

British Parachute Association

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The Council

Minutes of the meeting held on

Tuesday 8 December 2009 at 1840

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

Present:	John Smyth MVO	-	Chairman
	Paul Applegate		
	Adrian Bond		
	John Horne		
	Ian Marshall		
	Paul Moore		
	Craig Poxon	-	Development Chairman
	Grant Richards		
	Steve Saunders		
	Andy Scott	-	Competitions Chairman
	Martin Soulsby	-	Communications Chairman
	Weed Stoodley		
In attendance:	Kieran Brady	-	Chairman, Pilots' Committee
	Tony Butler	-	Technical Officer
	Debbie Carter	-	Treasurer (to item 96)
	Lesley Gale	-	Editor, Skydive the Mag
	John Hitchen	-	NCSO
	Martin Shuttleworth	-	Secretary-General
Observer:	Richard Head		
Apologies for absence:	Ray Armstrong		
	Paul Ledden		
	Alex Wilson		

Item Minute

90/09 Minutes

The minutes of the last meeting, held on Tuesday 13 October 2009, had already been ratified electronically by the Council. The ratified minutes had then been published on the BPA website on 30 October. The Chairman signed the master copy as correct for the official record.

The Council noted an addition to minute 77.5, participants in the New British record for 14-way head-down freefalling, set at Hibaldstow on 4 October 2009. The name of Chris Brook (camera) had been omitted from the list in error and would be recorded in these minutes with an apology from the Office. He had been sent a Certificate of Merit.

91/09 Matter arising

91.1 Life Membership (minute 77.8)

Council noted with appreciation a letter of thanks (circulated with the agenda) from Mike Carpenter on behalf of freefly team Volare - himself, Adam Mattacola and Alberto Fuertes - for their award of Life Membership.

92/09 Management accounts

Management accounts prepared by Jon Gretton (Financial Administrator) to the format designed by Debbie Carter (Treasurer) were tabled. The Chairman asked that the management accounts should please be circulated with the agenda in future to allow Council members time to study them before the meeting.

Action: BPA Office

The Council was pleased to note that, for the year from 1 April to 30 November 2009 inclusive, there had been a year-on-year increase in membership as follows: Provisional +22%; Temporary (including JSAT) +6%; Full renewals +4%; Full conversions +34%. The Council believed that some good weather had played a significant part in this.

The summary income and expenditure accounts for the same period, investments, standing of various funds administered by the BPA, and a list of debtors over 90 days (none) were also set out in the document. Council noted that the income to the BPA from the BPA Shop franchise with UK Parachute Services Ltd had reduced significantly year-on-year. The franchisee was about to launch a new website that would be likely to increase sales through this online shop (see minute 92.1.1).

93/09 Minutes of Committees

The minutes of each of the following meetings, except STC, had already been circulated, electronically ratified by the Council, and published on the BPA website.

93.1 Development Committee meeting on Tuesday 13 October 2009

There were no questions.

93.2 Communications Committee meeting on Tuesday 13 October 2009

There were no questions.

93.3 Competitions Committee meeting on Tuesday 13 October 2009

There were no questions.

93.4 Safety and Training Committee meeting on Thursday 26 November 2009

The draft minutes were discussed and John Hitchen (STC Chairman) answered a number of questions.

At the request of Andy Scott, the wording of minute 3 on page 2 was expanded, reference BPA Safety Notice 2/09 on Vigil 'Type 3' Cutters.

The Council referred back to STC minute 9 (iii a) in which STC had asked the Chairman of STC to write to the jumpmaster and pilot about a particular incident. Council requested that before a letter was sent to the pilot, he should first be offered the opportunity to provide STC with his observations on the incident. This carried unanimously.

Refer to STC

Paul Applegate then proposed, and John Horne seconded, a motion to ratify the minutes of the STC meeting held on Thursday 26 November 2009. This carried unanimously.

Ratified

94/09 Headline issues from Committee meetings today

94.1 Communications Committee

94.1.1 Archant Dialogue

Martin Soulsby (Communications Chairman) reported that Lesley Gale (Editor) had suggested, and the Committee had agreed, to contract the publishing house Archant Dialogue to sell advertising space in the Magazine and on the new website for the Magazine. Archant would also design and build the new website for the Magazine in liaison with Lesley Gale, and Lesley Gale would be responsible for the content. The cost of the new Mag website would be £8k, which exceeded the remaining budget for Communications in the current financial year ending on 30 June 2010. After discussion, the Council endorsed the arrangements with Archant and asked whether the new Mag website could be invoiced to the BPA in two tranches, the second being in the new financial year starting on 1 July 2009. This

would spread the cost over two financial years and thereby remain within budget. The target go-live date for the new Mag website was April 2010.

94.1.2 AGM Saturday 16 January 2010 at the Blackpool Hilton

Martin Soulsby reported that Adrian Bond (Chair, AGM working Party) had done a fantastic job of negotiation with the Hotel and the audio visual company for the AGM on Saturday 16 January 2010. He had also secured sponsorship for a number of elements of AGM Day. In all this had amounted to savings to the BPA of some £2,500. Martin Soulsby said that if Archant did not agree to stage billing (minute 94.1.1) he would like to spend just over £2k of this saving to top up the Communications budget to cover the cost of the new Mag website. No one spoke against this.

Action: BPA Office

94.1.3 Updated Starter Mag

Stocks of the Starter Mag had now run out due to an exceptional take-up this season. All DZs had been advised. Martin Soulsby reported that an updated Starter Mag, to be published in February 2010, would have a print run of 25k. The updated issue would be designed to last for about a year. Thereafter, the Committee had it in mind to publish the Starter Mag annually.

94.2 Development Committee

94.2.1 BPA Shop

Craig Poxon (Development Chairman) reported that the franchisee, UK Parachute Services Ltd (UKPS), had commissioned a new website to re-launch the BPA Shop. The Committee had viewed the website, which was due to go live soon. A letter of agreement between the BPA as and UKPS, for a minimum period of three years, was being negotiated.

In progress

The BPA had received a payment of £723 from the BPA Shop.

94.2.2 BPA credit card

Craig Poxon reported that the BPA had received a payment of about £500 from the credit card company MBNA. Adrian Bond maintained regular liaison with MBNA.

94.2.3 Insurance

The BPA's insurers, Mansons Insurance Brokers and Liberty International Underwriters, had kindly agreed in principle to meet the BPA's costs of the one-off work in scouring draft European aviation safety legislation at consultation state to highlight and object to any provisions that might be prejudicial to sport parachuting. The project had already cost the BPA several thousand pounds. The Council was very grateful to the insurers for this helpful support at the critical time when the first pan-European air safety legislation was being drafted - it would be likely to shape the European legislative environment for years to come.

94.2.4 BPA membership affinity scheme

The Development Committee was considering an offer by Clarke Roxburgh Insurance Brokers, an associate company of Manson Insurance Brokers, to develop an affinity scheme for BPA members. The scheme would offer discounted personal insurance. Detailed proposals were awaited and these would be considered at the first meeting of the 2010 Development Committee in February.

Under consideration

94.2.5 Survey of lapsed members

Craig Poxon said he was still compiling report from the raw data.

In progress

94.2.6 Development Action Plan 2009-10

Craig Poxon reported on progress on the Development Action Plan:

1. *Implement phase 2 of the new BPA website and database.*
He and Martin Shuttleworth had arranged to visit Hcoms, the contractors, on Monday 14 December.
2. *Explore the viability of the BPA developing a tandem bookings agency as an arm's length commercial activity*

The DZO meeting held on Tuesday 27 October (notes circulated) had not supported the development by the BPA of an online tandem bookings agency for the reasons set out in the notes. The Development Committee had therefore decided not to proceed with the idea.

3. *Support and encourage Clubs & Centres to run more safety events*

The Committee was considering whether it might be possible to develop a resource for Centres along similar lines to the USPA's Safety Day pack.

4. *Keep up-to-date with developments in statutory safeguarding of vulnerable groups*

John Horne and the Office were monitoring the position carefully. The government's implementation of this new scheme had caused public controversy, and a government review of the detail of the planned provisions was currently taking place. As a result, the information we were waiting for, of sector-specific guidance for sport, had not yet been published. The BPA could not sensibly take things forward until we had received and digested this key official guidance.

5. *Put updated Memo & Articles of Association to AGM 2010*

Although an earlier draft had been completed and approved in principle by the Council (minute 84), the legal advisers had since recast the whole document into the new format of Articles of Association only. The Committee would therefore need time to consider the new document before putting it forward for consideration by the full Council. The target to put the new governing instrument before the membership for approval would therefore now be the AGM 2011.

94.2.7 Possible role for a BPA President

Craig Poxon reported that the Development Committee had, at the request of Council, considered whether there was a role for a President within the BPA. The Memorandum & Articles of Association included provision for a President. Tony Butler said that General Michael Rose had been invited to assume this role some years ago, but had unfortunately declined because he had not had the time. Craig Poxon said the Development Committee had been greatly assisted in its deliberations by written advice from all four Vice Presidents.

The Committee had concluded that there was no need for the BPA to appoint a President, but that it would be appropriate to seek to offer the Vice Presidents more involvement in BPA activities, and would be consulting with them on this. This was appropriate now that the BPA had in place a published disciplinary procedure, which freed the Vice Presidents from their previous involvement in disciplinary matters. The Chairman endorsed this approach, and the Council thanked the four Vice Presidents for their continued support of the Association, which was greatly appreciated.

94.3 Competitions Committee

94.3.1 Chairman's summary

Andy Scott (Competitions Chairman) reported that:

- Details of all results and awards had been received for presentation at the AGM.
- The committee had agreed to a request to re-present at the AGM the Pat Hammond Trophy for the 2-way Grand Prix Canopy Formation champions.
- The Committee had agreed to pay £1k from the judges' budget to cover the cost of bringing judges from outside the UK to the Nationals held at Hibaldstow. This would enable the DZ to remit the full amount due to the British Team Fund, as they had held back £1250 to offset the cost of the overseas judges.
- All bids from Centres to host Nationals and Grand Prix meets in 2010 had now been considered and the successful bidders advised. The remaining dates would be published once administrative arrangements had been completed.
- The Committee had asked the Judges' Co-ordinator to allocated judges to next year's meets.

- He would liaise with the Judges' Co-ordinator about an agenda for the Judges' meeting on AGM Day.
- The Committee had set aside a budget for accuracy equipment. The equipment would be trialled at a Grand Prix meet at Headcorn.
- The Dubai Parachuting Championship and Gulf Cup 2010 would take place from 6 -18 January 2010. At least one British competitor had already registered direct with the organisers. The organisers had asked for an official UK team to be nominated. As this was not an FAI event, the BPA would not be co-ordinating the delegation and it would be up to the teams that had entered to decide among themselves which was the nominated UK team. This would not be an official national team within the normal meaning of this term, which related only to an official FAI/IPC event.
- Paul Moore, Head of the British Delegation to the World Cup in Canopy Piloting in Johannesburg, South Africa, from 2 - 6 December 2009, had reported back to the Committee. The British team of Kieron Hayes, Spencer Hogg, Simon Larcombe, Alastair Macartney, Martin Reynolds, Deane Smith, Stuart Storey, Sean Sutcliffe, Brian Vacher and Wez Westley had made up one of about 13 national delegations that had taken part in what had turned out to be the hardest CP competition ever, due to a combination of wind direction, heat and altitude. All events had been downwind, which had led to challenging conditions that had resulted in a significant number of very serious incidents. In one, a Russian competitor had suffered a fatal accident. Another competitor from Russia had broken his femur and there had been a number of lesser injuries. A competitor from the USA who had no personal accident insurance was believed still to be in hospital. The Russian delegation had only basic medical insurance, which did not cover the cost of surgery, and members of the British delegation had contributed about £100 each to a whip-round on the DZ to help to cover the surgical bill of one of the Russians. The competition itself had been well run. Brian Vacher, who was part of the PD Factory team, had been the top-placed British competitor at 6th overall. Two new world records and 4 new British records had been set.

The Chairman of Council sent the Council's congratulations to the British team. He gave Council's sincere condolences for the tragedy that had befallen the competitor from Russia. He thanked Paul Moore for managing the British delegation so well.

Andy Scott said the experience had highlighted the importance of adequate insurance when British delegations travelled to compete abroad. He would liaise with Craig Poxon, as Chairman of the Insurance Working Group, on the matter of personal accident insurance for British competitors.

Action: Andy Scott

- The Committee's budget of £68k for team funding, still had £10k unallocated, as it had held over £10k awaiting results of CP and Accuracy. However, although no individual had met the published performance criteria for funding in these events, the Committee now believed the CP criteria had been inappropriate for the exceptional conditions at the CP World Cup 2009. The Committee had a budget of £10k from which it had today agreed that £2.9k should go to the CP delegation as a whole to train for the WPC CP 2010. The Committee had further agreed, after a tied vote decided by the Chairman's vote, to award Deane 'Smudge' Smith up to £5k for coaching, leaving £2.1k remaining.

94.3.2 Competitions funding

Weed Stoodley said she dissented from a funding decision by the Competitions Committee and asked for it the matter to be considered by Council. The Chairman asked her to make a proposal.

Weed Stoodley outlined her view of the background to competitions funding and the recent allocation of the 'team funding action plan' whereby the original £55k had been increased to £68k. At this time, a sum of up to £10k of the budget had been set aside in case any competitors (from the forthcoming CP and any Accuracy Events) were to meet the published performance criteria.

No Accuracy competitors had met the criteria. In CP, notwithstanding that the conditions at the recent World Cup in CP had cast doubt on the appropriateness of the BPA's performance criteria for funding in this discipline, no CP competitors had qualified. However, the Committee had voted £2.9k (the same amount as had been voted to those who had met the performance criteria for funding in other disciplines) to the CP team as a whole.

The Committee voted on a proposal to award Deane 'Smudge' Smith, who had finished in 19th place at the World Cup in CP, funding for training of £5k. The motion had been carried 3-2.

Weed Stoodley questioned the fairness to other disciplines of this decision. She said that had the funding been re-allocated pro-rata among those in other disciplines who had met the performance criteria for funding, the funding per competitor would have increased from £2.9k to £3.6k each. Andy Scott said that the Committee had never ring-fenced this funding to those who had met the performance criteria for funding. He said that the decision to award funding to Deane 'Smudge' Smith had been on a merit basis and his improvement during the season showed great potential.

After extensive discussion, Weed Stoodley proposed, and Ian Marshall seconded, a motion that the funding allocation to Deane 'Smudge' Smith should be set at £2.9k, the same amount that the Committee had allocated per competitor in teams that had met the performance criteria for funding, and on merit to each member of FS 4-way team Satori. The vote was: For - 6, Against - 5.

Carried

Weed Stoodley then invited a review of the Competitions Committee's decision to award the CP team £2.9k for training, as she believed this to be unfair to other disciplines. During the discussion that followed, the mismatch was highlighted between the published performance criteria for funding and what would have been realistic in the exceptionally challenging circumstances of the 2009 CP World Cup. The particularly high-risk nature of CP was cited as another important factor. In the light of this discussion, there was no proposal to vary the Competitions Committee's funding allocation for CP team training.

95/09 Report on Royal Aero Club

The Chairman, as BPA Delegate to RAeC, reported that the Council had made one nomination for an FAI award and three nominations for RAeC awards. The nominations had been circulated to the Council for information. The Chairman said the outcome of the nominations would be known in time for the BPA AGM 2010. The RAeC awards presentation ceremony would take place at the Royal Air Force Museum, Hendon, on the evening of Tuesday 27 April 2010.

96/09 Europe

Paul Moore (President, European Parachute Union, EPU) reported that EPU continued to seek the national sport parachuting bodies of more member states to join. Serbia had recently made an enquiry: if they joined, it would bring the number of nations represented to nine. He said that Europe Air Sports (EAS) had issued a question paper, to which Tony Knight and Kieran Brady had drafted a strong response, and which would be channelled through EPU to provide a pan-European response to EAS. Kieran Brady observed that the dichotomous 'yes or no' format of the expected answers made many of them inappropriate for our sport, where answers often required explanation or qualification. The next EPU meeting would be held in Switzerland in late January 2010, coincident with the annual IPC meeting. Finally, Paul Moore reported that EAS would next year be convening a group on aerial work to which EPU would be putting forward nominations, although he had received no cv's to date from those wishing to be considered.

Kieran Brady reported that the European Air Safety Agency (EASA) had not yet published its replies to the responses it had received to its consultation on draft legislation, which included responses that Tony Knight and himself had filed on behalf of the BPA.

Ongoing

The Chairman thanked Paul Moore, Kieran Brady and Tony Knight for their continuing focus on the important issue of new European regulations.

97/09 BPA meeting for Drop Zone Owners and Operators

The BPA meeting for Drop Zone Owners and Operators, which had now become established in the calendar as an annual meeting, had taken place on Tuesday 27 October 2009. The venue hire and lunch costs had kindly been sponsored by Masons Insurance Brokers and Liberty International Underwriters, who had both been represented on the day. The meeting had been chaired by the Chairman of Council. 16 DZs had been represented. The Chairman said that it had been a useful day with wide-ranging discussions on a variety of issues as summarised in the notes on the meeting (already circulated). There had been unanimous support among those present for a similar meeting next autumn. Before then, the BPA was organising a training workshop for DZOs and CCIs on Safety Management Systems, at the Blackpool Hilton on Friday 15 January 2010 (the day before the AGM) and also kindly sponsored by the insurers.

98/09 AGM

The Council discussed arrangements for AGM Day at the Blackpool Hilton on Saturday 16 January 2010. Some of the facts and figures normally included in the Chairman's Review of the Year would be printed and distributed to those attending, which would help to shorten the speech. Mike Carpenter was kindly providing a video compilation of the competitions year for inclusion in the Review. A new format would be tried out for the presentation ceremony in which gold, silver and bronze medals would be presented together where possible, and an on-stage podium would be used. Only the team names would be read out, with the names of team members appearing on the screen.

The five finalist entries in the BPA Film Festival would be shown. Advance publicity for the Film Festival would be sought in local and regional media, with a view to opening it to the general public, together with the following 'Introduction to the sport' session.

Adrian Bond had secured reduced bar prices of £2.50 for a pint of beer or lager or a glass of house red or white wine. The Hotel was kindly covering the cost of the after-dinner comedian, and a reduction in the cost of the afternoon seminar rooms, together with commercial sponsorship of one room, had been secured. There would also be a 'goodie bag' with a few small trinkets to those attending.

99/09 The Taz Causer award for UK Skydiver of the Year

A call for nominations had been issued in the Mag and on the BPA website. The call back date was Monday 14 December. Council would be invited to vote electronically for the winner.

[Note: Two nominations had been received by the closing date of 14 December. The citations were forwarded electronically to the Council on 15 December for an e-vote by 21 December. On 23 December, the winner of Skydiver of the Year 2009 was declared as Alistair Hodgson.]

100/09 Royal Humane Society Bronze Medal awarded to Garth Grayling

The Council congratulated RAPA parachuting pilot Garth Grayling for his award of the Royal Humane Society Bronze Medal. This recognised his bravery when, as a solo pilot, he cut free the jump-master who, on exit, had become entangled in the static line and was trapped trailing from the aircraft.

101/09 Election of Council 2010

In reply to a question from Craig Poxon, the Office reported that the independent election administrators had advised that the election packs had already been posted. They were therefore expected to begin to arrive at UK addresses this week.

102/09 Disciplinary case

This item was held in camera and all except voting members of Council and staff left the room. John Horne (Vice Chairman) updated the Council on the complaint that had been received about a member (minute 73). The matter was now closed.

103/09 Chairman's thanks

At the close of this last meeting of Council 2009, the Chairman thanked all members for their hard work during the year. He especially thanked Ray Armstrong, Grant Richards and Alex

Wilson whose work schedules had prevented them from standing again for next year. The Chairman wished all nominees well in the election, and looked forward to the AGM, after which there would be the inaugural meeting of Council 2010.

The meeting closed at 2155.

[Note: 104/09 Staff Christmas bonus] Subsequent to the meeting, there was a Council e-vote on an item that had been left off the agenda in error. This was to consider paying a Christmas bonus to BPA staff of the same amount as last year. The vote was For - 8, Against - 0. **Carried**

Draft issued to the Council on 22 December 2009, ratified and published on 9 March 2010.