

# British Parachute Association

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## Development Committee

Minutes of the meeting held on  
**Tuesday 2 December 2008 at 1705**  
at the BPA Office, 5 Wharf Way, Glen Parva, Leicester

<b>Present:</b>	Craig Poxon	-	Development Chairman
	Paul Applegate		
	Adrian Bond		
	John Horne		
	Paul Ledden		
	John Page		
<b>In attendance:</b>	Kieran Brady	-	Insurance Working Group
	Tony Butler	-	Technical Officer
	Debbie Carter	-	Treasurer (from item 53.3)
	Lesley Gale	-	Editor, Skydive the Mag
	Jon Gretton	-	Financial Administrator
	John Hitchen	-	NCSO
	Paul Moore	-	Co-opted
	Grant Richards	-	Co-opted
	Andy Scott	-	from item 52.4
	Martin Shuttleworth	-	Secretary-General
	Martin Soulsby	-	Co-opted
	Weed Stoodley	-	Co-opted
<b>Observer:</b>	Mike Carpenter		from item 54
<b>Apologies for absence:</b>	Debbie Carter	-	Treasurer
	David Hickling	-	Chairman, Insurance Working Group
	David Ibbotson		

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### Item Minute

#### 50/08 Minutes

Adrian Bond proposed, and John Horne seconded, a motion that the minutes of the Development Committee meeting held on Tuesday 7 October 2008 should be approved as a correct record.

**Approved**

#### 51/08 Matters arising

##### 51.1 Carriage of parachuting kit by commercial airlines (minute 42.1)

As it had not proven possible to make progress on this by ourselves, several Committee members and staff having tried over the last few years, the Chairman of Council was being asked whether he believed it to be appropriate to try to take this forward through the Royal Aero Club (RAeC), in his capacity as BPA Delegate to RAeC.

**No further action by this Committee**

##### 51.2 Update of the Memorandum & Articles of Association (minute 44.2)

Weed Stoodley reported that her work on this was continuing. However, a number of questions had emerged on the new format of Articles now allowed by the Companies Acts. She knew of

only one sports NGB whose governing instrument was in the format of the new Articles. In response to a question by John Page, Weed Stoodley said that the basic structure of the new format for Articles was set out in government templates, and that there was a particular template for guarantee companies not having a share capital. The other sports NGB's Articles had followed the new template for guarantee companies. Therefore, other sports NGB's Articles were a relevant model for the BPA to take into account, although the other NGB had a more complex structure than the BPA. The Committee agreed to a request by Weed Stoodley and Martin Shuttleworth that they should consult the legal adviser used by the other sports NGB with their questions about how they should translate the BPA's governing instrument into the new format.

**Action: Weed Stoodley & BPA Office**

### **51.3 Membership recruitment and retention initiative (minute 42.3)**

Minute 42.3 contained an item to refer to Hayes Computing Solutions Ltd, developers of the new BPA website and database. Work on the new database would be the next stage of the project now that stage 1, the front-end of the new website, had been completed. Martin Shuttleworth asked that, in connection with membership and recruitment initiatives, the Committee should think ahead about what sort of information it might require in future, so that the new database could be designed to provide this. Lesley Gale said that a key field missing from the current membership database was gender, which meant that we did not know the percentage of members of each gender – it had to be estimated from periodic membership surveys. Another area that had been identified by Weed Stoodley was medals won at competitions. Martin Shuttleworth said that, as the new database would have an online face through the website, it would be important that Members should enter their own data, subject to checking procedures at the office for certain fields such as medals won. The old model of data being entered by the Office would no longer be appropriate as the number of fields and the amount of information increased, and Members needed to have easy access to the information the BPA held on them to ensure it was correct and up-to-date.

**Action: Note for specification of new database**

## **52/08 Reports on areas of responsibility**

### **52.1 UK Sport / Sport England / Sport England Regions**

John Horne said that because of the many crossovers between UK Sport, Sport England and CCPR, he believed it might be more appropriate next year for the same member of this Committee to look after liaison with all three. He said he would be pleased to volunteer to do this if he was re-elected next year. Adrian Bond, who was responsible for liaison with CCPR, said he was happy with this way forward.

John Horne reported that he had prepared a paper on the BPA and sport parachuting for Diana King, General Secretary of RAeC, who had gone to meet officials at the Department of Culture, Media and Sport to press the case for better public funding of airsports now that exchequer funding from UK Sport had been withdrawn as UK Sport concentrated its funding on Olympic sports. Diana King's meeting had been in lieu of a visit by the Sports Minister to an airsports event earlier in the year that had not in fact taken place, possibly because so much of the Minister's time in the late summer had been taken up by the Olympics. Diana King had seemed quite positive in her report on the meeting, at which she had made the point that airsports tended to be under-represented by Sport England's current method of surveying sporting activity. John Horne said that RAeC was pursuing the funding issue on behalf of all its constituent airsports. The BPA had indicated its willingness to be involved and to help in any way, and any further developments would be awaited with interest.

### **52.2 CCPR**

Adrian Bond said he would try again after Christmas to encourage more DZs to become BingoLotto partners for the re-launch of the game in February 2009. Both partner DZs and the sport as a whole would then benefit by a welcome but not huge income from the proceeds of ticket sales. BingoLotto funding to sports, including our own, continued to be co-ordinated by CCPR.

### **52.3 Insurance**

The Office reported that the annual review meeting with the existing insurers would take place after David Hickling (Chairman, Insurance Working Group) had returned from the USA. It would

be on Monday 22 December 2008 at 1100 at the BPA Office. Members of the Insurance Working Group were welcome to attend.

David Hickling had also been in negotiation with a number of other brokers, with a view to securing alternative quotations. This was being progressed by the Office whilst he was in the USA. At least one quotation had been promised, but it had not yet been received. Up to three quotations were in prospect, but experience over the years had taught that promises were one thing, quotations on the table were another. It was not yet clear on which side of Christmas quotations would be received, and it was possible that they may straddle the Christmas & New Year holiday (the Office would be closed from the afternoon of Wednesday 24 December 2008 to 0900 on Monday 5 January 2009).

The Office reported that one broker had advised that it was not necessary for the BPA to approach more than a few brokers because the market for underwriting specialist insurance of this kind was so small. They would all be fishing in the same pool.

#### **52.4 Media**

The Chairman said there was no report to this meeting from Becca Armstrong and Rich Rust, BPA Media Co-ordinators. It had not been an active period for liaison with the media because of the lower level of activity in the sport at this time of year.

### **53/08 Meeting with Drop Zone Owners & Operators**

#### **53.1 General**

The Chairman reported that a successful and well-attended meeting had been held at Walcote Village Memorial Hall, Lutterworth, Leicestershire, on Tuesday 11 November 2008. Most DZs had been represented. Several Council Members had attended including John Smyth, Chairman of Council - who had chaired the day - John Horne, Vice Chairman of Council; Adrian Bond, Communications Chairman; Weed Stoodley, and himself as Development Chairman. A wide range of topics had been discussed including membership recruitment and retention, insurance, environmental management including carbon offsetting, medical matters including declaration of fitness to parachute forms, booking agencies, and a number of flying and operational issues. Draft notes on the meeting had been circulated and would be issued to all DZs. The Chairman thanked the staff for organising the meeting. Analysis of attendees' feedback questionnaires had shown a positive response, with a high appreciation of the value of meetings of this nature, and a strong consensus that they should be held annually. A number of points had been referred from the meeting to this Committee and/or to the full Council, including the following.

#### **53.2 Recruitment and retention initiative**

This Committee's recruitment and retention initiative (minute 35) had been considered and DZOs were content for the Committee to develop detailed arrangements to run the initiative for a trial period. An issue the DZOs meeting had highlighted was how the take-up of the initiative would be monitored. The trial period was due to start with the new membership year on 1 April 2009 and would involve participating Drop Zones - each DZ would decide for itself whether or not it wished to take part.

Lesley Gale noted a suggestion from the meeting about paying for membership by monthly instalment by direct debit rather than as a single lump sum annual subscription. The reason for not progressing this that Tony Butler had given at the DZO meeting had been that an annual membership card could not be rescinded if a member failed to keep up their monthly payments. However, Lesley Gale believed that the online membership checks could overcome this. John Horne said that rolling annual renewal – on the anniversary of joining rather than the same renewal date of 1 April for all – had also been suggested, however this had not proved to be practicable because BPA insurance was an annual policy that ran for the membership year from 1 April to 31 March inclusive. Weed Stoodley said the Articles of Association set out certain provisions about membership and the position of members who owed money to the Association, which did not mean automatic termination of their membership. She said it also needed to be borne in mind that (i) the BPA relied on the inflow of subscription income on the present basis, and (ii) the BPA insurance premium was payable by the BPA to the insurance company as a lump sum, not in instalments. These factors meant that any variations to spread payments for members would have to be carefully considered in terms of their effect on cashflow.

### **53.2 Insurance for DZs**

David Turner of Skydive Airkix had circulated a letter to DZOs and the BPA Council ahead of the DZO meeting. In it he stated his belief that the limit of indemnity of BPA insurance should be increased for all Members from £2m to £5m per accident or incident, and that the BPA should subsidise the additional premium that would be payable. Two DZs represented at the meeting said they had arranged their own top-up cover to £5m. However, the meeting did not believe that it was reasonable to seek from the BPA, either from its reserves or from an increase in subscriptions for members, to cover the cost of a higher insurance indemnity limit that would principally be for the benefit of DZs – although David Turner believed that individual BPA Members needed the increased limit just as much as DZs, because individuals could be named in legal actions.

The Chairman said that David Turner had a point, and it may be appropriate for the BPA to make clear to Members that a £2m limit of liability did not mean that they were totally covered. The majority of DZs wanted a £5m limit, but there were cost considerations. Also, an insurer willing to provide top-up cover had been found – one DZ that had top-up insurance in place this year had been advised by their insurer (who was not the BPA insurer) that it may not be available from them during the year from 1 April 2009. Tony Butler reminded the meeting that a few years ago, the BPA's existing insurers had declined to quote for indemnity cover with a blanket £5m limit.

John Page said BPA third party public liability cover should not be confused with with personal accident insurance. He said that it was important to encourage maximum take-up of personal accident cover, which would help to deflect some potential claims away from the BPA policy.

David Hickling had advised the DZOs meeting that the Insurance working Group had been looking at a possible increase in indemnity to £5m. However, a blanket increase had appeared to be far too costly and the way forward appeared to be top-ups by individual DZs that required this.

### **53.3 Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA)**

The DZOs meeting had considered the ISA registration requirements for parachute instructors. In discussion it had been suggested that before an individual could be admitted to a BPA instructor course, they should have their ISA certification; and that such certification should also be required for renewal of an instructor rating. John Horne had said at the DZO meeting that the official guidance (from [www.isa-gov.org.uk](http://www.isa-gov.org.uk)) had to date been vague. Although it was the employer's responsibility (usually the DZOs), he believed that the BPA should take a lead and he had suggested that the Development Committee might consider establishing a working group to look at this, ideally comprising skydivers who could bring to the table a wide range of life experience from occupations such as social work and the police, as had been represented at the DZOs meeting. The Office suggested that sports umbrella bodies such as the home country sports councils and CCPR might also be lobbied for advice, as disappointingly little seemed to be coming from them on the subject of ISA requirements for sports instructors, although perhaps it was still early days. The Chairman said the issue would be considered at the next Development Committee meeting for possible inclusion in the Development Action Plan 2009/10.

**Action: Next meeting**

#### **54/08 The Airkix Fund**

Martin Soulsby reported that he had put an item in BPA Matters in the Mag for December 2008 inviting tenders to produce video clips of canopy handling on CH1 and CH2 exercises. He had asked for responses by 27 February 2009.

**Ongoing**

#### **55/08 Development Action Plan: 1 July 2008 to 30 June 2009**

##### **55.1 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 a debrief had taken place with Hcoms, the contractors, on stage 1 which had covered the new front end of the website, which was now up and running.

**Ongoing**

## **55.2 Pilot implementation of selected new funding stream/s**

### **55.2.1 Possible tandem agency**

The Chairman was continuing to work on the development of a tandem agency website for possible use by the BPA. He had intended to give a demonstration of work done so far but was unable to do so due to time constraints because the meeting was running late.

**Action: Chairman**

### **55.2.2 BPA Shop**

John Horne reported that he had held discussions with Grant Richards (in his capacity as owner, with Jason Thompson, of UK Parachute Services Ltd, UKPS) about the BPA Shop. UKPS operated the BPA Shop on behalf of the BPA. The discussions, which were still in progress, had taken as their starting point the uncompleted draft agreement between the BPA and UKPS of a couple of years ago, with the objective of working this up into an agreement acceptable to both parties.

**Ongoing**

### **55.3 Support and encourage Clubs & Centres to run more safety events**

The Chairman had called attention to the availability of this Fund at the DZO meeting. An application (circulated) had been received from the CCI of Target Skysports. This was the only application received to date in the current Action Plan year (1 July 2008 to 30 June 2009). The annual budget was £1K and the office reported that the annual budget for this target had been underspent during each of the two previous Action Plan years. The Committee therefore decided to allocate a grant of £500 to Target's safety events, with the remaining £500 available on a first come, first served basis to other DZs that may wish to apply before 30 June 2009.

**Ongoing**

### **55.4 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).

**Target achieved**

### **55.5 Research the promotion of the sport to young people**

Martin Soulsby reported that he was awaiting contact from Flying Aces, with whom he had been put in touch by the Royal Aero Club.

**Ongoing**

## **56/08 Online broadcasting of BPA meetings**

The Chairman had circulated a paper with the agenda outlining considerations and arrangements for BPA meetings to be broadcast online. He was keen to proceed with this to improve access to meetings for the membership. A question about insurance had already been clarified, and it appeared that the BPA needed for legal reasons to restrict access to such broadcasts to Members. Martin Soulsby said a possible downside was that the present convivial mood of most meetings might be put at risk by online broadcasting. Also, he said there was the potential for unfair or even malicious use of extracts that might be quoted out of context or selectively. The Chairman agreed that there were a number of issues to consider. The Committee was content to put forward this item as a possible target for consideration for inclusion in the next Development Action Plan 2009/10, which would be formulated at the next meeting.

**Action: Next meeting**

## **57/08 Scheduling of meetings**

Grant Richards noted that meetings of the Communications and Development Committees had often run out of time this year. He suggested that next year, the Committees might consider holding meetings on separate, perhaps consecutive, days. The Chairman said it was an interesting point and asked Grant Richards to raise it at tonight's meeting of the full Council.

## **57/08 End of session**

As this had been the last meeting of the year, the Chairman thanked all members of the Committee and staff for their hard work and application to the wide range of issues that had come to the table during the past 12 months.

The meeting closed at 1840