

BRITISH PARACHUTE ASSOCIATION
SAFETY AND TRAINING COMMITTEE MEETING
BPA OFFICES, 5 WHARF WAY, GLEN PARVA, LEICESTER
THURSDAY 11 AUGUST 2005

Present:

John Hitchen	-	Chairman STC
Kieran Brady	-	Skydive Strathallan
Pat Walters	-	Tilstock
Andy Goodall	-	Netheravon
Steve Jelf	-	Silver Stars
Ian Rosenvinge	-	Peterlee
Nick Johnstone	-	British Skysports
Dave Hickling	-	BPS, Langar
Phil Cavanagh	-	Black Knights
Pete Szer	-	Headcorn
Stuart Meacock	-	PPC
John Page	-	Skydive London
Paul Hollow	-	Target Skysports
Mike Bolton	-	LPS
Tony Knight	-	UK Parachuting
Dave Emerson	-	Hinton Skydiving
Dave Openshaw	-	JSPC (L)
Paul Applegate	-	Riggers Committee

Apologies Nigel Allen (Andy Goodall represented Nigel at the meeting), Barrie Buck, Dennis Buchanan, Jim White, Mike Rust.

In Attendance:

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

Observers Dave Walker, Karen Farr, John Harding, Rick Boardman, Colin Fitzmaurice, David Leonard, Michael Fogh, Nick Brown, Jane Buckle, Tim Scorer, Mark Maynard, Dave Major, Jeff Illidge.

ITEM

1. MINUTES OF THE STC MEETING OF THE 9 JUNE 2005

It was proposed by John Page and seconded by Dave Emerson that the Minutes of the STC meeting of the 9 June 2005 be accepted as a true record.

Carried Unanimously

2. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE STC MEETING OF THE 9 JUNE 2005

Page 2, Item 2 – AFF Instructor ratings. The Chairman reported that a meeting of AFF Examiners/Instructor had held a meeting in July to discuss AFF Instructor qualifications and following that meeting it was intended that Paul Hollow would put forward, hopefully for the next meeting, a proposal for STC to consider.

Page 10, Item 10 – A.O.B. (a). The Chairman stated that since the last meeting there had been some confusion regarding the need for an exemption from the ‘ram-air’ reserve rule on displays. This was a main agenda item (agenda item 6).

Pete Sizer referred to the voting on this item, as although Alan Wilkinson had been representing his CCI at the meeting he had not been able to vote on this particular item.

The Technical Officer pointed out that the STC Terms of Reference state that appointed representatives may attend STC, but not vote, provided written permission from the CCI is received. He stated that this was a policy decision made by BPA Council some years previously.

Pete said prior to this decision being made by BPA Council appointed representatives had been able to vote at STC. He asked if STC members wished to revert back to this system.

The Chairman asked for a show of hands from those present with regard to this. There was no support from CCIs to revert back to this system. Therefore, Pete was advised that if he wished the Terms of Reference to be changed, he would need to approach BPA Council directly.

3. MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING FROM THE RIGGERS SUB-COMMITTEE MEETING OF THE 9 JUNE 2005

Paul Applegate advised the Committee that he had nothing to report from the previous Minutes. Therefore it was proposed by Paul Applegate and seconded by Pat Walters that the Minutes of the Riggers Sub-Committee Meeting of the 9 June 2005 be accepted as a true record.

Carried Unanimously

Paul stated that he did not have anything to report from that evening’ s meeting.

4. INCIDENT/INJURY REPORTS - RESUME

- i) There had been 28 Student injury reports received since the last meeting. 16 male and 12 female. 4 of the reports were injuries just prior to, or on deployment. 2 were during training, one Student walked into the side of a parked aircraft, the other was during PLF training. The remaining 22 injuries were on landing, including one where the Student had a main/reserve entanglement. The Student had made a weak exit from the aircraft, turning 180 degrees. A main rigging line caught under the bottom of the container, causing a rotation. The reserve deployed through the main’ s lines, which were still partially attached, restricting the reserve opening. The Student had a hard landing fracturing a vertebra. The CCI concerned was present and was able to provide STC with further details. All the landing injuries were under ram-air canopies.

- ii) There had been 14 injury reports received for 'A' Certificate parachutists and above. 10 male and 4 female. 13 were landing injuries and 1 was on exit.
- iii) Since the last meeting there had been 10 Student Parachutist Malfunctions/Deployment Problems reported. 6 male and 4 female.
- iv) There had been 49 reports of Malfunction/Deployment Problems to 'A' Certificate parachutists and above, since the last meeting. 40 male and 9 female. The majority of these seem to be twist/rotations, many caused by brakes firing. The TO and NCSO believed a bit more care when packing could alleviate many of these problems.
- v) There had been 9 Tandem Malfunction/Deployment Problem reports received since the last meeting. There had also been 11 Injury reports received. 2 involved Students fainting under canopy. 5 were minor injuries. There was one dislocated shoulder and 1 broken ankle. The final 2 reports involved both the Student and her instructor. Whilst coming into land the instructor encountered turbulence, partially collapsing the canopy, resulting in a very heavy landing. The Student broke her jaw and injured her pelvis and the instructor broke his femur. The CCI was able to give further details.
- vi) One report had been received of an AAD firing. A parachutist with 23 jumps was making a 2-way FS jump with a CSBI. The pre-arranged break off height was to be 4,500ft. However, the jumper did not stop at that height and was given a pull signal by the instructor, but did not react. She was observed to deploy her main at a very low altitude. As the main was deploying the AAD fired and the reserve also deployed. At approximately 3-400ft the canopies developed into a down plane. The jumper finally released her brakes and the down plane ceased. She took a heavy landing, without injury.

Upon questioning by the CCI she appeared to be unaware of her altitude and even that she had two canopies inflated. Her CCI wrote to all Clubs (via the BPA) informing them that he had grounded her.

The CCI was present at the meeting and was able to provide further details of this incident to those present. He stated that although he had grounded the jumper concerned, he had given her the chance to jump again and told her that he would be willing to take her through AFF again, but to date he had not heard from her. He felt that CCIs should be aware in the event of her turning up at another Centre and the same thing happening again.

Following some discussion on this matter, it was proposed by Paul Hollow and seconded by Pete Sizer that this Committee write to the jumper concerned advising her of the actions already taken by Paul Hollow and also that the only way that she could jump again at this time, is with her CCI.

Carried Unanimously

- vii) Four reports had been received of display misfires. 2 Canopy entanglements and a malfunction. Also, one of the reports concerned a display jumper jumping a flag with a weight on the end, which came into contact with a member of the general public, luckily the spectator was not badly hurt.

- viii) Ten reports had been received of ' off landings' six at clubs, including one where the jumper broke his leg and 4 on displays.
- ix) Two reports had been received where two jumpers jumping wing suits collided, one hurting his leg and the other hitting his head and damaging his shoulder. Reports had also been received of a CF canopy entanglement and another of a jumper having to jettison a skysurfing board. Two reports had been received of canopy collisions.
- x) Two reports had been received of aircraft problems. Both were landing problems. One was a Cherokee 6, which landed, hit a hump on a grass strip and became ' air bound' again and the wing tip caught some crop when it landed again. The other, a Cessna 206, turned after landing, catching the propeller. It was suspected that a brake had seized.

5. PANEL OF INQUIRY - HEADCORN

The Chairman of STC stepped down from the Chair for this item, as he had been part of the original Board of Inquiry. The Technical Officer (TO) therefore took the Chair for this item. The TO stated that it was his intention to hold this item ' in camera' and asked that all observers with exception to those involved and their representative leave the meeting whilst this item was in progress.

Panel of Inquiry Following the Board of Inquiry into the Death of Peter Leighton-Woodruff

The TO advised those present that the above Panel of Inquiry Report had been sent out to CCIs with the agenda, together with representations from Pete Szer. He stated that around the table was a written response from the Panel to Pete' s representations. He allowed those present time to read the response.

The Board was chaired by Karen Farr and the other two members were David Hickling and Phil Collett.

The TO invited Pete Szer, Jane Buckle and & Mark Maynard and their representative to address the meeting and to add to the written representations if they wished. They were also able to answer questions from those present. Following which, they were asked leave the meeting room whilst STC made their deliberations.

Much, in depth discussion took place by those present. Questions were put to the Panel members present regarding the report and recommendations. After which the TO stated that the Report including the Conclusions (below), but minus the recommendations would be voted on first.

The Conclusions of the Panel were as follows:

CONCLUSIONS:

- a) If there was a breach by Peter Leighton-Woodruff (PLW) of the BPA Operations Manual on the fatal jump it was that he did not wear his glasses. However, PLW had never been in the habit of wearing them whilst jumping and he may have formed the opinion he was better off without them. This may have been alright for daylight jumping but given that PLW was long sighted and almost without doubt affected by the helmet lights (i.e. some form of Temporary Blindness) he

may not have been able to read his altimeter even with the 'aid' of his helmet lights (quite possibly the reflection back on the altimeter could have made the situation worse.

After examining the footage of the fatal jump it is estimated that his opening altitude was between 3000 and 3500 feet, possibly some 500 feet lower than he expected. PLW appeared to follow his normal 'after opening' format. This indicates that he was unaware he may have been lower than usual.

It is the conclusion of the Panel that possible Temporary Blindness, caused by a poor choice of helmet lighting, and possible loss of altitude awareness were the major contributing factors in the cause of Peter Leighton-Woodruffs death.

b) It is believed by the Panel of Inquiry that there were two breaches to the BPA Operations Manual:

i) The jump taking place was a night Tandem descent, which was in contravention of Section 2, Para 8 NB.

'Intermediate or Experienced parachutists attached to Tandem instructors will be classified as 'Student Tandem Parachutists' other than those taking part in Tandem Instructor Evaluation Courses (Section 4, Para 5).'

Also see Section 8, para 9.1:

'9.1 FAI 'B' Certificate (Red) is the minimum qualification to participate in a night descent (also see Section 13 - Display Parachuting, para 3.2.5).'

ii). Section 6, para 3, sub para 3.1.2:

'Student Tandem Parachutists must wear a 'French Type' ribbed helmet.'

The video of the jump shows Jane Buckle (JB) wearing a hard helmet during the descent.

The Panel also feel that although the camera helmet and lighting set-up used was not illegal, bad judgment had been shown in allowing its use. The helmet was poorly designed and could have caused a danger during deployment and there would appear to have been no background work done with regard to the effects of the lights used on night vision.

The Panel are aware that Pete Sizer (PS) disagrees that there were any breaches and he feels the Operations Manual is open to interpretation. However, evidence shows that PS was aware that permission is required for a Tandem night jump. There have been two permissions previously granted for Tandem night jumps – on 6.4.2000 (PS sent apologies for this meeting but minutes were circulated showing permission granted) and on 10.10.02 (PS attended this meeting as a voting member).

The 'NB' was incorporated into the BPA Operations Manual, following a re-write, in February 1996 (approved at STC 01.02.96 proposed by Jane Buckle, seconded by Skippy Morris and carried unanimously).

It should also be noted that 13 CCI' s attended the STC meeting on 2nd December 2004 where the minutes report:

' The committee agreed that there had been a suspected breach of the Operations Manual and that the Board of Inquiry was not wrong in the actions they had taken.

It was therefore proposed by Rob Noble-Nesbitt and seconded by Paul Hollow that the Board of Inquiry was correct in temporarily suspending the Instructor ratings of those involved in this suspected breach (Carried unanimously)' .

- c) It is the Panel' s opinion that there is no ' nice way' to suspend Instructor ratings, and whilst feeling a little sympathetic with HPC, there was no other course open to the Board once it had made its decision. It would appear that HPC were informed at the time of the Board' s visit that there was a suspected breach and that ' something' may come of it. Maybe with everything else going on this was not made as clear as it should have been. However the decision of the Board was confirmed to HPC the following day.

The Panel also feel that either the NCSO or TO could have informed the DZ Operator of the outcome of their actions so that he could make any necessary arrangements required to enable him to continue a parachuting operation at HPC.

(End of Conclusions)

It was proposed by John Page and seconded by Mike Bolton that the Panel Report and its Conclusions be accepted.

Carried Unanimously

STC then considered and voted on each of the Panel of Inquiry Recommendations individually.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- a) *Mark Maynard should receive a Letter reminding him of his responsibilities as a Tandem Instructor.*

It was proposed by Kieran Brady and seconded by Paul Hollow that the above Recommendation be accepted.

For: 14 Against: 1 (by proxy) Abstentions: 0

Carried

- b) *That Jane Buckle has her BPA Examiners Rating revoked for 2 years. After this period her re-application should comply with the provisions of the BPA Operations Manual in force at the time of re-application.*

It was proposed by John Page and seconded by Dave Openshaw that the above Recommendation be accepted.

For: 12 Against: 1 (by proxy) Abstentions: 2

Carried

- c) *That Pete Sizer has his BPA Examiners Rating revoked for 3 years and his Advanced Instructor Rating revoked for 1 year. After these periods his re-application should comply with the provisions of the BPA Operations Manual in force at the time of re-application.*

It was proposed by John Page and seconded by Paul Hollow that the above Recommendation be accepted.

A counter proposal was tabled by Tony Knight, seconded by Dave Emerson that Pete Sizer has his BPA Examiners Rating revoked for 3 years and that his Advanced Instructor Rating revoked for 1 year but that the revocation regarding his Advanced Instructor Rating be suspended for 3 years subject to no disciplinary action being taken against him in that 3 years. Also that he is tasked with the costs of the Panel of Inquiry up to a maximum of £1000.

For: 6

Against: 7

Abstentions: 1

Not Carried

As the counter proposal did not carry, a vote was then taken on the original Recommendation from the Panel of Inquiry, which had been proposed by John Page and seconded by Paul Hollow:

For: 8

Against: 5 (incl. 1 by proxy)

Abstentions: 2

Carried

- d) *That the BPA Office should consider implementing a system whereby DZ Operators are informed of any rating suspensions which may affect their daily parachuting operations.*

It was proposed by John Page and seconded by Dave Emerson that the above Recommendation be accepted.

Carried Unanimously

Dave Hickling stated that he felt that perhaps STC should consider some future modification in the way the Panels make their recommendations and gave his reasons behind this.

The TO stated that the BPA Chairman was looking into the whole aspect of disciplinary procedures within the BPA and suggested that Dave and anyone else with any suggestions should put them forward to him to consider.

The TO stated that himself, the NCSO and he believes the Association as a whole were very grateful for people who work on behalf of the Association, whether it be those working on Panels, carrying out inspections etc, their help was very much appreciated.

Following further discussion, it was proposed by John Page proposed a vote of thanks to the Panel members for their work carried out whilst conducting the Panel of Inquiry. This was seconded by Mike Bolton.

Carried Unanimously

Pete Sizer, Jane Buckle, Mark Maynard and their representative were invited to return to the meeting and were advised of STC's decisions concerning the Panel Recommendations. The TO stated that they all had the Right of Appeal.

The above members legal representative raised his concern that during STC deliberations on this matter, the Panel members themselves had 'sat in' during these deliberations.

All observers were invited to return to the meeting and the remainder of the meeting was chaired by the Chairman of STC.

6. BPA OPERATIONS MANUAL RECTIFICATIONS & PROPOSED CHANGE

A paper from the Technical Officer had been circulated with the agenda, detailing some BPA Operations Manual Rectifications and a Proposed Change.

The TO reported that in Section 13 (Displays) of the Operations Manual, Para 4 (Equipment), the *N.B.* at the bottom of the Para, under sub-para 4.3. gave the impression that the *N.B.* applied to all the above sub-paras (see below). However, this was a mistake, as the *N.B.* only applied to sub-par 4.3. and not sub-paras 4.1. & 4.2.

4. EQUIPMENT

- 4.1. Parachutists must be fully familiar with the equipment they intend using on a display.
- 4.2. Parachutists taking part in displays must be equipped with ram-air reserves.
- 4.3. Parachutists taking part in displays must use equipment fitted with an operational AAD, which must be switched on prior to jumping.

N.B. The above does not apply to parachutists taking part in water displays

Therefore, paragraph 4, should read as below:

4. EQUIPMENT

- 4.1. Parachutists must be fully familiar with the equipment they intend using on a display.
- 4.2. Parachutists taking part in displays must be equipped with ram-air reserves.
- 4.3. Parachutists taking part in displays must use equipment fitted with an operational AAD, which must be switched on prior to jumping.

N.B. The above sub-para (4.3) does not apply to parachutists taking part in water displays

Following some discussion, it was proposed by Steve Jelf and seconded by Dave Openshaw that the above BPA Operations Manual rectification be accepted.

Carried Unanimously

The TO also reported that one of the requirements to attend a CSBI or AFFBI course is that the candidate must hold a current Parachuting Aeronautical Ground Radio Operators Licence. However, the relevant paragraphs in the Operations Manual do not include the word 'Parachuting'. Therefore, Section 4 (Instructors), Paras 1.1.5 & 3.1.5. should be changed to read:

1.1.5. Holds a current Parachuting Aeronautical Ground Radio Operators Licence.

3.1.5. Holds a current Parachuting Aeronautical Ground Radio Operators Licence.

Some discussion took place with regard to radio frequencies as there seemed to be different interpretations to the rules. The TO agreed to obtain a clarification and inform the Committee of the outcome.

Following further discussion, it was proposed by Dave Openshaw and seconded by Paul Hollow that the above BPA Operations Manual rectifications be accepted.

Carried Unanimously

The TO also advised the Committee that at the AFF Examiners/Instructors meeting mentioned previously, it was noted that the Operations Manual permits 'solo' exits and 'tracking' to take place on AFF Levels 4 and 5. It had been felt that 'solo' exits should not be permitted before Level 5 at the earliest and that solo 'tracking' should not take place until Level 6. Therefore it is suggested that Section 2, Para 5, sub-paras 5.4. & 5.5. be changed to read:

5.4. Level 4

Start and stop turn(s)

a, Dive exit. b, Wave off.

5.5. Level 5

Turns left and right

a, Solo exit. b, Dive exit. c, Sub-terminal control.

It was proposed by Paul Hollow and seconded by Dave Hickling that the above BPA Operations Manual amendment be accepted.

Carried Unanimously

7. AFF/TANDEM INSTRUCTOR COURSE

The Chairman advised those present that there had been one Instructor Course held since the last meeting. An AFF/Tandem Instructor course had been held at RAFSPA, with the AFF element of the course finishing at Netheravon. This was due to poor weather the first week. The report from the course had been circulated to those present and was for information only.

He stated that the Association wished to thank RAFSPA for hosting the course and Netheravon for its assistance. One AFF Instructor candidates and five Tandem Instructor candidates were successful.

8. **PERMISSIONS**

- a) A letter from Paul Hollow had been circulated with the agenda requesting to revalidate Lee Pugh' s expired CSI rating, by attending a CSBI course, taking the CSI written examination and if the Examiners were satisfied with his performance on the course, renewing his CSI rating. Paul Hollow was able to provide STC with further details of his request.

Following some discussion, it was proposed by Paul Hollow and seconded by Jhn Page that the above permission be accepted.

Carried Unanimously

- b). A letter from Nigel Allen had been circulated with the agenda requesting a 12 month extension to the CSBI rating of Steven Ward. Steven' s CSBI rating had expired on the 31st May 2005. Nigel' s letter gave further details of his request.

Following discussion, it was proposed by Nigel Allen (proxy) and seconded by Dave Hickling that Steven Ward' s CSBI rating be extended for one year to run from 31st May 2005.

For: 13 (incl 1 by proxy)

Against: 0

Abstentions: 2

Carried

- c). Circulated to those present was a letter from Ian Rosenvinge requesting a permission against the rule for radios for Students, as he had a number of deaf people due to train and make jumps from August this year. Ian' s proposal was for the ' Permission' until the first STC of 2006 (February). Ian was present at the meeting and was able to provide further details of his request.

Following some discussion, it was proposed by Ian Rosenvinge and seconded by Jhn Page that the above permission be accepted.

Carried Unanimously

9. **A.O.B**

- i) The Chairman advised those present that the BPA had received a Consultation paper from the Department for Transport (DfT). Its implications could be serious with regard to the operation of foreign registered aircraft for parachuting in the UK. He stated that the paper would be sent to Clubs for their comments.

Tony Knight provided STC with further details and stated that the BPA had until the 28 October 2005 to issue a response to this Consultation. He asked that once CCIs had read the paper, any remarks should be sent to him by the 16 September at the latest. This would give him time to produce a draft response and send it to all respondents for comment before the final response is sent.

Date of next Meeting; Thursday 6 October 2005
 At 7 p.m.
 At the BPA offices.

Issued:
12 August 2005

Distribution

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CCI's
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