

BRITISH PARACHUTE ASSOCIATION
RIGGERS COMMITTEE MEETING
BPA OFFICES, 5 WHARF WAY, GLEN PARVA, LEICESTER
THURSDAY 28TH NOVEMBER 2002

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

Apologies: Andrew Hilton, Bill Sharp, Allan Hewitt, Pat Jones, Tony Butler.

In Attendance: Trudy Kemp - Assistant to NCSO/TO

Observers: Eno Van der Post, Dave Lewis, Mike Gorman, Phil Cavanagh.

ITEM

1. **MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING FROM THE RIGGERS MEETING OF THE 10TH OCTOBER 2002**

Page 2, Item 3 – The Future of Rigging within the BPA. Correspondence had been received from Bill Sharp, Andrew Hilton and Allan Hewitt on this particular item, which had been discussed by the Riggers Working Group meeting held in the morning.

The Chairman advised those present that Bill Sharp had produced a very detailed and comprehensive report of past Riggers Minutes a copy of which had been circulated to the Working Group. He stated that Andrew Hilton was producing a Rigging Technical Manual and was also in the process of updating/rewriting the BPA Rigging Manual

Page 3, Item 4 – Parachute Packing/Inspection Cycles A letter from Bill Sharp had been received on this item and previously circulated with the Agenda. Bill had referred to the last paragraph of this item, which stated “At the moment there is nothing in the rules to say that equipment cannot be jumped if the Cypres battery or AAD maintenance is due prior to the expiry of the end of the repack cycle”. Bill had stated this was incorrect and had referred to a previous meeting where Cypress battery replacement intervals had been discussed and it had been agreed that the Cypres battery should be replaced as per the Airtec Manual, ie every two years.

The subject of parachute packing and inspection cycles was an item discussed by the Working Group that morning. They had took on board Bill Sharp’s comments on this matter.

Page 3, Item 5 – Foreign Rigger Ratings. This item was discussed at the Riggers Working Group meeting held that morning.

Page 3, Item 6 – BPA Rigging Manual Update. This was another item that had been dealt that had been discussed by the Riggers Working Group. A letter from Allan Hewitt had been received

on this item and copied to those present.

Page 4, Item 8 – Manufacturers Safety Notices/Information Bulletins. At the previous meeting Pete Sizer had given the meeting details of an incident at Headcorn where a jumper had a riser, which had completely disintegrated. Pete advised those present that he would be sending the riser to the manufacturers for inspection.

Page 4, Item 9 – AOB (iv). John Curtis wished to clarify the wording in the previous Minutes and stated that he had asked to run both Rigger and Advanced Packing Courses between now and March 2003.

Page 5, Item 9 - AOB (vi) – At the previous meeting, the Committee had raised no objection to Rick Boardman registering a person who held a Advanced Packer (Grade S) only rating as a Basic Rigger under the 300 hour scheme provided that they obtained the “round” Advanced Packer rating prior to them attending a final Rigger assessment Course.

The Committee was advised that correspondence from Bill Sharp and Allan Hewitt had been received on this matter and previously circulated. Both Bill and Allan had stated that the above request had been an exemption from the BPA Operations Manual and therefore a formal vote should have been taken at the previous meeting to formalise the request.

Rick Boardman advised those present that following the previous meeting, he had registered an Advanced Packer (square only) status with the BPA as a Basic Rigger. Pete Sizer advised those present that he had also registered an Advanced Packer (square only status) as a BR under the 300 hour scheme.

Rick stated that he had asked for clarification on the above, as the BPA Operations Manual states that one of the requirements for Basic Rigger Training is that the potential BR is an Advanced Packing Certificate holder. It does not state the need full packing qualification before a potential BR can be registered

Rick raised the question - Does Committee wish potential BRs to obtain the “round” qualification first and then register as a BR under the 300 hour scheme or can a potential BR obtain the “round” qualification during their 300 hours training.

The Committee felt that there appeared to be different interpretation of the rules. John Curtis advised those present that Rigger Examiners were looking at the various Course Syllabus and in particular qualifications to attend Courses.

Following further discussion on this matter, it was proposed by John Harding and seconded by Rick Boardman that until the Rigger Examiners had come up with firm proposals with regard to qualifications to attend Courses. Those people wishing to register as a BR under the 300 hour scheme can do so without having an “all Types” Advanced Packing qualification as long as they obtain the full qualification before attending the final assessment Course.

For: 7 Against: 1 Abstentions: 0

Carried

There being no further matters arising, it was proposed by Pete Sizer and seconded by Kim Newton that the Minutes of the Riggers Committee meeting of the 10th October 2002, with the above amendment be accepted as a true record.

Carried Unanimously

2. **MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING FROM THE STC MEETING OF THE 10TH OCTOBER 2002**

There were no matters arising.

3. RIGGERS WORKING GROUP

John Curtis provided details of the Riggers Working Group Meeting that had been held that morning. John stated that he would be preparing a separate report of that meeting which would be circulated with the Riggers Minutes.

One of the items that the Working Group had discussed at some length was the one year re-pack cycle. This subject would be main agenda item for the next Riggers Committee meeting and that Kim Newton had offered to produce something to go out with the Agenda.

On behalf off the Riggers Committee, the Chairman thanked the Working Group members and to all those people that had attended the meeting.

4. STUDENT EQUIPMENT MODIFICATION REQUEST – RICHARD WHEATLEY

A request had been circulated with the agenda, together with relevant paperwork and drawings from Richard Wheatley to install an AFF style BOC pocket on TSE Student Zerox Containers and RWS Student Vector Containers so that the equipment may be used in an AFF ‘throwaway’ mode.

Richard had re-submitted this request which now included a drawing for the bridle line cover as had been requested at the previous meeting.

It was proposed by Richard Wheatley and seconded by Richard Boardman that the above Student Equipment Modification request be accepted.

Carried Unanimously

5. VORTEX/PARAGEAR HOUSINGS

A letter from Rick Boradman concerning Vortex/Paragear Housings had been circulated with the Agenda.

Rick advised the meeting that he was recently asked to repair a badly frayed 3 ring riser loop on a Vortex container. On closer inspection, the cause of the damage was found to be some very poorly built cutaway housings. At the terminal end, the ‘0’ grommet has been over-seated, creating a sharp burred edge. In addition, the housings have only been finished with the male half of the grommet, and the hole they are punched through seems either too big in the first place, or badly deformed by the action of the grommet been fitted.

Rick stated that he had contacted Chute Shop who had advised him that they had obtained this housing from Paragear. He stated that having also contacted Paragear they seem to be saying this was an isolated occurrence and that the terminal eyes are drilled bigger because they are not specifically built for skydiving use, and are made of a softer copper than ideal. Some manufacturers can’t fit their grommet setting tools on to this area, and so they only utilise half of the grommet.

Rick presented the short housing to those present for inspection and stated that he believed that this was not an isolated incident, and would urge all riggers and packers to inspect this area closely. The other two Vortex containers that he had seen that day on the Drop Zone were not too sharp, but their grommet seating was also similarly distorted.

The Committee felt that this was not an isolated incident and could also be a potential problem on other manufactured equipment.

6. ADVANCED PACKING COURSE REPORTS

- i) John Curtis had submitted an Advanced Packers Examination Course report, a copy of which had been circulated with the Agenda. Mike Gorman had successfully completed the course and had been awarded Advanced Packer (Grade S) status.
- ii) Andrew Hilton had submitted an Advanced Packers Examination Course report, a copy of which had been circulated with the Agenda. Alan Hamilton who already held Advanced Packer (Grade S) status had successfully completed the course for upgrading to Advanced Packer (Grade R) status.

7. BPA SAFETY NOTICES/INFORMATION BULLETINS

There had been no BPA Safety Notices or Information Bulletins issued since the last meeting.

8. MANUFACTURERS SAFETY NOTICES/INFORMATION BULLETINS

There had been no manufacturers Safety Notices of Information Bulletins issued since the last meeting.

9. A.O.B

- i) Pat Walters advised the Committee that Dave Major who held an Advanced Packing (Grade S) rating wished to become a Rigger, but he needed to hold an “all types” rating.

Pat advised the Committee that Dave had previously been working under the “grantfather” rules prior to him gaining his AP rating. Since obtaining this rating, Pat had forgotten to sign Part 2A of Dave’s annual renewal of membership to maintain his currency as a ‘round’ reserve packer.

The Committee was informed that Dave had previously attended a Basic Riggers Course in 1984 and held an Advanced Packing Certificate.

Following discussion on this matter, it was proposed by Pat Walters and seconded by Bernadette Whitaker that Pat be granted permission to sign Part A of the annual renewal of membership of Dave Major to enable him to maintain ‘round’ reserve packing currency, which he should have done in March in order that Pat can then register him as a BPA Rigger.

Carried Unanimously

- ii) Andrew Hilton had submitted an Advanced Packers Examination Course report, a copy of which had been circulated with the Agenda. Chris Clark had successfully completed the course and had been awarded Advanced Packer (Grade R & S) status.
- iii) Kim Newton presented an adjustable reserve closure loops taken from a “Wings” container, which showed a lot of damage from incorrect adjustment.
- iv) Kim Newton presented a new tool for testing reserve pull force.

- v) The Chairman advised those present of an e-mail from Benjamin Moreton with regard to the possibility of displaying a list of qualified BPA Riggers and Packers on the BPA Web site. Following some discussion on this matter, the Chairman said that he would liaise with the BPA Administrator to work out what the costs would be involved in setting this up.
- vi) A request had been received from Allan Hewitt that as his rigging loft that has been approved twice in the past but has again moved, this time to a new location in Spain be approved an official BPA rigging loft.

It is a requirement that new rigging establishment need to be inspected by the NCSO and Technical Officer or two Riggers nominated by them.

Following some discussion on this matter it was felt by those present that the Committee needed to ask the BPA Council for guidance on this matter.

- vii) During discussions that evening, the use of mini risers on AFF Student equipment had been brought up. This prompted some discussion by those present and it was felt that this was an area that needed clarification in the Minutes.

Although the trend now was to use large rings on student AFF equipment, there was no rule that states that small rings cannot be fitted.

Reference was then made to the BPA AFF Manual where it states that “riser releases – single point 3-ring type is mandatory. (Large ring) on AFF student Equipment”. It was pointed out that was not a BPA rule and never had been.

The rule governing RAPS equipment is that ONLY large must be fitted.

- viii) Pat Walters stated that no where in the BPA Operations Manual does it state that AAD’s should be used on Student reserves and he referred to a number of sections in the BPA Operations Manual.

It was pointed out by those present that this had never been a rule and that AADs may be used in conjunction with either the main or reserve parachute.

Date of next Meeting: Thursday 30th January 2003
BPA Offices, Glen Parva, Leicester.
4.00 p.m.

6th December 2002

Distribution

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