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Communications Committee

Minutes of the meeting held on

Tuesday 24 August 2004 at 1430

at the BPA Offices, 5 Wharf Way, Glen Parva, Leicester

Present:	Eddie Jones Paul Applegate Calvin Blacker Kieran Brady Tony Goodman	Committee Chairman
In attendance:	Tony Butler Lesley Gale John Hitchen Martin Shuttleworth	Technical Officer Editor, <i>Skydive</i> Magazine NCSO Secretary-General
Apologies for absence:	David Hickling Ian Midgley Elizabeth Stoodley	

Item Minute

25/04 Minutes

Calvin Blacker proposed, and Tony Goodman seconded, a motion that the minutes of the Communications Committee meeting held on Tuesday 15 June 2004 should be approved as a correct record.

Approved

26/04 Matters arising

26.1 Breakdown of Editorial costs for the Starter Magazine (minute 19.1)

Lesley Gale had circulated this in advance.

26.2 Royal Artillery items for Club News (minute 20)

Lesley Gale apologised that these had been left out of the August Magazine in error. She said they would be published in the October issue.

26.3 Call for more UK photographs for the Magazine (minute 20)

Lesley Gale had repeated the call in the August issue.

26.4 BPA Calendar 2005 (minute 23)

Lesley Gale said she had made a further request in the Magazine for suitable photographs for the BPA Calendar 2005. A poster for Drop Zones, with a similar request, was in hand. She reported that Warners (the Mag's advertising agency) had approached relevant companies for advertisements in, and sponsorship of, the calendar. UK Drop Zones were being given first refusal, followed by equipment manufacturers. Some advertising space had already been taken. This was a good start as advertising and sponsorship would help to offset some of the costs of production.

The possibility of sponsorship through a contact of Tony Goodman's had still to be explored.

Action: Lesley Gale

The Chairman reported that he had spoken with Tony Knight of the BPA Shop about the sale of surplus calendars. The BPA Shop was keen to sell the calendars, being the remaindered stock once the calendar had been distributed free-of-charge to Members in the December 2004 issue of the Magazine. The Committee agreed that the retail price should be £5 per calendar.

26.5 Membership survey by questionnaire (minute 23.2)

The Chairman reported that he had put out a note to the BPA Chairman, Committee Chairmen, Staff and the Editor to invite suggested questions for consideration for the membership survey. The deadline for proposing questions was Tuesday 19 October 2004, the date of the next meeting.

The Chairman said he had spoken with Andy Scott, FS Rep, who had originally asked for earlier issue and return dates for the questionnaire, to provide feedback ahead of the formulation of next season's FS rules. Andy Scott had been happy with the Chairman's suggestion that he should put his questions in the Mag, and it was understood that these would appear in the October issue.

27/04 Report on Skydive Magazine

27.1 August 2004 issue

Lesley Gale tabled her Editorial Report that covered the August 2004 issue and planned content for the October 2004 issue.

The Chairman congratulated Lesley Gale on a good issue for August 2004. He raised a concern with one item in *JM's Newsround* (page 11), an enthusiastic piece by George Pilkington about a video by Tim Porter. The Chairman said this had come across to him more as free advertising than an editorial feature. Lesley Gale said that the piece was a review. Kieran Brady believed that inclusion of a purchase price and details of where to buy the video had tipped the balance of the item into the category of advertising.

27.2 October 2004 issue

Lesley Gale outlined the planned content for the October issue. She said it was unlikely that all of the listed items could be included because of space constraints. Final editorial decisions had to be taken nearer the publication deadline to match the content with the available space. The Committee confirmed that it was satisfied with the range of items listed.

27.3 Magazine financial outturn for the year ended 30 June 2004

Lesley Gale tabled the budget outturn on the Magazine for the financial year ended 30 June 2004 and the draft Magazine budget for the financial year 2004/5.

The budget for the financial year ended 30 June 2004 showed an outturn of a surplus of £6,127 over budget. Income had been higher than forecast, and expenditure had been within budget except for the cost of mailing and delivery, which had been £200 per issue above budget. Lesley Gale noted that the final surplus more than offset the budget deficit of £4,297 on the Magazine last year. She said that two invoices, to the value of £2,874, had not yet been paid although they should properly have been attributed to the financial year ended on 30 June 2004. The figures presented had taken this sum as having been paid on time; otherwise it would not have given an accurate picture. Lesley Gale said that in the draft financial accounts for the BPA, figures for the Magazine and the BPA Calendar 2004 had been aggregated. She had asked for these figures to be separated out, as they were discrete publications.

Kieran Brady was satisfied that the Magazine's financial performance was now in surplus. Lesley Gale outlined some of the technical developments, involving the use of portable document format (pdf) software, which the designer had available and therefore did not need to be purchased separately for the Magazine, as had been included in the budget. This had helped to build up the surplus.

27.4 Magazine budget 2004/5

Lesley Gale introduced the draft budget (tabled). It assumed an increase of 1.6% in membership subscription income and a 7.5% increase in advertising revenue. Expenditure was forecast to rise by 5% for most items, but 7.5% for mailing and delivery. The 5% increase included the editorial fee and the design fee, neither of which had been increased last year.

In response to a question, Tony Butler reported that after a slow start, possibly because of the large increase in the insurance premium, the number of membership subscriptions had now caught up with the level of the previous year. It therefore appeared to the Committee that a forecast of a 1.6% increase in subscription income was not unreasonable.

The Chairman asked Committee Members to peruse the budget outside the meeting. It would remain as a draft for now, and come forward for consideration at the next meeting.

Action: Next meeting

28/04 Starter Magazine Reprint

Lesley Gale reported that Drop Zones had submitted a record number of orders for the reprinted Starter Magazine. Over 10% of the print run had been sent out already. She thought it was probably the 'new issue' syndrome. The Chairman asked that stock levels should be monitored to identify whether the stock was likely run out earlier than expected.

Action: Lesley Gale

29/04 Communications Action Plan targets for 2004/5

29.1 Publish a BPA skydiving calendar 2005

This was on target. Lesley Gale said that she had so far received only a trickle of images for the calendar - fewer than the 12-paired images required, one for each calendar month. The closing date for the submission of photographs was the end of October. Photographs would be selected from those available at the next meeting.

Action: Next meeting

29.2 Conduct a membership survey by questionnaire

This was on target, as already discussed (see minute 26.5).

30/04 Prospective article for the Mag

Lesley Gale had sought feedback on an article she had circulated. The article had already been published elsewhere, and was now available to *Skydive Magazine*. It was about training a bird from a hot air balloon. A variety of opinions were expressed, but the consensus of the Committee was that the article was no longer news and that its subject, although of casual interest, was at best borderline for inclusion in the BPA Magazine. Lesley Gale thanked the Committee for its views. The Chairman said that no policy issue was involved and the final decision therefore rested with Lesley Gale as Editor.

31/04 Publication of BPA minutes

Calvin Blacker reported that he had been asked, on his recent Club Reps' visit to Hibaldstow, why the BPA did not save money by no longer printing Council and STC minutes in hard copy now that they were available on the BPA website. Tony Butler said that he believed many Members did not read the minutes, but if the minutes were no longer to be printed and sent out, it might well invite accusations of censorship. The Chairman said the question about whether or not to print and circulate minutes to the Membership was a good one and that it should be included in the membership survey (minute 26.5).

Action: Chairman

32/04 DZ map in the Mag

Calvin Blacker reported that another point raised on his Club Reps' visit to Hibaldstow was that some of the location dots for Drop Zones in the Magazine might not be in quite the correct place. (The same applied to the map on the BPA website, and he would mention this at the Development Committee.) Lesley Gale agreed to review the map in the Mag to see if she could identify any dots that might need to be repositioned.

Action: Lesley Gale

33/04 Dates of future meetings

Tuesdays at 1430 at the BPA Office, Leicester: 19 October and 7 December.

The meeting closed at 1540.