



# British Caving Association

Minutes of BCA Training Committee held on Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> October 2010  
at Staffordshire Council Staff Club, Stafford

The meeting commenced at 10:10.

## 1. Present

Graham Mollard ( <b>GM</b> )	Training Officer
Tom Peacock ( <b>TP</b> )	Chairman of National Co-ordinating Panel
Nigel Atkins ( <b>NA</b> )	DCA Training Officer
Nigel Ball ( <b>NB</b> )	Chairman of CIC Panel
Lee Paskin ( <b>LP</b> )	Representing ACI
Mary Wilde ( <b>MW</b> )	Training Administrator

## 2. Apologies For Absence

Juliet Parker-Smith	Heads of Centres Rep
Steve Higgins	Joint Services Panel
Steve Holding	NAMHO
John Cliffe	Co-opted Member
Idris Williams	Voluntary Organisation Rep
Tom Redfern	ACI Rep (represented by Lee Paskin).

## 3. Minutes of the Meeting Held on 8<sup>th</sup> December 2009

The minutes were accepted as a true record of the meeting. Proposed by **GM** and seconded by **TP**.

## 4. Matters Arising

### 4.1 SRT Training

**NB** asked for clarification of the position regarding SRT skills at Level 2. **GM** explained that we are not running basic SRT training but that leaders are expected to be personally competent. For instance they must be able to ascend, descend, change over, pass a knot and get off a rope. There is no requirement for SRT rigging skills. **NB** questioned whether a leader was able to assess his or her own skills objectively. **GM** acknowledged that this might be a weakness but that he did not wish to be more prescriptive.

A discussion followed regarding the appropriate length of time for a L2 training course. **GM** said that 2.5 days was not mandatory but in his opinion that length of time required in order to cover the whole syllabus. **TP** had had 'complaints' that too much time was spent in the classroom. **LP** said that this was necessary in order to learn about geology and hydrology etc. **GM** said that at least 6 hours must be spent underground as stated in the handbook.

**GM** also explained that Tom Redfern was in favour of the SRT skills stipulation but was unhappy about the way in which it had been introduced.

### 4.2 Expenses and Fees.

**GM** raised the issue of continuing dissatisfaction with fees and expenses for revalidation workshops. He stated that the Exec would not pay for mini bus usage. The maximum of £50 for expenses cannot be exceeded. **GM** feels that the amounts are reasonable. He did acknowledge that some centres might charge more for their facilities but that LCL courses had not originally intended to be based at centres. The word 'transport' in the paragraph on expenses in the last minutes was incorrect and should be omitted. **MW** will issue an updated version of those minutes.

### 4.3 Revalidation Workshop Cancellations

**NB** asked for confirmation there is now a commitment to run revalidation workshops with less than the stated minimum number of candidates. **GM** stated courses would run where at least one person had booked and paid 6 weeks in advance. Anyone who tries to book after the 6 week period will be refused. If there are no bookings six weeks in advance the course will be immediately cancelled. **GM** said that we must find a way of enforcing payment and booking in advance. **NA** asked if it was OK to run workshops for a mix of L1 and L2 candidates, such as 3 at L1 and 2 at L2. **GM** confirmed that this was allowed. **LP** suggested **MW** update the website to emphasise the importance of booking in advance. **MW** will look at this but the application forms do already state it in red.

**GM** said that the Northern England and Derbyshire panels plan workshops 18 months in advance and that **MW** should email the other ALO's to request the same. A discussion took place regarding the LCMLA Revalidation Workshop booking process. **MW** explained that application forms and cheques go direct to the course director and unless there is a request for an invoice, she only gets involved after the workshop when all the paperwork comes through. Therefore she does not know in advance whether a workshop will run or not.

**NB** suggested (with a nervous glance at **MW**) that the LCMLA workshop booking process should run in the same way as CIC with all bookings going via **MW**. Two drawbacks were identified. Firstly the course director needs to check the candidates experience and log book before accepting them on the course and subsequently if **MW** banked their cheque immediately this might cause a problem if the course director later turned down the candidate.

Finally it was proposed (jointly by various committee members) that: -

- The LCMLA Revalidation booking form will be reformatted to ensure that it prompts for all the criteria required for revalidation.
- All LCMLA bookings will go to **MW**.
- **MW** will copy the application form and send to the course director.
- **MW** will hold the cheque until the course director notifies her that the booking is accepted.
- **MW** will then update the website to state that the workshop is confirmed to run.
- **MW** will process the cheques and paperwork after the workshop has run.

**MW** said that this was acceptable. Cheques with bookings made over six months in advance would have to be banked before six months had elapsed.

**MW** will revamp the Revalidation Workshop application form and send it to **TP** to check. It was agreed to introduce the new process from 1<sup>st</sup> January 2011.

## 5. NCP Report TP

TP had proposed that everyone reads the minutes before meetings to save time.

### 5.1 North Wales SRT

The North Wales panel proposal for an L2 special syllabus excluding SRT had been approved by the NCP. There is a possibility that other panels might request the same arrangement and indeed the Southern Panel did make such a request, which was turned down. North Wales is the only exception as North Wales mines with vertical sections all have walk outs. It was noted that anyone who qualifies in North Wales and wishes to add a new region would be required to gain the usual SRT skills.

NB said that this really allows North Wales leaders to do single pitch mines with walk-outs. NA asked what happens if some circumstance occurs which requires them to go back up? GM said that a ladder could be left in place and retrieved from top. We should not question the NW T/A's judgement in managing these trips.

LP added that North Wales would not get anyone on courses if SRT were compulsory and this is why new course was introduced. There then followed a discussion on what elements of SRT are actually taught or coached on training courses. GM again stated that candidates taking a L2 training course must be SRT proficient but that the T/A can coach if necessary.

### 5.2 JSMT Panel

The Joint Services military Panels held its 1<sup>st</sup> panel meeting. Any new aspirant panel members will have to go through the normal process for becoming a T/A. The panel ONLY cover military candidates and do not run Level 1 or 2 assessments.

GM outlined history of the BCA/Military relationship development. The military courses CVT and CVF have parity with the BCA L1 and L2 training and assessments. So if registered with the BCA, a military candidate can gain the BCA qualification by attending the military courses. The discussion that followed highlighted one area that needs finalising with the Military panel. The Military CVI training is designated as having parity with CIC training but no registration process for CIC has yet been set up. GM is to address this issue. LP asked if award could be granted retrospectively. GM explained that to qualify they must have registered not more than 18 months before the Military Panel was finalised.

NB commented that this issue keeps returning but that there is nothing more to be done. He felt everyone should move on. TP reminded the meeting that the facilities at the Ripon hangar could be used for non-profit making purposes. GM added that we could also use the excellent teaching materials that have been created by the JSMT. LP asked how he should go about getting hold of these materials and GM asked him to go direct to Steve Higgins.

GM reported that Steve Higgins was very disappointed that only 2 civilian panel members applied to attend their T/A workshop.

### 5.3 LCMLA Revalidations

TP said that the issues surrounding revalidation workshops had been discussed at NCP. He explained that new arrangements were to be made which are aimed at reducing the number of workshop cancellations. When an award reaches its expiry date there will no longer be a 12 month revalidation window. If someone's award expires they will be required to do a Core Skills Reassessment, which will include revalidation and development elements. This must be done within 6 months of the award expiry date. If the leader fails to do this they will be required to undergo full reassessment at the level at which they were originally qualified (unless they wish to be downgraded). Leaders will now be able to revalidate up to 18 months before their

award expiry date and will receive reminders at 18 month and 9 months before their award expiry date.

**NA** asked whether a Level 1 leader whose award runs out in February could do their Level 2 assessment in March. **GM** said no, the leader must have an in date Level 1 Award in order to progress to Level 2.

The new process will start immediately and be mandatory from 01/01/2012, allowing for those who are already within the old 12 month revalidation window.

**LP** asked what would constitute development elements of the CSR and **GM** explained that these would be set each year. **TP** added that some topics would be picked up from panel meetings and brought to the NCP.

Voting on the new process had been unanimous at the NCP.

#### **5.4 Other Business**

The 'Weather and Flooding' document was complete. **GM** had the necessary content for the 'Geology' document but needed photographs and would be requesting these in the near future.

The panels will decide the criteria for panel membership and there is **no** stipulation for a candidate to have been a CIC for at least 5 years.

ALO's are to be informed of which hot topics should be discussed at T/A workshops. Also workshop and panel minute will go the **GM** and **TP** in order for them to pick up new hot topics for further discussion. Current hot topics include a review of the Level 2 skills check list, which should be more prescriptive, and a review of each panel's practice in instructing traverse rescues at Level 2.

The next batch of emergency cards will be sponsored by Iain Rennie (£125) and (hopefully) DCA (£100). **GM** asked **TP** to approach Phoenix for further funding.

Mines terms documents have been sent (or will soon be sent) to **MW** for amalgamation into a single document.

**NA** highlighted the need to ensure that anyone gaining a North Wales level 2 certificate is made aware that it is not transferable to other regions without SRT skills. **MW** and **GM** will consider how this should be communicated and it may be added to relevant Section 5 certificates.

#### **6. CIC Report –NB**

1 person has now been assessed under the new regime and useful feedback has been received.

The redrafted CIC handbook has been completed and once **MW** has checked it, it will be sent to panel members for their input. They will be given 14 days in which to respond after which amendments will be made as appropriate and the new edition passed to Exec for approval. .

A new scoring system needed. **NB** had proposed a 5 point scheme, 1 inadequate, 2 poor, 3 developing, 4 good, 5 excellent. This generated a discussion on how such a scheme would work. For instance, would a candidate fail if they scored less than 3 in one module? **NB**

suggested that they must get at least 11 points over the 4 modules, but it was highlighted that would allow someone to get at least 11 points but scoring only 2 in one module.

Further work on the scoring scheme is required.

### 3. Exec Report GM

**GM** will stay on as Training Officer until someone else comes forward. He insisted that Exec make the role clear and it should have the power to make decisions. This was agreed by the Exec. He also asked for it to be an employed role but Exec was not forthcoming with a decision. **GM** feels the role should have parity with other similar roles in NGB's. Regarding panels, other NGB's see them as scheme providers and they do not have as much influence or input to the running of schemes. The Exec agreed that panels could put forward ideas but that the ultimate decision lies with the Training Officer.

The Training committee no longer fulfils its original purpose and **GM** is to put forward to Exec a proposal for a new body to replace TC and NCP, after canvassing regional representatives.

Returning to the NCP/TC merger, **LP** asked if this meeting should vote on such a merger. **GM** said a vote could be taken but it had already been agreed in principal at Exec. It had been suggested that once a year regional rep business would be done first in order to let them leave if the remaining business was irrelevant to them. **TP** suggested that this meeting might take place at Hidden Earth.

**LP** asked for clarification of who would have a seat and **GM** listed the following: -

Training Officer, Old NCP chair, CIC Chair, Regional Councils, ALO's

**LP** felt this could be a very weighty meeting. **MW** suggested reports should be produced and circulated in advance to save time.

**LP** said the ACI had discussed possible disbandment of the Training Committee or amalgamation of the Training Committee and NCP at a previous meeting and taken a decision that they were not in favour.

**NB NA** and **TP** all said they had no knowledge of any ACI discussion relating to disbanding the Training Committee or amalgamation of the Training committee and NCP.

A vote was taken and all agreed other than **LP** who as ACI rep could not support the disbandment of the Training Committee or amalgamation of the Training committee and NCP.

A discussion then took place regarding the role of the ACI and some personal views expressed. In summing up **GM** said that it was not his decision as to who should have a seat on the new body and that if this meeting support the ACI having a place then he will support it.

The Exec 'rubber stamped' the Manchester/Goyden document with some input from Peter Smart. **GM** sees this as an achievement as the document actually gives advice. The document will not be sent automatically to all leaders with Manchester/Goyden on their certificate, due to the cost of producing the document. However, **MW** will include a note with such certificates pointing the leader at the document which will be available on the BCA website.

## 6. Items for T/A Workshops

**GM** was concerned about inconsistencies in terminology used in different regions, and felt this was confusing to candidates. He asked for a glossary of terms to be agreed within 12 months.

**GM** would like the panels to discuss 'what is a level one pass for group day?' **GM** wishes for the criteria on which a pass is awarded to be defined. .

## 7. Items for Revalidation Workshops

**GM** asked for hot topics for Revalidation Workshops over the next 12 months. The following were suggested: -

- **TP** Should we be using crabs without a CE mark
- **NA** Rope weight.
- **LP** Suitability of lights (main or secondary) as so many types are now available. He said that they should only be used if they are specifically recommended for underground use.
- **GM** Flooding, which is an ongoing hot topic. .
- **NB** Longevity of caving equipment, ropes crabs helmets etc.
- **GM** Modern belaying techniques.

**GM** stated that the Weather and Flooding document should be used. .

## 8. Continuing T/A Dissatisfaction With Workshop Fees.

Already covered in this meeting.

## 9. Training Grants

**NA** has been granted one this year and has requests for three more. These are: -

- Lyon, BCA equipment and rescue workshop for club training officers £120.
- SRT rigging £210.
- Introduction to SRT - £160.

These were all agreed.

An application has been received from Boyd Potts for Derbyshire courses to be run by **NA**. Again these were agreed.

**GM** said that any CIC could run training a course if asked by BCA member club. There is money available for such courses. The only people other than CICs who would qualify for such grants were specialists such as doctors. **NA** asked if a cave photography specialist would qualify and **GM** agreed that would be appropriate.

**NB** asked what happened if money for grants was not spent. **GM** said that in such cases the money would be lost and would not roll over to the following year.

## **10. New Trainer Assessors/Retirements**

Northern England - **LP** and Steve Banks have been accepted as full T/As. Iain Rennie is now an aspirant member and Martin Barry is a probationary member. Paul Platt has withdrawn.

Derbyshire – **GM** is an aspirant member.

South Wales – Ian Healy has withdrawn

Southern England - John Whitely has retired. Robbie Warke has withdrawn.

**GM** emphasised that if T/A's did not fulfil the obligations set out on the signed agreement they would be suspended for a year. **GM** and **MW** are to discuss how warnings should be managed.

## **11. Any Other Business**

**MW** asked what the BCA charge would be for a CSR following the expiry of a certificate. **GM** suggested that a set rate be established for a CSR, which would include an element for BCA admin. This rate is to be established at a later date.

**NB** said that the Scouts have reviewed their syllabus and assessment processes and are now more in line with BCA. They have in addition an SRT award for groups.

## **12. Dates and place of next meetings**

Monday 07/12/2010

Saturday 14/05/2011 (If this meeting is the new body it will be the regional one)