

British Parachute Association

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Development Committee

Minutes of the meeting held on
Tuesday 5 December 2006 at 1650
at the BPA Offices, 5 Wharf Way, Glen Parva, Leicester

Present:	Kieran Brady Eddie Jones Paul Moore John Page Mike Rust Elizabeth Stoodley	Chairman
In attendance:	Paul Applegate Debbie Carter Tony Butler Lesley Gale Jon Gretton David Hickling John Hitchen Martin Shuttleworth	Treasurer (co-opted) Technical Officer <i>Editor, Skydive Magazine</i> Financial Administrator Chairman, Insurance Subcommittee (co-opted) NCSO Secretary-General
Apologies for absence:	Adrian Bond Tony Goodman John Horne Mark Maynard Julian Storey	Co-opted Media Co-ordinator (co-opted)

Item Minute

39/06 Minutes

Eddie Jones proposed, and John Page seconded, a motion that, with the addition of the name of Paul Applegate to the list of those in attendance, the minutes of the meeting of the Development Committee held on Tuesday 10 October 2006 be approved as a correct record.

Approved

40/06 Matters arising

40.1 Skydiving display material for the two UK wind tunnels (minute 31.1)

John Page reported that the BPA material to promote skydiving was now on display at both the Bedford and Milton Keynes wind tunnels.

Completed

40.2 The Airkix Fund (minute 33)

The Chairman reported that he had had a meeting with Simon Ward and Trevor Haines of the Airkix wind tunnel on 16 November at the BPA Office. He said that it had been a constructive meeting with all parties keen to reach agreement so that the Airkix Fund could be launched at the BPA AGM on Saturday 20 January 2007.

The Chairman said that Airkix had indicated that they would have been willing to meet 100% of the set up costs, recoverable from the Fund subject to sufficient funds being available, but had gladly accepted this Committee's proposal of a 50/50 split of start up costs with the BPA.

Terms and conditions had been agreed with Airkix. There had been a common sense approach to resolve any issues that arose, and this approach would be extended into the implementation phase. Agreement had been reached for a launch presentation by Simon Ward on AGM Day, and an appropriate slot in the programme had been reserved. Coverage by the Mag had also been agreed, and it was likely that there would a 'thermometer' style graphic used to illustrate how the Fund was building up.

Elizabeth Stoodley, who had kindly prepared the draft contract, sought clarification on a few points of detail. The Chairman outlined what had been agreed at the meeting in relation to terms and conditions and said that he would have sight of these as a final draft from Airkix before they were published. He said that it had been agreed at the meeting that the BPA and Airkix would meet at intervals to monitor progress of the initiative and look after any issues that might need to be re-addressed in the light of experience in operating the scheme. It was never going to be realistic to cater for every possible contingency on the pre-scheme agreement. A reasonable framework had been agreed and there was the goodwill of both parties to see the launch and operation of a scheme that all hoped would be successful. It was now time to let it run.

40.3 Discontinuation of the category of BPA Associated Organisations (minute 34)

The Office had drafted a letter to BPA Associated Organisations to advise them of the BPA's decision (minute 34) to discontinue with the category of Associated Organisations with effect from 1 April 2007. It was planned to send the letter in February 2007 together with information on Magazine advertising rates, as the letter expressed the hope that the organisations concerned would continue to support the Magazine by becoming advertisers and thereby keeping their details in front of the Membership. Lesley Gale said she would discuss with Warners Advertising Agency, which handled the Magazine advertising account, whether or not it might be appropriate to consider some sort of special offer to help to encourage them to take up advertising. The non-commercial organisations, such as BCPA and POPS (UK), would continue to be listed in the Magazine free of charge.

Action: BPA Office & Lesley Gale

40.4 Classified advertisements on the BPA website (minute 36)

The Office reported that an electronic filter had now been installed to the mailforms on the Classifieds Page of the BPA website. This was designed to ensure that only bona fide BPA Members were able to reply to advertisers. It was therefore intended to cut out the many spurious e-mails from unknown sources outside the Membership, some of which appeared to be attempts at money laundering or other swindles. No BPA Member advertising on the classifieds page of the website was known to have fallen victim to these spurious e-mails, but a number had become sufficiently concerned about them to report the problem to the Office. To date, it appeared as though the electronic filter was effective and therefore it was to be hoped that the problem had been solved.

Completed

40.5 "Dragon's Den" proposal (minute 37)

The Chairman referred to an e-mail that David Turner had circulated to Council Members proposing a "Dragon's Den" style event to bring financial backers together with those with innovative ideas for investment in parachuting kit or services, perhaps on AGM Day. John Page said that unfortunately, there was insufficient time before AGM Day on Saturday 20 January 2007, as he believed that plans for such events would need to be made some time – even years – in advance. He believed that the idea was a good one, although he could not see that it had anything to do with the BPA.

The Chairman said that in order to progress the proposal, the Development Committee 2007 would, subject to its agreement (as it would be a new Committee, this being the last meeting of the 2006 Committee), probably wish to consider inviting David Turner to one of its meetings to discuss the idea.

The Chairman agreed that the possible recipients of funding would need to have sufficient time to formulate their proposals, which ruled out holding such an event at next month's BPA AGM Day.

Action: Refer to Development Committee 2007

41/06 Reports on areas of responsibility

41.1 Insurance

David Hickling (Chairman, Insurance Subcommittee) reported that the Insurance Subcommittee had held the regular autumn review meeting with the insurers on 25 October 2006. In response to the BPA's request, following the motion carried at the AGM on 21 January 2006, the insurers had agreed to make provision within the existing BPA insurance policy for experienced European Skydivers with the appropriate FAI licence/s and with at least a specified minimum of skydiving insurance cover, to jump at BPA Affiliated Centres without the need for them additionally to take out BPA insurance. This would be at no additional cost to the BPA Membership. The Insurance Subcommittee had secured this concession from the insurers by providing them with statistics for the calendar year 2006 on the number of experienced EU parachutists who had visited the UK to jump.

Further good news was that there had been an underlying downward trend in claims, probably as a result of the culture of proactive risk assessment in the sport. Earlier in the year, it had therefore appeared that we were on course for, if not a reduction in insurance premium for next year, a small if any increase.

Unfortunately, the underlying positive trend had been distorted by two potentially large claims that had arisen during the year. Both involved jumpers who had put in claims for significant injuries as a result of parachuting accidents. The insurers were awaiting full particulars of the claims, which would be based on detailed medical prognoses. It was always the case that such matters took time, and the insurers had advised the BPA that they did not expect to be in a position to attach a reserve figure to each claim until February 2007. Because each reserve was likely to be a significant figure, the overall amount of the reserves for each of these new claims would determine whether the underwriters would be prepared to offer renewal of the BPA's insurance cover for a further year and, if so, at what premium any renewal would be.

This meant that, unfortunately, the insurers had not been in a position to provide a quotation for next year's insurance, and were not expecting to be able to do so even for in time the AGM on Saturday 20 January 2007.

David Hickling said that the Insurance Subcommittee had, during 2006, continued to scour the market to try to identify other possible insurers. At least seven possible underwriters had been approached, of whom six had declined and the seventh had not yet given a final response, although the delay in their reply did nothing to raise our hopes.

The Chairman said that the Membership needed to trust its Council to negotiate on its behalf. He noted that there was no insurance quotation for Student and Temporary Members at tonight's EGM, and there was unlikely to be an insurance premium quote for Full Members in time for the AGM. Therefore, he believed that it would be important to explain the situation to the Membership seek their trust in their elected Council to negotiate the best value insurance premium for renewal of the BPA's policy. The Committee endorsed this view and asked that it should be conveyed to the full Council and to tonight's EGM.

Action: Report to Council, EGM & AGM

John Page suggested that the Membership should be informed of the situation in advance of the AGM that it was unlikely that a quotation for the insurance premium would be known by then. This might be achieved by a letter from the Chairman to explain the position to Clubs & Centres.

Action: Chairman

The Chairman then thanked David Hickling for his hard work and commitment as Chairman of the Insurance Committee during another challenging year for the Subcommittee on this difficult and demanding, yet absolutely vital, subject.

The Office asked about the timetable for printing and issuing the Membership renewal form for 2007. The renewal form contained the subscription fee for the following year's Membership, and the insurance premium was a part of this fee. Therefore, until the insurance premium had been agreed, the subscription fee could not be set, and the renewal form could not be issued. Lesley Gale said that the Magazine publication date could be held back, and in consultation with the Committee, suggested that this could be for up to three weeks. If the new subscription rate was still not known by that time, there would be no option but to issue the Membership subscription form as a separate mailing. Lesley Gale kindly offered to obtain a quotation from Warners Distributors for such a mailing. As a ball-park guesstimate, the Committee believed that the cost of a special mailing to send renewal forms to over 5000 Members would be in the region of £2000.

Action: BPA Office & Lesley Gale

41.2 Media

A written report (circulated) on recent media activity from Julian Storey (Media Co-ordinator) was noted with thanks.

42/06 Development Action Plan: 1 July 2007 to 30 June 2008

42.1 Convene a subcommittee of the Development Committee to review and enhance the BPA's income streams following the projected end of UK Sport exchequer funding in 2009

The constitution of a subcommittee had been agreed, comprising John Horne, Mark Maynard, Paul Moore together with, as available, the Chairman or Vice Chairman of Competitions, to meet to consider income streams for the BPA. The Chairman said he was disappointed that the Subcommittee had not yet met. Paul Moore kindly offered to set out some considerations as a springboard for discussion on AGM Day.

Action: Paul Moore / Income Streams Subcommittee

42.2 Support and encourage Clubs & centres to run more safety evenings

See minute 31.2.

In progress

43/06 Date of next meeting

This was the last meeting of the Development Committee 2006. The Chairman thanked all Members, together with the staff and the Editor, for their hard work during the year.

The meeting closed at 1735.