

British Parachute Association

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Riggers Committee

Minutes of the meeting held on

Thursday 24 November 2011 at 1600

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

Present: Paul Applegate - Chairman
Kim Newton
Paul Stockwell
George Panagopoulos
Noel Purcell (NV)

NV = Non Voting Member

Apologies: John Curtis, Gerry Cepelak, Bernadette Whitaker, Pete Sizer,
Dave Major.

In Attendance: John Hitchen - Chairman STC
Tony Butler - Technical Officer
Alex Busby-Hicks - Council/Tilstock
Trudy Kemp - Assistant to NCSO/TO

ITEM

1. **MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING FROM THE RIGGERS MEETING OF THE 29 SEPTEMBER 2011**

It had been noted that Pete Sizer had not been included on the list of attendees in the Minutes of the previous meeting.

The Chairman reported that Pete Sizer had been recently injured whilst jumping on a BPA Instructor Course. The Chairman and members of the Committee wished him a speedy recovery.

Page 2, Item 6 – Clarification of who is qualified to sign up Rigger and Advanced Packer Rating Renewals. The Chairman reported that Pete Sizer had intended to submit a formal proposal for this meeting. However, Pete had indicated that from the feedback he had received with regard to Advanced Packers, it had been the general feeling that Advanced Riggers or CCIs should be signing up Advanced Packers at renewal time.

Page 5, Item 10 – AOB (iii). At the last meeting it had been reported that a connector link on a Tandem rig was found to be undone following a Tandem jump. The Chairman of STC reported that the connector link concerned had now been inspected, which he made available to the Committee. He stated that he had nothing conclusive to report at this time and it was his intention to carry out further investigations.

There being no further matters arising, it was proposed by Paul Stockwell and seconded by Kim Newton that the Minutes of the Riggers Sub-Committee Meeting of 29 September 2011 be accepted as a true record.

Carried Unanimously

2. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE STC MEETINGS OF THE 29 SEPTEMBER 2011

There were no matters arising from the Minutes of the above STC meetings.

3. RE-ORGANISATION OF RIGGING FORMS/INFORMATION ON BPA WEBSITE

The Chairman reported that whilst he was conducting a search of the BPA website, he had not found it easy to locate the various Rigging related forms and manuals. He stated that he felt that it would be beneficial to have all Rigging documents in one area on the BPA website.

The Committee considered that creating a Rigging page on the BPA website would be a good starting point. Noel Purcell stated that he would be more than happy to look into this and that he would liaise with Kim Newton with a view to producing something for the Committee to consider. It was also suggested that an article on how to become a BPA Rigger could be considered. The Committee welcomed any further ideas and input from other Riggers.

4. VIGIL INFORMATION – PAUL STOCKWELL

Paul Stockwell reported that the manufacturers safety notice about Vigil AAD Cutters had raised a concern about the traceability of components. In particular the notice had indicated that because components can be changed in the field and Vigil may not have been informed, the provided lists may not be extensive.

Paul presented a Vigil unit and some spare parts to demonstrate the required procedure for changing cutters, display units or batteries and the documentation that tracks such changes required by the manufacturer. Paul stated that whenever a person receives a new part, each new part comes with a certificate and a new hologram seal that covers the screw on the main box. The manufacturers instructions state that the certificate is to be faxed back to them in order that they can update their records with the serial numbers.

Paul stated that he wanted to make sure that everyone understood that this was the procedure that the manufacturers require and should make it absolutely certain that these items are traceable in the UK.

Paul also reported that there have been a few instances of Units failing to turn on. Leaving the "Hello" welcome on the control unit screen. Paul explained this situation can arise if for any reason during the start up a response between the control and main unit is missed. As the unit fails to switch on there is no safety issue. If the unit switches on normally it is safe to use even if previously it has exhibited this behavior.

Paul also stated Vigil will replace any unit that exhibits this fault. As it is only software updates to the display unit. It is only the display unit that actually needs replacing.

5. ADVANCED PACKERS COURSE REPORTS

- i) An Advanced Packers Tandem Upgrade Course had taken place at Netheravon from the 26 – 28 September 2011. George Panagopoulos had submitted a Course Report, a copy of which had been circulated to those present.

The Course had been attended by Andy Shaw, Ricky Davies and Chas Lawson. All candidates successfully completed the Course and had been awarded Advanced Packer (Grade T) status.

- ii) An Advanced Packers Examination Course had taken place at Headcorn from the 10 – 11 October 2011. Pete Sizer had submitted a Course Report, a copy of which had been circulated to those present.

David Clarke successfully completed the Course and had been awarded Advanced Packer (Grade S) status.

- iii) An Advanced Packer Training/Exam Course had taken place at Thomas Sports Equipment from the 24 – 27 October 2011. The Course had been attended by Jack Felstead. As the candidate was a very experienced packer, he was then permitted to complete the Examination phase of the Course on the 29 October 2011.

Jack successfully completed the Course and had been awarded Advanced Packer (Grade S) status.

Chris Thomas had submitted a Course Report, a copy of which had been circulated to those present.

- iv) An Advanced Packer Examination Course had taken place at Headcorn from the 4 – 5 November 2011. Pete Sizer had submitted a Course Report, a copy of which had been circulated to those present.

Simon Soper successfully completed the Course and had been awarded Advanced Packer (Grade S) status.

- v) An Advanced Packer Training Course had taken place at Netheravon from the 7 – 10 November 2011. George Panagopoulos had submitted a Course Report, a copy of which had been circulated to those present.

The Course was attended by Stu Storey, Aaron Cosbey and Nick Spiller all of whom were advised to attend the Examination phase of the Course at a later date.

6. BPA SAFETY NOTICES/INFORMATION BULLETINS

There had been no BPA Safety Notice or Information Bulletins issued since the last meeting:

7. MANUFACTURERS' SAFETY NOTICES/INFORMATION BULLETINS

- i) A mandatory Product Service Bulletin had been received regarding Vigil AAD Cutters, which concerned all Vigil AAD cutters produced in October 2007 (Part Number: 9582006) - Date of Manufacture: 10-07 (mm-yy)

The following incident occurred on the 14th September 2011 at the Saint-Jean Chrysostome (Canada) drop zone where a skydiver failed to deploy his main canopy and manually pulled his reserve handle with insufficient altitude to fully deploy the reserve canopy. During the investigation of the incident it was discovered that the loop was neither cut nor trapped by the cutter.

Because of the seriousness of this matter, this Emergency Product Service Bulletin must be complied with before the next jump on all Vigil AADs with the listed serial numbers attached to the Bulletin. A copy of the complete Bulletin can be found on the BPA website. See link below:

<http://www.bpa.org.uk/assets/Bulletins/VigilProductServiceBulletin-PSB8-2011-10-20.pdf>

8. A.O.B.

- i) Correspondence had been previously circulated from George Panagopoulos requesting to run a BPA Riggers Course from the 8 – 12 January 2012.

It was proposed by George Panagopoulos and seconded by Kim Newton that the above request be accepted.

Carried Unanimously

- ii) Correspondence had been received from Andy Page regarding a problem on a Strong Dual Hawk Tandem system, a copy of which had been circulated to those present, together with various photographs.

Andy Page had reported that following a cut away where the RSL was suspected of causing a hang-up of the cutaway main and near main and reserve entanglement. It was found on inspection that the RSL tuck tab had broken stitches at the point of strain where it should pull free. This may have been exacerbated by the Tandem pair dropping away back to earth, which causes the tuck tab to be pulled at the wrong angle to release easily.

Andy Page had made a change to the stitch pattern on the RSL, which allowed extra flexibility and easier release of the RSL in the back to earth position. Andy had informed the manufacturers of this and they had approved his modification. The manufacturers had also stated that they would conduct further tests to check out the possible problem.

Following some discussion, the Committee felt that they could only consider accepting Andy Page's modification on the basis that the modification had been approved by the manufacturer. It was agreed by those present that Andy Page be asked to submit the appropriate paperwork and drawings to enable the modification to be considered by the Committee for inclusion on the list of BPA approved Tandem modifications.

Following further discussion, it was proposed by Andy Page (proxy) and seconded by Kim Newton that the Committee accept the modification, for use by Andy Page only.

Carried Unanimously

- iii) Paul Applegate reported on a Tandem incident where a reserve container almost opened in the aircraft. The reserve pin on a Next 2 container was about to come out of the loop, but was spotted by the CCI in the aircraft. This was the second time this had happened in 2 weeks with the same set of equipment.

Paul Applegate stated that following inspection of the equipment, it was found that the reserve cable was just the right length for the swage at the end to be catching on the binding tape of the handle pocket. He stated that this may have occurred when the Instructor sat down in the aircraft and as he leant back, the pin was pulled. The Centre concerned had contacted the manufacturer to highlight these incidents.

Paul Applegate stated that these may have been isolated incidents, and that he would continue to monitor the situation.

- iv) Correspondence had been received from Andy Hughes, a copy of which had been circulated to those present drawing attention to the rigging documents and online safety notice index hosted at www.ukskydiver.co.uk

The Committee considered it would be extremely beneficial to have all the past BPA Safety Notices and Information Bulletins on the BPA website. Kim Newton said that she would contact Andy Hughes with regard to this. The Committee recognised the contribution that Andy had made and expressed their thanks to him.

- v) Correspondence had been received from Rick Boardman, a copy of which had been circulated to those present asking for clarification regarding the time period for the completing the required elements in order to become a Rigger Examiner, as the Syllabus does not set a time limit. Rick had attended both PR and BR Rigging Courses as required by the Syllabus nearly two years ago, but work commitments had prevented him from attending an Advanced Packer Course, which was the final phase he needed to complete for upgrading to Examiner status. Rick asked the Committee for guidance on this matter.

Following some discussion, the Committee had no concerns that Rick Boardman would complete all the requirements within a reasonable time frame.

However, it was felt by those present that the Committee may need to consider including a time limit in the Rigging Syllabus for completing the various stages for Rigger Examiner status and it was suggested that a two year period may be an appropriate option.

It was suggested that perhaps the Examiners on the next Riggers Course could look at this issue and report back to the Committee with their recommendations.

Post Meeting Note:

Paul Applegate had been asked by a jumper to include information in the Minutes of a Para Commander (PC) that had gone missing in the Weston on the Green area (Serial Number 16293, manufactured in 1972). Anyone coming across this canopy was asked to contact the BPA office.

Date of next Meeting: Thursday 9 February 2012
BPA Offices, Glen Parva, Leicester
at 4.00 p.m

6 December 2011

Distribution:

Chairperson Riggers Committee
All CCIs
All Riggers
Advanced Packers
Council
CAA
Editor - Skydive

PAPERWORK REQUIRING CIRCULATION WITH THE NEXT AGENDA MUST REACH THE BPA OFFICE BY FRIDAY 20 JANUARY 2012