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Abstract

This report presents the findings from a 2015/16 survey of users on the Alps 2 Ocean (A2O) cycle trail. The A2O, running from Aoraki/Mt Cook to Oamaru, is the longest trail in the New Zealand Cycle Trail (NZCT) network. The survey profiled current users (demographics, importance of A2O for area visit) and described their use of the A2O (amount ridden, group size, previous A2O experience, ride logistics, other activities). The survey also measured satisfaction and expectations relating to a variety of A2O amenity and support services. Other questions explored impressions of the A2O more generally and within the context of user experience of other cycle trails in the NZCT network.

Keywords

A2O, cycle trail, recreation, Mackenzie Basin, Waitaki Valley, Oamaru, tourism

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# Table of Contents

List of Figures ............................................................................................................................. iv  
List of Tables ............................................................................................................................... v  
List of Photographs ..................................................................................................................... v  
Executive summary .................................................................................................................. vii  

Chapter 1  
Introduction ............................................................................................................................. 1  
1.1 Background ......................................................................................................................... 1  
1.1.1 Cycle trail research .......................................................................................................... 3  

Chapter 2  
Methodology ............................................................................................................................... 5  
2.1 Survey distribution and sampling ....................................................................................... 5  
2.2 Sampling ............................................................................................................................... 6  
2.3 Intercept surveys .................................................................................................................... 6  
2.4 Analysis and reporting of results .......................................................................................... 9  

Chapter 3  
Results ......................................................................................................................................... 11  
3.1 Intercept Survey ................................................................................................................... 11  
3.1.1 Activity type ................................................................................................................... 11  
3.1.2 Trail usage ...................................................................................................................... 12  
3.1.3 Home locations .............................................................................................................. 13  
3.2 Online Survey - About you ................................................................................................ 15  
3.2.1 Age ................................................................................................................................. 15  
3.2.2 Gender ............................................................................................................................ 15  
3.2.3 Residence ....................................................................................................................... 15  
3.2.4 Importance of A2O for area visit .................................................................................... 17  
3.3 Your A2O activity ............................................................................................................... 19  
3.3.1 Type of activity ............................................................................................................... 19  
3.3.2 Parts of the A2O used ...................................................................................................... 19  
3.3.3 Overnight locations ......................................................................................................... 23  
3.3.4 Size of group .................................................................................................................. 27  
3.3.5 Previous A2O experience .............................................................................................. 28  
3.4 Your A2O experience ......................................................................................................... 31  
3.4.1 A2O logistics ................................................................................................................ 31  
3.4.2 Other activities whilst in the Mackenzie/Waitaki area ................................................... 32  
3.5 What you thought of the A2O ........................................................................................... 37  
3.5.1 Liked most ...................................................................................................................... 37  
3.5.2 Liked least ...................................................................................................................... 44  
3.5.3 Satisfaction with A2O services ...................................................................................... 52  
3.5.4 A2O support and amenity services ............................................................................. 56  
3.5.5 Satisfaction with hospitality and retail services ............................................................ 63  
3.5.6 Other feedback relating to services ............................................................................. 68  
3.5.7 Improving the A2O experience .................................................................................... 69  
3.6 The A2O in context ............................................................................................................ 71  
3.6.1 Other cycle trails ............................................................................................................ 71  
3.6.2 Why choose the A2O? ................................................................................................... 72  
3.6.3 Overall rating for the A2O ............................................................................................ 74  
3.6.4 Likelihood of recommending the A2O ......................................................................... 74
## List of Figures

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Figure</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FIGURE 1</td>
<td>NEW ZEALAND CYCLE TRAIL – GREAT RIDES (SOURCE: NGA HAERENGA THE NZ CYCLE TRAIL INC.)</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FIGURE 2</td>
<td>OHAU WEIR TRAIL COUNTER DATA</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FIGURE 3</td>
<td>MAP SHOWING INTERCEPT SITES AND NUMBER OF INTERCEPTS</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FIGURE 4</td>
<td>TRAIL USAGE</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FIGURE 5</td>
<td>TRAIL USE BY INTERCEPT SURVEY PERIOD</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FIGURE 6</td>
<td>HOME LOCATION</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FIGURE 7</td>
<td>HOME LOCATION BY INTERCEPT SURVEY PERIOD</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FIGURE 8</td>
<td>AGE</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FIGURE 9</td>
<td>RESIDENCE</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FIGURE 10</td>
<td>CANTERBURY RESIDENTS</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FIGURE 11</td>
<td>OTAGO RESIDENTS</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FIGURE 12</td>
<td>IMPORTANCE OF A2O FOR AREA VISIT</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FIGURE 13</td>
<td>TYPE OF ACTIVITY</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FIGURE 14</td>
<td>SECTIONS RIDDEN – FEWER THAN THREE SECTIONS</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FIGURE 15</td>
<td>SECTIONS RIDDEN – THREE OR MORE SECTIONS</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FIGURE 16</td>
<td>STARTING POINT</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FIGURE 17</td>
<td>WHY START THERE?</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FIGURE 18</td>
<td>NIGHT BEFORE STARTING</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FIGURE 19</td>
<td>NUMBER OF NIGHTS ON A2O</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FIGURE 20</td>
<td>PLACES STAYED WHILST ON THE A2O</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FIGURE 21</td>
<td>WHERE STAYED ON NIGHT FINISHED A2O</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FIGURE 22</td>
<td>SIZE OF GROUP</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FIGURE 23</td>
<td>RIDERS AGED UNDER 16 YEARS</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FIGURE 24</td>
<td>NUMBER OF TIMES ON THE A2O</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FIGURE 25</td>
<td>AMOUNT RIDDEN BY NUMBER OF TIMES ON THE A2O</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FIGURE 26</td>
<td>A2O LOGISTICS</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FIGURE 27</td>
<td>SPENDING ON A2O</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FIGURE 28</td>
<td>LEISURE AND RECREATION ACTIVITIES</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FIGURE 29</td>
<td>INFORMATION AND CULTURAL SITES</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FIGURE 30</td>
<td>COMMERCIAL TOURISM ACTIVITIES</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FIGURE 31</td>
<td>MOST LIKED ASPECTS OF THE A2O</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FIGURE 32</td>
<td>LEAST LIKED ASPECTS OF THE A2O</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FIGURE 33</td>
<td>NUMBER USING A2O SERVICES</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FIGURE 34</td>
<td>SATISFACTION WITH SHUTTLES</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FIGURE 35</td>
<td>SATISFACTION WITH LUGGAGE TRANSFER</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FIGURE 36</td>
<td>SATISFACTION WITH CYCLE HIRE</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FIGURE 37</td>
<td>SATISFACTION WITH CYCLE REPAIR</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FIGURE 38</td>
<td>EXPECTATIONS OF A2O SUPPORT AND AMENITY SERVICES</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Executive summary

Introduction
The Alps 2 ocean is a 301km cycle trail which starts at Aoraki/Mt Cook National park and descends 780m through the Mackenzie Basin and Waitaki Valley to Oamaru. This is the first comprehensive survey of trail users to be undertaken.

Method and sample
An online survey was undertaken between December 2015 and April 2016. The survey link was sent directly to people intercepted on the trail during 10 days of the Christmas holiday period (starting Boxing Day), over three days of Waitangi weekend and in the six days beginning Easter Sunday. The link was also distributed via survey cards displayed at a selection of commercial premises along the trail.

Altogether, the survey was completed by 410 respondents:
- 68% were aged between 50 and 69 years
- 52% were female
- 79% were resident in New Zealand (of these, 34% were from Canterbury, 22% Otago, 14% Auckland)
- 21% were from overseas (of these, 74% were from Australia)

The A2O was the only or main reason for visiting the Waitaki/Mackenzie area for 56% of respondents; 28% were either visiting anyway, or lived locally.

A2O activity
95% of the total sample were cycling on the A2O; the remainder were either walking or running, one person was horse riding.

Trail users can be described by the number of trail sections ridden:

‘Recreation riders’ were those riding fewer than three sections of the trail (35% of sample) and were more likely to:
- Be local residents or domestic holidaymakers and live in either Otago or Canterbury
- Have been on the A2O multiple times and to have a user pattern of repeating popular sections and/or riding new sections with each visit
- To report that the A2O was one of their reasons for coming to region or that they were in the region anyway
- Be only riding the off-road parts of many sections with Ohau Weir to Lake Ohau and Omarama to Sailors Cutting the most popular

‘Multi-section riders’ were those riding three or more sections of the trail (65% of sample) and were more likely to:
- Be visiting from further away (North Island and overseas)
- Be first time users on the A2O and report that the A2O was their main or only reason for coming to region
- Ride on all trail sections, with the three sections from Twizel to Otematata the most popular
- Ride only part of the sections in which the A2O was on-road
Just over half (55%) of the multi-section riders started at Aoraki/Mt Cook and 12% started on the eastern side of Lake Pukaki; 21% used the alternative start in Tekapo. Altogether 82% of riders stayed in either Twizel, Aoraki/Mt Cook, Tekapo or Christchurch the night before starting.

The majority of multi-section riders spent between two and six nights on the A2O with 40% spending either four or five nights. Altogether, these riders generated 1021 accommodation nights (not including the night before starting or the night after finishing). The most popular overnight locations while on the A2O were Twizel, Omarama, Lake Ohau and Kurow; 60% stayed in Oamaru the night they finished.

The most common group sizes were two people (29%), solo riders (18%) and four people (13%); only 8% of respondents were riding with children aged under 16.

Two thirds of all respondents (65%, n=264) were on the A2O for the first time and a fifth had been on the trail three or more times (20%, n=83).

**A2O experiences (multi-section riders only)**

Altogether, 36% of the multi-section riders were either on a guided tour or had purchased a self-guided package, 34% had used some A2O support services and 29% used no services.

While no specific spending data was collected, 84% of multi-section riders reported spending close to what they either expected, or budgeted for, on the A2O. The mean amount spent by the 46 respondents who reported having a budget for the A2O was $1419 (range $120-$3500).

The most popular recreation activities in the Waitaki/Mackenzie area (participated in alongside the A2O) were swimming (38% of respondents), visits to the Qualiburn Woolshed (30%), walking tracks (25%) and the clay cliffs (23%). The most popular information and cultural sites were Steampunk HQ (30%), winery visits (30%), Aoraki/Mt Cook Visitor Centre (29%) and Vanished World (17%). The most popular commercial tourism activities were the Hot Tubs in Oamaru (19%), The Sir Edmund Hilary Centre (11%), the Oamaru Penguin Colony (9%) and a scenic flight (8%).

**A2O Feedback**

The scenery was by far the ‘most liked’ aspect of the A2O with the diversity of landscapes particularly enjoyed. Respondents also liked the trail (for its quality) and the riding experience it offered (particularly being off-road) and enjoyed the social encounters and hospitality encountered along the way.

The least liked aspects of the A2O were the on-road sections and some of the trail surfaces on the off-road sections. There were also some complaints about a variety of trail facilities, hospitality services and trail information (particularly in respect of pre-ride expectations of ride difficulty and trail conditions).

High satisfaction scores (out of 7) were reported for A2O services (e.g., shuttles 6.12; luggage services 6.25; cycle hire 6.24; and cycle repair 5.67). Satisfaction scores (out of 7) were slightly lower for hospitality and retail services (e.g., accommodation 6.11; food outlets 5.76; retail opportunities 5.26).

Respondents were asked whether a variety of A2O support and amenity services had met their expectations (in each case the remainder of respondents had not used this particular service):
• Signage - equalled or exceeded (78%), fell short (17%)
• A2O maps - equalled or exceeded (75%), fell short (13%)
• Trail information - equalled or exceeded (75%), fell short (16%)
• Toilets - equalled or exceeded (62% of respondents), fell short (19%)
• Access to drinking water - equalled or exceeded (55%), fell short (20%)

Additional feedback about these services suggested that: the number of toilets could be increased; more information about places to fill up with drinking water are needed; and, signage to both toilets and drinking water sources could be improved. A number of specific signage issues were reported (some location specific and others more generic relating to the colour and placement of the signs themselves).

The majority of feedback on maps and trail information related to the amount and clarity of information with respect to trail conditions and points of interest on and around the trail. Better directions to, and information on the availability of, accommodation and other hospitality services was also wanted.

Improvements to the trail (e.g., the condition of the trail surface, signage, toilets and barriers) and having more sections off-road, or away from the road, were the two main suggestions for ‘improving the A2O experience’. Some respondents reflected that their own personal preparation might have been better; others noted the effect of the weather on their experience. Other suggested improvements related to hospitality services and to A2O information with some respondents recognising that it was still ‘early days’ for the A2O.

The A2O in context
Altogether, 80% of respondents had ridden at least one other trail in the New Zealand Cycle Trail (NZCT) network (of these, 26% had ridden 1 other trail, 20% had ridden 2 other trails and 17% had ridden 3 other trails).

The most ridden trail was the Otago Central Rail Trail (OCRT) (ridden by 63% of all respondents) followed by the Hauraki Rail Trail (20%), the Queenstown Trail (19%), the West Coast Wilderness Trail (16%) and the Clutha Gold Trail (16%).

The three most common reasons for choosing the A2O (instead of another cycle trail) were the scenery/landscapes on or near the trail (72% of respondents), trail location/convenience (49%) and the ‘significance of an Alps to Ocean journey’ (39%).

When asked to rate the A2O out of 100 (0=not so great; 100=awesome) 80% of respondents gave it a score of 80+/100. Average scores were also very high (mode= 90, median=88, mean=85.32).

When asked if they would recommend the A2O to others, 92% of respondents scored 8 or higher on the scale (0=not at all likely; 10=extremely likely) with 54% reporting that it was extremely likely. The mean score was 9.13 (out of 10).

Looking forward…
The survey found that while users are highly satisfied with their current A2O experiences, these may be improved by the following:
• The completion of more off-road trail sections
• Improved signage to accommodation and to points of interest located slightly off-trail
• The addition of more detailed information (e.g., relating to drinking water access, local points of interest, accommodation options, local history and interpretation) to extant A2O information sources (brochures, website and maps)
• The development of a more detailed A2O information resource (such as a guide book) would be welcomed
• Improved advertising of what A2O resources are currently available
• The addition of distance markers along the trail
• More signage and trail information at access points used by recreational riders
• Improvements to trail surfaces
• The installation of interpretation panels describing the natural environments and economic, social and cultural history of the surrounding area

Survey data also suggests that key marketing messages in the future might address:
• The scenic amenity of the ride (particularly its diversity)
• The ‘significance of an Alps to Ocean’ journey
• The challenge (and achievement) of completing a long distance ride
• The variety of land use and economic activity, including the hydro dams
• A cycling experience that offers a wide variety of accommodation options and the opportunity to experience a special part of New Zealand
• Experiencing the social, cultural and economic history of a little known area of New Zealand
Chapter 1
Introduction

The Alps 2 Ocean (A2O) is a 301km cycle trail which starts at Aoraki/Mt Cook National Park and descends 780m through the Mackenzie Basin and Waitaki Valley to Oamaru (see Figure 1). The trail, normally ridden from west to east, passes through a variety of landscapes including the high peaks of the Southern Alps, tussock grassland, forest, hydro lakes and dams, high country sheep stations, cattle and dairy farms, limestone outcrops and wineries. The trail is divided into nine sections which are all easily accessible for single day or multi-day rides (see Figure 3). For full trail riders, the trail website suggests the options of riding a relaxed (8 days), classic (6 days) or fast (4 days) itinerary (http://www.alps2ocean.com/suggested-itineraries).

Trail surfaces vary from gravel roads and tracks to smooth shingle on purpose built off-road sections. Some of the trail follows sealed roads, including Twizel canal roads and SH 83 (in the Waitaki Valley). The settlements of Twizel, Omarama, Otematata, Kurow and Duntroon are located on the trail and offer riders accommodation and a variety of visitor services.

The A2O is owned jointly by Waitaki District Council and Mackenzie District Council with Tourism Waitaki contracted to manage, market and operate everything to do with the trail. A project team made up of members from both councils, Tourism Waitaki and the Department of Conservation (DOC) is responsible for trail construction. The trail crosses both public and private land.

This report presents the results of a survey of users on the A2O undertaken during the 2015/16 summer. The survey was designed to capture data from all types of trail users (e.g., cyclists, runners and walkers) and levels of use (e.g., full and part trail, multi- and single-day users). The survey sought to profile current trail users, and to collect information on their use and experiences on the A2O.

1.1 Background

The Nga Haerenga, the New Zealand Cycle Trail (NZCT) project funded the establishment of a series of “Great Rides” across the country. The primary objectives of the NZCT were:

1) To create jobs through construction and maintenance of the trail network;
2) To create a high quality tourism asset that will enhance New Zealand’s competitiveness as a tourism destination and provide on-going employment and economic development opportunities for regional economies;
3) To maximise the range of complementary benefits that the cycle network provides to a wide range of New Zealanders (MBIE, 2013, p. 2).

The A2O was one of the first of a suite of 18 trails (now expanded to 23) to receive NZCT funding and was officially opened in December 2013. In the two years since opening, additional funding has allowed for more off-road sections to be built. A number of new businesses have been established to support the A2O, some existing businesses have been revitalised and anecdotal evidence and media reports suggest that many communities located along the route have benefitted as a direct result of the establishment the A2O. A previous research project, investigating rural change in Otematata, for example, found that the A2O is perceived to be a welcome panacea to a rural community struggling with both population and
economic decline (Wilson & Mackay, 2015). To date, however, the only A2O visitor data collected has been via trail counters situated at selected locations on the trail. 

*Figure 1 New Zealand Cycle Trail – Great Rides (Source: Nga Haerenga The NZ Cycle Trail inc.*)
1.1.1 Cycle trail research
The longest standing trail in the NZCT network – the Otago Central Rail Trail (OCRT) – has attracted considerable research attention since its official opening in 2000. Research has addressed user perceptions (Kulczycki, 2001), community and visitor benefits (Blackwell, 2002), its role in rural restructuring (Dowsett, 2008), effects on local landowner attitudes (Graham, 1996) and its importance in association with wider tourism development of the region (Reis, Jellum & Lovelock, 2010). The OCRT has also been the focus of a series of user surveys (CODC, 2009, 2011, & 2015).

Some of the newer trails in the NZCT network have also attracted research attention in recent years. The focus in much of this research has been the collection of user data and user feedback to inform on-going trail development and improvement. A Department of Conservation (DOC) visitor monitoring survey, for example, explored the quality of the St James Cycle Trail experience for users in its first season (the 2010/11 summer) after officially opening. While this research highlighted some management challenges requiring urgent redress, it also presented useful visitor ‘front-of-mind’ impressions of the trail gathered via open-ended questions describing their experiences (DOC, 2011).

In October 2013 the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (MBIE) evaluated usage on four trails (Hauraki Rail Trail, Mountains to Sea, Motu Trails and the Queenstown Trail) in the NZCT network to assess the performance of the NZCT project and to make recommendations for future evaluation and monitoring (MBIE, 2013; Angus & Associates, 2013). A need to better understand trail use and users was identified as an area of interest. Angus and Associates (2013) also found that cycle trails have also attracted usage for non-cycling activities providing new recreation resources for local communities and domestic holiday visitors in some areas and primarily catering to international tourists in others.

MBIE’s (2013) four cycle trail case studies highlighted difficulties associated with obtaining reliable information on the number of users from trail counters. These difficulties include technological and weather issues associated with the trail counters themselves and a high propensity on some trails for partial trail use (e.g., around population hubs where cyclists radiate out, rather than following the full trail). Other issues relevant to A2O trail counter data include the difficulty of measuring (and isolating trail rider) use in locations where other traffic and people movements occur.

Notwithstanding the challenges noted above, A2O trail counter data provides a useful overview of trail use indicating which locations are busiest and changes over time in the numbers using the trail. Figure 2, for example, shows the monthly trail counter data collected at Ohau Weir in 2014, 2015 and 2016 (available to May only). However, while these data show the strong peaks in use over the summer months they also show an overall decline in user numbers over time.
Figure 2 Ohau Weir trail counter data
Chapter 2
Methodology

The length of the A2O (> 300 kms) with multiple entry and exit points, and the variations in usage densities suggested by trail counter data, meant that surveying in-situ was impractical. Instead, an online questionnaire survey approach was used which allowed for the collection of data from a large number of A2O users over a long time period (December 2015 – April 2016).

The online survey was arranged in five parts:

- Part 1: About you (demographics, importance of A2O for area visit)
- Part 2: Your A2O activity (nature of A2O use, group size, previous A2O experience)
- Part 3: Your A2O experience (organisational arrangement, other activities)
- Part 4: What did you think of the A2O? (most and least liked aspects, feedback on services)
- Part 5: The A2O in context (other cycle trail experience, selection and rating of the A2O)

Appendix 1 contains a schematic overview of the survey and Appendix 2 contains the full survey. Although the survey was designed as a bespoke A2O survey, the methodology and survey design was based on that used in previous surveys of the Otago Rail Trail (CODC 2009, 2011, 2015), the Queenstown Trail, Motu Trails, Mountains to Sea and Hauraki Rail Trail (Angus & Associates 2013; MBIE 2013) and the St James Trail (DOC, 2011).

The online survey was designed and distributed using Qualtrics research software. The online survey distribution, sampling and intercept approach are described in more detail below.

2.1 Survey distribution and sampling

The survey was accessible online, with two approaches used to access respondents:

1. Intercept surveys
   Trail users were stopped and asked to complete a one-page survey form which collected some basic use and user data and email addresses to enable the direct distribution of the online survey. The Intercept Survey form can be found in Appendix 3.

2. Self-selection
   A poster advertising the survey (see Appendix 4), and business cards containing the online survey link (see Appendix 5), were left at the premises of selected A2O partners (primarily accommodation) along the length of the trail from late December 2015 until mid-April 2016. Premises were selected based on their location (i.e., all section ends were represented) and frequency of use by A2O cyclists.

In late March 2016, in order to attract additional respondents, the survey link was advertised via the A2O Facebook page. The A2O March Newsletter also included a description of the survey and the survey link with a request for anyone using the trail over the 2015/2016 summer to participate.
2.2 Sampling

The sampling framework was devised to capture the multiple user and use types on the A2O. The intercept approach allowed for sampling of all types of users (e.g., runners and walkers as well as cyclists and full trail, part trail and day users) whereas the self-selection approach primarily sampled cyclists completing the full trail or multiple trail sections.

While trail counter data is available showing daily user numbers it is difficult to estimate a response rate for either of the sampling approaches used. In respect of intercept surveys, for example, trail counter data is recorded over the course of an entire day whilst the researcher was only in the field for some of this time. Also, because users often ride/run in groups it was not always possible to stop everyone passing.

Likewise, the representativeness of the self-selection sample is difficult to calculate. There is no way of knowing how many users encountered the survey cards: a significant (and surprising) number of fully independent riders (i.e., those who did not stay at any commercial accommodation) were encountered during intercept surveys. There is also no way of knowing how many of the users who did take survey cards subsequently completed the survey.

It is, however, possible to calculate a response rate of online survey completion via the intercept approach. The online survey was distributed to 462 people whose email addresses were collected via the intercept survey. An additional 20 people completed the intercept survey, but either did not have email addresses or were not in a position to receive an online survey during the proposed survey period. A total of 283 online surveys (from the 462 emailed) were completed, representing a 61% response rate. This compares with response rates of 60 - 71% achieved using a similar approach in the MBIE cycle trail research (Angus & Associates, 2013).

2.3 Intercept surveys

The intercept surveys were undertaken at busy sites on the trail during three key holiday periods (Christmas/New Year, Waitangi Weekend and Easter). The initial selection of intercept sites was informed by extant trail counter data and preliminary field observations. Specific sites were selected for convenience of access and at points where users might be conveniently and safely expected to stop (i.e., near toilets and picnic tables, at breaks in trail sections, at significant barriers/gates and at scenic viewpoints).

The majority of intercepts were undertaken in the middle sections of the trail (i.e., at locations around Otematata, Omarama, Lake Ohau, Twizel and Lake Pukaki). While some sites were busy at particular times of the day (e.g., Pukaki Flats during the afternoon, Chain Hills in the mornings) it was not always predictable how busy any particular site might be. The length of time spent at each site varied considerably, with in-field adjustments made in response to the number of users encountered. Figure 3 shows the intercept survey sites and the number of intercepts at each. The Ohau Weir and Sailors Cutting survey sites are shown in Photographs 1 and 2.
Potential respondents were approached at the intercept sites and a brief explanation of the full online survey was given prior to a request to complete the one-page intercept form and to provide their email address (for online survey distribution). Assurance was given that participation in both the intercept survey, and the subsequent online survey, was voluntary and that completing the intercept survey and providing an email address did not in any way obligate them to complete the online survey.

A business card with survey information and the researcher’s contact details was given to intercept respondents as a record of their participation (see Appendix 5). While the intercept surveys were primarily designed to capture email addresses of users (for distribution of the online survey) some basic use/user data (see Appendix 3) describing type and amount of trail use, and users’ home location were also collected.
In total, 482 intercept surveys were completed over three collection periods:

- Ten days immediately after Christmas \( (n=238) \)
- Three days of Waitangi weekend \( (n=110) \)
- Six days starting Easter Sunday \( (n=134) \)

*Photograph 1 Intercept survey site – Ohau Weir*

*Photograph 2 Intercept survey site – Sailors Cutting*
2.4 Analysis and reporting of results

Altogether, data was collected from three sources:
- 482 users provided basic use data via the one-page intercept survey;
- Of these, 283 completed the online survey;
- A further 127 users accessed the online survey via the link provided on the self-selection cards or via social media requests.

Intercept survey data were entered into an Excel spreadsheet and transported to SPSS Version 23 for quantitative (frequency) analysis. The intercept survey results are presented separately to the online survey data.

The online survey data were transported from the Qualtrics programme into an Excel spreadsheet. The numerical data was checked for irregularities and any identifiers removed (e.g., the email addresses of intercept respondents and the IP addresses of the self-selection sample). For coding and analysis purposes, an ID number was assigned to each individual response. The data were uploaded into SPSS Version 23 for quantitative analysis.

In the case of open-ended questions, responses were transported verbatim to the Excel spreadsheet and were then manually analysed and (in some instances) post-coded. If numerical coding was applied these data were also transported into SPSS for quantitative analysis.

In SPSS, data were first analysed for frequencies and relationships between variables explored using cross-tabulation and comparison of means (where appropriate).

All online survey results were combined into one dataset (i.e., there was no differentiation between those distributed via the intercept surveys and those completed by the self-selection sample).

The project was reviewed and approved by the Lincoln University Human Ethics Committee.
Chapter 3
Results

The results are reported in six sections. The intercept survey results are presented first and provide an overview of trail use during holiday periods. This is followed by the online survey results, presented in five parts to align with the survey structure.

3.1 Intercept Survey

The activity type, amount of trail being used and home location of was recorded for those people intercepted (along with their email addresses for online survey distribution).

3.1.1 Activity type

Altogether, 482 users provided basic use data via the one-page intercept survey:

- 92% (n=446) cycling, 6% (n=28) walking and 2% (n=8) running
- 12 respondents were on the trail (all activities) with a dog
- 10 respondents were walking the Te Araroa Trail (Photograph 3) – 3 of these walkers were cycling the Tekapo to Lake Ohau section of the A2O.
3.1.2 Trail usage
Roughly one third of those intercepted were completing the entire trail (35%, $n=170$), slightly more than a third were doing only part of a section (37%, $n=177$) and a fifth (21%, $n=101$) were completing several trail sections (Figure 4).

Figure 4 Trail usage

Figure 5 shows the influence of domestic holidaymakers on trail usage, with more than three quarters of those completing a part section (76.8%, $n=136$) and two thirds of those completing only one section (67.6%, $n=23$) encountered during Christmas. The likelihood of encountering users who were completing either part sections or one section was also influenced by the intercept site. At Sailors Cutting, for example, most day riders were doing only part of that section (usually the off-road portion between Omarama and Sailors Cutting), whereas day riders encountered at Ohau Weir were more likely to be doing the complete section (from Twizel to Lake Ohau).
As Figure 5 shows, a greater percentage of the 170 users completing the entire trail were encountered at Easter (44.1%, \( n=75 \)) and Waitangi Weekend (33.5%, \( n=57 \)). Almost half of those completing several trail sections were also encountered at Easter (48.5%, \( n=49 \)).

3.1.3 Home locations
Almost half of the people intercepted were from the Canterbury or Otago regions (48%, \( n=132 \)) with 33 from the local area and 199 from further away, but still within the region. Of the remainder, 25 people (5%) were from elsewhere in the South Island, 112 people (23%) were from the North Island and 113 people were from overseas (24%) (Figure 6).

![Home location](image)

Analysis of home location by intercept survey period showed concentrations of domestic holiday visitors during Christmas, international tourism visitors in February and domestic tourism visitors later in the summer (Figure 7). More than half of those stopped over the Christmas period were from Canterbury and Otago (10.1% \( n=24 \)) from the local area and 55.5% \( n=132 \) from further away, but still within those regions) reflecting the home residence of many of the holidaymakers in the area. Altogether, overseas visitors represented 40 per cent \( n=44 \) of all the people stopped during Waitangi Weekend (compared with 22.4% \( n=30 \) at Easter and 16.4% \( n=39 \) at Christmas). Almost half \( 44\% , n=59 \) of the North Island users were encountered during Easter (Figure 7).
Being present in the field for the intercept survey data collection was invaluable in respect of visual observations of trail use and the collection of contextual use data that the online survey did not capture. For example, a high number of repeat users – primarily domestic holidaymakers – were encountered (both within and between the three intercept survey periods) and these users revealed that many were completing different sections of the A2O over multiple visits to the area, or were habitual users of particular sections.

The remaining sections of this results chapter relate only to the full online survey.
3.2  Online Survey - About you

The opening set of questions in the online survey were designed to find out about the people using the A2O. Respondents (n=410) are described by age, gender, residence and according to the importance of A2O in respect of their visit to the Mackenzie/Waitaki region.

3.2.1  Age
As Figure 8 shows, those aged 55-59 years (19.3%, n=79) and 60-64 years (18.8%, n=77) represented the most common age groups. Altogether, 68.1% of respondents were aged between 50 and 69 years.

3.2.2  Gender
A slightly higher percentage of females (52%, n=213) than males (48%, n=197) completed the survey. While gender data was not collected in the intercept surveys field observations also support a higher female usage.

3.2.3  Residence
Respondents were asked to select their residence from a list which included New Zealand regions and an overseas option (Figure 9). Altogether, more than half of all respondents (55.7%, n=228) came from either Canterbury (27.1%, n=111), Otago (17.6%, n=72) or Auckland (11%, n=45). Domestic users (i.e., New Zealand residents) represented almost four fifths (78.8%, n=323) of the total sample and slightly more than a fifth of respondents (21.2%, n=87) were from overseas.
Respondents from Canterbury (Figure 10), Otago (Figure 11) and overseas were asked to provide more residence detail. As Figure 10 shows, the majority of Canterbury residents were from the largest urban centres with more than half from Christchurch (57%, n=63) and a fifth from Timaru (22%, n=24). The ‘other’ Canterbury locations were Temuka (n=3) and one each from Rangiora, Rolleston, Hororata, Kaiapoi, Mayfield, Methven, Mackenzie District (unspecified) and Waimate.

Almost half of the Otago respondents were from Dunedin (47%, n=34) and almost a third were from either Oamaru (25%, n=18) or the area local (e.g., the Waitaki Valley) to the A2O (6%,
The ‘other’ Otago locations were: two respondents each from Alexandra, Arrowtown and Balclutha and one respondent each from Bannockburn, Cromwell, Hampden and Lake Hawea.

The majority of overseas respondents were from Australia (73.6%, n=64), followed by USA (n=6), Switzerland (n=3), Germany (n=3), Canada (n=3), UK (n=2), Ireland (n=2), the Netherlands (n=2), Singapore (n=1) and France (n=1).

3.2.4 Importance of A2O for area visit
Respondents were asked to indicate how important the A2O was in respect of their visit to the Mackenzie/Waitaki area. Options given were based on those used in other cycle trail research and included: the A2O as the only reason; the main reason; just one reason (amongst others); the reason they stayed longer; they were visiting area anyway; and, an ‘other’ option. Those responses recorded as ‘other’ which indicated that the respondent was a local resident were post-coded into a new category (see Figure 12). The ‘other’ reasons given for being on the A2O did not provide enough detail to allow post-coding, although they may have fitted the original categories. These included the celebration of a special occasion, a long-time planned activity, geocaching and inclusion of the A2O in a longer (NZ-wide) cycle ride, or as part of a charity ride.

Altogether, more than a third of all respondents (35.1%, n=144) reported that the A2O was the only reason they came to the area and a fifth reported that the A2O was their main reason (20.5%, n=84) for visiting (Figure 12). The majority of respondents who reported that they were on the A2O because they were visiting the area anyway (23.2%, n=95) were from either Canterbury (45.3%, n=43) or Otago (31.6%, n=30). These data support the large number of domestic holiday makers encountered during the intercept surveys.
Figure 12 Importance of A2O for area visit

Photograph 4 Sailors Cutting – the A2O as a holiday activity
3.3 Your A2O activity

This set of questions explored the ways in which respondents were using the A2O and included: type of activity, amount of A2O used, sections used, the number of people in user groups (including the number aged under 16 years) and their history of A2O trail use. Those respondents who used more than three sections of the trail were asked an additional set of questions relating to where they stayed along the trail.

3.3.1 Type of activity

As Figure 13 shows, the majority of respondents (95%, n=389) were cycling on the A2O with others walking, running and horse riding. The five respondents whose activity was recorded as ‘other’ did not provide enough information to allow recoding into any of the recorded activities (e.g., three simply reported geocaching, but were probably either cycling or walking). Also, observations and informal feedback from the intercept survey fieldwork suggested that many holiday makers who use the A2O (or parts thereof) on a regular basis participate in a variety of different activities along the A2O.

![Type of activity](image)

**Figure 13 Type of activity**

3.3.2 Parts of the A2O used

Respondents were first asked how much of the A2O they had used and then asked to indicate which sections. Two-thirds of respondents had completed three sections or more (65.1%, n=267) and one third had completed fewer than three sections (34.9%, n=143).

3.3.2.1 Fewer than three sections

Figure 14 shows which sections, or part sections, were used by those completing fewer than three sections. For these 143 respondents the most popular full section was Twizel to Lake Ohau Lodge (21.7%, n=31) whilst a further 33 respondents (23.1%) also rode part of this section. The most popular ‘part section’ was from Omarama to Otematata (30.8%, n=44). These use patterns relate to the number of holidaymakers present in Twizel, Omarama and at Sailors Cutting (on Lake Benmore) over the summer months (see Photograph 4). The Twizel to Lake Ohau Lodge section is a popular day ride from Twizel (with some riders beginning the start of the off-road at Ohau Weir or turning back when the trail re-joins the paved Lake Ohau Road). The part use of the Omarama to Otematata section reflects high use of the off-road...
part of this section (from Omarama to Sailors Cutting) (Photograph 5). These data support the trail use reported in the intercept surveys.

### Sections ridden (n=143)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>All section</th>
<th>Part section</th>
<th>Did not do</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aoraki/Mt Cook to Braemar Rd</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>134</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Braemar Rd to Twizel</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>113</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Twizel to Lake Ohau Lodge</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lake Ohau Lodge to Omarama</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>108</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Omarama to Otematata</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Otematata to Kurow</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>127</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kurow to Duntroon</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>133</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Duntroon to Oamaru</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>130</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lake Tekapo to Twizel</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>133</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Figure 14 Sections ridden – fewer than three sections**

**Photograph 5 Cyclists on Omarama to Sailors Cutting section**
3.3.2.2  Three or more sections

The section use data for those respondents \((n=267)\) who completed three or more sections of the A2O is shown in Figure 15. The three mid-trail sections (i.e., Sections 3, 4 and 5) were those most commonly ridden in full: Twizel to Lake Ohau Lodge (92.5%, \(n=247\)); Lake Ohau Lodge to Omarama (86.5%, \(n=231\)); Omarama to Otematata (80.9%, \(n=216\)).

Section 1 (Aoraki/Mt Cook to Braemar Rd) was ridden in full by 143 respondents (53.6%) whilst the Alternative Start (Lake Tekapo to Twizel) was ridden in full by 81 respondents (30.3%).

![Figure 15 Sections ridden – three or more sections](image-url)
3.3.2.3 Starting point
Those riders who completed three or more sections of the A2O were asked where they started from (Figure 16).

More than half of these respondents reported starting at Aoraki/Mt Cook (55%, n=148) (Photograph 6), a further 12 per cent (n=34) started at the top of Lake Pukaki (but on the eastern side of the Tasman River) and 21 per cent (n=55) started at Tekapo. Other starting points included Tekapo B, Twizel, Omarama and Oamaru. Three out of the seven respondents who reported an ‘other’ start did not know where they started, two reported starting in multiple places and two reported starting further away, without indicating where they had joined the A2O trail.

Photograph 6 The Aoraki/Mt Cook starting point
Respondents were also asked why they had selected that particular starting point and almost half reported that they wanted to complete the full trail (46.4%, n=124) (Figure 17); of these, 121 started at Aoraki/Mt Cook while the other three started at Tekapo, Tasman Point and Temuka.

More than half of those respondents who reported picking the easiest option logistically (21.3%, n=57) started at Tekapo or Tekapo B (50.9%, n=29). Affordability impacted on starting point selection for less than 10 per cent of respondents (7.5%, n=20). In respect of the A2O ‘affordability’ relates primarily to the cost of the helicopter transfer required if one starts at Aoraki/Mt Cook.

The 31 ‘other’ reasons given for starting point selection included:

- Preferred cycling option in respect of either scenery (particularly having views towards, rather than away from, the mountains) and the degree of riding difficulty (n=8)
- Being at their chosen start point for other reasons (n=6)
- Other people organising the ride (n=5)
- Constraints relating to shuttle services (n=4)
- Wanting to take the helicopter (n=3)
- Timing constraints (n=3)
- Starting at the point at which they joined the A2O as part of a longer ride (n=2)

### Overnight locations

Those riding three or more sections of the A2O were also asked where they stayed the night before beginning their ride (Figure 18), where they stayed while on the ride (Figure 20) and where they stayed the night they finished the ride (Figure 21).

#### Night before starting

Twizel (29%, n=77) and Aoraki/Mt Cook (29%, n=76) attracted the highest number of riders on the night before starting the A2O, followed by Tekapo and Christchurch (each 12%, n=33) (Figure 18). The 19 ‘other’ start locations included: Ashburton (n=3); Otematata, Braemar...
Station, Timaru \((n=2\) each); and, Jollie Rd, Lake Ohau, Pleasant Point, Fairlie, Geraldine, Rangiora, Kakanui, Moeraki, Wanaka and Auckland \((n=1\) each).

### 3.3.3.2 Nights on the ride

Respondents were then asked where they spent other nights whilst on the A2O. These data were summed to show the number of overnights reported by each respondent (Figure 19). The most common number of nights spent on the A2O was either four \((21\%, n=56\) or five \((19.1\%, n=51\). Figure 19 also shows that the 267 respondents who reported riding three or more sections generated 1021 accommodation nights along the A2O. However, these data are slightly under-reported as respondents riding multiple sections from a single location were only able to report one overnight location \((n=25\).
The most popular overnight location was Twizel, followed by Omarama, Lake Ohau and Kurow (Figure 20). While key locations were pre-coded, this question also offered respondents an ‘other’ option and these responses were post-coded to represent either single locations or into four areas that encapsulated more widespread accommodation options as follows:

- **Oamaru Hinterland** covered the area between Duntroon and Oamaru and included accommodation options and camping in and around Tokarahi (see, for example, Photograph 7), Burnside, Windsor, Livingstone, Danseys Pass, Peebles and Weston.

- **High Country** covered the area between Aoraki/Mt Cook and Twizel and included accommodation options and camping alongside the Tekapo Canal and Lake Pukaki.

- **Waitaki Valley** included accommodation options and camping around the Waitaki Valley lakes.

- **Mackenzie Basin** covered the area between Twizel and Omarama and included accommodation options and camping on and around Lake Ohau and the Qualiburn Road.

![Figure 20 Places stayed whilst on A2O](image_url)
3.3.3.3 Night finished the ride
Figure 21 shows where these 267 respondents stayed the night they finished the ride. Altogether, 60 per cent (n=160) stayed the night in Oamaru while 42 others (16%) stayed in either Twizel or another location along the A2O route. Eleven per cent (n=29) returned to Christchurch. Five respondents reported staying in Oamaru while on the ride (rather than the night they finished) (Figure 20).

![Figure 21 Where stayed on night finished A2O](image-url)
### 3.3.4 Size of group

All respondents were asked how many people they were with on the A2O. The most common group size was two people (29.3%, \(n=120\)) followed by solo riders (17.8%, \(n=73\)) and groups of four (12.7%, \(n=52\)) (Figure 22). The largest group size reported was 23 people. Solo riders were more likely to be completing fewer than three sections of the A2O.

The survey was restricted to people aged 16 years or over, but respondents were asked how many riders aged under 16 were with their group. As Figure 23 shows, only 8 per cent (\(n=34\)) of respondents reported that they were on the A2O with someone aged under 16 years, and more than half (53%, \(n=18\)) of those respondents reported riding with only one person aged...
under 16 years. The number of sections ridden by groups with riders aged under 16 years were roughly equal (i.e., $n=18$, <3 sections; $n=16$, 3≥ sections).

![Figure 23 Riders aged under 16 years](image)

### 3.3.5 Previous A2O experience
Two thirds of all respondents (65%, $n=264$) were on the A2O for the first time and a fifth had been on the trail three or more times (20%, $n=83$) (Figure 24).

![Figure 24 Number of times on the A2O](image)

There was a statistically significant relationship $[\chi^2=140.88, \text{df}=4, p<.001]$ between the number of times people had been on the A2O and the amount ridden. First time riders, and those who had been on the A2O once before, were more likely to be riding three or more sections. By contrast, those who had been on the A2O more than twice before were more likely to be riding fewer than three sections (Figure 25).
Those riding fewer than three sections were more likely to be local residents or holidaymakers from the Otago and Canterbury regions. Of the 62 respondents who had been on the A2O five times or more, 39 (63%) were from Canterbury and 18 (29%) were from Otago. Altogether, 90 per cent of overseas respondents were completing three or more sections of the A2O and 89 per cent were on the A2O for the first time.
Photograph 10 Self-supported trail riders at Pukaki Flats
3.4 Your A2O experience

This part of the survey explored the A2O experience of those who had ridden three or more sections \( (n=267) \). It included questions about ride logistics, including budgeting, and about other activities undertaken in the Mackenzie/Waitaki area whilst on the A2O. Those riding fewer than three sections were not asked these questions as they were less likely to be using A2O services and were more likely to be holiday makers (and in the area anyway) meaning that any other activities they might have undertaken were not necessarily A2O-visit related.

3.4.1 A2O logistics

Altogether, 95 respondents were either on a guided tour (15.4%, \( n=41 \)) or had purchased a package, but were self-guided on the ride (20.2%, \( n=54 \)). Ninety respondents (33.7%) used some A2O services (shuttles, luggage transfer, cycle hire, helicopter transfer) while 77 respondents (28.8%) used no services (Figure 26). The five respondents who reported an ‘other’ type of logistical arrangement were riding in large groups, but did not provide any further details.

![Figure 26 A2O logistics](image)

3.4.1.1 Budgeting

Altogether, 83 per cent \( (n=221) \) reported not having a budget for the A2O and 17 per cent \( (n=46) \) did have a budget. Thirty-nine of the 46 respondents who reported having a budget provided some details of how much their budget was (Table 1). The wide range in the budgeted amounts reported probably reflects the varying number of trail sections completed (i.e., some people were doing only three sections, while others were riding the entire trail). It was also unclear how many people some of the budget amounts applied to.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A2O budgets ( (n=39) )</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Range</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mean</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Median</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mode</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1 A2O budgets
Regardless of whether they had a budget or not, respondents were asked whether the amount they spent on the A2O matched their expectations. The majority reported that the amount they spent matched their expectations (84%, $n=224$) (Figure 27) and there was minimal difference between those with a budget and those without one.

**Figure 27 Spending on A2O**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number</th>
<th>More than expected/budgeted for</th>
<th>Less than what expected/budgeted for</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td></td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>224</td>
<td>Close to expected/budgeted for</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 3.4.2 Other activities whilst in the Mackenzie/Waitaki area

Respondents were asked about what other activities they did in the Mackenzie/Waitaki area either before, during, or after their A2O ride. These were presented as three activity sets with an additional section allowing respondents to self-report any other activities they had done. The results are reported separately for each of the three activity sets with the responses to the open-ended responses included where relevant. Activities which did not fit into the three activity sets are reported separately.

#### 3.4.2.1 Leisure and recreation activities

The first group included leisure and recreation activities (other than cycling) and some places that might have been visited that were located slightly away from the A2O trail. These were generally things that involved no cost. Swimming was the most popular of these activities (37.8%, $n=101$) followed by visits to the historic Quailburn Woolshed (29.6%, $n=79$) and walking tracks (24.7%, $n=66$) (Figure 28; Photograph 11 & 12).

The Hooker Valley and Otematata Wetlands Walk were provided in this question as examples of walking tracks and a variety of other walks were reported in the ‘other’ activity responses. These included: the Mueller Hut, Ball Shelter, Governors Bush Walk, Blue Lakes, Tasman Glacier View and Tasman Lake at Aoraki/Mt Cook; walks in the Ben Ohau Range; and walking at Braemar Station and to lakes adjacent to overnight stay locations.
Leisure and recreation activities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Number Participating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Swimming</td>
<td>101</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fishing</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walking tracks</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clay cliffs</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quailburn Woolshed</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 28 Leisure and recreation activities

Photograph 11 Swimming was the most popular leisure activity

Photograph 12 Quailburn Woolshed
Other recreation and leisure activities reported included cycling other nearby routes (with the Twizel flood route specifically noted by two respondents as offering more challenging terrain), boating, kayaking, water-skiing, 4WDing, hunting, geocaching, fruit picking and foraging and (freedom) camping.

3.4.2.2 Information and cultural sites
This set of activities included information and cultural sites. Some of these involved a cost, but most were free. As Figure 29 shows, Steampunk HQ (30.3%, n=81) (Photograph 13), a winery visit (for a tasting, meal or tour) (30.3%, n=81) and the Aoraki/Mt Cook Visitor Centre (29.2%, n=78) were the most popular of these. Several respondents reported that they enjoyed learning about the hydro power stations and one was disappointed that the Benmore Visitor Centre was closed when they visited.

Figure 29 Information and cultural sites

Photograph 13 Steampunk HQ, Oamaru
Seeing Maori Rock Drawings in situ was popular, as were visits to the various salmon farms in the area (with salmon feeding and the Pukaki Visitor Centre specifically mentioned). Two respondents reported visiting St John’s Observatory. Cheese tasting, eating out at local restaurants and experiencing local entertainment in pubs (e.g., playing pool, live music and quiz nights) was enjoyed by a number of respondents. Other local activities enjoyed included the Kurow Races and New Year celebrations in Kurow, exploring local graveyards and the historic sites/buildings in Duntroon (Photograph 14 & 15) and visiting the Church of the Good Shephard at Tekapo.
3.4.2.3 Commercial tourism activities

The last group of activities included some of the popular commercial tourism activities available in the Mackenzie/Waitaki area. These activities were not as well patronised, with the most popular – the Hot Tubs in Omarama – attracting only 50 respondents (18.7%). The Sir Edmund Hilary Centre (11.2%, \(n=30\)), the Oamaru Blue Penguin Colony (9.4%, \(n=25\)) and scenic flights (8.2%, \(n=22\)) were the next most popular of the commercial tourism activities (Figure 30).

![Commercial tourism activities](image)

Figure 30 Commercial tourism activities

Other commercial tourism activities reported included kayaking on Tasman Lake, OneRing Tours in Twizel and visits to the Tekapo Hot Pools.

3.4.2.4 Other activities

The majority of ‘other’ activities are reported in the appropriate sections above. In addition to these there was a wide range of activities enjoyed in Oamaru including the Victorian area (with the adventure bookshop specifically noted by a number of respondents) and the Public Gardens, Janet Frame’s House, Scotts Brewery and whiskey tasting. Others reported simply enjoying ‘exploring and sightseeing on foot in Oamaru’.

A number of respondents combined their A2O visit with sightseeing and visits to locations beyond the Mackenzie Basin/Waitaki Valley corridor. Amongst places specifically noted were: Christchurch and Akaroa, the Moeraki Boulders (and Fleurs Restaurant), Riverstone Kitchen, Dunedin and the Taieri Gorge Railway, Hampden (‘for famous fish and chips’) and the Danseys Pass Pub.

Several respondents reported that they did few other things on this particular visit because they were familiar with the area, or had visited many times previously.
3.5 What you thought of the A2O

This section of the survey sought feedback about the A2O from respondents beginning with open-ended (unprompted) questions which asked what they liked the most – and least – about the A2O. Other questions explored A2O support services, aspects of the A2O trail and hospitality services.

3.5.1 Liked most

Altogether, 395 respondents provided some feedback on what they liked the most about the A2O. While one respondent simply wrote ‘everything’, the majority provided more specific and detailed comments, as these two excerpts illustrate:

*Fantastic and changing scenery. The cycling freedom. Quiet roads MOST of the way. Gravel and tarmac roads were very manageable and usually few cars. Fun for all the group. We were aged 20 to 59 and all managed it. The first half - scenery - the lakes and canals. From Omarama - the engineering - the dams and lakes. Seeing how other New Zealanders spend their holidays (e.g., jetboating on lakes).*

*Stunning environment with interesting man-made features which enhance it. The man-made features show great foresight in the past to address energy requirements. The area is largely unspoiled by the cheap souvenir-based tourism we see [elsewhere]. The trail provides an opportunity to see the land and district as it really is.*

Feedback was coded into the nine broad categories shown in Figure 31 although there was some overlap between categories. ‘Scenery’, reported by 311 respondents (79% of those who answered this question) stood out as the ‘most liked’ aspect of the A2O followed in popularity by the A2O trail itself \( n=118 \), factors relating to the cycle ride \( n=96 \) and being off-road \( n=75 \). All nine categories are explained in more detail below along with examples of specific feedback given for each.

![Figure 31 Most liked aspects of the A2O](image-url)
Scenery comments (n=311) ranged from simple reports of ‘the scenery’ to references to the variety and diversity of scenery encountered and more detailed descriptions of specific locations along the full length of the A2O. There were also some references to the serenity and peacefulness associated with being in areas of scenic beauty. Examples of ‘scenery’ comments are shown in the box below.

The scenery. Especially starting at Mt Cook, and travelling past the beautiful blue lake and canals

Variety of countryside, Ohau trails, Duntroon to Oamaru section

The variety of scenery, especially the last day with the exceptional entry into Oamaru from the rail trail through the gardens

Change of scenery from biking around home

Big landscapes

Simple pleasure of cycling through beautiful scenery

I love the mountain scenery and wilderness feeling

The diversity of the track, from going lakeside to past old sheds and round forest tracks

It was so uplifting to be in such beauty day after day, and to enjoy the quietness or birdsong, away from main roads (mostly!)

Big open spaces, pure beauty, real South Island landscapes, beautiful colours (alpine rusts, aqua gem blues of lakes etc)

The mountain/lake views were amazing

The openness of the trail, the view of the majestic Mackenzie Country

Diversity of country travelled through

The scenery!
Photograph 16 A2O Scenery – leaving Aoraki/Mt Cook, the shores of Lake Pukaki and looking back at Lake Ohau
3.5.1.2 The A2O itself

These comments (n=118) included those expressing appreciation for the trail itself and the recreation opportunity it offers. Many specific comments related to the quality and condition of the trail surfaces, the variety of landscapes it traversed and other trail features such as sign-posting and trail information. Examples of these ‘A2O itself’ comments are shown in the box below.

It’s there...!

The track was very well organised, sign-posted and good track surfaces

Well sign-posted and easy to follow. Excellent graded cycle paths

Well-made surface, generally not too arduous and through interesting terrain

Track was in great condition

Easy riding, easy navigation, excellent information package - online, brochures and on-site

Surprised at the quality of trail

Tracks are child friendly

The way the track lead you on little adventures. You always knew when the track heads off in an odd direction that it would be for something worthwhile

Photograph 17 The A2O trail – Duntroon to Oamaru section
3.5.1.3  The ride and being off-road

These two related categories described the ride (in terms of how easy/hard it was and in respect of its distance) and the enjoyment associated with being able to ride off-road. Some comments referred to its suitability for all ages and abilities, others specified liking more challenging sections, with the sections around Lake Ohau/Quailburn particularly noted by many respondents. Being off-road was also appreciated from a safety perspective. The box below illustrates these comments.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The ride (n=96)</th>
<th>Being off-road (n=75)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Like that it is relatively flat and doable by us</td>
<td>Nice to be able to travel distances on the off-road bike paths</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nice easy riding</td>
<td>It was great to take the kids on a safe off-road trail. They really enjoyed the ride along by Lake Ohau</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Varied bike tracks - mixed easy and harder days</td>
<td>The off-road sections near Lake Ohau and the climb from Lake Ohau Lodge. Also the section around Lake Pukaki</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The helicopter ride and the rugged terrain to cycle over at the beginning, including crossing streams</td>
<td>It allows cyclists, runners, walkers, to enjoy the environment and to travel without having to be on the road with traffic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Like the challenge</td>
<td>The fact the most of it was off-road or on quiet roads</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The grade is moderate for an intermediate mountain bike ride</td>
<td>Getting off the roads and into amazing scenery you often don't get to see while travelling in a car on the main roads</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowing I had done the whole cycle trail</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seeing the area from a cycle instead of a motor vehicle</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The actual biking</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It was a challenge to cycle 300km</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comfortable distances each day</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The gradient/alignment - accessible to all riders, but challenging enough if you push it</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The section between Ohau Lodge and Quailburn Rd because of technical and steep ascent/descent</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Photograph 18  Riding off-road
3.5.1.4 Social, services (and hospitality)
Altogether, there were 41 comments made which related to social factors and 37 relating to services although, as the examples in the box below show, many of these overlapped into a hospitality category. Social factors included meeting locals, enjoying time with family and friends and meeting other cyclists and recreationists. The culture of the local area was also enjoyed along with many accommodation, food and other hospitality services. Any feedback relating to specific cycle tour companies, accommodation premises or hospitality services have been reported directly to those businesses.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Social (n=41)</th>
<th>Services (n=37)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sharing the ride with family members</td>
<td>Good quality trail amongst beautiful scenery with quality accommodation after our exertions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Remoteness, not a lot of people on the trail</td>
<td>Good accommodation and food</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scenery and the people I've met</td>
<td>Everything was great with our accommodation, meals and shuttles too</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The friendly people along the way</td>
<td>The farm stays and the other accommodation was all great. Food was excellent as well</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Companionship, meeting new people</td>
<td>The southern hospitality at places we stayed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The reward was experiencing the spectacular scenery and culture of rural South Island, NZ</td>
<td>Different types of accommodation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visiting the small town pubs at the end of the day</td>
<td>Accommodation was inviting and comfortable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comradery with other cyclists, experiences in small towns along the way</td>
<td>Seeing the benefit it was having to small businesses on the trail</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meeting international touring cyclists</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Hospitality**

Locals positive and welcoming

The small towns and the people, great to see the A2O giving a living to them

The welcoming local people who were keen to answer our questions and offer advice on places to visit. The hospitality was amazing

Pride of the locals (e.g., a lot of business people wearing the t-shirt)
3.5.1.5 Exploring and access
Comments in these categories included seeing new places, history (with hydro dams specifically noted by a number of respondents) and the variety of land use. Access comments described respondent’s appreciation of being able to explore previously undiscovered areas and the popularity of the A2O as a holiday/fitness resource.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Exploring (n=30)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Exploring a spectacular area that was previously unknown to me</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loved travelling through local towns</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adventure!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seeing and doing new stuff: dams, canals, fish, scenery, fossils, gliding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Being in a beautiful part of New Zealand. The hydro dams are a wonderful piece</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>of engineering. Starting in the high country and rolling toward the coast and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the changing landscape along the way</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A great part of NZ sustainable energy history</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The hydro dams</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Access (n=15)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lovely to have the extra access to areas with beautiful scenery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Being able to access different parts of the countryside that have been</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>inaccessible before now</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fantastic to be able to go for walks from Sailors Cutting everyday whilst</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>on holiday</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Easy access to just do bits of it as and when I want to</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.5.1.6 Weather
Altogether, 13 respondents commented positively about the weather they encountered during their ride.

We loved having a tail breeze each day. We chose that weather window knowing it would occur.

We were lucky and had fantastic weather for the first two days and the last day. The day we had wind and rain was the section we would have had to been on the road so we didn’t feel we lost anything.

Fabulous weather, tail wind!
3.5.2 Liked least

Altogether, 384 respondents provided some feedback on what they liked least about the A2O, although 66 of those people reported that there was nothing they liked least, as these comments illustrate:

- There were no downsides. It was all a new experience and I embraced it all
- No negative comment - I loved it all :)
- Nothing - it met all expectations
- Nothing - loved the entire route and being met in cafés by staff in Alps to Ocean T shirts!

The ‘least liked’ aspects of the A2O were coded into seven categories (Figure 32). ‘Road sections’ (reported by 137 respondents) stood out as the ‘least liked’ aspect of the A2O followed by trail surfaces (n=105) and factors associated with the A2O trail itself (n=50). All seven categories are explained in more detail below, along with examples of specific feedback provided for each.

![Bar chart showing least liked aspects of the A2O]

**Figure 32 Least liked aspects of the A2O**
3.5.2.1  Road sections
Altogether, 137 respondents reported that road sections of the A2O were their ‘least liked’ aspects of the A2O. As the comments in the box below show these related to safety issues whilst riding (high speed traffic, narrow road sections, and narrow shoulders), visibility and safety when crossing busy roads (to access trail sections, accessing accommodation) and the nature and experience of the cyclists/cycle groups (e.g., riding with children, having minimal road riding experience). Several respondents noted that riding long sections on the road was ‘boring’ while others simply did not enjoy being close to the road.

Highway riding. We did not do this, but opted to travel in our car to the next section

Riding along the highway for large portions of the 3rd day. I was expecting some highway riding, but the description of the ride as being "suitable for all ages" and "easy/intermediate" led me to expect more of a shoulder on the highway. I didn't like riding that close to fast cars and would NEVER take a child with me on a route like that

Double yellow lines and narrow road after Lake Benmore. Definitely felt more vulnerable when cycling on the open road - with cars and jet boat trailers zooming past. I knew that only one of our group regularly cycled on the roads, so our road skills were only basic

Just want it all finished and off-road. Keep going on getting it finished

Crossing some busy roads

Some of the road crossings to the campsites were quite hard to see if any cars were coming until you were right there. I nearly had one crash

Sections beside the road

The length of the Lake Ohau to Twizel section that is on the road

3.5.2.2  Trail surfaces
The quality of trail surfaces was a least liked aspect of the A2O for 105 respondents. The selection of comments related to trail surfaces (see box below) shows that these respondents struggled with rough gravel sections, dust, stones, rocky surfaces and corrugations. There were also complaints about animal droppings on some trail sections. Some respondents related the impact of these conditions to their own cycling experience. While gravel roads most often attracted complaints about the road surface, some sections of gravel road were also disliked because of their length and lack of interest (similar to the on-road complaints reported above). The road alongside Lake Pukaki was most often noted in this respect.
Quality of the track at times made riding a little uncomfortable

The long ride from Jollie Carpark on the VERY rough gravel road, it was so dusty and rough

Rough gravel and stones on Ohau - Omarama track. In places this made the uphill track feel unsafe when I rode over chunky sharp rocky gravel and the bike wheel went sideways towards the edge of the steep track

Quite shingly for the bike that I had

Corrugation bumps on the unsealed roads

Spinning out on sandy or very shingly sections. Lucky we were all experienced riders, though one of us had a fall

Cycle from the hill to Omarama track had been used by sheep and the chip was loose

Some of the rough roads, long stretches a bit boring

Some trail surfaces were a bit challenging

Soft track between Kurow and Duntroon

Water crossings
3.5.2.3  A2O trail
The 50 comments describing features of the ‘A2O trail’ as being least liked by respondents included most of the A2O facilities asked about specifically in a later question of the survey. As the examples below show, these unprompted comments described issues with access to drinking water, lack of clearly defined resting spots (with facilities), issues with barriers on the trail, signage (and requests for distance markers along the trail) and lack of trail maintenance. The quality of information on A2O maps (in both brochures and on the website) and on-trail information and interpretation was also perceived to have detracted from the experience of some respondents.

Lack of facilities i.e., places to replenish water, especially knowing how hot this area gets

There was nowhere to fill up water bottles on the section we did - would be useful in the guide booklets to make this clear, or even have signs on route saying where you can fill up

In the long term plan, some consideration needs to be given to stopping/resting points at 10-15k intervals, or at significant junctions. People travelling in groups will frequently get separated due to abilities and these are good spots for everyone to regroup and take a break. A picnic table, benches, etc would be appreciated

The fences on some parts off the trail. I think they want to keep motorcycles away from the trail, but we had luggage on our bikes and we couldn't pass the fences without taking off the bags from the bike...

I did not like the turnstiles around Lake Ohau. I needed to take the top part of my pannier off in order to get it through that contraption. I know that area well, but I thought it was light on signage confirming the track from Twizel to the Ohau weir. Needs a sign down where the Ohau canal meets the Pukaki canal

Photograph 21 Trail barriers at Lake Ohau
Signage easy to miss, especially at road junctions or entering/leaving towns. The route pamphlet is worse than useless - can’t read the map or distance graph because they are so tiny. Difficult to get the information needed from the website - the focus is on advertising - I only wanted a decent readable map to print off with clear route and distance details (and where the toilets are) but couldn’t get one

Interpretive signs to let people know about the history/geology/environment are needed

Few overview information panels at points along the trail, I feel they are important when people can enter the trail from any point

On one section near Lake Ohau the trail was a bit narrow - and because of vegetation it was a bit dangerous in not being able to see oncoming cyclists

Weeds on the track so soon after its created

Would have been helpful to have distance markers. Not necessarily every km, but 10km to or 5km to. When one is tired & has a head wind, a distance marker would have eased the journey
3.5.2.4 Difficulty
While a further 25 ‘least liked’ comments related specifically to the difficulty of the ride itself, many of these referred to inaccurate information with respect to the trail classifications and, in particular, that the information underplayed the difficulty of the ride. Many respondents, however, also recognised that the degree of difficulty experienced was related to the skill and experience of individual cyclists.

Some sections poorly classified. Much more difficult than expected

The web site did not accurately reflect the trail or the elevation. We looked carefully, but felt somewhat misled by the A2O website information

I disagree with the information booklet in terms of its description. The fitness levels, along with how tough it is, are understated. However this didn’t spoil it for me in any way

Section 8 advice - underplayed all the hills

Some hills out from Dunroon through the farmlands were very steep and un-rideable. All our group had to walk our bikes up the zig zag path section as it was unsafe to ride it

Some of the hills were a killer!

Some parts of the trail were too difficult for beginners

The last day from Dunroon to Oamaru is particularly hilly and has a few sections which could not be described as beginner/intermediate as the gradients are too steep

The ride was very physically and mentally demanding - and this detracted somewhat from the pleasure. The reason we did not participate in any other activities was because we were exhausted at the end of each day’s riding we had no energy left to do anything

Photograph 23 The climb up to the Tarnbrae highpoint
3.5.2.5 Services
Altogether, 26 respondents reported a service feature as their least liked aspect of the A2O. These comments included both cycle services (e.g., shuttles and bike hire) and hospitality services, as the examples in the box below illustrate.

| Disgraceful shuttle van, poor quality hire bike |
| Needs more shuttle services |
| In planning there did not seem to be good options for picking up a bike at one end and being able to return it at the other (without having to drive the 300 km to do it). Personally I did not like the bikes that were on offer for rent either. Coming from overseas organising a bike was the hardest bit |
| Difficulty trying to get trail transport from Oamaru to Mt Cook |
| Not enough cheap accommodation available |
| Lack of eating/coffee opportunities on some stages |
| Some of the accommodation is still a bit rough |
| The cost of incidental food was quite high – what is needed is basic filling economical fare for the budget traveller |
| Lack of decent coffee stops |
| Lack of accommodation |

3.5.2.6 Weather
Eighteen respondents reported the weather as their least liked aspect of the A2O (compared with 13 who reported it as a most liked). As might be expected, most negative weather comments related to wind.

| The wind! |
| Weather was dicey around Mount Cook, so we never really got to see the Southern Alps; bad headwind going across the Benmore Dam |
| The wind on road section around the outside of Aviemore was wearisome, but you can’t control the weather |
| Didn’t like the one day of rain! |
3.5.2.7 Other
The eight ‘other’ least liked things included experiences relating to other users on the trail and negative experiences of the wider environs of the A2O.

That people were walking and with dogs and did not get out of the way

Not being a strong bike rider I had a couple of falls mainly due to people walking their dogs. Even though I called out the dogs where not pull to one side quick enough and hence I didn’t want to hit the animal so I hit the brakes and hence fell off. Maybe if bikes had a bell on them we could let people know that a cyclist was coming along

So many tourists mistreating the environment cause the facilities are just not able to cope (e.g., toilets and small info spot at base of Lake Pukaki. Freedom campers everywhere on side roads that are the A2O...) I don’t mind both, but it seems out of balance and un-monitored

Trails in farm areas between Kurow and Oamaru. Gave an insight into poor farming practices. Quite a few polluted waterways. No riparian planting. Also a lot of litter on the road side trails near Oamaru. Not a good look

Irrigation changing the landscape dramatically

Photograph 24 Other users on the A2O
3.5.3 Satisfaction with A2O services

Respondents were asked to indicate on a Likert scale (1=very dissatisfied; 7=very satisfied) how satisfied they were with A2O shuttle services, luggage transfer, cycle hire and cycle repair services. A ‘not applicable’ (N/A) option was available for respondents who did not use that particular service. Altogether, shuttle services were used by 163 respondents (39.8%) luggage transfer services were used by 143 respondents (34.9%), cycle hire was used by 128 respondents (31.2%) and cycle repair services used by 52 respondents (12.7%). As might be expected, those riding three or more sections were more likely to have used these services (Figure 33).

![Number using A2O services](image)

Figure 33 Number using A2O services

3.5.3.1 Shuttles

The majority of respondents who used shuttle services (n=163) were very satisfied (68%, n=111) (Figure 34). The mean satisfaction score for shuttles was 6.12 (out of 7). However, limited shuttle service options were also reported – negatively – as the reason for selecting a particular starting point. There were some comments about the cost of using the helicopter transfer (e.g., ‘the helicopter is too expensive for us, [there] needs [to be] a cheaper option – maybe a jet boat [option]?’). There were also a number of negative comments about the inflexibility of shuttle services from respondents who had decided against using these:

*We had a car. It would have been good to be able to get a shuttle for one person to get from the end of a part of the trail, to pick up our car. It’s do-able, they are shuttling bags around, they just don’t want to know – they say it’s all too hard, but it’s not, it’s do-able with a bit of organisation.*

*There could be a more suitable and reasonably priced shuttle service as our group consisted of 8 motorhomes – we needed to be shuffled (without our bikes) at reasonable times of the day back to where the motorhomes were parked. The timetables for the shuttles were 6.30am and 5.00pm - not suitable for our group. Shuttle services that we rang wanted to charge $40 p.p. per shuttle including bikes that we weren’t transporting!*
There were also some complaints about shuttle services from those respondents who did use them:

A2O management need to have some kind of accreditation process for allowing people to use their name. We thought we were dealing with a quality, officially sanctioned bike hire/shuttle company, but it turned out to be a shonky car wrecking outfit who decided to cash in on the A20.

When we were dropped by the shuttle at Mt Cook village we were not given any information from the driver about where we had to go to get the helicopter, or where the start of the track was. He just told us we had to get off and get our bikes off. I think that was really poor service.

The shuttle to Mt Cook from Twizel. The driver talked the whole trip rather repetitively, what’s more worrying [is that] he held onto his speaker with one hand, rather than wearing over his head. Illegal I suspect?

Our shuttle dropped us outside the Heritage Hotel and just abandoned us without any clue how to locate our specific accommodation, very poor service especially as the shuttle went to this accommodation to pick up. When quizzed about it they said they can only drop off at Heritage and nowhere else.

It would have been nice to get to Aoraki/Mt Cook earlier in the day with the shuttle from Twizel, to enable visitors to venture out into the walking trails below Mt Cook. There was no time on the day of the ride as we had to get to the heliport at a designated time or miss the flight.

However, many comments reflected personal preference with, for example, one respondent reporting that the ‘commentary on the shuttle was a bit long winded – the information was good, but just a bit much detail when you have the wonderful scenery to enjoy’ while another reported having a ‘very informative and friendly bus driver who carried us and our bikes from Twizel to Mt Cook ready to start our two day ride’.
3.5.3.2 Luggage transfer

Three quarters (74.1%, \(n=106\)) of those who used a luggage transfer service reported being very satisfied (Figure 35). Luggage transfer services had a mean satisfaction score of 6.25 (out of 7).

![Figure 35 Satisfaction with luggage transfer](image)

Overall, those respondents who provided feedback on luggage transfers were happy with the service they received (e.g., ‘luggage transfers were easy and pain free’, ‘it was easy to arrange the transfer of luggage even when out on the track’). A number of respondents, however, reported having issues with the timing of luggage arrival:

> [Our] luggage arrived late in the day for Omarama and Otematata which is fine, but on the first day this happened we weren’t prepared so didn’t have a change of clothes and had to wait until our bags arrived a few hours later.

> In hindsight it would have been nice to know an approximate time when our luggage was to arrive at each destination. We could have easily spent more time exploring off track sites rather than getting to your destination to find out your luggage is still 3 hours away.
3.5.3.3  Cycle hire

The majority of the 128 respondents who hired cycles for the A2O were very satisfied (69.5%, \(n=89\)) (Figure 36). The mean satisfaction score for cycle hire was 6.24 (out of 7).

![Figure 36 Satisfaction with cycle hire](image)

There were a few complaints about the suitability of the cycles for hire (e.g., ‘I am not sure if the bikes they hire out are the best for this type of trail - bit heavy for the rough and steep parts’, ‘our bikes were designed for rail trails, comfortable but heavier than normal so harder on uphill sections’). There were also comments about the quality of hire cycles (e.g., ‘on some bikes the brakes and gears needed work’, ‘better quality bikes being available for hire would be good’).

3.5.3.4  Cycle repair

Only 52 respondents (12.7%) reported using cycle repair services and, of these, just over half (55.8%, \(n=29\)) were very satisfied (Figure 37). The mean satisfaction score for cycle repair was 5.67 (out of 7).

![Figure 37 Satisfaction with cycle repair](image)
The only feedback provided related to the location of cycle repair services (e.g., ‘access to a cycle repair shop would be handy if there was a problem with a bike in the middle sections of the trail’) and issues with repair services during holiday periods (e.g., ‘We went at Easter and there were no cycle repair facilities available in Oamaru or Kurow. We would have used this if there had been’).

3.5.4 A2O support and amenity services
Respondents were also asked if the A2O support and amenity services they experienced met their expectations. These included toilets, access to drinking water, signage, A2O maps and trail information. A ‘don’t know’ option was also given for those respondents who had either not used each service or had no expectations regarding that service. The results are summarised in Figure 38 and presented individually in Figures 39-43.

![Graph: Expectations of A2O support & amenity services]

Figure 38 Expectations of A2O support and amenity services

3.5.4.1 Toilets
Altogether, 61.8 per cent of respondents (n=253) reported that toilets either equalled or exceeded their expectations while 19.3 per cent (n=79) reported that they fell short of their expectations (Figure 39). Two thirds of the 78 respondents (19%) who reported that they didn’t know about the toilets were riding fewer than three sections of the A2O.
Specific feedback about A2O support and amenity services highlighted mixed views about toilets along the trail. As one respondent reported:

There are limited toilet facilities between Tasman Point to Tekapo B, Tekapo B toilets are locked (as has been the case for years), there are few toilets after Elephant Rocks to Weston.

Around a dozen respondents thought that more toilets were needed, with others reporting that more signage to existing toilets would be welcomed. There were a number of references to the poor condition and accessibility of specific toilet facilities (e.g., ‘toilets at Sailors Cutting are average’; ‘Lake Pukaki toilets are smelly’; ‘Tekapo B toilet unfit for humans’; ‘the toilets at Tekapo are gross’).

Others, however, reported that the ‘toilets were excellent’. One respondent provided detailed feedback on toilet provision:

Toilets - need to be a lot more of them, and it needs to be clearly signposted where they are. Assume people need a toilet at lunchtime, major stops and one hour after a stop... Using facilities off the trail (e.g., Lake Middleton, Elephant Rocks) is not ideal as these are not visible from the trail, can be difficult to find and it interrupts the group to have a person go that distance away from the trail. As for expecting people to go a mile up the road to the Quailburn to go to the toilet...? Yeah right. There needs to be toilets at the high point of the Tarnbrae track, where people stop for the view and lunch.
3.5.4.2  Access to drinking water

Altogether, 54.9 per cent of respondents (n=225) reported that access to drinking water either equalled or exceeded their expectations while 20 per cent (n=82) reported that it fell short of their expectations (Figure 40). Access to drinking water had the highest percentage of ‘don’t know’ respondents (25.1%, n=103) Seventy per cent of these ‘don’t know’ respondents were riding fewer than three sections.

More detailed feedback about access to drinking water included: a need for more signage to drinking water; more information in the A2O booklet about water availability and the need for more water points (especially in the height of summer) with a number of respondents suggesting that having water available at toilet stops would be useful. Several respondents commented about the availability of safe drinking water (e.g. ‘there was not generally drinkable water available outside of towns’; ‘most places said the water was not safe for drinking’). One respondent reported receiving misleading information from a cycle tour company:
We were told it was perfectly safe to drink the water out of the lakes. I don’t think they should be telling people this, there are a number of reasons why this water might not be fit to drink, not least the fish effluent that comes from the salmon farms, etc. Signs at campsites we saw advised boiling water.

3.5.4.3 Signage

Figure 41 shows that 78.3 per cent of respondents (n=321) reported that signage either equalled or exceeded their expectations. Signage exceeded the expectations of slightly more than half of these respondents (39.5%, n=162) and attracted the highest number reporting exceeded expectations overall (Figure 38). Signage fell short of expectations for 17.3 per cent of respondents (n=71) while only 4.4 per cent (n=18) did not know (Figure 41).

The majority of feedback about signage related to a desire for distance markers along the route with the A2O compared with other trails ridden: the OCRT, West Coast Wilderness Trail, Clutha Gold Trail and Nelson Great Taste Trail were specifically noted. There were a number of complaints about poor signage from Tekapo which have likely been resolved since the formal opening of this section (in January 2016). Other specific signage feedback/requests included issues relating to:

- Specific locations (e.g., signage leaving Twizel, confusion around the Rock Drawings at Duntroon and Tunnel gully, poor signage to accommodation premises, more signage needed in/around Kurow, ‘the high river route after Kurow lead us nowhere’)
- More generic direction issues (e.g., long stretches without signage when riding straight, more signage needed at intersections, more signage to nearby towns and points of interest, ‘lack of clarity when riding in reverse direction’)
- Issues with signs themselves (e.g., signs being too small in some places, ‘they are sometimes confusing when attached to existing signs’; ‘not enough signage in some places’; ‘[the] signs need to stand out more’; ‘black is not a good colour choice’)

Figure 41 Signage - expectations

![Signage Expectations Graph](image-url)
3.5.4.4 **A2O maps**

A2O maps either equalled or exceeded the expectations of 74.6 per cent (n=306) respondents (Figure 42).

![A2O signage](image)

**Figure 42 A2O maps – expectations**

Despite the low number who reported that the A2O maps fell short of their expectations (13.2%, n=54) respondents did provide some detailed feedback about the A2O maps. There were requests for the maps to include local points of interest, and the location of accommodation premises (including freedom camping options), food outlets and drinking water. There were also some comments relating to how up-to-date the maps were:

> We really needed maps with more detail on the terrain (up and down) and distances between landmarks for each day. All there is is a map showing the terrain for the whole ride, and a written description of some random intermediate distances for each day. It’s just not detailed enough. You need detailed distances to turn-offs and landmarks. Sometimes you can be cycling along, (fast if downhill), and looking at
scenery, and miss a turn-off. Also sometimes the weather is foul, or you’re
tired or injured, or your bike is broken, and you need to know how far it is
exactly to the next town or shelter.

The small size of the maps in the A2O brochure were noted by a number of respondents:

The A2O maps could be improved by having an A4 page per section,
which would have a large map on one side and then the information on
the ride on the other side. The map and brochure provided were OK, but a
large map would have been better.

[The trail] maps are small, with not enough information about the many
things to do or see in the middle of the sections (e.g. Deep Creek on Te
Akatarawa Road, places offering morning/afternoon teas - are there any
along the route?), [there is] little up-to-date information about changes,
track development.

Another respondent suggested that maps could be ‘printed on a handkerchief or small towel
and be a keepsake’.

There was, however, an expectation that the amount of detail on the maps would improve
over time. While several respondents commented that the maps in the brochure were hard
to read, others reported that these were excellent, but that they had not been aware of what
maps (and information) were available:

The A2O pamphlet/booklet was excellent, but I didn’t know about it until I
happened across it at the Aoraki/Mt Cook visitor centre – I would have
liked a copy before I left home – it wasn’t publicised on any of the
websites I looked at.

3.5.4.5 Trail information
Trail information either equalled or exceeded the expectations of 74.6 per cent (n=306)
respondents (Figure 43). This was the same percentage as reported for A2O maps although
slightly more respondents reported that trail information fell short of their expectations
(15.6% compared with 13.2% for maps) and slightly fewer reported not knowing about trail
information (9.8% compared to 12.2% for maps).
The majority of feedback relating to trail information incorporated elements of the trail amenities already reported with many respondents calling for more interpretation boards/panels and section maps to be located along the trail itself. As one respondent noted, ‘A booklet with history and points of interest would be nice. Maybe I missed it. There is a booklet for the West Coast Wilderness Trail that is interesting and informative’. Several respondents noted the lack of shade along parts of the trail and suggested that ‘shelter sheds’ would be welcome.

While most of the comments about the website reported that it was excellent, some respondents found it confusing. Specific information relating to the cost, frequency and contact details for helicopter services was requested. Other feedback related the condition/difficulty of the trail itself, including issues with animals on the trail and with vehicles on the off-road section around Lake Pukaki.

Some reported that ‘the brochures were not clear about how hard some sections were’ and that they needed more information about ‘riding with panniers’. Other comments related to the condition of specific sections of the trail, the difficulty of the ride and questioned the current trail grading:

\[A lot of work needs to be done above Mt Cook Station where the track is very rough and bridges are washed out, probably because they are in the wrong place\]. Also, the road from Mt Cook is too rough to cycle.

\[Some sections were gruelling, however, there is a possibility that given we did it in the shortest timeframe of four days the accumulative tiredness may have been an issue. Even so, I would say the info in the booklet plays down what is required even if only one section was being completed. I think it says somewhere in the booklet it is suitable for all ages – that is something I would disagree with.\]

\[I think the grading of the sections needs to be looked at. For instance the section from Omarama to Otematata is a Grade 3. The section from Lake Ohau Lodge to Omarama is also a Grade 3. However, the section from Ohau Lodge is much harder than the section from Omarama to Otematata.\]
There should be more signage on the trail to warn of dangerous corners or downhill sections. Especially for those who are not experienced mountain bikers.

Another respondent suggested that ‘the top of Quailburn was more a mountain bike ride than trail riding’.

Some of the issues raised in this feedback have already been resolved and, while a number of respondents suggested that ‘the trail needs to be more off-road’, the majority were aware that it is a ‘work in progress’. There were some calls for more effort to be made in respect of keeping trail information up-to-date, especially via information centres. Positive overall feedback was provided by a number of respondents. As one noted:

As a regular to the area, this trail is amazing. I am looking forward to enjoying it for many years to come with my family. A huge pat on the back to the people who put in all the hard work behind the scenes to get this trail up and running and all the people whose passion and enthusiasm keep it going.

3.5.5 Satisfaction with hospitality and retail services

Respondents were also asked how satisfied they were with accommodation, food outlets and retail opportunities on the A2O. Figure 44 presents a summary of these results and shows that 205 respondents (50%) did not use retail services, 138 respondents (33.7%) did not use accommodation and 94 respondents (22.9%) did not use any food outlets.
3.5.5.1 Accommodation

Just under half of the 272 respondents (66.3%) who used accommodation services while riding the A2O reported that they were very satisfied (49.6%, \(n=135\)) (Figure 45). The mean satisfaction score for accommodation was 6.11 (out of 7).

![Figure 45 Satisfaction with accommodation]

Feedback about accommodation was mixed, with many respondents specifically naming particular premises. All feedback of this nature has been reported directly to the relevant premises (when quoted here the names of particular premises or tour companies has been removed). More generic accommodation feedback included enjoyment of the variety of accommodation encountered along the A2O:

*Loved the variety – five nights, each in a completely different type of accommodation.*

*Loved the variety of accommodation we had... motels, cottage stay, farm & hut stays...this was thanks to the [tour company] because initially I tried to arrange accommodation myself, but it was logistically difficult as places were booked out for Waitangi weekend and a wedding & I had little local knowledge.*

A number of respondents reported poor quality/limited options in some locations (e.g., ‘accommodation in Otematata is in desperate need of an upgrade’; ‘Duntroon is wanting in accommodation’) and a lack of reasonably priced accommodation:

*I booked six months ahead (July) for the A2O (Dec 27-31) and found it almost impossible to get one night’s accommodation at reasonable rates in Twizel and Omarama.*

Some overseas respondents reported that it was difficult ‘to make payment for accommodation in smaller centres which had no credit card facilities’, adding that they had ‘difficulty accessing cash as we did not have NZ cards’.

Other accommodation feedback related to difficulty obtaining information about camping sites:
We wanted to camp and we found all the listed campsites were booked out, but travelling along the track there were all the camp sites around the hydro lakes and on the Ahuriri Rover that we saw, but no one seemed to have info about them when we called either [a tour company] or the Oamaru info centre.

One respondent suggested that having ‘camping information in the accommodation section on the website would be useful’. Another respondent provided comprehensive feedback on the accommodation and food services they experienced along the length of their ride:

We found great places to eat and stay along the way, however there were some sections where the options for food and accommodation were pretty grim. In my opinion, Duntroon has no quality accommodation to offer in terms of hotel/motels. Kurow was close to the same. Lake Tekapo was also pretty sad on the accommodation front. The last leg from Duntroon to Oamaru is one of the longest and slowest sections with a long distance between waterholes, we were incredibly grateful to find a tap and toilet and a small parking lot to camp in just before the tunnel. If we had pushed on it would have been dark by the time we got to Oamaru and we were tired having started in Kurow that day. (PS this was a great part of the track and we loved where it took us). We saw signs for Farm stays and B&Bs along the way, but unless these are clearly defined with distance and elevation we were not inclined to detour from the track not knowing if it was 10 minutes, 30 minutes, or an hour away. Mobile reception was generally not available to call and find out.

3.5.5.2 Food outlets
Altogether 316 respondents (77%) reported using food outlets along the A2O. Figure 46 shows that only 29 percent of these respondents were very satisfied with food outlets. The mean satisfaction score for food outlets was 5.76 (out of 7).

![Food outlets (n=316)](image)

*Figure 46 Satisfaction with food outlets*
Alps 2 Ocean Cycle Trail

The main complaints about food related to the lack of healthy food (e.g., ‘the cafés average and the pubs were really bad’; ‘food options were expensive and unhealthy’; ‘The food outlets need a major wake up, fresh, healthy food, I don’t want fries with everything’) and to limited options and closed premises encountered in some locations:

People need to know there are no food outlets Dunroon to Oamaru leg.

Surprised at lack of services in Dunroon - must be a business opportunity there.

Being a Monday there was no tavern or café open for a meal/coffee in Dunroon.

More food options at Kurow and Omarama would be good.

The trail could do with a few more places offering food and drink along the way.

Unlike the Otago Rail Trail, [there were] not many coffee and refreshment opportunities in the sections we did to Omarama, but that was OK, Neil the coffee guy made up for that (see Photograph 28).

Please, please persuade someone to set up a food van or coffee van between Dunroon and Oamaru. Very long tiring leg, and absolutely nowhere for weary cyclists to rest and revive.

Not enough infrastructure in place each day to have coffee.

Others reported that they were reliant on tour companies to supply/transport food:

I rode with [tour company] who provided good food and coffee each day. Without their support we may have struggled to find adequate food en route.

We self-catered for half the trip and ate out for half. Again, this was made possible by the [tour company] who dropped off a chilly bin of food at locations where there were no shops.

One respondent wrote that ‘Our 3 girls (aged 20 - 25) all commented on the friendly staff at cafes and along the way’.
3.5.5.3 Retail opportunities
Altogether, only 50 per cent of respondents ($n=205$) reported their satisfaction with retail opportunities. The mean satisfaction score for these was 5.26 (out of 7) and was the lowest satisfaction score reported; only 12.7 per cent ($n=26$) reported being very satisfied with retail opportunities (Figure 47).

Feedback suggested that many were simply not interested in retail opportunities as part of their A2O experience (e.g., ‘retail is not what I did the cycle tour for’; ‘I didn’t expect there to be shops everywhere and this was the reality. Nice to be away from them for a while!!!’). However, a number of potential retail opportunities were noted:
More shops selling local goods and produce would be fantastic!

It was very handy to have cycle supplies at the local hardware store in Twizel. A shame we couldn’t have purchased the A2O t-shirt anywhere.

There didn’t seem to be any shops targeted at cycle tourists. Even a bike drink bottle didn’t seem to be for sale anywhere.

I was keen to get an A2O shirt, but we finished our ride on a weekend so couldn’t find one. The tour company didn’t have my size in his store.

![Retail opportunities (n=205)](image)

Figure 47 Satisfaction with retail opportunities

3.5.6 Other feedback relating to services

Many of the respondents who had used commercial cycle companies to organise their A2O rides reported their satisfaction with these services, often specifying how happy they had been with the particular company they used. A number of respondents noted the advantage of being on an organised/semi organised tour and how this impacted their experience (e.g., ‘having transport support available provided flexibility for stages (larger inclines) I didn’t want to cycle’; ‘[they were] very professional and [gave us] a great experience’).

While there was no negative feedback about any of the commercial cycle tour companies, wider transport services and the facilitation of cyclists’ needs during the ride were criticised by some:

We did all the South Island Great Rides and connected them mostly by catching buses - mostly Intercity. Catching the Intercity bus is a fairly stressful event. Whilst they always took us, on each occasion we were threatened that they might not, although they would sell us a non-refundable ticket. We essentially had to book with the possibility that we would be left standing on the roadside with our bikes with another day to wait for the next one which may also not take our bikes. This never happened, but it was not a pleasant prospect and sometimes it was only through perseverance and repacking the bus cargo for the driver that we got on. For a country advertising its cycle ways to the world it needs a
welcoming united front. That said all the small business shuttles appear to be well set up and providing a great service.

Accommodation places could be more proactive and provide places to put your bikes. None of the places we stayed at had sufficient bike racks. Mountain bikes are expensive and it’s nice to be able to park them somewhere safe during your stay. Even many of the local Cafes did not have bike stands.

Others reflected on the success of the A2O thus far (‘we thought the track was doing great things for local little businesses’) and its future potential:

We have also cycled the Otago Rail Trail and the economy around that trail is better developed. But expect that this will be a matter of time and number of cyclists.

3.5.7 Improving the A2O experience

This part of the survey concluded with an open-ended question asking respondents what, if anything, would have improved their A2O experience. Altogether, 258 respondents (63%) reported something in response to this question with some reporting more than one improvement. Many of the improvements suggested had already been reported in the feedback given in response to preceding service and facility questions. The 47 respondents reporting ‘nothing’ were those who actually specified this (rather than leaving the question blank). The 298 improvements reported are summarised in Figure 48 and explained in more detail in Table 2.

![Figure 48 What would have improved your A2O experience?](image-url)
### Improvement details

#### Improvements to trail \((n=68)\)
- **Condition of surface**
- **Signage**
- **Toilets**
- **Barriers**

Selected examples given by respondents:

- ‘For God’s (and every biker’s sake) get that patch of 5kms each side of the Ohau summit sorted out so that it’s actually a genuine cycle/walking track and not the rough-as-guts confidence course that it currently is’;
- ‘The surface of the off-road sections is variable’;
- ‘Having consistent bike only barriers, some have been installed back to front or [are] too short for bikes with panniers (particularly toward the start/upper end of the trail)’;
- ‘Larger A2O signage and distance to next destination’;
- ‘No cattle stops’.

#### All/more off-road \((n=65)\)
- **Off-road**
- **Distance from road**

Completion of off road tracks to avoid having to use main roads’;
- ‘Less road riding, especially into Oamaru’;
- ‘Get rid of all road riding bits, try and keep the trails away from being beside the road as well’.

#### Other services \((n=49)\)
- **Accommodation**
- **Shuttles**
- **Food outlets**
- **Issues with closed facilities**
- **Service levels**
- **Other recreation facilities**

‘More options of cheaper backpacker type accommodation’;
- ‘More farm stays’;
- ‘Refreshment opportunities, we were there over the Christmas period, nothing open in Duntroon’;
- ‘Oamaru felt like a let-down - streets without signs, a disinterested information centre (pleasant, but not making any extra effort)’;
- ‘A few more cafes to recharge with caffeine!’;
- ‘Get hire bikes serviced and checked properly’;
- ‘More readily available fishing line rentals in the towns along the way’;
- ‘More geocaches’.

#### Nothing \((n=47)\)

‘Loved all of it’;
- ‘Nothing to suggest here, everything has been done very well’;
- ‘Nothing – trip was perfect’;
- ‘Overall a fantastic experience’.

#### Better A2O information \((n=23)\)
- **Trail updates**
- **Accurate trail descriptions**
- **Budget options**

‘Maybe a better description of the type of tracks we would be using’;
- ‘More knowledge of condition of tracks’;
- ‘A revamp of the website for non-tech people’;
- ‘Low budget information (concerning helicopter flight, campground)’;
- ‘To provide a list of available parking for fully self-contained camper vans, i.e. freedom camping’.

#### Personal preparation \((n=17)\)
- **Fitness/experience**
- **Allowing more time**

‘Me being a very experienced mountain bike rider!’;
- ‘fitness’;
- ‘To have stayed in Oamaru on the night finishing the trail so as to be able to spend all day there as there is so much to do and see and it would have been nice to have seen the blue penguins’;
- ‘A longer opportunity to explore Mt Cook & the Sir Edmund Hillary centre’.

#### Weather \((n=16)\)
- **Good weather**
- **Bad weather**
- **Wind**

‘The weather was perfect - what more could one ask for?’;
- ‘We had 2 days of rain - no rain at all would have been perfect!’;
- ‘Better weather - it did not rain much at all, but distinct lack of sun’;
- ‘Occasional headwind & side wind ...especially on exposed canal on Tekapo to Twizel section...scary when we had to walk & were nearly blown of our feet’.

#### Early days \((n=13)\)
- **Young trail**
- **Will improve over time**

‘Still a young trail, in years to come more people will do it and facilities will grow’;
- ‘I think that the concept is brilliant and where the trail is at now is pretty good. I believe the A2O would like to move to all off-road, but that will come in time’;
- ‘The job done so far is excellent and very impressive’.

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*Table 2 Potential improvements to the A2O experience*
3.6 The A2O in context

The final part of the survey looked at the A2O in the context of the wider cycle trail network, asked respondents to rate the A2O and if they would recommend it to others.

3.6.1 Other cycle trails

Respondents were asked which of the 23 Great Rides in the NZCT network they had ridden. Altogether, 326 respondents (79.5%) had ridden at least one other trail, 65 respondents had ridden two other trails and 54 respondents had ridden three other trails (Figure 49).

As might be expected, the longest standing cycle trail - the Otago Central Rail Trail (OCRT) - was the most popular of the trails with 257 respondents (62.7% of all respondents) reporting that they had ridden this trail (Figure 50). The OCRT had been ridden by only 59.3% per cent of those who had ridden one other trail \( (n=51) \), 70.8% of those who had ridden two other trails \( (n=65) \) and 81.5% of those who had ridden three other trails \( (n=54) \). All those who had ridden six or more other trails had ridden the OCRT.

Figure 50 shows that, after the ORT, the most popular trails for respondents were the Hauraki Rail Trail (19.8%, \( n=81 \)), the Queenstown Trail (18.8%, \( n=77 \)), the West Coast Wilderness Trail (16.1%, \( n=66 \)) and the Clutha Gold Trail (16.1%, \( n=66 \)). Te Ara Ahi (1.5%, \( n=6 \)) and Twin Coast Cycle Trail (2.4%, \( n=10 \)) attracted the smallest number of riders from amongst the survey respondents.
3.6.2 Why choose the A2O?
Respondents were asked why they chose to ride the A2O, rather than one of the other cycle trails. Multiple responses were possible from an original list of 13 reasons (developed from other cycle trail research); an additional two reasons – length of ride and family/friends/others’ decision – were coded from the list of ‘other’ reasons reported.

As Figure 51 shows, the most common reason for doing the A2O, selected by almost three quarters of respondents (72%, \( n=295 \)), was the scenery/landscapes on/near the trail. Just under half of respondents (48.5%, \( n=199 \)) indicated that they chose to do the A2O because of the trail location/convenience: sixty per cent of these respondents (\( n=119 \)) were doing fewer than three sections. The third most popular reason selected was the ‘significance of an Alps to Ocean journey’ and, as might be expected, the majority of these respondents (91%, \( n=143 \)) were riding three or more sections of the A2O.
The ‘other’ reasons (n=28) included:

- Those associated with holidaying in the area (e.g., ‘great for holiday exercise’; ‘ideal for fitness’; ‘there is also other good riding in the area’; ‘able to do parts of trail as ‘in and back’ in a day. We’ve been doing this for the past 3 years’; ‘part of the area’s attractions, not really something to do all in one go’)

- Sightseeing motives (e.g., ‘nice way to enjoy the countryside without using a car’; ‘having cycled in other parts of the world wanted to do the same in own back yard’; ‘love this part of NZ’; ‘had visitors staying with us from Scotland and thought this was a great way for them to experience the South Island’; ‘was hoping to do the Milford Track, but the cabins were booked out’)

- Particular characteristics of the A2O (e.g., ‘it would suit the abilities of a group of 6 different people’; ‘heard it was less commercialised than the Otago Rail Trail’; ‘geocaches along/near the trail’; ‘fact that there was an elevation decline from start to finish’; ‘not really regarding it as a “whole trail” but as several different trails, separated by road distances, unlike others that are all off road’)

- Advertising (e.g., ‘on the Great Rides list – trying to do all the South Island ones, all because of an insert advertisement in the Sydney Morning Herald’; ‘saw it on Breakfast TV’; ‘we’d read about it in a magazine and it sounded fantastic!’)
3.6.3 Overall rating for the A2O
When asked to rate the A2O out of 100 (0=not so great; 100=awesome) the majority of respondents (79.5%, n=326) gave it a score of 80+/100 (Figure 52) generating high average scores (Figure 53).

![How would you rate the A2O?](image1)

**Figure 52 A2O rating/100**

![A2O rating - averages](image2)

**Figure 53 A2O rating - averages**

3.6.4 Likelihood of recommending the A2O
Respondents were also asked how likely they were to recommend the A2O to a friend or colleague. Altogether, 92.2% of respondents (n=374) scored 8 or higher on the 0 (not at all likely) to 10 (extremely likely) scale, with more than half (53.9%, n=221) reporting that they were extremely likely to recommend the A2O (Figure 54). Likelihood of recommending the A2O had a mean score of 9.13 on the scale.
Figure 54 Likelihood of recommending the A2O

Likelihood of recommending the A2O

Number of respondents

Not at all likely 2 4 6 8 Extremely likely

0 1 1 0 0 1 6 4 23 64 89 221
Chapter 4
Concluding comments

The final survey question asked if respondents had anything else they wished to say about their experience on the A2O, or about the A2O more generally. While many respondents simply reiterated information reported elsewhere in the survey, others provided a broader overview of the A2O. These data are incorporated into this concluding comments section which revisits the key survey findings describing:

- A2O users and their A2O activity
- A2O experiences and feedback on the trail
- Positioning the A2O cycle trail in the NZCT network

The concluding comments section also provides a reflection on the survey methodology. While the survey was developed from other cycle trail research it was designed as a bespoke instrument to capture data specific to the A2O. However, a number of questions allow comparison of the A2O with other cycle trails in the NZCT network. The intercept survey approach worked well and, as noted, being present in the field facilitated collection of observational data. The use of self-selection cards containing the link to the survey was less successful as, although many of these cards were picked up by users, the actual response rate from them was low. It is possible that some users would not have encountered the survey cards as a higher number of fully self-supported riders than expected was observed during intercept survey fieldwork. Because this was the first A2O user survey the survey itself contained a significant number of open-ended questions – it is expected that these may be closed in future surveys, allowing for easier analysis.

4.1 A2O users and their A2O activity

Given the difficulty estimating response rates there is no way to know how representative the survey sample is of all A2O users. Those who responded to the survey tended to be from older age groups (72% were aged 50 or over) and were slightly more likely to be female. These data support field observations during intercept surveys and informal feedback from A2O business partners. As one respondent noted in their additional comments:

*I will support any cycle trails in NZ. I believe the concept is brilliant and will only grow in popularity. Can’t believe the numbers of woman over 50 on this trail!!!*

A2O riders were older than those surveyed on other cycle trails. The most recent OCRT survey found that 38 per cent of riders were aged 50 or over (CODC, 2015) while Angus and Associates (2013) reported that riders aged 50 or over made up 37 per cent (Queenstown Trail), 41 per cent (Motu Trails), 43 per cent (Mountains to Sea) and 55 per cent (Hauraki Rail Trail) of riders. Similar to the A2O, riders on the Motu Trails and the Mountains to Sea were slightly more likely to be female.

While almost all regions of New Zealand were represented, the majority of respondents were from the surrounding Canterbury and Otago regions (together 55.7%) or from regions containing the major population centres of Auckland and Wellington (together 18%). Altogether, 79 percent of those surveyed were domestic. CODC (2015) reported a falling percentage of domestic users on the OCRT (80% in 2008, 78% in 2011, and 61% in 2015).
Respondents on the other trails surveyed were identified as either visiting or as residing in the areas local to each trail; New Zealand residents made up the majority of visiting cycle trail users on all four trails with particularly high percentages on the Motu (89%), Mountains to Sea (87%) and Hauraki Rail Trails (96%) (Angus & Associates, 2013).

The majority (74%) of overseas users on the A2O were from Australia. In contrast, 39 per cent of international riders on the OCRT were from Australia and 25 per cent were from Europe (CODC, 2015). A relatively high proportion of international visitors using the Motu Trails were from Australia (50%) whereas 82 per cent of those surveyed on the Mountains to Sea were from Europe (Angus & Associates, 2013).

As expected, the majority of users surveyed were cycling, although observations during intercept surveys suggested that the A2O is also used extensively by runners and walkers, particularly around popular holiday spots. Walkers are also encountered along the A2O sections that overlap with Te Araroa with some Te Araroa hikers choosing to cycle those sections. There may be some potential to market cycle hire and luggage transfer options to Te Araroa hikers.

Extant trail counter data, fieldwork observations and informal feedback suggested potential issues with accurately measuring the amount of trail ridden via a survey. For example, asking if respondents had ridden ‘all of the trail’ was challenged by the length of the A2O with its multiple possible start points, the tendency of some riders (and tour companies) to avoid on-road sections and by timing constraints and weather impacts on riding behaviour. Data collected on the individual sections ridden suggested that riders can be usefully split into two groups: those riding fewer than three sections (35%, n=143) and those riding three or more sections (65%, n=267). To a large extent this classification aligns with a division of users into habitual domestic holidaymakers (using the A2O as a recreation resource) and those making a special visit to the area (during which they ride multiple sections of the A2O).

Both the intercept and online survey data reflect the popularity of Twizel and the Waitaki Valley as a domestic holiday destination, particularly for Canterbury and Otago residents. Cross tabulation of amount of trail used and number of times used (Figure 25) by home location, for example, showed that a high percentage of Canterbury (62%) and Otago (64%) respondents were completing fewer than three sections of the A2O and that only 37 per cent of Canterbury, and 29 percent of Otago respondents were first time trail users. Additional comments provided also supported field observations and survey data which suggested that many holidaymakers using the A2O are regular users and complete different sections of the A2O over multiple visits:

As we holiday in Otematata it’s easy for us to drive and do short segments of the A2O with our children i.e., a 1-3 hour ride and they love it too and see more of the countryside. We only do off-road sections though so would love to see more off-road sections.

We have a bach in Otematata and love the A20, we can’t wait for the trail between Sailors Cutting and Otematata to be completed, biking on the road there is not much fun and I was nearly hit by a passing vehicle.

Will be back to Twizel to ride some more sections in the future.

The open-ended data collected throughout the survey and intercept survey fieldwork encounters also suggested that the A2O attracts a number of local residents (who regularly use the A2O). While it might be useful to include this group as a specific user category in future
A2O surveys, the survey data showed that only 31 survey respondents (8%) lived locally to the A2O. By comparison, the local (resident) user category reported by Angus and Associates (2013) included between 13 and 43 per cent of locals. Both local and domestic holidaymaker use of the A2O was is strongly associated with fitness motives.

The multi-section riders (i.e., riding three or more sections) were more likely to be from further away and were on their first visit to the A2O. For example, 91 per cent of Auckland respondents were completing three or more sections of the A2O and 93 per cent were first time users of the A2O. Likewise, 90 percent of overseas respondents were riding three or more sections and 89 were first time users. These multi-section riders spent a significant number of nights in the Mackenzie/Waitaki area during their A2O visits with 70 per cent staying in either Twizel, Aoraki/Mt Cook or Tekapo the night before they started and 60 per cent staying in Oamaru the night they finished. In addition to these pre-and post-nights stays, these 267 respondents generated more than 1000 accommodation nights during their A2O ride.

The decision not to ask a specific question about the amount spent while riding the A2O was in part mitigated by the collection of these data describing ‘nights stayed’ by multi-section riders and data describing the variety of services used by all respondents. For example, two thirds of the total survey sample reported using accommodation services, four-fifths used food outlets and half used retail opportunities. In addition, 36 per cent reported purchasing an A2O package of some type and 34 per cent used at least some A2O support services (Figure 26).

Overall, these survey data show that the A2O supports a considerable number of local businesses, with many of the accommodation premises referenced in open-ended survey data having been established (or expanded) to cater expressly to A2O users. However, the number of negative comments reported in respect of limited facilities and opening hours in some locations along the trail suggest potential for additional business development. Business confidence in the A2O is, however, challenged by the seasonal appeal of the A2O for users and the increasing pressure by other tourists in respect of extant tourism facilities and amenities, particularly in, and around, the upper (busier) sections of the A2O.

4.2 A2O experiences and trail feedback

The data show that there is a high level of satisfaction with A2O services with satisfaction scores (out of 7) of 6.12 (shuttles), 6.25 (luggage transfer), 6.24 (cycle hire) and 5.67 (cycle repair). There were, however, a number of issues reported in least liked comments relating to: the availability and quality of shuttle services; misunderstandings associated with the timing of luggage delivery; negative comments about the quality of cycles available for hire; and, requests for more cycle repair services.

A2O support and amenity services either equalled or exceeded the expectations of the majority of those surveyed, although toilets and access to drinking water did not rate as highly as signage, A2O maps and trail information. Specific feedback on these services, along with responses given to other open-ended survey questions, suggested possible improvements with respect to the A2O amenity information included on signage and on maps/the website and in information brochures. The addition of distance markers along the trail itself was the most requested aspect of this.
Satisfaction with hospitality and retail services was not as high as that reported for A2O services with mean satisfactions scores of 6.11 (accommodation), 5.76 (food outlets) and 5.26 (retail opportunities). Given the number and variety of premises experienced along the length of the trail it is difficult to report generic issues associated with these services. In respect of accommodation there appear to be issues with signposting to premises located slightly off trail and a paucity of information on camping options. However, the variety of accommodation was particularly enjoyed, albeit with a number of requests for more farm stays. Food outlet ‘negatives’ related to the quality and variety of food available, with a number of specific complaints about a lack of food outlets in some places and of premises being closed. The data indicated that while retail opportunities do not represent a significant part of the A2O experience there are potential business opportunities for outlets selling local products, A2O souvenirs and cycle-related goods.

While the targeted survey questions provided useful information on a wide range of A2O services they did not capture some of the more experiential service aspects of the A2O, particularly those which incorporated multiple service aspects. Many of these were reported in response to open-ended survey questions. There were, for example, some issues associated with A2O services and, in particular, users’ expectations in respect of cycle suitability, trail standards and riding difficulty. As these two respondents noted:

*We rode on fixed frame, no suspension bikes with wide 29x2.2 inch knobbly profiled tires. These bikes and tires were perfect for the trail. We encountered some cyclists on lower and narrower profiled tire touring bikes who pulled off the trail onto roads because they were unhappy with the loose gravely surfaces. They were generally somewhat whingy about this aspect of the trail. I don’t think the trail should be changed, but somehow they had the wrong expectations.*

*My husband and I consider ourselves to be reasonably capable, 60+ year old, recreational riders. The very demanding physical nature of the track surprised us. When discussing this track with friends we caution that it is only for very fit, experienced and confident riders. We realise that grading is subjective, and perhaps the grading standards used are appropriate for NZ riders. We do not feel that these give the average Aussie bicycle rider a true indication of what to expect and what is required. For example, Aoraki/Mt Cook to Braemar is graded as easy. This involves 35km that is largely riding over ancient glacial moraine or gravel so chunky and thick that a mini bulldozer blade needed to be fitted to the front tyre of the bike in order to push through it. I feel the grading could lead to relatively inexperienced riders attempting the track, and this could result in serious accidents and injuries. Having said all this, everything about the ride, apart from its very demanding nature, was wonderful, and we are very glad that we have done it.*

Many of the additional comments, however, acknowledged that while there are currently some issues associated with service and trail expectations and with amount of off-road trail completed they understood that these would improve with time:

*Marketing of the trail has got in front of the construction - it really needs to be finished so it meets people's expectations. Really important to keep the official start at Mt Cook as this top section is the only truly wild section.*
It will be even better once it is all off-road. Would be good to have some facilities for food and/or drink between Duntroon and Weston - hopefully Enfield will provide something once the track goes through there.

It’s clearly a trail that is still being developed and will become even more enjoyable.

The construction of more off-road sections of the trail appears crucial to trail enjoyment. For example, off-road riding scored highly as a ‘most liked’ aspect and, conversely, on-road riding scored highly as a ‘least liked’ aspect of the A2O. While the most liked aspect of the A2O was the scenery, this was particularly enjoyed in the early (high country) sections when experienced via off-road trail sections. Although the lower trail sections traversing the Waitaki Valley and Oamaru hinterland were perceived to be less scenic by some respondents, there was significant interest in the economic, social and cultural history of these areas with numerous references to the lack of interpretation and information along the trail. As this respondent noted in their additional comments:

I really enjoyed the first half of the A2O, whilst the second half from Omarama to Oamaru wasn’t as interesting. I think that it could be improved by installing interesting interpretation panels about the history and ecology of the Waitaki Valley, as is done for the Tasman Great Taste Trail. The ecology of the Waitaki River margins could be improved in places, such as the planting of native plants and trees. The Omarama to Oamaru section is culturally significant to the Waitaha people as it traces the footsteps of their ancestor Te Maiharoa. A2O could partner with the Waitaha people to lift the visibility of this culturally significant route.

4.3 Positioning the A2O cycle trail in the NZCT network

Some respondents compared the A2O to other Great Rides, commenting on the (false) expectations people might have regarding the A2O (and other great rides). One respondent reflected on the criteria that makes a “Great Ride” and suggested ways the A2O might be improved:

Having done most of the Great Rides of the South Island I now find myself mulling over what criteria got them in to the Great Ride status. There is a general theme of multi-day off-road scenic rides and, on most, significant effort and money has been put into making them uniquely bicycle orientated, road separated, wilderness or landscape incorporated adventures. The Dun Mountain Trail doesn’t seem to me a match for a "Great Ride" and The Great Taste Trail may have had the length, but it is really a road and pavement ride with little planning to take you past cellar doors and restaurants to provide you with the "Great Taste" experience which is what you expect due to its name.... These trails do not match the calibre of the other rides on the South Island that we have done. For me they weren’t Great Rides... Just rides of their own minor merit.

The A2O is competing with the 22 other trails of the NZCT cycle network (see Figure 1) and the survey collected useful data describing its current positioning. A ‘trail choice’ question, for example, included the same items as used by Angus and Associates (2013), with the addition
of the ‘significance of an Alps to Ocean journey’, and the two post-coded reasons given ('length of ride' and ‘other’s decision’) (Table 3). As Table 3 shows, scenery/landscapes was a much stronger selection factor for A2O trail choice than was the case with these four other trails.

For the majority of trail choice reasons selected, the A2O fell in a mid-point between the four trails, flanked on one side by Motu Trails and the Mountains to Sea and on the other side by the Queenstown Trail and Hauraki Rail Trail (Table 3). After the OCRT (ridden by 63% of A2O survey respondents), the Hauraki Rail Trail (20%) and Queenstown Trail (19%) were the most ridden trails in the NZCT network by the A2O survey respondents (Figure 50). The A2O performed slightly better than the other South Island trail – the Queenstown Trail – in respect of being a new/different experience, recommendation, the degree of technical difficulty/challenge and in respect of other activities/attractions near the trail. The A2O category describing the ‘length of the ride’ (which was not given as a reason for trail choice for the other trails shown in Table 3) is also associated with the challenge of the ride.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reasons for trail choice</th>
<th>Motu Trails</th>
<th>Mountains to Sea</th>
<th>A2O</th>
<th>Queenstown Trail</th>
<th>Hauraki Rail Trail</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Scenery/landscapes on/near trail</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trail location/convenience</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Significance of an 'Alps to Ocean' journey</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td><strong>39</strong></td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A new/different experience</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suitability for people of all fitness levels</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recommendation</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Degree of technical difficulty/challenge</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Had cycled/run on trail before</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>11</td>
<td><strong>18</strong></td>
<td>31</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other activities/attractions near the trail</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>13</td>
<td><strong>13</strong></td>
<td>12</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facilities/services on or near the trail</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other reason</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td><strong>6.8</strong></td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Less crowded than other options</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trail part of an organised tour</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td><strong>5</strong></td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Length of ride</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td><strong>4</strong></td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The only option given transport/time available</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family/friend/other’s decision</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td><strong>4</strong></td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table 3 Reasons for trail choice (% of respondents selecting each reason) (Angus & Associates, 2013)*
Overall, the large number of other trails ridden by survey respondents suggest that both the reasons for trail choice and reported experiences on the A2O are important (and credible) indicators of ways in which the A2O could be effectively marketed. Survey data indicates that A2O marketing efforts should focus on its scenic amenity, particularly in relation to the diversity of scenery encountered along the full length of the trail. Associated with this is the A2O’s position as the longest trail in the NZCT network and the attraction and ‘significance of an Alps to Ocean journey’. There was also a considerable interest in the economic, cultural and social histories and environments of the A2O. While these aspects could also be incorporated into marketing initiatives there is also strong demand for interpretation relating to these aspects on the A2O along the trail itself.

As a cycle trail experience the A2O was rated very highly by those surveyed with 54 per cent reporting that they would be extremely likely to recommend it to others and the trail itself achieved a rating score of over 80/100. While a number of additional comments simply reiterated these findings, respondents also provided additional commentary relating to their own trail appreciation, expressed some caution around potential for over-development and reflected (positively) on the A2O’s future:

We really loved this trip, would do it again and would recommend it to others. We really appreciate all the effort that has gone into making this available.

Absolutely brilliant. The work that has gone into it makes me feel guilty that there is not a fee to use it!

Thank you for the opportunity! The trail and all the people who worked so hard on it are to be congratulated!

It was great to be met by someone doing a survey and so hopefully improving the quality of the experience for the future users of the track. It’s a great part of NZ and beautiful and as the track is improved it will only further serve to increase the popularity of the track and more people will come to use it.

It’s so large it can be quite solitary, which is a rare luxury out in the landscape. I imagine its popularity will grow significantly because of its location so let’s just remember to keep our priorities and not forget it’s just a lucky little track in a big beautiful landscape panorama. Modesty is good. I don’t see why we couldn’t see it akin to the whale watching - you know, special care needed long term with development/exploitation. Don’t forget the basics.
References


Appendices

Appendix 1: Survey schematic
Appendix 2: Full online survey

Alps 2 Ocean User Survey 2015/16

Opening page of survey

Thank you for taking part in this survey which is being undertaken by Jude Wilson (a Tourism Researcher at Lincoln University) in association with Tourism Waitaki. This is the first user survey that has been done on the A2O and we are interested in finding out who is using the trail, how they are using it and what they think of it.

The survey is designed for everyone using the A2O - e.g., you might be a cyclist, a runner, or a walker and you might have done the full A2O trail, or only part of it. The survey should take you approximately 20-30 minutes to complete - the completion bar will show you how far you have progressed.

After starting the survey, the system will allow you up to two weeks to complete the survey. The final cut-off / expiration date for the survey is Sunday 10th April 2016.

We do not ask for any identifying information and your participation is voluntary. You may withdraw from the survey at any time up until clicking on the 'submit survey' button at the end of the survey - any data collected via incomplete surveys will be excluded from analysis.

The research has been reviewed and approved by the Lincoln University Human Ethics Committee.

If you want any more information about the survey, my contact details are printed on the small card you either picked up or were given.

PART 1: ABOUT YOU

To begin, we would like to find out a little bit about the people using the A2O

Are you aged 16 or over?
  - Yes
  - No (THANK-YOU, YOU NEED TO BE AGED 16 OR OVER TO COMPLETE THE SURVEY – Taken to SURVEY END)
Q1 Which age group are you in?
• 16-19 years
• 20-24 years
• 25-29 years
• 30-34 years
• 35-39 years
• 40-44 years
• 45-49 years
• 50-54 years
• 55-59 years
• 60-64 years
• 65-69 years
• 70+ years

Q2 Are you?
• Male
• Female

Q3 Where do you live?
• Northland
• Auckland
• Waikato
• Bay of Plenty
• Gisborne
• Hawke’s Bay
• Taranaki
• Manawatu-Wanganui
• Wellington
• Tasman
• Marlborough
• Nelson
• Canterbury (go to Q4)
• West Coast
• Otago (go to Q5)
• Southland
• Overseas - which country? ____________________

Q4 Whereabouts in Canterbury do you live? (ONLY THOSE IN CANTERBURY Q3)
• Christchurch
• Timaru
• Ashburton
• Rangiora
• Other ____________________
Q5 Whereabouts in Otago do you live? (ONLY THOSE IN OTAGO Q3)
• Dunedin
• Oamaru
• Queenstown
• Wanaka
• Other ____________________

Q6 Which of the following most closely describes your visit to the A2O on the occasion you picked up the card with the survey link, or were approached to do this survey. The A2O was...
• The ONLY REASON I came to the Mackenzie / Waitaki area
• The MAIN REASON I decided to visit the Mackenzie / Waitaki area
• ONE OF THE REASONS I came to the Mackenzie / Waitaki area
• The REASON I STAYED LONGER in the Mackenzie / Waitaki area than I might otherwise have done
• Just something I was doing because I WAS VISITING THE AREA ANYWAY
• Other reason - what was it? ____________________

PART 2: YOUR A2O ACTIVITY

Now we have some questions about your A2O activity - once again, please answer these in relation to the visit on which you picked up the card with the survey link, or were approached to do this survey

Q7 What type of activity were you doing on the A2O?
• Cycling
• Running
• Walking
• Other ____________________

Q8 How much of the A2O did you do?
• Three or more sections (we will ask some more questions about this in a minute)
• Fewer than three sections (we will ask you which ones in the next question)
Q9 The A2O has 8 trail sections and an alternate Tekapo start - please tick which ones you used during this visit?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SECTION</th>
<th>Did ALL of this section</th>
<th>Did PART of this section</th>
<th>Did NOT DO this section</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SECTION 1: Aoraki / Mt Cook to Braemar Road</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SECTION 2: Braemar Road to Twizel</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SECTION 3: Twizel to Lake Ohau Lodge</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SECTION 4: Lake Ohau Lodge to Omarama</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SECTION 5: Omarama to Otematata</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SECTION 6: Otematata to Kurow</td>
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<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SECTION 7: Kurow to Duntroon</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SECTION 8: Duntroon to Oamaru</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ALTERNATIVE START: Lake Tekapo to Twizel</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
<td>●</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q10 You said that you did three or more sections of the A2O - where did you start? ONLY OPTION 1 FROM Q8

- Aoraki / Mt Cook
- Tasman Point
- Jollie Road carpark
- Oamaru
- Another place - where? ____________________

Q11 Why did you choose to start there? ONLY OPTION 1 FROM Q8

- Wanted to do whole trail
- More affordable option
- Easiest option logistically
- Took me somewhere I hadn’t been before
- Other reason - what was it? ____________________
Q12 Where did you stay the night before you started the A2O? ONLY OPTION 1 FROM Q8

- Aoraki / Mt Cook
- Tekapo
- Twizel
- Oamaru
- Omarama
- Another place - where was it? ____________________

Q13 You have already told us where you spent the night before you started the A2O - at which of the following places did you stop for the night while you were doing the ride? (if you stayed at places not on the list you can type them into the boxes at the bottom of the list)

ONLY OPTION 1 FROM Q8

- Braemar Station
- Twizel
- Lake Ohau
- Omarama
- Otematata
- Kurow
- Duntroon
- Oamaru
- Another place - where? ____________________
- Another place - where? ____________________
- Another place - where? ____________________

Q13a Where did you stay the night you finished the ride? ____________________

Q14 Including yourself, how many people were you with on the A2O?

Q15 How many of those people were aged under 16? (if there were none please enter '0')

Q16 How many times have you cycled, run, walked or otherwise been on the A2O?

- This was the first time
- Once before this occasion
- Twice before this occasion
- 3-4 times before this occasion
- 5 times or more before this occasion
- Don't know/can't recall
PART 3: YOUR A2O EXPERIENCE

These questions are about your A2O experience - ALL THE QNS IN THIS SECTION WILL ONLY BE ASKED OF THOSE PEOPLE WHO ANSWERED OPTION 1 IN Q8 (i.e., those who did three or more sections of the trail)

Q17 Which of the options listed below most closely describes your A2O arrangement / organisation?
- I was on a guided A2O tour
- I purchased an A2O tour package, but was self-guided on the ride
- I did the A2O independently, but did use some of the A2O services (e.g., shuttles, luggage transfer, bike hire)
- I did the A2O independently and used none of the A2O services
- Other ____________________

Q18 Did you have a budget for doing the A2O?
- Yes - roughly how much was your budget? ____________________
- No

Q19 Irrespective of whether you had a budget or not, was the amount you spent on the A2O...
- More than you expected / budgeted for
- Close to what you expected / budgeted for
- Less than you expected / budgeted for

Q20 The next questions are about what other activities you did in the Mackenzie / Waitaki area either before, after, or during this A2O visit. We have split these activities into three sets. Don’t worry if some of the things you did are not included - we will give you the opportunity to tell us about these in a later question.
The first set includes leisure and recreation activities (other than cycling), as well as some places that you might have visited that are located slightly away from the A2O trail. These are generally things that you don’t have to pay to do.

Did you do / visit any of these during your A2O visit?

- Swimming
- Fishing
- Walking tracks (e.g., Hooker Valley, Otematata Wetlands Walk)
- Clay Cliffs
- Quailburn Historic Woolshed

Q21 The second set of activities includes some information, cultural and historic sites - you may have paid to visit / experience some of these places, but most are free. Did you visit any of these places during your A2O visit?

- Steampunk HQ
- Vanished World Visitor Centre
- Winery - for a tasting, tour or meal
- Kurow Museum
- Aoraki / Mt Cook DOC Visitor Centre
- The Benmore Visitor Centre

Q22 This last set of activities includes some of the popular commercial tourism activities available in the Mackenzie / Waitaki area. Did you do any of these during your A2O visit?

- Scenic flight (e.g., fixed wing, helicopter, glider)
- Heli-hike
- Glacier Explorers
- Sir Edmund Hillary Alpine Centre
- Hot Tubs Omarama
- Earth & Sky (Lake Tekapo)
- Big Sky Stargazing (Aoraki / Mt Cook)
- Oamaru Blue Penguin Colony

Q23 Are there any other activities you did in the Mackenzie / Waitaki area during your A2O visit that were not included in the previous 3 questions?

PART 4: WHAT DID YOU THINK OF THE A2O?

This set of questions are about what you thought of the A2O - you should be able to answer these even if you only did one section of part of the trail

Q24 What did you like most about the A2O?
Q25 What did you like least about the A2O?

Q26 How satisfied were you with these A2O services? (If you didn’t use this service please check the N/A option)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Very Dissatisfied (1)</th>
<th>Dissatisfied (2)</th>
<th>Somewhat Dissatisfied (3)</th>
<th>Neutral (4)</th>
<th>Somewhat Satisfied (5)</th>
<th>Satisfied (6)</th>
<th>Very Satisfied (7)</th>
<th>N/A</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Shuttles</td>
<td>•</td>
<td>•</td>
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<td>•</td>
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<tr>
<td>Luggage transfer</td>
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<td>Cycle hire</td>
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<td>•</td>
<td>•</td>
<td>•</td>
<td>•</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q27 If you have any specific feedback you would like to give us about these services you can write it here - if you have nothing to tell us please go to the next question

Q28 How would you rate these aspects of the A2O?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aspect</th>
<th>Fell far short of expectations</th>
<th>Fell short of expectations</th>
<th>Equalled expectations</th>
<th>Exceeded expectations</th>
<th>Far exceeded expectations</th>
<th>Don’t know</th>
</tr>
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<td>Toilets</td>
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<td>Access to drinking water</td>
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<td>A2O maps</td>
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<tr>
<td>Trail information</td>
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</table>

Q29 If you have any specific feedback you would like to give us about these aspects of the A2O you can write it here - if you have nothing to tell us please go to the next question
Q30 What about the other things you spent your money on while doing the A2O? (there is a N/A option for those people who did not use any of these services whilst on the A2O)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Very Dissatisfied (1)</th>
<th>Dissatisfied (2)</th>
<th>Somewhat Dissatisfied (3)</th>
<th>Neutral (4)</th>
<th>Somewhat Satisfied (5)</th>
<th>Satisfied (6)</th>
<th>Very Satisfied (7)</th>
<th>N/A</th>
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<tr>
<td>Accommodation</td>
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<td>Food outlets</td>
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<td>Retail opportunities</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Q31 If you have any specific feedback you would like to give us about these services you can write it here - if you have nothing to tell us please go to the next question

Q32 What, if anything, would have improved your A2O experience?
**PART 5: THE A2O IN CONTEXT**

You are almost finished - just five questions to go...

**Q33** There are 23 Great Rides in the New Zealand Cycle Trail (Nga Haerenga) network. Which - if any - of these rides have you done?

- Great Lake Trail
- Hauraki Rail Trail
- Hawke's Bay Trail
- Motu Trails
- Mountains to Sea
- Rimutaka Cycle Trail
- Te Ara Ahi
- The Timber Trail
- Twin Coast Cycle Trail
- Waikato River Trails
- Around the Mountains
- Clutha Gold Trail
- Dun Mountain Trail
- Otago Rail Trail
- Queen Charlotte Track
- Roxburgh Gorge Trail
- St James Cycle Trail
- Little River Rail Trail
- Tasman Great Taste Trail
- The Old Ghost Road
- The Queenstown Trail
- West Coast Wilderness Trail
- None of these
Q34 Why did you choose to do the A2O rather than another one of these cycle trails - please tick as many answers as apply
  • Scenery / landscapes on / near the trail
  • Trail location / convenience (I live or was travelling nearby)
  • Recommendation
  • Suitability for people of all fitness levels
  • Other activities / attractions near the trail
  • Trail was part of an organised tour / packaged with other activities
  • Had cycled / run on the trail before
  • Degree of technical difficulty / challenge
  • Facilities / services on or near trail
  • Had NOT cycled or run / walked the trail before (a new / different experience)
  • This trail was the only option, given the transport / time available to me
  • Less crowded than other options
  • Significance of an 'alps to ocean' journey
  • Other - please specify ______________________

Q35 Overall, how would you rate the A2O? [Please click on the bar to give it a score out of 100]
0 = Not so great..... 100 = Awesome

Q36 On a scale from 0-10, how likely are you to recommend the A2O to a friend or colleague?
  • 0 (Not at all likely)
  • 1
  • 2
  • 3
  • 4
  • 5
  • 6
  • 7
  • 8
  • 9
  • 10 (Extremely likely)

Q37 If there is anything else you would like to tell us about your experience on the A2O, or about the A2O more generally, you can write it here. If you have nothing to add you can go to the end of the survey.

Thank you - that is the end of the survey
  • Click here to submit survey - please note that if you don't click on this button your answers will not be included in the analysis
Alps 2 Ocean Cycle Trail
Appendix 3: Intercept survey

We are running an online survey to collect information about users, use and experiences on the Alps2Ocean cycle trail. The survey is being undertaken by Lincoln University in association with Tourism Waitaki. Today, all we require from you are the answers to the four questions on this page and your contact details (so we can send you the full survey in the next few weeks). All information you provide today is strictly confidential*.

1. I am aged 16 years or older:
   - [ ] Yes
   - [ ] No

2. On this A2O visit I am (ONE OPTION ONLY):
   - [ ] Cycling
   - [ ] Running/jogging
   - [ ] Walking
   - [ ] Other __________________________

   * Your details will be held securely. The information we collect today about you and your visit will be analysed separately to the online survey and will not be linked in any way to your contact details. These contact details will ONLY be used to send you a link to the online A2O survey.

   Can you please enter your name and email address in the boxes below.

   Please write in CAPITAL LETTERS

   [ ] First name

   [ ] Email address

3. During this A2O visit I intend to (ONE OPTION ONLY):
   - [ ] Complete the entire trail
   - [ ] Complete several trail sections
   - [ ] Complete one section only
   - [ ] Use only part of a trail section

4. I normally live (ONE OPTION ONLY):
   - [ ] In the area local to the A2O (e.g., Mackenzie Basin, Waitaki Valley, Camaro, Waimate)
   - [ ] Further away, but still within the Otago or Canterbury regions
   - [ ] Elsewhere in the South Island
   - [ ] North island
   - [ ] Overseas

   Country? __________________________

   We will email you a link to the full survey sometime in the next few weeks. Your participation – both today and in the online survey – is voluntary.

   Thank you very much for your help
Appendix 4: Survey poster

Tell us about your A2O experience and what you think of the trail

- Simply pick-up one of the small cards with the link to the online survey.
- When you have finished riding the trail you can do the survey at your leisure.
- To participate you need to be aged 16 or over.

The survey will be available until 10 April 2016.

For more information contact:
jude.wilson@lincoln.ac.nz
03 423 0502

Lincoln University
Appendix 5: Self-selection and record cards

Online Survey Self-selection card

Alps 2 Ocean User Survey 2015/2016

Please take this survey to tell us about your experience on the A2O. The link below will take you to the online survey, which we would like you to complete after you finish the A2O. The survey will be accessible until Sunday 10th April 2016. The survey is designed for everyone using the A2O – cyclists, runners, walkers and for full trail or part trail users. The survey takes 20-30 minutes to complete. You need to be aged 16 or over to do the survey.

Go to: lu.ac.nz/A2Osurvey

Intercept Survey record card

Alps 2 Ocean User Survey 2015/2016

Thank you for answering our questions today and for giving us your email address. We will send you the link to an online survey about your experience on the A2O. The survey is designed for everyone using the A2O – cyclists, runners, walkers and for full trail or part trail users. The survey takes 20-30 minutes to complete.

Your participation is voluntary.

We do not ask for your name, or for any contact information, and your participation is voluntary.

For more information contact: jude.wilson@lincoln.ac.nz

The full survey results will be published as a Lincoln University Research Report and may also be published as an academic paper. The results will also be shared with Tourism Waitaki. Summary results of the survey will be available to view on the A2O website and/or released via the A2O newsletter.

The online survey does not ask for your name, or for any contact information.

The full survey results will be published as a Lincoln University Research Report and may also be published as an academic paper. The results of the survey will also be shared with Tourism Waitaki. Summary results of the survey will be available to view on the A2O website and/or released via the A2O newsletter.

If you do not receive an email with the survey link in the next few weeks, or if you would like some more information about this research, please contact Jude Wilson: jude.wilson@lincoln.ac.nz