

ProGuides Newsletter

28 April 2026



From the Chair

Attracting new members—particularly from the younger generation—has been a priority for some time. Our new Affiliate Membership category has been designed to open the door to anyone interested in guiding.

At the moment we are planning a **"mega-famil" in June**, as an introduction (or a refresher) to Aotearoa-New Zealand. At this stage, we are considering two trips, one in the North Island and one in the South Island. New members are invited to contact us for more information and to register. This famil is targeted at the Affiliate Members, but all are welcome, though you must be a member to participate. If you know someone who is thinking about joining, this is the right time for them!

I have been reaching out to some of our members for their support in making this famil a success. Planning is still flexible, and your input will be key in shaping them. Looking forward to hearing from you. Feel free to [get in touch with me](#).

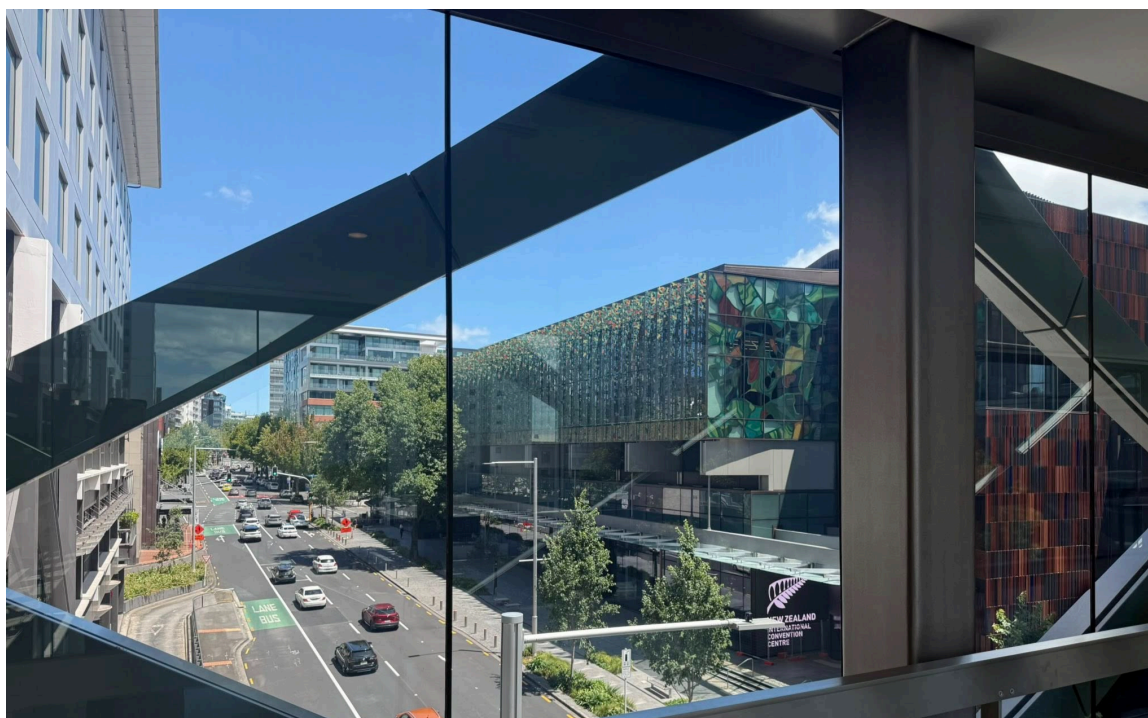
Nga mihi Angela

From the Committee

Just a reminder: Membership subscription for 1 July 2026 – 30 June 2027 is now due. [Click here to renew your membership](#). Once submitted, an email invoice with payment details will be sent out. When payment is confirmed, your membership card will be posted to the address provided in the form.

We also warmly encourage all members to attend this year's AGM in Oamaru. Your participation helps shape the future direction of our Association. Last but not least, have a look at all the exciting upcoming events. Enjoy the read!

Upcoming Events



Auckland Art Gallery Tour

Join in for a tour with a local guide from the Art Gallery. The event takes place on Wednesday, May 13, 2026 at 13.00 at the **Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki** Hesketh Henry Building, 2 Kitchener St. If you are interested, [click here for more information](#) and your participation. If you have registered and cannot attend, please update so that another

member can take your spot. We have almost reached the maximum numbers (15) for that famil, but we can schedule a second one if required.

First-Aid Webinar with Bex

On Wednesday, June 10, 7pm, Ambulance Officer and First Aid Trainer Bex Hill will run a **First Aid Scene Management Webinar for Tour Guides**. Whether you're on a mountain, in the bush, or managing a busload of guests, this chat is about sharpening your instincts, backing your decisions, having a kit that is ready and making sure you're ready to step up when it counts. Because out there—you are the first responder. [Click here if you are interested.](#)

Mega Famil for Affiliates

As stated in the intro, Angela and the committee team are preparing a road tour for our new Affiliate Members, to take place in the off-season. As we are working on the details, we would like to see many of the **senior members of the Association volunteer to assist**, whether it is sharing their knowledge, driving for a day or two, facilitating contacts with local operators or from an operational perspective. Please contact [Angela](#) if you would like to help.

AGM in Oamaru

Our preparations work for the 2026 AGM is ongoing. Dates and venue have been booked: **19 Sept at the Brydone Oamaru**. Please let us know, if you would like to book a room in the hotel as we have a small allotment at \$171 per room. Famils are planned before and after the event. We are working on the content of the AGM, more will be published on the next newsletter and the registration form will be live on our website in the next few weeks. Watch the space, we will keep you in the loop.

From our Industry



New Zealand on Show

New Zealand's Minister for Tourism and Hospitality Louise Upston has travelled to Seatrade Cruise Global in Miami, which took place from April 13 to 16 to make the case for increased cruise deployment to the region, meeting with CLIA president Joel Katz (left) and CEO Bud Darr and other industry leaders at the world's biggest cruise trade event. The New Zealand delegation is feeling more positive on future deployment following a 40% drop in cruise tourism in 2025/26, and stagnated deployment for the 2026/27 season. [Click here for more information.](#)

TECNZ Trade Event in Auckland

More than 400 tourism operators, buyers and industry stakeholders have been in Auckland for TECNZ's second standalone Trade Event, which took place April 22-23, 2026 at the Viaduct Events Centre in Auckland. The event's focus was to connect New Zealand tourism suppliers with inbound tour operators. [Click here for more information.](#)

Rising International Arrivals

New Zealand's tourism sector is showing impressive growth. According to latest data [released by Stats NZ](#), international visitor arrivals have been steadily rising, with February marking a significant milestone. For the 12-month period leading to February 2026, New Zealand welcomed 3.58 million international visitors, an increase of 229,000 year-on-year, which signals a strong rebound in the industry. However, it remains to be seen how the Iran crisis will impact our industry.

Tourism and the Middle East Conflict

Lynda Keene, the CEO of the Tourism Export Council of New Zealand (TECNZ), has been addressing the impact of international visitor cancellations due to flight disruptions caused by the ongoing Middle East conflict. Despite the challenges, Keene noted that the impact was felt at the tail end of the international tourism season, which runs from October to March, and that bookings for the next season were largely unaffected. [Click here for more information.](#)

Intrepid Travel completes largest acquisition

Intrepid Travel has completed the acquisition of France's Altai Group, an adventure travel company. The deal marks the operator's second major investment in Europe after acquiring Dutch tour operator Sawadee Reizen last year. The Altai Group is headquartered in Lyon and offers nature-based tours. It consists of multiple brands. [Click here for more information.](#)

New CEO for Fine Tours

Fine Tours Group, a company specialising in tailor-made, high-quality touring holidays across New Zealand and Australia, has appointed [Scott McNab as chief executive officer](#). It is regarded as an important step in the company's next phase of growth. McNab brings more than 20 years of leadership experience along with a strong track record of helping ambitious New Zealand businesses grow and expand internationally. His previous leadership roles include RealNZ and Icebreaker.

DOC Matters



Rates and Invoices

Committee member Brian Farrant informs that the new DOC concession invoicing system is designed to go through the Proguides account. DOC-card holders will soon get an email about their last 12 months activity. After receipt of the activity return, Proguides will send out one invoice that covers the 25-26 activity and the 26-27 concession fee. Any questions, please get in [touch with Brian](#).

The new rates for next year will be \$15 per client per day, or \$7.50 per client for half a day, or \$2 per client for up to one hour. These **new rates are much higher** than our existing rates, a significant increase which needs to be allowed for in quoting for tours next season, but still considerably less than applying for your own concession through DOC.

New Biodiversity Plan

The Government has set out its priorities to restore biodiversity in New Zealand. A new implementation plan aims to sharpen New Zealand's focus on restoring biodiversity and supporting nature to recover, Conservation Minister Tama Potaka says. 'Action for Nature' sets out a clear direction for smarter investment, stronger partnerships, and better use of information to guide decisions. [Click here for more information](#).

Hooker Valley Bridge to open this year

The massive new suspension bridge being built up the Hooker Valley at Aoraki/Mount Cook will open in late July/early August this year. The bridge which will span 189 metres across the Hooker River on the upper section of the popular Hooker Valley track will replace an existing swing

bridge which had to be closed in April 2025 due to riverbank erosion near the bridge supports. [Click here for more information.](#)

Welcoming New Members

* Affiliate members

Charles Dugmore - Auckland.

He migrated to New Zealand from Botswana/ South Africa 10 years ago, and has a Ph.D in history.

Melanie Wittwer - Auckland.

Originally from Germany, she has been living in New Zealand for 25 years. She works as a translator and a museum host.

* Full members

Ron Sperber - Maungatapere

Richard May - Auckland

Feng Chen - Christchurch

Marco Amarante - Tauranga

Notes from the Road

Facelift for Nowhere Bridge

A popular destination within the Whanganui National Park is ready for a makeover. The concrete Bridge to Nowhere built in 1936 in the remote Mangapurua Valley is getting a facelift by DOC. [More info.](#)



Chanel in the South Island

Central Otago's Lammermoor Station - the country's largest organic farm and only certified organic fine wool producer - has woven a new deal with French fashion house Chanel.

[Read more here.](#)



Regenerating Native Forest

Interested in the incredible story of botanist Hugh Wilson from Banks Peninsula and how gorse-infested farmland has been regenerated back into beautiful New Zealand native forest over the course of 30 years. [Click here.](#)

