

# British Parachute Association

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## Communications Committee

Minutes of the meeting held on

**Wednesday 22 April 2009 at 1200**

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

<b>Present:</b>	Martin Soulsby Adrian Bond Grant Richards	Communications Chairman
<b>In attendance:</b>	Tony Butler Helen Lucas Martin Shuttleworth	Technical Officer Administration Secretary (to item 20) Secretary-General
<b>Apologies for absence:</b>	Paul Applegate Lesley Gale John Hitchen Craig Poxon	Editor, <i>Skydive Magazine</i> NCSO

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### Item Minute

#### 14/09 Minutes

The Committee noted that the minutes (circulated) of the meeting held on Tuesday 17 February 2009 had already been approved by the Committee, ratified electronically by the Council and published on the BPA website <http://www.bpa.org.uk/minutes>

#### 15/09 Matters arising

##### 15.1 Terms of reference (minute 2.1)

Responsibility for public relations and the provision of information had now been transferred from the Development Committee's terms of reference to this Committee's, as mutually agreed at their last meetings.

**Completed**

##### 15.2 Competition for Mag readers (minute 5.1)

The Chairman reported that Lesley Gale had discussed this further with Kieran Brady, who had originally proposed the idea. They had agreed not to proceed because it had proved difficult to formulate rules.

**No further action**

##### 15.3 Functionality of the Mag website (minute 5.2)

The Chairman reported that there was an ongoing issue about timely updating of the Mag website by the web consultants. The Office reported that the online subscription facility had not worked due to technical incompatibility since last autumn when the Mag website had been transferred to the new hosts. The Chairman said that development of a planned new Mag website would be contingent on the Council's decision tonight on the award of the Mag contract for 2010-2012.

##### 15.4 Separate itemization of the Mag element of the subscription (minute 5.3)

The Committee awaited a report from Jon Gretton (BPA Financial Administrator) on how other associations presented the cost of their Magazines to their memberships, and the related question of how they accounted for VAT.

**Action: BPA Office (Jon Gretton)**

### **15.5 Starter Mag (minute 7)**

Consideration of this item was deferred until the next meeting.

**Action: Next meeting**

### **16/09 Editorial Report**

Lesley Gale had circulated her Editorial Report in advance. As Lesley Gale was unwell today, and had therefore tendered her apologies, the Committee deferred consideration of this item until the next meeting.

**Action: Next meeting**

### **17/09 Mag tender**

Adrian Bond (Chairman, Mag tender working party) reported that this item was on the agenda of tonight's Council meeting.

**Action: Council**

### **18/09 AGM 2010**

Adrian Bond (Chairman, AGM 2010 working party) reported that 28 replies to the AGM questionnaire had been received and analysed. Further responses had been received to the electronic version on the BPA website. Craig Poxon would be able to supply a link to an automated analysis of these returns.

**Action: Craig Poxon**

Adrian Bond said it was likely to be a safe to assume that the analysis of the paper questionnaires (tabled) was a representative response. The analysis indicated that the membership was generally satisfied with the format of the AGM. However, the consensus was that the Chairman's speech should be shorter in future. There were also calls for more use of video, a point also made in a letter from Adam Johnston. The videos shown during the Chairman's Review of the Year had been well received and this led the working party to think about whether part of the review of the year – such as the competitions review, which was highly photogenic – could be delivered by video. The Office emphasised that success in developing the use of videos at the AGM depended on commissioning videos from Members far enough in advance.

**Action: AGM working party**

The format that the working party was suggesting was:

### **Friday 15 January 2010**

am - DZO meeting (to follow-up a full-day meeting to be held in Central England in autumn 2009)  
pm - Instructors' meeting

### **Saturday 16 January 2010**

am - AGM  
pm - Seminars, and meetings – including film festival  
evening - Annual dinner with comedian, followed by disco in the nightclub

Adrian Bond suggested that the medals and awards presentations might take place before dinner rather than after the AGM. This would allow the seminars and meetings to start in the morning, immediately after the AGM.

Seminars that had been requested by members that the working party believed would be appropriate for AGM day included: looking after kit/rig maintenance; becoming an instructor; and progression. The Office would seek to identify appropriate speakers.

**Action: BPA Office**

The Chairman reported that Alex Wilson had experience of the successful APA Film Festival and he would therefore ask him whether he might be able to help us to benefit from this valuable experience.

**Action: Chairman**

The Committee identified a possible judge and sponsor of the BPA Film Festival, or possibly even sponsor of the whole AGM. Paul Moore offered to write to invite them.

**Action: Paul Moore**

The working party decided to make a facilities visit to the AGM venue, the Blackpool Hilton.

**Action: AGM working party**

**19/09 Review of the role of Club Reps**

Council had referred to this Committee a review of the role of Club Reps (Council minute 17 refers).

The Office observed that the Club Reps system had never really worked, and that it was now arguably something of an anachronism in these days of fast electronic communications. The Chairman asked what would happen if the BPA did nothing about Club Reps. The consensus was that there would probably be few if any representations from Clubs or members, because other lines of communication were being used.

The Committee decided to defer any recommendation until the next meeting.

**Action: Next meeting**

**20/09 Communications Action Plan: 1 July 2008 to 30 June 2009**

**20.1 Publish a new BPA website**

Stage 1, the new BPA website, was now complete - Action Plan target achieved .

**Target achieved**

Hcoms, the contractors, would be approached for a debrief meeting ahead of Stage 2: Development of the new BPA database with the facility for online membership renewal, which would be overseen by the Development Committee.

**Action: BPA Office**

**20.2 Prepare to publish a new Mag website**

This was on hold pending the debrief on the new BPA website (minute 20.1) and completion of the Mag tender process (minute 17).

**On hold**

**20.3 BPA Skydiving Calendar 2009**

**Target achieved**

**20.4 Explore the feasibility of creating an historical image archive of British parachuting**

The Chairman reported that work on this project was ongoing. He had received letters of support from the IPC and the RAeC Trust, and was expecting a letter from FAI.

**Action: Chairman**

**20.5 Investigate the possibility of introducing a new, more durable type of membership card**

Adrian Bond tabled a paper on plastic card options to replace the current paper card. The plastic cards could be personalised with members' details either on site or off-site. The Office was concerned that if the plastic cards were to be processed off site, it would delay turnaround times for which the office had for many years provided a fast service that was regularly praised by members. The Committee also bore in mind the higher cost of plastic cards, especially in these recessionary times. The Office suggested that another consideration might be whether it was environmentally friendly to issue a new plastic card every year, when credit cards for example typically lasted for a few years. However, Clubs & Centres depended on each year's card being a different colour, which made it easy for them to identify current members.

The Chairman said the ideal solution would be a better quality card that was not expensive, and could be personalised for each member in-house in such a way that it did not disturb the current excellent turnaround times for which the office was rightly lauded.

The Chairman said there had been a kind offer on UKS to sponsor better quality membership cards. Adrian Bond said he would contact the member who had kindly posted that message.

**Action: Adrian Bond**

**21/09 Communications Action Plan: 1 July 2009 to 30 June 2010**

**21.1 Archiving of Mag and minutes**

This target had been suggested by Craig Poxon, who was not present today. Further consideration of this possible target was therefore held over for the time being.

**Do not include in Action Plan**

**21.2 Use of video on BPA website**

The Committee believed that this target was already covered by the ongoing development of the BPA website.

**Do not include in Action Plan**

**21.3 Feasibility study of high-level full-time marketing/communications/PR staff post**

The Committee decided to include this as a target in the Action Plan. The budget for the feasibility study would be £250.

**Include in Action Plan**

**21.4 Enhance liaison with sister skydiving organisations around the world**

The Committee believed this already to be happening through development such as Paul Moore's recent election as President of the European Parachuting Union (EPU) and the Chairman of Council's election last year as a Vice President of the International Parachuting Commission (IPC). Therefore, there was no need to include it as an Action Plan target.

**Do not include in Action Plan**

**21.5 BPA Skydiving Calendar 2010**

**Include in Action Plan**

**21.6 BPA Online Membership Survey/s**

**Include in Action Plan**

**21.7 Promotional poster campaign**

The Committee acknowledged that recruitment was principally an activity of Clubs & Centres and that the BPA should focus mostly on retention. Also, it would be difficult to judge the success or otherwise of a campaign of this nature.

**Do not include in Action Plan**

**21.8 Update the conversion form to collect data on Members' route of entry**

By the addition of tick boxes to show route of entry to the sport.

**Include in Action Plan**

**21.9 Action Plan 2009-10 summary**

The Committee's agreed Action Plan is set out in the matrix on page 5.

**Action: Recommend to the Council**

**22/09 Date of next meeting**

Wednesday 23 June 2009 at 1200 noon at the BPA Office, Glen Parva, Leicester

The meeting closed at 1340.

## Communications Action Plan: 1 July 2009 to 30 June 2010

Target	From	To	By	How	Budget
1. Research the feasibility establishing a high-profile marketing staff post	No such staff post	Evaluation of return on investment were such a post to be created	June 2010	Consultation with stakeholders in the sport to determine whether, and if so how, such a new post might increase BPA Membership and help to drive the sport forward	£250
2. Conduct online membership survey/s	First online survey in 2008	New online survey/s	June 2010	Use commercial survey services, linked from BPA website	£250
3. Publish a BPA Skydiving calendar 2010	2009 calendar	2010 calendar	Dec 2009	Design calendar, sell advertising space, publish	£2,000 (from BPA running costs*)
4. Apply for a Heritage Lottery Grant to create an historical image archive of British parachuting	Positive feasibility study	Make a grant application	June 2010	Complete the Heritage Lottery Fund grant application process	£250
5. Harvest data on members' routes of entry to the sport	Limited data	Structured data to help to target membership recruitment initiatives	Feb 2010	Add tick-box options to conversion form and include relevant fields in new database	No additional budget required.

Available budget: £5980 Budget earmarked (excludes running costs): £750

\* NOT RATIFIED - Weed Stoodley has asked the next meeting to consider allocating the expenditure on the 2010 BPA calendar to the Communications Action Plan budget rather than BPA running costs.

Ratified electronically by the Council (except for item \* on the Action Plan Grid above) and published on 19 May 2009