

# British Parachute Association

5 Wharf Way  
Glen Parva  
Leicester  
LE2 9TF

Tel: 0116 278 5271  
Fax: 0116 247 7662  
e-mail: skydive@bpa.org.uk  
www.bpa.org.uk



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## The Council

Minutes of the meeting held on  
**Tuesday 10 October 2006 at 1830**  
at the BPA Office, Wharf Way, Glen Parva, Leicester

<b>Present:</b>	John Smyth Paul Applegate Kieran Brady John Horne Eddie Jones Ian Marshall Mark Maynard John Page Grant Richards Andy Scott	Vice Chairman, in the chair Development Chairman Communications Chairman
<b>In attendance:</b>	Adrian Bond Tony Butler Lesley Gale Martin Shuttleworth	Technical Officer Editor, <i>Skydive Magazine</i> Secretary-General
<b>Observers:</b>	Nick Johnston Gareth Thomas	Skydive Bridlington Skydive Bridlington
<b>Apologies for absence:</b>	Chris Allen Debbie Carter Tony Goodman John Hitchen Paul Moore Mike Rust Elizabeth Stoodley	Chairman Treasurer NCSO

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### Item Minute

#### 57/06 Chair

As the Chairman had been delayed due to work commitments, the Vice Chairman took the chair.

#### 58/06 Minutes

Two typographical corrections were made to the draft minutes of the previous meeting, on Tuesday 15 August 2006. On page 4, in the final paragraph of minute 48.4, Competitions Committee, the wording of the first sentence was corrected to read '...the Chairman referred to reports that a Member of the BPA who was a coach for another nation's delegation at the World Parachuting Championships at Gera had been hurt during the end-of-meet party due to an alleged act of violence.' On page 6, in minute 50, Reports from Club Representatives, the first sentence was corrected to read 'Eddie Jones reported that he had visited the Wild Geese Skydiving Centre in Northern Ireland.'

With the above corrections, Eddie Jones proposed, and Kieran Brady seconded, a motion that the minutes should be approved as a correct record. This carried unanimously.

**Approved**

## 59/06 Matters arising

### 59.1 Presentation sword for Outstanding Contribution to the Sport (minute 45.1)

The Office had ordered a British Infantry pattern 1897 sword in a presentation box, and the manufacturers had advised that it should be available in time for the next Council meeting on Tuesday 5 December. Nominations for the award would be considered later in the meeting (see minute 64).

### 59.2 Panel of Inquiry into the suspected irregularities regarding the operation of Cessna 208B at JSPC Netheravon (minute 45.2)

The Vice Chairman said that he wished to stand down from the chair for this item because of personal involvement. He asked, and the Council agreed, that Paul Applegate, as one of the longest-standing Members of Council, should take the chair.

John Smyth said that he had not been present at the last Council meeting but wished to raise two points he believed should have been considered.

At the Council meeting on 15 August 2006:

- (i) There had been a suggestion that Charles Shea-Simonds' attendance at Netheravon would be documented in gate records. In fact, Charles Shea-Simonds was on the permanent staff at Netheravon and had a gate pass. He was not required to sign in and out and there were therefore no records of his attendance.
- (ii) The Chairman of Council had suggested that it might be relevant to take into account the log of Charles Shea-Simonds' flying hours. Charles Shea-Simonds' pilot's logbook was available tonight for inspection. It showed him to have been a current and active pilot during the period under consideration.

John Smyth said that a letter of support for Charles Shea-Simonds from Robin Durie, Secretary of APA Netheravon, dated 26 June 2006, had not been circulated to the full Council. He had now received five letters of support from senior personnel at APA Netheravon for Charles Shea-Simonds as their CCP.

John Smyth said that Charles Shea-Simonds had been one of the founding fathers of the BPA over 40 years ago, and had been the Association's first NCSO. He asked the Council to look at the evidence, consider the facts, and re-address the issue.

Paul Applegate, from the chair, asked the meeting if it wished to consider this item further, and the Council agreed to do so. Paul Applegate therefore invited Kieran Brady to speak in his capacity as a Member of the Panel that had produced the Report.

Kieran Brady expressed his concern that the wording under consideration from the Panel's Report appeared to have been interpreted by some in an emotive rather than an objective way. He said the role of CCP was about much more than flying hours. He said the letters of support that had been sent at John Smyth's request including some from those who had not been directly involved with the Report. He said that there was no case to change the wording.

Kieran Brady accepted that the situation at Netheravon had improved since he had carried out his first inspection for the BPA. Charles Shea-Simonds was undoubtedly at Netheravon regularly, and was working with Brittain-Norman (aircraft manufacturers) to resolve the technical aircraft issues that had been highlighted in the Panel's Report. The Report had therefore been accepted and had achieved its objective of bringing about improvements.

Kieran Brady said that:

1. He never intended to state – and the Panel's Report had not stated – that Charles Shea-Simonds should be replaced as CCP of APA Netheravon.

2. He personally and the BPA Council collectively respected and supported APA's decisions in response to the Panel's Report.
3. From the information supplied, he was satisfied that Charles Shea-Simonds' current role as CCP at APA Netheravon is an active one.

Paul Applegate (chair) said that he believed that, in the light of the above, the matter should now be concluded, and the Council agreed.

### **59.3 Taz Causer Award (minute 54)**

Mrs Hazel Causer, mother of the late Tamsin 'Taz' Causer, to whom this new award would be dedicated, had suggested that it might be awarded to the 'Skydiver of the Year'. Tony Butler said that the Mike Forge Trophy was awarded to the most progressive new skydiver of the year, nominated by their CCI, but that he did not see any conflict because Taz's trophy would be awarded to an experienced skydiver. The two awards would therefore complement each other. The Council asked Lesley Gale kindly to co-ordinate Taz's award and publicise it in the Magazine by inviting nominations from the Membership so that Council could consider a shortlist nominations by e-mail in time for the award to be presented for the first time at the AGM on Saturday 20 January 2007.

**Action: Lesley Gale**

### **59.4 BPA Office premises maintenance (minute 55)**

An alternative water supply was being arranged to part of the BPA Office because contractors had been unable to identify the source of the blockage. Running the good supply from the other end of the building would be cheaper than paying for further possibly inconclusive excavations on the failed supply.

## **60/06 Ratification of the minutes of Subcommittees**

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

### **60.1 Development Committee meeting on Tuesday 15 August 2006**

In the absence of any questions or requests for clarification, Kieran Brady (Development Chairman) proposed, and Mark Maynard seconded, a motion that the minutes of the Development Committee meeting held on 15 August 2006 should be ratified. This carried unanimously.

**Ratified**

### **60.2 Communications Committee meeting on Tuesday 15 August 2006**

In the absence of any questions or requests for clarification, Eddie Jones (Communications Chairman) proposed, and Paul Applegate seconded, a motion that the minutes of the Communications Committee meeting held on 15 August 2006 should be ratified. This carried unanimously.

**Ratified**

### **60.3 Safety and Training Committee meeting on Thursday 28 September 2006**

Tony Butler offered to answer any questions relating to the STC minutes, but there were none. Two corrections were made to the draft minutes (circulated). The third paragraph on page 2 comprising a single line had been included in error and was deleted. A typographical error on page 12 was also corrected.

Kieran Brady then proposed, and Paul Applegate seconded, a motion that the minutes of the STC meeting held on 3 August 2006 should be ratified. This carried unanimously.

**Ratified**

### **60.4 Competitions Committee meeting held on Wednesday 6 September 2006**

Eddie Jones said he was disappointed to note from the Competitions Committee's minutes that the first British Open Nationals in Canopy Piloting, to be held in July 2007, would be held at a BPA Centre in Germany when a UK-based centre had bid to hold them. John Smyth, Competitions Chairman, said that the reasons for the decision had been clearly set out in the Competitions minutes – JSPC(L)/RAPA, the BPA Affiliated Centre in Bad Lippspringe, Germany, already had in place a suitable body of water as was required for Canopy Piloting, and had experience of running competitions in this discipline. Black Knights, the UK Centre that had bid, was in the process of preparing a body of standing water, as yet untried for Canopy Piloting competitions. The Competitions Committee had, as stated in its minutes,

decided on a UK-based programme comprising a pre-Nationals skills coaching roadshow, trials and assessments that would set a competence threshold to compete in the Nationals. As well as being developmental to jumpers and to the Centre, this programme was also essential on safety grounds. The Competitions Committee would, through its CP Discipline Rep Grant Richards, encourage Black Knights to play a full part in the pre-Nationals programme and thereby develop their understanding and expertise in this new discipline.

Paul Applegate pointed out that Black Knights' facilities for Canopy Piloting were cleared only at the last STC meeting and did not therefore officially exist at the time that the Competitions Committee decided on the successful bid for the 2007 Canopy Piloting Nationals.

Kieran Brady said he recognised that the Competitions Committee's decision was made for the best reasons, on the evidence available at the time.

The Council re-affirmed its policy that the British Nationals should be held in the UK. However, it recognised and respected the exceptional circumstances that had led to the Competitions Committee awarding the 2007 Canopy Piloting Nationals (and the 2007 Classics Nationals with them, by way of synergy) to a BPA Affiliated Drop Zone in mainland Europe.

Grant Richards then proposed, and John Page seconded, a motion that the minutes of the Competitions Committee meeting held on 6 September 2006 should be ratified. This carried unanimously.

**Ratified**

## **61/06 Reports on Committee meetings held earlier today**

### **61.1 Communications Committee**

Eddie Jones (Communications Chairman) reported that a short meeting of the Communications Committee had:

- received Adrian Bond's report on trends in Magazine advertising income over the last 4 years. This had been very well researched and presented. It would help to identify trends for the future that would help to maintain a pricing policy to optimise advertising income;
- commissioned printing of 50,000 promotional handbills and 2000 promotional posters on skydiving for Centres to purchase along the same lines as they purchased the successful *Freedom of the Skies* brochure. By capitalising on economy of scale through the Association, Centres could obtain high quality full colour promotional material at a low cost;
- identified a case of unauthorised use of the BPA logo on the Internet and requested the company concerned, Extreme Sports Café, to remove it.

### **61.2 Development Committee**

#### **61.2.1 General**

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

- received a report from John Page about BPA skydiving display material he was arranging to put in place at the Bedford and Milton Keynes wind tunnels. The material included maps showing the location of BPA Affiliated Drop Zones throughout the UK;
- noted that a letter advising Centres of BPA grants of £100 for safety evenings had been issued but that no applications for the year beginning 1 July 2006 had yet been received, although this was understandable because safety evenings were a usually a winter or pre-season activity and the nights were only now drawing in;
- reviewed the principle of having 'BPA Associated Organisations' and noted that their number had declined significantly over the last few years. The Committee had concluded that the existence of the category of 'BPA Associated Organisations' brought in little additional income but carried the risk that, notwithstanding disclaimers

on the Associated Organisations page in the Magazine, people might assume that Associated Organisations were bound by some sort of code or control by the BPA, which was not in fact the case – some operated entirely or partly outside the UK. To resolve this possible ambiguity, the Committee had decided to discontinue the category of BPA Associated Organisations – which was effectively just a listing on a page in *Skydive Magazine* – with effect from the end of the current period of Association, on 31 March 2007. Before this, the Editor would arrange to send Associated Organisations full detail of advertising rates in the Magazine and express the hope that they would continue to promote themselves through the Magazine. This applied to commercial Associated Organisations only: non-commercial clubs and societies such as BCPS and POPS UK would continue to be listed without charge in the Magazine;

- considered a working draft by Elizabeth Stoodley of a suggested draft agreement between the BPA and Airkix Milton Keynes Ltd on the Airkix offer of Wind Tunnel time to BPA Members. The draft agreement had been based on earlier discussions between Simon Ward of Airkix and Kieran Brady and John Smyth representing the BPA. Preparation of such a comprehensive and professionally laid out working draft had been an enormous undertaking, and the Development Committee wished to record its most grateful appreciation to Elizabeth Stoodley for having prepared the draft document and an associated budget.

#### **61.2.2 The Airkix Fund proposal**

Elizabeth Stoodley's working draft of a possible agreement between the BPA and Airkix on the Airkix offer of wind tunnel time to BPA Members had been circulated to the full Council. The Development Committee had recommended to Council acceptance of the document as the basis for further consultation with Simon Ward of the Airkix wind tunnel. The negotiations were to be on the basis of a 50/50 split between Airkix and the BPA of the initial promotional costs (estimated to be about £2K in total) and which would be recoverable from the Fund in full, subject of course to the Fund accruing sufficient income to cover these costs.

Andy Scott said that information from the draft contract had been leaked: Simon Ward had told him he had been read out extracts over the telephone by an individual not on the Council. This had concerned Simon Ward because he had asked the BPA to respect commercial confidentiality.

Ian Marshall proposed, and Andy Scott seconded, a motion that the Council endorsed the working draft, still as a working draft, as the basis of further negotiations with Simon Ward.

**Carried unanimously**

The Council authorised Kieran Brady, as Development Chairman, to drive forward this initiative and for the Development Committee to agree the wording of the final agreement – this did not need to come back to the Council table. This was with a view to the possible launch of the offer at the AGM on Saturday 20 January 2007.

**Action: Kieran Brady**

#### **62/06 Reports from Club Representatives**

There were no reports from Club Representatives.

#### **63/06 Report on the Royal Aero Club**

The Chairman (BPA Delegate to RAeC) reported that unfortunately neither he nor Jim Crocker (BPA Alternate delegate to RAeC) had been able to attend the recent RAeC Council meeting. Significant discussion had taken place at the meeting about pan-European issues of safety and the regulation of airports, on which Tony Knight and Tony Butler were actively pressing the BPA's interests through the RAeC as part of the RAeC's well-organised campaign to safeguard the interests of British airports in an increasingly more harmonised European regulatory regime.

The RAeC awards for 2005 had finally been presented last week, including a well-deserved Bronze Medal to the BPA's doyen of rigging, John Curtis. The Chairman had been disappointed that the ceremony had been so late in the year. Nominations for this year's

RAeC awards would be due in mid-November. The Chairman outlined the suggested nominations he had received to date, and further nominations were made from around the table. The Chairman undertook to co-ordinate the nominations with the assistance of others who kindly agreed to provide him with key facts for the citations.

**Action: John Smyth**

**64/06 BPA Award for Outstanding Contribution to the Sport**

Also for presentation at the RAeC Awards Ceremony were special awards by most of the Member associations but not, to date, by the BPA. This would be rectified by the introduction of the BPA's own award for Outstanding Contribution to Sport Parachuting, for which Jim Crocker had kindly agreed to meet the cost of the trophy (minute 59.1). The intention was to present the award not every year, but on an occasional basis.

The Council considered nominees of and shortlisted Pete Allum and Clare 'Sparky' Scott. The Council believed that both nominees were worthy of recognition for their sustained contribution to our sport over an extended period of time.

John Page proposed, and Ian Marshall seconded, a motion that the award for Outstanding Achievement in the Sport should be made to Claire 'Sparky' Scott. The vote was:

For – 8, Against – 0, Abstain – 1 (Andy Scott, declaration of interest as her husband)

**Carried**

Claire 'Sparky' Scott would be formally announced as winner of the BPA award for Outstanding Contribution to the Sport at the AGM on Saturday 20 January 2007. The award would be presented at the RAeC awards ceremony in 2007 on a date to be arranged by RAeC.

Pete Allum would be advised that he had been nominated for the award and that his nomination may be put forward again on another occasion.

**65/06 Application for Re-Affiliation**

British Skysports had applied for Re-Affiliation by its new name of Skydive Bridlington. It also had a change of directors to Nick Johnston, Gareth Thomas and Clair Armstrong, and new CCI and CCP Nick Johnston. CCI. Nick Johnston and Gareth Thomas were in attendance for this item.

Tony Butler said he had asked that the Centre should be represented because the BPA Office had received a number of telephone calls from concerned customers of the Centre who had booked jumps with the previous organisation. Nick Johnston assured the Council that all jumps that had been booked and paid for with the previous organisation would be honoured. Tony Butler said that, with those reassurances, he was not aware of any other issues that the Council should take into consideration.

Eddie Jones then proposed, and Ian Marshall seconded, a motion that the application should be accepted.

**Carried unanimously**

**66/06 Electoral process**

Martin Shuttleworth had circulated a paper setting out the costs of administering a Council election (i) in house and (ii) through the Electoral Reform Society's commercial arm, which offered an external electoral administration service. The costs were approximately £1K in-house, compared with £3.7K to contract out the work. The ledger used for last year's election, the votes for which had been counted in-house, was displayed. The ledger recorded the votes cast against the number of the card to which the votes related. The votes recorded in the ledger could be audited against the numbered card to which they related. Cards were numbered as they arrived and a note was made on each Member's record to show that he or she had returned a valid voting card. This was a safeguard to prevent more than one valid card being returned as cards were freely available to encourage voting, and to replace spoiled cards.

Comment had been made in previous years about the high percentage of invalid cards – returned by the due date typically around 10%. This was because the cards had not been completed correctly.

After extensive discussion, the Council decided that it would be difficult to justify an additional expenditure of about £2.7K to contract out administration of the election, when there was no evidence of any irregularity with the existing in-house system. Audit of the system would not be an onerous task, and the voting cards and ledger were available – this might be a role for a scrutineer who might, for example, be someone such as a Vice President or the Treasurer, who had not themselves stood for election, or indeed someone from outside the Association, perhaps from another sports body.

Kieran Brady said that he would like eventually to see the Association move towards an electronic voting system, but this would require careful investigation.

Eddie Jones proposed, and Paul Applegate seconded, a motion that the significant additional cost of using an external agency could not be justified BPA should continue with the in-house count of votes if there was an election for Council 2007, and task next year's Development Committee to review the electoral process, with a view to the possible eventual use of an electronic form of polling.

**Carried unanimously – Action: Development Committee**

The Council asked that, if there was an election for Council 2007 (that is, if there were more nominees than for the 15 seats available), every effort should be made in the December issue of *Skydive Magazine* to guide Members on how to fill in a voting card such that it was valid and their vote counted. Lesley Gale offered to help by using mock-ups of cards to illustrate how to make sure your card was valid.

**Action: BPA Office / Lesley Gale**

The Chairman reminded those Council Members intending to stand for election for Council 2007 that completed nomination forms, signed by a proposer and seconder, needed to be returned to the BPA Office by no later than noon on Monday 23 October 2006.

**67/06 Recognition of the BPA staff at Christmas**

At the request of the Chairman, this item was held in camera and the BPA staff and others left the room.

The Council decided to thank the paid staff of the BPA for their hard work during the year. Ian Marshall proposed, and John Horne seconded, that a Christmas bonus of the same amount as last year should be paid to the staff in December 2006. Eddie Jones proposed, and John Page seconded that a sum of up to £300 should be made available for a BPA Office Christmas lunch for the nine members of staff based there. For the avoidance of doubt, the Chairman said that this lunch was being provided by the Council for the staff only, in the Council's role as a caring employer.

The staff and others then rejoined the meeting and Tony Butler thanked the Council for their kind gestures to the staff for Christmas.

**68/06 Date of next meeting**

Tuesday 5 December 2006 (after the EGM at 1830) at the BPA Office, Glen Parva, Leicester.

The meeting closed at 2208.