

BRITISH PARACHUTE ASSOCIATION
SAFETY AND TRAINING COMMITTEE MEETING
BPA OFFICES, 5 WHARFWAY, GLEN PARVA, LEICESTER
THURSDAY 9 OCTOBER 2003

Present:

John Hitchen	-	Chairman STC
Ian Rosenvinge	-	Peterlee
Pat Walters	-	Tilstock
Dave Lewis	-	Silver Stars
Pete Sizer	-	Headcorn
Mike Rust	-	NLPC
Phil Cavanagh	-	Black Nights
Nick Johnston	-	British Skysports
Dennis Buchanan	-	NWPC
Karen Farr	-	Skydive Strathallan
Dave Hickling	-	BPS, Langar
Andy Montrou	-	Skydive Redlands
Dave Emerson	-	Hinton Skydiving
Brian McGill	-	RAFSPA
Paul Hollow	-	Target Skysports
Alan Wilkinson	-	St Andrews
Ian Cashman	-	JSPC (N)
Mac MacLennan	-	Services PC (NI)
Ronnie O' Brien	-	PPC
Paul Applegate	-	Riggers Committee

Apologies:

Steve Jelf (Dave represented Steve at the meeting), Tony Knight,
Rob Noble-Nesbitt, Dave Wood, Dane Kenny.

In Attendance:

Tony Butler	-	Technical Officer
Dr John Carter	-	BPA Medical Advisor
Trudy Kemp	-	Assistant to NCSO/TO

Observers

Jeff Illidge, Craig Kelsall, Rick Boardman, Doug Peacock, Gary Lawry
Liz Ashley, Phillip Elston, Sean Sutcliffe, Noah Stevenson, Nadir Afsharian,
Mick Nealis, John Curtis, Paul Moore, Phil Lyall.

ITEM

1. MINUTES OF THE STC MEETING OF THE 7 AUGUST 2003

It was proposed by Dave Hickling and seconded by Pete Sizer that the Minutes of the STC meeting of the 7 August 2003 be accepted as a true record.

For: 17

Against: 1

Abstentions: 0

Carried

2. **MATTERS ARISING FROM THE STC MEETING OF THE 7 AUGUST 2003**

Page 1, Item 2 (Matters Arising). The RAFSPA fatality Panel of Inquiry was to be a main agenda item.

Page 2, Item 2 (Matters Arising). The Chairman stated that the Instructors and packer involved in the Tandem incident had now been written to, as per the recommendations accepted by STC. Also, at the last meeting Pat Walters stated that in his opinion the people who check out Tandem Instructors on the flight line should only be Instructors and not other jumpers. Generally other members of STC seemed to agree with Pat, as some believed that as Tandem Students are Students, the pair should therefore be checked by an Instructor.

Circulated to those present was an e-mail from Ian Rosenvinge, in which he stated that his interpretation of the rules are that Tandem Students as Students must be checked by an Instructor, but Tandem Instructors as experienced parachutists do not need to be. They should be checked out by appropriately qualified persons familiar with the equipment in question.

The NCSO and TO stated that this was also their interpretation of the rules.

The Chairman advised those present that several other CCIs had contacted him with their concerns over this matter. They had pointed out that their operation was such that they also felt more confident with letting those people who were more competent to check out the Tandem Instructor rather than an Instructor who may not be familiar with the equipment.

The Technical Officer pointed out that when the Operations Manual refers to 'checking out'. It is not the actual equipment, but the person. He stated that Students have to be checked out by an Instructor, but experienced parachutists do not. He stated that the Student has to be checked out in his/her harness and usually the Tandem instructor does that, but the Operations Manual does NOT say that the Tandem Instructor must be checked out by an Instructor.

Following further discussion on this matter, the Committee agreed that the interpretation of the Operations Manual is that Tandem Instructors may get checked out by appropriately qualified persons, who may not necessarily be Instructors.

Page 3, Item 4 (Fatality – Target Skysports). The Chairman stated that the Police are continuing to investigate this fatality and a letter from the Chief Investigating Officer will be included in the next BPA magazine, requesting assistance from anyone who may have some information, which might help their investigation.

Page 5, Item 5 (Incident/Injury Reports - v). It was stated at the last meeting that all the Tandem malfunction reports received this year were to 'pro-packed' canopies. This was incorrect, as one had been 'flat-packed'. However, since the last meeting, three more Tandem malfunction reports had been received that had been to 'flat-packed' canopies.

Page 8, Item 6 (Panels of Inquiry/Working Groups). With regard to the Panel, following the Hinton fatality, the Chairman advised those present that this item would now be dealt with under A.O.B. as this and two other items may be held in camera. He stated that it would therefore be easier to deal with all these items towards the end of the meeting.

Page 9, Item 6 (Panels of Inquiry/Working Groups). Following John Horne's Panel report at the last meeting, where he asked for input regarding the CD he had sent to CCIs. He is yet to receive comments or suggestions and would like to remind CCIs that input would help the Panel when considering possible recommendations.

It was pointed out at the meeting that with the good weather during the past two months, the majority of CCIs will have been very busy during this period and may not have had the time to peruse John Horne's CD.

The Chairman asked CCIs if they do have time to have a look at the CD and to get some comments to the Panel, as it would be much appreciated.

3. MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING FROM THE RIGGERS SUB COMMITTEE MEETING OF THE 7 AUGUST 2003

Paul Applegate stated that he had nothing to report from the previous Minutes.

The Chairman of STC referred to a proposal agreed at the previous Riggers Meeting that BPA Riggers and Packing Courses can be held outside the UK, or outside of an overseas Affiliated Club. Although this had been accepted by the Riggers' Committee, the NCSO and TO had felt that this was a policy decision and should therefore go to Council.

The Chairman of STC advised the Committee that this matter had been discussed at the Council Meeting on the 19 August and an extract from the Minutes had been circulated with the Agenda, where Council had asked that this the subject be discussed by STC, before they make a final decision.

Circulated to those present was an e-mail from Allan Hewitt detailing the request he made to the Riggers Committee requesting permission to run BPA Rigging/Packing courses at his Club in Spain.

A lengthy discussion ensued, during which the Committee felt that they could foresee major problems if establishments outside the control of BPA were granted leave to run BPA training courses. They also felt that there were many other areas that the Association may not have control of and that was of immense concern to the Committee. There was also concern that if the Association set a precedent of permitting these Courses to be run, then this may open the 'floodgates' for other people wishing to run Courses outside of the UK.

Some members of STC felt that exporting our teaching methods was a good thing and something that we as an Association should be proud.

Paul Applegate stated that he understood CCIs concerns. However, he supported the request because from a rigging point of view he believed the Association was in need of places to run Courses. He stated that Courses in the UK are normally held during the winter months, but Allan Hewitt had the facilities to be able to run these Courses all year round and Allan had stated in his correspondence that all his Courses would be run under the auspices of the BPA.

The Chairman stated that no one was questioning Allan Hewitt's ability or the facilities at his Drop Zone in Spain. It was merely a policy decision that was to be considered.

The Chairman stated that, as Council required STC's opinion as to whether riggers or packers Courses should be held outside of the UK or at RAPA or Cyprus. He asked for a show of hands from those present as to whether they were in agreement with this or not, to enable him to advise Council. The result of which was as follows:

For: 2

Against: 7

Abstentions: 10

The Chairman stated that he would advise Council of STC's feelings on this matter.

There being no further matters arising, it was proposed by Paul Applegate and seconded by Pete Sizer that the Minutes of the Riggers' Sub-Committee Meeting of the 7th August 2003 be accepted.

For: 16

Against: 0

Abstentions: 3

Carried

Paul Applegate advised those present that he had nothing to report from that evening's Riggers Committee Meeting.

4. FATALITY – BRITISH SKYSPORTS

Unfortunately since the last meeting there had been two fatalities. The first was at British Skysports, Bridlington, on the 22nd August. The jumper was Grant Hager. A Board of Inquiry resume had been previously circulated with the agenda.

At approximately 16:10 hrs on Friday 22nd August 2003 at British Skysports, Bridlington, Grant Hager, an FAI 'A' Certificate parachutist with 29 jumps, boarded a Cessna 208B along with thirteen other parachutists. Grant was jumping a PD Navigator 200 canopy.

The aircraft climbed to approximately 13,000ft AGL. A 'jump run' was made over the PLA. Once the aircraft was at the exit point, the parachutists on board exited individually or in small groups. Grant was the eighth parachutist to exit the aircraft. He was carrying out a solo jump. All parachutists' canopies were seen to deploy at the correct altitude (between 2-3000ft AGL), and all were observed to be flying correctly.

At approximately 200-300ft AGL, Grant's canopy was observed to be flying towards some farm buildings, which were some considerable distance from the designated landing area for Student and Intermediate parachutists and close to the permitted landing area for Experienced parachutists. At approximately 50-100ft the Grant's canopy was seen to make a radical left turn. The parachute completed approximately 270°, at which point he impacted with the ground, approximately 150 metres south of the clubhouse.

A BPA Board of Inquiry was instigated, comprising of the National Coach & Safety Officer and the Technical Officer. Their conclusions and recommendation are below:

CONCLUSIONS

The Conclusions of the Board are that Grant made an uneventful free fall descent, deployed his main parachute at the correct altitude, but failed to remain in a suitable area in order to land in the area designated for inexperienced and intermediate parachutists. It appeared that

he might have intended to land closer to the club buildings, in an area where experienced parachutists are permitted to land.

At a very low altitude Grant initiated a radical turn in order to avoid a hazardous area, though a slight turn would have enabled him to avoid the hazards. The wind direction had changed by approximately 90° since the previous lift, though the wind speed was low and a satisfactory landing could have been achieved facing in any direction. He then struck the ground at high speed before fully completing the turn. The CCI had shouted to Grant to turn left, to avoid the hazards, but it is not known as to whether he had heard him.

RECOMMENDATION

The Recommendation of the Board is that the subsequent Panel of Inquiry, which follows a Board of Inquiry and is set up to investigate any peripheral aspects to the fatality, considers the following:

“ Whether it may be appropriate to take further measures to discourage parachutists from occasionally seeking to land in areas not commensurate with their level of skills in canopy control.”

It was proposed by Nick Johnston and seconded by Mike Rust that the Board of Inquiry Report, including the Conclusions and Recommendations be accepted.

Carried Unanimously

The Chairman informed the meeting that the Panel of Inquiry has been instigated and is ‘Chaired’ by Ian Rosenvinge. The other members are John Page and Ray Armstrong.

5. FATALITY – NETHERAVON

The second fatality occurred at Netheravon on Sunday, the 5th October. A Board of Inquiry report would be presented at the next STC. For this meeting, only an interim report was available.

Esmond Liggett a very experienced parachutist, and jump pilot, was carrying out a solo jump from 13,000ft, on the first lift of the day. He was second out at altitude. He was not seen in free fall and no canopy was observed. When he was located, it was noted that his main canopy had not been deployed and only the pilot chute and reserve bridle line were out of the container. This probably occurred on impact.

It was also noted that the main BOC toggle was just inside the pouch and was not visible. Esmond did not have an AAD or an audible altimeter and had been wearing glasses, secured by a cord. No goggles were located. He was also wearing fairly thick gloves.

The Board of Inquiry (the NCSO and TO) had not yet completed their investigation, but it was possible that Esmond may have reached for his toggle and inadvertently pushed it in the pouch. The Board tested this and found that this could easily happen. He may then have been unable to locate the toggle, possibly losing altitude awareness. It does not look as though he attempted to carry out his reserve drills.

6. INCIDENT/INJURY REPORTS RESUME (Previously Item 5)

The Chairman stated that since the last STC meeting, there have been a considerable amount of injury and incident reports received. This was probably due, to some extent to the exceptionally good summer.

- i) There had been 38 Student injury reports received since the last meeting, 27 male and 11 female. 34 were landing injuries, 1 Student aggravated an old injury during training and was unable to make a jump. 1 Student caught his container on the door during exit and experienced 'whiplash' to his neck during deployment. 1 student caught his arm in the lines during deployment and pulled a muscle in his shoulder. Another Student passed out under canopy and landed whilst still unconscious, sustaining cuts and bruises to his face. 5 of the landing injuries were on round/aeroconical canopies, the other 29 were on ram-air canopies.
- ii) There had been 19 injury reports received for Intermediate/Experienced Parachutists. 16 male and 3 female. 1 of the injuries involved an experienced jumper, with 1150 jumps, who had severe twists on deployment, spent a long time trying to clear them. He cutaway very low (below 1,000ft), having experienced a hard cutaway pull. His reserve opened low, he got line stretch and the canopy partially opened as he hit the ground. He sustained a broken hip and ankle. Another injury was to a video cameraman who clipped power lines trying to get back to the landing area after a deep spot. He landed heavily on his back, compressing a vertebra.
- iii) Since the last meetings there had been 14 Student Parachutist Malfunctions/Deployment Problems reported. 11 male and 3 female. All were on ram-air canopies. One incident involved a static line snapping. The bag came off the canopy and the canopy deployed normally. It appears that one set of lines had passed around the static line, probably during packing and as the lines started to deploy they cut through the static line near the bag attachment point. The static line at that point is red in colour and one set of lines was found to be discoloured red. The Riggers also discussed this incident that afternoon.
- iv) There had been 54 reports of Malfunction/Deployment Problems to Intermediate or Experienced Parachutists since the last meeting. 47 male and 7 female. A majority of the reports were twists, though there were quite a number of line over malfunctions reported.
- v) A large number of Tandem Injury and Incident reports had been received since the last meeting. 11 injury reports had been received. 9 of the injuries were fairly minor and 2 were broken legs. There had been 18 malfunction/deployment problems reported. One of these involved an instructor who lost altitude awareness and opened just before his Cypress fired resulting in two canopies out. This incident was to be discussed at the end of the meeting, in camera. Most of the incident reports were malfunctions. Many of them knotted lines. The Chairman stated that packers must ensure that the steering lines have been cleared of twists before packing, as many of these malfunctions could possibly be avoided.
- vi) There had been five reports received regarding 6 AADs firings. 1 involved a cameraman who was videoing the Tandem instructor who went low. This incident was also discussed at the end of the meeting. Another report involved two freefly parachutists who both lost altitude awareness while jumping on the same lift and both had Cypress fires at the same time, having just deployed their mains. Another

involved a Category 8 parachutist with 29 jumps, who deployed his main low. His Cypress fired, but the reserve did not inflate. One report involved a Category 6 parachutist who deployed low and his FXC fired. The final report involved an FS1 parachutist who had a freefall collision, resulting in him becoming unconscious. His Cypress fired and he was found still unconscious having landed downwind. He suffered severe facial bruising.

The Chairman stated that this year there had now been two freefall collisions where the jumpers were knocked out and were saved by their AADs. Also, the fatality at Netheravon last weekend could possibly have been prevented if the jumper's equipment had been fitted with an AAD. The Chairman asked CCIs how they would feel about the possibility of making AADs mandatory for all jumpers. He stated that this was something that himself and the Technical Officer would like them to consider.

Ian Rosenvinge advised those present that he had brought up this subject in the past and stated that the feeling of CCIs at that time was that they did not want to make AADs mandatory for everyone.

Ian Rosenvinge stated that if the Association was to bring it in at this stage CCIs may wish to consider making it mandatory for either 'B' Licence (red) or even 'C' Licence (red) parachutists.

Some CCIs present believed that in time everyone would have an AAD, as the majority of people getting qualified are going to buy their own kit which will be fitted with an AAD. Therefore, even on the second hand market, most of the equipment is fitted with an AAD.

Following further discussion on this matter, the majority of CCIs supported the idea, but believed it was wrong to mandate it for everyone as they believed it should be a matter of choice.

The Chairman stated that it was not something that he wished CCI's to make a decision on that evening, he just wished to get their opinion on the subject at this time.

The Chairman then continued with the Incident/Injury Reports – resume.

- vii) A couple of reports had been received of display misfires. One was a malfunction report and the other involved a team of nine, three of whom landed outside the arena.
- viii) Reports had been received of a canopy collision and two of CF entanglements. All landed safely without further problem. A report had also been received of a parachutist losing his video camera from his helmet in freefall.
- ix) Three reports had been received involving aircraft. All of which would be discussed at the next Pilots' meeting. One involved a damaged tail wheel. Another involved the loss of radio communication. The final one involved an aircraft which had a fuel problem, which resulted in the engine stopping and the aircraft making an emergency landing and being written off. The aircraft had already dropped the parachutists when the incident occurred.

7. **PANELS OF INQUIRY/WORKING GROUPS (Previously Item 6)**

A) Panel of Inquiry – RAFSPA Fatality

The Panel of Inquiry Report had been previously circulated with the agenda. The Panel was chaired by Nigel Allen and the other members were Ronnie O' Brien and Mike Rust.

The Recommendations of the Panel which were to be voted on, were as follows:

- i) All clubs/centres should have in place a system, which lays down guidelines for the use of club/centre hire equipment. This system should take into account the jumper's weight, experience level and any manufacturers' recommendations.

It was proposed by Ronnie O' Brien and seconded by Mike Rust that the above Recommendation be accepted.

For: 17 Against: 0 Abstentions: 1 (Nick Johnston)

Carried

- ii) All clubs/centres should have in place a system which ensures that recipients of issued club equipment who intend to pack for themselves have the appropriate endorsement on their packing certificate. This would prevent future similar breaches of the Operations Manual.

It was proposed by Mike Rust and seconded by Ronnie O' Brien that the above recommendation be accepted.

For: 17 Against: 0 Abstentions: 1 (Nick Johnston)

Carried

- iii) Although there was a breach of the Operations Manual concerning the jumper's packing certificate, the Panel felt that this minor breach was easily made and therefore Recommendation 2 above is sufficient and no further action will be necessary.

It was agreed by those present that the above recommendation did not require a vote.

- iv) All clubs/centres should remind experienced parachutists and holders of IC1 Grade qualifications of their responsibilities, particularly that they must hold a packing certificate for any club equipment where they carry out packing checks and that they must check for maintenance and serviceability every time they pack equipment.

It was proposed by Mike Rust and seconded by Ronnie O' Brien that the above Recommendation be accepted.

Carried Unanimously

- v) It is recommended that where a Club/Centre has a specific landing area for certain categories of jumper then these need to be clearly stated in the Club/Centre SOPs. The intended landing area should be included in a DZ brief for any visiting parachutist.

It was proposed by Mike Rust and seconded by Andy Montrou that the above Recommendation be accepted.

Carried Unanimously

The Chairman thanked the Panel for their work.

B) Investigation – Headcorn Freefall Collision

The Investigation Report into the Headcorn Freefall Collision had been previously circulated with the agenda. Steve Apps and Arron Hearsum had carried out the investigation and the Chairman thanked them for their work.

The Recommendation from the investigation was as follows:

‘That experienced parachutists are reminded that when jumping with others, they should satisfy themselves that their fellow jumpers are competent to carry out the planned exercises and that it also their responsibility to be aware of other parachutists in the air’ .

It was proposed by Andy Montrou and seconded by Ian Cashman that the above Recommendation be accepted.

Carried Unanimously

8. INSTRUCTOR COURSES (Previously Item 7)

There had been two instructor courses since the last meeting. Both course reports had been previously circulated with the agenda:

- A) The first course (3/2003) had been held at Target Skysports, Hibaldstow from the 11 – 20 August and the Association thanked Target Skysports for hosting the course. There was one recommendation from the course, which needed to be voted on by STC:

‘That Aff Afsharian be given a six month extension to his Category System Basic Instructor rating’ .

It was proposed by Ian Cashman and seconded by Mac MacLennan that the above Recommendation be accepted.

Carried Unanimously

- B) The second course, an AFF and Tandem Instructor course was held at North London Parachute Centre, Chatteris, from the 22 – 25 September and the Association thanked them for hosting the course.

There was one recommendation from the course, which needed to be voted on by STC. This recommendation was for a change in the Operations Manual:

That Section 6 (Instructors), Paragraph 4 (Tandem Instructor), sub-para 4.6. (Tandem instructor Currency) 4.6.3. of the Operations Manual be changed to read:

4.6.3. All current TIs must have practised Tandem Reserve Drills within the previous 60 days. It is the responsibility of the TIs to ensure that the reserve drills are observed and signed for in their log book by a CCI, or CCI nominated TI.

It was proposed by Karen Farr and seconded by Ian Cashman that the above Recommendation be accepted.

Carried Unanimously

9. PERMISSIONS (Previously Item 8)

- a) Dave Lewis gave the meeting details of his request which had been previously circulated with the agenda requesting permission to carry out two Tandem descents at Shobdon Airfield, with Tandem Students, in order to evaluate the practicalities of running a Tandem operation at Shobdon in the future. The Committee was advised that Shobdon had been an Affiliated DZ in the past.

There followed some discussion on this request and it was pointed out that Tandem Students had never been permitted to jump into anywhere that looked like a display. The Committee therefore suggested that the only way that Dave Lewis could achieve his aim was to get Shobdon cleared as a drop zone. At this point Dave Lewis withdrew his request.

- b) Circulated to those present was a letter from Dave Hickling requesting a reinstatement and six month extension to the CSBI rating of Michael Outen, which ran out on the 30th September.

It was proposed by Dave Hickling and seconded by Nick Johnston that the above permission be accepted.

Carried Unanimously

- c) Circulated to those present was a letter from Ian Cashman requesting a six month extension to the CSBI rating of Adele Murray, who had been unable to attend a course CSI Course because of injury.

It was proposed by Ian Cashman and seconded by Brian McGill that the above permission be accepted.

Carried Unanimously

- d) Circulated to those present was a letter from Pete Sizer proposing that Rob Oakley be permitted to attend a CSBI Course with a view to taking the CSI examination.

Pete Sizer advised the Committee that Rob had been a 'Foreign' AFF & Tandem instructor at Headcorn for the last two seasons he would like him to be able obtain a BPA CSI rating. He stated that Rob qualified as an Australian static line instructor in 1985 and holds a current New Zealand static line rating.

It was proposed by Pete Sizer and seconded by Ian Rosenvinge that the above permission be accepted.

Carried Unanimously

Pete Sizer advised the Committee that he had three 'Foreign Tandem Instructors' who had worked for him for the past 2-3 seasons. Pete asked the Committee what would they need to do to convert to BPA Tandem Instructor ratings.

The Chairman advised Pete that his Foreign Tandem Instructors would need to attend all of the necessary BPA qualification Courses to attain a BPA Tandem Instructor rating, unless he wished to make an application to STC for a 'permission' against this requirement.

- e) Circulated to those present was a letter from Nick Johnston requesting extensions to the CSBI ratings of Dave Saville and Tracy Bartley. Both were booked on the May 2004 CSI course. Therefore Dave Saville required a six-month extension, as his rating expires on the 30.11.03 and Tracy Bartley required a nine-month extension, as her rating expired on the 31.8.03.

It was proposed by Nick Johnston and seconded by Ian Cashman that the above permission be accepted.

Carried Unanimously

- f) Dave Emerson gave the Committee details of his request that two people over the age of 55 be permitted to train for solo parachuting at Hinton. The first, John Jenkins who is 63 years of age and had been a Physical Training Instructor for 30 years in the army and is currently a physiotherapist. The second, Robert Orr who is aged 68 who had previously undertaken a Tandem descent. He runs everyday and plays squash regularly and whom Dave Emerson believed to be very fit.

The Chairman asked the Committee whether they believed that these Students should present themselves to STC. Some members felt that it would be beneficial if they had presented themselves to STC as they felt unable to make a decision on someone whom they did not know anything about.

Mike Rust stated that prior to the last STC Clubs and Centres were taking people on of all sorts of ages and that this was at the CCIs discretion. The reason the age limit of 55 was brought in bringing people to STC were exceptions rather than the rule. He believed that Dave Emerson had made an assessment of these people and had brought that assessment to STC.

Dr John Carter, the BPA Medical Advisor was present at the meeting and he was asked for his opinion on this matter. Dr Carter stated that he could not really give an informed opinion when the people concerned were not present at the meeting.

Dave Emerson advised those present that both gentleman had been told that if permission is given, then their training will be carefully monitored and if there is any doubt at all about their ability to make a safe parachute descent, they will not be allowed to make the descent.

The Committee believed that Dave Emerson had complied with the requirements with regard to this matter and it was proposed by Dave Emerson and seconded by Mike Rust that Mr John Jenkins and Mr Robert Orr be permitted to make a solo parachute descent.

For: 12

Against: 1

Abstentions: 5

Carried

Mike Rust asked if it was preferable in the future for these people attend in person. The Chairman stated that in his opinion he believed it was preferable because CCIs may find it difficult to make an assessment themselves when the person concerned is not present, however he pointed out that this was not a requirement. The Chairman also stated that CCIs may wish to consider the comments made that evening regarding this item, when making similar requests in the future.

- g) Circulated to those present was a letter from Ian Cashman requesting STC approval to use Middle Wallop and Upavon airfields as Alternative PLAs, to be used when Netheravon can not be used. In April 2001 STC approved these two airfields as Temporary PLAs whilst the foot & mouth problem was happening. Both PLAs had been inspected by the Technical Officer at that time and approved.

It was proposed by Ian Cashman and seconded by Alan Wilkinson that the above permission be accepted.

Carried Unanimously

- h) Ian Rosenvinge gave the meeting details of his request for the reinstatement and six month extension to the CSBI rating of Paul Dorward, which ran out on the 30th September.

It was proposed by Ian Rosenvinge and seconded by Pat Walters that the above permission be accepted.

Carried Unanimously

- i) Circulated to those present was a letter from Alan Wilkinson requesting that a Robert Tennant-Gray, who is 57 be permitted to undertake AFF training at St Andrews.

Alan Wilkinson advised the Committee that Robert Tennant-Gray had previous military parachuting experience and had done two tandem descents at St Andrews in the last 2 months. The Committee was also advised that he underwent a heart transplant some 4 or 5 years ago and since then had run marathons, climbed a number of small and medium sized peaks in the UK and abroad and had amassed more than 70 medals from the "transplant games". He stated that without doubt he is a very fit man.

Alan Wilkinson also advised those present that he had contacted Mr Tennant-Gray's Cardio Transplant surgeon who has given his full approval and signed the appropriate medical forms.

Once again the Committee asked Dr John Carter the BPA Medical Advisor for his opinion. Dr Carter stated that he did not have privy to the full information, so again he could not express an opinion. However it is stated that he was happy to talk to Mr Tennant-Gray's surgeon.

It was proposed by Alan Wilkinson and seconded by Mike Rust that Mr Robert Tennant-Gray be permitted to undertake AFF training at St Andrews with the proviso that the BPA Medical Advisor was satisfied with Mr Tennant-Gray's fitness to parachute following consultation with his surgeon.

For: 16

Against: 0

Abstentions: 2

Carried

- j) Circulated to those present was a letter from Steve Jelf requesting a six month extension to the CSBI rating of Tom Parry.

It was proposed by Dave Lewis and seconded by Pat Walters that the above permission be accepted.

Carried Unanimously

10. A.O.B. (Previously Item 9)

The next part of the meeting was held 'in camera'. All observers, other than BPA Examiners and the BPA Medical Advisor were asked leave the room.

- i) **Item 2 from the Agenda – Matters Arising (Panels of Inquiry)** Following the Panel of Inquiry into the fatality at Hinton, both David Hickling and the Panel chairman Mick Nealis had written to Council. Their letters had been circulated to CCIs with the agenda, as Council asked that this matter be discussed by STC. Dave Emerson had also personally sent a letter to some CCIs regarding this issue. A letter from Doug Peacock had also been received and had been circulated to those present.

All parties concerned were given the opportunity to present their version of events that had occurred on the day of the fatality.

The Committee considered everyone's comments and came to the conclusion that there may have been some confusion on the day of the fatality when the TO arrived at Hinton.

The Committee also agreed that BPA Form 146 were the requirements to be observed following a fatal accident and it was stressed that should the NCSO or TO arrive at a parachute centre and request that parachuting be stopped, then this request MUST be observed at all times.

- ii) The Tandem incident referred to under item 5 of the agenda, involved a Tandem Instructor and video cameraman who both lost altitude awareness in freefall. Which resulted in low main deployments, with both their Cypress AAD activating.

The incident took place at Netheravon on the 14th September. The Tandem Instructor, who had made approximately 90 Tandem descents since he gained his rating a year ago, was carrying out a descent from approximately 14,000ft. The cameraman was making his first Tandem video jump, having previously carried out approximately 16 camera jumps. The Tandem Instructor did not look at his altimeter until approximately 2,000ft at which point he immediately deployed his main. The cameraman was concentrating on videoing the Tandem pair and did not read his altimeter until the Tandem Instructor deployed his main. Shortly after deployment both the Tandem Cypres and the cameraman's Expert Cypres fired. In both cases the reserve parachutes deployed. The Tandem Instructor was unable to release his main, as both canopies risers were twisted together. The Tandem Instructor and the Student were uninjured on landing. The cameraman released his main parachute and landed under his reserve.

Both Parachutists were immediately grounded for a month, pending an APA STC meeting. The APA STC meeting took place on the 2nd October and resulted in the following actions:

- i) That the Tandem Instructor remains suspended from parachuting for a month from the date of the incident and has his Tandem Instructor rating suspended for 18 months. After which he must attend another Tandem Instructor Course, with a CCI's recommendation. He was also given a formal written reprimand.
- ii) That the video cameraman remains suspended from parachuting for a month from the date of the incident. He was also given a formal written reprimand.
- iii) That from the 1st January 2004 all parachutists jumping cameras at Army Centres must have an audible altimeter fitted.

The Committee was advised that Ian Cashman would also like STC to endorse the APA's decision with regard to the two jumpers concerned.

Both jumpers were present at the meeting and were able to answer questions from the Committee. They were then asked to leave the room whilst STC made their deliberations.

Following the Committee's consideration of this matter, it was proposed by Ian Cashman and seconded by Alan Wilkinson that STC endorse the above stated actions taken by APA in relation to both jumpers.

Carried Unanimously

Ian Cashman advised the Committee that it will be mandatory at Army Centres for cameramen to wear audible altimeters from the 1st January 2004. He stated that he would be making a formal proposal at the next meeting that audible altimeters be made mandatory for all cameramen.

The Tandem Instructor and videoman were invited to return to the meeting where they were both advised of STC's decision.

- iii) The Chairman advised the Committee that he had received information to the effect that John Fisher would be present that evening, following an incident last year where his Instructor ratings were suspended until he attended an STC to explain his actions.

The Chairman said he was extremely disappointed that John had not turned up that evening as a lot of work had been spent over the last few days in getting all the relative paperwork together in relation to this matter to present to the Committee.

- iv) Phil Cavanagh referred to a TV programme recently screened involving parachuting during which he had noted that some areas may have contravened the BPA Operations Manual. Phil Cavanagh therefore asked the Chairman if he would follow this up, to which the Chairman agreed.

Date of next Meeting:- Thursday 4 December 2003
At 7 p.m.
BPA Offices, Leicester

15 October 2003

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