



2005 Annual General Meeting of the BHPA

Minutes of the meeting held on Sunday 27 November, 2005 at the National Exhibition Centre, Birmingham, commencing at 11.00am.

These minutes are not to be taken as a true record without referring to the minutes of the Executive Council meeting at which they were approved.

Present:

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

45 Voting members
of the Association

In attendance:

Jennie Burdett
Mark Dale
Sean Lovatt
Joe Schofield
Dave Thompson

ITEM 1: CHAIRMAN'S OPENING REMARKS

The Chairman, Martin Heywood, welcomed everyone to the fourteenth BHPA AGM. This was the first time the BHPA had held an event at the NEC and Martin said he hoped everyone would enjoy the show.

ITEM 2: RESOLUTIONS

2.1 That the Accounts and Report of the Executive Council for the year ended 31 March 2005 be approved.

The resolution to approve the accounts was passed.

2.2 That the following members be elected to the Executive Council: J. Aldridge, P. Dancey, E. Geczy, M. Heywood, A. Pinkerton.

The resolution for the election of members to the Executive Council was approved.

2.3 That Clear & Lane be re-appointed as auditors and the Executive Council be authorised to fix their remuneration.

The resolution was approved.

This concluded the formal business of BHPA Limited as required by the Companies Act.

ITEM 3: PRESENTATION OF TROPHIES

Lembit Opik, MP, had very kindly agreed to present the trophies for the winners of various competitions, which he duly did. There were also three BHPA Award of Merit presentations to: Chris Burns (Calvo), Phil Mackereth and Glen Stockton. John Lawrence had been delayed and was not at the meeting to collect his own Award of Merit.

Lembit then addressed the membership and said he has a passionate interest in flying almost everything, although having broken his back in twelve places whilst paragliding he no longer paraglides.

He went on to explain how he is fed up with the restrictions placed on air sports by our litigious society as well as governments. Although he had suffered a very bad accident, it was his choice to fly and he believes that we should all have the freedom to make our own choices.

Lembit and other like minded of MPs have therefore formed a small group with the aim of giving aviation a voice in parliament. He asked members to let him know if bad things are happening or if any legislation is going to have an adverse affect on our sport, so that he can try to help and maybe get things changed.

In closing, Lembit expressed his hope that we could all work together to improve things for aviation.

WINGS OVER THE CLOUD

The best article in Skywings was chosen by Barbara Bedding and this year the winner of the Wings Over The Cloud award was Dave Snowdon for 'The Really Big Hills' (July Skywings).

ITEM 4: OFFICERS' REPORTS

4.1 Treasurer

Dick Long reported that the only thing to highlight at the moment is the falling membership numbers and hence falling subscription income. We currently have good reserves but cutting costs may be an issue in future years. Exec are planning to spend some money on trying to improve our membership figures and will be looking for someone to analyse our statistics.

The Sports Council have informed us that we will not be getting any grant after next year as they will be focussing on Olympic sports. We are by no means the only sport to have grant withdrawn and Dick said he has submitted an appeal, although he did not expect this to make any difference.

4.2 Insurance

Martin Heywood said he was pleased to report that the insurers have agreed to increase the '60 day rule' to 120 days to enable our schools to conduct more training abroad. There will be no significant change in the premiums for the coming year.

Bill Morris asked whether the £25k limit had had any effect on the claims situation. Martin replied that we have not had any major claims since 2000 though whether this is because of the insurance cap or the improved training system we cannot say for certain. For whatever reason, we have had fewer claims and not so much has been paid out.

Angus Pinkerton added that in his view the tightening up of the training syllabus has had an effect.

Nigel Armstrong asked whether there is any plan to increase the £2m cover but Martin said most of our landowners are happy with £2m. We occasionally get asked for £5m by local councils but on the whole £2m is acceptable. If we increased cover to £5m it would have a dramatic affect on our subscriptions so we hope to stay as we are.

In response to a question from Andy Berzins regarding an alternative insurer, Martin said this has been looked at and we do keep any eye on other possibilities but at the moment what we have is the best available to us.

4.3 FSC

Angus Pinkerton presented his report for the Flying & Safety Committee.

4.4 Skywings

Paul Dancey presented his report on Skywings.

4.5 Events

Martin reported that Merv Turner's written report in the AGM folder is his last as a BHPA Exec Member as he has resigned. Nevertheless, the BHPA will continue to work closely with the BMAA on next year's event.

4.6 Competitions

John Aldridge presented his report on Competitions.

4.7 External Representation

Marc Asquith presented his report and was asked what the situation is in regard to transponders. Marc replied that nothing small enough or light enough for use on hang gliders/paragliders has yet been produced.

4.8 Schools Liaison

Andy Shaw reported on his Schools Liaison role and asked any instructors interested in attending the Schools' Workshop in March to contact him. He expressed his concern at the drop in membership numbers and felt that instructors needed to discuss how to change this.

4.9 Sites

Whilst presenting his report Steve Walsh highlighted that it had been agreed that donations to the Sites Fund should be voluntary as this is not a good time to be increasing membership fees.

4.10 Website

Sean Lovatt reported on the progress of the BHPA website.

ITEM 5: ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Brett Janaway asked whether Exec would consider it if he put a proposal forward for a 'Guide' rating. Martin said if Brett would put his proposal in writing the Exec would discuss it.

There were no further questions from the membership and Martin thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting.