

British Parachute Association

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Communications Committee

Minutes of the meeting held on

Tuesday 9 October 2012 at 1400

at the BPA Office, 5 Wharf Way, Glen Parva, Leicester LE2 9TF

Present:	Adrian Bond	-	Communications Chairman
	Paul Applegate		
	Kieran Brady		
	Marc Fletcher		
	Craig Poxon		
In attendance:	Tony Butler	-	Technical Officer
	John Hitchen	-	NCSO
	Stuart Meadows	-	Senior Account Executive, Archant Dialogue
	John Page		
	Martin Shuttleworth	-	Secretary-General
	Phil Sumner	-	Web Developer, Archant Dialogue
	James Swallow	-	From item 47.2
Apology for absence	Liz Ashley	-	Editor, Skydive the Mag

Item Minute

42/12 Minutes

The Committee noted that the minutes (circulated) of the meeting held on Tuesday 14 August 2012 had already been approved by the Committee, ratified electronically by the Council and published on the BPA website <http://www.bpa.org.uk/minutes>

Noted

43/12 Matters arising from the minutes

43.1 Vinyl promotional banners (minute 33.1)

Archant Dialogue had kindly provided artwork of the Mag masthead at no additional cost, and the BPA Office would arrange for three vinyl banners to be made from this for use at the AGM, etc.

Completed

43.2 Map of Affiliated Centres for display at wind tunnels (minute 33.2)

John Page reported that he had liaised with Liz Ashley, Editor of the Mag, regarding graphics/artwork for the display.

Ongoing

A paper about the response from the wind tunnels to our request for them to display the BPA 'Try Skydiving' leaflet had been circulated with the agenda. The Committee was grateful to Bodyflight Bedford and Airkix Milton Keynes and Manchester for kindly agreeing to display the leaflets.

Airkix had suggested displaying leaflets of DZs nearest to their locations, and had enquired about DZs displaying Airkix leaflets. The Committee was not in a position to speak for DZs on this, nor did BPA keep or distribute publicity specific to individual Drop Zones, though Airkix was of course free to seek reciprocal display of leaflets by directly approaching individual DZs.

Simon Ward of Airkix had said he wished to discuss the idea of wind tunnels becoming affiliated with the BPA in some way. The Committee referred this as an item for the agenda of the meeting of the full Council in December 2012.

Refer to Council

43.3 Online renewals (minute 33.3)

Phil Sumner (Web Developer, Archant Dialogue) updated the Committee on this ongoing project. He had had difficulty in replicating the desktop function of the membership database in use at the BPA Office. The BPA's IT suppliers, Computerlink (Leicester), had recently completed a desktop emulation of the BPA Office desktop function. Archant Dialogue now planned to contract a specialist developer to link the online renewals function that they had already completed with the membership database at the BPA Office. The specialist would be available during November 2012.

The Chair said the Committee was disappointed at this further delay and asked for the timetable for this work to be moved forward. He asked to be advised, by no later than tomorrow, of a revised timeframe.

Action: Stuart Meadows, Archant Dialogue

43.4 Update of BPA safety and information posters (minute 33.5)

Tony Butler (Technical Officer) reported on two new safety posters he was planning, on the dangers of low turns and canopy entanglement. The BPA's insurers, Jelf Manson Insurance Brokers and Liberty Mutual Underwriters, had kindly agreed to meet the cost of these and other safety and information posters, for which the Committee thanked them. An information poster was also in preparation on 'routes to progression' based on the progression chart on new BPA webpage with content provided by Marc Fletcher and the Mag.

In progress

43.5 Cross-media advertising sales (minute 35.4)

Stuart Meadows (Senior Account Executive, Archant Dialogue) reported that Rob Crane, Senior Sales Executive, was hampered in cross-media (Mag and web) advertising sales by low traffic across the BPA's websites.

Noted

43.6 Online subscription sales of the digital edition of 'Skydive the Mag' (minute 37.4)

Stuart Meadows (Senior Account Executive, Archant Dialogue) reported that it was possible to sell digital magazine subscriptions via subscriptionsave.co.uk - online subscriptions to the printed Mag were already on sale on this site.

A typical 12 month digital subscription for a bi-monthly (six issues per year) magazine cost £11.99 per annum. Archant would look to retain £4 per subscription as a maintenance fee. There would also be an initial set up cost of £400, to include the initial email templates to notify subscribers each time a new digital issue was available to view.

With regard to back issues of the Mag currently on the Mag website, Archant Dialogue recommended that the BPA either placed the magazines within a protected login area, so that they were no longer readily available to view, or postpone placing the current issue online for a period of at least one issue, for example the June issue would be available to view as the August issue was published. The estimated cost for a protected area would be £600.

Noted

44/12 Editorial Report

Liz Ashely, Editor, had submitted her Editorial report by e-mail in advance of the meeting. Included in it, she had outlined her plans to overhaul the Kit Zone feature, and had summarised planned content for the December 2012 issue. She had also reported that a reader had asked whether the paper quality had been reduced. Stuart Meadows (Archant Dialogue) said there had been no variation to the specification of the paper, but he would make enquiries outside the meeting.

Action: Archant Dialogue (Stuart Meadows)

45/12 Report from BPA publishing partner Archant Dialogue

45.1 Advertising revenue - Magazine

Advertising revenue for the October issue had been £16,685, an 8% increase year-on-year, and a record. Revenue had been helped by the forthcoming WPC Mondial 2012.

45.2 Advertising revenue, October 2012 - Mag website
£120.83.

45.3 Advertising revenue, October 2012 - BPA website
£205.83.

45.4 Subscription sales - subscriptionsave.co.uk

To date, 16 subscriptions sold (10 UK & 2 rest of Europe).

45.5 Online reader survey

Stuart Meadows reported that Archant Dialogue wished to suggest an online reader survey. The Committee welcomed this idea, and invited him to submit draft questions for consideration at the next meeting, to which the BPA would like to add a few questions of its own. The Chair asked whether Archant Dialogue could secure a sponsor for a prize to members who completed the survey, to act as an incentive. Craig Poxon said that members tended to be reluctant to answer any questions that might appear to regard them as a cash source.

Action: Archant Dialogue (Stuart Meadows)

46/12 Response to the press on serious incidents and fatalities

A paper by the Editor had been circulated with the agenda, and was discussed. Tony Butler (Technical Officer) said that, in the event of a fatality, the fatal accident procedure came into operation and this included a press statement already held by Clubs & Centres for them to issue. He and John Hitchen (NCSO) dealt with press enquiries and he did not believe the BPA issuing a news release would satisfy the press, as journalists wanted someone to talk to. Craig Poxon favoured putting press information on the BPA website, outlining the procedure in the event of a fatal accident. Tony Butler believed that if the BPA issued a press release, it could generate more press interest leading to more calls. He said that it was inappropriate to speculate on the cause of an accident before an inquiry had been carried out, and the inquiry reported to the coroner's inquest not to the press. The Committee placed particular weight on the advice of the TO & NCSO, who had become highly experienced over the years in handling such matters with professionalism and sensitivity at an emotional time for those affected. In conclusion, the Committee saw no reason to change the existing arrangements managed by the TO & NCSO.

Maintain status quo

47/12 Communications Action Plan: 1 July 2012 to 30 June 2013

The Committee needed to allocate its overall Action Plan budget of £6,138 to the targets in this year's Communications Action Plan. After discussion, Marc Fletcher proposed, and Kieran Brady seconded, a motion to allocate a third of the overall budget to each of the three Action Plan targets that required a budget.

Carried unanimously

47.1 Enhance media and public relations

Currently, this target comprised three strands:

- 1 Generating subjects, then copy/images, for human interest features involving skydiving to send to the editor of an appropriate Archant Life regional title. Liz Ashley (Editor) had sent the article on the British Limbless Ex-Service Men's Association from the October Mag (on amputee former soldiers doing AFF) to all the Life editors in the hope that some of them might reprint it. Stuart Meadows (Archant Dialogue) said he would liaise with Archant Life and advise us about copy dates.

Action: Archant Dialogue (Stuart Meadows)

- 2 Preparing a media pack for Affiliated Clubs & Centres. This comprised a sheet on writing a press release, which the Office would circulate to Centres.

Action: BPA Office

- 3 An invitational seminar on 'Skydiving and the Media' was planned (minute 38 of the last meeting).

Ongoing

47.2 Improve communication with members

This target was to investigate cost and practicability of (i) arrangements for e-communications with members of BPA company documents (subject to new database capability and issue of printed notification to all members to enable individuals to opt out to continue to receive hard

copies); (ii) e-mailing minutes as attachments rather than links, which Craig Poxon was progressing.

Ongoing

47.3 Improve communication with non-members

This target was to (i) add free-of-charge subscription facility for the BPA e-Newsletter to the BPA website so non-members could sign up to receive it.

To be progressed

(ii) explore the cost/benefit of putting the BPA Mag on the Archant website
subscriptionsave.co.uk

Completed

47.4 Review the role, function and future of the Mag website and the relationship between all of the BPA family of websites

The Chair said he would convene a conference call of the working party on the BPA's future online presence, as scheduling issues meant it was difficult to arrange a meeting in the near term.

Action: Chair / BPA Office

The Chair reported on a recent telephone discussion that he and Graham Spicer, one of the BPA Archivists, had had with Archant Dialogue regarding uploading online the full back archive of BPA magazines, which had now been digitized as searchable pdfs. The Committee agreed that it would be logical to upload these to the Mag website, where PageSuite software could be used to navigate back issues since 2005 (and also the first issue from 1964). Negotiations on the price of uploading continued because the present quote exceeded budget. Stuart Meadows (Senior Account Manager, Archant Dialogue) agreed to explore whether it might be possible to batch or automate the upload process to save on the estimated time of 4-5 days, and therefore on cost.

Action: Archant Dialogue (Stuart Meadows)

Craig Poxon said we could provide the cover images separately if that might help, and he would liaise with the BPA Archivists about this.

Action: Craig Poxon

48/12 UKS website

The Committee noted that a member believed they had been excluded, without being advised of this or told why, from participating in the log-in discussion boards on the website ukskydiver.co.uk. The Office would write to the controller of the site to seek to clarify the position.

Action: BPA Office

49/12 AGM Day

49.1 Saturday 26 January 2013 at the Marriott Hotel, Leicester

The Chair reported that the entertainment theme for the evening would be 'Hollywood Night' and a Blues Brothers tribute band was being considered. Also, a member who was a pole dancer had kindly offered to perform. The Chair was delighted to report that he had just received confirmation from e-mail from Mick Hurrell, Managing Director of Archant Dialogue, that they would again in 2013 kindly sponsor each of the four afternoon seminar/meeting rooms at £100 each. The Committee expressed its gratitude.

Action: Ongoing, by AGM working party

49.2 Saturday 25 January 2014 at De Vere east Midlands Conference Centre, Nottingham University

Contract negotiations were due to be completed soon, at a favourable cost to the BPA. A quote via the venue for the provision of audio visual services had been received, but the contractor we were to use for 2013 offered the best value.

Action: Ongoing, by AGM working party

50/12 Editorial calendar

Paul Applegate had reported that he had seen on the Internet a reference to the 100th anniversary of the first parachute jump from a plane, by a Frenchman on 20 August 2013.

Refer to Editor

51/12 Date of next meeting

1400 on Thursday 13 December at the BPA Office, 5 Wharf Way, Glen Parva, Leicester LE2 9TF.

The meeting closed at 1538

Ratified electronically by the Council and published on 29 October 2012.