
Riggers' Subcommittee

Minutes of the meeting held on
Thursday 3 August 2023 at 1500
by Microsoft Teams

Present: Pete Sizer (RE) - Chair
Dave Ballard (AR)
Rick Boardman (RE)
Josh Clark (RE)
Kim Newton (AR)
Noel Purcell (RE)
Karen Saunders (RE)
Andy Shaw (RE) - *(From item 6)*
Gary Stevens (AR) - *(From item 7)*

Key:

AR = Advanced Rigger
RE = Rigger Examiner
PR = Parachute Rigger

Apologies: Mary Barratt (PR) - Chair Council
Andrew Hilton (RE)
George Panagopoulos (RE)

In Attendance: Tony Butler - Chief Operating Officer (COO)
Liam Domin-Goddard - Communications Manager
Jeff Montgomery - STO/Chair STC
Trudy Kemp - Assistant to COO/STO (Secretary)
Annette O'Neil - Mag Editor

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.

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 13 APRIL 2023

It was proposed by Karen Saunders, seconded by Dave Ballard that the Minutes of the Riggers' Subcommittee Meeting of 13 April 2023 be accepted as a true record.

Carried Unanimously

3. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE RIGGERS' SUBCOMMITTEE MEETING OF 13 APRIL 2023

Page 3, Item 6.1 – Proposals to Change Form 169 – Advanced Packer Syllabus. The Chair reported that he was working on a paper outlining the various options, which would be circulated in a timely manner for consideration at the next meeting. He stated that he may also include something regarding extending the reserve re-pack cycle.

4. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF PREVIOUS STC MEETINGS

The Minutes of the STC Meetings of 13 April 2023 and 8 June 2023 had been included with the Agenda. There were no matters arising for consideration from these meetings.

5. REQUEST FOR ACCEPTANCE OF A RIGGING FACILITY

A request from Rick Boardman supported by George Panagopoulos for the acceptance of Dave Ballard's rigging facility at Bulford, Wiltshire had been included with the agenda. The request included full details of the facilities at the establishment.

Following consideration, it was proposed by Josh Clark, seconded by Karen Saunders that Dave Ballard's rigging facility be accepted.

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

Carried

6. EQUIPMENT RELATED INCIDENT REPORTS RESUMÉ

Details of an incident concerning the premature reserve deployment on an Icon container had been included with the Agenda. This followed an incident report from a PTO, detailing a premature reserve deployment, simultaneously with the main canopy deployment. This incident was identical to a previous incident in January 2023.

Both incidents occurred on different containers, but all came from the same manufactured batch. The reserves were each packed by different people.

The main deployment is initiated by the user. At approximately full line stretch as the user is swinging upright the reserve pin is extracted and the pilot chute for the reserve system starts to deploy. This leads to a near simultaneous deployment of both canopies. In all cases the user has opted to cutaway the main before full inflation of the reserve and the main has cleared successfully. In the most recent case the user did not activate the reserve handle as the reserve was already deploying. This allowed for analysis of the locations of the reserve handle and reserve cable at both ends.

Equipment

The containers are Icon, S7, fitted with the following components.

Container	DOM	Main canopy	Reserve Canopy	AAD
S7 21323	20/5/22	Solo 210(Dacron lines)	Tempo 210	Vigil
S7 21321	23/4/22	Solo 190(Dacron lines)	Smart 190	Vigil

Observation and Analysis by the PTO

These containers look to have been manufactured in a different fashion to other student Icon containers from both earlier and later batches.

Reserve cover flap design

There is a clear difference in shape of the reserve cover flaps for the 2022 batch. They are wider and smaller in length from yoke to bottom of the flap with a broader, more rounded bottom part.



The Icon on the left with Green embroidery is a 2022 model.

The Icon on the right with yellow embroidery is a newer October 2022 model but this design also matches earlier 2018 versions.

Back pad and yoke design

This is where we see the most significant design/manufacture differences. The 2018 and Oct 2022 version has a triangle stitch pattern as well as a much smaller, unstitched, section at the top above the binding tape next to the yoke line.



2018 design – Triangle stitching and only about 3/8 inch of material above the back pad binding tape

October 2022 design- very similar to 2018 with triangle stitching on the back pad – (s/n 21453)



2022 batch: no triangle stitching and 2 inches of fabric above the back pad binding tape. (s/n 21320)

The effect of this change is that the yoke area has a lot more movement available to it during use. The back pad also seems to be able to move around much more. As the user leans forward the reserve cover flap is lifted and mobile in a way that is not present on the other icons of different batches.



With the 2022 batch we have had a regular issue with the reserve cover flap popping out of the tucked area and then opening in freefall. This can be simulated on the ground by getting the user to roll their shoulder forward. The reserve cover then pops open. This is only evident on the 6 grounded sets of icons.

On occasions this movement also allows one of the magnetic riser covers to open.

After the initial incident we were left with questions such as:

- Was the reserve loop too long/loose?
- Was the reserve handle dislodged at some point? Was the RSL being pulled in some way?
- It was not easy to see the mechanism that allowed the reserve pin to be removed.
- Fortunately in the most recent incident the reserve handle was not pulled, and it can be clearly seen that it is positioned correctly. The cable is not moved or snagged.
- The marine eye that would normally have the reserve pin passed through it was in its correct location.
- The reserve system has recently been packed by a very experienced reserve packer (with over 20 years reserve packing experience).
- The RSL's on all batches are of similar construction and length.
- It is also noted that the container label looks different for this batch when compared to all our other containers.

PTO Conclusion

Moving the shoulder of the affected containers allows the reserve cover flap to move excessively. The best working theory at present is that in this batch the reserve cover flap can move up and forward to such an extent that the tuck flap on the RSL side is snagging the RSL at the Skyhook/Aeromard junction and is then pulling the reserve pin from its location.



Mark showing possible interaction with RSL/Skyhook

Junction between RSL and 'Red' Skyhook lanyard

It is the PTOs belief that the design or manufacture changes for the April/May 2022 batch have accidentally introduced a serious issue to the use of these Icons. The Manufacturer has been contacted and the PTO. In the meantime, all Icons at the PTO, manufactured in April and May 2022, have been grounded and removed from service.

Update

The PTO concerned have recently reported that Aerodyne have confirmed they will remanufacture the PTO with new, replacement containers. They have also been unable to replicate anything on the ground so any theories concerning the incident are largely a matter of guesswork.

Pete Sizer stated that the manufacturers do not agree with the CIs theory that the reserve cover flap is interfering with the RSL/Skyhook lanyard. Their view is that the cover flap is opening in freefall and then on deployment there is some sort of interface with the lines or risers with the reserve pin being removed. The manufacturer has not provided any reasoning as to why these containers were of a different design.

Karen Saunders also provided the meeting with further information relating to this incident.

7. 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 Training Course was run by George Panagopoulos at Netheravon from 8 – 11 May 2023. The Course was attended by Arthur Youe. Arthur was advised to practice under supervision in preparation for the Examination phase of the Course at a later date.
- ii) An AP Examination Course was run by Pete Sizer at Headcorn from 16 – 17 May 2023. The Course was attended by Cara Pritchard. Cara successfully completed the Course and was awarded Advanced Packer (Grade S) status.
- iii) An AP Examination Course was run by Noel Purcell at Skydive Hibaldstow from 16 – 17 May 2023. The Course was attended by Scott Becker. Scott successfully completed the Course and was awarded Advanced Packer (Grade S) status.
- iv) An AP Examination Course was run by Pete Sizer at Skydive Headcorn from 24-25 May 2023. The Course was attended by Chad Smith. Chad successfully completed the Course and was awarded Advanced Packer (Grade S) status.
- v) An AP Tandem Upgrade Course was run by Karen Saunders at Skydive Langar from 12 – 13 June 2023. The Course was attended by Nick Robinson and Shaun Dyer. Both candidates successfully completed the Course and were awarded Advanced Packer (Grade T) status.
- vi) An AP Examination Course was run by Pete Sizer at Skydive Headcorn from 27 – 28 June 2023. The Course was attended by Julia Turii. Julia successfully completed the Course and was awarded Advanced Packer (Grade S) status.
- vii) An AP Training Course was run by Gary Stevens at Rhomech Rigging from 26 – 29 June 2023. The Course was attended by Tamas Bodi, Rudy McClenaghan and Mike Patchett. All candidates were advised to practice under supervision in preparation for the Examination phase of the Course at a later date.

8. BRITISH SKYDIVING SAFETY NOTICES/INFORMATION BULLETINS

There has been no British Skydiving Safety Notices or Information Bulletins issued since the last meeting.

9. MANUFACTURER'S SAFETY NOTICES/INFORMATION BULLETINS

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

Pete Sizer reported that he had been made aware of a problem with Tandem Atom 740-1 and 740-2 parachutes, which had been highlighted in a circular issued by the FFP. He stated that although the manufacturers were aware of the issue, they had yet to release their own safety bulletin. Anyone who has a Tandem Atom System were asked to contact the Chair for further information.

10. A.O.B.

10.1 Request from George Panagopoulos

A request from George Panagopoulos had been included in the Riggers' Subcommittee Sharepoint folder as an 'additional' item to the agenda.

George had requested to run an AP(S) course in October 2023 for Oliver Hobbs. Although Oliver has previous parachuting experience, he did not currently meet the requirements of being involved in skydiving for at least 18 months to attend an AP Course. George had included full details in his request.

Following consideration, it was proposed by Rick Boardman, seconded by Josh Clark that the above request be accepted.

Carried Unanimously

10.2 Request from Karen Saunders

A request from Karen Saunders had been included in the Riggers Subcommittee Sharepoint folder as an 'additional' item to the agenda.

Karen had requested to run a Rigging Course at Skydive Langar from 17 – 22 October 2023. Karen had provided full details in her request.

Following consideration, it was proposed by Kim Newton, seconded by Josh Clark that the above request be accepted.

For: 8 (incl. 1 x proxy) Against: 0 Abstentions: 1 (Karen Saunders)

Carried

The Chair reported that there is now a £50 admin fee payable to British Skydiving for candidates attending a Rigging course. The Rigging Course application (Form 316) has recently been updated to include a payment section and is available to download from the British Skydiving website.

10.3 Inquiry into a Parachuting Fatality at RAF Weston on the Green on 2 September 2021

The Chair reported that the Defence Safety Authority (DSA) have now published their report into the fatality, which is available on the DSA website. A link to the report is as follows: [DSA Report](#). A Working Group will be instigated to consider the specific recommendations made to British Skydiving in their report.

The Chair of STC provided further details and some discussion took place, following which he requested that any Riggers interested in joining the WG to contact him direct.

10.4 **Registration of Basic Riggers**

Since the previous Riggers' Subcommittee meeting in April 2023, the following Method 2 Basic Riggers have been registered:

Cara Pritchard
Ruby Watkins

11. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Thursday 16 November 2023 at 3pm
Virtually by Microsoft Teams

The meeting closed at 15:48 (duration 00:48)

Distribution:

Chair Riggers' Subcommittee, All CIs, All Riggers, APs, Council, CAA, Mag Editor

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