



British Caving Association

Minutes of BCA Training Committee held on Tuesday May 8th 2012
at Staffordshire Council Staff Club, Stafford

The meeting commenced at 10:08

1. Present

Nigel Ball	(NB)	Training Officer
Nigel Atkins	(NA)	DCA Training Officer
Idris Williams	(IW)	Association Of Scout Caving Teams.
Tom Redfern	(SN)	ACI
Juliet Parker-Smith	(JP-S)	Heads of Centres Rep
Mary Wilde	(MW)	Training Administrator

2. Apologies For Absence

Les Sykes	(LS)	CNCC
Tom Peacock	(TP)	NCP Chairman
Phil Baker	(PB)	CIC Panel Chairman
Roger King	(RK)	DCUC
Steve Holding	(SH)	NAMHO

3. Minutes of the Last Meeting.

The minutes of the last meeting were accepted as a true record. Proposed by **NB**, seconded by **NA**.

4. Action Register and Matters Arising

The following actions were discharged from the action register.
011, 017, 018.

(Simple updates and ongoing actions on the action register at the end of these minutes)

Action 009 – **NB** to open discussion with Cambrian regarding access for LCMLA leaders.

This action was discussed at some length. It was acknowledged that some progress had been made with regard to Cambrian and access for TAs but concerns were expressed about the wider issue. **J P-S** said that some large systems are unavailable for training due to access issues, making it virtually impossible to run the scheme. Clubs wishing to use such caves with a CIC leader for training purposes are prohibited as novices see this as 'commercial', and as use of the cave by novices. However clubs can get permits for club trips, which could include novice cavers. **TR** asked for BCA support regarding TA/CIC access across all regions. **J-PS** added that their narrower approach with Cambrian was felt to be achievable but the wider issue needs support at BCA level. **TR** asked for the BCA to provide a "statement of principal" regarding access. **NB** agreed to take this back to BCA council.

TR proposed that **MW** sends individual email reminders about actions before each meeting. **MW** agreed to do so with certain reservations about admin time and effectiveness.

5. Regional Councils.

5.1 NA – DCA

The dry stone walling event was a great success and **NA** is waiting for the report to be completed. They are considering following this up with an underground practical and may run a 2nd surface course too. A discussion took place regarding who was responsible for any wall built or repaired by BCA members. **NA** felt that this could be an issue if the wall was adjacent to a public right of way.

MW suggested that reports from events support by a training grant be made available of the BCA website. Everyone was in agreement with this.

6. Applications for Training Grants

NB reported that CHECC had run a successful SRT course and would send the report to **MW** for the website.

The DCA dry stone walling course was covered under the DCA report above.

DCA are to run an Introduction to Cave Photography event in September and have requested £170. This was agreed by the meeting.

NA said that the Training Officers workshop planned for this Sunday had been postponed at the request of clubs involved.

Two ideas for future courses were suggested, geology (**NA**) and archaeology (**MW**).

7. Courses for recreational cavers (NB)

NB suggested that in order to provide inclusive support for cavers, the BCA should create a portfolio of courses that could be offered to recreational cavers. These would be skills based course such as weather and flooding, and geology, but would not involve leadership or coaching skills.

TR was in favour of this as long as it does not conflict with BCRA special interest groups. **NA** and **NB** suggested that this could be easily avoided by involving those groups too.

A discussion then took place that raised questions such as structure, timing, and cost etc. **NB** agreed to create an outline proposal and issue it for discussion at the next meeting

8. National Coordinating Panel Report

As there had not been an NCP meeting since the previous TC meeting, there was no report.

9. CIC Panel Report

A report had been circulated with the agenda.

IW felt that the stats would be more useful if they covered a period of years. **MW** had created such a report, which was on her laptop. She was able to show that the number of new registrations was generally increasing over time.

NB said that the new assessment process was working well and feedback was positive.

TR asked if how CIC costs to leaders compare with similar schemes. It was thought that although training might be less costly, assessments cost more. Overall it was felt that the cost of training and assessment together was inline with other schemes.

TR asked how many CICs leave the scheme each year. **MW** said that it should be possible to provide this data.

There was a discussion about the length of time that training remains valid. It was felt that restricting the training validity period would be complex to implement and not necessarily a positive step. Some candidates voluntarily retrain anyway.

With regard to revalidations, **J P-S** felt that new CICs would wish to observe before leading one. This led to a wider discussion on feedback. While it was felt that formal feedback might be useful, gathering it would be problematic.

Issues would include: -

- Additional administration work
- Duplication of feedback forms already in use by some leaders.
- Possibility of only receiving negative feedback.
- Feedback mechanisms - paper based, verbal or online.

As the NCP is considering feedback mechanisms, it was decided to wait and see what they proposed. **MW** suggested using "SurveyMonkey" which is a free online questionnaire tool.

10. CIC Handbook

TR asked what the state of play was regarding publication of the new handbook.

MW explained that it was virtually ready to go and was waiting for completion of the radon booklet and authority to publish. **NB** is to check with Damian regarding the radon booklet.

11. Lines of Communication within the CIC and LCML schemes (NB)

NB explained that a document is being drawn up that explains meeting structure and lines of communication. **NB** described an example of a potential issue. He said that while it was appropriate for a TA to request information regarding a candidate or leader that he or she was training or assessing, it was not appropriate to request information on candidates with no connection to that TA. **MW** stated that no such information is given out without the authority of the Training Officer. Enquiries from external sources such as employers, press or even sometimes the police, are referred to the Training Officer.

The document was circulated at the meeting. **TR** was generally in favour but did note that it was a little more comprehensive than the outline **NB** had given.

12. Any Other Business

12.1 LCMLA Revalidation Paperwork

MW suggested that we should consider removing the requirement for candidates to send photocopies of log book pages when applying for LCMLA revalidation workshops. Instead we could ensure that the application form requested relevant information and also that logbook be presented at the revalidation workshop. This is in line with CIC revalidation workshops administration. At present some applications are submitted with a large number of photocopies, which have to be forwarded to the TA.

The meeting was in favour and deferred the final decision to the NCP.

12.2 Training Officer substitutes at Council (and other?) meetings (TR)

TR suggested that the TC should have a process to provide a substitute on Council if the training officer was unable to attend. **NB** explained the background to the recent Council meeting where it had been perceived that Graham Mollard (**GM**) was acting as proxy for the TC. This was not the case as **GM** was present in his own right, but had provided some

background on TC business. He did not have voting rights. **J P-S** said that there should be an official deputy. It was agreed that in the event that the Training Officer was unable to attend he or she would approach an appropriate TC member to represent the TC

12.3 Compulsory BCA membership for award holders (TR)

The meeting acknowledged that Council had passed a motion requiring all TAs and leaders to be BCA members. However, it was felt that this decision had been taken without consideration of the following issues: -

- Additional costs would result in many people leaving the scheme.
- Some people work under workplace insurance and do not require additional BCA insurance that comes individual membership.
- What is the additional administration burden and how would it be managed?
- Various points regarding access made by Nick Williams in an emailed statement were felt to be inaccurate. It was pointed out that some areas such as Ribble Head, are not subject to a BCA access agreement.

NB suggested that a meeting be set up with Nick Willams to discuss these points and concerns.

12.4 LCMLA Revalidation Workshops

TR raised four issues relating to TAs running LCMLA Revalidation workshops

- (a) Employment status of TA's working on workshop
- (b) Insurance of TA's working on workshops
- (c) Expenses for TA's running workshops
- (d) VAT when running workshops

As with the previous item it was acknowledged that Council had agreed that TAs could only run workshops as individuals rather than through centres. A complex discussion followed which highlighted that the issues raised by **TR** were related. The key points made were: -

If a TA runs a workshop as a self-employed sub contractor, where does the insurance liability rest? ACI wish this to be raised with council.

Where a TA works for a centre operating under the centre's insurance, does the new ruling require them to take a day off work to run a workshop and to purchase insurance as an individual. This would be prohibitively expensive that could result in TAs refusing to run revalidation workshop.

Concern that centres were benefiting financially from revalidation workshops were refuted Meeting members suggested that the opposite was in fact the case.

As the BCA is not VAT registered, invoices sent by TAs should not include VAT. **NA** said that this meant that he would be unable to raise an invoice through his company and instead had to raise it through his club.

Where a TAs runs a workshop from their own premises it was felt that expenses should be payable where they are legitimate. This would not apply for room hire if a private dwelling were used.

Clarification on all these points was requested. **NB** is to raise these issues with council.

NA left the meeting at 13.20.

13.5 Mines inspections

J P-S said that both Steve Pope and Les Riley had the appropriate qualifications to undertake mines inspections for the BCA as Dave Carlisle is retiring.

13.6 Postage.

MW suggested that the recent postage cost increases might need to be passed onto scheme members. Also, at present she pays for all postage and stationery and claims it back on expenses. Although she is generally paid before she needs to pay her credit card bill, it is a large amount on her bill each month. The meeting felt that this is not reasonable and **NB** agreed to discuss it with the treasurer.

13.7 New Trainer Assessors.

Iain Rennie was ratified as a TA for the Northern England panel.

MW reported that Des Marshall had decided not pursue his existing request to be accepted back onto the North Wales panel.

14. AOB

IW was concerned that he might be unable to arrange a “caves to mines” assessment before his current LCMLA certificate expires, due to TA availability.

15. Dates and place of next meetings

Saturday 13th Oct 2012

Tuesday 26th Feb 2013

Tuesday 7th May 2013.

All at Stafford.

Training Committee Action Register

No	Action	By	Deadline	Done
	15/02/2011			
002	MW to add an option on the S4B form to allow T/As to select 'training excluding SRT skills'. Update 8/5/12 - No progress but hoping to complete this during the 'quiet' summer period	MW	ASAP	
	01/10/2011			
007	NB/SH to set up a BCA event at this years NAMHO Conference	NB/SH	ASAP	Ongoing
008	TP/BM to set up a BCA event for S Wales	TP/BM	ASAP	Ongoing
009	NB to open discussion with Cambrian regarding access for LCMLA leaders	NB	ASAP	Ongoing

	Update 08/05/12 –NB to raise the wider issues of “commercial” and “novice” access with Council.			
	18/02/2012			
012	AB would try to establish if a national training event would appeal to his members	AB	Next Meeting	
013	MW to draft a flyer on hat the BCA can offer club cavers. Update 8/5/12 No progress but hoping to complete this during the ‘quiet’ summer period.	MW	ASAP	
016	NB to clarify the training grant financial process Update 8/5/12. Done. Any money not spent in one financial before 1 st Jan is ‘lost’.	NB	Next Meeting	
	08/05/2012			
019	MW to send action reminders to individuals before the next meeting.	MW	Before Next Meeting	
020	MW to post grant support training course reports on the website	MW	ASAP	
021	NB to create a recreational cavers training course proposal and circulate before the next meeting.	NB	Before Next Meeting	
022	MW to produce CIC stats showing numbers dropping out each year.	MW	Next Meeting	
023	NB is to check with Damian regarding the radon booklet and publishing the CIC Handbook	NB	ASAP	
024	NB to raise issues surrounding compulsory BCA membership with council.	NB	Next Council meeting	
025	NB is to raise the issues with TA employments status, insurance, expenses with council	NB	Next Council meeting	
026	NB to raise the issue of MW’s expenses with the treasurer.	NB	ASAP	