

British Parachute Association

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The Council

Minutes of the meeting held on

Tuesday 7 December 2004 at 1840

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

Present:	Chris Allen Paul Applegate Calvin Blacker Kieran Brady David Hickling Eddie Jones Ian Marshall Andy Scott Elizabeth Stoodley Jim White	Chairman Development Chairman Communications Chairman
In attendance:	Debbie Carter Lesley Gale Jon Gretton John Hitchen Martin Shuttleworth	Treasurer Editor, <i>Skydive Magazine</i> Financial Administrator (to item 69) NCSO Secretary-General
Observer:	Adrian Bond	Council 2005
Apologies for absence:	Tony Butler Tony Goodman Nigel Holland John Smyth	Technical Officer Vice Chairman/Competitions Chairman

Item Minute

67/04 Council 2005

14 nominations had been received for 15 seats on Council 2005 and it had therefore not been necessary to hold a ballot. The Chairman welcomed Adrian Bond, a new member of Council for 2005, who was attending this meeting as an observer. The two other new members of Council 2005 were Ralph Fielding and John 'Geordie' Page.

68/04 Minutes

Andy Scott proposed, and Jim White seconded, a motion that the minutes of the meeting of the Council meeting held on 19 October 2004 should be approved as a correct record. This carried unanimously.

Approved

69/04 Matters arising

69.1 Entertainment at the Annual Dinner Dance (minute 54.2)

The band *Grounded* had advised the office that they were unfortunately no longer available to play on the date of the Annual Dinner Dance. After considering possible alternatives, Jim White proposed, and Paul Applegate seconded, a motion that Jon Gretton's band be invited

to play, for which the only charge, as there would have been with *Grounded*, would be the cost price of hiring amplifiers.

Carried unanimously

69.2 Trophy for outstanding achievement in the sport (minute 56.5)

The Chairman reported that he had tried to contact Jim Crocker, who was away in Spain. He would try again on his return to the UK and report back to the February 2005 meeting.

Action: Chairman

69.3 Competitions committee minutes of 12 October 2004 (minute 58.5)

The Chairman said that the 'water trough' was not the correct term as used in the IPC rules on Canopy Piloting. John Hitchen confirmed that the correct term was 'water course' and this was noted.

69.4 Hong Kong Parachute Association (minute 64)

The Chairman reported that a letter (circulated) had been sent to convey the best wishes of the BPA on the re-opening of the Hong Kong Parachute Association.

70/04 Insurance update: The Rhine Army Parachute Association (RAPA) Drop Zone at Bad Lippspringe in Germany

David Hickling (Chairman, Insurance Committee) reported that Paul Moore, Commandant of RAPA, had kindly supplied the BPA's insurance brokers with an English translation of the DFV insurance policy. This was the policy held by the experienced German national jumpers who used Bad Lippspringe Drop Zone in Germany under a concession allowing them to jump without BPA membership that had been granted by the BPA Council in April 2000.

The comparison had revealed that the German insurance policy was not as comprehensive in coverage as the BPA policy. The insurers had advised that this meant that, should the BPA allow the concession to remain, the BPA would be exposing itself to elements of risk for which the jumpers concerned were contributing no premium.

The Council considered the position and believed that, with insurance now such an expensive and sensitive issue, the only reasonable way forward for the Association as a whole was to withdraw the concession and revert to the policy that all jumpers at all BPA Affiliated Clubs & Centres must hold BPA Membership, and thereby contribute a premium to the BPA insurance policy. Although RAPA had special circumstances, which had been well documented in the papers previously circulated, the Council had to act in the interests of the Association as a whole. The Council therefore considered it reasonable to implement one blanket policy that would apply to all jumpers at all Affiliated Centres.

David Hickling proposed, and Elizabeth Stoodley seconded, a motion that RAPA should be advised in writing that, with effect from the start of the new membership year on 1 April 2005, all jumpers at their Centre would be required to hold BPA Membership. Because of the lack of compatibility of their DFV insurance policy with the BPA's, and with regret, the concession allowing experienced German jumpers to jump at RAPA without BPA membership would be withdrawn on 31 March 2005.

Carried unanimously

71/04 Budget

At the last meeting (minute 60), a new method of budgeting had been agreed based on a percentage allocation of the surplus in BPA income for the year forecast to remain after routine expenditure (insurance, staff, premises, magazine, etc).

Jon Gretton (Financial Administrator) had circulated a paper that had set out the estimated amount of the surplus and the historical percentage allocations over the last 3 years. Lesley Gale said that she had spoken with Jon Gretton about the costs of the Starter Mag and the BPA Calendar and he had agreed that it would be more accurate to include these, as with the Magazine itself, in running costs. This meant that he had revised the forecast surplus from £62.5K to £58K.

There followed considerable discussion about the percentage allocations of the surplus, and whether these would be sufficient, in cash terms, to cover the BPA's activities, especially in the core area of safety and training. There was also discussion about funding cycles in competitions that meant there was considerable variability in funding requirements in different years according to when the next World Championships were due to be held. The Council also noted action that had already been taken to help to cover the costs of particular activities from additional income generated from those same activities - for example, instructor courses and skills coaching roadshows. This was the way forward as the BPA had to plan to become self-sufficient, without relying on external funding from UK Sport.

The Chairman reported that the figures did not include any possible exchequer funding from UK Sport. UK Sport were putting in place an entirely new funding model, and it was not yet clear whether this would be of benefit or disbenefit to the BPA. However, prudence suggested that it would be sensible to plan for any cessation of UK Sport funding, as the trend was that it had sharply declined over the last decade. UK Sport was currently in the throes of a major reorganisation to put in place a new structure to support its new funding arrangements. The good news was that UK Sport had indicated that it was quite possible - although in no way could it be guaranteed - that the BPA's funding would not be cut off this year, but that 'stand still' grant of £25K would be made for 2005/6. The Chairman expected that, were this to be the case, UK Sport would specify the same allocation of their grant as they had this year, namely £20K for Competitions and £5K for Safety.

A paper by John Smyth (Vice Chairman and Competitions Chairman) had been circulated. The Chairman called attention to a point in John Smyth's paper that said: "Given all that we do, why do we have to put such a high percentage as 25% into a reserve fund which I am told cannot be accessed other than if Armageddon hits the BPA?". The Chairman said this was a good question: the answer was to be found in the insurance bordereaux. These showed that, should the BPA have to become self-insuring, the present level of reserves would be unlikely to meet the cost of insurance payouts and legal fees for even one calendar year.

The Chairman said that, despite numerous brokers' efforts, there was only one syndicate of insurance underwriters that was prepared to insure the BPA at this time - and Members needed no reminder that this was at a cost of a massive 150% increase in insurance premium this year. It was no exaggeration to say that the insurance situation was on a knife-edge. He therefore believed there should be not less than a 25% allocation to reserves. He said that reserves should more accurately be termed 'investments' because this was money invested for the future of the sport - indeed, to ensure that the sport *had* a future.

Kieran Brady supported the allocation of what he termed 'an absolute minimum of 25%' of the Association's 2005/6 surplus into investments.

David Hickling suggested that the Development Committee next year should consider the structure of the BPA as a company. It might be possible, by some variation of the company structure, to help to protect the membership's assets from liabilities. The Chairman thanked David Hickling for his suggestion, and referred it to the Development Committee.

Action: Refer to the Development Committee

Kieran Brady proposed, and Eddie Jones seconded, that the allocation the forecast £58K 2005/6 surplus of BPA income over routine expenditure should be:

25% to Investments (reserves)
10% to Safety and Training
5% to Communications
5% to Development
55% to Competitions.

The Chairman noted that John Smyth's paper contained a proposal. He would take this first, as a counter proposal by proxy in the paper from John Smyth, that the allocation of the forecast £58K 2005/6 surplus of BPA income over routine expenditure should be:

15% to Investments (reserves)
10% to Safety and Training
5% to Communications
5% to Development
65% to Competitions.

Ian Marshall seconded John Smyth's proposal. The vote was:

For - 3 (including proxy vote by John Smyth), Against - 6, Abstain - 1 (David Hickling)

Not carried

The Chairman then invited the Council to vote on Kieran Brady's proposal. The vote was:

For - 5, Against - 4 (including proxy vote by John Smyth), Abstain - 1 (David Hickling)

Carried

The Chairman said that Council's decision was therefore to budget 25% of the forecast surplus of income over routine expenditure to investments; 10% to Safety and Training; 5% to Communications; 5% to Development, and 55% to Competitions. Any UK Sport funding would be in addition to this, for allocation to areas designated by UK Sport. The Chairman asked that Jon Gretton should apply these percentages to the forecast surplus and table a note of the respective amounts at the inaugural Council meeting in 2005 (minute 79) so that the Committees could prepare their Action Plans in accordance with the agreed budget.

Action: BPA Office

72/04 Ratification of minutes of Subcommittees

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

72.1 Development Committee meeting on Tuesday 19 October 2004

Kieran Brady (Development Chairman) proposed, and Eddie Jones seconded, a motion that the minutes of the Development Committee meeting held on 19 October 2004 should be ratified. This carried unanimously.

Ratified

72.2 Communications Committee meeting on Tuesday 19 October 2004

Eddie Jones (Communications Chairman) proposed, and Paul Applegate seconded, a motion that the minutes of the Communications Committee meeting held on 19 October 2004 should be ratified. This carried unanimously.

Ratified

72.3 Special meeting of the Safety and Training Committee meeting held on Thursday 7 October 2004

David Hickling proposed, and Paul Applegate seconded, a motion that the minutes of the special STC meeting held on 7 October 2004 to consider the recommendations of the RAPS Panel/Working Group, should be ratified. This carried unanimously.

Ratified

In reply to a question from Andy Scott, David Hickling said that the recommendations of the Panel, which had been approved by STC, were non-mandatory and would be implemented by CCIs at their own discretion.

72.4 Safety and Training Committee meeting held on Thursday 2 December 2004

John Hitchen (STC Chairman) reported with regret on a fatal accident to Peter Leighton-Woodruff at Headcorn on 27 November from what appeared to be a low turn. A Panel of Inquiry was to be convened, to which various items of correspondence received by the office would be forwarded. The Chairman asked that the Council's condolences should be conveyed to the family and friends of the deceased.

On an issue (STC minute 6(b)) involving a suspected breach of the Operations Manual, by ratifying the STC minutes the Council was signifying its full support of STC and its Board of Inquiry.

Paul Applegate then proposed, and Kieran Brady seconded, a motion that the minutes of the STC meeting held on 2 December 2004 be ratified. This carried unanimously.

Ratified

72.5 Competitions Committee meeting held on Monday 15 November 2004

In John Smyth's absence, Ian Marshall (Competitions Vice Chairman) dealt with points of clarification on the minutes.

With reference to Competitions Committee minute 86.2.1, regarding FS Grand Prix competitions in 2004, Kieran Brady expressed concern and disappointment that the 4 and 8-way Grand Prix meet on 26-30 May had been awarded by the Competitions Committee to NWPC Cark on the long-established weekend of the Scottish Nationals. As a result of this, Kieran Brady said that Strathallan had cancelled the 2005 Scottish Nationals, meaning the end of a 43-year tradition. Strathallan would not therefore host the Classics & CF Grand Prix that the Competitions Committee had offered it.

Kieran Brady said that, in his view, the decision to hold a FS Grand Prix in Northern Britain to clash with the long-established Scottish Nationals showed poor judgment by the Competitions Committee. He regretted that this decision had been taken with the delegated authority of the Council and suggested that, in future, all decisions by the Competitions Committee should be subject to ratification by the full Council before they were implemented.

The Chairman said that it was only fair that John Smyth, in his capacity as Chairman of the Competitions Committee, should have an opportunity to reply to the issues that Kieran Brady had raised. To this end, the Chairman asked that they should be noted for consideration at the February meeting.

Action: February meeting

Ian Marshall then proposed, and Jim White seconded, a motion that the minutes of the Competitions Committee meeting held on 15 November 2004 should be ratified. This carried unanimously.

Ratified

73/04 Reports on Committee meetings held earlier this afternoon

73.1 Communications Committee

Eddie Jones (Communications Chairman) reported that the Communications Committee had:

- Reviewed the December 2004 issue of *Skydive Magazine* and considered it to have been another good, balanced issue that should be well received by the membership.
- Received a copy of the BPA Calendar 2005 and considered this to have been impressive. Feedback from the membership was awaited. Advertising in the calendar had made a significant contribution to its cost of production and reduced the call on BPA funds.
- Discussed the addition of including a disclaimer in the Magazine about recognition in the UK of training and qualifications, and possibly other services, offered at locations outside the UK.
- Started to consider the possible future treatment of the *Freedom of the Skies* brochure, existing stocks of which were likely to become depleted in mid or late 2005.

73.2 Development Committee

Kieran Brady (Development Chairman) reported that the Development Committee had:

- Received an update on insurance from David Hickling (see Council minute 70).

- Heard a presentation about the Sky Venture UK wind tunnel from Simon Ward, and agreed that Sky Venture could have a space at the BPA AGM Day exhibition on 22 January 2005.
- Heard proposals from Simon Ward to initiate a dialogue between the BPA and Sky Venture UK, which the Committee would consider and consult upon within the BPA.

74/04 Reports from Club Reps

There were no reports from Club Reps.

The Chairman thanked the Club Reps for their work during the year. He particularly thanked Andy Scott for the clear, concise written reports he had submitted after each of his visits. These had proved particularly helpful to inform the Council of the issues that had been discussed, and he commended the simple but effective format that Andy Scott had developed to all Club Reps in the future.

75/04 Report on Royal Aero Club Activities

John Smyth (BPA Delegate to RAeC) had circulated a written report.

75.1 RAeC awards 2004

The BPA had been successful in all three of its nominations for RAeC awards 2004, viz:

RAeC Bronze Medal	-	Derek Thomas
RAeC Certificate of Appreciation	-	Rob Noble-Nesbitt Trudy Kemp

The RAeC had also awarded the Prince of Wales Cup to the Red Devils. This had not been a BPA nomination, but an independent one from a supporter of the Red Devils who knew the Chair of the RAeC Awards Committee, who had been actively seeking nominations. Whilst naturally pleased for the Red Devils, John Smyth had noted in his report that the nomination had cited an average year of display team activity for them. The award of the prestigious Prince of Wales Cup - previously awarded to *VMax* and the Royal Marines and indeed the Gliding Team who had all won World Championships at World Meets - had changed the emphasis of the award.

The Chairman said that it struck him as extremely odd for a nomination not to be known to the relevant Association in advance. He asked that the RAeC should reconsider its rules for nomination such that all nominations had to come through the appropriate Member Association. This was to ensure that the portfolio of nominations in any individual airsport was balanced, both in any one year and from year to year.

Action: John Smyth

The awards ceremony was early next year - 3 February 2005 - with HRH the Duke of York. John Smyth had said in his paper that he would unfortunately be unable to attend because he would be heading the UK Delegation to the Canopy Piloting World Cup in Florida. Ian Marshall (Alternate BPA Delegate to RAeC) confirmed that he would be pleased to attend.

75.2 WADA and UK Sport Drug-Free Sport Codes

John Smyth had reported in his paper that RAeC still intended to send a letter to FAI questioning the relevance of the World Anti-Doping Agency Code to airsports. However, indications were that this would not be as strongly worded as when it had first been suggested. The BPA had entirely disassociated itself from any such letter (minute 59). The Chairman had since had a telephone conversation with Marc Asquith, Chairman of RAeC, who had kindly agreed to let the BPA see the RAeC letter to FAI before it was sent, so that the BPA could prepare its own letter to be forwarded to FAI at the same time.

76/04 Staff Christmas Bonus

The staff left the room for this item to be held in camera. Ian Marshall proposed, and Andy Scott seconded, a motion that the BPA should pay its employed staff a Christmas bonus of the same amount as last year. The staff then returned and thanked the Council for this kind gesture.

77/04 Letter of Appeal from Sandy Barnett

The Chairman referred to a letter of appeal from Sandy Barnett about an STC decision, and the Chairman's reply (both circulated) stating that the earliest date at which the Council could now consider the appeal would be at its meeting in April 2005. This was because Mr Barnett's letter of appeal had arrived too late for the matter to be considered at this Council meeting, and not all parties would be available at the time of the February 2005 meeting. Mr Barnett would need to send a fresh letter of appeal by the date specified in the Chairman's letter if the matter were to be included in the agenda of the April meeting.

78/04 Council 2004

The Chairman thanked all Members of the Council, including those who were unable to be present tonight, for their hard work and thoughtful contributions during the year. David Hickling and Calvin Blacker had not offered themselves for re-election next year, and he wished both of them well for the future. He paid tribute to David Hickling's membership of the Council over many years, and thanked him for his kind offer to remain associated with the BPA's work on the insurance. David Hickling thanked colleague members of the Council, past and present, for their contributions to debate over the years and said he was looking forward to having more time to himself upon his retirement from the Council. He also complemented the Chairman on his conduct of Council meetings. Kieran Brady then proposed a vote of thanks to the Chairman.

79/04 Date of next meeting

The inaugural meeting of Council 2005 would be held in Room 18, Ground Floor, the Hanover International Hotel, Watling Street, Hinckley, Leicestershire, immediately after the AGM and presentation ceremony on the morning of Saturday 22 January 2005.

The first task of each Committee in 2005 would be to draft its Action Plan for the year 1 July 2005 to 30 June 2006, for consideration by the full Council at the first ordinary Council meeting, to be held at a date to be arranged in February 2005.

The meeting closed at 2025.