
Riggers' Subcommittee

Minutes of the meeting held on
Thursday 4 September 2024 at 1400
by Microsoft Teams

Present:

Pete Sizer (RE)	-	Chair
Mary Barratt (PR)	-	Chair Council
Rick Boardman (RE)		
Josh Clark (RE)		
Liam Goddard (PR)		
George Panagopoulos (RE)		
Noel Purcell (RE)		
Karen Saunders (RE)		
Andy Shaw (RE)		
Gary Stevens (RE)		

Key:
RE = Rigger Examiner
PR = Parachute Rigger

Apologies: None

In Attendance:

Tony Butler	-	Vice President
Jeff Montgomery	-	HoST&C/Chair STC
Kev Dynan	-	STO
Robert Gibson	-	Chief Executive Officer
Trudy Kemp	-	Assistant to HoST&C (Secretary)
Ryan Mancey	-	STO

Observer: Andy Pointer - Sibson Skydivers

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 the preparation of the minutes after which the recording would be deleted.

1/24 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

2/24 MINUTES FROM THE RIGGERS' SUBCOMMITTEE MEETING OF 16 NOVEMBER 2023

It was proposed by Rick Boardman, seconded by Karen Saunders that the Minutes of the Riggers' Subcommittee Meeting of 16 November 2023 be accepted as a true record.

Carried Unanimously

3/24

MATTERS ARISING FROM THE RIGGERS' SUBCOMMITTEE MEETING OF 16 NOVEMBER 2023

Page 3, Item 6 – Proposed Operations Manual Amendments (Section 14).

At the previous meeting, the Subcommittee had accepted an amendment to Section 14 (Rigging) of the Operations Manual. This involved the requirements for Rigger ratings using different terminology, which needed to be tidied up. This amendment to the Operations Manual was accepted by STC on 8 February 2024.

Page 4, Item 7.3 – Advanced Packer Course Syllabus – Post Course

Supervision. The Chair had agreed to draft a new British Skydiving form for the purpose of recommending a Supervising Packer. This was an item on the main agenda this afternoon.

Page 5, Item 7.5 – Advanced Packer Course Syllabus – Currency and

Records. At the previous meeting, the Subcommittee had accepted a proposal to amend the renewal requirements of Advanced Packer (AP) ratings, which currently allows Advanced Riggers or Chief Instructors (CIs) to renew the rating.

It was agreed that any CI renewing the AP rating should hold an AP rating themselves and be current.

It was agreed that the words “who is a current AP” be added to the requirement the Currency and Records paragraph in the Advanced Packing Course Syllabus (Form 169). As this also involved an amendment to the Operations Manual, this required acceptance by STC.

This amendment to the Operations Manual had been accepted by STC on 8 February 2024.

Page 5, Item 7.6 – Advanced Packer Course Syllabus (Form 169).

Following the acceptance of the proposed amendments that required STC approval, Form 169 had now been amended and published on the website.

Page 5, Item 8 – Reserve Inspection and Repack Cycle. This is a main agenda item for this afternoon.

Page 6, Item 10 – Riggers’ Subcommittee Terms of Reference.

Parachute Riggers had now been granted permission access to enable them to view documents via the Riggers’ Sharepoint site. They had also been sent a ‘Teams’ invite to this meeting.

4/24

MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF PREVIOUS STC MEETINGS

The Minutes of the STC Meetings of 16 November 2023, 8 February 2024, 11 April 2024, 6 June 2024 and 1 August 2024 had been included with the in the Riggers’ SharePoint folder for this meeting.

There were no questions or comments raised from those present regarding the previous STC Minutes.

5/24

RIGGERS COURSE REPORTS

There have been two Riggers’ Courses held since the meeting in November 2023. Copies of the Course reports were included in the Riggers’ Sharepoint folder for this meeting.

5.1 British Skydiving wished to thank Skydive Buzz, Dunkeswell for hosting the British Skydiving Riggers’ Course from 11 – 15 December 2023.

The Examiners conducting the Course were George Panagopoulos, Allan Hewitt, Andy Shaw and Josh Clark.

Basic Riggers Course:

There were two candidates on the Basic Rigger Course. Both candidates were successful and were awarded Basic Rigger status. The successful candidates were: Fabian Eke and Ollie Hobbs.

Parachute Riggers Course:

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

Rigger Examiner Course:

One candidate attended the Course for upgrading to Rigger Examiner status. The candidate was advised to return at a later date after updating their lesson plans and manufacturing notes. They were also advised to look into the latest parachute equipment standards.

5.2 British Skydiving wished to thank Rhomech Rigging for hosting the British Skydiving Riggers' Course from 12 – 16 February 2024.

Because there was no Riggers' Subcommittee meeting prior to the Course dates, permission to run this Course was granted by the Head of Safety, Training & Competitions. Due to the delay in obtaining permission for the running of the Course, three of the four candidates withdrew prior to commencement of the Course. This left one candidate for the Parachute Riggers' Course. Amii Calway successfully completed the Course and was awarded Parachute Riggers' status.

6/24

PROPOSALS TO AMEND THE VARIOUS COURSE SYLLABUSES

Proposed amendments from Allan Hewitt to the following Riggers Course paperwork had been put forward for consideration and had been included in the SharePoint folder for this meeting. A detailed discussion on each proposal took place:

6.1 Basic Riggers Course Syllabus

The Committee agreed with some of Allan's points and felt they had good value. There were some areas of the proposal that required further clarification from Allan Hewitt.

Following consideration, Allan Hewitt's proposal to amend the Basic Riggers Course Syllabus failed to find a proposer from those present.

6.2 Parachute Riggers Course Syllabus

The Committee felt that although some of Allan's proposals had some merit, a more in depth discussion was required by Rigger Examiners especially regarding a number of the items that Allan Hewitt wished to see withdrawn from the Syllabus, i.e. risers.

Following consideration, Allan Hewitt's proposal to amend the Parachute Riggers Course Syllabus failed to find a proposer from those present.

6.3 Advanced Riggers Course Syllabus

There was some concern raised with regard to Allan's proposal to include the extra sentence.....'Modifications must be documented, tested and proved that they are fit for purpose.'

It was felt that this required further consideration by Rigger Examiners.

Following consideration, Allan Hewitt's proposal to amend the Advanced Riggers Course Syllabus failed to find a proposer from those present.

6.4 Rigger Examiner Course Syllabus

The Committee felt that the RE exam paper requires some clarity but did agree that the pool of questions does need review.

Whether we continue with the RE candidate producing a paper or being asked to conduct some kind of task/presentation. There needs to be something in place to assess the candidate's ability and depth of knowledge and that this could also be used as an online learning resource for cpd.

The Committee discussed Allan's proposals regarding currency requirements, for an RE to maintain their rating which they agreed required a review.

There needs to be a system in place with regard to how currency can be recorded and verified, and what attending a Rigging course every 2 years to maintain the rating actually means. The Committee felt that this could be further explored.

It was agreed by those present that Allan's proposals required further consideration by Rigger Examiners.

Following consideration, Allan Hewitt's proposal to amend the Rigger Examiners Course Syllabus failed to find a proposer from those present.

It was agreed that a meeting of the Rigger Examiners be convened over 1-2 days during the Winter months to further consider Allan's proposals. This would be an in-person meeting facilitated by British Skydiving.

Action: Riggers' Chair/STOs/Secretary

7/24

PROPOSAL TO AMEND THE POOL OF RIGGER COURSE EXAM QUESTIONS

A proposal to amend the pool of Rigger course exam questions from Allan Hewitt had been included in the SharePoint folder for this meeting.

The Committee agreed that the idea of a pool of questions is to maintain a degree of standardisation and that Rigger Examiners need to go through the list and see what questions are still relevant.

Following discussion, Allan Hewitt's proposal to amend the pool of Rigger course exam questions failed to find a proposer from those present.

The Committee noted that Allan Hewitt had put a great deal of effort and thought into his proposals, which had generated a great deal of discussion, and had prompted the decision to convene a Rigger Examiner meeting to have a thorough review of Riggers documentation and processes.

8/24

RESERVE INSPECTION AND REPACK CYCLE - DISCUSSION

Discussion papers on the subject of extending the current six months repack cycle had been included in the SharePoint folder for this meeting from British Skydiving Riggers: Allan Hewitt, Pete Sizer, Rick Boardman, Josh Clark, Jo Oosterveer and Paul Champollion.

There followed an extensive discussion by those present,

The discussion focussed on three main areas:

1. Whether to keep the current six months repack cycle
2. Changing the repack cycle to 12 months for all equipment

3. Changing the repack cycle to 12 months for Licensed skydiver equipment but keeping Tandem and Student equipment at six months

Keeping the current six months repack cycle

A question was raised whether there was any data to substantiate that it is safer to change to a 12 month repack cycle. There is evidence suggested from some manufacturers that repeated handling of a canopy can cause wear and tear on it, but is there any data to show that we will have less malfunctions and less incidents?

It was felt by some Riggers present that if the 6 month repack cycle was not broken why attempt to fix it! Although many countries have adopted a 12 month repack cycle, there is no evidence to say it is safer.

Changing the repack cycle to 12 months for Licensed skydiver equipment

If the Committee recommended increasing the repack cycle for Licensed skydiver equipment, the Committee might need to consider implementing a mandatory interim inspection of main equipment. This could be similar to the 100 jump check for Tandems.

The meeting discussed what an inspection might involve and the associated paperwork, some of which might already be in place from the component maintenance records produced by the Committee some time ago but not widely adopted. Some members felt that if an interim inspection was introduced for Licensed skydiver equipment, then a full repack may as well be conducted.

It was also noted that there are processes already in place for checking that equipment is suitable, i.e., equipment is checked on arrival at a DZ, and potential issues and problems are also picked up during the flight line check.

Equipment Education

It was felt that there should be more emphasis on jumper education in respect of equipment maintenance such as the regular check of equipment including inspection of the main canopy and deployment system, which would help to improve safety and reduce the number of incidents.

Risk

The Chair also raised the subject of risk and who ultimately held the risk should the repack cycle be extended, and if the worst scenario occurs.

Ultimately, the risk holder is British Skydiving, and they would need to justify why this change was made. They would need to show whether due process had been followed and what evidence had been presented to justify the change.

It was also agreed that British Skydiving needed to have a discussion with their Insurers/Lawyers for further clarification and advice going forwards, and also whether any change to the repack cycle would impact the cost of insurance for members.

The CEO, Rob Gibson noted that:

Any changes that get voted on by the Riggers and STC Committees regarding the repack cycle or any changes to the Operations Manual, must be notified to the Underwriter.

British Skydiving's Insurance premium is based on the risk profile calculated by the underwriters. The risk profile is based in part on the conditions listed in the Operations Manual at the time the insurance premium is calculated. Any changes to the Operations Manual affect the risk profile and British Skydiving is obliged to inform the underwriters of these changes.

Where do we go from here?

The Chair stated that any change to the current repack cycle requirements should not be rushed. There needed to be further discussion and evidence presented to justify the change.

The Committee had acknowledged that an interim check of equipment would enhance safety and that if the repack cycle was extended, it should start by extending it for Licensed skydiver equipment initially, before considering whether the change was suitable for Student and Tandem equipment.

The Committee agreed that a framework for an interim inspection as per Allan Hewitt's proposal, including an inspection of the main canopy, should be in place before the repack cycle was extended to 12 months.

The Chair invited members to give some thought to an interim check and what this might look like.

The Chair and members of the Riggers' Subcommittee extended its thanks to Allan Hewitt for bringing this item to the table.

Action: Chair of Riggers'

9/24

DRAFT FORM FOR RECOMMENDING A SUPERVISING ADVANCED PACKER

At the Riggers' Subcommittee Meeting on 16 November 2023, the Chair had agreed to draft a new British Skydiving form for the purpose of recommending a supervisor for AP candidates between their training and examination Courses. A draft of the form (Form 349) had been circulated with the agenda.

Following consideration, it was proposed by Gary Stevens, seconded by Karen Saunders that the AP Candidates Supervisor Recommendation (Form 349) be accepted.

For: 8

Against: 0

Abstentions: 1 (Andy Shaw)

Carried

The Committee agreed that once a Form 349 had been received by HQ and endorsed by the STOs, the Supervising Packer would then be added to the list held by HQ. This did not require the approval of the Riggers' Subcommittee first.

10/24

STUDENT EQUIPMENT CHANGE APPLICATION

A Student Skydiver Equipment Change Proposal Application submitted by Richard Wheatley had been circulated with the Agenda. The equipment involved was the Aerodyne Student Icon.

The Student Icon is already cleared for student use in the UK, but it is requested that it be allowed to be used for S/L Jumping.

Current rules in the Equipment Knowledge for Instructors manual states on page 10 that Large rings are mandatory on "RAPS" Equipment. Later, on page 19 it states, "Large 3 ring system mandatory on Static Line kit." There is no mention of such a requirement in the British Skydiving Operations Manual. Richard Wheatley stated that he believes this rule came about in 1991 with the initial clearance of the use of Ram Air canopies for S/L (What became known as RAPS and later the Category System).

Aerodyne do not manufacture the Icon with a large rings option, but it does come with their Miniforce elongated middle ring. This type of equipment has been used both in the UK and abroad by many thousands of students completing programs such as AFF as well as internationally for S/L. The manufacturer approves the use of this container for S/L use, and it can be purchased in a S/L configuration

from Aerodyne. Richard states that he knows of no cases where it has been shown that this equipment is unsuited to any S/L program.

The meeting was informed that the equipment in question had been inspected by Rigger Examiner Karen Saunders and deemed suited to S/L.

Potentially, there is no change required, if the PTO has a policy of using a Mallion Rapide link as a replacement to the RSL shackle then one of these will be required to replace existing RSL Shackle. (This is a mod that is already approved by British Skydiving for S/L operations).

Following consideration, it was proposed by Noel Purcell, seconded by Josh Clark that the Aerodyne Student Icon with mini-force risers for static line jumping be accepted.

Carried Unanimously

The Riggers' Technical Manual and Equipment Knowledge for Instructors would also require amending following acceptance of this proposal.

Action: Chair Riggers

11/24

REQUEST TO ACCEPT A TANDEM HARNESS SYSTEM

A request from Andy Pointer to accept a Tandem harness system had been included in the SharePoint folder for this meeting. The request had also included full details together with various photos.

The proposal is for the use of a newly made harness system that is designed to assist a Tandem student in adopting a good landing position, where that student has limited mobility of their legs.

The harness is designed to work with the Sigma student harness in a way which should not interfere with the existing harness. The harness was built by Malcolm Knox who held an Advanced Rigger rating at the time.

The meeting was informed that Karen Saunders and Pete Sizer had inspected the harness and were both content with the construction of the harness and the overall design.

Andy Shaw expressed his concern that he had not seen the equipment or had a chance to view the photos that had accompanied the proposal, and he felt he would therefore have to abstain from any vote.

The HoST&C pointed out that the whole purpose of the two Advanced Riggers checking the equipment is so that the equipment doesn't actually physically need to be present at a meeting for inspection. This was a decision made prior to virtual meetings taking place.

Andy Pointer provided further information regarding the harness and shared the photographs of the harness to those present. He also clarified a number of points raised by those present. He stated that a detailed brief would take place with the Tandem Instructor/Student. A risk assessment would also be conducted.

There was some concern expressed with regard to the placement of the buckle and whether the current placement could be reached by the Instructor.

Andy Pointer stated that it should not make a difference as to where the buckle is located. However, if the harness was adapted in the future, the location of the buckle would possibly be changed for ease of use, but basically the overall basic design would be the same.

Following consideration, it was proposed by Gary Stevens, seconded by Rick Boardman that the Tandem harness system as proposed by Andy Pointer be accepted for use.

For: 8

Against: 0

Abstentions: 1 (Andy Shaw)

Carried

12/24

RESUMÉ OF EQUIPMENT RELATED INCIDENTS

Details of six equipment related incident reports had been included with the agenda.

12.1 Next Century

After an uneventful Tandem descent, an Instructor with 3,348 descents jumping a Next Century container pulled the primary drogue release handle only for the handle and tuck table to detach leaving the cable in place (see image below). The instructor then pulled the secondary release handle, and the main canopy deployed without further incident.

The instructor lost the handle but on review of the cable left in the container, it appears that the handle had failed under the crimped area of the cable. It was not clear if this was a handle made by the manufacturer or was a replacement handle made by the PTO rigger. All other primary handles were checked for wear at this point and the CI now includes a check of the primary handles with the monthly checks of the tandem harnesses. A Safety Information was also issued on 21 December 2023, recommending the inspection of primary and secondary release handles and other suggested component parts.



Remaining drogue release cable exposed after handle has sheared off.

Photo taken from Next Century Owner's Manual.



Representation of the plastic tuck-tab handle in a serviceable condition.

12.2 Reserve Packing Tool Control

During a recent routine six-month inspection and repack of an Aircare Tandem Reserve container, a two-inch metal pony clamp was found attached to the centre cell top skin of the reserve free bag (see images below).

The clamp was found attached to the centre cell top skin which was rolled up from the warning label at the tail too and including a small section of the nose.

Otherwise, the reserve looked to have been folded as per the manufacturer's guidelines for a twin speed reserve into an Aircare Tandem System.

The clamp appeared to have been used to control the centre cell roll, which according to the manufacturer's packing manual states the need to be tight.



Investigation

According to the previous ROI, the equipment had been packed by an AP(T) on 12/10/23. When alerted to the incident by their Chief Instructor, the AP(T) stated that they wished to relinquish their AP ratings. They had previously been a staff packer at a PTO but had left their employment in November 2023.

Other anomalies were noted by the PR that found the clamp. The packing data card had also not been filled in following the repack, nor had the 112B 100 jump inspection.

The AP(T) had packed at least 5 reserves on 12/10/23 – two tandem and three Licensed skydiver reserves. The other tandem reserve packed on that date, a Strong Tandem system, also had the same paperwork errors, the packing data card and 112B 100 jump inspection had also not been filled in.

Initially when questioned by their Chief Instructor, the AP(T) had thought the error occurred when they had been sent to another PTO with another AP to pack several tandem and student reserves. The AP(T) stated that on that occasion that they had been working to the early hours of the morning and blamed poor lighting in the area they were packing. They packed 4 tandem reserves on this day and reportedly worked beyond 1am in the morning.

That event occurred in August 2023 but as the incident reserve was last packed in October 2023 following a live use, it's likely that it was packed in the PTO rigging room. This can't be confirmed as the packing data card was not filled in on this date.

Actions

The PTO contacted all the owners of the rigs that the AP(T) had packed and were in date and had them returned to the PTO for inspection.

The AP(T) has not responded to any requests for information by the PTO or British Skydiving. HoST&C suspended their AP ratings until remedial training has been received or they have notified British Skydiving that they wish to relinquish their AP ratings.

The PTO has implemented a shadow board in the rigging room for tool control and will be conducting a reactive audit in their SMS.

All APs have been reminded of the importance of tool control when packing reserve parachutes via a Safety Information Bulletin. Note Safety Information 1/24 was distributed to PTOs, CIs and APs on 11 March 2024.

The Chair noted the Recommendations that had been for consideration by STC and the Riggers' Subcommittee:

1. The AP(T) concerned had their Advanced Packing ratings suspended on 01 March 2024 until they receive remedial training, and the AP(T) concerned is still yet to respond to any communications. It is recommended that these ratings remain suspended. STC voted to accept this recommendation on 11 April 2024.
2. Conduct a review of the advice given to APs regarding a tools list and adequate tool control in the *Reserve Packing Guide*. Note this is a process already underway by the DSA Working Group.
3. Conduct a review of working practices for reserve packing and rigging. This should include considering guidance on the sensible number of sports, student and tandem reserves / amount of rigging work that can be safely conducted on a day. It should also consider the sensible hours that rigging work and reserve packjobs that can be conducted.
4. 'Location' and 'Time Packed' be added to the Record of Inspection to aid in the investigation of similar events in the future.
5. A section on 'Human Factors' be added to the *Reserve Packing Guide*.
6. PTOs consider implementing regular internal audits of their APs or second person assurance of AP work.
7. All PTOs conduct an SMS audit of reserve packing and tool control.
8. All those packing reserves are to be audited by a CI with an AP rating, AR or RE, every 2 years, and to include packing area, tool control, knowledge of manuals, and packing techniques. This should include an observed repack.

The above recommendations had been considered by Chief Instructors at the STC Meeting of 11 April 2024.

12.3 Double ended loop failure

During a recent Incident, a tandem pair experienced a premature deployment of the main canopy a short time after the instructor set the drogue. Up to the point of canopy deployment, the exit and freefall were uneventful.

The Tandem system in use was a Paratec Next system and the main canopy was an A2 350.

Upon inspection of the equipment on the ground, it was noted that the double ended loop had failed (see image 1 below), causing the premature deployment of the main canopy.

Image 1 (Expanded) shows that one end of the loop has either snapped or not been correctly finger trapped and bartacked. It is possible that either the loop is too long or that the bartacking has not been long enough to capture both ends of the finger trapping.

Images 2 and 3 illustrate a double ended loop from the manufacturer.

Actions:

Following the incident, the PTO rigger examined the loop and instigated a reactive audit of the other loops in use as it did not look like a loop that they had

manufactured. They noted that the packers had acquired double ended loops not only from the PTO rigger but also from various other unknown sources.

SI 2/24 was distributed to All PTOs, Riggers, APs and Tandem Instructors on 11 March 2024.

Recommendations issued:

1. It is recommended that PTOs using Tandem systems with a double ended loop on the drogue riser, conduct an internal audit of all loops installed on the Tandem Systems and any spares to ensure that loops are in a serviceable condition.
2. The audit should be annotated within the SMS documentation for the PTO.
3. Wet conditions on the PLA and freezing temperatures at altitude may also contribute to wear and tear of loops, therefore regular checks are also recommended.

(Note: Two incidents were reported on 03 March 2024 where the drogue did not release when the primary handle was pulled. This was attributed to wet double ended loops. In both cases the drogues released when the TIs pulled the secondary drogue release).



Image 1



Image 1 (Expanded)



Image 2 (Paratec Loop)



Image 3 (Paratec loop side view)

12.4 Javelin Container Canopy Compatibility

A report has been received of a Javelin Odyssey container that had been packed with canopies that are outside the manufacturer's recommendations.

The container was a Javelin Odyssey J3K with an Optimum 193 reserve and Pilot 210 main.

According to the manufacturer's compatibility chart, the main canopy was 2 sizes too big and the reserve 1 size too big.

[Canopy Compatibility Chart for Javelin Rigs | Sun Path](#)

Container Model	F-111 Reserve Canopy	Low Bulk Reserve Canopy	Zero Porosity Main Canopy	Hybrid F-111/ ZP Main Canopy	Low Bulk Main Canopy	Crossbrace Main Canopy	Main Pilot Chute Diameter (F-111)
RSK	106 - 120	113 - 126	83 - 99		107	68 - 75	28
RSK.5	106 - 120	113 - 126	100 - 107		120	80 - 88	28
RSK-1	106 - 120	113 - 126	109 - 120	135	135	88 - 96	28
NJK	113 - 120	126	109 - 120	135	135	96 - 103	28
DNKY	126	143	109 - 120	135	135	96 - 103	28
TJNK	126 - 135	143	135	150	150	108 - 120	28
TJNK.5	126 - 135	143	150	170	170	120	33
OJK	143 - 150	160	135	150	150	120	28
J1KS	143 - 150	160	150	170	170	135	33
J1KL	143 - 150	160	170	190	190		33
J2K	160 - 170	176	150	170	170	135	33
J3K	160 - 170	176	170	190	190		33
J4K	176 - 190	193	190	210	210		33
J4.5K	193 - 210	218	210	230	230		33
J5K	218 - 235	235	240	260	260		35
J6NK	235 - 245	253	260				35
J7NK	245 - 253		280				35
J8K	281		300				35

The manufacturer is explicit:

“Do not install a main or reserve canopy larger than the sizing chart calls for as there are serious safety issues that may arise from “overstuffing” a main or reserve container.”

The container was assembled overseas but last inspected and repacked in the UK. When questioned, the rigger that last packed the reserve stated that they had noticed that the main canopy was too big for the container but when packing the reserve, it did not appear oversized. When they consulted PIA information on pack volume:

“the Performance design website states that an Optimum 193 is the equivalent of the PD176 (according to the PIA pack volume chart the PD176R is 414 cu in and the Optimum 413cu in, the PDR160 being between 378 and 419 cu in) making them comparable.”

Actions:

The owner of the equipment has been notified that the equipment is not to be jumped in this configuration.

Sunpath were contacted for clarification and Pat Thomas replied:

“The reserve sizes that we recommend are what the equipment has been tested with and approved for. To change that on numbers from a pack volume study test were conditions, packing method, technique, fabric thickness, sewing techniques can cause variations in sizes enough to make it invalid to the fitment to the container, without appropriate testing and approval. Sun Path DOES NOT approve going against the published sizing chart distributed by Sun Path. Sun Path will not take any responsibility in deviation from this sizing chart unless there is written approval from Sun Path directly. We believe this is for everyone’s safety and is what is best for the skydiving community as a whole.

The OP 193 is too Large for the J3K”

Recommendations for consideration by STC/Riggers Committee:

It is recommended that the Riggers Committee discuss the policy for canopy compatibility in Sun Path Javelin containers at the next Riggers’ Sub Committee meeting.

The Chair reported that an e-mail had also been received from Gary Small with a number of questions for consideration by the Committee on this subject.

Karen Saunders also expressed concerns about going against manufacturers' recommendations, highlighting the need for a policy on canopy compatibility. She stated that she believed in the necessity of aligning with manufacturers' guidelines to avoid grounding equipment and ensuring safety.

A wider discussion ensued regarding manufacturers recommendations as a whole in particular where manufacturers requirements conflict with those of British skydiving,

The discussion that followed focused on the potential liability and implications of not following manufacturers' recommendations and guidelines. The Committee acknowledged that we need to establish a clear policy going forwards, and it was agreed that this subject should be included as an agenda item for consideration at the Rigger Examiners meeting.

**Action: Riggers Chair/
Secretary**

12.5 Amended Record of Inspection (F112)

A Packing/Rigging Confidential Report has been received regarding a Record of Inspection Form that appeared to have been amended / falsified.

A Licensed skydiver presented their equipment to a rigging loft for repack. On inspection of the paperwork and the Record of Inspection (F112), it was noticed that the equipment had been repacked twice in the US, once after a live use. The AP that packed the reserve in the US had used the previous Record of Inspection from when the equipment was packed in the UK, and instead of issuing a new form had simply annotated their details, using Tippex to cover the previous packer's Name, Signature, British Skydiving number, Date packed, Packers Number and Next Inspection Due date.

When questioned, the AP that packed the equipment in the US (who is a British Skydiving member and AP) stated that they had annotated the previous form because they did not have their British Skydiving ROI paperwork with them in the US and had been asked by the equipment owner to complete an ROI for their return to the UK.

12.6 Missing Bartacks on New Canopy

One Equipment Related Incident Report has been received regarding missing bartacks on a new Pilot 188.



During a routine inspection and assembly of new equipment, direct from the factory, it was noticed that four bartacks were missing on the number three and number five brake lines of a Pilot 188 Canopy. The bartacks were missing on both sides, left and right, above the cascade and where the lines are attached to the canopy. See the image below.

The Rigger assembling the equipment stitched the lines with bartacks and re-inspected the canopy.

The Manufacturer was informed and launched an internal investigation.

13/24

ADVANCED PACKER (AP) COURSE REPORTS - RESUMÉ

A resumé of the Advanced Packer Courses held since the last meeting had been circulated with the Agenda and is included as an attachment to the Minutes (Appendix 1).

14/24

BRITISH SKYDIVING SAFETY NOTICES/INFORMATION BULLETINS

There has been five British Skydiving Safety Information Bulletins issued since November 2023 and had been included in the Riggers' Sharepoint folder for this meeting:

14.1 01/23 – PIA Retainer Band Advisory -Rubber Band Failures Cause Hard Canopy Openings (14 December 2023)

Safety Information 01/23 had been issued following an Information Advisory released by the Parachute Industries Association (PIA) about the failure of rubber retainer bands of various sizes. This information is collated from reports of failed or broken rubber bands, whilst canopies laid packed and dormant during the off season. The Advisory provides sizes of those rubber bands affected, and guidance and information which may prove useful.

The PIA Technical Committee will initiate a long-term evaluation of rubber retainer bands to determine the extent of the issue and to develop workable solutions. Some retainer bands have an unknown shelf/service life.

The PIA Technical Committee had requested information via a survey requesting field data on rubber bands failure.

14.2 02/23 – Next Century – Primary Drogue Release Handle (21 December 2023)

Safety Information 02/23 had been issued as a result of an incident involving concerning a Primary or Main Drogue Release Handle which broke when pulled on a Next Century Container. (This incident was discussed at Item 12.1 -above)

14.3 01/24 – Reserve Packing Tool Control (11 March 2024)

Safety Information 01/24 was issued following where during a recent routine six-month inspection and repack of an Aircare Tandem Reserve container, a two-inch metal pony clamp was found attached to the centre cell top skin of the reserve free bag. (This incident was discussed at Item 12.2 - above).

14.4 02/24 – Tandem Double Ended Loop Failure (11 March 2024)

Safety Information 02/24 was issued following a recent Incident, where a Tandem pair experienced a premature deployment of the main canopy a short time after the instructor set the drogue. Up to the point of canopy deployment, the exit and freefall were uneventful. (This incident was discussed at Item 12.3 - above).

14.5 03/24 – Tandem Instructional Procedures (1 July 2024)

Safety Information 03/24 had been issued following a number of Tandem incident reports received, which may have been avoided by ensuring that adequate procedure is adhered to.

MANUFACTURERS' SAFETY NOTICES/INFORMATION BULLETINS

There had been five manufacturer's safety notices or information bulletins received since November 2023 and had been included in the Riggers' Sharepoint folder for this meeting:

15.1 Safran SB 740-25-010, 25 July 2023 - No-fly Halyard 120cm with Reed P/N 304626-0

15.2 Safran SB ATOM 25-011, 8 Dec 2023 - Rescue containers with new forms of adhesion

15.3 Safran SB ATOM 25-007, 15 Jan 2024 - Checking the integrity of the emergency upper flap assembly

15.4 Safran SB 740-25-012, 13 Feb 2024 - Emergency Repeater Handle Cable End Ring Phishing.

15.5 Fluid Wings SB 24-400-01, 14 Mar 2024

Fluid Wings LLC have issued a mandatory maintenance inspection of All Fluid Wings Parachutes with 400 lb. suspension line. This is immediate and before the next parachute jump.

A link to the Bulletin can be found:

https://www.fluidwings.com/_files/ugd/5a932f_823caac223434fe28628bfd7c_dc3f6b8.pdf

A.O.B.

16.1 Noel Purcell had asked that AP Training courses be run over two sets of two consecutive days. He stated that he has had a number of potential candidates struggling to get time off from work to attend a course over four continuous days. He stated that many PTOs are often shut for a couple of days it gives some more flexibility. The second set of days should not take place later than the following week. He felt that it would also give people the chance to practice (obviously not on kit unsupervised to go into the air) before completing the full four days.

The current AP Syllabus states that the Course should be run over 4 days, but it does not state that this cannot be split over a period of time.

Following discussion, it was felt that AP Courses could be run over two sets of two consecutive days, which would allow for more flexibility. This would also require some form of time frame. This would be four days normally consecutively or four days within a 2 week period.

The Chair stated that any amendment regarding AP Course structure allowing for more flexibility in scheduling would require a proposal for consideration at a future meeting.

In the meantime, the Committee raised no objection to Noel Purcell running an AP training course over two sets of two consecutive days for a one-off Course.

16.2 Rick Boardman commented on the frequency of meetings, which had led to a backlog of minutes and discussions, suggesting the need for more regular meetings to ensure safety and efficiency.

The Chair took on board Rick's comments and stated that we would be looking to hold a meeting sometime in November and that a calendar invite would be circulated once the date had been confirmed.

17/24

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Thursday 14 November 2024 at 2pm
Virtually by Microsoft Teams

The meeting closed at 17:11 (Duration 03:11)

Attached:

- **Appendix 1 - Resumé of Advanced Packer Courses**

Distribution:

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

Accepted by Riggers' Subcommittee & STC on 14 November 2024
Published on 15 November 2024

APPENDIX 1 – Resumé of Advanced Packer Courses Since November 2023

- i) An AP Examination Course was run by George Panagopoulos at Netheravon from 24 – 25 November 2023. The Course was attended by Arthur Youe. Arthur successfully completed the Course and was awarded Advanced Packer (Grade S) status.
- ii) An AP Examination Course was run by George Panagopoulos at Netheravon from 4 – 5 December 2023. The Course was attended by Oliver Hobbs. Oliver successfully completed the Course and was awarded Advanced Packer (Grade S) status.
- iii) An AP Examination Course was run by Pete Sizer at Skydive Headcorn from 30 November – 1 December 2023. The Course was attended by Richard Latter. Richard successfully completed the Course and was awarded Advanced Packer Grade (S) status.
- iv) An AP Training Course was run by Pete Sizer at Skydive Headcorn from 2 – 5 December 2023. The Course was attended by Joe Connolly, Bobbie Petrov and Max Holmes. All candidates were advised to practice under supervision in preparation for the Examination phase of the Course at a later date.
- v) An AP Training Course was run by Gary Stevens from 18 – 21 December 2023. The Course was attended by Kirk Trainor, Grant Macpherson and Morgan Wilkins. All candidates were advised to practice under supervision in preparation for the Examination phase of the Course at a later date.
- vi) An AP Tandem Upgrade Training Course was run by Noel Purcell from 5 – 6 January 2024. The Course was attended by Andy Pointer, Richard Cotton and Jack Bradford. All candidates were advised to practice under supervision in preparation for the Examination phase of the Course at a later date.
- vii) An AP Tandem Upgrade Examination Course was run by Noel Purcell from 7 – 9 February 2024. The Course was attended by Andy Pointer, Richard Cotton and Jack Bradford. All candidates successfully completed the Course and were awarded Advanced Packer (Grade T) status.
- viii) An AP Examination Course was run by George Panagopoulos at Netheravon from 8 – 9 February 2024. The Course was attended by Patrick McHugh. Patrick successfully completed the Course and was awarded Advanced Packer (Grade S) status.
- ix) An AP Examination Course was run by Gary Stevens at Rhomech Rigging from 10 February 2024. The Course was attended by Grant MacPherson and Tamas Bode. Both candidates successfully completed the Course and were awarded Advanced Packer (Grade S) status.
- x) An AP Examination Course was run by Gary Stevens from 16 – 17 February 2024. The Course was attended by Rudy McClenaghan. Rudy successfully completed the Course and was awarded Advanced Packer (Grade S) status.
- xi) An AP Tandem Upgrade Training & Examination Course was run by George Panagopoulos at Netheravon from 19 – 20 February 2024. The Course was attended by Fabian Eke. Fabian successfully completed the Course and was awarded Advanced Packer (Grade T) status.
- xii) An AP Training Course was run by Noel Purcell at Hibaldstow from 17 – 20 February 2024. The Course was attended by Lukasz Gawlik, Amy McClay and Fabrizio Colonna.

All candidates were advised to practice under supervision in preparation for the Examination phase of the Course at a later date.

- xiii) An AP Round Upgrade Training and Examination Course was run by Andy Page at Beccles Skydivers from 4 – 8 March 2024. The Course was attended by Mike Jones. Mike successfully completed the Course and was awarded Advanced Packer (Grade R) status.
- xiv) An AP Training Course was run by Andy Shaw at Sky Gear UK, Dunkeswell from 18 – 21 March 2024. The Course was attended by Philip Webley. Philip was advised to practice under supervision in preparation for the Examination phase of the Course at a later date.
- xv) An AP Examination Course was run by Gary Stevens at Rhomech Rigging from 8 April 2024. The Course was attended by Morgan Wilkins. Morgan successfully completed the Course and was awarded Advanced Packer (Grade S) status.
- xvi) An AP Examination Course was run by Pete Sizer at Skydive Headcorn from 27 – 28 April 2024. The Course was attended by Joe Connolly. Joe successfully completed the Course and was awarded Advanced Packer (Grade S) status.
- xvii) An AP Training Course was run by Karen Saunders at Skydive St Andrews from 11 – 14 May 2024. The Course was attended by Connor Johnston, Marcin Gala and Lukasz Holownia-Czarny. All candidates were advised to practice under supervision in preparation for the Examination phase of the Course at a later date.
- xviii) An AP Examination Course was run by Pete Sizer at Skydive Headcorn from 15 – 16 May 2024. The Course was attended by Stephen Capper. Stephen successfully completed the Course and was awarded Advanced Packer (Grade S) status.
- xix) An AP Examination Course was run by Noel Purcell at Skydive Hibaldstow from 4 – 5 June 2024. The Course was attended by Lukasz Gawlik. Lukasz successfully completed the Course and was awarded Advanced Packer (Grade S) status.
- xx) An AP Training Course was run by Gary Stevens at Rhomech Rigging from 1 – 4 July 2024. The Course was attended by Jack Jackett, Edward Roscoe and Mohamed Ahmedi. All candidates were advised to practice under supervision in preparation for the Examination phase of the Course at a later date.
- xxi) An AP Training/Examination Course was run by George Panagopoulos from 22 – 25 July 2024. The Course was attended by Panayiotis Panayi. Panayotis successfully completed the Course and was awarded Advanced Packer (Grade S) status.
- xxii) An AP Training Course was run by Gary Stevens at Rhomech Rigging from 2 – 5 August 2024. The Course had been attended by Daniel Chater and Casey Flay. Both candidates were advised to practice under supervision in preparation for the Examination phase of the Course at a later date.
- xxiii) An AP Examination Course was run by Gary Stevens at Rhomech Rigging from 19 – 20 August 2024. The Course was attended by Mohamed Ahmedi. Mohamed successfully completed the Course and was awarded Advanced Packer (Grade S) status.