

British Parachute Association

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The Council

Minutes of the meeting held on

Tuesday 20 April 2010 at 1847

at the BPA Office, 5 Wharf way, Glen Parva, Leicester LE2 9TF

Present:	Craig Poxon	-	Development Chair, in the Chair
	Paul Applegate		
	Christopher Beattie		
	Adrian Bond		
	Kieran Brady		
	Richard Head		
	Ian Marshall		
	Paul Moore		
	Steve Saunders	-	Competitions Chair
	Andy Scott		
	Martin Soulsby	-	Communications Chair
	Weed Stoodley		
Apologies for absence:	Lesley Gale	-	Editor, Skydive the Mag
	John Hitchen	-	NCSO
	John Horne	-	Vice Chairman
	Paul Ledden		
	John Smyth MVO	-	Chairman
In attendance:	Tony Butler	-	Technical Officer
	Debbie Carter	-	Treasurer
	Jon Gretton	-	Financial Administrator (to item 27)
	Martin Shuttleworth	-	Secretary-General
Observers:	Jo Bell	-	from item 28
	John Page	-	items 24.2 to 27.1.4

Item Minute

20/10 Chair

In the absence of both John Smyth, Chairman (who had been delayed overseas because of the closure of UK airspace), and John Horne, Vice Chairman, Craig Poxon (Development Chair) took the Chair for this meeting. References in the rest of these minutes to the Chairman of this meeting are to him.

The Chairman apologised for the late start due to the Competitions Committee over-running.

21/10 Renewal

The Chairman thanked all Members of Council for having promptly renewed their BPA membership.

22/10 Minutes

The minutes of the last meeting, held on Tuesday 23 February 2010, had already been ratified electronically by the Council. The ratified minutes had then been published on the BPA website on 15 March. The Chairman signed the master copy as correct for the official record.

Ratified electronically

23/10 Matters arising

23.1 Minute 94.3 of the meeting on Tuesday 8 December 2009 (minute 8.2)

The wording had been agreed by the Council by e-mail and the minutes had been ratified and published on 9 March.

23.2 Re-Affiliation of NLPC/NLSC (minute 16.2)

North London Parachute Centre (NLPC) had retained that name but was still planning to change it to North London Skydiving Centre (NLSC). This made no difference to their Affiliation to the BPA.

23.3 Condition of the road surface in Wharf Way (minute 17)

The potholes on Wharf Way, a privately owned road that provides the only access to the BPA Office, had been filled in at no cost to the BPA during late February (the BPA's freehold on its premises specified it was responsible for 6% of the cost of road upkeep). However, so poor was the quality of the repairs that the potholes had begun to re-appear a few weeks later. The Council asked the Office to express to the road owners its concern over the continuing poor condition of the road.

Action: BPA Office

24/10 Management accounts and membership statistics

24.1 Membership

The Council was pleased to note the increase in membership confirmed by the statistics for the full membership year ended on 31 March 2010, with year-on-year variance, which were as follows.

	2009/10	2008/9	Variance
Full Members	5,436	5,190	+5%
Temporary Members*	763	549	+39%
Student Provisional Members	43,416	36,017	+21%

- excludes Temporary Membership for up to 2000 Joint Services Activity Training (JSAT) participants each year

24.2 Income & expenditure

The Council had before it management accounts and membership statistics to 31 March 2010, being the end of the membership year and month 9 of the financial year. The Council asked that these should be issued in advance, to allow Council Members to consider the figures before the meeting.

Action: BPA Office (Jon Gretton)

Debbie Carter (Treasurer) reported that the BPA's income had shown a year-on-year increase of £8K and expenditure a year-on-year increase of £50K.

The Treasurer explained that BPA's pattern of expenditure typically showed variations of this nature because of the two-year cycle of international competitions. The World Parachuting Championships (WPC) were to be held this summer, in the BPA financial year 2010/11. Therefore, teams eligible for BPA funding towards additional training to compete in WPC were being funded during the current financial year, hence the significant year-on-year increase in expenditure.

The Chairman called attention to the year-on-year percentage variances. The Treasurer suggested, and the Council agreed, that a further column should be added in which to set out the reasons for the most significant variances.

A year-on-year increase of about 15% was noted in the subscription payable by the BPA to the Royal Aero Club. The Treasurer reported that we received the RAeC's accounts from which it was clear that the RAeC itself had to pay a significant sum to FAI, the World Air Sports Federation, and that this payment was in Euros. The exchange rate for sterling was unfavourable. Also, the subscription the BPA paid the RAeC was pro rata to the number of BPA members, which had increased. And the RAeC, similarly to the BPA, had costs associated with fighting the corner of British airports in the new 'single European skies'.

The cost of 'Development' was shown in the management accounts as a year-on-year increase of 110%. On enquiry, this was attributable to the cost of constructing the new Mag website. The Council asked that the report should be clear on what this heading (and any others that might be ambiguous) actually covered.

24.3 Investments

The Treasurer briefed the Council on an investment options report she had received from a firm of Independent Financial Advisers (IFA), and which she had copied to Martin Soulsby. Among a number of alternatives it included only two, very similar, options that met the BPA's established low risk profile. The Treasurer suggested, and the Council agreed, that she should seek further low risk options, that guaranteed return of capital invested, through another IFA on a no-fee basis.

Action: Treasurer

25/10 European airports legislation

Paul Moore reported that the AGM of Europe Airsports that had been due to take place last weekend had had to be postponed because of the closure of some European airspace consequent on ash from the Icelandic volcano.

There was excellent news to report - the French had written a paper for Europe Airsports that was fully in line with the position the BPA had set out in an earlier paper. Paul Moore said we should congratulate ourselves on having inspired the paper from colleagues in France, and Kieran Brady gave special thanks to Gill Winter of IPC. We looked forward to working with French and other European colleagues in together securing the future of our sport in the skies of Europe.

26/10 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.

26.1 Communications Committee meeting on Tuesday 23 February 2010

There were no questions.

26.2 Development Committee meeting on Tuesday 23 February 2010

There were no questions.

26.3 Competitions Committee meeting on Tuesday 23 February 2010

There were no questions.

26.4 Safety and Training Committee meeting on Thursday 8 April 2010

In the absence of John Hitchen (STC Chair), who had been detained overseas by the current closure of UK airspace, Tony Butler (Technical Officer) offered to answer any questions on the draft STC minutes (circulated).

Andy Scott asked about the pilot scheme for Tandem Assist Free Fall (TAFF) that STC had accepted. Tony Butler said this was seen as just one method of entry, with no wider implications. Andy Scott then asked about any possible impact on instructor progression within the BPA system of the work being undertaken by the working party STC had established to consider the relationship of foreign ratings to the BPA system. Tony Butler said the working party would not be considering advanced ratings, and therefore their work was unlikely to have any impact on the instructor progression system.

In response to a question from the Chairman, Tony Butler confirmed that the BPA checked that CCIs had renewed their membership at the start of each membership year. He also clarified that there was no obligation on DZ Owners to belong to the BPA, although most were active in parachuting operations and therefore belonged to the BPA.

Paul Applegate then proposed, and Paul Moore seconded, a motion to ratify the minutes of the STC meeting held on Thursday 8 April 2010. This carried unanimously.

Ratified

27/10 Headline issues from Committee meetings today

27.1 Communications Committee

27.1.1 Editorship and production management of Skydive the Mag, etc

27.1.1.1 Resignation of Lesley Gale

A resignation letter dated 29 March from Lesley Gale, Editor of the Mag, had been circulated to the Council. Martin Soulsby (Communications Chair) reported that the Communications Committee had received Lesley Gale's resignation with great regret. He said that he and other Council Members had tried to persuade her to reconsider, but that she had decided that now, after 15 years as Editor, it was time for a change.

The Council expressed their gratitude to Lesley Gale for her sterling contribution to the Mag. The Mag had grown and developed hugely under Lesley Gale's Editorship, which had been marked by her great passion and enthusiasm. It was testament to Lesley Gale that the Mag was now widely regarded as the best skydiving magazine in the world.

Kieran Brady asked about the background to Lesley Gale's resignation. Martin Soulsby said it was entirely Lesley Gale's choice. He said that Lesley Gale had won the contract to produce the Magazine for the three-year period 2010-12, and had decided to work with contract publisher Archant Dialogue who had been the other shortlisted bidder. Lesley Gale had found Archant Dialogue to be positive and productive, and - should the BPA so decide - able to provide an appropriate home for the Mag for the remainder of the contract period. He added that Archant Dialogue had themselves been disappointed by Lesley Gale's decision to stand down, as they had looked forward to working with her.

The Council would have time to consider how to honour Lesley Gale's 15 years of service. Martin Soulsby said she would edit the June and August issues, and had asked if she could leave after that, rather than produce 3 issues during her notice period as per the contract. Martin Soulsby had said, and the Council agreed, that this would depend on arrangements for her successor as Editor being able to be in post in time, see below.

27.1.1.2 Arrangements for remainder of contract period to December 2012

Martin Soulsby said that the Communications Committee had taken the view that there was no reason to repeat the tender process. Therefore, it recommended to Council that Archant Dialogue Ltd should be contracted to produce Skydive the Mag, and other BPA publications, on behalf of the BPA (the BPA would remain as publisher).

In discussions earlier today with representatives of Archant Dialogue, who had attended part of the Communications Committee meeting, an outline contract had been negotiated by Adrian Bond at a favourable rate to the BPA which included Archant printing and distributing the Mag, which were areas beyond Lesley Gale's current arrangements with them. Archant Dialogue would themselves contract a skydiving editor, subject to the BPA's agreement to the individual concerned. The plan was to advertise the position in the June issue, and ideally for the new appointee to be engaged in time to be involved with the August issue.

After discussion, Martin Soulsby proposed, and Kieran Brady seconded, a motion that the BPA Magazine contract from which Lesley Gale had given notice of resignation should be re-negotiated with contract publisher Archant Dialogue Ltd.

Carried unanimously

27.1.2 New look Mag and new Mag website

Martin Soulsby reported that the new look Mag for April, and the concurrent launch of the new Mag website, had been generally very well received. There had been teething problems on a Club News item, and another Club had issues about the Club Zone on the new Mag website. Martin Soulsby requested that anybody unhappy with articles or club news to please contact the Communications Committee so they could resolve any issues. He also said he would write to Club Mag reps to encourage them to upload photographs and news items onto the new Mag website.

27.1.3 Social networking on the web

Martin Soulsby reported that the BPA and Skydive the Mag were now on Facebook and Twitter. The BPA page already had over 1,300 fans. He and Craig Poxon had provided most of the content to the BPA Facebook page to date. They now wished to encourage other Council Members and the Office to do so.

27.1.4 BPA Membership survey 2010

Adrian Bond had circulated to Council a link to the results of the online BPA Membership Survey 2010. The number of members responding to this survey had been 780, more than double the 372 who had responded to the previous survey in 2008.

The Chairman invited observer John Page to press the button to start a computer program to select at random one member who had left their details, after completing the survey, for the prize draw for an Olympus digital camera kindly supplied by Archant Dialogue. The winner had not entered their name but a telephone number, which the Office would follow up. A reserve winner was also drawn. **[Note:** The telephone number was that of BPA Member Ben Lawford from Surrey, who has won the digital camera.]

Action: BPA Office

27.1.5 Web streaming of meeting

Martin Soulsby reported that, thanks to use of Craig Poxon's equipment and expertise, as a trial today's meeting of the Communications Committee had been streamed live over the Internet, and was also available for members to watch on demand. For legal reasons, members had had to register to receive a password to watch the meeting. Over 30 members had registered, of whom about 14 were online for the live streaming. When the meeting went in camera, the sound was muted and a notice to this effect displayed on screen. The trial would continue at the next meeting of the Communications Committee. **[Note:** Apologies that on today's trial, due to an error, the meeting was streamed live but not recorded for later viewing on demand.]

27.1.6 AGM Saturday 22 January 2011

Adrian Bond reported that the benefit of nearby alternative accommodation and food, which had been so well appreciated by members at the Blackpool AGM in January 2010, was not available in Daventry. Therefore, Daventry was not in this important respect a suitable location for 2011. After consultation with Istead Events (part of the business presentations company the BPA had been using for the AGM for many years), the Communications Committee recommended to Council that the AGM on Saturday 22 January 2011 should now be held at the Hilton Coventry. The Council agreed. The Council also agreed that a nominal charge should be made to exhibitors, because Istead would manage the exhibition, for which they would charge the BPA. Management was necessary because the configuration of the exhibition area meant that each exhibitor would need to book a pre-allocated space - it was not simply one big empty room where each exhibitor could set up where they liked, as had been the case at previous AGMs.

Hilton Coventry agreed for AGM 2011

27.1.7 AGM 2012

Adrian Bond reported that Ray Armstrong's contact at the De Vere Hotels Group had been excellent. Adrian Bond had been able to negotiate a deal for the 2012 AGM at De Vere Whites at the Reebok Stadium at Horwich, home of Bolton Wanderers, at a price match for the Blackpool Hilton in 2010. This included the same prices as at Blackpool for a limited range of fixed-price drinks. Andy Scott had said that availability would depend on the football fixtures, which were not likely to be known until summer 2011. The Council agreed in principle to the venue. Adrian Bond said he would arrange a facilities visit with Martin Shuttleworth.

Action: Adrian Bond

27.2 Development Committee

The Chairman, in his capacity as Development Chair, reported that Lee Harrison, a former Red Devil now working as an independent insurance adviser, had introduced Paul Nicholson of underwriters TLC to the meeting. He in turn had advised on personal accident insurance for competitors abroad. He had suggested the premium would benefit by skydiving being pooled with other sports, as it was a policy that covered competitors in a basket of sports. Andy Scott had agreed to provide further information for an indicative quote that he would pass to the Competitions Committee for information.

John Horne had circulated an update on the Independent safeguarding Authority's Vetting and Barring Scheme (VBS). It was now almost certain that skydiving would not be classed as a 'regulated activity' which involved additional compliance measures. In skydiving courses open to the general public, occasional contact with people from vulnerable groups was likely to be classed as 'incidental'. The Development Committee planned to put out this update to Clubs as a consultation, also seeking feedback from them. However it was important for the BPA not to see anything as absolute until the government had published the long-awaited sector specific guidance for sport. The Council thanked John Horne for his paper and for his work in investigating the new safeguarding provisions.

27.3 Competitions Committee

Steve Saunders (Competitions Chair) reported that:

- Paul Moore had resigned as CP Rep and from the Committee.

The Chairman said Paul Ledden had asked why Paul Moore had resigned. Paul Moore said he had gone to the beginning of today's Competitions meeting to explain his reasons. He said that as a volunteer, he had been disappointed by the marked lack of appreciation by certain competitors of the time and effort involved in being a discipline rep. Some had sought to blame him for logistical issues that had not been of his making and, quite to the contrary, he had been working hard to seek to resolve. Disappointingly, these efforts had not been well received by some of the CP fraternity, therefore it was time for someone else to take the helm. Steve Saunders said that the Committee had expressed their grateful thanks to Paul Moore for his contribution to its work, and had been sorry to see him stand down.

- Two new trophies had been donated. They were swords, and this raised issues about safety. The Council advised that the sword trophies should be boxed or affixed to a display mounting.
- The Committee had decided to purchase some equipment for Accuracy competitions, together with a contract for servicing it.
- The role description of the Judges' Co-ordinator had been updated, and a Deputy Judges' Co-ordinator had been appointed. The deputy had not been co-opted to the Committee but would normally be expected to attend meetings in the event that the Judges' Co-ordinator was unable to do so.
- John Smyth, BPA Chairman, had unfortunately not been available to accept the offer to be Head of Delegation for this year's WPC 2010 in FS & Artistics in Russia. Weed Stoodley would be Delegation Manager. Andy Scott made a suggestion for Head of Delegation for the Committee to follow up.
- Kate Charters would be Head of Delegation for the Classics WPC 2010 in Montenegro.
- A Head of Delegation for the CP WPC 2010 was still being sought.

28/10 Action Plan 2010-11

The Action Plan now covered Communications, Competitions and Development. The Council had decided last (minute 45/09 of the meeting on 23 June 2009) year that Safety & Training and Administration projects would be considered for funding on an individual basis as they arose.

28.1 Communications

Martin Soulsby (Communications Chair) recommended to Council the following targets (paper tabled).

- 1 Develop a communications plan
 - 1.1 Communicate regularly with members by e-mail
 - 1.2 Run more regular shorter membership surveys each focusing on a specific theme
 - 1.3 Publish campaign posters to send to DZs on (i) BPA information; (ii) safety.
- 2 Consult stakeholders on developing a marketing and retention strategy for the sport.

- 3 Publish a BPA Skydiving calendar 2011.
- 4 Re-apply for a Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) grant to create an historical image archive of parachuting in the UK.

In discussion, Andy Scott said he had suggested that the BPA could publicise charity jumping by links on the BPA website. Martin Soulsby said this idea had been noted, and would be considered in consultation with stakeholders on developing a marketing and retention strategy for the sport (target 2). Kieran Brady said he believed it was Clubs & Centres' job to attract first-time jumpers, not the BPA's - healthy competition between Drop Zones was how the market for first-time jumpers worked. Martin Soulsby said these inputs reflected the kind of discussion this target was intended to stimulate.

Ian Marshall asked about arrangements for scanning an archive of photographic prints of skydiving that the BPA had been offered. Martin Soulsby said that this was one of several inputs that had given rise to the idea of creating a visual archive of sport parachuting in the UK (target 4). It would be costly to do justice to such a project, hence the need to apply for an external grant. In the case of the particular archive material to which Ian Marshall was referring, Martin Soulsby said that it had not been possible to meet the conditions the photographer had specified, which involved the BPA sending someone to the continent to do the scanning.

Debbie Carter noted that there were enormous potential problems with archiving only digital records. The players needed to retrieve digital images might no longer be widely available as technology moved on in the future. She observed that this was why national archives continued to preserve documents and images in their original form, in addition to making digital copies.

28.2 Development

The Chairman, in his capacity as Development Chair, recommended to Council the following targets (paper tabled).

- 1 Commission a new BPA website and database.
- 2 Develop a resource package for safety events at DZs.
- 3 Research provision and adequacy of information / courses for first-aiders at Drop Zones.
- 4 Update the BPA's governing instrument, its Articles of Association to reflect the BPA in the 21st century. Present this to the membership for consideration for approval at the AGM 2011.

28.3 Competitions

Weed Stoodley, on behalf of the Competitions Committee, recommended to Council the following targets.

- 1 Organise a programme of skills coaching roadshows for juniors and intermediates.
- 2 Review BPA competitions equipment.
- 3 Maintain the judging pool, including engaging new trainee judges as appropriate.
- 4 Provide a national team uniform.
- 5 As the plan covers an off year, to fund targeted coaching (details yet to be decided).

Weed Stoodley reported that some of the current year's (2009-10) unspent Action Plan budget would be carried forward to 2010-11. She also said that as this was an on off year, the Committee would also set aside a lump sum to fund teams meeting the criteria for funding for WPC 2012.

Andy Scott asked about the shortage of Artistics judges and the cost of bringing in overseas judges for the Nationals. Weed Stoodley said she did not believe that using overseas judges

necessarily inflated costs significantly. The cost had been inflated last year because of particular issues of communications and planning.

28.4 Budget

Weed Stoodley reported there was a budget of approximately £100K. After discussion, Kieran Brady proposed, and Andy Scott seconded, a motion to approve the Committee Action Plans 2010-11 in 28.1 to 28.3 above, with the following budget allocations, in £:

Competitions	55K	Development	5K
Communications	5K	Investments	25K
Contingency	10K, if not spent to go to investments		

The division of spend by target under each budget head would be decided by the relevant committee.

Carried unanimously

29/10 Report on the Royal Aero Club

The Chairman reminded the Council that the RAeC Awards Ceremony would be held on Tuesday evening, 27 April, at the RAF Museum in Hendon.

Jim Crocker had advised that the RAeC Trust had received 7 applications from BPA Members for bursaries, all of which had been successful. There had been fewer applications by BPA Members than the year before, when there had been 13.

The above-inflation increase in the BPA's annual subscription to RAeC had already been discussed (see minute 24.2).

30/10 Non FS1 jumpers jumping with FS1 jumpers

Martin Soulsby raised this item, following discussions on UKS and elsewhere. Andy Scott said that the issues that had been raised had been based on a misunderstanding of the Operations Manual. No changes had been made to the Operations Manual in years on this - it was not a new rule. He said that one of the information posters he envisaged in Communications Action Plan target 1.3 (minute 28.1) would cover the grading system.

31/10 Policy on cancellation of meetings

Following a flurry of e-mails consequent upon national restrictions on flying because of the volcanic ash cloud, the Council discussed a range of views, and confirmed its policy was to postpone meetings only if they were unlikely to be quorate.

32/10 Staff

The Council noted a complaint (previously circulated) from a member of staff who said they had been verbally abused by a member over the telephone. The Council deplored this and Tony Butler would write to the member concerned.

33/10 Chair

Adrian Bond expressed the Council's thanks to Craig Poxon for chairing this meeting.

34/10 Dates of next meetings

Tuesdays 22 June, 17 August, 12 October and 7 December (after the General Meeting) at 1830 at the BPA Office, 5 Wharf Way, Glen Parva, Leicester LE2 9TF.

The meeting closed at 2125.

Ratified by the Council and published on 4 May 2010.