

BRITISH PARACHUTE ASSOCIATION
SAFETY AND TRAINING COMMITTEE MEETING
BPA OFFICES, 5 WHARF WAY, GLEN PARVA, LEICESTER
THURSDAY 1 JUNE 2006

Present:

John Hitchen	-	Chairman STC
Pat Walters	-	Tilstock
David Hickling	-	BPS, Langar
Alan Wilkinson	-	St Andrews
Pete Sizer	-	Headcorn
Phil Cavanagh	-	Black Knights
Dave Wood	-	Cornish PC
Mike Rust	-	NLPC
John Page	-	Skydive London
Bill Sharp	-	RAPA
Jason Thompson	-	UK Parachuting
Ian Rosenvinge	-	Peterlee
Mike Bolton	-	LPS
Mike Carruthers	-	NWPC
Stuart Meacock	-	PPC
Paul Hollow	-	Target Skysports
Paul Applegate	-	Chairman Riggers Committee

Apologies: Andy Montriou, Steve Scott, Steve Jelf, Mick Nealis, Dave Openshaw (Bill Sharp represented Dave at the meeting), Dennis Buchanan, Kieran Brady, Doug Peacock.

In Attendance:

Tony Butler	-	Technical Officer
Trudy Kemp	-	Assistant to NCSO/TO

Observers: John McGreevy, Chris Butchers, Pete Marsden, Jeff Illidge, Phill Elston, Rick Boardman.

ITEM

1. MINUTES OF THE STC MEETING OF THE 30 MARCH 2006

It was proposed by John Page and seconded by David Hickling that the Minutes of the STC Meeting of the 30 March 2006 be accepted as a true record.

Carried Unanimously

2. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE STC MEETING OF THE 30 MARCH 2006

Page 7, Item 6 – Instructor Currency. The Chairman advised those present that the changes to the Operations Manual with regard to Instructor currency, was the subject of an amendment proposal from Pete Sizer, which was being dealt with as a main agenda item this evening. He stated that there also seemed to be some confusion with regard to what was agreed at the previous meeting and reiterated that the accepted proposal was only with regard to Instructors' jumps and that even if an Instructor is not jumping, he/she will still require a medical, as per Operations Manual requirements. The Instructor is still permitted to carry out such activities as dispatching.

Page 8, Item 7 – Privileges & Rules Affecting sub ‘A’ & ‘B’ Certificate Holders. Ian Rosenvinge had agreed to produce a checklist, which could be given to Students, or displayed at Centres advising Students of what they can and cannot do. Ian had now produced a checklist for consideration by the Committee, a copy of which had been circulated to those present.

The Committee discussed the content of the Check List in more detail and Ian was able to clarify a number of points raised by those present. The Committee felt that the list was a good idea in principle, and with a bit more fine-tuning would be a useful aid for Clubs and Centres.

During the discussion on this item, Phil Cavanagh highlighted an area of concern he had with regard to the use of cameras. He stated that during the past few months a number of experienced jumpers had turned up at his Centre wishing to jump with cameras who had not been cleared to do so. Phil stated that some jumpers may believe they are cleared because they have done 200 jumps and that they may not realize that they need to have their logbook endorsed by a CCI prior to them jumping a camera.

John Page stated that he believed the way in which the Operations Manual is worded regarding the use of cameras is a bit ambiguous, as it only mentions that the camera needs CCI approval. It does not mention the individual jumper.

Page 12, Item 10 - AOB (c) – Skydive Jersey). The Chairman advised those present that at the previous meeting a proposal regarding ‘boat’ requirements at Skydive Jersey, had not been voted on as STC did not feel they had enough information, without Andy Montriou being present. The Committee was advised that Andy was unable to attend this meeting, however, Pete Marsden was in attendance that evening to represent the Club. A copy of Skydive Jersey’s proposal had been circulated to those present.

The Committee was advised that the Skydive Jersey initial permission included the following clause:

"The rescue boat is to be capable of retrieving all parachutists dropped on any single pass. If more than 5 parachutists are to be dropped on a pass, a minimum of 2 boats and a towing vehicle for each boat shall be available, with the exception that additional vehicles shall not be required for any boats positioned and manned at sea."

This clause had been included based on the belief that in the event that if parachutists were dropped into the sea and spread over a large area that the time taken to retrieve all the parachutists would be excessive and thus 2 boats would be more effective. The Club had considered this scenario again in light of new information from the available water rescue services.

The meeting was advised that the RNLI lifeboat station is located in the St. Helier marina, only 1.5 miles from the PLA. The lifeboat standard on scene response time is 12 minutes. The Inshore Rescue Craft is a service provided by the States of Jersey Fire & Rescue Service with an on scene response time of 8 minutes. It was believed that employing the professional rescue services will improve safety in all scenarios.

The Club believed that the most significant risk is to tandem pairs and had had therefore requested STC consent to amend the above permission to read as follows:

"The rescue boat(s) is to be capable of retrieving all Tandem Student & Tandem Instructors dropped on a single pass."

The following additional clause to be included within the Club’s general provisions.

"The inshore rescue service and lifeboat are to be notified of any planned parachuting activities."

Pete Marsden was able to explain the proposal in more detail and was also able to clarify a number of points raised by those present.

The Chairman pointed out that one area of concern raised at the previous STC Meeting was that some CCI's had interpreted that the proposal would mean that the Club would no longer be using both of their safety boats.

Pete Marsden was able to clarify that this was not the intention and confirmed that the request was if more than 5 parachutists are to be dropped per pass then the second boat is not required. It was felt that one boat on the beach was more than adequate bearing in mind the lifeboats are on standby as well. Pete Marsden stated that also written into the Club's SOPs will be a restriction should they be doing Tandem, they must have a boat on that must be able to pick up all Tandem pairs in any pass. There will also be a limit of two Tandem pairs per pass

A question was raised that if the Club operated an Airvan, which can carry up to 9 jumpers would the Club still only have the one boat of their own. Pete confirmed that this was correct and also confirmed that their safety boat was licenced to carry 7 people.

Pete stated that for the forthcoming Boogie being held at Skydive Jersey, they would use their two safety boats and they still had the Lifeboat and Inshore boats on standby if required.

Some concern was raised by those present as they felt that there should be some linkage between the number of people in the aircraft and the capacity of the safety boat. There was also some concern raised that if there was a major bad spot then all parachutists need to be reached in the water.

Pete Marsden stated that the Club were asking for more parachutists on a pass than their safety boat can recover as the Club feels that their boat and the rescue services that are available are adequate to cover anyone else in the very unlikely scenario that even one person goes into the water.

Following further discussion Pete Marsden wished the original proposal to stand. This proposal failed to find a seconder.

Pete Sizer tabled a counter proposal seconded by John Page that the rescue boats at Skydive Jersey be capable of retrieving all Tandem students and Tandem Instructors dropped on a single pass and if more than 10 parachutists are to be dropped on a pass then a minimum of two boats and towing vehicles for each boat shall be available, with the exception that additional vehicles shall not be required for any boats positioned and manned at sea.

For: 4 Against: 1 Abstentions: 8

Carried

David Hickling commented that he believed that he felt it very difficult to vote on an item such as this where the CCI could not be present. He wished it recorded that he felt this presentation was ill conceived in light of the CCI not being able to be present that evening.

A number of CCIs present gave their reasons for abstaining as they had different issues with safety and some felt that neither of the above proposals demonstrated any linkage between the number of jumpers in the air at any one time and the capacity of the boats. Others felt that they did not know enough about the operation at Skydive Jersey.

Some discussion ensued as to whether this item should have been allowed to be dealt with at all, as the previous Minutes had stated that this item should be postponed until the CCI could be present at STC.

Following some discussion, it was felt by those present that there had been a number of various safety related issues that they had been concerned about, which they felt had been clarified in Andy Montriou's absence and they did not feel that he would have said anything different.

Following further discussion it was agreed by those present that the counter proposal tabled by Pete Sizer should stand.

Page 13, Item 10 – AOB (d). It was noted that the aircraft stated in the previous Minutes should of stated Netheravon C208B.

3. MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING FROM THE RIGGERS' SUB-COMMITTEE MEETING OF THE 30 MARCH 2006

There being no further matters arising from the previous Minutes, it was proposed by Paul Applegate and seconded by Pete Sizer that the Minutes of the Riggers Sub-Committee Meeting of the 30 March 2006 be accepted as a true record.

Carried Unanimously

Paul Applegate advised the Committee that Riggers had discussed a number of problems relating to Icon containers. These problems had resulted in a BPA Safety Information Bulletin being issued.

Paul stated that following further research into these incidents; it had been found that these problems had resulted because of the pilot chute being too small. The manufactures were aware of this problem and they have agreed to replace the pilot chutes concerned and owners should contact their equipment supplier regarding this aspect.

The Chairman advised the meeting that the office had received a joint statement from the USPA and the PIA, which had been circulated to all clubs, with their concerns that within the last seven months there have been two US Tandem fatalities in which the student/passenger has fallen out of the harness upon opening shock. Reportedly in one case the person went under the back strap and in the other, over the back strap. Both fatalities are under investigation.

All Tandem Instructors were advised to pay attention to the Tandem harness fitting and adjustment procedures.

4. FATALITY – OLD BUCKENHAM

The Chairman advised those present that a Board of Inquiry Report Resume had been sent to CCIs with the agenda detailing the fatality that occurred at UK Parachuting at Old Bickenham Airfield on the 29th April 2006.

At approximately 16.00 hours on Saturday 29th April 2006, David Crowcroft a first time static line RAPS Student, boarded a Nomad aircraft at Old Buckenham Airfield, Norfolk, operated by UK Parachuting Services, following his initial training on the 29th April 2006 and Revision Training that morning. There were thirteen other parachutists on board, including his instructor, who was also the Jumpmaster. This was the seventh parachuting lift of the day.

The aircraft climbed to approximately 2,000 ft AGL above the PLA, where the Jumpmaster released a WDI in order to ascertain the parachutist's release point.

The aircraft then climbed to 3,500 ft, during which time the Jumpmaster gave David a pre-jump equipment check. The aircraft then 'ran in' over the top of the PLA, at which time David was instructed to move to the door to prepare for exit.

On the command of the Jumpmaster, David released from the aircraft. Once the parachute had fully deployed, approximately four seconds after exit, it was observed that there were twists in the rigging lines. David was seen to kick out of the twists and take control of the parachute.

A short time after the parachute deployed, something was seen to fall away from David, possibly his helmet.

The parachute appeared to be flying correctly until approximately 1,000ft AGL, when David was observed to become detached from his parachute and harness. He was observed in freefall until he was lost from view, just prior to impact. The parachute remained inflated and landed approximately one hundred metres away.

A BPA Board of Inquiry was convened and consisted of Tony Butler, BPA Technical Officer and Mike Rust, BPA Instructor Examiner. The Board Came to the following Conclusions:

That David Crowcroft had been trained and revised correctly prior to making his first descent. His exit from the aircraft was uneventful and his main parachute deployed fully. However, there were twists in the parachute rigging lines, which he cleared in the manner he had been taught.

He then took control of his parachute and turned towards the PLA. Shortly after he removed and released his helmet.

The Board believe that he then spent some time removing a pair of shears/snips that he had hidden beneath his trousers and jumpsuit, which were attached to his leg with approximately two metres of cord. He then deliberately cut through the parachute harness chest strap and leg straps, which resulted in him falling away from the parachute and harness. He impacted with the ground approximately ten seconds later, with fatal results.

It was proposed by John Page and seconded by Pete Sizer that the Board of Inquiry Report to Investigate the Death of David Crowcroft, including the Conclusions be accepted.

Carried Unanimously

The Chairman also advised those present that the Board recommend to STC that no Panel of Inquiry be convened following this fatality.

This recommendation was proposed by David Hickling, seconded Stuart Meacock and carried unanimously.

Carried Unanimously

5. INCIDENT/INJURY REPORTS - RESUME

- i) There had been 17 Student injury reports received since the last meeting. 14 male and 3 female. One of the injuries was to an AFF Student who dislocated his shoulder upon deployment. He was in a head down position and his pilot chute went around his arm. The others were all landing injuries, all on ram-air canopies.
- ii) There had been 9 injury reports received for 'A' Certificate or above parachutists. 7 male and 2 female. Including one jumper whose full-face helmet visor steamed up and she did a down wind landing.
- iii) Since the last meeting there had been 8 Student Parachutist Malfunction/Deployment Problems reported. 7 male & 1 female.

- iv) There had been 21 reports of Malfunction/Deployment Problems to 'A' Certificate parachutists and above since the last meeting. 16 male and 5 female. These reports included a couple pilot chutes in tow on Icon containers. A number of verbal reports have also been received of pilot chute hesitations on Icons. These problems resulted in a BPA Safety Information Bulletin being issued. Riggers also discussed the problem at their meeting this evening, which had been previously reported on.

The next item was dealt with 'in camera' and all observers were asked to leave the meeting room.

The Chairman advised the meeting that a letter from Dennis Buchanan had been sent to all Clubs regarding his permanent 'grounding' of a parachutist. Dennis had stated in his letter that the parachutist, a 69 year old with 200 jumps had to use his reserve twice because he had been unable to locate his BOC toggle. Dennis felt that the parachutist should be grounded nationally. The parachutist has been written to and was present as he wished to appeal against Dennis's recommendation.

The committee was advised that Dennis Buchanan had been unable to attend that evening, but Mike Carruthers was present at the meeting to represent Dennis.

The parachutist concerned addressed the meeting and was able to answer a number of questions posed by the Committee, after which he was asked to leave the meeting to enable STC to make their deliberations.

Following some discussion, it was proposed by Pete Sizer and seconded by Paul Hollow that STC support Dennis Buchanan's request that he be grounded nationally.

Carried Unanimously

The parachutist concerned was invited to return to the meeting where he was advised of STC's decision. He and Mike Carruthers then left the meeting, and all observers were then invited to return.

The Chairman then continued with the Incident/Injury Report resume.

- v) There had been 12 Tandem Malfunction/Deployment Problems Reports and 8 Injury reports received since the last meeting. A couple of the malfunction/deployment problem reports related to a fairly new Sigma container, including one where the instructor pulled the primary handle at 6,000ft and nothing happened, he then pulled the secondary handle and nothing happened. He then deployed the reserve, which took a long time to deploy, as it is believed the reserve pilot chute and free bag entangled with the drogue. The reserve eventually deployed at a fairly low altitude.

The Chairman stated that there had been several cases reported of jumpers having stiff pulls on Sigma's. He stated that the vast majority of these appeared to be in military parachuting.

Mike Rust reported that he had jumped the Sigma had a few hard pulls, which he believed was down to packing.

- vi) Two reports had been received of AADs firing. One was a Cypres misfire on a display, where the AAD fired at 1200ft. The second was a jumper with 442 jumps who lost altitude awareness and deployed his main low and the AAD fired shortly after.
- vii) Five reports had been received of 'off landings' at clubs, including 2 Tandems and 1 Student who landed in trees. The student hit the side of a DZ control building, without injury.

- viii) Two reports had been received where parachutists have had to deploy their reserve because of problems with jumpsuit wings. One was a jumper who was jumping a wing-suit and who could not clear the wing from around the BOC. The other was a cameraperson who deployed the main pilot chute through the wing on her suit.
- ix) Two reports had been received of problems with aircraft. One was to a 'C' Certificate jumper whose pilot chute snagged as he moved to the door and the pilot chute extracted as he was exiting. The pilot chute struck the tail of the aircraft. No damage to aircraft or parachutist. The second involved an aircraft with steering problems. Nine jumpers exited early. All landed without further problem.

6. PROPOSED CHANGES TO BPA OPERATIONS MANUAL

- a) A letter from Pete Sizer had been circulated with the agenda requesting that the proposal regarding instructor currency, which was accepted at the last STC meeting be amended to state that Advanced Instructors and Instructor Examiners be required to have completed at least 40 descents in the 5 years preceding their renewal application.

Pete Sizer had proposed that **Section 4 (Instructors), Paragraph 11)Instructor Rating Renewals), sub-para 11.3.** be changed to read:

11.3. AIs and IEs are required to have completed a minimum of 40 descents during the preceding 5 year period.

Following some discussion, it was proposed by Pete Sizer and seconded by Mike Rust that the above amendment to the BPA Operations Manual be accepted.

For: 9 Against: 3 Abstentions: 1
Carried

- b) The T.O. had suggested a change to the wing loading criteria for Student canopies, which had also been circulated with the agenda.

The rule regarding wing loading for Student main canopies (**BPA Operations Manual, Section 6, Paragraph 2, Sub-para 2.2.1**) is as follows:

‘The following Wing Loading criteria should be applied to main ram-air canopies:

- a. First Jump ‘Solo’ Student Parachutists - not to exceed 0.8 lbs/sq.ft.
- b. ‘Solo’ Student Parachutists having completed at least one ‘solo’ descent - not to exceed 0.85 lbs/sq.ft.’

When the above requirements were accepted by STC a number of years ago, following a Working Group recommendation, the following *N.B.* was also included:

‘N.B. The following exceptions to apply to the above:

Where the Canopy’s Manufacturer has published advice that a higher wing loading is suitable (when the manufacturer’s higher limit will apply).

or

Where the person has logged previous relevant parachuting experience.

or

Where the Student Parachutist is above average fitness, his/her CCI believes a higher wing loading is appropriate for him/her and the CCI has recorded clearance for a higher specified wing loading on the Record of Training.'

The T.O. stated that the first *N.B.* (above) is accepted as reasonable and does not seem to have caused a problem. However, the second and the third do not make sense, in that according to them, a fit Student, or Student who has previously jumped a high wing loaded canopy, could in theory jump a canopy with a wing loading of i.e. 1.50 lbs/sq.ft.

The T.O. therefore suggested that only the first *N.B.* (above) is retained in the Operations Manual and the others are removed.

It was proposed by Pete Sizer and seconded by John Page that the above amendment to the BPA Operations Manual be accepted.

Carried Unanimously

7. INSTRUCTOR COURSES

a. AFF/Tandem Instructor Course – BPS, Langar

The Association wished to thank British Parachute Schools, Langar, for hosting the AFF & Tandem Instructor Course, from the 3rd - 6th April. A Course report had been circulated with the STC agenda. There was one recommendation that required approval by STC:

That Katie Woods be given a six month extension to her AFFBI rating.

It was proposed by David Hickling and seconded by Stuart Meacock that the above recommendation be accepted.

Carried Unanimously

b. Tandem Instructor Course – Cyprus

The Association wished to thank the Cyprus Combined Services Parachute Centre, for hosting the Tandem Instructor Course, from the 1st – 4th May. A Course report had been circulated with the STC agenda for information.

c. Instructor Course 2/2006 – Skydive Strathallan

Circulated to those present was a Course report from Strathallan. The Association was grateful to the Club for hosting the course. The Course recommendations required approval by STC:

That Steve Lambert be given a six month extension to his CSBI rating.

It was proposed by Alan Wilkinson and seconded by Stuart Meacock that the above recommendation be accepted.

For: 12 Against: Abstention: 1

Carried

The Chairman stated that three CSBI candidates who attended this Course did not have the correct documentation and had not been permitted to continue on the Course. He again reminded CCIs the importance of candidates having the correct paperwork prior to their attendance on a Course.

8. PERMISSIONS

- a. A letter from Paul Hollow had been circulated with the agenda requesting a six month extension to the CSBI rating of Jason Snailham.

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

Carried Unanimously

- b. A letter from Nigel Allen had been circulated with the agenda requesting that Sean Sutcliffe be given a six month extension to his AFFBI rating, after November 2006, when his rating expires. The Committee was advised that Sean is on operational deployment in Afghanistan until October.

It was proposed by Nigel Allen and seconded by Jason Thompson that the above permission be accepted.

Carried Unanimously

- c. A letter from Pete Sizer had been circulated with the agenda requesting 6 month extensions to the CSBI ratings of Simon Hopkins and Richard Wiggins.

It was proposed by Pete Sizer and seconded by Alan Wilkinson that the above permission be accepted.

Carried Unanimously

- d. Circulated to those present was a letter from Steve Scott requesting an extension to the CSBI rating of Lloyd Green. Lloyd's rating expired in February. Therefore, he will need reinstating as a CSBI and an extension to his rating.

John Page gave the meeting details of this request after which, it was proposed by John Page and seconded by Jason Thompson that Lloyd Green be re-instated as a CSBI and that the rating be extended for 12 months.

For: 8 Against: 3 Abstentions: 2

Carried

- e. Circulated to those present was an e-mail from Skydive Jersey requesting a permission from the requirement for a pilot flight check-out. The pilot is Mark Burby and the e-mail gave details of his qualifications. The Committee was advised that the only reason Mark required the permission is that the helicopter does not have an AOC, as it is his own, even though he is a commercial pilot.

Following some discussion, it was proposed by Stuart Meacock and seconded by Pete Sizer that the above proposal be permitted.

For: 11 Against: 0 Abstentions: 2

Carried

- f. Circulated to those present was a request from Alan Wilkinson to carry out a water display at Anstruther on the 29th July 2006 and be exempt from the 'ram-air' reserve and AAD requirement. The Committee was advised that permission for this has been given a number of times in the past.

It was proposed by Alan Wilkinson and seconded by Pete Sizer that the above permission be accepted.

For: 12 Against: 0 Abstentions: 1

Carried

9. **A.O.B**

- a. The Chairman advised those present that a request had been received from Dave Wood, a copy of which was circulated to those present for Lands End Airfield cleared for parachuting, as an alternate DZ/PLA for the Cornish Parachute Club. He stated that a number of years ago the airfield was used for parachuting by Mike Bolton.

The airfield had not been used for some time for parachuting, but permission for the Cornish Parachute Club to re-use the airfield had been agreed in writing by the owners. However, due to the short notice of the request the NCSO or TO have not inspected the site. Therefore, the request for clearance would be on the basis that the airfield would not be used for parachuting until re-inspected and cleared by the NCSO/TO or a NCSO/TO nominated examiner. The CCI was aware that the Club will require CAA permission and the Club SOP's will need to be amended prior to any activity on the airfield.

The Chairman advised those present that the Cornish Parachute Club will have its BPA inspection/audit on the 4th July 2006. This may be a suitable time to look at the airfield at Lands End. To fly from Perranporth airfield to Lands End airfield is approx 15minutes.

Mike Bolton was also able to provide further information to those present on Lands End Airfield.

Following some discussion, it was proposed by Dave Wood and seconded by John Page that Lands End Airfield be cleared for parachuting, as an alternate DZ/PLA for the Cornish Parachute Club with the proviso that the airfield would not be used for parachuting until it was inspected and cleared by the NCSO/TO or a NCSO/TO nominated examiner.

Carried Unanimously

- b. Alan Wilkinson gave the meeting details of his request that RAF Leuchers be cleared as an alternative PLA/DZ for Skydive St Andrews for 'C' Certificate holders and above parachutists and also Tandem parachuting.

Following some discussion, it was proposed by Alan Wilkinson and seconded by Ian Rosenvinge that RAF Leuchers be cleared as an alternative PLA/DZ for Skydive St Andrews with the proviso that the airfield would not be used for parachuting until inspected and cleared by the NCSO/TO or a NCSO/TO nominated examiner

For: 12

Against: 0

Abstentions: 1

Carried

Date of next Meeting; Thursday 3 August 2006
At 7 p.m.
At the BPA offices.

6 June 2006

Distribution:

C. Allen - Chairman BPA
CCI's
Council
Advanced Riggers
CAA
Lesley Gale (Editor – Skydive)