



Riggers' Subcommittee

Thursday 7 April 2016 at 1600

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

Present: Paul Applegate (AR) - Riggers' Subcommittee Chair
Rick Boardman (AR)
Pete Sizer (RE)
Paul Stockwell (PRv)
Gary Stevens (PRnv)

Key:

RE = Rigger Examiner

AR = Advanced Rigger

PR(v) = Parachute Rigger (voting)

PR(nv) = Parachute Rigger (non-voting)

Apologies: John Curtis, Karen Saunders, George Panagopoulos, Noel Purcell,
Dave Major, Bill Sharp.

In Attendance: Tony Butler - Chief Operating Officer
Jeff Montgomery - Chair STC/Safety & Technical Officer
John Hitchen - Vice Chair STC
Jack Bradford - Council
Trudy Kemp - Assistant to COO/STO

Observers: Niel de Wit, Martin Cole, Alex Busby-Hicks.

ITEM

1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

2. MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING FROM THE RIGGERS' SUBCOMMITTEE MEETING OF THE 4 FEBRUARY 2016

Page 1, Item 2 – Next & Next Century Tandem Systems. There was nothing to report with regard to the various issues surrounding reserve loops on Next and Next Century Tandem Systems.

Page 2, Item 2 – Non-BPA Rated Riggers/Packers & Basic Rigger Training. The Chair reported that the Working Group set up to look at developing a system for integrating Non-BPA rated Riggers & Packers into the BPA system, as well as looking at BR training methods and any other issues in relation to Rigger and Packer training was still ongoing.

Page 2, Item 2 – Equipment Proposal Request Ray Armstrong had agreed to look at compiling a list of manufacturers who were recognized by the BPA for manufacturing Student main and reserve canopies. Unfortunately, Ray Armstrong was unable to be present at the meeting to report on his progress to date.

Page 2, Item 5 – Proposal to amend Various Rigging Related Forms. Rick Boardman reported that he had re-drafted the Student/Tandem Harness & Container Initial Clearance forms following the previous meeting, which had been sent Rigger Examiners for comment. Rick hoped to have the draft forms ready for the next meeting for consideration.

There being no further matters arising, it was proposed by Rick Boardman and seconded by Paul Stockwell that the Minutes of the Riggers Subcommittee Meeting of 4 February 2016 be accepted as a true record.

Carried Unanimously

3. **MATTERS ARISING FROM THE STC MEETING OF THE 4 FEBRUARY 2016**

There were no matters arising from the previous meeting.

4. **PROPOSAL TO AMEND VARIOUS BPA PACKING RELATED FORMS**

A proposal from Rick Boardman to amend two packing related BPA forms had been circulated with the agenda. Details of the proposed amendments and the draft forms had also been circulated and summarised below:

Form 197 – Guidelines for Obtaining an Approved Packing Certificate

Deleted all references to student front mount reserves, and certification of same.

Replaced the second bullet point under Training & Certification with the following

- "Certification for main parachutes and assemblies may only be carried out by at least a CSI or AFFI (who also holds the same packing qualification on their own Packing Certificate), or a Parachute Rigger."

Added under "General Information", Para 1, the following:-

"All packing and rigging related documents are listed in Form 238."

Form 111 –Approved Packing Certificate

Replaced the asterisked reference to who can certify with the same statement as on Form 197(i):-

- "Certification for main parachutes and assemblies may only be carried out by at least a CSI or AFFI (who also holds the same packing qualification on their own Packing Certificate), or a Parachute Rigger."

Added under N.B. (1) the following:-

"All packing and rigging related documents are listed in Form 238."

Following consideration, it was proposed by Rick Boardman and seconded by Pete Sizer that the above revised forms be accepted.

Carried Unanimously

5. **CORRESPONDENCE FROM BILL SHARP**

The Committee discussed correspondence from Bill Sharp, which had been circulated with the Agenda.

Bill Sharp had reported that he had been updating the BPA Tandem Mods website he had noted that the manufacturers (Strong Parachutes) had published on their website (www.strongparachutes.com), an approved list of components that are permitted and compatible to be used with the TNT Tandem system. Bill had pointed out that this list had included the unusual step of approving the use of two other major manufacturers main canopies into their equipment apart from their own.

Bill had stated that in the past, no other Tandem container manufacturer had ever formally approved other manufacturers main canopies to be used in their systems. However, the BPA had taken it upon themselves to allow this, via various clearances and the Riggers Subcommittee had many years ago established a policy that Tandem systems may accept 'all mains into all containers' provided that the canopy had been inspected (for size and compatibility) and signed off by a BPA Advanced Rigger.

Bill Sharp had asked for the Committee's comments and thoughts of how this information may affect the BPA.

Following consideration, it was agreed by those present that the BPA's well established policy, as set out above should be applied to Strong TNT containers when looking at the compatibility of various types of main canopies.

6. **CORRESPONDENCE FROM PAUL STOCKWELL REGARDING THE BPA TANDEM MODS WEBSITE & SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION, DRAWINGS ETC.**

Correspondence from Paul Stockwell had been circulated with the agenda.

Paul Stockwell had made reference to the Tandem Mods site and had stated that he was very impressed with the updated site, which he found was much easier to follow and find relevant references to Riggers or STC minutes that might affect a piece of equipment.

Paul stated that he still had an issue with locating supporting paperwork drawings etc that accompany many of the equipment clearances, as since the change to electronic circulation of BPA documents, supporting papers were no longer published with the minutes.

Paul had also reported that he had found a problem when he had come across a reference to a manufacturers "Product Improvement Notice" from in BPA safety notice, which was no longer available on the manufacturers web site. The web link to the information no longer worked. Although Paul managed to obtain a copy of the original information through the BPA office, he did not feel that this was an ideal situation particularly when trying to access information out of office hours.

Paul Stockwell had asked the Committee to consider setting up a Working Group to address the various issues surrounding availability of information.

Following discussion, the Committee raised no objections to a WG being established. The Committee felt that the WG could perhaps give some thought into developing the Tandem Mods website even further, where supporting documentation, drawings etc. could be uploaded thus creating our own document reference. Paul stated that he would initially liaise with Bill Sharp and other Riggers for input.

Until the WG had come up with its recommendations, it was agreed by those present that any papers referred to at a meeting such as Safety Bulletins, accompanying paperwork for equipment related acceptances etc. be attached to the minutes for that particular meeting. This would enable Packers and Riggers to maintain their own document reference.

7. **DISCUSSION ON THE RETROFITTING OF THE SKYHOOK TO JAVELIN BRIDLES IN THE UK**

This item had been included on the Agenda following correspondence from Rick Boardman concerning the retrofitting of Skyhooks to Javelin bridles in the UK.

Rick Boardman reported that in 2008, he attended the Barcelona PIA, and had become qualified in retrofitting of Skyhooks to existing Javelins capable of having them fitted. He stated that no one had ever pursued this retrofit through him to date, either because they did not have the right spec of Javelin with the internal flaps etc. or because they found the cost too high.

Rick Boardman had expressed some concern that other Advanced Riggers in the BPA system may have been retrofitting the Skyhook to Javelin bridles without realizing that strictly speaking, he was the only person in the UK licensed by Sunpath to do so.

Rick had therefore sought the Committee's opinion as to what they believed to be acceptable if an AR was faced with having to retrofit a skyhook.

Following discussion, it was stated that the BPA already had a well established policy that permits a BPA Advanced Rigger or above to carry out work on any type of equipment as long as it is to the same manufacturers specifications.

It was therefore confirmed by those present after further discussion that by moving a Skyhook from one Javelin bridle to another that the BPA policy would apply.

8. ADVANCED PACKERS COURSE REPORTS

- i) An Advanced Packers Training Course had been held at Skydive Headcorn from the 8 – 11 February 2016. The Course had been run by Noel Purcell and supervised by Pete Sizer.

Pete Sizer had submitted a Course Report, a copy of which had been tabled.

The Course had been attended by Simon Beech, Chad Smith and Drew Moon. Pete had reported that Drew had attended the Course for revision training as it had been more than 12 months since he had attended his original AP Training Course. All candidates were advised to practice under supervision before presenting themselves for the examination phase.

Pete Sizer had also reported that Noel Purcell had been well prepared and covered all of the lessons of the Course in a structured and logical manner and he recommended that he be added to the list of Riggers authorised to run and exam AP Courses.

- ii) An Advanced Packers Examination Course had been held at UK Parachuting (Beccles) from the 10 – 12 February 2016. Andy Page had submitted a Course Report, a copy of which had been tabled for information.

Javi Centeno-Gomez successfully completed the Course and was awarded Advanced Packer (Grade S) status.

- iii) An Advanced Packers Examination Course had been held at Netheravon from the 29 February – 3 March 2016. George Panagopoulos had submitted a Course Report, a copy of which had been tabled for information.

The Course was attended by Reuben Wolfe who was advised to attend the examination phase of the Course at a later date following a number of supervised pack jobs.

- iv) An Advanced Packers Examination Course had been held at Skydive Headcorn from the 27 – 28 March 2016. Pete Sizer had submitted a Course Report, a copy which had been tabled for information.

Drew Moon successfully completed the Course and was awarded Advanced Packer (Grade S) status.

9. BPA SAFETY NOTICES/INFORMATION BULLETINS

A BPA Safety Information Bulletin (1/16) had been issued regarding Next / Next Century Tandem Equipment.

At the Riggers Subcommittee meeting of the 04 February 2016 it was decided that the recommendation made by the Working Group on the 20 of November 2015 (SI 5/15), that the inspection of the reserve closure loop be extended to 100 jump intervals between inspections may now fall in line with the current requirements for the 100 jump Tandem Equipment inspection.

The condition of the reserve closure is to be checked at the same time as the 100 jump Tandem Equipment inspection and documented on forms 112A and 112B (ROI and Blue book).

The reserve closure loop check is to conform to the same time and extension constraints as the 100 jump Tandem Equipment inspection, at which time a new reserve loop must be fitted.

Any closure loops which are found to be in good condition are no longer required to be sent to the working group as evidence, although you are advised to keep these on record as it is seen as good practice.

10. MANUFACTURERS' SAFETY NOTICES/INFORMATION BULLETINS

The Chair reported that Parachute Systems have released a further update to their product service bulletin (PSB# 2016-01) concerning DSF Stainless Steele hardware on Vortex Harness Containers. This bulletin would be attached to the Minutes for information.

11. A.O.B.

- i) Tabled to those present was correspondence from Pete Sizer.

Pete Sizer reported that Mike Morton had attended an Advanced Packers Training Course at Skydive Headcorn in January 2014, before the time limits were introduced.

Pete stated that Mike Morton had packed a number of reserves under his supervision over the past two years, but as a weekend jumper accumulating enough re-packs had taken a long time. Mike Morton was now approaching 20 pack jobs and Pete Sizer requested that Mike undergoes an extended exam phase to ensure that he was current in all aspects and that this exam takes place within the next six months.

It was proposed by Pete Sizer and seconded by Rick Boardman that the above request be accepted.

Carried Unanimously

- ii) The Chair reported that Chris Gilmore had identified a numbering error in BPA Form 290 (Advanced Packer Tandem Guide for Tandem Reserves – issue 2) following the previous update. Chris had stated that when he had added the MVTC-3R (421), he had listed it as number 18, instead of number 2. He had therefore, amended the form to maintain consistency. Chris stated that he had also added the 402 from Paratec, which had been accepted for many years in a variety of containers, including the UPT/Vector, to include the UPT Sigma. A draft of Form 290 (issue 3), had been tabled for information, and the various amendments were noted by those present.

- iii) The Chair reported that he had received a number of Rigging/Packing Confidential Reports involving the same Advanced Packer. He stated that whilst he was still investigating the various alleged packing related anomalies, there was one issue specifically that he wished to bring to the Committee's attention that had been mentioned in all of the Reports.

The Chair stated that on opening up a number of reserves to conduct a routine inspection and re-pack. A small piece of paper which contained info relating to the Advanced Packer concerned had been found tucked inside the reserve slider. The understanding was that it had been their idea to 'catch out' other Advanced Packers that may be pencil packing their pack jobs.

Following discussion, the Committee reminded Packers that they should not under any circumstances place any foreign objects including pieces of paper into their re-pack jobs.

It was also agreed by those present that a reference to this should be included in the Riggers Technical Manual.

Date of next Meeting: Thursday 2 June 2016 at 4pm

Venue to be notified due to the planned BPA office re-furbishment

19 April 2016

PAPERWORK REQUIRING CIRCULATION WITH THE NEXT AGENDA MUST REACH THE BPA OFFICE BY MONDAY 16 MAY 2016

Distribution:

Chairperson Riggers' Subcommittee, All CIs, All Riggers, Advanced Packers, Council, CAA
Editor – Skydive



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Reg No: 2002/050029/23

PRODUCT SERVICE BULLETIN 2016-01 (PSB # 2016-01) Update 2

Correction to Original Bulletin PSB#2016-01

ISSUE DATE: 24th February 2016

A small number of harness containers were produced by Parachute Systems in 2011 with stainless steel base ring as pictured below:



These DO form part of the recall and are in addition to the ones referenced in the original Bulletin (PSB#2016-01) stamped "DSF".

We were unaware that the manufacturer changed their stamp on the rings at the time we published the first Bulletin.

The original Bulletins are hereby corrected and should include the harness containers with the rings stamped as this picture indicates. All references in all Bulletins and Notices include products with either one of these stamps on the stainless steel base rings.

Harness containers with stainless steel base rings with either or both of these stamps are immediately grounded and affected by the recall.

These should immediately be registered and returned for replacement.



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Serial numbers of containers with the stamp in question are:

**0322514, 0322535, 0322540, 0322541, 0322542, 0322543, 0322544, 0322545,
0322546, 0322547, 0322548, 0322549, 0322550, 0322551, 0322552, 0322553,
0322554, 0322555, 0322556, 0322558**

SUBJECT: Stainless Steel Base Ring Hardware on Vortex Harness Containers with DSF stamp or Daesung logo (as pictured)

STATUS: **All Harness Containers with Stainless Steel base ring hardware stamped DSF AND with Daesung logo are Permanently Grounded (Product Recall)**

IDENTIFICATION: Vortex Harness Containers Fitted with Stainless Steel Base Rings as identified below:

All DSF/and Daesung logo printed Stainless Steel Hardware (Part Number: H38005) ,this includes the stainless steel mini base ring and hip and chest rings identifiable by DSF stamp and logo stamp as in picture below.





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ORIGINAL BULLETIN PSB#2016-01

NAME: DSF Stainless Steel Hardware on Vortex Containers (PSB # 2016-01)

BACKGROUND:

On January 2nd, 2016, a photograph of a stainless steel ring with DSF imprinted on it was sent to us by our dealer in Holland. This ring was observed by a jumpmaster/loader prior to boarding. We think the ring cracked and was pulled apart by about ten millimeters on one side, on the previous opening. The harness/container only had four jumps on it, according to the dealer. Without much information and due to the holiday weekend, we were unable to assess exactly what had occurred and we therefore ground all the Vortex containers with this stainless steel hardware pending a full investigation in the interests of safety. The manufacturer of these stainless steel rings, Daesung Forge, flew to meet with us and lengthy discussions were conducted and the product was reviewed against test results and conformance specifications. Opinion was also garnered on testing the rings in the harness containers, replacement of the rings only and it was concluded that in the absence of a means to test each ring on the container without damage to it and a further risk to the integrity of the harness/container which could occur in the unpicking process, that the best solution was a replacement. On Saturday 9th, 2016, agreement was made between ourselves and Daesung Forge to implement a replacement program for these affected harness containers. The harness containers that are in use with this hardware are therefore permanently grounded and must be returned to our facility in order to be entirely removed from use and circulation.

Affected Vortex Rigs: All Harness Containers fitted with Stainless Steel DSF hardware

Notice regarding Grounded Vortex Harness Containers referenced in Safety Bulletin 2016/01

To : All Parachute Systems Dealers and Customers

After extensive meetings, discussions and opinion, we wish to advise our customers:

1. While the hardware manufacturers believe the compromised stainless steel ring could be an isolated incident, and expert opinion has confirmed this is very possible, in the absence of being able to test every single ring quickly and efficiently, both companies



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- have decided that they will not risk the possibility of even one Harness Container in the field with a potentially faulty stainless steel ring.
2. It has been decided, therefore, that every Vortex Harness Container with the stainless steel hardware as referenced in the Bulletin and stamped "DSF" BE GROUNDED PERMANENTLY.
 3. This grounding does NOT pertain to the Vortex Harness Containers that do not have the referenced stainless steel hardware per the Bulletin and stamped "DSF".
 4. It has been further agreed to by both companies, that EVERY Vortex harness container that has the stainless steel hardware as referenced in the initial Bulletin, will be replaced with a brand new identical Harness Container as the original order.
 5. The replacement phase (VORTEX REPLACEMENT PROGRAM) will commence immediately and the closing date for the receipt of claims under this program is December 31st, 2016.
 6. Manufacturing and delivery of new harness containers will be done in the fastest and most expeditious way possible and will include an increased production line/s for this specific purpose which will not delay or impact new orders.
 7. All new VORTEX replacements will be made 'standard' with the new Skyhook ready design and magnetic riser covers (unless otherwise requested), which will provide all replacement customers the ability for an after market Skyhook fit and give them the upgraded magnetic riser covers.
 8. Any changes to the size and extra options from the original order will attract charges outlined on the registration form discussed hereunder.



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The procedure for the Claim and return of the permanently grounded harness containers:

- a. Each harness container needs to be 'registered' for return by its owner. The form is available on our website and together with a color selector of the replacement harness container is to be returned by email to vortexrecall@parachutesystems.com.
- b. The harness container should then be returned to Parachute Systems in Durban. Once registered and when ready to mail, each customer should request a letter of authorization for shipping with "LETTER OF AUTHORIZATION REQUEST" and their name and serial number in the subject line of same email. They will receive an email with such authorization letter to be provided to the shippers.
- d. Each harness container must have its reserve, main, and AAD removed. All accessories should be removed and retained EXCEPT the following SHOULD BE RETURNED with the harness container: **RSL (if there is one) , Risers IF there is an RSL, Reserve freebag, Reserve Rip Cord and Cut Away Handle.**

DISTRIBUTION:

1. All registered owners affected by the Service Bulletin.
2. All Parachute Systems Dealers.
3. All Parachuting Publications.
4. National Aero Clubs, Parachuting Section.
5. Military Parachute Organizations.
6. PIA Para Newsbriefs
7. All drop zones.

We apologize to all our customers who are affected by this but we believe that this is the safest and best outcome for the resolve of this potential risk. Please be assured that customer safety is our most important concern and we assure you of our best attention at all times.



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Authorizing Authority

Chris Dales, Managing Director

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A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "C. Dales", is written over a horizontal dotted line.

Christopher Dales

Managing Director: Parachute Systems