

Editor's note

Kia ora,

This issue features a collection of papers on safety and fatality prevention in outdoor education by Associate Professor Andrew Brookes from LaTrobe University in Australia. The genesis for the publication of this collection arose following the 2010 Outdoors New Zealand Forum in Wellington.

As the invited keynote speaker Andrew made two presentations to attendees entitled; *Licensing and Bubble Wrap? Guided outdoor pursuits for youth in the wake of the Mangatepopo tragedy* and *So What? Now What? Lessons learned from recent incidents*. These presentations undoubtedly provoked unease, raised questions and provided cause for reflection.

Whilst Andrew made the powerpoint presentations available on the ONZ website they failed to capture the detailed and nuanced points that he raised. He also drew on previous studies that had been published elsewhere – but were difficult to obtain without a direct subscription or institutional affiliation.

Given the importance of the points that he made and the desire to disseminate this information more widely I approached him about turning his keynotes into a peer reviewed paper. He has done this and I am pleased to lead this issue of the journal with, *Preventing fatal incidents in outdoor education. Lessons learnt from the Mangatepopo tragedy*. I am also thankful to the support of the previous and current editors of the Australian Journal of Outdoor Education, Glyn Thomas and Robyn Zink respectively, for permission to reprint the other three articles in this issue. Published between 2002-2004 these papers focus on outdoor education fatalities in Australia between 1960-2002. The papers summarize the incidents and introduce fatality analysis; examine contributing circumstances – supervision, first aid and rescue; and finally environmental circumstances leading to fatalities. As a collection this issue provides a resource for individuals and organisations that I hope will be well read and frequently referenced.

At the recent 2011 Outdoors New Zealand Forum I noted a desire to look ahead. While this is laudable and understandable we can, and must, learn from the past if we are to avoid the maxim “old accidents, new people”. As Brookes concludes the first paper, “It would be a further tragedy if the outdoor education sector, particularly in New Zealand, failed to properly learn the lessons to be learned, or re-learned, from the seven preventable deaths” (p. 30). This issue is one way of contributing to part of the process of learning from the past. I hope that it provides ‘food for thought’ as

you continually strive to improve the quality of the learning outcomes for participants and ensure that they return home safely.

I had hoped that this issue would have been ready for this year's Forum, but given the very pleasant predicament of a backlog of submissions which formed Vol2(5), this issue has been somewhat delayed. As this year draws to a close, I would like to extend my thanks to those who contributed papers and to those who willingly reviewed these submissions. I would also like to thank Keri at ONZ for her design input which saw the last issue of the journal take on a more polished look.

As always the journal welcomes the submission of scholarly articles that will inform outdoor education theory and practice in Aotearoa New Zealand and the international outdoor community.

Mike Brown

Editor