

BRITISH PARACHUTE ASSOCIATION
RIGGERS COMMITTEE MEETING
BPA OFFICES, 5 WHARF WAY, GLEN PARVA, LEICESTER
THURSDAY 1 OCTOBER 2009

Present: Paul Applegate - Chairman
John Curtis
Pete Sizer
Bernadette Whitaker
Steve Thomas
Richard Wheatley
George Panagopoulos
Dave Major
Rick Boardman
Kim Newton

Apologies: Bill Sharp, Phill Elston, Liz Ashley, Louise Cliff.

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

Observers: Dean Fisher, Phil Cavanagh, Dr John Carter, Colin Fitzmaurice.

ITEM

1. TO FORMALLY APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE RIGGERS MEETING OF THE 11 JUNE 2009

As the meeting of 6 August 2009 had not been quorate, the minutes from the Riggers Meeting of the 11 June 2009 needed to be formally ratified.

It was therefore proposed by Pete Sizer and seconded by Rick Boardman that the Minutes of the Riggers Meeting of the 11 June 2009 be accepted as a true record.

Carried Unanimously

2. MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING FROM THE RIGGERS MEETING OF THE 6 AUGUST 2009

The Chairman stated that it was not necessary to formally accept the previous Minutes, as the meeting had not been quorate.

Page 2, Item 4 – Working Group into Lifing of Equipment. This was a main agenda item.

Page 4, Item 8 – AOB (vi). The Chairman reported that following the last meeting, STC had agreed that a Panel of Inquiry be instigated to investigate a number of confidential packing reports received concerning an Advanced Packer. They had also agreed that the person concerned has their Advanced Packing certificate suspended pending the outcome of the Panel.

Page 4, Item 8 – AOB (vii). A Student Parachutist Equipment Change Proposal application had been received from John Page together with a set of Emergency Drills, copies of which had been circulated with the Additions to the Agenda

Mr Page presented the equipment in question to the Committee and gave further details of his request, which was a move of handles on a Strong system to a similar configuration as the Next Tandem system including a ring around the secondary drogue release. Because of the location of the RSL he proposed that only Tandem Instructors (qualified on Next) who had been briefed and had their log book endorsed by a CCI from Skydive London, UKPC or Skydive Hinton were permitted to jump the equipment. . The serial numbers of which were: 601537, 009178, 203028, 102032, 402728, 310284 and 704122.

Following some discussion, it was proposed by Pete Sizer and seconded by Kim Newton that the above equipment with the stated serial numbers be accepted for use at the listed Centres.

Carried Unanimously

3. MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING FROM THE STC MEETING OF THE 6 AUGUST 2009

There were no matters arising from the previous Minutes.

4. AUTOMATIC ISSUE OF AP RATINGS TO RIGGERS

A proposal had been received from Bill Sharp regarding the automatic issue of Advanced Packer (AP ratings) to Riggers, a copy of which had been circulated with the Agenda.

Bill Sharp had reported that at the June 09 Riggers Meeting, it had been decided that all previous versions of reserve packing ratings, apart from the current AP rating, would cease to exist from the 1 April 2010. During that discussion that followed, it had been pointed out that all 'prior to 2003' Riggers would lose their authority to pack reserves because they were using the original Advanced Packing Certificates or equivalent as their authority to pack reserves. Bill Sharp had stated that as they had never held an AP rating, removal of these earlier versions meant they technically had no right to pack reserves.

Bill had stated that in early 2004, a version of this problem had been discussed in order to formalise "who could pack what, using what authority". The problem was finally sorted out resulting in the below vote by Riggers in June 2004. It split Riggers into 3 groups.

Group 1: Riggers who qualified as riggers **before 1997** had to have 'All Types' added to their original packing certificate (*the certificate now being revoked*) and this would allow them to pack Square, Round and Tandem reserves, provided they were could prove continued currency.

Group 2: Riggers who qualified **between 1997 and 2002** had to have their packing experience and log reviewed by an AR or above and the AR would then endorse them for either Round, Square and/or Tandem as applicable.

This would more or less put the 1997 to 2002 riggers into the same class as the above Group 1 riggers, who qualified before 1997, but who now are also having their certificates revoked.

Group 3: Riggers who qualified **after 2003** are packing on the authority of their specific AP rating. *These riggers have a Rigger number and an AP number.*

Bill Sharp had therefore proposed that prior to the new ruling being implemented in April 2010 (*that only people holding an AP rating can pack reserves*), all current Riggers qualified before the end of 2002 (Groups 1 & 2 above), will automatically be issued with AP ratings by the BPA, to pack Round, Square and Tandem reserves, as per the authority they already held (*i.e. All Types*).

Following further discussion, it was proposed by Bill Sharp (proxy) and seconded by Pete Sizer that the above proposal be accepted.

Carried Unanimously

5. **TO CONSIDER REQUESTS FOR EXEMPTIONS FROM THE NEW PACKING REQUIREMENTS**

Three requests had been received for exemptions from the new packing requirements, copies of which had been previously circulated with the Agenda. The Committee discussed this item as a whole then discussed and voted on the three requests individually. E-mails on this item had also been received from Phill Elston, Liz Ashley, Louise Cliff, Ray Armstrong and Bill Sharp. Some of which contained a number of proxy votes. Copies of which had been circulated to the meeting.

This topic generated a great deal of discussion. It was the general feeling amongst those present that they could not see why someone who was extremely experienced and who had been packing their own equipment for their own personal use and that they held a packing certificate to cover them for that equipment, should not be given an exemption against the new packing requirements that come into force at 1 April 2010. However, it was pointed out at the meeting that should these individuals then change their equipment, they would need to work under new packing requirements.

Rick Boardman expressed his concern in that if these exemptions were granted, it would open the floodgates to similar requests. He was concerned that the termination of the old system would therefore seem to be a waste of time. Rick stated that the reason for the termination of the old packing requirements, some thirteen years since the introduction of the Advanced Packing Rating, was so that everyone was working to one system.

The TO stated that the BPA had a system where people could apply for exemptions to rules and any request such as this would need to be considered on a merit by merit basis.

The Chairman reported that Bill Sharp had suggested that Dean Fisher, John Carter and Dave Parry provide more detailed verification of their individual cases before considering their requests. Rick Boardman stated that in his opinion Bill Sharp's suggestions were complicated, and he felt that they proved many of the reasons for streamlining the system in the first place.

Following further discussion, the three requests for exemptions against the new packing requirements were voted on individually:

a) Dean Fisher

It was proposed by Richard Wheatley and seconded by Steve Thomas that an exemption be given to Dean Fisher, which permitted him to continue to pack his own reserve canopy for his own personal use only.

For: 6 (incl 1 by proxy) Against: 5 (incl 3 by proxy) Abstentions: 2

Carried

b) Dr John Carter

It was proposed by Kim Newton and seconded by John Curtis that that an exemption be given to Dr John Carter which permitted him to continue to pack his own reserve canopy for his own personal use only.

For: 6 (incl 1 by proxy) Against: 5 (incl 3 by proxy) Abstentions: 2

Carried

c) **Dave Parry**

Phil Cavanagh had reported that Dave Parry had been packing Round reserves for approximately the last 25+ years at BKPC Cockerham. He had the sole responsibility for the inspection and packing of the 27 BKPC Club Student Rigs still fitted with Round reserves. He stated that Dave Parry has had his Advanced Packers Certificate Holder rating renewed every year in line with BPA requirements. Phil Cavanagh advised those present that he was looking to avoid a situation where a very experienced packer, packing in the region of 60 round reserves per year, loses his long standing qualification and his Centre was put at risk.

Phi Cavanagh stated that this request for an issue of an AP(R) certificate was based on the fact that Dave Parry packed many reserves and had a proven record of currency year on year. It was not a request to pack one or two times per year, but to ensure that he was able to continue safe operations at the Cockerham, with Dave Parry being allowed to continue to pack Club equipment and no other.

The Committee discussed this request at some length. It was pointed out by those present that if Dave Parry was automatically granted an AP(R) rating, this would actually entitle him to pack any reserve canopy and thus would actually give him 'permission' to pack reserves that he was not currently entitled to pack.

Following further consideration of this matter, the above request failed to find a proposer from those present.

A counter proposal was tabled from Bernadette Whitaker that Dave Parry continues to pack round reserves at BKPC after 1 April 2010. This proposal failed to find a seconder from those present.

6. **TO CONSIDER A REQUEST FROM NICK BROWNHILL**

A request had been received from Nick Brownhill of the Royal Engineers Parachute Team, a copy of which had been circulated with the Agenda. The request was for an exemption to the rule requiring a person to have been a member of the BPA for 18 months prior to becoming an Advanced Packer.

Mr Brownhill had advised that the request was for a Terry Sullivan who was due to start on the team in January 2010 at which point he would be seconded to the Advanced Rigger at Netheravon for a period of 3 months at the end of which, it was hoped that he would be allowed to sit his Advanced Parachute Packer (Square) examination. Mr Brownhill had stated that by March 2010, Mr Sullivan would have been a BPA member and have held a packing certificate for 12 months as well as have been fully immersed in a very busy rigging store with full time supervision and first class instruction for 12 weeks.

Following some discussion, it was proposed by Pete Sizer and seconded by John Curtis that the above request be accepted.

Carried Unanimously

7. **TO CONSIDER A REQUEST FROM JOHN CARTER**

This request had previously been discussed under item 5 of the main agenda.

8. **TO CONSIDER A REQUEST FROM BRIAN DYAS**

A letter from Brian Dyas had been circulated with the Agenda requesting the re-instatement of his Parachute Riggers rating. A letter supporting Brian's request had also been circulated with the Agenda from Phill Elston.

George Panagopoulos reported that Bryan Dyas had carried out some supervised packing with him at Netheravon. He stated that he had suggested to Brian that he attend an AP Course in order to bring him up to speed with current safety notices etc.

Following further discussion, it was agreed by those present that Brian Dyas attend an AP examination course prior to undertaking the PR Exam with a Rigger Examiner.

9. WORKING GROUP (WG) INTO LIFING OF EQUIPMENT

Rick Boardman (Chair) reported on the meeting held that afternoon and advised the Committee of the WG's progress to date. He stated that the WG were in the process of finalising a letter to parachute manufacturers with the view of obtaining definitive answers from them with regard to their lifing policies. Rick stated that he envisaged that this was going to be a lengthy project and invited members for their input.

10. ADVANCED PACKER COURSE REPORTS

- i) An Advanced Packers Examination Course had taken place at TSE on 24 August 2009. Chris Thomas had submitted a Course report, a copy of which had been circulated to those present.

Michael McNulty had successfully attended the Course and had been awarded Advanced Packer (Grade S) status.

- ii) Joe Willoughby and Chris McCann had attended a Course at Skydive Great Britain from the 9 – 10 September 2009 to be converted from an Advanced Packer Square rating to the Advanced Packer Square/Tandem rating.

Ray Armstrong had submitted a Course Report, a copy of which had been circulated to those present.

Both candidates had been advised to return for the final examination phase of the Course in the future.

- iii) An Advanced Packers Examination Course had been held at Skydive Great Britain from the 11 – 12 September 2009. Westleigh Guest and Peter Harries successfully attended the Course and had been awarded Advanced Packer (Grade S) status.

Ray Armstrong had submitted individual Course Reports, copies of which had been circulated to those present.

- iv) An Advanced Packers Examination Course had been held at Skydive Britain from the 29 – 30 September 2009. Ray Armstrong had submitted a Course Report, a copy of which had been circulated to those present.

Aaron Binks successfully completed the Course and had been awarded Advanced Packer (Grade S) status.

11. BPA ONLINE MEMBERSHIP SURVEY 2010 – SUGGESTED QUESTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION

The Chairman reported that Adrian Bond had asked the Chairs of each Committee to consult with their relevant Committees to provide questions for the next BPA online survey.

The Chairman asked the Committee to submit any questions for consideration asap.

12. BPA SAFETY NOTICES/INFORMATION BULLETINS

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

13. MANUFACTURER’S SAFETY NOTICES/INFORMATION BULLETINS

There had been no Manufacturer’s Safety Notices or Information Bulletins received since the last meeting.

14. A.O.B

- i) The Chairman reported that a Tandem Incident/Malfunction Deployment Problem report had been received since the last meeting. He stated that the Tandem Instructor concerned had experienced a normal exit, drogue deployment and drogue fall. On drogue release at 6000ft AGL, normal main canopy deployment until pulled upright at line stretch, then he felt risers release and reserve deployed cleanly and on heading. Further inspection of the main canopy revealed the 3 ring release system loop had snapped on deployment.
- ii) The Chairman issued a reminder concerning items for the meeting being notified in writing to the office at least 24 hours prior to the meeting. This included items for AOB, comments on agenda items and proxy votes.

Date of next Meeting: Thursday 26 November 2009
BPA Offices, Glen Parva, Leicester
at 4.00 p.m

8 October 2009

Distribution:

Chairperson Riggers Committee
All CCIs
All Riggers
Advanced Packers
Council
CAA
Lesley Gale

PAPERWORK REQUIRING CIRCULATION WITH THE NEXT AGENDA MUST REACH THE BPA OFFICE BY FRIDAY 6 NOVEMBER 2009