

British Parachute Association

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The Council

Minutes of the meeting held on
Tuesday 2 December 2008 at 1900
at the BPA Office, Wharf Way, Glen Parva, Leicester

Present:	John Horne	-	in the Chair
	Paul Applegate		
	Adrian Bond		
	Paul Ledden		
	Paul Moore		
	John Page		
	Craig Poxon		
	Grant Richards		
	Andy Scott		
	Martin Soulsby		
	Weed Stoodley		
In attendance:	Kieran Brady	-	Pilots' Committee Chairman
	Tony Butler	-	Technical Officer
	Debbie Carter	-	Treasurer
	Lesley Gale	-	Editor, Skydive the Mag
	John Hitchen	-	NCSO
	Martin Shuttleworth	-	Secretary-General
Observers:	Mike Carpenter	-	Team Volare
	Alberto Fuertes	-	Team Volare
	Steve Saunders	-	Council 2009 nominee
Apologies for absence:	David Hickling	-	Chairman, Insurance Working Group
	David Ibbotson		
	Ian Marshall		
	John Smyth MVO	-	Chairman
	Alex Wilson		

Item Minute

- 94/08 Chair**
John Horne, Vice Chairman of Council, took the Chair because the Chairman, John Smyth, was in Australia on business. He welcomed the observers including Steve Saunders, a nominee for Council 2009.
- 95/08 Minutes**
The minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 7 October 2008 had been ratified electronically by the Council and had been published on the BPA website on 28 October 2008. **Ratified**
- 96/08 Matters arising**
- 96.1 Commemorative plaque (minute 77.5)**
The Secretary of Cheltenham Civic Society had written to say that the total cost of the plaque was more than he had estimated because he had not taken into account the colour BPA logo. He therefore asked whether the BPA would be prepared to pay half the total cost which

amounted to £327, which was £77 above the maximum of £250 that the Council had previously agreed to pay (minute 39.1 refers), and which had already been paid. The Council unanimously agreed to pay the additional £77.

Action: BPA Office

96.2 Video montage of the skydiving year for AGM (minute 77.8)

Mike Carpenter had kindly prepared this and handed it to the BPA Office, for which the Council was grateful. Andy Scott reported that he could himself also supply a DVD of the Honda jump.

97/08 Ratification of minutes of Committees

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

97.1 Development Committee meeting on Tuesday 7 October 2008

In the absence of any questions, Adrian Bond proposed, and Craig Poxon seconded, a motion that the minutes of the Development Committee meeting held on 7 October 2008 should be ratified. This carried unanimously.

Ratified

97.2 Communications Committee meeting on Tuesday 7 October 2008

In the absence of any questions, Grant Richards proposed, and Martin Soulsby seconded, a motion that the minutes of the Communications Committee meeting held on 7 October 2008 should be ratified. This carried unanimously.

Ratified

97.3 Safety and Training Committee meeting on Thursday 20 November 2008

A spelling mistake on page 2, item 4.6, of the draft STC minutes was corrected. The Council noted a change in the student: instructor ratio for AFF to a maximum of 4:1, having previously been 3:1 and suggested this should be highlighted in the Mag.

Action: Lesley Gale

Craig Poxon questioned use of the term 'misfire' in connection with display parachuting. He believed the term to be jargon and could not correlate its origin and its meaning. Moreover, he believed that the term could potentially be confusing. John Hitchen said he did not know how the term had originally come to be used in the context of display parachuting.

John Page then proposed, and Paul Applegate seconded, a motion that the minutes of the STC meeting held on 20 November should be ratified. This carried unanimously.

Ratified

97.4 Competitions Committee meeting held on Wednesday 15 October 2008

With a typographical correction to the final paragraph on page 5, Weed Stoodley proposed, and Paul Applegate seconded, a motion that the minutes of the meeting of the Competitions Committee held on 15 October 2008 should be ratified. This carried unanimously.

Ratified

Andy Scott (Competitions Chairman) called attention to Competitions minute 86.9 concerning the eligibility of BPA Member Alberto Fuertes (who was attending tonight's meeting with team mate Mike Carpenter) to belong as a new member of British National Champion and WPC Bronze freefly team Volare. A letter from Team Volare (Mike Carpenter, Adam Mattacola and Alberto Fuertes) had been circulated in advance. Alberto Fuertes had been educated in Britain and spent much time in the UK, but he currently held a Spanish passport and would not be eligible to apply for a British passport until September 2009. He needed to compete as part of Volare, a British team, in the British Nationals 2009, in order for the team to be eligible for selection to represent the UK at the WPC 2010. The British Nationals would be held in August 2009. FAI rules on nationality allowed residence to be taken into consideration and, on this basis, the Competitions Committee had already agreed that Alberto Fuertes could compete as part of team Volare, a British team, in the World Cup 2009.

The Competitions Committee also confirmed that team Volare had been invited, based on the World Championship results 2008, to compete at the World Games 2009.

After extensive discussion, Grant Richards proposed, and John Page seconded, a motion that the BPA should adopt the FAI rules on nationality, which took into account residence in the case of individuals who did not hold a passport of the nation concerned. The vote was For – 9, Against – 1, Abstain – 0.

Carried

Andy Scott said that Council's decision would be reflected in the rules for the British Nationals 2009, about which the Competitions Committee would consult with John Hitchen to ensure the wording accurately reflected the FAI rules on nationality.

Refer to Competitions Committee 2009

With regard to Alberto Fuertes, Andy Scott confirmed that, from the documentation that he and the Competitions Committee had already seen, Team Volare comprising Mike Carpenter, Adam Mattacola and Alberto Fuertes was eligible to compete as a British team in the Nationals 2009 and, if it won its event, would be eligible for selection to represent the UK at WPC 2010.

98/08 Reports on Committee meetings held earlier today

98.1 Development Committee

Craig Poxon (Development Chairman) reported that, at the meeting held this afternoon, the Development Committee had:

- received the notes on the Drop Zone Owners' and Operators meeting convened by the BPA on Tuesday 11 November 2008 (Council minute 102);
- noted that David Hickling (Chairman, Insurance Working Group) was liaising with a number of brokers with a view to them submitting a quotation for BPA third party public liability insurance for the new membership year beginning on 1 April 2009. The quotations would be needed before the AGM on Saturday 10 January 2009, at which the BPA subscription rate, including the insurance element, would be set. No quotations for insurance had yet been received. One broker had asked for a fee of £5K to quote. There had been no proposal at the Development Committee for the BPA to pay such a quotation fee, which had never been requested by a potential broker before;
- noted that the annual insurance review meeting with the existing insurers, which always took place before they issued their renewal quote, would take place after David Hickling's return to the UK, on Monday 22 December 2008 at 1100 at the BPA Office;
- heard from Martin Soulsby that he had put an item in the Mag, with a call-back date of February 2009, to seek tenders for producing canopy handling videos to be financed from the Airkix Fund;
- noted that Weed Stoodley was continuing with her work in drafting updated Articles of Association;
- noted that work was continuing on the development of additional income streams for the BPA;
- reported that the Committee had received a request from an individual financially to support an animated film of a flat pack parachute. The purpose of the film was not entirely clear. The individual's name appeared on the BPA membership database as a lapsed member, clarification had been sought from them by the Office some weeks ago but no reply had been received to date;
- considered a paper from himself which proposed that BPA meetings should be broadcast online, and outlining the considerations and arrangements that would need to be put in place to do this.

Grant Richards noted that meetings of the Communications and Development Committees had often run out of time this year. He suggested that next year, the Committees might consider holding meetings on separate, perhaps consecutive, days. Discussion followed about a number of different ways that meetings might be scheduled, including holding Communications, Competitions and Development meetings concurrently immediately before each Council meeting, although it was recognised that this would restrict each Council Member to serving on only one Committee and would present logistical difficulties in rooming

and staffing. The Chairman said the question of the composition and scheduling Committees and their meetings was one for consideration by Council 2009.

Action; Refer to Council 2009

98.2 Communications Committee

This item was held in camera and Lesley Gale and others left the room, leaving the elected Council, Treasurer, and staff.

Adrian Bond (Communications Chairman) reminded the meeting that the Mag tender process, along with others, had been brought about by the BPA focusing on its costs. However, cost would not be the ultimate factor because quality was, and should always be, in the lead. The Mag currently cost approximately £21K per issue, and this cost was divided on approximately a 50:50 basis between the (i) editorial fee and (ii) production, design and distribution costs.

Adrian Bond reported that there had been an excellent response to the invitation to tender with 16 intents to tender having been received. He circulated a copy of a summary of the organisations and individuals who had responded to the invitation to tender. He had previously e-mailed to the Council a draft copy of the tender specification for issue early in 2009. Unfortunately, Andy Scott had been omitted from the mailing list in error and therefore Adrian Bond e-mailed him an electronic copy during the meeting. The tender specification had been agreed by the Communications Committee at its meeting this afternoon. Those who had signified their intent to tender comprised 12 companies who had been sent sample packs of the relevant BPA publications, 2 companies who had not been sent packs, and 2 individual BPA Members.

However, the Communications Committee had noted with regret that Lesley Gale, Editor of Skydive the Mag, had not notified the BPA of her intent to tender for the new contractual period of 3 years following the end of her current fixed-term contract next year. This meant that the current excellent Magazine would not be in the running for the new contract period. The Committee had, all along, been working on the assumption that Lesley Gale would tender because of the strong track record and popularity of the current BPA Mag.

Lesley Gale had tabled a letter addressed to 'Gentlemen and ladies of the BPA Council, Staff and the Membership' in which she had set out her reasons for not registering an intent to tender. The Committee had considered at length some of the issues that Lesley Gale had identified as a barrier to her registering an intent to tender. The Committee had then asked Lesley Gale to give the matter further consideration, which she had agreed to do, and had asked her to notify the BPA of her decision by no later than Friday 5 December at 1700.

The meeting Chairman read aloud from an e-mail (circulated in advance) from John Smyth, Chairman of Council.

The meeting Chairman said that the Council wanted Lesley Gale to put in a tender. Adrian Bond proposed, and Grant Richards seconded, a motion that the Council should ratify the Communications Committee's negotiation with Lesley Gale. This extended to her the time period until Friday 5 December 2008 to decide whether or not to tender (by notifying the BPA of her intent to tender, or otherwise). If Lesley Gale notified her intent to tender, the existing contract for the Mag would remain in place until the December 2009 issue, with the new 3-year contract period beginning with the February 2010 issue.

Andy Scott made a counter-proposal, seconded by Craig Poxon, that the time period should be extended until Monday 8 December at 1700. The vote was: For - 4, Against - 6.

Not carried

A vote was therefore taken on the original motion, to extend the time period until Friday 5 December at 1700.

Carried unanimously

A number of Members had e-mailed the Council about the tender process. Adrian Bond said that many of these e-mails were based on an inaccurate or incomplete understanding of the position. This had been clearly set out in the minutes of meetings of the Communications

Committee, which were available on the BPA website, throughout the year. He said he would respond in writing to the Members who had written in.

Action: Adrian Bond

The Chairman said that a note in general terms should be posted on the BPA website.

Action: BPA Office

Lesley Gale was then invited to rejoin the meeting. The Chairman set out the Council's decision to her, which was subsequently confirmed by e-mail from the BPA Office. Lesley Gale thanked the Council for its consideration and said she would advise the BPA if she wished to tender by 1700 on Friday 5 December. [Note: Subsequent to the meeting, the BPA received an intent to tender from Lesley Gale by e-mail at 1546 on Friday 5 December.]

The meeting then resumed in open session.

99/08 Reports from Club Representatives

Paul Ledden said he believed the terms of reference for Club Reps would benefit from being updated. He believed that the expectation that Reps would visit each DZ in their area once a year was now out-of-date in today's world of electronic communications. The Chairman invited Paul Ledden to set out his ideas as an updated draft, which Paul Ledden kindly agreed to do, for consideration by Council 2009.

Action: Paul Ledden

100/08 Report on Royal Aero Club

Citations in respect of the Council's twelve nominations for RAeC or FAI awards had been duly submitted by the BPA Office to Diana King, General Secretary of RAeC, before the closing date of 30 November. The Office had found it to be a challenge to obtain basic facts for two of the citations and asked that Council should only agree to nominations where there were already key facts available to work into a citation, otherwise it risked putting undue pressure on the Office to chase these facts, as had been the case for two of the nominations this year.

The Office said that John Smyth had asked that the Council be invited to consider whether it wished to award the Jim Croker Trophy Sword for an Outstanding Contribution to Skydiving. The Council decided to consider this at an in-camera session later in the meeting (minute 104.2).

101/08 European developments

Paul Moore had circulated a paper in advance. The BPA's subscription to the European Parachute Union (EPU) was overdue, as were EPU's subscriptions to FAI and Europe Air Sports (EAS). EAS considered EPU to be a new member, as it had been re-formed earlier this year, and were therefore charging 25% for the first year of EAS membership (2008 - €2308) and 50% in the second year (2009 - €4615). The full rate would be charged thereafter. In response to a question from Weed Stoodley, Paul Moore confirmed that nations would be eligible to vote on EPU only if they paid their subscription, which would spread the contributions and therefore give EPU a broader financial base and pro rata a lower subscription per subscribing nation.

Paul Moore proposed, and Weed Stoodley seconded, a motion that as the BPA were taking the lead in the re-organisation of the EPU, the BPA pay the subscription fee of €2308 to EAS by 15 December 2008.

Carried unanimously

Paul Moore reported that efforts continued to get the EPU re-organised. He had seen the previous EPU statutes, written in French, and had discovered that the EPU had been registered at the address of the French Parachute Federation. Paul Moore recommended, and the Council agreed, that he should seek if possible to change the country of registration of EPU to the UK so that we could take a lead. The Council unanimously supported a request by Paul Moore for the BPA to cover his registration fee and costs to attend the IPC conference in Sweden as an observer on behalf of the BPA in order to chair a EPU meeting there.

Action: Paul Moore

Paul Moore reported that, as far as was known, the EPU had no bank accounts or deposits with any of the European national governing bodies for aviation or parachuting. If our aspiration was for the BPA to take the lead in the EPU, Paul Moore believed that an EPU bank account in Euros should be opened in the UK. Debbie Carter (Treasurer) advised that, in order to open such an account quickly, it would have to be done in the BPA's name although it would be designated internally as the EPU account and kept separate from the rest of the BPA's finances. The Council agreed to such an account being opened.

Action: BPA Office (Jon Gretton)

Lastly, Paul Moore reported that EAS had won a significant victory recently in persuading the European powers that aircraft below 5700 kg should be excluded from the Emissions Trading Scheme. Most sporting aircraft fell within this category and therefore this meant the avoidance of a huge amount of bureaucracy and cost for the skydiving community.

102/08 Meeting with Drop Zone Owners' and Operators

Draft notes had been circulated on the BPA meeting for Drop Zone Owners' and Operators' held at Walcote Village Memorial Hall, Lutterworth, Leicestershire, on Tuesday 11 November 2008. The majority of DZs had been represented. Discussion had covered a wide range of topics including membership recruitment and retention, insurance, environmental management (including carbon offsetting), medical matters and declaration of fitness to parachute, as well as a range of operational and flying issues. The opportunity to meet had been well received by those who had attended, who believed that such a meeting should be held annually. The notes included various items referred to the Development Committee or its Insurance Working Group for consideration. The response of DZOs to piloting the membership recruitment and retention initiative by the Development Committee, which already had the approval of Council (minute 68.2.2), had been in favour of trying it to see the outcome in the hope, rather than any firm expectation, that it would be successful.

Refer to the Development Committee & its Insurance Working Group

103/08 AGM Day: Saturday 10 January 2009

Arrangements for AGM Day were discussed. The following points were recorded.

- The results of the election of Council 2009 would be posted on the BPA website on receipt from ERS on Wednesday 7 January 2009 and announced formally after the AGM, before the inaugural meeting of Council 2009.
- There were more presentations than usual this year. Therefore the Gold, Silver and Bronze medallists in any one event could be called up together, although each team would continue to be photographed individually.
- Use of a podium was suggested, but this would incur additional staging costs and would not therefore be progressed.
- There would not be a live band for the evening entertainment, just the disco.
- The Council confirmed to Lesley Gale that fundraising for the 'Jump for the Cause' charity, to fund research into breast cancer, would be acceptable at the AGM.

104/08 Awards

This session was held in camera with elected Members of Council and staff only.

104.1 The Jim Crocker Trophy for an Outstanding Contribution to Sport Parachuting

Members of Council suggested a number of names of BPA Members whom they believed to be worthy of consideration for this honour. This award recognised a supreme and sustained contribution to the sport over many years. After discussion, the Council settled on the name of the individual to whom it wished to confer the honour. The name would be announced at the AGM, and BPA would consult with RAeC with a view to arranging presentation of the award at the RAeC Awards Ceremony in spring 2008.

Action: Announce at AGM / Liaise with RAeC

104.2 The Taz Causer Skydiver of the Year Trophy 2008

In response to a call for nominations in the Mag for October, six nominees had been put forward. This award was for a significant contribution to skydiving over the past 12 months. The citation accompanying each nomination was considered. A show of hands (including a proxy vote from Alex Wilson) resulted in a shortlist of two nominees, and a further show of hands resulted in the trophy being awarded to Dean 'Smudge' Smith. The Council offered him their warmest congratulations.

Action: Present at AGM

104.3 Instructor of the Year award

John Page said he believed that the BPA Instructor of the Year award, which was one of the few BPA awards that was not named in honour of a high-profile BPA Member, should be named after Tony Butler and John Hitchen, or the other way around. The exact wording to be confirmed by TO and NCSO.

Action: TO/NCSO

105/08 Tributes

Weed Stoodley had circulated in writing a proposal that where a deceased member would normally receive flowers from the BPA at his or her funeral, but had requested a donation to a named good cause in lieu of flowers, the BPA should make a donation of an equivalent amount to the cost of the flowers that would otherwise have been sent.

Tony Butler reported that the BPA's policy had always been not to send donations in lieu of flowers. Paul Ledden proposed, and Paul Moore seconded, a motion to retain this status quo. The vote was For – 2, Against – 8.

Not carried

Weed Stoodley therefore made her proposal as above, which was seconded by Martin Soulsby. The vote was: For – 8.

Carried

The Council left it to staff to ensure that donations were not made under this arrangement to controversial or inappropriate organisations. The new policy would apply from now on, not retrospectively.

106/08 Staffing

106.1 Competitions Committee

Martin Shuttleworth said that it had become too much for any one member of staff to draft the agendas and minutes for the Communications, Competitions and Development Committees as well as the full Council. He asked that Council should approve in principle the offer of training linked with promotion of another member of staff to look after the Competitions Committee, which had a schedule of meetings different from the dates of the other Committees and the Council (that in the same way that STC, which was administered separately in the office, had its own schedule of meetings dates). He had discussed this informally with Tony Butler and Andy Scott, Competitions Chairman. The Council agreed to this and to the Treasurer being involved in setting the salary associated with the enhanced job description.

Action: Treasurer / BPA Office

106.2 Staff Christmas bonus

This item was held in camera, with the staff and others leaving only elected Members of Council. The Council decided to award a Christmas bonus to staff, of the same amount as last year, as a token of the Council's appreciation of the work of the staff during the year. On the meeting resuming in open session, Tony Butler thanked the Council on behalf of the staff.

106.3 BPA employer contributions to staff pensions

Weed Stoodley (Staff Liaison Officer) reported that she had obtained, from the Treasurer and from the staff, information on rates from other comparable employers and there appeared to be no cause for concern that the BPA's arrangements were outside the norm.

106.4 New website

Weed Stoodley reported that, to date, no staffing issues had arisen in connection with the new BPA website.

107/08 Donation of a competitions trophy

John Hitchen reported that Pat Hammond's CF team wished to donate to the BPA a memorial shield trophy in memory of Martin Gardiner, a member of the CF team who had recently died suddenly from natural causes. Pat Hammond had said that the trophy could be used for any competitions discipline, not necessarily CF, although he had noted there might be a trophy missing for CF intermediate rotations.

The Chairman thanked Pat Hammond for this thoughtful gesture, for which it was most grateful, and referred the matter to the Competitions Committee.

Refer to Competitions Committee

108/08 Car mileage rate

Andy Scott noted that the Council, at its meeting on 19 August (minute 68.2.3) had increased the car mileage rates payable on BPA business consequent upon the significant increase in fuel prices during the summer. Now that fuel prices had reduced, he suggested that the rate should be reviewed. Andy Scott suggested, and the Council agreed, that consideration of this item should be deferred until the February meeting to wait to let things settle and see what happened to fuel prices between now and then.

Action: February 2009 meeting

109/08 Public actions of Council Members

Craig Poxon raised an issue about the public action of Council Members at election time. The Chairman said he understood the point, which related to certain comments that had been made in public forums that some might consider unbecoming of a Member of Council.

110/08 End of session

The Chairman of the meeting thanked all Members of Council for their hard work during such a busy year and conveyed the personal thanks of John Smyth, Chairman of Council, to all on Council and its Committees and to the staff. Thanks were also due to all the other Members who had contributed to the work of the Association and the sport in general during the year. The Chairman wished good luck to all who were standing for election to Council 2009, and season's greetings to all. 2008 had been a year of significant achievements in British skydiving and he looked forward to celebrating these and planning for the new year ahead at the AGM on Saturday 10 January 2009.

The inaugural meeting of Council 2009, for those elected, would be held immediately after the AGM and presentation ceremony on Saturday 10 January 2009 at the Hinckley Island Hotel, Hinckley, Leicestershire LE10 3JA.

The meeting closed at 2235.