

Alps 2 Ocean Reference Group (A2ORG) - Terms of Reference

1. Purpose

The purpose of the Alps2Ocean Reference Group (A2ORG) is to represent stakeholders to the Alps2Ocean Cycle Trail (the Trail) governing Joint Committee. The A2ORG allows a communications conduit for feedback, input, and consideration of the Alps2Ocean strategic and operational objectives and timeframes.

High-level objectives are:

- Ensure broad representation across the Waitaki and Mackenzie Districts for community interest groups, businesses, organisations and agencies associated with the Trail. This includes tourism and tourism-related businesses (such as food and accommodation businesses), proximity land-owners, and local and central government agencies such as Environment Canterbury and LINZ.
- Input and review of the annual strategic objectives.
- Input and review of the annual marketing strategy.
- Input and review of the quarterly operational programme.
- Matters of interest or concern to the representatives.
- For the representatives to report to the wider stakeholder community regarding the Trail strategic and operational objectives and progress against these objectives.
- Receiving statistical and anecdotal feedback regarding the Trail's activity results.
- Improving the delivery of the Trail services.

A2ORG is a non-binding, non-decision-making, advisory group and does not constitute governance of the Trail. The forum will be tasked with making recommendations on the Trail objectives to the Trail Joint Committee and does not have delegated authority to direct activity or spend budget. The Trail Joint Committee may undertake activity which is against the recommendation of A2ORG.

2. Key Goals

The A2ORG will:

- Identify strategic and operational priorities.
- Contribute to improving the alignment of the Trail's programmes of work with the local communities.
- Build effective working relationships between the stakeholders across both districts as a whole, the Trail Joint Committee, Papatipu Rūnanga, Department of Conservation, Mackenzie District Council, and Waitaki District Council.
- Ensure that recommendations provided to the Trail Joint Committee include broad tourism sector feedback from across the tourism sector.
- Act as a conduit between the Trail Joint Committee and the represented stakeholder groups.

3. Operating Principles

A2ORG will observe the following principles in all its meetings:

- Consider the interests of the stakeholder groups represented by all A2ORG members.
- Work in a collaborative and co-operative manner using best endeavours to reach solutions that take account of the interests of all sectors of the community.
- Members represent the interests of their stakeholder group and will not use the A2ORG to pursue specific individual benefit.
- Any conflicts of interest will be declared.
- A2ORG members and any stakeholders or Council employees invited to contribute will provide information based on empirical evidence, established best practice or experience where possible. Where an option is anecdotal or not supported by evidence this must be made explicit.
- In considering strategic development matters, members will be mindful of both Councils and Department of Conservation strategic documents and directions that have been developed in consultation with the community.

4. Member Selection Process

The A2ORG is initiated and managed by the Trail Joint Committee. The Trail Joint Committee will invite representatives (according to the process described in Appendix A) nominated from:

- Tourism operators and tourism-related businesses
- Proximity landowners
- Other key stakeholders as determined by the Trail Joint Committee to ensure fair and broad representation across both the Mackenzie and Waitaki districts.

5. Membership

Membership of the A2ORG will be decided and agreed upon by the Trail Joint Committee. The membership will consist of a minimum of six (6) members as follows (additional members may be invited at the discretion of the Trail Joint Committee). Nomination of numbers of members will be invited as follows:

- Local tourism industry representatives (across both districts) (4)
- Proximity landowners (2)
- Other stakeholders nominated by the Trail Joint Committee (as needed)

Non-member A2ORG participants:

- Mackenzie District Council representative(s), Elected Member, CEO or delegate
- Waitaki District Council representative(s), Elected Member, CEO or delegate
- Ngā Rūnanga Arowhenua, Moeraki, and Waihao
- Department of Conservation

6. Role Descriptions

The role of members, chair, deputy chair, and lead officers are outlined in Appendix B of this document.

7. Meetings

The Advisory Forum will aim to meet at least 4 times per year.

- Scheduled meetings may be a mix of open meetings, closed workshops, wider tourism industry forums and digital meetings. Guest speakers may be invited to attend, at the invitation of the Trail Joint Committee, where they will add value.
- Should conflict occur, the A2ORG Chair will work with the Trail Joint Committee Chair to resolve the conflict. If necessary, mediation can be requested.
- A2ORG meetings will be closed to the media. Minutes will be made available to the public following the meeting.

8. Terms of Appointment

- The standard term of appointment will be two years.
- Members can be considered to serve an additional term. The A2ORG Chair must approve extended terms of appointment. The maximum term of service will be two terms.
- The term of appointment will be re-evaluated if a member misses more than three consecutive meetings without apology during any one calendar year.
- If an A2ORG member resigns, a replacement will be sought through the current selection process.
- Members may request a leave of absence of up to three months due to sickness or injury.
- The A2ORG members shall appoint the Chair and Deputy Chair from the membership. The A2ORG members shall reconsider the appointment of the Chair in February of each year.
- To ensure continuity, members terms will be staggered.

9. Operation and Other Matters

- The Trail Joint Committee will oversee the administration of the A2ORG.
- The Trail Joint Committee administrator will take meeting minutes and make them available to the Trail Joint Committee and A2ORG members.
- If a situation arises where the A2ORG is not functioning effectively, or there is a disagreement regarding membership eligibility, the Trail Joint Committee Chair will have final approval of the membership and composition of the forum.
- All members are expected to comply with the Code of Conduct as outlined in Appendix C of the document.

10. Review

The Terms of Reference will be reviewed every two years at a formal A2ORG meeting. All changes to the Terms of Reference will be subject to the approval of the Trail Joint Committee.

APPENDIX A: Selection process

Recruitment of new members will be managed by the Joint Committee Chair. The Chair will call for nominations using contacts through relevant community networks, Alps2Ocean website and local print and social media. Applications will be reviewed and shortlisted by a selection panel comprised of the Joint Committee and the A2ORG Chair.

The role description for members included in Appendix B and the A2ORG selection criteria as stated in the terms of reference will be used for the selection process. The selection panel will make the final decision about all appointments to the A2ORG.

Replacement of Vacancies

The Joint Committee will work to fill any vacancies as they arise.

APPENDIX B: Roles and responsibilities

All A2ORG members are to:

- Provide advice to the Joint Committee that is informed by the stakeholders or stakeholder groups they represent.
- Consider issues on their merits to ensure the best advice is provided.
- Be openminded and display a willingness to listen to differing points of view.
- Treat others, including Council and Department of Conservation employees, with respect always.
- Actively engage with members of the wider communities they represent.
- Establish and maintain relationships within their respective communities.
- Comply with the Code of Conduct as outlined in Appendix C.

Chair

The Chair is to:

- Facilitate A2ORG meetings to enable considered yet efficient decision making
- Encourage open communication from all A2ORG members
- Work with the A2O Trail Manager to compile meeting agendas

Deputy Chair

The deputy Chair is to:

- Support the chair in their role.
- Act in place of the chair if the chair is unavailable or has a conflict of interest.

Secretarial duties

The A2O Trail Manager will be assigned to attend forum meetings. Their tasks are to:

- Advise the chair on the strategic agendas.
- Follow up on meeting actions and resolutions.
- Highlight potential issues and risks.
- Take minutes in formal meetings and wider community forums.
- Take notes in closed workshops.

APPENDIX C: Code of Conduct

The objective of the code of conduct is to:

- Support the development of mutual trust and respect amongst A2ORG members and the Joint Committee
- Clarify the standard of behaviour expected from members of the A2ORG

Relationships

Members are expected to conduct their dealings with each other and the Joint Committee, in ways that:

- Are open, honest and maintain integrity.
- Focus on issues rather than personalities.
- Maintain confidence in the A2ORG.
- Keep focus on issues of the stakeholders represented that directly relate to A2O Trail business.
- Should conflict occur, the Chair and reference group will work together to resolve the conflict. If necessary, mediation can be requested.

Public comment

All media enquiries will be directed to the Joint Committee Chair. Where appropriate a view may be expressed by the A2ORG with Joint Committee agreement. In these circumstances:

- Only the Chair or Deputy Chair can represent the forum to the media.
- The Chair will work with the Joint Committee in relation to any public comments
- Members must support the official view of the reference group and refer any further enquiries to the Chair.

Members are free to express a personal view in public. When doing so, they should make it clear that:

- They are expressing a personal view (or a view on behalf of the stakeholders or stakeholder group they are representing on the A2ORG).
- Their comments do not represent the views of the A2ORG.
- In addition, public comments should comply with all other expectations as outlined in the A2ORG's Code of Conduct.

Conflict of interest

A2ORG members are expected to report any conflicts of interest to the Joint Committee as soon as possible. Information that may benefit a private business representative should be made publicly available through the meeting minutes.

General Conduct

A2ORG members are expected to:

- Act with honesty and integrity at all times.
- Be prepared for meetings and arrive at meetings on time.

- Provide apologies in advance when attendance at a meeting is not possible.
- Abide by the direction of the Chair.
- Maintain a positive public image and not bring the Alps2Ocean Trail or brand into disrepute.
- Avoid publicly criticising any Alps2Ocean employee or contractor in any way.
- Raise concerns about Joint Committee employees or contractors through Joint Committee Chair.
- Ensure that any confidential information received remains confidential. Any A2ORG member raising confidential information must declare this to the A2ORG prior to raising the confidential information.

Review of position

Any behaviour that is deemed to be in breach of the Code of Conduct may result in a review of A2ORG membership and will be required to go through a Joint Committee process for a decision to be made. The A2ORG member in question may represent themselves, with or without support, but the Joint Committee will have the final say and no further discussion will be entered into.