

BRITISH PARACHUTE ASSOCIATION
RIGGERS COMMITTEE MEETING
BPA OFFICES, 5 WHARF WAY, GLEN PARVA, LEICESTER
THURSDAY 5TH JUNE 2003

Present: Paul Applegate - Chairman
Kim Newton
Pete Sizer
Pat Walters

Apologies: John Curtis, Bill Sharp, Allan Hewitt, Bernadette Whitaker, Dave Prince.

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

Observer: Jeff Illidge

ITEM

1. **MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING FROM THE RIGGERS MEETING OF THE 10TH APRIL 2003**

Page 2, Item 1 – Minutes & Matters Arising – One Year Re-Pack Cycle for Square Reserves. Kim advised the meeting that this project was still ongoing. Because she had been very busy, work on this project had been slow and she apologised for not getting further with it at the moment.

Page 4, Item 8 – Updating of ‘old’ Riggers Committee Minutes. A letter had been received from Allan Hewitt for discussion purposes with regard to the updating of ‘old Riggers Committee Minutes’, a copy of which was circulated to those present.

Allan had asked whether the BPA documents had been updated based on all the proposals agreed at the previous meeting. It was confirmed that this had been done and the various syllabuses on the BPA website had been updated.

Allan had noted that in the past some items had been lost within the Minutes and had sometimes conflicted with the training syllabuses etc. Allan had therefore asked the Committee what were the Committee using as the ‘legal’ system, the minutes or the relevant syllabus/documentation.

The Committee referred to the Riggers Technical Manual being compiled by Andrew Hilton. It was the intention that the BPA treat Technical Manual as the document to refer to, to enable members to obtain details of past decisions made at Riggers meetings.

There being no further matters arising, it was proposed by Pat Walters and seconded by Pete Sizer that the Minutes of the Riggers Committee meeting of the 10th April 2003 be accepted as a true record.

Carried Unanimously

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

10TH APRIL 2003

There were no matters arising.

3. PROPOSAL FROM BILL SHARP CONCERNING RESERVE RE-PACKING

At the last Riggers Meeting, Bill Sharp had put forward several items from old Riggers Minutes that needed clarification.

One of the 'clarifications' concerned the changing of the Cypres battery and it is now mandatory to change the Cypres battery as per the manufacturers' recommendations, i.e. every two years. Bill had stated that he believed the natural follow on then was that a reserve packer could not date a reserve for a longer period than the battery change date.

Bill stated that his original request was made to clarify the situation, but in reality nothing has changed, in that you must change the battery at the two-year point, but you can still pack a reserve with a 'soon to be' unserviceable item in it.

Bill had stated that under the present rulings, you can pack a reserve for 6 months complete with a battery that must be changed early. He believe that the present 'system' is helping to promote jumpers continuing to use their kit that legally requires a battery change but doesn't get it (reserve is still in date), or just as bad, having jumpers switch the Cypres off after the battery does expire, just to stay legal. Bill also believed that we are also putting the reserve packers in the same situation; if there is an incident, they are involved with having to explain to lawyers why they packed a reserve with an unserviceable item in it.

Bill had therefore proposed the following, a copy of which had previously circulated:-

Proposal

Service dates and battery change dates on AAD's must be adhered to as per manufacturers' recommendations. No reserve repack can be dated for a longer period than the expiry date of any AAD component part. In the case of a Cypres battery, the original reserve packer can change the battery and can then extend the repack date to the maximum original period allowed.

The Chairman advised those present that he had intended to contact Airtec with regard to finding out what their views were to the possibility of extending the Cypres battery life.

Pat Walters stated that he believed that the onus should be on jumper as experienced parachutists are responsible for the safe condition of personally owned equipment that they may use and for ensuring that such equipment is serviced checked and inspected as appropriate. He stated that if he packed someone's kit and he noted on the RoI that the Cypres battery date runs out two months from that date then he believed that it is down to that person to go and get it done.

It was felt by some members present that this could be down to interpretation, as the Cypres could be deemed not serviceable if the battery is out of date, so a CCI could be held responsible.

Following further discussion on this item Bill Sharp's proposal failed to find a seconder.

It was suggested that Committee defer this item until the Chairman had contacted the manufactures find out their response with regard to extending the Cypres battery life.

4. PROPOSALS FROM PETE SIZER CONCERNING UPGRADING OF RESERVE PACKING CERTIFICATE HOLDERS

Following discussions at the last meeting concerning the upgrading of reserve packing certificate Holders. Pete Sizer had produced two proposals, which had been circulated with the agenda regarding this item.

Because a number of holders of Packing Certificates for reserves and Advanced Packing Certificates have upgraded to Advanced Packer status. However, those who are still packing under the old qualifications present an anomaly to the system and we need to consider the implications. Advanced Packers are cleared to pack all types, Advanced Packing Certificate holders are only cleared for the types on their certificates.

Proposal 1

As from 1.4.04 holders of Advanced Packing Certificates may not add new equipment types to their Packing Certificates.

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

Carried Unanimously

Proposal 2

Owners of rigs packed by Advanced Packing Certificate holders may be asked for evidence that the packer is qualified to pack that particular equipment. A photocopy of the packer's Certificate with relevant endorsement will suffice.

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

Carried Unanimously

During discussions on this item, it was noted that there are still people in the system who are signing up packing certificates for new equipment who have not been cleared to pack that particular set of equipment themselves. It was suggested that following ratification of the Minutes, a letter highlighting the Committee's concerns on this matter be sent to all CCIs.

5. BPA SAFETY NOTICES/INFORMATION BULLETINS

The Technical Officer advised the Committee that following a recent fatality, the Panel of Inquiry that follows the Board of Inquiry had issued a Safety Information Bulletin, which would be circulated to all Clubs with the Minutes concerning connector link covers/slider buffers.

6. MANUFACTURERS' SAFETY NOTICES/INFORMATION BULLETINS

Since the last meeting a Product Service Bulletin from Mirage Systems concerning soft reserve ripcord recall. This had been previously circulated for information.

7. A.O.B

- i) The Technical Officer asked for clarification with regard to the rules concerning notification of Advanced Packing Courses and asked whether or not the Committee require formal approval prior to a Course being run. He stated that there is nothing in the rules concerning this and there also seemed to be different opinions on the requirements.

The Technical Officer advised those present that he had drawn up a suggested criteria for discussion purposes, which applied to Advanced Packer Courses, a copy of which was circulated present:-

1. *BPA Affiliated Clubs wishing to run Advanced Packers Courses must notify the BPA office at least 14 days prior to the course. The BPA Riggers' Committee will then be informed of the course(s) at the next meeting.*
2. *Those wishing to run a course at a location other than BPA Affiliated Clubs must apply to the Rigger's Committee for permission, giving details of facilities etc.*

N.B.1 Proposed courses at locations other than a BPA Affiliated Club will not be permitted outside the UK.

N.B.2 All courses must be held under current BPA requirements and guidelines.

The Committee discussed the TO's suggestions, and a number of comments were made. Kim Newton stated that she felt that an additional NB should be added stating that the BPA reserve the right to refuse someone to hold a Advanced Packing Course.

Pete Sizer commented on those Riggers running courses at their own establishments and not at an affiliated club.

The TO pointed out that the Committee and previously agreed that a minimum criteria should be set for the purposes of those establishments wishing to run rigging courses, but nothing had been laid down yet. He also stated that the Committee had previously expressed concern with regard to both rigging and packing courses being run outside of the BPA. It was felt by those present that these Courses were unlikely to be approved if they are outside of the UK or not on sovereign territory.

The TO stated that he believed that the Committee would look favourably on those people who had previously run Advanced Courses outside of an Affiliated Club, but in the UK.

Following further discussion, the Committee agreed that the TO's suggestion should be put out as a proposal for consideration at the next meeting

Discussion then ensued with regard to the requirements for the running of Rigging Courses. The Committee felt that the TO's second item in his suggested criteria for Advanced Packing Courses including the NB's could be applied for those wishing to run Rigging Courses. These suggested criteria would also be put out as a proposal for consideration at the next meeting.

- ii) The Committee was advised that Correspondence had been received from Allan Hewitt on a number of items, a copy of which had been circulated to those present.
 - a) Allan had submitted an Advanced Packers Examination Course Report that he had held at Skydive Spain. The Committee was advised that Jonathan Horne had successfully completed the Course and had been awarded Advanced Packer (Grade S) status. Barry Maple had successfully completed the Course for upgrading to Advanced Packer (Grade T) status.

The Committee were extremely disappointed that no notification had been made to the BPA prior to the Course being held, as it was unlikely that this Course would have been permitted. However, following further discussion on this matter, the Committee agreed that on this occasion they would accept Allan's report and recommendations.

Pat Walters asked whether the Committee would be voting on this item. It was pointed out to Pat that there was not a requirement for a formal vote to be taken.

Pat Walters stated that he was disappointed with this as he did not agree with Allan Hewitt running a Course in the first place.

It was pointed out that it is unlikely that courses that will be permitted to run outside of the UK in the future. The Committee believed it was never the intention the Advanced Packing Courses were held outside of the auspices of the BPA.

- b) Allan Hewitt had proposed a 6-month extension to Barry Maple's Basic Riggers rating, which expires in June. He had stated that Barry had been unable to attend an examination, but hoped to attend a Course this year.

It was proposed by Allan Hewitt (proxy) and seconded by Pete Sizer that the above extension to Barry Maples rating be granted.

For: 2 (incl 1 by proxy) Against: 1 Abstentions: 1

Carried

- c) Allan had also proposed for the second time that his rigging loft is approved to run rigging Courses. He had stated that he has the same qualifications, the same equipment and work under the same BPA system, so unless the Committee have a valid genuine reason why he could not run courses for BPA members then he request that his previous approval be re-instated at his new address (Skydive Spain).

Following some discussion by those present, Allan Hewitt's proposal failed to find a seconder.

- d) Allan had requested permission to run a rigging examination course at Skydive Spain. He requested that his proposal be put forward as a vote as he had 2 BPA members would like to take the examination and he has a second examiner willing to work with him on this request, as per normal for rigging courses.

Allan Hewitt's proposal failed to find a seconder.

- e) Allan had also requested that the following proposal be put on the next agenda:-

He would like to proposed the following change to BPA Form 199 (I) issue 2 Apr 2003. Delete (for both round and square parachutes).

Following some discussion, it was pointed out by those present that the same proposal had already been discussed and voted on this year and it was felt by those present that it was not reasonable to have it on an agenda so soon.

- iii) Another letter had been received that morning from Allan Hewitt with regard to the Rigging for Instructor's Manual, which he had asked to be discussed under AOB.

The Committee felt that they had not had enough time to digest the contents of Allan's letter and it was felt by those present that his letter should have gone out with the agenda prior to it being discussed. The Committee felt that they could not therefore deal with

this letter under AOB.

It was agreed by those present that Allan should be asked he wished his letter to go out with next agenda.

- iv) The Committee was advised that Bill Sharp had requested formal approval to run a Basic Riggers/Parachute Riggers Course from the 3rd – 7th November 2003. Details of the proposed Course was circulated to those present.

It was proposed by Bill Sharp and seconded by Kim Newton that the above request be accepted.

Carried Unanimously

- v) The Chairman advised that he had received correspondence from Ian Robertson, which was circulated to those present. Ian had highlighted a problem while packing a Javelin, which he believed, emphasised the need for packers to do scale pull tests.

Ian had stated that he had previously packed this rig and it had passed the scale pull test. He repacked it in the same manner this time the scale showed 34lb! He tried polishing the pin and grommet and adding more silicon to the loop, but it still showed in excess of 30lbs. He then tried a fresh repack with a longer than normal new loop and it still showed in excess of 30lbs.

In case the problem was related to a defective or damaged ripcord housing, he then tried routing the ripcord cable external to the housing, and I also put a thin piece of card under the shoulder of the pin in case the end of it was somehow snagging on the top flap material. The scale pull still showed in excess of 30lbs. The pin he had polished and then done the scale test on showed some slight longitudinal marks on its surface. Ian then tried a Talon ripcord in the Javelin and it showed 16lbs on the scale.

Ian stated that a new Javelin handle was obtained and he replaced the top and bottom flap grommets and fitted another new loop and did a fresh repack on it and the scale showed 16lbs.

Ian reported in his letter that the Jump Shack had issued a Product Services Bulletin about ripcord pins produced with a rough surface between 15th May 2001 to 24th July 2001, but the surface did not appear to show cracks. Ian stated that the owner of the old ripcord is going to have it examined in comparison to some other ripcord pins for hardness etc and get back to Ian with the results.

- vi) Kim Newton advised the Committee that the manufactures of the Vortex II were now producing anti twist inserts, which go into the risers for the cutaway cables to sit in. It is a plastic tube which is cut into a spiral, which can be bent in half and the ends are not secured and not tacked in. Kim stated that she had taken out these plastic tubes and replaced them.

Date of next Meeting: Thursday 7th August 2003
BPA Offices, Glen Parva, Leicester.
4.00 p.m.

16th June 2003

Distribution

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Council
D. Beaven (CAA)
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**PAPERWORK REQUIRING CIRCULATION WITH THE NEXT AGENDA MUST REACH THE
BPA OFFICE NO LATER THAN MONDAY 21ST JULY 2003**