

BRITISH PARACHUTE ASSOCIATION
RIGGERS COMMITTEE MEETING
BPA OFFICES, 5 WHARF WAY, GLEN PARVA, LEICESTER
THURSDAY 10 JUNE 2004

Present: Paul Applegate - Chairman
Pete Sizer
John Harding
Bernadette Whitaker
Pat Walters

Apologies: Allan Hewitt, John Curtis.

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

Observer: Colin Fitzmaurice.

ITEM

1. **MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING FROM THE RIGGERS MEETING OF THE 8 APRIL 2004**

The Committee was advised that correspondence had been received from Bill Sharp and circulated with the Agenda with his comments on a number of items discussed at the last Riggers meeting.

Page 1, Item 3 – Proposal from Pat Walters. At the previous meeting it was stated that Pat Walters had voiced his concern on the number of proxy votes that had been received which were against his proposal. The Minutes had recorded that Pat had suggested that perhaps the Committee should once again consider that any rigger not having attended a minimum number of riggers' meetings waives his/her right to a proxy vote.

The Committee was advised that comments on the subject of proxy voting had been received from Bill Sharp and Allan Hewitt which had been circulated to those present and had included their comments on their right to submit proxy votes as a voting member of the Riggers Committee.

Pat Walters stated that he had only made a comment at the previous Meeting concerning proxy voting and had merely made reference to a suggestion that had been made at a past meeting.

The Technical Officer suggested that it may be appropriate to include in the Minutes the extract on proxy voting requirements taken from the Riggers' Sub-Committee – Terms of Reference and Rules of Procedure to remind people in the future. This read as follows:-

2.1. *PROXY VOTING*

A vote by proxy is the right of a voting Member of the Council of the Association, or one of its Subcommittees, to exercise their vote when they are unable to attend the meeting on any motion which, from the agenda, or papers for, the meeting they know, or may reasonably expect, will arise.

The absent Member has the right to appoint the Chairman of the meeting as their proxy to cast their vote at the meeting. The vote must be made in writing, which includes fax, and by e-mail from a recognised or verifiable e-mail address of the voting Member. The Chairman of the meeting is then duly obliged to cast the absent Member's vote in accordance with his or her written instructions.

Page 2, Item 4 – Proposals from Andrew Hilton (3-Ring Risers, RSL Shackles). This item

was on the main Agenda for that evening.

Page 4, Item 5 – Proposals from Bill Sharp (i). At the previous meeting the Committee had discussed a proposal from Bill Sharp concerning Student equipment modification, which had been duly accepted by those present.

Bill had voiced his concern that although this modification was accepted by the Committee, two experienced riggers abstained from the vote. Bill had accepted that this was their right to do so, but he wondered why? With no 'against' votes or negative comments reported, he assumed there were no safety issues about it, so why the abstaining. He had stated that surely attending a meeting and sitting at the table as a voting member, carries with it a responsibility to deal with properly presented rigging items, in a professional and better manner than abstention.

The Committee noted Bill's comments.

Page 4, Item 5 – Proposals from Bill Sharp (ii). Bill Sharp's proposal regarding a modification to the RWS Tandem Sigma Student Harness was on the main agenda for that evening.

There being no further matters arising from the previous meeting, it was proposed by Bernadette Whitaker and seconded by Pat Walters that the Minutes of the Riggers Committee meeting of the 8 April 2004 be accepted as a true record.

Carried Unanimously

2. **MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING FROM THE STC MEETING OF THE 8 APRIL 2004**

There were no matters arising from the previous Minutes.

3. **PROPOSAL FROM BILL SHARP FOR MODIFICATION TO STUDENT TANDEM EQUIPMENT**

At the previous meeting, the Committee had discussed a proposal from Bill Sharp involving the RWS Tandem Sigma Student Harness. The proposal had been to add some tape extension handles to the existing passenger harness quick release buckles, for ease of release by the Tandem Instructor.

At the previous meeting it was felt by those present that as this modification had already been approved in the past and had been given a 'blanket' approval (15 Feb 2001). The Committee had felt that Bill's proposal could be included in this 'blanket' approval, even though the Tandem Sigma had not been in use then. The Chairman had been asked to contact Bill on this matter.

Bill Sharp had submitted a letter to the Committee on this item, a copy of which had been circulated with the agenda.

Bill had stated that in Feb 2001, he was given a clearance for the initial modification to the Tandem **Vector** student harness. At that time, the modification was approved with a blanket approval for all to use on the Tandem **Vector** system.

The Tandem **Sigma** was not approved for use in the UK until Dec 2001, about a year later. At the same Dec 2001 meeting, the NCSO advised the Committee that the Tandem **Sigma** was a completely different system to the Tandem Vector. Thereafter, because of these differences, it was decided to treat it separately, complete with a new section added to the BPA Approved Tandem Modification website, specifically for Tandem Sigma clearances and modifications. Bill Sharp had also stated that he had attended the Feb 2002 Rigger's meeting, and whilst there, he asked a general question about the use of the previous 'Tandem **Vector** student harness tape extensions clearance' for use with the new Tandem **Sigma** harness. He stated that he was advised that as it was a new and different system, that it would be best to re-submit the clearance in the

Tandem **Sigma**'s name. At that time, for various reasons he never bothered but then decided to include it with my other clearance for attention at the last meeting.

Bill had stated in his correspondence that the above 'blanket clearance' suggestion was never given, nor was it ever intended to be given. The acceptance was for general use on the Tandem Vector. Bill had stated that in his opinion this 'blanket clearance' assumption is a reversion back to the days of anything goes, something that he had spent a lot of time getting sorted out.

Bill stated that the Tandem Sigma (TV3) harness may be the same or similar as the Tandem Vector harness (TV2) but they belong to two different systems, and should have separate clearances.

The Committee accepted Bill's comments on this matter.

Bill Sharp had therefore, re-applied for the same Tandem Sigma student harness tape extensions application as previously submitted.

Following further discussion on this matter, it was proposed by Bill Sharp (proxy) and seconded by John Harding that Bill Sharp's modification to add some tape extension handles to the existing passenger harness quick release buckles to the RWS Tandem Sigma Student Harness as per the drawings previously submitted.

For: 5 (incl. 2 by proxy) Against: 0 Abstentions: 1

Carried

A proxy vote in favour of this item had been received from Allan Hewitt.

Pete Sizer said that he would put forward a similar proposal for consideration at the next meeting with regard to extension handles to be used on other Tandem equipment.

4. PROPOSALS FROM ANDREW HILTON CONCERNING RSL SHACKLES AND RIGGERS PACKING CERTIFICATES

Andrew Hilton had submitted a paper, which had been circulated with the Agenda requesting that the Committee consider the following:-

1. RSL Shackles as per last meeting minutes

The following should be added to the Technical Manual as the RSL shackle information. This is directly from the August and October 1996 meetings:

"Swedish release RSL shackles can be changed for Rapide links under the following conditions:

- a) The minimum size Rapide link is to be a stainless steel # 3.5 rated at 220 kg
- b) The complete assembly is supplied by the equipment manufacturer with the RSL attached with a Rapide link or refer to c & d below.
- c) The person replacing the shackle with a Rapide link is to insure that the overall effective length of the RSL is not altered by the change from the brass shackle to a Rapide link.
- d) An Advanced Rigger is to inspect the equipment with the RSL and Rapide link installed."

The Riggers discussed this item at some length. It was felt that item (d) in Andrew Hilton's proposal was unnecessary and in practicality terms would be difficult to implement. It was therefore agreed by those present to put this item back to the next meeting following discussions with Andrew Hilton.

2. Riggers Packing Certificates

After the April Riggers meeting, Richard Wheatley had pointed out a problem with the Riggers Packing Rule from the Technical Manual. Currently we have the following

"Riggers Packing Certificates

1. Riggers qualified before 1996 should have had 'All Types' added to packing certificate by an Advanced Rigger.
2. Riggers qualified since 1996 (the introduction of the Advanced Packer rating) pack under their specific Advanced Packer Rating qualifications and certificates."

This causes problems as follows:

- Riggers who hold Advanced Packing certificates but who gained their PR rating since the introduction of the Advanced Packer rating are restricted by this rule, as according to the time-scales on the above ruling they can only pack what is on their certificate.
- Other people started their rigging career with some but not all 3 AP (R,S,T) ratings. On gaining their PR rating they operated quite legally as "All Types".

Andrew Hilton had stated that he believed that the Committee all agree that going forward newly qualified riggers should rely on their AP courses and training as their packing qualifications, since rigging courses no longer assess or teach packing.

He also stated that he believed that the Committee all agreed that those riggers who were taught and examined on packing on the old style rigger courses are entitled to the "All Types" rating previously granted.

The "grey area" is those riggers who qualified during the 6 year transition between the two systems. About 10 of this year's renewed riggers are in this situation.

To be fair to these riggers, Andrew had stated that he would like the Committee to consider the following, as the entry in the Rigging Technical Manual. It felt that it was important to be aware that due to the changes in rules and methods of teaching and qualifying packers, the "grey area" time period has gaps and weaknesses which could be used against the BPA and rigger. The intention here is to close these gaps, not to obstruct or stop these riggers packing. The committee have already discussed this issue and agreed in principle that it requires tidying up and Andrew had therefore proposed the following:

"Riggers Packing Certificates

1. Riggers qualified before 1997 should have 'All Types' added to packing certificate by an Advanced Rigger.
2. Riggers qualified between 1997 and 2002 should have an Advanced Rigger (not themselves) or above review their packing experience and log to date and endorse their packing certificate accordingly as "All Types (round, square AND/OR tandem)".
3. Riggers qualified since 2003 pack according to their specific Advanced Packer Rating qualifications and certificates."

Andrew had stated the Committee should take into account the following points when considering this matter:

- i) This would not be a blanket clearance for "grey area time period" riggers to gain All Types (R, S, T). It is down to the integrity of the endorsing AR to only sign up what is appropriate for the individual rigger based on their current experience to date.
- ii) 1997 is a more appropriate cut off date as riggers qualifying in 1996 would have been using the Advanced Packing certificate system rather than the Advanced Packer rating.
- iii) This issue raised its head last year just before the December 2003 PR exam course, hence the choice of 2003 onwards.
- iv) Once the initial endorsement is provided for an individual, further packing qualifications for rounds, squares or tandem could only be gained via AP courses.
- v) If this proposal gets accepted then the riggers affected should be made specifically aware by the BPA office of the requirements for their packing certificates and qualifications to be brought into line.

Following discussion on this matter, it was proposed by Andrew Hilton (proxy) and seconded by

Pete Sizer that the following be included in the Riggers Technical Manual concerning Riggers Packing Certificates:-

Riggers Packing Certificates

1. Riggers qualified before 1997 should have 'All Types' added to packing certificate by an Advanced Rigger.
2. Riggers qualified between 1997 and 2002 should have an Advanced Rigger (not themselves) or above review their packing experience and log to date and endorse their packing certificate accordingly as "All Types (round, square AND/OR tandem)".
3. Riggers qualified since 2003 pack according to their specific Advanced Packer Rating qualifications and certificates."

Carried Unanimously

The Committee requested Andrew Hilton to update the Riggers Technical Manual accordingly.

The Committee was advised that Andrew had stated that the updated syllabus promised in the last meeting minutes had been put back until the next meeting.

5. REQUEST FROM JOHN HARDING

An e-mail had been received from John Harding and circulated with the Agenda requesting an exemption for Eric Bazin-Laziou to allow him to be examined on his reserve packing without attending the teaching course.

The Committee was advised that Eric is an FAA Rigger and has some experience packing reserves. Pete Sizer advised those present that he had evaluated Eric and gave the meeting details.

Following some discussion on this matter, it was proposed by John Harding and seconded by that the above proposal be accepted.

For: 3 Against: 1 Abstentions: 0

Carried

6. ADVANCED PACKERS COURSE REPORT – ALLAN HEWITT

An Advanced Packers Course had been held at Skydive St Andrews from the 21 – 24 April 2004. The Examiner running the Course was Allan Hewitt, with assistance from Roy Bannerman and Paul Burns. A copy of the Course Report had been circulated with the agenda.

The Committee was advised that six candidates had attended the Course, all of whom were advised to practice and prepare for the examination phase.

A number of recommendations had been made and were as follows:-

- i) That Paul Burns be added to the BPA list and be allowed to run advanced packing training courses and advanced packing examination courses having met the requirements stated in the advanced packing syllabus. Allan Hewitt had stated in his report that Paul had previously attended an Advanced Packers Course in August 2003, details of which had been recorded in the Minutes of 9 October 2003, but was not voted on and therefore was never approved by the Riggers Committee.
- ii) That Roy Bannerman be added to the BPA list and be allowed to run advanced packing training courses and advanced packing examination courses having met the requirements stated in the advanced packing syllabus.

The Following Course recommendations had also been made:-

A. Recommendation to a change to BPA form 175 as follows:

1. Delete FAI number and replace with a “checked by” box
2. Add an approved packing certificate “checked by” box and “issue date” box
3. A new part be added to this form to ensure all relevant handouts are given out during the course

A copy of the proposed form had been circulated with the Agenda.

Following some discussion, it was proposed by Allan Hewitt (proxy) and seconded by Pete Sizer that the above recommendations including the amendments to BPA Form 175 be accepted.

Carried Unanimously

B. Recommendation to a change to BPA form number 169 (i) as follows:

Candidate Qualifications in item 2 be changed to the following:

Must hold a BPA approved packing certificate and have been a BPA member for at least 18 months.

Allan Hewitt had stated that the reason for this proposal is that not every one gets a certificate and have no requirement for one until some one tells them that they must have held one for 12 months before attending a course.

It was noted that correspondence had been received by Bill Sharp with regard to this recommendation and had been distributed to those present.

This subject had had been discussed on several occasions by the Committee in the past and a number of permissions against the requirement of holding a BPA Packing Certificate for 12 months had been granted by the Committee to enable people to attend Advanced Packing Courses. One of the main reasons being that people wishing to undertake a Course did not always realise that they need to have held a packing certification for 12 months until they actually applied to attend a Course.

Following further discussion on this request, it was proposed by Allan Hewitt and seconded by Pete Sizer that proposed changes to the Advanced Packer Course Syllabus (BPA Form 169) with regard to candidate qualifications be accepted.

Carried Unanimously

7. ADVANCED PACKERS COURSE REPORTS – GEOFF HUGHES

Geoff Hughes had submitted two Advanced Packers Course Reports that had been circulated with the agenda. Glen Coleman had attended the Advanced Packer Course held at the Services Parachute Centre (NI) and had subsequently attended the final examination phase held at the Service Parachute Centre (NI) from the 18 – 19 May 2004. Glen successfully completed the Course and had been awarded Advanced Packer (Grade S) status.

8. BPA SAFETY NOTICES/INFORMATION BULLETINS

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

9. MANUFACTURERS’ SAFETY NOTICES/INFORMATION BULLETINS

The Committee was advised that two Service Bulletins had been received from Advanced

Aerospace Designs concerning the Vigil AAD, both of which had been previously circulated for information.

10. A.O.B

- i) The Chairman gave the meeting details of an incident report which concerned a Tandem canopy about to be repacked, where it was noticed that the main pin (the swaged yellow cable), was missing from the drogue bridle. It was believed that the pin came off during deployment, possibly because the cable was not correctly swaged. The bridle had only completed 2 or 3 jumps previously. The CCI had contacted the suppliers and manufacturers and it appeared to have been a 'one off'.

This incident was discussed by those present and it was agreed that a BPA Safety Information Bulletin be issued highlighting this problem.

- ii) The Chairman advised those present that an Advanced Packer application form had been received from David Gould, together the AP Training Record to upgrade Phill Elston to AP (Tandem) status. He stated that on checking our records, it had been noted that Dave Gould was not on the list of people registered to run and examine an Advanced Packers Course.

The Chairman stated that following some research, it was found that Dave Gould had attended an Advanced Packers Course held at Sky Science in February 2002, copy of the Course Report was circulated to those present. The Recommendation from the Course Examiner (Allan Hewitt) had been as follows:

“David Gould had assisted in running the Course and had given a number of lessons as required by the syllabus. Mr Hewitt had stated in his report that although David knew his subject, he was very inexperienced in teaching. Mr Hewitt had therefore recommended that he either attends a method of instruction course or works with an examiner to help him deliver his knowledge”.

The Committee was advised that Dave Gould has never notified the BPA that he had attended a Method of Instruction Course. However on contacting Dave, he confirmed that he had attended such a Course with Steve Apps and that he would ask Steve to forward confirmation to the office. The Chairman stated that to date (10 June 04) nothing has been received.

The Committee discussed this matter at some length. It was noted that on the AP Training Record supplied by David Gould, he had only examined Mr Ellston on one Tandem system type when in fact this should be at least two different equipment types.

Pete Sizer stated that he would liaise direct with Phill Elston on this matter.

The Committee then discussed the situation with regard to Dave Gould. As there was no recommendation for him to run Advanced Packers Course, the Committee agreed that until such a time as he gets a recommendation, he is not permitted to run these Courses.

- iii) The Chairman advised those present that Bill Sharp had notified the office of his intention to run two Riggers Courses later in the year at RAPA, Germany. The first Course is to be held from the 29 November – 3 December 2004 and the second Course is being held from the 6 – 10 December 2004. Details of these Courses would be circulated with the Minutes.
- iv) The Chairman reported that the Cyprus Combined Services Parachute Centre had now

gone over to using dual operation cutaway system on their Javelin equipment.

Date of next Meeting: Thursday 5 August 2004
BPA Offices, Glen Parva, Leicester.
4.00 p.m.

17 June 2004

Distribution

Chairperson Riggers Committee
All CCIs
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 JULY 2004**