

BRITISH PARACHUTE ASSOCIATION
RIGGERS COMMITTEE MEETING
BPA OFFICES, 5 WHARF WAY, GLEN PARVA, LEICESTER
THURSDAY 22 NOVEMBER 2007

Present: Paul Applegate - Chairman
Rick Boardman
Pat Walters
Steve Thomas
Bernadette Whitaker
Dave Major
Pete Sizer
Kim Newton
Ray Armstrong

Apologies: John Curtis, Phill Elston, Allan Hewitt.

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

Observers: Phil Cavanagh, Allison Armstrong.

ITEM

1. **MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING FROM THE RIGGERS MEETING OF THE 27 SEPTEMBER 2007**

Page 2, Item 4 – Lifting of Tandem Component Parts. The Chairman advised the Committee that a Working Group had now been set up to look at the whole subject of Tandem drills and equipment maintenance. He stated that the Working Group had held its first meeting this afternoon and he would keep the Committee advised of any progress. Any Rigger was welcome to attend the next meeting, which was scheduled for 2pm on Thursday 7 February 2008, which was the proposed date of the next Riggers and STC Meetings.

There being no further matters arising, it was proposed by Pete Sizer and seconded by Pat Walters that the Minutes of the Riggers meeting of the 27 September 2007, be accepted as a true record.

Carried Unanimously

2. **MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING FROM THE STC MEETING OF THE 27 SEPTEMBER 2007**

There were no matters arising from the previous Minutes.

3. **TO CONSIDER A PROPOSAL FROM ALLAN HEWITT REGARDING RESERVE PACKING**

A proposal from Allan Hewitt had been circulated with the Agenda, together with his proposed Record of Inspection sheet. An E-mail had also been received from Bill Sharp and had been circulated to those present with his comments and proxy vote in favour of Allan's proposal. Allan had also submitted another letter, which was copied to those present, following discussions between himself and Bill Sharp.

Allan had stated that when packing reserve parachutes the current situation required the purchase of a reserve packing book from the BPA. However when packing Tandem reserves this required a separate form, which was available to download from the BPA website to print and complete. In addition a reserve packing log card must also be completed for each system that has usually been supplied by the manufacturers and has no BPA equivalent form. Allan had stated that he believed the system worked well, however it was still a paper trail system that limited both the ability to find any given reserve repack as quickly as a computer system would allow and restricted what can be added to further improve safety. Also many times when the documents have been completed, parts are completely illegible. He stated that he had come across many checklists where it was impossible to work out who did the actual work without spending time researching the fact, and in many cases no way of contacting the reserve packer.

Allan had combined the two BPA forms as one, which had been circulated for consideration. He asked the Committee to allow himself and other BPA qualified members to use this form for a period of 12 months which would be completed online and then printed to be signed and kept with the equipment. After 12 months Allan would like to return to the Committee to give a full report and ask for either a complete acceptance or some changes depending on the feedback during that period. Allan had stated that the form would include every check item that was currently on the two BPA forms.

Allan had requested that he be allowed to add additional information as required to the Check list, but not be allowed to remove anything without first applying to the BPA Riggers Committee. The signed form would be kept with the equipment with the reserve packing log completed as normal.

Allan had advised that the reason behind his request was that he had a safety notice database that would soon be available online. He stated that many people had used his previous version which required installation by a CD, who could vouch how it could save time and allowed for a very accurate method of making sure the equipment being packed had no safety notices pending. In addition, he believed it was a great learning tool for Advanced Packers and Riggers to learn from other people mistakes, preventing the same mistakes from happening again.

Allan had stated that each inspection checklist would be given a unique serial number and kept in a database for retrieval, therefore every piece of equipment would have a complete detailed history that was quick and easy to retrieve.

Allan stated that his request for the form to be a combination of both BPA forms allowed Advanced Packers and Riggers to complete one online form, which was directly linked to the safety notice database. On completion of the form it will have checked every safety notice to see if any item on the form had a safety notice pending.

Allan states that his database, after years of updates and improvements, was now a very detailed and easy to use system and with the current computer technology was available to all members of this industry.

Allan's request was to allow himself and others to choose to use either the current BPA system or this new computer age system for the next 12 months, not to replace the current system in any shape or form. He stated that when the form was printed it will have automatically imported the logo's and contact details from each manufacturer selected while the form is being completed, it will also automatically import the Advanced Packer / Riggers logo and contact details if they chose to allow this option. Anyone who wants to request further information from any of the manufacturers or the rigger can then contact them without having to search for the information.

Allan had advised the Committee that he would be launching his new safety notice database online during the next month and would be giving a presentation at the BPA AGM in January and the PIA Symposium in February to launch this project.

The Committee then considered Allan's proposal at some length. The majority of members welcomed his trial and realised it was a huge project to take on and a number of those present stated that they would be more than happy to assist.

During the discussion, the Committee noted that Allan's proposed inspection form did not quite meet the BPA's current minimum requirements as some information had been omitted. They agreed that the trial would need to be run alongside BPA's current system and they would like to see a broad spectrum of Advanced Packers, Riggers and Advanced Packing Certificate Holders taking part in the trial. At the end of the trial the Committee would like to receive any comments and feedback from those taking part.

Following further discussion, a counter proposal was put forward by Pete Sizer, seconded by Ray Armstrong that the Committee accepts Allan's proposed trial with the proviso that the trial is conducted with a variety of riggers/packers over the next 12 months and that the trial must be conducted in parallel with existing system and the proposed form Allan had submitted would need to include everything that is included on the current BPA forms.

Carried Unanimously

4. TO CONSIDER A PROPOSAL FROM ALLAN HEWITT TO HOST A BPA RIGGING COURSE

A proposal from Allan Hewitt requesting to host a BPA Rigging Course at Netheravon from the 4 – 8 February 2008 had been circulated with the Agenda.

Following some discussion, it was proposed by Allan Hewitt (proxy) and seconded by Pete Sizer that the above request be accepted.

Carried Unanimously

5. ADVANCED PACKERS COURSE REPORTS

i) An Advanced Packers Examination Course had taken place at UK Parachuting from the 29 – 30 October 2007. Andy Page had submitted a Course Report, a copy of which had been circulated to those present.

Paul Jordan, Stephan Thain and Reg Green successfully completed the Course and have been awarded Advanced Packer (Grade S) status.

ii) An Advanced Packers Examination Course had taken place at the Headcorn Parachute Club from the 6 – 7 November 2007. Pete Sizer had submitted a Course Report, a copy of which had been circulated to those present.

Simon McConnell successfully completed the Course and has been awarded Advanced Packer (Grade S) status.

- iii) An Advanced Packers Training Course had taken place at UK Parachuting from the 5 – 8 November 2007. Andy Page had submitted a Course Report, a copy of which had been circulated to those present. Paul Dorward, Andrew Hughes and Robert Krysztofiak attended the Course all of whom were advised to attend the Examination phase of the Course at a later date.

Andy stated that there were a couple of discrepancies in two of the candidate's paperwork, which he hoped could be resolved by the Committee this evening.

Andy Page had advised that Robert Krysztofiak's Approved Packing Certificate had not been stamped by the BPA office and that Andrew Hughes did not hold an Approved Packing Certificate prior to the commencement of the Course.

Andy Page had stated that Andrew Hughes had done all the work for an Approved Packing certificate with another Instructor/Advanced Packer at Sibson in 2004, but had never been issued with the certificate. Andy Page stated that he had tested Andrew Hughes on his approved packing skills during the week and stated that he demonstrated a high level of knowledge & skill.

Andy Page hoped that on his recommendation that Andrew & Robert can be signed up for their Approved Packing Certificates retrospectively and had included both certificates for endorsement by the office.

A great deal of discussion ensued on this matter. The Committee were concerned that Andy Page had allowed the Course to go ahead with candidates not having the correct paperwork prior to the start of Course. They were also concerned that this matter had not been picked up previously as the two candidates concerned had a previous history of packing. During the discussion, the Committee felt that a reminder be put in the Minutes that Approved Packing Certificates were not valid unless they had been endorsed by the BPA office and that anyone who turned up for a future Advanced Packers or Riggers Course without the correct paperwork would not be permitted to continue the Course.

Some discussion then took place with regard to whether the two candidates concerned should re-attend another AP training Course. The Committee decided that the two candidates did not have to re-attend another training Course, but any exam phase they attend in the future must be conducted by an independent Examiner.

Following further discussion, it was proposed by Rick Boardman, seconded by Dave Major that the following action be taken in respect of this matter:

- i) That Robert Krysztofiak be instructed to get his paperwork in order in future before attending any BPA Courses.
- ii) That Andrew Hughes is re-assessed by an independent Advanced Rigger and not to pack mains or reserves until he does so.
- iii) That Andy Page is reminded about the correct procedure and syllabus requirements for any Courses he runs in the future.

Carried Unanimously

6. BPA SAFETY NOTICES/INFORMATION BULLETINS

There had been one BPA safety notices/information bulletin (1/07) issued since the last meeting. This concerned the inspection of Cutaway Housings.

7. MANUFACTURER'S SAFETY NOTICES/INFORMATION BULLETINS

A number of Advisory Notices had been circulated since the last meeting:

i) An English translation of the Advisory Notice number 143 issued by the French Parachute Federation (FFP) had been previously circulated. This had concerned cutaway housings and had been discussed at the last meeting.

ii) An Advisory Notice from the FFP number 146 had been circulated with regard to the checking of reserve packs from Sunpath made between 1 January 1998 and 31 December 1999.

The Notice stated that in many cases of sticky bags had been recently detected in between the top inside surface from the reserve bag and the out layer of the reserve canopy during periodical packing cycle. The issue comes from the waterproof urethane coating, sensitive under meteorological circumstances or particular storage, which can cause an adherence. The adherence level may affect the airworthiness of the freebag.

iii) The FFP had published an English version of Advisory Notice 135, issued in June 2007. This Bulletin had required changing the bottom part of the steering lines on the Decelerator 120 made before December 2001.

The Technical Officer wished to make it clear that the Advisory Notices issued by the FFP were circulated for information purposes only.

Pete Sizer advised that these Advisory Notices would not be included in the Safety Notice Index.

8. A.O.B

i) A request has been received from Andy Page for an extension to Aaron Ellen's Basic Riggers (Method 2) rating, which expired on the 30 September 2007.

Andy has stated the due to other work commitments at the Centre, it had been difficult for both of them to be in the rigging room at the same time to complete the necessary 300 hrs. However Aaron was working well and has a good aptitude and attitude to rigging and he was sure that in time Aaron would make an excellent Rigger.

Following some discussion, it was proposed by Pete Sizer and seconded by Kim Newton that Aaron Ellen be given a six month extension to his BR rating.

Carried Unanimously

- ii) An e-mail had been received from Bill Sharp and tabled to those present regarding Rigger rating renewals.

Bill had stated that a recent case had highlighted a discrepancy with the renewal of a 2007 rigger related rating. He felt that with all Rigger and Advanced Packer ratings needing renewal early in the New Year, he believed this was perhaps a good time to remind people of the renewal requirements. He stated they were all clearly listed in the Ops Manual (Sec 14) and the various Rigger syllabi.

Bill had stated that the BPA membership form (and rating renewals form) was already cluttered, and cannot give every eventuality in the small space available for each rating renewal. It is the responsibility of:

- 1: The person requesting the rating renewal to ensure that they are fully qualified in every respect for the renewal being requested.
- 2: More importantly, that the person signing up the rating renewal checks that all requirements for the rating have been met, and that they themselves are authorised to sign for that renewal.

Bill had listed, in brief, the rigging ratings, along with their renewal requirements and who could sign them. Following some slight additions by those present these requirements were listed below for information:

Advanced Packer:

Who can sign : Advanced Rigger or Advanced Instructor.
Requirements : Reserve packing log book inspection .
: Satisfy AR/AI they are current and up to date with current practices. An AI signing up an Advanced Packer must be themselves qualified to pack the same items listed in their packing log.

Packing Certificate Holder:

Who can sign : Advanced Rigger or Advanced Instructor.
Requirements : Reserve packing log book inspection .
: Satisfy AR/AI they are current and up to date with current practices. An AI signing up an Advanced Packing Certificate Holder must be themselves qualified to pack the same items listed in their packing log.

Basic Rigger:

Who can sign : Advanced Rigger.
Requirements :Satisfy AR they are current and progressing with their training.
: (Method 1). Must attend PR course within one year of BR course.
: (Method 2). Must attend PR course within 18 months of initial registration.

Parachute Rigger:

Who can sign : Advanced Rigger.
Requirements : Satisfy AR they are current and up to date with current practices.

Advanced Rigger:

Who can sign : Advanced Rigger.
Requirements : Satisfy AR they are current and up to date with current practices.

Rigger Examiner:

Who can sign : Rigger Examiner.
Requirements : Satisfy RE they are current and up to date with current practices.
: Must have attended 1 rigging course in the last two years.

iii) A Packing/Rigging Confidential Report had been received where the packer had reported that during an inspection of the kit he found that the front left riser had been hooked up to the mallon link incorrectly. Also on inspection of the steering toggles the left toggle had been attached through the wrong side. The Chairman advised that he had spoken to the packer concerned.

iv) The Chairman reported that two Tandem Incident deployment problems had been reported since the last meeting:

a. The first incident involved an unintentional cutaway on opening. Subsequent inspection showed that the housing for the secondary drogue release handle had caused the problem. The housing runs from the drogue riser up inside between the back pack and the reserve and is secured over the right shoulder to the same bit of tape as the cutaway housings. This housing had become 'coiled' inside the back pack area effectively making the housing 6 to 8 inches shorter.

On deployment of the main and loading of the harness webbing the secured end by the cutaway pad was pulled up inside the container taking with it the cutaway housings. The cutaway housings were pulled far enough away from the cutaway pad to cause the main to be released.

The equipment had undergone some rigging maintenance work in the days prior to the incident. The work was carried out with the reserve in place. The packer had stated that they believed it was the unusual manipulation of the kit during this rigging work that had allowed the housing to loop within the back pack area. When the kit was worn and the housing compressed between the reserve and the users back then the coiled housing was unable to work free. The packer had stated to prevent similar occurrence any rigging work would take place with the reserve out and a more thorough and general inspection of the equipment would take place following any rigging work.

b. On the second incident reported, the drogue had been set as normal and 15 secs into the jump the main deployed due to drogue bridle failure. On inspection it

was found that the drogue bridle was worn at the main ring attachment under Kevlar. This was not easily recognized.

- v) Pete Sizer had submitted an update to the Safety Notice Index, a copy of which had been circulated to those present

SAFETY FILE INDEX

- 47. Basik Air Concept

(2) BPA SAFETY INFORMATION INDEX

- 97. Cutaway Housings, SI 1/07

(8) PARACHUTES de FRANCE

- 49. Improvement of Tandem Atom Container, BS 25-63-34 31.7.07

(12) RELATIVE WORKSHOP INDEX

- 54. Tandem Loop Style Reserve Ripcords, SB 300107, 30.01.07

(47) BASIK AIR CONCEPT

- 1. Advance Harness / Container Inspection of Pilot chute pocket, SB 05.08.07
- 2. Advance Tandem System T1 & T2 diagonal left backstrap & clamp, AV070718, 18.07.07

- vi) Kim Newton gave the meeting details of a reserve that had been opened and re-sealed abroad. She stated that the equipment in question was a Vortex 2, which had been opened and then resealed in the American way. Kim stated that on checking the paperwork, this showed an English packer. However the reserve card had a 'Perris' stamp on it and written on the card was "closed after loop.....". The remainder of the writing was illegible. She stated that whether they had shortened the loop, she could not determine.

Kim advised the Committee that she got a pull force of over 50lb on the reserve. She then continued the inspection and found a number of other faults with the reserve, which she stated should have been picked by the previous two reserve packers. She had taken a number of photos depicting these faults, copies of which had been circulated to those present.

Kim reported that she had spoken to one of the packers concerned and was also in the process of contacting the other packer making them aware of the problems she had found.

- vii) The Chairman stated that he had received a query regarding the battery life on an Argus AAD, as there was nothing on the actual AAD unit to say when the battery expired. This was a particular problem if someone had just purchased a unit and the paperwork was missing.

Following some discussion, the Committee asked that anyone changing the battery on an Argus AAD to ensure they write on the packing card and where possible to put a sticker on the actual unit advising of the next battery due date.

- viii) Pete Sizer advised the Committee that he was available to run an Advanced Packers Course from 28 – 31 January 2008. He asked that anyone interested should contact him direct.

Date of next Meeting: Thursday 7 February 2008 (provisional date)
BPA Offices, Glen Parva, Leicester
at 4.00 p.m

27 November 2007

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 NO LATER THAN MONDAY 21 JANUARY 2008