

British Caving Association  
Training Committee Meeting 8th April 2006  
10.00 a.m. at Stafford County Council Sports and Social Club

MINUTES

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

Present:                    Idris Williams                    BCA Training Officer  
                              Graham Mollard                    Chairman NCP  
                              Matt Robbins                        DCA (standing in for Nigel Atkins)

1. Apologies for absence. Steve Tomalin, John Cliffe Nigel Atkins, Steve Holding, Tom Redfern, Nigel Ball, Steve King (on behalf of Southern Council)

2. Minutes of meeting 17th December 2006. Since none of the attendees (except T.O. who wrote them), had been at the previous meeting no points of correction were note and they were accepted as a true record.

3. Matters arising from the minutes.

Joint Service Award. G.M. tabled his previously circulated report regarding his observation of a Joint Services Caving Proficiency Award training course. He added that he believed the syllabus and the method of delivery was at least equal to LCMLA Training at both Level 1 and Level 2. The committee agreed therefore that provided military candidates registered for the LCMLA scheme, prior to or within 30 days of attending such a course they could be granted automatic exemption from LCMLA training. These candidates would have to still be assessed for all the modules of LCMLA, but, if this were done at the same time as Military Assessment and the Military Assessor(s) were also LCMLA Assessors, and the entire LCMLA syllabus was assessed then this could also be considered as an LCMLA assessment. G.M. also went on to suggest that a Military Representative be invited to serve on the Training Committee and that they be encouraged to take part in the Area Panels, particularly Northern and Derbyshire. It was felt that as Chips Rafferty was currently BCRA rep on Training Committee that this should be someone else. NCP had already accepted this and Training Committee was asked to endorse this.

This was agreed and G.M. was tasked to arrange, via the C.O. at Ripon that a representative be appointed by the Military who could be co-opted on to Training Committee. This to ensure that should either scheme change consistency could be maintained.

Action:- G.M. to enter into discussions with the C.O. to put this in place.

Insurance for Trainer Assessor. T.O. Reported that he had chased Dave Judson (BCA Insurance and Legal Officer), on this subject. He and Nick Williams (BCA Insurance Manager), were now looking into an Officers and Directors Policy. T.O. added that he felt there was little interest in this subject at BCA Council level.

Risk Assessments. In the Minutes T.O. had noted that the Risk Assessments promised by Chips Rafferty at the September 05 meeting had not been circulated. G.M. noted that whilst he did not agree, Training Committee in September had agreed that Risk Assessment had no part in the LCMLA process, as this was entirely an employer responsibility. T.O stated that he felt that a Guidance

Note on this subject should be prepared, however, no one seemed prepared to offer this.

**Trainer Assessor Fees** A query was raised about the decision made at the last meeting. T.O. explained that currently T/As in LCMLA paid £30 and CIC T/As paid £10 while T/As in both schemes were paying £40. This meant that CIC T/As who were not in the LCMLA scheme were only paying £10. The situation from 1st. Jan 2007 would be that T/As in one scheme would pay £30 and those in both would pay £40. This was fairer and better reflected the amount of administration work involved.

**Fee setting in the training schemes** T.O. reported that BCA Council had devolved fee setting to Training Committee and that from 1st April the LCMLA registration fee had increased to £40. (TASP had been instructed to be flexible in the application of this increase, as it was felt counter productive to chase up people who had paid the old fee of £35). T.O. commented that at present the financial position of BCA overall was quite strong. The Training Schemes however were still dependant on external funding, independence from external funding could come at the price of a 30-50% increase in the fees.

**Revalidations** T.O. reported that he had attended a recent CIC workshop as an observer and had felt that the process was well worthwhile for the participants, although the experience would have been better if it had been residential. All the participants agreed that it was a good experience and that it gave them an opportunity to practice and hone their skills, which otherwise they would not have had.

#### 4. NCP Report back.

**Trainer Assessor Workshops** G.M Reported that NCP had discussed the frequency that attendance at these was required. Currently T/As had to attend once every two years. NCP requested the Training Committee to extend the to once every three years from 2007 which brought it into line with award revalidation frequencies. Training Committee agreed to ratify this.

**Trainer Assessors attendance at Area Panels** There had been a complaint from a T/A who had been removed from T/A status in an area as he had not attended a Panel meeting during the year. NCP had reiterated the rules and the T/A concerned had since made arrangements to meet.

**CIC prequalification.** G.M. stated that CIC panel had asked NCP for comments on the current situation whereby candidates for CIC had to have undergone LCMLA Level 2 Training. There had been a couple of instances lately when candidates had arrived on a CIC course not being SRT proficient, this had been found disruptive to the courses and CIC Panel were considering making Assessment for Level 2 a requirement. The committee were unable to determine a way forward on this issue.

This discussion led on into the root cause of the problem, which was the poor levels of training within the caving community, such that these candidates were probably not even aware of their failings. T.O. reported that, as an example of the difficulty in promoting recreational caver training, he had been pressing Cambrian Caving Council for a list of suitable contacts within their member clubs who could be contacted for discussion on the needs in Wales, with a view to arranging an event for them. He had been unable to make any progress with this.

Handbook Amendments. T. O. Asked that all prospective handbook amendments be finalised by NCP in June and brought to Training Committee in September in order that the next edition be published before the end of the year.

Use of Harnesses on Level 1 trips. G.,M. Reported that he had had discussions with a Trainer Assessor regarding the use of harnesses on certain climbs. These were climbs, which were dealt with as "spotted climbs" by some Award holders, but some others automatically rigged by "assisted handline". The feeling of the committee was that waist belts were perfectly adequate for all Level 1 trips. This subject led on to discussion about the wording of the handbook in dealing with rope work at Level 1, which currently described it as "Emergency". G.M. stated that NCP would look into the changing of this to a form that would guide award holders into making more rational use of the rope.

Vote of Confidence. G.M. had asked for this as he felt he had been knocked back a few times and NCP had given this.

5. CIC Panel Report back.

New CICs G. M. reported on N.Bs. behalf that there had been 3 new CICs issued during the past 6 months.

New registrations 5 all from the LCMLA scheme.

Revalidations 8.

Vacancies for CIC Trainer Assessors. T.O. reported that advertisement had taken place for up to 3 vacancies and there had been 7 applications within time. 1 application had been received after the closing time, with no referees and no logbook pages. This had been rejected. A panel had been appointed and was scoring the application at present. T.O. had excluded himself from this panel, as he had to take appeals (if any), and could not be considered outside the schemes as the independent member, as he had an LMCLA.

T.O. added that the process had thrown up some mistakes in the CIC Handbook, which would need to be addressed. He felt that too much information had perhaps been asked for as one application ran to 103 sides of A4. T.O. felt that the last 5 years of logbook should be enough. There had also been a letter from a well-known LCMLA T/A assessor with extensive mines experience. Although this person had no wish to be a full CIC T/A he felt that his services could be used as a specialist Mines Assessor. Training Committee agreed that this could be an asset and agreed to ask CIC Panel to look into this option.

Action:- N.B. to bring this up at CIC Panel.

6. Hidden Earth 2006.

Training Committee involvement G.M. reported that he had approached some members of Derbyshire and Northern Panels who would be prepared to offer their services for guided trips aimed at spouses and offspring of delegates. T.O. reported that he had approached the conference manager to see if a separate hall could be available for SRT training. It seemed that this would not be the case. Previous experience had shown that it was unhelpful to attempt training in full view of the whole conference. He continued by adding that the Upper Limits Climbing wall was nearby, and suitable so he intended to ask Nigel Atkins to arrange with the management for this venue to be used. Publicity for these facilities at the event was paramount. It was also agreed that Training Committee should have some form of stand where questions could be answered and copies of the Handbooks were available.

Action:- G.M. to organise 2 trips per day to be led by local LMCLA/CIC holders (preferably from the local Panel) at a venue to be agreed. T.O. to approach Nigel Atkins with a view to setting up SRT training at Hidden Earth and finding one CIC per day to carry out training and another to be on "standby" to assist on each day should demand dictate doubling up, and to continue pressure on the Hidden Earth organisers to publicise this. T.O. also to inform BCA insurance managers of the intention so that this would be covered by BCA insurance.

#### 7. Matters arising from BCA Council/AGM

T.O. Reported that at the AGM he had been reappointed. He was not intending, and had made that clear, to serve the full term.

Training Grants. Council had guaranteed £2000 per year for two years towards this item irrespective of the outcome of Sports Council applications. This would also cover the preparation of a syllabus for use by clubs to train their members.

Action:- T.O. to prepare an outline syllabus for comment. This could be reviewed in the light of these comments and used as a basis for full syllabus and teaching/training notes.

#### 8. Publications.

Weather. T.O. reported that Chips Rafferty had now returned the extracts of the original work done on this subject for the "Cavecraft and Leadership " publication, together with a copy of his own lecture notes on this subject. T.O. hoped to work on this in the near future. He stated that photos of flood debris, foam in roof and so on, also of a flood pulse, would be an asset to the publication if any one had these available.

Action:- All to enquire for suitable photos.

#### 9. Trainer Assessor Status 2006

Forest of Dean Panel. T.O. reported that he had heard from the ALO thus:-The panel had met and had agreed that they would wish the panel to continue. Other members not at the meeting had expressed the same wish. They intended to organise a Trainer Assessor Workshop and a Leadership Development Workshop in late 2006/early 2007.

Training Committee agreed that the Panel Should be allowed to continue subject to dates being agreed for these workshops with NCP Chairman and a list of dates for panel meetings for the next 12 months.

Trainer Assessors with "LifeTime" CICs. T.O. reported that he had not removed these from the approved list as they could show a valid award, subject to proving continuing logbook experience. Accordingly he had written to them asking them to submit their logbooks to a CIC T/A for checking and to let him know the result. The Committee agreed that they should be given 14 days notice, in writing, that if the logbook check had not been carried out, or found to be unsatisfactory, they would be removed from the approved list.

Action:- T.O. to send these letters.

Mines Inspections. A discussion took place regarding the possibility/need for alternative inspectors.

Action:- T.O. to investigate this.

Trainer Assessor Agreement. M.R. raised on behalf of N.A. a query regarding the details of this. In particular, the need for the attendance at Panel Meetings,

for T/As belonging to multiple panels. G.M. went through the details and outlined some changes which NCP were intending to make as Handbook amendments.

#### 10. Training Grants.

SRT Kits. T.O. Reported that during the student seminar in November a lot of equipment had gone missing. T.O. had agreed to deduct the value of this from their Training Grant. G.M. offered to enter into discussions with potential suppliers to set up a BCA Trade Deal similar to the ACI Trade deal and to obtain these replacements

Action T.O. to provide G.M with a list. G.M. to obtain the kit.

This seminar had been poorly organised from the point of view of training grants. Information about the event had been difficult to extract and the kit had been arranged for collection at the last minute. T.O. stated that for next year Training Committee would organise the appointment of CIC's direct and pay direct thus enabling better control of equipment etc.

Crewe Pothole Club. Had received a grant for £100 for an SRT Workshop.

DCA. Had received Grants of £390 and £180 for two workshops.

Southern Council Had discussed applying for a grant but this application had not materialised yet.

South Wales Caving Club Were considering applying for a grant.

Cambrian Caving Council Were being pushed by T.O. to provide contacts so that an event could be organised for them, so far with no response.

Northern Caving Council G.M. reported that there had been no rep. from this Council since Paul Ramsden retired.

#### 11. Any other business.

Ireland, Republic and North. A discussion took place about the apparent lack of and Leadership structure here. It was felt that it might be worthwhile looking into the possibilities of setting something up.

Work at Height. Tom Redfern's report on this subject had been circulated. The Committee expressed satisfaction with the progress being made.

Gorge Walking. G.M. reported that he had had preliminary discussions with BMC on this subject and that this would continue when John Cousins' replacement took up his post. The Committee agreed that BCA was the most appropriate body to act as an NGB for this activity. This was due to the similarity in techniques and flooding knowledge required, although there was a crossover with mountaineering. NCP would add this subject to the next Agenda with a view to drafting a Module by December. What was not clearly defined, at present, was the difference between gorge walking and canyoning.

Action:- G.M. to continue the discussions and to add this to NCP agenda.

#### 12. Dates of next meetings.

Thursday 28th September already agreed

Saturday 16th December has been mooted at a possible with only one dissent. This was agreed.

Saturday 21st April 2007 was agreed.