

British Parachute Association

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Communications Committee

Minutes of the meeting held on

Tuesday 19 August 2008 at 1700

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

Present:

Craig Poxon in the Chair
Paul Applegate
David Ibbotson
Paul Moore
Grant Richards

In attendance:

Tony Butler Technical Officer
Debbie Carter Treasurer (from item 34)
John Hitchen NCSO
John Horne
Paul Ledden
Ian Marshall (from item 34)
Martin Shuttleworth Secretary-General
Weed Stoodley

Apologies for absence:

Adrian Bond Communications Chairman
Lesley Gale Editor, Skydive Magazine
Helen Lucas Membership Services
John Page
Martin Soulsby

Item Minute

28/08 Chair

Adrian Bond had asked that, in his absence, Craig Poxon (Development Chairman) should take the Chair. Craig Poxon indicated he was willing to do this, and it was agreed by those present, so he duly took the Chair.

29/08 Minutes

With a correction to draft minute 21.2.4, on UK ProBASE, to change the wording 'a group of four BPA Members' to read 'a group including BPA Members', Grant Richards proposed, and Paul Applegate seconded, a motion that the minutes of the Communications Committee meeting held on Wednesday 25 June 2008 should be approved as a correct record.

Approved

30/08 Matters arising

30.1 Use of BPA logo - competitions (minute 23)

The wording agreed by this Committee would go to the full Council tonight (as minute 23 of the Communications Committee meeting of 25 June 2008) for formal ratification.

Completed

30.2 Possible article on ground launching (minute 20.2)

This had been run as a news item in the August 2008 Magazine.

Completed

30.3 Mag competition (minute 21.2.1)

Consideration of this item, involving a prize kindly sponsored by Kieran Brady (Chairman, Pilots' Committee) was deferred until the next meeting when Lesley Gale would be present.

Action: Next meeting

30.4 Mercedes car advertisement on Mag website (minute 21.2.2)

The advertisement had been uploaded to the Mag website and appeared to fit in very well, without unduly distracting from the content of the rest of the site.

Completed

The Committee noted that there might be potential for other commercial advertising on the Mag website, and that this provided a likely additional source of income – including possibly selling packages of advertisements in the printed Mag and on the Mag website. The Chairman believed that Lesley Gale would be able to discuss this with Warners Advertising Agency who might be able to promote the Mag website as an additional channel to potential advertisers.

Action: Lesley Gale

30.5 'Square One' catalogue (minute 21.2.3)

This paid advertising insert had been included in the August 2008 issue of *Skydive the Mag*. The Committee understood that, as a result, a UK skydiving clothing store and a UK distributor had enquired how much it would cost to insert their own advertisements into a future issue of the Mag. This appeared to be a domino effect, and if so it was an indication of the value of the Mag as an advertising medium to reach BPA Members.

Completed

30.6 UKProBASE (minute 21.2.4)

This had been run as a news item in the August 2008 Magazine.

Completed

The Committee further discussed how best to cover non-mainstream skydiving in the Magazine. It re-confirmed its view that news items were appropriate for this, with feature articles reserved for mainstream skydiving topics.

30.7 Deadlines for Committee feedback (minute 21.2.5)

Lesley Gale had taken on board the request at the last meeting by John Page for Committee Members to be allowed reasonable time to respond to her e-mails about Mag content. By the same token, Lesley Gale had asked Committee Members to honour copy submission dates. The Chairman said both requests were entirely reasonable and asked all to do their best kindly to comply.

30.8 Libel insurance (minute 22)

The same policy as last year had been renewed for a further year.

Completed

31/08 Editorial Report

Lesley Gale had circulated her Editorial Report in advance with apologies for her absence as she would be out of the UK at the time of the meeting.

31.1 August 2008 issue

31.1 1 Content

Paul Moore said the article on the Spanish CP Nationals in the August 2008 issue was fine. The text had been written by Alastair Macartney. However, Paul Moore said he would have preferred more of the photographs to have featured British competitors to give the coverage a stronger British angle. He believed that the BPA Members' Mag should focus on BPA Members wherever possible. Paul Applegate agreed – he said the Magazine was a fantastic publication but it had always to keep in mind its roots: it needed to fly the red, white and blue flag.

Weed Stoodley said she would have preferred less on the Spanish CP Nationals and more on the sensational, ground-breaking jump for the live Honda television advertisement, which was such a significant step forward to demonstrate the massive potential for television / media coverage of the sport.

Weed Stoodley believed that, because the Mag was the BPA's official journal of record, it might be appropriate for it to document record-breaking jumps, with information (both to interest readers now and for posterity) on the time, date and location of such jumps and the names of the Members who had taken part. She said she could not find the names of all the Honda jumpers in the August issue, although it they were listed on the BPA website.

31.1.2 Cover image

Turning to the cover image of the August 2008 issue, the Committee was delighted with the 'H' for Honda formation that it featured. The Chairman noted that Lesley Gale had circulated an e-mail with three possible cover photographs, each of a quite different subject, and inviting feedback. The consensus of the Committee was that, when there was a sensational skydiving achievement such as the live Honda television advertisement, such an event should be honoured on the cover of the Mag. Whereas the quality of the image might not be as good as that of images of alternative subjects – perhaps photographed in more ideal photographic conditions – the news value of the Honda jump and its centrality to the BPA, as all the jumpers were BPA Members, should have assured its place on the cover.

The Chairman said that he did not believe that Lesley Gale intended to make a regular practice of e-mailing the Committee alternative cover images. He understood that she had done so on this occasion because of a possible issue with one of the other images that might have been used.

31.2 Magazine Budget

The Editorial Report that Lesley Gale had circulated in advance had included (i) the financial outturn for the Magazine for the financial year ended 30 June 2008; and (ii) the draft budget for the Magazine for the financial year 1 July 2008 to 30 June 2009.

In the financial year ended 30 June 2008, the Magazine had recorded an underspend of £20,744. The Committee noted, and Grant Richards proposed and Paul Applegate seconded a motion, that this outturn triggered the performance incentive on the Editorial Services contract as set out in minute 47.2/2007 of the Communications Committee meeting held on 4 December 2007 and subsequently ratified by the full Council in minute 18.2 of the Council meeting held on 19 February 2008.

Carried unanimously

Weed Stoodley said that the BPA's financial accounts for the year ended 30 June 2008, which would be presented in draft to tonight's meeting of the full Council, needed to take account of the above. The charge needed to be made to the 2007/8 Magazine accounts, and not to the current 2008/9 financial year. **[Note:** This was duly actioned when the draft accounts for 2007/8 were considered by the full Council at its meeting later in the day, Council minute 65 refers.]

The draft budget for the year 1 July 2008 to 30 June 2009 was already in use as a working document. It forecast an end-of-year outturn of £21,701. The Chairman asked Committee Members carefully to consider the draft budget with a view to discussion and consideration for formal approval at the next meeting. It would also be appropriate, at the next meeting, to consider whether or not a performance incentive should apply in this financial year and, if so, what it should be. A performance incentive had been introduced for the first time in the last financial year without commitment one way or the other for future financial years.

Action: Next meeting

Tony Butler said that as the Mag's financial performance for the year ended 30 June 2008 had shown expenditure for the year to be significantly under-budget, it suggested to him that the Committee may wish to consider to re-balancing the current year's budget. He believed that it would be reasonable to budget for a break-even figure, not a 'surplus' that only showed as such because income earned by the Mag from advertising and non-member subscription sales was underpinned by a larger financial contribution from the BPA. At the Mag's current level of financial performance, if it could be sustained, the Mag appeared to offer the Committee the option of reducing the budgeted contribution from the BPA and budgeting for an outturn of break-even.

The Chairman said he believed it would be appropriate to defer decisions on the current year's draft budget for the Magazine until the next meeting, when Adrian Bond and Lesley Gale would be present. He asked Committee Members to consider the points that had been raised today which would be central to that discussion.

Action: Next meeting

31.3 October issue

In the Editorial Report that Lesley Gale had circulated in advance included a 'shopping list' of articles for the October 2008 issue, the best of which would go forward for inclusion in the issue. As always, this depended on suitable copy being received in time to meet production deadlines. The Committee was content with the planned content.

32/08 Communications Action Plan: 1 July 2008 to 30 June 2009

32.1 Publish a new BPA website

A quick tour of the working draft of the new BPA website was shown using a projector. The Chairman said there had been a slight delay in the first stage of moving to the new website, which had been for Hcoms (new BPA web consultants) to take over from ZCT (former BPA web consultants) the hosting of the existing BPA website. The delay had been due to technical issues. A link to the new BPA website would be circulated by e-mail to the full Council before it went live, which was currently planned for the end of this month.

Action: Hcoms & BPA Office

32.2. Prepare to publish a new Mag website

The Chairman reported that Adrian Bond planned to discuss the new Mag website (minute 25.2 refers) with Lesley Gale and report back to the next meeting.

Action: Adrian Bond/ Lesley Gale / Next meeting

32.3 BPA Skydiving Calendar 2009

The Chairman reported that Lesley Gale planned to present proofs to the next meeting. Weed Stoodley said she did not remember a call for photographs for the calendar in this year's Magazines, but she may have missed it. She asked whether a call had in fact gone in the Mag? Paul Applegate said that it was a good idea to call for photographs each year, because it encouraged up-and-coming camera flyers.

Action: Lesley Gale / Next meeting

Grant Richards, speaking on behalf of the BPA Shop, which he ran under franchise from the BPA with Jason Thompson as part of their company UK Parachute Services Ltd, said that there had been little demand for calendars sold through the BPA Shop, and suggested that the number of overs produced next year might be scaled back. Tony Butler said that the Office would still need its usual supply, as it sent a calendar to those who converted to Full Membership during the course of the year. The Office said it believed that the marginal cost of overs was likely to be small.

32.4 Explore the feasibility of creating an historical image archive of British parachuting

Martin Soulsby, who was spearheading this project, had circulated in absentia a discussion paper on the proposed image archive. David Ibbotson asked for re-confirmation of how the project would be financed, and the Office said that the plan was to apply for a grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund. The Chairman invited Committee Members to feed back their views direct to Martin Soulsby in order that the details of the planned project and its application for funding could be progressed at the next meeting.

Action: All Committee Members / Next meeting

32.5 Investigate the possibility of introducing a new, more durable type of membership card

Consideration of this item was deferred until the next meeting when Adrian Bond, who was investigating the options for a different type of membership card, would be present.

Action: Adrian Bond / Next meeting

33/08 Tender for Editorial services

Pursuant to minute 4.1 of the Communications Committee meeting held on 19 February 2008, the Committee was to prepare a tender document for the Editorial Services contract for the BPA Magazine and its associated website for the period from 1 July 2009.

Adrian Bond had set out some guidelines together with a suggested timescale. The Chairman read these aloud and said that Adrian Bond had asked that a copy should be circulated to all Committee Members, which he would be pleased to arrange.

Action: Craig Poxon

Among the issues noted by Adrian Bond was the desirability of improving liaison between the Mag and the BPA Media Co-ordinators, and the related matter of setting out where media and public relations activities might best be accommodated in the wider BPA infrastructure, and in particular a possible future the role of the Editor in this.

The planned timescale was to discuss the content of tender document at the next meeting in October, and to work on the draft in order to recommend it to the full Council on Tuesday 2 December. The confirmed tender document would then be published, both in hard copy and on the BPA website. An item would be placed in the December 2008 issue of the Magazine stating how to download or otherwise obtain a copy of the tender, but the Committee did not propose to include the full tender specification in the Magazine. Bids were to be requested by a deadline of mid-February 2009, with shortlisted bidders invited to present their bids to the Committee in March ready for a decision in April.

The Committee agreed to invite Adrian Bond and Grant Richards to prepare a first draft of the tender document for consideration at the next meeting in October.

Action: Adrian Bond & Grant Richards / Next meeting

The Office suggested that consideration should be given to all possible outcomes of the tender process, to cover all bases. The Chairman said this should be included in the discussion at the next meeting, at which preparation of the tender specification would be a substantive agenda item.

Action: Next meeting

34/08 RAeC Trust

Grant Richards proposed, and Paul Moore seconded, a motion to give half a page of complimentary advertising space to the charity the Royal Aero Club Trust.

Carried unanimously

The Trust, which was linked to the BPA because the BPA was a Member of the Royal Aero Club, did sterling work that included in promoting airsports to younger people in its 'Flying for Youth' programme. To this end, 7 younger BPA Members had this year been the beneficiaries of bursaries from the RAeC Trust to help to pursue their skydiving ambitions.

35/08 National Aerosports Exhibition

Paul Moore enquired of the BPA's policy on attendance at exhibitions, such as the forthcoming National Aerosports Exhibition. Debbie Carter (Treasurer) reported that the BPA had set aside no budget for exhibition attendance because past experience, some years ago, had demonstrated that even then it had been an extremely expensive activity. The Office said that the BPA was probably invited, on average, to take part in one exhibition each month, another current example being BT's 'Heroes of Sport' exhibition to be held in Manchester. The Office doubted that exhibition attendance by the BPA would be a cost effective means to promote the sport. Paul Moore thanked the Committee for this clarification.

No further action

35/08 Dates of next meetings

Tuesdays at 1400 at the BPA Office, Glen Parva, Leicester: 7 October and 2 December 2008.

The meeting closed at 1838