



Riggers' Subcommittee

Minutes of the meeting held on

Thursday 13 September 2018 at 1600

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

Present: Jeff Montgomery (STO)/Chair STC - In the Chair
Pete Sizer (RE)
Dave Major (AR)
Rick Boardman (AR)
Gary Stevens (AR)
Noel Purcell (AR)
Karen Saunders (AR)
Josh Clark (AR)

Key:

AR = Advanced Rigger

RE = Rigger Examiner

Apologies: John Curtis, Richard Wheatley, Nicky Johnston

In Attendance: Tony Butler - Chief Operating Officer (COO)
John Hitchen - Vice Chair STC
Trudy Kemp - Assistant to COO/STO

ITEM

CHAIR RIGGERS' SUBCOMMITTEE

It was with regret that the Chair of STC had to report that Paul Applegate has decided to relinquish his Advanced Rigger and Advanced Packer ratings due to personal reasons, which makes rigging work difficult. Because of this Paul has also decided to retire as Chair of the Riggers' Subcommittee with immediate effect.

The Chair of STC and members of the Riggers' Subcommittee expressed its thanks to Paul Applegate for his hard work and loyalty to the Association over the years of his contribution to the sport in the specialist area of rigging and packing and wished him well in his future endeavors.

1. DECLARATIONS 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. These would be declared at the relevant item.

2. MINUTES FROM THE RIGGERS' SUBCOMMITTEE MEETING OF 26 JULY 2018

It was proposed by Rick Boardman and seconded by Noel Purcell that the Minutes of the Riggers' Subcommittee Meeting of 26 July 2018 be accepted as a true record.

Carried Unanimously

3. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE RIGGERS' SUBCOMMITTEE MEETING OF 26 JULY 2018

Page 1, Item 2 – Vigil AADs. There had been one further report received relating to Vigil AAD units where the attachment to the control unit was found to be snapping. This would be discussed under Item 5 of the Agenda – Résumé of Equipment Related Incident Reports.

Page 1, Item 2 – Velocity Risers Update. There had been no further reports received regarding Velocity Risers with phosphate hardware.

Page 1, Item 2 – Equipment Inspection Policies Working Group. There had been no meeting of the Equipment Inspection Policies WG held today. Gary Stevens reported that he had been giving some thought to a solution based on the jump number of a canopy rather than its age. This would be explored further at the next meeting of the WG, which is planned for the afternoon of the next Riggers' Subcommittee meeting on the 15 November 2018. The COO stated that he would also write to all PTOs as requested at the last WG meeting.

4. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE STC MEETING OF THE 26 JULY 2018

There were no matters arising from the previous meeting.

5. EQUIPMENT RELATED INCIDENT REPORT RÉSUMÉ

The following equipment related incident reports had been received since the last meeting:

- i) On the 27 July 2018, it was reported that a Vigil 2 Unit was removed from a customer's rig for the purposes of being sold. It was found to have a cracked cable protector at the junction of the display unit cable. This was sent to AAD on their advice for repair. The unit was fully functional at the time. The unit was sent for repair on the 13-04-18. It was returned by AAD upgraded to Cuatro, tested to see if it switched on and off and then sat in a box until 09-07-18. It was then activated on that date and shortly after switched itself to Config, or at least displayed that it had. It appeared to not function as it should. AAD was contacted again on the 10-07-18 and arranged for the unit to be collected. The unit was returned on the 24-07-18 and it was concluded by AAD that the error was a faulty display unit and the unit now appears to be functioning correctly.
- ii) HQ has received an e-mail from a Dutch rigger containing photographs and video footage of an Icon container riser lock, which shows that the end of the loop had caught between the middle ring and the top ring. The rigger concerned has made the manufacturers aware of this issue.

After viewing the photos and video footage, members of the Committee stated that they had not experienced any similar issues with the Icon container.

6. BPA RIGGERS' SUBCOMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE - REVIEW

The Chair of STC reported that towards the end of each year, the BPA Riggers' Subcommittee Terms of Reference are reviewed, and any proposed variations shall be subject to approval by the Safety & Training Committee and ratification by Council to maintain consistency across Committees as applicable. A copy of the current BPA Riggers' Subcommittee Terms of Reference had been circulated the Agenda for information.

The Chair of STC stated that there had been no suggested changes this year.

It was proposed by Gary Stevens and seconded by Dave Major that no changes to the Terms of Reference for Riggers' Subcommittee be made.

Carried Unanimously

7. ADVANCED PACKER (AP) COURSE REPORTS

The following AP Courses had been held since the last meeting, and the respective Course Reports circulated to those present:

- i) Rick Boardman had run an Advanced Packers Training Course from the 9 – 12 August 2018 at Rhomech Rigging. The Course was attended by Mathew Stevens who was advised to attend the Examination phase of the Course once he had completed a number of supervised reserve pack jobs.
- ii) Karen Saunders had run an Advanced Packers Training Course at Skydive Langar from the 2 – 5 September 2018. The Course was attended by Tom Hill and Colin Stevenson, both of whom were advised to attend the Examination phase of the Course once they had completed a number of supervised reserve pack jobs.

8. BPA SAFETY NOTICES/INFORMATION BULLETINS

There have been no BPA Safety Notices or Safety Information Bulletins issued since the last meeting.

9. MANUFACTURERS' SAFETY NOTICES/INFORMATION BULLETINS

- i) An Informational Advisory had been circulated by the PIA concerning Tubular Retainer Bands (TRBs), a copy of which had also been tabled for information.

This followed numerous reports of failed TRBs from worldwide sources which indicate that both newly manufactured TRBs as well as older stock are failing at the glued overlap and other locations along the tubing.

Parachutists and Riggers are advised to check the condition of their TRBs to ensure they are not defective or significantly weakened. A field test procedure is described on page 2 of the PIA Advisory, which can be found on the PIA website, and will also be attached with the outgoing Minutes for information (Appendix A).

Anyone who encounters a product failure, should contact the manufacturer of their specific brand. Substandard TRBs should be removed from service immediately and destroyed.

- ii) The Chair of STC reported that HQ had received an official statement from Firebird USA LLC reporting that they have voided the TSO of one of their containers currently in use in the UK where a modification had been made to the harness, which had not been approved by them. A copy of the statement had been tabled for information.

The COO reported that the modification to this container had been carried out in the USA. The equipment was owned by an American jumper who jumps in the UK. He stated that a BPA Advanced Rigger had inspected the modification and deemed it ok. Therefore, the CI of the PTO concerned had let the equipment be jumped.

The COO stated that we do not operate to the same TSO in the UK. It is, therefore, a CIs decision to permit equipment to be jumped at their PTO if they believe that the equipment is safe to do so.

[Secretary's Note: Following the meeting, the manufacturers have advised us that they have now resolved this issue.]

10. A.O.B.

- i) A letter had been tabled to those present from Richard Wheatley who had requested an exemption to allow Gregory Bersoult and Pauline Pauget to be able to attend a BPA Advanced Packers Course having not met the criteria of being a BPA member for at least 18 months. Both Gregory and Pauline had taken out full BPA membership in March 2018.

Karen Saunders provided further details of this request.

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

For: 6

Against: 0

Abstentions: 1 (Karen Saunders)

Carried

ii) **Election of Chair of BPA Riggers' Subcommittee for 2019.** The Chair of STC reported that the nomination paper (Form 211A) for Chair of Riggers' Subcommittee for 2019 would shortly be circulated to CIs and Advanced Riggers. The form was also available to download from the BPA website. The closing date for receipt of completed nominations was Friday 26 October 2018.

iii) Karen Saunders had asked that the Wingtip Pouch (WTP) Manual be discussed. A copy of the manual had been tabled to those present together with a disclaimer notice from Phoenix-Fly.

The WTP is an opening system that has been designed for installation into wingsuits where the pilot chute is not housed in the bottom of the container (BOC), but in a pocket at the tip of the wing, so that handle is always in the wingsuit flyers palm of the hand. It allows the pouch to be opened with a wrist movement without changing the flight position. It has primarily been designed for base-jumpers.

Following discussion, Riggers' present expressed some concern with regard to where the responsibility lay with regard to wingsuit modification and at which point did a wingsuit and its deployment move from being the responsibility of the experienced jumper to becoming a rigging matter.

This was an area that the Riggers' Subcommittee wished to explore further, and Rick Boardman agreed to put something together for consideration at a future meeting.

It was also agreed to make CIs aware of the WTP manual at the STC meeting this evening.

iv) Karen Saunders reported that she had recently come across three UPT Sigma Tandem containers that have had the staging loops removed.

The staging loop was introduced on all Vector 3 type and Sigma Tandem systems in 2009. Its purpose is to secure the reserve freebag in its allocated position until full reserve bridle stretch during deployment. Although it remained an option on the Vector 3 Sports Containers, UPT recommend its use on Student and Tandem Equipment.

Following consideration, the Committee agreed that the manufactures (UPT) recommendation regarding the use Staging Loops should be observed.

It was agreed by those present that an Information Notice be circulated to Advanced Packers and Riggers reminding them that when packing UPT Student Vectors and Sigma Tandem Systems the use of the Staging Loop IS required.

v) Karen Saunders asked for clarification regarding the use of soft links on Tandem main canopies.

It was confirmed by those present that the Riggers' Subcommittee had previously accepted the use of Tandem main connector links (soft or metal) provided they were acceptable to the canopy manufacturer.

Gary Stevens then referred to rigger manufactured soft links.

Pete Sizer reported that there was only one acceptable rigger manufactured rigging line main canopy connector links which are those made to TSE drawing 2-88. He stated that anyone wishing to manufacture another soft link, would require the standard drawings/testing and Riggers' Subcommittee acceptance.

- vi) Noel Purcell referred to the subject of reserve closure loops on Next and Next Century Tandem equipment. He stated that if no one was experiencing any further issues with regard to damaged closure loops, he was looking at proposing that the requirements for inspecting the reserve loops at 100 jump intervals be lifted.

Noel asked if anyone present had any objections to this, to which none were raised.

- vii) **Index of Safety Notices – update Sept 2018**

Pete Sizer had produced an update to the Index of Safety Notices & Information Bulletins:

- (2) **BPA Safety Information Index**

- 110. TSE Zerox with Straight Reserve pin not affected by SN 1.99. SI 1/18 9.2.18

- (35) **Aerodyne Research Index**

- 8. Semi-stowless bags – replace soft link with #5 Rapide link. PSB 2018-01 19.7.18

- (40) **Parachute Systems**

- 7. D-Bags with Removable Bridals on Vortex Harness Containers produced in second quarter 2018. PSB 2018-01. 19.07.18

- (44) **Vigil /AAD Index**

- 18. Information re battery replacement Vigil 1. PA 10.4.18
 - 19. High altitude jump software. PSB 01-18. 19.4.18

- (52) **Sife Index**

- 3. Upgrade of Reserve Cover Flap (advisory). SB 2018-001. 30.3.18

- viii) **BR Registrations**

- a) George Panagopoulos has registered Christopher Ptak as a Method 2 Basic Rigger.
 - b) Karen Saunders has registered Benjamin Mitchell as a Method 2 Basic Rigger.
 - c) Noel Purcell has registered Brad Dimmock and Karl Peart as Method 2 Basic Riggers

- xi) The COO asked those present whether they wished to consider changing the start time of future meetings from 4pm to 5pm. It was felt that this was a good idea, and that the new timing could perhaps be introduced from the first meeting of 2019.

11. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

Thursday 15 November
at 1600 at BPA HQ

21 September 2018

PAPERWORK FOR CIRCULATION WITH THE NEXT AGENDA MUST REACH THE BPA OFFICE BY MONDAY 29 OCTOBER 2018

Distribution:

Chair Riggers' Subcommittee, All CIs, All Riggers, APs, Council, CAA, Editor – Skydive



PIA Informational Advisory

To: Parachutists & Riggers - Worldwide

Date: 3 August 2018

Subject: Tubular Retainer Band Failures

Equipment: Retainer Bands made of Surgical Tubing with Glued Overlap

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**Scope**

“Tubular Retainer Bands” (TRBs) that fail during parachute deployment may adversely affect the opening and the structural integrity of the parachute, as well as the physical well-being of the parachutist.

**Background**

Numerous reports of failed TRBs from worldwide sources indicate that both newly manufactured TRBs as well as older stock are failing at the glued overlap and other locations along the tubing.

Recent independent testing has shown that natural rubber latex (NRL) tubing is adversely affected by UV light, ozone, excessive heat and age. As a result of this testing, at least one company has initiated a 2-year product shelf life and ships their TRBs in sealed UV resistant packaging with DOM clearly marked to help ensure consistent performance.

Retainer bands (RBs), regardless of type, perform a vital function during parachute deployment. Orderly release of each suspension line bight from the deployment bag helps to ensure that the parachute’s deployment is properly sequenced. Complete line stretch must be achieved before the parachute is released from the deployment bag. When RBs fail during bag lift-off, it is possible for the canopy to exit the bag and begin inflating prior to full line stretch. When this occurs, the parachute may open with explosive force, possibly damaging fabric, lines and potentially injuring the parachutist. This is referred to as an “out-of-sequence deployment.”

**Advisory**

Parachutists and riggers are advised to check the condition of their TRBs to ensure they are not defective or significantly weakened. A field test procedure is described on page 2 of this advisory. You should contact the manufacturer of your specific brand, not PIA, if you encounter product failure, or if you have further questions about a particular product. Substandard TRBs should be removed from service immediately and destroyed.

PIA expressly renders no opinion and makes no judgment as to the condition or quality of any specific TRB. Such determinations must be made by the individual rigger or user.

If you have any questions regarding this advisory, please contact the PIA Technical Committee Chair.

**PIA - Technical Committee**

T.K. DONLE – Chair ([technicalchair@pia.com](mailto:technicalchair@pia.com))  
Betsy Hoats-Smith – Co-Chair ([b.hoats@gmail.com](mailto:b.hoats@gmail.com))

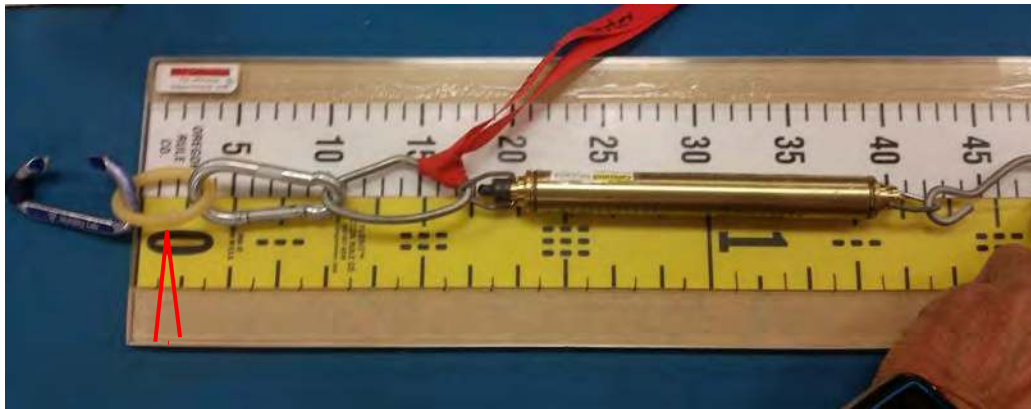


PIA Informational Advisory

Field Test Procedure  
for  
Tubular Retainer Bands

**Tool Requirements**

- Ruler: Twelve (12) inches long (300mm) minimum
- Spring Scale or digital equivalent (calibrated)
- Anchor Points : Smooth metal hooks or carabiners
  - 1/4" – 3/8" (6.5 -9mm) diameter where the anchor meets the TRB (as shown below)



**Test Procedure**

1. Attach TRB to the table anchor point and to the carabiner on the spring scale.
2. Ensure the glued overlap is placed between the two anchor points. (Red arrow)
3. A minimum pull force of twenty-five (25) pounds (12kg) is applied for five (5) seconds.
4. During the pull-test, the TRBs should elongate to the measurements below without compromising the integrity of the material or the glue joint.
  - a. All Microline TRBs shall be pulled to nine (9) inches  $\pm 1/2$ " (229mm  $\pm 13$ mm)
  - b. All Dacron TRBs shall be pulled to twelve (12) inches  $\pm 1/2$ " (305mm  $\pm 13$ mm)
5. All TRBs should pass without failure. 3-5% of each lot/batch should be tested.
6. Report TRB failures to the manufacturer.
7. TRBs that are tested should not be used for parachute rigging applications.

~~~ End of Test Procedure ~~~