



## Meeting 2009A of the BHPA Executive Council

Meeting held on Thursday 29th January, 2009 at the Grange Strathmore Hotel,  
41 Queens Gate Gardens, Kensington, London, SW7

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  
Brett Janaway  
Martin Heywood  
Steve Walsh  
John Welch

**In attendance:**

Jennie Burdett  
Mark Dale  
Joe Schofield  
Dave Thompson

### ITEM 1: APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Paul Dancey, Rustam Davar and Ed Cunliffe.

### ITEM 2: MINUTES OF LAST MEETING

#### Meeting 2008C – 16th September 2008

ITEM 1: Steve Walsh was not actually present at the meeting and should have been shown in the apologies.

6.2 first line, change "consider" to "discuss"

7.10 para three, first line, change "all" to "some of"

The minutes were approved.

### ITEM 3: MATTERS ARISING

2007 – C3	Closed
2008 – A2	Continuing
2008 – A7	Closed
2008 – B3	Closed
2008 – B6	Continuing
2008 – B9	Closed
2008 – C1	Closed
2008 – C2	Continuing
2008 – C3	Continuing
2008 – C4	Closed
2008 – C5	Closed
2008 – C6	Closed

### ITEM 4: NEC SHOW

Martin reported that the profit from the show was around £7k and that the attendance numbers were down on 2007. Only about 10% of our own members attended and they were the same people who turned up every year.

John W said that one reason for the low turnout was that our schools have had two bad years so there were very few exhibitors from our sport. Dave added that the profit from the show would just about balance out the cost of accommodation and travel expenses for the staff and Exec to attend.

Martin then said that approaches had been made by Telford who are willing to undercut the NEC in order to get us back there. The possibility of going back to Telford was then discussed as for some reason, although it is more difficult to get to than the NEC, our members seem to prefer it.

Brett felt that as the majority of our pilots are in the south of the country, we should try to hold the event further south. However, it was too late too late for this year so Telford would be the best option. The Three Counties Showground was also a venue that had been suggested.

Mark wondered why we have to be involved in the organisation at all when we could just turn up with a stand in the same way at the BGA and LAA. Now that we are in an economic recession we could cut costs by only having a stand and holding an AGM.

The format of the show was discussed, John W felt that it was not clear why we have the event at all. It should not be to support people selling things and if it is supposed to be for our members we need a new format. Mark added that it used to be the AGM and there never was a plan to turn it into a show, it just happened.

There was much debate about the show and all were in agreement that there was no point in us trying to continue at the NEC when it was clearly not what our members wanted. It was agreed that if possible it would be held at Telford this year but if the membership did not support it then that would be the end of the show in the current format.

Martin said he would get back to the BMAA and explain that we will not be going to the NEC but would look at the possibility of holding the event at Telford.

Marc agreed to write something for the Attitude column in Skywings and Brett agreed to join the panel organising the show.

**FOR ACTION: (2009 – A1) Martin Heywood to speak to BMAA re moving the show to Telford.**

**FOR ACTION: (2009 – A2) Marc Asquith to write an 'Attitude' piece for Skywings.**

### ITEM 5: STAFF SALARIES REVIEW

Martin said that this matter would be dealt with by the F&GP as usual.

## ITEM 6: DEPLOYMENT OF HANG GLIDERS FROM HOT AIR BALLOONS

As Angus Langford was not at the meeting to present this item there was only a brief discussion and no conclusion was reached.

## ITEM 7: REPORTS

### 7.1 Finance

The Treasurer's written report was discussed. Exec were pleased to see that the BHPA reserves had been placed on deposit at a fixed rate.

7.1.1 The Technical Staff expressed their concern at the proposed ceiling on expenses for overnight stays. Mark pointed out that there is not always a Travel Lodge available within 25 miles of the school being inspected. The situation with the mileage allowance was also unsatisfactory and caused extra work for Carolyn as she has to track the RAC figures month by month. It was agreed that this matter would be looked at by the F&GP.

7.1.2 Membership fees were discussed and Martin reminded the Exec that our previous Treasurer had always been very reluctant to increase membership fees. Opinions were split on whether we should be putting up fees during these difficult economic times; some members felt that we should not put up fees until it was absolutely essential, others felt that they should go up by inflation this year. The final decision would be left to the F&GP.

7.1.3 Marc said that he and Jennie had been looking at how to increase the number of Direct Debit payers. He proposed that the Pilot rating discount should be scrapped and that the Direct Debit discount should be changed to £7 every year, instead of a one off discount of £8. There was some discussion about whether this would lead to a decrease in the number of members progressing to Pilot.

As a substantial number of our members fail to renew after their first year, Marc also proposed introducing a two-year membership, for new members only, at a discount rate.

Exec members were quite enthusiastic about the new proposals but obviously the F&GP would have to consider the financial implications before any decision could be made.

7.1.4 John A made the point that if it is decided not to increase membership fees this year, we need a piece in Skywings to explain to the members why we have taken this decision. Both Marc and Steve were very much against increasing fees and said our finances could take a loss if necessary; we need to be thinking about our members.

Joe requested that the F&GP let him know as soon as possible what the decision is so that he can get it in Skywings.

### 7.2 FSC

Angus Pinkerton was unable to be at the meeting so Mark reported on his behalf.

7.2.1 The FSC had been considering the future of the test rig. The decline in hang gliding has meant that the test rig has not been used in the last year and as we still have to pay storage and maintenance charges, FSC have been looking at other options.

7.2.2 The Pilot Rating/Endorsement system has become confused over the years and it has been agreed that endorsements will no longer be used and the PRS will be simplified. Details have not yet been finalised.

7.2.3 Amendments to the Technical Manual will be web based in future and paper copies will no longer be issued.

7.2.4 The lower age limit was discussed at the last FSC meeting and they want hang gliding and paragliding to be available for fourteen year olds. John A felt that this was certainly desirable although Marc said that the Child Protection issue could be a problem. Mark would be asking the CAA to look at the age restriction.

7.2.5 It had been agreed that Training Wings will no longer be printed and will be available on the website. This will get around

the problem of schools who do not pass them on to students because they contain advertising from other schools.

### 7.3 Insurance

Martin reported that the insurance had been renewed on exactly the same terms as last year. He had been hoping for improved terms but due to problems in the aviation world premiums were going up so we have actually done quite well.

Re the £5m sites issue, the insurers may be willing to help in this respect and Martin said he is in the middle of gathering further information on this.

### 7.4 School Liaison

John W reported that all schools are having a bad time, some more so than others. The ones doing the best are having a bad year and those that are doing badly are going out of business. Tow schools seem to be doing slightly better than hill schools but the bottom line is that several schools are teetering on the edge and this is almost entirely due to the weather. Schools have had the enquiries but have not had the weather; if it is a bad summer again this year we will lose several more schools.

Brett asked whether schools have a wet weather programme of videos etc. John W replied that they can do that for a day but last year his school was only able to teach for seven days in eleven weeks due to the weather.

Brett also mentioned the simulator but members explained that this had been a costly exercise for the Association and we would not be buying another one. The simulator is easily broken and is not suitable to loan to schools.

The general feeling was that the basics are right and there is nothing that we can do about the weather.

### 7.5 Competitions

7.5.1 John A reported that the paragliding team needs the money now for the Worlds in Mexico and although the Treasurer has been asked for it, there has been no response.

7.5.2 Gordon Rigg had lodged a complaint about the selection of the team for Larangne. A Panel of the Exec (Martin, Steve and Brett) had looked at the points in the complaint and found that the selection panel were not in breach of either their own rules or BHPA rules but the Panel suggested that a format should be written down so that everything was transparent, particularly in regard to international selection.

Robin Hamilton had now resigned from the team due to an email campaign which meant that Gordon Rigg would get into the team as he was first reserve.

After reading the findings of the Panel, the Exec ratified the findings, subject to a slight amendment to the wording.

### 7.6 Sites

There was good news about Bradwell Edge; the house is now in separate ownership and the land has been retained by the original owner, so there may be the possibility of purchasing the site at some time in the future. We have also won the case concerning traffic restrictions.

### 7.7 Skywings

Joe reported on behalf of Paul Dancey who was unable to get to the meeting.

Advertising is suffering due to the recession and therefore there has been a very low page count over the last few months. The budget for Skywings was cut by £9k several years ago and Joe informed members that a modest increase of £4k was now required to maintain Skywings. Paul and Joe had explored other options, such as making Skywings online only during the winter months but they did not want to take this step as the magazine is the only tangible benefit of membership.

Brett agreed that Skywings should continue as a printed publication and he suggested that £10k should be injected into the budget. John W added that if we downgrade Skywings we will lose members, especially over the winter months. There was a suggestion that we should offer lower advertising rates or one off reduced rates to our schools and dealers. Joe replied that our problem is not getting new advertisers but keeping our regulars, particularly those who have signed up to a series of ads at heavily discounted rates and then reneged on the deal.

John W said that Skywings is a really good tool for keeping members and maybe we should be putting more into it to give them something better. Also, the better the magazine, the more

attractive it is to advertisers.

John A was in no doubt that rather than seeing Skywings get thinner we should be injecting cash into it. This is of much more benefit to our members than the NEC show and one that they will appreciate much more.

Joe explained that the advertising/editorial ratio was 60-40 so when we do not get enough advertising the magazine gets thinner. He said that all the advertising is negotiated and Colin Fargher does a very good job for the Association. Joe felt that this should carry on rather than simply reducing the rate card by a percentage.

All agreed that we should be looking at giving Skywings £10k and this would be put to the Treasurer. This cash injection would be regarded as a first year to provide extra pages and would be reviewed after than.

This was remitted to the F&GP for further consideration.

## 7.8 Web Site

7.8.1 It is generally felt that there is a problem with the map on our website but there is no easy way to fix it.

John A said that it should be possible to put in a postcode and select a radius of 25 miles, 50 miles or 100 miles. John W said he had spoken to a number of schools and generally they have not had a problem. They are getting enquiries via the BHPA website so are not that concerned. He did not think there was a major problem.

7.8.2 Joe explained that Paul was currently working on PCI compliance which is necessary for us to continue to take card payments over the phone and via the website.

7.8.3 Brett asked whether we had a paid webmaster at the moment and Joe explained that Paul had taken over from Sean Lovett on a voluntary basis. Paul is happy to keep the site running day to day but when it needs a complete revamp we will have to pay someone to do it.

## 7.9 External Representation

7.9.1 John A informed the meeting of a potential conflict of interest concerning Calvo, who is our Alternate Delegate to CIVL and head of the CIVL Paragliding Sub Committee. As Calvo is also part of a team bidding for the 2011 World PG Championship to be held in Spain and the bids have to be reviewed by the CIVL Paragliding Sub Committee, there is a conflict of interest.

If the bid to hold the championship in Spain is successful, John A said he did not feel able to support Calvo for re-election to Chairman of the CIVL PG SC.

7.9.2 Reporting from a recent RAeC meeting, John A said that it is likely that in 6 years or so airways will disappear, making transponders for all aircraft essential.

7.9.3 In regard to Anti Doping Rules, the FAI have been put under pressure by WADA and have reluctantly adopted the revised version of the Anti Doping Rules, this is by no means voluntary. Eventually the FAI will have to pass the responsibility down to the RAeC and they will pass it down to their members. There are no drugs that enhance performance in aviation but this does not seem to make any difference to WADA and as far as UK Sport is concerned if we do not comply with WADA rules they could stop us holding international competitions.

Marc added that WADA is slowly spreading its remit and the big problem is out of competition testing, although we are getting reassurances that they are not interested in us and out of competition testing will not be applied to us. John A also pointed out that paragliding pilots are the biggest offenders for the use of recreational drugs, which rather weakens our case.

A paragraph concerning the FAI Anti Doping Rules and Procedures would be added to the Sporting Licence application form.

**FOR ACTION: (2009 - 3) Jennie Burdett update the Sporting Licence application form.**

7.9.4 Noel Whittall was the only BHPA member put forward for a RAeC award this year and this nomination had subsequently been withdrawn. John A explained his reasons for withdrawing the nomination, which would give Noel a better chance of receiving an award next year.

Marc said that nominations for awards had not been followed up in recent years and we really need to make more of an effort to put names forward. Joe agreed to put something in

Skywings in September asking for suggestions and at the same time asking for nominations for the BHPA Award of Merit.

## 7.10 Paramotors

Ed was not at the meeting but his written report gave the good news that the CAA have accepted the proposals put forward by the BHPA and BMAA regarding the 10 litre fuel limit. Until the wording is removed in the next revision of the ANO it will be acceptable for pilots to mark their fuel tanks at the 10 litre mark and fill to that point only.

John A mentioned that the Paramotor competitions people had much appreciated our support for them.

## 7.11 Admin.

Marc said there were no problems in the office. There was some discussion of the office lease and Marc said agreement had been reached on the rent and we had got a good deal. There was also mention that now may be a good time to think about buying our own office rather than renting.

## ITEM 8: ANY OTHER BUSINESS

8.1 Martin reported that our president, Lembit Opik, had invited Exec members to Westminster and topics for discussion were considered. It was suggested that WADA would be a good subject to raise, given that there are no performance enhancing drugs in aviation.

8.2 Members discussed whether there was any way to help our schools during the recession but it was felt that there was nothing we could do at the present time.

8.3 The Secretary of the RAeC is looking to work less hours and RAeC members had been emailed to ask if any of them would be prepared to help with admin. Marc had said that BHPA could help if required.

8.4 Review of staff Terms and Conditions and Pensions. This had been raised at the AGM and the Exec had agreed to look into it. There will be new government legislation coming in and as this progresses the BHPA will react accordingly.

8.5 Child Protection. Exec had looked at this before and decided that it did not affect us but it now appears that things are not quite that simple. Joe said that an organisation that he belongs to is in a similar situation to the BHPA and they require a form to be signed but do not do CRB checks. John W said his staff all have CRB checks every year, he gets the checks done in Scotland as it is quicker.

There was some discussion on what we should do; it was felt that this is not our core business so we want to comply with the minimum requirements.

Mark had originally looked at the Child Protection issues and he said he would find his report and circulate it again. Martin said he would speak to the BGA as well.

**FOR ACTION: (2009 – A4) Mark Dale to circulate his original report on Child Protection.**

8.6 Marc informed the meeting that the new Chairman of Flyability, Steve Derwin, had resigned.

8.7 Joe reported that Mark Woodhams had agreed to take over the role of choosing the winner of the Wings Over a Cloud award. Thanks were expressed to Barbara Keyworth who had been doing the job since the death of Ann Welch.

8.8 Brett referred to the Attitude column in the January issue of Skywings which had caused considerable debate on pilot forums. The meeting discussed the best way to get newly qualified pilots to find a club.

## ITEM 9: DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The Chairman closed the meeting at 4.15pm and reminded everyone that the next meeting would be on the 14th May at the Royal Overseas League.

## ACTIONS - OPENED, CONTINUING

<b>WHO</b>	<b>NUMBER</b>	<b>WHAT</b>	<b>STATUS</b>
Steve Walsh	2008 - A2	Write paper on environmental code and forward to Martin Heywood.	Continuing
Steve Walsh	2008 – B6	Draft letter to clubs and send to Martin Heywood.	Continuing
Martin Heywood	2008 – C2	Liaise with Angus Langford re repayment proposals from Birdwings.	Continuing
Martin Heywood	2008 – C3	Query expenses on accounts with Angus Langford.	Continuing
Martin Heywood	2009 – A1	Speak to BMAA re moving show to Telford.	Opened
Marc Asquith	2009 – A2	Write 'Attitude' piece for Skywings.	Opened
Jennie Burdett	2009 – A3	Update Sporting Licence application form.	Opened
Mark Dale	2009 – A4	Circulate original report on child protection.	Opened