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**Adventure tourism accidents and the New Zealand media: An
analysis and discussion on implications for future research and the
tourism sector**

A thesis
submitted in partial fulfilment
of the requirements for the Degree of
Master of Applied Science

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Ember Song

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Abstract of a thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the Degree of Master of Applied Science.

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by

Ember Song

Adventure tourism is a vital part of the New Zealand tourism industry, and has great importance internationally. Due to the risks inherent in adventure activities, accidents will always occur in some quantity during these activities. Such accidents have the potential to cause significant financial losses, injuries, and/or deaths. The media presentation of such accidents can cause further losses to an operator, destination or sector through providing information to prospective tourists. The risks involved in adventure tourism and how tourists and operators react to them have been examined by both academic and government research in the past, and the effects of sensationalised media coverage of specific events have been well-recorded. However, little work has been done on the overall manner in which the media report on adventure tourism accidents.

This study identifies key themes and patterns in the reporting of adventure tourism accidents and incidents in the New Zealand print media. This was accomplished through the use of a mixed-methods approach examining a sample of newspaper articles extracted from six years of news coverage. Both the articles within the sample and the accidents that were described were analysed to provide new insight into how these accidents are reported in the New Zealand media.

Better knowledge of how adventure tourism accidents are reported in the media enables more effective use of news reports as data for future academic research on risk and accidents. It also informs effective responses to accidents by industry, and greater understanding of policy-making decisions made in reaction to accidents in the adventure tourism sector. Through providing an exploratory examination of the New Zealand print media it is hoped that this study will contribute to a greater understanding of how adventure tourism accidents are reported, and what significance this may have to academic study and the sector's response to crises.

Keywords: Tourism, adventure tourism, media, newspapers, safety, risk, accidents, New Zealand

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Table of Contents

Abstract	ii
Acknowledgements	iii
Table of Contents	iv
List of Tables	vi
List of Figures	vi
Introduction	1
Overview.....	1
Research objectives.....	4
Research contribution.....	4
Thesis structure.....	6
Literature Review	7
Introduction.....	7
Risk and Society.....	8
Role of safety and risk in tourist decision-making.....	10
Accidents and Incidents.....	12
Adventure tourism in New Zealand.....	14
Tourism accidents in New Zealand.....	22
The 2010 Adventure Tourism Review.....	25
Tourism and the Media.....	26
The role of media in policy-making after accidents and disasters.....	28
Portrayal of accidents in the media.....	30
Media values and newsworthiness.....	33
Portrayal of adventure tourism accidents in the New Zealand media.....	37
Conclusion.....	39
Methods	40
Data collection.....	41
Quantitative analysis of newspaper articles.....	44
Article classifications.....	45
Statistical analyses.....	47
Qualitative analysis of newspaper articles.....	47
Magazine pilot study.....	49
Limitations.....	50
Conclusion.....	53

Results.....	54
Introduction.....	54
Accidents reported within the sample.....	54
Accident categorisation.....	56
Activities involved in reported accidents.....	57
Chronology of accidents.....	61
Article attributes.....	62
Chronology of articles.....	63
Factual versus narrative structure.....	64
Word-count.....	65
Syndication.....	68
Relative frequency of accident reports and follow-up articles.....	69
Frequency of mention.....	70
Common themes in accidents appearing in multiple articles.....	71
Skydiving aircraft crash, Fox Glacier Aerodrome (2010).....	73
Hot-air balloon crash, Carterton (2012).....	77
Helicopter crash, Fox Glacier (2015).....	80
River-boarding drowning, Kawarau River (2008).....	83
Skydiving aircraft crash, Lake Taupo (2015).....	85
Scenic flight crash, Poolburn Reservoir (2014).....	87
Summary of most-mentioned accidents.....	88
Magazine pilot study.....	92
Conclusion.....	94
Discussion.....	95
Introduction.....	95
Accidents appear to be covered factually, but more can be learned.....	96
Coverage is largely uniform between newspapers, but not magazines.....	97
Adventure tourism accidents appear to be infrequently covered in the New Zealand print media.....	99
Certain activities and accident types may be over or under-represented.....	102
Deaths may be over-represented in media reports.....	105
Most accidents receive little attention, but a few gain greater coverage.....	107
Why do some accidents receive unusual media attention?.....	108
The importance of researching accident coverage.....	115
Conclusion.....	118
Research questions.....	118
Implications.....	121
Future research.....	124
References.....	131
Appendix A: Newspaper circulation information.....	140
Appendix B: Articles examined within the study.....	142

List of Tables

Table 2.1 Adventure and Extreme Adventure Activities (from Tourism New Zealand,2013) ..	17
Table 2.2 Adventure tourism activities (from Bentley & Page, 2008).....	19
Table 2.3 List of activities covered by the governmental review of safety in the outdoor recreation and adventure tourism sector (from Department of Labour, 2010).....	20
Table 2.4 Media values (adapted from Galtung & Ruge, 1965).....	34
Table 2.5 Contemporary news values (from Harcup & O’Neil, 2016).....	35
Table 3.1: Newspapers examined during the study.....	42
Table 4.1 Frequency of reported accident categories within the sample.....	56
Table 4.2 Activity categories identified in sampled articles, arranged by frequency.....	58
Table 4.3 Summary of activity categories and the number of accidents in each category.....	60
Table 4.4: Article count by year of publication.....	63
Table 4.5 Number and percentage of articles featuring ‘narrative’ structure by publisher....	65
Table 4.6 ANOVA analysis of mean word-counts between publications.....	67
Table 4.7 Syndication summary for all newspapers.....	69
Table 4.8 Summary of all accidents referenced ten or more times.....	72
Table 4.9 Summary of accidents mentioned in 4-10 sampled articles.....	94
Table A1 Newspaper circulation figures for sampled New Zealand newspapers.....	140
Table B1 Newspaper articles sampled.....	142

List of Figures

Fig. 4.1 Reported adventure tourism accidents, excluding those occurring in or before 1990, graphed by year of occurrence.....	62
Fig. 4.2 Word-count for all articles.....	66
Fig. 4.3 Frequency of reference for all unique accidents/incidents in the sample articles.....	70

Introduction

Overview

Adventure tourism has been a topic of academic discussion for a considerable period of time since its emergence as a subsection of the wider tourism market (Buckley, 2006, 2009). As a market, adventure tourism is of considerable importance to the wider New Zealand tourism sector (Page, 1997), and is a major part of the New Zealand tourist experience, with over 50 percent of international visitors in 2012 undertaking one or more adventure tourism activities during their stay (Tourism New Zealand, 2013). Adventure tourism is known for overlapping heavily with nature-based tourism, adventure travel, commercial expeditions, outdoor education, and outdoor recreation (Buckley, 2006), and exact definitions of adventure tourism vary considerably between industry, government, and academic settings (Swarbrooke, Beard, Leckie & Pomfret, 2003; Buckley, 2006). Adventure tourists seek thrills, or what can be described as 'rush' (Buckley, 2012). Though the adrenaline rush of an activity is desirable, physical danger is generally undesirable to the adventure tourist (Swarbrooke et al, 2003; Buckley, 2006). However, adventure tourism is considered an inherently risky activity, with some rate of accidents being inevitable due to the nature of the associated activities a (Faulkner, 2001).

Risk is a social construct that has been the topic of considerable academic work in the past decades, and interpreted as a defining characteristic of modern society (Beck, 1992; Furedi, 1999; Van Loon, 2002; Mythen, 2004). Risk has no 'reality' in and of itself (Beck, 1992): when a risk is actualised it ceases to be a risk, and is instead becomes an adverse event in the form of an incident or accident (Van Loon, 2002). Accidents and incidents vary considerably in impact and effect, but are able to cause significant financial loss, injury, or death (Page, 1997).

Consequentially, risk management has become integral to modern tourism operations and, while eliminating all risk is impossible, reduction and control of risk is thought to support the smooth and safe operation of activities, processes, and destinations in the tourism sector. The perception that risk is well-managed is important to tourists, who feel concerned about their safety when they believe they have reason to be (Lovelock, 2003), and will change their

behaviour if they have reason to believe they are unsafe (Holme, Lugosi, Croes, & Torres, 2017). Accidents and disasters provide a signal to tourists that they may be unsafe if they travel to a destination or partake in an activity, and can have considerable impacts on a destination (Page, 1997; Potter, Becker, Johnston, & Rossiter, 2015; Walters, Mair & Lin, 2016).

The separation of adverse events into significant “accidents” and less serious “incidents” (sometimes also referred to as “occurrences”) is common in governmental and academic settings (Page, 1997). Accidents cause damage, injury, and/or death. Incidents are less serious, and can be considered ‘near misses’. However the lines between these two classes of event are blurred and inconsistent, varying between different agencies and settings (Page, 1997). The word ‘accident’ has been controversial in academic settings in the past due to a presumed implication that an accident is a random event, and implies a lack of human responsibility (Davis & Pless, 2001; Smith, Girasek, Baker, Bowman, Samuels & Gielen, 2012). Popular meanings, including those used by the media, frequently do not reflect these distinctions, and the term ‘accident’ is in common usage to describe adverse events in general, including those where responsibility is apportioned (Smith et al. 2012).

The true rate at which accidents occur in the adventure tourism sector is difficult to establish, due to both the varied definitions of adventure tourism and the variety of activities and legislation that adventure tourism falls under (Page, 1997; Bentley & Page, 2008). However a number of academic and government studies have been published to establish risk profiles and accident rates for various purposes (Page, 1997; Bentley & Page, 2008; Department of Labour, 2010; Mountain Safety Council, 2016). Through these studies a greater understanding of risk and safety in the sector has been achieved via the study of prior accidents and their consequences. The consequences of an accident on a business, activity or sector may be direct (in the form of shutdowns and forced closures), however a longer term impact may be felt on visitor numbers, and this is greatly affected by media coverage due to the important role that media coverage plays in forming a perception of risk in the minds of prospective tourists (Page, 1997; Walters et al., 2016). The modern tourist exists in a convergence of many types and genres of media, and may be influenced through popular perceptions and culture that has been indirectly formed or influenced by media, without even knowing it (Månsson, 2011). Thus the reporting of accidents has considerable importance to the perception of risks by tourists (King & Beeton, 2006).

Reporting of accidents in the news media varies in style across different settings, and has the potential to have considerable impact upon the sector through public pressure and the influence that reporting can have on the tourist decision-making process. Sensationalist reporting, wherein a crisis is exaggerated in the news media, has in particular been reported to have significant effects on tourism destinations and operators (Walters et al., 2016). Differences in the ways that similar accidents affecting different demographics have been reported in the New Zealand media have been noted previously (Davidson, 2008), however this has not been studied in detail.

The reporting of accidents can lead to public pressure on industry and government resulting in changes in regulation and oversight. In New Zealand this has happened at least twice: first with a series of high profile accidents in the 1990s leading to a report into accidents in the sector (Page, 1997), and a subsequent series of academic papers over approximately ten years (Bentley & Page, 2008). The second known case occurred in the late 2000s with the drowning of a river-boarder (and a number of other accidents) spurring a review of the adventure tourism and outdoor education sectors (Department of Labour, 2010), with subsequent changes to rules reported heavily in the media. As high-profile accidents gain their visibility largely through media coverage, it is thus important to examine the media portrayal of accidents. This has not been done in great detail, however.

Quantifying and managing risk in New Zealand's adventure tourism sector has been the objective of considerable published academic and government work in the past, culminating in a major review of the adventure tourism and outdoor education sector published in 2010 (Department of Labour, 2010). However little attention has been given to the media portrayal of accidents when they occur. A brief but broad overview of coverage in the 1990s formed part of a government report published in 1997 (Page, 1997), and coverage of specific mountaineering accidents was examined in greater detail a decade later (Davidson 2008). Other than these two studies, no literature has been found that examines the media portrayal of adventure tourism accidents in New Zealand. This gap in the research literature has not been addressed for a considerable period, and it is now time to work to close it. This study serves as an exploratory effort to begin this process.

Research objectives

At its heart, this study is an exploration to inform further work on this subject, and as such takes a wide scope. Broadly speaking, the objective of this study is to *determine how accidents in the New Zealand adventure tourism industry are reported in the New Zealand print media, and examine the implications for adventure tourism in New Zealand.*

To help direct this broad objective into a study possible under the constraints of time and resources, a number of research questions were developed:

1. What key themes, styles, and attributes (eg. Placement and prominence) are apparent in adventure tourism accident reporting in the New Zealand print media?
2. Are there recognisable differences between New Zealand print media outlets with regard to adventure tourism accident reporting practices?
3. How does current reporting of adventure tourism in New Zealand compare to the historical conclusions of Page (1997) and the wider international literature regarding the reporting of accidents, tourism crises, and death/injury events?
4. To what extent are general frameworks of news values (eg. those developed by Galtung & Ruge, 1965) useful when examining the narrower field of accident reporting in tourism?

In order to address these questions a mixed-methods approach was taken via the collection of newspaper articles related to adventure tourism accidents published in 16 domestic newspapers between January 1st 2010 and December 31st 2015. Both qualitative and quantitative data was extracted from these articles and subjected to analyses as described in Chapter 3.

Research contribution

This study set out to address major gaps in the research literature surrounding adventure tourism accidents. These accidents can have major impacts on individuals, operators, the tourism sector, and even society as a whole. Yet research in the past has largely focused on accidents and their direct impacts, not their wider effects and *why* their effects occur in the ways that they do.

The first exploratory study into accidents in New Zealand's adventure tourism sector briefly examined the news media and its role in reporting on accidents (Page, 1997). However this was only a small component of a larger work, intended to provide "an overview of media coverage and whether it was over-emphasising fatalities in pursuit of newsworthy reporting" (Page, 1997). Few conclusions could be drawn, and no similar study was undertaken until the present study. A single study examined media portrayal between different mountaineering accidents, suggesting that more remained to be examined than the initial exploratory work had suggested (Davidson, 2008). However research in New Zealand has focused heavily on the true risk profile of adventure tourism (Bentley & Page, 2008), not the manner in which they are described to the world.

By ignoring the matter of media portrayal, research has only established one half of a process that influences decisions by tourists (Walters et al., 2016), operators, and government (Department of Labour, 2010). Through extensive research, a picture has been built up of the risk profile of the adventure tourism sector in New Zealand, albeit one pre-dating the current regulatory environment (Buckley, 2009). However we do not know at all how this true risk profile is reflected in the news media, and thus what implications may be had for tourism operators, planners, and governments dealing with adventure tourism safety (and their responses to accidents). There are undoubtedly many areas of research that can be done, but the fundamental research is lacking from which to base future study.

This study is intended to create a foundation for future work examining the manner in which adventure tourism accidents (and indeed other accidents involving tourists) are reported by the media. It is exploratory in nature by necessity due to the lack of current research in the area. It is hoped that the conclusions that have been drawn through a first exploration of the media portrayal of adventure tourism accidents, together with the identification of early implications for the sector and possible lines of inquiry for future research, may lead to this gap in the knowledge base being filled, allowing better understanding of how accidents influence tourist behaviour, governmental responses, and changes in broader society through their interpretation by the news media.

Thesis structure

This thesis is structured around 6 chapters. Chapter 2 presents a review of the relevant academic literature, identifies key gaps in prior research, and provides the theoretical background for the study in detail. Chapter 3 describes and discusses the data collection process and the mixed-methods approach used for study, as well as a pilot study of magazines carried out early in the project that helped inform discussion later in the thesis. Chapter 4 presents the results of the research, consisting of both quantitative and qualitative data. Chapter 5 discusses the key findings of the study in the light of existing literature. Finally, chapter 6 provides a conclusion to the study, including key implications and opportunities for future research.

Literature Review

Introduction

To cover the significance of tourism accidents and their portrayal in the media, one has to first examine the wider context. This is especially important as very little research appears to have focused on this specific area. However, wider studies on the nature of risk, its role in society, and the way in which the media more generally covers events all have relevance to this study.

The effects of media portrayals of accidents are based largely on wider sociocultural patterns or phenomena that have been examined to varying degrees in the academic literature. For instance, starting in the 1980s a 'Risk society' has been described in the academic literature (Beck, 1992; Mythen, 2004). Furthermore, the social construct of 'risk' has become a major driver of legislation and human behaviour and provides a high-level background to this study. The perception of risk or a lack of safety can significantly influence tourist decision-making (Espiner, 2001). As a result, the media portrayal of an accident or disaster can have major consequences for a destination and/or operator, regardless of whether coverage is accurate. Research into tourism accidents in New Zealand has covered adventure tourism specifically, and this focus is retained in the current study with adventure tourism being defined based on prior work in this field. Prior work also informs the setting of the current study within the framework of a 'risk society'.

Only two prior studies appear to have been undertaken in New Zealand on the subject of media portrayal of accidents and other adverse events in adventure tourism (Page, 1997; Davidson, 2008) and it appears that no analogous works have been published internationally. These two prior studies consisted of a single chapter of a larger (and more widely-scoped) report (Page, 1997) and a more detailed study of only a small number of mountaineering accidents and the manner in which they were portrayed (Davidson, 2008). Thus while the current project is guided by prior studies and works, it is largely exploratory. The academic literature provides a firm foundation for this by starting at the highest-level themes that provide important context, before working down to more specific themes, including the scale of adventure tourism (and

associated difficulties in providing a definition), the relationship between tourism and the media, the role of the media in policy-making after accidents and disasters, the concept of newsworthiness, and prior studies into risk and accidents in the New Zealand adventure tourism sector.

Risk and Society

The concept of a 'risk society' originated in the work of Ulrich Beck in the 1980s and has become a major source of debate and discussion within academia since that time (Beck, 1992; Furedi, 1997; Mythen, 2004; Beck & Kewell, 2014; Gstaettner, Lee, & Rodger, 2018). While the role of risk in society is not the primary subject of this project, it serves as a useful backdrop to the more focused examination that documented here. The underlying concept is that, as a result of technological advancement and social changes over time, modern society in many western nations has become increasingly concerned with risk (Beck, 1992; Furedi, 1997; Mythen, 2004). This is supported by work examining news media that has found that certain types of accident (and deaths) are more likely to be reported than others (Frost, Frank & Maibach, 1997).

Risk is a nebulous term that is difficult to define precisely. As a concept, it is used widely across science and engineering, public policy, and the commerce and insurance sectors. Standard dictionary definitions often define risk in terms of “possibility of loss or injury” or “someone or something that creates or suggests a hazard”, as well as covering definitions for an insurance risk, or an investment risk (Merriam-Webster, 2016). In colloquial use this is generally noted to be true, however several complexities have been noted in scholarly treatments of the concept. What is a risk to one party may be an opportunity for another, and firm definitions can lose concrete meaning (Mythen, 2004; Gstaettner et al., 2018). Ultimately, this is because risk is not a concrete term in the first place: it is a social construct that has different meanings across time and cultures (Furedi, 1997; Gstaettner et al., 2018).

The concept of risk has been described repeatedly as taking on a pervasive role in modern western society since the 1980s (Beck, 1992; Furedi, 1997; Van Loon, 2002; Mythen, 2004). The 'avoidance' of risk is impossible, however its management has become a major field of its own, inside and outside of academia. The management of natural or manufactured hazards is used to mitigate the risk that something may happen that has a negative effect on an individual, group, business, location, nation, or suchlike. Management or manipulation of the media can be an

important part of mitigating a risk, and has been reported on extensively as part of the management of a more focused area of literature: the tourism crisis (Ritchie, 2009). However, the tourist's perception of risk is considered an essential part of adventure tourism and while risk itself is not a desired part of the experience, the 'thrill' of a physical adventure tourism activity is often tied to a similar phenomena (Buckley, 2006, 2009). While older literature on adventure tourism often focuses on the integral nature of risk to adventure tourism and describes 'risk seeking' behaviour (Morgan, 1998), tourists generally do not want to genuinely fear for their safety, but seek a deliberate triggering of the human body's response to danger that can be very pleasurable (Buckley, 2006; Swarbrooke et al, 2003; Gstaettner et al., 2018). This can be described as seeking a 'rush', a mixture of thrill and flow that often feels indescribable to the participant, but can be reliably triggered through adventure activities (Buckley, 2012). Thus risk presents a paradox: by controlling risk one can keep tourists (and providers) safe, but by reducing perceived risk one may also reduce the excitement of (certain) adventure tourism activities (Swarbrooke et al, 2003). Though tourists may want a rush rather than risk, the two are often closely linked in adventure tourism activities, requiring risk to be carefully managed (Buckley, 2012).

Another key aspect of 'risk' as described by Beck (1999) and others since, is that while the social construct of risk is influenced by past events (including accidents), risk is not 'real'. Rather, it is the potential for something to become real, a possibility for disaster actualised through human anticipation (Van Loon, 2002). This can be refined upon by what in tourism studies is often called 'perceived risk', as opposed to 'actual risk' (Espiner, 2001; Decrop, 2006; Gstaettner et al., 2018), although Beck (1992) argues that they are one and the same in many cases, being social constructs. Nevertheless, the consideration of the two elements as separate but related parts of a greater whole is widespread in the academic literature. While both forms of risk are social constructs, 'actual' risk is based on the real possibility of an event occurring. It is not altered by whether or not the risk has been identified, unless that identification (or lack thereof) has led to changes. Perceived risk is what a person (or persons) think that possibility is (Furedi, 1997).

Perception of the dangers of life is based on our own experiences, plus those we are told about or hear about through other channels. Perception of risk does not inherently alter the 'true risk', but is critical to controlling and reducing a risk: one cannot control what one does not see. As Beck notes, "The tangibility of need suppresses the *perception* of risks, but only the perception,

not their reality or their effects; risks denied grow especially quickly and well” (Beck, 1992, p.45 Original emphasis). Without effective monitoring of risks (and their visible consequences), or if the true risks of an endeavor are denied, they may grow rapidly and be considerably more difficult to manage later. This observation is tangential to the topic of this study, but is important background commentary. Several pieces of literature note a complex regulatory environment in the New Zealand adventure tourism sector in which risks were not being evaluated across the sector as a whole, or indeed assessed consistently between different parts of the sector (Page, 1997; Bentley & Page, 2008; Department of Labour, 2010). However for the purpose of tourist decision-making, it is this perceived risk that is key, informed as it is by the ‘true risk’, the learned ability to evaluate risk, and any relevant media coverage (Buckley, 2009).

Role of safety and risk in tourist decision-making

The processes by which tourists make their decisions have been studied widely over the past 30 or 40 years (Ross, 1998; Decrop, 2006; Smith & Espiner, 2007; Holme et al, 2017). These decisions include whether to travel at all, where to go, what to do, and how to go about doing it. Traditionally this has involved economic models, which while powerful have some notable weaknesses (Papatheodorou, 2001). Indeed most models have the issue that individual factors are hard if not impossible to isolate from the combined effects of all factors (Decrop, 2006). In the current study, the exact impact of each individual accident is not important, but establishing that there is likely to *be* an impact is still necessary. Fortunately, the effects of 'tourism crises' have been examined in detail in many studies previously (Baxter & Bowen, 2004; Glaesser, 2006; Ritchie, 2009; Balakrishnan, 2011; Parker & Steenkamp, 2012). Case studies in the literature include the September 11 terrorist attacks in the United States (Glaesser, 2006; Balakrishnan, 2011), the 2001 outbreak of foot and mouth disease in the United Kingdom (Baxter & Bowen, 2004), and the 2010/11 Canterbury Earthquakes in New Zealand (Parker & Steenkamp, 2012; Potter et al., 2015).

While the exact impacts of a crisis vary according to its specific circumstances and severity, all crises share certain elements. A crisis is an undesired and extraordinary event or process, occurring rapidly and demanding immediate decisions and countermeasures by involved parties in order to arrest negative effects, and effect a recovery (Glaesser, 2006). While on a far smaller scale than the grand crises that frequent the literature that are triggered by terrorism, epidemic

or natural disaster, accidents and safety scares can and do trigger crisis situations for destinations, people and places involved (Page, 1997; Glaesser, 2006).

Successful management of a tourism crises frequently involves controlling or influencing media messages. Significant research on both tourism crises and tourist decision-making in general has also been conducted, and supports the conclusion that accidents and safety are important factors in tourist decision-making (Ritchie, 2009). In a survey of tourists from the UK and USA conducted in the 1990s it was determined that these tourists made safety a key factor in their selection of destinations, and that this was often done on the basis of news media (Bovet, 1994). Media reports of poor safety can contribute to the overall stereotype of a destination, especially as tourists usually do not exhaustively research their destinations to get all the facts (Decrop, 2006). Thus, media coverage has the potential to severely damage (or enhance) the performance of a destination, whether or not that coverage is accurate. Sensationalist coverage of natural disasters has been noted as impacting on visitor numbers to an area in the past (Walters et al., 2016).

In the late 1990s and early 2000s, travel agents were one of the most important influencing factors in the travel decision-making process, according to a study examining how New Zealand travel agents gave advice regarding 'risky' destinations (Lovelock, 2003). This study found that at that time the most common sources of information for travel agents on safety and related issues were newspapers and television news/documentaries (Lovelock, 2003). Travel magazines were also highly used, with travel advisories and foreign embassies being well down the list of sources (Lovelock, 2003). Obviously, New Zealand travel agents are not frequently going to be used by prospective international travellers to book international visitors into New Zealand. However this pattern of using the informal media to reinforce or diffuse any existing perceptions about safety by clients is important. While travel agents are perhaps not as important as they once were, they still play an important role in destination and activity selection. In Lovelock's study, focusing heavily on *political* risks to personal safety (eg. coups, possibility of armed conflict/nuclear war), most responding travel agents (85.7%) had at some stage given advice on an 'unsafe' destination. However they did not give such advice very often, with most giving such advice either 'once or twice a month' or 'once or twice a year'. The focus on political risk and armed conflict suggests that in the context of this study, agents did not consider the possible dangers of activities when classifying destinations as "unsafe" and giving advice based on that

classification (Lovelock, 2003). However, the nations generally regarded as “risky” had appeared in news media that showcased risks within these potential destinations in the previous year. Despite a perhaps simplistic approach to classifying a destination as ‘risky’, Lovelock’s study has interesting conclusions relevant to this study. While media coverage was considered a major information source for travel agents, the perceived risk of destinations (at least with regards to health, security and terrorism) did not seem to influence agent selling behaviour (Lovelock, 2003). This has mixed implications for the impact of negative conditions on the attractiveness of destinations (or at least the sale practices regarding them). It is possible that the low number of possible tourists enquiring about ‘unsafe’ destinations is itself a powerful indicator of how safety (and the media portrayal of safety) impacts a destination: while agents did not change their behaviour when covering a ‘risky’ destination (an oddity which remains unexplained, though may simply be a matter of professionalism), there were far fewer clients interested in travelling to these places in the first instance.

This is itself entirely logical. Tourists are thinking, feeling people, and will change their behaviour based on perceived risks (Holme et al. 2017). While deliberate risk-taking is a known phenomena in tourism (Morgan, 1998), even in adventure tourism it is largely the “rush” or “thrill” that is desired and risk is simply a means to an end if not an undesirable element (Buckley, 2012). The media is but one of many sources of information by which travellers form their decisions (Decrop, 2006). Indeed the media does not act without a source of information: something must happen for information to be disseminated to the prospective tourist. This can be advertising, or it may be news of events. Events which, in their negative form, include accidents and incidents involving tourists and tourism.

Accidents and Incidents

Adverse events that occur during tourism activities may be separated into “accidents” and “incidents” (sometimes also referred to as “occurrences”) (Page, 1997). “Accident” generally refers to an incident in which a person suffered significant injury or death or significant property loss occurred, while “incident” or “occurrence” usually refers to an event in which the *potential* for such damages to occur was present, but was avoided in some manner (Page, 1997).

However, different agencies define these terms very differently for different sectors of the New Zealand economy (Page, 1997). Many injuries occur in minor incidents, and while these are of

lesser impact they do affect the persons involved (MSC, 2016). The current study takes less rigid approach to defining accidents, largely merging the two categories together except in very obvious cases.

Risk, and its management, plays a vital role in determining when accidents occur, how they occur, and in what form they occur. Regardless of the level of risk involved in an activity, over a long enough period of time any destination or operator will experience accidents or incidents (Faulkner, 2001). The *elimination* of risk is after all impossible. However a higher level of risk will generally result in a higher number of accidents, and as such it is reasonable to infer that a high number of accidents may be indicative of high levels of risk (or poor management thereof). As such, while risk has been the focus of many prior studies of the adventure tourism sector in New Zealand and elsewhere (Page et al., 2005; Eitzinger & Wiedemann, 2007; Bentley & Page, 2008), examining the accidents themselves is also of importance.

The use of the word “accident” itself has been controversial in academic settings for some time over the possible implication of unpredictability that might be given through the use of the term (Davis & Pless, 2001; Smith et al. 2012). This suggestion that the mere use of the word ‘accident’ implies an unpredictable event was taken seriously enough for multiple agencies and academic journals, particularly in the medical sciences, to attempt to restrict usage in favour of more specific labels for individual events (for example “car crash” rather than “car accident”) (Davis & Pless, 2001). The British Medical Journal, a well-respected publication that chose to take the matter seriously, published several articles over the course of this debate (Davis & Pless, 2001; Smith et al, 2012). More recent studies support the view that the informal use of the word does not have this implication of unpredictability and that usage within academic settings is not inherently problematic (Smith et al. 2012).

For reasons of practicality, the definition of 'accident' for the purpose of this study will at first be limited to *what the sources examined for this research refer to as accidents*. Indeed as this research relies on the news media for its data, an important objective was to determine what accidents are reported. This favoured an informal or ‘popular’ definition over the more precise terminology used by academic and governmental sources. This is important as while this thesis seeks to reach the standards required of an academic work, it is ultimately an examination of media that does not prescribe to such rigid definitions.

However, it is worth returning to the discourse around the word 'accident' before moving on to other matters. Within the various agencies and authorities of the New Zealand Government, definitions for this term vary significantly from agency to agency, although most government agencies (eg. the Civil Aviation Authority, Maritime New Zealand) have a two-tiered system with "incidents" or "occurrences" covering what the layperson might refer to as minor accidents or 'near misses', with the term 'accident' restricted for more serious events involving injury, significant property damage or death. The reasoning behind this is complicated, however, it is important to note that news media is highly unlikely to have such a rigid set of criteria for what it labels as "accidents", preferring instead the colloquial use. This also has implications when considering how the word is used in academic writing. As is also the case when referring to "tourism" and "tourists", the popular definition of "accident" as used by the general public and news media will be different and more generalised than academic or governmental definitions (Leiper, 2001). The definitions used by agencies are intended for specific purposes, and these are unlikely to be taken into account by media reporting.

Given that this study focuses on media outside of academia it is inevitable that the popular definition of 'accident' will predominate (i.e. a definition that does not inherently absolve those involved of responsibility). The closest existing written form of this would most likely be a descriptive dictionary definition (i.e. A definition written based on current usage). Ultimately however, a sufficiently detailed popular definition of 'accident' for the purpose of this study would require significant knowledge of the type of events covered by the New Zealand print media, which does not presently exist.

Adventure tourism in New Zealand

Adventure tourism forms a major part of the New Zealand tourism sector. In the 1992-1993 period, 10 per cent of all international visitors arriving in New Zealand went on to undertake some form of adventure tourism activity (International Visitor Survey, 1992-1993. New Zealand Tourism Board, 1993, as cited in Bentley & Page, 2001, p. 707). In 2008 this proportion had reached 38% (Department of Labour, 2010), and by 2012 roughly half of all international visitors were undertaking at least one adventure activity during their stay and spending a total of NZ\$1.6 billion during their collective time in New Zealand (Tourism New Zealand, 2013). The 2010 review of safety and risk management in the adventure tourism and outdoor recreation

sectors noted that tourism directly and indirectly contributed some NZ\$15.0 billion (or 9.1%) to New Zealand's total Gross Domestic Product (excluding GST and import duties) (Department of Labour, 2010). This figure indicates the considerable importance of tourism to New Zealand at the beginning of the period examined by this study. This has continued to the present day.

At the time of this study's completion in 2019 the tourism sector as a whole directly employed just over 216,000 people according to the Tourism Satellite Account, accounting for some 8% of overall employment in New Zealand (Stats NZ, 2018). International arrivals had climbed to 3.86M per year, with total expenditure for all international visitors reaching \$11.23B in the year ending March 2019 (Ministry of Business, Innovation & Employment, 2019). Statistics obtained for specific categories (such as bungy jumping, tramping, and extreme rides such as luge) indicate that the proportion of visitors undertaking certain prominent activities differed in years after 2012 (for example, Tramping participation declined from 13.3% to 5.5% between the YE December 2012 and YE December 2018 reports). However direct comparisons of overall adventure tourism participation after 2012 was impossible to conduct as part of this literature review due to the undocumented methods used to obtain the earlier figures and the limitations of the data published by Stats NZ. Despite the age of the most recent overall statistics, it is clear that adventure tourism is of huge importance to the New Zealand tourism sector, and by extension the wider New Zealand economy.

Despite this significance, adventure tourism has largely defied consistent definition even within industry and academic publications in New Zealand. This is not overly surprising, however, given the myriad of ways in which defining adventure tourism can be approached.

Adventure tourism is first and foremost a social construct, as is the idea of 'tourism' in general (Leiper, 2001; Buckley, 2006). It is a phenomenon created by human behaviour and perception, rather than a concrete thing in and of itself. As such, there are many ways to consider adventure tourism.

Definitions of adventure tourism can be approached from both a supply-side and demand-side perspective. Demand-side approaches have been taken by several researchers looking at motivation, expectation and experiences (Morgan, 1998; Swarbrooke et al, 2003; Buckley, 2012, Williams & Balaz, 2013). Adventure tourists seek thrills and, logically, adventure. Yet these themselves are difficult to define. The adrenaline rush of a close call or a 'risky' activity is

desirable, yet actual physical danger is not (Buckley, 2006, 2012; Gstaettner et al., 2018). While this 'rush' is often linked to risk, it is a separate phenomenon that participants frequently find 'indescribable' (Buckley, 2012). Yet while physical adventure is certainly the predominant motivation that is examined by the literature, tourism for intellectual, emotional and/or spiritual adventure is also a valid form of adventure tourism, albeit a smaller one than the more traditional physical adventure (Swarbrooke et al, 2003). Motivation of tourists involved in adventure tourism is a well-studied area, largely due to the obvious commercial and management advantages of increased knowledge (Swarbrooke et al, 2003; Buckley, 2006, 2009; Holme et al, 2017). However to focus on motivations is beside the point of this study, where a definition of 'adventure tourism' is used as a focusing tool, to restrain the tide of news articles to a stream that can be measured and analysed. This study must therefore turn to the more common definition based on the activities undertaken, rather than those undertaking. These supply-side definitions have their own limitations but are widely used in academic, business, and government projects.

It is worth acknowledging that not all adventure tourism involves physical adventure (Swarbrooke et al, 2003). However for the purposes of this study, only physical adventure tourism will be examined. This lends itself well to the supply-side approach of defining the phenomenon, as prior studies and industry-analysis of the sector has provided a fairly complete list of the major adventure tourism activities in New Zealand. These can be divided into industry, academic, and governmental definitions, which will be discussed in order. Tourism New Zealand (TNZ), an industry body that promotes New Zealand tourism internationally, defines adventure tourism by means of a list of activities, splitting the sector between 'adventure' and 'extreme adventure' activities (Tourism New Zealand, 2013), as shown in Table 2.1.

Table 2.1 Adventure and Extreme Adventure Activities (from Tourism New Zealand, 2013)

Adventure Activities	Extreme Adventure Activities
Abseiling	Abseiling
Balloonning	Bungy Jumping
Canoeing	Canoeing
Caving	Caving
Extreme Rides	Extreme Rides
Fishing	Glacier Walking
Glacier Walk	Heliboarding/Skiing
Jet-boating	Jet-boating
Kayaking	Kayaking
Luge	Luge
Mountain biking	Mountain biking
Mountain climbing	Mountain climbing
Parachuting	Parachuting
Paraponting	Paraponting
Blackwater rafting	Blackwater rafting
Whitewater rafting	Whitewater rafting
Sailing	Scuba-diving/Snorkelling
Scuba-diving/snorkelling	Snowboarding
Skiing	Rock climbing
Snowboarding	Surfing
Rock climbing	Water skiing
Surfing	4WD Sports
Water skiing	

As is immediately apparent, there is a significant overlap between these two categories with many activities (for example, SCUBA diving and snorkelling) being listed in both categories. This appears to be partly due to each list being generated with the aid of a different consultant (TIA for the adventure tourism list, and Support Adventure for the 'extreme adventure' list). While there is definite merit in differentiating between activities based on their 'extreme' nature (or, indeed, their perceived risk), there is significant difficulty in doing so. Indeed a footnote included in the Tourism New Zealand document defining adventure tourism by activity type notes that it

is neither a formal definition nor an exhaustive list. Indeed, the TNZ report uses a very loose definition for adventure tourists, with participation in *any* activity rendering a tourist an “adventure tourist”. This is largely reasonable, but does have the effect of inflating participation figures. This may be intentional: the purpose of this report, and the definitions and research that went into it, was to allow for the creation of basic statistics about participation in adventure activities with a view to marketing the sector more effectively.

However, there is distinct merit in part of the approach used by this industry definition. Indeed, most definitions used for study of the New Zealand adventure tourism industry use a list of activities based on the philosophical definitions of ‘adventure’ and adventure tourism. A rigid approach based purely on a list of activities may exclude activities that do not meet the criteria of a particular list resulting in those activities not being considered when they should be. However, such an approach is convenient to use and allows for a high level of compatibility with the existing tourism literature. It is a pragmatic approach, and one that is generally considered the most practical solution to a difficult problem (Swarbrooke et al. 2003; Buckley, 2006).

In academia a similar approach has been taken to create similar lists of activities that constitute “adventure tourism” for particular purposes. This approach will be summarised through the activities used by the review of a decades-worth of accidents by Bentley & Page (2008). This list of activities covers the majority of adventure tourism in New Zealand, and is itself a modified and updated version of the list used in Page (1997), a report commissioned by the New Zealand Government that formed the basis of much of the academic work on adventure tourism accidents and safety subsequently carried out in New Zealand. Intermediary lists between these start and end points have been used for virtually every published study between these periods that examined risk and safety in the adventure tourism sector of New Zealand (Page, 1997; Bentley, Page & Laird, 2000, 2001; Callander & Page, 2002; Page, Bentley & Walker, 2005; Bentley, Page & Macky, 2007; Bentley & Page, 2001, 2008), and the ultimate version of this definition (Table 2.2) serves as the best representative of the academic definitions used previously in studies of adventure tourism safety in New Zealand. As such it is an invaluable tool for the purposes of this study.

Table 2.2 Adventure tourism activities (from Bentley & Page, 2008)

Sea-kayaking	Eco-tourism	Mountain biking
White-water kayaking	Hot-air-ballooning	Quad-biking/4WD
White-water rafting	Parasailing	Horse riding
Black-water (cave) rafting	Hang-gliding	Rock-climbing
Jet-boating	Scenic flights	Snow-sports
Wake-boarding	Skydiving/parachuting	Abseiling
Jet-skiing	Mountaineering	Bungee-jumping
Surfing	Tramping	Canyoning/caving

While the purpose of using a list of activities is to restrict the subject-matter to a workable (and logical) scope, activities may have become available since 2008 that are not included. Bentley & Page's list of activities, while similar to that generated by Tourism New Zealand, excludes a number of activities that may be considered edge-cases (eg. Fishing). However, it also *includes* activities such as scenic flights, horse riding, and ecotourism which do *not* appear in the Tourism New Zealand list. While this is of use to cut back on the volume of data considered in an academic project, using this definition (or indeed the Tourism New Zealand one) as a prescriptive definition would likely cut out many perfectly valid adventure tourism activities, potentially allowing important information to slip through unnoticed.

Finally, lists of activities have been compiled for government purposes. The most recent and most relevant to this study is that used by the review of adventure tourism and outdoor recreation conducted by the Department of Labour, released in 2010 and mentioned frequently in the early years of the current study's sample, as shown in Table 2.3.

Table 2.3 List of activities covered by the governmental review of safety in the outdoor recreation and adventure tourism sector (from Department of Labour, 2010)

Land-based activities	Water-based activities
1. Abseiling	27. Diving (from vessels <6m/within 5Nm from coast)
2. Adventure-based learning	28. Diving (from vessels >6m/>5Nm from coast)
3. Bungy jumping	29. Events*
4. Canyoning	30. Jet boating
5. Caving	31. Marine Mammal swimming
6. Cycle Touring	32. Rafting (white water)
7. Events*	33. River sledging/boarding
8. Glacier Walking	34. Sailing
9. Globe riding (plastic spheres)	35. Sea kayaking
10. Go-karting	36. Snorkelling
11. Horse trekking	37. Surfing
12. Hunting	38. Swift water kayaking / canoeing
13. Indoor rock climbing	39. Water skiing
14. Infrastructure attractions (extreme rides not covered by other legislation)	
15. Infrastructure attractions (extreme rides covered by other legislation)	Air-based activities
16. Land based fishing	40. Hot air ballooning
17. Luge riding	41. Microlight passenger flights
18. Motorcycle touring (on road)	42. Parasailing
19. Mountain biking	43. Tandem hang gliding and para gliding
20. Mountaineering	44. Tandem parachuting
21. Quad bike touring	
22. Rock Climbing	
23. Sand boarding	*A footnote on the original table indicates that both land and water-based events 'may include multiple activities or a single type of activity' (Department of Labour, 2010)
24. Ski fields (activities on)	
25. Ski touring	
26. Walking/tramping	

While considerably longer than the lists of activities used in the previous two definitions, this list of activities still does not fully encompass the complexity of the adventure tourism sector, and again differs significantly in places from the previous lists. In this case the reason for any

discrepancies is more clearly apparent than it is in the other lists (where omissions are largely unexplained), and is largely due to the purpose for which this definition was created.

The list of activities used by the Department of Labour differs in one critical fashion from those used by Bentley & Page (2008) and by Tourism New Zealand (2013): It was created in response to gaps in policy for the specific purpose of finding and investigating those gaps, and was additionally limited by specific legislation that already existed at the time of the review of adventure tourism. Thus while a very wide set of activities was desirable (and achieved), certain activities had to be removed from consideration or added to meet the specific targets of the review. The most notable example of this is the complete omission of scenic flights and similar activities from the list of activities covered by the review. This is because such flights are categorised as *air transportation* from a legislative perspective and as such were both out of scope for the review and already covered by existing legislation (Department of Labour, 2010). The review also included adventure-based learning and related activities as these had been the focus of scrutiny following several previous incidents.

Apart from these major differences, it is a list largely in the spirit of earlier academic work, but with different specific examples. Notably, it features more individual water sports such as sailing, snorkelling and surfing. Some activities, such as SCUBA diving or shark-cage diving, are omitted from both lists for unknown reasons. By comparing these definitions, it can be seen clearly that the same activities usually appear on supply-side definitions such as these, but reliance on any single definition is likely to omit some form of activity for various reasons.

Ultimately, some degree of conflict between academic and governmental definitions of adventure tourism activities and those activities considered as such by the news media is to be expected, and judgement is necessary when considering which activities are and are not covered. For the purposes of this study, both industry, academic and governmental activity lists were used to inform the selection of candidate articles, however their lists of activities were considered demonstrative of adventure tourism activities, rather than being the only activities that would be considered. This resulted in several 'edge-case' accidents entering the study, involving activities which lie on the boundaries of what can be considered adventure tourism. Ultimately there is no perfect definition of 'adventure tourism', even when simplifying a complicated social construct to a list of activities, with each definition in the literature being developed at different times by different groups and individuals for different purposes, and

including different forms of activities as a result. This study ultimately examines the popular media, and as such must use a nebulous 'popular definition' of adventure and adventure tourism derived from these multiple sources and the examined articles themselves.

Tourism accidents in New Zealand

Tourism and recreation accidents in New Zealand are nothing new. As early as 1903 the newspapers eagerly reported the inquest into a group of tourists and their guide killed by the eruption of the Waimangu Geyser (Hunt, 2014). More recent historical adventure tourism accidents which retained their interest enough to appear in articles reviewed for this study include the disappearance of a scenic flight en-route to Milford Sound in 1962, and the crash of Air New Zealand Flight 901 at Mt Erebus in Antarctica in 1979. As well as these major events, newspapers have reported on accidents as a matter of local interest. However the management of the health and safety in these settings became a matter of extreme interest following the Cave Creek disaster of 1995, when 14 people were killed in the collapse of an improperly-constructed viewing platform on the South Island's West Coast (Espiner, 2001). Following this tragedy, attention was drawn to several series of accidents in the adventure tourism sector, with the British magazine *Which* naming New Zealand as one of the most dangerous destinations in the world for adventure tourism activities following a number of well-publicised accidents and deaths (Page, 1997).

Despite this reported perception of danger, it has been apparent for many years that the actual rate of injury among tourists undertaking adventure tourism activities is very low, and when injuries do occur they tend to be rather minor: trips, slips and falls rather than those more serious events that attract the greatest media attention (Bentley et al., 2000; MSC, 2016). Indeed while the proportion of accidents that can be used to generate statistics is extremely limited due to the multitude of involved agencies and the data protection required by the Privacy Act, there is a reasonable understanding of the overall 'reality' of tourism accidents in New Zealand (Buckley, 2006). This is perhaps surprising, as several studies published in the course of this picture being built up have noted an extremely fragmentary reporting and investigatory regime in New Zealand (Page, 1997; Bentley & Page, 2001, 2008). Despite a relatively clear picture existing by the late 2000s only certain sectors such as jet-boating and scenic aviation had attracted additional regulation in response to incidents, largely in the late

1990s and early 2000s (Department of Labour, 2010). It was only in the 2010s that governmental attention and changes to regulation for the entire sector began to occur as a result of further accidents creating a pressure to act. This new attention from central government began with the Department of Labour's review of the adventure tourism sector released in 2010 (Department of Labour, 2010). This review was spurred by a request in 2009 by the then-Prime Minister and Minister of Tourism, John Key, to the department. The letter requesting a review expressed concern over "a number of incidents in the adventure and outdoor commercial sectors, including the tragic death of young British backpacker Emily Jordan" (Department of Labour, 2010, p. 12). The review noted several areas for improvement in the management of risk in the sector, and spurred changes to legislation.

As there is no single agency that investigates or reports on tourism accidents in New Zealand, prior studies have used information from a variety of sources: media reports, hospital admissions information, coroner's reports, ACC (Accident Compensation Corporation) claims, accident and incident reports from government agencies and surveys of tourism operators (Smith & Espiner, 2007; Bentley & Page, 2008). Together, these separate sources have built up a picture of the way that accidents occur in New Zealand's tourism industry, and key patterns that have emerged in the 1990s and 2000s. While derived from incomplete sources, the overall impression of what level of accidents occur in New Zealand adventure tourism is one of the most comprehensive created worldwide at this time (Buckley, 2009).

More recently, the Mountain Safety Council (MSC) released a report into "outdoor recreational incidents" in New Zealand (MSC, 2016). This report, using data supplied by partner agencies, examined five outdoor recreation activities to explore key questions around how, when and where outdoor recreationists become involved in incidents. These activities were tramping (defined as any walk where the intention is to be more than one hour away from the nearest road), mountaineering (defined as technical climbing in alpine areas, usually requiring technical equipment than would be needed for tramping), hunting (defined as recreational hunting of any game, excluding fishing and trapping), mountain biking (limited to mountain biking in remote locations on tracks either built specifically for mountain biking or which are also used for tramping), and trail running (running on tracks which are also used for tramping or day-walks) (MSC, 2016).

The MSC reported an annual average of 5,908 injuries, 540 people becoming involved in search and rescue (SAR) call-outs, and 13 deaths across the five activities examined. Just over half (51%) of fatalities were caused by a fall, with the three next-most-common forms of death being firearms incidents and river crossings (14% each), and hypothermia (7%) (MSC, 2016). These findings corroborate earlier examinations of hospital admission records in New Zealand (Bentley, Meyer, Page & Chalmers, 2001), as well as examination of ACC data (Bentley & Page, 2001). However, detailed statistics were not reported for the cause of injuries, suggesting that the problems noted in earlier works (eg. Bentley & Page, 2008) around finding information regarding injuries continued to be apparent at this point in time. The report noted that 78% of injuries were soft-tissue injuries such as strains, sprains and bruises. In addition, most injuries (65%) occurred somewhere on the leg. This supports the conclusion in the literature that the majority of accidents (at least in this subset of activities) were of a minor nature (though still potentially quite dangerous in some circumstances) (Page, 1997; Heggie, 2005). While the MSC study is not entirely directly comparable to other research into adventure tourism (due to the limited set of activities), it provides the most recent detailed study into injuries and injury rates in the outdoor adventure sector in New Zealand, and provides a valuable tool for discussion in Chapter 5 of this thesis.

These previous studies cover one half of any examination into the reporting of adventure tourism accidents: what has actually happened. However, since the original comparison in Page (1997) and the more focused research by Davidson (2008), no study appears to have looked at the other half of the equation: what is said to be happening, and how it is said.

As a documented example of a potential mismatch in reality versus portrayal, between 1973 and 1993 over 50,000 visitors rafted on the Shotover River, with only two drownings occurring. Yet the occurrence of two rafting drownings in the years 1995-1996 resulted in significant media coverage and speculation about safety in the industry (Otago Daily Times, 22nd February 1994, as cited in Page, 1997, p. 4). While limited analysis has been done on news media in the past and has been noted in academic works as having been conducted, it has generally been conducted by journalists, rather than academics, in the form of newspaper or magazine articles examining portrayals (Page, 1997; Davidson, 2008). Thus while it is clear that media coverage does tend towards covering only the more major accidents that occur during operations, it is not clear exactly how this is done, and what recurring factors might cause an accident or incident to be of

greater interest to news media. Limited research suggests that general frameworks of 'news values' are applicable to this area (Davidson, 2008). These frameworks, particularly those developed by Galtung & Ruge (1965) are widely used for journalism studies, but are imperfect and are designed for general use (Harcup & O'Neil, 2016), and thus may have problems when examining a specific area of journalism such as accident reporting. Considering that minor accidents are generally both more frequent than major events and of far greater importance to tourism management on a day-to-day basis (Page, 1997), this lack of clarity is problematic. Use of accident analyses in the literature (eg. MSC, 2016) and literature on known patterns in death reporting in the news media (Frost et al., 1997) presents an opportunity to examine this problem further in Chapter 5 based on the findings of this study.

The 2010 Adventure Tourism Review

As mentioned previously, a review of the 'adventure and outdoor commercial sectors' was begun in 2009 and published in 2010 by the New Zealand Department of Labour. This report examined 44 different activity types identified as being relevant, as shown previously. The final report of the review identified four key points:

- That there did not appear to be a fundamental problem in the sector's ability to develop appropriate safety systems
- That gaps in the safety management framework of the sector did, however, 'allow business to operate at different standards than those generally accepted'.
- That while these gaps remained, there was insufficient assurance that preventable accidents would not occur.
- Finally, that this situation could result in harm to individuals and their families and damage to New Zealand's reputation as an international visitor destination.

(Department of Labour, 2010, p. 17-18)

These findings are surprising for their similarity to the conclusions of earlier studies on risk in the New Zealand adventure tourism sector. At least as early as 1997 concerns existed over the fragmentary nature of legislation covering the sector (Page, 1997). Much like the review, earlier studies did not express concern over the sector's safety at a fundamental level, only at the ways

in which cases could slip through the cracks in the regulatory and monitoring environment (Page, 1997; Bentley & Page 2001; 2008). While the review was unique for being a wide-ranging and influential *government* report, it was by no means the first document to raise these general points, though it did so in far greater detail than earlier studies (which were predominantly concerned with the risk levels, not the legislative environment).

The Adventure Tourism Review has had significant impacts on adventure recreation and tourism in New Zealand, sparking mandatory registration for providers of commercial activities. However, the review itself encountered difficulties with data collection due to the highly fragmentary and incomplete nature of accident records, noting that “due to the limited centrally-held data held by the Department of Labour on the cause and outcomes of serious harm accidents, the working group was not able to conduct a review of serious harm accidents to determine lessons that might be learnt” (Department of Labour, 2010, p. 75). Despite this, the Review tallies 39 reported fatalities and 382 reported ‘workplace serious harm injuries’ in the in-scope activities between 1st July 2004 and 30th June, 2009. The review in general is an additional overview of the challenges of safety in this sector, although it must be noted that the review limits itself to commercial activities and thus does not cover self-guided activities which may also fall under the label of ‘adventure tourism’ or recreation. One difficulty or challenge that does present itself is that the final report of this review not only constitutes an important reference document for the current study, but a primary source for a significant number of articles in the study period, particularly in 2010 when the report was released. Of note is that while the review itself only briefly credited the accidents that lead to the establishment of the review process, media coverage of the processes behind the review heavily detailed the specific accidents that appeared to be credited with catalysing the inquiry. This may provide some explanation as to why changes occurred following the release of this review, and not when the same conclusions were arrived at by other publications. This is explored further in Chapter 5.

Tourism and the Media

As covered previously, safety and media have a critical role in the tourist decision-making process. However, the wider effects of media coverage on the tourism sector have been a subject of research for many decades. Research has previously examined the worlds of written

media (such as news reporting and literature), visual media (such as art and advertising), aural media (such as music), and the combined realm of audio-visual media (such as films and television) (Beeton, Croy, & Frost, 2006). Many forms and genres of media converge to create an impression of a place or activity, which has a significant effect on the behaviour of potential tourists (Månsson, 2011). Negative portrayals of events at a destination have the potential to have major significant effects on future tourism (Page, 1997; Walters et al., 2016), and even scandals in related industries can negatively impact tourism (Cavicchi & Santini, 2011). Conversely, positive portrayals of destinations in the media can provide a significant boost to tourism, even when based in fictional media (Månsson, 2011; Frost & Laing, 2014). Tourism itself has become a mass-market phenomena alongside the news media, and criticism of both 'mass-tourism' and 'mass-media' has followed (Beeton et al., 2006). However even criticism of tourism and the tourist has been used to market tourism experiences, appealing to 'travellers' and 'the anti-tourist' with the promise of authentic experiences away from the crowds of mass tourists, even when advertising similar, if not the same, experiences (McWha, Frost, Laing, & Best, 2016). Media presentation of a destination has fundamental impacts on what a tourist expects when they arrive at a destination in terms of sights, sounds, safety, and infrastructure (King & Beeton, 2006; Moyle & Croy, 2009), and can vary as the same event is reported in different regions (Frew, 2009).

The interaction between tourism and the media is not simple: the blending and subversion of genres and narratives creates considerable complexity in examining the impacts on tourism behaviour (Månsson, 2011). The convergence of media helps to create popular culture, influencing behaviour even when individuals are not aware of it (Månsson, 2011), and as such effects of media may not be direct, or easy to trace.

In the case of adventure tourism, the importance of the media has been noted previously by Page (1997) and Davidson (2008) in setting the scene for their studies. Mass media portrayals have been found to influence the perception of risk of young people, though this appeared to encourage future participation rather than discourage it (King & Beeton, 2006). This may be due to the correlation (or conflation) of risk with the concept of 'rush' as defined by Buckley (2012).

As well as influencing tourists, the media can have effects on policy-making and the practices of industry. This becomes of considerable importance to this study when the media responses to accidents are considered, as well as the effects on policy that these responses can help to cause.

The role of media in policy-making after accidents and disasters

Though often maligned as potentially misleading or sensationalised, media coverage of accidents and disasters is relied upon heavily by the public (Bonham, Edmonds & Mak, 2006; Walters et al., 2016). In wider disasters it provides information on what one should do, while in smaller cases media coverage is essential for knowledge of the accident to be gained in the first place (Garner & Huff, 1997). The media, in theory, provide an unbiased view on a situation. In practice of course, journalists report what they are able to discover about an incident, which is often coloured by press statements by involved parties and regulatory agencies. This has implications for accuracy in some cases, as there is an argument that governments have an inherent interest in avoiding scrutiny of the risks involved in a sector such as adventure recreation/tourism. Ulrich Beck puts it as such:

“...The margins of scientific research become narrower and narrower as the threatening potential increases. To admit today that one had been mistaken in setting the acceptable values for the safety of pesticides – which actually would be a normal case in science – amounts to the unleashing of a political (or economic) catastrophe, and must be prevented for that reason alone” (Beck, 1992. p. 54. Original emphasis)

While Beck was predominantly concerned with the environmental impacts of an industrialised society, his words apply equally to the management of health and safety in adventure tourism and recreation sector. There is significant incentive to avoid ‘rocking the boat’ and endangering a sector that is integral to the New Zealand economy at this point in time. In theory, media outlets avoid this problem by not having a direct stake in the matter, and through being about to undertake investigative journalism or present opposing viewpoints. However the manner in which media influences policymaking is still a subject of debate in academia.

Knowledge of a relationship between public opinion and policy outcomes is not new, having been established as a correlation by studies in the 1970s and 80s, and as a causal relationship in the early 1990s (Shanahan, McBeth & Hathaway, 2011). Much of the research into the power

and influence of the media has focused on war and conflict, with debate over media acted as a force of change, or as a means of 'manufacturing consent' for the actions of elites (Robinson, 2001). However the ability of media to alter public opinion is well established at this point (it is the very basis of the concept of advertising, after all). It is such a powerful effect that "[T]he media may shape opinions even without telling their audiences what to believe or think" (Graber, 1997., as cited in Shanahan et al, 2011, p. 378). As well as having implications for the use of "narrative" and "factual" classifications as discussed elsewhere in this chapter (and in greater detail in chapter 5), this indicates a powerful force on politics in a democratic society: when politicians must to some degree act according to the will of the general public, the opinions of said public will affect policy. This is however unreliable. In the study of western interventions in humanitarian crises it has proven difficult to establish why media coverage has affected some interventions, but not others (Robinson, 2001). Nevertheless, while media coverage is affected by numerous confounding variables, it has been repeatedly and reliably established to have an effect on policy-making, both in New Zealand and internationally (Phelan, Rupar & Hirst, 2012; Shanahan et al. 2011).

The *direct* importance of the media in policymaking has several potential explanations in the literature. One argument is that political, personal and financial relationships between those who own media outlets or 'empires' and the business and political elite give those media controllers (and their publications) direct influence (Phelan et al., 2012). This is challenging to examine from an academic perspective, particularly in New Zealand, but is of considerable interest. Details of ownership of media companies can be difficult to come by, and are largely not tracked in convenient sources. Magazine ownership is more diverse than that of newspapers, relatively speaking, but is still rather difficult to track beyond an initial company. However the limited number of owners of large newspapers has caused enough concern over the integrity of the sector and possible implications to the public that a recent proposed merger between NZME and Fairfax was rejected by the New Zealand Commerce Commission for multiple reasons including a concern for the potential loss of 'quality' and the risks of losing plurality in the news media (Smith, 2017; Commerce Commission, 2017). Indeed in rejecting the proposed merger the Commission noted:

“Plurality ensures that there is a diversity of viewpoints available and consumed across and within media enterprises. Plurality helps safeguard against concentrating influence over public opinion and the political agenda. A loss of plurality cannot be quantified in a mathematical sense.

...Plurality considerations are particularly important in New Zealand given that current concentration levels of media ownership are already high by international standards. This merger would consolidate the two largest news media providers in New Zealand, in an already concentrated market.”

(Commerce Commission, 2017. p.12. Abridged.)

As such these direct relationships between media and the ‘elite’ are potentially of significance. An alternative position is that by acting independently and reporting on items that are in the public interest journalists exercise power and gain legitimacy through intellectual labour, acting as a ‘Fourth Estate’ (Hirst, 2012.). It is important to keep in mind, however, that there also exists the simple explanation that politicians and regulators are human, and as such do receive and process information from sources such as the news media in addition to any specialised material they receive through their agencies. Nevertheless, it is clear that the media is important in policymaking to a degree that ensures that examining media coverage has an important role in analysing policy decisions (Phelan et al. 2012), and this is supported by paragraphs referring to prominent (widely-reported) accidents in both Page’s 1997 report, and the 2010 review of the adventure tourism and outdoor recreation sector (Department of Labour, 2010).

Portrayal of accidents in the media

The way in which the news media portrays accidents, both in tourism specifically and more generally, has been briefly examined by a number of exploratory studies (Page, 1997; Clarke & Van Ameron, 2007; Davidson, 2008; Smith et al. 2012). While hardly the sole issue, accidents form a significant part of the topic of safety, and are appealing to the media due to the dramatic nature of a significant accident, incident or near-miss.

Media portrayals of safety and accidents in general have previously been broadly categorised as either “factual” or “narrative” (Clarke & Van Amerom, 2007). The former is marked by a focus on the bare facts, with little or no moral judgement of the parties involved. The latter is more speculative and prone to moral judgements about the victims of an accident and/or other

parties involved (Clarke & Van Amerom, 2007). It is important to note that this classification is based on structure, not veracity. Clark & Van Amerom describe a 'factual' structure as being that which "simply described the occurrence of an accident primarily in terms of what, where and how (although sometimes proximal causes were also given)" (Clark & Van Amerom, 2007), while 'narrative' articles:

"...told a story of an individual or a group, described the feeling and relationships of the victims, discussed the impact of the accident on their lives and on the lives of their significant others and often theorized or hypothesized about the causes of the accident."

(Clarke & Van Amerom, 2007. p.248)

Page (1997) originally intended to categorise media and run some form of analysis on the metaphors involved in more narrative articles, although he did not entirely spell out his categorisation methods, and used the term "dramatised" rather than 'narrative". However with few exceptions (Mountain Scene and the Sunday Star Times being publications specifically noted as such) the media sampled from the 1994-1997 period was noted by Page to lack such 'dramatised' articles almost entirely. Use of a two-group classification scheme seems to be motivated by a wish to exclude articles perceived to be irrelevant for content analysis and other in-depth examinations of metaphor and phrasing. It has the inherent flaw that dealing with articles that mix both techniques requires the researcher to pick and choose a single category, although in the studies using such a method a fail-safe could be established with an "if in doubt, consider it narrative" policy, although it is unclear whether the researchers did so (Page, 1997; Clarke & Van Amerom, 2007). In addition, the structure of an article does not indicate in and of itself whether an article is accurate: different news services may differ significantly in how they frame the same events based on their choice of sources and framing of events, rather than through inclusion or omission of a narrative element (Lazic & Kaigo, 2013).

A related line of research, using press releases rather than media articles themselves, has been used successfully in the past to create an inventory of fatal and non-fatal accidents in the Hawaii Volcanoes National Park in the USA (Heggie, 2005). This approach works well for isolated contexts but runs into the same fragmentation issues on larger scales that other sources and methodologies face, and was not pursued for this project. It is discussed in Chapter 6 as part of general possibilities for future research suggested by this study.

In the United States, examination of media coverage of accidents in general has focused on particular fields and terms, with 60% of articles examined in one study that focused on the use of the term 'freak accident' over the years 2006-2009 being found to cover a single injury event involving a professional athlete or sports-persons (Smith et al. 2012). It is unknown whether this is a trend in wider accident reporting, or if the observed pattern is also the case in New Zealand. Additionally, news reporting that covers deaths frequently focuses on violent and/or catastrophic events, with deaths from causes such as motor vehicle accidents, fires and homicides being over-reported relative to their actual frequency, while deaths from less 'spectacular' causes such as all forms of disease were under-reported relative to their actual frequency (Combs & Slovic, 1979). Indeed in the United States it was found that the frequency of reporting of every cause of death examined in one study differed significantly from the actual number of attributable deaths, following a similar pattern to that reported to Combs & Slovic. (Frost et al., 1997). A similar pattern of 'spectacular' news being more appealing has been noted with medical news (de Semir, 1996), suggesting that this is a wider value for the media. Thus, accidental deaths appear more likely to be reported if they are 'spectacular' or fall into a category that is frequently over-reported.

Coverage of a specific accident or disaster may vary significantly between different media outlets. In the case of the Fukushima nuclear power-plant accident in Japan, coverage from the Japanese broadcaster NHK was found to favour the Japanese government through the selection of information sources (biased towards official statements from government sources) and the framing of the accident in news coverage when compared to an international broadcaster (BBC World) (Imtihani & Yanai, 2013). Coverage of the Fukushima meltdown in three US newspapers was heavily framed around conflict, responsibility, and economic impact, with evidence that these themes may be generic to disaster and crisis news (Lazic & Kaigo, 2013). Coverage of disasters may be framed very similarly between different outlets, yet vary considerably based on what sources are chosen and how information is presented.

The media portrayal of blame – that is to say, who or what is responsible for accidents – does not appear to have been researched in this country before based on previous reviews of journalism studies in New Zealand (Mathieson, 2010). This area is therefore a relative unknown at present. Apportioning blame in the media may on occasion open an outlet up to libel proceedings, however New Zealand law is such that the chilling effect of such a possibility is

greatly reduced over locations with more plaintiff-friendly libel laws, such as the United Kingdom (Cheer, 2008).

Media values and newsworthiness

An important element to consider when undertaking study into media reporting is the concept of 'newsworthiness'. In short, how events become 'news' (Galtung & Ruge, 1965). Although journalists usually do not apply firm frameworks when choosing to cover events, definitions relying on 'gut feeling' can obscure as well as reveal, resulting in a series of academic taxonomies attempting to provide a more formal framework for assessing newsworthiness (Harcup & O'Neil, 2016). These frameworks are of particular importance to this project as very little research has been conducted into the specifics of accident (particularly adventure tourism accident) reporting internationally. As such, general frameworks of newsworthiness provide a useful base from which to begin work. The most influential and long-lasting of these frameworks is that proposed by Johan Galtung and Mari Ruge in 1965, after examination of Norwegian newspaper coverage of incidents in Cuba, Cyprus and the Congo (Galtung & Ruge, 1965).

Galtung & Ruge (1965) proposed a core set of news values that collectively influence whether an event will become 'news'. These consist of frequency, threshold, unambiguity, meaningfulness, consonance, unexpectedness, continuity, compositional balance, the involvement of elite nations/regions, the involvement of elite people, personification, and negativity. These are summarised in Table 2.4 below.

Table 2.4 Media values (adapted from Galtung & Ruge, 1965)

Frequency	Events that unfold conveniently within the production cycle of a news outlet are more likely to be reported than those that do not
Threshold	The larger an event is, and/or the more people it impacts, the more likely it is that the event will be reported
Unambiguity	The fewer ways there are of interpreting an event, the more likely it is to be reported
Meaningfulness	The more culturally proximate or relevant an event is, the more likely it is to be reported
Consonance	If a journalist has a mental pre-image of something/it is expected to happen, it is more likely to be reported
Unexpectedness	If an event is unexpected, it is more likely to be considered 'newsworthy' and to be reported by media
Continuity	Once an issue or event has obtained media attention, future developments or events that relate to it are more likely to be reported
Compositional balance	An event that contributes to the diversity of the topics covered by a media outlet is more likely to be covered than one that adds to a pile of similar news stories
Elite nations/regions	Events which involve 'elite' nations or regions are more likely to be reported than those that do not
Elite people	Events that involve 'elite' people are more likely to be reported than those that do not
Personification	Events that can be discussed in terms of the actions of individuals are more likely to be reported than those that are the outcome of abstract social forces
Negativity	An event with a negative outcome is more likely to be reported than one with a positive outcome

Not all traits must be met in order for an event to be newsworthy, indeed some media values are at least in part contradictory. However, an event that meets more of these criteria is considered more likely to become a news item (Galtung & Ruge, 1965). This set of values has been relatively accepted over time, however alternative sets of values have been proposed in more recent times in response to shifts in society and the media in the intervening half-century (Harcup & O'Neil, 2016). In two papers published in 2001 and 2016, Harcup & O'Neil argue for updated sets of news values (Harcup & O'Neil, 2016). Their 2016 paper suggests 15 news values of which, in their general experience, one or more must be present for a potential news story to be selected for reporting (Harcup & O'Neil 2016). These values are summarised in Table 2.5. This more recent framework offers a larger variety of values and is updated to take into account

more modern technology (seen most prominently with the ‘Audio-visuals’ and ‘Shareability’ values).

Table 2.5 Contemporary News Values (from Harcup & O’Neil, 2016)

Exclusivity	Stories generated by, or available first to, the news organisation as a result of interviews, letters, investigations, surveys, polls, and so on
Bad news	Stories with particularly negative overtones such as death, injury, defeat and loss (of a job, for example)
Conflict	Stories concerning conflict such as controversies, arguments, splits, strikes, fights, insurrections and warfare
Surprise	Stories that have an element of surprise, contrast and/or the unusual about them
Audio-visuals	Stories that have arresting photographs, video, audio and/or which can be illustrated with infographics
Shareability	Stories that are thought likely to generate sharing and comments via Facebook, Twitter and other forms of social media
Entertainment	Soft stories concerning sex, show-business, sport, lighter human interest, animals, or offering opportunities for humorous treatment, witty headlines or lists
Drama	Stories concerning an unfolding drama such as escapes, accidents, searches, sieges, rescues, battles or court cases
Follow-up	Stories about subjects already in the news
The power elite	Stories concerning powerful individuals, organisations, institutions or corporations
Relevance	Stories about groups or nations perceived to be influential with, or culturally or historically familiar to, the audience
Magnitude	Stories perceived as sufficiently significant in the large numbers of people involved or in potential impact, or involving a degree of extreme behaviour or extreme occurrence
Celebrity	Stories concerning people who are already famous

Good news	Stories with particularly positive overtones such as recoveries, breakthroughs, cures, wins and celebrations
News organisation's agenda	Stories that set or fit the news organisation's own agenda, whether ideological, commercial or as part of a specific campaign

Due to limitations in the NewzTextPlus database, the categories of 'audio-visuals' and 'shareability' could not be considered for this study, and this must be considered a limitation of the study. Apart from this, the more modern framework was considered the more versatile, though the original framework by Galtung & Ruge was used primarily for this study for pragmatic reasons, namely for compatibility with other studies (eg, Davidson, 2008). Regarding their own list of contemporary media values, Harcup & O'Neil note that:

"It is important to reiterate that the above criteria can be contested since they are also governed by practical considerations, such as the availability of resources and time, and subjective, often unconscious, influences, such as a mix of the social, educational, ideological and influences on journalists, as well as the environment in which they work, their position in the workplace hierarchy and the type of audience for whom journalists are producing news....."

...In other words, who is selecting news, for whom, in what medium and by what means (and available resources), may well be as important as whatever news values may or may not be inherent in any potential story." (Harcup & O'Neil, 2016, Page 13-14. Abridged)

Despite these limitations (and others covered in Chapters 3 and 5), media values represent a valuable tool for assessing contributing factors to the newsworthiness of adventure tourism accidents. While the practical considerations that may influence publication cannot be examined easily, media values are by their nature often easy to determine to at least some extent. In the case of adventure tourism accidents, it does not appear that this form of examination has been conducted across the sector previously.

Portrayal of adventure tourism accidents in the New Zealand media

The portrayal of adventure tourism accidents in the media is largely uncharted territory. In New Zealand, it appears that little work has been conducted since Page (1997) examined print media in the mid-to-late 1990s as a minor part of a report on the cost of adventure tourism accidents to the New Zealand tourism industry. Internationally there is also a lack of academic reference for this subject. In his study, Page (1997) collected articles via NewsIndex, Kiwinet, the Ministry of Commerce's library of newspapers, radio and television coverage, press releases, previous research, and collated news clippings between 1994 and 1997 (Page, 1997). Within the period 1994-1997, 70 articles covering tourism accidents were located, with 16 pertaining to rafting accidents and seven covering hot-air-balloon accidents. Page emphasised that the searches conducted were “by no means comprehensive”, as they contained only those articles with a “business interest”, and only articles of around 100 words as smaller articles were not indexed at the time (presumably the same is potentially true of larger articles, although this is only implied in the original chapter) (Page, 1997. p.31). He also stressed that the examination of media portrayal was a relatively minor part of his work as a whole. In addition, no mention of media values or analysis of newsworthiness appears in the chapter. As such, while Page (1997) provides an excellent template and example of an earlier work of this type, the search conducted to create it can only be considered a partial representation of the situation at the time (circa 1994-1997).

In the years following Page's report, numerous studies were conducted regarding risk levels and accident rates for adventure tourism accidents, as well as their implications (Bentley et al., 2000, 2001. Bentley et al., 2001; Callander & Page, 2002; Page et al. 2005; Bentley et al., 2007; Smith & Espiner, 2007; Bentley & Page, 2001,2008). However, no follow-up study to the investigation of the media included in Page's report appears to have been conducted. The only apparent research into media coverage of adventure tourism is considerably more specific, focusing on the field of mountaineering (Davidson, 2008), overlapping with the adventure tourism sector. The only study to directly examine the portrayal of accidents examined the media coverage of three mountaineering accidents occurring in the year 2003 using an updated form of Galtung & Ruge's media values, as well as examining narratives of risk and responsibility within news pieces covering the three accidents (Davidson, 2008). The study concluded that “(the media) will inevitably emphasise negative outcomes in outdoor adventures, and this will undoubtedly frame

the way in which the non-mountaineering public views the hazards involved in this activity” (Davidson, 2008. p.17). The role of standardised narratives was also introduced by this later study, with the examination of news media indicating that:

“Mountaineering accidents were talked of in terms of two standard scenarios or narratives; that is, either they were caused by bad judgement and/or inexperience, or the victims were skilled decision-makers and bad luck (the world-as-player or the malevolent mountains) brought about their downfall.” (Davidson, 2008. p.17)

Negative outcomes are consistently described as increasing the likelihood of reporting (Galtung & Ruge, 1965; Harcup & O’Neil, 2016). This does, however, conflict with Page’s assertion that reporting was, at that time, overwhelmingly factual in nature (Page, 1997). This likely lies in a lack of consideration for media values in this older study, and the fact that, when reporting on events, being ‘factual’ in structure does not rule out emphasis on negative outcomes. Despite this, the conclusions of the only study to examine media coverage of adventure tourism as a whole are valuable for the current study. As mentioned previously, Page(1997) attempted a categorisation between “factual” and “dramatised” articles with a view to conducting content analysis on ‘dramatised’ articles, but found almost all articles he examined to be “factual”. As Page did not document his categorisation criteria it is not possible to know exactly how this was determined, although comparison to the current study is possible to some extent. Most articles in Page’s sample were positioned as long columns or small blocks from pages 2-3 onward, and except in the cases on major features is similar in substance to reports on other matters (Page, 1997). Page considered the small number of articles found to be potentially indicative of under-reporting, and a limited knowledge base driven by major accidents. This is entirely plausible: as perception is more important than reality, major accidents would be expected to disproportionately alter perceptions of safety, rather than the day-to-day events that fail to be noteworthy to the general public. However as Page himself noted, his study was a minor part of a greater work, and did not create a complete picture of the overall media landscape, it is possible that articles on more minor accidents simply fell into limitations in his approach.

The current study was initially intended to create a spiritual successor that might potentially overcome some of these limitations with the aid of modern database technology. This has met with mixed success in places but largely achieves this overall objective.

Conclusion

This study aims to address a gap in the tourism science literature. Academic study of adventure tourism safety in New Zealand has previously largely focused on the risk of adventure tourism activities, both in a line of academic work from the mid-late 1990s through to a summary article in 2008 (Bentley & Page, 2008), and governmental work in the late 1990s (Page, 1997) and the more recent review of the sector by the Department of Labour that made widespread findings and recommendations to central government regarding the true risks of the sector, and how well these risks were being managed (Department of Labour, 2010). However, despite a relative wealth of information on the risk of the sector, only two studies could be identified that examined media coverage of adventure tourism accidents in New Zealand. A relatively recent study examined the reporting of mountaineering accidents within the framework of 'news values' established by the field of journalism study (Davidson, 2008). An older study, a government report that began the many investigations into risk and accidents in the adventure tourism sector in New Zealand, covered a wide range of media and activities (Page, 1997). This lack of research is surprising, as it is known that media coverage frequently does not reflect the true risks, particularly when reporting on deaths (Combs & Slovic, 1979; Frost et al., 1997). In addition, inaccurate or sensationalist media coverage can have significant impacts on a provider or destination (Walters et al., 2016).

Chapter 11 of the Page report is the most direct equivalent to the study undertaken for this thesis. However, Page's conclusions were limited heavily by a lack of cohesive data sources, technical limitations, and a relatively small number of source articles from which to work. By examining the broad conclusions of Page's work while implementing analyses that take into account the established system of news values used in prior studies of journalism (Galtung & Ruge, 1965; Davidson, 2008; Harcup & O'Neil, 2016), this study addresses an important research gap via an examination of patterns and trends in the reporting of adventure tourism accidents in the New Zealand media, combined with the identification and examination of selected widely-reported adventure tourism incidents.

Methods

This study employs a mixed-methods approach to examine how the New Zealand print media reported on adventure tourism accidents and incidents in the years 2010 through 2015. Mixed-methods research involves collecting and integrating both quantitative and qualitative data into a single project, and can result in greater understanding of a phenomenon than a purely quantitative or qualitative approach (Leary, 2017). Quantitative data was used to examine parameters that lent themselves well to numerical statistical analyses, such as word count, structure, and the statistics of the accidents reported within the sample. Qualitative analysis was used following this to identify key themes that could not be described numerically, as well as to examine *why* certain accidents might have been mentioned in large numbers of articles.

In addition to the analysis methods, the means through which a corpus of articles was obtained are also important to understanding the scope and inherent limitations of this study. This began with a pilot study aimed at incorporating magazine articles into this study, which was ultimately dropped due to incompatibilities with the newspaper corpus and the number and type of magazines being used potentially introducing a significant uncontrolled source of bias. This pilot study did, however, produce useful results prior to curtailment and as such is included in this chapter.

In this chapter, the methodology used for this study will be described in five parts. The first section covers the processes used to find and collect the articles examined over the course of this study. The second section describes the quantitative data collection and analysis. The third section describes the use of qualitative methods. The fourth section covers the pilot study of magazines conducted early in the course of the wider study, prior to its abandonment. The final section covers the known limitations in the methods used, and the constraints that these place upon this study.

Data collection

To provide sufficient material to identify key themes in media reporting of accidents, a substantial number of newspaper articles were required. Collection of articles began with an intended sample period of three years (2013-2015, inclusive). However in response to concerns raised by the magazine pilot project, this was extended at an early stage to a six-year sample, examining articles published between January 1st, 2010 and December 31st, 2015. This time period covers an important period for the tourism industry in New Zealand, in which a major review of the adventure tourism sector was released and new rules introduced in response to shortcomings in prior legislation. The period saw a number of significant adventure tourism accidents, as well as wider challenges posed by the new legislation and a series of major earthquakes that struck the Canterbury region in 2010 and 2011. While the effect of the Canterbury earthquakes on media reporting could not be quantified and is included later in this chapter as a potentially confounding variable, the period examined was of considerable importance to the adventure tourism industry in New Zealand, and is recent enough for the findings of this study to be of greater compatibility with media reporting today.

The source of articles for this study was the NewzTextPlus database. This database archives the plain text version of articles published in NZME and Stuff-owned New Zealand newspapers, as well as a number of other publications. The use of a national selection of newspapers was intended to be able to detect regional differences as found in other studies (eg. Frew, 2009). To identify articles of potential relevance a keyword search was performed using the search criteria “accident AND touris*”, limiting the results to only include newspaper articles published within the 2010-2015 time period. The newspapers examined are detailed in Table 3.1, with additional information on circulation collected in Appendix A.

Table 3.1: Newspapers examined during the study

Newspaper	Publisher
The Timaru Herald	Stuff
The Press	Stuff
The Southland Times	Stuff
Dominion Post	Stuff
Marlborough Express	Stuff
Manawatu Standard	Stuff
Taranaki Daily News	Stuff
Waikato Times	Stuff
Nelson Mail	Stuff
Sunday News	Stuff
Sunday Star Times	Stuff
The New Zealand Herald*	NZME
The Daily Post	NZME
Bay of Plenty Times	NZME
The Northern Advocate	NZME
Hawke's Bay Today	NZME

*The New Zealand Herald also has a sister/sub-publication, the "Herald on Sunday". Due to limitations in the NewzTextPlus database these were treated as a single publication.

This broad search term was used in an attempt to capture the 'popular meaning' of tourism and adventure tourism, rather than relying exclusively on activity lists and pre-established criteria. As the magazine pilot study had suggested that use of the term 'adventure tourism' might be uncommon, the choice was made not to include this as a search term, and instead to apply this further qualification of corpus entries manually. This was done by reading summaries of each article included in the database and only exporting those articles which appeared to be of relevance to adventure tourism. This decision was made subjectively based on the definitions described in Chapter 2.

A more prescriptive search using activity-based keywords or a recursive-keyword process would likely have been more reliable in uncovering accidents which fall under the umbrella of adventure tourism in the literature, however the broad search revealed certain articles that would *not* have tripped an activity-based keyword list. As this study largely depends upon the

common meaning of 'adventure tourism', the compromise was deemed acceptable. This approach also resolved potential problems caused by limitations in the NewzTextPlus database that would have made combining data sets from multiple searches unreasonably labour-intensive.

This initial search produced an exported collection of 428 newspaper articles in plain-text format, published between January 1st 2010 and December 31st 2015. This ~800 page export file required further processing before being accepted as a corpus due to the presence of duplicate, out-of-scope or irrelevant articles. This was accomplished manually by reading through the full text of each entry individually to check for relevance. This created a final corpus of 384 articles after the removal of articles that pertained to accidents outside of New Zealand, were in a magazine that was inadvertently included in the search due to being categorised incorrectly in the NewzTextPlus database, were duplicates, or pertained to 'safety' news and did not specifically mention an accident or incident.

Duplicate articles were defined as cases where the same article, from the same publication and date, appeared more than once in the corpus. This *excluded* syndicated articles, which initial examination showed to not be identical between publications and thus not suitable for removal. As such, while they were flagged during preparation for analysis, syndicated articles were treated as their own articles for the purposes of quantitative analysis (as differences between versions would otherwise be lost). Articles were flagged as 'probably syndicated' based on extreme similarities in areas of the article that could not be explained via simple quotation of sources. This was in most cases immediately apparent on reading the articles.

The details of the articles used in this study are included in this thesis in Appendix B, which lists the publication, date, edition (where available), and title of each of the 384 articles that made up the final sample.

Quantitative analysis of newspaper articles

While examining each article to establish relevance to the topic and objectives of the study, data were collected for use in quantitative analysis. For each article, a range of variables were recorded including:

- Publication, publication date, title, author(s), word-count, and page number
- A brief description of the article and its contents
- Whether the article was part of a 'syndicated set' and if so, which set it belonged to
- Whether the article was categorised as "factual" or "narrative" based on structure
- Whether the article primarily served as an accident report, follow-up to an accident/incident, or used one or more accident/incident events as context to the main subject of the article
- The number of accidents mentioned in the text

In addition, details of all domestic adventure tourism accidents mentioned in each article were collected and collated, including the following details:

- A unique accident ID code for each accident
- The type of activity and the form that the accident took
- The date on which the accident occurred, to the highest level of detail given
- The number of individuals killed or injured in the accident/incident
- The location as described in the article(s)
- The number of articles each accident was mentioned in, in any level of detail. This included mentioning of the accident as background or 'context'.

This was conducted on a per-article basis until saturation of detail (that is, once the basic facts of an accident were established, duplicate entries of data were ended unless different details appeared later). When sources differed on the facts of an accident, further research was undertaken to determine what the correct value was. This was a fairly rare occurrence, usually involving errors in the date an accident occurred or the number of persons injured. Due to the varying level of detail in the news articles gathered, a consistent level of detail and/or accuracy could not be maintained for these fields across all accidents. However by combining information from all articles that mentioned each accident, a list of all accidents could be produced and used for analyses.

A limitation noted very early in examining the articles was that the author(s) of articles were not consistently entered into the NewzTextPlus database. This made analysis of author influence impossible and made differentiation between editorials and 'op-eds' impossible. In the latter case, all opinion pieces were simply labelled as such when quoted or referred to.

Article classifications

In order to allow some measure of comparison between this study and the work of Page (1997) and other international studies, categorisation of articles based on their structure/style was necessary. This was conducted in two ways.

First, a judgement was made as to whether each article was "factual" or "narrative" based on the criteria used in prior literature, particularly the work of Page (1997) and Clarke & Van Amerom (2007). In this context, the labelling of an article as "factual" or "narrative" is based on structure, not veracity (as described in more detail in Chapter 2). Clarke & Van Amerom describe 'factual' articles as those that "simply described the occurrence of an accident primarily in terms of what, where and how (although sometimes proximal causes were also given)" (Clark & Van Amerom, 2007), while 'narrative' articles:

"...told a story of an individual or a group, described the feeling and relationships of the victims, discussed the impact of the accident on their lives and on the lives of their significant others and often theorized or hypothesized about the causes of the accident."

(Clarke & Van Amerom, 2007. p. 248)

Clarke and Van Ameron also describe narrative articles as presenting moral judgements on those involved in an accident. However, this differentiation was in practice extremely difficult to make on the newspaper articles examined, as the newspaper articles appeared to follow a different style than the American magazines studied by Clark & Van Amerom. Clear distinctions between the two categories were not uniformly present, suggesting a continuum rather than a binary variable. A pragmatic approach was taken looking for clear signs of a narrative, which may have resulted in the under-counting of narrative articles. While this form of classification was less useful than anticipated (and is the subject of discussion in chapters 5 and 6 with regards to its implications for past and future research), the use of this system produced useful statistics and conclusions nonetheless.

Second, a simple classification system was used in parallel. For newspaper articles this separated articles into “accident reports”, “accident follow-ups”, “safety news” and “accident(s) as context”. Accident reports constitute the initial reporting of an accident. Accident follow-ups are secondary articles that give additional information not available in initial reporting. This is a large class ranging from articles a few days after an accident through to reporting on coroners’ inquests potentially several years later. The use of accidents as context for an article not primarily about an accident or incident was common enough to mandate an “accidents as context” category. Finally, articles that did not directly include an accident, but were still potentially relevant, were classed as “safety news”. All articles in this latter category were removed from the sample after a review as they did not *directly* refer to an accident.

These categorisations are inherently subjective, and do suffer from issues regarding selection of a category when the criteria for more than one category is met (for example, an article which reports on a recent plane crash may list previous air accidents for context). For reason of simplicity, a hierarchy was created wherein only the ‘primary’ category was considered (with a hierarchy of reports and follow-up overriding use as context). Thus effectively this data was only recorded on a per-article basis, not a per-mention basis. This was sufficient for this study but created some limitations for the analysis: no statistics could be run that would require knowing this information for every occasion in which an accident was mentioned.

Statistical analyses

After a final corpus comprised solely of articles mentioning at least one relevant accident occurring within New Zealand had been collected, descriptive statistics were obtained covering both the data collected on article attributes, and those of the accidents mentioned within those articles.

Statistics obtained for article parameters included mean and median word counts, levels of syndication, and the number of articles in each category. To compare differences in word count and syndication levels between newspapers, a set of ANOVAs were performed in Minitab 18. These looked for significant differences in word-count between publications, as well as between the 'factual' and 'narrative' categories. As other data did not meet the criteria for the use of ANOVAs, the non-parametric Kruskal-Wallis one-way analysis of variance test was used for other comparisons as appropriate.

Statistics obtained for accident parameters were entirely descriptive, as no appropriate comparisons could be made with the data obtained. This included the total accidents and incidents, the activities involved in accidents and incidents, that date range for accidents reported within the sample, the types of accident/incident reported, and how many times each individual accident was mentioned within the sample. The latter result was used to inform the use of qualitative methods, as described later in this chapter.

Initially a comparison between geographic regions was intended, however this was not possible with the quality of location data obtained from news articles as the level of detail varied massively between accidents in terms of detail and accuracy.

Qualitative analysis of newspaper articles

As part of a mixed-methods approach, qualitative data were collected during two phases of the study. As an overall content analysis, notes were taken on key themes, narratives and patterns in reporting as each article was examined for quantitative data. These themes were used for the purpose of discussion as well as to inform the second phase of qualitative analysis. After a number of potentially significant accidents had been identified through quantitative analysis a decision was made to focus on those accidents that had been referred to more frequently than

was usual for a second phase of content analysis. This second phase would examine these cases in greater detail than could be accomplished across the full sample of articles and accidents.

Initial quantitative results (see Chapter 4) had indicated that very few accidents were mentioned in more than three articles within the sample period, and the initial content analysis of all articles suggested that further investigation into more frequently mentioned accidents was warranted in order to better understand why this was occurring.

For reasons of practicality, four mentions was chosen as the starting point for more detailed qualitative analysis of 'potentially significant accidents'. This threshold was low enough in practice that single sets of syndicated articles could meet the requirements for further examination. However, given the importance of understanding why some accidents achieve more media attention than others, and the unknown effect of syndication, the chance of a false positive was deemed acceptable given that a second round of examination was planned for only the most-mentioned articles out of this initial sub-sample.

After an initial examination to determine a more accurate cut-off point, short case studies of the six accidents mentioned in more than ten articles were incorporated into the results section for the purpose of providing examples of coverage and richer descriptions of the themes that emerged from analysis of these events. The remaining potentially significant accidents were summarised in table form, and common patterns/themes observed in all potentially significant accidents were recorded. Information from the analyses were incorporated into discussions and conclusions.

Qualitative analysis of those accidents mentioned in more than ten articles within the sample was carried out through a content analysis of the articles mentioning each accident, identifying key themes and patterns within news reporting. To test the suitability of existing 'news values' frameworks, analysis was conducted using Galtung & Ruge's (1965) framework of media values, with the more modern suggested set of values by Harcup & O'Neil (2016) used to fill gaps where the older framework was less effective.

Magazine pilot study

Initially, it was intended for this study to examine the coverage of adventure tourism accidents in both newspapers and printed magazines. For this purpose, a selection of New Zealand magazines was searched manually to identify potentially relevant articles published between January 2010 and December 2015. Articles were retained in hard-copy and kept or discarded after a second search. Magazine titles were chosen based on a variety of factors, including ease of access and their subject matter, as well as the possibility of comparisons with the historical work by Page (1997). The chosen magazines were:

- The Listener
- North & South
- NZ Today
- Adventure
- Wilderness
- NZ TravelTrade (Ceased publication during the sample period)

Magazines used a different spreadsheet layout than the later newspaper search, which resulted in difficulties in comparison. Additional information was collected during a second pass on the data to bring the original spreadsheet up to the standard of later work.

Initial results indicated that the sample collected would be heavily influenced by just two of the chosen magazines (*Wilderness* and *Adventure*), and would be difficult to compare with the newspaper results. As a result, examination of magazines was limited, and did not reach the level of detail subsequently used during the primary (newspaper) part of the study.

Analysis of the magazines was, by necessity, conducted manually on potentially relevant articles and advertisements photocopied from physical copies of the magazines held at the Lincoln University Library and Christchurch City Library. A short summary of each item was written, however descriptive statistics could not be obtained due to incompatibilities between newspapers, and the aforementioned inability to provide a fair sample or means of comparison with the newspaper corpus. Notes were taken on the experience in order to inform future

research efforts, as well as on the broad themes and patterns observed during the initial reading of each item. The initial results from this pilot study are presented in Chapter 4, and used to inform discussion in Chapter 5.

Limitations

The methods used for this study have inherent limitations. The decision as to whether an article would be included in the sample was inherently subjective, despite being based on established criteria. At times it was difficult to tell whether those involved in an accident or incident were tourists, recreational users, or outside of scope. These questionable entries were included in analyses on the basis that those involved were most likely in one of these two categories. Similarly, whether or not certain activities constituted 'adventure' tourism/recreation was in some cases difficult to ascertain. These were also generally included on the basis that adventure activities have a fairly nebulous definition. However, the human element in article selection may influence the results on this study. In addition, an immeasurable effect from the words used to describe particular types of accident by the authors of individual articles is present. In several cases, articles were included on the basis of meeting the subjective criteria for an adventure tourism accident/incident, but had only appeared in the sample due to use of the word "tourist" or "tourism" in a manner not directly related to the accident at hand. Reduction of this effect could have been possible through iterative keyword searching (using keywords from identified articles to refine the search terms), however a lack of technology to eliminate duplicate articles and the already massive size of the raw data to be checked for relevance made this approach impractical with the time and resources available. Further limitations inherent to the methodology are described in this section under subheadings.

Use of activities to determine relevance

The two-part process for determining whether to include or exclude an article from the study has the potential to introduce bias, as the decision to exclude or include a potentially relevant article was ultimately subjective. This was controlled as far as was possible through use of academic and governmental lists of activities, in particular those used by Bentley & Page (2008) and the Department of Labour (2010). However, as articles often lacked key information on *who* was undertaking an activity, and the context in which that activity was being undertaken, it is possible that this approach included cases in which an activity *associated* with adventure

tourism was taking place *outside* of what would be considered adventure tourism. This is associated with the common definition of adventure tourism used: significant overlap is noted in the literature between outdoor recreation, outdoor education, adventure tourism, and other related areas (Swarbrooke et al, 2003; Buckley, 2006, 2009).

Another problem with the approach taken is that by searching first for a broad term, then filtering by activity, the method used for this study may have filtered out adventure tourism activities that were not commonly referred to as such. For example: if an article referred to a “French skier” having an accident, and failed to use the word “tourist” or “tourism” in any place, that article would not appear in the initial article search and could not be selected for study. Initially it was planned to search to saturation through use of keywords extracted from articles to guide further searches. However the limitations of the NewzTextPlus database and the volume of articles obtained in the initial search rendered this approach unfeasible.

As this study focuses on the common or ‘popular’ meaning of adventure tourism, such a means of determining relevance runs the risk of over-correcting, and removing items from consideration erroneously.

Plurality of sources

The news media in New Zealand, particularly print media, has been noted for a lack of plurality (Commerce Commission, 2017). This study examined many of the country’s newspapers across multiple regions. Ensuring a geographical range of publications was important for this study to avoid missing geographical variations in the coverage of events, as noted in the literature previously (Frew, 2009). However, this study only examined two media companies overall. This was due to an incompatibility with data collection: the third player in the market, Allied Press, does not archive its articles in the NewzTextPlus database. While use of the Otago Daily Times online archive was considered early in the study, this would have created problems with amalgamating articles from the different archives, and also with the amounts of information collected with each article varying. The effects of this decision on the study cannot be known. It is perhaps ironic that in a media sector where mergers are blocked out of concern for the small number of voices, it is extremely difficult to find a way in which to include all those voices in academic research.

Time-frame limitations

Originally a three-year period was intended to be examined, from 2013-2015 (inclusive). Following early results from the magazine pilot study, this was extended to six years, from 2010-2015 (inclusive). This introduced a potentially confounding variable in the form of the 2010 and 2011 Canterbury Earthquakes, a set of major natural disasters that caused significant disruption across a large part of the country. News media attention both domestically and internationally became heavily concentrated in both instances on the Canterbury region, particularly around the city of Christchurch. This is likely to have affected coverage of other events occurring elsewhere at the same time.

Some possible effects of the 2010 earthquake were noted within the study. However, the true impact on any concurrent reporting is impossible to measure: as each major accident was unique in its circumstances and background, and there exists no statistics for overall true accident rates during the study period, or for overall media coverage at the time.

Qualitative Analysis

Qualitative analysis was for the most part only conducted on articles relating to the most-mentioned accidents in the study. While some level content analysis was conducted during reading of *all* articles for the collection of quantitative and qualitative data, details from 'less significant' accidents are likely to have been missed. In addition, limited time and resources were available for this phase of the study, with the result that the analyses were very exploratory in nature, and could not examine more complex media coverage in detail. A good example of this is the media coverage of the 2010 Fox Glacier skydiving aircraft crash, which generated sufficient material that examining it all in detail could only be left to future research. Despite this, the examinations that could be conducted were generally sufficient to identify key themes and news values within specific accident case studies.

In addition, the means through which significant accidents were identified featured a known flaw: by prioritising the number of times each accident was mentioned throughout the sample, the selection process was biased towards those accidents occurring early in (or before) the time-frame examined in this study, and against those occurring later in the period examined. This could be accounted for to some degree, but ultimately had to be accepted as a limitation caused

by the use of a fixed time period. Means for future research to limit or avoid this limitation are featured in Chapters 5 and 6.

Lack of control data

While this study established patterns in the reporting of adventure tourism accidents, and could be compared with broad patterns noted internationally by previous studies (eg. Combs & Slovic, 1979; de Simar, 1996; Frost et al., 1997) no studies existed from which to draw a comparison with New Zealand print media coverage in general. This significant gap in the research literature reduced the potential for interpretation of certain results, and mirrors the lack of information on true accident rates noted previously. In particular, data on syndication, word-count, and factual/narrative balance could not be compared with any figures for articles outside the sample, and such while patterns could be described, they could not be evaluated to determine whether coverage of adventure tourism accidents was significantly different from the coverage of news as a whole. While this could potentially have been solved through the creation of a control group of articles from the selected time period from which baseline statistics could be established, this was not conducted as it was not possible within the time and resource constraints of this project. It is suggested as an avenue for future research in Chapter 6.

Conclusion

Notwithstanding some inevitable limitations inherent in a research project of this type, this study represents a unique attempt to assess the way in which the New Zealand print media report on adventure tourism accidents.

Through the application of both quantitative and qualitative methods data on both the articles and accidents within a substantial corpus of 384 newspaper articles published in 16 newspapers across a six-year time-span were generated, the analysis of which is presented in Chapter 4.

Results

Introduction

Over the course of this study, 384 newspaper articles covering 110 unique adventure tourism accidents and incidents were extracted from newspapers published between January 1st 2010 and December 31st 2015. The resulting sample was then analysed through a mixed-methods approach employing both qualitative and quantitative methods.

This process generated a significant quantity of descriptive statistics and research notes, pertaining to both the accidents reported within the sampled articles and the articles themselves. Through this process key themes and patterns in the reporting of adventure tourism accidents in the New Zealand print media were identified and examined.

This chapter collects and records the results of the research process. The results of quantitative analysis of the sampled articles and accidents are presented first. These are split between the accidents reported, the activities reported, and statistics regarding the articles themselves, and are presented in that order. Following this, the most frequently mentioned accidents within the study are presented as case studies and the results of qualitative analysis of the coverage of these accidents are presented. Finally, the results are summarised and the research questions posed in Chapter 1 revisited before proceeding with discussion in Chapter 5.

Accidents reported within the sample

A total of 110 unique accidents and incidents were identified from the news reports, and these accidents were mentioned or covered 461 times throughout the sampled articles. Eighty-two of the accidents occurred during the sample period, with the remainder either falling outside the period or lacking enough detail to determine a date of accident. The higher number of mentions than articles reflects that a substantial proportion of articles covered more than one accident, or used prior accidents as context or background for the main topic of the article (often, but not always, another accident).

When considering overall casualty figures, the exclusion of the two accidents within the sample that occurred prior to 1990 was deemed a requirement: These two accidents were extreme outliers in time-span, occurring in 1968 and 1979, and one accident (the crash of Air New Zealand Flight 901 in Antarctica in 1979) had such high casualties (257 killed) that inclusion would have swamped the results of the sampled period. Excluding the two pre-1990 accidents, the remaining 108 accidents and incidents killed a minimum of 119 people (with three accidents not being detailed enough to determine whether deaths occurred), and injured 60 (with 9 accidents not having details sufficient to determine an injury count). Three accidents had insufficient detail to determine any casualty figures. In the post-1990s accidents reported within the study, 46 accidents occurred in which deaths, but no injuries, were clearly reported, 6 accidents occurred in which both deaths and injuries were clearly reported, and 47 accidents occurred in which injuries and no fatalities were reported. A further six accidents appear to have occurred with no casualties at all. This contrasts with traditional models of accident frequency, which universally indicate that injurious accidents (and minor accidents) far outnumber deaths (Page, 1997), and published data on outdoor recreation accidents (MSC, 2016).

This suggests that deaths are more 'newsworthy' than injuries, barring confounding factors. This is logical, given the known focus on more "spectacular" deaths by news media overseas (Combs & Slovic, 1979; Frost et al., 1997).

Accident categorisation

All 110 relevant accidents/incidents reported in the sampled articles were examined and a basic description of the known facts of the accident was written. These accidents and incidents were extremely varied in nature, but have been classified as shown in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1 Frequency of reported accident categories within the sample

Type of accident/incident	Frequency within sample	Percentage of sample (1 d.p)
Fall	26	23.6
Aircraft accident	19	17.3
Jetboat accident	8	7.3
Quad-bike/ATV accident	8	7.3
Drowning	6	5.5
Lost/missing Person	4	3.6
Parachuting/hang-gliding accident	4	3.6
Boat collision	4	3.6
Unknown	4	3.6
Back/spinal injury	3	2.7
Medical event	3	2.7
Weather event	3	2.7
Accidental shooting	3	2.7
Tramping injury	2	1.8
Structural failure	2	1.8
Avalanche	2	1.8
Swimmer struck by boat	2	1.8
Construction/maintenance accident	2	1.8
Near-drowning	1	0.9
Fall + near-drowning	1	0.9
Climbing accident	1	0.9
Boating accident	1	0.9
Aircraft incident	1	0.9
Total:	110	

Four accidents could not be adequately classified due to a lack of detail within the article(s) that reported on them, with one additional reported accident gaining a unique category as it constituted both a severe fall *and* a near-drowning, and neither category alone would have been entirely accurate. In addition, certain categories are significantly broader than others. The primary finding of interest is the high representation of aircraft crashes (excluding unpowered hang-gliders and parachute accidents) within the accidents reported within the sample, with this category accident appearing more frequent than any other, save for falls (which is both an extremely common form of accident and one that can occur during virtually any tourism activity).

The prevalence of falls has been observed before in accident statistics compiled for outdoor recreation in New Zealand by the Mountain Safety Council, which found falls to be the most common cause of accidents in tramping, climbing and trail running (MSC, 2016), however other accidents appear to be unusually frequent (though this cannot be entirely confirmed without accurate accident statistics for the entire sector, which do not exist). This matter is discussed in Chapter 5.

It appears that certain categories of accident are not especially newsworthy without something to make them unusual. This finding will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 5. It appears likely that these results indicate a higher interest in aviation, jetboat and ATV accidents compared with more 'generic' accidents that would potentially be of greater frequency (for example, missing trampers, weather events, etc). This possibility is supported by existing literature that suggests that more 'spectacular' accidents should be reported more than those are less so based on historical coverage of causes of death, injury, and ill health (Combs & Slovic, 1979; de Semir, 1996; Frost et al., 1997). Confirming this is however impossible without the true accident rates for the sampled period (a statistic that does not seem to exist in any source).

Activities involved in reported accidents

The variety of activities involved in the 110 reported accidents covered previously was also extremely diverse. As some accidents/incidents were not directly related to the type of activity involved, examination of the activities was separated from that of the types of accident/incident themselves. After some consolidation, 42 raw categories were identified as illustrated in Table 4.2.

Table 4.2 Activity categories identified in sampled articles, arranged by frequency

Activity	Category	Reported accidents/incidents
Tramping	Climbing, Tramping & Hunting	23
Jetboating	Boating and water sports/activities	11
Scenic flights	Aviation and related, excluding training	9
Quad-biking	Powered land vehicle	7
Skydiving	Aviation and related, excluding training	6
Climbing	Climbing, Tramping & Hunting	3
Hunting	Climbing, Tramping & Hunting	3
Climbing/Tramping	Climbing, Tramping & Hunting	3
Jumping from waterfall	Other	3
High-wire	Roped Activities	2
Kayaking	Boating and water sports/activities	2
Dolphin-swim	Boating and water sports/activities	2
Powerboating	Boating and water sports/activities	2
Skiing	Snowsports excl. Aviation	2
White-water rafting	Boating and water sports/activities	2
Boating	Boating and water sports/activities	2
Hot-air ballooning	Aviation and related, excluding training	2
'Sea biscuit'	Boating and water sports/activities	1
Riverboarding	Boating and water sports/activities	1
Jetskiing	Boating and water sports/activities	1
Paragliding	Aviation and related, excluding training	1
Heli-hiking	Aviation and related, excluding training	1
Speedflying	Aviation and related, excluding training	1
Heliskiing	Aviation and related, excluding training	1
Helicopter flight	Aviation and related, excluding training	1
Unknown Aviation	Aviation and related, excluding training	1
Hang-gliding	Aviation and related, excluding training	1
Bungy-jumping	Roped Activities	1
Bridge-swing	Roped Activities	1
Rope-swing	Roped Activities	1
Flying Fox	Roped Activities	1

Tobogganing	Snow-sports excl. Aviation	1
Canyoning	Climbing, Tramping & Hunting	1
Dune-buggy	Powered land vehicle	1
Scenic railway	Powered land vehicle	1
Construction	Support and training	1
Flight training	Support and training	1
Road maintenance	Support and training	1
Surfing	Boating and water sports/activities	1
Orienteering	Other	1
Dune-boarding	Other	1
Unknown	Unknown	1

The relative frequency of specific activities was not compatible with statistical analysis, however conclusions could be drawn regarding how ‘newsworthy’ certain activities might be. This is covered in more detail in Chapter 5. Of interest, certain activities identified by the Adventure Tourism Review (Department of Labour, 2010) were not present within the sample, though whether this is due to a difference in definition or simply due to a lack of accidents within such activities could not be determined.

From this initial table, a series of abbreviated categories was created (Table 4.3). These more general categories provide an overall summary of accident activity types. Within this classification system the ‘climbing, tramping and hunting’ category featured the largest number of accidents/incidents (33), followed by ‘boating & water-sports/activities’ (25) and ‘aviation & related (excluding training)’ (25). The high number of aviation accidents covered is again of some interest, given that aviation is of statistically very *low* risk compared to other activity types (Bentley & Page, 2008). This may be due to the number of accidents that occurred, or may be due to inherently high newsworthiness of aviation accidents, in particular aircraft crashes. The latter explanation would be consistent with prior studies suggesting that in the reporting of *deaths* more ‘spectacular’ causes are preferentially reported (Combs & Slovic, 1979, Frost et al., 1997). Lacking detailed statistics on the true accident rates, neither possibility can be proven or disproven by this study.

Table 4.3 Summary of activity categories and the number of accidents in each category

Category	Reported accidents/incidents
Climbing, Tramping & Hunting	33
Boating and water sports/activities	25
Aviation & related, excluding training	25
Powered land vehicle activities	9
Roped Activities	6
Other Activities	5
Snow-sports, excluding aviation-related activities	3
Support and training activities	3
Unknown Activity	1
Total:	110

Certain categories within this classification system require explanation. In the case of the aviation category, all activities in which an aircraft of any kind was involved in the activity were classed, except for a single accident in which an aircraft was involved in training of staff. This was placed in the 'Support and training' category. Because heliskiing and helihiking activities thus became an aviation category event, this inflated the aviation category in those cases where the involvement of an aircraft in an adventure activity was immaterial to the accident or incident that occurred. Conversely, the snow-sports category, having to exclude these accidents, was subsequently shrunk. Roped activities referred to activities including bungy-jumping, bridge swings, rope swings and high-wire adventure courses in which participation relies on ropes and similar equipment as a fundamental part of the experience. Support and training activities were defined as those activities involving an adventure tourism venture, involving staff and/or facilities of the adventure venture, but not involving tourists directly. The three accidents in this category consisted of a construction accident, a fatal tractor accident while maintaining a road to an adventure tourism venture owned by the victim, and a fatal crash of a helicopter carrying two staff of an adventure tourism venture on a training flight in the same vehicle used for adventure tourism operations. In one case, the activity involved could not be determined, beyond the fact that it did constitute an adventure tourism activity. Accidents and incidents that could not be fitted easily into the main categories, such as dune-boarding, falling into a cave while orienteering, and jumping from waterfalls, were classified as 'other activities'.

As no detailed statistics exist from which to provide a comparison, death and injury statistics were not broken down by activity. It is important to note that, while this broad summary is useful for certain purposes, the discussion in Chapter 5 is largely informed by the longer and less broadly categorised data.

Chronology of accidents

While some accidents occurring in the years prior to the start of the sampled period in 2010, and a handful of historical accidents occurring well before that time were featured in articles within the sample, the vast majority of accidents/incidents reported occurred during the survey period, with 2015 seeing the greatest number of unique accidents and 2013 the least. Accidents occurring before 2010 were usually found as either context to a later report (such as the handful of aviation accidents of the 1990s reported on), follow-ups or in-depth articles. In particular, the 2008 drowning of Ms Emily Jordan on a river-boarding activity on the Kawarau River was the subject of several in-depth articles corresponding to the progress of the 2009-2010 Adventure Tourism Review, which was commonly reported to have been started in response to lobbying efforts by the father of Ms Jordan following her death. The 2008 canyoning accident at the Mangatepopo Gorge in which 7 people drowned was also the subject of several detailed articles within the early part of the sample, including the single longest article in the sample; a 5,792-word (including supplementary information) narrative article published by the Sunday Star Times on April 4th, 2010 (just over two years after the accident).

In addition, a small number of articles consisted of historical reflections on accidents occurring well before the sampled period. These primarily covered three historical occurrences: the collapse of a viewing platform at Cave Creek in 1995, the crash of Air New Zealand Flight 901 in Antarctica in 1979, and the disappearance of a DeHavilland Dragonfly airliner on a scenic flight over Fiordland in 1962. For purely practical reasons (as noted above), the extreme outliers of the 1962 and 1979 incidents were removed from statistics where their presence could adversely affect the quality of results. The temporal spread of reported adventure tourism accidents, excluding the two accidents occurring prior to 1991 (1990 was chosen as the cut-off point), is indicated in Figure. 4.1

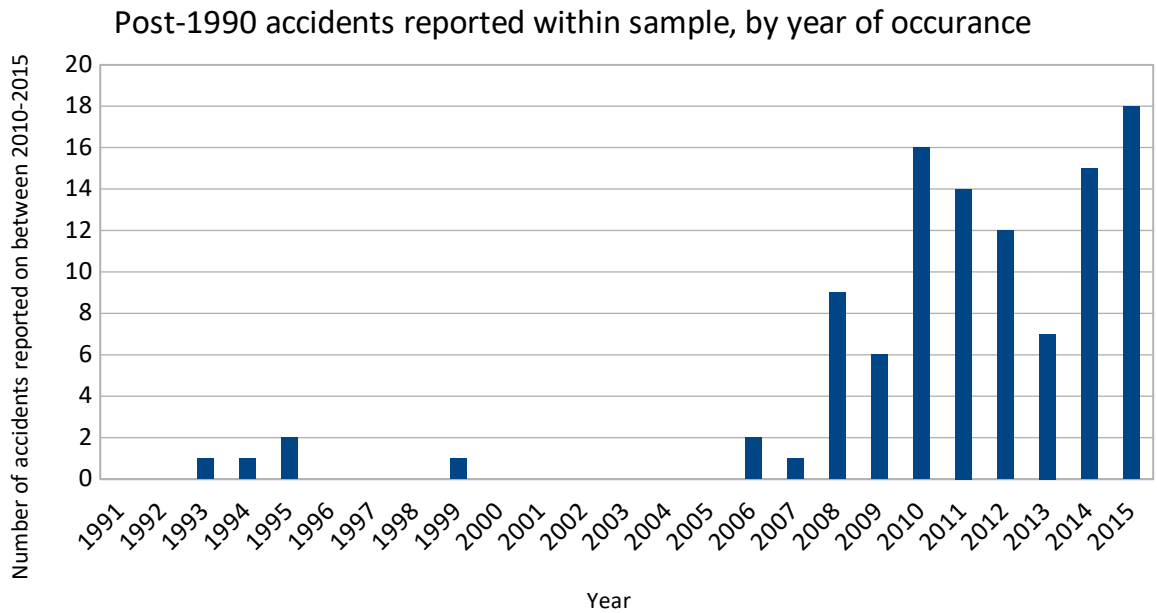


Fig. 4.1 Reported adventure tourism accidents, excluding those occurring in or before 1990, graphed by year of occurrence.

It is important to note that this graph indicates the year in which the accident occurred, *not* the year in which it was first reported. As is immediately apparent in Figure 4.1, the majority of accidents reported on during the sample period also occurred during it. While detailed analysis was not conducted to ascertain why pre-sample accidents were reported, details noted briefly while collating articles suggested that most pre-sample accidents were mentioned as historical context for an accident occurring within the article, or because of investigative or legislative developments on a significant accident prior to the beginning of 2010.

Article attributes

As part of the analysis, a number of newspaper article attributes were examined in order to identify how accidents were reported by the various newspapers included in this study. These attributes can be summarised under the categories of chronology, the factual/narrative

structure, word-count, syndication, relative frequency of reports and follow-ups, and the frequency with which accidents were mentioned within sampled articles.

Chronology of articles

The number of accidents per year was not consistent throughout the study. The highest number of accidents per annum occurred in 2015, with the lowest total occurring in 2013. This did not correlate well with the total number of articles published per year, however. 2015 saw the highest number of articles published, with 2011 seeing the lowest. The breakdown of articles by year is given in Table 4.4.

Table 4.4: Article count by year of publication

Year	Total articles	Total reported accidents/incidents in year
2010	75	16
2011	27	14
2012	80	12
2013	53	8
2014	43	15
2015	106	18
Total:	384	83

Factors influencing article count per year include the number and severity of accidents or incidents within that year, release of investigation results or coroner’s reports into previous accidents, and significant anniversaries. It is likely that the news environment also plays a role (i.e. under certain circumstances, more articles are written on adventure tourism incidents that might not otherwise have attracted media attention). Attempting to establish more concrete causative relationships is beyond the scope of this project, however it is worth noting that the years 2010, 2012 and 2015 saw a number of accidents that received significant media attention and thus the severity of interest level in specific accidents is likely the predominant factor in these years’ higher article counts.

Factual versus narrative structure

Articles were analysed and then classified as either 'Factual' or 'Narrative' based on the criteria of Clarke & Van Amerom (2017) and Page (1997), as these represented the closest form of prior work in this area (this is covered in greater detail in Chapter 2). However, this proved difficult: factual articles often contained narrative elements and moral judgements. Ultimately, the decision for categorisation when moral judgements were present was made largely on whether the article was *making* (narrative style) or simply *reporting on* (factual style) these judgements. Narrative structure was treated similarly as to whether it reinforced the factual style, or was supported by the facts. This was an inherently subjective standard, but proved useful with refinement. Of the total, 342 articles (89%) were assessed as having a 'factual' style, with 42 (11%) featuring a 'narrative' structure. This did not appear consistent between publishers, with the percentage of narrative articles varying from 0-36%, as shown in Table 4.5. However no significant difference ($P>0.1$) was found in the proportion of narrative articles between those papers published by NZME and Stuff following use of a Kruskal-Wallis test (a non-parametric method used in place of ANOVA as the data did not meet the assumptions of the ANOVA method).

Table 4.5 Number and percentage of articles featuring ‘narrative’ structure by publisher

Newspaper	Publisher	Total articles	Narrative articles	Narrative fraction (to nearest %)
Timaru Herald	Stuff	24	5	21%
The Press	Stuff	56	5	9%
Southland Times	Stuff	46	3	7%
Dominion Post	Stuff	33	6	18%
Marlborough Express	Stuff	16	0	0%
Manawatu Standard	Stuff	14	1	7%
Taranaki Daily News	Stuff	22	1	5%
Waikato Times	Stuff	23	4	17%
Nelson Mail	Stuff	33	3	9%
Sunday News	Stuff	1	0	0%
Sunday Star Times	Stuff	11	4	36%
New Zealand Herald	NZME	61	9	14%
Daily Post	NZME	14	0	0%
Bay of Plenty Times	NZME	11	0	0%
Northern Advocate	NZME	14	1	7%
Hawkes Bay Today	NZME	5	0	0%

It can be concluded that the majority of articles in the sample were of a factual structure and nature, but that the proportion of narrative articles may vary between publications. This has implications for the importance of selecting a variety of titles when conducting future studies of this type.

Word-count

The word-count in the sampled articles varied from a minimum of 47 to a maximum of 5,792 words. However, this upper value was some 3,700 words higher than the next highest value (2,001 words). Mean word-count was 479 words (with the outlying 5,800 word article included), with a median value of 421 words. However, the sample standard deviation of 411 words

indicates a wide spread in the word-count of articles. The distribution of article word-count also demonstrated positive skew (Fig. 4.2)

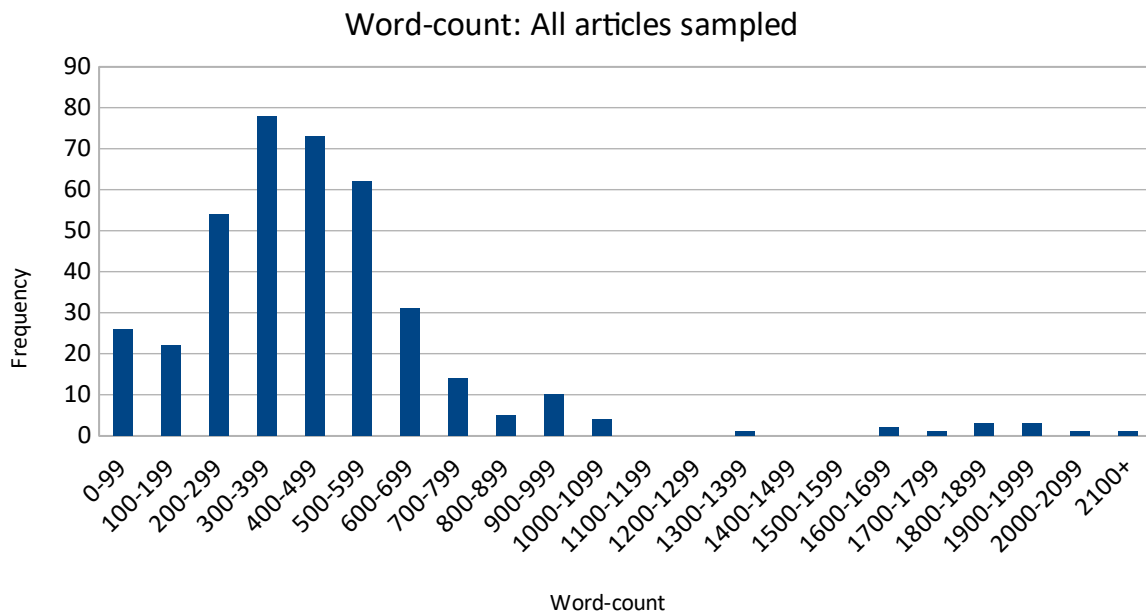


Fig. 4.2 Word-count for all articles

Word-count was largely consistent between different newspapers. As the data met the criteria for an ANOVA, this was performed using the Fisher LSD method with 95% confidence. The results of the ANOVA indicated that the Sunday Star Times featured a significantly higher mean word-count ($P < 0.05$) than other titles with the exception of the Sunday News, a paper which only contributed a single article to the sample. This difference may be due to the confounding variable of the day of the week the paper was published, however, a comparison of the Sunday Star Times with the Sunday editions of other newspapers, which would have been of interest, was not possible due to inconsistent labelling in NewzTextPlus. No other significant differences in word-count between titles were observed. The results of the ANOVA are summarised in Table 4.6, with publications sorted and grouped by mean word-count. Publications within a group (that share a letter code) are not significantly different from each other in regards to word-count. Publications that are not in the same group (that do not share *any* letter code in the results) feature a significant difference in mean word-count.

Table 4.6 ANOVA analysis of mean word-counts between publications

Publication	# Articles	Mean word-count	Grouping
Sunday Star Times	11	980.0	A
Sunday News	1	576.0	A/B
Waikato Times	23	553.3	B
Timaru Herald	24	536.6	B
Nelson Mail	33	505.3	B
Dominion Post	33	501.9	B
The Press	56	490.1	B
New Zealand Herald	61	486.0	B
Southland Times	46	456.5	B
Daily Post	14	420.5	B
Manawatu Standard	14	413.6	B
Northern Advocate	14	407.0	B
Marlborough Express	16	368.4	B
Taranaki Daily News	22	347.3	B
Hawkes Bay Today	5	325.0	B
Bay of Plenty Times	11	272.5	B

In addition, an ANOVA with 95% confidence was carried out to test of significant differences in word-count between 'factual' and 'narrative' styles of article. This shows that narrative articles had a significantly higher mean word-count (946) than factual articles (193.9) ($P < 0.05$). As it was not entirely clear if the criteria required for accurate ANOVA had been met, this was confirmed with a Kruskal-Wallis non-parametric test, which yielded the same results ($P < 0.05$).

While word count could be examined between structure types, and between publications, these results exist in something of a vacuum; As noted in Chapter 3, no control data exists for this study, and as such no comparison could be made to average word-counts for overall newspapers or for non-related articles, as these figures are not publicly available and could not be generated within the constraints of this study.

Syndication

Forty-three percent of articles within the sample were flagged as being syndicated: wherein what was effectively the same article was published in multiple newspapers. This indicates that syndication is relatively common practice in the reporting of tourism accidents in the New Zealand media, although no comparisons could be made to determine whether this is a deviation from the normal levels of syndication. Syndicated articles often varied in length and content between different publications using the same 'base'. As such, it was often difficult or impossible to determine the 'original' article, and so syndicated articles were not cropped or consolidated. A total of 166 articles were flagged as being syndicated or probably syndicated, 216 as non-syndicated, and 2 articles flagged as uncertain.

The number of articles flagged as syndicated was separated by newspaper publication, as shown in Table 4.7. Despite variation in syndication between newspapers, no significant difference in the proportion of syndication between the two publishers was noted when a Kruskal-Wallis test was carried out ($P>0.4$).

Table 4.7 Syndication summary for all newspapers

Newspaper	Publisher	Total articles	Syndicated	Non-Syndicated	Uncertain	Proportion of Syndication *
Timaru Herald	Stuff	24	16	8	0	66.7%
The Press	Stuff	56	25	31	0	44.6%
Southland Times	Stuff	46	20	26	0	43.5%
Dominion Post	Stuff	33	14	19	0	42.4%
Marlborough Express	Stuff	16	7	9	0	43.8%
Manawatu Standard	Stuff	14	9	5	0	64.3%
Taranaki Daily News	Stuff	22	14	7	1	63.6%
Waikato Times	Stuff	23	13	10	0	56.5%
Nelson Mail	Stuff	33	17	15	1	51.5%
Sunday News	Stuff	1	0	1	0	0%
Sunday Star Times	Stuff	11	0	11	0	0%
New Zealand Herald	NZME	61	10	51	0	16.4%
Daily Post	NZME	14	5	9	0	35.7%
Bay of Plenty Times	NZME	11	7	4	0	63.6%
Northern Advocate	NZME	14	7	7	0	50%
Hawkes Bay Today	NZME	5	2	3	0	40%
Total		384	166	216	2	N/A

**Rounded to 1 decimal place*

Relative frequency of accident reports and follow-up articles

As described in Chapter 3, articles were classed by the way in which they referred to accidents. Initial reporting on an accident or accidents was classed as “accident reports”, later reports were classed as “accident follow-ups”, with articles merely using accidents for supportive purposes classed as “accident as context” articles. In total 109 articles were deemed to be accident reports, 194 were considered to be follow-ups, with only 18 articles solely using accidents as context. This was only recorded on a per-article, not a per-accident-mention basis: the use of accidents as context was considerably more frequent, but almost always accompanied an accident report or follow-up. Because of the recording of this information on a per-article basis,

certain limitations restricted the analyses that could be performed (as per the limitations section of Chapter 3).

Frequency of mention

The number of articles in which each accident was mentioned in the sample was recorded in order to examine the level of coverage given to adventure tourism accidents. While frequency-of-mention does not take into account how detailed a mention of an accident within an article is, or how it is referred to, it provides a simple way to attempt to locate ‘important’ accidents under the assumption that more prominent, impactful and/or ‘newsworthy’ accidents will be mentioned in more articles. This was broadly true, though the disparity between those accidents referred to in a larger number of articles and the remainder of the sample somewhat exceeded expectations. Of the unique accidents reported on within the sample, over half (58 accidents/incidents) were only mentioned in a single article. Only 23 accidents/incidents were mentioned in 4 or more articles, of which a mere six accidents were referred to in ten or more articles. These accidents are examined in greater detail in section 4.4. The frequency of reference for all articles is shown in Fig. 4.3.

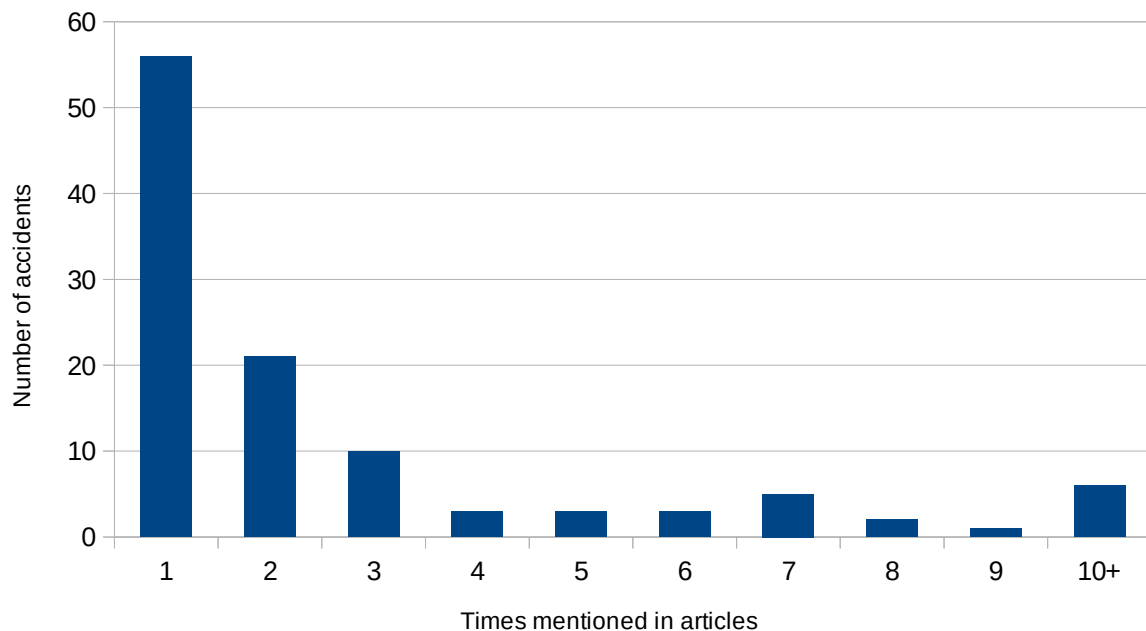


Fig. 4.3 Frequency of reference for all unique accidents/incidents in the sample articles

This extremely skewed distribution indicates that, setting aside the length or ‘importance’ of each individual article, most accidents appear worthy of only minimal follow-up, if any. This general pattern was anticipated as a likely finding early in the research process, but the degree to which most accidents obtain little coverage was surprising. This has implications for the importance of examining these accidents in future research (see Chapters 5 and 6).

Common themes in accidents appearing in multiple articles

Content analysis of all incidents mentioned in four or more articles was undertaken to establish any recurring themes or possible explanations for their newsworthiness. This amounted to a total of 23 accidents or incidents. The total number of articles referring to an accident proved to be potentially misleading at times, as heavily syndicated articles could make an accident with only one or two unique articles appear as if it had been mentioned more frequently until subjected to closer analysis. At the same time, it could simply reflect a significant accident where only one reporter was present, and/or when the convenience of syndication outweighed any potential benefits that might be gained from unique articles (The *frequency* value suggested by Galtung & Ruge (1965) may have some relevance here, as described in greater detail later in this chapter). As the intricacies of syndicated content were not able to be examined in detail during this study, the topic poses questions regarding the possible relevance of syndicated articles that cannot be answered at this time. Of relevance to the results of this study, however, is a simple conclusion: without better understanding of the effects and causes of syndication, ranking the ‘importance’ of an accident against other events via article-count is unreliable unless a gross difference is apparent. Such ranking also excludes possible confounding variables such as other news events present at the time of publication. However, experience with this study suggests that while ranking of accidents in this way can be somewhat less than reliable, it is still a valuable tool for identifying accidents of high newsworthiness, and as such it was retained as a method. Table 4.8 summarises the six accidents mentioned ten or more times within the sampled articles, including the number of articles in which each accident or incident appeared.

Table 4.8 Summary of all accidents referenced ten or more times

Articles	Date	Location	Accident Type	Description	Accident Themes
107	September 4 th , 2010	Fox Glacier Aerodrome	Plane crash	Skydiving aircraft crashed shortly after take-off, all 9 on board killed	Aircraft accident, fatal, no survivors, drawn-out investigation, international tourists, drug use, change to regulation/practices
42	January 7 th , 2012	Carterton	Hot air balloon crash	Struck power-lines and caught fire. 11 killed	Aircraft accident, fatal, no survivors, international tourists, drug use, change to regulations/practices
28	November 21 st , 2015	Fox Glacier	Helicopter crash	Helicopter crashed on glacier, 7 killed	Aircraft accident, fatal, no survivors, difficult rescue/recovery
21	April 29 ^h , 2008	Kawarau River, near Queenstown	Drowning	Participant in a river-boarding activity was drowned	Drowning, fatal, accident prior to sample period, international tourists, change to regulations/practices, drawn-out investigation, Adventure Tourism Review, alleged negligence
17	January 7 th , 2015	Lake Taupo	Plane crash	Engine failure after takeoff. Skydivers and crew parachuted to safety	Aircraft accident, no fatalities survival story, 'miracle' story, international tourists, unusual within sample
13	August 5 th , 2014	Poolburn Reservoir, Central Otago	Plane crash	Scenic flight crashed: pilot killed, 2 passengers injured	Aircraft Accident, fatal, international tourists

These incidents served well as case studies for this research. The use of case research is generally considered appropriate when examining novel and complex situations, such as when there are many variables and an unknown or inconsistent pattern of variables (Nelson, 1996). While this study can only briefly examine each case, identifying important accidents to serve as case studies may be important to future research. A summary of each accident in Table 4.8, and its print media coverage within the sample, is therefore included below:

Skydiving aircraft crash, Fox Glacier Aerodrome (2010)

By far the single most mentioned accident in the sample, appearing in 107 articles, this accident occurred when a fully-loaded skydiving aircraft crashed shortly after take-off from the Fox Glacier Aerodrome, killing all 4 passengers and 5 crew on board. Due to the sheer volume of articles, and limitations in the recording methods used for this study, analysis of mentions for an accident of this prominence was extremely difficult. Examination was limited to key themes, narratives, and the identification and testing of 'news values' within the media coverage of this accident.

Early reports of the accident focused on the sudden nature and basic facts of the crash. While the cause of the crash was yet to be determined, the controversy that would ultimately occur over the accident had not yet begun. To use Galtung & Ruge's (1965) values, the crash was both *unexpected*, *bad news (negativity)*, and *unambiguous*. The location of the crash in the tourism hotspot of Fox Glacier may also have played a role in the prominence of the accident in the news media: Galtung & Ruge (1965) identify the presence of '*elite nations or regions*' as a factor in newsworthiness, and while the initial meaning of this was on a more international scale, it may well be true within a domestic media context as well. Media coverage also focused on the stories of locals who had witnessed the crash. This included the account of the local fire chief, whose house was only 50m from the crash site. This allowed additional usage of *personification*, an additional media value (Galtung & Ruge, 1965).

Reports also focused on the trauma the accident had caused to both the local community and the wider aviation community. One example of this appears in the initial reporting of the crash for the Sunday Star Times, published the day after the accident:

"Franz Josef skydiving operator James Meldrum was one of the first people on the scene. "I'm a volunteer fireman so I was on the scene. As a skydiving operator it's a tragic thing to see. I'm quite traumatised. It's a small industry skydiving, we do know them, they're fairly close to us. The whole glacier community is stunned and devastated.""

(Nine dead as plane crashes in fireball, Sunday Star Times, 5th September, 2010, p.14)

In the case of this accident the close-knit nature of the local community, and the wider aviation sector, increases the effective impact of the accident (the 'threshold' value referred to by Galtung & Ruge, 1965).

Early coverage of the accident was complicated by the crash occurring on the same day as the first of the Canterbury earthquakes. With television crews occupied with the damage to the Christchurch area, attention was diverted away from the crash. Grant Shimmin, in an opinion piece published in the Timaru Herald almost two months after the crash, commented on this effect on coverage:

"Not much more than nine hours after the quake, the first brief reports started to pop up online and on television of a plane crash at Fox Glacier, on the South Island's remote West Coast, in which people had died. Early reports said three were dead, but before too long, the death toll was confirmed as nine.

The crash on take-off of that plane, from a skydiving company, with several overseas tourists on board, was one of the worst aviation disasters in New Zealand and it's safe to say that, had it happened on any other day, there would have been extensive coverage.

...That day's air crash will have left some indelible scars, on families, on a small coastal community, and it certainly won't be forgotten.

But with some 100,000 homes damaged, and many uninhabitable, the quake will be with tens of thousands of people affected by it for the rest of their lives. For most people in Canterbury and surrounds, I'm sure that's what September 4, 2010 will be remembered for.

(A tragedy overshadowed by a disaster, Timaru Herald, 28th October, 2010, p.10. Abridged.)

Indeed, the prime minister (who also served as Minister of Tourism) himself stated while visiting the scene of the crash that he would have been there earlier had it not been for the earthquake (Key shows sympathy for Fox, *The Press*, 17th September, 2010). Despite these concerns that the accident would be overshadowed, the accident was by far the single most-mentioned incident within the sample. Early coverage by newspapers, while possibly reduced by earthquake coverage, was quite extensive. This indicates that despite the disruption caused by the earthquake, the accident occurred "conveniently within the production cycle" of those media outlets with reporters in the area, satisfying the *frequency* value described by Galtung & Ruge

(1965). It is also possible that due to the events in Canterbury, those outlets that had access to the crash site at Fox Glacier gained *exclusivity*, an additional media value identified in contemporary studies (Harcup & O'Neil 2016). Despite this, the effect on overall coverage, at that time, was likely negative based on what media commentary was contained within this part of the sample.

In the longer-term the drawn-out and troubled investigation into the crash, as well as its severity, its use as context for later accidents (in particular those involving aviation) and its impact on policy and practice all resulted in many more news articles over the following years. It is also possible, though likely impossible to prove, that the accident may well have been less prominent in the media had the September 2010 earthquake not itself been overshadowed by the greater tragedy of the 2011 Christchurch earthquakes that devastated the city and killed 185 people. Closer examination of the timeline of coverage of this accident, particularly when compared to other major accidents may allow the identification of any impacts of the Christchurch Earthquakes on coverage.

Initial reports by the Transport Accident Investigation Commission (TAIC) found that the aircraft had been overloaded, a claim almost immediately disputed by operators familiar with the aircraft. Other articles drew attention to the manufacturer of the aircraft objecting to one of the modifications used on this particular aircraft (a more powerful engine), and competing theories regarding the cause of the crash. Later, coverage over the release of the final report would also cover disputes, with competing causes attributed by TAIC and coroners. Eventually, the TAIC would re-open the investigation and declare that the true cause of the accident could not be established. Several rule changes regarding the modification and loading of aircraft were made as a result of the crash, some temporary and others permanent. It is very likely that the high profile of the accident also caused it to influence wider rule changes over the following years, though a causative relationship would be beyond the scope of this study to determine. This drawn out investigative process created a story of *conflict*, an important media value (Harcup & O'Neil, 2016). As the media was previously invested in the crash and the investigation – the value of *continuity*'(Galtung & Ruge, 1965) – each new major development in the investigations was in itself a newsworthy event, generating further articles.

An additional area of interest, one not covered by traditional measures of media values, is the use of this accident as an example to give context or background to other stories. Though other accidents were used as background or context in many cases, this particular accident was used particularly frequently. This is likely a side-effect of the wider prominence of the accident within the New Zealand domestic media (including the print media examined for this study). It may also relate to the time at which the accident occurred (this would come under the category of increasing *meaningfulness* under Galtung & Ruge's (1965) framework), although this possibility would require a more extensive analysis in order to prove or disprove. In any case, the 2010 Fox Glacier skydiving crash became a common accident to refer to as background to a wide variety of accidents, including those not related to aviation. Similar patterns have been noted before relating to the widespread and enduring influence of the 1995 Cave Creek disaster (Espiner, 2001), and so this is potentially an example of a wider pattern in the media. While use outside the topic of adventure tourism accident reporting cannot be known without further study, it appears possible that this accident took on greater meaning in the media landscape, or simply served as a major event that could be referred to when reporting on tourism accidents in general. Further research may reveal more information regarding this phenomena and potential reasons for its occurrence.

It is clear that the combination of the factors of the accident itself (a plane crash with no survivors, involving international tourists and well-known members of a tight-knit community in a significant (or 'elite') tourism destination, on a day when New Zealand was rocked by a major natural disaster), the long-running and ultimately inconclusive investigations into the cause of the accident, and its impacts on the affected sectors, combine to make this a truly uniquely important accident within the sample, having a major impact on the adventure tourism sector, and potentially the nation as a whole, for years after the accident occurred. Further study is required to investigate the coverage and impacts of this particular accident, and is likely to reveal valuable insights into the reporting of major accidents in general, as well as the reporting of adventure tourism accidents.

Hot-air balloon crash, Carterton (2012)

The crash of a hot air balloon in Carterton on January 7th 2012 appeared in 42 articles within the sample. As with the Fox Glacier crash, the accident involved an aircraft crashing (again, in flames) with the loss of all eleven people on board. This crash featured the worst loss of life in a New Zealand aviation accident since the Mt Erebus disaster in 1979. Coverage of the accident was generally neutral, focusing on the horror of the accident and of the need for answers. An opinion piece published in the Nelson Mail two days after the crash carries the general mood of this early coverage, if perhaps slightly more emotively than the regular news articles, stating:

“With 11 deaths, this was New Zealand's worst air disaster since an Air New Zealand scenic flight hit Mt Erebus in 1979, claiming 257 people. The balloon struck power cables before plunging in flames from some 150 metres. The sheer terror felt by those on the flight, and the horror and disbelief among those watching from the ground, is not difficult to imagine.

It is unwise to speculate on possible causes of such incidents - the air accident investigation will be painstaking. The weather was clear, calm and warm - perfect conditions - and the region is well known for ballooning. The owner and pilot of the ballon (sic) could hardly have been more experienced, modern balloon construction and materials are robust and the safety checks stringent.”

(Another shocking aviation tragedy, Nelson Mail, 9th January 2012, p.9)

The headline of the article also provides a possible link to other accidents, in particular the 2010 Fox Glacier skydiving aircraft crash described previously. By describing the accident as “*another* shocking aviation tragedy” (emphasis my own), a link is made that was later referred to within the article. As accidents, the two crashes at Fox Glacier and Carterton were very different, with the shared elements being of aircraft crashes, with significant fatality counts and no survivors, and involving adventure tourism and international visitors. Yet as events in the media the two are linked greatly. This poses questions: It is likely that the ability to link the two accidents together increases the visibility of the former accident (through its being mentioned as a background element or for context on the wider adventure tourism sector and accidents therein), but to what extent this occurs, what impact it may have, and what effect it may have on the newsworthiness of the *later* accident are all unknown, and should be the focus of future study.

The story of the Carterton crash satisfied many of Galtung & Ruge's (1965) criteria for newsworthiness: Sufficient impact to meet thresholds, unambiguity, being unexpected, being able to be personified through talking to or about individuals involved, and being a negative story. Using Harcup & O'Neil's (2016) contemporary news values framework, the story featured bad news, surprise, audio-visuals (although these were not examined for this study due to the limitations of the NewzTextPlus database), drama, relevance within existing narratives of adventure tourism safety, and high magnitude. The relevance of the crash in particular seemed to draw from the existing coverage of the Fox Glacier skydiving crash, with the accident frequently mentioned as background or context, despite the two accidents being almost entirely unrelated.

While early coverage speculated over the cause of the crash, moral judgements were largely absent until an initial report into the accident published by the Civil Aviation Authority revealed the pilot had THC, the active chemical in cannabis, present in his blood. This revelation, combined with the news two days earlier that THC had also been found in the blood of two of the skydiving staff on the aircraft involved in the Fox Glacier skydiving crash (though this was not alleged to have had any role in the accident), led to calls for compulsory drug testing in adventure aviation (which was ultimately brought in) and wider adventure tourism. Reporting on the developments regarding drug testing conveyed the possibility of a mixed outcome from the beginning of the process, with the New Zealand Herald, among others, reporting that:

"Prime Minister John Key said it was completely unacceptable that cannabis had been found in the systems of both the balloon crash pilot and the two skydivers.

He said mandatory drug testing in the adventure tourism industry looked likely to be necessary and he had asked Labour Minister Kate Wilkinson to look into it.

Ms Wilkinson said she would prefer the industry take it up voluntarily before legislation to make it mandatory."

('Dope shock makes tests likely', New Zealand Herald, 11th May 2012, p. A002)

Mr Key's phrasing is of particular interest and is similar to that used in statements by other officials within the sampled articles. An examination of the additional articles in which the Prime Minister is quoted suggests that his approach was pragmatic: he does not commit to legislation, instead giving the implication while only committing to examine the possibility. This is likely due to the severe negative reactions to the revelation of drug use potentially contributing to an accident. While the articles in New Zealand newspapers are, for the most part, fairly measured with the exception of some papers quoting a father of one of the victims describing the 'question of drugs' (in the accident investigation) as "a sign of a sick society" (Dope in pilot's body sign of 'sick society', *The Press*, 11th May 2012, p.5), other coverage including radio and television and in particular coverage of the news in the international media may not have been so reserved, judging by an opinion piece by an unknown author in the Herald on Sunday a few days later:

"Such a strong statement from the top was needed. The father of 24-year-old Englishman Bradley Coker, who died in the 2010 crash, has been widely interviewed in the British press this week, urging people not to come here. The drug revelations will surely add fuel to that fire.

But if Key's response is the proper one for international consumption, we should be at pains to avoid a rush to judgment (sic) here. Several media organisations quickly scampered for the moral high ground, among them Mary Wilson on Radio New Zealand National's Checkpoint, who was somewhat hysterically referring to "drug abuse" and a divemaster "[jumping] out of a plane when he was stoned".

(No time for reefer madness panic, Herald on Sunday, 13th May, 2012, p. A037)

Later coverage indicated that some operators had indeed voluntarily taken up drug testing both before and after the Carterton accident, however legislation covering adventure tourism operators outside the aviation industry was ultimately not pursued.

An article in the Nelson Mail in September of 2015 reported that documents obtained under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) revealed the government had examined the possibility of introducing drug testing in response to the Carterton accident, but rejected it as 'too complex'. In particular the cost and complexity of keeping up with an increasing number of new drugs that did not trigger standard tests appeared to motivate the decision not to legislate. Family members of the Carterton victims opposed this development, but as of 2019 it appears that no

action was taken in this area. Despite this, the rule changes regarding the aviation sector can be directly attributed to the Carterton crash and the response to it following the efforts of the CAA and TAIC to investigate the crash. However, whether these were in response to the media coverage and the Prime Minister's directive to examine legislation, or a response to recommendations made as a regular part of such investigations, cannot be determined by a study of this type. However the plausible role of the media in the decision to pursue changes in regulation can be considered strong supporting evidence for the importance of media portrayals of accidents such as the Carterton crash.

Helicopter crash, Fox Glacier (2015)

The third-most referenced accident occurred very late in the sample, with the crash of an AS350D helicopter on the 21st of November 2015 on a scenic flight over the Fox Glacier, killing all 7 passengers and crew on board. The cause of the crash was never fully established, but a Transport Accident Investigation Commission report released in May 2019 found that the aircraft was operating above its maximum weight, in poor weather, and with an inexperienced and improperly-trained pilot (Transport Accident Investigation Commission, 2019). The release of the report was covered in media (eg: Carroll, Long & Clarkson, 2019) but this coverage was not analysed due to being outside of the sampled period. The 28 articles in the sample focused on the crash, loss of life, details of the lives of the passengers and crew, and of the extremely difficult operation to recover bodies and wreckage from crevasses on the glacier. As the accident was so very close to the end of the sample, temporally speaking, analysis of this accident can only cover the very early reporting on the crash and subsequent recovery operation. However, these provide useful examples of reporting styles and trends seen elsewhere in the sample.

As with other highly-mentioned accidents, the story of this accident met many established criteria for newsworthiness. Using Galtung & Ruge's set of news values, the accident easily met the *threshold*, *unambiguity*, *unexpectedness*, *continuity*, *personification*, and *negativity* criteria. Re-examining with Harcup & O'Neil's contemporary values, the accident met the criteria for the *bad news*, *surprise*, *audio-visuals*, *drama*, *follow-up*, *relevance*, and *magnitude* values. While one of these values (audio-visuals) could not be ascertained directly from the sample as images are not recorded in the NewzTextPlus database, reference to images and additional research undertaken as part of an abandoned pilot project early in the study allowed confirmation that

“arresting photographs” (Harcup & O’Neil, 2016) of the wreckage were a prominent feature of early reporting in particular.

An initial report into the crash published on November 22nd 2015 by the Sunday Star Times provides an example of the use of prior accidents as context for a report. The article lists a number of aviation accidents in the general area of Fox Glacier occurring between 2008 and 2015, though none were of an entirely similar nature. One example, a one-sentence description of a skydiving aircraft suffering a landing accident, is the only mention of this accident in the entire sample. This form of list was not uncommon after major accidents, as were unique mentions of accidents within such lists.

This article by the Sunday Star Times also serves as a useful example of the tendency of ‘factual’-structure articles to report on moral judgements. As the identities of the deceased passengers had not been released, coverage in this and other early articles focused on the pilot, almost acting as a form of eulogy.

“Gameren was passionate about flying and had racked up almost 3000 flying hours around the world, including working for a safari operator in Botswana and more recently as a Medevac pilot in Malaysia.

He had returned from Malaysia only a month ago and resumed his "summer job" based at Franz Josef for Alpine Adventures.

"He loved flying and flew many different aircraft including fixed wing but he also really loved fishing and hunting," said Bray.

Bray said he had not been told how the accident happened. "There's not much point in finding out really. It doesn't matter now. He's gone."

(Ice Traps Bodies, Sunday Star Times, 22nd November, 2015. p.1)

This manner of reporting on victims was near universal within the sample, at least in major accidents where no blame had been attributed. Similar phrasing was noted in early articles on the Carterton hot-air ballooning crash, stressing the experience and skill of the pilot (who was, as mention previously, later found to have used cannabis before the flight and generally spoken of less charitably in the media following this revelation). This personification of an accident via

focusing on those involved generally avoids casting negative judgements, at least in the early stages.

While fatal aviation accidents appear several times within the sample, the difficulties faced by the government agencies tasked with body recovery and investigating the crash were distinctly unusual, owing to the location of the crash-site on an actively moving glacier. Reports over the following days covered the initial recovery of four of the seven victims, efforts to survey the scene via drone, and bad weather delaying further efforts. These articles were syndicated between Fairfax/Stuff newspapers. Some speculation appeared over the cause of the crash, with a New Zealand Herald article on November 24th consulting competing experts regarding whether the state of the crashed helicopter's rotor indicated anything to do with a possible mechanical failure. Coverage largely ended after the recovery of the remaining victims and the beginning of the investigation, followed shortly thereafter by the end of the sampled period.

Though coverage of this accident was cut short, one opinion piece in particular shows how this accident, in the media landscape at least, was linked to earlier accidents. Published in The Press on November 24th, the author stresses the need for a careful and thorough investigation (a narrative that appears extremely common after major aviation accidents in this sample), linking this to the 2010 plane crash at the Fox Glacier Aerodrome:

“An awful feeling of deja vu has settled over the small West Coast township, which only five years ago was struggling to cope with the aftermath of another aviation tourism calamity. Nine people were killed on September 4, 2010, when the skydiving plane they were in crashed on takeoff at the small Fox Glacier aerodrome.

The Transport Accident Investigation Commission (TAIC) report into that and its conclusions were subsequently panned by other experts. Last month, the commission released a second report, with new conclusions, in which it said it had been badly resourced at the time and admitted handling evidence poorly.

...Given the problems with the last commission investigation at Fox Glacier, it is even more vital that this accident is explored thoroughly and correctly.” (Fox crash needs thorough probe, The Press, 24th November, 2015. p.12. Abridged.)

Indeed, while a full cause was never established, the TAIC investigation into this accident would ultimately take over three years to deliver a final report. The lengthy time-spans involved in accident investigation in New Zealand were noted a number of times within the sample.

River-boarding drowning, Kawarau River (2008)

A rare case of an accident occurring well before the sample period yet still being covered in significant detail was the death of Emily Jordan on a guided river-boarding trip on the Kawarau river in 2008. This accident, referenced in 21 articles within the sample, is credited as the catalyst for the hugely influential Adventure Tourism Review, after lobbying by Ms. Jordan's father. Though the involvement of the latter is not mentioned, this accident is directly referred to in the introduction to the review itself:

"On 16 September 2009, the Prime Minister of New Zealand wrote to the Minister of Labour (the Minister) expressing concern about a number of incidents in the adventure and outdoor commercial sectors, including the tragic death of young British backpacker Emily Jordan. The Prime Minister noted public concerns about the various regulatory regimes governing these activities.

The Prime Minister advised the Minister that he would like the Department of Labour (the Department) to lead a cross-departmental group to investigate and report back on the situation and ways of improving risk management and safety in the sector. He asked for a report on the group's findings and suggestions from the Minister on any changes necessary. "

(Department of Labour, 2010. p.12)

The newsworthiness of this accident appeared particularly complex, including public allegations of poor safety by the operator (and of the wider adventure tourism sector), a drawn out criminal investigation and a long-lasting influence on legislation around adventure tourism in New Zealand.

Examining the accident through Galtung & Ruge's (1965) values, the accident is not by itself particularly large and did not *directly* affect a great number of people, and as such does not appear to satisfy the *threshold* value. Instead, the accident appears to meet the criteria of *meaningfulness, continuity, personification, and negativity*. Using Harcup & O'Neil's (2016) framework the accident meets the criteria of the *bad news, conflict, drama, follow-up*, and

possibly *magnitude*. In addition it most likely meets the criteria for *the power elite* due to the involvement of prominent political figures and its impact on legislation and the Adventure Tourism Review.

From examination of the tail-end of news coverage captured in this sample (and recognising a confounding factor in the lack of initial reporting within the sample), it appears that this accident had great significance not necessarily for what happened in the accident itself, but how it spurred changes within the adventure tourism industry. Further examination of the coverage of this accident *outside* of the sampled time period in future research would be necessary to be certain of this, however.

Initial coverage within the sample occurred as the Adventure Tourism Review progressed, as Ms. Jordan's father and families of other individuals killed in adventure tourism accidents in New Zealand lobbied for particular measures, such as compulsory licensing for adventure tourism operators (Adventure license not the answer, *The Daily Post*, 12th January 2010, page A008), as well as expressing discomfort with the length of time being taken for the review (Families dismayed by review delay, *The Press*, 12th January 2010, page 3). These early articles credit Mr. Jordan's lobbying of the prime minister with causing the review to be undertaken.

Later mentions of the accident occurred as the review progressed, with the accident frequently being used as background or context. When speaking of the conclusions of the Adventure Tourism Review, one opinion piece in the Nelson Mail stated:

"It is unfortunate that it has taken two high-profile deaths - one from a Manawatu bridge swing, the other from a river-boarding accident in Queenstown - to finally prod a reluctant government to take action."

(Adventure tourism checks are overdue, Nelson Mail, 26th August 2010, p.7)

Following the conclusion of the Adventure Tourism Review, mentions of this accident became rather more sparse. Reports mentioned the accident when the company involved in the accident changed its name, and in detailing an ongoing feud between the operator and the father of the victim, who claimed that the operator had never apologised for his daughter's death ('Horror' over attitude to fatality, *The Press*, 27th May 2011, page 3). Following this last direct mention, only three remaining articles mentioned the accident, with one each in 2013,

2014 and 2015. These used the accident as background or context for articles reporting on more recent accidents.

The last mention of this accident occurred in a Southland Times article primarily concerned with the 2015 Fox Glacier helicopter crash (as described previously in this section), which effectively credits this accident with effecting change to the sector:

“Prime Minister John Key ordered a government review of the adventure sector in 2009, after British tourist Emily Jordan, 21, drowned during a Mad Dog River Boarding trip near Queenstown in 2008. New regulations governing commercial adventure activities were enacted in 2011 and operators must pass audits and register with WorkSafe New Zealand.”

(DNA tests reveal fourth body found, Southland Times, 24th November 2015. p.4)

Indeed, it appears this accident captured media attention through its significant impact on policy and practice in New Zealand. In particular the level of media coverage indicates this accident’s role as the catalyst for the Adventure Tourism Review and subsequent changes to rules governing adventure tourism. Whether this role complements or is separate from the facts of the accident that may have served to initially bring the accident to the attention of media is impossible to determine within the limited sample obtained by this study.

Skydiving aircraft crash, Lake Taupo (2015)

The fifth-most referred-to accident is distinctive in that it is one of very few accidents in the ‘frequently mentioned’ category in which no one died. On the 7th of January 2015 a skydiving aircraft suffered a catastrophic engine failure shortly after takeoff from an aerodrome near Lake Taupo. All 13 people on board were able to parachute to safety before the aircraft crashed into the lake. This accident was referenced in 17 articles in the sample, with possible gaps in early coverage from Stuff/Fairfax newspapers (all early results appeared from NZME titles). Early coverage praised the pilot and skydiving crew for saving their passengers, with the NZME title *Hawkes Bay Today* opening its reporting with:

“A pilot has been praised for quick thinking after 13 people, including six tourists, were forced to jump from a skydiving plane that crashed into Lake Taupo yesterday.

There were no deaths or serious injuries in the "miraculous" incident which was observed by holidaymakers on the lake's shoreline at about 12.15pm. Six crew members and six foreign passengers were on board and evacuated the aircraft in tandem. The pilot also exited the plane by parachute.”

(Pilot praised for quick thinking, Hawkes Bay Today, 8th January 2015, p. A003)

While it did emerge later that the pilot had in fact accidentally broken a safety rule by bailing out of the doomed aircraft while two skydivers (an instructor and tourist) were still inside the aircraft, the pilot was not judged harshly for this by the media, likely due to the official report noting that due to the colour of the aircraft interior it appeared the pilot had simply not seen the pair when checking to see if the plane was empty before making their own escape. This information, among other updates, were covered as information was released by the investigation, which ultimately determined that a defect in the plane’s engine caused the catastrophic failure that doomed the aircraft.

News media also covered the individual skydivers, including the story of a tourist who returned a month after the crash to carry out the same jump that had been planned on the day of the crash (Crash jumper takes the plunge again, *The Daily Post*, 4th February 2015, page A014).

This accident is unusual within the sample, and highlights problems with Galtung & Ruge’s framework of news values. The crash satisfies the *threshold, unambiguity, unexpectedness, continuity, and personification*. The latter value in particular was apparently through coverage of the survivors of the crash. However, while this accident is undoubtedly ‘bad news’ and would satisfy the *negativity* value to some extent, it is also a ‘good news’ story, something that Galtung & Ruge’s framework fails to account for.

Re-examining the accident and its narratives through Harcup & O’Neil’s (2016) framework, the crash satisfies the values of *surprise, drama, magnitude*, and arguably both the ‘good news’ and ‘bad news’ values. The value of drama in particular appears to be under-regarded in the older framework, and is present in a number of the most-mentioned accidents. This highlights a failing of news value frameworks: while they account for elements that may make a story more

newsworthy, they do not account for *all* elements. As both Galtung & Ruge's (1965) and Harcup & O'Neil's (2016) frameworks are designed for *general* use, they have a common failure in lacking specificity when applied to a narrow topic such as adventure tourism accidents.

Ultimately, coverage of the accident was limited to the initial accident reporting, with some level of following up. The accident was generally not referenced as background in the same way as a fatal accident might have been. Future research using tone analysis or other methods could shed further light on the differences between reporting of this entirely remarkable accident in which no individuals were hurt beyond some scrapes and bruises, and those receiving similar media attention in which people were seriously injured or killed.

Scenic flight crash, Poolburn Reservoir (2014)

On August 5th, 2014 a plane carrying tourists on a sightseeing flight over areas used for the filming of the *Lord of the Rings* trilogy crashed near the Poolburn reservoir in central Otago. The pilot of the plane was killed in the crash, while the two international tourists on board as passengers were injured. The survivors were rescued some time later after a signal from the plane's emergency beacon was detected by emergency services.

Using Galtung & Ruge's (1965) framework of news values, the accident meets the criteria for the *unambiguity, unexpectedness, and negativity* values. The accident had relatively little personification in news coverage. This may indicate a lack of information available to the media. The remote crash sight may also have impacted coverage in some way, however this could not be examined in this study.

The crash was referred to in 13 articles in total. However, four initial reports were syndicated articles, though these varied in length between publications. A further five articles following up on the crash were also syndicated between different outlets. As such, while the crash was widely reported, these reports did not differ greatly. This was not uncommon within the sample, particularly when regarding those accidents at the lower end of the list of potentially significant accidents. Coverage of the crash was dominated by factually-structured articles. The nature of the accident, a plane crash, is likely the reason for such heavy coverage, though the lack of detail further suggests a possible lack of information available for media to report on.

Summary of most-mentioned accidents

These six most-referred accidents provide numerous illustrations of how print media covered adventure tourism accidents in the 2010-2015 period. These were of course not the only accidents to receive significant attention in the media during this time. The remainder of the accidents flagged as potentially significant are summarised below in Table 4.9. It is difficult, given the myriad of factors, to firmly pin down what makes an accident newsworthy. The work of Galtung & Ruge (1965) and Harcup & O’Neil (2016) aid in this process, but these frameworks, as evaluated later in this chapter, do not entirely translate effectively to examining accident coverage specifically (rather than the general purposes for which they were designed). Through examination of factors outside the existing news frameworks these systems may be evaluated and greater understanding gained.

Table 4.9 Summary of accidents mentioned in 4-10 sampled articles

Articles	Date	Location	Accident Type	Description	Accident Themes
9	March 7 th , 2009	Ballance Bridge, near Woodville, Manawatu	Fall	Participant in bridge swing fell to her death when rope was not checked before activity	Roped Activity, fatal, prior to sample period, changes to regulation/policies, Adventure Tourism Review, negligence
8	December 2010 (exact date uncertain)	Marlborough Sounds	Propeller strike on swimmer	Participant in swim-with-dolphins activity struck by boat propeller	Marine Activity, non-fatal, international tourist(s), survival story, change to practices/operations
8	October 11 th , 2012	Onewhero	Quad-bike crash	Participant in quad-bike tour crashed due to poorly-maintained vehicle, killed	Quad-biking, fatal, negligence, avoidance of responsibility by operator (liquidated business to avoid fine)
7	Early 2013	Near Hellensville	Fall	Participant in high-wire adventure course fell to death	Roped activity, fatal, minimal detail, impact on industry, potential high significance
7	March 7 th , 2013	Glacier Peak	Fall	German climber fell into crevasse, injured	Non-guided, no fatalities, climbing, rescue story, international tourist(s), use as context as recent accident

Articles	Date	Location	Accident Type	Description	Accident Themes
7	November 8 th , 2014	Mt Victoria, Wellington	Fall	Foreign tourist fell from unofficial rope swing used in official tourism marketing, injured	Roped-activity (edge case), no fatalities, international tourist(s), change to regulation/practice (marketing), ineffectiveness of warning signs
7	June 20 th , 2015	Driving Creek Railway, Coromandel	Fall	2 year old child fell from carriage and 9m down embankment on scenic railway	Railway, Edge case, No fatalities, injury of a child, unique within sample
7	January 10 th , 2015	Shotover River	Jetboat crash	Commercial jetboat struck rock, injuring 6	Jetboat, no fatalities, injury of a child, domestic tourists, international tourist(s)
6	February 19 th , 2015	Lochy Valley, near Queenstown	Helicopter crash	Helicopter run by adventure firm crashed on flight training staff. 2 pilots killed.	Aircraft accident, fatal, staff-only, training, edge case, temporary impact (grounding of similar helicopters)
6	October 28 th , 2013	Tyndall Glacier	Helicopter crash	Helicopter on scenic flight landed hard after pilot blinded by snow. Helicopter then collided with second (landed) helicopter, damaging both aircraft.	Aircraft accident, no fatalities, heavy syndication, international tourist(s), no followup except as context
6	On or about May 9 th , 2010	Waiiau Ferry Bridge, near Hanmer Springs	Fall	Australian tourist injured when she slipped from rope during bungee-jump	Bungee-jumping, no fatalities, 'unsafe operations' (fined), international tourist(s)
5	August 10 th , 2015	Near Queenstown	Avalanche	Australian tourist caught in avalanche during heliskiing trip, killed.	Heliskiing, fatal, international tourists(s)
5	January, 2011 (exact date unknown)	Queenstown	Aircraft incident (injury on takeoff)	Polish tourist injured when sky-diving aircraft took off due to not being secured	Aircraft incident, no fatalities, ACC coverage of tourists, international tourist(s), personal responsibility

Articles	Date	Location	Accident Type	Description	Accident Themes
5	August 16 th , 2014	Mt. Alta	Helicopter crash	Heliskiing flight crashed. 1 killed, 6 injured.	Aircraft accident, fatal, coverage continued beyond sample, investigation report published after sample (2017)
4	November 28 th , 1979	Mt Erebus, Ross Dependency, Antarctica	Plane crash	DC-10 on scenic flight over Antarctica crashed into mountain, 279 killed	Aircraft accident, fatal, high death toll, no survivors, international tourist(s), historical incident, change to regulation/practice
4	Circa 2012 or 2013	Area around Porirua	Fall	Participant in high-rope activity died due to fall from rope.	High-rope. Fatal, minimal details in sample, accident exclusive for context, impact on industry, single syndicated set
4	February 12 th , 1962	Fiordland area	Plane crash	DeHavilland Dragonfly aircraft disappeared on scenic flight, five killed	Aircraft accident, fatal, no survivors, accident prior to sample period, historical, single syndicated set

Air accidents may be inherently newsworthy: Out of the 23 candidates for analysis 11 accidents/incidents directly involved aviation, with an additional accident tangentially related to aviation (the death of a skier caught in an avalanche while heliskiing). Indeed when examining the six accidents covered ten or more times (and that were thus chosen for more detailed examination above), only one event did not involve an aircraft crash of some form. A confounding factor in this case is that due to the intensive processes involved in air-crash investigation, the inquiries into these accidents tended to take an extremely long time. This also appears to be a factor in and of itself: Accidents which had a drawn-out period of investigation or influence are reported more frequently than those which did not (provided that they are significant enough for the investigation to *be* reported). This extends to accidents which ultimately influence the rules and regulations under which adventure tourism operates, such as the 2012 Carterton hot-air balloon crash, the 2008 drowning on the Kowarau River, and the 2009 death of a participants in a bridge

swing (see Table 4.9) jointly credited with the Jordan drowning case as sparking the Adventure Tourism Review in some accounts.

All bar one of the accidents mentioned ten or more times featured international tourists, the exception being the Carterton hot-air balloon crash in 2012. When also considering those accidents mentioned between 4 and 10 times, international tourists were present in 14 out of 23 incidents. Whether the presence of international tourists makes these incidents more newsworthy or not is difficult to determine. While it could potentially constitute a case of Galtung & Ruge's "*elite people*" value, it is questionable whether domestic media coverage is increased by this value, or whether such high-impact, high-newsworthiness accidents merely happened to include international tourists through statistical chance. Activities that attract a higher proportion of their participants from international tourists will in any accident involving tourists (as opposed to accidents during support/training activities) have a higher likelihood of the involvement of international tourists, which may have the potential to influence *international* media coverage, particularly in those nations from which tourists originate. It should be noted however that the use of the popular meaning of 'tourism' in this study may bias the selection of activities more likely to involve international tourists. However this does not exclude a domestic effect, and the involvement of international visitors and its potential influence on international media is still of interest. Having a victim or survivor from the home nation of an international media organisation would allow for greater personification of an accident narrative than would be the case otherwise, and as such this should still be considered an important factor in analysis of tourism accident coverage.

A factor in most, but not all of the most-mentioned accidents was a high level of detail available to reporters. While some prominent accidents had only minimal detail (such as a fall at a high-wire adventure course near Helensville at some time in early 2013) and were mentioned more for their impact on industry as an element of background or context, the majority of widely-reported accidents were described in substantial detail. This could be considered a case of Galtung & Ruge's *unambiguity* value. Certainly, reporting on some of these accidents to the levels seen would be impossible without the significant factual details available to reporters. However, this did not prevent speculation being reported, particularly during the very long periods between an accident occurring (particularly aircraft accidents), and the release of accident reports by the CAA/TAIC, as well as coroner's inquests and legal cases. This occurred

through the release of information (usually possible causes or objections to interim findings) by experts and those with ties to the individuals and/or companies involved in the accident(s) being investigated.

It appears that having more information available about an incident is linked to more coverage, though it is also likely that more information may be being provided by sources in response to high media attention. This complicates analysis of this as a potential newsworthiness factor.

Cases where an accident is mentioned with little detail but over a number of articles (such as the aforementioned high-wire accident) suggest some accidents are used as contexts for other issues which are themselves newsworthy, rather than the accidents used as examples. Further study using a more refined methodology (eg. splitting the mentioning of accidents between *direct* and *indirect* cases) would be required to pursue this further.

With the exception of the miraculous escape from a burning skydiving aircraft over Lake Taupo, all of the most-mentioned accidents involved the loss of human life. This trend was reduced greatly within the larger candidate group, however this still appears to be a major theme within those accidents which attract considerable media attention. Severe or significant injury also appears newsworthy. A statistical test to examine whether accidents involving deaths and/or significant injuries were mentioned in significantly more articles was considered, but not pursued due to the extreme skew present in the data. However, the academic literature has previously concluded that more spectacular *deaths* are more likely to be reported (Combs & Slovic, 1979. Frost et al. 1997). Negative outcomes are noted in multiple frameworks of news values (eg. Galtung & Ruge, 1965. Harcup & O'Neil, 2016). As death can be considered at the extreme end of a scale of negative outcomes possible in an accident, it is logical that its presence would increase newsworthiness.

Magazine pilot study

Prior to the discontinuation of the pilot study, 244 items of interest were identified from the magazines examined. Of these *Wilderness* featured the largest number of items (185), followed by *Adventure* (45), *North & South* (10), and *NZ TravelTrade* (4). No other publications examined featured any items of interest for this study. It is important to note that unlike the refined sample used for the main study, the magazine search included multimedia items such as

captioned images and advertisements, and is not directly comparable to the main sample gathered from newspapers. While little analysis was conducted due to the focus of the project shifting to newspapers, initial examination during the course of selecting a sample for the pilot study yielded information valuable both to this project, and to future research in this area.

An immediate difference between newspapers and magazines was apparent regarding the theming of titles. Whereas newspapers are general publications, and different titles are largely separated by the geographical area at which they are aimed (for example, the *Southland Times* and *Timaru Herald* covering the Southland and South Canterbury/North Otago regions respectively), magazines examined for the pilot study were published nationally, and separated by *topic*. This had the effect of concentrating potentially relevant items within a small number of publications, while other publications lacked anything directly relevant. This did not appear to indicate an unwillingness to cover negative news: the *Listener* covered the 2010/11 Canterbury Earthquakes and the Pike River Mine disaster in considerable detail over the course of the sampled period, but did not cover any adventure tourism safety topics during that period. However its sister publication *North & South* did cover potentially relevant topics during the same time period. This great difference between titles stands in contrast to the relative uniformity of newspaper coverage, as discussed in chapter 5.

As such, selection of magazine titles is considerably more fraught than when choosing newspapers for a study such as this. Inclusion or omission of a single title may have a considerable impact on the results of a study, especially when only a limited number of titles are available for access. As a direct result of this preliminary finding, plans for more detailed examination of magazine content were largely abandoned. The results indicated in this section are not indicative of an exhaustive study of magazine content within the sampled period. However from the apparent difference in the nature of coverage compared with newspapers, further study of magazine coverage of adventure tourism accidents is warranted.

The large number of potentially relevant items from *Adventure* and *Wilderness* means that conclusions cannot be drawn regarding the overall content of magazines, however some minor findings may be made regarding *outdoor recreation* magazines. One item of interest is the presence of accident and safety narratives in advertisement and public service items. In particular, advertisements for “FastFind” personal locator beacons featured frequently in both titles, and usually included a testimonial describing an accident of one sort or another. As

advertisements could not be examined within the main sample due to the lack of such content in the NewzTextPlus database, the presence or absence of similar items within the newspapers sampled could not be determined. Despite this, a valuable lesson may be drawn from this: that content *other than articles* may be relevant for a study on the media portrayal of accidents. This is discussed further in Chapter 5.

Conclusion

This chapter has presented the results of this wide-ranging exploratory study. The analyses performed covered a variety of attributes within the sample, on both accidents and articles.

Despite the significant limitations of this study, the common themes of aviation accidents being highly newsworthy, that coverage is fairly uniform between publications and publishing companies, that deaths appear to be reported more than injuries, and the observations on the influence on policy or practice that accidents may have are findings of considerable utility. Qualitative work revealed some of the reasons for accident newsworthiness, as well as indicating work for future studies to focus on to reveal more information into the portrayal of adventure tourism accidents in the New Zealand media.

Certain results appear to align closely with what may have been expected. The high prevalence of falls, for example. Yet the high levels of reporting for certain types of accident and activity, those involving aircraft in particular, suggest that there is more to be done to examine the relative newsworthiness of specific accident and activity types. There are many questions yet to be answered, and much to be discussed in relation to how the results conveyed in this chapter tie in to the international literature used as a foundation for this study. This will be covered in the next chapter, Chapter 5.

Discussion

Introduction

Over the course of this study, a picture has emerged of how the New Zealand print media reports on adventure tourism accidents. This chapter discusses key findings relating to the style and substance of the media coverage analysed during the study. This is first done by examining the overall themes and patterns in the sampled media, including that:

- Coverage is predominantly factual
- Coverage is largely uniform between newspaper publishers
- Articles covering adventure tourism accidents appear to be infrequent in the New Zealand print media
- Certain activities and accident types may be over-represented
- Fatal accidents may be over-represented
- Most accidents receive little media attention, but a small number of accidents attract considerable coverage

These findings are covered in order using both the data available from the study and the relevant literature to discuss why these key patterns and themes might be present, and how these findings compare with prior studies.

Following this, further discussion on the latter-most point is included, focusing on those accidents which were the subject of high levels of media attention and examining why certain accidents attract more media attention than others.

Finally, the utility of the tools used and the relevance of studies of this nature are discussed briefly, before the study is concluded in Chapter 6.

Accidents appear to be covered factually, but more can be learned

While speculation on the cause of accidents is not uncommon in major incidents, the analysis of sampled articles suggests that the news media appear to largely report on the events as they occurred, and avoid sensationalism. This is consistent with the findings of Page (1997). The exceptions appeared to be in the early stages of coverage, where information was scarce and incorrect details sometimes appeared. Observing these within the sample required cross-referencing articles, but was done more to establish casualties for accidents than to determine accuracy later. One example of an error in detail that was very quickly corrected occurred in the initial reporting of an accident on a scenic railway in the Coromandel, in which a young child fell from the train and down a steep bank (initially reported as being 20m high, and later corrected to a much lower value). Such corrections were extremely rare, however. More commonly, information was simply missing. This does not refer to those articles that failed to be identified by the initial search methods, or to limitations in the NewzTextPlus database (such as the absence of images, figures, and inconsistent authorial information), but to articles that failed to report on details such as the number of people involved, nationalities, the type of accident, or the activities involved. Establishing accurate casualty counts for all accidents proved impossible, though the presence or absence of injuries and/or fatalities could be established for most accidents. Ultimately though, the level of detail was easily sufficient to complete the objectives of this study.

However, while purely-narrative articles were rare, details were generally accurate, and broad details were usually present even if specifics were not, *this does not indicate impartiality*. The choice of facts to report, the manner in which purely factual information is presented, and the overall tone of reporting are of considerable importance, and can convey a narrative in what existing research would deem a 'factual'-structured article. Indeed the deletion of sections of a syndicated article can wildly change the tone of a piece, to give one example from the literature (Davidson, 2008). Assuming the contrary, as has been done previously (eg. Page, 1997) is not a safe course of action, as important information on tone and perspective are lost when only narrative articles are subjected to deeper analysis. In addition modern methods and technology enable this to be examined in ways that were not possible at the time (eg. computer-aided tone analysis). This could not be examined during this study, however it is a valuable area for future

research using techniques such as tone analysis on samples similar to the one gathered for this study.

An important lesson from this study is that while coverage is generally very similar, the exceptions can be of extreme interest. This is of even more interest given another finding of this study: that coverage of adventure tourism accidents differs little between newspapers.

Coverage is largely uniform between newspapers, but not magazines

Within the 16 newspapers examined, coverage of accidents was largely very similar. This study found syndication occurring in all newspapers bar two: the Sunday News (which only contributed a single article to the sample), and the Sunday Star Times. Word-count was similar between all titles (with the exception of the Sunday Star Times, which featured significantly higher average word-count). The proportion of narrative to factual articles varied, but the significance of these differences could not be established statistically.

The magazine pilot study, though cut short, found rather different results. Levels of coverage varied massively between different magazines, with two of the sampled publications featuring the vast majority of content. Why then are these two areas of the print media so very different?

One answer is likely the lack of plurality within the sampled newspapers, and indeed in the wider New Zealand media landscape. The New Zealand newspaper market is dominated by only two firms: Stuff (formerly Fairfax) and NZME, and this study *only* sampled newspapers published by these two corporations (due to other publishers such as Allied Press not being available in the NewzTextPlus database). If editorial standards are shared between different newspapers within a company, one would expect coverage within each company to be similar. In addition, information from one newspaper can be shared with others within a company, and the use of syndication (discussed in greater detail later in this chapter) allows entire articles to be modified for publication in multiple different newspapers at once. Under these circumstances, it is relatively unsurprising that in *most* newspapers within the sample (with the possible exception of the Sunday Star Times) coverage of accidents differed little from other outlets. This is supported by recent events, in which the Commerce Commission denied permission for NZME and Stuff to merge primarily on the basis of an existing lack of plurality in the news media, and

concerns over the integrity of the sector if the merger were to be approved (Commerce Commission, 2017; Smith, 2017).

The very 'factual' nature of coverage may also be a factor in the uniformity of newspaper coverage. As mentioned previously, articles related to adventure tourism accidents were of a predominantly factual nature. If all newspapers are reporting on the same story, have the same information, and are avoiding sensationalised reporting, to what extent *can* their coverage differ? This study cannot answer this question, however further options for investigation are identified in Chapter 6. A compounding factor is the possibility that news media are operating on very little information, leaving little room for variation in the first place. This was noted as a likely factor in the homogeneous reporting found by Page (1997), however this cannot be confirmed in the contemporary media without further research.

An important note that may be taken from this finding is that the overall uniformity of coverage makes exceptions to this rule more important for study. In the first study of this kind, Page (1997) noted the Sunday Star Times as an exception to the rule of coverage being 'factual' (and not 'dramatized', as he put it), as well as noting a concerted campaign by the Queenstown local newspaper 'Mountain Scene' against perceived poor safety standards in white-water rafting at the time (a campaign which may have succeeded, based on later comments in the media regarding the matter). This difference was still identifiable today, with the Sunday Star Times having significantly longer articles than other papers and featuring some specific articles that would be invaluable to more focused investigations. In particular a roughly 6,000 word article on the Mangatepopo Gorge canyoning disaster of 2008 was of considerable interest, telling the story of the accident, and the series of mistakes and oversights that caused it to happen. Articles such as this are extremely rare, however under the right circumstances it is possible that a single article, expose, or concerted campaign (such as that launched by the family of Emily Jordan following her death) may have discernible results. These may be lost if only the larger whole is examined, or if the general homogeneity of the news media is allowed to swamp those occasions in which unusual or unique stories are told. It is therefore important for research methodologies to take this into account. Though this study presents some likely factors, the question of why most coverage is very similar, but a few outlets defy this trend, is very much open and suitable for future studies to investigate.

Adventure tourism accidents appear to be infrequently covered in the New Zealand print media

While the reporting of accidents appears accurate, and is generally uniform between different newspapers, it must also be said that the reporting of adventure tourism accidents *does not happen very often*. No year saw more than 20 unique reported accidents (that is to say, accidents that occurred within that year and were reported on), and within the sample a total of 83 accidents occurred and were mentioned in varying levels of detail through the sample. The number of articles covering these accidents varied from a low of 27 in 2011 to a high of 106 articles in 2015. In many cases, one, two, or three articles was all the media attention an accident or incident received. While the overall number of articles published by the sampled newspapers within the period examined for this study could not be determined due to limitations in the NewsTextPlus database, the level of reporting seems in general to be very low, although some accidents achieve a significant level of media attention (as discussed later in this chapter).

When considering the pilot study of magazines, this pattern was even more clear: adventure tourism accidents were *only* reported within the more 'specialised' titles: general interest titles for the most part simply did not refer to them at all. This should be considered separately to the newspaper results, however, as a representative sample of magazines could not be obtained for the pilot study.

As adventure tourism accidents are not recorded by a central body, it is impossible to determine whether this represents a fair portrayal of these accidents (or indeed those occurring prior to the sample). In addition, the manner in which this study has been designed limits the examination of accidents to the *popular* meaning of adventure tourism. It is possible that through activity-based searching, considerably more material would be found. However, the findings of the magazine pilot study do support the conclusion that these articles are, if not *rare*, then not particularly common either. This poses a simple question: If it is indeed the case that articles referring to or reporting on accidents are relatively uncommon, why is this the case?

In the case of the magazine pilot study one answer appears to be specialisation, and the different purpose that magazines play in the media market. Magazines report on areas of

interest to their intended audience, and in many cases this simply does not include accident reporting. This matter was not examined in detail however, and is left for future research to examine in detail.

A factor that impacts all forms of media is the availability of information. Where a major event has occurred and is *known* to have occurred, a lack of information may lead to speculation. However some level of information must be available for journalists to be able to write about an event in the first place. Similarly, a lack of follow-up information may limit the coverage of an accident to initial coverage only. This was noted by Page (1997) in his initial exploratory study of the New Zealand media, and appears to still be apparent today.

The prospect that a lack of information prevents media reporting on accidents links into an additional possibility: that of limitations in the source material and methodology creating survivorship bias in the sample. To be examined a relevant accident must occur, have sufficient information and newsworthiness available for at least one article to be written, and that article must then be stored in the correct database and found with the correct search parameters before passing manual review in order to appear in this study. There are many places in which an accident may not be reported, and likewise many places in which limitations or errors could remove articles. As such it is likely that at least *some* relevant articles were not found, and that this may contribute to the lack of reporting noted. However, given the size of the sample and the broad search terms used, this possibility is likely to be of minor impact if it is present. Replication of this study using alternative data collection methods would be able to confirm or refute this possibility.

The possible factors in the low level of reporting observed in this study, discussed above, tie into a key truth in news reporting: Each story that might be featured in a newspaper, magazine, or other form of news media must compete with others to be published, as there is limited time (and in physical media, space) available to reporters and editors (de Simar, 1996). Academic knowledge of the New Zealand media is limited to specific areas, and overall patterns have largely not been examined (Mathieson, 2010; Phelan et al., 2012). While the use of news values helps to explain the factors that make a story attractive for publication (Davidson, 2008), they do not account for logistical concerns or other events that are occurring at the same time as an accident (Harcup & O'Neil, 2016). The possible effects of the Christchurch Earthquake were

noted as an uncontrolled variable in the limitations section of Chapter 3. In addition, the earthquake was noted as a factor in the level of coverage early in the timeline of the 2010 Fox Glacier skydiving aircraft crash. Given that the year 2011 featured the lowest number of articles of any year within the sample, it is possible that the Canterbury Earthquakes and other current events created a high barrier to publication for other stories, including those about accidents. This may be a case of the 'compositional balance' value given by Galtung & Ruge (1965): if a major disaster is present, other negative news may be overshadowed or suppressed. This is a speculative suggestion, however future research may be able to quantify the effects of the Canterbury Earthquakes on media reporting in New Zealand. As well as the effect of a major natural disaster, individual accidents may have been less reported (or not reported at all) as a result of other events occurring concurrently that were of greater newsworthiness.

A final factor, and likely the major reason for a lack of reporting, is a relatively low incidence of accidents. As mentioned previously, there is no firm record with which to confirm this, however strong evidence does exist in the form of two previous works in this field: the 2010 adventure tourism review, and a report by the Mountain Safety Council published in 2016 regarding outdoor recreation incidents in New Zealand.

The review of the adventure tourism and outdoor recreation sector carried out by the Department of Labour in 2009/10, based on data collected just prior to the start of the sampled period, observed that:

"Available data on serious harm accidents and fatalities in the adventure and outdoor commercial sectors in New Zealand suggests that most are managing risk well. Many of the activities carry heightened inherent risks but the number of serious harm accidents and deaths appears low when compared to known participation levels."

Department of Labour (2010)

The adventure tourism review was by its nature limited to commercial activities, which would exclude a large proportion of the activities included in this study. However, an additional source of information exists that supports the hypothesis that accidents are relatively uncommon.

In an examination of five outdoor recreation activities (tramping, mountaineering, hunting, mountain-biking, and trail running) the Mountain Safety Council found that on average one

person was injured for every 194 participants, one person was involved in a search and rescue (SAR) operation for every 2,124 participants, and one person died for every 86,023 participants (MSC, 2016). These numbers are not directly comparable to the activities involved in this study, however they provide an evidential base in a closely related field. Critically, the data ranges for all three factors (injuries, SAR incidents, and fatalities) overlap with the time period examined in this study.

This then is one important factor: accidents are uncommonly reported because they are themselves uncommon events. However a second factor is the relatively low severity of most accidents. The study conducted by the Mountain Safety Council makes a small but relevant finding when examining injury statistics between 2004 and 2014: that 78% of injuries were soft-tissue injuries such as sprains, strains and bruises. These are not the type of injury that regularly result in media attention in and of themselves (though the subject of what makes an accident 'worthy' of media attention is its own topic for discussion, and will be covered later in this chapter). This supports the view of the literature and of prior research in New Zealand that major accidents are rare events (eg. Page, 1997). If accidents themselves are relatively rare, and major ones even rarer, then it is unsurprising that few accidents are being reported in the media. There are however interesting leads in examining what accidents *were* reported in the media. In particular, two possible anomalies are apparent: possible over-representation of certain activities, and possible over-representation of death-causing accidents.

Certain activities and accident types may be over or under-represented

Within the accidents mentioned in sampled articles, certain activities and accident types are more prevalent than others. Both the most-common activity type involved in an accident (tramping) and the most common form of accident (falls) were largely as expected.

Tramping is a major outdoor adventure activity with over 700,000 participants per year (MSC, 2016), with an average of about 3000 injuries, 340 people involved in SAR callouts, and 6 fatalities per year (MSC, 2016). Falls are a form of accident that can occur on virtually any form of activity and are noted as a major cause of fatalities in outdoor recreation (MSC, 2016). It is therefore unsurprising that these should be the most common activities and accidents present.

However other activity and accident types appear to be over-represented within the sample. Following tramping (23 reported accidents/incidents), the most frequent activities involved in accidents were jetboating (11 accidents/incidents), scenic flights (9), quad-biking (7), and sky-diving (6). Consolidating activities into categories, boating and water-sports accidents and aviation accidents were tied for the second highest number of accidents (25 accidents each), after the hunting, climbing and tramping category (33 accidents). This appears anomalous: at least in commercial settings the accident rates for adventure tourism are considered quite low (Department of Labour, 2010), and the prominence of these activities may represent an over-representation of these accidents.

Similarly when examining the types of accident that were reported within the sample there are indications of disproportionate attention. The three most-common forms of accident reported in the sample after falls (~23% of sample) were aircraft accidents (17% of sample), jetboat accidents (7% of sample), and quad-bike/ATV accidents (7% of sample). Combined with the fraction of activities recorded, this suggests that aviation and boating (specifically jetboating) accidents are being over-represented. As accident type and activity type are frequently linked, it is appropriate to discuss both simultaneously when considering why certain accidents and activity types attract more attention.

Different types of accident are handled through different regulations and government departments (Page, 1997; Department of Labour, 2010). Certain types of accident (for example aircraft accidents) are subject to detailed investigations, and this may provide more information or controversy to fuel media coverage. This matter is discussed in greater detail later in this chapter. More relevantly, it may limit the availability of information for the media and general public with regards to certain accident types. Both this study and the initial exploratory work by Page (1997) note that lack of information may be an important factor in both the level of coverage, and the relative uniformity of media coverage of adventure tourism accidents. It may also be a factor in which some accident and activity types are more reported than others.

The value of spectacle may also play a role in this observed pattern. Prior research has shown that in newspaper coverage of deaths in general, more 'spectacular' forms of death are over-represented (Combs & Slovic, 1979; de Simar, 1996; Frost et al., 1997). This would affect the figures for the media representation of *fatal* accidents directly, and a similar effect is plausible

for accidents in general. Several of the apparently over-represented activities (aviation, jet-boating and quad-biking in particular) involve vehicles capable of suitably 'spectacular' accidents, and several of the accidents noted in the sample could well be described as such. This may also explain the lack of coverage for some activities: a lack of spectacle associated with the type of accidents associated with an activity may have the effect of reducing coverage.

A final factor may be the relative risk of death in certain activities. Aviation accidents in particular were notable for fatalities being reported. The level of risk is different for each and every adventure tourism activity, both in the chance of an adverse event occurring and the consequences of such an event should it occur (Department of Labour, 2010). Given the involvement of vehicles travelling at potentially high speeds (and the number of accidents described as 'crashes' within the sample), it is possible that certain activities gain a boost to their 'newsworthiness' in the event of accidents due to their inherently higher risk of fatalities or serious injury should an accident occur. This is particularly plausible as this study also found that media may have disproportionately reported fatalities compared with injuries.

A final matter to consider, before moving on to discuss the over-representation of death in the media, is to consider that many activities associated with adventure tourism did *not* appear in the sample in great numbers (for example: skiing and snowboarding). The reasons for this are unclear, however the limitations of this study should be considered an important candidate: if media articles refer to a participant without using the word "tourist" or "tourism" (for example the phrase "a French skier was injured") this would not cause the article to be included within this sample. Thus if certain activities are outside the *popular* meaning of 'adventure tourism' as used by this study, and are thus *less likely to be represented as 'tourism'*, they are less likely to appear in the sample, and thus may be under-counted by a considerable margin. This cannot be proven or dis-proven within the confines of this study, and is left for future studies to examine in greater detail.

Deaths may be over-represented in media reports

In the post-1990 accidents mentioned within the sample, 60 injuries were reported by the media. However, 119 deaths were also reported. Of the 105 post-1990 accidents for which sufficient information could be obtained, 46 had a clear indication of one or more fatality (and no injuries or a lack of information on injuries), 47 had a clear indication of one or more injuries (but no fatalities or a lack of information on fatalities), six accidents had clear indications of both one or more injury and one or more fatality occurring, and six accidents had clear indications suggesting no injuries or fatalities.

This proportion seems unusual: while the lack of overall accident statistics does stymie any detailed comparisons, what overall statistics *have* been compiled suggest that deaths (and death-causing accidents) are comparatively rare (MSC, 2016).

Because of a lack of a centralised information source on the true accident (and fatality) rates, a firm conclusion is impossible to reach on this matter. However, some explanations are feasible and should be discussed:

The first possibility is that injuries were being under-reported or deaths over-reported during the sampled period. This would synergise with the literature on news values and 'newsworthiness', that find that negative outcomes are a factor in the newsworthiness of a story (Galtung & Ruge, 1965. Harcup & O'Neil, 2016). Indeed it is well established that within the reporting of deaths overall, more spectacular deaths are over-reported by news media (Combs & Slovic, 1979; de Simar, 1996). This then is one possibility: that deaths are more interesting to the media, and as such have been reported more.

Supporting this possible factor is the presence of retrospective articles on or mentions of accidents occurring prior to the start of the sampled period. Accidents such as the Cave Creek disaster (14 killed, 1995), the drowning of Emily Jordan (2008), and the Mangatepopo Gorge canyoning disaster (7 killed, 2008), among others, were covered either in detail or as background. Accidents mentioned in this manner, or covered for retrospective pieces (including the longest article within the sample, a detailed examination of the Mangatepopo Gorge incident) usually (though not always) involved fatalities.

Another potential factor in the disparity noted in the reporting of deaths and injuries is the possibility of a lack of information about injuries affecting the level to which they are reported. Several studies of adventure tourism risk and safety in New Zealand were conducted using medical and ACC (Accident Compensation Corporation) claims data from around the turn of the millennium. However these studies became impossible to replicate or continue after around this time period as patient privacy was improved and access to records restricted as a result (Bentley & Page, 2008). Thus it is *possible* that information is less readily available in the case of victims of accidents who have been injured, and thus reporting is more difficult and/or less likely to occur. However, this is speculative and would require further research to prove or disprove as a factor.

A third possibility, supported by the results of the quantitative analysis, is that the years examined for this study saw an unusually high number of deaths, in particular those occurring in high-profile accidents likely to attract attention. The crash of a sky-diving aircraft in 2010 (9 killed), the crash of a hot-air-balloon in 2012 (11 killed), and the crash of a helicopter on a scenic glacier flight in late 2015 (7 killed) were all single accidents with significant casualty counts. Insufficient time and resources were available to examine this in detail during this study, however it is possible that a spate of major accidents coincidentally occurring within the sampled period increased the number of deaths reported within the sample.

Regardless of the possible reason, a pattern does appear to be present: following traditional models of accident occurrences more injuries will occur than deaths (Page, 1997; Department of Labour, 2010). This is supported by the existing literature on outdoor recreation in New Zealand (MSC, 2016). Were non-fatalities of equal newsworthiness to fatalities, one would expect to see significantly more injuries reported than fatalities in the news media. The fact that this is not the case indicates that while the New Zealand print media *is* reporting in a factual and accurate fashion, it is preferentially reporting incidents in which loss of life occurs. This is an important finding with some implications: answering the question of whether the news media was “overemphasising fatalities” was one of the objectives of the initial pilot study in this field by Page (1997). Page could not effectively answer this question with the time and resources available for what was a small part of his wider study. This study, some two decades later, can suggest that numerically it does indeed appear that fatalities are over-emphasised to a certain degree in the New Zealand media.

This over-representation, as well as that noted previously for certain accident and activity types, is tied to another pattern noted within media coverage: that only a few accidents receive more than only a little attention from the news media.

Most accidents receive little attention, but a few gain greater coverage

As noted in Chapter 4, the majority of accidents (58 in total) were mentioned in only a single article within the sample. This suggests that these accidents, while of sufficient interest to be mentioned at all, lack aspects that would attract further attention. However, as these articles were usually fairly short, and could not be compared with accident reports, it was not possible to establish *why* most accidents are relatively lacking in newsworthiness. However, some speculation is possible based on the literature:

While certain accidents are major events, most affect relatively few people and have little wider effect. They fail to meet the ‘threshold’ value posited by Galtung & Ruge (1965) (or the equivalent value, ‘magnitude’, suggested by Harcup & O’Neil, 2016). As the activities that make up adventure tourism have an inherent level of risk, accidents will always occur (Falkner, 2001). It is possible that the ‘everyday’ nature of accidents, or an acceptance that accidents *do* occur, is such that these articles are simply everyday news. They are nothing special. In some cases, accidents were reported in amalgam: a list of cases in which a rescue helicopter had been deployed recently. This ties in with the prevalence of the ‘factual’ style and the relatively short length of many articles. This is not to say that these accidents, and the articles that report on them, are not important in the wider picture. In amalgam they may be important indeed. But they are not *stories* that significant resources are dedicated to pursuing.

This changes in a small number of instances, when something about an accident is outside the normal. Something that attracts attention, or moves it out from the background. It ceases to be simply everyday news, and becomes a story in its own right. These events were examined in the qualitative analysis phase of the study, in which those accidents mentioned in the highest number of articles were subject to content analysis to try to determine, among other things, why these accidents proved to be different.

Why do some accidents receive unusual media attention?

The majority of adventure tourism accidents reported on within the sample were mentioned in only a very small number of articles, many of them in only one or two. This appears to be the normal situation for most accidents. However, some accidents attract significantly more media attention. It is therefore important to examine why some accidents are mentioned in great detail (or in many articles), and others are not.

The short answer, unhelpful as it may be, is that some accidents are more interesting than others to both journalists, editors, and the readers they are creating content for. Attempts to unravel the hows and whys of newsworthiness have been ongoing for some decades (Galtung & Ruge, 1965; de Simar, 1996) at this point, with Galtung & Ruge's influential set of news values first published in 1965. In addition to this well-tested framework, a more contemporary framework of news values from 2016 was also examined (Harcup & O'Neil, 2016). However, as will be covered in further detail later in this chapter, these frameworks are generalist, and are attempts to describe retroactively decisions to which journalists themselves could not put criteria (Harcup & O'Neil, 2016). While the latter issue likely cannot be resolved by *any* study, the information gathered by this research project does allow for some progress on the former problem: by allowing the examination of factors in the more specific field of accident reporting (and in this case, *adventure tourism* accident reporting).

Certain factors were identified as providing some explanation for why some accidents achieved more media attention than others, and are discussed below. These were syndication, wider trends and patterns in society, controversy and conflict, the use of major accidents as context or background for other events/stories, and the importance of news values in general.

Syndication

In some cases, particularly of those accidents mentioned between 4 and 10 times, accidents were mentioned in articles that were syndicated between multiple newspapers owned by a single firm. This poses interesting questions regarding the role of syndication in causing some accidents to be mentioned more widely than others, as well as its effects in general.

Syndication was very prevalent within the sample, with 43% of the articles examined being flagged as syndicated to some degree. This posed a problem with data management: syndicated articles are by nature derived from a common source, but rarely if ever were two copies of a syndicated article truly identical. This raised the question of how syndicated articles should be handled. In this study, syndicated articles were treated as independent articles for the purposes of statistics and quantitative analysis, as determining which copy would be chosen as the 'correct' item to be left in the sample would pose its own problems (further discussed in Chapter 6). The changes in tone that can be generated by alteration of a syndicated article were noted by Davidson (2008) who noted that in the coverage of a mountaineering accident:

"...the headline of The Press article suggested there was at least some reason behind the activities that result in these deaths (that is, the 'challenge'), The Dominion Post ran the same article on the front page of their 1 January 2004 edition, with some notable deletions. The notion of challenge was deleted from the headline, and the paragraph which qualifies the fatalities to some extent was cut. Hence their article read much more like a bleak (and bullet-pointed) list of tragic deaths ('Death in the peaks', 2004)."

(Davidson, 2008. p.10)

Similar changes in tone were noted within the sample during the qualitative research phase, and this appears to be a pattern of some form, whether accidental or deliberate on the part of the newspapers publishing different versions of syndicated articles. Quantifying this pattern and the differences in tone within syndicated sets of articles is a matter beyond the scope of this study, and is strongly suggested as a matter for further research.

The role of syndication in allowing certain accidents to become more widely reported (or mentioned) can be given as an example of a factor benefiting the 'frequency' value proposed by Galtung & Ruge (1965) in their set of media values. This value suggests that events that unfold conveniently within the production cycle of a news outlet are more likely to be reported than those that do not (Galtung & Ruge, 1965). While syndication does not make a story more compelling in and of itself to an editor, the option to use a syndicated article may very well make it considerably *easier* to publish a story on an unfolding event than if an original article had to be written from scratch. As additions or subtractions may change the tone of a syndicated article considerably (as noted by Davidson (2008)), this also allows for editorial

decisions on tone to still be made, potentially aiding in satisfaction of the 'compositional balance' news value suggested by Galtung & Ruge (1965) and the 'news organisation's agenda' value suggested by Harcup & O'Neil (2016).

The availability of time and resources has been noted as a factor in the decision to publish (Harcup & O'Neil, 2016), and it seems that syndication provides a convenient way to reduce the barrier to publication on stories that are of sufficient newsworthiness to begin with. It also provides a way to fill gaps in a publication that lacks sufficient local content. It is impossible to differentiate between these and other possibilities within the confines of this study, but it can be concluded that the ability to syndicate *does* influence how and why certain accidents are reported more widely than others.

Wider trends and patterns

Accident reports are not independent of current affairs. Both of the frameworks of news values used in this study note that events can become more relevant due to ongoing events (Galtung & Ruge, 1965; Harcup & O'Neil, 2016). This was seen clearly in a number of examples within the study, and the influence of wider events on tourism accident reporting is both difficult to take into account and potentially of considerable importance.

For example, one article (Tourist's quad bike death makes five for year, *New Zealand Herald*, 24th October 2012, page A003), in reporting on a recent adventure tourism accident in which a woman was killed, noted that then-recent deaths from quad-bike accidents (five over a one-year period, including the accident the article was reporting on) had caused an unspecified drop in sales for an adventure tourism provider operating quad-bike tours. This operator was not involved in any of the accidents. Of the five accidents, one involved an Australian tourist who died after sustaining a severe head injury in a crash, and another may have involved a domestic tourist, but this was not stated in any article examined. While written in a factual style, the article (and those interviewed) called for improvements to quad bike safety, rather than specifically tourism safety. This reflects the partially industrialised nature of tourism (Leiper, 2004). While the safety issue (as reported) is not specifically an adventure tourism safety issue, it heavily affects and may impact upon adventure tourism. This also applies to media coverage: where a wider problem or narrative exists that an accident may conveniently be slotted into, the newsworthiness of the event will likely be higher than if this were not the case.

Controversy and conflict

It was noted during the study that several accidents had extremely long periods after their occurrence before an official cause was announced. In the case of aircraft accidents in particular, it was frequently several years before a final report was produced, and subsequent inquests could extend this period even longer. This provided further material for news media to report on, satisfying Galtung & Ruge's (1965) value of *continuity*.

However, in several cases the cause of an accident was sufficiently contentious as to generate conflict or controversy. This was not limited to those cases with an extended investigation period, but appeared to be more common with such accidents. Conflict has been identified as a contemporary news value by Harcup & O'Neil (2016), and was noted in certain accidents even without prolonged periods. For example, the coverage of 'illicit' activities, such as jumping from waterfalls, or the use of an illegally-constructed rope swing featured conflict over the very nature of the attraction, and whether sufficient action had been taken to prevent such activities. In the latter case, in which an international tourist was injured in a fall, the illegally-constructed rope swing on Mount Victoria had accidentally been included in local tourism marketing material aimed at an international audience, and coverage focused both on this and the cat-and-mouse game played by council staff removing illegal swings, and those who continued to build and rebuild such structures. This difficulty in controlling unwanted and unsafe behaviour has been noted before in the New Zealand tourism market, such as unsafe behaviour around glaciers (Espiner, 2001). In cases such as the Mt Victoria rope swing incident and others like it controversy built quickly, but dissipated equally rapidly. These cases were, however, rare compared with those cases in which controversies grow over time as more information came to light about an event (or where, in the lack of information, speculation was reported).

Considering that those accidents which undergo extended investigations are likely to be of high significance and newsworthiness in the first place, problems with the investigative process may amplify news coverage of an event long after it has happened. This may incentivise the streamlining and reviewing of investigative procedures so that accurate conclusions may be made in a timely manner so as to minimise the negative impact on a sector or destination through uncertainty, controversy, or simply the amplification of negative news through having details of the accident repeated as background for each new development.

An association was noted while regarding the role of conflict and controversy: that these frequently were factors in major accidents with more than the usual coverage, that went on to be used as context in later reports, and in some cases had long-lasting effects on the adventure tourism sector, and potentially on society as a whole.

Accidents as context and long-lasting influences on reporting

Certain accidents within the sample took on significance beyond their own events, being mentioned as background even in accidents which were entirely unrelated besides involving adventure tourism. This use of accidents as context of background was a substantial factor in several accidents being mentioned unusually frequently within the sample. These accidents sometimes also had greater impacts on wider media reporting, and the sectors involved, in some cases many years after the accident had occurred. These may involve wider impacts on society as a whole. Two examples in particular stand out:

The first example occurred prior to the start of the sampled period, with the death of Ms. Emily Jordan, who drowned on a commercial river-boarding trip in 2008. Though a number of accidents are credited as triggering the Department of Labour's review into adventure tourism safety, only the death of Ms. Jordan is consistently credited as being a cause of the review, specifically via a letter sent to the Prime Minister by Ms. Jordan's father. As this accident occurred well before the beginning of the sampled period it was not possible to evaluate in detail, however it is likely that the accident and the efforts of the victim's father to raise public awareness of perceived weaknesses in New Zealand's adventure tourism legislation provided a narrative that later stories regarding other accidents (and the adventure tourism review itself) could attach themselves to. In this way, an accident that did not in and of itself affect a large number of people created a link with other accidents and incidents, as well as the review of adventure tourism and outdoor education safety conducted in 2009/10. This accident clearly had far-reaching consequences for the adventure tourism sector, many years after it had occurred.

The second example of note occurred in September 2010. A skydiving aircraft taking off from an aerodrome at Fox Glacier township crashed for unknown reasons, killing all nine passengers and crew on board. This accident was mentioned in more articles than any other by a considerable margin, including many articles that did not directly pertain to the accident and the subsequent

investigations. This accident and the coverage that followed is described in greater detail within the results section. More than any other, this accident was noted as a background event in later articles regarding accidents in the adventure tourism sector. While it cannot be stated with certainty that a different accident would not have taken the place of these mentions of the Fox Glacier crash had the accident not occurred, the presence of a single accident as an example in so many articles that do not directly refer to it is a sign that the accident is potentially of considerable cultural significance within the sample period.

Both of these accidents became meaningful to a wider group of people than those directly impacted. In doing so, they likely made other accidents that could be linked to them more meaningful to the intended audience of the news articles as well. This is described by Galtung & Ruge (1965) as the value of 'continuity'. As mentioned previously in this chapter, continuity is a powerful factor in explaining the coverage of certain specific accidents. However, this study suggests strong continuity values *between* accidents, particularly through the use of past significant accidents as background or context, even when such use may not be appropriate. The role of specific accidents that take on this greater role in the minds of the readers and writers of these pieces is likely to be very important, and is an area worthy of greater study in future. This is particularly true given the likelihood of such accidents having long-term impacts on the adventure tourism sector and on society as a whole through entering into popular culture (Månsson, 2011).

News values

Throughout this chapter, and the previous one, there have been references to the news values proposed by Galtung & Ruge (1965) and Harcup & O'Neil (2016). Specific values in particular have been referred to as explanations for certain patterns observed in the data, and discussed in passing as a result. However, given the versatility and ubiquity of these frameworks, and their roles in defining the factors of newsworthiness, it is appropriate to discuss them specifically.

In this study, two frameworks of news values were employed. In general, both frameworks performed well: incidents meeting the criteria did appear to be reported in greater detail and/or in more articles. These frameworks have been used previously in work of this nature (Davidson, 2008), and are generally fit for purpose in explaining why an individual accident obtained significant media coverage.

However both of these sets of news values were designed for general-purpose use across journalism as a whole. As such, while they serve well enough to explain why an individual accident is particularly newsworthy, they are less effective at explaining why one accident is more or less newsworthy than another. Certain elements are almost universally present in accident reporting: the value of 'negativity' for example is almost a given when considering accident reporting, even in stories of miraculous survival. However other values worked well outside their originally intended meaning: the 'elite people/regions' value proposed by Galtung & Ruge (1965) may well apply to elite *destinations* and also serve some explanation for the differences in coverage of accidents featuring different nationalities noted by Davidson (2008):

“Mountaineering accidents were talked of in terms of two standard scenarios or narratives; that is, either they were caused by bad judgement and/or inexperience, or the victims were skilled decision-makers and bad luck (the world-as-player or the malevolent mountains) brought about their downfall.”

(Davidson, 2008, p.17)

Virtually every news value proposed by Galtung & Ruge (1965) and Harcup & O'Neil (2016) appears to be valid in some way with regard to accident reporting. However, they appear to be of limited value for comparing accidents across more than a small sample, with clear contrast in narrative.

In addition the more commonly used framework by Galtung & Ruge (1965) is over half a century old, and does not reflect the changes in media over the past decades, such as the rise of social media and the greater importance of shareability and audio-visual elements (Harcup & O'Neil, 2016). This was handled within this study through the use of both the more commonly used Galtung & Ruge (1965) framework and the more contemporary Harcup & O'Neil (2016) framework. However, it is apparent that generalist frameworks of news values may not be entirely suitable for all comparisons that a researcher may wish to make.

To improve upon these frameworks for the *specific* task of investigating the newsworthiness of accidents, disasters and other adverse events would likely require the creation and testing of a customised set of news values/newsworthiness criteria for such events. This is largely beyond the scope of this study, but would be of great value for further examination of the media portrayal of accidents in general, as well as the coverage of adventure tourism accidents as

examined in this study. One possible refinement noted during the qualitative examination of the most-mentioned accidents was to examine the demographics of the person(s) involved, for example the involvement of children (as was noted in particular in the case of a young child falling from a train and down an embankment on a scenic mountain railway, which attracted considerable media attention despite negligible injury occurring). The role of demographics was also noted by Davidson (2008), who noted differing coverage of mountaineering accidents involving different demographics (specifically, the nationalities of the persons involved). A second factor may be of novelty: while related to the existing values that cover unexpected events, the novelty of an unusual accident may be a factor in certain accidents becoming newsworthy (perhaps as a matter of 'human interest'). Other factors will likely emerge from more detailed examination of widely-reported accidents as case studies, and could help to refine tools for future studies.

Ultimately, frameworks for the analysis of news values are simply another tool, with their own limitations and possibilities. Existing frameworks have been used previously in the past by Davidson (2008) without critique, and contributed greatly to the analysis process used for the present study. Both systems of news values used provided suitable possible explanations for the newsworthiness of specific incidents. Further use of such frameworks in this context will likely lead to significant improvements and the possible creation of more refined tools and frameworks for examining negative events such as accidents or disasters.

The importance of researching accident coverage

A final matter for discussion is rather central to this project: does media coverage of accidents matter in the first place? If, as has been found by this study, coverage is generally accurate and relatively sparse, what impact can it have, and is the area worthy of further research?

The results of this study have shown that the way in which the media reports on accidents is important, and worthy of more study. This is supported by both the academic and government literature, and the way in which key accidents and their effects on policy and practice were described within the sample. Both of the two direct prior works stated outright the importance of media coverage (Page, 1997; Davidson, 2008). In addition, the major works on the risk

profiles of the sector have important notes regarding this matter. The last academic review of risk in the New Zealand adventure tourism sector stated:

“...policy concerns in the late 1990s in New Zealand were associated with a number of high profile deaths associated with adventure tourism accidents but no underlying data existed to demonstrate how this interconnected with injuries per se in the sector.”

(Bentley & Page, 2008, p.859)

These concerns are also mentioned by Page (1997), and media coverage is credited with raising the profile of accidents and safety in the sector. Thus while the importance of the media is often left unstated, it is implied heavily through mentioning the importance of “high profile” accidents: it is very difficult for an accident to become prominent if media do not report on it.

The above passage by Bentley & Page has distinct parallels to the Adventure Tourism Review undertaken between 2009 and 2010. Similar to the concerns of the 1990s, the Review was sparked by a number of high profile accidents that had the potential to damage the sector, noting “a number of incidents in the adventure and outdoor commercial sectors, including the tragic death of young British backpacker Emily Jordan” (Department of Labour, 2010). This crediting of the death of Emily Jordan in a river-boarding accident as a causative event is significant, given the story that emerged through examination of media articles both within and outside the sample: Following the death of his daughter, Ms. Jordan’s father lobbied extensively and publicly before the then-Prime Minister John Key chose to request a review after receiving a letter personally. It was not simply the facts of these accidents that caused them to spur government and industry attention: it was the public pressures caused by media attention and a concerted lobbying campaign.

In both periods, the late 1990s and the period around 2010, media coverage spurred tangible scrutiny of the sector by government highlight the importance of the media. A fundamental factor in making accidents worthy of government attention was clearly that they were *widely reported*. Were it otherwise, it would be exceedingly difficult for an accident or group of accidents to reach a high enough profile to have such an obvious impact. However, the role of accidents in aggregate may also be highly significant. New stories can become a part of popular culture, as can other forms of media (Månsson, 2011). Thus the impacts of accident reporting may be direct or indirect, but are undeniably present in society, based on the examples above.

The study of adventure tourism accidents and the way in which they are portrayed in the media is an area of research that has been sorely neglected in the past, and has great potential in the future. This study has attempted to establish the fundamentals of media reporting of adventure tourism accidents in New Zealand, and has made some significant findings and identified important areas for future research. These are summarised in the next chapter, wherein the study is concluded.

Conclusion

This final chapter integrates the previous discussion and results chapters to provide conclusions to the study, as well as recommendations for future research. This study took an exploratory approach to examine how adventure tourism accidents were reported in the New Zealand print media. This was accomplished through the use of a mixed-methods approach, examining six years of data collected from sixteen newspapers published by the two major media companies present in the New Zealand market. Key themes and patterns in media coverage were identified and discussed in relation to local and international literature. As an exploratory study, the methods used were also critiqued to further inform future research. Media coverage of adventure tourism accidents has been the subject of little research previously, and so this study should contribute to filling this gap in academic knowledge.

In this chapter, the research questions posed in Chapter 1 will be revisited in order to provide some closure on the lines of inquiry that initiated this study. Following this, the implications for academia, government, and industry are given. The thesis will then conclude with recommendations for future study in this area.

Research questions

This study sought to address four broad research questions, designed to guide an exploratory study of media coverage to provide a starting point for future research.

What key themes, styles, and attributes are apparent in adventure tourism accident reporting in the New Zealand print media?

This study identified many key aspects of how adventure tourism accidents are reported. By understanding the ways in which accidents are reported on, the news media can be more effectively used as a future source in research projects. The implications to industry and government can also be better understood. Coverage of accidents in the newspapers sampled was predominantly factual and style and substance, supporting the conclusions of prior study. However, the narrative-styled exceptions were significant in both number and content, and

suggested that further research must include more qualitative analysis of such articles. Newspapers did not usually apportion blame themselves, but frequently reported on other groups or individuals who did so, or who speculated on the causes of an accident under investigation. In addition, the tone and style in which 'factual' articles convey information was found to require a more detailed examination than was possible in this study, and suggested that prior perspectives on factually-structured articles may have been simplistic.

Patterns of possible over-representation of certain accident and activity types were identified, as well as an apparent over-representation of fatalities. Possible explanations for these were discussed, with a view to informing future research.

Are there recognisable differences between New Zealand print media outlets with regard to adventure tourism accident reporting practices?

This study examined the similarities and differences between different companies and publications in multiple ways, examining both quantitative and qualitative data. Identifying differences between different publications is critical to selecting samples for future work, as well as identifying possible areas to examine specifically (eg. influence campaigns). The study found that coverage was largely uniform within the newspapers sampled, with the probable exception of the Sunday Star Times. No significant differences were found between the two media companies that owned the sampled newspapers in the areas that could be subjected to statistical tests, and qualitative analysis supported the conclusion that coverage of adventure tourism accidents. This was possibly caused by the overwhelmingly factual nature of reporting, the small number of publishers causing a lack of plurality in coverage, and a possible lack of information that would allow for variation of reporting between publications.

How does current reporting of adventure tourism in New Zealand compare to the historical conclusions of Page (1997) and the wider international literature regarding the reporting of accidents, tourism crises, and death/injury events?

This study provided additional data to test prior conclusions. Replication is uncommon in this field, and the length of time since the prior studies examining the New Zealand media specifically made true comparisons very difficult. However, providing further evidence for or against these conclusions allows for future research to be targeted to examine areas of weakness within the literature. This study generally upheld the conclusions of Page (1997) and Davidson (2008). In particular Page's (1997) that coverage of accidents in the New Zealand news

media was largely factual in nature, and the emphasis on negative outcomes noted by Davidson (2008) were both observed in the present study. The latter point also supports the international literature on the reporting of deaths, accidents, and illnesses, where more negative or 'spectacular' outcomes have been found to be emphasised by the news media internationally (Combs & Slovic, 1979; de Simar, 1996; Frost et al., 1997). This demonstrates that related studies showing patterns in other forms of reporting are generally applicable to this particular field of study. However, sensationalist content as noted in some prior tourism crises was not found in quantity. This study noted that certain choices made in prior studies (such as the conclusion by Page that narrative articles were virtually absent) were not supported in *contemporary* media or were based on generalisations, and that future studies should take fresh approaches to examining media.

To what extent are general frameworks of news values (eg. those developed by Galtung & Ruge, 1965) useful when examining the narrower field of accident reporting?

This study relied on the work of Galtung & Ruge (1965) and Harcup & O'Neil (2016) when seeking to understand why certain accidents were reported more than others. Critiquing these general frameworks allows for their use to be accomplished more effectively in future, and may contribute to the future development of more precise tools for academic work in this field. This study noted that particular values were almost always present to some degree (eg. negativity/'bad news') in accident reporting, rendering them less useful than would otherwise be the case. Known limitations in the frameworks were also encountered. Limitations in the database used for the study also prevented the examination of visual data (eg images, infographics) to which certain values apply more heavily. Despite this, the existing generalist frameworks used proved adequate to the task and generally appropriate to studies of this type. It was concluded that the frameworks work well for examination of why specific incidents achieve the media coverage that they do, but are not precise enough for wide-level comparison. It was considered that future refinements to these frameworks, aimed directly at examining the newsworthiness of accidents and disasters, may be a product of future research and would largely alleviate the problems encountered with the existing frameworks. Two factors for newsworthiness suggested by this study were the demographics of those involved (such as the nationality and age), and the factor of novelty or 'human interest'. Future research on specific

accidents was considered likely to identify further factors for the refinement of tools and frameworks.

Implications

In a risk society, the perception of risk has important impacts on decision-making at multiple scales. From tourists to tourism operators, and from marketers to the governments that regulate tourism activities, all levels of the sector are affected by the risk of accidents, or the perception that risk is not well-managed. While the true risk of an accident may drive real accident rates, it is perception that drives behaviour and government and community response. While there are many ways for these perceptions to be influenced, the central role of the media is well-acknowledged (Beeton et al., 2006; King & Beeton, 2006; Croy, Frost & Beeton, 2009; Månsson, 2011; McWha et al., 2016).

Despite this, very little specific academic attention has been paid to the media and their coverage of adventure tourism accidents, and the matter is only briefly acknowledged by the published governmental material on the topic. The current study begins to fill the gaps in the literature, forming a base for future research as well as affirming existing conclusions in the limited studies conducted previously on this topic.

Coverage of adventure tourism accidents in the New Zealand print media appears to be predominantly factual in structure and lacked sensationalist content. While speculation was reported, it was not *generated* in the articles examined. Further, official sources were widely quoted. This suggests a reasonably high level of accuracy. Where narratives and judgements existed, they were almost always being reported *on* by an article, rather than being generated by the author of the piece. The analyses undertaken during this study suggests that businesses engaged in adventure tourism activities in New Zealand are unlikely to face overwhelming sensationalist reporting of an accident, at least not in the area of the media examined by this study.

Accidents appeal to the media for diverse reasons (Harcup & O'Neil, 2016). While certain news values are extremely common (such as negativity), there are a myriad of factors that can influence whether a story is big news, small news, or not 'news' at all. Some are related to the newsworthiness of the accident itself, while others are operational in nature (Harcup & O'Neil,

2016). Many of these factors are outside the control of operators, destinations, and governments. However, some news values can be controlled, or at least influenced. When creating contingency plans for an accident or crisis, knowledge of news values and how they relate to tourism accidents may be of considerable use. Industry and government may be able to reduce the long-term negative impacts of accidents through influencing newsworthiness. For example, the long and sometimes discordant investigations into certain accidents appeared to be a significant factor in their enduring newsworthiness. Improvements to investigative processes might, as well as enabling more to be learned from accidents in a more rapid timespan, reduce the controversy of an accident and thus the potential negative effects from media coverage. The value of continuity or expectation must also be considered: while the shock value of an unexpected accident likely cannot be compensated for, increased media attention is likely when an accident follows previous accidents of a similar nature.

The results of this study suggest that media reporting, particularly when part of a focused campaign or based around a prominent incident, can lead to changes in rules and regulations. Of course, the extent to which a decision to regulate is based on media coverage is very difficult to prove. However clear evidence in both the media sampled for this study, and the literature used as its foundation, links the governmental decision-making process to media coverage. This means that solely focusing on the accidents and their physical consequences when conducting research results in missing an important element in how individuals, industry and society react to their occurrence.

The pressure to regulate following an accident may arise from the reporting of the accident itself in the media, or of the reporting of its results or events which follow on from the initial accident (for example, the lobbying campaign following the death of Emily Jordan that led to the 2010 Adventure Tourism Review). The impacts of lobbying campaigns following accidents should be examined in greater detail by future research, as examples of both successful campaigns (eg. That following Ms. Jordan's death) and unsuccessful campaigns (eg. the push for mandatory drug testing following the 2012 Carterton hot-air balloon accident) were noted in this study. Similar campaigns have been noted in the past (Page, 1997), and it is likely that many more examples may be found with concerted study. These campaigns and the patterns behind and within them are of considerable potential interest to both academia, industry, and government, as well as those seeking to change policy and/or practice in the sector in future.

The lack of plurality in the New Zealand news media is possibly a cause for concern for industry, government, and researchers. While there is still work to be done examining the *exact* differences between publications, this study indicated little variation in coverage between the two major players in the newspaper market. This supports the conclusions the New Zealand Commerce Commission reached in denying a planned merger between the two media companies whose publications were examined for this study (Commerce Commission, 2017). To some extent this lack of plurality may be interpreted as a good thing: accurate coverage with little variation is easier to manage and perhaps more convenient for the researcher when looking for the overall trends and narratives in coverage. However, it also places a burden upon the researcher (and perhaps the wider public) to find the exceptions. Certain articles within the sample collected for this study leapt out as unique and enthralling pieces of work, even as plain text with no visual elements. However these appear to be an exception to the rule. What significance do these articles have? Do they have greater impact than articles which follow the general trend of purely factual coverage with little variation? These are just some of the questions that future studies might seek to address. Considering that the role that concerted campaigns of coverage and different styles has been noted in prior work (Page, 1997), but has not yet been explored in detail, it is important for players in the sector to be aware that exceptions to the norms of accident coverage may have outsized influence, but that the extent of their influence is not yet known (and indeed cannot be known without further research). Perhaps more worryingly, the lack of plurality within the New Zealand print media suggests that were news coverage to become *inaccurate*, or to sensationalise an accident, it may have greater impact on the general public and potential visitors than if greater plurality existed in the news market. This possibility was alluded to by the Commerce Commission (2017), and should be taken seriously by industry and government, particularly if the news media in New Zealand continues to consolidate.

Similarly, a lack of information was apparent in many accidents, and was been noted in previous research (Page, 1997). Indeed the difficulty in finding details of adventure tourism accidents has been a common refrain in many prior studies examining the risk profile of the sector (Page, 1997; Bentley & Page, 2001; 2008; Dioko & Harrill, 2019). The media in this study served as an imperfect means to discover information about a large number of very varied accidents, and has been used previously to examine deaths across the entire tourism sector in the United Kingdom (Dioko & Harrill, 2019). However this approach runs into the problem of survivorship bias: where

there is a shortage of information, news articles will not be written, and thus research that relies on such articles will not cover the incidents involved. This *must* be taken into account by future studies, both those using the media as a primary source, and those using news reports to bolster lists of accidents gained from other sources.

Further to this point, the development of a complete inventory or register of accidents in tourism for a specific period would allow for comparisons between the reporting of accidents and the reality of accidents. It would also allow for other studies to be performed which are presently impossible. However, such an initiative would be difficult to implement (and prohibitively expensive), given the large number of agencies involved in the collection of statistics, the incompatibility of different data sets, the lack of details that can be used to identify tourism accidents in official statistics, and the need to respect the privacy of tourists involved in accidents (Newman, 2005).

Finally, and perhaps most importantly, this study has demonstrated that there is a large amount of material to be examined, a great many studies that could be done (as outlined in the section below). The current work has barely scratched the surface, and yet intriguing patterns and possibilities are emerging from this exploratory analysis of the news media coverage of adventure tourism incidents. As Ulrich Beck (1992) wrote: “The tangibility of need suppresses the *perception* of risks, but only the perception, not their reality or their effects; risks denied grow especially quickly and well” (Beck, 1992. p.45. Original emphasis). While this study, and the prior work by Page (1997) and Davidson (2008) may provide some insight, there is so much left to know that *not* knowing it may represent unknown risks, left to grow without being examined. It is for this reason that considerable future research should be conducted.

Future research

This study sought to serve as an exploratory examination of the media portrayal of adventure tourism accidents in the New Zealand print media. As such, numerous avenues for improvements and opportunities for future research were identified throughout the course of the project.

The first suggestion for research that this study makes is a general one: A lack of control data rendered comparisons with the wider New Zealand print media challenging, as wider research

into the New Zealand media has focused on specific areas in the past (Mathieson, 2010; Phelan et al., 2012). Though not directly related to the topic of adventure tourism, wider studies of the New Zealand media would be invaluable as a source of context for both this study and the approaches suggested below.

This study examined two of the main media companies in New Zealand. However a third company, Allied Press, was not examined. Given the existing discussion of plurality in the New Zealand media, and the prominence of Allied Press titles such as the Otago Daily Times and Mountain Scene in previous studies, it would be valuable to include archival material from this company in future studies. This would be particularly valuable as the archive for the Otago Daily Times records the entire publication, including visual elements, placement, prominence and advertisements. These could not be examined in this study due to the limitations of the NewzTextPlus database used to extract Stuff and NZME material, and limited the examination of certain media values proposed by Harcup & O'Neil (2016).

Further to this matter, the subject of magazines should be the topic of future research. Magazines have been studied before and yielded useful results into how accidents are reported, both within and outside the tourism sector (Page, 1997; King & Beeton, 2006; Clark & Amerom, 2007; Smith et al. 2012). However this study found that major differences in coverage existed between different magazines, and in general between newspapers and magazines. Perception differences between the perceived accuracy of magazine and newspaper coverage has been reported before in the literature (King & Beeton, 2006). However in the case of the current study, these differences proved too great to allow the use of magazines in the main study without a much larger sample than could be accomplished with the resources and publications available for use. As such, they were removed from the project after a brief pilot project that nevertheless informed discussion. It would be of great value for a future study to fully examine *all* New Zealand magazines to determine the patterns and narratives present. The role of advertisements and public safety messages could also be examined; something impossible in the present study as the NewzTextPlus database used to extract newspaper articles does not archive advertising material.

This study briefly covered the topic of syndication, but could not devote the time and resources required to examine it in detail. Future research could seek to understand the differences in tone between different versions of syndicated articles, such as those noted by Davidson (2008).

The possible lack of root information might also be addressed through this form of study, if the origin of information and its passage through the media can be tracked for a specific event for use as a case study. Technology now exists that allows for such tracking of similarities and differences across many articles at once, and is well known to most academics in the form of commercial anti-plagiarism software. Such software, or a more specialised system, could easily allow for precise tracking of similarities and differences, changes in tone, copying, quoting and editing in a way that manual examination as used by this study and those before it could not begin to attempt. This would give insight into the information flow following an accident, and provide valuable information for managing the longer-term impacts of such events.

A related possibility for future study is the use of tone analysis. Using machine learning, the tone of many articles can be extracted very quickly through software, and the results used to determine differences between publications to a precise level. As noted above, addition or omission of fact, particularly in syndicated sets but in other articles as well, can significantly change the way in which an article 'feels'. The use of tone analysis is a promising area that might be examined in future research into how the New Zealand print media report on any topic, but particularly in the area of adventure tourism accidents that has been the topic of this study.

This study featured a focus on the popular meaning of adventure tourism, leading to possibilities of sampling bias. Focusing more heavily on this problem produces another research question for future examination: what *is* the popular meaning of 'adventure tourism' and how does it compare with those definitions used by industry, government, and past academic work. This could be accomplished through the creation of a corpus of articles based around the activities given in each of the three supply-side definitions used in Chapter 2, then examining how often each activity was referred to as 'adventure tourism' (or a similar term) when details in the articles would support such a definition. This could be combined with a survey of tourists to create two additional supply-side definitions of adventure tourism: that used by the news media, and that used by tourists. This would provide important additional perspectives on what adventure tourism is, and have implications for the marketing of the sector.

This study examined a wide variety of media coverage of many accidents, many of them with little coverage. While some attempt has been made to explain the exceptions, resources were insufficient to give these seemingly important events full analysis. Future research should take individual accidents of high impact, including those identified by this study, and examine media

coverage of these specific accidents in detail. While saturation is difficult to achieve on a wider search for all accidents in a given time period, examining a single accident and seeking *all* media coverage from the time of the accident up until the present day is viable, if time-consuming for the researcher. This could incorporate an examination of press releases to identify original sources of information, such as those used previously in inventorying accidents and injuries in the Hawaii Volcanoes National Park (Heggie, 2005). This study, and other before it, provide a broad overview of coverage. Closely examining individual accidents, identifying their narratives and the perspectives that flow through media coverage over time, and working to establish possible and probable effects on the wider industry, is of considerable importance to further understanding how the media report on accidents. It also solves the problem of a key limitation of this form of study: by including hard cut-off points in time, accidents occurring very early or very late in the study had their relative 'importance' influenced. In addition, accidents occurring prior to the sample period that were reported during the time period examined lacked important base material and context for analysis. This form of research does not share this problem.

An additional possible area for future research to consider is the collection of data on accidents themselves. The collection of accident statistics for the entire tourism sector in New Zealand has been suggested as a possibility at least as far back as the late 1990s (Page, 1997), but is still not the case today. While attempts have been made to generate statistics on overall fatalities and injuries for individual activities (MSC, 2016), or for the adventure tourism sector at large (Page, 1997; Bentley & Page, 2001; 2008), these do not generally create databases of individual accidents. Future research might examine the feasibility and necessity for an inventory of tourism accidents and/or fatalities. Both the current study and previous work in this field has illustrated that there are certainly many data sources that may be usable for the purposes of creating a database (Page, 1997; Newman, 2005; Bentley & Page, 2008). For instance, significant collections of accident statistics are held by ACC, the CAA, Maritime New Zealand, the TAIC, and other agencies. These and other collections of data could be used both for the creation of inventories, and to augment research based on specific case studies.

Possible accidents for examination as case studies that were identified by this study include the 2010 Fox Glacier skydiving crash, the 2012 hot air balloon crash at Carterton, and the drowning of Emily Jordan in 2008. The former and latter in particular are of known importance for their

effects on perceptions on the sector, and the reviews and changes to rules and regulations. The drowning of Emily Jordan is credited with spurring the review of the entire adventure tourism and outdoor education sector (Department of Labour, 2010). It is imperative that cases such as this be examined so that there is a better understanding of *how* and *why* this happens, to better inform management of accident aftermaths and tourism crises in general, as well as to fill a critical gap in the research literature. Given the aforementioned challenges in creating overall inventories of accidents, focusing on accidents which are known to have had lasting consequences to the wider tourism sector (and society in general) is likely to be a more efficient use of resources than many alternatives. As such, future research on adventure tourism accidents, their portrayal in the media, and their wider impacts, should make use of significant accidents such as these to create detailed case studies that go into greater and more specific detail than wide-spanning studies can accomplish.

At times, the news media becomes focused on a series of accidents, potentially linking them together and drawing conclusions on the risk profile or safety of a particular activity, operator, or destination (1997). This may be influenced by 'major' accidents that resonate through society, or be caused by similarities between different accidents. This phenomena has not been studied, though it has been noted before (Page, 1997). This also has ties to the campaigns and lobbying efforts that have also been noted as having influenced decision-making in the past (Page, 1997; Department of Labour, 2010). Developing the case-study methodology previously proposed for examining major accidents into an examination of groups of accidents that have been linked together or portrayed as a group by the media and examining how and why accidents are linked together (particularly when the facts of the involved accidents are significantly different) would be an important continuation and contribute significantly to the understanding of how tourism accidents are reported in the media.

In addition to the study of domestic media reporting of adventure tourism accidents, it would be valuable to assess how these same incidents are reported internationally. This study, as well as the two known prior examinations of media coverage of adventure tourism safety, relied on domestic media to obtain results and draw conclusions (Page, 1997; Davidson, 2008). While it is likely that media outlets overseas that do not have a local presence will use domestic media as sources, the manner in which they cover accidents here may well be very different considering the results of previous research into disaster coverage (Imtihani & Yanai, 2013). In addition, as

more publications move to focus their efforts on the world-wide web fewer geographic barriers to readership exists. Although an investigation of international media would be challenging, the value of understanding the portrayal of tourism accidents in specific markets is undeniable.

As mentioned above, the rise of the internet has caused great changes in how news spreads. Temporal and spatial barriers are disappearing as a result of social media and the global reach of websites in comparison to printed or broadcast media. This has interesting implications for the formation of risk perception in relation to travel and tourism. While older issues can resurface in the print media (such as in the retrospective pieces on Air New Zealand Flight 901 and the Cave Creek disaster), this resurgence occurs far more easily occur, with some international news websites (such as The Guardian) redesigning their websites in response to this phenomena to flag old articles that suddenly see a large quantity of traffic as they gain public attention again months or years after their publication, so as to inform users of the age of the article. The reappearance of old news online may have tangible effects on the perception of an activity, operator, or destination. Hence the 'reach' of news articles online and the ways in which old stories become relevant again are significant, and further underlines the effects of news media reporting on the tourism sector. Examining how news media relating to accidents is distributed online, and how stories become widely-read and/or shared through social media long after they have been published is an area that future research should examine in detail given the increasing importance of online media.

Adventure tourism is of high value to the New Zealand tourism sector, and the wider New Zealand economy (Page, 1997; Department of Labor, 2011; Tourism New Zealand, 2013). In an increasingly risk-averse society (Beck, 1992; Furedi, 1997; Mythen, 2004), accidents and their associated safety concerns have significant effects at many levels, ranging from individuals to companies to entire destinations and sub-sectors (Bovet, 1994; Page, 1997; Bonham, Edmonds & Mack, 2006; Balakrishnan, 2011). One route through which accidents filter into the public's consciousness is through the news media, which can have significant impacts on a destination in times of scandal or crisis (Cavicchi & Santini, 2011; Walters et al., 2016). Prospective tourists, as well as members of the public and members of government and regulatory agencies gain their perceptions of destinations and activities from a convergence of media (Moyle & Croy, 2009; Månsson, 2011), of which the work of news agencies is a significant part (King & Beeton, 2006). The analysis of New Zealand print media presented in this thesis is a small part of this milieu, but

a significant stepping stone on the route to understanding how tourism accident reporting impacts the sector, as well as wider society. This study has explored the fundamentals of New Zealand print media reporting of adventure tourism accidents, and future researchers should feel encouraged to examine other facets of the process of how accidents are communicated to and impact upon society, both domestically and abroad.

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Appendix A: Newspaper circulation information

This table summarises the average net circulation of the newspapers sampled for this study. Historical circulation figured for the period from which articles were taken was unavailable. It is important to note that these figures do not include online articles. As newspaper readership has increasingly moved from hardcopy to online views this has driven consolidation of newspapers and reduction in circulations (Read, 2017; Edmunds, 2018). However, the newspaper articles examined by this study were also published online by both Stuff and NZME. Thus the readership of articles created by these publications may be significantly higher than is suggested by traditional circulation figures.

Table A1 Newspaper circulation figures for sampled New Zealand Newspapers

Newspaper	Publisher	Daily/Weekly	Average Net Circulation (ANC) to 30/9/2017
The Timaru Herald	Fairfax	Daily	8,367
The Press	Fairfax	Daily	48,738
The Southland Times	Fairfax	Daily	17,072
Dominion Post	Fairfax	Daily	48,092
Marlborough Express	Fairfax	Other*	5,103
Manawatu Standard	Fairfax	Daily	8,173
Taranaki Daily News	Fairfax	Daily	13,880
Waikato Times	Fairfax	Daily	18,892
Nelson Mail	Fairfax	Daily	8,835
Sunday News	Fairfax	Weekly	16,377
Sunday Star Times	Fairfax	Weekly	77,627
The New Zealand Herald**	NZME	Daily	117,269
The Daily Post	NZME	Daily	6,107
Bay of Plenty Times	NZME	Daily	11,903
The Northern Advocate	NZME	Daily	10,968
Hawke's Bay Today	NZME	Daily	17,527

*The Marlborough Express was formerly a daily newspaper before being reduced to three issues per week in 2017 (Read, 2017).

**The New Zealand Herald also has a sister-publication, the “Herald on Sunday”, which has an ANC of 85,374. NewzTextPlus does not allow for accurate differentiation between ‘Herald’ and ‘Herald on Sunday’ articles, and as such they are treated as a single newspaper for the purposes of this study.

(New Zealand Audit Bureau of Circulation, n.d, retrieved 26/2/2018)

Appendix B: Articles examined within the study

This appendix consists of a table of the articles examined over the course of this study. The table lists the title, edition (where available), and page number of every article that appeared in the final sample, as well as the title. As the sampling methodology used for this study has limitations and future studies may be able to improve upon these limitations (as noted in Chapter 3, 5, and 6), knowledge of the sample used for this study is important for future reference, and for critique and/or replication of this study.

Table B1 Newspaper articles sampled

Publication	Issue info	Date	Page	Title
Timaru Herald	Edition 1	06/01/10	1	Adventure Tourism Review plea
The New Zealand Herald		08/01/10	A006	Outdoor safety code aims to cut tragedies
The Daily Post		12/01/10	A008	Adventure license not answer, say operators
The Press	Edition 2	12/01/10	3	Families dismayed by review delay
Southland Times	Edition 1	12/01/10	1	Safety upgrades 'not fast enough'
The Dominion Post	Edition 2	18/01/10	3	American tourist killed while rafting
Southland Times	Edition 1	03/04/10	5	Jetboat death still 'deeply felt'
Sunday Star Times	Edition 1	04/04/10	4	'A TRAGEDY THAT COULD HAVE BEEN AVOIDED'
Bay of Plenty Times		06/04/10	A001	12-year old rescues tourist from surf
Timaru Herald	Edition 1	12/04/10	7	Thanks
The Dominion Post	Edition 2	19/04/10	5	On patrol with intensive care from the air
The New Zealand Herald		10/05/10	A005	Fall victim talks to bungy firm from bed: Sydney tourist with serious injuries now in a stable condition
Marlborough Express	Edition 1	11/05/10	2	Bungy jumper 'stable'
Dominion Post	Edition 2	11/05/10	3	Rescuers thanked
Manawatu Standard	Edition 1	20/05/10	5	Guide Rescued
The Press	Edition 2	20/05/10	2	Guide in glacier rescue
The Southland Times	Edition 1	04/06/10	3	Jet boat driver relieved there were no deaths
The Press	Edition 2	15/06/10	7	Tourist died of natural causes – police
The Southland Times	Edition 1	06/07/10	1	Operators run activities 'by the seat of pants'
The Press	Edition 2	06/07/10	5	Adventure firms 'run by seat of pants', say critics
The Press	Edition 2	09/07/10	2	Unplanned extra run cost ski guide his life
The Southland Times	Edition 1	17/07/10	3	Judge endorses Donaldson's Maritime NZ safety adviser role
The Southland Times	Edition 1	17/07/10	3	Jetboat driver not at fault
The Southland Times	Edition 1	17/07/10	3	Jetboat driver was not at fault

The Southland Times	Edition 1	17/07/10	1 Judge endorses adviser's role in boating fraternity
The Southland Times	Edition 1	17/07/10	1 Jetboat trip started well but ended in tragedy
The Dominion Post	Edition 2	30/07/10	3 Lack of apology hurts grieving family
Taranaki Daily News	Edition 1	30/07/10	5 Tourism report set to go to Cabinet
The Press	Edition 2	30/07/10	3 Review of safety set to go before Cabinet
The Nelson Mail	Edition 1	05/08/10	3 Students speak out over proposed cuts
The Daily Post		25/08/10	A008 Tourism industry backs call to register adventure operators
The New Zealand Herald		25/08/10	A003 `Law changes too late for my girl' : New adventure tourism rules should always have been there: victim's father
The Southland Times	Edition1	25/08/10	1 Govt sheriff agency to lasso adventure tourism cowboys
The Press	Edition 2	25/08/10	1 Tougher rules for action tourism
The Dominion Post	Edition 2	25/08/10	3 Adventure tourism faces safety checks
The Nelson Mail	Edition 1	26/08/10	7 Adventure tourism checks are overdue
The Southland Times	Edition 1	27/08/10	5 Coroner yet to decide on inquest
Waikato Times	Edition 1	27/08/10	13 Adventure tourism welcomes safety rules
The Press	Edition 2	28/08/10	15 Adventure reform too late for bereft parents
The New Zealand Herald	Herald on Sunday	05/09/10	A012 Nine die as plane crashes in flames
The Sunday Star Times	Edition 2	05/09/10	14 Nine dead as plane crashes in fireball
Sunday News	Edition 1	05/09/10	9 Residents in shock as nine killed in plane crash blaze
The New Zealand Herald		06/09/10	A007 Pub tribute for dead plane crew
The Nelson Mail	Edition 1	06/09/10	1 Friends shattered by Fox Glacier crash
The Timaru Herald	Edition 1	06/09/10	2 Firm's future queried after skydiving crash
Taranaki Daily News	Edition 1	06/09/10	9 Victim knew pilot since his first skydive
The Press	Edition 2	06/09/10	17 Skydivers perish in fiery plane tragedy
The Dominion Post	Edition 1	06/09/10	7 Crash inquiry may take a year
The Southland Times	Edition 1	06/09/10	1 Experienced and talented skydive pilot mourned
The Press	Edition 2	07/09/10	13 Horror as women see boyfriends die in crash
The New Zealand Herald		12/09/10	A017 Parents read of daughter's plane death
The Press	Edition 1	15/09/10	12 Mourners tell of skydiver's zest for living
Manawatu Standard	Edition 1	17/09/10	7 Key sympathises with sad Fox
The Press	Edition 2	17/09/10	4 Key shows sympathy for Fox Glacier after skydiving tragedy
The Press	Edition 2	17/09/10	4 Skydiver farewelled in Nelson
The Timaru Herald	Edition 1	18/09/10	10 A tragedy overshadowed by a disaster
The Northern Advocate		28/10/10	A001 Daredevil plummets off dangerous falls `` I heard the slap as he hit the water and everyone went `ooohhhh'.
The Southland Times	Edition 1	30/09/10	1 River company changes name
The Press	Edition 2	29/10/10	7 Skydiving firm reopens after crash
The Press	Edition 2	02/11/10	5 Tour firm shuns skydiver
The Marlborough Express	Edition 1	11/11/10	16 Fatal crash plane overloaded
The New Zealand Herald		12/11/10	A003 Tragedy inquiry finds plane was overweight

Taranaki Daily News	Edition 1	12/11/10	5 Skydivers show caution
Waikato Times	Edition 1	12/11/10	2 Industry awaits full report
The Press	Edition 2	12/11/10	3 Overloading may have caused crash
The Southland Times	Edition 1	12/11/10	1 Pilot disputes crash findings
Waikato Times	Edition 1	24/11/10	3 Jetboat inquiry
The Press	Edition 2	09/12/10	14 Kayaker ready for 'big adventure'
The New Zealand Herald		12/12/10	A014 Diver may lose leg relatives (sic)
The Marlborough Express	Edition 1	13/12/10	12 Dolphin trip turns to disaster for tourist
The Nelson Mail	Edition 1	13/12/10	2 Injured swimmer stable
The Marlborough Express	Edition 1	14/12/10	12 Thanks for guide who freed doctor from propeller
The Marlborough Express	Edition 1	16/12/10	16 Hope for boat victim
The Nelson Mail	Edition 1	23/12/10	3 No action taken on fatal microlight crash
The Marlborough Express	Edition 1	31/12/10	3 Injured tourist making progress
Taranaki Daily News	Edition 1	01/01/11	5 Injured tourist walking after propeller accident
The Nelson Mail	Edition 1	05/02/11	1 More powerful but less safe?
The New Zealand Herald		06/02/11	A007 Students in boating collision
The Marlborough Express	Edition 1	07/02/11	1 Fast boats 'frequent problem'
The New Zealand Herald		08/02/11	A003 Tourist dies but mate saved after boat crash
The Marlborough Express	Edition 1	08/02/11	3 Boating accident
The Southland Times	Edition 1	11/02/11	3 Tourist says after accident: Why weren't we told of ACC?
The Southland Times	Edition 1	11/02/11	1 Tourist critical of accident care
The Southland Times	Edition 1	16/02/11	3 Tourists 'not told' about ACC cover for injuries
The Southland Times	Edition 1	24/02/11	10 Paragliding accident in for CAA investigation
The Dominion Post	Edition 2	04/04/11	3 Skydiving tourist hurt in crash-landing
The Marlborough Express	Edition 1	06/04/11	3 Maritime NZ probes incident in which boy injured
The Northern Advocate		19/04/11	A003 Tourist ride ends in tragedy for local farmer
The New Zealand Herald		28/04/11	A001 Search for 2 missing in chopper
The New Zealand Herald		05/05/11	A004 Bungy jump firm to pay \$40,000
The Dominion Post	Edition 2	05/05/11	3 Fine imposed after bungy accident
The Nelson Mail	Edition 1	05/05/11	5 Bungy firm fined \$40,000 for fall
The Press	Edition 2	11/05/11	7 Trumper hurt
The Timaru Herald		11/05/11	1 Hurt hiker pulled out
The Southland Times		19/05/11	3 Para pilot in clear for broken leg
The Southland Times	Edition 1	27/05/11	3 River accident wrangle continues
The Press		27/05/11	3 'Horror' over attitude to fatality
The New Zealand		10/08/11	A004 Tobogganing tourist lucky to survive fall near rocks

Herald				
The New Zealand Herald		30/08/11	A007	'Lights out', but jet-boater wants back in
The Sunday Star Times	Edition 1	11/09/11	8	BRIEFS: Tourist death ruling
Bay of Plenty Times		31/12/11	A010	(No headline)
The Northern Advocate		31/12/11	A007	(No headline, news briefs)
The New Zealand Herald		04/01/12	A003	Victim's family: Why are people still being shot?
The Sunday Star Times		08/01/12	2	Fellow flyers sickened at crash horror
The Sunday Star Times		08/01/12	3	Crash site an awful scene, says minister
The Dominion Post		09/01/12	2	Accident leaves fate of this year's Balloons Over Wairarapa festival in balance
The Dominion Post		09/01/12	3	Other fatalities in same model craft
The Nelson Mail	Edition 1	09/01/12	9	Another shocking aviation tragedy
The New Zealand Herald		10/01/12	A008	Inquiry must lift balloon tourists' safety
The New Zealand Herald		10/01/12	A005	CAA probe for balloon firm in crash
The Waikato Times	Edition 1	10/01/12	13	Ballooning inherently risky
The Nelson Mail	Edition 1	28/01/12	15	Without a trace for half a century
The Timaru Herald	Edition 1	28/01/12	27	Mystery of the lost Dragonfly
The Press	Edition 1	28/01/12	10	Missing plane remains a mystery 50 years on
The Southland Times	Edition 1	30/01/12	7	Mystery remains after 50 years
The Daily Post		04/02/12	A005	Flouting water safety rules causing avoidable incidents
The New Zealand Herald		18/02/12	A005	Aussie dies in flying accident
The Nelson Mail	Edition 1	11/04/12	1	Aviation rule anomaly cited in fatal microlight crash
The Northern Advocate		08/05/12	A001	Back-break boat operators fined
The Press	Edition 1	09/05/12	3	Results of Skydive crash investigation out today
The Nelson Mail	Edition 1	09/05/12	1	Fatal air crash 'could have been avoided'
The New Zealand Herald		10/05/12	A009	Crash victim's father begs PM to tighten aviation rules
The Southland Times	Edition 1	10/05/12	3	Series of failures caused tragedy
The Nelson Mail	Edition 1	10/05/12	4	Plane crash charges possible
The Timaru Herald	Edition 1	10/05/12	4	Police mull Fox crash charges
The Manawatu Standard	Edition 1	10/05/12	6	Plane crash charges
The Press	Edition 1	10/05/12	2	Parachuting veteran queries blame being pinned on plane
The Dominion Post	Edition 1	10/05/12	4	Decision close on charges, say police
The Press	Edition 1	10/05/12	2	Key defends tourism after tragedy
Taranaki Daily News	Edition 1	10/05/12	5	Changes to plane blamed for crash
The Press	Edition 1	10/05/12	1	Charges possible after plane-crash report
Taranaki Daily News	Edition 1	10/05/12	5	Charges decision soon over fatal Fox Glacier air crash
The Marlborough Express	Edition 1	10/05/12	6	Charges possible
The Southland Times	Edition 1	10/05/12	1	Report criticises CAA failings

The New Zealand Herald		11/05/12	A002 Dope shock makes tests likely
The Dominion Post	Edition 1	11/05/12	1 We can't afford to take chances, says Key
The Nelson Mail	Edition 1	11/05/12	1 Grieving dad says pilot's drug use a 'sick' sign
The Press	Edition 1	11/05/12	5 Dope in pilot's body sign of 'sick society'
Waikato Times	Edition 1	11/05/12	3 Safety a priority in tourism
The Dominion Post	Edition 1	12/05/12	5 Adrenaline junkies can choose their thrills without facing more red tape
The New Zealand Herald		13/05/12	A037 No time for reefer madness panic
The Press	Edition 1	19/05/12	15 Police review awaited
The Bay of Plenty Times		14/07/12	A015 Inquest streams live to absent families
The New Zealand Herald	Herald on Sunday	12/08/12	A014 Staff blamed by grieving parents / Couple too traumatised to attend Fox Glacier crash inquest
Hawkes Bay Today		14/08/12	A007 Witnesses recall skydive plane horror
Bay of Plenty Times		14/08/12	A004 Witnesses recall plane horror
The Northern Advocate		14/08/12	A022 Witnesses recall horror
The New Zealand Herald		14/08/12	A006 Witnesses feared plane about to hit house / Inquest into Fox Glacier airfield crash told of onlookers' fears
The Southland Times	Edition 1	14/08/12	2 Plane-crash victims' families tell inquest of agony at loss
The Nelson Mail	Edition 1	14/08/12	6 Crash families speak of loss
The Waikato Times	Edition 1	14/08/12	12 Plane's manual inadequate for use in skydiving, inquest told
Taranaki Daily News	Edition 1	14/08/12	5 Aviation industry 'failed victims'
The Press	Edition 1	14/08/12	7 Grieving relatives cast blame for air crash
The Dominion Post	Edition 1	14/08/12	5 Son adamant skydiver 'totally safety-conscious'
The Dominion Post	Edition 2	14/08/12	5 'Major failings' claim at skydive crash inquest
The New Zealand Herald		15/08/12	A004 Victim's girlfriend spared sight of crash
The Press	Edition 1	15/08/12	7 Crash likened to kamikaze dive
The New Zealand Herald		16/08/12	A005 Parts of wreck buried in paddock
The Press	Edition 1	16/08/12	5 Pilot rejects expert's findings
Waikato Times	Edition 1	16/08/12	6 Inquest hears differing reasons for cause of crash
Bay of Plenty Times		17/08/12	A004 Doubts on plane tragedy
The New Zealand Herald		17/08/12	A006 Experts discount excess weight as factor in crash
The Press	Edition 1	17/08/12	5 Aviation experts dispute official report on air crash
Taranaki Daily News	Edition 1	17/08/10	2 Further witness doubts crash cause finding
The Nelson Mail	Edition 1	17/08/12	5 Air crash findings disputed
The Southland Times	Edition 1	17/08/12	2 Opposition to official crash findings mounts
The Dominion Post	Edition 1	17/08/12	5 Aviation experts reject official plane-crash report
The Press	Edition 1	18/08/12	11 Coroner raises option of grounding aircraft
The Timaru Herald	Edition 1	18/08/12	4 Plan to strap down divers
Waikato Times	Edition 1	18/08/12	5 Coroner queries lack of restraints in skydiving craft
The Manawatu Standard	Edition 1	18/08/12	5 Aircraft grounding suggested

The New Zealand Herald	Herald on Sunday	02/09/12	A012 Drug tests for skydivers
The Press	Edition 1	17/09/12	3 Chopper busy
The New Zealand Herald		24/10/12	A003 Tourist's quad bike death makes five for year
The Timaru Herald	Edition 1	25/12/12	1 Tourist dies
The Southland Times	Edition 1	25/10/12	3 Quad bike tourist dies
Taranaki Daily News	Edition 1	25/10/12	5 Quad-bike woman dies
The Press	Edition 1	25/10/12	3 Tourist dies
The Southland Times	Edition 1	16/11/12	1 Contract skydiver falls to his death
Taranaki Daily News	Edition 1	17/11/12	5 Investigation after expert skydiver plummets to death
The Nelson Mail	Edition 1	27/12/12	1 Laser aimed at chopper
The Southland Times	Edition 1	28/12/12	15 Man aiming laser tracked down by helicopter crew
The Daily Post		09/01/13	A003 Tourist boat in collision
The Southland Times	Edition 1	18/01/13	3 Toppled crane had been greatly overloaded
The Dominion Post	Edition 1	19/03/13	3 German climber tells of long night in crevasse
The Southland Times	Edition 1	19/03/13	2 Crevasse fall woman knew she'd survive
The Press	Edition 1	19/03/13	3 Climber: 'I was afraid she would die on the glacier'
The Manawatu Standard	Edition 1	19/03/13	5 Climber faced death, and survived
Taranaki Daily News	Edition 1	26/03/13	6 Tourists' safety high on agenda
The Timaru Herald	Edition 1	26/03/13	6 Tourists' safety high on industry agenda
The Dominion Post	Edition 1	26/03/13	5 Safety high on adventure tourism operators' agenda
The Waikato Times	Edition 1	26/03/13	7 High hopes for adventure sector
The Daily Post		03/04/13	A006 Rescue chopper callouts
The New Zealand Herald		13/04/13	A009 Tragedy's aftermath runs deep
The New Zealand Herald		06/05/13	A005 Tourists' plane doomed at take-off
The New Zealand Herald		06/05/13	A005 PM backs improvements
The Marlborough Express	Edition 1	06/05/13	6 Families hit out at 'crazy' NZ aviation
The Waikato Times	Edition 1	06/05/13	5 Aviation passing buck, say families
The Press	Edition 1	06/05/13	3 Families slam 'crazy' NZ aviation
The Nelson Mail	Edition 1	06/05/13	1 Govt to consider aviation changes
The Manawatu Standard	Edition 1	06/05/13	5 'Blase' aviation industry slated
The Southland Times	Edition 1	06/05/13	2 Families may take legal action over crash
The Dominion Post	Edition 1	06/05/13	3 Anger over 'crazy' aviation industry
The Timaru Herald	Edition 1	06/05/13	1 Report frustrates victims' families
Taranaki Daily News	Edition 1	06/05/13	4 Skydivers' families frustrated
The New Zealand Herald		07/05/13	A024 Adventure tourism must ensure safety
The Southland Times	Edition 1	07/05/13	5 Tourism operators might face drug tests
Taranaki Daily News	Edition 1	07/05/13	5 Plea for action on air safety

The Dominion Post	Edition 1		07/05/13	8 Plane crash lessons must be heeded
The Press	Edition 1		07/05/13	4 Victims' families urge 'decisive action'
The New Zealand Herald			09/05/13	A032 Adventure tourism is getting a whole lot safer
The Dominion post	Edition 1		09/05/13	9 Safety first now in adventure tourism
The Sunday Star Times	Edition 1		26/05/13	3 Manslaughter charge for quad bike tour owner
The Timaru Herald	Edition 1		25/07/13	3 Jet boat drivers charged for crash
The Southland Times	Edition 1		25/07/13	3 Jet boat drivers charged over crash
The New Zealand Herald			29/07/13	A007 Shot visitor trapped by ACC system
The New Zealand Herald			02/08/13	A028 Shot tourist's scaled-back compo unfair
The Nelson Mail	Edition 1		17/10/13	1 Visitors overwhelmed by help
The Marlborough Express	Edition 1		18/10/13	12 Pair praise 'amazing' care
The New Zealand Herald			27/10/13	A014 Slow uptake of new rules
The Timaru Herald	Edition 1		29/10/13	1 Chopper crash - tourists airlifted
The Southland Times	Edition 1		29/10/13	1 Tourists airlifted to safety after helicopters crash at snowfield
The Press	Edition 1		29/10/13	3 Snow landing ends in crash
The Marlborough Express	Edition 1		29/10/13	12 Tour choppers crash on glacier
Taranaki Daily News	Edition 1	29/1013		3 Pilot hurt as snow landing goes awry
The New Zealand Herald			01/11/13	A008 Balloon deaths spur drug warning
The Press	Edition 1		01/11/13	5 Drugs link in balloon tragedy
The Timaru Herald	Edition 1		01/11/13	10 Drug testing is a must
The Waikato Times	Edition 1		01/11/13	1 Stoned pilot caused crash
The Manawatu Standard	Edition 1		01/11/13	3 Calls for more strict testing after crash
The Northern Advocate			02/11/13	A012 Drug use shocks colleagues
The New Zealand Herald			02/11/13	A022 Attitude to drugs needs to change
The Waikato Times	Edition 1		02/11/13	4 Balloon report welcome
The Sunday Star Times	Edition 1		03/11/13	15 Reputation as tourism destination at stake
The Sunday Star Times	Edition 1		03/11/13	14 Adventure issues
The Northern Advocate			11/01/14	A012 Tourists climb out of toppled chopper
The Nelson Mail	Edition 1		04/02/14	2 Temporary sign warns of danger
The Timaru Herald	Edition 1		05/02/14	4 Safety signs now at falls
The Press	Edition 1		05/02/14	9 Warning on safety after falls drowning
The Nelson Mail	Edition 1		07/02/14	1 Cavers in rescue bid
Hawkes Bay Today			10/02/14	A003 Man critical after 'diving accident' at falls
Hawkes Bay Today			11/02/14	A003 Injured falls diver remains in critical condition
The Nelson Mail	Edition 1		14/03/14	12 Chopper flies in to help tourist
The Waikato Times	Edition 1		15/03/14	8 Little glory in rescues but plenty of guts still needed

The Timaru Herald	Edition 1	29/03/14	11 MERCY MISSIONS
The Sunday Star Times	Edition 7	11/05/14	8 Parents in fresh bid for balloon drug tests
The Northern Advocate		17/05/14	A008 Balloon crash victim had overcome cancer
The Daily Post		17/05/14	A011 Balloon victim survived cancer
The New Zealand Herald		17/05/14	A021 Victim cleared of cancer just before balloon tragedy
The Bay of Plenty Times		17/05/14	A012 Balloon crash victim had overcome cancer
The Nelson Mail	Edition 1	26/05/14	3 Concerns addressed, says plane company
The New Zealand Herald		02/08/14	A024 SIGNS The warning
The Press	Edition 1	02/08/14	20 Trouble in paradise
The Press	Edition 1	06/08/14	1 Plane crash: Pilot dies, tourists injured
The New Zealand Herald		06/08/14	A003 Tragic end to flight over Lord of the Rings site
The Southland Times	Edition 1	06/08/14	1 Pilot killed, tourists injured
The Nelson Mail	Edition 1	06/08/14	10 Crash investigation start
The Marlborough Express	Edition 1	06/08/14	7 Crash pilot dies, tourists injured
The New Zealand Herald		07/08/14	A018 'Too early to comment' on cause of crash
The Southland Times	Edition 1	07/08/14	1 Dead pilot widely mourned
The Timaru Herald	Edition 1	07/08/14	2 Crash pilot died 'living his dream'
The Waikato Times	Edition 1	07/08/14	7 Crash pilot died 'living the dream'
The Press	Edition 1	07/08/14	2 Pilot mourned by many
Taranaki Daily News	Edition 1	07/08/14	5 Pilot died 'living the dream'
The Sunday Star Times	Edition 1	17/08/14	2 One dead after heli-ski chopper crash
The New Zealand Herald	Herald on Sunday?	17/08/14	A003 Heli-ski flight horror
The New Zealand Herald		13/09/14	A018 Grieving UK dad welcomes safety audit
The New Zealand Herald		25/09/14	A021 Bike death earns fine but firm can't pay
Taranaki Daily News	Edition 1	25/09/14	4 \$120,000 fine after tourist dies
The New Zealand Herald		28/09/14	A007 Lucky to survive crash
The Dominion Post	Edition 1	10/11/14	3 Woman badly hurt in fall from risky swing
The Press	Edition 1	10/11/14	2 Thrillseekers warned off dangerous swing
The Dominion Post	Edition 1	12/11/14	5 Dangerous swing in tourism campaign
The Dominion Post	Edition 1	14/11/14	5 Family calls for swing accident tree to get chop
Taranaki Daily News	Edition 1	14/11/14	4 Chop tree, say swing victim's family
The Manawatu Standard	Edition 1	14/11/14	5 Chop down tree, says victim's family
The Dominion Post	Edition 1	15/11/14	12 Village rallies to bring home swing-fall victim
The Southland Times	Edition 1	02/12/14	3 Air crash report six months away
The Northern Advocate		02/01/15	A004 Spate of summer beach accidents
The Dominion Post	Edition 1	05/01/15	5 Rope line safety device 'smart and beautiful'

The Waikato Times	Edition 1	05/01/15	7 Tree-top adrenalin rush made safer, clients return
The Press	Edition 1	05/01/15	9 Clic in time keeps high wires swinging
The Manawatu Standard	Edition 1	05/01/15	9 Clic in time keeps high wire adventurers swinging
The Southland Times	Edition 1	05/01/15	15 Clic in time keeps high wires swinging
Taranaki Daily News	Edition 1	05/01/15	11 Clic in time keeps thrill-seekers safe
The New Zealand Herald		06/01/15	A016 Ledge fall claims life of tourist
The Daily Post		08/01/15	A003 'It was miraculous no one was killed'
The New Zealand Herald		08/01/15	A002 Lucky 13: Skydivers leap for lives at 2000ft
Hawkes Bay Today		08/01/15	A003 Pilot praised for quick thinking
The Daily Post		09/01/15	A004 Flames followed engine stoppage
The New Zealand Herald		09/01/15	A007 'No panic' when plane's engine died
The Timaru Herald	Edition 1	09/01/15	3 Subdued skydivers return to duties
Taranaki Daily News	Edition 1	09/01/15	3 Passenger joked about lake crash
The Nelson Mail	Edition 1	09/01/15	3 Skydiver joked about crashing
The Dominion Post	Edition 1	09/01/15	3 Skydiver 'joked about crashing'
The Waikato Times	Edition 1	09/01/15	1 Skydiver joked of crash moments before flight
The Daily Post		10/01/15	A008 Survivor becomes fearless after early exit from plummeting plane
The Northern Advocate		10/01/15	A012 In the wake of disaster
The Timaru Herald	Edition 1	10/01/15	5 Taupo plane crash inquiry begins
The Nelson Mail	Edition 1	10/01/15	3 Probe starts into Lake Taupo crash
The Waikato Times	Edition 1	10/01/15	3 Taupo plane crash inquiry begins
The Dominion Post	Edition 1	10/01/15	5 Report on lake crash 18 months away
The Press	Edition 1	10/01/15	5 Taupo plane-crash inquiry begins
The New Zealand Herald		11/01/15	A006 Six hurt in boat crash
The Marlborough Express	Edition 1	12/01/15	7 Cause of boat crash 'unknown'
The Southland Times	Edition 1	12/01/15	1 This Morning
Taranaki Daily News	Edition 1	12/01/15	3 One thrill-seeker still in hospital
The Nelson Mail	Edition 1	12/01/15	4 'No obvious cause' for jet boat crash
The Waikato Times	Edition 1	12/01/15	5 Five injured after jet boat hits rocks in Shotover River
The Press	Edition 1	12/01/15	2 Rock suspected in jet boat crash
The Daily Post		04/02/15	A014 Crash jumper takes the plunge again
The New Zealand Herald		20/02/15	A003 Helicopter pair killed in alpine crash
Hawke's Bay Today		20/02/15	A021 Tourism company mourns staff deaths
The New Zealand Herald		22/02/15	A003 Choppers ordered from skies after crash
The New Zealand Herald		23/02/15	A015 Copter firms face wait
The Daily Post		25/02/15	A012 Nat Briefs: Copters free to fly again
The Northern		25/02/15	A024 Nat Briefs: Copters free to fly again

Advocate				
The Northern Advocate		24/03/15	A022	Tourist Search
The Northern Advocate		24/03/15	A022	Hunter dies in accident
Bay of Plenty Times		24/03/15	A017	Tourist Search
Bay of Plenty Times		24/03/15	A017	Hunter dies in accident
The Nelson Mail	Edition 1	25/03/15	6	Death of a proud granddad
The New Zealand Herald		24/04/15	A019	Families hail balloon crash findings
The Dominion Post	Edition 1	24/04/15	1	Coroner: Ensure balloon tragedy is never repeated
Taranaki Daily News	Edition 1	24/04/15	4	Balloon deaths 'preventable' – coroner
The Timaru Herald	Edition 1	25/04/15	13	A survivor's (sic)
The Dominion Post	Edition 1	25/04/15	1	THE CAVE CREEK TRAGEDY A survivor's story
The Waikato Times	Edition 1	25/04/15	8	Surviving Cave Creek disaster
The New Zealand Herald		15/05/15	A014	Air crash report
The New Zealand Herald		21/06/15	A003	Toddler falls 25m from tourist train
The Timaru Herald	Edition 1	22/06/15	3	Shock as toddler falls from train
The Waikato Times	Edition 1	22/06/15	1	Train fall prompts probe
Taranaki Daily News	Edition 1	22/06/15	5	Train fall toddler in stable condition
The Dominion Post	Edition 1	22/06/15	4	Toddler falls 25m off Coromandel tourist train
The Waikato Times	Edition 1	23/06/15	3	New measures put in place while train probe begins
The Southland Times	Edition 1	12/08/15	2	'Good bugger' buried in Hector avalanche
The Press	Edition 1	13/08/15	6	Tourists yell in vain to warn of avalanche
The Southland Times	Edition 1	13/08/15	3	Tourists yell in vain as avalanche buries skier
The Manawatu Standard	Edition 1	07/09/15	5	Safety audit urged after cable mishap
The Press	Edition 1	12/09/15	22	Safety first at Adrenalin Forest
The Nelson Mail	Edition 1	14/09/15	8	Adventure drug tests 'too complex'
The Press	Edition 1	14/09/15	1	Tourism drug tests 'too hard'
The Nelson Mail	Edition 1	26/09/15	4	Two dead after kayaks swamped
The New Zealand Herald		26/09/15	A001	Tourist tragedy on Lake Tekapo as kayakers die in icy water
The Daily Post		26/09/15	A006	Weather played role in lake deaths
The Press	Edition 1	07/10/15	4	Tourist fell 500m to his death in Treble Cone accident
The Southland Times	Edition 1	08/10/15	2	US skier killed
The Waikato Times	Edition 1	19/10/15	2	Railcar must up its safety measures
The Bay of Plenty Times		30/10/15	A017	Mystery of air crash remains
The Manawatu Standard	Edition 1	30/10/15	4	Review finds crash inquiry team lacked resources
The Southland Times	Edition 1	30/10/15	4	Review: Crash probe team lacked resources
The Nelson Mail	Edition 1	20/11/15	3	Aviators fight to fly again
The New Zealand Herald		22/11/15	A006	'All round good guy' pilot perishes in chopper crash

The Sunday Star Times	Edition 1	22/11/15	1 ICE TRAPS BODIES
The Daily Post		23/11/15	A011 Drone to study helicopter crash site
The Northern Advocate		23/11/15	A021 Drone to study glacier helicopter crash site
The Dominion Post	Edition 1	23/11/15	1 Three bodies recovered from glacier
The Nelson Mail	Edition 1	23/11/15	4 Bad weather halts retrieval of crash victims
The Press	Edition 1	23/11/15	1 Tourists' bodies recovered
The Manawatu Standard	Edition 1	23/11/15	4 Bad weather halts retrieval of crash victims
The Southland Times	Edition 1	23/11/15	1 Crash pilot schooled in Invercargill
The Marlborough Express	Edition 1	23/11/15	4 Bad weather halts retrieval of crash victims
The Bay of Plenty Times		24/11/15	A016 Wait on weather to retrieve last bodies
The New Zealand Herald		24/11/15	B003 Glacier helicopter tragedy hits hard, chief says
The Daily Post		24/11/15	A014 Wait on weather to retrieve last bodies
The New Zealand Herald		24/11/15	A010 Intact blades offer clue: pilot
The Press	Edition 1	24/11/15	12 Fox crash needs thorough probe
The Southland Times	Edition 1	24/11/15	4 DNA tests reveal fourth body found
The Dominion Post	Edition 1	24/11/15	5 PM confident in adventure tourism safety changes
The Press	Edition 1	24/11/15	1 Agonising wait
The Press	Edition 1	25/11/15	2 Weather halts body recovery
The Timaru Herald	Edition 1	27/11/15	4 Pilot's family salute crash recovery effort
The Nelson Mail	Edition 1	27/11/15	5 Pilot's family salute crash recovery effort on glacier
The Waikato Times	Edition 1	27/11/15	7 Pilot's family salute crash recovery effort
The Press	Edition 1	28/11/15	9 River of ice and sorrow haunts industry
The Press	Edition 1	03/12/15	4 Australian family visit Fox crash site
The Manawatu Standard	Edition 1	04/12/15	5 Family 'grateful' for crash site visit
The Southland Times	Edition 1	04/12/15	4 Family 'very grateful' for crash site visit
The Timaru Herald	Edition 1	04/12/15	4 Family 'grateful' for crash site visit
The Nelson Mail	Edition 1	04/12/15	5 Family 'very grateful' for chance to visit crash site
The New Zealand Herald		10/12/15	A005 Rescuers 'legends' says Oz climber
The Manawatu Standard	Edition 1	11/12/15	5 Body of tourist tramper retrieved
The Bay of Plenty Times		12/12/15	A003 Helicopter dispatch
The Timaru Herald	Edition 1	30/12/15	4 Tourist thanks rescuers after tumble over cliffs