



Meeting 2012B of the BHPA Executive Council

Meeting held on Thursday 28 June 2012 at the BHPA Office, 8 Merus Court, Meridian Business Park, Leicester, LE19 1RJ

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

Present:

Marc Asquith
Bill Bell
Ed Cunliffe
Paul Dancey
Martin Heywood
Angus Langford
John Nash
Angus Pinkerton

In attendance:

Jennie Burdett
Mark Dale
Joe Schofield
Dave Thompson

ITEM 1: APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies had been received from John Welch.

ITEM 2: MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

2011D - 8 September 2011

AGM - 3 March 2012

2012A - 3 March 2012

The minutes of the above meetings were approved.

ITEM 3: MATTERS ARISING

2011 – B5 Continuing.

2011 – B6 Closed

2012 – A1 Continuing

2012 – A2 Closed

2012 – A3 Marc said that nobody was providing insurance for Sub115k so this action could not be done. Closed.

ITEM 4: STAFF PENSIONS

Angus L said we have a couple of years before we are required to provide pensions but we will need to think about it seriously next year. When we are looking at subscriptions for 2015 we will need to take into account the cost of providing staff pensions.

FOR ACTION: (2012 – B1) Angus Langford to circulate paper re staff pensions.

ITEM 5: AGM

Marc proposed that we should do the same next year as this year, i.e. have our AGM at the BGA's event, and he asked Exec for comments.

Bill suggested that the paramotor event would be a good place to hold the AGM. He said that joining with BGA this year was good to cement relations but maybe we would get more members attending if we held the AGM at one of our own events.

The meeting discussed that lack of members at the AGM and Martin pointed out that people live on the internet now; as a form of communication with members the AGM is unnecessary. Anyone can get in touch with Exec and Officers via email etc. Martin also felt that the BGA may feel slighted if we move away from them. However, we could move the AGM around to a different event of our own each year.

Various possibilities were discussed but members felt that if the AGM was held at a flying event and the weather was good, there would still be nobody at the AGM as they would all be out flying.

Angus L said we could actually abolish the AGM as under

the new Companies Act this was possible. Alternatively it could be held on-line, it would definitely be possible to do a webcast and this would save us a good deal of money.

Dave wondered whether we could get rid of the AGM altogether and if we want a meeting at any time the members could just turn up at events. Marc believed it was important to have a meeting to allow members to meet the Exec.

There was some further discussion then Marc proposed that we have the AGM in the hotel again next year but make it a webcast as well, just to see how it goes. He added that the BGA talks were very interesting and would be relevant to our members if only we could get them there.

It was agreed that the AGM would again be at the BGA event but this year BHPA would be there for one day only. The date would again be early March.

ITEM 6: SKYWINGS ADVERTISING AGENT

The current billing arrangements between the BHPA and its advertising agent were discussed and Marc explained that a new "contra" system was to be put in place by exchange of letters. This would both simplify arrangements and offer better financial protection for both parties.

ITEM 7: SPEED WINGS

This item was in response to questions raised at the AGM and was referred to the FSC.

ITEM 8: REGISTRATION OF NATIONAL RECORDS

Bill reported that the competitions people were trying to tidy up the situation regarding records. They are now recording who holds which national record so that people know what the current record is. A clear set of rules will be produced but will not necessarily be the same for hang gliding and paragliding

ITEM 9: HUMAN POWERED FLIGHT

Marc explained that we have formally accepted HPF as a BHPA discipline. Members agreed that this was an area that was likely to increase in future.

ITEM 10: REPORTS

10.1 Finance

Angus L reported a profit of approximately £13k for the year to March 2012 but said that due to the difficulties with the calculation of fees in advance this may have to be revised. He noted that expenses had come in over budget but this was mainly due to increased travelling costs etc.

The lowest figure for the bank account over the year has been £150k and Angus therefore suggested that £150k should

be put on deposit with RBS at the highest rate of interest. Bill asked what would happen if we needed this money within the year that it was on deposit; for instance for a site purchase. Angus replied that if we were desperate we could get a bank loan but it is unlikely that this would be necessary. Following some discussion about the current financial climate it was agreed that £150k should be put on deposit.

In regard to the fees in advance, Angus said he would get the auditors to look at this when they came in.

10.2 FSC

10.2.1 Angus P said that in Martin's Insurance Report he refers to the accident at Airways. The formal report by AAIB has been published. Chris Dawes is a member of the FSC and head of the Development Panel, nevertheless he will have to appear before the FSC.

We still have one school aero-towing ab initio and they have had no problems.

10.2.2 A problem with a long standing parascender's Senior Tow Coach licence was mentioned. The person only holds a Tow Coach licence due to some grandfathering years ago in parascending. This has come to light because the person wants to be a Senior Tow Coach at one of our clubs. FSC are not happy for this person to be running an operation and if they want to get their STC Licence then they must comply with the rules for that licence.

10.2.3 Angus informed members that following complaints, DHV have had to review their rules on certification and now accept US and BHPA tests provided that they are written in German. Angus also said that he has been formally appointed as Convenor to WG6.

10.2.4 Joe said that the new Pilot Training Guide was about to be printed and it is a good opportunity to have a glossy cover. The extra cost would be about £100. All agreed that this was a good idea and Joe was given the go ahead.

10.3 Insurance

10.3.1 Martin reported that we have had nothing significant for several years but we now have a few ongoing claims though these are mainly with the old insurers. However, there will be some costs for the new insurers and these will go on our schedule so when renewal is due our premium will probably be higher.

10.3.2 Angus L said that Exec may want to consider putting our Site Purchase Fund into another entity so that if things went wrong it would be safe. This was discussed and Martin explained briefly how this could work. Martin also explained the legal position of the BHPA and Exec if there was a claim that exceeded the £50k insurance cap.

Marc was not keen to take the Site Purchase Fund out of general finance and the pros and cons of this were considered. Angus L felt that it would look better to the membership of it was at arms length.

FOR ACTION: (2012 - B2) Marc Asquith to look into how much it would cost to set up a site fund as a charitable trust.

10.3.3 Martin mentioned that we are using three month membership for visiting foreign pilots and it was agreed that things should continue as they are.

10.4 Admin

Marc said that it may be possible to rearrange the BGA/BHPA offices to enable us to let office space to another association. Both the BPA and BMFA were looking to move from their current premises, although the BPA have said that they are not interested in joining us at Merus Court.

10.5 Skywings

Paul reported that advertising was up slightly but things hadn't been helped by the increase in postal charges. Paul said he will be making an effort to get a better deal on print costs.

10.6 Website

10.6.1 Paul reported that the online Incident Report seems to be going very well. There are ongoing problems with some uploads from the office but hopefully this will be fixed before too long.

10.6.2 There was some discussion about the use of social media and it was noted that we have a Facebook page, although there is nothing on it. John said he had set up the page but only two schools had added anything. Marc had had some people volunteer to give us a presence on social media and he asked Exec whether they wanted to get into this. He said he was not minded to put this workload on to any of the Exec or staff so it would have to be done by volunteers.

10.7 Competitions

Bill reported that good progress was being made with parachute packing and there had been some very questionable ones out there. He said the schools should be happy as they will have sold some new kit.

10.8 External Rep.

Marc thanked Bill for agreeing to take on the work for Duxford. This will be a weekend next year and all kinds of sports will be participating.

10.9 School Liaison

There was no report and John Welch was not present.

10.10 Paramotor Liaison

Ed Cunliffe reported that the event at Kerswell Green had gone very well and he thanked all who had turned up, particularly Michelle and Stef from the BHPA office who manned the BHPA stand.

Marc explained that the BMAA had dropped the event at the last minute and did not want anything to do with paramotoring. We had to register a new club to cover the organisers of the event and it had all got very messy. However, it all worked out and he suggested that they should be a panel of the Competitions Committee. Next year it will probably be a BHPA competition and we should get some new members from this change.

FOR ACTION: (2012 – B3) EdCunliffe to see if paramotor paperwork can form template for Comps Directors Handbook.

10.11 Sites

There was no report and Steve Walsh was not present.

10.12 Communications

John had circulated a written Communications Business Study Report which he went through and discussed.

10.12.1 He explained that in order to compile the report he had been to the office and spoken with all the staff and looked at how the BHPA database and systems are set up. He had also contacted Andrew Wakelin and spoken with him about the database. John had concluded that there are no major issues with the database and if and when Andrew decides he can no longer support it, it should not be too difficult for someone with the right skills to take over.

10.12.2 John felt that communication with the membership needs to be improved and the core of our communications should be the website. Our webmaster had done a sterling job but it is time that BHPA put some money into the website to bring it up to date and user friendly. These days people expect to be able to use the website to search for technical information, update their own information and pay their membership renewal fee etc.

John suggested that a project team should be set up to work on this and come up with some concrete suggestions. In order to do this we need to produce terms of reference. Paul said we should come up with a wish list and put it out for tender in the same way as we did before.

There was further discussion about what was really necessary and the costs involved. Marc was concerned that whereas once we were at the forefront with the first website, we are now in danger of falling way behind. He suggest that as John had started this project he should progress it.

FOR ACTION: (2012 – B4) John Nash to investigate website improvements.

10.12.3 One of John's recommendations in regard to Skywings was to put back issues on the web. Joe informed members that

USHGA had had all back issues of their magazine scanned a few years ago and it had proved to be so expensive that in order to recoup their costs they needed to sell the DVD for £70. There is also a problem with storing this information, with twelve issues per year it would take up a lot of space which we would have to pay for.

The possibility of Skywings only being available on the web was mentioned and John felt that in due course Skywings would cease to be printed. Joe said that the only reason some members wanted Skywings on line was because they wanted a cheaper membership subscription.

ITEM 11: ANY OTHER BUSINESS

11.1 Marc reported back from the F&GP review of staff salaries. This had resulted in an increase of 3.6%

11.2 Rod Buck had put a proposal forward for BHPA to take over Wendy Windblows but Exec had felt unable to accept it given the strain on resources.

11.3 Marc reported that Angus P had been unable to attend the recent EHPU meeting so he gone in his stead. Marc reported that EHPU had written to CIVL saying that uncertified gliders would not be allowed in national competitions. Martin had also set out the insurance position of allowing 'death ships' in competitions. CIVL had responded by asking for some kind of competition class glider but after looking at this the Technical Committee of EHPU had concluded that another category was not required.

Angus P expressed concern that the success of the EN scheme would be subverted by simultaneously using it for competition gliders. As EN 'D' are known as 'death ships' anything beyond D would be very bad indeed. He wondered whether a completely different way of certifying competition gliders could be found and would suggest that EHPU think about competition class glider testing. This would involve having instruments and sensors within a glider to give readings.

Martin said that competition pilots may go off and have their own F1 competitions, not affected by certification. However, Angus P replied that there is no practical way of doing this. Every time somebody tries to organise their own competition they very quickly find that it is not possible.

Dave said that it is important that the current system is made to work properly so that you cannot have an A that is really a B or a B that is really a C, etc. Angus agreed that work needs to be done on making sure that the categories are correct and we do not have gliders drifting into the next category.

11.4 John proposed that we should chase up lapsed members by telephone. It was noted that this had been done some years ago and Jennie said she would find the reports and conclusions from that time.

FOR ACTION: (2012 – B5) Jennie Burdett to include contacting lapsed members on agenda for next meeting

Paul mentioned that the new system of membership checks worked very well and had enable him to chase up lapsed members in his own club.

There being no other business the Chairman closed the meeting and said the date for the next meeting would be set later.