**Transcript**

***Associate Professor Andrew Brookes – Understanding fatal incidents in supervised youth in the outdoors***

My, my research is trying to understand the causes of fatal incidents with school and youth group camps and excursions. So I’ve been looking at every fatal incident involving supervised youth in the outdoors since 1960 and trying to understand what the causes are of those incidents.

What you’re really trying to do is prevent deaths but you can never prove you’ve prevented something that didn’t happen so what you’re, what you’re satisfied with is a very clear understanding of what’s caused incidents in the past and you can then test current practice and safety guidelines against what you know about incidents in the past.

Well, deaths in the outdoors of young people are very infrequent so they’re not an epidemic but they’re a dreadful tragedy when they happen and they’re nearly always preventable. So every one that’s prevented is prevents some trauma. But it can also help us understand incidents when they occur. For example, in 2008 six students and one teacher died on the Mangatepopo River and La Trobe was able to contribute to the investigation into that tragedy so that the New Zealand community could understand what happened. And however painful it is, communities want to understand “why?” after an incident like that.