. Saved by a large truck inner tube that washed over the weir and landed on his head. Two members of the local rowing club died at the same place two weeks later.

Hates weirs!

NZOIA Christmas Hours

NZOIA wishes all of our membership and their families a relaxing yet adventurous Christmas and New Year period. A Christmas wish that the New Year brings opportunities and prosperity for you all.

The NZOIA office will be closed from:

12pm Friday 24th December until Wednesday 05th January 2011

Kim Willemse, Training & Assessment Coordinator will also be spending time with family during these hours.



Aspects of Leadership by Ray Hollingsworth

THE MANGATEPOPO TRAGEDY PART 1.

Ray Hollingsworth

In this article, the first part of a three-part reflective interpretation, personal lessons shaped in the aftermath of the Mangatepopo tragedy of 2008, are examined.

Reflection on Silence

There are times when silence is the right thing to hear: the pre-dawn stillness of a clear day in the mountains; the post-crying calm of a sleeping baby; the subtle pauses in a mellow Miles Davis jazz piece. These things feel appropriate, profound even. But the silence of outdoor professionals around the tragedy of the Mangatepopo doesn't feel right. Sure there have been conversations and speculations and immense sadness, and often a feeling, especially in the first days, of 'there but for the grace of God'. But these have been private conversations, away from a public forum, and this I find strangely troubling.

There are a number of questions that spring to mind about the tragedy, some of which have been eventually answered by the coroner's report. Other questions linger but who among us would be brave enough to ask them? Consider this:

- One of the leading proponents of New Zealand outdoor risk management strategy and analysis was in charge of OPC at the time of the tragedy
- The strategies for identifying and managing the risks of that gorge – strategies that are commonplace in this industry – were found to be not enough to prevent the tragedy
- OPC itself, for a long time at the forefront of outdoor pursuits teaching and outdoor education possibilities, and also influential in establishing the type and amount of policies and procedures applicable to outdoor organisations in New Zealand, was found wanting
- The auditing methods of OutdoorsMark, the outdoor industry quality assurance scheme, have been called into question

Who dares question that which has come to be taken for granted?

We should. Collectively. Through having conversations in our professional forums – the meetings, the conferences, the publications. There are things we can learn from this, all of us. Not just lessons from the findings of the Coroner or the Department of Labour or the Police, though they are important. But lessons from reflecting on our own practice: Are we still being safe? Are we being over-cautious? Do we need to ask ourselves if there is the right balance between adventure

and risk in our practice? And who decides anyway – the administrators, removed from the field? The policy makers or qualifications gatekeepers? The practitioners? The parents? We need to reflect on the development of our profession, our collective history, and ask ourselves are we doing the best we can, have we gone in the right direction, or is there another way.

One of the useful things about professional conversations, is that they allow those not involved to reflect on the sequence of events and to put themselves in the same position. And by doing so, ask themselves "what decision would I have made at that point?" It is interesting too, to think about our decisions in terms of what our training and organisations would have had us do.

Over a year ago, fuelled by coffee in the predawn stillness, I wrote my own 'Lessons from Mangatepopo' list. Later I suggested to the NZOIA editor that it might be a good start to a wider conversation. The idea was rejected: Too soon. Let's wait for the Coroner's report. Well, the report's out and it's time to have those conversations. I hereby submit again my own 'post – tragedy / pre-Coroner's report' lessons, written at a time when I didn't know the details of the tragedy but felt compelled to learn something from it. They may not be profound but they are a start and I encourage others to do the same in the hope that our profession is mature enough to discuss that which is painful.

Lesson # 1: Paperwork is not the same as fieldwork

Does orderly paperwork produce professional outdoor operators (operators being a term that I use to encompass guides, instructors, educators and anyone working in an adventure education capacity)? There is no doubt that the template of RAMS and the development of policy and procedures, have helped clarify what we do and how we do it. But there is a duality that exists. Policy – the rules that shall be followed - should support and inform field-based decision making, not constrain it. RAMS forms are not the same as experience-based judgement; they are a tool for sharpening one's thinking, not the end point of one's thinking. Over the years I have witnessed various operators mention that in order for trips to go ahead, they had to supply a RAMS form to the management to get approval – so they used the same one as last year and it was 'sweet'. And that is the blind spot – without repeating the thinking, we may not make ourselves fully aware of the hazards that exist. Having to identify risks in an activity because our systems require it is not the same as identifying risk in an activity because **you want to know**.

To be honest, most of the paperwork I have to currently do in my job just to take a group into the field, is superfluous. This is not a statement of arrogance; rather, the paperwork reinforces

and duplicates what I already know, as I have had enough experience to understand the risks in the activity. The act of writing down the site-specific information on the off-campus form, however, does help sharpen my thoughts on the place where I am going. It helps me prepare mentally for the trip I am doing, but it is not the trip. I still need to be able to see, smell, hear, taste, feel, the place and the people and the activity. I still need to be present in order to analyse the group, the weather, the mood of the individual. No matter how many forms are filled out, *nothing can substitute for being there and having been there.*

Lesson # 2: There is no substitute for experience

Qualifications are signposts to gauge ability as we journey from 'gumby' to 'expert'. Collecting bits of paper to account for one's skill level can be a motivational force for some; for others it can be the complete opposite. At one of the original meetings in the mid-1980's, held to discuss the establishment of NZOIA, there was fierce debate about the concept of collecting bits of paper. Old wise heads discussed the pro's and con's of such a structure. To them, experience in the field was the key component of being a successful practitioner. "Time in boat," said Mick. The logbook was the key to gauging a person's suitability – their experiences told the story. But scratch any old instructor and they will also tell you that they've had close calls and that their experience could not safeguard against all possibilities. That sometimes, given the nature of the outdoors and the complexity of people, stuff happened. But that their experience, their situational awareness, – of weather, terrain, group ability – more often than not, allowed them to make good decisions. And how do we acquire situational awareness? By spending time in the field.

Lesson # 3: There is still merit in the 'old ways'

When do you stop being 'new'? We have all had to start our careers somewhere. The raw energy / enthusiasm / nervousness of a new instructor gradually transmogrifies into competency and confidence. After a while, another metamorphosis occurs and we find ourselves in the pigeon hole of being an 'old hand'. Some places have specific demarcation lines – when you have ticked the box beside trips A, B and C three times each, you are ready. Or perhaps it is a time thing - you serve an apprenticeship for a lengthy period of time, say a year, then you are on your own. Ideally the 'old hands' keep an eye on the 'young guns', offering sage advice or tricks of the trade. There is no easy answer to when you are ready to move from newbie status. The aforementioned practices were all part of my training when I started. Some of my students are ready to be on their own after the two intense years of the DORL (Diploma of Outdoor Recreation Leadership) course at AUT; some aren't. Upon graduation I hope they find an organisation that is willing to support them in their apprenticeship.

Lesson # 4: What would the coroner say?

Some years ago, in a challenging moment, my boss at AUT once asked me "What do you actually do?" I replied that I teach people how not to kill other people in the outdoors. I think he was a little shocked by that. Later, aside from admiring my uncommonly quick repartee, I reflected that I knew there was more to it than that. But it is certainly a good thing to

keep in the forefront of our minds – the old 'what if?' question: "what would the coroner say if I messed up here?" The line between adventure and mis-adventure is a thin one. Yet again it requires experience and judgement to see what's coming and even that is no guarantee. A related question to ponder is "whose adventure is it?" Sometimes we get bored with doing the same thing, and so we seek to inject some new element of excitement. But your group might not be bored – it might be all 'new' to them.

Lesson # 5: We are all individuals

To quote Monty Python. Well, yes we are, but we are all linked by invisible threads too. We don't operate in isolation – what I do in Auckland may well have ramifications for you in Wanaka. The students I teach might well be your child's instructor / teacher on a school camp. A rafting accident in Queenstown puts the spotlight onto the outdoor industry in all its forms. A media critical of a lost trapper or an expensive cave rescue, plants a seed in the collective mind of society that questions the need for risk. We need to be mindful of those linkages; we need to support each other in our growth.

A Deeper Analysis is Needed

The September 2009, Outdoors New Zealand (ONZ) forum was the first public presentation by then-OPC Director Grant Davidson and the OPC lawyer, about the impact of the tragedy upon that organisation. It was engrossing and offered as a type of 'warning' to the rest of the industry. But I couldn't help but wonder 'where is the deeper analysis of the event itself?' Like many of us I have pondered the tragedy of Mangatepopo and wondered if it could have been prevented. All of the reporting so far seen about it, including the 2010 coronial report, says 'yes'. But I'm not sure the recommendations of the coroner, and the changes made to equipment and systems at OPC, have actually addressed the tragedy at a deeper level – at the level of normalised industry-wide practice. The next two articles will explore this idea further.

In Part 1, personal reflections about the tragedy, written before the Coroner's report was published, were offered. In this second part of a three-part reflective interpretation, questions raised by the discourse around the Mangatepopo Tragedy of 2008 are examined.

Questions

I don't consider myself an 'expert' in anything in particular. I did my training at OPC in the mid-1980's, did some volunteering there before getting work in 1992-93, and later returned for a brief stint as a contract instructor. I am proud of my time there and my small part in the development of the place, proud of what OPC stands for. But in reading the newspaper articles about this topic over the last few years, and dissecting the Coroner's report, I think there are some interesting questions raised that need to be discussed in some way. Some of the questions, when I started trying to unravel them, had very complex possible answers.

- Why did Sullivan enter the gorge in the first place?
- Why did senior OPC staff not intervene to veto the intentions of Sullivan?
- Why did the OutdoorsMark auditor not veto the intentions of Sullivan?
- Why did the Coroner recommend changes to training practices and technical matters, yet ignore the evidence about the type of culture that existed at OPC?
- Who would gain from an analysis of the accident and a dissemination of that analysis, and who would lose?

Certainly the complexity of operating in these times was shown by the number of investigations, the number of charges laid, the political manoeuvrings to reduce the impact upon the centre, the size of the fine and the debate over whether it was enough / appropriate, the range of responses by the parents to the charges, the prosecutions and later the evidence at the Coroner's court.

Furthermore, the systems failures at OPC, implied or visible, were complex in themselves: some appeared obvious lapses yet hid deeper causes that did not always fully reveal themselves in the court proceedings.

In this particular tragedy, it initially appeared that all reasonable steps for identifying and managing the risk within that activity, were undertaken by the staff of OPC:

- There had been a weather forecast obtained and communicated to the staff at the morning briefing
- The field manager had approved the activities for the day
- The field manager had liaised with the instructor prior to her taking her group into the gorge, and had cautioned her to be aware of rising water levels
- The group had entered the gorge with appropriate clothing and equipment, and had practised throw-bag rescues prior to entering
- OPC had the relevant policies and procedure in place to theoretically manage the risks of the activity (Devonport, 2010)

Let us now turn to the questions raised above. Sullivan entered the gorge with her group because she felt it was an appropriate activity for her group and because no one had told her not to go. The NZ Herald articles on February 16th 2010, clearly relate this:

[Palmer] *I asked her why she was still going into the gorge. She said she wouldn't go far. I told her to check the river levels when she got into the gorge. But I wish I'd told her not to go into the gorge...*

[Sullivan said that] *No one had advised her not to proceed, despite predicted thunderstorms... the group was excited about the expedition and played games near the dam at the bottom before she led them in (NZ Herald, February 16th 2010).*

She checked the water levels and carried on, seemingly oblivious to the changing situation. This raises a related question, which is why did she not notice the changes – the rainfall, the darkening sky, the discolouration – until it was too late? Was it inexperience or something else?

Why senior staff or the OutdoorsMark auditor did not intervene is a hard question to answer too. Certainly the latter was bound by a scope of inquiry that prevented her from seeing all staff running all activities – she could not be everywhere at once. The focus of this type of audit is to see if the paperwork matches the field practice. It was not the auditor's role to stop staff doing their job, but to see if what they did in the job matched what the paperwork said they were going to do.

Blind Trust

A paper by Chisholm and Shaw (2004) may offer some insight into why the senior staff, including the Field Manager, may not have intervened earlier. In this paper, they explore the discourse around audit and accreditation processes in the New Zealand outdoor industry, and ask whose interests are best served by this 'need'.

... Greater focus on 'safety', in the outdoors industry has led to the development of a 'new' accreditation system [OutdoorsMark], which has been proposed by the national advocacy and leadership body Outdoors New Zealand (ONZ) (Chisholm and Shaw, 2004, p318)

Undoubtedly, each of these organisations [NZOIA, ONZ, Water Safety New Zealand, MSA] has a responsibility to promote a responsible development of the NZ outdoors industry. Yet each focuses primarily on safety, choosing to marginalize other discourses, for example fun, enjoyment, social interaction, exercise or health. This focus on safety... does little to allay any fears of potential customers. Indeed a suspicion may develop that if it were not for the national regulatory organizations then operators / teachers / instructors would be constantly pushing the boundaries of safety. (Ibid, p319)

Thus, consumers are encouraged to rely on regulatory bodies to ensure that practice is being conducted safely. These regulatory bodies influence what is 'safe' and what is not, as they are in a position of power to lobby to further these concerns. In New Zealand, what has become normalized is the need for organisations to demonstrate that their practice is safe, by having policies, procedures in place and by having appropriately qualified staff.

Not only are there bodies such as ONZ who can implement sanctions based on compliance but, over time, operators themselves can become experts in self-surveillance, expecting sanctions and thus conforming to the requirements of audit and accreditation. Consequently the influence of the governing bodies extends, increasing their stature within the industry. The ability of operators to make individual choices, based on experience or context, diminishes (Ibid, p322).

The audit and accreditation processes are essentially reductionist, in that they privilege one form of knowledge over others, and may ignore the experience levels and abilities of operators. The ability of operators to make choices further diminishes, Chisholm and Shaw argue, if they trust too much in the criteria for safety.

Based on the knowledge that is represented by such 'yardsticks', those who choose to do outdoor activities may expect that a company or individual with glowing 'results' will have no accidents... therefore, accreditation and audit may create a culture of *blind trust* (Ibid, p324).

Is it possible that OPC's processes – its many policies and procedures, its training methods – instilled a 'blind trust' within the management and within the instructor taking her group into the gorge, that everything would be alright?

... *the rising of the water level does not appear to have been noticed by Ms Sullivan...* (Devonport, 2010, p23)

And that while they didn't intervene because of that 'blind trust' (distinctly different from complacency), the senior staff and the auditor had been around long enough to also value their instincts, which is why there was such discomfort expressed:

The whole place and atmosphere had an eerie (spooky) feel /atmosphere to me. It just did not feel right to be there today. *That is what my gut feeling told me* (Contract instructor Zimmer, in Devonport, 2010, p13).

He [Palmer] was a bit distracted because Jodie hadn't come back and it had been raining quite a lot and *I could see he was getting increasingly nervous...* I said to him "*Look your mind's not on this and neither is mine*" so because *we both knew things weren't feeling right...* I said I'll write up my report and we'll just leave it there (OutdoorsMark auditor Dalton, in Devonport, 2010, p19).

In addition, it appears the wider system that existed on that day did not support intervention: it was not the job of the contract instructor to oversee the junior instructor – his responsibility was to his group and to his contract. It was not the role of the auditor to intervene in the running of the organisation. And if the Field Manager perceived the junior instructor as being competent enough to be with a group in the gorge – as he mostly did – it is a reflection of the trust that he had in the system, and that it was an appropriate point in her development as an instructor for her to be empowered and not overseen. The 'leash' had been taken off.

The Recommendations of the Coroner

The Coroner made 29 recommendations:

- 6 related to aspects of training (river rescue technique, rescue exercises, competencies, radio use and gorge geography, assessing water levels and catchment data)
- 5 related to field practice (signals, radios carried and kept on, ratios, approach to gorge)
- 4 related to the duties of the field manager (field plan, decision analysis, radio communications, environmental conditions)
- 3 related to the stream (catchment identified, gorge map, monitoring)
- 3 related to equipment (radios)
- 3 related to Metservice (severe weather warnings, written forecasts, procedures)

- 2 related to OPC policy (when to exit gorge, communicating with the field manager)
- 1 for an OPC procedure (emergency plan)
- 1 for ONZ (audits)
- 1 for the government (licencing)

The short answer to why the Coroner recommended changes to training practices and technical matters, yet ignored the evidence about the type of culture that existed at OPC, is probably that the training and technical matters are easier to deal with than the issues around culture. The types of issues that emerged in the discourse of this event, have been around in that organisation, it appears, for at least ten years:

The first, a confidential safety audit [from 1996], showed staff stress levels were high enough that half of all employees had a 50% risk of being involved in a serious accident or illness... *Identified safety risks included high staff turnover, non-compliance with agreed organisational policy and an "autocratic, unfriendly and demotivating" management dynamic.* (Sunday Star-Times, 28th March 2010)

The 2006 report... critiqued the three-week induction period for newly graduated instructors... It warned of the potential to place instructors in more demanding situations than the ones they had been signed off for. (Ibid)

John Maxted, Centre Manager at the time of the tragedy [2008], *painted a picture of a dysfunctional organisation with poor institutional memory. He said there was little interest in culture change, "unless there were clear financial advantages" ... there was "significant pressure to deliver programmes with very little resources". He said staff operated under an ethos of "don't complain – just deal with it"* (Sunday Star-Times, February 21st 2010).

How an organisation *is*, is reflected in how an organisation *works*. The discourse critical of the OPC organisation suggests that the culture of OPC may not have encouraged a sharing of information, and may have actually reinforced a 'management knows best' hierarchy. This is in keeping with modern business management practice where roles are compartmentalized, but its suitability for the NZ outdoors has yet to be examined. The recommendations of the Coroner will not change anything about how OPC *is* because it doesn't address the culture of the place.

So, does it take insightful criticism from within an industry, or from an external source, in order for real change to be seen? What would 'real change' look like? Does the Mangatepopo tragedy represent an industry-wide systems failure or an organizational systems failure? Who would gain from an analysis of the accident and a dissemination of that analysis, and who would lose? These are questions that will be examined in Part Three.

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In Part 3 of a reflective interpretation, some other incidents in the outdoors are examined for the potential insight they offer into the Mangatepopo Tragedy of 2008. The questions of who would gain from a close analysis of this incident, and what 'real change' could look like, are also examined.

Five Other Outdoor Incidents

Mountain guide Bill Atkinson, the MSC avalanche programme head Steve Shreiber, and Don Bogie, former head of search and rescue at Mt Cook, investigated an incident on Mt Tasman in 2003 that involved guides and clients and multiple fatalities. In addition, an independent safety auditor was engaged by OSH to review the guides report. The outcome of all of this analysis was that there was no evidence that the company had breached health and safety regulations, that poor light conditions had contributed to the guides not recognising wind slab potential, and that spreading the party out across the slope may have avoided the rope entanglement (Cropp, 2004).

Yet sometime later, in relation to this incident, the call for objective but informed analysis was evident in the remarks offered by renowned New Zealand mountaineer Pat Deavoll,

If people – especially professional operators – make mistakes, these need to be recognised, not swept under the carpet or dulled down so as to not harm the industry. You're not going to learn that way. The guiding profession needs to be more accountable. Accidents need to be investigated by highly competent mountaineers who are outside the guiding community (Deavoll in Hersey, 2009, p139).

Hersey, a climber himself, recognized that in the immediate aftermath of an incident, changing how things are done is difficult; and while the coroner in the 2003 incident showed an understanding of the relationship between risk and adventure in mountaineering...

But coroners base their investigations and subsequent findings on the expert advice that is presented to them, so their investigations have limited scope. *The alpine guiding industry itself needs to critically reassess its practices after each accident, and the guiding*

community should be prepared to change its practices accordingly and to improve all relevant technical information available to the wider climbing community (Ibid, p140. Italics added)

Are Hersey and Deavoll suggesting that there is reluctance from within that industry, to critique and change practice? Or is it that the lens through which the critique occurs needs to be widened?

In contrast, the remarks by the government organisation investigating the fatal kayaking incident on the Buller River in 2002, the Maritime Safety Authority (MSA) were vehemently refuted by industry experts, both from within New Zealand and overseas:

A chronic problem with the MSA is that they have jurisdiction over white water kayaking, yet they have no knowledge of the subject, and often refuse to seek any...

The MSA report assumes an instructor has absolute responsibility for a student, and that if an accident happens, it must therefore be the instructors fault. On this point one of the overseas experts, Marcus Bailey, made the following comments: "Tim was well into the strange transitional phase between being a student and being a leader which exists with leader training. One cannot expect to stop being a guided and instructed student one day and become an aware self reliant leader the next" (Ward-Holmes, 2004, pp8-9)

Thus we can see two points emerging from the past that are relevant to the Mangatepopo incident– one is that a coroner can have a limited understanding of an outdoor practice, and a limited scope within which to examine an incident. The second is that 'the strange transitional phase' between learning and competence, requires an ability by those with more experience or power to know when, and how often, to 'lengthen the leash' in order to allow learners to make some decisions and live with the consequences.

The death of a man while on a commercial rafting trip in 1994, resulted in the Maritime Safety Authority (MSA) prosecuting Kawerau Rafts for recklessness. The standard of safety and training within the rafting industry was criticized as being 'appalling', as the industry had had three fatalities and a permanently brain damaged client in the previous couple of years. Industry self-critique appeared to not be working in the rafting industry, as the companies were predominantly resistant to change, regardless of the external criticisms being levelled at them.

What is interesting is that the training within this industry, at that time, appeared to focus heavily on accruing experience in order to achieve competency, but that this was done in isolation within each company, and that there was no accepted standard of competency.

Most [raft guides] are male, tough and fit, in their 20's - and retain the invincibility of youth. They start in the industry by learning first aid and survival swimming skills, then assisting experienced guides until a rafting company reckons they're competent to skipper a boat of their own. There are no exams, no certification, no annual surveillance by outside authorities, just the grace and favour of a company owner. Most guides are on-call and paid only if they raft (McLauchlan, 1995, p75).

The point here is that even though the emphasis is on an apprenticeship model – accruing experience in the company of others who are more experienced - this model was flawed because of its inward looking nature. As such it differs from the tragedy of 2008, in that OPC incorporated national standards into its training pathways, and its organisational paperwork was heavily influenced by accepted best practice and managing risks.

The issues raised by the 2008 tragedy are similar in nature, however, to concerns that emerged from an investigation into the death of a student at Outward Bound in 1993. Blame for that fatality was definitely laid upon the organization, and industry 'experts' commented on the incident.

[Experienced outdoor instructor Ray] Button says the deaths at OB are a sure signal of a massive organizational problem: "Each death is predicated by hundreds of near misses or lesser accidents. The deaths are just the tip of an iceberg" ...

Button believes the lack of long-term, experienced instructors at OB is part of the problem, but the other and perhaps most important part, is the *hierarchy of control within the organization which prevents the instructors from really owning and running the programme* according to their own best judgements...

The programme is very demanding on staff, and the system set up by OB deals with this by expecting rapid burn-out and staff turn over. A safer solution would be to increase the staff numbers so students and instructor ratios in areas like kayaking and bush expeditions were lower and instructors were able to pace themselves better (Brett, 1994, pp52-53. Italics added).

Outward Bound drastically overhauled the way it ran its courses after this incident, partly in response to the criticism from industry 'experts' like Button, and partly in response to an independent audit. One of the auditors was the Director of OPC at that time, Grant Davidson.

Davidson was at the forefront of examining the multiple fatalities on Mt Ruapehu in 1990, and disseminating the learning for the outdoor industry. In the February /March 1991 issue of Adventure magazine, Davidson had this to say:

The media hype is now over... But the outdoor world should not sit back. Now the dust has settled we should rationally reflect on what can be learned from this incident...

One thing we know for sure is that in those conditions there was no reason for six men to die. This is evidenced by the two army personnel walking out safely to raise the alarm... and... George Iwama sitting out the same storm only a couple of hundred metres away...

Every accident is the culmination of a series of smaller decisions leading on a critical path towards the final incident. The final result can be avoided by making a correct decision at any of those decision points on the path, and similarly each one of those decisions is not as important as the path in its entirety... (Davidson, 1991, p48. Italics added).

What I am trying to point out is that once in the field the *only weapon we have to avoid progressing along the critical path towards an incident is careful assessment of all factors, and good judgement. Good judgement is based on a certain degree of common sense and a depth of experience.* That experience should be gained on personal trips where your only responsibility is your own life. It comes from a variety of situations and will generally involve a history of some poor decisions, you progress on the learning curve towards more educated decision-making and this leads to good judgement. Instructing should not be the means of gaining experience (Ibid, p49. Italics added).

Interestingly, in light of the Coroner's recommendations for the 2008 tragedy, in this article Davidson makes a comment about radios, saying that 'they are no substitute for experience and judgement', that they are useful tools but that it would be irresponsible to rely on them for your safety.

The article is eloquently and persuasively written and at one point compares the Ruapehu incident with two overseas tragedies that had consequences for their respective outdoor professions, the Cairngorm incident in the UK in 1971, in which six died, and the Mt Hood incident (1986) in North America, in which ten died:

These comparisons bring out some interesting points:
1) The use of a regular venue for training can lead to a lowered perception of the dangers they possess...
2) The people who died would not have been there at all if they had not been on a course...
3) The aftermath of all three incidents included a call for increased qualification of instructors.

I believe this is not the complete solution but merely an easy focus for administrators to opt out of their true responsibilities ... *This responsibility [is] to find out if the instructor has the required ability of sound judgement based on past experience, and that the skills they possess are equal to the task given* (Davidson, 1991, pp49-50. Italics added).

In the same magazine, a further article by Chris Knol reflected a similar discourse, namely that experience is the key ingredient in making good judgement calls in the outdoors. Knol had a long association with the Mountain Safety Council and mountaineering, and at the time was working for the Hillary Commission. He had been the civilian on the Military Board of Enquiry into this incident.

Accidents are never the result of a single event, although often it may look that way. Usually they are the culmination of events that may have had their roots in decisions made weeks or even months before the disaster occurs. Very often the decisions needing to be made immediately prior to the incident need to be made so close together that there is little margin for error, and every opportunity to lose control of the situation.

How well outdoor leaders respond to decision making and the attitudes, behaviour, skills, knowledge and training that go towards making the correct judgement have long been debated.

There can be no doubt however that good leaders are those who make the right decisions and this ability is all of the above coupled with a large amount of experience. There is an old adage which says: "Where does good judgement come from? It comes from Experience. Where does experience come from? It comes from bad judgement?"

Inevitably, in the career of an outdoor leader will come a time when they are required to make hard decisions. *How well they respond and the eventual outcome will in large depend on how much experience they have to meet the demands placed on them* (Knol, 1991, p46. Italics added).

The five incidents discussed above involved different outdoor pursuits – mountaineering, tramping, white water rafting, white water kayaking. The 2008 event adds a fifth pursuit – canyoning. Yet the differences in the pursuits are incidental because the collective discourse around these historic tragedies points us towards several themes:

- That the critique most valued by the profession, comes from within the profession itself. Even the rafting industry, resistant as it was to change and unable to agree on standards, thought more highly of itself than external commentators
- That organizational change is difficult but that it can be achieved – both the Army Adventurous Training

Centre (AATC) and Outward Bound overhauled their systems after the dust had settled, and in doing so changed their culture

- While not the only factor, experience was the **key factor** in avoiding incidents
- That there has been a shift in the speed of the critical analysis of an incident by the outdoors profession. The 1990 Mt Ruapehu incident was analysed in Adventure magazine in 1991; the 1993 OB incident was reported in North and South magazine in 1994; the 1994 death in the rafting industry was reported in North and South in 1995; the 2002 kayaking death was commented on in both the NZ Recreational Canoeing Association (NZRCA) publication New Zealand Canoeing, and the NZOIA Quarterly in 2004. The 2003 mountain deaths were reported in North and South in 2004. As of July 2010 there had been no publication examining in depth of the 2008 event

A Duty to Critically Examine Itself

Does the outdoor industry, as represented by NZOIA, have a duty to critically examine the 2008 tragedy and to pass on its thoughts / findings to its members? These industry voices believe so:

But the outdoor world should not sit back. Now the dust has settled we should rationally reflect on what can be learned from this incident...

(OPC Director Grant Davidson, 1991, p48. Italics added).

If people – especially professional operators – make mistakes, these need to be recognised, not swept under the carpet or dulled down so as to not harm the industry. You're not going to learn that way. The guiding profession needs to be more accountable. Accidents need to be investigated by highly competent mountaineers who are outside the guiding community (Alpine Guide Pat Deavoll in Hersey, 2009, p139).

[Outdoor instructor Ray] Button says the deaths at OB are a sure signal of a massive organizational problem: "*Each death is predicated by hundreds of near misses or lesser accidents. The deaths are just the tip of an iceberg*". (Brett, 1994, pp52-53. Italics added).

In the eight NZOIA Quarterly newsletters published after Mangatepopo, in a time span of two years from June 2008 to June 2010, there had not been a single in-depth analysis of the incident from the organisation representing professional outdoor instructors in New Zealand. The only communication about the tragedy was from the Chief Executive in his regular column, and the tone of communication was one of sympathy and a desire to keep people informed.

The 2008 tragedy reflected systemic failures. But was it the organisations systems or the system widespread in the outdoor industry? The 2008 incident, on one level, was no more complex than the incidents at OB or Mt Ruapehu. But as of July 2010 there had been no analysis offered in any publication. Is the lack of published analysis by the outdoor industry reflective of fear? Perhaps that depends on who would gain from an analysis of the incident and a dissemination of that analysis, and who would lose. In addition, who has the authority to challenge the authority of the norm?

There has certainly been a shift, in at least the last twenty years, towards a more systematized approach to outdoor instruction. Correspondingly in the language and in the practice, greater emphasis has been placed on identifying and managing risks in the outdoors environment, and on having suitably high levels of technical skill. An example of this can be seen in the 2010 New Zealand Mountain Safety Council (MSC) media release from Chief Executive, Darryl Carpenter:

From a sector wide perspective, New Zealand Mountain Safety Council supports the Coroner's recommendation *that Government consider ensuring minimum safety standards are met* in outdoor education and adventure operations.

If we are to reduce the risk of such tragedies recurring, the focus has to be on prevention and education. We support any moves to ensure *robust standards* exist across the outdoor recreation sector and that operators and participants receive *adequate training and education in how to best manage the risks inherent in outdoor activities*.

We would go further and *urge that Government consider requiring all activity providers undergo regular, external review of their operations to ensure minimum standards are met and that there is continual improvement in safety standards across the sector* (Mountain Safety Council, March 31st, 2010. Italics added).

This emphasis – on safety, on standards, on the 'right' training - has privileged one type of knowledge and one approach to practice, over others. The language of the MSC media release is representative of an industry that currently has a highly systemized, highly compartmentalized approach to outdoor practice. The language used in the earliest incident analysed above was much more focused on experience, judgement, and decision-making. Thus there has been a shift in the outdoor industry in how training occurs and *what is emphasised* in that training. The systemization of training is not necessarily a bad thing, and a case could be made that it is the most efficient way to train large numbers of people. What appears from examining the past is how far the industry has seemingly moved from the emphasis on accruing experience. The answer to who would gain

from a close analysis of the 2008 tragedy is potentially the entire outdoors industry. The answer to who would lose is potentially the privileged position of that body of knowledge, in that an analysis may reveal a better approach to practice. 'Real change' therefore, would be whatever a robust and self-critical industry acknowledged about the architecture of its practice.

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Ray Hollingsworth works on the AUT Outdoors programmes. The thoughts expressed in the article reflect his own search for meaning from the tragedy.

Following the Mangatepopo tragedy, a new tool was developed to evaluate the hazards and risk of serious harm posed by a specific activity.

Factors Likely to Accentuate Serious Harm

The FLASH Rating

A RISK COMMUNICATION TOOL

Author: Grant Davidson (PhD)

Abstract

This paper discusses a tool that can be used to make the most of instructors' past experience and group discussions to evaluate the hazards and risk of serious harm posed by a specific activity. The tool can then be used to communicate the risk of those hazards to other staff. The need for such a tool became apparent when reviews found that there were differing perceptions among staff of the risk in the Mangatepopo Gorge and this was identified as one factor in a tragedy where seven people died. The resulting risk communication tool can be used both in training instructors and during programmes to identify factors that might lead to serious harm in order to establish when higher levels of supervision are required and to decide if an activity should be cancelled due to having too much risk on the day. Use of this tool has been found to be valuable in discussing factors that lead to serious harm in any activity, recording this learning for future users of the activity, and for evaluation of suitability of the activity prior to conducting it in a programme on any day. It has application across a wide range of organisations and activity settings.

A PDF of the full version of this paper is available at:

http://www.nzoi.org.nz/resources/doc_library_details.asp?catID=10&name=Technical+Notes+from+the+NZOIA+Quarterly+and+other+sources

or at www.nzoi.org.nz

and then click on RESOURCES > DOCUMENT LIBRARY > Technical Notes From The NZOIA Quarterly And Other Sources

Figure 2 opposite is a flowchart of the stages of FLASH risk for an activity and is explained in detail in the full paper.



Calculating a **FLASH**
RISK RATING for an activity

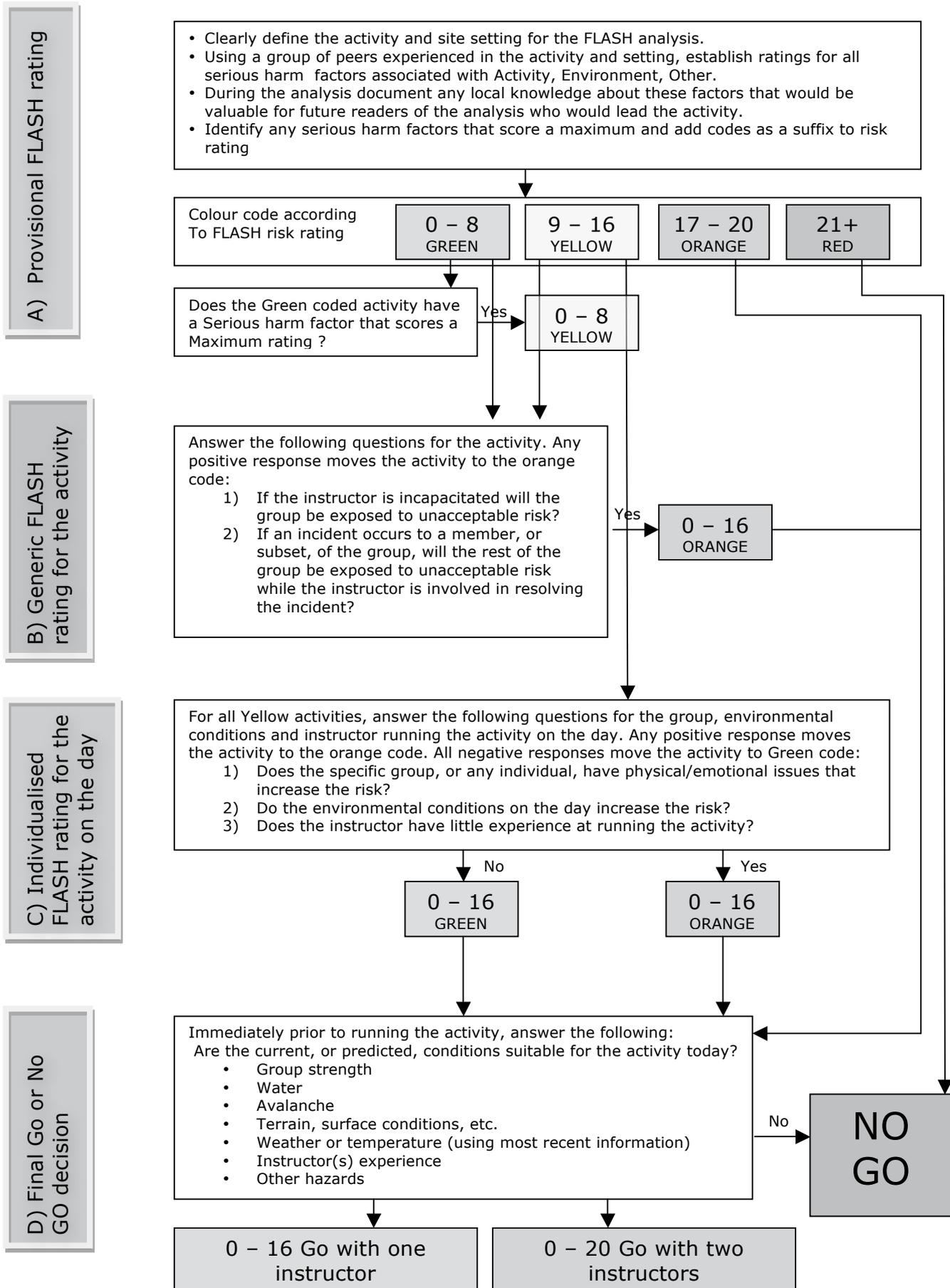


Figure 2: Flowchart outlining the stages of FLASH risk rating for an activity

Chairman's Report 2009 – 2010

Andy Thompson

2009 / 2010 has been a year of many transitions; our strategic relationships, funding applications, government safety review, changes in Executive leadership and roles within the NZOIA committee to name a few. Our environments are changing, and as a leading outdoor industry association we need to keep sharp and ahead of what the future may bring, not rest on our past successes.

Shaping the outdoor industry on our own is unlikely to work favourably; we need to be working collaboratively with other organisations for win/win outcomes for the benefit of New Zealand outdoor education. This last year NZOIA has worked hard at improving relationships with other bodies with the aim of increasing the quality and skill levels in the outdoor sector. Relationships with organisations may seem simple on the face of it, however no relationship is ever plain sailing. We continue to work hard with Skills Active on our qualification alliance. This has been challenging at times and part of this is the collision between two different organisations' values and motivations. Overall we are managing to work through these successfully and will continue to strengthen our alliance for the benefit of both parties. Our relationships with other outdoor bodies including Outdoors NZ, Mountain Guides Association, Sea Kayak Operators Association, Mountain Safety Council, continues. You would imagine there would be no problem with these strategic relationships as we all have a common interest in the outdoors, however each organisation has its own agendas and personalities and these can present challenges we must keep in mind and respect, and still all be working for the greater good of the sector. Our relationships with Water Safety, TIA and SPARC are very positive and collaborative. Key to all this good work is the time and effort put in by our CE, Matt Cant, and the Executive. All relationships need effort and time to develop and NZOIA will continue to develop these alliances so that it can better serve its membership, its sector and for the greater good of outdoor education in New Zealand and internationally.

Funding for NZOIA has always been, and always will be, a concern. NZOIA is now financially better positioned, thanks to the hard and timely work of Matt Cant and the team. Our funding applications have been supported and we are now well placed for the up and coming 3 years. The incoming Executive will require good vision and strategic planning to ensure NZOIA delivers tangible results for the support it has received from its funding sources and from its fees. NZOIA will need to stay slim and efficient and remember financial support is performance based.

The recent Government safety review has come out for comment. While NZOIA has been active in contributing to this process, it appears there is still a long road ahead to seeing tangible effects within our sector. Key to the success of the recommendations presented in the report will be the allocation

of appropriate financial resources by government. The incoming committee and CE will have to monitor this process closely, consider the next steps, and ascertain where we may be a part of this. It is important that this is adequately funded so that we are not diverted from key tasks for the membership and association.

The NZOIA Executive has aligned its meetings to our strategic plan. This is a solid way to ensure our decision making achieves our visions, aims and objectives for the association. With an ever changing landscape we must be diligent to review our strategic direction on this regular basis..

Earlier this year Dr Grant Davidson resigned from his position as President as required by his new position with Skills Active. I was privileged to be elected as interim Chair and now Steve Milgate is filling in today, as I am away overseas. I would like to thank Grant for his years of contribution to NZOIA and all the hard work he has done (and still is doing) for NZOIA because of his belief and support for the outdoor industry. There is no doubt Grant has faced many challenges both personally and professionally and we wish him every success in his new role.

My thanks to our elected members; Mark Lewis, Simon Graney, Ajah Gainfort, and Sam Russek, and to our co opted member Steve Milgate, who is huge asset to have within the committee. Also big thanks go to Mike Atkinson for stepping up and taking on the TSC role from me and to Janette Kear for filling in while NZOIA sorted its Training and Assessment Coordination role. I would also like to thank the paid staff Steve Scott, Anne Tresch and Garth Gulley for their contributions, and take this opportunity to welcome our new Training and Assessment Coordinator, Kim Willemse. Our relationship with Skills Active would not be the positive one that it is without the expertise and dedication, flexibility and hard work of Paul Richards and Sue Gemmell – thanks to you both.

Finally I would like to thank all of you – people who believe and support what NZOIA as an association is doing for New Zealand's outdoor education profession; without you we do not have a reason to be in existence.

The future holds uncertain paths. Some we consider we know; many we will not see until we stand at the crossroads of decisions. However, it looks bright and we will all play an active role in guiding this Association to perform exceptionally well for your benefit and the industry's future. I encourage you all to keep in touch, raise your hand and get involved with the Association – every little thing you do counts.

I wish you a fantastic 2010 / 2011 year and look forward to talking to you personally soon.

Andy Thompson
Interim Chair, March - September 2010

Chief Executive's Report 2009 – 2010

Matt Cant

While not explicitly stated in either our Constitution or Strategic Plan, NZOIA is largely focussed on increasing the skill level of people working in the outdoor sector. This goal is about achieving a number of important and desirable outcomes such as quality of delivery and learning, professional recognition, public assurance and safety, and building careers. NZOIA's primary responsibility is to its members whose needs and aspirations are sometimes in tension with the needs, priorities and capabilities of employers; it's a balancing act. The following report reflects what's occurred in the past year and our efforts, priorities and direction to achieve a more skilled outdoor community.

Continuing our strong commitment to work collaboratively with other organizations within our sector considerable effort has been expended in consolidating our relationship with Skills Active, and in working towards a more unified future with NZ Mountain Safety Council.

Membership and Awards Data

2010 has seen a continuation of the growth in membership and assessment activity. Registrations have increased to 651 representing a 72% increase since 2006-7. Total membership peaked at 744. The 2009 calendar year saw 195 people participate in 40 assessment courses, up from 168 people and 34 courses the previous year.

Assessor Training

A new process of assessor selection and training has been developed and promoted. 22 new assessors have so far been through this year and a further 10 are scheduled to be trained this month. Paramount in the selection process has been the necessity to establish sufficient demand to support these assessors. Applicants able to provide evidence of demand in their own workplace have been given priority, as have people in areas of regional or activity need.

Leader Level Qualifications

Our four leader level qualifications developed in partnership with Skills Active are now on the National Qualifications Framework and available for use by workplaces and providers. NZOIA is keen to establish strategic alliances with major employers and tertiary institutions to better facilitate this and ensure trainees / students recognise NZOIA as their professional

association, supporter and registration body. Mountain Bike Leader is also now available through MTB NZ / Skills Active and we will be working with them to enable access to this qualification.

River Safety and Rescue Courses

White Water NZ has recently asked that NZOIA take over the running and coordination of these programmes. Consequently courses will be advertised on the training calendar at a cost reflective of the Water Safety NZ funding support for kayak instructor training. This is a welcome development in our long relationship with the recreational kayaking sector.

Review of Qualifications

In the past year NZOIA employed an independent consultant to conduct a review of our existing qualifications through a member and sector survey followed by regional forums. Conducted in partnership with Skills Active this led to a formal report and recommendations. Over the coming months Technical Advisory Groups are scheduled to be convened for the purposes of rewriting the Level 1 qualifications syllabi and the respective National certificate Unit standards that reflect these. This is the next stage in the alignment of NQF qualifications to the NZOIA qualifications, and the redesign of syllabi and scope documentation in the improved format of the Leader qualifications.

Finance and Funding

Overall our financial position is good with final accounts showing a small surplus. We sincerely thank SPARC for their base funding and Water Safety NZ and NZ Community Trust for their continued support over the past year. Latterly 2010 has seen some challenges in terms of our accessibility to future external funding sources with hard questions being asked by WSNZ regarding the desirability of Lottery Grants funding supporting people in paid employment. SPARC have moved to a new contestable funding regime that involves a more demanding application criteria. In both instances we have been successful in securing funding for the coming year. Through the new process SPARC have shifted to a three year funding cycle. This provides a level of financial security we have not previously had which, coupled with a 300% funding increase, presents a welcome, much

appreciated, and exciting opportunity that will enable NZOIA to significantly develop.

Revalidation and Registration

The process of annual revalidation is now well established; though maintaining first aid currency seems to be a challenge (perhaps an annoyance) for many members. Revalidation refresher workshops are well under way and the next few months in particular look extremely busy. As an Executive we are working hard to find new and more accessible ways for members to get through the revalidation process and have received funding support from SPARC to assist in running an annual training symposium to this end.

Staff

Steve Scott our Administration Officer continues to work diligently and efficiently in the day to day running of the Association. With increasing membership and course activity Steve has faced considerable challenges and increasing hours of work, thank you Steve. The role of Training and Assessment Coordination shifted in this year to being managed by Skills Active. This was unfortunately not entirely successful and many members suffered inconvenience and uncertainty as a consequence. Janette Kear stepped willingly in to fill the gap and has got things back on track. My sincerest thanks to Janette for the enormous effort she put into doing this; and her ongoing training and support for our new coordinator Kim Willemse. Supporting our partnership with Skills Active, Kim will be based in their offices and will spend a

proportion of her time working specifically for Skills Active as a workplace relationship manager.

Garth Gulley joined the team this year in a shared position with Outdoors NZ. Garth was specifically tasked with managing the River Safety Education contract we have with WSNZ and about which members will learn more over the coming months. Garth has also made substantive contributions to He Pikau Matauranga, the international cross crediting resource, and to the Quarterly. I thank Garth for his sterling work on these projects.

Core business of the Association is our assessment and training courses, the successful delivery of which falls upon members of the assessor pool and a number of other Level 2 instructors; our thanks to all those who have trained and assessed on our behalf and who continue to make the scheme the success that it is.

Liaison

NZOIA maintains representation at Board or Council level with Water Safety NZ and NZ Mountain Safety Council. Steve Milgate has been our delegate to the MSC and we acknowledge and appreciate his contribution in this and many other ways. Mark Jones has represented us on the MSC Bush Committee and we thank him also for his time and effort in this regard.



Matt Cant, Chief Executive

* * * * * Congratulations * * * * *

Congratulations to the following members who recently gained NZOIA Qualifications:

Bush Walking Leader	Harry Greer, Christan Long, Daniel Lynton, Elina Piere	Rock Climbing Leader	Rawiri Harper, Josuha Loft, John McDonald
Bush 1	Asher March, Ashley Whitehead, Debbie Wanhill, Katherine Mikes, Peter Evans, Cameron Walker, Luke Middleton, Sally McDonald, Robert Cox, Larissa Mueller, Alistair Mitchell, Paul Nicholson, Katrina Pollard, Daniel Dyer, Andre Booth, Matt Wight	Rock 1	Robin Maxwell, Eddie Murphy, Gregory O'Donnell, Owen Shrimpton, Mark Skrzyniara, Darren Rooney, Sean Mulvany, Asher March, Peter Cooper, Christan Long, Daniel Lynton, Elena Piere, Sally McDonald, Luke Middleton, Mark Windust, Stewart Dempsey, Michael Coker, Jonathan Taylor, Craig Dunnett
Bush 2	Nicholas Davies, Ivor Heijnen	Sea Kayak Guide	Doug Aitken, Stefan Austin, Sophie Ballagh, Harley Lawson
Kayak Leader	Samantha Barkman, Immanuel Feci, Ian Fitzpatrick, Harry Greer, Rawiri Harper, Joshua Loft, Christan Long, Craig Rouse, Shannon McNatty	Sea Kayak 1	Nicholas Davies
Kayak 1	Allen Yip, Peter Eley, Cameron Walker	Sea Kayak 2	Simon Graney, Mark Jones, Ashley Cheeseman, Mark Johnston
Kayak 2	Craig Adams	Outdoor Safety Management	Callum Findley, Ben Louie

NZOIA

Excellence in Outdoor Leadership

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

NZOIA Technical Officer

Applications are invited for the above full time position within NZOIA. The Technical Officer will be responsible for visits to employers and training providers to support the training, assessment and revalidation systems and to encourage uptake of these.

The role also involves developing administrative systems that back up Assessment Centres, Approved Employers and cross crediting. The role will involve travel throughout NZ, periods away from home, and regular reporting to the Wellington office.

The ideal candidate will have a thorough knowledge of the outdoor sector, education and training; will be a good administrator and communicator; and will have some or all of the abilities to train, assess, revalidate and act as a moderator.

This is an exciting new role combining an administrative function with lots of time in the field, and is supported by SPARC funding.

Further information is available on the NZOIA website noticeboard or from the NZOIA office.

www.nzoia.org.nz

Phone: +64 4 385 6048

Fax: +64 4 385 6048

Email: ao@nzoia.org.nz

Applications close 14 January 2011

National Training Symposium Convener

Applications are invited for the above part time position within NZOIA. The National Training Symposium will become an annual event that provides a residential training and revalidation opportunity for NZOIA members in an outdoor setting. The Convener will be responsible for all aspects of organising the annual symposium including: convening an organising committee; venue selection; programme development; advertising; contracting trainers and assessors; selecting and inviting overseas contributors etc.

This position is four hours per week averaged through the year and reporting to the NZOIA office, and is a new role supported by SPARC.

Further information is available on the NZOIA website noticeboard or from the NZOIA office.

Applications close 28 January 2011

Expressions Of Interest

National Training Symposium

NZOIA is planning to run these events on an annual basis from 2011/2012. The symposium will be a residential training and revalidation opportunity as well as a general get together for members.

We are seeking Expressions of Interest from Organisations that would like to partner with NZOIA in the running of the initial event. Such a partner will need facilities in an outdoor setting that are suitable for the hosting of such an event, and a location that enables ease of access to rock climbing, tramping, caving and kayaking activities. Facilities will need to include a range of accommodation options including camping or a very low cost equivalent; catering and self catering capability; indoor spaces where activities, presentations and seminars can take place.

Please reply to ce@nzoia.org.nz or the NZOIA office by 28 January 2011.

NZOIA Merchandise

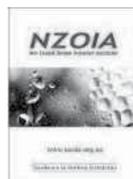
Waterproof Notebooks

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 with NZOIA logo.

Cost (inc. gst)

\$10.00

Assessment Calendar

The assessment calendar is now published only on the NZOIA website 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 Phone: 04 916 4373

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

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 Phone: 04 916 4373

http://www.nzoi.org.nz/training/training_calendar.asp



bivouac/outdoor

COMMITTED TO ADVENTURE

Bivouac Outdoor is a 100% New Zealand owned company with a business model that gives the flexibility and scale to provide you with the best outdoor clothing and equipment available in the world today. "Committed to adventure" is not a throw-away line, it's a mission statement that we'll bring you the best of the best.

Top performers that won't let you down

With each of our stores stocking over 7500 products from 150 different suppliers, we are able to offer the best performers in each category. We present cutting edge technology from leading international manufacturers such as Arc'teryx, Berghaus, Black Diamond, Exped, Osprey, Outdoor Research and The North Face. Every item has undergone a selection process during which the product has proven itself to be a top contender in its category.



Outdoor Research Helium Jacket

Outdoor Research's most compressible storm shell is so light it practically floats, or at least it's so light that you won't notice you're carrying it until a sudden downpour bursts into your day. When a big, exposed objective puts you on route for a full day stretching into dark, this jacket packs into its own pocket and can be clipped to your harness for quick access if you need protection from rain, wind, or cooling temps. And it includes all the features needed for true functionality, without any bulky excess.

Ultralight, waterproof/breathable 2.5-layer 20D Pertex® Shield DS ripstop fabric

Fully seam taped

Single-pull hood adjustment

Ultralight, water-resistant zips

Front zip has a 19cm inner stormflap

Zipped napoleon pocket

Stuff pocket at side hem with hook/loop closure

Elastic cuffs

Single drawcord hem adjustment

Weight: 193gm (men's size large) 163gm (women's size medium)

\$229 RRP

20% DISCOUNT TO NZOIA MEMBERS*

plus a percentage of your purchase supports NZOIA
*Discount is off RRP, not to be used in conjunction with any other discount, special or offer



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PLANTING THE SEEDS OF ADVENTURE



Photos supplied by Outward Bound

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.

