



Riggers' Subcommittee

Thursday 1 June 2017 at 1600

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

Present: Paul Applegate (AR) - Riggers' Subcommittee Chair
Pete Sizer (RE)
Gary Stevens (PRnv)
Rick Boardman (AR)
Karen Saunders (AR)
Bill Sharp (RE)

Key:

RE = Rigger Examiner

AR = Advanced Rigger

PR(v) = Parachute Rigger (voting)

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

Apologies: John Curtis, Paul Stockwell, Ray Armstrong, Mat Knight.

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

Observers: Steve Saunders, Mark Bayada [*from item 9 (iii)*]

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 6 APRIL 2017

Page 1, Item 2 – Tandem Mods Website & Supporting Documentation. This item was still ongoing. Bill Sharp reported that Paul Stockwell had encountered a number of problems relating to the uploading of documents to the BPA website. Paul was asked to contact the office to discuss these issues.

Page 1, Item 2 – Mars 2 AAD. There had been no further issues reported on the Mars 2 AAD.

Page 2, Item 2. The Committee had agreed to look into a number of areas in an effort to try and encourage more participation from Packers & Riggers:

Karen Saunders was looking into compiling a list of older BPA safety notices and bringing them up to date. A number of ideas were also being considered for various topics and presentations at the Riggers convention in January.

Page 5, Item 9 – Equipment Related Incident Report Resume (i). The Chair agreed to contact the Rigger concerned to ascertain if they had any further input following this incident.

Page 5, Item 9 – Equipment Related Incident Report Resume (iii). An incident had been reported regarding an SWS Fire container which was found with signs of oxidation on the black metal. The manufacturers had been made aware of this incident. The meeting had also been made aware that UPT had recalled a container which had also been manufactured with black hardware.

No further input had been received on either of these incidents. Karen Saunders therefore agreed to contact the various manufacturers for further information.

Page 6, Item 10 – Requirements for Advanced Packer Courses. At the previous meeting, the Committee agreed that candidates attending an AP Course should provide a selection of their own basic packing tools, and that perhaps some guidance notes could be produced that could be incorporated into the Reserve Packing Guide. Karen Saunders agreed to draw up a list of tools for consideration.

Page 7, Item 15 – AOB (i). At the previous meeting the Chair had reported the office were dealing with a Packing/Rigging confidential report that had been received.

The COO reported that this matter had been dealt with internally and after careful consideration it had been agreed that the AP ratings of the Packer concerned be suspended until they had attended a re-evaluation Course at an independent Rigging facility.

The COO stated that it had not been felt necessary to form a Panel of Inquiry to deal with the various packing allegations.

The meeting heard that there had been a number of other alleged packing irregularities involving the same Packer that had been found since the original confidential report had been submitted.

A lengthy discussion ensued, and a number of comments were made, which led to a heated discussion between the parties concerned.

The Committee felt that they should have been provided with the facts of the various packing allegations in this particular case, and given the opportunity to discuss and consider whether or not any proposed disciplinary actions taken against the packer concerned was deemed adequate.

The COO stated that he believed a sensible decision had been made based on the written evidence received at the time.

There being no further matters arising, it was proposed by Pete Sizer and seconded by Rick Boardman that the Minutes of the Riggers Subcommittee Meeting of 6 April 2017 be accepted as a true record.

Carried Unanimously

3. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE STC MEETING OF THE 6 APRIL 2017

There were no matters arising from the previous meeting.

4. EQUIPMENT RELATED INCIDENT REPORT RESUME

The office had received several Incident / Malfunction / or Deployment problems reported since the last Riggers Subcommittee meeting:

- i) On the 25 March 2017, a Tandem Instructor sustained a hard opening on deployment, which caused the left steering line to break at the finger trap position. The bottom section of the steering line broke off.

The main canopy was a Sigma 2 370 with 1237 jumps, the container was a Next with a Vector 360 reserve.

- ii) On the 8 April 2017, a Tandem Instructor after an uneventful free fall released the drogue at which point the bridle line broke and detached. The container opened and the main bag lifted off ok allowing the main canopy to deploy correctly.

The main canopy was a Twin 340 with 162 jumps. The container was a Next with a Twin Speed reserve. The drogue was brand new from Paratec and had only 63 jumps.

- iii) On the 15 April 2017, a Tandem Instructor experienced a broken kill line at the position of the knot within the drogue, however the main bag lifted off ok and the main canopy deployed.

The main canopy was an A2 with 353 jumps, the container was a Next. The reserve was a Twin 402 with a Vigil AAD.

The kill line had 357 jumps and although it didn't look brand new it didn't look over worn either. It was manufactured by Nicky Johnston. The kill line broke at the top approx 12 inches below the base of the drogue so the full snake skin and drogue slid off the top and came free and fell away during the deployment. The kill line had not been recovered.

- iv) On the 27 April, an A Licensed Parachutist went to release his brakes shortly after deployment of his main canopy. As he took control of the canopy and released his steering toggles, they both came free from the steering lines. He subsequently carried out his reserve drills. The Canopy was a PD 190, the reserve was a Tempo 170 and the container was a Teardrop Classic with a Cypres AAD.

After inspection of the brake lines they appeared to be finger trapped without a bartac. The A Licensed parachutist had connected up the main canopy on the day, but the steering toggles were already set prior to that. The parachutist concerned has been thoroughly debriefed by an Advanced Rigger and the PTO CI. The steering lines were micro-line.

- v) On the 29 April, a D Licensed parachutist with 2446 descents experienced a premature reserve deployment whilst positioned outside the door of a Cessna Caravan. The parachutist's reserve pad was caught by the centre float as he initiated the key by moving up and then down, which caught the reserve pad and deployed the reserve pilot chute whilst holding on to the aircraft. Fortunately, the reserve deployment occurred underneath the tail of the plane due the lines being pushed down by the left arm of the rear floater.

The equipment was an Icon container with a Cypres AAD, a Zulu 103 main and a Smart 120 reserve.

- vi) On the 6 May, a B Licensed parachutist flying in a Cessna 206, caught his reserve pin on the back of the pilot's seat. The reserve pilot chute deployed and both pilot and parachutist realised. The plane landed with the parachutist on board without further incident. The container was a Zerox with a Vigil AAD, a Sabre 230 main and a Tempo 250 reserve.

- vii) On the 20 May, a Tandem Instructor with 51 tandem descents experienced a deflated drogue 4 seconds after exit. The Instructor waited for nine seconds and pulled his primary release handle and the main deployed correctly and landed safely on the PLA. The Tandem system was a Next with an Icarus 365 main, 372 Twin speed reserve with a Cypres 2 Tandem.

The report stated that the bridle wrapped itself around the drogue pilot chute causing it to remain deflated and this may have been caused by excess bridle not being tucked inside the drogue.

- viii) On the 21 May, another Tandem Instructor experienced the same type of incident, but on a different system. The system was a UPT Micro Sigma container with a Sigma 2 340 main canopy and a Vector 2 reserve.

The Tandem Instructor with over 14000 Tandem descents deployed the drogue shortly after exit and in this instance the bridle wrapped around the drogue pilot chute causing the drogue to remain deflated. The Instructor waited 6 to 8 seconds and deployed his reserve canopy, which deployed without any issues. However, he realised he should have pulled the drogue release handle instead. No matter how many jumps a Tandem Instructor may have they can still get it wrong.

The drogue was packed according to the manufacturer's recommendations (bridle stowed outside the drogue). This incident is the third deflated drogue incident that the PTO had sustained within a year and they are now reverting to the old style of packing the drogue (bridle inside the drogue) with immediate effect.

The PTO has now enforced a one calendar month TI emergency drills session and informed the manufacturer of the incident.

- ix) On the 28 May, a Tandem Instructor experienced a broken line on opening of the main canopy, at which point he could not get the slider to go down the lines. The Instructor carried out his emergency procedures and landed safely on the PLA.

The equipment used was a UPT Micro Sigma container with an Icarus 330 main canopy which had 800 jumps. The reserve was a Vector with a Cypres Tandem AAD.

The lines on the main canopy were Vectron coated. Karen Saunders stated that she had experienced some problems with Vectron coated lines.

- x) Over the same weekend another Tandem Instructor also experienced a broken kill line. The main canopy deployed correctly and the pair landed safely on the PLA. The kill line had broken close to the base of the drogue. The PTO checked the guide ring for wear but none was apparent. The line was last formally inspected at the 100 jump inspection, although that area of the kill line will have been pulled out and routinely untwisted on jumps undertaken since that check, and is 2/3 way through the current cycle with the rig having been fitted with a refurbished drogue some 242 jumps ago. The drogue cap has made several hundred jumps. The drogue was manufactured by Nicky Johnston.

The STO stated that this gave a total of three broken kill lines and one steering line and suspension line which could indicate that equipment maintenance could be improved.

The Chair of the Riggers' Subcommittee expressed his thanks to the Chair of STC for the resume of equipment related reports that he had prepared for the meeting.

There followed some discussion with regard to the 100-jump inspection book, and a suggestion was put forward to add a section on the form to enable the packer to write in the reserve due date. The Committee agreed to this, and the 100-jump inspection would therefore be amended at the next re-print.

5. ADVANCED PACKERS COURSE REPORTS

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

- i) George Panagopoulos had run an Advanced Packers Training Course at Netheravon from the 24 – 27 April 2017. The Course was attended by Ivan-Leon Jacobs, Alexander Lilburn and Thomas Blakey. All candidates were advised to attend the Examination phase of the Course once they had completed a number of supervised pack jobs.

- ii) Noel Purcell had run an Advanced Packers Examination Course at Hibaldstow from the 4 May 2017. The Course was attended by Chris Judd who successfully completed the Course and was awarded Advanced Packer (Grade S) status.
- iii) George Panagopoulos had run an Advanced Packers Training Course at Netheravon from the 22 – 25 May 2017. The Course was attended by Gary Chapman and Leon Nance. All candidates were advised to attend the Examination phase of the Course once they had completed a number of supervised pack jobs.
- iv) George Panagopoulos had run an Advanced Packers Examination Course at Netheravon from the 30 – 31 May 2017. The Course was attended by Dean Hoskins and William Ross. Both candidates were successful and awarded Advanced Packer (Grade S) status.

6. PERMISSIONS

A request from Allan Hewitt had been circulated with the Agenda.

Allan had requested an exemption for Alex Hewitt to attend an Advanced Packer course without having held his BPA membership or his BPA Approved Packing Certificate for the required period of 18 months.

Allan had stated that Alex had completed his initial packing course with himself in November 2015 when he was a Dutch KNVvL Master Rigger. Since then Alex has worked for Allan in Holland and Spain as a full time packer.

Alex has been training as a reserve packer under Allan's supervision during this time, so he is already a competent reserve packer. However, Allan would like him to attend a BPA Advanced Packer training course with someone other than himself, so he can learn different ways of doing things, and experience the full BPA training syllabus. After attending a training course, Alex would then continue and attend a BPA Advanced Packer examination. Once again, with an independent AP Examiner.

Karen Saunders was also able to provide the meeting with further details of this request.

Following further consideration, it was proposed by Karen Saunders and seconded by Pete Sizer that the above request be accepted.

Carried Unanimously

7. BPA SAFETY NOTICES/INFORMATION BULLETINS

There had been no BPA Safety Notices/Information Bulletins issued since the last meeting.

8. MANUFACTURERS' SAFETY NOTICES/INFORMATION BULLETINS

There had been no Manufacturers' Safety Notices/Information Bulletins issued since the last meeting.

9. A.O.B.

- i) Karen Saunders reported that she plans to run an AP Training Course at Skydive St Andrews from the 6 – 9 June 2017, and had requested that Rupert Connell attend this particular Course with a view to having his AP (S) rating re-instated. A copy of Karen's request had been tabled to those present.

Karen had stated that Rupert Connell's AP rating had expired on the 31st March 2014. He has taken a break away from Skydiving for one year. Since returning in 2015 he has been practising packing reserves, following the manual and obtaining advice from appropriate people.

Karen Saunders stated that the intention is for Rupert to attend the whole course to refresh his knowledge and understanding of AP work and to bring him up to speed with the latest information, safety notices etc. At the end of the week Karen proposes to examine him with a view to recommending him for the reinstatement of his AP (S) rating.

The Committee noted that this would be an additional person to the three candidates that Karen already had down to attend this particular Course. However, it was felt by those present that with Rupert's background, it was agreed that he could attend this Course as the fourth person.

Following further consideration, it was proposed by Karen Saunders and seconded by Pete Sizer that the above request be accepted and that Rupert Connell be permitted to attend the AP Course being run by Karen Saunders as the fourth candidate.

Carried Unanimously

- i) The COO Reported that at the STC meeting this evening, CIs would be voting on a proposal regarding the renewal of various ratings/qualifications, which also included AP Ratings. The proposal is that AP qualifications would be signed annually by a Chief Instructor or minimum of an Advanced Rigger.
- ii) The COO referred to the Defence Safety Authority (DSA) Recommendations to the BPA following the fatal accident to Ali Woodford at Skydive Bad Lippspringe in September 2015, and to the subsequent Working Group set up by the BPA to consider these recommendations.

To that end, the Working Group had asked the Riggers' Subcommittee to look at producing a set of guidelines to assist CIs/ARs when assessing AP currency at annual renewal.

Following discussion, Pete Sizer agreed to draft a set of guidelines for consideration. This was likely to include an audit of an APs pack jobs, but nothing too onerous.

Rick Boardman stated that after reading the DSA report, it had raised a number of issues including that we as an Association do not have a system for conducting audits of Riggers or Packers, i.e. sampling of paperwork/checking pack-jobs etc.

Rick felt that having a random audit process was something that the Working Group may wish to consider.

- iii) Bill Sharp referred to a disciplinary matter that had been considered at a previous Riggers' Subcommittee Meeting [5 June 2008 – Item 4 (Misuse of Soft Links on Reserves)].

At this meeting, a Packing/Rigging Confidential Report had been received in which a BPA Rigger reported that he had found that main soft links had been fitted on a reserve instead of the correct reserve soft links.

The previous three packers of the reserve had been identified, but the original fitter of the incorrect links could not be identified because this had not been annotated on any of the related packing documentation. However, the Committee had agreed at the time that the onus for packing errors such as this always rests with the last person who packed the equipment and whose name appeared on the Equipment Check List.

Bill Sharp stated that he was concerned at this last statement, as he believed that there were certain situations where it was possible to carry out an audit trail, and that it may not be just the last packer who was held accountable for any packing misdemeanors.

The Committee fully understood Bill's concerns on this matter. However, it was the feeling of those present that this statement was made in relation to the incident under consideration at the time.

Dates of Next Meetings: Thursdays at 1600: 27 July, 21 September and
16 November at BPA HQ, 5 Wharf Way, Glen Parva,
Leicester LE2 9TF

9 June 2017

**PAPERWORK REQUIRING CIRCULATION WITH THE NEXT AGENDA MUST REACH THE BPA
OFFICE BY MONDAY 10 JULY 2017**

Distribution:

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