

BRITISH PARACHUTE ASSOCIATION
RIGGERS COMMITTEE MEETING
BPA OFFICES, 5 WHARF WAY, GLEN PARVA, LEICESTER
THURSDAY 9 APRIL 2009

Present: Paul Applegate - Chairman
Rick Boardman
Steve Thomas
Louise Cliff
George Panagopoulos
Pete Sizer (from item 7iv)

Apologies: Dave Gould

In Attendance: John Hitchen - Chairman STC
Tony Butler - Technical Officer
Trudy Kemp - Assistant to NCSO/TO

ITEM

1. **MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING FROM THE RIGGERS MEETING OF THE 12 FEBRUARY 2009**

Page 1, Item 2 – Minutes & Matters Arising (Lifing of Equipment). The Working Group being set up to look at the subject of ‘lifing of equipment’ was still ongoing.

Page 9, Item 12, AOB(ia) – TSE Containers and Re Certification Programme.

The Chairman reported that he had contacted TSE regarding their lifing policy on their container systems. He stated that a response had been received from TSE, a copy of which had been circulated to those present. Their response had been as follows:

“TSE 1 Pin Tear Drop containers as all our container systems are lifed for 15 years. TSE container systems may be returned to Thomas Sports Equipment at 15 years old, where the container can be re-lifed for a further 5 years of service.”

TSEs response generated some discussion from those present. Some members present believed the BPA system covered this situation, as all equipment was lifed on its condition at inspection every 6 months. However, it was pointed out that the BPA system applied only to canopies and not to container systems.

Rick Boardman reported that the Working Group being set up to look at the subject of lifing of equipment, where many issues such as this would be covered.

The Chairman stated that he would inform CCIs of TSEs lifing policy at the STC meeting that evening.

[Note: Subsequent to the meeting, the Chairman of Riggers contacted TSE and the following reply has been received from them regarding their lifing policy: “We are prepared to permit BPA Advanced Packers or Riggers to extend the life of TSE containers, once they have reached 15 years, on a six-month basis, as they do for canopies and other parachute containers, when they carry out the six-month Equipment Inspection/Reserve repack (Record of Inspection) and that these six-month life extensions may continue until the containers are no longer serviceable.”]

Page 12, Item 12, AOB(ix) – Advanced Packers. Correspondence had been received from Bill Sharp, a copy of which had been circulated with the Agenda concerning an impending proposal following an item discussed at the previous meeting regarding Advanced Packers.

The Committee noted Bill Sharp's comments on this matter. However, to date a proposal regarding this issue had not as yet been received.

There being no further matters arising, it was proposed by Rick Boardman and seconded by Steve Thomas that the Minutes of the Riggers Meeting of the 12 February 2009 be accepted as a true record.

Carried Unanimously

2. **MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING FROM THE STC MEETING OF THE 12 FEBRUARY 2009**

There were no matters arising from the previous Minutes.

3. **PROPOSED CHANGE TO BPA OPERATIONS MANUAL**

A letter from Bill Sharp had been circulated with the agenda requesting that the Committee consider a change to the Operations Manual with regard to Tandem equipment.

Bill Sharp had stated that the change to the Operations Manual was to clarify Tandem equipment being non-Student equipment, but equipment that was used by Students. The clarification was to prevent possible misinterpretations with regard the type of AADs used etc.

Therefore Bill had proposed that the BPA Operations Manual, Section 6 (Equipment), Paragraph 2 (Equipment Used by Student Parachutists), Sub-Para 2.2.1. be changed to read:

'Tandem equipment is not Student Parachutist equipment, however it is equipment used by Student Parachutists. Therefore only Tandem equipment acceptable to the BPA (via Riggers' Committee and STC) may be used.'

Following some discussion, the Committee agreed to a slight wording change to the Bill Sharp's proposal to include the words 'classified as'

Therefore, it was proposed by Steve Thomas and seconded by Rick Boardman that the BPA Operations Manual, Section 6 (Equipment), Paragraph 2 (Equipment Used by Student Parachutists), Sub-Para 2.2.1. be changed to read:

'Tandem equipment is not classified as Student Parachutist equipment, however it is equipment used by Student Parachutists. Therefore only Tandem equipment acceptable to the BPA (via Riggers' Committee and STC) may be used.'

Carried Unanimously

The Technical Officer pointed out that anyone wishing to make changes to Tandem equipment still needed to apply to the Riggers Committee in the same way and all the necessary forms and relative paperwork needed to be submitted.

4. ADVANCED PACKER COURSE REPORTS

- i) An Advanced Packers Training Course had been held at British Parachute Schools, Langar from the 9 – 12 February 2009. Ray Armstrong had submitted a Course Report, a copy of which had been circulated to those present. The instructing riggers running the Course had been Ray Armstrong and Paul Burns.

Damian Hewitt, Daniel Williams, Westleigh Guest and Peter Harries had attended the Course, all of whom were recommended to attend the examination phase of the Course at a later date.

- ii) An Advanced Packers Tandem Examination Course had been held at British Parachute Schools, Langar on the 13 February 2009. Ray Armstrong had submitted individual Course Report, copies of which had been circulated to those present.

Paul Yeoman and Ally Milne both successfully completed the Course and had been awarded Advanced Packer (Grade T) status.

- iii) An Advanced Packers Training Course had been held at Ray Armstrong's establishment in Nottingham from the 23 – 27 February 2009. Ray had submitted a Course Report, a copy of which had been circulated to those present.

Karen Saunders, Greg Taylor and Michael McNulty attended the Course, all of whom had been recommended to attend the examination phase of the Course at a later date.

- iv) An Advanced Packers Training Course had been held at Netheravon from the 16 – 19 March 2009. Ray Armstrong had submitted a Course Report, a copy of which had been circulated to those present. The Instructing Riggers running the Course had been Ray Armstrong, Paul Burns and George Panagopoulos.

David Thornton, James Peace, Christopher Sharman, Max McLeod and Steve Scott all attended the Course, all whom had been recommended to attend the examination phase of the Course at a later date.

- v) An Advanced Packer Course had been held at Netheravon from the 16 – 18 March 2009. Ray Armstrong had submitted a Course Report, a copy of which had been circulated to those present. Mark Bayada had attended the Course to be examined to upgrading from a traditional reserve packing certificate to an Advanced Packer Square rating.

Mark Bayada successfully completed the Course and had been awarded Advanced Packer (Grade S) status.

5. BPA SAFETY NOTICES/INFORMATION BULLETINS

There had been one BPA Safety Notice issued since the last meeting, which had concerned a Skyhook Product Improvement Notice issued by United Parachute Technologies.

6. MANUFACTURER'S SAFETY NOTICES/INFORMATION BULLETINS

There had been no Bulletins received since the last meeting.

7. **A.O.B**

- i) Louise Cliff had submitted a photograph of a damaged cutter that had been found on a Vigil AAD during a routine inspection and re-pack by an Advanced Packer, a copy of which had been circulated with the Agenda.

Louse presented the damage cutter to those present and reported that Vigil had classed it as a 'bubble' type defect, which they had stated could not cause damage to the loops, but may cause some difficulties when passing the loop through the hole. Louise stated that a replacement cutter had arrived from the manufacturers the following day.

The Committee noted that the Advanced Packer concerned had shown good diligence in spotting this particular defect and it had highlighted the fact that all packers needed to be very vigilant when packing.

- ii) A letter had been received from George Panagopoulos, a copy of which had been circulated to present, requesting an extension to Steve Thain's Basic Rigger rating.

George had stated that Steve had been unable to attend a PR Course due to work commitments.

Following some discussion, it was proposed by George Panagopoulos and seconded by Steve Thomas that Steve Thain's Basic Rigger rating be extended until the 31 January 2010.

Carried Unanimously

- iii) The Chairman advised those present that George Panagopoulos had also submitted an application for the clearance of an Icon container for use by AFF Students. As this item had been received too late to be discussed that evening, it would therefore, be included on the next agenda.

- iv) The TO had asked that the Committee to discuss and clarify who was permitted to sign up Advanced Packing Certificate Holder ratings at BPA renewal time, as in his opinion, it had become apparent that there were still people not complying with the current rules and the situation was becoming increasingly difficult to monitor.

Currently, Advanced Instructors signing up an Advanced Packing Certificate Holder on the BPA membership renewal form for someone packing under the grandfather clause system must be qualified to pack that equipment themselves. Also that as from the 1st April 2004 holders of Advanced Packing Certificates must not have new equipment types/reserve canopies added to their Advanced Packing Certificates.

The Chairman reported that he had also come across a number of anomalies within the current system and stated that some people believe they were working within the rules when in fact, they were not.

Following some discussion, the Committee felt that the current two tier system was still not workable and that they would like to see the Advanced Packing Certificate Holder system being phased out by end of 31 Mar 10. They believed that the only people packing reserve canopies should be Riggers and Advanced packers. Also, they would like to see only Riggers being permitted to sign up Advanced Packers at renewal time.

Although the Riggers Committee had agreed to a similar proposal two years ago, STC had not supported the proposal because some CCIs could see no valid reason to take the grandfather rights away from Advanced Packing Certificate Holders, as some were only interested in packing their own equipment.

Following further discussion, Rick Boardman agreed to submit a proposal for consideration at the next meeting including a system of how Advanced Packing Certificate Holders could convert into the AP system within the suggested time frame.

- v) The Committee was advised that Rick Boardman had registered Andy Callender as a Method 2 Basic Rigger.
- vi) Rick Boardman asked the Committee what process a former member would need to follow in order to renew his Advanced Packer Certificate Holder rating, as both his BPA membership and rating had expired at 31 March 2008.

Following some discussion, the Committee agreed that once the person concerned had re-joined the BPA he should attend an Advanced Packer training course and then attend the examination phase of the course in the normal manner.

Date of next Meeting: Thursday 11 June 2009
BPA Offices, Glen Parva, Leicester
at 4.00 p.m

20 April 2009

Distribution:

Chairperson Riggers Committee
All CCIs
All Riggers
Advanced Packers
Council
D. Beaven (CAA)
Lesley Gale

PAPERWORK REQUIRING CIRCULATION WITH THE NEXT AGENDA MUST REACH THE BPA OFFICE BY FRIDAY 22 MAY 2009