

British Parachute Association

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The Council

Minutes of the meeting held on
Tuesday 18 August 2009 at 1830
at the BPA Office, Wharf Way, Glen Parva, Leicester

Present:	John Horne	-	Vice Chairman (in the Chair)
	Paul Applegate		
	Adrian Bond		
	Paul Ledden		
	Ian Marshall		
	Paul Moore		
	Grant Richards		
	Steve Saunders		
	Andy Scott	-	Competitions Chairman
	Martin Soulsby	-	Communications Chairman
	Weed Stoodley		
In attendance:	Kieran Brady	-	Chairman, Pilots' Committee
	Tony Butler	-	Technical Officer
	Debbie Carter	-	Treasurer
	Lesley Gale	-	Editor, Skydive the Mag
	Jon Gretton	-	Financial Administrator (to item 66)
	John Hitchen	-	NCSO
	Tony Knight	-	Consultant
	Martin Shuttleworth	-	Secretary-General
Apologies for absence:	Ray Armstrong		
	Craig Poxon	-	Development Chairman
	John Smyth MVO	-	Chairman
	Alex Wilson		

Item Minute

62/09 Minutes

The minutes of the last meeting, held on Tuesday 23 June 2009, had already been ratified electronically by the Council. The ratified minutes had then been published on the BPA website on 10 July. The Chairman would sign the master copy as correct for the official record.

63/09 Matters arising

63.1 Mag Tender Working Party (minute 41.1)

Adrian Bond (Chairman, Mag Tender Working Party) recorded his disappointment that the working party had been stood down by the Communications Committee at its last meeting. He said this had been without consultation with him and fellow working party member Grant Richards, neither of whom had been present. Martin Soulsby (Communications Chairman) apologised and assured them that the Committee was grateful for the work the working party had carried out. The Chairman asked whether the terms of reference of the working party had included the contract stage. Adrian Bond said they had, for an end-to-end project. Grant Richards said he believed that the outcome would have been no different whether the working

party had continued or not. **[Note:** Subsequent to the meeting, it was clarified that formal terms of reference of the ad hoc working party had not been set out but there were written notes, filed at the Office, that Adrian Bond had provided to Craig Poxon who had acted as his locum to chair the meeting of the Communications Committee on 19 August 2008. These were referred to in Communications minute 33/08 as “guidelines together with a suggested timescale”.]

63.2 Royal Aero Club (minute 46)

Andy Scott reported that he and his wife, Claire ‘Sparky’ Scott, had greatly enjoyed a Garden Party at Buckingham Palace earlier this summer. They again thanked the Royal Aero Club, by whose good offices their invitation had been issued.

64/09 Congratulations on Members’ achievements

Andy Scott proposed, and Weed Stoodley seconded, a motion that a Certificate of Merit be awarded to each of the following Members.

64.1 World Games (Olympic test event) Chinese Taipei, 16-26 July 2009.

Freely Team Volare - Adam Mattacola, Alberto Fuertes and Mike Carpenter had taken Bronze in Freely, and Deane ‘Smudge’ Smith had come 8th in the world in Canopy Piloting.

64.2 World Record Head-Down Freely 108 formation over Skydive Chicago, Illinois, USA, on Saturday 1 August 2009

Dan Parker, James Davies, Martin Reynolds, Mark Joyner, Adam Mattacola, Mike Carpenter, Claudio Lettieri and Frazer Smith were the 8 British skydivers who had taken part.

65/09 European regulatory changes

Tony Knight had been engaged by the BPA as a consultant to respond to consultation on European regulations that could be inimical to sport parachuting. He had written a position paper for the Council that had been circulated before the meeting. The title of the paper was ‘A review of the European Aviation Safety Agency regulatory process and its effect on sport parachuting within the UK’.

Tony Knight then answered questions. In the discussion that followed, he, Paul Moore (President, European Parachuting Union, EPU) and Kieran Brady (Chairman, BPA Pilots’ Committee) underlined the need for parachutists within the EU to speak with one voice. That voice was the EPU, to which the UK, Germany, Netherlands, Italy, France and Cyprus were now paid-up members. The EPU bank account, administered by the BPA, currently had a balance of £2381. Other EU nations were being lobbied to join. Paul Moore reported that unless more nations joined EPU, it would be left with a shortfall of income to meet its subscription of about £9000 to Europe Air Sports (EAS). EAS was the only window to access the European Air Safety Agency (EASA), the regulatory body. By a show of hands, the Council indicated that, in a worst-case scenario, it would be prepared to make up a shortfall. However, the Chairman emphasised that, as but one nation, it was not our job to underwrite EPU, notwithstanding that we were its prime mover.

Tony Knight said there continued to be uncertainty – the fog had lifted to reveal the mist. But the BPA team of three continued to take advice from appropriate sources. They were reasonably confident that, from the information currently available to them, their approach was likely to be the most beneficial to support and maintain our sport under the coming European regulatory regime. It was also helpful to us that David Roberts of the British Gliding Association and the Royal Aero Club, had been elected President of EAS.

Tony Knight would liaise with Lesley Gale (Editor) to prepare an update for inclusion in *Skydive the Mag* to keep members informed of the work that the BPA was doing to seek to protect the sport from the potentially damaging effects of European aviation regulations.

Action: Tony Knight

Kieran Brady suggested, and the Council noted, that other possible funding streams should be investigated. These included identifying whether the terms of any requests made to the Royal Aero Club might yield financial help for this work.

Refer to the Chairman as BPA Delegate to RAeC

The Office reported that James McDougall, CCPR's European and International Officer, had been suggested by CCPR as a potentially useful contact.

The Chairman invited Tony Knight to lead a presentation and discussion at the BPA meeting for Drop Zone Owners & Operators to be held at Walcote Memorial Hall, Lutterworth, Leicestershire, on Tuesday 27 October 2009; and Tony Knight accepted.

Action: Put on agenda for DZO meeting on Tuesday 15 October 2009

66/09 Finance

66.1 Draft of the audited accounts for the financial year 1 July 2008 to 30 June 2009 for approval and issue

The draft accounts had been circulated. Debbie Carter (Treasurer) highlighted key points. The outturn was a surplus for the year of £85,965 which reflected a lower spend on competitions than the previous year because of the normal two-year competitions cycle. That this had been achieved in the face of a biting recession, and despite a significant reduction in investment income consequent on record low interest rates, was justification of the Council's tight control of expenditure and prudent investment policy.

Subject to clarification of how to record the magazine element of the membership subscription, Martin Soulsby proposed, and Weed Stoodley seconded, a motion to publish the accounts to the membership as an insert to the October issue of Skydive the Mag.

Carried unanimously

The General Meeting on Tuesday 8 December 2009 at 1830 (the agenda for which would be published in the same issue) would consider the accounts for formal approval and adoption.

Debbie Carter tabled an example of a different format of presentation of the accounts. She explained that the current format had been required to account for the annual exchequer grant from UK Sport. As this funding was no longer available to non-Olympic sports such as ours, the Council was now free to set out the Association's accounts in a format that was most relevant to the BPA and, she hoped, easier for the membership to understand. The Council fully supported the suggested updated format, and sought its adoption for this set of accounts if it would not involve significant additional cost. If it would, Council decided that the new format should be adopted from next year.

Action: Debbie Carter / BPA Office (Jon Gretton)

66.2 Management accounts

Pursuant to minute 55, Debbie Carter (Treasurer) tabled a draft format for management accounts for the benefit of Council Members, including key membership figures, to be presented to each meeting of Council. After discussion, the format was agreed. The Chairman thanked Debbie Carter for her guidance.

Action: BPA Office (Jon Gretton)

66.3 Audit of expenses

Weed Stoodley had carried out an audit of staff expenses claims and reported that her spot checks had demonstrated the system to be fit for purpose and working properly. She had made a few suggestions, including on how to make the paperwork easier to use and audit next time. Debbie Carter (Treasurer) was in the process of carrying out an audit of Council Members' expenses claims and would report back to the next meeting. At that time the Council would consider whether or not it would be appropriate to review expenses policy.

Action: Treasurer / Next meeting

66.4 Policy in investment of BPA reserves

Debbie Carter (Treasurer) reconfirmed that the Association's reserves had been invested after taking independent financial advice. The established policy over many years had always been to use low risk investments that offered capital protection (ie, the BPA was guaranteed to get back at least what it paid in). The new format for management accounts (minute 66.2) would include the dates of maturing investments. The Council endorsed the status quo of its long-established cautious investment policy, which had served the Association so well not least during a period of unprecedented turmoil in the global economy.

Action: BPA Office (Jon Gretton)

67/09 Ratification of minutes of Committees

The minutes of each of the following meetings, except STC, had already been circulated, electronically ratified by the Council, and published on the BPA website.

67.1 Development Committee meeting on Tuesday 23 June 2009

In the absence of Craig Poxon (Development Chairman), the Chairman of Council invited questions. Andy Scott asked about putting to use any surplus back issues of Mags that might be discarded. Lesley Gale (Editor) said she was hoping to offer back issues for sale through the new Mag website (minute 68.2). The Office ordered the number of copies it estimated it needed to send to new members etc, and tried to maintain only a small inventory of back issues. Andy Scott suggested any spares might be used for freshers' fairs rather than be thrown away.

67.2 Communications Committee meeting on Tuesday 23 June 2009

Martin Soulsby (Communications Chairman) said the minutes were self-explanatory. He asked if there were any questions from around the table and there were none.

67.3 Competitions Committee meeting on Tuesday 23 June 2009

Andy Scott (Competitions Chairman) said the minutes were self-explanatory. He asked if there were any questions from around the table and there were none.

67.4 Safety and Training Committee meeting on Thursday 6 August 2009

John Hitchen (STC Chairman) reported on a typographical error in the dates on item (c) on page 6 of the draft. This would be corrected before the minutes were issued. The following points arose in discussion of the minutes:

- Martin Soulsby made brief reference to the 'Council v STC' thread on the Internet newsgroup ukskydiver.co.uk. Council regarded this as a tabloid-style thread header that did not reflect reality. Council and STC were now, as always, working as partners to maintain and improve the UK's enviable record in safety and training in our sport, in which STC was the expert body.
- The item on student tandem harness checks on page 2 of the STC minutes had re-confirmed that STC had identified this as issue for instructors. Weed Stoodley said she would have liked to have read in the STC minutes that CCIs had themselves said they would remind their instructors, rather than them being reminded to do so by the TO/NCSO.
- The Council noted that STC had suspended an advanced packing rating of a member pending convention of a Panel of Inquiry. As this was a safety issue, the respondent's name had been notified to Clubs & Centres on the grounds of duty of care to the membership.

Paul Moore then proposed, and Martin Soulsby seconded, a motion to ratify the minutes of the STC meeting held on Thursday 6 August 2009. This carried unanimously.

Ratified

68/09 Headline issues from Committee meetings today

68.1 Development Committee

In Craig Poxon's (Development Chairman) absence on a BPA AFF Instructors' course, the Vice Chairman of Council, who had chaired this afternoon's meeting of the Development Committee, reported as follows. He said that the meeting had not been quorate and had therefore made no formal decisions.

- Craig Poxon had arranged for the electronic questionnaire to be circulated to lapsed members and had achieved an excellent response of over 500 replies. He was analysing these and would report back to the next meeting.
- A short article on the Drop Zone Defence Fund (DZDF) would appear in the February issue of *Skydive the Mag* to coincide with membership renewal, at which members were invited to make an optional donation to DZDF.

The Chairman said that there was also the option for members to make a discretionary donation to the British Team Fund. Andy Scott (Competitions Chairman) said he would be delighted to write a short article on the British Team Fund for the same issue.

Action: Andy Scott

- Ray Armstrong (BPA Liaison Officer with CCPR) and BPA staff had had a meeting at the BPA Office on 25 June with James Stibbs, Head of Communications at CCPR. This had established a constructive dialogue in which CCPR had advised of its services and BPA had suggested a number of possible future developments it would like to see in CCPR.
- Adrian Bond reported that BingoLotto, to which the BPA was fully signed-up through CCPR to benefit from distributions to sport, was due to re-launch in September 2009. It was promised to be bigger and better than before, with tickets available through Tesco for the first time.
- Weed Stoodley and Martin Shuttleworth were progressing their work on updating the BPA Memorandum & Articles of Association.

Debbie Carter (Treasurer) reported on an issue that the legal advisers had highlighted. The Companies Act 2006 provided for small company audit exemptions. Debbie Carter said the BPA had always had an external financial audit, which cost about £3K per annum. She believed that, in the interests of transparency, this arrangement should continue. The only difference going forward was that it was no longer a statutory requirement. The Council decided to reflect this change in the law by asking the legal advisers if it was possible to stay silent on audit requirements in the draft updated Articles, which would then default to the provisions of Company Law, so leaving it to the discretion of Council to continue with an annual independent financial audit, which Council today confirmed remained its policy. The updated Articles would of course be subject to adoption by the membership in General Meeting.

Action: Weed Stoodley / BPA Office

- A university skydiving club had drafted what appeared to John Horne (BPA liaison officer with the home countries sports councils) and the BPA secretariat to be an excellent application for funding under Sport England's small grants programme. They did not know the outcome.

Andy Scott reported that the skydiving club and at least one other university was planning to apply next year, as other sports clubs at that university had exhausted the available funding this year.

In answer to a question from Weed Stoodley, the Chairman and Martin Shuttleworth said that the funding arrangements varied between the different home countries sports councils. Sport England currently had a user-friendly online application process. The available funding was open to application by not-for-profit community sports clubs, and subject to an annual cap. BPA, as a not-for-profit sports national governing body could apply, but would then be itself subject to the annual cap, which was £10K pa for the small grants programme. Also, certain funding streams might put the BPA in moral difficulty - for example, one fund was for the benefit of sportspeople under 25 years of age, which might not be a significant issue for a university skydiving club where perhaps a majority of its members might fall within that demographic, but a possible problem for the wider BPA in terms of age discrimination. The landscape of public funding of non-Olympic sports in the UK today comprised a number of smaller pots for community sport if specific terms and conditions were met, rather than a larger amount available to the national governing body to distribute within its sport.

- Following the stage 1 debrief with the BPA's website consultants on stage 1 on 27 July, development work on stage 2, online renewals, would begin with a briefing to the consultants from BPA staff on 21 September. The Office wished to record its thanks to Craig Poxon who had made an insightful contribution to the debrief meeting.

- A canopy handling video supported by the Airkix Fund was now at editing stage. The Committee had agreed to release £400 from BPA funds to pay for the jumps. This would be made good from the Airkix Fund with the Airkix wind tunnel's agreement once the video was satisfactorily completed. The Committee hoped that the video could be showcased at the AGM at the Blackpool Hilton on Saturday 16 January 2010.
- The Committee was keeping up-to-date with the phasing-in of the provisions of the Safeguarding of Vulnerable Groups Act 1986 and in particular the Independent Safeguarding Authority's vetting and barring scheme (VBS). It was currently waiting for the government to publish key guidance on interpretation of the new provisions in sport.

68.2 Communications Committee

Martin Soulsby (Communications Chairman) reported on today's meeting of the Communications Committee as follows.

- The Committee had agreed with Lesley Gale (Editor) the new Editorial Services contract for the *Skydive the Mag* for the period 1 January 2010 to 31 December 2012, and we were now just waiting for legal advice to confirm the wording, with the expectation that the contract would be signed in October.
- Agreement had been reached with the BPA's web consultants for the new Mag website to be sourced elsewhere in view of its specialist nature suggesting that taking it to the online division of a magazine publishing house might be the most effective solution. *Skydive the Mag* had a long-established relationship with Warners Publishers through Warners advertising agency and printing and distribution subsidiaries. She had therefore suggested that Warners Online should make a pitch for the planned new website for *Skydive the Mag*, in accordance with her successful tender for the Mag contract (minute 28). Warners' presentation had been made to the Committee today. The Committee expected to reach a decision sourcing the new Mag website at its next meeting on 13 October.
- The Committee was exploring the possibility of an electronic version of the Starter Mag that could be personalised to individual Drop Zones. The intention was to discuss this with Drop Zone Operators (DZOs) at the BPA meeting for DZOs to be held on Tuesday 27 October.
- The rules for the BPA film Festival had been published on the BPA website. The five best films would be shown at the AGM.
- Preparations were on track for the AGM at the Blackpool Hilton on Saturday 16 January 2010.
- Following a facilities visit by the Communications Chairman and Martin Shuttleworth this morning, Barcelo's Daventry Hotel had been shortlisted by the Committee as a venue for the 2011 AGM. This would see a return to Central England based on Craig Poxon's helpful computer analysis of minimum average travel distance for members across the UK.

Weed Stoodley recorded thanks to Rich Rust, one of the BPA Media Co-ordinators, for valuable work he had done in publicising the sport this summer.

68.3 Competitions Committee

Andy Scott (Competitions Chairman) reported that:

- The Committee had given a vote of thanks to a judge who had continued with her judging commitments at the Nationals despite significant family issues.
- The trophies database was nearing completion.
- The Committee had awarded Karla Cole a Certificate of Merit in recognition of her efforts in putting in place an online judging system for IPC.

- Changes had been noted to the administration of anti-doping in sport nationally. The BPA's Anti-Doping Policy remained current.
- The Committee thanked the host centres for the Nationals, UKSL and Grand Prix meets to date. The bid form for 2010 would be issued shortly.
- The style event had not been completed at the Classics Nationals and the Committee had considered bids from two DZ's to host the remainder in late September.
- A jumper at the CP Nationals had been disqualified for dangerous practice. The Discipline Rep, who was also an advanced instructor, would refer the matter to STC.
- The CCI at the Speed Skydiving Nationals had overruled the eligibility criteria in the rules in a case of a prospective competitor who had been out of the sport for some time. Next year's rules would be reviewed in the light of this.
- The highest speed recorded at the International Speed Skydiving Association's World Cup meet at Hinton had been 306mph.
- The British Delegation in FS & Artistics was in place for the World Cup at Prostejov, Czech Republic: 30 Aug - 6 Sept 2009.
- The Chairman of Council would be present at the European Skydiving League (ESL) Finals, which we in the UK were hosting this year, at Target Skysports, Hibaldstow, from 11-13 September 2009.
- The Committee had several members who were co-opted to fulfil various specific roles. The Committee would make the nomination and co-option process clearer in future so that any member who wished to offer themselves for consideration by the Committee for possible co-option had the opportunity to do so.
- The Committee had reviewed its expenditure against budget for the financial year ended 30 June. Expenditure, at £42K, had been approximately only two-thirds of budget, returning one third, around £22K, to the general BPA pot. The Committee had saved over £2K in travel costs by holding its meetings on the same day as the full Council.

69/09 Report on Royal Aero Club

There was no report.

70/09 Application for re-Affiliation: Skydive St Andrews

This application, on Form 135, had been circulated in advance. Jim White was no longer a Director, but remained as CCI. The technical staff had no comments. Grant Richards therefore proposed, and Andy Scott seconded, a motion that Council should approve the application

Carried unanimously

71/09 Co-options to Council

Minute 1.10 of the inaugural meeting of Council 2009 held on Saturday 10 January, concerning co-option to the BPA Council of APA and RAFSPA reads: *Paul Moore asked why RAPA was not also listed [for co-option] and Tony Butler said he believed the reason was lost in history. Paul Moore asked that the item be deferred until the first ordinary meeting in order that he could check the position with his colleagues and come back with an up-to-date proposal that reflected the current structure of sport parachute clubs/organisations within the military.*

Paul Moore apologised for the delay in reporting back on this. He said he had now checked, and had found no reason why RAPA should not also be co-opted. Paul Moore therefore proposed, and Martin Soulsby seconded, a motion that RAPA should be co-opted to the BPA Council (so as to be along with the already- co-opted organisations APA, RAFSPA and BCPA).

Carried unanimously

72/09 Independent election administration

Andy Scott proposed, and Ian Marshall seconded, a motion that, should there be more nominees than the available 15 elected seats on Council 2009, the election should be administered by an independent, outside organisation competent to do so.

Carried unanimously

The Office was obtaining quotations.

Action: BPA Office

73/09 Complaint about a Member

The Council held this item in-camera, with only elected members and staff present.

Before the meeting, the Office had circulated to elected Council Members, written complaints received about a Member. The circulated version had been anonymised. The Council decided that there was a prima facie case to invoke the BPA disciplinary procedure. The Office would advise the complainants of this, and seek their permission to start due process by informing the respondent of the complaints.

Action: BPA Office

74/09 Date of next meeting

Tuesday 13 October 2009 at 1830 at the BPA Office, Glen Parva, Leicester.

The meeting closed at 2310.