

British Parachute Association

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Safety & Training Committee

Minutes of the meeting held on

Thursday 30 May 2019 at 1900

at BPA HQ, Wharf Way, Glen Parva, Leicester LE2 9TF

Present:

Jeff Montgomery	-	Chair STC/STO
Pete Sizer	-	Chair Riggers' Subcommittee/Headcorn
Brucie Johnson	-	Blue Skies
Richard Wheatley	-	Skydive Langar
Dave Emerson	-	Skydive Isle of Wight
Chris McCann	-	Sibson Skydivers
Jason Thompson	-	Beccles Skydivers
Ian Rosenvinge	-	Peterlee
Gary Small	-	Skydive Chatteris
Stacey Canning	-	APA
Mike Carruthers	-	Skydive North West
Ryan Mancey	-	GoSkydive

Apologies: Andy Duncan, Noel Purcell, Ady King, Andy Clark, Kieran Brady, Dave Wood, Sara Orton, Hans Donner, Stuart Meacock, Alex Busby-Hicks, Jason Farrant, Mally Richardson.

In Attendance:

Tony Butler	-	Chief Operating Officer
John Hitchen	-	Vice-Chair STC
Trudy Kemp	-	Assistant to COO/STC

Observers: Phil Wayper, Tim Moran, Ben Samuel, Brad McBride, Gordon Blamire.

ITEM MINUTE

1. DECLARATIONS OF ANY CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

The Chair stated that any member with any personal, financial or material interest in any item/s of business on the agenda for this meeting should state any declaration of interest, either now or at the relevant item. Gary Small declared a conflict of interest, as he had an item on 'Permissions' (Item 8).

2. MINUTES OF THE STC MEETING OF 4 APRIL 2019

It was proposed by Richard Wheatley and seconded by Ryan Mancey that the Minutes of the STC Meeting of 4 April 2019 be accepted as a true record.

Carried Unanimously

3. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE STC MEETING OF 4 APRIL 2019

Page 2, Item 3 – (Matters Arising). The Chair reported that the Canopy Handling/Performance Working Group, chaired by Mark Bayada, has nothing substantial to report, other than that Mark Bayada is carrying out a great deal of research at this time. He stated that the WG's first priority would be to update the Canopy Handling Manual.

4. RIGGERS' SUBCOMMITTEE MEETING OF 4 APRIL 2019

Pete Sizer reported that there were no matters arising from the Minutes of the previous Riggers' Subcommittee Meeting.

It was proposed by Bruce Johnson and seconded by Mike Carruthers that the Minutes of the Riggers' Subcommittee meeting of 4 April 2019 be accepted as a true record.

Carried Unanimously

Pete Sizer reported on the Riggers' Subcommittee meeting held this afternoon and stated that the Subcommittee had discussed a number of equipment-related incidents.

Pete Sizer stated that one of the incidents related to a set of Tandem equipment on a Tandem Instructor Course where during a packing exercise, it was noticed that the connector links on one of the sets of equipment were loose, only done up finger tight.

Pete Sizer stated that the checking of connector links should be part of the 100 jump equipment inspection and he also reminded owners that they should regularly be checking their equipment to ensure that the connector links are fully tightened.

5. INCIDENT/INJURY REPORTS – RÉSUMÉ

The Chair reported that since the last STC meeting we have experienced longer periods of good weather than is usual for this time of year, with many jumpable days, especially over Easter. This is reflected in the number of incident reports received.

- i) There had been 15 Student Injury reports received since the last meeting. 13 males and 2 females. 2 of the injuries occurred during ground training, both minor, during landing practice. One student dislocated his shoulder on an AFF jump, carrying out 'practice pulls'. All the other injuries occurred on landing.
- ii) Since the last meeting there had been 10 Injury reports received for 'A' Licence parachutists or above. 8 males and 2 females. 2 of the incidents involved jumpers who were knocked unconscious in freefall; the first was a jumper with over 1,200 jumps who was taking part in a 10-way FS jump. One of the other jumpers in the group landed on top of him in freefall and he was knocked unconscious for approximately 5 – 10 seconds. He regained consciousness and deployed his main canopy without further incident. The other involved a jumper with 6,580 jumps who was taking part in a 7-way FS jump. He was 'front floater' on the aircraft and was elbowed on exit by the 'centre floater'. He lost consciousness, which he regained at approximately 5,000ft. he deployed his main canopy and landed without further incident. A jumper with over 800 jumps had a very hard instant opening, hurting his back. The remaining 7 injuries were all on landing. Only one had over 500 jumps.
- iii) There had been 9 Student Malfunction/Deployment Problem reports received since the last meeting. 6 males and 3 females. One student on a 10 second delay jump couldn't find the deployment toggle and carried out his reserve drills. The other 7 were either malfunctions, or students who thought they had a malfunction.
- iv) There had been 47 Malfunction/Deployment Problem reports received for 'A' Licence parachutists or above. 44 males and 3 females. These included 10 wingsuit jumps. 8 of the 47 jumpers had less than 100 jumps, 14 had between 100 and 500 jumps, 9 had between 500 and 1,000 jumps, and 16 had over 1,000 jumps, including 3 with over 5,000 jumps.
- v) Since the last STC there had been 7 Tandem Injury reports received. 3 males and 4 females. One student hurt his back slipping from the bench in the aircraft whilst sitting down. 2 students dislocated their shoulders and one fainted under canopy. The remaining 3 were on landing.
- vi) There had been 15 Tandem Malfunction/Deployment Problem reports received.

- vii) An incident involving a Tandem Instructor was reported shortly after the last STC meeting. On the 18 April a TI decided to jump without a visual altimeter. The TI checked his kit and his Tandem Student. The TI was checked on the flight line, however the flight line checker did not notice the TI was not wearing a visual altimeter. The TI did not realise he was without his altimeter until the aircraft was at approximately 1,500ft. Once he had realised, he asked his camera flyer if he had a spare. The camera flyer did have a spare, but it was marked in metres. Being unfamiliar with that type the TI chose not to wear it. Because the TI had an audible altimeter he decided to continue with the jump. The jump went ahead, and the TI deployed when the audible sounded at 6,000ft. The pair landed without further incident.

Once back at the centre the TI admitted his error and immediately stood himself down for the rest of the day and requested to speak to the CI after the jump programme had ended. The CI suspended the TI and reported the incident to the BPA. The STO wrote to the TI and suspended his Tandem rating until this STC meeting. The rating had now been suspended for approximately 6 weeks. The TI had completed 565 Tandem descents since gaining his rating.

The CI has taken the following actions; A training session has taken place with staff regarding the incident and conveying the importance of attitude, responsibility and professionalism. A new kit checking procedure has been written and added to the PTO procedures. All jump staff have been briefed regarding the importance of not being afraid to admit mistakes and on good decision making. They were also reminded on the dangers of expectation bias.

The TI concerned had written a statement fully apologising for his actions.

The Chair reported that it is his intention to write to both the TI and the flight line checker reminding them of their responsibilities and informing them that should a further incident take place this incident will also be considered.

The Committee were satisfied with the actions taken by the CI concerned and also with that of the Chair with regard to the Tandem Instructor and flight line checker in relation to this incident.

- viii) Four reports had been received of AAD firings. The first involved a jumper with 53 jumps who exited the aircraft at 4,800ft, attempted to carry out a leg turn but went into a spin. She eventually deployed her main below 2,000ft. The pilot chute entangled with the jumper due to the spin, which eventually cleared, and she deployed the main canopy at around 1,000ft at which time the Vigil also fired. The second incident involved a jumper with 19 jumps who was carrying out his first freefall. He de-arched on exit, went over on his back, attempted to stabilise and started to rotate. He made no attempt to pull and the FXC deployed his reserve. The third incident involved an experienced jumper with 4,182 jumps carrying out a display jump. The jumper exited the aircraft at 5,000ft on a tracking-suit jump. He deployed his pilot chute at 2,000ft, experienced a pilot chute in tow. He gave it a few more seconds and then started his reserve drills. At which time his main deployed, but as it fully opened his Cypres fired.

The fourth was a student with 26 jumps who claimed his altimeter stuck at 8,000ft but instead of deploying continued in freefall until approximately 1,500ft and then deployed his main, at which time his FXC also fired. The altimeter was checked, and no fault was found. It is believed the student lost altitude awareness.

- ix) There had been a further 4 display misfire reports received, 3 DZ misses. The first involved a DZ miss by one jumper on a team, who had 1,077 jumps. The remaining team members landed in the arena. The second was a jumper with 311 jumps who landed outside the arena on a fence. The third incident involved 3 team members who also landed outside an arena. One jumper had 296 jumps, another had 300 jumps and the third 870 jumps. One struck a fence and car. Another came into contact with a member of the public, who was later discharged from hospital without injury. The jumpers were grounded by their team leader until they have carried out further training. The last one was a jumper with 630 jumps who dislocated his shoulder on opening. He was able to control his canopy to land into the arena.

- x) There had been 25 'off landings' reports received since the last meeting. These comprised 4 Students, including 3 first-timers, 4 Tandem pairs, the remainder being experienced jumpers.
- xi) A report had been received of a canopy wrap whilst carrying out a Canopy Formation jump.
- xii) There had been 10 reports of items coming off jumpers on exit, in freefall or on deployment. 2 cameras, 4 helmets, 2 Tandem Students' leather helmets and 2 shoes.
- xiii) Four reports had been received involving aircraft. 3 of aircraft overflying DZs/PLAs when parachuting operations were taking place; a paramotor, a glider and 2 F15 jets. The meeting was shown video footage of the F15 jet-related incident.

The fourth report was a jump pilot flying in controlled airspace who was not concentrating on his flight level and descended approximately 300ft after Air Traffic had permitted another aircraft to fly below him, causing the two aircraft to be closer than would normally be acceptable to Air Traffic.

The CI of the PTO concerned reported that he had filed an Airprox report in relation to this incident and was waiting to hear back from the investigators.

6. PROPOSED CHANGE OF PLA

The Chair reported that at the STC meeting of 26 July 2018, the Committee approved a proposal for clearance for a PLA/DZ for GoSkydive at Little Staughton Airfield in Cambridgeshire. However, since then it has been confirmed that a solar farm is going to be constructed on the airfield, though at the time of approval it was thought this would not take place. Therefore, GoSkydive are requesting a change of PLA location to a field just off the airfield. The proposal had been circulated with the Agenda.

The PLA which is to the North of the airfield and the dimensions are; Length (North to South) – 547 metres. Width (East to West, Northern end) – 430 metres. Width (East to West, Southern end) – 300 metres. The proposal is that it is cleared for Tandem parachuting and BPA 'C' Licence parachutists and above, with a restriction of no more than 4 Tandem groups per pass.

The PLA had been inspected by both the COO and STO on 27 February 2019, both of whom supported the proposal.

Following consideration, some concern was expressed by a number of CIs with regard to the close proximity of the solar farm on both sides of the runway for taking off and landing.

Ryan Mancey (CI), was able to provide further details of the request to those present.

The COO reported that the proposed restrictions that the PTO had put in place were considerably more stringent on this request and stated that there were other PTOs currently operating under similar situations.

Following consideration, it was proposed by Ian Rosenvinge and seconded by Richard Wheatley that the above request be accepted.

For: 9 (incl. 3 x proxy) Against: 3 Abstentions: 2 (Ryan Mancey, Jason Thompson)

Carried

7. INSTRUCTOR COURSES

- i) Tandem & Pre-Advanced Instructor Course

The Association wished to thank Skydive Hibaldstow for hosting the Tandem and Pre-Advanced Instructor Assessment courses from 8 – 11 April 2019. The course report had been circulated with the Agenda and was for information only.

ii) Instructor Course 2-2019

The Association also wished to thank Skydive Strathallan for hosting the Course from 13 – 16 May 2019. The course report had been circulated with the Agenda and was for information only.

8. PERMISSIONS

A request from Gary Small had been circulated with the Agenda requesting that STC give permission for Augustin Mera to attend a Tandem Instructor course without first attending a TBI course.

Gary's letter stated that Augustin (Gus) qualified as a BPA Tandem Instructor in March 2016 and completed 60 Tandem descents. His Tandem Instructor rating expired in March 2018 when he had to return to Romania due to family commitments. Prior to attending a Tandem Instructor course Augustin will have completed 50 descents in the previous 12 months, complying with the BPA Operations Manual for currency. Due to the fact that Augustin has already completed a BPA Tandem Instructor Course, Gary had also proposed that Augustin attends a TI Course to complete the required number of jumps at the discretion of the Examiners on the Course.

Following consideration, it was proposed by Pete Sizer and seconded by Chris McCann that the above request be accepted.

For: 13 (incl. 3 x proxy) Against: 0 Abstentions: 1 (Gary Small)

Carried

9. A.O.B

i) Circulated to those present was a letter from Noel Purcell requesting permission for Kris Cavill to attend the Pre-Advanced Instructor Assessment Course without having completed a night descent.

The Chair noted that this request is only for the Pre-Advanced course and that Kris would still need to have completed a night descent before attending an Advanced Instructor course.

Following consideration, it was proposed by Brucie Johnson and seconded by Gary Small that the above request be accepted.

Carried Unanimously

ii) Circulated to those present was an e-mail from Jason Farrant requesting an extension to the AFFBI rating of Ben Simpson whose rating expires on 31 August 2019. Ben would like to attend the AFFI course in September 2019.

Following consideration, it was proposed by Mike Carruthers and seconded by Dave Emerson that Ben Simpson be given a six-month extension to his AFFBI rating.

Carried Unanimously

iii) Circulated to those present was an e-mail from Hans Donner requesting a six-month extension to the AFFBI rating of Wayne Shorthouse. Hans had stated that due to Wayne's work commitments he had been unable to attend an AFFI Course.

Following consideration, it was proposed by Richard Wheatley and seconded by Stacey Canning that the above request be accepted.

Carried Unanimously

iv) The COO referred to an e-mail that had been circulated to all CIs in March 2019, for discussion with their pilots, that the ongoing transition to the new online rating renewal system has revealed the need for a change to the system for pilot authorisation renewals. It highlighted a potential safety issue about aircraft type authorisations.

The COO stated that at present the system permits pilots to list new aircraft types on their BPA Pilot Authorisation renewals without any restriction on currency intervals. Thus, a BPA Pilot Authorisation may approve pilots to fly aircraft in the parachuting role that they have not actually flown for many years, even though they continue to hold a valid licence. This means that some pilots have over twenty types of aircraft on their authorisations but may not be current on many of them.

The intention is that if a pilot has not had a Proficiency check on a particular type of aircraft in the previous 5 years, that aircraft would be removed from the pilot's authorisation. The COO reported that the only input received from CIs/pilots is that they agree with the proposed change.

The COO stated that the Pilot Renewal form would be updated.

- v) The Chair reported that at the last Council meeting on 30 April, the following was minuted:

'Craig Poxon noted that the injury reports resumé was not circulated in advance of the STC meeting as was good practice for information presented to committees. Mark Bayada said advance circulation could lead to misunderstandings and potentially generate much correspondence, both of which could be avoided by explanation and discussion at the meeting. Nick Bunting said this was a case of comply or explain. Council referred the matter to STC on this basis.'

The Chair asked for STC's view and also presented the opinion of the COO and himself regarding the matter.

The Chair stated that generating possibly not entirely helpful correspondence in advance, with scant information, could generate requests for more information and would likely be time-consuming and offer little or no added value for information provided communally around the table. The meeting agreed and it was pointed out that the Technical Staff highlighted important areas at the meeting that were fully discussed. There was no desire from those present to change the current system of presenting a résumé at STC meetings.

The Chair stated that he would report back STC's position to Council.

- vi) The Chair reported that a memo from Tony Knight had been circulated to Chief Instructors and their Chief Pilots (via the CIs) reminding them of Mandatory Occurrence Reporting, in that aircraft accidents/incidents may need to be reported to the CAA and/or the AAIB as well as the BPA. A copy of the memo had also been tabled to those present for information.
- vii) The Chair stated that following some PTO Audits, it appeared that some CIs may not be aware that when endorsing an initial Packing Certificate application, the packing certificate is not valid until it has been endorsed at BPA HQ and that the packer is not to be considered qualified until that has been completed.

10. DATES OF 2019 MEETINGS

Thursdays, 25 July, 19 September, 14 November.
at 19:00hrs. at BPA HQ.

Distribution: Chairman BPA, Council, CIs, All Riggers, Advanced Packers, CAA, Editor – Skydive, File

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