



Riggers' Subcommittee

Minutes of the meeting held on

Thursday 4 April 2019 at 1700

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

Present: Pete Sizer (RE) - Chair
Dave Major (AR)
Rick Boardman (RE)
Gary Stevens (AR)
Phil Wayper (PR)
Josh Clark (AR)
Noel Purcell (RE)

Key:

AR = Advanced Rigger

PR = Parachute Rigger

RE = Rigger Examiner

Apologies: Tony Butler, John Curtis, Brad Dimmock.

In Attendance: Jeff Montgomery - STO/Chair STC
John Hitchen - Vice Chair STC
Trudy Kemp - Assistant to COO/STO

Observers: Tim Moran, Mally Richardson.

ITEM

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. Phil Wayper declared an interest in item 6 of the Agenda.

2. MINUTES FROM THE RIGGERS' SUBCOMMITTEE MEETING OF 7 FEBRUARY 2019

The Chair noted that the previous minutes state 'Draft' on the front. This is because they remain draft minutes until they have been approved by Riggers and STC respectively.

It was proposed by Noel Purcell and seconded by Phil Wayper that the Minutes of the Riggers' Subcommittee Meeting of 7 February 2019 be accepted as a true record.

Carried Unanimously

3. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE RIGGERS' SUBCOMMITTEE MEETING OF 7 FEBRUARY 2019

Page 1, Item 2 – Vigil AADs. No further reports have been received relating to Vigil AAD units where the attachment to the control unit was found to be snapping.

Noel Purcell reported that the battery replacement requirements of the Vigil Cuatro AAD manufactured since October 2018 can now be replaced at factory between 8 and 12 years after date of manufacture. These units have a label on the unit stating a battery replacement

before date. He noted that for older Vigil units (Pre Oct 2018) the battery must be replaced at factory when the unit indicates low battery or mandatory at 10 years.

Page 1, Item 2 – Velocity Risers Update. No further reports have been received in relation to Velocity Risers with phosphate hardware. It was therefore agreed by those present that no further action was required on this item.

Page 1, Item 2 – Equipment Inspection Policies Working Group. There was nothing further to report on this WG at this time.

Page 5, Item 14 – (AOB iii) – Older Tandem Systems no Longer in Use in the UK. Chris Gilmore had reported that one person had been in contact to advise that they were still using equipment in a Strong/Next configuration.

Chris Gilmore had requested that if anyone else was using older (named) Tandem systems such as a Tandem Racer, Tandem Point Zero Conversion etc. to kindly contact him, as it is his intention to present a proposal to the next meeting to withdraw permission for the use of these systems.

4. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE STC MEETING OF THE 7 FEBRUARY 2019

There were no matters arising from the previous meeting.

5. CHANGE OF CYPRES AAD MAINTENANCE REQUIREMENTS

A paper by the STO had been circulated with the Riggers' Subcommittee Agenda stating that in January 2016 Airtec GmbH & Co.Kg Safety Systems changed their Cypres AAD maintenance policy for all those units manufactured after the 1st of January 2016, from mandatory to highly recommended and that at the Riggers Subcommittee meeting of 2 June 2016, the Subcommittee members felt that nothing relevant had changed to warrant BPA changing its stance on the current servicing requirements of CYPRES AADs and had agreed that the maintenance would remain "mandatory" for all types of CYPRES AAD units.

In January 2019 Airtec reviewed and changed their maintenance policy from highly recommended to voluntary for any units manufactured after 1 January 2016. This change was based on information gathered from data of Cypres 2 units in the field, which undertook technical changes in 2014.

The STO stated that based on this information, Airtec have now confirmed to us, that these devices have been technically designed in such a way that, according to their current assessment, they can last their entire service life without maintenance. However, Airtec still offer the Cypres maintenance for everyone on request.

Based on Airtec's change, the STO suggested that the Riggers' Subcommittee consider whether they wish to rescind or amend BPA Safety Information 02/16 and 01/17 which refers to the mandatory servicing of those units manufactured in January 2016.

Following consideration, it was proposed by Gary Stevens and seconded by Rick Boardman to recommend to STC to rescind BPA Safety Information bulletins 02/16 and 01/17 and that the following extract of the Cypres 2 Users Guide now applies:

Page 55. Paragraph 14.1 Versioning

*For units with DOM 12/15 and earlier the maintenance is **mandatory** to be performed 4 and 8 years after the original DOM. Service Life is 12.5 years.*

For units made in 2016 the maintenance can be performed on a voluntary basis 4 and 8 years after original DOM. Service Life is 12.5 years.

For units with DOM 01/17 and later the maintenance can be performed on a voluntary basis 5 and 10 years after the original DOM. Service Life is 15.5 years.

For: 5 Against: 0 Abstentions: 1 (Noel Purcell)

Carried

Pete Sizer stated that the above changes had resulted in a revision to the Guidelines for the Completion of Forms 112 & 112A - Record of Inspection Forms and Document Checks (BPA Form 275). The revised form would be uploaded to the BPA website.

6. LIMITATIONS OF WORK – REQUEST FOR CLARIFICATION

A paper by Phil Wayper had been circulated with the Riggers' Subcommittee Agenda requesting clarification from the Committee that Parachute Riggers are cleared for all work on any part of main parachutes and components, which would also include the construction of a main canopy.

Pete Sizer had collated the relevant extracts from the Operations Manual and various BPA forms relating to limitations of work / responsibilities, which was tabled for information.

This topic generated a great deal of discussion, during which the Committee considered that from the various BPA documentation, all work on main parachutes included parachute manufacture. Reference was made to the following docs:

BPA Operations Manual - Sect 6, Para 1, Sub-para 1.2, states:

'Parachutes may only be used if they are manufactured for Sport Parachutists or Military Parachutists, by recognised parachute equipment manufacturers or riggers with the necessary qualifications.'

Form 316 – Riggers Course Application/Recommendation, states:

Limitations of work

- Basic Riggers (BR) must work under the supervision of at least a PR of two years' experience, and all work must be inspected and authorised by the supervisor.
- Parachute Riggers (PR) are cleared for all work on Main parachutes and components.
- Advanced Riggers are cleared for any work , main, reserve, and harness.

During the discussion, the following points were also noted:

- Only packing certificate holders or above can assemble kit. Where kit is unfamiliar/specialist system, this should be recorded on someone's packing certificate.
- B licence holders and above are responsible for the safe condition of their kit and for the packing of the main, but not assembly.

Phil Wayper had previously reported that it his intention to construct a main canopy, and now that he held a Parachute Rigger rating, the Committee did not have a problem with this. However, it was down to individual PTOs and at the discretion of the Chief Instructors (CIs) when he comes to jump it.

Noel Purcell reported on another issue concerning work limitations. He stated that he had identified a bellyband that had been made from a holdall strap. The bellyband did not have a label, so there was no traceability. Noel stated that he had seen different types of bellybands being made that were not necessarily copies and had a great deal of innovation. He was concerned that there could be a risk of someone falling out of the harness at some point if they are wearing a bellyband that was not correctly manufactured and that in his opinion belly bands and chest straps extensions formed part of the harness.

The Committee were made aware that there were several recognised designs for bellybands in the field.

Following further discussion, the Committee felt that Noel had identified an issue that warranted further consideration. Josh Clark suggested that he would look into the possibility of producing a design for a belly band that could be approved by Committee.

7. **PERMISSIONS**

A letter from Noel Purcell had been circulated with the Agenda requesting permission for Sara Henricson to attend an AP course having not met the criteria of being a BPA member for at least 18 months. Noel stated that Sara has been a BPA member since May 2018, and that she has been a full-time packer for 3 years.

Following consideration, it was proposed by Rick Boardman and seconded by Dave Major that the above request be accepted.

Carried Unanimously

As similar requests to the above had been considered previously, it was suggested that perhaps the Committee should look at this particular pre-course requirement, as it was felt that the previous packing experience of a potential candidate that was the important factor here rather than how long they had been a BPA member.

The Chair welcomed a proposal for a future meeting.

8. **EQUIPMENT RELATED INCIDENT REPORT RÉSUMÉ**

There had been no equipment related incident reports received since the last meeting.

9. **ADVANCED PACKER (AP) COURSE REPORTS**

A résumé of the Advanced Packer Courses held since the last meeting had been circulated to those present:

- i) Gary Stevens had run an AP Training Course at Rhomech Rigging from the 11 – 14 February 2019. The Course was attended by David Icely who was advised to practice under supervision in preparation for the examination Course at a later date.
- ii) Rick Boardman had run an AP Examination Course at his establishment from the 4 – 6 March 2019. The Course was attended by Mathew Stevens who successfully completed the Course and was awarded AP (Grade S) status.
- iii) Noel Purcell had run an AP (Tandem) Packing Course at Skydive Hibaldstow from the 7 – 8 March 2019. The Course was attended by Braden Dimmock, who was advised to practice under supervision in preparation for the examination Course at a later date.
- iv) Pete Sizer had run an AP Examination Course at Skydive Headcorn from the 19 – 20 March 2019. The Course was attended by Steven Powell who successfully completed the Course and was awarded AP (Grade S) status.
- v) George Panagopoulos had run an AP Training Course at Netheravon from the 25 – 28 March 2019. The Course was attended by David Keevers who was advised to practice under supervision in preparation for the examination Course at a later date.

10. **BPA SAFETY NOTICES/INFORMATION BULLETINS**

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

11. **MANUFACTURERS' SAFETY NOTICES/INFORMATION BULLETINS**

A PSB had been issued by Firebird USA LLC and previously circulated. The bulletin concerned reserve pin ripcord assemblies on all Firebird EVO HC with Pillow Ripcord assemblies PN 012 built between April 2018-March 2019, Serial numbers BD 001-CB 010.

The PSB asks for **MANDATORY** visual inspection of the pin cable junction by a FAA certified Senior or Master Rigger (or national equivalent) before the next jump.

If your HC has a ripcord pillow ripcord assembly installed between SN BD001 and CB010 they have to be visually inspected for swaging marks.

If your reserve pin doesn't have clear swage marks as pictured on the PSB. DO NOT JUMP until notification and further inspection through Firebird USA LLC.

The PSB is attached to the Minutes (Appendix A), and can also be found on the Firebird website: usa@flyfirebird.com

The Chair brought to Committees attention a second incident involving a Mirage pilot chute at his PTO where the grommet was found to be a bit loose and sharp on the inside. He stated that this used to be a problem on older Vector pilot chutes, but he had not come across anything recently. He believed that these may just be isolated incidents. However, he would continue to monitor the situation and report any further problems if found.

Noel Purcell reported an incident on an SW Fire container where during a sub-terminal cutaway the Collins Lanyard had pulled the teflon cable through that quickly that the 5/8" square weave webbing had been damaged from the friction and subsequent heat. The manufacturer had been contacted and a replacement was due to be sent.

The Committee were urged to complete and submit the Equipment Related Incident Report (BPA Form 298A) for any equipment related issues, however minor, as in this way any trends can be identified, and any relevant information disseminated as required.

Josh Clark reported that UPT have updated their sizing/compatibility charts for their rigs, and that some older equipment may not now be listed on their updated charts. The manufacturers have stated that they are continually changing and evolving their manufacturing processes. However, Josh was concerned that the manufacturers may not necessarily advise jumpers of any changes to their processes.

The Chair stated that it has normally been the case that the relevant authority for a particular item of equipment is the manual that was issued with the equipment at the time of manufacture. However, he felt that care should be taken if a manufacturer's recommendations regarding compatibility changes, as further investigation may be required.

12. A.O.B.

- i) Mally Richardson had asked for some clarification on sport kit components.

Mally reported that they had a visiting members rig in the club, which had been arranged to be borrowed by another suitably qualified club member. The equipment was a Wings container. It was jumped, but upon being repacked, the brake routing and stowing was questioned, due to being un-familiar with the two ring brake configuration.

Mally had reported that during inspection, he noted that the risers that had been fitted were not 'Wings' risers but had been replaced by 'Chutingstar' main risers. He had noted that there were a number of differences.

He stated that the manufacturers claim to be compatible to a host of manufacturers containers. However, there was no guidance on their website on the fitting, rigging or setting of the brakes.

Mally's concern was that if there had been an incident, i.e. an entanglement from a subsequent jump if Mally had permitted the equipment to be jumped, where would the responsibility/duty of care lie. Would it be with the user of the equipment or with the CI for permitting that kit to be used?

The Chair stated that a 'B' licence holder is responsible for the safe condition of personally owned equipment, and that holders of Approved Packing Certificates are cleared to assemble mains stripped down to components, therefore cleared to change components.

Where people are using unfamiliar/specialist kit, there is now a section on the Packing Certificate for 'specialist/unusual equipment' – perhaps 'swoop' risers are part of that, as they are different to the standard PIA specification on normal equipment.

With Mally's situation, there is an industry standard. Anything different to that, packers should consider whether they have the specialist knowledge and if unfamiliar with the equipment, they should not pack it and therefore refer it back to owner.

Further discussion took place on compatibility of equipment and the assembly of risers during a reserve repack. The Committee considered that if Advanced Packers are not familiar with the configuration of the brake system, they should not pack the main canopy, and likewise if they are not happy with the riser compatibility, they should not connect the risers, and annotate that within the comments section of the Record of Inspection.

Following further consideration, Packers were advised that when they are assembling a set of equipment, particularly if in doubt of something, it is recommended that they check it in a flying configuration.

- ii) A letter from Pete Sizer had been tabled to those present requesting the reinstatement of Marcus Muir-Smith's AP(S) rating.

Pete Sizer reported that Marcus had let his rating lapse in March 2017 whilst travelling. He stated that after completing 10 supervised repacks with Simon Soper and redoing the AP exam with Pete Sizer, Marcus now wished to regain his AP(S) rating.

Following consideration, it was proposed by Gary Stevens and seconded by Rick Boardman that the above request be accepted.

Carried Unanimously

13. DATES OF NEXT MEETINGS

Thursdays, 30 May, 25 July, 19 September, 14 November.
at 1700 at BPA HQ

Distribution:

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