
Riggers' Subcommittee

Minutes of the meeting held on
Thursday 13 April 2023 at 1500
by Microsoft Teams

Present: Pete Sizer (RE) - Chair
David Ballard (AR)
Mary Barratt (PR) / Chair Council
Liam Domin-Goddard (PR) / Communications Manager
Allan Hewitt (RE)
David Major (AR)
Noel Purcell (RE)
Karen Saunders (RE)
Gary Stevens (AR) (from item 6)

Key:
AR = Advanced Rigger
RE = Rigger Examiner

Apologies: Rick Boardman, Josh Clark, Joe Oosterveer

In Attendance: Tony Butler - Chief Operating Officer (COO)
Jeff Montgomery - STO/Chair STC
Trudy Kemp - Assistant to COO/STO (Secretary)

Observers: Paul Champollion (BR), Nick Robinson.

ITEM

WELCOME & OPENING ADDRESS

The Chair welcomed members and guests to the British Skydiving Riggers' Subcommittee meeting. He gave the meeting details of the procedures for those wishing to speak, voting etc.

The Chair stated that the meeting would be recorded to assist with preparation of the minutes after which the recording would be deleted.

It appeared that a number of Riggers had experienced connection issues trying to access the Teams meeting this afternoon. Apologies have been recorded for those Riggers concerned.

1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Any declarations of interest would be made at the item/s to which they relate.

2. MINUTES FROM THE RIGGERS' SUBCOMMITTEE MEETING OF 29 SEPTEMBER 2022

It was proposed by Karen Saunders, seconded by Noel Purcell that the Minutes of the Riggers' Subcommittee Meeting of 29 September 2022 be accepted as a true record.

Carried Unanimously

3. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE RIGGERS' SUBCOMMITTEE MEETING OF 29 SEPTEMBER 2022

Page 2, Item 5 – Proposal to allow Reserves to be Sealed by the FAA Method in Addition to the Method of British Skydiving Form 215. Form 215 has been updated, and is an item of the main agenda for this meeting.

4. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF PREVIOUS STC MEETINGS

The Minutes of the STC Meetings of 29 September 2022, 17 November 2022 and 9 February 2023 had been included in the Riggers' Sharepoint folder for this meeting. There were no matters arising for consideration from these meetings.

5. RIGGING COURSE REPORTS

There had been two Rigging Courses held since the last Riggers Subcommittee Meeting:

- 5.1 British Skydiving wished to thank George Panagopoulos for kindly hosting the Rigging Course at Skydive Buzz, Dunkeswell from 5 – 9 December 2022. The Examiners conducting the Course were: George Panagopoulos, Andrew Hilton, Andy Shaw and Pete Sizer.

There was one candidate on the Basic Riggers Course: Jacob Jackson. Jacob successfully completed the Course and was awarded Basic Rigger status.

There was one candidate on the Parachute Riggers Course: Max Tork. Max successfully completed the Course and was awarded Parachute Rigger status.

Josh Clark attended the Course for assessment for his final phase of the requirements for upgrading to Rigger Examiner qualification.

Josh successfully completed this phase of the Course and was awarded Rigger Examiner status.

- 5.2 British Skydiving wished to thank Rhomech Rigging for kindly hosting the Rigging Course from 19 – 23 December 2022.

The Examiners conducting the Course were: Rick Boardman and Karen Saunders, with Pete Sizer succeeding Karen on day 3.

There were 4 candidates on the Basic Riggers Course: Amii Calway, Lucy Mancey, Rafal Kacprzyk and Viola-Deborah Fechete. All candidates successfully completed the Course and were awarded Basic Rigger status.

Gary Stevens attended the Course for assessment on his 2nd phase for Rigger Examiner status.

Gary successfully completed this phase of the Course, and the Examiners were satisfied for Gary to progress to the final part of his RE rating.

6. PROPOSAL TO CHANGE FORM 169 – ADVANCED PACKER SYLLABUS, INCLUDING A PROPOSAL TO CHANGE THE RENEWAL OF ADVANCED PACKER RATING

Introduction

The Chair reported that the Rigger Examiners met in 2022 to discuss proposals to change and update various syllabuses and forms. He stated that much of this meeting will be

considering these proposals, some of which may require ratification from STC and others which can be implemented by this Committee. To that end Pete Sizer had proposed separate votes on items even if they applied to the same form.

Allan Hewitt expressed concern, as he believed that a number of proposals that he had previously submitted to HQ and presented to the Rigger Examiners had not been included for consideration by the wider Riggers' Subcommittee.

The Chair stated that he had not tried to deliberately ignore Allan's proposals and went on to explain that the proposals put forward to this meeting had been what he believed were based on a collective response from the majority of Rigger Examiners. The Chair stated that Allan had the right to put forward counterproposals to any of the tabled proposals if he so wished.

Allan stated that he was not going to do anything this afternoon, but he planned to follow up on this another time, as he believed his other proposals should also be considered by the Subcommittee.

The COO stated that when there are a great deal of proposals to consider, it seemed logical that these are put forward to a smaller group, in this case Rigger Examiners. In his opinion the Chair of the Riggers' Subcommittee had acted in the correct way.

6.1 Proposals to Change Form 169 – Advanced Packer Syllabus, including a proposal to change the renewal of the Advanced Packer rating.

Allan Hewitt stated that one of the items that he had proposed for inclusion on the AP examination phase of the Course was that one of the reserve inspection and repack tests was on equipment fitted with a Skyhook, MARD or Mojo.

This subject raised a considerable amount of discussion.

Some Riggers present agreed that we should be testing on some form of Skyhook on the AP examination phase. However, it was felt that if this became a requirement, we need to consider the practicalities of having available the right set of equipment for the exam courses, which may not always be practicable.

The Committee as a whole, agreed that the AP does need to be introduced to MARDs, but this could be introduced as part of the training syllabus for the AP Course.

Following further consideration, and because of the varying opinions from Riggers present on this subject, which it was felt required further debate, the COO suggested that a special meeting take place possibly at HQ, where Riggers could consider this, together with any other proposed amendments to the Advanced Packer Course Syllabus. This was agreed by those present.

The Chair asked the Committee for a discussion on the proposed amendments to Form 169 that had been put forward for consideration:

Post course Supervision

The Chair stated that not all AP trainees have easy access to a Rigger to supervise them after the AP training course, therefore, he had proposed to allow a suitably experienced Advanced Packer (>100 repacks) to supervise their packing between their AP Training Course and the AP exam.

The Chair had suggested that we define suitably qualified by a set number of repacks rather than time served as someone with 100 repacks has more experience than someone than has done 25 repacks over 2 or three years.

Following consideration, this proposal was agreed in principle by the majority of those present. However, it was felt that there also needed to be a method of documenting/recording the supervising APs suitability, which could possibly be achieved by logbook endorsement by an Advanced Rigger. This would require a bit more thought going forward.

Hosting Establishments

Currently a PTO wishing to host an AP course only has to notify the office 14 days in advance, whilst a Rigging establishment has to request permission from Riggers sub-committee, giving details of facilities. Those Advanced Riggers and Examiners that run AP courses know what facilities they require, i.e. sufficient clean and undisturbed space for each candidate, access to suitable inspection facilities, and access to required documentation and training aids, and may be better served in locations other than a busy PTO.

The Chair had proposed that Course tutors can decide the most suitable location for hosting an AP course and that there should not be a difference between a PTO and any other facility. Therefore, he had proposed that Form 169 should be changed to read:

Establishments

- All courses are to be run in an environment with facilities suitable to teach and examine good Advanced Packing practices.
- *Those wishing to run Advanced Packer Courses must notify British Skydiving HQ at least 14 days prior to the course, giving details of facilities etc. The British Skydiving Riggers' Subcommittee will be informed of the course(s) at the next meeting.*
- All courses must be held under current British Skydiving requirements and guidelines.

Following consideration, this proposal was agreed in principle by those present.

Initial Training Course Syllabus

The Following had been proposed:

8. Inspection of AAD and RSL installations should include an introduction to MARDs

9. Contamination of materials

The Chair had stated that in his opinion it is no longer relevant to include 'fabric tensile strength testing and acid mesh' in the AP (S) syllabus. He stated that PD no longer require an annual tensile test, and if such a test was required it would be better done by a Rigger. He believed that the acid mesh issue should be included in the AP(R) conversion course section.

Following discussion, it was felt by those present that the items included within the AP initial training course syllabus required further consideration.

Currency and Records

The Following had been proposed:

- Advanced Packers must keep a printed log of all reserves packed
- *The rating will be approved annually by an Advanced Rigger or Chief Instructor, who is an AP, who must be satisfied that the holder is current and up to date with the latest packing related developments and techniques (see Form 302 – Requirements and guidelines for Renewing Advanced Packer Ratings).*

The Chair stated that the addition of 'who is an AP' will require approval of STC as it requires a change to the Operations Manual. Therefore Pete Sizer had proposed that this proposal is put forward to STC for consideration.

This was agreed in principle by those present.

7. PROPOSAL TO AMEND VARIOUS RIGGING RELATED FORMS

7.1 Form 175 – Advanced Packer Course Training Record

A draft of Form 175 had been included with the Agenda, with proposed changes marked in red.

Following consideration, it was proposed by Karen Saunders, seconded by Gary Stevens that the amendments to Form 175 be accepted.

Carried Unanimously

7.2 Form 202 - Rigger Examiner Course Syllabus

A draft of Form 202 had been included with the Agenda, with proposed changes marked in red.

Following consideration, it was proposed by Allan Hewitt, seconded by Karen Saunders and agreed by Rigger Examiners present that the amendments to Form 202 be accepted.

For: 7 Against: 0 Abstentions: 1 (Dave Ballard)

Carried

7.3 Form 215 - British Skydiving acceptable Reserve Sealing Methods

A draft of Form 215 included with the Agenda

The Chair reported that Form 215 had been updated to include the second method of sealing reserves which was accepted at the Riggers Subcommittee on 9 June 2022. He stated that new pictures have also been produced, and that Method 1 has also been updated and includes new drawings.

Following consideration, it was proposed by Noel Purcell, seconded by Allan Hewitt that Form 215 be accepted.

Carried Unanimously

7.4 Form 237 - Rigging Loft Minimum Criteria

A draft of Form 237 had been included with the Agenda.

Following consideration, it was proposed by Dave Ballard, seconded by Allan Hewitt that the amendments to Form 237 be accepted.

Carried Unanimously

7.5 Form 257 - Guidelines for the Manufacture of a Safety Stow

A draft of Form 257 had been included with the Agenda, which had been updated and included new pictures.

Following consideration, it was proposed by Dave Ballard, seconded by Dave Major that the amendments to Form 257 be accepted with a slight variation to the wording.

Carried Unanimously

8. INSURANCE CLARIFICATION

The Chair reported that since the insurance clarification which had been circulated with the Agenda, further comments have been received from a number of Riggers stating that the policy wording was still ambiguous and unclear.

The COO reported that the Insurance Brokers have relayed the comments from the Riggers Committee to the Insurers, and they have promised to update the 2023/24 policy wording and IPID document to make the cover for Riggers clearer and more concise.

The COO stated that Riggers are covered for work (packing rigs) for British Skydiving members and PTO's and if they are carrying out work for others i.e., Bail outs rigs for aircraft/hang gliders, film work etc. then they should obtain separate, adequate cover for that.

9. REQUEST FOR ACCEPTANCE OF A RIGGING FACILITY

A proposal from Andy Shaw and Andrew Hilton for the acceptance of Karen Saunders' rigging facility at Langar Airfield had been included with the agenda.

Following consideration, it was proposed by Gary Stevens, seconded by Dave Ballard that Karen Saunders rigging facility at Skydive Langar be accepted.

For: 7 Against: 0 Abstentions: 1 (Karen Saunders)

Carried

10. EQUIPMENT RELATED INCIDENT REPORTS RESUMÉ

A resumé of equipment related Incident Reports had been included with the Agenda.

1. Cutaway Pad

An equipment incident report has been received, detailing the inspection of a cutaway pad, where a discrepancy in the length of the cables was noticed. Once the cutaway pad was opened, it was discovered that the cables were not attached to the pad, and that the required stitching had been omitted during the manufacture process (see image 1).



The Black cutaway pad, in the photo above, is from a Velocity Infinity container I-13SN Serial Number: 7748, Date of Manufacture: January 2007

The container has been in the possession of the owner for two years, and they do not know the history of any component manufacture.

In the process, the rigger opened another cutaway pad from the same velocity manufacture to compare the two cutaways, and differences were found in the manufacturing process. The cutaway pad that has been used as a comparison, is the green one and comes off an Infinity, I-33,S/N 6818, DoM July 2003 (See image 2 below).



The rigger has manufactured a new cutaway pad for the customer, as a replacement.

11. ADVANCED PACKER (AP) COURSE REPORTS

A resumé of the Advanced Packer Courses held since the last meeting had been circulated with the Agenda:

- i) An Advanced Packers Examination has taken place at Rhomech Rigging from 17 – 18 October 2022. The Course was attended by Alex Johnson. Alex successfully completed the Course and was awarded Advanced Packer (Grade S) status.
- ii) An Advanced Packers Training Course has taken place at Skydive Headcorn from 31 October – 3 November 2022. The Course was attended by Cara Pritchard and Julia Turii. Both candidates were advised to practice under supervision in preparation for the Examination phase of the Course at a later date.
- iii) An Advanced Packers Training Course has taken place at Skydive Hibaldstow from 21 – 24 November 2022. The Course was attended by Richard Cotton, Andy Pointer and Florin Cotofana. All candidates were advised to practice under supervision in preparation for the Examination phase of the Course at a later date.
- iv) An Advanced Packers Examination Course has been run by George Panagopoulos at Netheravon from 28 – 29 November 2022. The Course was attended by Jacob Jackson. Jacob successfully completed the Course and was awarded Advanced Packer (Grade S) status.
- v) An Advanced Packers Examination Course has been run by Noel Purcell at Skydive Hibaldstow from 30 Nov – 1 Dec 2022. The Course was attended by Thomas Curran. Thomas successfully completed the Course and was awarded Advanced Packer (Grade S) status.
- vi) An Advanced Packers Tandem Upgrade Course has been run by Karen Saunders on 2 December 2022 at Skydive Langar. The Course was attended by Colin Stevenson. Colin successfully completed the Course and was awarded Advanced Packer (Grade T) status.
- vii) An Advanced Packers Training Course was run by Karen Saunders at Skydive Langar from 28 November – 1 December 2022. The Course was attended by Joe Mann, James Round and James Moran. All candidates were advised to practice under supervision in preparation for the Examination phase of the Course at a later date.
- viii) An Advanced Packers Training Course was run by Karen Saunders at Skydive Langar from 5 – 8 December 2022. The Course was attended by Benjamin Reed Smith, Lee Robinson and Jake Orton. All candidates were advised to practice

under supervision in preparation for the Examination phase of the Course at a later date.

- ix) An Advanced Packers Examination Course was run by Karen Saunders at Skydive Langar from 9 December 2022. The Course was attended by Jason Tippins. Jason successfully completed the Course and was awarded Advanced Packer (Grade S) status.
- x) An Advanced Packers Training Course was run by George Panagopoulos at Netheravon from 12 – 15 December 2022. The Course was attended by Fabian Eke. Fabian was advised to practice under supervision in preparation for the Examination phase of the Course at a later date.
- xi) An Advanced Packers Examination Course was run by Gary Stevens at Rhomech Rigging from 12 – 13 January 2023. The Course was attended by Gareth Mooney. Gareth successfully completed the Course and was awarded Advanced Packer (Grade S) status.
- xii) An Advanced Packers Training Course was run by Gary Stevens at Rhomech Rigging from 17 – 20 January 2023. The Course was attended by Chad Smith. Chad was advised to practice under supervision in preparation for the Examination phase of the Course at a later date.
- xiii) An Advanced Packers Examination Course was run by Gary Stevens at Rhomech Rigging from 2 – 3 February 2023. The Course was attended by Richard Bremner. Richard successfully completed the Course and was awarded Advanced Packer (Grade S) Status.
- xiv) An Advanced Packers Tandem Upgrade Course was run by George Panagopoulos at Netheravon from 6 – 7 February 2023. The Course was attended by Max Tork. Max successfully completed the Course, and was awarded Advanced Packer (Grade T) status.
- xv) An Advanced Packers Examination Course was run by George Panagopoulos at Netheravon from 22 – 23 February 2023. The Course was attended by Fabian James Eke. Fabian successfully completed the Course and was awarded Advanced Packer (Grade S) status.
- xvi) An Advanced Packers Training Course was run by George Panagopoulos at Netheravon from 27 February – 2 March 2023. The Course was attended by Patrick McHugh. Patrick was advised to practice under supervision in preparation for the Examination phase of the Course at a later date.
- xvii) An Advanced Packers Examination Course was run by Karen Saunders at Skydive Langar from 28 February – 1 March 2023. The Course was attended by Lee Robinson and James Moran. Both candidates successfully completed the Course and were awarded Advanced Packer (Grade S) status.
- xviii) An Advanced Packers Training Course was run by Pete Sizer during March 2023. The Course was attended by Giuseppe Gigantesco, Richard Latter and Stephen Capper. All candidates were advised to practice under supervision in preparation for the Examination phase of the Course at a later date.
- ix) An Advanced Packers Tandem Upgrade Course was run by Karen Saunders at Skydive Langar from 27 – 29 March 2023. The Course was attended by Paul Champollion. Paul successfully completed the Course and was awarded Advanced Packer (Grade T) status.

Additional Advanced Packer Course Reports

Since the Agenda was published three further AP Course reports had been received:

- i) An Advanced Packers Examination Course was run by Noel Purcell at Skydive

Hibaldstow from 4 – 5 April 2023. The Course was attended by Richard Cotton, Andy Pointer and Florin Cotofana. All candidates were successful and awarded Advanced Packer (Grade S) status.

- ii) An Advanced Packers Training Course was run by George Panagopoulos at Netheravon from 3 – 6 April 2023. The Course was attended by Trevor Evans. Trevor was advised to practice under supervision in preparation for the Examination phase of the Course at a later date.
- iii) An Advanced Packers Examination Course was run by Karen Saunders at Skydive Langar on 11 April 2023. The Course was attended by Joseph Mann. Joseph successfully completed the Course and was awarded Advanced Packer (Grade S) status.

12. INDEX OF SAFETY NOTICES/INFORMATION BULLETINS - UPDATE

An update to the Index of Safety Notices and Information Bulletins had been included with the Agenda:

2. Safety Information Index

118 Next Millennium Tandem system Student Harness SI 1/22 18.11.22

8. Parachutes de France / Safran

54. Integrity of reserve upper flap SB 740-25-005 24.10.22

12. UPT

- 66. Weight limits Tandem Canopies:
 - Sigma and Sigma 2 Mains : 550lb
 - SR 340 and SR370 Reserves : 550lb
 - VR 360 Reserve : 500lb

43. Paratec

13. Next Millennium Tandem system Student Harness SI 1/22 18.11.22

13. BRITISH SKYDIVING SAFETY NOTICES/INFORMATION BULLETINS

Since the last Riggers' Subcommittee meeting in September 2022, a British Skydiving Safety Information (SI1/22) had been issued concerning the Next Millennium Tandem System Student Harness. Full details can be found on the British Skydiving website:

<https://britishskydiving.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/118.-Bulletin-SI-1-22-Next-Millennium-student-harness-1.pdf>

14. MANUFACTURER'S SAFETY NOTICES/INFORMATION BULLETINS

There had been no manufacturer's safety notices or information bulletins received since the last meeting.

15. A.O.B.

- 15.1 The Chair reported that a request from Nicky Johnston to update the wording in the British Skydiving Equipment Knowledge for Instructors Manual regarding soft links has been included (today) in the Riggers' Sharepoint folder for this meeting.

The Chair apologised for the lateness of this proposal, and that it was an oversight on his part that the proposal had not been forwarded earlier to HQ for inclusion on the Agenda.

The Chair reported that Nicky Johnston had stated that currently their NZ Aerosports Student Main Canopies are supplied with Soft Links and he was seeking authority to be able to use them on solo student equipment. Therefore, he had proposed a change to wording on page 11 of the Equipment Knowledge for Instructors Manual.

Currently the Manual states:

“Soft links may not be used on Student Main Canopies.”

Nicky Johnston had proposed that the wording be amended to:

“Soft links may not be used on Student Main Canopies, unless the canopy manufacturer allows the use of Soft Links.”

Following discussion, the Chair stated that as a Committee, we have always taken the canopy manufacturers lead on this, i.e. the canopy manufacturer dictates what type of links are used.

Jeff Montgomery referred to a British Skydiving Safety Notice that was issued in 1988 regarding connector links, hence the current text in the Equipment Manual regarding soft links.

The Chair stated that this was perhaps an area that required tidying up as there are approved rigging line specification out there and a subsequent notice on that, as there are rules as to what line can be used in rigger made soft links

The Chair stated that he would like to see the addition of the word ‘specific’ soft links added to the proposal, and subsequently tabled a counter proposal, seconded by Noel Purcell that the wording in the British Skydiving Equipment Knowledge for Instructors Manual concerning soft links:

‘Soft links may not be used on Student Main Canopies, unless the canopy manufacturer allows the use of ‘specific’ Soft Links.’

Carried Unanimously

15.2 Pete Sizer reported on a recent directive issued by the FFP regarding zinc-plated (galvanised) Maillon Rapide links on certain Tandem main canopies. He stated that he has written to a number of parachute manufacturers regarding this issue, and is currently monitoring their responses before taking any further action.

15.3 Karen Saunders reported on a recent issue with some imported equipment, that had been assembled in China. She stated that the equipment had arrived in various conditions, fully packed. There were incompatibility issues, mismatched canopies, no documentation etc.

It was agreed that a reminder be included in the Minutes to Riggers and APs to be aware of imported equipment and to keep a close eye on what’s coming through.

15.4 Since the previous Riggers’ Subcommittee meeting in September 2022, the following Method 2 Basic Riggers have been registered:

Shaun Dyer, Trevor Evans and Fabian Eke.

16. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The Chair asked for Agenda items to be submitted in a timely manner, to enable us to decide on a date for the next meeting. He stated that we also need to plan a meeting where Riggers can get together to look at the Advanced Packer Course Syllabus (Form 169).

Allan Hewitt asked whether the Riggers Inspection Policies Working Group was still ongoing.

The Chair reported that he was still continuing to obtain information from other countries to ascertain their equipment inspection policies. He stated that this was another area, which he hoped to progress this year.

The meeting closed at 16:38 (duration 01:38)

Distribution:

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

Accepted by Riggers' Subcommittee on 3 August 2023

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