



Meeting 2006A of the BHPA Executive Council

Meeting held on Monday 27th February 2006 at Baden Powell House, Queen's Gate, London SW7 5JS.

These notes of the Minutes are not to be taken as a full record of the Meeting of the Directors of BHPA Ltd.

Present:

John Aldridge
Marc Asquith
Edi Geczy
Martin Heywood
Dick Long
Angus Pinkerton
Andy Shaw
Steve Walsh

In attendance:

Jennie Burdett
Ed Cunliffe
Mark Dale
Sean Lovatt
Trevor McLoughlin
Joe Schofield
Dave Thompson

ITEM 1: APOLOGIES AND CHAIRMAN'S OPENING REMARKS

Apologies were received from Paul Dancey.

ITEM 2: MINUTES OF LAST MEETING

Meeting 2005B - 28th September, 2005

The following changes were agreed:

- 9.1.1 Remove all except first sentence.
- 9.2.1 Remove second paragraph.
- 9.10 Correct two typing errors.

Annual General Meeting - 27th November 2005

The minutes were approved.

Meeting 2005C - 27th November 2005

The minutes were approved.

ITEM 3: MATTERS ARISING

- 2003 - A2 Marc Asquith made the point that since the Association has been functioning perfectly well without a President, we have proved that we do not have to have one. His view was that political assistance is worth having and since we have invited Lembit Opik to our last two AGMs Marc suggested that we should invite him to be President for a fixed term of four years. This was agreed.

FOR ACTION: (2006 - A1) Marc Asquith to draft a formal letter from the Chairman to Lembit Opik.

- 2004 - B1 Continuing
- 2004 - B2 Closed
- 2004 - B11 Continuing
- 2004 - B15 Closed
- 2004 - C3 Merv Turner is no longer on Exec and members discussed whether there is a real need for someone to produce a Child Protection Policy. Edi added that some schools do not fly youngsters simply because of all the hassle involved. Closed.

FOR ACTION: (2006 - A2) Angus Pinkerton to ask FSC to investigate CPP.

- 2004 - C17 Closed.
- 2004 - C18 Continuing.
- 2004 - C20 Closed.

- 2005 - A2 Continuing.
- 2005 - A4 Closed.
- 2005 - A8 Closed.
- 2005 - A9 Angus reported on the high cost of getting magazines on to CD. Closed.
- 2005 - A10 Closed.
- 2005 - A11 Closed.
- 2005 - B1 Closed.
- 2005 - B2 Closed.
- 2005 - B3 Closed.
- 2005 - B4 Closed.
- 2005 - B5 Closed.
- 2005 - B6 Dave Thompson was still keen for foreign schools to be allowed to buy BHPA Student Training Record books, even though this was thrown out at the last FSC. It will be on the agenda for further discussion at the next FSC. Continuing.
- 2005 - B7 Closed.
- 2005 - B8 Closed.
- 2005 - B9 Closed.
- 2005 - B10 Closed.

ITEM 4: MILITARY LOW FLYING

Martin reported on an email he had received from Robin Emley who was concerned that not enough of our members are using the Low Flying Military Avoidance System.

The meeting considered how pilots could be encouraged to use the system and members felt that an article should be published in Skywings and information included on our website. It was agreed that Joe would write the article for Skywings and forward to Tom Hardie for checking. Robin Emley would then be asked if he had anything to add to the article before publication.

There was some discussion about the sites database. Steve mentioned that his role was made very difficult because he does not have access to the sites database. It was agreed that Tom Hardie should be requested to pass the database to Steve so that he can administer it.

FOR ACTION: (2006 - A3) Joe Schofield to write article for Skywings re Low Flying Military Avoidance Systems.

FOR ACTION: (2006 - A4) Jennie Burdett to email Marc Asquith to see if other RAeC bodies use the same system in the same way.

FOR ACTION: (2006 - A5) Dick Long to speak to Tom Hardie about the Sites Database.

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ITEM 5: STAFF SALARY REVIEW

Martin said that as was the normal procedure, staff salaries would be dealt with by the F&GP.

ITEM 6: FLYABILITY TREASURER

Martin explained that because of the legal status of Trustees, Flyability need formal approval from the BHPA Executive in order to appoint Chris Roberts as a Trustee. Chris has been Flyability Treasurer for a number of years and Steve Varden feels that he should be a Trustee.

Dick said that we are giving Flyability of grant of £2,000 per year but never manage to get a copy of their accounts. It was suggested that the grant should be withheld until we have received the accounts as Dick had expressed concern that Flyability was accumulating funds instead of using them.

Members agreed not to approve the appointment of Chris Roberts until a full set of accounts had been received. Dick would write to Flyability accordingly.

ITEM 7: RAeC PROJECTS DIRECTOR

Marc explained that there is more and more government legislation going through all the time and it is increasingly difficult for Royal Aero Club voluntary officers to cope with it. RAeC would therefore like to employ someone part time to monitor what is happening in government. The BMAA have already agreed to put some money in to kick start this and Marc hoped that BHPA would agree to do the same. Marc pointed out that BHPA had been prepared to sue DEFRA at a cost of £11,000 but the proposed appointment at the RAeC would be a much better and cheaper way of responding.

Dick was reluctant to give financial support and said that we do not get a lot out of the RAeC for the amount that we already contribute. He was concerned that our subscription to the RAeC would continue to increase and that employing another person would simply be 'empire building'.

John felt that we should spend money on protecting our interests. Legislation will continue to increase and we need to be in a position to defend ourselves.

After further discussion members agreed in principle to provide seed corn funding. Marc would get back to Exec with full costs and details.

ITEM 8: PARAMOTORING

Mark had circulated his draft of a PPG survey and explained that we need to rethink how paramotoring is dealt with within the BHPA. He said that one of the reasons why people do not join us at the start of their paramotoring career is because there is a widespread belief that we 'waste their time' by making them learn to fly from hills first and they therefore feel that they are better off going to a non-BHPA club. Mark had been looking at 'flat from scratch' where students do ground handling rather than flying from a hill or winch.

Mark went on to say that most paramotor pilots never go more than five miles from base so really they do not need all the information that we are insisting that they have. At the moment our exam qualifies them to go cross country but a CP exam might be more appropriate.

The survey and Mark's suggestions were then discussed. Edi said that he had noticed, as had other schools, that once students have done their first solo they never go back to finish their training. However, he thinks that they are still out flying despite not completing the training.

FOR ACTION: (2006 – A6) All Exec to get back to Mark Dale with feedback on the survey within two weeks.

It was agreed that the survey should be available on the web but Sean suggested that it should not be on the BHPA website as this may put people off and be a disincentive. Ed offered to put the survey on his website with suitable wording such as:

"This survey has been produced by a BHPA Technical Officer because they are looking into improving training standards."

FOR ACTION: (2006 – A7) Edi Geczy, Ed Cunliffe and Sean Lovatt to liaise with Mark Dale.

The meeting then discussed what could be done to help paramotoring and Mark suggested that all our clubs should try to find a flat field for paramotoring members. All clubs could have a site for paramotoring. Angus proposed that this should be published in the Bulletin and Skywings.

ITEM 9: MARKETING

9.1 Martin opened the discussion about the BHPA's marketing policy for the future and asked members for ideas. Andy felt strongly that someone should be employed to manage our marketing.

It was noted that BHPA had spent a considerable sum on marketing in the past without any identifiable result. Also, both the Australian and German associations had spent huge amounts of money on marketing and the subsequent slight increase in members did not produce anything like enough revenue to pay the salaries of the people employed to do the marketing.

FOR ACTION: (2006 – A8) Jennie Burdett to find previous Exec discussions on Marketing in old minutes and circulate.

Dave added that the drop in membership numbers directly reflected the summer weather conditions, i.e. bad weather for two consecutive years.

Edi suggested that it would be more productive to employ a marketing specialist to liaise with the schools and help them to improve their own marketing, someone who the schools could call on for advice. Exec members felt that this was a good idea and should be progressed.

Sean said that grants are available for this kind of thing and Mark suggested that Mark Shaw should be approached as he is something of an expert in obtaining grants.

FOR ACTION: (2006 – A9) Mark Dale to speak to Mark Shaw about marketing grants.

9.2 Andy reported that the virtual hang glider is not interesting enough for the people who write software to bother with. Mark suggested that Andy should look at the software that the BGA use for their own virtual sailplane.

FOR ACTION: (2006 – A10) Mark Dale to contact BGA re the software for their virtual sailplane.

ITEM 10: FUTURE OF EVENTS

Martin said that he would be having a meeting with the BMAA the following week. He informed the meeting that contrary to what had originally believed, we are not tied in to having the event at the NEC this year. Martin also mentioned that historically the All Out event had always made a loss and the annual trade show had always made a profit.

Joe expressed the view that the show at the NEC had not had much to do with our sport. Despite it being 'our' show, only about 20% of the stands had any connection with hang gliding or paragliding. Andy mentioned that there were no talks going on during the event.

Steve said Exec had to decide whether the show is merely for our members and a place to hold the AGM, if it is intended as marketing tool then it is not the right format.

Nonetheless, there was a general feeling that the show is a worthwhile event and Dave suggested that Edi should write an article for Skywings to counter the negative comments that had been published after the event.

FOR ACTION: (2006 - A11) Edi Geczy to write article and Martin Heywood to provide input on the draft.

Marc said that this year we really need to promote the event properly; we also need someone to replace Merv Turner.

There was an idea from Edi that BHPA should subsidise stand space to our schools to encourage them to attend. They could have 3sq.mtrs. stand space for free and anything over that they would pay for. Members felt that this was an excellent idea and Dick said that if the cost was £50k then it was a non-starter but we could afford it if the cost was only £15k.

The discussion continued and Angus said that there must be a centrepiece for the show – such as the VHG or a zip slide.

FOR ACTION: (2006 – A12) Martin Heywood to get cost of 3sq.mtr stand space and whether a zip slide is a possibility.

Sean suggested that there should also be something educational going on for our newer members who are still desperate to learn.

Dick said that as the trade show is going ahead, we should get rid of the name SPLASH. This was agreed and Sean added that the website for the event needs to be done properly as it has been terrible.

ITEM 11: REPORTS

11.1 Treasurer

Dick reported that we have lost about £15,000 so far this year but he hoped that this would improve during the next quarter. He reminded everyone that we must take care of the finances and cut expenditure.

Sean said that we are not aligned to the right sports, we need to be looking at young and fashionable sports. People are not coming to us until they are relatively old compared to the age group on the continent.

11.2 FSC

Angus had attended the EHPU meeting with Martin and, as chairman of the Airworthiness Committee, Angus had expressed his regret that the Germans had been unable to adopt the test standard, as well as voting against the load test standard. The Germans are now thinking of using both the DHV and GEN stamp.

Martin reported on the possible development of a very small, light, transponder suitable for use on a hang glider or paraglider by one of the Swiss Federation members. Angus said that Brussels have not yet realised how many transponders there would actually be.

11.3 Insurance

Martin said there was nothing to add to his written report that had been circulated.

11.4 Schools Liaison

Andy reported that the Schools' Workshop would be hosted by Airways this year and he would like to see more officers/Exec members attend. Dick agreed that as in previous years BHPA would pay for refreshments at the workshop.

11.5 Competitions

John expressed concern that some of the FLPA competitions committee are not BHPA members. As FLPA is administered through the BMAA and CIMA it is not without its complications but Michel Carnet is hoping that BHPA will sponsor a national competition. Ed said that if BHPA would do this it would send a strong message to paramotorists. Dick agreed that if we are committed to paramotoring then we should be supporting it.

There was some discussion in regard to FAI licences which would have to be issued by the BMAA for FLPAs. However, Marc said that the RAeC could vary this if the BMAA agreed that the BHPA could issue licences for FLPA.

Mark asked whether there is a chance of running a PPG XC competition. John replied that the problem with that is getting someone to run it. Apart from that, the competitors would have to have the correct ratings and not many of them have at the moment.

11.6 Sites

11.6.1 Steve had circulated a paper on sites purchase to Exec members and asked them to give him any feedback within two weeks.

11.6.2 LARA have been asking for our support in lobbying to stop a change in the Natural Environmental and Rural Communities Bill and Steve asked the meeting whether this was appropriate. Marc said that this would do us no harm and suggested that he and Steve should liaise on this.

FOR ACTION: (2006 – A13) Steve Walsh and Marc Asquith to liaise re lobbying peers.

11.6.3 Re information concerning free flight and disturbance to birds, Dick informed Steve that the RSPB had done some research on this and suggested that Steve should speak to Jockey Sanderson. Marc wondered whether we ought to produce a Code of Practice to be agreed with some of these bodies.

11.7 Skywings

Paul Dancey was not at the meeting but had submitted his

written report.

Joe pointed out that contrary to Steve's suggestion recently that the number of Skywings subscriptions is falling; they are actually increasing.

Sean said he would be setting up a part of the website for Exec members only.

11.8 Website

11.8.1 Sean asked if he could have access to the BHPA membership database. This was agreed in principle but would be considered by the F&GP as it was a data protection issue.

11.8.2 Sean asked what to do about BHPA email addresses where the person concerned is no longer an officer or employee of the Association. Martin said they should be bounced with an email saying that the address is no longer available.

11.8.3 Martin reminded members that they should use IRIS to apply for Sports Council grants for international travel etc.

FOR ACTION: (2006 – A14) Martin Heywood to forward email re international grants to Dave Thompson.

11.9 External Representation

The RAeC have asked for nominations for people to attend a garden party at Buckingham Palace. Anyone interested should contact Jennie who will collate the responses.

FOR ACTION: (2006 – A15) Jennie Burdett to collate any applications to attend garden party.

11.10 Admin

The trial to find out whether sending out membership renewals by 1st Class rather than 2nd Class, actually makes a difference is now being done and the figures should be available by the end of April.

ITEM 12: DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting would be held after the summer and Availability Planners would be circulated as usual.

ACTIONS - OPENED, CONTINUING

WHO	NUMBER	WHAT	STATUS
Marc Asquith	2004 - B1	Draft a note for Skywings re advertising policy	Continuing
Steve Walsh	2004 - B11	Write an article for Skywings on site issues in general	Continuing
Steve Walsh/ Adrian Bishop	2004 - C18	Look as possibility of Sites Fund.	Continuing
All Exec	2005 - A2	Email Job Description and photo to Sean.	Continuing
Dave Thompson/ Angus Pinkerton	2005 - B6	Look at possibility of selling Student Training booklets to foreign schools.	Continuing
Marc Asquith	2006 - A1	Draft a formal letter from the Chairman to Lembit Opik.	Opened
Angus Pinkerton	2006 - A2	Ask FSC to Investigate CPP.	Opened
Joe Schofield	2006 - A3	Write article for Skywings re Low Flying Military Avoidance Systems.	Opened
Jennie Burdett	2006 - A4	Email Marc Asquith re other RAeC bodies using Low Flying Military Avoidance Systems.	Opened
Dick Long	2006 - A5	Speak to Tom Hardie re Sites Database.	Opened
All Exec	2006 - A6	Give feedback on ppg survey to Mark Dale.	Opened
Edi Geczy/Sean Lovatt/Ed Cunliffe	2006 - A7	Liaise with Mark Dale re ppg survey.	Opened
Jennie Burdett	2006 - A8	Check old Exec Minutes for previous discussions on marketing.	Opened
Mark Dale	2006 - A9	Speak to Mark Shaw about marketing grants.	Opened
Mark Dale	2006 - A10	Contact BGA re software for their virtual sailplane.	Opened
Edi Geczy	2006 - A11	Write article for Skywing re NEC event and Martin Heywood to provide input on the draft.	Opened
Martin Heywood	2006 - A12	Martin Heywood to get cost of 3sq.mtr stand space and whether a zip slide is a possibility.	Opened
Steve Walsh/ Marc Asquith	2006 - A13	Liaise re lobbying peers.	Opened
Martin Heywood	2006 - A14	Forward email re international grants to Dave Thompson.	Opened
Jennie Burdett	2006 - A15	Collate applications for attend Buckingham Palace garden party.	Opened