

British Parachute Association

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The Council

Minutes of the meeting held on
Tuesday 17 February 2009 at 1840
at the BPA Office, Wharf way, Glen Parva, Leicester

Present: John Smyth MVO - Chairman
Paul Applegate
Ray Armstrong
Adrian Bond
John Horne
Ian Marshall
Craig Poxon
Steve Saunders
Andy Scott
Martin Soulsby
Weed Stoodley
Alex Wilson

Apologies for absence: Paul Ledden
Paul Moore
Grant Richards

In attendance: Kieran Brady - Chairman, Pilots' Committee
Tony Butler - Technical Officer
Debbie Carter - Treasurer
Lesley Gale - Editor, Skydive the Mag
John Hitchen - NCSO
Martin Shuttleworth - Secretary-General

Observer: Stuart Meacock

Item Minute

10/09 Minutes

The Chairman reported that minutes of the following meetings had already been ratified electronically by the Council. The Office reported that it had not yet been able to publish minutes for meetings in the year 2009 pending construction of a new page by the BPA website technical consultants.

10.1 EGM - Tuesday 2 December 2008 *Ratified electronically*

10.2 Council meeting Tuesday 2 December 2008 *Ratified electronically*

10.3 AGM - Saturday 10 January 2009 *Ratified electronically*

10.4 Inaugural Council meeting 2009 - Saturday 10 January 2009 *Ratified electronically*

11/09 Matters arising from the above minutes

11.1 Letter from Jim Crocker, Vice President (minute 8)

The Office had asked for, but not yet received from Jim Crocker, a duplicate copy of his letter for circulation to the Council. The Chairman said that the letter might have been overtaken by events - he would check with Jim Crocker.

Action: Chairman

11.2 Sport England Regional Representatives (minute 4)

There were three vacancies as the following had stood down at the AGM.

<i>Name</i>	<i>Region</i>
John Page	South West
Mick Matthews	West Midlands
Grant Richards	East

Craig Poxon (Development Chairman) reported that his Committee would be in touch with them to ask if they could suggest a successor for their region.

Action: Development Committee / Next meeting

12/09 IPC plenary meeting 2009

A written report had 60th Annual IPC Plenary meeting held in Vasteras, Sweden, from 27 January to 1 February 2009, had been circulated in advance to the Competitions Committee and circulation to the full Council would follow. The Chairman, in his capacity as UK Delegate to IPC, highlighted key points of the meeting he had attended together with John Hitchen (UK Alternate Delegate to IPC). Much of the report was most relevant to the work of the Competitions Committee which had considered it in some detail at its meeting this morning.

The Chairman had made a presentation to the IPC meeting that had included showing the 4 Creative video (as played to the BPA AGM) on the jump by BPA Members for the Honda live skydiving television advertisement. This had been received by IPC with a standing ovation. It demonstrated the technical feasibility and sheer power of live air-to-ground video. The Honda jump was therefore a milestone in the formulation of the mission plan that IPC confirmed at its meeting, which was to introduce live ground-to-air judging of all major competitions as soon as practicable.

The Council congratulated BPA national and international judge Karla Cole on being selected as an adviser to the IPC Judges Committee. This was a reflection of the high regard in which she was held by the international judging community in the sport, and in appreciation of her work in helping to create the pioneering online training programme for judges.

IPC meeting report noted

13/09 European Parachuting Union (EPU)

The Chairman reported that EPU had been reformed at the recent IPC plenary meeting. Paul Moore had been elected President of EPU. The BPA was now taking a lead in co-ordinating EPU. The BPA would administer the EPU's bank account and Jon Gretton would be Treasurer. The account would be completely separate from the BPA's bank account. EPU had an essential role in fighting to maintain the sport's access to airspace against new European Regulations that, if left unchecked, could well see the end of our sport (see also minute 14.3.2).

The draft EPU statutes had been circulated for formal approval. Paul Applegate proposed, and Andy Scott seconded, a motion that this Council should hereby approve the EPU statutes on behalf of the UK.

Carried unanimously

Weed Stoodley asked that the BPA budget should take account of the BPA's subscription to on EPU .

Action: BPA Office (Jon Gretton)

14/09 Ratification of minutes of Committees

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

14.1 Development Committee meeting on Tuesday 2 December 2008

With the addition of a point of clarification by Weed Stoodley, John Horne proposed, and Paul Applegate seconded, a motion that the minutes of the Development Committee meeting held on 2 December 2008 should be ratified. This carried unanimously.

Ratified

14.2 Communications Committee meeting on Tuesday 2 December 2008

Adrian Bond proposed, and Martin Soulsby seconded, a motion that the shorter version of the minutes of the Communications Committee meeting held on 4 December 2007 should be ratified. This carried unanimously.

Ratified

14.3 Safety and Training Committee meeting on Thursday 12 February 2009

14.3.1 Ratification of minutes

John Hitchen (STC Chairman) raised an issue about the principle of STC being asked to give a permission against an operational requirement set out in a document belonging to an authority other than the BPA – in the case that came to the last STC meeting, a CAA document. After discussion, the Council agreed with Tony Butler that such issues had to be carefully considered on a case-by-case basis and with due consultation as appropriate.

Paul Applegate then proposed, and Ray Armstrong seconded, a motion that that the minutes of the STC meeting held on 11 February 2009 should be ratified. This carried unanimously.

Ratified

14.3.2 Regulatory threats from EASA

Kieran Brady (Pilots' Committee Chairman) addressed the Council on important European regulatory changes being progressed by the European Air Safety Agency (EASA) that posed a significant threat to our sport.

The regulation of sport parachuting in the UK was now passing from our own CAA to EASA who were a pan-European agency. This meant a wholesale change to the regulatory regime. Our sport would have to fight for its place in this new regime. Because our sport, to EASA, represented such a small part of the overall regulation of air safety, there was a risk that the sport would be pummelled out of existence by red tape designed for commercial air transport – an entirely different purpose, but one to whose regulations our sport could fall foul by default. The mechanism to avoid this was to secure an 'acceptable means of compliance' or AMC against commercial air transport regulations. Consultation on these regulations took up doorstep-sized tomes, therefore writing an effective AMC was a highly skilled and time-consuming job. Kieran Brady said he understood that EASA had not got the budget to oppose well-drafted AMCs.

Kieran Brady suggested that the Council might wish to consider the BPA drafting an AMC with the intention, if it was successful, of allowing all BPA Affiliated Clubs & Centres to operate under its provisions. It might even serve as a template, through EPU, for parachuting operations in certain other European nations.

After discussion, the Chairman thanked Kieran Brady for calling the matter to the Council's attention. He said the Council would be grateful if Kieran Brady, under the Pilots' Committee, were to establish a working group to fight prejudicial EASA legislation, to include the TO/NCSO and co-opting others with particular expertise (for example, from among pilots and DZOs). Council appreciated that, should the working group (which would initially liaise with EASA, CAA, HSE, NATS, etc) confirm Kieran Brady's analysis of the European regulatory threat to our sport and how to fight it, it might well be necessary for the Council to vote to help to fund a specialist to draft an AMC. The complexity and volume of this work would be beyond what could be expected of a volunteer. However, Kieran Brady confirmed that he knew of individuals whom he believed had the capacity to draft an AMC. The Chairman asked Jon Gretton (BPA Financial Administrator) to open a new budget head for this work. Kieran Brady said that the working group might also approach the Drop Zone Defence Fund.

Action: BPA Office (Jon Gretton)

Kieran Brady outlined further measures to help to stave off EASA legislation that would be harmful to sport parachuting. EASA's current consultation on draft regulations would end on 30 May. It was possible that at least some objections that we may submit might be sustained, but it was unlikely that this strategy alone would be sufficient. He assured that the Council that the BPA EASA working party would exploit all avenues to achieve our aim.

The Chairman thanked Kieran Brady for this briefing, assured him of the support of the Council. He asked that a report from the working party should be added as a standing item to future Council agendas. See also minute 18, Report on RAeC.

15/09 Reports on Committee meetings held earlier today

15.1 Competitions Committee

Andy Scott (Competitions Chairman) reported that, at the meeting held this morning, the Competitions Committee had:

- elected Martin Soulsby as Competitions Vice Chairman
- decided to adopt an abridged format for minutes
- continued to keep under review the BPA's anti-doping requirements to assure compatibility with FAI and UK Sport requirements, which were harmonising to the World Anti-Doping Agency Code
- noted and discussed IPC's decisions as set out in the report on the IPC Plenary Meeting 2009
- issued invitations to represent the UK at this year's World Cups
- reviewed possibilities for British delegation clothing
- approved new posters to promote Skills Coaching Roadshows for non-seniors
- been pleased to note the recruitment of a new trainee judge
- added extra events to the calendar of domestic competitions 2009
- considered equipment issues such as modification of accuracy scoring pads from 3cm to 2cm
- progressed the 'coach the coaches' target of the current year's Competitions Action Plan with a sports tutor from Loughborough University with a view to offering two courses for BPA coaches at weekends in April 2009
- monitored good progress on the rest of the current year's Competitions Action Plan started to formulate ideas to recommend to the April meeting of the Council for the Competitions Action Plan for the year 1 July 2009 to 30 June 2010.

In answer to a question from the Chairman, Andy Scott said that the committee would consider the appointment of 2009 World Cup Heads of Delegation/Delegation Managers at its next meeting.

15.2 Communications Committee

15.2.1 General

Martin Soulsby (Communications Chairman) reported that, at the meeting held this afternoon, the Communications Committee had:

- agreed with the Development Committee to propose to the Council that the BPA Media Co-ordinators 2009, Rich Rust & Rebecca Armstrong, should report to the Communications Committee rather than the Development Committee as hitherto, and that the terms of reference of both committees should be adjusted to reflect this. Martin Soulsby formally proposed this motion to the Council, and it was seconded by Adrian Bond.
- Carried unanimously**
- discussed plans for a BPA film festival with finalists to be judged at the Blackpool AGM on Saturday 16 January 2010 – Alex Wilson noted that something along similar lines run by the APA had been a huge success

- monitored good progress on the current year's Communications Action Plan started to formulate ideas to recommend to the April meeting of the Council for the Communications Action Plan for the year 1 July 2009 to 30 June 2010.

The Council meeting then went in camera with only Council Members and staff remaining.

15.2.2 Mag tender working group

Martin Soulsby invited Adrian Bond (Chairman, Mag Tender Working Group) to report. Adrian Bond said that of the 19 intents to tender that had been received last December, 7 completed bids had been submitted by the deadline of 5 February. Some high quality bids had been attracted. The bids had been carefully considered by his working group and the strongest four had been subject to a numerical scoring exercise designed to give a qualitative input to the selection process. The scoring process, together with further qualitative review, had eliminated one further bid leaving the three best bids on the shortlist. Shortlisted bidders would be invited to meet the working party at the BPA Office for discussions on Tuesday 3 March. The working party would then, through the Communications Committee, report to the Council on the three shortlisted bidders and make a recommendation. It would be for the Council, at its meeting on Wednesday 22 April, to decide to whom to award the contract.

The in camera session ended and the open meeting resumed.

15.3 Development Committee

Craig Poxon (Development Chairman) reported that, at the meeting held this afternoon, the Development Committee had, from the nine Council Members interested in serving on the Committee this year, decided on the six voting members of the Development Committee (seven with himself as Chairman).

This led to a discussion about the number of voting Members on each Committee. Council policy (minute 48/07 of the Council meeting on 12 June 2007) was that Committees should have, as voting Members, no more than 50% of the voting Members of Council. Others, including further Council Members, could be co-opted, but would not be entitled to a vote on the Committee. This was so that no single Committee could dominate the Council, for example by approving spending plans on its own, which might be possible if any Committee had a majority of Council Members as voting members.

The discussion broadened to cover the scheduling of meetings, today being the first time that the Competitions, Communications and Development Committees had all met on the same day. The idea of concurrent scheduling meetings during the afternoon, to avoid an early start, was discussed. An issue was that this would prevent those Council Members on Competitions and another Committee from serving on both. The Chairman expressed his concern that the meetings schedule adopted today had the potential to lead to very long days (prophetically, this Council meeting ended at 2300!). It also had the drawback, as had happened today, of other meetings running into Council meeting time, which was not acceptable. The Chairman said that if the Council wanted to maintain the new 'all on one day' meetings schedule, it was incumbent on each and every Council Member to make it work. This would be further considered at the next meeting when Grant Richards, who had raised the issue (minute 5), would be present.

Action: Next meeting

Craig Poxon reported that the Development Committee had also:

- decided on the allocation of areas of responsibility for Committee Members, viz:
 - UK Sport/Sport England/ BPA reps to Sport England Regions – John Horne
 - CCPR – Ray Armstrong
 - BingoLotto – Adrian Bond
- recorded its most grateful thanks to David Hickling for his Chairmanship of the Insurance Working Group, from which he wished to stand down in favour of a current Council Member. The Committee had elected Craig Poxon as Chairman of the Insurance Working Group for 2009. The Group would comprise Grant Richards, Paul

Moore and Kieran Brady, with Tony Butler, John Hitchen and Martin Shuttleworth from the BPA staff in attendance at its meetings

- noted that Weed Stoodley supported by the Office was continuing a review and update of the BPA governing instrument the Memorandum & Articles of Association to bring it into the 21st century
- received a report from Martin Soulsby about responses to the Committee's invitation to tender to produce a training video on canopy handling funded by the Airkix Fund. One bid had been received, which appeared to be a good basis to negotiate with the bidder
- further considered membership recruitment and retention, and data capture and analysis to support this
- decided to ask DZOs which of three alternative dates they would prefer for the next BPA meeting for DZOs – (i) autumn 2009, (ii) Friday 15 January 2010 in Blackpool (the day before the AGM) or (iii) Feb/March 2010
- sought more vigorously to pursue a suggestion to the organisers of the London 2012 Olympics that a parachuting display should form part of the opening or other ceremony
- agreed to experiment with an Internet-based service to allow the Development Chairman, who would be away at a parachuting event in the USA at the time of the next meeting on Wednesday 22 April, to take part in the meeting remotely. Andy Scott had kindly agreed to provide the equipment to try this out

Action: Andy Scott

- monitored good progress on the current year's Development Action Plan, and started to formulate ideas to recommend to the April meeting of the Council for the Development Action Plan for the year 1 July 2009 to 30 June 2010
- considered BPA investments because an investment (part of the BPA's reserves) was due to mature soon. See next item.

16/09 Investments

The Chairman reported that he had spoken with John Gretton, BPA Financial Administrator, about investments. The BPA's reserves were invested in guaranteed investments, one of which was due to mature shortly. However, with the recent sharp decline in interest rates, the question of re-investment raised the prospect of negligible interest combined with little if any growth, at least in the short term. He believed that an alternative investment strategy could benefit both the BPA's finances and many of its members.

Debbie Carter (Treasurer) said that a professional code of conduct prevented her from giving investment advice. BPA investments were, however, made with the benefit of independent external financial advice. The advisers were available to carry out a financial health check. She pointed out that Council Members were custodians of the BPA's assets, and that this carried with it important obligations.

Tony Butler and Martin Shuttleworth said that third-sector member-run organisations such as the BPA had an obligation to safeguard the organisation's assets and this was reflected in custom and practice by the use of low-risk investments. They believed it to be entirely inappropriate for a body such as the BPA to seek directly to invest in the equity of any commercial organisation because of the high level of risk relative to the guaranteed investment vehicles that had hitherto been used. The current turmoil in global financial markets made it in their view even more essential to protect and safeguard the BPA's reserves. The Treasurer said that, by way of example, one current BPA investment was a property bond that guaranteed at least the return of the capital invested. Had the BPA invested directly in property, it would have suffered a capital loss.

Ian Marshall said that any significant shift in investment strategy should be subject to a vote by Members at a General Meeting.

The Chairman said that the question of investments had raised a passionate debate around the table. He said that it was right that Council should give proper consideration and full investigation to any suggestion brought to the table, and asked Craig Poxon to bring to the next meeting more detail on the investment opportunity.

Action: Craig Poxon / Next meeting

17/09 Club Representatives

A paper by Paul Ledden suggesting an updated role description for BPA Club Reps, which had been circulated at the last meeting, was considered. The consensus was that it was appropriate to review this role, and that perhaps to have an even more fundamental review than that which had been proposed by Paul Ledden. A key point that Paul Ledden had made was that, in today's age of rapid electronic communication, the Club Rep role needed to adapt and evolve. Craig Poxon suggested turning the role on its head so that instead of Club Reps visiting Clubs & Centres, Clubs & Centres should be invited to send their own representative to sit in on Council meetings. The consensus was that there may be more effective ways of communication to and from the membership, and the Chairman referred the issue to the Communications Committee to review.

Refer to Communications Committee

In the meantime, the Chairman asked the Office to publicise the names and contact details of the Chairs of Committees and the Competition Discipline Reps as key points of contact for the Membership.

Action: BPA Office

18/09 Report on Royal Aero Club

The Chairman reported in his capacity as BPA Delegate to RAeC. The RAeC had increased the subscription it charged to the BPA as one of its member bodies by 7.6% this year, from £6817 to £7337. Apart from inflation, the reasons were twofold (i) RAeC had in turn to pay its own subscription to FAI. FAI subscriptions were payable in Swiss francs, and the exchange rate with the pound sterling was not in our favour; (ii) RAeC's costs had increased in fighting European legislation that was likely to be harmful to airports. In answer to a question reference minute 14.3.2 on regulatory threats from EASA, the Chairman said that individual airports such as ours should not rely on RAeC to fight European legislation on a sport-by-sport basis, which was the responsibility of individual member associations such as ours. But work was ongoing at a pan-airports level, and this was where the RAeC was involved.

The Council noted that BPA membership of the RAeC was necessary to maintain links with FAI, most specifically to allow British competitors to take part in international parachuting competitions. Reservations were noted about the increasing cost of RAeC membership.

Andy Scott then proposed, and John Horne seconded, a motion that the RAeC subscription invoice should be paid.

Carried unanimously

Martin Shuttleworth reported that RAeC was convening a networking meeting next month for senior staff of its member associations.

19/09 Correspondence

19.1 Arklay Robert Purdie – Jump for Heroes

Copies of e-mails dated 12 and 15 January 2009 from Arklay Robert Purdie had been circulated. He sought non-financial support from the BPA for his charity campaign Jump for Heroes www.jumpforheroes.com to raise funds to help British service personnel wounded on active service in Afghanistan. The Council agreed to assist with publicity etc at no cost to the BPA, and a Council Member in his personal capacity offered to make a jump suit for Arklay Robert Purdie to use on his charity jumps. The Council wished him well.

19.2 Road Repairs to Wharf Way

A letter dated 23 January from Summit Engineering, owners of Wharf Way, had been circulated with the agenda. Wharf Way was a private road owned by Summit Engineering, over which the BPA, in the freehold to its offices, had access rights together with an obligation to contribute to the cost of its upkeep. Summit Engineering had asked the BPA to contribute £628 to the cost of repairs, and said they had asked neighbouring businesses for the same

amount. The Council believed that lorry movements along Wharf Way had been the main cause of the potholes in the road surface, and that it was unfair for the BPA to be asked to pay the same as companies that were responsible for heavy goods vehicle traffic. A suggestion from was made from the table that the BPA should pay £300 as a light user. The Chairman put this to a show of hands which was 7-4 in favour of paying the full £620, with a letter setting out the Council's view that an office should not be charged as much as a business generating heavy goods traffic.

Action: BPA Office

20/09 Car mileage

The Council had increased the car mileage rate payable on official BPA business by 3p a mile with effect from 1 September 2008 in response to the sharp increase in fuel prices last summer (Minute 68.2.3 of the meeting on 19 August 2008). As fuel prices had now reduced, Andy Scott proposed, and John Horne seconded, a motion to reduce the BPA car mileage rate by 3p per mile with effect from 1 March 2009.

Weed Stoodley made a counter-proposal, seconded by Adrian Bond, that there should be no change. A vote was taken on the counter-proposal which was: For – 5, Against – 6.

Not carried

Ian Marshall then made a second counter-proposal, seconded by Alex Wilson, that the BPA car mileage rate should be reduced by 2p per mile with effect from 1 March 2009 on the basis that although fuel prices had fallen, they were still higher than their summer 2008 level. The vote was: For – 5, Against – 6.

Not carried

A vote was then taken on the original proposal, to reduce the two BPA car mileage rates by 3p with effect from 1 March 2009. The vote was: For – 6, Against – 5.

Carried

21/09 Budgets

Weed Stoodley reported that she would like to have the opportunity to review next year's budgets (provided to her earlier today) with Jon Gretton, BPA Financial Administrator, to ensure that they were not over-optimistic in the light of the credit crunch, the sharp decline in interest rates and the global financial crisis. In addition, the Council at this meeting had agreed to new expenditure or budget heads, and this needed to be factored in. The Chairman asked Weed Stoodley kindly to liaise with Jon Gretton and report back to the next meeting.

Action: Weed Stoodley / Jon Gretton

22/09 Electronic ratification of Committee minutes

Craig Poxon suggested that, because the electronic ratification of Council minutes had been successfully trialled, Committee minutes should also be ratified electronically. The Council agreed to try this for the Competitions, Communications and Development Committees. STC minutes would continue to be ratified at the Council table, as the timing of STC minutes was supportive of this and there were often items for Council to discuss. For the Committees involved in e-ratification, the minutes would first need to be approved electronically by the Committee itself. Once this had been done, the minutes would be e-mailed to the full Council for ratification. Ratified minutes would then be published on the minutes page of the BPA website.

Action: BPA Office

23/09 Ted Lewington

John Hitchen reported the sad news that Ted Lewington, a good friend of the BPA, had died in Australia. The Council gave its condolences to his family and friends.

24/09 Date of next meeting

Wednesday 22 April 2009 at 1830 at the BPA Office, Glen Parva, Leicester.

The meeting closed at 2300.

Minutes electronically ratified by Council and published on 17 March 2009.