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Development Committee

Minutes of the meeting held on

Tuesday 7 December 2004 at 1630

at the BPA Offices, 5 Wharf Way, Glen Parva, Leicester

Present:	Kieran Brady Chris Allen Calvin Blacker David Hickling Eddie Jones Elizabeth Stoodley	Development Chairman BPA Chairman (from mid-item 45) Media Co-ordinator
In attendance:	Paul Applegate Lesley Gale Jon Gretton John Hitchen Martin Shuttleworth Simon Ward	Editor, <i>Skydive Magazine</i> Financial Administrator NCSO Secretary-General SkyVenture
Apologies for absence:	Tony Butler Debbie Carter Tony Goodman Ian Midgley	Technical Officer Treasurer

Item Minute

42/04 Minutes

Eddie Jones proposed, and Elizabeth Stoodley seconded, a motion that the minutes of the meeting of the Development Committee held on Tuesday 19 October 2004 be approved as a correct record.

Approved

43/04 Matters arising

43.1 Host an open forum meeting for Drop Zone Operators (minute 36.2)

This was planned to be held on a day (to be arranged) during the first few months of 2005.

Action: Next meeting

43.2 Insurance link from the BPA website (minute 47)

Endsleigh Insurance Services Ltd had now provided documentation for a link from the insurance page on the BPA website to their website, which would yield a 10% commission for the BPA on travel insurance policies sold by Endsleigh to customers who had come to them via the BPA hyperlink. The documentation provided by Endsleigh comprised web and licence agreements and was in fact a detailed contract. Endsleigh had confirmed that the BPA would not come under any additional Financial Services Authority (FSA) regulation by signing this contract, because it was Endsleigh rather than the BPA that was selling the insurance. However, the Committee believed that, with new regulations on insurance sales, etc, to take effect in January 2005, it would be prudent to let the new regulatory regime bed down before considering a contract of this nature.

Action: Defer

43.3 Media coverage (minute 36.4)

The Chairman reported that Elizabeth Stoodley was planning to put forward a proposal for the Development Action Plan 2005/6 on how to further increase positive media coverage of skydiving.

Action: Next meeting

43.4 BPA Shop (minute 40)

The Chairman reported that he had spoken to Tony Knight, who had confirmed that he had sold his shares in the company that ran the BPA Shop under franchise from the BPA. He said that the new directors had signified that they had no intention to change the Shop, except by way of gradual improvement. They had assured Tony Knight that there would be no dramatic or fundamental change in the way the Shop was run.

44/04 Reports on areas of responsibility

44.1 Insurance

David Hickling reported that it was now apparent that the BPA third party insurance did not in fact come under the new regulatory regime of the Financial Services Authority because the BPA was not 'carrying on insurance by way of business'.

With regard to third party insurance of experienced German jumpers at RAPA Bad Lippspringe, he said that the German insurance policy held by such jumpers had been found to be not as inclusive as the BPA policy. This meant that the BPA could end up picking up the tab in the event that a claim could not be settled by the German policy. He therefore believed that, pending a decision at tonight's meeting of the full Council, the BPA's requirement that all jumpers at BPA Affiliated Centres had to be current BPA Members (and therefore covered by BPA third party insurance) should apply at RAPA, as at every other Affiliated Centre.

The Chairman then thanked David Hickling, who was retiring from the Council and therefore from this Committee, for his kind offer to attend future meetings on insurance so that the BPA could continue to benefit from his knowledge of this area.

44.2 Media liaison

Elizabeth Stoodley reported that she had received no new news items from the Membership since the last meeting. She was however aware of a news story that POPS were promoting, about a 98-year-old who had parachuted into France.

44.3 Other areas of responsibility

There were no reports on other areas of responsibility.

45/04 SkyVenture Wind Tunnel

The Chairman introduced Simon Ward of the SkyVenture Wind Tunnel, who had asked to attend to update the BPA on progress of the project. He gave a short presentation illustrated by video. He said that all the money had now been raised (the investment opportunity was to close on 31 December 2004) and the tunnel had been ordered, for delivery to its location at Xscape, a ski centre, in Milton Keynes in the first quarter of 2005. Construction work was due to start on site in February 2005. The tunnel was to be aimed both at skydivers and people outside skydiving - hence its location at a ski centre. Simon Ward said the wind tunnel was forecast to have 25,000 users during its first year and to make a profit of £1.6 to £1.7m during that time.

Simon Ward said he was keen for the wind tunnel to be integrated with skydiving in the UK. He believed that use of the tunnel would help to increase the number of jumps at DZs in the UK as a 'feeder and enabler' for skydiving. He believed that the tunnel could attract 20%+ of UK skydivers in any year - more than any single DZ. It could help with training for competitions without the need to go abroad. For novices, it offered 'freefall without the fear'.

Simon Ward concluded his presentation by putting three questions to the Committee:

- 1 Can the Development Committee help SkyVenture to turn as many as possible of the estimated 25,000 wind tunnel users into skydivers? The time to convert them was straight after they came out of the tunnel.
- 2 Can the Development Committee work with SkyVenture to offer every BPA Member say 10 minutes' free tunnel time in a year? Any agreement would have to benefit both the BPA Membership and SkyVenture.
- 3 Can SkyVenture have a space at the BPA AGM Day exhibition 2005?

The Committee then discussed Simon Ward's questions. David Hickling cited the experience of the wind tunnel in Florida, where he said DZs had not been affected in any adverse way, in fact the tunnel had helped to boost attendance at DZs.

In answer to a question, Simon Ward said that he would personally head up the operation of the Milton Keynes wind tunnel. It would have a staff of 15, and there would also be freelance instructors. SkyVenture planned to open the tunnel in late summer 2005 and envisaged it as the first of a series of wind tunnels at different Xscape sites, each of which was expected to have some 20m visitors each year.

In response to Simon Ward's question 3, Elizabeth Stoodley proposed, and Calvin Blacker seconded, a motion that SkyVenture should be provided with a space at the BPA AGM Day exhibition on Saturday 22 January 2005 on condition that no sales were made from the stand. Simon Ward agreed to this condition.

Carried unanimously

The Committee then discussed Simon Ward's questions 1 and 2 above. The Chairman suggested that perhaps the best way forward might be to appoint someone to liaise with the BPA on Simon Ward's behalf. Simon Ward said that he was happy to continue to look after liaison with the BPA himself.

In reply to a question by Chris Allen, Simon Ward put forward one possible option for the free wind tunnel time for BPA Members. This could be for each BPA Member to bring in three non-skydiving friends who would pay a discounted rate of say £30 each for tunnel time, with the BPA Member then getting 10 minutes' free tunnel time, worth £75.

Elizabeth Stoodley asked whether SkyVenture would consider a simpler option of offering BPA Members a discount on the normal price of tunnel time. Simon Ward said he was trying to avoid BPA Members having to spend anything to try out the tunnel.

The Chairman thanked Simon Ward for his presentation and said that the Committee would need time to consider, and consult more widely on, Simon Ward's questions 1 and 2. In particular, the Committee would need to consult with DZ Operators. The Committee planned to organise a meeting for DZO's early in 2005 (minute 43.1) and this could provide an important opportunity for consultation. Simon Ward said he would be happy to attend any such meeting if the Chairman considered it to be appropriate.

Finally, there was a short discussion of whether SkyVenture was eligible to take paid advertising space in *Skydive Magazine*, the first advertisement being likely to be for staff recruitment. Eddie Jones (Communications Chairman) confirmed that SkyVenture could advertise in the Magazine.

Simon Ward then thanked the Committee for its attention and left the meeting.

46/04 Action Plan, 2004/5

46.1 Target 1: Start a new page on the BPA website on National Skydiving Records

The new page was now online. It features the *Brit Chicks 2004* record with an invitation for Members to e-mail information and pictures on other appropriate records.

Achieved

46.2 Target 2: Host an open forum meeting for Drop Zone Operators

See minute 43.1.

Action: Next meeting

46.3 Target 3: Create a new role as Media Co-ordinator

Elizabeth Stoodley was active in this role (see minute 43.3).

Achieved

46.4 Target 4: Improve the quality and quantity of media coverage of skydiving in the UK

See minute 43.3. This had been achieved by Elizabeth Stoodley's liaison with the media, which had resulted in positive media stories reaching some 1.2 million people during the calendar year 2004 via local newspapers, national and local radio and regional television.

Achieved

It was important, however, not to let this success be a flash in the pan. Elizabeth Stoodley would therefore bring forward fresh proposals for the next Action Plan Year, 2005/6, at the next meeting (minute 43.3 refers).

47/04 Date of next meeting

The next meeting would be of the 2005 Development Committee, at a date to be arranged at the AGM, on the same day as the Council meeting, with the Development Committee meeting starting at 1630.

The Chairman thanked all Members of the Committee for their contributions during the year, and wished David Hickling and Calvin Blacker well for the future as they had decided to stand down from the BPA Council at the AGM.

The meeting closed at 1735.