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Communications Committee

Minutes of the meeting held on
Tuesday 15 June 2004 at 1400
at the BPA Offices, 5 Wharf Way, Glen Parva, Leicester

Present:	Eddie Jones Paul Applegate Calvin Blacker Kieran Brady David Hickling Tony Goodman Elizabeth Stoodley	Committee Chairman late arrival, for item 23.2 only
In attendance:	Tony Butler Lesley Gale Martin Shuttleworth	Technical Officer Editor, <i>Skydive Magazine</i> Secretary-General
Apologies for absence:	John Hitchen Ian Midgley	NCSO

Item Minute

18/04 Minutes

Paul Applegate noted that Ian Midgley, whose apologies for absence from the last meeting had been recorded in the minutes, had not been a BPA Member at that time because he had not renewed his membership. The Chairman confirmed that Ian Midgley had since renewed, and was now a Member again.

Paul Applegate proposed, and Tony Goodman seconded, a motion that the minutes of the Communications Committee meeting held on Tuesday 20 April 2004 should be approved as a correct record.

Approved

19/04 Matters arising

19.1 Breakdown of Editorial costs for the Starter Magazine (minute 15)

Lesley Gale said that this was not yet ready, but it would be available for the next meeting.

Action: Lesley Gale

19.2 Starter Magazine cover photograph (minute 15)

Lesley Gale had found a better photograph for the cover of the reprint of the Starter Magazine and had circulated this to the Committee by e-mail. The Committee had approved the new photograph, which had been used for the reprint.

Completed

20/04 Report on Skydive Magazine

Lesley Gale tabled her Editorial Report that covered the June 2004 issue and planned content for the August 2004 issue. A budget outturn would be circulated once figures for the June magazine were available.

Tony Goodman asked why two separate articles that the Royal Artillery had submitted for *Club News* had not appeared in the June Magazine. Lesley Gale apologised if these had been missed out. She said she would check when she got back to her office and if anything had been overlooked it would be carried forward to the August issue.

Action: Lesley Gale

Feedback on the June 2004 issue received by the Committee from Members was that there was a lot of coverage of head down flying. The Chairman said that this was just the way it goes: balance needed to be considered over a number of issues and not just a single one.

Paul Applegate noted a photograph from Wild Geese that showed a jumper without a safety helmet. Lesley Gale apologised that the photograph had slipped through. Tony Butler said he had already noticed the photograph himself and was going to take up the matter with Wild Geese.

Paul Applegate noted that cover of the June 2004 issue had again, as with covers of some earlier issues, featured jumpers abroad. The Chairman said that Members who were calling for more UK photographs on the cover of the Magazine should do their best to supply high-resolution photographs of a suitable quality and with the impact necessary for a cover. Kieran Brady said there was a need to adopt a flexible approach, and was satisfied with the disclaimer in the Magazine stating that any photographs of jumpers without helmets were taken abroad, outside the jurisdiction of the BPA.

The Chairman believed that it would be a good idea to repeat yet again the call for good UK photographs for the Magazine, including for use on the cover if they had sufficient impact. He realised it was difficult because relatively few UK jumpers took stills cameras in-air. There was a plethora of tandem stills, compared with relatively few in-air photographs of experienced jumpers. Lesley Gale said she would include another call for UK photographs in a future issue. Such photographs were needed for the 2005 BPA calendar, too (see minute 23).

Action: Lesley Gale

The wording of certain advertisements by Drop Zones was discussed. Lesley Gale explained the difference between fact and opinion in advertising copy. Facts were objective and she checked advertisement copy to ensure that it contained no incorrect facts. Opinions were, by their very nature, subjective. A Drop Zone might describe itself as the 'friendliest' or the 'most scenic', etc, which was their opinion and they were entitled to it. Such was the nature of advertising. The Chairman thanked Lesley Gale for her detailed eye for matters of this kind.

21/04 Starter Magazine Reprint

The Starter Magazine had been reprinted during May 2004 as agreed by the Committee (per minute 15) and copies were tabled.

The Committee congratulated Lesley Gale on a first class publication. The Chairman said that the makeover had made an excellent magazine even better - it would be the envy of the world.

The Committee was impressed with the cost of the reprint because it had been less than half of the budget forecast. This had been because advertising income, which had been budgeted as £9.8K, had actually come in as £12.7K. The result was that the cost of the reprint to the BPA had been an amazingly low 10p a copy for 30,000 copies, total cost £3K.

The Committee had already agreed, at its last meeting (minute 15 refers) to carry out a wholesale review of the Starter Mag next year - including its publication media, print, CD or a combination of the two; whether or not to take advertising, etc. The review would be conducted whilst there was still approximately one year's supply of the current reprint remaining in stock. This would allow sufficient time for any changes. Kieran Brady said that, in the light of the high quality and low price of the reprint, he had done a 180° turn from his original opinion, and now believed that the Starter Mag was a publication that did not need a significant rethink.

Action: Bring forward in 2005

Eddie Jones said that DZs should be encouraged to use up their old stocks of the Starter Magazine before they started to issue the reprint.

22/04 Update on achievement of targets in the Communications Action Plan for 2003/4

22.1 Secure online Magazine subscription facility **Target achieved**

22.2 In-house update of Magazine website **Target achieved**

22.3 Electronic Drop Zone focus

The first e-DZ page had been constructed and would be ready to be uploaded by the end of June 2004. All DZs had been invited to submit content, and web pages for another three DZs were under construction. It was anticipated that there would be a cascade effect once the first new pages were online, which would encourage more DZs to submit content for their page.

On target

22.4 Publish a BPA skydiving calendar 2004 **Target achieved**

23/04 Communications Action Plan targets for 2004/5

23.1 Publish a BPA skydiving calendar 2005

Lesley Gale reported that she had published requests for photographs for the 2005 BPA calendar in the April and June 2004 issues of *Skydive Magazine*. To date, there had not been much response. She said she would therefore contact known photographers and competition teams to invite them to submit photographs. Elizabeth Stoodley said we needed to get across the message that the invitation was not just to the top photographers. The Chairman said that what mattered was the quality and impact of the image - it had to be sharp, of high resolution and well composed. Lesley Gale said that she had in mind to publish an advertisement in the Magazine to seek good photographs for the calendar. She would also send a poster with a similar request to all Drop Zones.

Action: Lesley Gale

Lesley Gale tabled the budget for the BPA Calendar 2005. With regard to possible sponsorship of the 2005 BPA calendar, Lesley Gale said she planned to approach the big camera manufacturing companies such as Canon and Olympus, etc.

There were two principal options. One was to seek a sponsor to be associated with the whole calendar. This might be good if it could be achieved, but perhaps the amount of sponsorship required for the whole calendar might be prohibitive. The other was to seek a different sponsor for each month. A consideration with the second option was that it might be difficult to secure twelve sponsors, albeit that each would be for a smaller amount of sponsorship. Moreover, seeking as many as twelve sponsors might 'rob' the Magazine and the Starter Magazine of some of their regular advertisers. Lesley Gale said she would discuss the project's viability and the above options with Warners Group as the advertising sales agent in the market place; the Chairman supported this approach.

Action: Lesley Gale

Tony Goodman said that he might know of a possible commercial sponsor. He asked whether Lesley Gale could supply him with some calendars to help with his approach.

Action: Lesley Gale and Tony Goodman

Elizabeth Stoodley asked whether the 2005 BPA calendar would be sold. Lesley Gale said that BPA Members would continue to receive a copy, as they had done of last year's calendar, at no cost to themselves. However, Lesley Gale would be exploring the possibility of making surplus copies available for a nominal cost through the BPA Shop or the BPA Office. This was not to make money - although it might help to offset costs just a little - but because giving out too many additional copies free of charge tended to devalue the calendar. The Chairman said he would report back on this to the next meeting.

Action: Chairman

23.2 Conduct a membership survey by questionnaire

The Chairman agreed to collate the questions for the questionnaire to be issued as an integral part of the 2005/6 membership renewal form. It would be issued as an insert to the February 2005 issue of *Skydive Magazine*. He said that the intention of the questionnaire was to provide direction and guidance from the membership to the Council and its Committees. He invited Council and Committee Members, other Members and staff, to send him any relevant draft questions for consideration for inclusion in the questionnaire.

Action: All

Andy Scott (Competitions Committee) had asked whether the issue date of the questionnaire might be brought forward. This was so that the replies to questions about Members' preferences in competitions could be analysed ahead of the rules for the 2005 competitions season being finalised. The Chairman said that unfortunately, this would not be possible because the questionnaire was inexorably linked with the membership renewal process. Therefore, it was tied to the same timetable. This was necessary in order to try to secure a reasonable rate of return of completed questionnaires. The Chairman said he would suggest to Andy Scott that relevant questions about competitions could be put in a separate article in the Magazine, and on the BPA website, some time before the printed membership survey questionnaire was issued. This should then allow plenty of time for feedback before next season's competitions rules were formulated.

Action: Chairman to speak with Andy Scott

24/04 Dates of future meetings

Tuesdays at 1430 (please note this new start time, 30 minutes later than usual) at the BPA Office, Leicester: 17 August, 19 October and 7 December (after the EGM).

The meeting closed at 1503.