

# British Parachute Association

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## Safety & Training Committee

Minutes of the meeting held on

**Thursday 17 November 2016 at 1900**

at Blaby Civic Centre, 22-24 Leicester Road, Blaby, Leicestershire LE8 4GQ

**Present:**

Jeff Montgomery	-	Chair STC/STO
John Hitchen	-	Vice Chair/Skydive GB
Mike Rust	-	Skydive Chatteris
Stuart Meacock	-	Hinton Skydiving
Dave Wood	-	Cornish PC
Richard Wheatley	-	Skydive Langar
Ryan Mancey	-	Go Skydive
Mark Bayada	-	APA
Iain Anderson	-	Skydive St Andrews
Ian Roseninge	-	Peterlee
Steve Saunders	-	Wild Geese
Paul Yeoman	-	Black Knights
Brucie Johnson	-	Blue Skies
Rob Spour	-	Target Skysports
Pete Sizer	-	Skydive Headcorn
Kieran Brady	-	Skydive Strathallan
Dave Emerson	-	Skydive Isle of Wight

**Apologies:** Andy Duncan, Nader Afsharian, Dennis Buchanan, Mal Richardson, Jason Farrant, Alex Busby-Hicks, Phil Collett.

**In Attendance:**

Tony Butler	-	Chief Operating Officer
Paul Applegate	-	Chair Riggers' Subcommittee/Council
Gordon Blamire	-	Council
Jack Bradford	-	Council
Jason Kelleher	-	Council
Trudy Kemp	-	Assistant to COO/STC

**Observers:** Andy Shaw, Paul Stockwell, Andy Pointer, Pete Marsden, Ben Wood, Noel Purcell, Karen Saunders.

The Chair welcomed Steve Saunders as the new CI of Wild Geese.

### 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 22 SEPTEMBER 2016

It was proposed by Brucie Johnson and seconded by Mike Rust that the Minutes of the STC Meeting of 22 September 2016 be accepted as a true record.

**Carried Unanimously**

**2. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE STC MEETING OF 22 SEPTEMBER 2016**

There were no matters arising from the previous meeting.

**3. RIGGERS' SUBCOMMITTEE MEETING OF 22 SEPTEMBER 2016**

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

It was therefore proposed by Iain Anderson and seconded by Pete Sizer that the Minutes of the Riggers' Subcommittee meeting of 22 September 2016 be accepted.

**Carried Unanimously**

Tony Butler (COO) reported on the meeting held this afternoon (22 September) and stated that the Riggers' Subcommittee had received two nominations for the position of Chair (Paul Applegate & Andy Shaw), which STC would be considering in the next item (item 4).

He stated that no formal vote had been taken by the Subcommittee to decide on who the Committee would recommend to STC for election purposes, as the Subcommittee felt that the nominees' names should have been published ahead of the meeting, so that all members of the Riggers' Subcommittee could take part in the voting process.

The Subcommittee had therefore agreed that the Riggers' Subcommittee Terms of Reference regarding the nominations process for the annual election of the Riggers' Subcommittee Chair should be reviewed, which the COO stated he would do and present to the next Riggers' meeting.

**4. ELECTION OF CHAIR OF RIGGERS' SUBCOMMITTEE FOR 2017**

Jason Kelleher withdrew from the meeting for this item. He stated that there was no conflict of interest, it was out of respect of the nominees.

The Chair reported that as STC were aware, following a previous change in the Terms of Reference for the STC and the Riggers' Subcommittee, it was now for STC to elect the Chair of the Riggers' Subcommittee. He stated that as previously reported (item 3 refers), the Riggers' Subcommittee had received two nominations for the position of Chair for 2017, Paul Applegate and Andy Shaw.

The Chair asked STC for a proposer and seconder for each nominee:

Paul Applegate:  
Proposer: Pete Sizer  
Secunder: Kieran Brady

Andy Shaw:  
Proposer: Brucie Johnson  
Secunder: Ryan Mancey

Each nominee then made a short statement to support of their nomination. The Chair then asked for a show of hands from CIs present as an indication of who they wished to elect as Riggers' Subcommittee Chair for 2017:

Paul Applegate: 10  
Andy Shaw: 3  
Abstentions: 3

Therefore, Paul Applegate was elected Riggers' Subcommittee Chair for 2017 by a majority decision.

Comments were made from those present that they would have liked to have known the names of the nominees in advance of the meeting to enable them to make an informed decision. However, they understood however, that the Riggers' Subcommittee Terms of Reference would be reviewed in this respect, so that there would not be a repeat of this in the future.

**[Post Meeting Note: Unfortunately STC had not been asked to formally co-opt Paul Applegate to STC due to a procedural oversight, as he was not currently an STC member (Co-opted members were non-voting members of STC). This would now take place at the first STC meeting of 2017]**

Jason Kelleher re-joined the meeting.

## **5. FATALITY PETERLEE**

Ian Rosenvinge stated that in his opinion, the Chair of STC should step down from chairing this item, as the Chair of STC had been one of the Board of Inquiry Members, and he believed in his opinion there may be a conflict of interest.

The COO stated that it was customary for the Chair of STC to Chair these items even if they had also been a member of a Board of Inquiry. He believed that this would be a decision for members of STC to make.

Ian Rosenvinge stated that he disagreed with this and said that he would refer this issue the Governance Working Group. However, there was no objection expressed from the rest of CIs present to the Chair of STC continuing to chair this item.

The Chair then reported that at the last STC meeting the committee were informed of a fatal accident at Peterlee on the 10 September 2016. The Board of Inquiry have completed their investigation of the accident and the Board of Inquiry Report Resume was sent to CIs with the agenda for this meeting:

At approximately 15.25 hours on Saturday 10 September 2016, AFF Student Pamela Gower took off from Peterlee Parachute Club (PPC), Shotton Colliery Airfield in a Cessna 208 (Caravan) aircraft along with nine other parachutists.

The aircraft climbed to approximately 5,000ft AGL. A 'jump run' was made over the PLA. Once the aircraft was at the Exit Point, a solo parachutist exited. The aircraft then climbed to approximately 10,000ft AGL where a Tandem pair exited, after which the aircraft climbed to approximately 15,000ft AGL where the remaining parachutists exited. The first to exit was a group of three parachutists carrying out a 'tracking' skydive, followed by a solo parachutist. The next to exit was Pamela and her instructor. The last parachutist to exit was a solo parachutist carrying out a 'wingsuit' jump.

Pamela's jump was to be AFF Level 6 skydive. She carried out a 'dive' exit from the aircraft. She was slightly unstable during the dive, but recovered to a face-to-earth position after approximately five seconds, after which she was given a signal by her instructor to carry out a 'barrel roll' manoeuvre, as an instability recovery exercise. However, Pamela did not recover from the 'barrel roll' and remained in a 'back-to-earth' position, and started to rotate. The rotation quickly became a spin, which increased in speed rapidly. She continued to spin until her reserve parachute was seen to deploy, below 1,000ft AGL.

Once the reserve parachute had deployed, it was observed to be rotating to the left, and increased in speed. Pamela appeared to be hanging limply in her harness under the parachute. She was lost from view prior to her impact with the ground in a housing estate adjacent to the airfield. All the other parachutists' jumps went without incident and all landed safely on the PLA.

A BPA Board of Inquiry was immediately instigated. The members of the Board were; Tony Butler – Chief Operating Officer and Jeff Montgomery – Safety & Technical Officer.

Pamela was forty-nine years of age. She had previously made three Tandem Parachute descents at PPC. The majority of Pamela's Accelerated Free Fall (AFF) training took place at PPC on 12 March 2016. She completed the remainder of her AFF training in Spain prior to making her first AFF jump on 16 March 2016. She had completed eight AFF jumps, 7 in Spain and one at PPC prior to the fatal jump on 10 September 2016.

Pamela originally carried out three Tandem jumps; on 31 August 2014, 24 October 2014 and 25 July 2015, after which she decided she wished to learn to skydive. However, it was decided that she would require modified parachuting equipment because of her stature. She had restricted growth (dwarfism).

Whilst Pamela's custom parachuting equipment was being manufactured in the U.S.A - a UPT Vector 310 container, with belly-band deployed main pilot chute, cloth cutaway pad and reserve ripcord pad, PD Pulse 170 main, PD Optimum 160 reserve and Cypres changeable-mode AAD - she undertook on a number of occasions in 2015 some free fall training in a wind tunnel. Once her parachuting equipment had been manufactured and she had received it, it was decided that AFF training could commence.

As the parachuting equipment required to be accepted by the BPA before it could be used in the UK, it was decided that her initial AFF jumps would be conducted outside the UK, in Spain.

The majority of the 'ground school' phase of Pamela's training took place at PPC on 12 March 2016. Additional training took place in Spain prior to the Pamela's first AFF jump on 16 March 2016. Pamela carried out seven AFF jumps between 16 - 18 March 2016 before returning to the UK. Her last jump was a Level 5 type jump.

Because Pamela returned to the UK before she had qualified, she made a further trip to Spain on 6 May 2016 in order to try to complete her jumps. However, because of weather and landing location problems she was unable to make any further jumps in Spain.

Following the trips to Spain it was decided that Pamela would continue her training and jumping in the UK. However, prior to her jumping in the UK her equipment needed to be accepted by the BPA. Pamela's parachuting equipment was presented to the BPA Riggers' Subcommittee and the Safety and Training Committee on 28 July 2016. Both committees accepted that the equipment was suitable for her to jump.

Following the approval of the Pamela's equipment she made her first AFF jump in the UK at PPC on 5 August 2016 having had further training on 20 June 2016 in the wind tunnel and additional refresher training at PPC. The jump was a Level 5 check-out jump as she had not jumped since 18 March 2016. Pamela's instructor stated that the jump went well and Pamela was cleared to make a Level 6 jump next.

Pamela carried out further refresher training on 17 August 2016 and again on 10 September 2016. Once her refresher training had been completed, she manifested to jump on the fourth lift of the day. She boarded the aircraft with her instructor and the aircraft climbed to approximately 15,000ft AGL. However, she decided not to jump because of nerves. The aircraft circled and she was given a second opportunity to jump, but decided not to do so. The aircraft then landed with her and her instructor on board.

Later that same day Pamela informed her instructor that she wished to try again and wanted to jump. She was then re-manifested for the eleventh lift.

When examining Pamela's equipment, it was noted that the parachute harness had been cut through at the scene to remove it from her. The harness was in good condition, other than where it had been cut. The main parachute was still stowed in its container and the main parachute pilot chute was still fully stowed within its deployment pouch. A Board member deployed the main parachute, which operated easily. This indicated that Pamela had not been able to deploy the pilot chute herself, possibly because she had not been able to locate it, or been unable to reach it because of the speed of her spin.

The main parachute release pad (handle) and the reserve parachute ripcord pad (handle) were both still in situ, indicating that no attempt had been made to release the main parachute or deploy the reserve parachute.

The AAD had activated deploying the reserve parachute. The reserve parachute rigging lines had been cut through when removing the equipment from Pamela. However, it was noted that there were twists in the rigging lines. It is most likely these had been caused by Pamela spinning as the reserve parachute deployed. Both of the reserve parachute steering toggles were stowed in their keepers, indicating that no attempt had been made to control the reserve parachute once it had deployed.

Pamela's AAD was sent back to the manufacturer to be analysed. The manufacturer's report indicated that the device had operated correctly and activated the reserve parachute at approximately 820ft AGL.

The Conclusions of the Board are that Pamela made a reasonable dive exit from the aircraft. She obtained a face-to-earth position after approximately 6 seconds. Following which she had a slow involuntary right turn. After approximately 15 seconds she was then given a signal by her instructor to carry out a 'barrel roll' manoeuvre, which she attempted; however, she rolled onto her back, but was unable to recover to a face-to-earth position. She started an involuntary turn to the right while on her back, which rapidly became a fast spin that increased in speed (approximately four rotations per second). She attempted to deploy her main parachute, but because of the severe G-Force was unable to do so. Pamela continued to spin until her AAD activated at 820ft AGL. It is likely that whilst she was spinning she lost consciousness and was then unable to make any further attempts to deploy her main parachute.

Once the AAD had activated and her reserve parachute had deployed, there were twists in the rigging lines, due to her spinning as the parachute deployed. This resulted in the reserve parachute turning, which increased in speed until she impacted with the ground. This is likely to have taken less than 15 seconds.

It is BPA policy that following a Board of Inquiry, a Panel of Inquiry is formed to consider any peripheral aspects to the Board of Inquiry. Therefore, the Board recommends that the following is considered by the Panel:

- a) Whether Pamela was progressed beyond her abilities, taking into account the time periods between her latter jumps.
- b) Whether a formal written risk assessment should be required for those ab initio student parachutists with special needs, who require reasonable adjustments to be made to their training and equipment etc. for reasons of body morphology (such as restricted growth), or other special needs.

The Chair reported that a letter from Ian Rosenvinge had been received regarding the Board of Inquiry report, a copy of which had been circulated to CIs on Monday of this week.

The Board were also able to answer questions relating to the Board of Inquiry report.

Ian Rosenvinge made a short address to the Meeting and made a number of points with regards to Pamela's progression after which Ian stated that, he felt a Board's Findings should be limited to the facts as was done in this case, with any Recommendations limited to matters of imminent safety concern such as the grounding of unsafe equipment or the suspension of any unsafe instructional practice. Ian pointed out that whilst he fully accepts that a Panel investigate such aspects as are included in Recommendation a) it was specifically the wording of that Recommendation that we (he & his staff) were very unhappy with. We (he & his staff) had already pointed this out to the Board suggesting an alternative form of words.

The COO stated that this was a perfectly reasonable recommendation for the Board of Inquiry to make to the subsequent Panel of Inquiry.

Ian Rosenvinge left the meeting whilst the formal vote took place on the report.

Following consideration, it was proposed by Mark Bayada and seconded by Pete Sizer that the Board of Inquiry Report including the Conclusions and Recommendations be accepted.

For: 13                  Against: 0                  Abstentions: 2 (Ryan Mancey, Dave Wood)

**Carried**

Ian Rosenvinge re-joined the meeting.

The Chair reported that a Panel of Inquiry has been formed. The panel is chaired by Ryan Mancey and the other members are Dave Wood and Stacey Canning. They held their first meeting on 2 November 2016. Once they have completed their investigation, their report will be presented to STC.

## 6. INCIDENT/INJURY REPORTS – RÉSUMÉ

- i) There have been 10 Student Injury reports received since the last STC meeting. 4 males and 6 females. One Student twisted an ankle while practising exits from an aircraft 'mock-up'. One bruised her elbow exiting from the aircraft. Another cut her hand and lip during an out of sequence deployment. The rest were on landing.
- ii) Since the last meeting there have been 4 Injury reports received for 'A' Licence parachutists or above. All males.
- iii) There have been 8 Student Malfunction/Deployment Problem reports received since the last meeting. 7 males and 1 female.
- iv) There have been 31 Malfunction/Deployment Problem reports received for 'A' Licence parachutists or above, including 3 on wingsuit jumps. 25 males and 6 females.
- v) Since the last STC there have been 5 Tandem Injury reports received. 4 males and 1 female. 2 were to instructors. 2 of the students felt unwell after landing and 1 was hurt on landing.
- vi) There have been 5 Tandem Malfunction/Deployment Problem reports received. Including one incident where it was noticed after landing that one of the links was undone and bent. There was also report on an incident where a Tandem Student took off in the aircraft without a helmet. It was noticed shortly after take-off. Both the instructor and student landed with the aircraft. The instructor had been distracted and had missed it, as had the jumpmaster. The CI has reminded the TI and JM of their responsibilities, as had another Examiner who was visiting the PTO at the time. The CI also requested that the BPA write to them, which has now been done. The TI was not permitted to carry out any further Tandems until he received the letter from the BPA.
- vii) One report has been received of an AAD firing. A student with 16 jumps went unstable following a dive exit and remained unstable until he deployed low. The AAD fired at the same time.
- viii) There have been 27 'off landings' reports received since the last meeting. Including Tandems, and other student jumpers.
- ix) Ten reports were received of items coming off jumpers on exit or in free fall. 3 cameras, 3 helmets, 2 x shoes, an altimeter, and a Student radio.
- x) One report has been received of an aircraft overflying a DZ/PLA whilst a parachutist was under canopy, missing the jumper by approximately 1,000ft.

## 7. INSTRUCTOR COURSES

The Association wished to thank Target Skysports, Hibaldstow, for hosting BPA Instructor Course 4-2016. The Course took place between the 31 October – 9 November. There were CSBI, TBI and CSI candidates. There were also Advanced Instructor candidates on the course. The course report had been tabled to those present for information.

## 8. ANNUAL REVIEW OF STC TERMS OF REFERENCE (TOR)

The Chair reminded those present that it was Council policy that the Terms of Reference for all the Committees of Council are reviewed annually at the end of the year. There were no suggested changes this year.

Ian Rosenvinge reported that he would be putting some suggested changes to Council, which may ultimately lead to changes to the STC Terms of Reference.

It was proposed by Brucie Johnson and seconded by Richard Wheatley that the current STC Terms of Reference be accepted.

For: 15

Against: 0

Abstentions: 1

Carried

## 9. PERMISSIONS

- i) A letter from Nader Afsharian had been circulated with the agenda requesting a 6-month extension to the CSBI rating of Richard Oakley. Nader had stated that Richard had successfully completed his CSBI course November 2015 and was booked on the CSI course for November 2016. The reason for him not being able to attend the CSI course was that Bad Lippspringe had been closed by the Army since May this year and Richard had not been able to satisfactorily complete any static line courses during this time, in order that he may be ready for his CSI course.

It was proposed by Nader Afsharian (proxy) and seconded by Ian Rosenvinge that the above request be accepted.

**Carried Unanimously**

- ii) An e-mail from Ian Rosenvinge had been circulated with the agenda requesting a 6-month extension to the CSBI rating of Lee Sample. Lee's rating was not due to expire until May 2017, but whilst Lee had been involved in Peterlee's student programme he was currently wintering in New Zealand undertaking Tandem Parachuting, returning next April 2017 and will require the additional time to involve himself in their Category System programme and to prepare for a CSI course later in 2017.

It was proposed by Ian Rosenvinge and seconded by Rob Spour that the above request be accepted.

**Carried Unanimously**

## 10. A.O.B

- i) A letter from Rob Spour had been circulated to CIs this week requesting that Neil Oliver be permitted to attend a Tandem Basic Instructor Course, short of the required 800 jumps. Rob reported that Neil currently had 730 jumps, and with the rate of jumps he was doing, he expected that Neil would have achieved between 750-780 Jumps by the time the course.

It was proposed by Rob Spour and seconded by Brucie Johnston that the above request be accepted.

**Carried Unanimously**

The Chair reported that Rob Spour had also asked for clarity regarding the BPA Operations Manual *NB* for TBI Course requirements which states: '*TBI Course candidates **should** meet the jump and free fall requirements of the Tandem Instructor Course prior to attending the TBI Course.*'

Rob Spour had asked as to whether it should state 'Should' or 'Must'.

The COO reported that the original intention of the word 'should' was to permit a potential candidate to attend a TBI Course if they were just a few jumps short of the jump number requirements for a TI.

Mark Bayada commented on the jump criteria, and stated that if not 'must' then why did we have a jump number requirement in the first place?

Rob Spour commented that he could go down the road of getting the candidate to attend a CSBI Course first and then the TI Course as this would get around the jump number issue for a TBI. However, he did now wish to go down this route.

Mark Bayada stated that in his opinion, which was shared by several other CIs present, that a BI candidate should only attend the examination Course for which they did their BI Course for, i.e. CSBI – CSI, TBI-TI, AFFBI-AFF.

Mark Bayada said that the idea of a BI was that they gain exposure to real students, and at the moment a TBI who met the TI Jump requirements could attend a TI Course two weeks after qualifying as a TBI. Should we therefore consider introducing a minimum time period (3 months) before a TBI can attend a TI Course to ensure that they get that exposure to real students.

Following discussion, it was pointed out that there was already a forum for considering Instructor Course requirements, and it was suggested that the areas discussed this evening, should be addressed by the Instructor Examiners when they next meet.

In the meantime, it was agreed that if CIs have potential TBI candidates who are short of the TI jump requirements they should apply to STC for individual exemptions.

- ii) A letter from Dave Emerson had been circulated to CIs this week requesting that the agreed restrictions at Skydive Isle of Wight be changed from 2 Tandems and 1 camera jumper per pass, to 3 Tandems and 2 camera jumpers per pass. Dave had provided details of the reason for the request, which was supported by the STO. An aerial photo of the PLA was also tabled to those present for information.

It was proposed by Dave Emerson and seconded by Rob Spour that the above request be accepted.

**Carried Unanimously**

- iii) Circulated to those present was a letter from Phil Collett requesting a 6-month extension to the AFFBI rating of Lee Winter. Phil had stated that Lee's military commitments had prevented him from attending an AFF course this year.

It was proposed by Phil Collett (proxy) and seconded by Iain Anderson that the above request be accepted.

**Carried Unanimously**

- iv) Circulated to those present were two requests from Paul Yeoman requesting 6-month rating extensions to the CSBI ratings of Carl Marsh and Chris Davison. Both of whose ratings expire at the end of November 2016 and they would like to attend the CSI course February 2017.

It was proposed by Paul Yeoman and seconded by Dave Wood that the above requests be accepted.

**Carried Unanimously**

- v) Mark Bayada provided details of the next phase of the Age Working Group, following on the Medical Certificate/Declaration changes made earlier in the year for Student Tandem Parachutists.

Mark reported that it is the intention of the Age Working Group to review the various other Medical Certificate/Declarations. However, before they make a start on this, he asked for any feedback from CIs now that the new Student Tandem Medicals had been in place since April 2016.

The COO stated that there had been no major issues reported to him or the STO.

Ian Rosenvinge asked for a point to be clarified regarding the validity of the old Student Tandem Medical/Declaration/Doctor's Certificate (BPA Form 115), as the Committee had agreed to honour those certificates that had already been issued, prior to the introduction of the new forms (BPA Forms 115 a&b).

The COO stated that validity of the Doctor's Certificate on the old BPA Form 115 was from the date the Doctor's Certificate had been issued until the expiry date, as detailed on the reverse of the certificate. He stated that none of the old Student Tandem Medical/Declarations (BPA Form 115) should have been issued or used after the new forms (115 a&b) came into use in April 2016.



- vi) The Chair asked CIs if they had anyone they wished to nominate for the Mike Forge Trophy (New Skydiver of the Year), they should send details of their nomination to the Chief Operating Officer before the end of the year.
- vii) The Chair expressed his thanks to STC members for their support throughout the year and wished everyone a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. 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 28 January 2017. He also pointed out that there were only a few spaces left for Tandem Instructors wishing to attend the Tandem Day on the 27 January 2017 for which pre-registration was required by contacting the Chair.

Date of next Meeting: Thursday 2 February 2017  
at 1900  
BPA Offices

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