

British Parachute Association

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Development Committee

Minutes of the meeting held on
Tuesday 7 October 2008 at 1640
at the BPA Office, 5 Wharf Way, Glen Parva, Leicester

Present:	Craig Poxon Paul Applegate Adrian Bond John Horne David Ibbotson Paul Ledden John Page	Development Chairman
In attendance:	Kieran Brady Tony Butler Jon Gretton David Hickling John Hitchen Paul Moore Grant Richards Andy Scott Martin Shuttleworth Martin Soulsby Grant Richards	Insurance Working Group Technical Officer Financial Administrator Chairman, Insurance Working Group (to item 43.1) NCSO Co-opted Co-opted from item 46 Secretary-General Co-opted Co-opted
Apologies for absence:	Debbie Carter Weed Stoodley	Treasurer Co-opted

Item Minute

41/08 Minutes

With deletion of the name of Martin Soulsby who had been incorrectly listed as in attendance, Paul Applegate proposed, and John Horne seconded, a motion that the minutes of the Development Committee meeting held on Tuesday 19 August 2008 should be approved as a correct record.

Approved

42/08 Matters arising

42.1 Carriage of parachuting kit by commercial airlines (minute 32.1)

John Page reported that, despite his repeated and persistent efforts, he had unfortunately been unable to persuade British Airways (BA) formally to recognise sport parachute equipment in their terms as sporting equipment, in order to secure the extra baggage allowance conferred by such recognition. The Committee thanked him for his efforts and decided to refer the matter to the Chairman of Council John Smyth, in his capacity as BPA Delegate to RAeC, to ask whether or not John Smyth believed this might be an appropriate matter on which to seek the support or involvement of RAeC.

Action: Refer to RAeC Delegate

The Chairman noted a recent article in the press that had suggested that BA might be likely to undertake a review of its charges for baggage in the light of its competitors' practices. One possible outcome of such a review might be that even recognised sports equipment might become chargeable as extra baggage.

42.2 Update of the Memorandum & Articles of Association (minute 33.2)

As Weed Stoodley was not in attendance today, she would update the Committee at the next meeting.

Ongoing

42.3 Membership recruitment and retention initiative (minute 35)

Tony Butler had reviewed with John Horne the paper that John Horne had presented to the last meeting. An updated version of the paper, containing a few clarifications, had been prepared for discussion at the BPA meeting of Drop Zone Operators to be held on Tuesday 11 November (minute 46). The outcome of that discussion would be reported to the next meeting.

Action: Next meeting

On the subject of retention, Martin Soulsby asked about exit interviews of those who had not renewed their Membership. Tony Butler said that something similar had been tried before, but by letter. It had taken up considerable staff time and had had little apparent affect on retention rates, merely yielding a list of reasons why Members had not renewed, many of which had been outwith the BPA's control. The Chairman said that the new BPA database from Hcoms might be used to follow up lapsed members not to ask why they had lapsed, but to offer them the opportunity to rejoin. The Committee agreed to refer this suggestion to Hcoms as part of the development of the database.

Action: Refer to Hcoms

43/08 Reports on areas of responsibility

43.1 Insurance

David Hickling (Insurance Chairman) sought from the Committee, and received, permission to continue negotiations with potential new insurers and to provide them with such data and information as was necessary to enable them to quote for the BPA's third party public liability insurance for the new insurance year from 1 April 2009.

He pointed out that there might be variations in the arrangements for insurance with different insurers. For instance, one quotation last year required a substantial up-front payment whereas the present insurers had always offered payment by a modest initial deposit followed by two larger payments against retrospective half-year declarations. This helped the BPA's cash flow because it was paying over to the insurers money the BPA had already received from Members. Other insurance quotations might be based on the insurers using a different firm of solicitors for legal advice. These variations had to be carefully weighed up as significant factors, in addition to price.

This gave rise to a discussion about the BPA's insurance specification. Largely, this was seen as being in the wording of the bespoke policy document. However, the other factors that David Hickling had mentioned (above) were not all necessarily set out in the policy wording. Martin Soulsby believed that, because the BPA had adopted tenders in other areas of activity such as its website and its Magazine, it would be appropriate to set out a tender for insurance – which, at a cost of about £1.2m a year, was easily the biggest contract that the BPA entered into. Paul Moore agreed that it would be helpful to firm up the BPA's insurance requirements by means of a tender specification. However, John Page urged caution because it was necessary to carry the insurers with us.

Grant Richards suggested, and the Committee agreed, that the suggestion of the BPA formulating an insurance tender specification should be referred to the Insurance Working Group.

Refer to the Insurance Working Group

David Hickling reported that he had heard the idea of a 'no claims bonus' for individual Drop Zones was again doing the rounds. This had been considered with the BPA's broker and underwriter before, and was a non-starter. Lower claims in any year were taken into account by

the insurers in setting the premium for the ensuing year, so that all beneficiaries of the policy benefited. To seek to single out particular groups covered by the umbrella of the policy, and attach to them differently weighted premiums, would be likely to destroy the integrity of the policy and in turn the coherence of the sport.

Kieran Brady reported that one of the potential underwriters that had been recommended to the Insurance Working Group last year had got into financial difficulty as a result of the current global financial crisis, and had had to be bailed out.

43.2 UK Sport / Sport England / Sport England Regions

John Horne reported on Sport England's active people survey. It was part of their three-year strategy from 2008-11 to encourage people to grow, sustain and excel through sport. A number of Sports National Governing Bodies (NGBs), especially for the smaller sports, had responded to Sport England to say that they did not believe funding should be tied to the active people survey, and they considered it inappropriate for Sport England to use the active people survey as a sole management focus. Because of the small sample sizes, NGBs of smaller sports were concerned that their sports would be under-represented and therefore under-funded. NGBs had also expressed concern that they were not represented on Sport England's funding committee.

43.3 CCPR

Adrian Bond reported that BingoLotto would return in February 2009 for a planned 42-week run on digital television, on Sunday evenings instead of Friday evenings as previously.

43.4 Media

The Chairman reported that the Nationals had not attracted a huge amount of press coverage, although there had been an article in the *Scunthorpe Evening Post*, being the local paper to Target Skysports, Hibaldstow. The recent unveiling by Andy Scott (Competitions Chairman) and Paul Applegate (Riggers Chairman) of a commemorative plaque to John Hampton, who had made the first successful parachute descent in Cheltenham 170 years ago, had achieved television, radio and press coverage. The Chairman thanked BPA Media Co-ordinators Rich Rust and Becca Armstrong, and Martin Shuttleworth at the BPA Office, for the work they had done in publicising the event to the media and in arranging a display jump by the Silver Stars that had undoubtedly helped to heighten media interest. The media interest had been so strong that Andy Scott, who was Cheltenham born and bred, had been invited back on BBC radio Gloucestershire a week later as the guest on their lunchtime show to talk about his skydiving career.

44/08 Application of the Airkix Fund

Martin Soulsby reported that he had asked Brian Vacher to provide a budget for a compilation of CH1 video clips. He was still waiting to hear from Mark Bayada, whom he had also been trying to contact with a similar request. Any proposal formulated by this Committee would of course need to be discussed with Airkix under the agreement covering application of the Airkix Fund. However, informal discussions with Simon Ward of Airkix had suggested that Airkix would support production of a canopy training video.

Ongoing

Martin Soulsby said that the BPA had also received a letter from Blair Stent (previously circulated) concerning a possible malfunctions video, which might be a different project for consideration by the Committee (probably not funded by the Airkix Fund) next year. The Committee agreed that Martin Soulsby would respond to Blair Stent to seek clarification of what he had in mind and the cost.

Action: Martin Soulsby

45/08 Development Action Plan: 1 July 2008 to 30 June 2009

45.1 Improve the functionality of BPA website to provide more and better services to Members and the wider public

This would be the second phase of development of the new website, once the front-end was up and running.

Ongoing

The new arrangements for hosting the bpa.org.uk domain by Hcoms allowed Council Members each to have their own e-mail address on the BPA domain. The Chairman had asked the Office to advise on a standard e-mail footer, and the Office was consulting on this and would supply appropriate wording.

Action: BPA Office

The Chairman reminded the Committee that e-mails on the BPA domain were to be used for BPA business only. Due care needed to be exercised over content because Council Members were inevitably writing in their capacity as a Director of BPA Ltd. An e-mail from the BPA domain was the electronic equivalent of writing on BPA headed letter paper.

45.2 Pilot implementation of selected new funding stream/s

45.2.1 Possible tandem agency

The Chairman reported that he was continuing to work on the development of a tandem agency website for possible use by the BPA.

Action: Chairman

45.2.2 BPA Shop

John Horne reported that he and Paul Moore had yet to meet with Grant Richards (in his capacity as owner, with Jason Thompson, of UK Parachute Services Ltd, UKPS) to discuss the BPA Shop. UKPS held the franchise from the BPA to run the BPA Shop. One objective of the meeting was to consider fresh ideas about products and services the BPA Shop might sell.

Action: John Horne & Paul Moore

45.2.3 Financial loans to Members to purchase parachuting kit

John Horne had discussed with Debbie Carter (Treasurer) the idea of providing Members with loans at preferential rates. He said that Debbie Carter had advised that this had been tried some years ago and had not been successful. John Horne was not therefore proposing to pursue it again.

45.3 Support and encourage Clubs & Centres to run more safety events

The availability to Centres of grants from the BPA to run safety events would be highlighted at the BPA meeting for Drop Zone Owners and Operators to be held on Tuesday 11 November (minute 46).

Action: Highlight at DZO meeting

45.4 Increase media coverage of skydiving in local UK media

The target of issuing the new media contact form to first-time jumpers had already been achieved (minute 23.4). See also minute 43.4 for a report on a further BPA success in local and regional media coverage for the sport.

The media form for first-time jumpers, which was downloadable from the media page of the BPA website, had been allocated a BPA Form number (Form 268) and uploaded to the Forms page of the website.

Target achieved

45.5 Research the promotion of the sport to young people

Martin Soulsby had responded to the RAeC to take part in the initiative by the company Flying Aces, a television and media partner of the FAI, to get more about airsports into the school curriculum. He said the BPA had been the only RAeC body to respond, and he had put Rick Boardman (who ran the Young Eagles project) in touch with Flying Aces. It was possible that a visit to a London school would be arranged for Rick Boardman and Pam Snow, a BPA Member who was a teacher, to show off parachuting equipment. In response to a question from John Horne, Martin Soulsby said that Rick Boardman and Pam Snow held the appropriate certification to work with young people.

The Chairman was aware of a journalist who was planning a sports-related publication for distribution to all schools. He would put them touch with Martin Soulsby.

On target

46/08 Meeting for Drop Zone Owners and Operators

The venue for this meeting, on Tuesday 11 November, had yet to be arranged. Drop Zone Owners and Operators had been asked to submit agenda items and the agenda would be issued about a week before the meeting.

Action: BPA Office

In addition to agenda items, among others, on membership recruitment and retention (minute 42.3) and insurance (minute 43.1), availability of BPA grants for Centres' safety events (minute 45.3), there would be an item on medical issues led by Dr John Carter, BPA Medical Adviser, who would be available only during the afternoon. The Chairman reported there had been a thread on UKS about first-aid at Centres, medical packs and medical training, which Centres may wish to discuss with Dr Carter at this meeting. Council Members had also been invited to attend., although many were likely to be at work on that day.

47/08 BPA credit card

Adrian Bond was pleased to report that he had negotiated use of a skydiving image on the BPA credit card, supplied by MBNA Bank Europe plc. He tabled a copy of the image, and reported that a promotional flyer would go out as an insert with *Skydive the Mag*. The Chairman thanked Adrian Bond for his work on this.

48/08 Digital recordings of meetings

The Chairman said he had been discussing with the Office the possibility of piloting electronic recordings of BPA meetings. This had also been mentioned on UKS. He believed there was a need to consider cost versus benefit, but was keen to put a toe in the water. To this end, he was prepared to bring his own digital video camera to record the Chairman's Review of the Year at the AGM on Saturday 10 January 2009 with a view to seeking to make this available as a podcast on a trial basis. The Committee agreed that this would be a useful exercise. In considering possible future podcasts of Council meetings, the Chairman said he believed that it may more economical to consider the possibility of an audio recording rather than video, at least to start with. The way forward appeared to be to proceed, and experiment, one step at a time, in seeking to exploit opportunities offered by new technology to make the content of BPA meetings more accessible to Members, and to be available more quickly. He hoped that this might help to generate more interest from the Membership on how their Association worked on their behalf, and encourage better understanding and, in turn, more participation.

Action: Chairman / BPA Office

49/08 Date of next meeting

Tuesday 2 December 2008 at 1600 at the BPA Office, Glen Parva, Leicester:

The meeting closed at 1808