

BRITISH PARACHUTE ASSOCIATION
RIGGERS COMMITTEE MEETING
BPA OFFICES, 5 WHARF WAY, GLEN PARVA, LEICESTER
THURSDAY 6TH DECEMBER 2001

Present: Paul Applegate - Chairman
John Harding
John Curtis
Kim Newton
Bernadette Whitaker
Pat Walters
Pete Sizer

Apologies: Dave Prince, Richard Wheatley.

In Attendance: Tony Butler - Technical Officer
John Hitchen - NCSO
Trudy Kemp - Assistant to NCSO/TO

Observers: Phil Cavanagh, David Hickling.

ITEM

1. **MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING FROM THE RIGGERS MEETING OF THE 11TH OCTOBER 2001**

Page 1, Item 1 – (Matters Arising) – Rigging Manual Update. John Curtis advised those present that he had now looked at the paperwork with regard to revising the Advanced Course Syllabus. Mr Curtis stated that he had proposed to circulate something to all Rigger Examiners for consideration so that hopefully they would be in a position to put something to this meeting, but it had involved more work than he had first envisaged and he hoped to be in a position to get something out prior to the next meeting.

Page 1, Item 1 – (Matters Arising) – Tandem Modifications. At the previous meeting some concern had been expressed by those present with regard to the Committee accepting proxy votes. The Committee felt that the whole issue of proxy voting warranted further discussion and it was agreed that this item should be put on the main agenda for discussion.

The Chairman apologised for not putting this on the Agenda for discussion that evening and stated that he would ensure that it went on the next Agenda for discussion at the next meeting.

Page 2, Item 2 – (Matters Arising from the STC Meeting of the 9th August 2001) – CYPRES AAD. At the previous meeting John Curtis had voiced his concern with regard to the installation of the Student CYPRES AAD into some containers, to switch it off, as within an aircraft emergency situation the instructor would not easily be able to get to it.

Mr Curtis stated that he was particularly concerned with the Expert CYPRES that has been converted and then installed into some equipment where it was not easily accessible.

He stated that Airtec had also voiced their concerns with regard to this matter and that on 'Teardrops' they had taken some containers back and had put a special pocket in them so that that the CYPRES was more easily accessible.

Page 4, Item 6 – Riggers Manual Update. The Chairman advised those present that he had

spoken to Allan Hewitt with regard to the completion of the Riggers Manual and Packers Manual and stated that Mr Hewitt had promised faithfully that he would be at that evenings meeting.

The Committee was extremely concerned and disappointed that Allan Hewitt was not present that evening as he had promised that a complete version of the Manual would be available for the October 2001 meeting.

Following discussion on this matter, it was agreed by those present that this matter would be referred to the BPA Council.

Page 4, Item 8 – Manufacturers Safety Notices/Information Bulletins. Following the issue of a product safety bulletin concerning the grounding of a number of Icarus Crossfire canopies. The NCSO advised those present that since the last meeting the BPA had received an e-mail from Precision Aerodynamics raising their concerns over all Icarus Crossfire canopies.

The NCSO stated that Precision Aerodynamics and Icarus had split because of disputes between the two companies.

Mr Hitchen advised the Committee that the BPA had contacted Icarus asking for their comments and stated that do date no reply had been received from them. It was felt by those present that a follow up e-mail should be sent to Icarus in an effort to generate a response from them.

Because of the concerns raised by Precision Aerodynamics concerning Icarus Crossfire canopies, the Committee felt that the Association had an obligation to its members to ‘minute’ these concerns because of the possible safety implications.

Note: Following the Riggers meeting, a reply had been received from Icarus. Extracts from the two e-mails sent from Precision and Icarus would be circulated with the Minutes for information.

Page 4, Item 9 – AOB (i). At the previous meeting the Committee was advised of a non-BPA rigger working in Spain who had been opening up re-packs jobs completed in the UK then re-packing the equipment and issuing a copy of the BPA Record of Inspection with the serial number deleted.

Following some discussion on this matter, John Harding agreed to contact Pete Jones expressing the BPA concerns on this matter.

Page 6, Item 10 – AOB (vii). John Curtis advised the Committee that he had run an Advanced Packers Course from the 15th October as previously advised. A copy of the Course report was circulated to those present for information.

The two candidates attending the Course were advised to practice and prepare for the examination phase and to return for final examination once they feel they are ready.

Kim Newton advised those present that her name had been omitted from the attendance list at the previous meeting.

There being no further matters arising, it was proposed by Kim Newton and seconded by John Harding that the Minutes of the Riggers Committee meeting of the 11th October 2001 with the addition of Kim Newton’s name to the list of those present be accepted as a true record.

Carried Unanimously

2. MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING FROM THE STC MEETING OF THE

11TH OCTOBER 2001

Page 6, Item 6 – Incident/Injury Reports Resume (v). At the previous meeting details were given of a number of Tandem malfunctions/deployments problems due to knotted lines, this was also the cause of a number of the experienced jumpers malfunctions. Jumpers were reminded to make sure there are no ‘twists’ in the steering lines every time they pack.

Concern was also expressed by the Riggers Committee with regard to jumpers not clearing break line twists on all equipment.

3. MANUFACTURERS QAULITY CONTROL

The Technical Officer advised the Committee that 2 Incident Reports had been received concerning Malfunction/Deployment problems, which had concerned equipment from the same manufacturer where the bar tacking had been left off steering lines. One on the main and one on the reserve. This had not been spotted during the packing. Jumpers were reminded that they should have new equipment carefully inspected before using it, as quality control by some manufacturers is not always as good as it should be.

John Curtis advised those present that he had contacted the manufacturers concerned and they were looking at their inspection procedures.

4. ADVANCED PACKERS EXAMINATION COURSE REPORT – PETE SIZER

Pete Sizer had submitted a Course Report, a copy of which had been circulated with the Agenda. Garry Wilson had successfully completed the Examination phase of the Advanced Packers Course and had been awarded Advanced Packer (Grade S) status.

5. ADVANCED PACKERS EXAMINATION COURSE REPORT – DAVE CHAPMAN

Dave Chapman had submitted an Advanced Packers Examination Course Report, a copy of which had been circulated with the Agenda.

Four candidates had successfully completed the Course and had been awarded Advanced Packer (Grade S) status. The successful candidates were; Wayne Costello, Nader Afsharian, Andrew McLeod and Frank Millerick.

6. BPA RIGGING MANUAL UPDATE- ALLAN HEWITT

This item had been dealt with under Matters Arising.

7. SAFETY NOTICES/INFORMATION BULLETINS

There had been no BPA Safety Notices of Information Bulletin issued since the last meeting.

8. MANUFACTURERS SAFETY NOTICES/INFORMATION BULLETINS

There had been no manufacturers Safety Notices or Information Bulletins received since the last meeting.

9. A.O.B

- i) A letter from Andrew Hilton had been circulated with the Agenda asking the Riggers Committee to consider his document illustrating the two approved methods of sealing reserves and proposed that Riggers consider this document to become a BPA form which could then included on the BPA website.

A letter from Andy Page concerning this matter had been circulated to those present for consideration.

The above request generated a great deal of discussion. Some of the discussion concerned the two methods and whether one or both of them had been approved. The Committee felt that it was a good idea to publish the BPA methods of sealing reserves. It was therefore agreed by those present that approved reserve sealing methods be put on the next Agenda with a view to publishing the approved methods as per Andrew Hilton's request, if both had been previously approved.

- ii) Pat Walters brought up the matter of who was qualified to issue Approved Packing Certificates for Tandem main canopies. As the rules stand at the moment a Tandem Instructor who does not hold a CSI rating cannot sign anyone up to pack a Tandem rig, but a CSI can. Pat felt that Tandem Instructors should have the power to issue a packing certificate for a Tandem main.

The Committee felt that this was an area that needed looking at carefully and suggested that Pat may wish to put a proposal forward to go out with the next Agenda. The Technical Officer agreed to draft a proposal, which would also include AFF Instructors for distribution with the next Agenda.

- iii) Kim Newton reported on two Tandem malfunctions that had occurred at her Centre on the same day, where the instructors pulled the drogue release handles and the main parachutes did not deploy. It was felt by the club that the problem could have been because the rigs had been used all day (which was very wet) and it was possible that the 3 ring loops were saturated with water (because of previous skidding/sitting down landings) and this may have contributed to the problem, with the loops freezing at altitude.

Kim Newton had carried out some tests and had confirmed that given these circumstances the 3 rings as they get colder were less likely to release. She had since spoken to the manufacturers who had confirmed this theory.

Kim Newton also stated that when conducting tests she introduced mud to the lines as opposed to them just being wet. When it was approaching freezing conditions this significantly increased the pull force needed to release the 3 rings.

Packers should be aware of this problem and check 3 ring assemblies before use particularly if the equipment was being used in wet, muddy and cold conditions.

Kim reported that the system used at the Club is a single drogue release and the situation may have been better with a secondary release system, which uses a running loop and stated that they were considering using the Paratec handle.

- iv) A letter had been received from Dave Chapman and circulated to those present proposing that JSPC (N) staff be exempted from the requirement to hold an Approved Packing Certificate for 12 months before being eligible to attend an Advanced Packers Course.

Dave had stated that the assistant staff work at the centre full time all year and so gain experience extremely quickly. It was his intention should this request be accepted, to personally select and train only the most promising individuals with the correct attitude towards safety, and a minimum of 6 months full time on centre staff.

Following some discussion on this request, the Committee did not feel that they could accept a 'blanket' cover as per Dave's request, but they had no problem considering individual clearances.

Following further discussion on this matter, Dave Chapman's proposal failed to find a seconder.

- v) A letter had been received from Bill Sharp and circulated to those present requesting acceptance of the new Relative Workshop (Vector) Tandem Sigma container system and passenger harness for use at BPA Clubs and Centres.

Mr Sharp had inspected the complete assembly and was satisfied with the system.

The Chairman advised those present that the equipment had been well tested in the USA. Both the NCSO and another Rigger Examiner had seen the equipment and were both satisfied with it.

It was proposed by Bill Sharp and seconded by Kim Newton that the Tandem Sigma system be accepted for use at BPA Clubs.

For: 4 (incl. 1 by proxy) Against: 0 Abstentions: 3

Carried

The NCSO advised those present that the Sigma was a completely different system from the Vector 1 and Vector 2 Tandem systems and that instructors qualifying on the Sigma system would probably not be permitted to jump other Tandem Systems.

- vi) An Advanced Packing Course report had been received from Geoff Hughes, which was circulated to those present.

The three candidates attending the Course were advised to practice and prepare for the examination phase and to return for final examination once they feel they are ready.

- vii) A letter had been received from Brad Rock asking for advice on how to attain a BPA Rigger rating. Mr Rock was currently a FAA Master Rigger and now lives in the UK. He had been working at Sibson for some time using his foreign instructor ratings.

Following some discussion by those present, it was proposed by Pete Sizer and seconded by John Harding that Brad Rock present himself to a BPA Rigger Examiner nominated by the Chairman for assessment.

Carried Unanimously

- viii) Kim Newton advised the Committee that on the paperwork that is coming back with FXC 12000 units, there was a bit on it that states that service is required annually. She had contacted FXC and they had sent her a new manual which, stated "Model 12000 – revision A to G require annual factory servicing while revision J and later require factory

servicing every two years”.

- ix) Mr Harding presented a reserve pilotchute, which he wished to use on Static Line Zerox equipment. The pilotchute was similar in construction to the balloon type, but the lower half was mesh covered and had been approved by the container manufacturer.

Mr Harding advised those present that he had been conducting extensive evaluations on low speed reserve openings on S/L equipment. He had found that at slow speed there are pilot chutes that are more effective than others.

Following discussion on this matter, it was proposed by John Harding and seconded by Pete Sizer that the pilotchute as presented be accepted for use on Static Line Zerox equipment.

For: 5

Against: 0

Abstentions: 1

Carried

Date of next Meeting:

Thursday 7th February 2002
BPA Offices, Glen Parva, Leicester.
4.00 p.m.

11th December 2001

Distribution

Chairperson Riggers Committee
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D. Beaven (CAA)
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