



# Adventure & Outdoor Update

A joint newsletter from:



**Outdoors New Zealand**  
Mahi Ngahau ā-Waho Aotearoa



**tourism  
INDUSTRY**  
ASSOCIATION NEW ZEALAND

## Welcome to Adventure and Outdoor Update 2

Spring is in the air and we expect you are busy gearing up for a great summer season. The TIA and Outdoors NZ teams have also been busy, working hard on the adventure tourism review actions. Our focus over the past month has been the adventure operator safety guide. This is very much a practical "by industry for industry" tool. The working draft will be released to you in November.

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## Adventure activities regulations

Minister of Labour Kate Wilkinson has today released the new adventure activities regulations. Sitting under the Health and Safety in Employment Act 1992, the regulations require commercial adventure tourism and outdoor education operators in New Zealand "who provide activities that are designed to deliberately expose participants to a managed risk of serious harm" to undergo a safety audit and become registered.

The regulations don't apply to organisations that don't charge fees, such as schools or voluntary clubs.

Operators have a three year transition period from November to comply with the new regulations. The Department of Labour (DOL) is preparing a guidance document for operators to help them understand the regulations. This will be available early next year.

"For now, all operators have to do is notify the Department about their operation - this is not the registration process - but a simple notification of your activity or organisation," Ms Wilkinson says.

[Click here](#) to read Ms Wilkinson's media release. To read the regulations, [click here](#). More background information is available on [DOL's website](#).

### Industry response

TIA says the new adventure activities regulations will help address safety gaps identified in the Adventure Tourism Review. But it is concerned that some operators may find them difficult to understand until the supporting guidelines are available from DOL.

"The definition of adventure within the regulations is more open to interpretation than we expected. DOL is writing explanatory guidelines, but the regulation scope also puts a great emphasis on the support and guidance that TIA and Outdoors New Zealand are providing to adventure and outdoor operators," TIA Advocacy Manager Geoff Ensor says.



Kate Wilkinson

TIA will continue to encourage all adventure operators to adopt industry-accepted safety standards and external audits. Read [TIA's media release](#).

**Outdoors New Zealand** believes the adventure activity regulations have the potential to provide significant benefits for the adventure tourism and outdoor commercial sector.

Although the definition of adventure activity is relatively narrow and a number of adventure activities will not be captured by the regulations, Outdoors New Zealand believes that there will be a raised expectation for the whole sector to demonstrate that they have appropriate safety systems in place. Outdoors New Zealand is calling for all outdoor operators to voluntarily undergo an external safety audit, CEO Paul Chaplow says.

Read [Outdoors New Zealand's media release](#).

**Maritime New Zealand** Deputy Director Lindsay Sturt says the regulations put in place a safety framework that will provide greater levels of assurance that higher risk activities meet appropriate safety standards.

"The review found that most adventure operators manage risk well. Most maritime based adventure activities, such as commercial jet boating and rafting, are already required to undergo safety audits under maritime rules and will not come under the new system. The changes address gaps in the regulatory framework and will help ensure safety in higher-risk parts of the adventure sector."

Read [Maritime New Zealand's media release](#).

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## Adventure operator safety guide

The adventure operator safety guide is one of the key actions coming out of the Adventure Tourism Review. Content will range from advice on regulations and how to meet them to legislative requirements, auditing operations and creating safety management plans.

The guide will be web-based, practical and very much by industry for industry. Content development is being spearheaded by TIA with input from Outdoors NZ, focus groups and operators – ideas and examples on how to build effective and efficient safety systems are rolling in from all over the country.

While the guide is aimed at new operators, parts will also be useful for more experienced operators as they come in line with the government's new adventure activities regulations.

A working draft of the guide will be released for operator use in late November. Operators will have an opportunity to use the guide over the summer months and provide feedback. Our November workshops (see below) will focus on introducing the guide and the feedback system. The guide will be finalised in autumn 2012.



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## Activity specific safety guidelines

We will start work on this project in December. We have been asked by DOL to provide additional guidance to better inform adventure and outdoor commercial sector operators about their current responsibilities, particularly activity specific guidance. This includes finalising three activity specific guidelines by mid-2012.

Our first priorities will be establishing a process to review existing guidelines and agree how to develop new guidelines, consistent areas of content, and where the guidelines should be hosted. The [Project Advisory Group](#) is providing input into how best to do this. Once a draft process is established it will be sent out for sector-wide consultation.

### What can you do now?

Start talking within your sector about your own guideline review or development. We will need to know what is already out there in the way of existing industry guidelines and codes of practice, what needs updating and where there are gaps.

Keep an eye on these Updates. We will keep you posted on what is happening and how you can contribute.



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## Qualifications and Incident reporting system

Outdoors NZ with the support of TIA is investigating what the appropriate levels and measures of competency are for adventure and outdoor commercial sector instructors and guides. This includes looking at whether instructors and guides should be required to hold qualifications and work only within the scope of their qualifications for some activities.

Outdoors NZ is also investigating a sector-wide incident reporting system. As part of this we will look at sector interest in such a system, likely engagement and concerns.

Advisory groups have been established to provide input into both investigations, including the



best approach and process. We expect to have project plans ready to present to DOL by the end of October. Attendance at the November workshops (see below) will be a great way for you to get a comprehensive understanding of these projects and how you can contribute.

If you have any questions or wish to provide input into either or both of these investigations please contact Outdoors NZ Project Leader – Safety Review Sue Gemmell, email [sue@outdoorsnz.org.nz](mailto:sue@outdoorsnz.org.nz), phone 04 385 7287, mobile 027 436 5612.

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## November workshops

Following the success of the joint TIA-Outdoors NZ consultation workshops at the beginning of the year we'll be running another series of operator workshops from mid-November to early December. The key areas of focus will be to introduce the new web-based adventure operator safety guide and provide updates on the adventure activities regulations, the adventure specific safety guidelines and the qualifications and incident reporting system projects.

Workshop dates, venues and registration details will be emailed to you soon. These workshops will fill quickly so make sure you register early to be assured of a place.

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## Pre-season safety checklist

TIA has a short pre-season safety checklist that you might want to refer to before the full flurry of summer activity arrives. [Click here](#) to read more.



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## Keep up-to-date

TIA and Outdoors New Zealand Updates will help keep you up-to-date with our progress against the five actions DOL has contracted us to deliver. We will also bring you the latest announcements about the adventure activities regulations, including key dates, new initiatives and developments and implications for your business and the sector.

The next Adventure & Outdoor Update is due out in November – make sure you don't miss it. If you aren't already on the mailing list, [click here](#) to sign up.

[Click here](#) for background to the Adventure Tourism Review and adventure activity regulations.

**All the best,  
Sue and Rachael**

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