

**BRITISH PARACHUTE ASSOCIATION**  
**RIGGERS COMMITTEE MEETING**  
**BPA OFFICES, 5 WHARF WAY, GLEN PARVA, LEICESTER**  
**THURSDAY 1 FEBRUARY 2007**

**Present:** Paul Applegate - Chairman  
Rick Boardman  
Pat Walters  
Bernadette Whitaker  
Kim Newton  
John Curtis  
Pete Sizer

**Apologies:** Dave Major, Phill Elston.

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

**Observers:** Jeff Illidge.

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**ITEM**

**1. ELECTION OF CHAIRPERSON**

The Chairman of STC took the Chair pending the election of a Chairperson.

Kim Newton proposed, seconded by Pat Walters a motion that Paul Applegate continues in the post as Chairperson of the Riggers Committee for a further year. This was unanimously agreed by those present.

**Carried Unanimously**

**2. MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING FROM THE RIGGERS MEETING OF THE 23 NOVEMBER 2006**

**Page 1, Item 1 – Minutes & Matters Arising AADs (Fitting to Equipment)**. Rick Boardman pointed out that it was the older version of the wording regarding the fitting of AADs to equipment that had appeared in the Dec magazine. The Chairman confirmed that he had spoken to Rob Colpus on this matter.

**Page 3, item 7 – AOB (iii) Record of Inspection Books**. The Chairman advised those present that this item was on the main Agenda.

There being no further matters arising, it was proposed by Kim Newton and seconded by Rick Boardman that the Minutes of the Riggers meeting of the 23 November 2006, be accepted as a true record.

**Carried Unanimously**

3. **MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING FROM THE STC MEETING OF THE 23 NOVEMBER 2006**

There were no matters arising from the previous Minutes.

4. **BPA RECORD OF INSPECTION SHEET/CHECK LIST – SUGGESTED AMENDMENTS FOR CONSIDERATION AND ACCEPTANCE**

A number of suggested amendments to the BPA Record of Inspection Check List had been distributed with the Agenda.

The Committee considered each of these individually and a number of the suggested amendments were agreed on.

The BPA Record of Inspection Check List would be updated to include the agreed changes and further books would be ordered. The Committee agreed that once the updated books were available, Riggers and Packers would still be able to continue using the older version of the books in the future.

5. **TO CONSIDER IN PRINCIPLE, THE POSSIBILITY OF PUBLISHING A LIST OF INDIVIDUAL BPA RIGGERS AND THEIR CONTACT DETAILS (WITH THEIR AGREEMENT) ON THE BPA WEBSITE**

This item arose because of an enquiry from a BPA member who wished to contact a Rigger, via the BPA website. He had asked why a list was not available on the website and that perhaps the Association should consider providing such a list if individual Riggers agreed.

The Committee was advised that because of the Data Protection Act, the office was prevented from giving out personal details of any member unless they had their express authority to do so. Therefore anyone contacting the office for details of a Rigger were advised to contact their nearest Parachute Centre for assistance.

Following some discussion on this item, the feeling of the Committee at this time was to leave things as they were at present. However, any Rigger wishing to advertise their services could do so through the BPA magazine.

6. **RIGGERS COURSE REPORT**

A Riggers Course had been held at RAPA from the 11 – 15 December 2006. The Association wished to thank the Club for hosting the Course. A copy of the Course Report had been circulated with the Agenda.

The Examiners conducting the course were Bill Sharp (RE 53) and Andrew Hilton (RE 179). Assistance was given by Kim Newton, who was attending the PR Phase towards her RE rating. There were a total of 5 people attending for upgrading, teaching, or exam. (2 x Basic Rigger, 1 x Parachute Rigger, 1 x Advanced Rigger, 1 x RE upgrade phase 2 of 3)

Deane Smith (BPA 757534) and Stuart Smith (BPA 913586) successfully completed the Basic Riggers Course and had been awarded Basic Rigger status.

George Panagopoulos (BPA 732477) successfully attended the Parachute Rigger Course and had been awarded Parachute Rigger status.

Dave Ballard successfully completed the Advanced Rigger Course and had been awarded Advanced Rigger status.

Kim Newton had also attended the PR Course (the second of the three required) for her RE rating. The Examiners noted that Kim had made a valuable contribution to the running of the BR course, which was ongoing at the same time. The Examiners had no hesitation in recommending that Kim continues to the next phase of her Examiners rating, by attending and teaching on a BR course.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE COURSE EXAMINERS**

The Examiners had noted during the course that the only Riggers current on packing round reserves were the 2 BRs who had just undertaken their AP (R) rating to allow them to attend the BR course. They and none of the other attendees, including the examiners, could claim any interest or intention to pack round reserves in the near future. One attendee had not packed any more than 2 in the last year, some none at all for over 5 years.

The Examiners had stated that these facts cannot be misrepresentative of the rest of the UK rigging and packing community with round parachutes and they had therefore proposed that the Basic Rigger Syllabus be amended to have AP(S) as the only packing prerequisite.

The Examiners believed that this proposal would encourage even more BPA members to become Riggers. They felt that time and again, the hurdle of the round AP requirement discourages progress from AP(S) to BR. They hoped that this was not a reason in the minds of those who have resisted this change in the past.

The Examiners also felt that it would not stop people gaining the AP (R) if their environment and local equipment and interest so required. They believed that it did not stop the teaching of repair of round parachutes (which would only be allowed on mains) to BR candidates as the techniques and skills transfer directly within the current course syllabus.

The Examiners believed that in this form, would not create a 2 tier system of round only / square only Riggers. Whilst the packing division already exists between AP(R) and AP(S), the Examiners were not suggesting removing round repairs from the BR course or PR exam.

The Examiners had stated that this had now been a comment for the past 4 years of riggers course reports from RAPA. This had been rejected as having been recently discussed, but it has now been 4 years since it had been considered and the Examiners felt this was again worthy of discussion and consideration.

The Report also stated that Andrew Hilton would be willing to commission a survey of riggers and packers to see how much / little round equipment is in use. Only 2 UK DZ's operate round parachutes as mains (and one of those is phasing them out by next summer).

There then followed some discussion from those present regarding the Examiners recommendation.

The main concern the Committee had was that as things stood, individuals were being qualified to pack round reserves, who then in some cases were unable to remain current. The Committee also bore in mind the fact that round reserves were still in use in the UK.

John Curtis pointed out that at rating renewal time, a rigger or packer must satisfy an Advanced Rigger or a Rigger Examiner that he/she is current in all aspects of packing relevant to their status.

He was concerned that Advanced Riggers and Examiners need to be certain these people are current in what they are signing them for particularly if they are not current in the packing of round reserves.

The Committee felt that the BPA Membership Renewal application would need to be amended to reflect John's comments.

Following further discussion, the Committee felt that round reserves should not be taken out of Rigger syllabus completely, as they believed that there was a need for keeping them in the system, but only if someone wished to qualify for an Advanced Rigger rating.

Pete Sizer proposed, seconded by Kim Newton that the requirement for advanced Packer round requirement remains for the Advanced Riggers syllabus, but is removed from the Basic Rigger Syllabus.

**Carried Unanimously**

The relevant BPA forms would be updated and would be available to download from the BPA website.

The Committee accepted Andrew Hilton's kind offer to carry out a survey as mentioned in the Report to demonstrate how things were changing within the sport.

## **7. ADVANCED PACKER COURSE REPORTS**

- i) An Advanced Packers Training Course had taken place at the North West Parachute Centre from the 5 – 8 November 2006. The Examiners running the Course were Ray Armstrong and Paul Burns. A Copy of the Course Report had been circulated to those present.

There had been four candidates attending this Course; Mike Carruthers, Pete Connor, Alec Flint and Stephen Nolan

The examination of all candidates was carried out at the North West Parachute Centre from the 10 – 17 November 2006. The Advanced Rigger examination the candidates was Ray Armstrong. A copy of this Course Report and also been circulated to those present.

All candidates successfully completed the examination phase and had been awarded Advanced Packer (Grade S) status.

A question was raised with regard to the amount of practice candidates should have received prior to attending an Examination Course.

Following some discussion, the Committee felt that this was an area that warranted further consideration and that perhaps due consideration should be given to maybe including a minimum number of reserves packed under supervision prior to attending exam phase.

Pete Sizer said he would look at the Advanced Packing course syllabus prior to the next meeting.

- ii) An Advanced Packers Tandem Upgrade Course had been held at UK Parachuting from the 20 – 22 November 2006. A report had been submitted by Andy Page and had been circulated to those present.

Deane Smith and Aaron Ellen both of whom already held Advanced Packer (Grade S & R) status, successfully completed the Course, for upgrade to include Advanced Packer (Grade T).

- iii) An Advanced Packers Examination Course Report had been submitted by Andy Page, a copy of which had been circulated to those present.

There were two candidates attending this Course. One candidate was advised to return to attend another Exam Course in the future. Gerry Cepelak successfully completed the Course and had been awarded Advanced Packer (Grade S) status.

- iv) Pete Sizer had submitted an Advanced Packers Examination Course Report, a copy of which had been circulated to those present. Craig Petitt had successfully attended the Course and had been awarded Advanced Packer (Grade S) status.

## **8. INDEX OF SAFETY NOTICES/INFORMATION BULLETINS - UPDATE**

Pete Sizer had prepared an update to the BPA Index of Safety Notices and Information Bulletins, a copy of which had been circulated with the Agenda:

### **SAFETY FILE INDEX**

46. Aviacom / Argus

### **(6) RIGGING INNOVATIONS**

20. Vigil AAD not cleared for use in RI products, 12/6/06

### **(8) PARACHUTES de FRANCE**

47. Quick 3 pilot chutes packing in Atom - R06 001, 16/5/06

### **(46) AVIACOM / ARGUS**

- 1. Argus AAD recall of units manf 5.06 - 30.5.06
- 2. Argus cutters recall - PSB AMM021206/2, 11/12/06

## **9. RIGGER ASSESSMENT REPORT FROM JOHN CURTIS**

John Curtis had submitted a Rigger Assessment Report, a copy of which had been circulated with the Agenda.

John had carried out an assessment of Craig Bonnar's rigging ability as requested in the Rigger Minutes of the 14 April 2005. At this meeting the Committee had considered a request for the re-instatement of Craig's Advanced Packer (S& R) ratings and Parachute Rigger ratings. The Committee had unanimously agreed that Craig Bonnar have his AP ratings re-instated, but before they could agreed to his PR rating being re-instated, he would need the recommendation of a BPA Rigger Examiner.

It was proposed by John Curtis and seconded by Rich Boardman that Craig Bonnar be re-instated

as a BPA Parachute Rigger.

**Carried Unanimously**

**10. BPA SAFETY NOTICES/INFORMATION BULLETINS**

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

**11. MANUFACTURER'S SAFETY NOTICES/INFORMATION BULLETINS**

A Service Bulletin had been received from Aviacom SA concerning the Argus AAD, which had been previously circulated.

The Bulletin stated, "Systems that have the cutter located ABOVE the pilot chute and have the "old style" cutter with the plastic insert, **MUST** have the cutter replaced with the "new style" cutter before the next jump.

All other systems must have the cutter replaced with the "new style" cutter before the next repack, but no later than June 30 2007".

**12. A.O.B**

i) **Notification of Advanced Packing Course:** Bill Sharp had notified the Committee of an Advanced Packing course (S) being run at RAPA by himself starting in early Feb 07, and running for about a month. The course was for 1 candidate, who was doing the course and then staying to practice as necessary, until he was ready for the AP(S) examination.

ii) **Approved BPA Tandem Modifications Website:** Bill Sharp had also advised the Committee that due to his personal circumstances, he was having to change his Internet Provider, where he presently hosts the Tandem Mods. website. His new IP provider did not provide free website space so he was left with two options. One was for either the BPA or for someone else to provide the space on their site whereby he would continue to administer the site, or he would have to stop it altogether. As his account would be terminated within the next few months, Bill had asked the Committee to discuss this as a matter of some urgency. Bill had stated he was happy running the site as long as space (at no cost to himself) was found somewhere else.

Following some discussion, the Committee suggested that perhaps the BPA's own website could be used to host the Tandem Mods website. The Chairman agreed to liaise with Martin Shuttleworth at the office to consider this as an option.

iii) **Notification of Advanced Packing Course:** Pete Sizer had advised the office that he would be running an Advanced Packers Course at Headcorn from the 5 – 9 February 07.

iv) **Packing/Rigging Confidential Reports.**

The Chairman advised those present that one report has been submitted since the last meeting.

v) **Form Update**

The Chairman reported that BPA Form 238 (Rigging Related Documents) had been updated to include the following BPA forms:

Form 253 – Packing/Rigging Confidential Report  
Form 257 - Guide for the manufacture of Safety stows  
Form 258 - Student Harness and Container System Initial Clearance

vi) **Request from Kim Newton**

A request had been received from Kim Newton for an extension to Mike Evans' Basic Rigger rating, a copy of which had been circulated to those present. Kim apologised for the lateness of her request.

Kim advised those present that Mike had attended the Basic Rigger Course with Bill Sharp in December 2005, but he had been unable to fully prepare for the Course that Bill had held in December 2006. Kim stated that Mike had assured her that he intends to prepare for the next Course, which is unlikely to be held until December 2007. Kim also stated that she had been Mike's supervising Rigger for the last year and she had been very happy with his work to date.

Kim had therefore asked the Committee for an extension to Mike's Basic Rigger rating until December 2007.

It was proposed by Kim Newton and seconded by Pete Sizer that the above request be accepted.

**Carried Unanimously**

Dates of next Meetings:           Thursday 29 March 2007  
  Thursday 31 May 2007  
  Thursday 2 August 2007  
  Thursday 27 September 2007  
  Thursday 22 November 2007

BPA Offices, Glen Parva, Leicester  
at 7.00 p.m

14 February 2007

**Distribution:**

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

**PAPERWORK REQUIRING CIRCULATION WITH THE NEXT AGENDA MUST REACH THE  
BPA OFFICE NO LATER THAN MONDAY 12 MARCH 2007**