

British Parachute Association

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Riggers Committee

Minutes of the meeting held on

Thursday 29 September 2011 at 1600

at the BPA Office, 5 Wharf Way, Glen Parva, Leicester LE2 9TF

Present: Paul Applegate - Chairman
Pete Sizer
Dave Major
Paul Stockwell
John Curtis
Noel Purcell (NV)

NV – Non Voting Member

Apologies: Rick Boardman, Bernadette Whitaker, Kim Newton

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

ITEM

1. MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING FROM THE RIGGERS MEETING OF THE 9 JUNE 2011

Page 1, Item 1 – Proposed Cutter Relocation. Paul Stockwell advised the Committee that he had nothing further to report on this item.

Page 2, Item 4, Working Group into Equipment Inspection Policies. There had not been a meeting of the Working Group that afternoon. It was Rick Boardman's intention to make a presentation to the next DZO meeting, after which he would update the Committee on the progress so far.

Page 4, Item 8, AOB (i) – Packing Incident. At the previous meeting, the Committee were given details of a number of packing related incidents involving the same packer. The packer concerned had written a letter to the Chairman of Riggers regarding the alleged incidents, which he read out to those present. He stated that the packer concerned had admitted to one of the allegations.

Following further consideration of this matter, it was proposed by Pete Sizer and seconded by Dave Major that the Packer concerned be written to reminding him of his responsibilities.

Carried Unanimously

There being no further matters arising, it was proposed by John Curtis and seconded by Paul Stockwell that the Minutes of the Riggers Sub-Committee Meeting of 9 June 2011 be accepted as a true record.

Carried Unanimously

The Chairman reported that there was no Riggers Committee meeting on the 4 August 2011. Therefore, there were no Minutes to consider.

2. **MATTERS ARISING FROM THE STC MEETINGS OF THE 9 JUNE 2011 & 4 AUGUST 2011**

There were no matters arising from the Minutes of the above STC meetings.

3. **THE RE-INSTATEMENT OF BRIAN DYAS' PARACHUTE RIGGER RATING**

At the Riggers Committee Meeting of 1 October 2009, the Committee had considered a request from Brian Dyas with regard to the reinstatement of his Parachute Riggers rating. The Committee agreed that Brian attend an Advanced Packer examination Course prior to undertaking the Parachute Riggers examination with an Advanced Rigger.

The Committee was informed that Brian had now achieved his Advanced Packer R, S & T status, and had subsequently been re-examined by Andrew Hilton on practical rigging work, which included submission of recently made components, a day manufacturing PR Syllabus items using a full range of tools and machines and also sitting a written test. A report from Andrew Hilton had been circulated with the agenda.

Andrew Hilton stated that he found Brian's work to be of the standard required of a Parachute Rigger and he therefore recommended that Brian Dyas' Parachute Riggers Rating be reinstated.

It was proposed by John Curtis and seconded by Pete Sizer that the above recommendation be accepted.

Carried Unanimously

4. **REQUEST FROM BILL SHARP TO HOST A BPA RIGGING COURSE**

A letter from Bill Sharp had been circulated with the agenda requesting to host a Rigging Course at RAPA from Mon 12 Dec – Fri 16 Dec 2011.

It was proposed by Bill Sharp (proxy) and seconded by John Curtis that the above request be accepted.

Carried Unanimously

Note: Bill Sharp has since informed the office that he has now had to cancel the above Course due to the withdrawal of military involvement at RAPA.

5. **RIGGING COURSES – FUTURE VENUES**

The Chairman reported that after this year, it was unlikely that any further Rigging Courses would be held at RAPA. Therefore, it was essential that the Committee look at possible new venues for the hosting of future Courses.

A number of suggestions for potential locations were considered by those present. It was pointed out that any new facility would require approval from the Committee.

This was an ongoing issue, which the Committee welcomed further input.

6. **CLARIFICATION OF WHO WAS QUALIFIED TO SIGN UP RIGGER AND ADVANCED PACKER RATING RENEWALS**

At the previous meeting, some discussion had taken place with regard to who was qualified to sign up Advanced Packer and other ratings at membership renewal time.

Currently, Advanced Packer ratings can be signed up by an Advanced Rigger or Advanced Instructor) who must be satisfied that the holder is current and up to date with the latest packing related developments and techniques. However, there was a strong feeling amongst the Riggers Committee that Advanced Instructors should not be signing up Advanced Packers at rating renewal time, particularly if they do not hold an Advanced Packers rating themselves.

A Rigger Examiner or Advanced Rigger may not endorse their own rating renewal applications, but there was an area of concern because technically an Advanced Instructor who held an Advanced Packer rating is able to endorse their own Advanced Packer rating renewal application without the signature of another Advanced Instructor or Advanced Rigger.

Some Riggers present stated that in their opinion it should only be Advanced Riggers and CCIs signing up these particular ratings, but the main aim was that Advanced Packer ratings were only signed up by those who held that particular rating themselves.

Following further discussion, it was felt by those present that this was an ongoing issue and Pete Sizer agreed to bring this matter to the attention of CCIs that evening.

7. ADVANCED PACKERS COURSE REPORTS

- i) An Advanced Packers Examination Course had taken place at Skydive Headcorn from the 20 – 21 June 2011. Pete Sizer had submitted a Course Report, a copy of which had been circulated to those present.

The Course had been attended by Shane Hind who had successfully completed the Course and had been awarded Advanced Packer (Grade S) status.

- ii) An Advanced Packers Training Course had taken place at Skydive Headcorn from the 4 – 7 July 2011. Pete Sizer had submitted a Course Report, a copy of which had been circulated to those present.

The Course had been attended by Simon Soper who had been advised to attend the examination phase of the Course at a later date.

- iii) An Advanced Packers Training Course had taken place at Netheravon from the 4 – 7 July 2011. George Panagopoulos had submitted a Course Report, a copy of which had been circulated to those present.

The Course had been attended by Darren Stuart and Ed Blakey both of whom had been advised to attend the examination phase of the Course at a later date.

Darren Stuart had since attended the Advanced Packers Examination Course that had taken place at Netheravon from the 3 – 4 August 2011. George Panagopoulos had submitted a Course Report, a copy of which had also been circulated to those present. Darren had successfully completed the Course and had been awarded Advanced Packer (Grade S) status.

- iv) An Advanced Packers Examination Course had taken place at Headcorn from the 31 August – 1 Sept 2011. Pete Sizer had submitted a Course Report, a copy of which had been circulated to those present.

The Course had been attended by Rezzan Shiel, an experienced packer who held an FAA Senior Riggers rating and who had packed in excess of 280 reserves.

Pete Sizer had reported that all key points of the AP Course had been covered and she passed the written exam and had packed four various systems. Rezzan had successfully completed the course and had been awarded Advanced Packer (Grade S) status.

8. BPA SAFETY NOTICES/INFORMATION BULLETINS

There had been no BPA Safety Notice or Information Bulletins issued since the last meeting:

9. **MANUFACTURERS' SAFETY NOTICES/INFORMATION BULLETINS**

- i) A Service Bulletin has been issued by Aviacom-Argus regarding the immediate and mandatory cutter replacement on Argus cutters manufactured before September 2007. This Service Bulletin has been issued in response to the findings of the final report of the Polish Authorities and by recommendation of the USAP after recent incidents.

The Bulletin had been circulated for information only, as the Argus AAD was still grounded for use in the UK.

It was reported that no input had been received from other manufacturers or Associations regarding Argus AADs, and in the absence of any new information, the Committee saw no reason at this time to change the status quo.

10. **A.O.B.**

- i) The Chairman wished to draw the Committee's attention to an article which was due to appear in 'Kit News' of the October 2011 magazine entitled ' Incompatible Compatibility'. It focused on the issue of 'approved' compatibility between items built by different manufacturers.

Riggers present believed that the article did not alter current BPA policy concerning Tandem equipment compatibility, which can be found on BPA Form 212 from December 1999, which states:

Any Tandem Main into any Tandem Container provided that it is compatible and deemed to fit by a Parachute Rigger (PR) or higher. The following applies:

- a) *No modifications are permitted (apart from minor rigging work to match the brake line to the toggle area) without approval from the Riggers Committee.*
- b) *A main canopy is deemed to consist of connector links, lines and canopy material.*
- c) *The rigger concerned must produce written documentation to the owner of the Tandem equipment stating that the new set-up is compatible.*
- d) *This approval becomes the BPA authority for the change and must be produced on demand by the owner of the Tandem equipment.*

Following further consideration of this issue, the Committee would watch this debate with interest.

- ii) The Chairman reported that Rick Boardman would be setting up a riggers display stand at the BPA AGM in Bolton. E-mail had been received from Rick with regard to this, a copy of which had been circulated to those present.

Rick had stated that the intention was to expand the stand to encompass a "rigging safety" format. This would involve a team of riggers sharing the stands operation throughout the day, with a team of assistants being the "manikins" for the flight line. In addition to the flight line check test, the stand would be a central point for all matters of BPA safety pertaining to equipment. Rick had also stated that additional educational entertainment could be gained from for example:

- A cutaway stand which demonstrates the problems inherent with 3 rings (3g test etc),
- A full database of safety notices – (facility to e-copy or e-mail said docs to owners if they request, or print out).
- Gear checks prior to use – different to flight line in so many ways.
- This years prevailing trends regarding kit problems – eg Vector 3
- Riggers "horror" box collection on display.

Rick had stated that effectively the flight line check stand would be rebranded as the BPA equipment/rigging stand. Rick had asked for volunteers from the rigging community regarding manning the stand and imparting their wisdom to the punters.

Anyone willing to help was asked to contact Rick direct either by email: (Ricksriggery@aol.com), or text 07747 114 602.

- iii) The Chairman of Riggers handed over the 'chair' to the Chairman of STC for this item, which was held 'in camera'.

The Chairman of STC advised the Committee that a Tandem Malfunction/Deployment report had been received where the connector links on the main were alleged to have not been fully tightened after the equipment came back from a reserve re-pack and inspection. The Tandem instructor had made 11 jumps with them like that, but without knowing. On the 11th jump a link came apart. The instructor landed it safely.

On checking other links following this jump the Tandem Instructor found that the other 3 connector links were loose.

The Committee considered this incident at some length. The exact cause of the problem could not be determined at this time, although a number of possibilities were explored by those present.

The Chairman of STC stated that he was hoping to inspect the connector link concerned.

It was reported that the owner of the equipment believed that connector links should have been checked to ensure that they were spanner tight.

Discussion then ensued by those present how they would normally tighten connector links. Some Riggers present stated that they tighten the links until they are finger tight. A number of other Riggers present stated that once the links are finger tight, they then add a quarter of a turn with a spanner. The Committee wished to emphasise to Riggers that care should be taken if they are using a spanner to ensure that they do not over tighten the link, which could cause damage to the link barrel.

Following further discussion, it was felt by those present that the standard check when conducting a routine inspection of the connector links was that the links could not be undone with the fingers. They believed that this was the standard inspection that owners should carry out on a regular basis and that they do not wait until the six month inspection for someone else to do it.

Date of next Meeting: Thursday 24 November 2011
BPA Offices, Glen Parva, Leicester
at 4.00 p.m

10 October 2011

Distribution:

Chairperson Riggers Committee
All CCIs
All Riggers
Advanced Packers
Council
CAA
Editor - Skydive

PAPERWORK REQUIRING CIRCULATION WITH THE NEXT AGENDA MUST REACH THE BPA OFFICE BY FRIDAY 11 NOVEMBER 2011