

BRITISH PARACHUTE ASSOCIATION
RIGGERS COMMITTEE MEETING
BPA OFFICES, 5 WHARF WAY, GLEN PARVA, LEICESTER
THURSDAY 11 AUGUST 2005

Present: Paul Applegate - Chairman
Rick Boardman
Pat Walters
John Harding
Dave Major (NV)

(NV) = Non Voting

Apologies: Pete Sizer, Liz Ashley.

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

Observers: Andy Goodall, Jeff Illidge, Colin Fitzmaurice.

ITEM

1. **MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING FROM THE RIGGERS MEETING OF THE 9 JUNE 2005**

Page 1, Item 1 (Matters Arising) – RSL Shackles. A draft proposal was still awaited from Kim Newton with regard to the proposed RSL entry in the Rigging Technical Manual for consideration by the Committee.

Page 2, Item 1 (Matters Arising) – Proposal from Rick Boardman concerning Incident Reporting. This item was on the main agenda for that evening.

There being no further matters arising, it was proposed by Rick Boardman and seconded by Pat Walters that the Minutes of the Riggers Committee Meeting of the 9 June 2005 be accepted as a true record.

Carried Unanimously

2. **MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING FROM THE STC MEETING OF THE 9 JUNE 2005**

There were no matters arising from the above Meeting.

3. **PROPOSED STUDENT EQUIPMENT MODIFICATION**

At the Riggers Committee Meeting of 14 April 2005, the Committee had accepted a proposal from Bill Sharp for a modification to the RWS Tandem Sigma Student Harness. The modification included drilling a hole into each of the two Tandem Sigma Student Harness butterfly snap hooks (the butterfly gate part, not the main hook), in order to insert a locking pin.

The Committee had accepted this modification for use by Bill Sharp only, as at the time there was no diagram or details of the location/dimension of the hole or specified the type of locking pins to be used. The Committee had felt that that they would like to see this modification accepted for general use. Bill had therefore re-submitted the relevant paperwork and drawings, copies of which had been circulated with the agenda for consideration by the Committee.

Following some discussion, it was proposed by Bill Sharp and seconded by John Harding that the above Student Equipment Modification be accepted for general use on any student harnesses that have the same butterfly snap hooks as the Sigma (part nos: MS22042, MS22042-1, MS70121).

Carried Unanimously

4. ADVANCED PACKER COURSE REPORT - BILL SHARP

An Advanced Packer Conversion/Upgrade Course had been held at RAPA from the 9 – 11 July 2005. George Panagopoulos (Advanced Packer Grade S) successfully attended the course and was upgraded to also include Advanced Packer Grade R status). A copy of the Course Report had been circulated with the Agenda.

5. RIGGING COURSE CHANGE OF DATES

At the previous meeting, Bill Sharp had notified the Committee of a Riggers Course to be run at RAPA (dates 5 to 9 Dec 05). This had been approved by those present.

Due to a clash with other events taking place at RAPA, Bill had notified the Committee of a change of Course dates to 1 week later i.e. **12 to 16 Dec 05**.

6. STUDENT CONTAINERS APPROVED BY RIGGERS

At the previous meeting, Bill Sharp had asked about a list of cleared Student Container systems. As there was no formal list, Bill had produced brief details of any student container related items accepted by the Riggers Committee since 1990, and the relevant reference to the Riggers Minutes it originally came from, which had been circulated with the agenda. Bill had also produced a more comprehensive list containing the actual wording from the Minutes relating to each clearance.

The Committee acknowledged that this was a useful reference list and the Committee expressed their thanks to Bill for the work he had carried out on this item. It was suggested that this list was kept on file in the BPA office for future reference.

7. STUDENT HARNESS & CONTAINER SYSTEMS – INITIAL CLEARANCE

Bill Sharp had produced a suggested form for future clearances of Student Harness and Container systems, which had been circulated with the agenda.

A number of suggested amendments and additions to the form were discussed by those present. The Committee felt that the form was a good idea in principle and it was suggested that those Riggers who had any input or comments should liaise directly with Bill Sharp in order that he can modify the form prior to circulation with the agenda for consideration at the next meeting.

8. TANDEM EQUIPMENT MODIFICATIONS – ‘CLEARING UP GREY AREAS’

The Chairman referred to Tandem equipment modifications that are brought to Committee for acceptance prior to use. He stated that these modifications had either been accepted for general use or for specific named persons.

The Chairman asked the Committee to consider that in the future Tandem modifications are only cleared for general use unless it was a for ‘one off’ purpose. He stated that his main concern with accepting modifications for specific named persons was when equipment gets sold on etc and people not being able to identify whether or not that piece of equipment has been accepted for use or not.

Following some discussion on this matter, the Committee agreed to consider the above suggestion when considering future Tandem equipment modifications. The Committee was aware however, that in some instances Tandem modifications may not be suitable for general use.

9. RIGGERS CONFIDENTIAL REPORTING

At the previous meeting Rick Boardman had raised an issue with regard to the fact that not all incidents or minor infringements were reported to the Committee. Rick Boardman believed that if all incidents were reported the Committee would be in a much better position to identify potential problems. The Committee had acknowledged that this was an area that warranted further discussion. Rick Boardman had agreed to produce a ‘Confidential Reporting form’ to be used by Riggers and Packers on a similar basis as the Pilots Confidential Reporting form. A copy of the draft form had been circulated with the agenda for consideration by the Committee.

Rick Boardman stated that Riggers had traditionally ‘phoned each other up’ if they found minor problems. The problem was that we don’t know how many others are phoning the same person with the same problems, from all over the country. Rick felt that it was the Committee’s responsible duty to be doing more than just a ‘phone call’. Rick had therefore proposed that we continue to politely ‘phone each other up, whilst also completing an Advanced Packers/Riggers Confidential Report form. Rick stated that if received, the Chairman of Riggers could monitor the forms and act accordingly.

Following some discussion by those present it was agreed that the form be re-named ‘Packing/Rigging Confidential Report’. A number of other minor changes were also agreed.

It was proposed by Rick Boardman and seconded by John Harding that the Packing/Rigging Confidential Report (BPA Form 253) with the various amendments as discussed by those present be accepted.

Carried Unanimously

It was noted that this form and its use will be for packing or rigging incidents caught on the ground, and would NOT replace the usual channels already in place for handling incident/malfunctions.

10. CLEARANCE OF EQUIPMENT

Rick Boardman raised some concern with regard to a foreign 2-pin pop and top container, which he presented to the meeting. Rick’s main concern was the fact that the first the Riggers Committee take a look at equipment in an official capacity is when it is formally submitted to the Committee for acceptance for Student use. He stated that with regard to expert equipment, it simply appears on a DZ and gets cleared for use by the CCI. He also stated that he believed that

as a governing body, the BPA should consider as to whether it was practicable to scrutinize equipment used by experienced jumpers. His point being that this particular piece of equipment had been in use for some time, and the governing body was not aware of potential problems. Rick stated that all that had happened was that it had been left to reserve packer(s) as to whether it was allowed to be jumped.

This generated a great deal of discussion after which, the Committee applauded Rick's concern. However, it was felt that this should be left to the integrity of reserve packers as to whether they believe equipment is suitable to be packed or not.

Following further discussion, Rick Boardman agreed to contact the manufacturers of the equipment for their comments.

11. ADVANCED PACKERS COURSE REPORTS

- i) An Advanced Packers Training Course Report had been received from Andy Page, a copy of which had been circulated with the Agenda.

The Course had been held at UK Parachuting from the 13 – 16 June 2005. Thomas Parry, Wayne Clark and Adele Murray attended the Course and were advised to practice in preparation for the Examination phase of the Course.

- ii) An Advanced Packers Training Course Report had been received from Geoff Hughes, a copy of which had been circulated with the Agenda.

The Course had been held at the Services Parachute Centre (NI) from the 13 – 17 June 2005. Stuart Smith attended the Course and was advised to practice in preparation for the Examination phase of the Course.

12. BPA SAFETY NOTICES/INFORMATION BULLETINS

There had been no BPA Safety Notices/Information Bulletins issued since the last meeting.

13. MANUFACTURERS' SAFETY NOTICES/INFORMATION BULLETINS

- i) A Service Bulletin had been received from Relative Workshop concerning the mandatory inspection of A line attachments and steering lines on Relative Workshop Tandem VTC-III reserves (VR-360), manufactured by Performance Designs. A copy of which had been previously circulated for information.

- ii) Service Bulletins had been received from Performance Variable concerning the Omega Container System (models: XXS, XSA, S, SS, M, L and XL). The manufacturer has now developed a modification of the container flap no. 3 and a visual inspection of the new bartecs at each packing. In addition, the manufacturer has revised the equipment handbook to clarify certain procedures for a safe jump operation and correct maintenance tasks. A copy of which had been previously circulated for information.

14. A.O.B

- i) George McGuinness had notified the office of a 3 –ring problem that he had discovered on a Wings system. It appeared that the problem stemmed from too much material

between the rings allowing the top ring to flip backwards jamming into the other one. It did not lie metal to metal and the top ring could flip over and get stuck in the other ring. George had felt that it would probably work, but in some situations where the load could be on one side, the other side could drop and lock. George had sent in a DVD highlighting this potential problem, which was presented to the meeting.

Some concern was raised by those present with regard to the geometry of rings, but they believed that when under load and under pressure they should work fine. The manufactures had been contacted and they were quite happy with their risers and drawings.

The Committee expressed their thanks to George McGuinness for highlighting this problem.

- ii) The Chairman advised those present of a letter he had received from Richard Aveyard concerning Paratec Grommets. Richard had stated that the Centre had purchased 3 Next Tandem rigs manufactured 15/7/04, SN 1463, 1464 and 1465. It was noticed that the lower brake lines were wearing where they passed through the grommet on the main toggles. The grommets on all three sets of toggles were not fully set. Paratec were contacted and in accordance with their instructions, the existing grommets were re-set and the lower brake lines replaced.

Richard had also stated that upon further inspection, the grommets on the main risers were of a similar state, creating wear on the type 2A loop. Grommets on the main and drogue risers had since been changed as well as the type 2A. He stated that grommets on the container and bags appear to be set correctly.

Richard had stated that he felt that it may be vigilant for owners of Next Tandem rigs manufactured around these dates to check the grommets mentioned.

The Committee thanked Richard Aveyard for bringing this matter to their attention.

Date of next Meeting: Thursday 6 October 2005
BPA Offices, Glen Parva, Leicester.
4.00 p.m.

18 August 2005

Distribution

Chairperson Riggers Committee
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All Riggers
Council
D. Beaven (CAA)
Lesley Gale
File

PAPERWORK REQUIRING CIRCULATION WITH THE NEXT AGENDA MUST REACH THE BPA OFFICE NO LATER THAN MONDAY 19 SEPTEMBER 2005