

British Parachute Association

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Development Committee

Minutes of the meeting held on
Tuesday 13 June 2006 at 1630
at the BPA Offices, 5 Wharf Way, Glen Parva, Leicester

Present:	Kieran Brady Tony Goodman John Horne Eddie Jones John Page Mike Rust Elizabeth Stoodley	Chairman (from mid-item 18.1)
In attendance:	Paul Applegate Adrian Bond Tony Butler Jon Gretton David Hickling Martin Shuttleworth	Co-opted Technical Officer Financial Administrator Chairman, Insurance Subcommittee (co-opted; to item 18.2) Secretary-General
Apologies for absence:	Debbie Carter John Hitchen Mark Maynard Paul Moore Julian Storey	Treasurer (co-opted) NCSO Media-Co-ordinator (co-opted)

Item Minute

16/06 Minutes

Eddie Jones proposed, and Tony Goodman seconded, a motion that the minutes of the meeting of the Development Committee held on Tuesday 11 April 2006 be approved as a correct record.

Approved

17/06 Matters arising

17.1 Skydiving display material for the Bedford wind tunnel (minute 10.1)

John Page reported that work on preparing display material was still in progress.

Action: John Page

17.2 Display team links on the BPA website (minute 10.2)

David Lee of the Royal Navy Raiders, the Display Team Member whose approach had given rise to the idea of a Display Teams Webpage, had kindly submitted some photographs and written copy which would be used as source material to help to construct the new BPA web page on display parachuting.

Action: BPA Office

17.3 Wind tunnels (minute 10.3)

The Chairman reported that he was due to meet Simon Ward of the Airkix wind tunnel to discuss the detailed arrangements to progress the Airkix offer to BPA Members, following the agreement in principle at the last meeting to accept the Airkix proposal (minute 10.3). The meeting had been arranged for this Friday, 16 June, at 1700. The Chairman said that there were many complexities in the detail of the offer, which would require careful consideration. He said that John Smyth would be joining him at the meeting with Simon Ward.

Ongoing

17.4 Media Co-ordinator Terms of Reference (minute 10.5)

Elizabeth Stoodley had circulated her final draft terms of reference for the honorary position of BPA Media Co-ordinator. She proposed, and John Page seconded, a motion that these be formally accepted (see Appendix).

Carried unanimously

The Chairman thanked Elizabeth Stoodley for preparing the terms of reference.

18/06 Reports on areas of responsibility

18.1 Insurance

David Hickling (Chairman, Insurance Subcommittee) reported that he had held a meeting at the BPA office with a potential new broker, who had experience in the insurance of motor sports. BPA staff had also been present at the meeting. The broker had not yet come forward with a written proposal, but had indicated that he planned to do so in due course. The possibility of separate groups within the BPA such as Drop Zones and instructors, etc, having their own insurance policy with different rates of premium had not been considered practicable by the broker, because it would be likely to lead to higher costs because of lower numbers in each group, compared with the present umbrella policy covering all, and it would also lead to higher administration costs. The latter would still apply even if the existing policy were retained, but different premiums were charged to different groups within the full membership according to variations in their perceived level of risk.

David Hickling referred to his paper already circulated in which he had set out some calculations that showed that students contributed approximately the same amount to the BPA as did experienced jumpers. If Drop Zones were to take out their own insurance, they might decide no longer to provide their students with BPA insurance, but to add them to their own insurance policy instead. This could significantly reduce the number of students being insured by the BPA policy and, on the other side of the coin, increase the premium payable by those that were left. In any case, an individual Drop Zone might be unlikely to be able to secure the same rates premium rates than the BPA, collectively, could negotiate simply because of the higher numbers.

David Hickling advised the Committee to act with caution before going down the road of fragmentation of insurance. A straw poll of instructors he had conducted had suggested that most instructors with multiple ratings considered it to be acceptable to pay a little more for their insurance, but not a lot more. All but one Drop Zone had signified to him their preference to stay under the umbrella of BPA insurance.

Eddie Jones said that his discussions with Members as Northern Club Rep had demonstrated to him that Members did not have the financial background on insurance costs available to them. Once the situation was explained, they did not wish to change from the existing arrangements, which they saw were the most economic both for them and for the sport as a whole. He said that Members at one centre were even planning a petition for no change to be made to BPA insurance.

David Hickling said that he and the BPA office were regularly approached by Members who said 'I know a broker with a friend at Lloyds who can get the BPA a better deal on insurance'. However, the experience was that more detail the BPA provided, the less this enthusiasm tended to be sustained by potential new brokers with the result that, to date, no better offer had materialised. The potential new broker with whom extensive discussions had recently been held had however offered something different – his approach was from adventure sports

insurance rather than the existing route of aviation insurance. The broker's written reply, when received, would help to identify whether or not this was a viable avenue for the BPA to pursue. As yet, there was no offer on the table. But what was clear was that the potential new insurer had shown no wish to vary the existing all-encompassing BPA policy because he had agreed that this was the most economic approach to insuring the risks.

The Committee discussed Paul Moore's article on insurance in the June issue of *Skydive Magazine* and the complementary article that Tony Butler had compiled to put another view and thereby had presented to the Membership the complex and challenging matters that the Insurance Subcommittee was dealing with. The Chairman said there was an issue about the publication of these articles, which the Insurance Subcommittee had seen but had not had an opportunity to discuss at a face-to-face meeting, before they had been published in the Magazine. He said that it did not appear that the correct procedure had been followed with regard to publication of these articles, and the Communications Committee would be reviewing the matter.

Tony Butler called attention to the need to focus on the specific area of concern that had been raised at the AGM, namely reciprocal arrangements for sport parachutists from other EU nations. He said he understood that Paul Moore accepted that this was the key issue.

Eddie Jones recommended that insurance should stay as it was. Tony Goodman supported this recommendation, saying that jumpers at his Drop Zone (CCSPC) wanted the insurance arrangements to remain as they were. John Page reminded the meeting that, at the AGM, the Membership had mandated its elected representatives to keep on looking for a better arrangement on insurance. David Hickling agreed: he said that deciding to stay with the same concept of an all-encompassing policy would not stop the Insurance Subcommittee exploring the possibilities for reciprocal arrangements with jumpers from other EU nations.

David Hickling pointed out that the Insurance Subcommittee had always been tasked with seeking the best value insurance for BPA Members. Following the AGM, the Council had tasked the Subcommittee with investigating whether and if so how jumpers from other EU nations can be covered, ideally at no additional cost. The Insurance Subcommittee had, accordingly, briefed the existing insurers and the potential new insurers, who had both asked for firm figures. These were currently being compiled – they had to be this year's figures, because the recently opened wind tunnels might affect the numbers. These actions covered the resolution passed at the AGM, at which reciprocal arrangements for German jumpers was all that had been voted upon. Since then, it had become clear from the existing insurers that to treat colleague jumpers from one EU nation any differently from those from the rest of the EU would be at best bad practice and at worst illegal – and the insurers had refused to do it.

Elizabeth Stoodley said that various options on restructuring insurance that Paul Moore had set out in his paper to the Council and his article published in the June 2006 Magazine had not been put to a vote at the AGM. John Horne said he did not believe that this Committee should recommend to the Council that the structure of the BPA insurance policy should be left as it was, because this would mean that the Insurance Subcommittee would not be investigating other options, which he said would destroy confidence and momentum. David Hickling said that those who implied that the Insurance Subcommittee, which had considered in detail the alternative options but found the existing arrangements to be far better, had 'not done anything', were not well informed.

Tony Butler said that, although the June 2006 issue of the Magazine had been out for only about a week, the response from Members to date appeared to support retention of the existing structure of BPA insurance.

The Chairman summarised the majority view of the meeting that was to recommend to the full Council that the existing structure of the BPA 'umbrella' insurance policy should be retained, and that fragmentation of the policy into different policies, or different premiums, for groups of full BPA Members should not be considered. John Horne did not support this recommendation.

Action: Recommend to Council

David Hickling said he had been researching the cost of insurance in Europe. He had been surprised to find how many jumpers in Europe were relying on USPA insurance of US\$ 50,000. The 1.5m Euros limit of the European policies appeared to be very much in the minority.

The Chairman said he was keen to have a reciprocal arrangement on insurance but he believed that most of the work to achieve this needed to be done on the continent. He thanked David Hickling for his contribution and plain hard work as Chairman of the Insurance Subcommittee. David Hickling said he was unelected, unpaid and felt unsupported in the light of vitriolic comments that had been directed at him from some quarters. He said that if the Council or this Committee wished for someone else to take over Chairmanship of the Insurance Committee, he would have no problem with that. The Chairman said that insurance was an emotive issue and thanked David Hickling for his valued tenacity in helping the Association to navigate through choppy waters.

18.2 Media

The Chairman reported that Julian Storey (Media Co-ordinator) had sent in a fax to apologise that he could not be present to attend this meeting today due to prior work commitments.

Copies of an e-mail from an unverified source had been circulated that had raised an issue about the activities of Julian Storey as a councillor on his local authority (which was nothing to do with the BPA, although his BPA role had been mentioned in a local newspaper report). Julian Storey was aware of the e-mail, and had responded by e-mail (copies circulated) both to the source of the comment, and to this Committee. As Julian Storey had been unable to attend today's meeting to discuss the matter, John Page proposed, and Elizabeth Stoodley seconded, a motion that the Office should write to Julian Storey to remind him of the date of the next meeting and underline the importance of his attending to discuss this matter.

Carried unanimously - Action: BPA Office

19/06 Development Action Plan: 1 July 2005 to 30 June 2006

19.1 Publish a BPA web page for Members to make the most of the media

Achieved

19.2 Research the potential of re-launching the BPA Affinity Credit Card

Achieved

Adrian Bond reported that the uptake of the BPA affinity credit card had been too low to date to allow a skydiving image to be used on the card. MBNA, the card issuer, had received 86 new applications that had resulted in the issue of 47 new cards (this being about the average ratio of applications to cards issued). The indications were that this was a chicken-and-egg situation with some Members deciding not to apply for the card because it did not currently bear a skydiving image. The income to the BPA for the last 12 months had been about £3K, about the same as for the previous 12 months.

Adrian Bond said that the MBNA planning team was hoping to receive an additional budget to market affinity card programmes, and it would try to increase the uptake of the BPA card with the aim of getting a new design for a re-launch next year. In response to a question from Adrian Bond, the Chairman confirmed that it was the BPA's policy not to release the membership database to third parties for mailing or other promotional activity, and that inserts in *Skydive Magazine* were the accepted way to get promotional leaflets into the hands of the Membership.

19.3 Support and encourage Clubs & Centres to run safety evenings

Mike Rust reported that his Centre, NLPC, had held a well-attended and successful safety evening on Saturday 29 April. This had not, however, used experts from outside the centre and had not, therefore, been a call on any BPA funding. Mike Rust said that a safety evening was now likely to become an annual feature at his Centre, although next time he would be likely to hold it earlier in the year.

An application for BPA funding of 2 x £100 for two safety evenings from Robin Durie, Secretary to the Army Parachute Association, had been circulated. The application was for a contribution to the costs of two safety evenings in May 2006 that had called on international expertise from outside the Centre. The Committee unanimously approved this application and asked the Office to arrange to send APA a cheque for the BPA grant of 2 x £100 for two safety evenings.

Action: BPA Office

Elizabeth Stoodley observed that this was the only application that the Committee had received to date for grants to help meet the cost of safety evenings. She said that she believed the application process could be made more user-friendly for Drop Zones. The Chairman asked her kindly to liaise with the office with a view to simplifying the process for BPA support of safety evenings in the new Action Plan year 2006/7 (minute 20).

Action: Elizabeth Stoodley / BPA Office

The Chairman thanked Members of the Committee and staff for their hard work in achieving the Committee's Development Action Plan targets for the year ending on 30 June 2006.

20/06 Development Action Plan: 1 July 2006 to 30 June 2007

The Chairman said that the first reports on progress towards the 2006/7 Development Action Plan targets would be taken at the August meeting. The new Action Plan year would start on 1 July 2006.

21/06 Car mileage rates

Paul Applegate proposed, and Mike Rust seconded, a motion that in the light of increasing fuel prices, the BPA's car mileage allowances should be increased by three pence per mile with effect from the start of the BPA's new financial year on 1 July 2006.

Carried unanimously

22/06 Dates of next meetings

Tuesdays at 1430 at the BPA Office: 15 August, 10 October and 5 December 2006.

The meeting closed at 1740.

Appendix: Terms of reference of BPA Media Co-ordinator

Appendix to the meeting of the BPA Development Committee held on Tuesday 13 June 2006, reference item 17.4, Media Co-ordinator Terms of Reference

BPA Media Co-ordinator – Terms of reference (BPA Form 259)

Title: BPA Media Co-ordinator

Reporting to: BPA Development Committee, a Sub Committee of the Council. (In the event that the Media Co-ordinator is unable to report to the Committee in person on media coverage achieved during the previous two months, s/he shall submit a written report to keep the Development Committee up-to-date with media liaison.)

Tenure:

The Media Co-ordinator shall normally be appointed for the Committee year (which runs from one AGM to the next). The Development Committee may, at its absolute discretion, reduce or terminate the period of tenure. The Media Co-ordinator is asked to give notice if s/he wishes to step down, to allow the Development Committee to appoint a successor.

Remit:

Under the term of reference, to promote **Positive** Media Coverage for the Association, its members and the sport.

Including to:

- Prepare and distribute press releases, publicity and promotional statements etc, on behalf of the Association, its members or the sport.
- Deal with enquiries, leads, contacts from Media or public and /or other agencies in the most appropriate manner.
- Encourage and assist the Association, its members and the sport in gaining positive media coverage, and help to educate the media and the general public about the sport.
- Increase public awareness and participation and understanding of the sport through positive media coverage
- Highlight the Association's, its members' and the Sport's achievements, records, events etc.

Terms:

Any document, statement, release, article, conversation or any other medium used, supplied or implied by the Media Co-ordinator shall:

- **Only** positively promote the Association, its members and the Sport
- **Only** use names and details etc with the prior authorisation of the persons/parties involved
- **Respect** the copyright of any images or documents and gain necessary authorisation, as required
- **Include** BPA contact details and web link
- **Not** refer to any incident, accident or injury (the BPA Technical Officer and the BPA National Coach and Safety Officer deal with all safety-related matters)

Contact with Parties:

Any contact, enquiries or requests from Media, General Public, Members or the Association or whom ever, not within the remit of this role, must be politely and immediately referred to the relevant contact with in the BPA Office who will deal with the matter.