

British Caving Association

Minutes of Training Committee 9th April 2005.
10.00a.m. at Stafford County Council Sports and Social Club.

NOTE:- These minutes remain as a draft until approved or corrected by the next meeting.

Present

Idris Williams	BCA Training Officer
Nigel Ball	CIC Panel Chair
Graham Mollard	NCP Chair
Steve Holding	NAMHO
Tom Redfern	ACI
Eric Hoole	Cambrian Caving Council
Nigel Atkins	Derbyshire Caving Association
John Cliffe	Co-opted.
Steve Tomalin	Co-opted.

T.O. Welcomed members to the first meeting of the Training Committee of the British Caving Association. The NCA had been wound up at the recent AGM and all training formally transferred to the new body.

T.O. Said that since the last meeting Dave Edwards the Training Technical Advisor had sadly passed away. The committee observed a few moments silence in memory of him.

1. Apologies for absence.
None.

2. Minutes of meeting 18th December 2004.

It was pointed out that the heading on the minutes was incorrectly typed as 18th September. Otherwise the minutes were accepted as a true record.

3. Matters Arising.

Joint Services awards comparison. No report had been made. An individual case of application to have Joint Services used as an equivalent to LCMLA had been received and Tony Flanagan had been asked to advise.

Trainer/Assessor Insurance.

No report was yet available on a draft policy/spec. The latest victim of insurance loss was Paul Ramsden.

The usual discussion on insurance followed which T.O. brought to an end by asking once again for a draft proposal stating the requirements which he could take to the BCA's Insurance Officer. It was agreed that this would have to be a scheme which covered all Trainer/Assessors as an opt in/opt out scheme would be unworkable.

Action:- Graham Mollard to present a draft proposal. T.O. to take up with Insurance Officer on receipt.

Porth-Yr-Ogof. T.O. noted that a HSE report had been published but the inquest still awaited a Military enquiry.

Notice of expiry of qualifying awards for Trainer/Assessors. T. O. stated he had not proceeded with this but would pursue.

Action:- TO arrange a procedure with TASP.

Publications:- Nigel Ball reported that Chips Rafferty had all the information (on weather and flooding) provided from Des Marshall and was studying it with a view to deciding if he and NB should rewrite it or take it back to the original author for a re-write. A query was raised regarding the possibility of BCA funding this work. T.O. asked for this to be deferred until Item 8 on the agenda.

T.O. mentioned that he had been in discussions with Dave Elliot who had now found a publisher for his new edition SRT book. He had agreed that the BCA Training Committee could review the text with a view to it becoming a BCA recommended publication.

T.O. said there had been an enquiry from a solicitor about footwear. This had gone to BCA chairman who had given a guarded reply drawing attention to the need to assess the site, in order to determine which kind of footwear is appropriate.

LCMLA Handbook. There was a discussion about the circulation of amendments to the Handbook to Trainer Assessors. There had been some concern that T/As were not getting the up to date version that candidates were getting. It was pointed out that the full up to date Handbook was on the website, changes were agreed at NCP so that ALOs could disseminate the info and changes should be discussed at workshops.

T.O. stated that some confusion had arisen in respect of candidates who had completed a Standard Revalidation on time but were late in undertaking a Leadership Development Review. The handbook seemed clear on the procedure for late Standard Revalidation but not for late LDRs. A long discussion followed and it was agreed that NCP would examine this issue with a view to amending the handbook. As a result of discussions on an individual case it was noted that LCMLA Handbook para.

3.6.3.4 b second bullet point should read "revalidation" not "standard revalidation" and that the words "or assessment module" be added after "training course". Similar changes would be needed to para 3.6.3.3 b. Both these clauses to be combined into one.

T.O. Asked NCP to revisit the routes for Trainer/Assessors who did not hold CIC to revalidate their awards. The detailed list agreed had resulted in the removal of many of the options for these to revalidate at their 3 yearly interval which would have been acceptable for 6 yearly revalidations for other award holders.

Proposal for compulsory BCA membership.

T.O. reported that this had been withdrawn at the last NCA/BCA meeting.

BCA Newsletter. It was agreed that there needed to be some form of communication with Award Holders possibly through the web site if that ever got going. However it was felt that no progress could be made with this at present.

Peer Belaying. Discussions were still going on regarding this issue, but no further progress had been made.

Scout Association Consultative Document. T.O. stated that he had received an acknowledgement of the BCA response stating that they had received a lot of replies and would be taking them into consideration.

4. NCP Report Back.

There had been no NCP meeting since the last Training Committee Meeting. One was planned before the end of April.

A query had been raised from N.Wales about two candidates who had completed Module 1 assessment in a cave but wished to do a mine transfer module 6 before

completing Module 2 group day assessment. The Committee agreed that this was an acceptable procedure.

A discussion was held about written risk assessments. Some members of the committee were of the opinion that this should form part of the LCMLA training. After a long debate it was generally agreed that formal written risk assessments were an employer issue and that the emphasis in the scheme should be on the award holders identification of hazards associated with all the variable factors, (group, weather and so on) and their ability to deal with these. However, it was felt that this topic should be raised at workshops.

Trainer Assessor Matters.

N.Wales A.L.O. Would be asking NCP to approve Barry Ellis as a Trainer/Assessor. Training Committee agreed to ratify this approval in advance.

5. CIC Panel Report Back.

CIC Chair reported:-

7 participants had attended a recent re-validation workshop, run by Tony Flanagan. Planned workshops are Dave Elliot in May. Geoff Barber in August there was some doubt if there would be sufficient participants for this to take place, if it were cancelled Geoff would run one in November.

CIC Training courses were planned as follows:-

Tony Flanagan running one 26th-29th April.

Juliet Parker-Smith running one Early Autumn.

Tony Flanagan running one 11th-14th October.

The panel had discussed the setting up of CIC Trainer/Assessor workshops, to help standardise training and assessments, and would be holding one later this year.

CIC Panel were also concerned that the SRT races held at "Hidden Earth" could be counter productive to the safety standards being promoted by BCA.

A case had arisen whereby a CIC was revalidating his CIC, however his mines module expired on a different date. CIC had agreed that it would make sense when mines modules were added that the expiry date should be the same as the CIC so that both parts could be revalidated together. Training Committee ratified this procedure.

6. CIC Handbook Finalising for publishing.

CIC Chair. Stated that the panel had discussed at length the matter of mines assessment at CIC level. The currently proposed clause envisaged all CIC T/As being in a position to assess in mines. However, the panel felt that many of them were not sufficiently expert in mine exploration to carry out this function. The Panel was now proposing that there be nominated mines assessors who would assess this module and be consulted during revalidations. The clause wording needed fine tuning to achieve this.

Other items to be dealt with before publication were front cover pictures and changes from NCA to BCA.

The Committee discussed the format of the handbook and it was agreed to follow the format of the LCMLA handbook with a bound booklet for candidates and a loose leaf binder with additional sections for Trainer/Assessors.

7. T.T.A.S.P. Work.

T. O. Commented that apart from his loss of "emails" he felt the system was working fairly well, although, he needed to chase NCP chair for more rapid response on occasions. A query regarding the permanent need for this system was raised. T.O. stated that whilst this year there was some money available for technical advice the situation for next year looked very bleak. One thing that T.O. felt we were omitting was the coordination of items for discussion at workshops. NCP Chair said that he hoped to sit in on most of the workshops this year to ensure continuity. T.O. asked if CIC panel Chair could take on the role of issuing contracts to CIC Workshop Directors.

8. BCA Council matters arising.

T.O. stated that he had been re-elected by BCA for another year, which would complete the original 3 year term for which he had been elected by NCA. He had not yet decided if he would stand again after that time.

The AGM had been very complimentary about Training Committee and the way it functioned.

Effect of grants from sports councils.

T.O. stated that for 2005/6 UK Sport has halved the grant from £22,000 to £11,000. BCA was going to allocate all of this to Training making a 100% cut to Equipment and Expeditions. Conservation and Access would continue to be part funded from Training Registration fees. The total income from fees and grants was expected to be £23,500. Running costs of all functions of Training Committee was expected to be £20,000. This left £3,500 to cover costs for the LMCLA Handbook, the CIC Handbook and Training Technical Advice. The Committee agreed that in view of these figures expenditure on Technical advice should be avoided if possible but keeping the option to buy in professional advice on one off issues.

The situation for next year was unclear. Sport UK was putting pressure on Sport England to take over some of the funding.

Principles of Expenditure. Following from the last meeting that had revealed some discrepancies in fees being paid, T.O. had done some research and proposed the following principles.

Training Committee NCP & CIC panels:- BCA would pay for room hire, mileage, car parking and the charges of pre-agreed visiting speakers. BCA would also pay mileage and car parking expenses for designated representatives at workshops or other meetings.

LCMLA T/A Workshops:- BCA would pay for pre-agreed room hire and pre-agreed visiting speakers.. The Director charges a fee direct to participants to cover any other costs.

CIC Workshops:- A contract is issued to the Director to cover his time, mileage and out of pocket expenses. Each participant pays a fee direct to BCA (currently

£75). The Director pays a fee (currently £15) to BCA if he uses the event to revalidate his own award.

Area Panels:- These are expected to cover their own costs, although pre-agreed visiting speakers could be paid by BCA.

LDR Workshops:_ The Director charges a fee to participants to cover all costs. The participants pay a fee (currently £15) to BCA to register their revalidation. The Director may collect this fee on behalf of BCA.

All other training courses and assessments :-The fees charged are a matter between the T/A and the candidates although there might be fees to be paid to BCA.

There might be need from time to time to replace items from the SRT kits but this would be relatively small amounts and should not be needed for a while. These existing kits are cared for by John Cliffe who, given adequate warning, would be able to dispatch them for use on training events. T.O. stated that the old kits had been written off.

9. Training Grants.

T.O. Stated that £500 had been allocated to DCA for 2 events in the first quarter of the year (this came from UK Sport 2004/5 allocation). The funding was back to normal and he appealed to other regional reps. to come forward with events. N.A. Asked for funding for "Ecohang" bolting training, it was pointed out that this was a matter for Equipment Committee, not for recreational training grants. T.O. promised to find out who was the Equipment Officer and pass on the request to N.A. It was pointed out that Regional Councils needed to be involved in bolting matters.

N.A. Raised tabled a grant application for a proposed SRT course in August. T.O. pointed out that he did not need to bring these to a meeting as T.O. had delegated powers to deal with them.

10. Any Other Business.

N.A. Reported that he had been involved in discussions in Derbyshire about Local Cave and Mines Leader courses. Traditionally Derbyshire had run two day courses covering both caves and mines, however, they were finding that this was not allowing sufficient time and were intending to now operate as the other areas with a two day cave course and a separate one day mine course for mines. This lead into a discussion about inter regional transference of skills.

T.R. Expressed concern that the former NCA Treasurer had been responsible for an article in Descent which drew a parallel between an accident in rope access in Australia where a twin tail fall arrest lanyard had been wrongly used in such a way as to bypass the shock absorber and a caver who might use cowstails wrongly by attaching one end to an anchor and the other to the harness leaving the central knot to be loaded in the wrong direction. The committee felt that this situation was extremely unlikely to occur and that the original accident was not related to caving.

T.O. stated he would discuss this with him and point out that before going to press on this matter he should have taken technical advice from Training Committee as due to his previous position in NCA this could be interpreted as being an official BCA/NCA statement.

T.R. Reported that the Work at Height regulations had now been finalised with an exemption for cavers and climbers. The HSE would be issuing guidelines to be developed in consultation with the governing bodies during the next 12 months and based on best practice. A discussion followed on the manner in which best practise would be established. This would have to be done by obtaining professional opinion, since the BCA had a system of regular revalidation and disseminating of information it was felt that this would enable a consistent up to date approach to be adopted by all.

11. Dates of next meetings.

29th September (Thursday) and 17th December had been agreed. 8th April 2005 was agreed being the last Saturday before the Easter Bank Holiday.