

British Parachute Association

5 Wharf Way
Glen Parva
Leicester
LE2 9TF

Tel: 0116 278 5271
Fax: 0116 247 7662
e-mail: skydive@bpa.org.uk
www.bpa.org.uk



Riggers Committee

Minutes of the meeting held on

Thursday 5 August 2010 at 1600

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

Present: Paul Applegate - Chairman
Rick Boardman
Dave Major
Pete Sizer
John Curtis
Kim Newton
Pat Walters

Apologies: Andy Hughes, Bernadette Whitaker.

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

Observer: John Page

ITEM

1. **MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING FROM THE RIGGERS MEETING OF THE 10 JUNE 2010**

Page 1, Item 1 – Minutes & Matters Arising – Basic Riggers Course Method 2 (300) Hrs – Review. This was an item on the main agenda.

Page 1, Item 1 – Minutes & matters Arising – Parachute Riggers Course Syllabus – Review. This was also an item on the main agenda.

Page 2, Item 3 – Tandem Equipment Record of Inspection – Check List. Kim Newton reported on the progress so far with this project. Kim stated that she had produced a draft Check List that included a number of suggested amendments, a copy of which had been circulated to those present.

Following some discussion by those present, it was felt a copy of the Check List with the suggested amendments be circulated with the next Riggers Agenda with a request for input for further consideration.

There being no further matters arising from the previous meeting, it was proposed by John Curtis and seconded by Kim Newton that the Minutes from the Riggers Sub-Committee meeting of 10 June 2010 be accepted as a true record.

Carried Unanimously

2. **MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING FROM THE STC MEETING OF THE 10 JUNE 2010**

There were no matters arising from the previous Minutes.

3. PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO RIGGERS COURSE SYLLABUS

A paper from John Curtis had been circulated with the Agenda proposing a number of changes to the requirements for candidates attending BPA Rigging Courses:

- i) With regard to the Basic Riggers Course – Method 2 (300 hours scheme). John Curtis had proposed that the number of hours for the Method 2 training scheme be reduced to 200 hours.
- ii) John Curtis had pointed out that at the moment there was no requirement for Course candidates to bring with them a log of all the rigging work they had carried out over the previous 12 months. He stated that this would give the Examiners some insight into the candidates work history. John had therefore proposed that this be a requirement for all Rigging courses, including Examiner Candidate courses.
- iii) John Curtis reported that there was a requirement within the Association for all component parts manufactured by BPA Riggers to be labelled for identification purposes. He stated that this had not been carried out by Rigging Course candidates in the past. John had therefore proposed that this be a requirement.

Following some discussion by those present, it was proposed by John Curtis and seconded by Kim Newton that the above proposed changes to the various Rigging Course Syllabi be accepted.

Carried Unanimously

The TO advised the Committee that updated forms would be circulated with the Minutes.

4. STUDENT HARNESS & CONTAINER SYSTEM – INITIAL CLEARANCE REQUEST

A Student Harness & Container System – Initial Clearance application request had been received from Kim Newton, a copy of which had been previously circulated with the Agenda, together with the relevant paperwork.

Kim presented the equipment to the meeting, which was the Next Century Tandem Container. Kim reported that the container had a number of differences from the Next Tandem and whilst she felt those differences may be described as minor, in order to prevent future misunderstandings, she believed it was necessary to accept the Next Century on its own merits. Kim had also advised that Mike Rust had examined the container and he had confirmed that there were no differences in the operation and drills for the Tandem Instructor/operator.

There then followed some discussion on this request. It was felt by those present that the equipment presented was in fact a manufacturers upgrade and therefore, it did not require acceptance for use by the Committee. Kim stated that she understood this, but had submitted the necessary paperwork out of courtesy to the Committee and asked for formal acceptance of this equipment by those present.

Following further discussion, it was proposed by Kim Newton and seconded by Pete Sizer that the above equipment as presented be accepted for use in the UK on the basis that it was a manufacturers upgrade.

Carried Unanimously

5. WORKING GROUP INTO LIFING OF EQUIPMENT

Rick Boardman reported on the meeting held that afternoon. He stated that the Working Group had decided that the project would no longer be referred to as Equipment Lifing, but would in the future be referred to as 'Inspection Policies'. He reported that the Working Group was considering a policy where responsibility was split across the ratings. For Student & Tandem Equipment – if the equipment was less than 10 years old then an Advanced Packer would undertake the inspection. For equipment older than 10 years old, then the responsibility moved to a Parachute Rigger and for equipment over 20 years old then an Advanced Rigger would undertake the inspection.

For other licensed parachutist's equipment (not Student or Tandem), again the Working Group were also looking at splitting responsibility across the ratings. For equipment less than 15 years old an Advanced Packer would undertake the inspection. For equipment over 15 years old a Parachute Rigger would get involved. If over 25 years old then an AR would be required to undertake the inspection.

The Working Group were also considering whether or not inspections on older systems should be checked and countersigned by the relevant higher ratings, as well as the Advanced Packer doing the job, or actually only carried out by those with higher ratings.

Rick stated that at the moment there was very little in the BPA Advanced Packing Syllabus regarding lifing of equipment, and this was another area, which the Working Group would be addressing.

Rick believed that the key point with this system was that it should not actually ground any equipment. He believed that it gave the Association a backed up working policy, which the Working Group had spent over a year looking into, in addition the Working Group had received a considerable amount of data from manufacturers regarding their lifing/warranty policies.

Some discussion then ensued with regard to the workmanship of a number of Advanced Packers that had been discussed at the previous meeting. Rick Boardman stated that with the introduction of the new policy, he envisaged Advanced Packers working more closely with Riggers. He believed that Advanced Packers would require much more advice and assistance from Riggers to make this system work. Rick felt this would help to address some of the problems that had been identified in the past.

Rick reported that he would be making a presentation to STC that evening on the progress of the Working Group to date.

6. ADVANCED PACKERS COURSE REPORTS

- i) An Advanced Packers Examination Course had been held at Netheravon from the 9 – 10 June 2010. The Course was attended by Chas Lawson, Andy Shaw and Matthew Wellington. A Course Report had been submitted by George Panagopoulos, a copy of which had been circulated to those present.

All candidates successfully completed the Course and had been awarded Advanced Packer (Grade S) status.

- ii) An Advanced Packers Examination Course had been held at Skydive GB, Bridlington from the 30 July – 1 August 2010. A Course Report had been submitted by Ray Armstrong, a copy of which had been circulated to those present.

Stephen Cooper successfully attended the Course and had been awarded Advanced Packer (Grade S) status.

7. BPA SAFETY NOTICES/INFORMATION BULLETINS

There had been no BPA Safety Notices/Information Bulletins circulated since the last meeting.

8. MANUFACTURERS' SAFETY NOTICES/INFORMATION BULLETINS

- i) A Technical & Safety Information Notice from the IPC Technical & Safety Committee had been previously circulated. The Notice referred to a Safety Bulletin issued by the French Parachute Federation following an agreement between the French Parachute Federation and Aviacom SA regarding Argus cutters.
- ii) Chris Gilmore had forwarded a Product Service Bulletin from Paratec GmbH, dated 11.11.2009 concerning a cutter buffer manufactured to protect cutter and grommets of Next rigs. Chris had also included an e-mail from Advanced Aerospace Designs

(AADsa/nv) manufacturer of the Vigil AAD stating that they had no objection to placing the Vigil cutter in this buffer.

It was agreed by those present that this Bulletin be distributed with the Minutes of this meeting.

- iii) The Committee acknowledge receipt of a Product Service Bulletin issued by Aerodyne Research LLC for Icon S7, S8 and S9 Student rigs, dated 25 June 2009, which had been forwarded to the BPA office by Andy Hughes.

Following discussion, Pete Sizer stated that he would add this Bulletin to the Index of World-Wide Safety Notices/Information Bulletins.

9. A.O.B.

- i) The Committee discussed a malfunction/deployment incident where it had been found that the safety pin had punctured the main bridle, locking the pin and bridle around the closing loop, causing a pilot chute in tow type malfunction.

The Committee were advised that the same problem had arisen on two successive weekends to the same jumper on the same set of equipment. During the first incident the container had cleared as the jumper pulled the reserve, but on the second incident it had stayed in place and the jumper landed with a pilot chute in tow malfunction.

Following some discussion, it was felt by those present that these incidents may have occurred due to a packing problem rather than a manufacturers problem. It was noted however, that a contributing factor may have been if the main container was closed without leaving enough slack in the bridle between the closing pin and the main container flaps above the pin. The closing pin could possibly pierce the bridle after the pilot chute is thrown, which could lock the container closed. This appears to occur when there was little or no slack in the bridle between where it exits the container and goes to the pin, when the pin is oriented towards the top of the container and when the bridle completely covers the pin.

This problem had been noted in the USA on other equipment and they had put it on their list of problems to look out for.

The Committee felt that this was something that packers should be aware of and was something to look out for during flight line checks.

- ii) Andy Hughes had asked the Riggers Committee for some clarification with regard to Parachutes de France ATOM Millennium harness-containers type 34 and 35.

Pete Sizer advised the meeting that this matter had now been resolved and appeared to revolve around a dates issue regarding various bulletins issued in 2000 from the manufacturer regarding these containers.

- iii) The Chairman reported that four Confidential Reports had been received since the last meeting:

- a. During a repack on a Next Tandem, when inspecting the reserve ripcord, it was found that the swaging at both the pin and handle ends of the ripcord was different to the manufacturers' method. The handle still had the original manufacturer's label, showing batch number and date of manufacture. When the work records for the rig had been traced, it was found that a new handle had been manufactured by an Advanced Rigger while under supervision as part of the training for their Advanced Riggers rating.

On further consideration of this report, the Committee's main concern was that the component part manufactured by the Advanced Rigger was not labelled and as such had been unable to be identified.

Although the Committee could foresee the Advanced Rigger having difficulty labelling this particular component part, they felt that this could have been identified on the reserve log card.

Following discussion, the Committee wished to emphasise the BPA requirement that the manufacturer of new components **must** be identified by the Advanced Rigger's label or stamp.

The Chairman then resumed with Confidential Reports and noted that the next two reports had involved the same Rigger:

- b. During a routine repack of Student Telesis Equipment the reserve was repacked by the Rigger concerned and the main also packed and put back into service. On a check of the equipment it was noticed that the pin had not been routed through the FXC AAD loop.
- c. Following a reserve deployment on a set of Student equipment the Rigger repacked the reserve. The main was then reattached by the Rigger and the main was then packed. On the flight line whilst checking a AFF Student the AFF Instructor noticed that the 3 ring release system on one side had been misrouted. The CCI was informed and elected to speak to the NCSO or Technical Officer and deal with the matter internally as it was thought that this incident was isolated.

The CCI of the Rigger concerned had provided the Committee with background information relating to these incidents. There were mitigating circumstances, which the CCI was monitoring. The Rigger concerned was deeply remorseful that he had allowed these mistakes to be made and had intended to be present that evening.

Following further discussion on this matter, it was agreed by those present that the Chairman of Riggers write to the Rigger concerned advising that the Committee had accepted the mitigating circumstance surrounding both incidents and suggest that no further rigging or packing work be undertaken until the mitigating circumstances are resolved.

- d. The Chairman then gave the Committee details of the final Confidential Report received:

During a reserve inspection, the left, front connector link and line group had a 360 degree twist in it. On further inspection four separate lines on the other connector links had 1 twist in them.

Following discussion by those present, some concern was expressed by the Committee that some packers may not be undertaking a proper inspection of all equipment during routine re-packs.

- iv) Rick Boardman reminded the Committee that he was still looking into the confidential reporting system and of the possibility of introducing a new improved system.
- v) Rick Boardman reported on an incident that had been brought to his attention where a jumper had come across a main parachute, which had a particularly frayed line. On closer inspection it was found that the slinks were tacked away. Both sides of the riser had been hand tacked so it was physically near impossible to get inside. However, once inside it was found that the slink had virtually worn away completely.

A number of Riggers present stated that this seemed to be a common occurrence in that when jumpers order a new set of lines, they were not ordering or fitting a new set of slinks at the same time, hence they were becoming worn.

The Committee again reminded jumpers the importance of maintaining their own equipment.

- vi) Rick Boardman asked whether it was possible for the Riggers Committee to be provided with copies of all Malfunction/Deployment problem incident reports involving equipment related issues.

The TO reported that he passes on any significant equipment related incidents to the Riggers Chairman and he reminded the Committee that Incident reports were confidential.

Date of next Meeting: Thursday 30 September 2010
BPA Offices, Glen Parva, Leicester
at 4.00 p.m

12 August 2010

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 10 SEPTEMBER 2010