

BRITISH PARACHUTE ASSOCIATION
SAFETY AND TRAINING COMMITTEE MEETING
BPA OFFICES, 5 WHARF WAY, GLEN PARVA, LEICESTER
THURSDAY 1 OCTOBER 2009

Present:

John Hitchen	-	Chairman of STC
Paul Applegate	-	Chairman Riggers
Paul Hollow	-	Target Skysports
Phil Cavanagh	-	BKPC
Richard Wheatley	-	BPS, Langar
Steve Thomas	-	Cyprus
Steve Scott	-	Skydive Weston
Jason Thompson	-	UK Parachuting
Andy Goodall	-	Netheravon
Mike Rust	-	NLPC
Chris McCann	-	SDAK
Dave Wood	-	Cornish P.C
Nigel Allen	-	Skydive South Coast
Pete Sizer	-	Headcorn
John Page	-	Skydive London
Ian Rosenvinge (from item 4)	-	Peterlee

Apologies: Bill Sharp, Matty Holford, Dane Kenny, Jason Farrant, Andy Montriou, Stuart Meacock.

In Attendance:

Tony Butler	-	Technical Officer
Dr John Carter	-	BPA Medical Adviser
Grant Richards	-	Council
Trudy Kemp	-	Assistant to NCSO/TO

Observers: Gordon Blamire, Rick Boardman, Colin Fitzmaurice, Hans Donner, Ben Wood, Mark Tether.

ITEM

1. MINUTES OF THE STC MEETING OF THE 6 AUGUST 2009

The Chairman reported that on page 4 of the previous minutes (ninth paragraph down) it was stated that 'LPS' had been using the equipment. It should have read 'Skydive London'.

It was proposed by Paul Hollow and seconded by Chris McCann that the Minutes of the STC Meeting of the 6 August 2009, with the above amendment, be accepted as a true record.

Carried Unanimously

2. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE STC MEETING OF THE 6 AUGUST 2009

Page 2, Item 2 - Matters Arising. The Chairman reported that the discussion regarding Nuisance Factors, had resulted in a proposal being made, which was an agenda item for that evening.

Page 4, Item 4 Matter Arising from Riggers' Meeting. The Panel investigating alleged packing anomalies was ongoing and would hopefully be in a position to report back to the next meeting.

3. MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING FROM THE RIGGERS' SUB-COMMITTEE MEETING OF THE 6 AUGUST 2009

There were no matters arising from the previous Riggers Meeting.

The Chairman stated that it was not necessary to formally accept the previous minutes, as the meeting had not been quorate.

Paul Applegate then reported on the meeting held that evening and stated that the Committee had discussed and accepted a proposal from John Page, the details of which had been circulated to CCIs with the Additions to the Agenda together with a set of Emergency Drills.

The proposal was a move of Handles on the Strong system to a similar configuration as the Next Tandem system including a ring around the secondary drogue release. Because of the location of the RSL it had been proposed that only Tandem Instructors (qualified on Next) who had been briefed and had their log book endorsed by a CCI from Skydive London, UKPC or Skydive Hinton were permitted to jump the equipment. The serial numbers of which were: 601537, 009178, 203028, 102032, 402728, 310284 and 704122.

Mike Rust commented on the Emergency Drills and requested that additional information be included on to the form regarding aircraft drills.

Following some discussion, it was proposed by John Page and seconded by Mike Rust that the above equipment with the stated serial numbers be accepted for use at the listed Centres and with the proviso that the Emergency Drills be amended to include the additional information concerning aircraft drills.

Carried Unanimously

4. FATALITY – TARGET SKYSPORTS

The Chairman reported that unfortunately there had been a fatal accident at Hibaldstow on the 22 August 2009. He stated that the Board of Inquiry resume had been circulated to CCI at the end of August.

At approximately 16.15 hrs on Saturday 22nd August 2009, Tom Scanlon an experienced parachutist with 2191 descents, boarded an SMG-92 aircraft operated by Target Skysports, Hibaldstow, North Lincs, along with seven other parachutists. This aircraft lift was one of five aircraft, which were to fly in formation at approximately 15,000ft AGL in order for 64 parachutists to exit the aircraft in an attempt to complete a 60-way freefall formation, videoed by 4 camerapersons.

The other aircraft involved were a Shorts SC7 Skyvan, an SMG-92 and two Dornier G92s.

All five aircraft climbed to approximately 15,000ft AGL. A 'jump run' was made over the PLA. When the aircraft were over the 'exit point', Tom, along with the seven fellow parachutists exited their aircraft in order to carry out their planned formation jump. The parachutists in the other four aircraft also exited at approximately the same time.

The free fall part of the descent went without incident, during which the 60-way formation was successfully completed. At between 5,500ft and 3,000ft AGL the parachutists separated and deployed their parachutes between 2 - 3,000ft AGL.

All parachutes appeared to have deployed normally. Tom's parachute appeared initially to be flying correctly. At a lower altitude, possibly between 800-1,000ft AGL, Tom's parachute was observed to be spiralling (probably to the left) and remained turning until he impacted with the ground.

A BPA Board of Inquiry was instigated, comprising of the National Coach & Safety Officer and the Technical Officer.

The Board inspected the parachute equipment and it was noted that the left hand brake toggle was in the half-brake setting, although the bottom tuck-tab was out of its keeper, while the top part of the control toggle was still in place in its stowed position. The right hand brake toggle had been released from its half-brake stowed position. However, the toggle was trapped to the riser by a loop of excess brake line, which had been inserted through the bottom toggle tuck-tab keeper, wrapped around near the base of the toggle and went back under the bottom tuck-tab keeper and back up, locking it. This would result in the right side of the parachute having more forward drive than the left, initiating a left turn.

The Conclusions of the Board were that Tom made an uneventful free fall descent. His main parachute was open between 1,900 – 2,000ft AGL.

The Board believe that once Tom's parachute had deployed, he initially steered away from other parachutists using the rear risers and when he was in clear airspace he 'stowed' his slider. At around this stage of the descent he was observed to be flying his canopy without difficulty.

The Board believe that at a lower altitude, possibly between 800 - 1,000ft AGL Tom started to release the right hand brake toggle and it become locked with the excess loop from the stowed steering line, resulting in the parachute turning to the left, because the left hand brake was still in the stowed 'half-brake' configuration and the right hand brake had been partially released.

The Board believe that Tom was concentrating on trying to release the brake toggle and lost altitude awareness, during which time the parachute continued to spiral until impact.

The Board recommend that parachutists and parachute packers take care when setting the brakes that the excess brake-line does not interfere with the correct release of the steering toggles, as stowing the excess steering line incorrectly, or leaving the excess steering line unstowed may cause a control system malfunction.

Following discussion, it was proposed by Phil Cavanagh and seconded by Richard Wheatley that the Board of Inquiry Report including its conclusions and recommendations be accepted.

Carried Unanimously

The Chairman reported that the Board believe that it was not necessary to instigate a Panel of Inquiry in this instance and therefore had recommended to STC that one was not instigated. This was proposed by John Page and seconded by Steve Scott.

Carried Unanimously

5. INCIDENT REPORTS - RESUME

- i) There had been 26 Student Injury Reports received since the last STC meeting. 19 male and 7 female. One was a static line student who lost consciousness under canopy and only regained consciousness at about 20ft, flared and landed without further incident. Another student had a hard opening and sustained whiplash to the neck. Another bruised her face with the altimeter, whilst kicking out twists and another dislocated her shoulder whilst flaring. The remaining 22 injuries were on landing.

- ii) Since the last meeting there had been 18 Injury Reports received for FAI 'A' Certificate parachutists or above. 14 male and 4 female. One injury was on deployment, causing neck muscle damage after a fast opening. Another was to a jumper who had muscle damage to his hip, which occurred on climb out of the aircraft. Another involved a jumper who had a rotating malfunction on his reserve causing it to spiral until impact with the hangar roof. The jumper received spinal injuries, but no fractures and the prognosis was good. The DZ Operator present was able to provide further details of this incident to those present. The remaining 15 injury reports received were on landing.
- iii) There had been 12 Student Malfunction/Deployment Problem Reports received since the last meeting. 11 male and 1 female.
- iv) There had also been 41 Malfunction/Deployment Problem Reports received for FAI 'A' Certificate parachutists or above. 34 male and 7 female.
- v) Since the last STC there had been 8 Tandem Injury Reports received. 3 male and 5 female. There were also 12 Malfunction/Deployment Problems Reported. A report was also received of a Tandem Instructor colliding with a cameraman as he landed. No one was hurt.

A report had also been received of another Tandem Incident. This incident involved a Tandem Student who had been signed for as being flight-line checked by her instructor, but whose chest strap had not been fastened. Another Tandem Instructor noticed the Student's chest strap prior to her boarding the aircraft. The Tandem Instructor concerned had since handed in his Tandem Instructor rating.

The next part of the meeting was held in camera and all observers left the room.

During the 'in camera' session it emerged that a number of 'Packing/Rigging Confidential Reports' had also been received regarding the Instructor, concerning packing/rigging work. Because of this and the fact that disciplinary action had been taken against him in the past, by both the BPA and the CCI of his Centre regarding other Tandem related problems, it was felt by those present that further investigation should take place.

Following further discussion, it was proposal by Pete Sizer, seconded by John Page that the Instructor concerned have his Category System Instructor rating suspended pending the outcome of a Panel of Inquiry.

A counter proposal was then tabled by Ian Rosenvinge, seconded by Jason Thompson that the Instructor concerned have his current ratings: Category System Instructor, Advanced Rigger and Advanced Packer suspended with immediate effect and that a Panel of Inquiry be formed to investigate these incidents.

A vote was then taken on the counter proposal:

For: 12 Against: 1 Abstentions: 1

Carried

The meeting then resumed in open session and the Chairman continued with the resume of incident reports.

- vi) One report had been received of an AAD fire. A student on his third consolidation jump, and a check-out jump with an instructor, had his altimeter stick at 8,500ft. The instructor signalled him to pull, but the student carried on with the jump and deployed his main at 1,300ft, shortly after his Cypres fired. He landed without further incident.
- vii) Four reports had been received of Display Misfires. One involved a jumper who had to jettison a smoke canister, because it caught fire. It landed safely in water. Another was a DZ miss. The third was a malfunctioned main and the fourth involved a DZ controller on a display who burnt her hand on a misfired smoke canister.
- viii) There had been 15 reports received of 'off landings' at clubs, including 2 Tandems and one involving several balloon jumps. Another involved a static line Student who landed on a Porsche.
- ix) One report had been received of a canopy entanglement during a CF jump.
- x) Two reports had been received of helmets coming off and 2 of shoes coming off.

6. PROPOSED CHANGES TO THE BPA OPERATIONS MANUAL

Following the previous meeting where the appropriate place(s) to teach Nuisance Factors in an initial training course were discussed, Ian Rosenvinge had submitted a paper, a copy of which had been circulated with the agenda.

Ian had made a proposal for a 'NB' clarification to be added to the training syllabus in the Operations Manual, which was as follows:

Section 5 (Training), Paragraph 2 (The Basic Training System Syllabus), Add the following 2 NBs below sub-para 1.1.10:

N.B.(1) Nuisance Factors may not be taught or introduced to student parachutists for the first time within the Malfunctions Lesson, but must be taught in an earlier Lesson.

N.B.(2) Nuisance Factors may not be formally introduced into the main Malfunctions Lesson until Malfunctions have been fully described, and the drill to deal with those Malfunctions has been demonstrated to, and practiced by, the participating student parachutists.

Following some discussion, it was agreed by those present that the word 'separate' be deleted from NB(1).

It was proposed by Ian Rosenvinge and seconded by Chris McCann that the above proposed amendments to the BPA Operations Manual be accepted, subject to the agreed amendment to NB (1).

For: 12

Against: 2

Abstentions: 0

Carried

7. INSTRUCTOR COURSE 3/2009

Instructor Course 3/2009

The Association wished to thank British Parachute Schools, Langar for hosting the course, which ran from the 10 – 19 August. This was a large course, as it was the first time that both

AFF and Tandem were included in the course. The course ran very well. The report had been circulated with the agenda and there were two recommendations from the Course, which were voted on separately.

- a. That a Canopy Handling (CH) coaching rating be one of the qualifications to attend a CSBI Course. The Examiners recommend this as CSBIs/CSIs instruct Category System Students until they obtain an FAI 'A' Certificate and a CH1 Grade is a requirement for an 'A' Certificate.

It had been suggested that this comes into force from the first course in 2010.

It was proposed by Mike Rust and seconded by Paul Hollow that the above recommendation be accepted.

Carried Unanimously

- b. That David Holiday be given a six-month extension to his Category System Basic Instructor rating.

It was proposed by Pete Sizer and seconded by Paul Hollow that the above recommendation be accepted.

Carried Unanimously

Pete Sizer asked whether the six month extensions from Instructor Courses could be routinely awarded by the Examiners on the Course, as in some instances a BI could technically not have a rating if that rating had lapsed prior to the next STC meeting that followed a Course.

The Chairman stated that this would involve a change to the Operations Manual and suggested that Pete Sizer may wish to consider submitting a request for consideration at the next meeting.

8. PERMISSIONS

- i) A letter from Andy Goodall had been circulated with the agenda requesting that Shane Cook's CSBI rating be reinstated so that he could attend the CSI Course November.

Andy had stated that Shane's 12 month probationary period expired in May 2009 but was extended to August 2009 due to military commitments. He was originally booked on the August course, but unfortunately due to military commitments abroad he could not attend. He was due back in October and hoped to attend the November CSI Course at Hibaldstow.

It was proposed by Andy Goodall and seconded by Jason Thompson that Shane Cook's CSBI rating be reinstated until November 2009.

Carried Unanimously

- ii) A letter from John Page had been circulated with the Additions to the STC Agenda requesting an Exemption to BPA Operations Manual, Section 9 (Flying), Sub para 1.1.3. which states:

'1.1.3. Age. No person over the age of 55 years will be accepted for initial parachute pilot training. No pilot will be permitted to fly for parachuting after reaching the age of 70 years.'

The Committee was advised that Mr Page had requested that Phil Hall who was 56 years of age be exempted from the first part of this restriction and be accepted for initial training as a BPA pilot. Mr Page had stated that Phil Hall had held a PPL (A) since 1989 and had 679 hours PIC. He was also a flying Instructor and held an IMC, a night rating and has had experience with parachuting from C130's whilst serving with the RAF.

The Chairman read out an extract from the BPA Pilots' Manual with regard to the age of pilots. He stated that there was a possibility of exemptions to be granted to the stated age restrictions, but STC would likely to require the application to be supported by appropriate medical information supported by input from the BPA Medical Adviser and two BPA Pilot Examiners.

Mr Page confirmed that he had not had any of the above documentation to support his request, but he stated that the Pilots' Manual had only stated 'likely' and that it was not a specific requirement.

Following further discussion, it was proposed by John Page and seconded by Andy Goodall that Phil Hall be accepted for initial training as a BPA pilot.

For: 9

Against: 0

Abstentions: 5

Carried

9. A.O.B.

- i) A letter from Mark Tether, on behalf of Andy Goodall, had been circulated with the Additions to the STC Agenda requesting permission for parachutists to fly above 12,000ft on six occasions for more than six minutes whilst using oxygen, and at no time unless in an aircraft emergency will parachutists exit the aircraft.

Mark Tether was requesting this 'trial' Permission prior to requesting a further permission from the CAA/BPA to conduct High Altitude jumps at Netheravon somewhere in the region of 18 to 22000ft sometime in the future.

Mark Tether's letter gave full details and was accompanied by a risk assessment and a lesson plan. The BPA Medical Advisor had been asked for his comments and has given advice throughout this process.

Mark Tether gave the meeting detailed information regarding his proposal, followed by comments by Dr John Carter and a number of CCIs who had experience with the use of oxygen systems.

Following further discussion, it was proposed by Andy Goodall and seconded by Pete Sizer that the above request be accepted.

For: 13

Against: 0

Abstentions: 1 (Ian Rosenvinge)

Carried

- ii) The Chairman reported that Adrian Bond was putting together the next BPA Survey.

Adrian had asked the Chairs of each Committee to consult with their relevant Committees to provide questions that focus on current activity but also future and also general questions in relation to the BPA as well.

The Chairman asked that anyone with any questions to send them in asap for consideration.

Date of next Meeting: Thursday 26 November 2009
BPA Offices, Glen Parva, Leicester
at 7.00 p.m

6 October 2009

Distribution:

Chairman BPA

Council

CCIs

All Riggers

Advanced Packers

CAA

Lesley Gale (Editor – Skydive)

File

AMENDMENTS TO BPA OPERATIONS MANUAL

At the STC meeting of the 1st October 2009 the following amendments were made to the BPA operations Manual:

SECTION 4 (INSTRUCTORS), Paragraph 1 (Category System Basic Instructor). New sub-para 1.1.6. to read:

1.1.6. Holds a BPA Canopy Handling (CH) coach qualification.

SECTION 4 (INSTRUCTORS), Paragraph 4 (Category System Instructor). New sub-para 4.1.3. to read:

4.1.3. Holds a BPA Canopy Handling (CH) coach qualification.

SECTION 5 (TRAINING), Paragraph 2 (The Basic Training System Syllabus), New N.B. (1 & 2) after sub-para 2.1.10.) to read:

N.B.(1) Nuisance Factors may not be taught or introduced to student parachutists for the first time within the Malfunctions Lesson, but must be taught as part of an earlier lesson.

N.B.(2) Nuisance Factors may not be formally introduced into the main Malfunctions Lesson until Malfunctions have been fully described, and the drill to deal with those Malfunctions has been demonstrated to, and practiced by, the participating Student Parachutists.