

British Parachute Association

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The Council

Minutes of the meeting held on
Tuesday 20 April 2004 at 1837
at the BPA Office, Wharf Way, Glen Parva, Leicester

Present:	Chris Allen Paul Applegate Calvin Blacker Kieran Brady Tony Goodman Eddie Jones Ian Marshall Andy Scott John Smyth Elizabeth Stoodley Jim White	Chairman Development Chairman Communications Chairman Vice Chairman/Competitions Chairman
In attendance:	Nigel Allen Tony Butler Debbie Carter Robin Durie Allan Hewitt John Hitchen Martin Shuttleworth	For item 23.1 Technical Officer Treasurer For item 23.1 For item 22 NCSO Secretary-General
Apologies for absence:	David Hickling Nigel Holland Ian Midgley Brian Vacher	

Item Minute

18/04 Renewal of BPA Membership

The Chairman reported that Ian Midgley and Nigel Holland had not yet renewed their BPA membership for the year that began on 1 April 2004. Article 25 of the BPA's Articles of Association stated that 'no person who is not a Member of the Association shall be eligible for membership of the Council except as a co-opted Member'. John Smyth therefore proposed, and Paul Applegate seconded, a motion to suspend the Council membership of Ian Midgley and Nigel Holland until they renewed their BPA membership.

Carried unanimously

19/04 Minutes

Kieran Brady proposed, and Ian Marshall seconded, a motion that the minutes of the meeting of the Council meeting held on 17 February 2004 should be approved as a correct record. This carried unanimously.

Approved

20/04 Matters arising

20.1 BPA Representative for the Sport England South West Region (minute 8.2)

Andy Guest had been invited to put his name forward but had declined to do so because of other commitments. The Chairman asked for any suggested names to be put forward to the BPA Office.

Action: All

20.2 Minutes of STC meeting on Thursday 5 February 2004 (minute 9.4)

Andy Scott said there had been a discussion at the last Council meeting about the start date of 1 July 2004 for the mandatory fitting of AADs for all parachutists below 'B' Certificate excluding those jumping 'traditional' static line equipment. This had not been recorded in the Council minutes and so had presumably not been reported back to STC. Tony Butler said that he had received no complaints or concerns specifically about the implementation date of 1 July 2004 from STC.

No further action

21/04 UK Sport Exchequer Funding

The Chairman reported that UK Sport had awarded an exchequer funding grant of £25K to the BPA for the year from 1 April 2004 to 31 March 2005. UK Sport had designated £20K of this sum for Competitions and £5K for Safety and Training. This grant compared with an annual equivalent of £40K (comprising £20K each for Safety and Competitions) for the previous year - although £30K had actually been awarded for a 9-month period to allow UK Sport to change the dates of its funding year. The Chairman said that UK Sport's Performance Services Consultant for airports, who had visited the BPA Office last autumn, had not herself expected a reduction in funding this year. She had, however, indicated that funding levels could never be guaranteed, particularly in view of the priority given to Olympic sports.

The Chairman said the BPA had little control over UK Sport's grant awarding system and that, to be realistic, the BPA had to plan to cope with further reductions in funding from UK Sport and even the complete cessation of this funding. He believed, however, that it might be appropriate for the BPA to consider making representations to UK Sport against the reduction in funding (down by £15K, from £20K to £5K a year) on safety and training. He would discuss this further outside the meeting with those most involved with safety and training.

Action: Chairman

The new BPA Action Plan for the year from 1 July 2004 to 30 June 2005 had been tabled. This had been submitted as a bid application to UK Sport for the award of exchequer funding. Because of the new calendar to which UK Sport was working, it would be the BPA's progress towards meeting the targets set out in this Action Plan that the UK Sport funding panel would consider in or after October 2004. The Chairman reminded all Council Members that the Action Plan was a living document they should take with them to all Committee meetings. It was the blueprint for the year, and an important measure of the Association's progress and success during the year.

22/04 Request by Allan Hewitt to run BPA rigging and packing courses in Gibraltar

The Chairman introduced Allan Hewitt to speak to his paper (previously circulated) requesting approval to run packing and rigging courses in Gibraltar under the BPA Operations Manual. Allan Hewitt's request to run similar courses in Spain had been declined by the Council at its meeting on 21 October 2003, which had resolved (minute 55.3) that courses for riggers, packers, examiners, etc, were to be held only in the UK and at UK sovereign bases overseas. The Chairman clarified the meaning of 'UK sovereign bases overseas' as 'BPA Affiliated Drop Zones at UK military bases outside the UK'.

Allan Hewitt said that the UK Civil Aviation Authority controlled airspace over Gibraltar. He also said that if insurance were perceived as a problem, he would arrange to insure the courses under his own company's policy so that the BPA's insurance did not have to cover it.

Allan Hewitt left the room for the item to be considered in camera. There followed a full and frank discussion with opinions both for and against granting Allan Hewitt's request expressed by different Council members.

The Chairman advised Council to keep in mind the general principle it had set out in October 2003 of not running courses abroad, and suggested that any relaxation of this could create a precedent that might make it difficult for the BPA to decline applications to run rigging and packing courses in other countries. John Hitchen said he believed that STC, which supported this policy, would be unlikely to change its view. Paul Applegate reported that the Riggers' Subcommittee did not agree with STC and Council's policy on this matter, and pointed out that the STC vote had recorded 10 abstentions. The Riggers' Subcommittee had supported Allan Hewitt's application to run rigging and packing courses in Spain under the BPA's Operations Manual. Paul Applegate believed that the Riggers' Subcommittee would be equally supportive of Allan Hewitt's application to run such courses in Gibraltar.

Paul Applegate proposed, and Calvin Blacker seconded, a motion that the Council should accept Allan Hewitt's application to run rigging and packing courses in Gibraltar under the BPA Operations Manual.

Kieran Brady made a counter-proposal, which was seconded by Eddie Jones, to retain the status quo that no rigging or packing courses should be run under the BPA Operations Manual outside the UK except at BPA Affiliated Drop Zones at British military bases. A vote was taken on this counter-proposal. The result was:

For - 6	Against - 4	Abstentions - 0	<u>Carried</u>
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The counter-proposal being carried meant that Allan Hewitt's request to hold rigging and packing courses under the BPA Operations Manual in Gibraltar had been declined. Allan Hewitt returned to the meeting and the Chairman informed him of the Council's decision. The Chairman and others emphasised that the decision had been based purely on a matter of geographical principle and in no way was Allan Hewitt's competence to conduct such courses, which was not in any doubt, been a factor. Allan Hewitt thanked the Council for considering his request, and said he thought it unlikely that he would be in a position to come to the UK to run rigging and packing courses notwithstanding Kieran Brady's kind offer of use of the facilities at Strathallan without charge for such a purpose.

Status quo retained

23/04 Ratification of minutes of Subcommittees

The minutes of each of the following meetings had been circulated in advance.

23.1 Insurance Committee meeting on Tuesday 30 March 2004

David Hickling had chaired this first meeting of the Insurance Subcommittee, which reported to the Development Committee.

Tony Butler explained that, historically, Clubs & Centres had had the facility to opt out of BPA insurance cover in favour of their own insurance cover. One Club had done this until about two years ago.

Robin Durie (second in command) and Nigel Allen (CCI) of APA Netheravon were in attendance for discussion of the arrangement currently in place for soldiers on Joint Services Adventure Training (JSAT) courses to take out BPA Membership without the insurance element. This was possible because MoD insurance applied that was in effect employer's liability insurance covering their duty of care to military personnel in MoD service. The Chairman asked whether it would be possible for the MoD to set out these arrangements in writing to the BPA. Robin Durie confirmed that the MoD would write to the BPA to this effect, although he was unable to put a timescale on it because it involved liaison between all three services.

The Chairman confirmed that the BPA had a need to clarify the position absolutely because the BPA's insurance bordereaux recorded a significant number of claims from military

members. The Chairman said that the BPA would be discussing the matter in some detail with the BPA insurance company's legal team, and thanked Robin Drurie for his confirmation that the MoD would set out to the BPA in writing its position on the insurance of JSAT students.

Kieran Brady then proposed, and Calvin Blacker seconded, a motion that the minutes from the meeting of the Insurance Committee held on 30 March 2004 should be ratified. These contained recommendations to the Council that:

- (i) the scope of the policy should be changed from "worldwide cover except for the USA", to "BPA Affiliated Drop Zones and UK displays notified by BPA Registered Display Teams"; and
- (ii) the current coverage by BPA insurance parachute displays should not be renewed from 1 April 2005. This would mean that it would be prudent for Display Teams to ensure that events of which their displays were a part were themselves protected by adequate insurance cover.

The motion carried unanimously.

Ratified

23.2 Development Committee meeting on Tuesday 17 February 2004

Kieran Brady (Development Chairman) proposed, and Calvin Blacker seconded, a motion that the minutes of the Development Committee meeting held on 17 February 2004 should be ratified. This carried unanimously.

Ratified

23.4 Communications Committee meeting on Tuesday 17 February 2004

Eddie Jones (Communications Chairman) proposed, and Kieran Brady seconded, a motion that the minutes of the Communications Committee meeting held on 17 February 2004 should be ratified. This carried unanimously.

Ratified

23.5 Safety and Training Committee meeting held on Thursday 8 April 2004

John Hitchen (STC Chairman), reported that STC had been unable to endorse a proposal from the Competitions Committee presented by Brian Vacher for the BPA to hold competitions in Canopy Piloting. This was because STC did not consider that it had, as a body, sufficient experience in this discipline to reach an informed view. That said, STC had recognised that Brian Vacher was an expert in Canopy Piloting, and therefore STC had no objection to the Competitions Committee carrying forward its proposals. The issue was simply that, at this time, STC was not in a position to endorse them.

John Smyth expressed the disappointment of the Competitions Committee that STC had not considered itself in a position to do more to assist the development in the UK of this up-and-coming discipline. The Competitions Committee had recognised the primacy of safety issues and had naturally looked to STC for advice and support. As this was not presently forthcoming, John Smyth said that the Competitions Committee would consult with IPC and take the lead to draft a set of competition rules to recommend to the Council. He regarded it as important that the UK should not get left behind, especially as it had recently been announced that the second World Cup in Canopy Piloting would take place in the USA in late October 2004.

The Chairman said there was no doubt that Canopy Piloting competitions were exciting to take part in and to watch. However, as a discipline, Canopy Piloting carried a well-documented risk. One consequence of this was that canopy swooping had been banned in France. The Chairman said that this year's massive 150% increase in the cost of the BPA insurance premium, and the many hours of deliberations that had been put in by the Insurance Committee and others to seek to reduce the number of claims, meant that now was no time to add more risk to be covered by the BPA's insurance policy. The Chairman therefore suggested that the Competitions Committee should consider arranging for competitors to sign some form of waiver of the BPA insurance policy, in favour of their own insurance they personally had taken out.

Tony Goodman reported that the Icarus team at Perris Valley, who were the current World Champions in Canopy Piloting, had recently piled in over water. Had they been over land, there would probably have been a fatality.

Ian Marshall believed that the Development Committee had an important role in helping to develop the new discipline of Canopy Piloting. The Chairman confirmed that the Canopy Panel convened by STC had the development of a teaching syllabus on canopy control as part of its remit, although it had not yet got that far.

John Hitchen reported with regret on the fatality of Ethan Brentwood at Headcorn from a low turn. The Council expressed its condolences.

Paul Applegate proposed, and Tony Goodman seconded, a motion that the minutes of the STC meeting held on 8 April 2004 be ratified. This carried unanimously.

Ratified

23.5 Competitions Committee meeting held on Tuesday 16 March 2004

There was discussion of an item concerning the repayment of overpaid expenses from the budget for Artistic Skills Coaching Roadshows arising from an item on page 3 of the Competitions minutes. The Chairman confirmed that the authorisation process for paying expenses claims had been changed, which should ensure that invalid claims were not paid in future.

John Hitchen reported that David Hickling was of the view that the Competitions Committee had been unfair to require Centres to be broadband enabled in order to bid for this year's new National Speed 8 competition. John Smyth said that this specification had had to be made because of the strong possibility of sponsorship of the meet by a broadband service provider. To hold it at a DZ that did not have a broadband connection would have meant there would have been no chance of closing this potentially ground-breaking sponsorship deal.

John Smyth proposed, and Calvin Blacker seconded, that a recommendation by the Competitions Committee to the Council that Paul Applegate should be appointed to the joint role of Head of UK Delegation and UK Delegation Manager to the Artistic WPC 2004 in Brazil should be approved.

Carried unanimously

The Chairman thanked Paul Applegate for kindly agreeing to take on this role. John Smyth said this decision meant that Paul Applegate, in connection with the BPA Office, and no-one else, should now deal all of the arrangements for the UK Delegation to the Artistic Disciplines WPC 2004 in Brazil.

John Smyth proposed, and Jim White seconded, a motion that the minutes of the Competitions Committee meeting held on 16 March 2004 be ratified. This carried unanimously.

Ratified

24/04 Reports on Committee meetings held earlier this afternoon

24.1 Communications Committee

Eddie Jones (Communications Chairman) reported that the Communications Committee had:

- Agreed to a reprint of 30,000 copies of *Skydive Starter Magazine*, with minor updates including a new cover, to replenish current stocks that would run out next month. The cost would be about £16K offset by about £9K advertising income, with a budgeted cost to the BPA of £6.2K (21p per copy). The new stock was expected to last for 2 years.
- Agreed to review the future of the Starter Magazine next year well ahead of the reprint running out.

- Heard that more updates to the Magazine website were now being carried out by the Magazine office, as per the Action Plan, so saving on the cost of external web specialists.
- Seen a draft of the first entirely new electronic DZ Focus page and agreed that this new format should be extended to include general aviation information and weather, then rolled out as the new pages became available for each of the Affiliated Clubs & Centres, to replace their current pages on the BPA website.

24.2 Development Committee

Kieran Brady (Development Chairman) reported that the Development Committee had:

- Held an extended discussion on insurance, which had endorsed the recommendations of, and further work currently being undertaken by, the Insurance Committee (minute 23.1).
- Been pleased to receive a draft of the FF1 section of the new Freefly Manual that had been prepared by Paul Floyd, and looked forward to receiving the draft of the FF2 section to go with it.
- Noted the first draft of the content of the new page on insurance for the BPA website, which was an Action Plan item.
- Noted that research on information for the history of parachuting display was in progress, which was another Action Plan item.

25/04 Report on Royal Aero Club Activities

John Smyth (BPA Delegate to RAeC) reported that Barry Rolfe was shortly to retire as Secretary to RAeC. His successor would be Diana King. The UK representative to FAI had been present at the recent RAeC Council meeting. There had been discussion about the relationship between the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) code and the UK Sport Drug Free Sport code. John Smyth had said that the BPA had sought advice from UK Sport on this, and the RAeC had been grateful to the BPA for taking a lead on the matter. The RAeC Council had agreed that the annual subscriptions payable by member organisations such as the BPA should increase by 3%, this having originally been 2% now with an additional 1% to help to pay for the considerable work on defending the UK position on the future regulation of airsports in Europe. The RAeC had however already sent the BPA an invoice for £4741 for its 2004/5 subscription, this being a 2% increase on last year's subscription of £4648.

John Smyth proposed, and Ian Marshall seconded, a motion that the BPA should pay the RAeC annual subscription of £4741 as invoiced (2% increase).

Carried unanimously

26/04 Reports from Club Reps

There was one report. Andy Scott had circulated a written report listing questions he had been asked during his recent Club Reps visit to RAFSPA, Weston on the Green. These were discussed and Andy Scott agreed to report back to those who had asked questions that he did not answer on the day, which included media liaison on incidents. In general discussion, it was reported that a suggestion had been made to include next of kin details on membership cards. The Chairman said this could risk the press getting hold of these details ahead of the police, and that it was therefore better for the DZ to retain control of information on next of kin.

A Member had asked Andy Scott whether it might be possible for the BPA Shop to act as a discount retailer for AADs. The Chairman said this was a matter for Tony Knight, who ran the BPA Shop under franchise from the BPA.

Action: Forward suggestion to BPA Shop

The Chairman recalled that in a previous membership survey, the membership had expressed a strong view that they did not see it as a function of the BPA to help to fund AADs. He suggested that Andy Scott might wish to draft a question along similar lines and

forward it to Eddie Jones for consideration for inclusion in the next membership survey in February 2005 to see whether or not the view of the membership was still the same.

Action: Andy Scott

The Chairman thanked Andy Scott for so clearly setting out the questions he had been asked in writing in an easy-to-read table.

Tony Goodman said he planned to start his Club Rep visits soon, and would be contacting the Clubs concerned.

27/04 Applications for Re-Affiliation

27.1 Skydive St Andrews

New CCI Jim White. Proposed by Ian Marshall and seconded by Andy Scott.

Carried unanimously

27.2 Peterborough Parachute Centre

New CCI Kev Goode. Proposed by Paul Applegate, seconded by Kieran Brady.

Carried unanimously

27.3 APA Netheravon

New CCI Nigel Allen. Proposed by Kieran Brady, seconded by Ian Marshall.

Carried unanimously

28/04 Correspondence

The Chairman announced that the next item was to be held in camera, and those not on the Council (other than staff) left the room. Correspondence from Member A to the Council had been received complaining about the conduct Member B towards Member C. Member B had been shown Member A's letter and had written to the Council to say that Member A's letter should not be distributed as it was libellous and based on hearsay. Only Member B's letter had been tabled thus far. The Council were then informed that the police were investigating the complaint. John Smyth said that this meant that the matter was sub judice and that any discussion now may be prejudicial to due process.

Elizabeth Stoodley proposed that, as a general principle, because the original letter had been addressed to the Council, the Council had a right to see it and therefore it should be tabled. The proposal failed to find a seconder.

Paul Applegate proposed, and Ian Marshall seconded, a motion that the letter from Member A should not be distributed, nor the matter considered, pending the outcome of the police investigation and any official action that may follow. The vote was:

For - 6 Against - 2 Abstentions - 3 (Jim White, Kieran Brady, Eddie Jones)

Carried

29/04 Date of meetings in 2004

Tuesdays at 1830 at the BPA Office, Leicester: 15 June, 24 August, 19 October and 7 December (after the EGM).

The meeting closed at 2045.