

# British Parachute Association

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## Communications Committee

Minutes of the meeting held on

**Tuesday 6 December 2005 at 1430**

at the BPA Offices, 5 Wharf Way, Glen Parva, Leicester

<b>Present:</b>	Eddie Jones Paul Applegate Adrian Bond Kieran Brady Ralph Fielding Elizabeth Stoodley	Committee Chairman
<b>In attendance:</b>	Tony Butler Lucie Fenton Lesley Gale Martin Shuttleworth	Technical Officer <i>Skydive Magazine</i> Editor, <i>Skydive Magazine</i> Secretary-General
<b>Observer:</b>	Roy Clarke	
<b>Apology for absence:</b>	Tony Goodman	

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### Item Minute

**42/05 Minutes**

Ralph Fielding proposed, and Kieran Brady seconded, a motion that the minutes of the Communications Committee meeting held on Tuesday 11 October 2005 should be approved as a correct record.

**Approved**

**43/05 Matters arising**

**43.1 Meeting with Mike Gorman about the computer system (minute 33)**

Lesley Gale reported that she had held a meeting with Mike Gorman and relevant BPA staff to discuss the computer system at the BPA office in relation to the generation of mailing labels for the Magazine and a number of other Magazine-related issues. The immediate and urgent problems had been dealt with and other matters, such as the Magazine subscription renewals procedure, had been discussed. Following the meeting, Lesley Gale had set out a list of action points.

**Ongoing**

**43.2 Use of the BPA logo (minute 33.2)**

Ralph Fielding was in the process of drafting a form of words to set out the updated policy regarding use of the BPA logo. This would be considered at the next meeting.

**Action: Ralph Fielding / Next meeting**

**44/05 Magazine budget 2005/6**

Elizabeth Stoodley sought clarification of the wording of minute 34. The Chairman said that the last meeting had agreed that there would be no overall increase to the budget for this year compared with last year, except for inflation and two specific items for which the Committee had agreed an above-inflation level of increase: overseas mailing costs and the premium for libel

insurance, as the policy now covered the USA. This was pending further consideration of the budget today.

Lesley Gale had updated the 2005/6 budget in line with the Committee's decisions at its last meeting (minute 34) and the revised budget had been circulated in advance. Elizabeth Stoodley proposed, and Ralph Fielding seconded, a motion that the revised budget should be approved.

**Carried unanimously**

**45/05 Magazine advertising rates**

Adrian Bond tabled on an analysis he had conducted of the magazine advertising charges. 70% of advertising income was paid to the BPA, with Warners, the advertising agents, retaining 30%. Elizabeth Stoodley asked whether this rate of commission for Warners was a good deal for the BPA.

The purpose of Adrian Bond's analysis had been to enable the Committee to form a view on whether or not the current rates for advertising were optimal. To this end, he had forecast the likely effect on advertising income of increasing the prices and reducing the discounts available. He pointed out that some of the discounts were historic and that these would not always be amenable to change, unlike other shorter-term or ad hoc discount arrangements.

Kieran Brady had calculated on the basis of the figures available to him that, for the October 2005 issue of *Skydive Magazine*, the income from priced advertisements if all had been sold at the rate set out on the rate card would have been £20,255. The actual income had been £14,000 (of which the BPA received 70%). The average discount on the rate card had therefore been 20%.

Kieran Brady asked if BPA Affiliated Drop Zones were getting a good deal. Lesley Gale confirmed that BPA Affiliated Drop Zones were being offered colour advertisements for the price of monochrome advertisements, which represented a discount of more than 50% on the rate card. A similar arrangement had been offered to Affiliated Drop Zones advertising in the BPA calendar.

In discussion, Adrian Bond confirmed that there was minimal variation in the cost of advertising charged to BPA Affiliated Drop Zones, bearing in mind that typesetting, artwork and negotiation over regular advertising in each issue or multiple issues would all impact upon the cost.

There was some discussion about certain editorial items in the Magazine, which Kieran Brady said that Members might perceive as advertising. Examples included references to a product or service in *JM's Newsround* or a filler on the diary page of the October 2005 issue promoting an event at a particular Drop Zone. Lesley Gale said that there were few free-of-charge fillers such as the one on the diary page, which was promoting an event in aid of charity. Kieran Brady said that it was important to treat all Affiliated Clubs & Centres equally and not to favour any one by giving what was effectively a free-of-charge advertisement.

Adrian Bond said that he believed that all the advertisers got a fair deal, and Kieran Brady said he was reassured to hear this. Lesley Gale said that Warners had increased the advertising income per issue by 115% in the last six years, and the Magazine had consistently returned an underspend to the BPA. Whilst she saw that there may well be further opportunity for a controlled growth in advertising income, she did not expect that income from advertising could ever replace the Magazine element of members' subscriptions.

The Chairman asked Adrian Bond kindly to liaise with Warners about the analysis he had carried out, including the 'what if' column which forecast the effects of rises of charges for advertising in the Magazine. Lesley Gale confirmed that she was happy for Adrian Bond to do this. She said that after every issue of the Magazine, she held a debriefing meeting with Warners, to which Committee members were of course welcome to attend.

**Action: Adrian Bond**

**46/05 Advertising leaflet**

Discussion on the production of an A4 gatefold advertising leaflet, to whet the appetite for people to try skydiving, was deferred until the next meeting.

**Action: Next meeting**

**47/05 Starter Magazine update**

Lesley Gale said that the *Skydive Starter Magazine* had had a fairly thorough update at its last reprint, and she did not see the need to risk re-inventing the wheel by launching on a major update now. She did however identify the interview with Giles Owen as in need of an update, and invited suggestions from the Committee for other variations that may be required.

Kieran Brady suggested a straight reprint, as he believed that the need for any updating would not be likely to justify the additional expenditure. Elizabeth Stoodley agreed, noting that the basic information was still correct. Lesley Gale said that the advertising space would need to be re-sold, as the charge was per printing (with stocks expected to last for about two years). Lesley Gale asked about the advertisement for the BPA Shop, which last time had been included without charge as part of the agreement between the BPA and the franchisee of the BPA Shop. Kieran Brady said that the franchise conditions were currently being re-negotiated with the franchise's new owners, and he would report back to Lesley Gale on this

**Action: Kieran Brady**

After further discussion, the Committee agreed that the Starter Magazine should be updated with a new cover (so that advertisers could see that it was a new printing) and minimal updates of content, for a minimum cost. Lesley Gale agreed to obtain a quotation for printing 30,000 copies on this basis.

**Action: Lesley Gale**

**48/05 Membership survey questionnaire 2005**

Elizabeth Stoodley said that she believed this Committee should start to act on the analysis of the membership survey questionnaire 2005. The Chairman said that, because this was now the last meeting of this Committee year, he believed that it would be unwise to start to consider the results of the survey today. It would, however, be taken as part of the input to the drafting of the BPA Action Plan for the year from 1 July 2006 to 30 June 2007. Kieran Brady suggested that consideration of the survey results should be an item for the full Council.

**Action: Council**

**49/05 BPA Calendar 2006**

The Committee noted that the BPA Calendar 2006 had been issued to Members, free of charge, as an insert to the December 2005 issue of *Skydive Magazine*. The Chairman said he believed the page layout to be an improvement on last year. The Committee noted that a spring boogie was advertised on the September page. Lesley Gale said that the rate charged to the advertiser had reflected this, and that all advertisers were happy with their rate and their slot.

**50/05 Editorial Report**

Lesley Gale tabled her report on the December 2005 and February 2006 issues of *Skydive Magazine*. Lesley Gale said that some readers had raised an issue about the extent of the coverage of *Jump for the Cause*, which Lesley Gale pointed out had in fact been two events, although they had resulted in a lot of pink (the campaign's house colour).

The Chairman reported that Members of his own Club, Strathallan, had complained passionately about the way in which their submissions to *Club News* had been edited down – he tabled original submissions and published versions to demonstrate this. In some cases the jumpers at Strathallan had said that editing had changed the meaning of their piece, because it had removed in-jokes - the Scottish sense of humour was different from the sense of humour of people in England. Kieran Brady said it would be better for the Magazine to set a word count and publish what was submitted. He and the Chairman undertook to read what was to be submitted before it was sent to the Magazine to ensure that there was nothing inappropriate in the content.

Lesley Gale said it was well-recognised issue that many Members said they thought *Club News* to be too long, yet were keen to see more about their own Club. She said she would be reluctant to give up editorial control, but said she would edit the pieces sensitively by editing in chunks rather than piecemeal.

In conclusion, Lesley Gale agreed to talk to the 'Mag 7' at Strathallan to seek to resolve their concerns.

**Action: Lesley Gale**

**51/05 Communications Action Plan targets for 2005/6**

**51.1 Start to publish pdf files on the Magazine Website**

This had already been achieved.

**Achieved**

**51.2 Run a competition in the Magazine to further improve reader interaction**

This would be progressed ahead of its June 2006 target date for completion.

**On target**

**51.3 Publish a BPA skydiving calendar 2006, subject to consultation**

See minute 49. Lesley Gale reported that although the account had not yet been finalised, the cost would be less than budget.

**Achieved**

**51.4 Update the *Freedom of the Skies* brochure to attract new BPA members**

This had already been achieved.

**Achieved**

**51.5 Update the BPA Starter Magazine for first-time jumpers**

See minute 47.

**On target**

**52/05 December 2005 *Club News* editorial**

The Chairman said that several Members had complained to him about the wording of the editorial for *Club News* on page 66 of the December 2005 issue of *Skydive Magazine*. This had mentioned the Council election. It had been written as a signed piece by Lucie Fenton, Editorial Assistant, who said she had intended it to be a positive piece to encourage Members to vote. The Chairman said that it had been poorly worded because it could be read as a criticism of Council Members. Lucie Fenton accepted this and assured the Committee that this had not been her intention; and both she and Lesley Gale, as Editor, apologised for any offence that had been caused.

**53/05 Date of next meeting**

This being the last meeting of 2005, and therefore the last meeting of the current Committee before the Council election for 2006, the Chairman thanked all Members of the Committee for their hard work and dedication during a busy year.

The date of the next meeting, which would be the first meeting of the Communications Committee for 2006, would be arranged for the afternoon of the same day as the first evening Council meeting of the year, normally at 1430 on a Tuesday in mid-February, date to be confirmed at the inaugural Council meeting on Saturday 21 January 2006.

The meeting closed at 1625.