

BRITISH PARACHUTE ASSOCIATION
RIGGERS COMMITTEE MEETING
BPA OFFICES, 5 WHARF WAY, GLEN PARVA, LEICESTER
THURSDAY 9 OCTOBER 2003

Present: Paul Applegate - Chairman
Kim Newton
Gary Lawry
Rick Boardman
Pat Walters
Bernadette Whitaker
John Curtis
Nick Johnston
Pete Sizer

Apologies: Andrew Hilton, Bill Sharp, Richard Wheatley, Geoff Hughes.

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

Observers: Phill Elston, Liz Ashley, Phil Lyall, Jeff Illidge, Ian Rosenvinge (from 6pm).

ITEM

1. **MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING FROM THE RIGGERS MEETING OF THE 7 AUGUST 2003**

Page 1, Item 1 (Matters Arising). John Curtis advised the Committee that he had spoken to Andrew Hilton with regard to producing a minimum criteria for the purposes of those establishments wishing to run Rigging Courses. He stated that they would be looking at this during the winter months for inclusion in the future Riggers Technical Operations Manual.

Page 2, Item 3 (Proposal from Bill Sharp concerning Reserve Packing). John Curtis voiced his concern with regard to the voting on this item and drew the Committee's attention to the number of proxy votes that had been received. He stated that he was concerned that people were voting on items when they had not been present at the meeting to hear the full debate. The Committee noted John's concerns.

Page 5, Item 5 (i) – Correspondence and Proposals from Alan Hewitt. At the previous meeting the Committee had discussed a proposal from Allan Hewitt with regard to changing the Basic Riggers Course Syllabus. John Curtis stated that he was concerned with the final paragraph in the Minutes relating to this item where it had stated that the Committee did not care to have this matter discussed again in the future. John was concerned that the way this had been minuted was in such a way that he believed that this item could never be discussed again.

The Chairman noted John's concerns and stated that the Committee had asked for it to be minuted to reflect the Committee's feelings at the last meeting, that this particular issue had been debated several times in the past and they therefore, did not wish it to be raised again in the immediate future.

Page 5, Item 5 (ii) – Proposal from Allan Hewitt to tun Advanced Packing and Rigging

Courses. At the previous meeting the Committee had accepted a proposal by Allan Hewitt that he be permitted to run Courses at Skydiving Spain providing that the details of his facilities and equipment were acceptable and that Council agreed to Courses being run outside of the UK, or outside of an overseas Affiliated Club.

The Chairman advised the Committee that this matter had been discussed at the Council Meeting on the 19 August. He stated that Council had noted that STC had not yet discussed this matter in any detail and they had therefore asked that this subject be discussed by STC to find out their views, before they make a final decision.

Page 7, Item 11 – AOB (iv). John Curtis advised the meeting that he would be running an Advanced Packing Course from the 15 – 18 December 2003.

Page 7, Item 11 -AOB (vi). Pat Walters advised those present that he had examined the Tandem Instructor who had recently purchased a Tandem Sigma to enable him to pack the equipment himself.

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 7 August 2003 be accepted as a true record.

Carried Unanimously

2. **MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING FROM THE STC MEETING OF THE 7 AUGUST 2003**

There were no matters arising.

3. **DRAFT RIGGING TECHNICAL OPERATIONS MANUAL BY ANDREW HILTON**

A draft copy of the Rigging Technical Operations Manual by Andrew Hilton had been circulated to all Riggers with the Agenda. E-mail from Allan Hewitt had been received with his comments, which had tabled to those present, with a copy also being passed to Andrew Hilton.

The Committee was advised that Andrew Hilton had stated that he would incorporate all comments and suggestions that he receives into draft 2 version of the Manual in the near future. Andrew welcomed any further input, which the Committee suggested should be sent direct to Andrew.

The Chairman advised the Committee that a number of riggers and packers had queried the BPA insurance coverage relating to themselves following Andrew Hilton's 'draft' publication of the Rigging Technical Manual.

The Chairman stated that the problem had now been resolved. The technical Officer had tabled a paper giving his interpretation of what BPA Insurance cover meant for riggers and packers:-

“BPA riggers, packers and trainees are covered by the BPA third party liability insurance, when working on the kit of any BPA member, providing the kit is used within sport parachuting and they are operating to the requirements of the BPA Operations Manual. They are not covered when working on kit for those outside the BPA, eg. Glider rigs or Pilot bail out rigs, other than BPA jump pilots. Neither is it intended to cover equipment manufacturers.”

4. UPDATE OF TANDEM EQUIPMENT RECORD OF INSPECTION CHECK LIST

Andrew Hilton had noted that there were a few items on the Tandem Equipment Record of Inspection Check List that were due for update. Andrew had drafted a new version of the form for consideration by the Committee, which had been distributed with the agenda and had included a number of changes.

The Committee discussed the proposed Tandem Equipment Record of Inspection Check List and they were happy with the changes that Andrew had incorporated into the revised form. It was felt that having the Check List in book format may be useful. However on considering this idea, the Committee felt that because of the small amount of Tandems in use, it would not be cost effective.

Following further discussion, it was proposed by Andrew Hilton and seconded by Pete Sizer that the Tandem Equipment Inspection Check List produced by Andrew Hilton be accepted.

For: 7 Against: 0 Exemption: 1

Carried

A copy of the new Tandem Equipment Record of Inspection Check List is attached.

5. CORRESPONDENCE FROM BILL SHARP CONCERNING VORTEX 2 RESERVE FREEBAG BRIDLE

The Committee was advised that further correspondence had been received from Bill Sharp, which had been previously circulated with the agenda. This related to a potential problem that had been highlighted at the previous meeting concerning a possible snag point on the Vortex 2 reserve freebag bridle line, because of an excessively large loop at the pilot chute end of the freebag bridle.

Bill had been in contact with the manufacturers (Chute Shop, SA) who had replied to him with a 'limited authority' for correcting the potential problem, a copy of this reply had also been circulated with the agenda. Bill had stated in his letter that he had asked the manufacturers to contact the BPA directly with an official solution. The Committee was advised that nothing had been received from Chute Shop, SA to date.

Bill had stated in his letter that although the manufacturers recognize that the loop is large and can be made smaller. They do offer a solution, but don't say who can carry out the work. The Chairman advised the Committee that he had spoken to the manufacturers and they had stated that they are going to reduce the size of the loop in the future.

Following some discussion on this matter, the Committee felt that if Packers and Riggers were not happy with the existing loop, then they could shorten it if they wished. They believed that the knowledge was already in the field to do this.

6. EXEMPTION REQUEST FROM GARY LAWRY

A copy of Gary Lawry's request had been circulated with the Agenda for a number of named BPA members to undertake Advanced Packer training, who had not completed the required twelve month period as Approved Packers. The individuals were full time assistant staff at the Joint Services Parachute Centre.

It was noted that since Gary had submitted his request, one of individuals had now held an Approved Packing Certificate for 8 months. The other two individuals had held the Approved Packing Certificate for 6 months and 3 months respectively.

The Committee was advised that correspondence had been received from Geoff Hughes and Bill Sharp with regard to this request, copies of which had been circulated to those present.

Gary Lawry gave the meeting details of his request and advised those present that it is intended to qualify these individuals during their tour of duty at the Joint Services Parachute Centre Netheravon. Gary stated they had been involved in the supervising of the packing of 6500 canopies during a number of Courses held at Netheravon since March this year.

It became apparent during discussion that the Committee would have a problem in giving someone permission to undertake Advanced Packer training who had only held a Packing Certificate for 3 months. Gary Lawry was therefore asked if he would consider withdrawing his request for this particular individual at this time and bring it back to the Committee at a future meeting once the person concerned had served another couple of months on his Packing Certificate. Gary Lawry agreed to this.

It was therefore proposed by Gary Lawry and seconded by Pat Walters that Nicholas Livermore (898259) and Stephen Chadwick (878301) be permitted to undertake Advanced Packer training, without having held a Packing Certificate for twelve months.

For: 7 Against: 1 Abstentions: 0

Carried

7. ADVANCED PACKER COURSE REPORTS

- i) An Advanced Packers Course had been run By Chris Thomas and Albert Hooker from the 4 – 8 August 2003 at Target Skysports, with the Examination phase being held at Thomas Sports Equipment on the 10 August 2003. A copy of the Course Report had been previously circulated with the agenda.

The following candidates attended the Course had successfully completed the Examination phase and were awarded their ratings as follows:

Brian Fielding was awarded Advanced Packer (Grade R & S) status
Rupert Connell was awarded Advanced Packer (Grade S) status
Brian Poole was awarded Advanced Packer (Grade S) status

The following candidates attended the Course and were advised to return for final examination in the future:

Jason Southall, Danny Jessop, Liz Ashley, Paul.Hollow and Richard Aveyard

Phil Elston (AP91 Grade S) attended the Round Packer Course and was advised to return for final examination in the future.

Noel Purcell (AP98 Grade S) attended the Round Packer Course and successfully completed the Examination phase and was awarded Advanced Packer (Grade R) status. Chris Thomas had also registered Noel Purcell as a Basic Rigger.

John Curtis advised those present that on examining the paperwork submitted by Chris Thomas, he had noted that Noel Purcell had only packed one round reserve on the examination phase for upgrading to AP (Grade R) status. John pointed out that the Advanced Packing Syllabus states that the final examination will consist of a minimum of four reserve repack tests (rounds in this instance). These tests will be with different types of equipment to include AAD's and RSL's.

The Committee noted that Noel Purcell already held an Advanced Packers rating for

square reserves, and bearing this in mind, although the requirements of the present syllabus had not been fulfilled, they felt that Noel should pack at least one more round reserve in another system to maintain his Advanced Packer (Grade R) rating.

It was felt by those present that an upgrade syllabus for use once a person had already qualified for an Advanced Packer round or square rating needed to be produced. They believed that the current syllabus for those wishing to upgrade may be a bit ambiguous. John Curtis stated that he would liaise with Andrew Hilton on this matter.

Following further discussion on this matter, it was proposed by Pete Sizer and seconded by Pat Walters that Noel Purcell packs another round reserve on a different system to maintain Advanced Packer (Grade R) status. Until such time as this had been completed and the necessary paperwork sent to the BPA Office, Noel cannot get a rigger rating.

Carried Unanimously

It was felt by those present that to prevent this from happening again, there should be no more Advanced Packer upgrades until we know what is required to upgrade.

The Chairman then continued with presenting details of Chris's report.

Chris Thomas had thanked Albert Hooker for overseeing the Course and Examinations. He also passed on his thanks to Roy Bannerman and Kim Newton who had assisted on the Course with the recommendation that they be allowed to run an Advanced Packing Course on their own.

Chris had also thanked Target Skysports for the use of their facilities for the duration of the Course.

Rick Boardman stated that at present there was no way of knowing who was cleared to run Advanced Packing courses. Rick advised the Committee that he was in the process of collating a list.

ii) The Chairman advised those present that an Advanced Packers Examination Course Report had been received from Chris Thomas and Albert Hooker and had been previously circulated with the Agenda. Jason Southall, Paul Hollow and Richard Aveyard had successfully completed the Course and were all issued Advanced Packer (Grade S) status.

iii) The Chairman advised the Committee that a Tandem Advanced Packers Course Report had been submitted by Chris Thomas and had been previously circulated with the Agenda.

Noel Purcell (AP98 Grade R & S) had attended the Course for upgrading to Tandem status. He had then successfully attended the final examination phase of the Course and was awarded Advanced Packer (Grade T) 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

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

10. A.O.B

- i) Circulated to those present was information concerning Aerodyne Reserve Canopy Soft Links.

The Chairman advised the Committee that Aerodyne were supplying equipment that was fitted with the Aerodyne reserve canopy soft link. He stated that these links had not been accepted by the BPA for use on reserves. This had only come to light during a reserve routine re-pack.

John Curtis stated that he was concerned that the Aerodyne soft links look similar to the Parachutes de France link, which had not been accepted by the BPA for use on reserves. He did not want to see the PDF Links being inadvertently fitted to reserves.

The Chairman stated that he would contact the manufacturer to find out if they can manufacture these links with an identifying mark, such as PDFs.

The Chairman stated that any dealers selling equipment has a duty of care to ensure that the equipment they are supplying is permitted for use at BPA Clubs.

Following a lengthy discussion on this matter, the Committee felt that as the manufacturer had specifically approved these soft links for use on their reserve canopies, they did not want to go against their recommendations.

It was proposed by Pete Sizer and seconded by Rick Boardman that the only soft links that can be used on reserve canopies are those specifically approved by the manufacturer for that reserve.

For: 6 Against: 0 Abstentions: 2

Carried

N.B. As of today's date (9 October 2003), the only two that have been accepted by the BPA are:-

- i) PdF
- ii) Aerodyne

- ii) The Chairman advised the Committee that an Advanced Packers Examination Course Report had been received from Roy Bannerman and had previously been circulated to those present. He stated that Iain Anderson had successfully completed the exam and had been awarded Advanced Packer Grade R & S status.

- iii) Rick Boardman advised the Committee that it had recently come to light that a pair of reserve canopies once in use by the Royal Navy Royal Marines Sport Parachute Association (RNRMSPA), have had their identities swapped. He stated that it was not known why this had been done, and the equipment had only recently surfaced from a period of non-use. The two reserve canopies which had swapped identity are:

Swift + 175 #R6 0682 DOM 03/92
Paraflyte Swift #2382 DOM 11/83

All Riggers and Packers were advised to be cautious when dealing with ex RNRMSPA

equipment, and to be sure that the reserve they were dealing with is actually what it says it is.

- iv) The Chairman gave details of an incident where the attachment to the static line to the bag was observed to snap. He stated that the bag came off the canopy and the canopy deployed normally. The actual bag in question was made available to the Committee for inspection.

The Technical Officer stated that it appears that one set of lines had passed around the static line, probably during packing and as the lines started to deploy they cut through the static line near the bag attachment point. The static line at that point is red in colour and one set of lines was found to be discoloured red. The Technical Officer stated that in his opinion this was the only logical way in which this incident could have happened.

Following examination of the bag, the Committee agreed with the TO's opinion of why this incident had occurred. He advised Riggers and Packers to take care when packing static line equipment.

- v) Kim Newton presented a Student (Hop) Tandem Main canopy and she asked whether this equipment required acceptance from the Committee as the main canopy had been specifically manufactured by the canopy manufacturer for Student Tandem.

The Technical Officer advised those present that the BPA Operations Manual states that only Tandem equipment acceptable to the BPA (via Rigger's Committee and STC) may be used.

Pete Sizer stated that he was unaware that he needed to bring the Student (Hop) Tandem to Riggers before he could first use it. He advised those present that the Centre had used it for about three years and stated that extensive amount of jumps had been made at the Centre and they had found it to be a very suitable canopy.

Following further discussion it was proposed by Pete Sizer and seconded by Kim Newton that the Student (Hop) Tandem main canopy be accepted for general use.

For: 6 Against: 0 Abstentions: 2

Carried

- vi) Kim Newton presented a Paratec pilotchute and stated that Paratec would be supplying these on their Next Tandem reserves and any new Zeroxes would also be supplied with them. Kim also stated that Zeroxes used for AFF would also be supplied with these pilotchutes on the main.

Kim asked if anyone had any objection to her using these pilotchutes on main canopies, only on the Centre's Vector equipment as she had been unable to get hold of any V2 pilotchutes. Kim asked if anyone had any objections if she does a test programme on these pilotchutes.

Having inspected the pilotchute as presented by Kim Newton the Committee raised no objection with Kim undertaking a test programme with the pilotchute (mains only).

It was proposed by Kim Newton and seconded by Pat Walters that Kim be permitted to test jump the Paratec main pilotchute in Centres Vector equipment and once she was satisfied with it could be used on as a main pilot chute on Student equipment.

Carried Unanimously

- vii) Ian Rosenvinge presented a Vector2 drogue release handle, which had come apart. He stated that this did not occur during use, but it was noticed during a routine check that only a couple of threads were holding it together. He believed this may have occurred through normal wear & tear and could possibly have worn on the hard plastic of the handle. He felt that this was something that jumpers should be aware of and advised them to pay particular attention to this area of their equipment.
- viii) Pete Sizer advised the Committee that one of his jumpers had recently had a number of pilotchute hesitations. Pete stated that it had been noted on the equipment that the distance between the velcro and the pin was such that it increased the drag pull that was required and the velcro had been sheered with the pin force. He stated that when equipment was packed without the velcro being used there was no pilotchute hesitation.

Pete Sizer stated that when buying buy new equipment, jumpers should check the set up with the pilot chute and collapsible bridle as it may not necessarily be the right distance from the velcro.

NOTE: As of the 9 October 2003, this is now the rule applying to service dates and battery change dates on AAD's:-

'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'.

Date of next Meeting: Thursday 4 December 2003
BPA Offices, Glen Parva, Leicester.
4.00 p.m.

20 October 2003

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 17 NOVEMBER 2003