

BRITISH PARACHUTE ASSOCIATION
SAFETY AND TRAINING COMMITTEE MEETING
BPA OFFICES, 5 WHARF WAY, GLEN PARVA, LEICESTER
THURSDAY 26 NOVEMBER 2009

<u>Present:</u>	John Hitchen	-	Chairman of STC
	Pete Sizer	-	Headcorn
	Paul Hollow	-	Target Skysports
	Chris McCann	-	Skydive Airkix
	Richard Wheatley	-	BPS, Langar
	Mike Rust	-	NLPC
	Stuart Meacock	-	Hinton Skydiving
	John Page	-	Skydive London
	Jason Thompson	-	UK Parachuting
	Phil Cavanagh	-	Black Knights
	Kieran Brady	-	Skydive Strathallan
	Matty Holford (<i>from item 4</i>)	-	Silver Stars
	Paul Applegate	-	Chairman Riggers

Apologies: Andy Goodall, Dave Wood, Nigel Allen, Steve Scott,
Ian Rosenvinge, Jason Farrant.

<u>In Attendance:</u>	Tony Butler	-	Technical Officer
	Trudy Kemp	-	Assistant to NCSO/TO

Observers: Dave Major, Rick Boardman, Dave Luke, Paul Yeoman.

ITEM

1. MINUTES OF THE STC MEETING OF THE 1 OCTOBER 2009

It was proposed by Phil Cavanagh and seconded by Chris McCann that the Minutes of the STC Meeting of the 1 October 2009 be accepted as a true record.

Carried Unanimously

2. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE STC MEETING OF THE 1 OCTOBER 2009

Page 2, Item 3, - Minutes & Matters Arising from the Riggers Sub-Committee Meeting of the 6 August 2009.

At the Riggers Committee Meeting of 1 October 2009, the Committee had considered and accepted two requests for exemptions from the new packing requirements.

Paul Hollow stated that he felt disappointed that this item had not been brought to the attention of CCIs at the last STC meeting, when the Chairman of Riggers gave his usual 'round' up of important issues arising from the Riggers meeting of the same date.

Paul Hollow stated that he had only learnt of these exemptions when he had read the Minutes of the previous Riggers meeting and was particularly concerned when much discussion and consideration had taken place by CCIs on this important issue.

Both the Chairman of Riggers Committee and Chairman of STC apologised for this oversight, but stated that it had not been the intention to deliberately keep this information from CCIs.

Page 4, Item 5, Incident/Injury Reports (v). The Chairman reported that the Panel of Inquiry referred to was a main agenda item for that evening.

3. MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING FROM THE RIGGERS' SUB-COMMITTEE MEETING OF THE 1 OCTOBER 2009

There were no matters arising from the previous Riggers Meeting.

It was therefore proposed by Paul Applegate and seconded by Pete Sizer that the Minutes of the Riggers' Sub-Committee meeting of the 1 October 2009 be accepted as a true record.

Carried Unanimously

Paul Applegate then reported on the meeting held that evening and stated that the Committee had discussed the two Panel Reports that were on the main STC agenda for that evening. He also advised those present that a number of the Recommendations made by the Panel would be the subject of main agenda items for the next Riggers Committee meeting.

Paul Applegate reported that Riggers had also discussed a recent Product Service Bulletin issued by Advanced Aerospace Designs regarding Vigil 'Type' 3 Cutters produced in December 2007. Dom 12-07-2 (mm/yy/Batch). After an activation of the cutter, the cutter body separated from its base. This occurred on the 19 September 2009 in Cerfontaine (Belgium).

Paul Applegate reported that the Riggers Committee had agreed to issue a BPA Safety Notice stating that all Vigil 'Type 3' cutters manufactured since December 2007 are to be inspected/replaced prior to the next use. Therefore any Vigil unit that has had a cutter replaced since December 2007 and the Vigil 2 listed in the Safety Bulletin were grounded until the date of manufacture of the cutter had been established.

All users should refer to BPA Safety Notice 2/09 issued on 26 November 2009 and also the AAD Product Service Bulletin PSB-5 issued on 10 October 2009.

The manufacturer would replace affected cutters free of charge: www.vigil.aero - info@vigil.aero

4. INCIDENT REPORTS - RESUME

- i) There had been 8 Student Injury Reports received since the last STC meeting. 5 male and 3 female. The injuries were on landing.
- ii) Since the last meeting there had been 8 Injury Reports received for FAI 'A' Certificate parachutists or above. 6 male and 2 female. Two injuries were jumpers hitting the doorframe of the aircraft on exit. The remaining 6 injuries were on landing.

- iii) There had been 9 Student Malfunction/Deployment Problem Reports received since the last meeting. All male, including one Student who unclipped his static line at 1,000ft instead of his restraint. The instructor spotted it straight away and re-attached the static line.
- iv) There had also been 21 Malfunction/Deployment Problem Reports received for FAI 'A' Certificate parachutists or above. 17 male and 4 female.
- v) Since the last STC there had been 4 Tandem Injury Reports received. 1 male and 3 female. There were also 11 Malfunction/Deployment Problems Reported, plus a report of a Tandem main parachute that was inspected on the ground and it was noticed that a front riser rapide link was unthreaded and bent open.
- vi) There had been 9 reports received of 'off landings' at clubs, 5 of which were Tandems.
- vii) One report had been received of a canopy entanglement during a CF jump.
- viii) Two reports had been received of helmets coming off, one on deployment and one in freefall.
- ix) A report had been received of a Cessna 206 running out of fuel. The pilot did not have sufficient reserves of fuel, as per his club's requirements, and then got held at altitude, after which it became cloudy and as the pilot was descending with the parachutists on board, it ran out of fuel. The aircraft landed safely with all on board. The club had disciplined the pilot. He had been grounded for a month, after which he would be completely retrained.
- x) The Chairman reported that in June of this year STC had been informed of an incident involving a Nomad, which had to land with all parachutists on board, due to poor weather and upon landing the undercarriage collapsed. This incident was investigated by the AAIB, whose report would be published in the near future. He stated that the incident highlighted the possible lack of pilot training on foreign registered aircraft and it had therefore been decided to form a Working Group to look into this aspect of pilot qualifications/training. The Working Group expects to be able to report to the Pilots' Committee at the AGM.

5. **PANELS OF INQUIRY**

a. **Panel of Inquiry to Investigate Packing Issues Identified from Confidential Reports Regarding Ralph Mitchell**

The Panel report had been circulated to CCIs with the STC agenda. The Chairman advised that it should be noted that Panel Member Richard Wheatley was referred to in the report as an Advanced Rigger, but he was in fact a Parachute Rigger.

The Recommendations of the Panel were:

- i) The Panel accept that Mr Mitchell's Advanced Packer's rating has been relinquished.
- ii) The Panel recommends that Mr Mitchell is not permitted to reapply for requalification as an Advanced Packer for a period not less than 5 years. At

which time he would have to complete all the necessary requirements to gain the Advanced Packers' rating.

- iii) The Panel recommends that Mr Mitchell pay Panel costs up to a maximum charge of £200.00.
- iv) The Panel also recommends that:
 - a). As the inclusion of the ROI and Reserve Cards were extremely useful when studying the confidential reports, the Panel recommends that members using the confidential reporting system are encouraged to include copies of these wherever possible.
 - b). The BPA investigate implementing a system for informing members that a confidential report has been filed regarding them, even if it is only a brief summary of the faults found. The Panel recognises the need for confidentiality and the difficulty of achieving this if a system is implemented, but feels the matter will benefit from discussion.

The Chairman of Riggers Committee reported that the recommendations in (iv) above would be main agenda items for consideration at the next Riggers meeting.

The Chairman of STC reported that Ralph Mitchell had accepted the report, including the recommendations regarding him. He stated that he considered this matter to be now closed, unless STC objected.

There were no objections raised by those present.

The Chairman thanked the Panel members for their work they had carried out on the Panel.

b. **Panel of Inquiry to Investigate Tandem Incident and other ratings held by Phill Elston following recommendations from STC 1st October 2009**

The Panel report had been circulated to CCIs with the STC agenda.

The Conclusions and Recommendations of the Panel were:

- i) That Phill Elston not be permitted to reapply for a Tandem Instructor rating for a minimum of five (5) years.
- ii) That Phill Elston be written to with regard to his Category System Instructor rating, which should be reinstated, reminding him of his responsibility to all Students Parachutists and a copy of the letter sent to his CCI.
- iii) That Phill Elston's Advanced Rigger rating be withdrawn and that he is not permitted to reapply for a minimum of two (2) years. The Panel also recommends that as Phill has produced a parachute container that was acceptable on his previous Advanced Riggers' course, he should not be required to produce another if he reapplies to attend an Advanced Riggers' course within three (3) years.

- iv) That Phill Elston's Approved Rigger and Advanced Packer ratings be reinstated, but he be required to work under the supervision of an Advanced Rigger, acceptable to the Chairman of the Riggers' Committee, until that AR is satisfied with his work in general. Also, that Phill be subject to spot checks from time to time as dictated by the Chairman of the Rigging Committee.
- v) The Panel recommend that Phill is charged for the Panel's expenses in order that the membership does not have to cover the costs.
- vi) The Panel would, if the recommendations are accepted by Phil, request, the relevant ratings listed above be reinstated forthwith, in order that he may recommence work immediately.
- vii) The Panel also recommend that the Riggers' Committee consider implementing a system whereby all riggers are inspected periodically in order to check standards, similar to those carried out by the Technical Officer and the National Coach & Safety Officer when they carry out Club inspections.

The Chairman of Riggers Committee reported that recommendation (vii) above would be a main agenda item for consideration at the next Riggers meeting.

Mike Rust (Panel Chairman) reported on the Panel's reasons behind this recommendation and stated that some riggers have their own workshops, which in some cases may be situated at home and were not subject to the same inspections carried out at BPA Clubs. The Panel saw it as a way of assisting riggers and to ensure they were kept abreast of best practice.

The Chairman advised those present that Phill Elston had accepted the Panel's report, including the recommendations regarding him. An Advanced Rigger had worked with Phill supervising his work and was now satisfied with his work. Phill's ratings, other than his Advanced Rigger rating had now been reinstated.

The Chairman stated that he considered this matter to be now closed, unless STC objected. There were no objections raised by those present.

The Chairman thanked the Panel members for their work they had carried out on the Panel.

6. AMENDMENTS FO BPA OPERATIONS MANUAL

The Technical Officer reported that it had been pointed out that when Section 11 (Medical), Paragraph 2 (General), sub-para 2.1. of the Operations Manual was updated in the past (see below), the line: '**not to include Student Tandem Parachutist descents**' had been omitted inadvertently.

The current paragraph read as follows:

- 2.1. *No person under the age of 16 years, or aged 55 years or over, will be permitted to carry out initial 'solo' parachute training. Exceptions to the higher age limit may be permitted if the person has previous recorded parachute experience. Higher age limits for Student Tandem Parachutists may be acceptable (see BPA Form 115 – Student Tandem Parachutist Declaration of Fitness to Parachute/Doctor's certificate).*

Therefore it had been proposed that this paragraph be amended to read:

- 2.1. No person under the age of 16 years, or aged 55 years or over, will be permitted to carry out initial 'solo' parachute training. Exceptions to the higher age limit may be permitted if the person has previous recorded parachute experience (not to include Student Tandem Parachutist descents). Higher age limits for Student Tandem Parachutists may be acceptable (see BPA Form 115 – Student Tandem Parachutist Declaration of Fitness to Parachute/Doctor's certificate).

It was proposed by Pete Sizer and seconded by Paul Hollow that the wording: '**not to include Student Tandem Parachutist descents**' be reinserted into the paragraph.

Carried Unanimously

7. INSTRUCTOR COURSES

- i) AFF, Tandem & Pre-Advanced Instructor Course – October 2009

The Association wished to thank North London Parachute Centre, Chatteris for hosting the course, which ran from the 5 – 8 October. The course report had been circulated with the agenda and was for information only.

- ii) Instructor Course 4/2009

The Association wished to thank Target Skysports, Hibaldstow for hosting the course, which ran from the 9 – 19 November. The course report had been circulated to those present.

The recommendations from the Course were that David Holiday and Steve Dove be given six-month extensions to their Category System Basic Instructor ratings.

It was proposed Mike Rust and seconded by Matty Holford that the above recommendations be accepted.

Carried Unanimously

8. PERMISSIONS

No permissions had been received for this meeting.

9. A.O.B.

- i) Circulated to those present was a map detailing a new DZ/PLA for UK Parachuting at Beccles Airfield (OS Sheet 156, Grid ref: 465,886). The Chairman reported that the Club were leaving Old Buckenham and would be starting at Beccles in the New Year. He stated that the new DZ/PLA falls within the requirements of the Operations Manual and therefore this was for information only.

- ii) The Chairman reported that Mike Rust had asked for a general discussion on a new training system to include Tandem and AFF (TAFF). He stated that Mike had presented this in the past, but it failed to be accepted. Mike felt that this may be the time to re-submit a proposal, but before he did he would like to assess the likelihood of support.

Mike Rust reported that at the recent DZ Operators meeting, discussion had taken place on European matters involving parachuting and the possible implications of EASA regulations on commercial aviation. A key issue was the relationship between sport parachuting and 'commercial skydiving'. It was pointed out that some other European nations consider Tandem parachuting to be a commercial operations.

Mike Rust stated that it had been suggested at the DZ Operators meeting of making Tandem the first level of structured training for progression within the sport, which they believed would be looked at differently.

Following further discussion, the consensus of opinion from those present was that they saw the potential to consider making Tandem an entry-level to skydiving, both as an introduction and as an evaluation of an individual's capacity to progress.

Mike Rust requested that a Working Group be set up to look into this in more detail and suggested that an initial meeting be held following the next Riggers Committee meeting commencing at approx 6pm.

- iii) The Chairman reported that the BPA had been informed of two videos that had been posted on You-Tube of two Tandem descents which had taken place recently, both of which appeared to show Tandem Students not attached to their instructors on take-off.

He stated that both of the Tandem Instructors concerned had admitted that the Students had not been fully attached on take-off and they had both had their Tandem ratings suspended until that evenings meeting. Both Instructors were present that evening. He stated that a letter from one of the Tandem Instructors concerned (Paul Yeoman) had been received, a copy of which was then tabled to those present for information.

Some concern was raised by those present with regard to dealing with video evidence such as this, because of the fact that video footage may easily be edited. The Chairman took on board the Committee's concerns. However, in this particular case both of the Instructors involved had admitted a breach of the rules.

This item was dealt with 'in camera' and all observers and persons concerned were asked to leave the room.

CCIs were given the opportunity to view both videos on several occasions and the Tandem Instructors concerned were invited back to the meeting individually to comment and answer questions on the respective incidents, after which the meeting resumed its 'in camera' session. CCIs then considered each of the incidents separately and decided on a suitable course of disciplinary action to follow.

a) Incident One - Paul Yeoman

During the discussion, it was felt by those present that the Jumpmaster and Pilot of the aircraft should have also taken some responsibility for this incident.

It was proposed by John Page and seconded by Pete Sizer that Paul Yeoman (Tandem Instructor), the Jumpmaster and Pilot be written to by the Chairman of STC reminding them of their responsibilities and the reasons behind this decision.

For: 10 Against: 0 Abstentions: 1

Carried

Paul Yeoman was invited to return to the meeting where he was advised of STC's decision.

b) Incident Two – Dave Luke

It was proposed by Paul Hollow and seconded by Chris McCann that Dave Luke have his Tandem Instructor rating suspended for a period of 3 months at the end of which time he must carry out Tandem harness drills and undertake a currency jump with an FAI 'C' certificate jumper before taking further Tandem Student Parachutists.

For: 8 Against: 1 Abstentions: 2

Carried

During the discussion, it was felt by those present that the Jumpmaster and Pilot of the aircraft should also have taken some responsibility for this incident.

It was therefore proposed by John Page and seconded by Matty Holford that the Jumpmaster and Pilot be written to by the Chairman of STC reminding them of their responsibilities and the reasons behind this decision.

Carried Unanimously

Dave Luke was invited to return to the meeting where he was advised of STC's decision. Dave stated that he accepted the Committee's decision with regard to the suspension of his Tandem Instructor rating.

The Chairman pointed out that because Dave Luke had accepted the disciplinary action meted out by the Committee, this matter, did not therefore need to be referred to a Panel of Inquiry.

During the 'in camera' discussion on the above incidents and also taking into account a number of previous incidents regarding Tandem Instructors, it had been felt by some that there were still Tandem Instructors who appeared to not understand the rules regarding the hooking up of Tandem students and that they were required to hook up Tandem students on the ground prior to take off regardless of the aircraft being used. The Chairman stated that he did not agree with that though.

Following further discussion on this issue, STC requested that the Technical Officer include an 'NB' to all Tandem Instructors regarding the rules on the hooking up of Tandem students in the letter that he normally sends out to all Instructors in December.

The meeting then resumed in 'open session' and the Chairman continued with AOB.

- iv) The Chairman reported that the Club Annual Return forms had been sent to Clubs and he requested that the completed forms be returned as soon as possible after the end of Club's operations this year.
- v) The Chairman asked CCIs that if they had anyone they wished to nominate for the Mike Forge Trophy (New Skydiver of the Year), they should send details of their nomination to the Technical Officer before the end of the year.

The Chairman expressed his thanks to CCIs on behalf of himself and the TO for their support throughout the year and he wished everyone a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Date of next Meeting: Thursday 11 February 2010
BPA Offices, Glen Parva, Leicester
at 7.00 p.m

30 November 2009

Distribution:

Chairman BPA
Council
CCIs
All Riggers
Advanced Packers
CAA
Lesley Gale (Editor – Skydive)
File

AMENDMENTS TO BPA OPERATIONS MANUAL

At the STC meeting of the 26th November 2009 the following amendments were made to the BPA operations Manual:

SECTION 11 (MEDICAL), Paragraph 2 (General), sub-para 2.1. change to read:

- 2.1.** No person under the age of 16 years, or aged 55 years or over, will be permitted to carry out initial 'solo' parachute training. Exceptions to the higher age limit may be permitted if the person has previous recorded parachute experience (not to include Student Tandem Parachutist descents). Higher age limits for Student Tandem Parachutists may be acceptable (see BPA Form 115 – Student Tandem Parachutist Declaration of Fitness to Parachute/Doctor's certificate).