

Methodology for evaluating DOC's public awareness activities

DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION TECHNICAL SERIES 19

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Published by
Department of Conservation
P.O. Box 10-420
Wellington, New Zealand

Keywords: Public awareness events; effective public awareness activities; evaluation methodology; conservation advocacy.

Department of Conservation Technical Series presents instructional guide books and data sets, aimed at the conservation officer in the field. Publications in this series are reviewed to ensure they represent standards of current best practice in the subject area.

© December 1999, Department of Conservation

ISSN 1172-6873

ISBN 0-478-21857-5

This publication originated from work done under Department of Conservation Investigation no. 2185, carried out by Carolyn Blackford, Taylor Baines and Associates, PO Box 8620, Riccarton, Christchurch. It was approved for publication by the Manager, Science & Research Unit, Science Technology and Information Services, Department of Conservation, Wellington.

Cataloguing in Publication

Blackford, Carolyn, 1948-

Methodology for evaluating DOC's public awareness activities / C. Blackford. Wellington, N.Z. : Dept. of Conservation, 1999.

1 v. ; 30 cm. (Department of Conservation technical series, 1172-6873 ; 19)

ISBN 0478218575

1. New Zealand. Dept. of Conservation. 2. Conservation of natural resources—New Zealand—Citizen participation. 3. Environmental education—New Zealand. I. Title. Series: Department of Conservation technical series ; 19.

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Evaluating public awareness activities—a quick guide

This is a summary of Department of Conservation Technical Series Report 19 and a guide to where to find the information you need for each stage.

STAGE	DESCRIPTION	PAGES
1. Choosing your activities.	A step-by-step guide to help initial planning of the event through analysis of goals and desired outcomes.	7-16
2. Designing the evaluation strategy and collecting the data.	<p>Step 1—Choose your performance indicators.</p> <p>Step 2—Decide how to choose people to talk to.</p> <p>Step 3—Decide how to get your information.</p> <p>Step 4—Other things you need to plan for.</p>	<p>17-18</p> <p>18-20</p> <p>20-22</p> <p>22</p>
3. Deciding what it all means and what you need to do to make your events more successful.	<p>Step 1—Code your data.</p> <p>Step 2—Analyse your data by using the Results from public awareness goals (Stage 1), the indicator (Step 1, Stage 2), a way to test the indicator, and a suggestion for measuring the extent to which the indicator is achieved.</p> <p><i>There are a number of examples illustrated in this section.</i></p> <p>Step 3—Write a report, including conclusions about the effectiveness of each activity.</p> <p>Step 4—Look at how events could be more effective next time.</p>	<p>22-23</p> <p>23</p> <p>26-27</p> <p>27</p>

Other useful information is contained in the four appendices:

Appendix 1.—Questions to help with planning an event.

Appendix 2.—Design issues and options, a technical assessment.

Appendix 3.—Tips for developing questions.

Appendix 4.—Question examples.

Abstract

These guidelines provide a methodology for New Zealand Department of Conservation (DOC) conservancy staff to evaluate public awareness activities in order to improve the effectiveness of public awareness events in achieving conservation advocacy.

The first of four phases encourages a systematic approach to choosing the most appropriate activities in the months prior to the event. DOC's public awareness goals and results focus this decision making.

Preparation of an evaluation strategy for each activity is then undertaken alongside other planning for the event. Performance indicators are selected and a data collection approach is designed that is in accordance with the activity and resources that are likely to be available.

Data collection takes place while activities are actually happening or immediately after. Techniques discussed include personal interviews, focus groups and self-administered questionnaires. Document analysis and informal feedback by way of letters and phone calls can enhance the data available.

The final stage involves analysis of and reporting on the achievements of each activity after the event. The effectiveness of the overall event is assessed in terms the extent to which DOC's public awareness goals have been achieved. This phase also focuses on identifying where improvements can be made when planning for future events.

1. Introduction—purpose and scope of the guidelines

Each Department of Conservation (DOC) Conservancy is required to develop a strategy that is compatible with the goals and directions of the National Public Awareness Strategy while reflecting the issues, demands and opportunities of the conservancy. Public awareness staff in the conservancies are then responsible for ensuring that public awareness activities and events are specifically incorporated in the business plan of the conservancy. Guidelines, which are provided by the Department of Conservation's Head Office for each planning period, identify national priorities and objectives for the period.

A priority statement for DOC's Key Output 8.3 highlights core public awareness work, including the **Events Programme**. Staff in each conservancy develop **one focused activity for associates and one for staff** either in the conservancy office or at a field centre for:

Sea Week,

Conservation Week,

Arbour Day,

as well as disseminating information to groups that initiate their own activities for Arbour Day and Conservation Week.

Monitoring of whether (a) the things DOC staff set out to do are actually happening, and (b) the things they have done are making a difference to public awareness is recommended in the Department's National Public Awareness Strategy. However, the Department does not have consistent and effective means of evaluating public awareness events in terms of either running a good event or influencing associates. Some conservancies have no formal or structured evaluation approaches.

The purpose of these guidelines is to provide a methodology for DOC conservancy staff to evaluate public awareness activities in order to improve the **effectiveness** of public awareness events in achieving conservation advocacy¹.

The overall approach:

- focuses on a specific context,
- does not generalise findings beyond the setting in which staff are working,
- emphasises the improving of effectiveness within that setting,
- facilitates doing less but doing it better within an existing budget,
- encourages feedback on the effectiveness of techniques used.

The primary purpose of the evaluation methodology is to elicit information on and insights into where activities may not be effective and where Public Awareness Staff might improve the effectiveness of future events. In this regard they will be looking for a relatively narrow range of **indepth** experiences, perceptions or impressions from a small number of people.

¹ The process for developing the guidelines is reported in Blackford, C. (1997): Report on the development of a methodology for evaluating DOC's conservation advocacy. Taylor Baines and Associates, Christchurch.

A preliminary evaluation methodology was developed and three case studies were used to trial it; these were activities that were undertaken in the Bay of Plenty, Southland, and Wellington Conservancies during Sea Week in 1997.

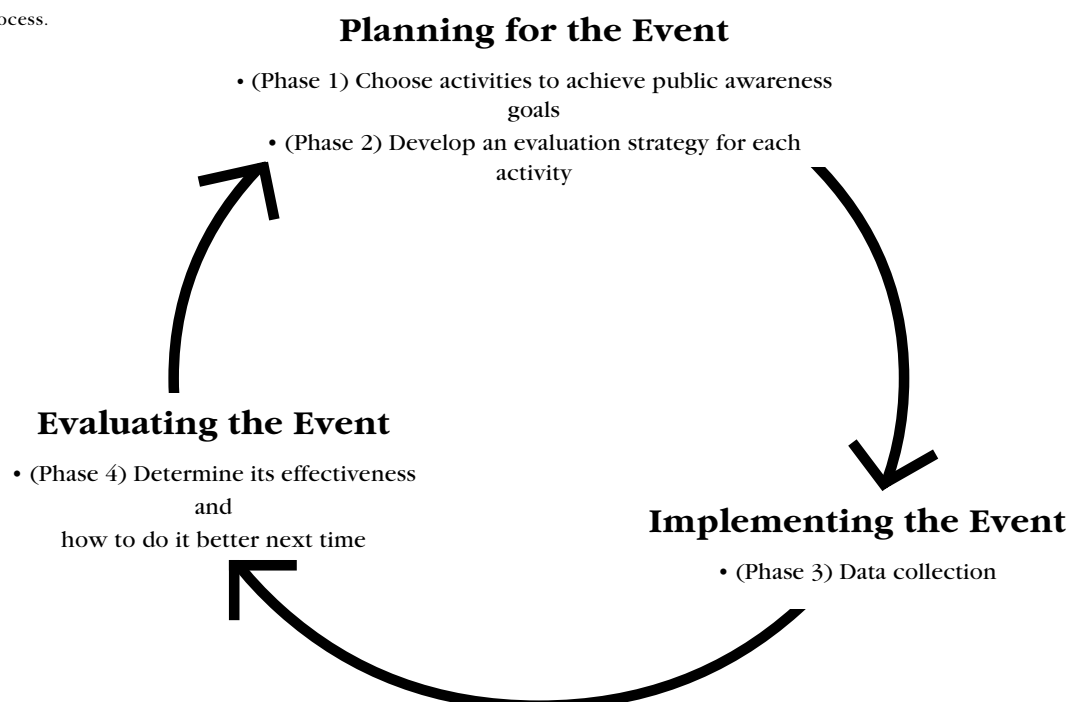
2. Phases of the evaluation process

The overall process comprises four phases (see Fig. 1).

- The first phase illustrates a systematic approach to choosing public awareness activities for a specific event (e.g. Arbour Day). You carry this out in the months prior to the event when you start your planning. While not strictly part of the evaluation process itself, this phase ensures the preliminary thinking necessary to prepare for an effective evaluation to take place. It provides a focused context within which event activities are chosen and subsequently evaluated.
- You also implement the second phase (i.e. preparing an evaluation strategy) during the course of planning for the event. A number of design issues and options need to be considered when designing the strategy.
- Data collection is undertaken while activities are actually happening and just after.
- The final phase (i.e. analysis) takes place after the event when you look back to see how each activity contributed to the effectiveness of the overall event in achieving DOC's public awareness goals. This phase (section 5) focuses on the achievements of each activity and identifying improvements to be incorporated when planning for future events.

Appendix 1 contains a set of questions that were used when the case studies were evaluated. They can assist in meeting information needs during the various phases.

Figure 1. Evaluation process.



3. Choosing public awareness activities

The principal purpose of this phase is to choose activities that are likely to contribute most effectively towards achieving DOC's public awareness goals. The activities you finally choose will be the ones you evaluate. An 'orientation or getting started' exercise precedes seven distinct steps in selecting activities.

3.1 ORIENTATION OR GETTING STARTED

You probably already carry out some or all of the following tasks when you are preparing for a public awareness event; explicitly stating them at the outset ensures that aspects that are sometimes taken for granted or overlooked are explicitly recognised for their role in the overall evaluation process.

3.1.1 Setting up a working party

Depending on the public awareness event (i.e. Arbour Day, Conservation Week, or Sea Week), the working party may consist of public awareness staff and staff in other relevant divisions of DOC (coastal staff would be the most obvious to be involved in SeaWeek, for example) as well as people from other agencies and organisations. The following questions (see Appendix 1) help to focus this step (the first two assume the event is Sea Week):

- Who are DOC's statutory associates in the coastal marine environment, e.g. regional and district councils (Resource Management Act 1991 requirements), tangata whenua (Conservation Act 1987 requirements)?
- Who are DOC's non-statutory associates in the coastal marine environment in your conservancy?
- Which organisations or agencies are likely to be involved in planning and organising the event?
- Which organisation will take or has taken the lead role in organising or co-ordinating the event?
- What is DOC's role in the event?

3.1.2 Relationship building

Don't assume that there are good and open relationships between the different people who are involved; time may be needed for relationship building.

3.1.3 Goal setting

Set clear goals for the evaluation process, i.e. its use and its intended purpose. At this point you need to be clear about uses that others within DOC and / or associates may make of it, too.

3.1.4 Climate setting

The team needs to reach agreement on the **style** of interaction they will use and to establish ground rules for the process. Once this stage is completed, you can move to choosing your activities

3.2 CHOOSING PUBLIC AWARENESS ACTIVITIES

There are seven steps in doing this:

Step 1: Prioritise goals

Goals have already been articulated in the Department of Conservation's (1996) National Public Awareness Strategy (see Box 1). They are:

understanding, relationships, empowerment and process

and provide the criteria against which you will eventually evaluate the performance of the public awareness event or activity (Section 5 below).

Box 1. DOC's public awareness goals.

Goal 1. Understanding

A high proportion of the public enjoy and appreciate the value of New Zealand's natural, historic and cultural resources and understand the need for their protection.

Results

- *There is a high public awareness of conservation issues and the department's role.*
- *The public has ready access to conservation education.*
- *The public know about all DOC's facilities and services.*
- *People have the opportunity to learn more about conservation during visits to the conservation estate.*
- *We focus on customer satisfaction without compromising conservation results.*

Priority actions focus on: biodiversity, visitor growth, visitor awareness, and historic and cultural issues.

Goal 2. Relationships

Iwi, community groups, volunteers and other public agencies are involved with us in achieving our conservation goals.

Results

- *Opportunities and issues have been identified and used to establish good relationships and heighten awareness of the department's role and responsibilities.*
- *A range of opportunities are available for community and volunteer involvement in conservation work.*
- *Resources are available for consultation, and appropriate processes negotiated for development of mutually beneficial relationships.*
- *We facilitate establishment of effective conservation networks.*
- *The community is involved in conservation decision making.*
- *We are involved in the conservation activities of other groups and agencies.*

Priorities include: partnership with Iwi, local government, volunteers, central government, and associates.

Goal 3. Empowerment

We have encouraged individuals, iwi, community groups and other agencies to take their own conservation initiatives.

Results

- *People are empowered to achieve conservation goals.*
- *We respond positively to community initiatives which promote conservation.*

The priority group identified includes private landowners.

Goal 4. Processes

The systems and processes are in place to ensure our public awareness efforts are effective.

Results

- *Public awareness and conservation management work are integrated.*
- *We have effective internal communications.*
- *All staff are equipped with the knowledge and skills needed for public awareness work.*

Prioritise the goals if appropriate (that is, if Head Office recommends you do so) so that the public awareness activities chosen and resources used are directed towards the most highly ranked goal or goals.

Alternatively, determine whether the event can actually address all of the goals. The choice may depend on the event that you are planning for as well as themes and sub-themes for the event.

When other organisations are involved, they need to set out their ideals and goals alongside those of DOC to ensure that the needs of all stakeholders are visible and well-defined.

Step 2: Prioritise results

The results or outcomes pertaining to each individual goal have also been determined in DOC's Public Awareness Strategy and priority actions have been identified (refer to Box 1 again).

Prioritise the results of each of the public awareness goals according to the event you're planning for. (You'll need to refer back to this list for Step 4.)

Alternatively, establish which results (if they do not all seem relevant to the specific event) are the ones you hope to achieve or seem to be the most important in the team's view.

Ensure that other organisations involved define targets or results for their ideals or goals.

Step 3: Outline possible activities and (potential) immediate effects of those activities

Brainstorm the possible activities you could hold for the public awareness event. This is likely to be influenced in part by:

- whether another organisation is taking the lead role and the theme determined by that organisation,
 - DOC's sub-theme for the event,
 - DOC's goals or objectives for the event,
- (as specified by Head Office),
(as identified by your conservancy).

Order the possible activities according to their anticipated or estimated consumption of resources (both time and financial).

Speculate as to all the **potential immediate effects** (desired and undesired, intended and unintended) that could arise from each possible activity, for example, public learn more about deep-sea creatures, negative media publicity, etc. What you are doing here is a Risk Assessment. Follow the DOC Business Plan process to do this using the seven criteria relevant to the Department.

Table 1 provides examples relating to the activities that were planned by the three conservancies studied in the case studies (see footnote 1 on page 8). The 'desired or intended' and 'undesired or unintended' reflect objectives and prior concerns stated by the public awareness co-ordinators in those conservancies.

Step 4: Compare desired results and potential immediate effects

- Repeat the third task in Step 3 but this time replace the column ‘Undesired or unintended effects’ with the ‘Results’ that you hope to achieve (refer back to Step 2 above).
- Identify which Results, if any, could be achieved by each immediate effect (Table 2 illustrates how this could be done).
- Check whether there is a close correspondence between the anticipated immediate effects and the results.
 - Focus on the results (Step 2 above) which don’t seem to be addressed sufficiently by the immediate effects.
 - You may need to think of an additional activity to assist in achieving those results.

TABLE 1. POSSIBLE SEAWEEK ACTIVITIES: SELECTED EXAMPLES OF DESIRED OR INTENDED AND UNINTENDED OR UNDESIRE IMMEDIATE EFFECTS.

ACTIVITY	DESIRED OR INTENDED EFFECTS	UNDESIRED OR UNINTENDED EFFECTS
Estuary clean-up, barbecue	Improved staff awareness in coastal issues, improved staff and associate communication.	Public perception of inappropriate activity or use of taxpayer dollars.
Video (‘Wild City Neighbours’)	Heightened awareness (of young children) of penguins and seals.	
Launch at local marae	Opportunity to work with target associates; provision of material which meets the People of the Pacific and deep-sea wanderers sub-themes; increased public and associate understanding of relevant issues.	
Snorkel trips	Introduced people to life under the sea.	
Snorkelling, wading, boulder hopping	Raised awareness in children of marine issues.	
Marine Wildlife Walk	Raised awareness in adults of marine issues.	
Seabird cruises	Introduced the public to deep-sea wanderers (sea birds).	
Marine mammal medic courses	Raised awareness and skill levels for marine mammal rescue volunteers.	
Creatures of the deep (photographers)	Worked with associate and target groups, demonstrated fisheries and preservation issues working together.	

- Now focus on the possible activities with anticipated immediate effects that don't seem to address the results.
 - This may mean that the activity is not appropriate and the idea can be discarded.
- Consider whether potential **undesired** or **unintended effects** could undermine the intended effects of important activities. If they could, then decide how you would manage them.
- Revise your list of possible activities.

TABLE 2. POSSIBLE SEAWEEK ACTIVITIES—COMPARISON OF RESULTS AND DESIRED IMMEDIATE EFFECTS .

ACTIVITY	DESIRED IMMEDIATE EFFECTS (FROM BOX 1)	RESULT (SEE FIGURE 1)
Estuary clean-up, barbecue	Improved staff awareness in coastal issues, Improved staff and associate communication.	Goal 4 Processes—Result 3 Goal 2 Relationships—Result 1
Video ('Wild City Neighbours')	Heightened awareness (in young children) of penguins and seals.	Goal 1 Understanding—Result 1
Launch at local marae	Opportunity work with target associates. Provided material which met the People of the Pacific and deep-sea wanders sub-themes. Increased public and associate understanding of relevant issues.	Goal 2 Relationships—Result 1 Goal 1 Understanding—Result 2 Goal 1 Understanding—Result 1 Goal 2 Relationships—Result 1
Snorkel trips	Introduced people to life under the sea.	Goal 1 Understanding—Result 2
Snorkelling, wading, boulder hopping	Raised awareness in children of marine issues.	Goal 1 Understanding—Result 1
Marine Wildlife Walk	Raised awareness in adults of marine issues.	Goal 1 Understanding—Result 1
Seabird cruises	Introduced the public to deep-sea wanderers (sea birds).	Goal 1 Understanding—Result 2
Marine mammal medic courses	Raised awareness and skill levels for marine mammal rescue volunteers.	Goal 1 Understanding—Result 2 Goal 2 Relationships—Result 2
Creatures of the deep (photographers)	Worked with associate and target groups, showed fisheries and preservation issues working together.	Goal 2 Relationships—Results 1, 4

Step 5: Define resources for carrying out each activity

Resources include money, materials, services, information and the like, as well as the time (skills and energy) availability of each team member. Some may be obvious whereas others are less tangible. Resources define the **costs** of holding a public awareness event.

- Order the revised list of possible activities according to how important they are (in terms of achieving results and goals).
- Define the resources which the most important activity would be likely to consume. Don't overlook the intangible costs such as skills and energy.
- Rank the resources you would need for each activity according to their cost to DOC.

Step 6: Compare activities and resources

Ideally, the most expensive resources should be consumed by activities which are likely to contribute strongly towards the public awareness goals.

- Consider whether the most resource-consuming activities are those which appear likely to contribute most to the team's important ideals and public awareness goals. Reconsider the value of holding activities that are likely to be resource expensive but don't contribute significantly to the goals.
- Focus on the expensive resources and try to identify where costs could be lowered through resource substitution or through alternative means of resourcing.

Any reduction in the resources they could consume, or the costs of those resources, is worthwhile. This ensures that expensive resources are directed towards the more important activities.

Step 7: Select activities

From those potential activities that are left on your list identify the number and the most appropriate to your needs. These will be the activities you evaluate.

You should now have the following information for each intended activity:

- Activity description.
- Desired immediate effects.
- Means by which potential undesired or unintended effects are to be managed.
- Goal results or outcomes you're aiming for .
- Resources required and their sources .

Box 2. Summary of steps 1-7 for choosing public awareness activities.

Step 1: Determine which goals you want the event to address.

Step 2: Establish which results you hope to achieve or seem to be the most important in the team's view.

Step 3: Brainstorm possible activities and identify potential effects (risk analysis).

Step 4: Confirm whether there is a close correspondence between the anticipated immediate effects and the results.

Step 5: Re-consider the possible activities with anticipated immediate effects that don't seem to address the results.

Decide how you will manage potential undesired or unintended effects.

Step 5: Establish the resources you will need for carrying out each possible activity.

Step 6: Ensure that expensive resources are directed towards the more important activities.

Identify where the costs could be lowered through resource substitution or through alternative means of resourcing.

Step 7: Choose the activities you intend to hold.

4. Designing the evaluation strategy and collecting your data

Make sure you have an initial allocation of resources in your conservancy or public awareness business plan to carry out your evaluation. These should include personnel and time for the planning, data collection, analysis and reporting of the evaluation process.

Collect data for and evaluate each public awareness activity separately (unit of analysis)² so that you can discuss the effectiveness of each of them in terms of achieving the public awareness goals. This means you will need to prepare for each activity separately **during the planning stages**, that is, **before the event**.

The four steps involved are shown in Box 3.

Step 1: List the indicators you will be using

In order to evaluate the effectiveness of activities in terms of achieving DOC's public awareness goals (see Box 1) you need a definition of 'effectiveness' and a set of performance indicators with which to measure effectiveness. A suggested definition is:

'Effectiveness' is a measure of the extent to which the intended advocacy goals for the event are reached. An effective event is one which shows some measurable result in any of the goals of the public awareness strategy³.

Indicators enable us to measure or describe the extent to which the public awareness goals have been met or satisfied. Note that some outcomes can be measured whereas others cannot, but it is possible to describe them and to develop standardised ways of looking at them each time.

Box 3. Steps in preparing for public awareness activities.

Step 1: List the indicators you will be using to measure the effectiveness of each activity.

Step 2: Prepare a strategy for choosing your interviewees for each activity.

Step 3: Determine the ways in which you can enhance the validity and confidence in your findings.

Step 4: Plan for issues such as the time period during which you will collect your data for each activity, 'gaining entry' to the setting, and confidentiality.

² Detail on design issues and options that have been included in the design of the strategy can be found in Appendix 2. The first two issues have already been addressed in previous sections.

³ During the process of developing these guidelines DOC Head Office and Conservancy staff were consulted on workable definitions of **effectiveness** that are consistent with DOC's public awareness strategy and on criteria for evaluating events.

The **Results** set out under each public awareness goal in Box 1 provide the basis for developing indicators. As many of the Results comprise more than one concept, each concept requires a separate indicator. Box 4 illustrates sample indicators (that will also be used in Section 5 below).

Look back to what you noted during Step 7 in Section 3 above about the goals and results you hope to achieve. Now identify what indicators you will need for each activity you plan to evaluate. Use the examples in Box 4 or develop your own if you wish to achieve results that have not been specifically discussed in these guidelines.

At this stage you should also be thinking about what sort of information you'll be trying to gain from activity participants. This has a dual purpose of encouraging you to clearly identify what your public awareness activity needs to focus on and the messages you hope to convey.

Go forward to Section 5, Step 2, for a moment. The tasks that are marked with ** need to be done now during your planning phase; that is, before the public awareness event.

Step 2: Prepare a strategy for choosing your interviewees

There are two approaches to data collection: quantitative and qualitative.

Quantitative approaches involve, amongst other things, the selection and interview of a sample (individual people providing information on, for example,

Box 4. Examples of evaluation indicators⁴.

Goal 1. Understanding

Results

- There is a high public awareness of conservation issues.
Indicator: Key issues (pertaining to activity) are identified by the public.
- There is a high public awareness of the department's role.
Indicator: DOC's key responsibilities are identified.
- We focus on customer satisfaction.
Indicator: Participants express positive experience.

Goal 2. Relationships

Results

- Opportunities have been used.
Indicator: Relevant associates are involved.
- Issues have been identified.
Indicator: Issues relating to joint or shared roles of associates and DOC are identified.
- Good relationships have been established.
Indicator: Associates and DOC staff describe experience positively or express satisfaction with relationship.
Indicator: Relevant associates previously involved continue to be involved.
- Heightened awareness of the department's role and responsibilities.
Indicator: Positive change in awareness demonstrated (after participation in activity).

Goal 4. Processes

- All staff equipped with knowledge and skills for public awareness work.
Indicator: Staff knowledge and skills have increased or improved.

⁴ Only indicators that were trialed in the case studies have been presented here.

how they plan to vote at the next election) that is representative of a population (e.g. those who are entitled to vote in a general election in New Zealand). The views of the sample can be generalisable to that population (that is, those entitled to vote in New Zealand) as long as the survey is carried out and analysed in the proper manner.

Qualitative data, on the other hand, may be based on the views of a small number of people; because the sample is unlikely to be representative of a broader population the findings cannot be generalised to that broader population. However this approach enables you to get a certain depth of information that is less likely to be gained by way of a quantitative approach.

The choice between these approaches depends on the skills and resources of the people carrying out the evaluation as well as whether you're looking for deeper insights rather than generalisable views.

During the development of these guidelines DOC staff were asked about current techniques used for evaluating events as well as the skills of and resources (time and financial) available to conservancy staff for evaluation. A **qualitative** approach appeared to be most appropriate both to the purpose of the study and to the experience, skills and resources generally of many conservancy public awareness staff.

The remainder of the guideline discusses qualitative options and considerations. Staff can also be creative in using other information such as media reports, letters to the Department, etc. to add to their information base. However staff with skills in quantitative survey design should certainly use them wherever it seems appropriate.

Appendix 2 sets out issues associated with choice of survey design. The sample options and considerations in **bold** have been adopted in these guidelines.

Sampling strategies

Small samples are characteristic of qualitative data collection approaches. **Purposive or purposeful sampling** assumes a sample made up of information-rich cases where we can learn a lot about issues that are of central importance to the research purpose.

- Note that with a small sample it is **credibility** and **not representativeness** (potentially generalisable statistically to other situations) that you are wanting to achieve.
- You may need to compile a **sampling frame** (a complete list if possible of all those who participated in the activity) from which you will draw your sample. This could be used if you plan to personally interview participants (see Step 3 below). The ease with which you can do this will depend in large part on the particular activity you have planned. On a seabird cruise, for example, it is a simple task as you are likely to have a list of all those who are on the boat, and you also know they will all be easily accessible throughout the duration of the cruise. Even though your samples will be small, the credibility of the results can be enhanced if you select your interviewees randomly to gain a relatively wide range of views. The number you will be able to interview will depend on the number of questions and the duration of the cruise.

On the other hand, although a library display has people being accessible at a specific geographical spot, those people will attend at different times of the day and on different days if the display runs for a week, for instance. The full sampling frame can only be known at the end of the activity and then it is likely to be simply numbers who passed through. Two of a number of options you have is either to ask each person who attends the display for a contact name and address and then randomly choose a sample after the event has finished and interview the people at a place of their choice. Alternatively, you may choose to settle for interviewing one or two people each day the display is on and make a decision as to how you will choose those two people each day. It may be easier to simply leave questionnaire forms available for people to complete if they wish with the trade-off (compared to interviews) being that you gain less information if people don't answer all the questions or provide brief answers.

The sampling frame will also reflect the public awareness goal or goals you are attempting to achieve with the activity, that is, whether it is the public or associates you will be interviewing.

- When it comes to **sample size**, there are no hard and fast rules in qualitative enquiry. You are likely to be limited by time both for collecting your data and for your later analysis. Try getting up to 5 cases (interviews) for each activity if you can.

Step 3: Determine the ways in which you can enhance the validity and confidence in your findings

With several staff being involved in interviewing and / or using multiple data collection methods and sources of information you add validity to your evaluation. However the number of perspectives you draw upon has to be balanced against the resources at hand.

Methods of getting information

Personal interviews

One of three basic approaches to qualitative data collection by way of open-ended interviews includes the **standardised open-ended interview**. You develop a set of carefully worded and arranged questions where each person you are interviewing is asked the same questions with the same words. They answer in any way they wish in that there are no pre-determined categories to choose from. This approach is often used in situations when there is potential for bias (e.g. through the use of several interviewers) and when it is important to minimise variation in questioning. The strategy for choosing interviewees discussed in Step 2 above applies to this method.

Take notes as well as tape recording the interview but ask your interviewee for their permission to tape what they are saying.

Several DOC staff could be involved in interviewing members of the public, for example, at any one time.

Focus group interviews / debriefs

Focus group interviews can provide a structured approach to debriefs with associates, for example, or for obtaining feedback from a group that participated in an activity.

A sample of 6-12 people who have been involved in the same activity are invited to meet to discuss issues and subjects determined by the researcher or evaluator. The interviewer or facilitator explains the purpose of the interview, and then poses questions to stimulate discussion. The interviewer is likely to have developed a number of questions in advance. The major role of the interviewer is to ensure that everyone in the group has the opportunity of participating and that all the subjects of interest are covered. Simple voting can be used to assess how many contained a particular view or had a similar experience, etc.

You need to have someone in addition to the facilitator to take notes and to operate a tape recorder (contains a full record of the discussion).

Self-administered questionnaires

In the situation outlined in Step 2 above with regard to library displays, for example, you may choose to leave questionnaire forms available for people to fill in if they wish. This method of data collection needs to give clear instructions as to how the questionnaire is to be filled in and where completed forms are to be left or returned.

One advantage of this approach is that if you have too few staff available to carry out any / many personal interviews then you have an alternative or complementary means of seeking the information you want.

Drawbacks are that you will have a self-selected sample rather than a random sample and that people are likely to provide less (written) information than they would in a face-to-face interview.

Informal methods

Other data sources to draw upon can include letters or phone calls to the Department, or people volunteering information informally during an activity such as how they hadn't realised the significance of something portrayed in an activity, for example.

Data collection instrument—the questionnaire

This is an important task in your evaluation. If your questionnaire is not developed properly you run the risk, amongst other things, of not getting the information you want or of not measuring what you want to measure. The wording of questions needs to be appropriate to the method you will be using to get your data. This is particularly important if the questionnaire is to be self-administered; no-one will be necessarily be available or present to explain what a question means.

Refer back to the indicators you noted in Step 1 above and make sure you have questions that will elicit information for those indicators.

If you want to develop your own questionnaire, Appendix 3 offers some points to keep in mind. You should pre-test the questionnaire on at least five people (not friends or colleagues) to determine whether the questions will be answered in the way you anticipate and that people can understand what you are asking.

Examples of questionnaires that could be modified for a range of public awareness events or activities appear in Appendix 4. Don't ask more questions than you need to as it takes time to analyse each one later.

Step 4: Plan for issues such as the time period during which you will collect your data, 'gaining entry' to the setting, and confidentiality.

Timing of data collection

The timing of your data collection process has to be carefully considered in advance. The overall timeframe would generally be the duration of the activity although you might choose to interview people after the activity or event. You may want to wait until your potential interviewees have had enough time to observe or absorb some of the key messages.

Logistics and practicalities

'Gaining entry' to the setting should not pose any problems generally as participants in public awareness events are presumably coming to DOC voluntarily. However, in one of the case studies (a class of children viewing a DOC video at their school) entry to the interviewees needed to be gained through the principal and teachers.

Ethical issues and confidentiality

The people you interview are voluntarily helping you and you need to acknowledge this by treating them and their views with utmost respect. Sometimes people will be reluctant to be involved if they are not reassured that their responses will be treated in strictest confidence. No matter how unimportant or insignificant a response may seem to you, that information remains with you alone. If you need someone else to help you transcribe the interviews then you should ensure that the notes or tapes contain only a reference number for your own information and not the name of the person.

5. Determining the achievements—what it all means

After you've collected your data, the final phase in the process involves analysing that data and preparing a report. You want to be able to demonstrate the effectiveness of the public awareness event to yourself and others, and to identify where you can improve your efforts the next time you are planning for and implementing an event. You will carry out what is referred to as **content analysis**; by examining the data you have collected in terms of the richness and variety of what has been said rather than performing statistical analyses on information gained from a larger sample.

Step 1: Preparing your data

First you need to order your data (what your interviewees said and / or wrote) by **coding** it. The indicators and their links with the questions in your questionnaire (see Section 4 above) provide a framework for your analysis. You can develop an initial set of categories that represent the different responses you might have expected from each question and then give each category a name or a code.

Writing comments or notes in the margins of your interviews helps you to organise your data with the comments representing initial categories or themes, for example.

Step 2: Data analysis

You will then carry out what is known as **cross-case analysis** where you group the answers from the people you interviewed to each of the questions in the questionnaire. Describe your findings in terms of the indicators you chose earlier, and make some tentative observations about the findings.

The remainder of this section (Boxes 5 to 13) demonstrates how to analyse the data you have collected from your interviews using examples from the three Sea Week case study evaluations that were used in developing the methodology. The method for analysis involves the individual results for the public awareness goals (summarised in Box 1), the indicator, a means to test the indicator, and a suggestion for measuring the extent to which the indicator is achieved.

Public Awareness Goal 1—Understanding

(Boxes 5-7)

Box 5.

RESULT: HIGH PUBLIC AWARENESS OF CONSERVATION ISSUES

INDICATOR: ALL KEY ISSUES IDENTIFIED BY PARTICIPANTS

** (i) Public awareness staff in the conservancy identify all the key issues being highlighted during the activity, and compile a list of key words and phrases that can be used to represent those issues;

(ii) Examine the interview transcripts for mentions of and reference to the key words and phrases identified in (i) above.

(iii) Compare the list of key issues or messages identified in (i) above with the findings of (ii).

Measure: One quarter, half, three quarters, or all key issues identified.

Suggested discussion points:

1. The issues that were not mentioned or infrequently mentioned are likely to give you some guidance as to where you may have failed in getting one or some of your key messages across and where you may need to try a different approach in the future.

2. Reasons for no or few mentions could indicate that the key issues were not well articulated or that the question may not have been sufficiently clear to elicit the information you wanted.

**** To be done prior to the public awareness event**

Box 6.

RESULT: HIGH PUBLIC AWARENESS OF THE DEPARTMENT'S ROLE

INDICATOR: DOC'S KEY RESPONSIBILITIES ARE IDENTIFIED BY PARTICIPANTS

** (i) Set out a description of the department's role and list its responsibilities (particularly those relevant to the particular event, ie. Sea Week, Arbour Day or Conservation Week):

(ii) Examine the interviewees' transcripts for mentions of or reference to the key words or phrases identified in (i) above.

(iii) Compare the description of DOC's role and list of key issues or messages identified in (i) above with the findings of (ii) to determine the height of public awareness of the department's role.

Measure: One quarter, half, three quarters, or all key responsibilities identified.

Suggested discussion points:

1. Reasons for no mentions or few mentions could indicate that effort was not made to ensure participants were informed of DOC's key responsibilities.

**** To be done prior to the public awareness event**

Box 7.

RESULT: CUSTOMERS ARE SATISFIED

INDICATOR: PARTICIPANTS EXPRESS POSITIVE EXPERIENCE

(i) Examine the interviewees' transcripts for mentions of/reference to expectations and experience of (positive and negative) the activity.

Measure: Minimum of one positive mention per participant.

Suggested discussion points:

1. Reasons for no positive mentions or negative mentions is likely to indicate that the activity was poorly organised, or inappropriate for those who attended, for example.

Public Awareness Goal 2—Relationships

(Boxes 8–11)

Box 8.

RESULT: OPPORTUNITIES HAVE BEEN USED

INDICATOR: RELEVANT ASSOCIATES ARE INVOLVED

** (i) Identify associate groups who should/could be involved, eg. statutory and non-statutory associates such as Iwi, local authority, community groups, etc.)

(ii) List those associate groups that were actually involved in the activity.

(iii) Compare the findings of (i) and (ii) to assess whether the public awareness event 'opportunity' was used.

N.B. The information for this indicator does not come from your interviews but from your planning for and involvement in the activity or event.

Measure: Proportion of associate groups who were actually involved compared to those who could or should have been involved, i.e. one quarter, half, three quarters, all.

Suggested discussion points:

1. It is not appropriate to view this particular indicator in isolation from other indicators and activities during the course of the event, and other events over the course of a year, for example. Public Awareness Conservancy Coordinators have a choice of running one activity for associates (during an event) where they might choose either to focus on establishing good relationships with just one associate (as in this case) rather than running an activity where several associates are involved but the establishment of good relationships with all, some, or one of them might not be so successful.

2. It is recommended that this indicator be evaluated over, say, several activities and / or the course of several events where the PA coordinator ensures that different priority associates are involved each time a public awareness event is held.

**** To be done prior to the public awareness event**

Box 9.

RESULT: ISSUES HAVE BEEN IDENTIFIED

INDICATOR: ASSOCIATES AND DOC STAFF IDENTIFY ISSUES RELATING TO JOINT OR SHARED ROLES

** (i) List all the issues relating to shared responsibilities or concerns (in terms of the RMA) in the (coastal) environment that the activity is likely to cover.

E.g. Condition of coastal environment or estuary, restoration, enhancement, pollution, diversity of life, clean-up.

(ii) Examine the interview transcripts (both DOC and associate) (questions 3-5 in Appendix 4) for mention of the issues in (i).

(iv) Compare mentions in (ii) with issues outlined in (i).

Measure: One quarter, half, three quarters, or all shared responsibilities or concerns identified.

**** To be done prior to the public awareness event**

Box 10.

RESULT: GOOD RELATIONSHIPS HAVE BEEN ESTABLISHED

INDICATOR: ASSOCIATES AND DOC STAFF EXPRESS POSITIVE EXPERIENCE AND SATISFACTION WITH RELATIONSHIP

(i) Prior to the event, determine what key words/phrases could demonstrate a 'good' relationship.

E.g. *Good / better / working relationship, enjoyable, positive, team building, personal contact*

(ii) Examine the transcripts of the interviews for the key words/phrases identified in (i) above.

(iii) List any additional relevant key words and phrases used.

(Examples of additional key words and phrases used: went well, very fulfilling, good to put faces to names, people working together, good people, share experience, common goal, easier to talk to them now, non-threatening, real tangible benefits)

iv) Add mentions from (ii) and (iii).

Measure: Minimum of two mentions each interviewee.

Suggested discussion points:

1. Note that if the interviewer was a DOC staff member the interviewees may have been reluctant to disclose their true views on the relationship, especially if those views were not positive.

2. (Improving future effectiveness: The choice of activity may not have been conducive to getting to know associates better; finding an activity where you 'go to' associates or the public rather than their coming to you or your venue; holding the activity at a 'neutral' venue; engaging an independent interviewer or analyst where funds permit.)

**** To be done prior to the public awareness event**

Box 11.

RESULT: HEIGHTENED AWARENESS OF THE DEPARTMENT'S ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITIES

INDICATOR: POSITIVE CHANGE IN AWARENESS DEMONSTRATED AFTER PARTICIPATION IN ACTIVITY

** (i) Set out a description of the Department's role and list its responsibilities (particularly those relevant to the particular event, i.e. Sea Week, Arbour Day or Conservation Week):

(ii) Interview relevant associates (those identified in the Orientation Phase (section 3.1) **before** they participate in terms of (i) above.

(iii) Question them again **after** participating.

(iv) Compare the results of (ii) and (iii) above.

Measure: Minimum of one additional mention per interviewee **after** participating

**** To be done prior to the public awareness event**

Public Awareness Goal 4—Processes

(Boxes 12–13)

Box 12.

RESULT: STAFF EQUIPPED WITH APPROPRIATE KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS

INDICATOR: STAFF KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS HAVE INCREASED OR IMPROVED

- ** (i) List the knowledge and skills required for staff participating in the particular event.
(ii) Interview staff **before** the event to determine if they have the knowledge and skills.
(iii) Compare (ii) with (i) to determine whether staff need training before the event.
(iv) Interview staff **after** the event to determine what knowledge and skills they were able to use.
(v) Compare (iv) with (i) to determine whether staff were equipped with the appropriate knowledge and skills.

Measure: Minimum of one new skill and/or piece of knowledge gained after participation in event.

Suggested discussion point:

1. See discussion for following indicator.

**** To be done prior to the public awareness event**

Box 13.

RESULT: ALL STAFF EQUIPPED

INDICATOR: ALL STAFF'S KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS HAVE INCREASED OR IMPROVED

Suggested discussion points:

1. This indicator can really only be assessed over time as different staff in the organisation are given the opportunity or required to be involved in public awareness events.
2. These two indicators assume that specific training programmes have been given to all staff on all aspects of DOC advocacy.
3. Note too that this result is unlikely to be fully met in the sphere of public awareness events only.
4. These indicators may also not be adequately evaluated because staff may not have had the opportunity to be 'tested' during the course of a public awareness activity or event as to whether they have the appropriate knowledge and / or skills.

Step 3: Writing up your report

Use separate sections for each activity that comprised the public awareness event.

- Report on the goals and results / targets you were working towards achieving
- Write up your process (Section 2) for selecting activities
- Set out a full description of each activity held over the duration of the event
- List the indicators you used
- Describe your evaluation strategy (Section 4) e.g. how you selected your sample and collected your data, etc.
- Report on your findings and analysis or interpretation of the indicators. Include any information you have gained from documents or informal feedback. When you are reporting on your findings you may think of things

that could have had an effect on your results. At the same time be careful not to read more into the data than what is there. Note any unexpected or unanticipated results.

- State your conclusions with regard to the effectiveness of each activity (in terms of the definitions set out in Section 4). (For example, the event opportunity might have been poorly used whereas the establishment of relationships might have been very good.) The effectiveness of the event in meeting the overall public awareness goals of understanding, relationships, empowerment, and process can be discussed in terms of the separate evaluations for each activity.

Answers to some of the questions in Appendix 1 might give you some further insights into how good your planning was and whether the resources available were sufficient.

Step 4: Improving future effectiveness

- Consult with the project team as to possible reasons why activities were not effective in achieving public awareness goals. Brainstorm means you could have used to have used to improve the ratings.
- List the recommendations that you noted for improving effectiveness in the future.
- Incorporate these recommendations into your planning for subsequent public awareness events.

Appendix 1

PLANNING QUESTIONS FOR PUBLIC AWARENESS STAFF (SEA WEEK EXAMPLE)

1. What are DOC's role and statutory responsibilities in the coastal marine environment?
2. Who are DOC's statutory associates (e.g. Treaty partner, others) in the coastal marine environment?
3. Who are DOC's non-statutory associates in the coastal marine environment in your conservancy?
4. Which organisations or agencies were involved in planning and organising the event?
5. Which organisation took the lead role in organising or co-ordinating the event?
6. What was DOC's role in the event?
7. What was MESA's theme for the event?
8. What was DOC's sub-theme or themes for the event?
9. What were DOC's goals and objectives for Sea Week?
—as specified by Head Office,
—for our conservancy.
10. Give a description of the planned activity.
11. Was the event (and associated activities) incorporated in your conservancy's business plan?
12. What was the budget available for (a) the overall event, and / or this activity being evaluated?
13. How does the planned activity coincide with or reflect or reinforce themes and sub-themes of the event?
14. If it doesn't do this, why not?
15. On what basis or according to which criteria was the activity chosen for the Sea Week event?
16. Which DOC staff could have been involved in planning for the activity or event?
17. Which DOC staff were actually involved in planning for the activity or event? (If different to those mentioned in previous answer, why?)
18. Did those planning for the activity set a time-frame at the outset of the planning process?
19. Was the time-frame adhered to? If not, why not?
20. Were staff and senior management briefed on the event or activity in good time? If not, why not?

21. Which audiences was the activity targeted at?
22. List all the possible means of informing target audiences of the activity.
23. List the **actual** means or methods used to inform target audiences of the activity.
24. If there is a difference between the 'possible' and 'actual' means used, please outline why this was so.
25. Which media were advised of the event or activity?
26. List the words or phrases that you believe represent or reflect the key messages you want to convey to your target audiences.
27. List source and resources available for planning and implementing activity (e.g. sponsorship, DOC funds, media material, kits or fact sheets, posters, etc.).
 - DOC head office
 - your conservancy
 - other conservancy
 - other
28. List if and how above resources were used.
29. Outline the potential opportunities after the event to create or build on the marine education concept.
30. Have any evaluation attempts been planned? If yes, please describe or attach.

Appendix 2

DESIGN ISSUES AND OPTIONS

ISSUES	SAMPLE OPTIONS AND CONSIDERATIONS
1. What is the primary purpose of the study?	Basic research, applied research, summative evaluation, formative evaluation , action research.
2. What is the focus of study?	Breadth versus depth trade-offs.
3. What are the units of analysis ?	Individuals, groups, program components (i.e. public awareness activities) , whole programs, organisations, communities, critical incidents, time periods, and so on.
4. What will be the sampling strategy or strategies?	Purposeful sampling , probability sampling; variations in sample size from a single case study to a generalisable sample.
5. What types of data will be collected?	Qualitative , quantitative, or both.
6. What controls will be exercised?	Naturalistic inquiry , experimental design, quasi-experimental options.
7. What analytical approach or approaches will be used?	Inductive , deductive; Content analysis , statistical analysis, combinations
8. How will validity of and confidence in the findings be addressed?	Triangulation options, multiple data sources , multiple methods , multiple perspectives, and multiple investigators .
9. Time issues: When will the study occur? How will the study be sequenced or phased?	Long-term fieldwork, rapid reconnaissance, exploratory phase to confirmatory phase, fixed times versus open time lines.
10. How will logistics and practicalities be handled?	Gaining entry to the setting, access to people and records , contracts, training, endurance, and so on.
11. How will ethical issues and matters of confidentiality be handled?	Informed consent , protection of human subjects, reactivity, presentation of self, and so on.
12. What resources will be available? What will the study cost?	Personnel , supplies, data collection , materials, analysis time and costs , reporting and publishing costs.

Appendix 3

TIPS FOR DEVELOPING QUESTIONS

You want to avoid asking questions in a way that has the interviewer repeating your categories or assumptions. Truly open-ended questions could begin in the following ways:

- How do you feel about
- What is your opinion of
- What do you think of
- What was your
- How did
- What was like for you?

These help to avoid dichotomous response questions which invite a 'yes' or 'no' response. Try to avoid questions beginning with:

- Have you.....?
- Are you
- Did you

'Why' questions can also cause problems and are best avoided.

General, nondirective questions are a good approach at the beginning of the interview.

Examples 1 and 2 below provide overlapping checklists for wording questions. The wording is particularly crucial when you are using self-administered questionnaires as the interviewee does not have the interviewer at hand to clarify ambiguities, etc.

Example 1: Questionnaire wording (i)

1. Is the language simple?
2. Can the question be shortened?
3. Is the question double-barrelled?
4. Is the question leading (i.e. predisposing people to answer in a certain way)?
5. Is the question negative?
6. Is the respondent likely to have the necessary knowledge?
7. Will the words have the same meaning for everyone?
8. Is there a prestige bias in the question?
9. Is the question ambiguous?
10. Do you need a direct or indirect question?

Example 2: Questionnaire wording (ii)

1. Does the question ask for only one piece of information?
2. Does the question presuppose a certain state of affairs?
3. Does the question wording imply a desired answer?
4. Are any of the question's words emotionally loaded, vaguely defined or overly general?
5. Do any of the question's words have a double meaning that may cause misunderstanding?

Appendix 4

QUESTION EXAMPLES

Sample questionnaire 1

(as used for a Sea Week video for children)

Introduction of interviewer, explanation of project, and assurance of confidentiality in using the interview transcript.

- 1. Suppose I hadn't seen the video this afternoon and I wanted to know what it was about. What would you tell me?**

(Explanation: This question was designed to re-focus the children's attention on the video as they had returned to the classroom and had commenced another activity before being interviewed.)

- 2. What was the video like for you?**

(Explanation: An opportunity to gain an overall impression of their experience of the activity.)

- 3. What do you know now that you didn't know before you watched the video?**

- 4. Was there anything that you couldn't understand?**

If there was, please tell me what it was.

- 5. People at the Department of Conservation filmed the video. What do you think they hope people who watch it will learn from it?**

- 6. What sorts of things are dangerous to little blue penguins?**

- 7. What sorts of things are dangerous to seals?**

- 8. What do you think people can do to help protect little blue penguins?**

- 9. What do you think people can do to help protect seals?**

(Explanation: These questions are designed to determine whether the key messages in the video were communicated clearly to the target audience. Questions 3-5 were general and did not give any clues as to what the video was about nor the messages it was attempting to communicate.)

Thank you.

Sample questionnaire 2

(as used for the Estuary Clean-up—involved DOC and Associates)

Interviewer introduces him or herself and the organisation he or she works for, explains the project and how the person was selected for interview, and assures interviewee of confidentiality in using the interview transcript.

1. Just for the record, how long have you worked for DOC/SRC?

(Explanation: To determine whether the interviewee was a new employee who might have had limited experience with associates.)

2. Last Friday (14 March) SRC and DOC people took part in a joint activity. If I had been there, what would I have seen you and other people doing?

(Explanation: As the sample was interviewed four or five days after the activity this question was designed to encourage people to recall the activity through describing it; this allows them to report on their experience rather than the interviewer telling them what he or she believed had happened. It also provides a fuller picture of the activity itself through recording multiple perspectives.)

3. What was the purpose of what you were doing?

(Explanation: To check whether DOC staff conveyed the objectives of the activity to participants.)

4. In what ways do you think the clean-up will affect the estuary?

5. What did you learn about the estuary during the clean-up?

(Explanation: These questions were to gain information for the indicator ISSUES IDENTIFIED.)

6. What was the clean-up experience like for you?

7. What was the barbecue experience like for you?

8. How did you feel about working with DOC and / or SRC people before the clean-up and the barbecue?

9. How do you feel about working with DOC and / or SRC people now?

10. (If difference between 8. and 9.) What are the reasons for the difference?

11. In your opinion, what effect is joint activities such as the one we are discussing likely to have on DOC and SRC working relationships?

(Explanation: To gain information for INDICATOR: ESTABLISH GOOD RELATIONSHIPS.)

(Separate question for DOC staff only):

12. How did you feel about answering SRC questions on the estuary in particular or on the coastal marine environment in general?

(Explanation: To gain information for INDICATOR: STAFF EQUIPPED WITH APPROPRIATE KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS.)

(Separate question for SRC staff only):

13. Would you tell me what you think the Department of Conservation is responsible for and what activities it is involved in?

(Explanation: To gain information for INDICATOR: HEIGHTENED AWARENESS OF THE DEPARTMENT'S ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITIES.)

(Same question to be asked both **before** and **after** the activity.)

Thank you.

Sample questionnaire 3

(as used for the sea bird cruise)

Introduction of interviewer, explanation of project, and assurance of confidentiality in using the interview transcript.

1. How did you find out about this cruise?

(Explanation: This question enables you to check on what aspects of your public information dissemination and / or advertising were successful or not.)

2. What information did you have about the cruise before you booked to come on it?

(Explanation: This question enables you to check on the information people had to assist them in deciding whether to participate; if it was inadequate it could explain why fewer people than anticipated actually turned up.)

3. What was it about the cruise that attracted you to it?

(Explanation: To assess what sort of publics were participating in the activity, i.e. whether the cruise had attracted mainly members of the Ornithological Society, for example, or whether the broader public was interested.)

4. What did you expect to learn this morning?

5. What have you learnt about deep-sea birds (so far) this morning?

(Explanation: These two questions could provide information on awareness of key issues.)

6. What has the cruise been like for you (so far)?

(Explanation: An opportunity to gain an impression of their satisfaction with the experience of the activity.)

7. In your opinion, why do you think the Department of Conservation has organised this cruise?

8. What do you think the Department expects or hopes people will learn this morning?

(Explanation: Questions 7. and 8 are to check whether DOC staff conveyed the objectives of the activity to participants.)

9. Would you tell me what you think the Department of Conservation is responsible for and what activities it is involved in?

(Explanation: To gain information for RESULT: HIGH PUBLIC AWARENESS OF THE DEPARTMENT'S ROLE.)

Thank you.