

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



The Council

Minutes of the meeting held on

Tuesday 24 August 2004 at 1830

at the BPA Office, Wharf Way, Glen Parva, Leicester

Present:	Chris Allen	Chairman
	Paul Applegate	
	Calvin Blacker	
	Kieran Brady	Development Chairman
	Tony Goodman	
	Nigel Holland	
	Eddie Jones	Communications Chairman
	Ian Marshall	
	Andy Scott	
	Jim White	
In attendance:	Tony Butler	Technical Officer
	Debbie Carter	Treasurer
	Lesley Gale	Editor, <i>Skydive Magazine</i>
	John Hitchen	NCSO
	Martin Shuttleworth	Secretary-General
Observers:	Mark Bayada	RAPA
	Paul Moore	RAPA
Apologies for absence:	David Hickling	
	Ian Midgley	
	John Smyth	Vice Chairman/Competitions Chairman
	Elizabeth Stoodley	

Item Minute

39/04 **25 years' service presentation to Trudy Kemp**

The Chairman, on behalf of the Council, made a presentation to Trudy Kemp, PA to the TO/NCSO, in recognition of her 25 years' service as a member of staff of the Association.

40/04 **Minutes**

Paul Applegate proposed, and Calvin Blacker seconded, a motion that the minutes of the meeting of the Council meeting held on 15 June 2004 should be approved as a correct record. This carried unanimously.

Approved

41/04 **Matter arising: Questions for FS competitors (minute 33.1)**

Andy Scott confirmed he had prepared an article for the Magazine including questions to FS competitors on which he sought feedback before preparing next year's rules.

42/04 **Statutory accounts: 1 July 2003 to 30 June 2004**

A draft of the audited BPA Report and Financial Statements for the year 1 July 2003 to 30 June 2004 had been circulated. Debbie Carter (Treasurer) reported that a number of typographical and punctuation errors, which did not affect any of the figures set out, needed

to be corrected. She noted that expenditure on the Magazine was listed as £136,284. This included expenditure of £4,168 on the BPA calendar 2004. The Treasurer recommended, and the Council agreed, that expenditure on the calendar, being a separate item from the magazine, needed to be split out and shown either as a separate heading or as a note. The advice of the auditors would be sought on how to effect this clarification.

Jim White then proposed, and Paul Applegate seconded, a motion that the Report and Financial Statement for 2004 be approved for publication with the October issue of *Skydive Magazine*.

Carried unanimously

43/04 Insurance update

The Chairman reported that the Insurance Committee had held a meeting on 26 July 2004 with the insurers and their solicitors. It had discussed some of the Committee's ideas to help to reduce the insurers' exposure to risk and thereby help to contain any further increases in the premium. The insurers appeared to be satisfied with this approach, and had not at this stage indicated any further substantial rise in the premium for next year.

The Chairman reported that two related issues had been discussed at the meeting with the insurers. Both related to the military.

- 1 *Joint Services Adventurous Training (JSAT) parachuting activities.* This was in-service training for on-duty military personnel. JSAT students were presently allowed to join the BPA but opt out of, and therefore not pay a premium for, cover by the BPA insurance policy. The senior claims officer of the MoD had, in correspondence that had been circulated, confirmed that service personnel on JSAT courses were insured by the MoD under the employer/employee relationship. But he had gone on to say that the BPA would have to look closely at its own liability.
- 2 *The Rhine Army Parachute Association (RAPA) drop zone at Bad Lippspringe in Germany.* The Chairman said that about 4 years ago, the BPA had reached an agreement with RAPA that German nationals who were members of their own national parachuting governing body could jump at RAPA *without* needing to belong to the BPA. RAPA had recently asked for an extension of this arrangement to cover nationals from other European countries. The Insurance Committee had put RAPA's request to the insurers, who saw a potential liability for the BPA. The view of the insurers was that *all* jumpers at RAPA, because it was a BPA Affiliated Club, should be BPA Members and that rather than extend the agreement with RAPA to cover other European nationals, the agreement covering German nationals should no longer be continued. Correspondence from Paul Moore of RAPA had been circulated, and he was in attendance to highlight the significant negative impact on RAPA that any such change would be likely to make.

In discussion, Kieran Brady said that both these were complex issues with potentially far-reaching consequences both for the BPA and military parachuting centres. He therefore proposed that a decision by the Council should be deferred to the next Council meeting (on 21 October 2004) so that a meeting could be convened involving those with the most detailed knowledge of the issues. He said that liaison between experts from all parties would ensure that an informed, considered view be available to the next meeting of the Council. Ian Marshall seconded Kieran Brady's proposal that the status quo should be maintained pending further consideration at the next Council meeting.

Carried unanimously

The Chairman looked forward to a meeting between the military, the BPA Insurance Committee, and the BPA's insurers and their legal advisers to seek to reach a common mind on the way forward. The outcome would be reported to the next meeting of the Council.

Action: Next meeting

44/04 Ratification of minutes of Subcommittees

The minutes of each of the following meetings had been circulated in advance.

44.1 Development Committee meeting on Tuesday 15 June 2004

Kieran Brady (Development Chairman) proposed, and Calvin Blacker seconded, a motion that the minutes of the Development Committee meeting held on 15 June 2004 should be ratified. This carried unanimously.

Ratified

44.2 Communications Committee meeting on Tuesday 15 June 2004

Eddie Jones (Communications Chairman) proposed, and Paul Applegate seconded, a motion that the minutes of the Communications Committee meeting held on 15 June 2004 should be ratified. This carried unanimously.

Ratified

44.3 Safety and Training Committee meeting held on Thursday 5 August 2004

John Hitchen (STC Chairman) invited comments or questions about the STC minutes.

Jim White said he had written to call the Council's attention to what he alleged were procedural errors at the STC meeting in its consideration of the Panel of Inquiry Report on Flying Operations at St Andrews (STC minutes, page 2, item 2). Jim White spoke to summarise his concerns.

The Chairman noted that no member of STC appeared to have raised any concerns about the procedure that the meeting had followed.

The Chairman said that the matter raised by Jim White should be referred to the next meeting of STC (of which Jim White was a member), as it related to the process of that committee.

Action: Refer to STC

Paul Applegate then proposed, and Kieran Brady seconded, a motion that the minutes of the STC meeting held on 5 August 2004 be ratified.

Ratified

44.4 Competitions Committee meeting held on Wednesday 14 July 2004

As John Smyth (Competitions Chairman) was working outside the UK, Ian Marshall (Competitions Vice Chairman) presented the minutes.

The Council asked that a few words in minute 53, Judging Matters, on page 6 of the Competitions Committee meeting concerning non-payment of a judges' expenses should be deleted because they related to hearsay that was inappropriate for a permanent record.

Ian Marshall called the Council's attention to a recommendation of the Competitions Committee (Competitions minute 49), supported by a paper from John Smyth (already circulated), that the BPA should hold a British Open National Competition in Speed Skydiving in 2005, subject to any safety considerations that the TO/NCSO may wish to put forward. Tony Butler and John Hitchen said they had no specific safety issues to raise at this stage and were therefore content for the proposal to come forward for consideration by the Council. Ian Marshall therefore proposed, and Andy Scott seconded, a motion that the BPA should hold a British Open Nationals in Speed Skydiving in 2005.

Carried unanimously

Ian Marshall reported that Mark Calland, who had attended the last meeting of the Competitions Committee, was now the unofficial British World Champion in Speed Skydiving. The discipline of Speed Skydiving was not presently recognised by IPC. John Hitchen (UK Rep to IPC) said he would enquire at the next IPC Plenary Meeting in January 2005 about the level of support for speed skydiving, as he believed it likely that the extent of IPC involvement in this discipline would be determined by international demand.

Ian Marshall then proposed, and Jim White seconded, a motion that the minutes of the Competitions Committee meeting held on 14 July 2004 be ratified. This carried unanimously.

Ratified

Nigel Holland reported that there was a feature on skysurfing team *Project Airwave* - Robbie Powell and Gary Dawes - in *X Elements* magazine for Autumn 2004. He said he would arrange to circulate copies. He said that the Artistic Nationals 2004 had been recorded and were likely to be shown on Sky Sports and 'www.high.tv', an online sports channel. The recording had been free of charge and at no cost whatsoever to the event.

45/04 Reports on Committee meetings held earlier this afternoon

45.1 Communications Committee

Eddie Jones (Communications Chairman) reported that the Communications Committee had covered the following items.

- The Magazine had made a profit of £6,127 for the year, which more than offset the deficit of £4,297 last year.
- The draft Magazine budget for 2004/5 had been tabled. The Committee would consider this further at its next meeting.
- Work on the BPA Calendar 2005 was on schedule, but more good photographs were needed on any British skydiving theme.
- The BPA Calendar 2005 would continue to be supplied free-of-charge to Members who received the magazine. The BPA Shop had kindly agreed to sell surplus calendars to help to recover some of the cost of production.
- Eddie Jones had issued a call to Committee Chairman and staff for draft questions by no later than 19 October 2004 (the date of the next Council meeting) for consideration for inclusion in the Membership Questionnaire Survey 2005. To help to maximise the number of completed questionnaires returned, the questionnaire was to be printed as an integral part of the membership renewal form, to be distributed with the February 2005 issue of *Skydive Magazine*.

45.2 Development Committee

Kieran Brady (Development Chairman) reported that the Development Committee had met during the afternoon to review progress to date on the new Action Plan targets for the year that had begun on 1 July 2004. Progress was satisfactory and there were no significant matters to report.

46/04 Reports from Club Reps

Andy Scott had circulated a written report on his visits to Hibaldstow on 26 June 2004 and Black Knights on 3 July 2004. The report listed a number of points raised and how he, with assistance from Calvin Blacker where appropriate, had answered them. Andy Scott highlighted points for the Council's consideration. One was the possibility of saving over £1K per Magazine issue by not inserting printed minutes in the Magazine, when they were already available on the BPA website. Eddie Jones said this would make a good question to include in the February 2005 Membership Survey.

Action: Eddie Jones

Another question that had been raised was whether the membership year could be moved to match the Council election dates. The Chairman said that the existing timetable was interdependent - any change could see the AGM having to be shifted to the spring or the annual renewal moved to around Christmas time. Neither of these outcomes would be likely to be welcomed by the majority of Members. The existing arrangements had evolved over the years because, although they were not perfect, we knew that they worked. It was admittedly sometimes inconvenient to have three different years - a membership year, a financial year and a Council year. But seeking to alter any one of these could have unfortunate repercussions on the others, and therefore on the smooth running of the Association as a whole. Unless there was a compelling and thoroughly thought-out case for change, including all its ramifications, the Chairman urged caution and the Council shared this view.

A Member had asked whether the Council ballot could be polled online. The Chairman said this was a question that might be considered for inclusion in the questionnaire. However, he asked that the practicability and any other relevant implications of an online vote (security, cost, arrangements for Members without web access) should be researched ahead of any question being formulated.

Action: Communications / Development Committees

A question for STC was whether it would move to a standard format for gear tags across all Affiliated Clubs & Centres? The Chairman said this had been discussed at the last STC meeting and the answer had been an emphatic 'no', because every Centre had its own system tailored to its own particular requirements.

Jim White had circulated a written report on his visits to Peterlee and Bridlington. He summarised the issues that had been raised, and the information he had to date provided in return.

On insurance, a jumper had asked how many claims had been settled out of court. The Chairman said this was the vast majority, with actions only getting as far as the courts when the BPA insurers' expert legal adviser indicated there was a sufficiently robust defence that was likely to convince the court.

Another question had been about the purpose of the British Team Fund. The Chairman said this Fund had been established to support competitions come the day that UK Sport funding was no longer available (see minute 49). De facto the British Team Fund had been used in recent years to cover the cost of T-shirts for National competitors at World Meets, although this had never been its primary purpose.

A question from a jumper at Bridlington had concerned the BPA's accounts (minute 42). The Treasurer urged caution in interpreting the accounts in that it appeared that, in a snapshot in time on 30 June 2004 when the accounts had been prepared, the BPA had been cash-rich. A significant amount of this cash had been collected early in the new financial year as insurance premiums and was being held by the Association pending payment to the insurers. The cash position would be much different later in the year when more expenditure had occurred and once the very substantial cumulative insurance premium had been paid over to the insurance brokers.

Jim White said he had also been asked about the possibility of a Magazine opt-out. The Chairman said this question had been raised before. The Council's policy was not to support a Magazine opt-out, because it the Magazine was a primary tool of communication with and between the Membership and therefore it was important that all full Members continued to receive it. Moreover, a Magazine opt-out would increase the cost of the Magazine for everyone else.

A jumper at Bridlington had requested more articles and news about British jumpers. Lesley Gale said she would gladly publish this if it was submitted.

47/04 Report on Royal Aero Club Activities

Ian Marshall said he had nothing to report. In answer to a question on whether the BPA had yet received a formal request for the BPA to pay £200 to support RAeC's campaign for UK interests in Europe Air Sports, it was understood that no written request for payment had yet been received.

48/04 Application for Re-Affiliation: London Parachute School Ltd

New CCI Mike Bolton. Proposed by Kieran Brady, seconded by Eddie Jones.

Carried unanimously

49/04 Suggested approach to budgeting 2005/6, including the Action Plan

A document with the above title had been circulated. The Chairman said in his opinion, in the not too distant future, it was likely that exchequer funding of sport parachuting by the UK

Sports Council would either be further reduced or cut off altogether. Any such change would be in common with other airports and there was little practically that the BPA could do to seek to change UK Sport's policy. The Controller for sport parachuting (and other air sports) at UK Sport had indicated that their next 5-year plan, post the Olympics, would be "likely" to have implications for funding. This was almost certainly a coded message for a reduction or cessation of funding.

The BPA was therefore, in financial terms, soon likely to reach a crossroads. It was now necessary seriously to plan and budget assuming little or no UK Sport funding. To do this effectively, it would be necessary to review the current method of budgeting. The paper that had been circulated looked at ploughing the surplus of income over routine expenditure into Action Plan targets in the various areas of the Association's operation. Another method - an outline of which would be circulated before the next meeting - was to consider income as a whole, rather than what remained after overheads and other routine expenditure.

In the past, there had been a perhaps natural tendency to over-budget on expenditure to seek to impress UK Sport in the hope that they would increase their grant to the BPA. But it was now necessary to be ultra-realistic in budgeting. There was still a need for an annual Action Plan, even if little or no funding might come from UK Sport. The Action Plan set out clear objectives and therefore gave structure to each Committee's work during the year, and a means of measuring progress.

Under new arrangements, Council might, for example, consider allocating each Committee a percentage share of the Association's income to progress its work. Such an approach was in sharp contrast with the present method of budgeting, which was based on a bid system in which each committee said 'this is what we should like to do - this is what it will cost'. The weakness of the present system was that it did not take into account the Association's income, so expenditure could turn out to exceed income and leave the Association with an unforeseen deficit for the year. It was clearly important to avoid such a pitfall. Under the possible new arrangement, any underspend could be carried forward to the next financial year and any overspend could be carried back from the following year's budget.

An agenda item for the next meeting would therefore be budgeting, including budgeting for the next Action Plan for the year 1 July 2005 to 30 June 2006.

Action: Next meeting

50/04 BPA Monitoring Report for UK Sport

The Chairman reported that the BPA Monitoring Report on the Action Plan Year 1 July 2003 to 30 June 2004 had now been prepared for UK Sport. Should any Council member require a copy, the report was available on request from the BPA Office.

51/04 Entertainment at the Annual Dinner Dance

Nigel Holland had suggested a 12-piece soul band called *After Midnight* as a possibility for entertainment at the annual BPA Dinner dance on AGM day, Saturday 22 January 2005 at the Hanover Hotel, Hinckley. The Chairman noted that the cost to the BPA of bands in previous years had been about £300 for the hire of amplifiers. He asked Nigel Holland to see if he could obtain a demo tape and a cost from the band, bearing in mind that it was possibly unlikely that the Council would consider with favour a cost much in excess of £300.

Action: Nigel Holland

52/04 Date of future meetings

Tuesdays at 1830 at the BPA Office, Leicester: 19 October and 7 December (after the EGM).

The meeting closed at 1950