

British Parachute Association

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Safety & Training Committee

Minutes of the meeting held on

Thursday 24 November 2011 at 1900

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

Present:

John Hitchen	-	Chairman STC
Matty Holford	-	Silver Stars
Gary Stevens	-	Skydive UK
Kieran Brady	-	Skydive Strathallan
Stuart Meacock	-	Hinton Skydiving
Noel Purcell	-	Target Skysports
Alex Busby-Hicks	-	Tilstock
Brucie Johnson	-	Skydive London
Mark Bayada	-	Cyprus
Ian Roseninge	-	Peterlee
Phil Cavanagh	-	BKPC
Chris McCann	-	UK Para (Sibson)
Mike Rust	-	NLSC
Dennis Buchanan	-	NWPC
Phil Collett	-	22 Training Group RAF
Jay Webster	-	JSPC (N)/APA
Nigel Allen	-	Skydive South Coast
Paul Applegate	-	Chairman Riggers Committee

Apologies: George McGuinness, Andy Clark, Pete Sizer, Carl Williams, Dave Wood.

In Attendance:

Tony Butler	-	BPA Technical Officer
Paul Moore	-	Council
John Page	-	Vice Chair STC/Council
Dr John Carter	-	BPA Medical Adviser
Trudy Kemp	-	Assistant to NCSO/TO

Observers: Colin Fitzmaurice, Paul Stockwell, Chas McNeil, Jeff Montgomery, Jon Moulder, Georgie Roles.

ITEM MINUTE

The Chairman welcomed two new CCIs present that evening: Phil Collett of 22 Training Group RAF and Jay Webster of JSPC (N)/APA.

1. MINUTES OF THE STC MEETING OF THE 29 SEPTEMBER 2011

It was proposed by Alex Busby-Hicks and seconded by Matty Holford that the Minutes of the STC Meeting of the 29 September 2011 be accepted as a true record.

Carried Unanimously

2. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE STC MEETING OF THE 29 SEPTEMBER 2011

Page 2, Item 2 – Matters Arising. The Chairman reported that the Tandem Working Group had held their first meeting that afternoon. John Page (WG Chair) reported on the meeting and stated that the WG had considered a number of issues regarding medical and age requirements. He stated that he envisaged that the WG would take some time to complete, because of the scale of items to be considered.

Page 2, Item 3 – Incident Reports. The Chairman advised those present that at the last meeting it had been reported that a connector link on a Tandem rig was found to be undone following a Tandem jump. The Chairman stated that the connector link concerned had now been inspected, which he made available to STC. He stated that he had nothing conclusive to report at this time and it was his intention to carry out further investigations.

Page 5, Item 6 – A.O.B (i). The Chairman reported that at the last meeting Gary Stevens had informed STC of Skydive UK's intention to construct a swoop pond. He stated that since the last meeting the Club had decided to re-locate the pond, details of which had been circulated to those present and was for information only.

3. RIGGERS' SUB-COMMITTEE MEETING OF THE 29 SEPTEMBER 2011

There were no matters arising from the Minutes of the previous Riggers Meeting.

It was proposed by Paul Applegate and seconded by Brucie Johnson that the Minutes of the Riggers' Sub-Committee meeting of the 29 September 2011 be accepted.

Carried Unanimously

Paul Applegate then reported on the meeting held that evening and stated that the Committee had discussed a Tandem incident where a reserve container almost opened in the aircraft. The reserve pin on a Next 2 container was about to come out of the loop, but was spotted by the CCI in the aircraft. This was the second time this had happened in 2 weeks with the same set of equipment.

The CCI concerned provided STC with further information and stated that following inspection of the equipment, it was found that the reserve cable was just the right length for the swage at the end to be catching on the binding tape of the handle pocket. He stated that this may have occurred when the Instructor sat down in the aircraft and as he leant back, the pin was pulled. The Centre had contacted the manufacturer to highlight these incidents.

Paul Applegate stated that these may have been isolated incidents, and that he would continue to monitor the situation.

4 INCIDENT REPORTS – RESUME

- i) There had 16 Student Injury Reports received since the last STC meeting. 11 male and 5 female.
- ii) Since the last meeting there had been 7 Injury Reports received for FAI 'A' Certificate parachutists or above, 5 male and 2 female. One concerned Pete Sizer who was injured whilst jumping on the BPA Instructor Course. He landed a main and reserve entanglement. The Chairman and members of the Committee wished him a speedy recovery.
- iii) There had been 13 Student Malfunction/Deployment Problem Reports received since the last meeting. 10 male and 3 female.
- iv) There had also been 27 Malfunction/Deployment Problem Reports received for FAI 'A' Certificate parachutists or above. 24 male and 3 female.

- v) Since the last meeting there had been 10 Tandem Injury Reports received, including two to Instructors. (3 male and 7 female). Most of the injuries were minor.
- vi) Since the last STC there had been 12 Tandem Malfunction/Deployment Problem reports received, including one where the reserve container almost opened in the aircraft. The pin was about to come out of the loop but was spotted by the CCI in the aircraft. This incident had been discussed by the Riggers Committee that afternoon.
- vii) There had been 17 reports received of 'off landings' at clubs. The Chairman stated that in his opinion this seemed to be a large amount.
- viii) There had been 4 reports of parachutists losing equipment in freefall. Three helmets and a shoe.
- ix) A report had been received of 2 Tandem Students taking small cameras up with them taped to their wrists. The Chairman stated that this was happening more often with tiny cameras now available and CCIs should remind Instructors to keep an eye out for them.

5. PROPOSED GROUND INSTRUCTORS

The Chairman reported that following a discussion earlier in the year regarding Instructors who were no longer able, or no longer wished to fulfil the jump requirements for Instructor rating renewal, Mike Rust had agreed to write a proposal regarding the possibility of Ground Instructors being permitted. A copy of Mike Rust's paper had been circulated with the agenda together with his proposal.

Mike reported on his reasons behind this proposal for a new rating for Instructors who for whatever reason ie, age or disability were no longer able to actively continue to jump as regularly as they would like or unable to jump altogether. He stated that the idea was not to give this to people who take their initial Instructor rating exam and then stop jumping, but for those Instructors who had held the rating for a minimum period of time and initially seek approval of STC via their CCI.

The Chairman reported that the Technical Officer had also circulated a paper with the agenda suggesting that if STC agreed with Mike Rust's proposal, how the Operations Manual could be amended:

Section 4 (Instructors), New paragraph 9 (Ground Instructors), to read:

9. GROUND INSTRUCTORS (G)

A Ground Instructor is a BPA instructor who does not meet the required annual/bi-annual jump number requirements for instructor rating renewal (see para 12, below). To obtain a ground instructor rating, an instructor must first obtain STC approval, via his/her CCI. After which the instructor may renew his/her ground instructor rating annually (see *N.B.* below).

9.1. Category System Instructor (G)

To become a CSI(G) the CSI must have held the rating for a minimum of 3 years before seeking STC approval. Once CSI(G) status has been awarded, the instructor will be permitted to carry out all the duties of a CSI on the ground, but will not be permitted to carry out any CSI duties in the aircraft or in the air, including dispatching, jumping with or observing Student Parachutists.

9.2. Accelerated Free Fall Instructor (G)

To become an AFFI(G) the AFFI must have held the rating for a minimum of 3 years before seeking STC approval. Once AFFI(G) status has been awarded, the instructor will be permitted to carry out all the duties of a AFFI

on the ground, but will not be permitted to carry out any AFFI duties in the aircraft or in the air, including dispatching, jumping with or observing Student Parachutists.

9.3. Tandem Instructor (G)

To become a TI(G) the TI must have held the rating for a minimum of 3 years before seeking STC approval. Once TI(G) status has been awarded, the instructor will be permitted to carry out all the duties of a TI on the ground, but will not be permitted to carry out any TI duties in the aircraft or in the air, including jumping with Tandem Student Parachutists.

N.B. Ground Instructor ratings expire on the 31st March each year, but may be renewed up to six months after that date. To renew a ground instructor rating the instructor must satisfy his/her CCI and an IE that he/she is current in all aspects of parachuting instruction relevant to his/her status.

9.4. Regaining Full Instructor Status

Should a Ground Instructor (G) wish to regain his/her full instructor status, that instructor must first obtain STC approval, via his/her CCI. STC will decide what will be required to regain full instructor status. After regaining full instructor status, the instructor will then be required to fulfil the requirements for renewal as detailed in paragraph 12 (below).

Previous Paragraphs 9 –13 would become paras 10 –14.

The Technical Officer reported that he had omitted the section of the Operations Manual with regard to Advanced Instructors and Instructor Examiners Paragraph 11.3, but had been included in Mike's paper, which would need to be changed to Paragraph 12.3. and should read:

12.3. AIs and IEs are not required to have completed a minimum number of descents in the previous two years to renew their ratings provided they have held their rating for a minimum of 3 years. In the case of IEs they are only permitted to carry out in air evaluations on a BPA Instructor Course provided they are current and only at the discretion of the course director.

Following further consideration, it was proposed by Mike Rust and seconded by Phil Cavanagh that the above proposed amendments to the BPA Operations Manual be accepted.

For: 16 Against: 1 (by proxy) Abstentions: 0

Carried

6. PROPOSED CHANGES TO BPA OPERATIONS MANUAL

A paper by the Technical Officer had been circulated with the agenda regarding a suggested change to the requirements for FS1. The paper had also included a suggested change to the Operations Manual. He stated that a great deal of input had been received on this issue and reported that further correspondence had been received from Noel Purcell after the agenda had been distributed, a copy of which had been circulated to those present.

The Technical Officer reported that the suggestion had followed two discussion documents sent to Clubs in an effort to help retention by permitting an FAI 'A' Certificate parachutist to jump with someone else before obtaining FS1. He reported that Georgie Roles had carried out a lot of work on the suggested requirements for FS1 and had also agreed to review the FS Manual. Georgie was present that evening.

A lengthy discussion then ensued. A number of CCIs present stated that they believed that the suggested changes were not of a high enough standard. The Technical Officer pointed out that the Operations Manual contained the minimum requirements and that CCIs had the ability to make the requirements more stringent on their drop zones. He stated that he agreed the Committee should be encouraging people to set higher standards.

Some CCI's present felt that the move to alter the requirements for obtaining FS1 was coming from two opposing views, ie retention and whether FS1 was of a suitably high standard.

The Chairman then invited Georgie Roles to address the meeting. Georgie stated that she had taken on board the various comments that evening and that she would address the issues raised in her review on the FS Manual.

The Chairman thanked Georgie for her input on this matter.

Following further consideration on this item, Stuart Meacock proposed that the suggested Operations Manual amendments as previously circulated regarding the requirements for FS1 be accepted. This was seconded by Ian Rosenvinge.

A counter proposal was then tabled by Mike Rust, seconded by Kieran Brady that STC wait until the review of the FS Manual had been completed before the Committee consider voting on a change to the requirements for FS1.

As was standard practice, the counter proposal was voted on first. The outcome of which was as follows:

For: 10 Against: 6 Abstentions: 0

Carried

7. INSTRUCTOR COURSE 04/2011

The BPA wished to thank Target Skysports, Hibaldstow, for hosting the Instructor course, from the 7 – 18 November 2011. A copy of the Course report had been circulated to those present and was for information only.

8. PERMISSIONS

- i) A letter from Mark Tether had been circulated with the agenda requesting that Greg Henry's CSI rating to be re-instated. Mark had stated that the reason Greg had not been signed up at the start of the season (Apr 2011) was due to him moving house and not being fully current at the APA. Mark Tether had intended to sign Greg's renewal form but had misplaced it. Mark's letter had provided full details of this request.

The Chairman reported that Mark Tether was no longer CCI for JSPC(N)/APA. His position had now been taken by Jay Webster.

It was proposed by Brucie Johnson and seconded by Alex Busby-Hicks that the above request be accepted.

Carried Unanimously

- ii) A letter from Martin White had been circulated with the agenda requesting a 12 month extension to the CSBI rating of Mathew Thomas. Martin had reported that Mathew had been unable to attend a CSI course due to military commitments with the RAF Falcons display team.

Martin had stated that Mathew had completed his Tandem Instructor Course in the middle of the year and that he remained current in BPA parachuting. He was now assigned off the display team into employment within the Parachute School and will now be able to concentrate his efforts on completing the CSI Course early next year. The Chairman reported that Martin White was no longer CCI for 22 Training Group. His position had now been taken by Phil Collett.

It was proposed by Phil Collett and seconded by Mike Rust that the above request be accepted.

Carried Unanimously

- iii) A letter from Mark Tether had been circulated with the agenda requesting that Charles Shea-Simonds, Club Chief Pilot at Netheravon, be permitted to continue parachute flying past the age of 70. Mark Tether's letter had included full details of this request and had been supported by 2 BPA Pilot Examiners. A letter from Charles Shea-Simonds was also circulated to those present

The Committee was advised that Charles Shea-Simonds started parachuting flying in 1972 and has accumulated just over 5480 flying hours. He was a regular and active parachute Pilot Examiner and met all the other requirements in terms of fitness to fly and also held a current Class 1 commercial medical, which was due for renewal in January 2012. This was also copied to those present.

Dr John Carter, BPA Medical Advisor was present that evening and reported that the Club concerned had not approached him for any advice with regard to this request prior to this meeting.

Dr Carter referred to the BPA Pilot Working Group who some years previously had looked at restrictions on BPA pilots, which had made 2 main recommendations with regard to the age limitations. The BPA now places an upper limit of 55 years of age for someone to be accepted for initial parachute pilot training and an upper age limit of 70 years of age for a pilot to hold a BPA Pilot Authorisation.

Dr Carter stated that these age limits were imposed as a result of research, but the two recommendations had been made for completely different reasons from each other. The limit of 55 years of age for new pilots had been based on performance issues, because it had been felt that pilots moving past the age of 55 may not be as able to learn and retain new skills that were required. He stated that the limit of 70 years of age for a pilot to hold a pilot Authorisation though was made for completely different reasons in that on average the age of 70 heralds a sharp decline in psychomotor ability.

Dr Carter stated that in his opinion Charles Shea-Simonds had given decades of service to parachuting in general and to the Association in particular. He was not questioning his ability to fly an aeroplane well. The problem was that when someone reaches the age of 65 – 70 the risk of suddenly becoming incapacitated in the aircraft was considerable higher. In his opinion, it would be very hard to find a reason for extending a rating beyond 70 years of age. He felt we would be very unwise to extend it past that point even if we have a very experienced pilot.

A number of CCIs present commented that there were many pilots still flying who were 70 years of age or over. However, it was pointed out that they were not generally flying commercially and it was regarded as unacceptable to fly with a significant number of other people in the aircraft when over 70 years of age.

However, the BPA Jump Pilots Manual states that there will inevitably be individuals who can continue to perform satisfactorily beyond these age limits. Because the BPA Operations Manual, incorporates the possibility for exemptions to be granted from any of its requirements, given special circumstances, it is therefore possible for individuals to apply for exemptions from these limits and following guidelines prepared by the BPA Pilot Working Group, STC are likely to require the application to be supported by appropriate medical information supported by input from the BPA Medical Adviser and two BPA Pilot Examiners.

Kieran Brady commented that the Pilot Working Group had considered it would be acceptable for people who had an exceptional track record and a high level of fitness to come to the STC for an exemption. He did not see a reason why STC could not, on a one off occasion extend a pilot rating until age of 71, but only in exceptional circumstances if the person had a high level of fitness and if the pilot had the backing of two independent examiners.

Kieran Brady stated that Charles Shea-Simonds had many years of experience and he would support a request for a one off exemption for another year. He believed that it was different from someone only flying for a few years.

Dr Carter stated that if STC decided to grant Charles Shea-Simonds an exemption, while he would not object to STC doing that, he would have to make it clear that he was not actively supporting it because he did not believe there were medical grounds to support Charles Shea-Simonds over any other 70 year old pilot.

Tony Butler stated that if the BPA Medical Adviser did not agree that a pilot over 70 years of age should be flying for parachuting, STC would need to decide whether 70 years of age is the limit, and then they would need to consider changing the wording in the Pilots Manual to reflect this.

Kieran Brady stated that he agreed in principle that we should have an upper age limit; he believed that we must have a situation which allowed flexibility, and that each case should be considered on its own merits.

Some CCIs felt that whatever decision the Committee reached that evening, there was a need to draw a line under this regardless of previous exemptions. It was therefore agreed by those present that this would be the last exemption that the Committee considered regarding BPA pilot age restrictions, until it had been decided what was required.

Following further discussion, it was proposed by Kieran Brady and seconded by Ian Rosenvinge that Charles Shea-Simonds be given a 'one off' exemption to allow him to continue parachute flying for a further year.

For: 9

Against: 6

Abstentions: 1

Carried

The Technical Officer, with the support of STC said that he would draw up a proposal for STC to consider with regard to an age limit of Parachute Pilots based on the discussion that evening.

- iv) A letter from Gary Stevens had been circulated with the agenda requesting a six month extension to the AFFBI rating of Pete Brookes. Pete had been unable to dedicate the necessary time to preparing for his AFFI course due to team training.

It was proposed by Gary Stevens and seconded by Brucie Johnson that the above request be accepted.

Carried Unanimously

- v) A letter had been received from Mark Bayada, a copy of which had been circulated to those present, requesting that Rob Campbell's CSI rating be re-instated. Mark had reported that Rob had over 2500 jumps and had been a CSI for 10 years. In that time he had taught over 600 students. Due to military commitments and overseas postings Rob had been unable to maintain teaching currency and unfortunately his rating expired in March 2010. Rob had however, been jumping throughout that time and was a current jumper. Since arriving in Cyprus he had been a regular jumper and assisted under supervision with the training of students. Mark had stated that he felt that Rob was fully current in all the responsibilities of a CSI and he had no hesitation in recommending that STC re-instate his qualification.

The Chairman reported that Mark Bayada's letter not been circulated with the agenda due to an error in the office.

It was proposed by Mark Bayada and seconded by Matty Holford that the above request be accepted.

Carried Unanimously

The Technical Officer stated that it was also a requirement that as well as being signed by a CCI the renewal application would also need to be signed by an independent Examiner.

- vi) Circulated to those present was a letter from Nigel Allen requesting that Jim O'Kane's instructor ratings be re-instated after they lapsed on the 31 March this year. Nigel had stated that Jim had been unable to instruct since October last year due to military commitments. Nigel's letter had also provided additional information regarding this request.

It was proposed by Nigel Allen and seconded by Mike Rust that the above request be accepted.

Carried Unanimously

The Technical Officer stated that it was also a requirement that as well as being signed by a CCI the renewal application would also need to be signed by an independent Examiner.

9. A.O.B

- i) The Club Annual Return forms had been sent to Clubs and it was requested that the completed forms be returned as soon as possible after the end of Club's operations this year.
- ii) The Chairman asked CCIs 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 STC members for their support throughout the year and from the staff at the BPA he wished everyone a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Date of next Meeting: Thursday 9 February 2012

BPA Offices, Glen Parva, Leicester
at 7.00 p.m

29 November 2011

Distribution: Chairman BPA, Council, CCIs, All Riggers, Advanced Packers, CAA, Editor – Skydive,
File

AMENDMENTS TO BPA OPERATIONS MANUAL

At the STC meeting of the 24 November 2011 the following amendments were made to the BPA operations Manual:

SECTION 4 (INSTRUCTORS), New Paragraph 9 (Ground Instructors) to read:**9. GROUND INSTRUCTORS (G)**

A Ground Instructor is a BPA instructor who does not meet the required annual/bi-annual jump number requirements for instructor rating renewal (see para 12, below). To obtain a ground instructor rating, an instructor must first obtain STC approval, via his/her CCI. After which the instructor may renew his/her ground instructor rating annually (see *N.B.* below).

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9.2 Accelerated Free Fall Instructor (G)

To become an AFFI(G) the AFFI must have held the rating for a minimum of 3 years before seeking STC approval. Once AFFI(G) status has been awarded, the instructor will be permitted to carry out all the duties of a AFFI on the ground, but will not be permitted to carry out any AFFI duties in the aircraft or in the air, including dispatching, jumping with or observing Student Parachutists.

9.3 Tandem Instructor (G)

To become a TI(G) the TI must have held the rating for a minimum of 3 years before seeking STC approval. Once TI(G) status has been awarded, the instructor will be permitted to carry out all the duties of a TI on the ground, but will not be permitted to carry out any TI duties in the aircraft or in the air, including jumping with Tandem Student Parachutists.

N.B. Ground Instructor ratings expire on the 31st March each year, but may be renewed up to six months after that date. To renew a ground instructor rating the instructor must satisfy his/her CCI and an IE that he/she is current in all aspects of parachuting instruction relevant to his/her status.

9.4 Regaining Full Instructor Status

Should a Ground Instructor (G) wish to regain his/her full instructor status, that instructor must first obtain STC approval, via his/her CCI. STC will decide what will be required to regain full instructor status. After regaining full instructor status, the instructor will then be required to fulfil the requirements for renewal as detailed in paragraph 12 (below).

Previous Paragraphs 9 –13 will become paras 10 –14.**SECTION 4 (INSTRUCTORS), Paragraph 12 (Instructor Rating Renewals), sub-para 12.3 (previously 11.3.) to read:**

12.3. AIs and IEs are not required to have completed a minimum number of descents in the previous two years to renew their ratings provided they have held their rating for a minimum of 3 years. In the case of IEs they are only permitted to carry out in air evaluations on a BPA Instructor Course provided they are current and only at the discretion of the course director.