

# British Parachute Association

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## Safety & Training Committee

Minutes of the meeting held on

**Thursday 22 September 2016 at 1900**

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

<b>Present:</b>	Jeff Montgomery	-	Chair STC/STO
	John Hitchen	-	Vice Chair/Skydive GB
	Matty Holford	-	JSPW(N)
	Rob Spour	-	Target Skysports
	Paul Yeoman	-	Black Knights
	Alex Busby-Hicks	-	Skydive Tilstock
	Mike Rust	-	Skydive Chatteris
	Stuart Meacock	-	Hinton Skydiving
	Andy Guest	-	Skydive Buzz
	Ian Roseninge	-	Peterlee
	Billy Steele	-	Skydive St George
	Jason Webster	-	LPS
	Richard Wheatley	-	BPS, Langar
	Iain Anderson	-	Skydive St Andrews
	Dennis Buchanan	-	Skydive North West
	Ryan Mancey	-	Go Skydive

**Apologies:** Brucie Johnson, Pete Sizer, Carl Williams (Reg Green represented Carl at the meeting), Andy Duncan, Jim White, Paul Floyd, Dave Wood, Mark Bayada, Phil Collett.

<b>In Attendance:</b>	Tony Butler	-	Chief Operating Officer
	Paul Applegate	-	Chair Riggers' Subcommittee/Council
	Gordon Blamire	-	Council
	Dr John Carter	-	BPA Medical Adviser
	Trudy Kemp	-	Assistant to COO/STC

**Observers:** Mike Carruthers, Gary Stevens, Martin Cole, Paul Stockwell.

### 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 28 JULY 2016**

It was proposed by Stuart Meacock and seconded by Billy Steele that the Minutes of the STC Meeting of 28 July 2016 be accepted as a true record.

**Carried Unanimously**

#### **2. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE STC MEETING OF 28 JULY 2016**

There were no matters arising from the previous meeting.

### **RIGGERS' SUBCOMMITTEE MEETING OF 28 JULY 2016**

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

It was therefore proposed by Stuart Meacock and seconded by John Hitchen that the Minutes of the Riggers' Subcommittee meeting of 28 July 2016 be accepted.

**Carried Unanimously**

Paul Applegate reported on the meeting held this afternoon (22 September) and stated that the Riggers' Subcommittee had discussed a Service Bulletin (BS-Atom-25-002) concerning all harness/containers single and dual manufactured by Parachutes de France, which had been issued by them on them on 11 July 2016.

The subject concerned hydrolyze phenomena of the cordura fabric used for the reserve container in extreme conditions of temperature and humidity, as per BS-ATOM-25-001, dated 19 February 2015.

Parachutes have been found, after a favorable inspection at the last packing, with a degraded and sticky coating. The phenomenon has been listed on the black military equipment manufactured in 2004/2005 and to a lesser extent 2009 (1 isolated case). In civil activity it was confirmed cases on other colours, but information (colour and serial number) are not sufficient to isolate a batch of fabric (colour or date of manufacturing).

The manufacturers have asked for all parachutes whose reserve container is not double-lined (or in manufacturing or repair):

- For all equipment with a black reserve container manufactured between November 2004 (Serial Number PKxxx) and September 2005 (Serial Number QJxxx), to modify the reserve container in accordance with the BS ATOM-25-001 before the next jump.

- For the other parachutes, check every 4 months the aspect of the coating. This periodic checking will be retained until application of the SB ATOM-25-001 (repair or preventive action).

Any reserve repacks that may have been conducted since 11 July 2016 should be re-opened and inspected at the 4-month point. If the inspection is conducted by the same person who packed it, he/she can then close it back up and extend the pack job to the 6-month point. The inspection should be annotated on the Record of Inspection.

Copies of both Service Bulletins 25-001 & 25-002 will be attached to the Riggers' Subcommittee Minutes.

Paul Applegate also reported that the proposal from Ian Rosenvinge regarding canopies manufactured by Phil Wayper, which had also been circulated to CIs, had now been withdrawn by Ian.

### **FATALITY PETERLEE**

The Chair reported that unfortunately, there had been a fatal accident at Peterlee on the 10 September 2016. The parachutist involved was AFF Student, Pamela Gower, who had attended the last Riggers' and STC meetings in order that her modified parachuting equipment could be cleared for her to continue her jumping in the UK.

A Board of Inquiry was convened to investigate the accident. The members are the COO and the STO. Once the Board Report is completed it will be presented to STC, hopefully at the next meeting.

A brief résumé of the accident was that on the afternoon of 10 September, Pamela made an AFF Level 6 jump. She carried out a 'dive' exit from the aircraft in which she was slightly unstable during the dive, but recovered stability after approximately five seconds, she was

then given a signal by her instructor to carry out a 'barrel roll' manoeuvre, as an instability recovery exercise. However, she 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 very quickly. 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 hitting the ground in a housing estate adjacent to the airfield. It is likely that she lost consciousness while she was spinning.

All the other parachutist's jumps went without incident and all landed safely on the PLA.

The Board wished to acknowledge the tremendous work carried out by two BPA instructors, Stuart Storey and Lee Sample, who arrived at the scene of the accident within a few minutes and who worked tirelessly carrying out CPR in an effort to save life.

## **5. INCIDENT/INJURY REPORTS – RÉSUMÉ**

- i) There had been 12 Student Injury reports received since the last STC meeting. 6 males and 6 females. One Student bruised his ribs during PLF training. One bruised her arm exiting from the aircraft. Another dislocated his shoulder while carrying out a tracking exercise. The rest were on landing.
- ii) Since the last meeting there had been 12 Injury reports received for 'A' Licence parachutists or above. 6 males and 6 females. One parachutist slipped out of an aircraft mock-up and hurt his shin. One hurt her back during a hard opening. Another dislocated his shoulder while reaching for his steering toggles. Two parachutists hurt their necks when standing on the PLA and canopies landed near them and rigging lines caught around their necks. These were two separate incidents. The rest were on landing, including a jumper who landed in trees.
- iii) There had been 9 Student Malfunction/Deployment Problem reports received since the last meeting. 7 males and 2 females. One Student with 16 descents had a weak exit and his right arm and pack caught the side of the door, causing him to roll to the left. He deployed the main canopy and got wrapped in the bridle. He carried out his emergency drills and landed safely.
- iv) There had been 45 Malfunction/Deployment Problem reports received for 'A' Licence parachutists or above. 43 males and 2 females, including 2 wing suit jumpers. Also a jumper had a premature reserve deployment at 4,000ft, the ripcord cable was too short, causing the problem. It appeared that this had happened on three occasions and nothing had been done about it. The equipment had now been grounded following further investigations.
- v) Since the last STC there had been 18 Tandem Injury reports received. 12 males and 8 females. 4 dislocated their shoulders, 1 in the aircraft, 2 in freefall and 1 on deployment. One student bruised her neck due to a loose helmet strap. One student had a loss of feeling in her arm, possibly caused by the harness pressing on her arm. One fainted under canopy and one had lower back pains after a hard opening. The remainder were on landing.
- vi) There had been 20 Tandem Malfunction/Deployment Problem reports received. Also a report of an AFF Level Student who landed on a Tandem pair shortly after they landed. There was no report of any injury.
- vii) One report had been received of an AAD firing. An AFF student on a Level 6 jump went unstable, and went into a spin. Attempted to pull a number of times and then decided to wait until the AAD fired. The Student has been stopped from jumping.
- viii) A report had been received of a canopy entanglement. The jump was a CF Diamond formation, which split just before landing, resulting in two of the jumpers entangling and landing hard. One fractured a femur and broke three ribs. The other parachutist fractured his femur.

- ix) One report had been received of a near-miss under canopy, while two jumpers were heading back to the landing area.
- x) There had been 16 'off landings' reports received since the last meeting, including Tandems, and other student jumpers. Often on the first lift of the day!
- xi) Seven reports were received of items coming off jumpers on exit or in free fall. 2 helmets, including a Tandem Student's helmet, 3 cameras, a shoe and a Student radio.
- xii) Three reports had been received of display misfires, an 'off landing' and a malfunction. There was also an incident where a display jumper decided to celebrate his 1,000<sup>th</sup> jump on a water display by cutting away at approximately 20ft above the water. The impact rendered him unconscious for about 10 seconds. He was recovered by the rescue boat. His team leader has grounded him from carrying any further displays in 2016 and will review his actions prior to 2017 season.
- xiii) Five reports had been received involving aircraft. The first concerned an AFF Student on a consolidation jump, carrying out a dive exit from an Airvan. She made a weak exit, the slipstream pushing her to the rear of the door. As she exited, the anaconda housing for a ripcord (when used) caught around the door catch on the rear door frame. The Student became suspended just outside the aircraft. The Instructor left at the same time as the student. The pilot was unaware and started to descend. He felt a slight buffeting and stopped the descent. Just after this the Student carried out her reserve drills and got dragged off the aircraft. Her reserve deployed at 9,000ft. Both she and the aircraft landed safely.

Another report was received where a Cessna 208 took off with the fuel cap undone. The aircraft landed straight away without further problem. Another report was for an airspace infringement. A small jet overflew the PLA while parachutists were exiting the jump aircraft. A report had also been sent to the CAA. Another report was for a Cessna 208 that had a problem with the flaps. The jumpers were told to exit and the aircraft landed without further problem. The final report involved a Cessna 208 that experienced a loss of power while landing, resulting in a heavy touch down. The pilot experienced suspected whiplash.

## **6. HIGH ALTITUDE PROPOSAL**

A paper from Andy Guest had been circulated with the agenda together with a draft proposal from Ryan Jackson. Andy Guest had requested permission for Skydive Buzz to carry out trial high altitude jumps from 25,000ft using oxygen. His paper stated that oxygen will be used in the aircraft and in free fall.

The Chair reported that comments on this item from Martin White and Dave Wood had been received and were tabled to those present for information.

Andy Guest had made 3 separate proposals, but informed the meeting that he was withdrawing the third proposal with regard to the Tandem Student Medical Declaration. (Form 115b). Andy then gave the meeting details of his first two proposals:

- 1. To be allowed to carry out high altitude trial jumps from 25,000ft, once completed the finding will be reported back to STC.**
- 2. To carry out Tandem trial jumps with Oxygen utilising the named qualified Tandem Instructors and Dr John Carter or another 'D' licence jumper.**

Andy Guest reported that Dr Ryan Jackson would be overseeing the trials together with Si Guest and Dr John Carter (BPA Medical Adviser).

Dr John Carter was also present and was also able to provide further input to those present.

The COO reported that he and the STO understood what Andy was trying to achieve. However, they believed that any trial needs to be carried out correctly and STC need to be assured of that before it agrees to it taking place. Also, that before an application is made to the CAA, a safety case needs to be produced by the operator providing details of the

proposed activity which identifies the hazards and risks, outlines how the risks are controlled and describes the safety management system in place to ensure the controls are effectively and consistently applied.

The COO stated that he and the STO believe that the proposal put forward by Andy Guest was not anywhere near comprehensive enough and a lot of questions remained unanswered for high altitude Tandem parachuting to be agreed by STC. There is a significant difference between experienced skydivers jumping at high altitude and taking, effectively members of the public 'Tandem Students'. Besides all the safety implications, there may be insurance problems, as the extra risks above FL150 would not have been considered, which would in his opinion also need Council approval.

Matty Holford reported that Nethervon were currently conducting ground trials with regard to high altitude jumps with the use of oxygen and suggested that they consider joining forces.

Following further discussion, it was agreed by those present that a Working Group by Skydive Buzz be set up to include all those that have expertise in high altitude jumping. They should then produce a Manual/SOPs to include a thorough risk assessment on all aspects and all procedure, together with details of personnel involved. The COO also stated that the trial proposal should be considered before any proposal was submitted for actual Tandem Students.

## **7. INSTRUCTOR COURSES**

- i) The Association expressed its thanks to Skydive Headcorn for hosting BPA Instructor Course 3-2016. The Course took place between the 8 – 19 August. There were CSBI, TBI and AFFBI candidates, CSI, AFFI and TI candidates. There were also Pre-Advanced Instructor Assessment candidates on the course. The course report had been circulated with the agenda for information.
- ii) The Association expressed its thanks to BPS/Langar for hosting an AFFI, TI and Pre-Advanced Instructor Assessment Course from the 5 – 8 September. The course report had also been circulated with the agenda for information.

## **8. PERMISSIONS**

There had been no 'Permission' requests received for this meeting.

## **9. A.O.B**

A letter from Carl Williams had been circulated with the agenda requesting a change to the restrictions at Skydive Swansea. Carl had stated that for the last 10 years Skydive Swansea has operated two PLAs at Swansea Airport. The Northern PLA is unrestricted and the Southern PLA is for BPA 'B' licence and above.

Carl had proposed to change the current Southern PLA restriction in order to allow BPA 'A' licence skydivers that have completed all pre-declared landings (which are required for B licence) and with CI approval, to jump onto this landing area.

The Chair reported that this proposal was supported by the COO, who had re-visited the site since the last STC meeting.

It was proposed by Carl Williams (proxy) and seconded by Alex Busby-Hicks that the above request be accepted.

**Carried Unanimously**

Date of next Meeting: Thursday 17 November 2016  
at 1900  
Blaby Civic Centre

29 September 2016

**Distribution:** Chairman BPA, Council, CIs, All Riggers, Advanced Packers, CAA, Editor – Skydive, File