

# British Parachute Association

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## Safety & Training Committee

Minutes of the meeting held on

**Thursday 19 November 2015 at 1900**

at the BPA Office, 5 Wharf Way, Glen Parva, Leicester LE2 9TF

**Present:**

John Hitchen	-	Chair STC
Nader Afsharian	-	Skydive Bad Lippspringe
Ian Rosenvinge	-	Peterlee
Brucie Johnson	-	BSFC
Mike Rust	-	SCC Ltd
Alex Busby-Hicks	-	Skydive Tilstock
Andy Guest	-	Skydive Buzz Ltd
Gary Stevens	-	LPS
Rob Spour	-	Target Skysports
Steve Saunders	-	Skydive GB
Chris McCann	-	UK Parachuting (Sibson)
Paul Yeoman	-	Black Knights
Jay Webster	-	Go Skydive
Mark Bayada	-	APA

**Apologies:** Tony Butler, Paul Floyd, Pete Sizer, Dennis Buchanan, Richard Wheatley, Mal Richardson, Phil Collett.

**In Attendance:**

Jeff Montgomery	-	Safety & Technical Officer
Paul Applegate	-	Chair Riggers' Subcommittee/Council
Dr John Carter	-	BPA Medical Adviser
Gordon Blamire	-	Council
Jack Bradford	-	Council
Trudy Kemp	-	Assistant to COO/STC

**Observers:** Andy Shaw, Ray Armstrong, Alec Flint, Rick Boardman.

The Chair welcomed new CIs: Rob Spour (Target Skysports) and Steve Saunders (Skydive GB).

### Declarations of interest

The Chair invited declarations of interest relating to items on the agenda for this meeting. None were stated.

### ITEM    MINUTE

#### 1.    MINUTES OF THE STC MEETING OF THE 24 SEPTEMBER 2015

It was proposed by Rob Spour and seconded by Steve Saunders that the Minutes of the STC Meeting of the 24 September 2015 be accepted as a true record.

**Carried Unanimously**

#### 2.    MATTERS ARISING FROM THE STC MEETING OF THE 24 SEPTEMBER 2015

**Page 1. (Item 2 — Matters Arising - Age Working Group)** The Chair reported that the Working Group was continuing with their work. Mark Bayada (WG Chair) gave STC a brief update on the progress so far and stated that the WG were looking at producing draft copies of the various medical self-declarations in association with the BPA Medical Adviser.

**Page 2. (Item 2 — Guidelines for Tracking and Angle Flying).** The Chair reported that Paul Floyd was unable to attend the meeting as he was out of the country. He stated that Paul Floyd was having difficulty obtaining a consensus of opinion from various tracking coaches. It was his intention to arrange a meeting with them and hopefully have a firm proposal for the next meeting.

**Page 2. (Item 2 — Tandem Working Group).** The STO reported on the first Tandem WG meeting, which had been held at the BPA offices on the 17 November. He stated that WG had discussed a number of items on the agenda and a great deal of discussion had taken place.

The STO reported that the WG had agreed to write to all PTOs with a view to gathering and collating information on a number of issues, and he highlighted the 3 key areas that the WG were initially considering:

- Disabled Skydiving. It was the intention of the WG is to develop a set of guidelines/ risk assessment for disabled skydivers.
- Aircraft procedures and Jumpmaster responsibilities.
- Student Injuries. The WG are to look at producing an injury report specific to Tandem injuries, with a view of establishing any possible trends etc.

The STO stated that he would report on the progress of the WG in phases, as he envisaged it would take a considerable amount of time to cover all of the various aspects that fell within the scope of the WG.

Mike Rust asked whether the WG would be looking at developing a system for drug and alcohol testing at PTOs.

The STO stated that this was something that could be addressed by the Tandem WG. However, the BPA Medical Adviser stated that in his opinion, this would require an entirely separate WG, due to the many areas that would require consideration before such a system could be implemented.

**Page 7, item 6 – Tandem Incident Panel of Inquiry** Alex Busby-Hicks asked why as a Tandem Instructor Examiner, he was not able to carry out a Tandem Instructor equipment conversion course at his own Parachute Training Organisation (PTO).

It was pointed out to Alex that a Tandem conversion course may take place at any Affiliated PTO, but the course must be delivered by an independent Tandem Examiner, who must be authorised by the STO or the COO.

A number of CIs present believed that this was perhaps another item that the Tandem WG could address.

### **3. RIGGERS' SUBCOMMITTEE MEETING OF THE 24 SEPTEMBER 2015**

Paul Applegate (Chair, Riggers' Subcommittee) stated that he had nothing to report from the previous meeting.

There being no matters arising, it was proposed by Alex Busby-Hicks and seconded by Nader Afsharian that the Minutes of the Riggers' Subcommittee meeting of the 24 September 2015 be accepted.

**Carried Unanimously**

Paul Applegate reported on the meeting held that afternoon and stated that the Committee had accepted a finalised version of the data card (Parachute Equipment Logbook). A Mock-up of the proposed Logbook was made available for inspection.

Paul Applegate reported that the idea of the equipment logbook is that a maintenance record card is introduced for each individual component part of a parachute system, i.e. AAD, reserve canopy, main canopy, harness & container. This card then accompanies the equipment and any work carried out would then be noted on the individual card(s).

He stated that the cards would stay with their respective pieces of equipment for their service life and that they would give a full record of repairs, modifications, service bulletin compliance etc. and should the components be sold on separately, each item would go to the next owner with its complete history intact.

Paul Applegate stated that the logbooks were not compulsory, but initially a 'voluntary' introduction for equipment already in use and would run alongside the existing BPA Record of Inspection/Check List.

Mike Rust expressed some concern at the legalities and principles of adopting a system that was not actually a mandatory requirement.

Rick Boardman (Riggers Subcommittee) reported that the idea of logbook was to enhance how we inspect and have a service history of our kit. He addressed the point raised by STC regarding the legal aspect by using the analogy of car ownership. He stated that it was perfectly acceptable to drive a car with an MOT, insurance & tax, but having a full service history or not, did not prevent a person from driving a car.

Following further consideration, CIs present believed that the equipment logbook was a good idea/system that could be put into trial, and if successful, could possibly be made a mandatory document in the future.

The Committee was advised that once the logbooks had been printed, they would be available to purchase from the BPA office.

Paul Applegate reported that the Riggers' Subcommittee had also discussed a Product Service Bulletin issued by Advanced Aerospace Designs on 9th of November 2015. This followed their concerns that some Vigil unit loop cutters, manufactured between March 2015 and July 2015, could have rough edges inside which may damage the reserve closure loop.

Paul Applegate stated that any cutters found to be affected by PSB 01-2015 must be sent back to Advanced Aerospace Designs for a manufacturer's inspection. Additionally any reserve container closure loops in containers that have used affected cutters must be replaced.

In the "Compliance Time Limits" section of Advanced Aerospace Designs PSB 01-2015, a distinction is made between required timings of actions depending on where the cutter is located in a rig.

However, at the Riggers Subcommittee meeting that afternoon, it was recommended that for any equipment affected by Advanced Aerospace Designs PSB 01-2015, compliance is immediate, and independent of where the cutter is located in a rig. Therefore, affected cutters should be replaced PRIOR TO THE NEXT JUMP.

It was proposed by Andy Guest and seconded by Chris McCann that the recommendation of the Riggers' Subcommittee be accepted and that a BPA Safety Notice be issued accordingly.

For 12

Against: 0

Abstention: 1

**Carried**

Paul Applegate reported that the Riggers' Subcommittee had also heard a verbal report from Kim Newton (Chair) of the WG formed on the 31 of July 2014 to collate and investigate the information reported with reference to the damage found on some Next & Next Century Tandem reserve closure loops. He stated that the WG had determined that after sufficient time and evidence gained they can now recommend that the inspection of the reserve closure loop be extended to 100 jump intervals between inspections.

Paul Applegate stated if at the time of inspection any damage or marks are found, then the inspection interval is to revert back to the 50 jump inspection. Any closure loops which are found to be in good condition are no longer required to be sent to the WG as evidence, although Packers are advised to keep these on record as this was seen as good practice.

Following further discussion, it was proposed by Bruce Johnson and seconded by Steve Saunders that the recommendation of the Riggers' Subcommittee regarding Next & Next

Century Tandem reserve closure loops be accepted and that a BPA Safety Information Bulletin be issued accordingly.

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Carried Unanimously

During discussion on this item, a number of CIs present asked if any consideration had been given to bringing the 100 jump inspection to fall in line with the current 100 jump check, which they believed would work better.

Andy Shaw who was a member of this particular WG stated that he believed that this had been the WG intention, but this was not what had been voted on at the Riggers' Subcommittee meeting.

The Committee asked that this be put to the next Riggers' Committee meeting as a proposal for consideration.

Paul Applegate reported that the Riggers' Subcommittee had also accepted the ex-military MTVC-3R (421) Tandem reserve canopy for general use in the sport parachuting role.

It was proposed by Gwhn2(bel)-as4-8( pr)-6(9 0 Td [(6(9 0Mar)-6(i)3(t))-12(auc 0.001 Tw -1(o )-(t)-1(ee as)-3(e

It was proposed by Alex Busby-Hicks and seconded by Paul Yeoman that Paul Applegate be co-opted to STC for 2016.

**Carried Unanimously**

## **5. FATALITY – BAD LIPPSRINGE**

The Chair reported that unfortunately there was a fatal accident at Skydive Bad Lippspringe on the 29 September 2015. The Board of Inquiry Report resume had been sent to CIs with the agenda. The resume was also tabled to those present.

At 16.56 hours local time on Tuesday 29 September 2015, Ali John Woodford boarded a DO28/G92 aircraft, in order to carry out his second static line jump, along with ten other parachutists. Eight of whom were other static line students trained with him the previous day and that morning. This was the third parachuting lift of the day.

The aircraft climbed to approximately 3,500ft AGL. A 'jump run' was made over the PLA. Once the aircraft was at the exit point a member of the PTO junior staff was dispatched carrying out a static line descent. The jumpmaster/instructor then dispatched two of the static line students. The aircraft completed a circle of the airfield and ran-in again. The next two students were then dispatched, the first being a fellow student followed twelve seconds later by Ali Woodford. The aircraft completed another circle after which a further two static line students were dispatched.

The parachutes of all six static line students were observed to deploy fully.

Towards the lower portion of the parachute descent, Ali Woodford's canopy, which was blue in colour, and that of the canopy being flown by the other parachutist from the same pass, which was red in colour, was observed to be flying downwind from the 'holding' area towards the intended landing area. It was shortly after that both parachutes were seen to be close to each other. Both parachutists were instructed by the Chief Instructor to steer away from each other. However the blue parachute turned left towards the red parachute and shortly afterwards they collided and became entangled.

Sometime after the entanglement Ali Woodford was seen to fall away from the entangled main parachutes. His reserve parachute was observed to start to deploy, but did not fully develop before he impacted with the ground. After Ali Woodford fell away from his main parachute the other parachutist was also observed to fall away from his main parachute. His reserve parachute started to deploy and was almost fully developed as he impacted with the ground. It was estimated by witnesses that both parachutists released from their main parachutes well below 1,000ft AGL. The other parachutist appeared unhurt and walked back to the parachute centre. However there was no movement from Ali Woodford, who was later pronounced dead at the scene. Once the incident had been observed, the remaining four parachutists on board the aircraft were instructed to descend with the aircraft.

A BPA Board of Inquiry was immediately instigated. The members of the Board were; Tony Butler – Chief Operating Officer and Mark Bayada – Instructor Examiner.

Ali Woodford was 26 years of age and was a member of a group of 14 soldiers who were carrying out a sport parachuting course at Bad Lippspringe. He had made his first jump previously the same day.

When examining the equipment it was noted that both sets of equipment were in good condition and appeared to be fully airworthy. The reserve ripcord from Ali Woodford's equipment had a kink in the cable which could indicate that the RSL may have deployed the reserve parachute before he was able to. The reserve ripcord from the other parachutist's equipment showed no kink in the cable which would likely indicate that he pulled the reserve ripcord handle before the RSL had time to deploy the reserve parachute.

Both parachutists' AADs had fired. These were sent back to the manufacturer to be analysed. They both showed that at approximately 780ft AGL there was an increase in descent rate, most likely to have been caused by the collision. After approximately 45 seconds Ali Woodford's AAD then showed a severe increase in descent rate at approximately 460ft probably caused by him cutting away from his main canopy. The other parachutist's AAD showed a severe increase in speed approximately 75 seconds after the collision at approximately 280ft AGL.

The Board believe that even though the other parachutist cutaway lower than Ali Woodford, he may have operated his reserve parachute prior to or at the same time he cutaway which resulted in his reserve parachute deploying more fully prior to his impact.

The Conclusions of the Board are that both Ali Woodford and the other parachutist's main parachutes deployed correctly, though the other parachutist initially had some twists in the rigging lines, which quickly cleared. Both parachutists were in full control of their main parachutes. They both flew their parachutes to the holding area and remained in that area until approximately 1,000ft AGL when the Chief Instructor directed them to commence their 'down-wind-legs'. They started to fly their parachutes down-wind towards the PLA. The Chief Instructor then turned his attention to the two parachutists who had exited the aircraft on the third pass over the PLA. It was shortly after this that the Chief Instructor became aware that both Ali Woodford and the other parachutist were getting close together. He instructed the parachutists to steer away from each other. At that time Ali Woodford, who was under the blue parachute, turned left towards the red parachute. Ali Woodford's parachute then collided with the other parachute and they became entangled at approximately 800ft AGL.

Forty-five seconds later at approximately 460ft AGL, Ali Woodford cutaway his main parachute and his reserve parachute started to deploy but did not develop enough to sufficiently slow down his descent before he impacted with the ground, resulting in fatal injuries. About thirty seconds later, at approximately 280ft AGL the other parachutist also cutaway, though he may have operated his reserve parachute slightly before or at the same time as he cutaway, his reserve parachute inflated enough to slow his rate of descent for him to survive the landing.

With regard to the parachuting operation at Skydive Bad Lippspringe, the Board also concludes that qualified staffing levels for the nature of the operation were inadequate:

There were only two qualified instructors at the centre. During the static line parachuting operation one was in the aircraft and the other was acting as drop zone controller, whose duties included monitoring all parachutists, being in radio contact with the aircraft and conducting student radio talk-down.

The centre operates a relatively large aircraft, which can take up to fifteen parachutists (eleven in this instance). Regular courses of fifteen students were being trained. There were seven junior staff that required supervision. When student static line parachuting was taking place, there would usually be four student parachutists in the air at any one time.

Following the accident, and in order to permit static line parachuting to recommence, the Board, in agreement with the Chief Instructor, initiated the following restrictions:

- a. Only one static line student will be dispatched per pass, up to and including their third jump.
- b. After the third jump and prior to their fourth jump, students will receive a further lesson on Canopy Control and Emergency Procedures, to include further training on entanglements, collisions and cutaway heights.
- c. After completion of a & b above, a maximum of two static line students may be dispatched per pass.
- d. Students must continue to be equipped with radios for at least the first six descents.

The Recommendations of the Board are that:

- a. The restrictions (at 9 a-d) in the Board Conclusions should become permanent. These recommendations are in agreement with the Chief Instructor.
- b. The subsequent Panel of Inquiry, which follows a Board of Inquiry and is set up to investigate any peripheral aspects to the fatality, also includes the following in its considerations:
  - i. Whether all PTOs should teach Student Parachutists as part of initial Category System or Accelerated Free Fall Student training a given height after which a main canopy cutaway must not be undertaken.

- ii. Whether drills for a canopy entanglement should be taught.
- iii. Whether parachutists planning to attend an instructor course should be permitted to teach/instruct Student Parachutists, even under direct supervision, prior to attending a Basic Instructor Course.

Mark Bayada, one of the Board Members was present at the meeting and was able to answer any questions relating to the Report.

A number of points were raised with regard to staffing levels at PTOs as mentioned in the Board of Inquiry Conclusions, which Mark Bayada advised would be one of the areas looked at by the ensuing Panel of Inquiry.

It was proposed by Brucie Johnson and seconded by Alex Busby-Hicks that the Board of Inquiry Report, including the conclusions and recommendations be accepted.

For: 11                                      Against: 1                                      Abstention: 1 (Ian Rosenvinge)

**Carried**

The Chair reported that as was normal procedure following a Board of Inquiry Report, a Panel of Inquiry had been formed. He stated that the Panel would be chaired by Mark Tether and that the other members would be Jane Hopkins, Geordie Page and Jay Webster.

## **6. INCIDENT/INJURY REPORTS – RESUME**

- i) There had been 9 Student Injury Reports received since the last STC meeting. 6 male and 3 female. One involved a 51 year old jumper carrying out a four second freefall jump. He went unstable and after approximately 15 seconds he deployed his reserve, still unstable. His leg became entangled in the reserve rigging lines and landed a rotating reserve, resulting in serious injuries.

The CI of the PTO concerned gave an update to the meeting and he stated that this incident had highlighted several areas that he would be looking at more closely. Firstly, entanglement drills and what are taught to the Students. Secondly he would be looking at the exit height of a parachutist on their first free fall.

- ii) Since the last meeting there had been 5 Injury Reports received for 'A' Licence parachutists or above. 4 male and 1 female.
- iii) There had been 9 Student Malfunction/Deployment Problem Reports received since the last meeting. 7 male and 2 female.
- iv) There had been 23 Malfunction/Deployment Problem Reports received for 'A' Licence parachutists or above. 21 male and 2 female. 3 were on wingsuit jumps.
- v) Since the last STC there had been 4 Tandem Injury reports received. 2 male and 2 female.
- vi) There have been 7 Tandem Malfunction/Deployment Problem reports received.
- vii) Three reports had been received of AAD firings. The first involved a jumper with 174 jumps who, after tracking away from a formation was unable to locate his toggle. After several attempts, he carried out his reserve drills. His Vigil fired at about the same time. The second report involved a jumper with 243 jumps who had a premature deployment of his main whilst flying on his back. The lines and bag caught his arms and broke it above the elbow. He deployed his main, then released a brake, but could not locate the other, causing a rotation. He therefore, cutaway expecting his RSL to deploy his reserve. His Cypres activated, deploying the reserve. On inspection on the ground after the incident, it was noted that the RSL had become detached. There was no explanation, as it was attached when checked on the flight line.

The CI of the PTO concerned was able to provide further information to those present on this particular incident.

The third report was of jumper with 54 jumps who lost altitude awareness and deployed his main at approximately 2,000ft. His Vigil fired just after, but did not result in the reserve inflating.

- viii) There had been 13 'off landings' reports received since the last meeting. Including Tandem and wingsuit jumpers.
- ix) Six reports were received of items coming off jumpers or being dropped, on exit, in free fall and under canopy. 3 helmets, 1 camera, 1 Tandem leather helmet and 1 trainer.
- x) One report has been received of a number of seagulls colliding with an aircraft shortly after take-off at about 100ft. the aircraft landed but no damage was found.

## **7. INSTRUCTOR COURSES**

### Instructor Course 4-2015

The Association wished to thank Target Skysports, Hibaldstow, for hosting the course, which took place from the 2 – 11 November. The course report was tabled to those present and there was one recommendation that required STC ratification:

'That Ross Walker and Martin Cole are given a 6 month extension to their CSBI ratings and that they be permitted to attend a CSI course at any time within the 6 month period, but only when their Chief Instructors deem them ready.'

It was proposed by Brucie Johnson and seconded by Rob Spour that the above recommendation be accepted.

**Carried Unanimously**

Ian Rosenvinge asked if the Course Examiners could perhaps consider for the future awarding a 9 month extension as the norm, particularly on the November Course, as a number of PTOs were closed over the winter months and he felt in some circumstances it did not give potential candidates enough training time in preparation for the forthcoming CSI Courses.

## **8. ANNUAL REVIEW OF STC TERMS OF REFERENCE**

The Chair reported that it was Council policy that the Terms of Reference for all of the Committees of Council are reviewed annually at the end of the year. He stated that minor changes to the STC Terms of Reference were made last year. There were no suggested changes this year.

Ian Rosenvinge reported that a review was currently taking place of the BPA Grievance and Disciplinary procedures, the outcome of which may have an impact on the STC Terms of Reference in the future.

It was proposed by Ian Rosenvinge and seconded by Andy Guest that the current STC Terms of Reference are accepted.

**Carried Unanimously**

## **8. PERMISSIONS**

- a. A letter from Jay Webster had been circulated with the agenda requesting that a licenced jumper be permitted to jump on the front of a Tandem Instructor with a Nintendo Hand held device glued to his glove to help launch his Website. A picture of the device accompanied the letter. Jay had stated that he would also advise the jumper that a very short tether be attached to the device and then attached to his wrist in case the glue was to fail.

It was proposed by Jay Webster and seconded by Afsharian that the above request be accepted.

**Carried Unanimously**



- b. A letter from Nader Afsharian had been circulated with the agenda requesting that Jose Manuel Lopes Horta, a BPA Authorised pilot be permitted to become a Chief Pilot and Pilot Examiner, provided he passed the appropriate written examinations. Jose was short of the requirement, which was to have been an Authorised Pilot for 12 months. Nader had also stated that Jose had been an Authorised BPA pilot since 19 June 2015. He currently had over 3000 hours PIC for parachute jumping in the Dornier D028 G92, and had been flying for Skydive Bad Lippspringe for half of this year.

It was proposed by Nader Afsharian and seconded by Steve Saunders that the above request be accepted.

**Carried Unanimously**

- c. A letter from Bryn Chaffe had also been circulated with the agenda requesting a six month extension to the CSBI rating of Danny Coultrup. Bryn had stated that due to the infrequent courses run at St George he required further training prior to attending a CSI course.

It was proposed by Bryn Chaffe and seconded by Mike Rust that the above request be accepted.

**Carried Unanimously**

- d. An e-mail from Brucie Johnson had been circulated with the agenda requesting a 12 month extension to the TBI rating of Jenny Bouquet. Brucie had stated that Jenny had attended a TI course in June 2015 at Sibson but was unsuccessful on the canopy landing phase. Brucie had also stated that he was requesting the extension to enable Jenny to attend a course in 2016 when she felt she had gained the required strength and technique to be successful.

It was proposed by Brucie Johnson and seconded by Alex Busby-Hicks that the above request be accepted.

**Carried Unanimously**

**9. A.O.B**

- a. Circulated to those present was an e-mail from Jason Thompson requesting a six month extension to the AFFBI rating of Zuzanna Tillner. Jason had stated that the reason for the extension request was that Zuzanna had moved jobs this summer and with a house move he felt that she had not had enough training to prepare for the course.

It was proposed by Jason Thompson and seconded by Nader Afsharian that the above request be accepted.

**Carried Unanimously**

- b. The Chair asked if any CIs have anyone they wish to nominate for the Mike Forge Trophy (New Skydiver of the Year), to send details of their nomination to the Chief Operating Officer before the end of the year.
- c. The Chair expressed his thanks to STC members for their support throughout the year and wished them a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year and he also hoped that as many as possible would be attending the 'Skydive the Expo' event and AGM at the East Midlands Conference Centre, Nottingham on the 30<sup>th</sup> January 2016.

Date of next Meeting: Thursday 4 February 2016  
BPA Offices, Glen Parva, Leicester. LE2 9TF  
at 7.00 p.m

24 November 2015

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