



Draft Minutes of the November 2020 Council Meeting

Held by Zoom

Wednesday 4th November 2020, 7:45 pm

Note Recording of the meeting took place on Zoom

Chair: Phil Rowsell

Secretary: Russell Myers

Treasurer: Howard Jones

Recorder: Russell Myers

Meeting documentation

The Agenda was circulated by email to Council members on 30th October 2020

Four reports (Membership Administrator, CroW Convenor, Training Officer, Executive Initial Recommendations regarding training) are included as appendix to these minutes.

All documents have been posted on the BCA web site after the meeting.

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Council Positions, Attendance and Report Status Table

Voting Positions

Position	Name & Initials	Atn (y/n)	Report Status		
			Last	New	
BCA Executive					
Chairman (2018- 2021) 3 years	Phil Rowsell	PJR	Y	04/11/2020	yes
Secretary (2019- 2022) 3 years	Russell Myers	RM	Y		
Treasurer (2020 - 2020) 3 years	Howard Jones	HJJ	Y	04/11/2020	Yes
Group/Club Representatives					
Position 1 - (2019-2021 - 2 years)	Hellie Adams	HA	Y		
Position 2 - (2019-2021 - 2 years)	Josh White	JW	Y		
Position 3 - (2020-2022 - 2 years)	Lydia Leather	LL	Y		
Position 4 - (2020-2022 - 2 years)	Idris Williams	IW	Y		
Individual Member Representatives					
Position 1 - (2019-2021 - 2 years)	Pete Knight	PK	Y		
Position 2 - (2019-2021 - 2 years)	Martin Hoff (See notes)	MF	N		
Position 3 - (2020-2022 - 2 years)	Jenny Potts	JP	Y		
Position 4 - (2020-2022 - 2 years)	Andrew McLeod	AM	Y		
Chairs of Standing Committees					
Training Officer (2018-2021 - 3 years)	Nigel Atkins	NA	Y	04/11/2020	Yes
Equipment and Techniques Officer (2020-2023 -3 years) Co-opted	Mark Sims	MS	Y	04/11/2020	Yes
Conservation & Access Officer (2019- 2022 - 3 years)	Will Burn	WB	Y	15/09/2020	No
WP Convenor with voting rights					
Publications & Information Officer	Rostam Namaghi	RN	Y	18/08/2020	No
Regional Council Representatives					
Cambrian Caving Council	Stuart France	SF	Y		
Council of Northern Caving Clubs	Andrew Hinde	AH	Y		
Council of Southern Caving Clubs	Linda Wilson	LW	Y		
Derbyshire Caving Association	Wayne Sheldon	WS	Y		
Devon and Cornwall Underground Council	David Jean	DJ	Y		
Constituent Body Representatives					
William Pengelly Cave Studies Trust	Richard Vooght	RV	Y		
Association of Caving Instructors	Stephan Natynczuk	SN	N		
National Caving Scout Active Support Unit	Tony Radmall	TR	Y		
British Cave Research Association	John Gunn	JG	Y		

National Association of Mining History Organisations	Steve Holding	SH	Y		
Council of Higher Education Caving Clubs	David Botcherby	DB	Y		
Cave Diving Group	Claire Cohen	CC	N		
British Cave Rescue Council	Emma Porter	EP	N		

Non -Voting Positions

Position	Name & Initials	Atn (y/ n)	Report Status		
			Last	New	
Working Group Convenors					
Information Technology	Ari Cooper-Davis	ACD	Y	18/08/2020	No
Youth and Development	Josh White	JW	Y	18/08/2020	No
CRoW Annual	David Rose	DR	Y	04/11/2020	Yes
Qualifications Management Committee (QMC)	Juliet Parker-Smith	JPS	Y	15/09/2020	No
Vision	Hellie Adams	HA	Y		
Radon	Gethin Thomas	GT	Y	15/09/20	No
Additional BCA Appointments					
Insurance Manager	Howard Jones	HHJ	Y	04/11/2020	Yes
Membership Administrator	Wendy Williams	WW	Y	04/11/2020	Yes
Safeguarding Officer	Chris Boardman	CB	N		
Training Administrator	Mary Wild	MW	N		
Library Representative	Jenny Potts	JP	Y		
Newsletter Editor	Davis Rose	DR	Y		
UIS Representative	Andy Eavis	AE	N		
FSE Representative	Ged Champion	GC	N		
Rope Testing	Bob Mehew	BM	N		
Artificial Cave	Katie Eavis	KE	N		
QMC Representative 1	Phil Rowsell	PJR	Y		
QMC Representative 2	Chris Boardman	CB	Y		
Observers	Robert Scott		y		

(1) Apologies for absence.

Andy Eavis
Ged Campion
Stefan Natynczuk

(2) Comments on the BCA AGM voting results

The Chair opened the meeting with comments on the results of the on-line voting and the election to positions on Council and is summarised below. Notes:

1. 567 members voted, roughly 10% of our membership had voted. The Executive had been elected with a good majority.
2. The Equipment and Techniques Officer position had not been elected at the AGM but the incumbent had expressed interest in continuing in post. After discussion, Idris Williams proposed, seconded by Richard Vooght to co-opt Mark Sims to continue in the post for the remaining period of tenure until 2022. Carried unanimously.
3. Will Burn indicated he would stand down from his position at No 2 Individual Member Representative following his election to C&A Officer creating a vacancy. After discussion about the candidate for Individual Representative who had not been elected at the AGM, a proposal from Jenny Potts, seconded by Nigel Atkins to co-opt Martin Hoff for the remaining term of office i.e. 1 year, was agreed 9 for, 3 against and 9 abstentions. did we actually check who out of those could actually vote??

Update: On 5th November after contacting Martin with the offer, he accepted.

4. PJR welcomed the new members Lydia Leather and Pete Knight to Council and asked them to introduce themselves.
5. All the motions proposed had been passed. PJR announced that all the proposals submitted to the AGM passed and detailed how the Executive proposed to deal with them. Proposals 1-8 be passed to the Constitution and Manual of Operations Working Group to implement and bring back to the next Council Meeting to show they have been done and a revised Constitution posted on the website.

Motions 9 & 10 are to do with membership and the IT Convenor has already started work on the new membership database and formed a team comprising Dave Gibson, Wendy Williams, Phil Rowsell and intended inviting Mary Wilde to implement these with a report back to Council for approval at the next AGM. Accepted by Council.

PJR offered a vote of thanks to the IT Convenor and IT Group for pulling off a great achievement, which seemed to go off smoothly

(3) Council appointment of roles and new Group Members:

The following appointments, which require annual Council approval, were confirmed.

Working Groups/Parties/Committees Positions Available**Non -Voting Positions (Annual posts)**

Position	Name & Initials (Current)	Approved	Date
Working Group Convenors			
Information Technology	Ari Cooper-Davis ACD	Yes	4/11/2020
Youth and Development	Josh White JW	Yes	4/11/2020
CRoW	David Rose DR	Yes	4/11/2020
Qualifications Management Committee (QMC)	Juliet Parker Smith JPS	Yes	4/11/2020
Vision	Hellie Adams HA	Yes	4/11/2020
Radon	Gethin Thomas GT	Yes	4/11/2020
Insurance Manager	Howard Jones HJJ	Yes	4/11/2020
Safeguarding Officer	Chris Boardman CB	Yes	4/11/2020
Library Representative	Jenny Potts JP	Yes	4/11/2020
Newsletter Editor	David Rose DR	Yes	4/11/2020
UIS Representative	Andy Eavis AE	Yes	4/11/2020
UIS 2nd Representative	Phil Rowsell PJR	Yes	4/11/2020
FSE Representative	Ged Champion AE	Yes	4/11/2020
FSE Vice-Representative	Dave Botcherby DB	Yes	4/11/2020
Rope Testing	Bob Mehew BM	Yes	4/11/2020
Artificial Cave	Katie Eavis KE	Yes	4/11/2020
QMC Representative 1	Phil Rowsell PJR	Yes	4/11/2020
QMC Representative 2	Chris Boardman CB	Yes	4/11/2020

Notes:

1. DB pointed out he had acted as FSE vice-representative, which was accepted.

2. PJR pointed out that previous AGM PJR was also rep with a view to taking over from AE when he stood down; he was still keen to do this, and accepted by council. PJR also had a support letter from Zdenek.Motycka (UIS vice present) for his support for PJR candidacy for BCA UIS rep and future UIS rep See appendix E
3. A discussion took place about FSE and UIS costs to BCA versus the benefits resulting in a sub-group being formed to undertake a cost/benefit analysis comprising Dave Botcherby, Stuart France and Andrew Hinde and report back to Council.
4. HJJ confirmed he would seek a replacement as Insurance Manager before his Treasurer term expired so there as a consistent handover.

(4) Minutes of the Meeting of September 15th 2020

Secretary reported some minor typo errors to be corrected before the final version is posted on the website. There were no further amendments and the minutes were accepted .

One item remained outstanding from the September Action list regarding the future work of the Radon WG. GT addressed the meeting about further sampling and would put a plan for this forward to Council for the next council meeting.

(5) Chair's Report

PJR commented verbally on the amount of work undertaken to update matters within BCA since he was appointed Chair and in particular recorded another vote of thanks to the IT Convenor and his team helping the BCA to move forward. This included the new website, Zoom meetings, virtual AGM, podcasts and on-line voting which had reached many of the BCA members. 567 members voted, roughly 10% of our membership and when compared to the 14% for the CroW vote was deemed a good success. He offered his thanks to all who had made it such a success. He felt that the Executive were working as an effective team with 95% total agreement, and the disagreements were on strategy rather than what needed to be achieved. He hoped that the same trust the membership have given the Executive by the election would be reflected by Council.

He discussed what he described as the need for BCA to develop a corporate image and had already discussed this with IT and P&I for standardisation strategy and better functionality for BCA to benefit the BCA members. A report on this will be presented at the next Council meeting by the P&I Officer and hopefully lead to a more joined up approach by the working groups so they are working together rather than individually.

He also stated that the Constitution and Manual of Operations Working Group would deliver a modern set of rules by the next AGM to allow the BCA to operate in the modern era.

The Chair saw the biggest challenge being Covid-19, as his thoughts were that it will have a long lasting effect on cavers and the caving community. He stated that the BCA will need to do all that it can to help cavers, Clubs and all those involved in caving, so British caving can pull through the Covid situation. As Chair, he indicated that he will be spending a lot of time talking to cavers and Clubs for ideas so the BCA can support them and he encouraged Council members to do the same and bring ideas back to him so that the BCA can deal with this crisis the best it can.

He has already started seeding some ideas, he proposed a week long BCA caving event in Yorkshire to bring British cavers together after Covid, at which the 2021 AGM could also be held (after the success of Eurospeleo Event). Hopefully, the Covid situation will allow cavers to cave in groups again by next summer. This event could also be in conjunction with the UIS's year of Caves and Karst 2021 who are asking countries to support this event. John Gunn (BCRA) also have some comments on this - See later.

He also indicated that initial planning has started on a BCA foreign trip and had asked Beardy (Paul Swire) to help organise this, with a view to going to the PSM. The idea again to encourage British cavers to travel abroad and experience a classic foreign trip to again bring the caving community together. The event would hopefully be around the time of the UIS International Conference in France (25th July - 1st August) to also encourage our people to also go to this event.

These two initiatives are aimed at bringing the caving community together again and start building that team spirit after the prolonged effects of Covid. He also indicated that he has a lot of other ideas, which are still in their infancy, and during future Council meetings, he will slowly drip feed them in which will hopefully help the BCA move forward.

Lastly, he confirmed he was an interfering Chair by style, and that BCA needed a strong Chair (and Exec) right now to push through the required changes. He described himself as a hound dog, running about wagging his tail and ensuring that our working groups are working as they should. On frequent occasions, he would return back to the Executive to make sure the Exec are also happy things are correct before continuing. He indicated that Council will have to accept this while he is Chairman. If Council does not like this then by all means, have a vote of no confidence to vote him out. He reiterated that the electorate have given him and the Executive a strong mandate and he hoped that Council would also give him and the Executive the same level of support.

JG gave a description of what UIS does and referred members to their website and outlined Geoparks identified by Unesco. The Chair asked if it would be possible to present a short report for the next Council meeting describing the BCRA plans for Unesco year of cave and karsts 2021 which JG agreed to prepare and also referred to the 2019 BCRA Review which he would also circulate to Council Members. DR asked JG for an article about all this for the Newsletter.

(6) The President Mick Day - Commemorative contribution

Members of Mick's Club SWCC are proposing to place a commemorative bench and plaque in his memory near OFD. The Executive recommend authorisation by Council of up to £200 for the provision of a suitable bench and plaque. This was agreed unanimously on a proposal from the Chair, seconded by Linda Wilson.

(7) BCA Treasurer Report to BCA Council November 2020

The Treasurer gave a synopsis of his report.

Current bank balances: as at 28/10/2020 was £265,000. Of which £120,000 is in medium term interest bearing accounts and £85,000 is in a short term deposit account. I am holding more in the current account than usual due to potential CRoW legal fees.

Budget 2020:

October 2019 Council meeting approved a budget for 2020, which had a deficit of £10,000. In January we approved significant expenditure on extra PL cover (£9k) and Adventure Academy project (£5k) and radon (£1k). Since then we approved £12,000 on the first batch of CRoW legal fees. Council have approved a budget of £60k for CRoW legal fees and if we lose the case (worst case scenario), the deficit for 2020 is likely to be in the order of £75k currently.

Budget 2021:

Is a separate discussion paper for this Council meeting.

Interest rate:

Continues to be at a record low , hence any interest earned will be much less than in prior years.

Regional accounts:

Both CSCC and CCC have made claims since the last Council in line with accrual values in the BCA 2019 accounts. Both were scrutinised by BCA Finance Committee and both paid. DCC claim is outstanding to date for 2019.

Secure Trust Bank

This saga ended when they refunded our balance and I reinvested it with Redwood bank, one of our other deposit banks.

CRoW financial situation.

A previous Council meeting agreed we could spend up to £60k pursuing this claim on the basis of its details and likely impact for UK caving as a whole. To date we have invested £30k in the legal proceedings, of which £12k has been paid. Should we win the case most of the costs we incur will be refunded. At present we are within budget with the proceedings.

C&A projects approved

The C&A committee met and approved 6 large projects with expenditure greater than £750 each, in line with regional funding rules. 6 projects were approved at a total cost of £9,600. This will be funded by the regions and reclaimed retrospectively from BCA as normal.

HJJ November 2020

(8) BCA 2021 Budget Proposal - November 2020

The Treasurer gave a synopsis of the Budget proposal.

BRITISH CAVING ASSOCIATION

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE COMPARATIVES - BUDGET 2021

As can be seen I have taken a similar approach to last year's budget.

I have taken the 4 year average of each item and where necessary have adjusted the average for known differences. These are known either as I have discussed them with Council members or from past decisions.

The biggest unknown for 2021 will be membership income and the affect of Covid19 on renewal membership. I have assumed no impact on income from this affect which is optimistic. However if this proves to be too optimistic the deficit will be larger and we will eat into our cash reserves. We could increase the membership annual fee for 2021 to compensate but I think that would be the wrong thing to do in the present climate. However that might be necessary for 2022, I will monitor during 2021.

There is a proposal to reduce the club membership fee to a flat £25 to help the clubs at this time. If accepted this reduces our income by £5,000. I have reflected this proposal in the budget as I assume it will be accepted by Council as a good will gesture.

The result of the budget is a deficit of some £21,000 due to extra activity levels particularly in Y&D and E&T, which if they occur will be pleasing.

Please refer to spreadsheet "INCOME AND EXPENDITURE COMPARATIVES - BUDGET 2021" for full budget proposed.

HJJ 28102020

Raised Questions

In response to a question from AH about whether there had been a draw on the Adventure Academy Project £5000 allocated to, the Treasurer responded that £1500 had been spent on equipment in February this year but no further activity presumably due to lockdown. He assumed in the budget that the balance of £3500 would be spent in 2021.

The Chair thanked the Treasurer for all his hard work and asked Council to familiarise themselves with the Budget if they hadn't already done so, as council were responsible to the membership for doing this. He suggested any further questions should go directly to the Treasurer.

The Chair proposed acceptance of the Budget seconded by Stuart France (SF), which was accepted unanimously.

BRITISH CAVING ASSOCIATION
INCOME AND EXPENDITURE COMPARATIVES - BUDGET 2021

	2016 Actual £	2017 Actual £	2018 Actual £	2019 Actual £	4 year average £	Adjustment	2021 Budget £	Note regarding adjustment										
INCOME																		
Subscriptions	56,167	102,280	97,681	100,886	99,999	-8000	91,999	No general increase in subscriptions rates for 2021 Dim - CIM fee decision 2020 club fees 2021 reduced to £5 per club regardless of the interest rate crash in 2020										
Bank interest	2,742	2,795	2,219	3,194	2,758	- 2,000	758											
Training Services	16,194	21,808	22,918	22,471	20,598		20,598											
Meetings	0	2,350	-	-	588		588											
Web Services	1,252	1,553	1,389	732	1,232	- 1,232	-											
TOTAL INCOME	118,355	130,766	124,207	127,373	125,179	- 11,232	113,947											
EXPENDITURE																		
Subscription	56,785	51,887	45,097	54,995	52,186	5000	57,186	2018 actual includes 3 years rebate assume increase due to BMC claim late 2019										
Association	7,836	11,599	10,394	8,933	9,691	2000	11,691	assume zoom meetings continue more support for library agreed 2019										
Conservation & Access	2,045	221	1,868	-	1,034	1000	2,034	new appointee										
Training Services	16,480	19,669	22,101	22,318	20,142	3,200	23,342	go membership costs										
Caver Training	500	1,190	2,652	827	1,292		1,292											
Publications & Information	237	-	-	247	121	1000	1,121	new appointee										
Equipment & Techniques	3,597	2,882	1,453	-	2,008	4,000	6,008	Steel for hangers at £4k										
Youth Development	162	120	1,542	1,650	866	8,000	8,866	Adventure caving carry over from 2020 Plus training support for Universities										
meetings and conferences	138	2,524	-	-	663		663											
Web Services	1,540	1,724	1,982	2,776	2,005	1,000	3,005	new appointee										
Regional Caving Councils	3,252	3,364	2,682	5,582	3,770		3,770	assume reduced activity in 2020										
British Caving Library	10,000	10,000	10,000	12,000	10,500	1,500	12,000	increased to £12k in 2019										
Expedition Programme	5,000	5,000	5,000	6,000	5,250	-2,250	2,000	2020 donations only partially spent										
International	0	216	339	400	239		239											
Rodon work	0	-	-	3,957	-	1,000	1,000	Final testing spring 2021										
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	107,650	110,476	105,110	119,695	110,706	24,450	135,156	Assumes no carry over of CROW legal costs from 2020										
SURPLUS FOR THE YEAR	10,805	20,280	19,097	7,678	14,465	-	21,217	deficit										
TAX	0	0	-	-	-	-	-											
SURPLUS FOR THE YEAR AFTER TAX	10,805	20,280	19,097	7,678	16,727	-	21,217											
Net assets at year end	224,434 235,239 254,336 ##																	
History	15 year average	2019	2018	2017	2016	##	2014	2012	2010	2009	2008	2,007	2006	2005				
Income	117,820	127,373	124,207	130,795	118,355	##	130,825	#	117,819	#	113,938	121,479	101,272	97,289	108,082	109,168		
expenditure	108,613	119,695	105,110	110,476	107,550	##	123,228	#	110,414	#	88,684	84,164	87,238	91,023	91,494	101,571		
surplus	14,197	7,678	19,097	20,280	10,805	#	7,597		7,405	#	25,254	37,315	14,034	6,266	16,588	7,597		
net assets at year end	262,014 254,336 235,239 224,434 #								197,356	184,699	#	151,140	113,825	99,791	93,525	76,937	69,340	61,743

(9) BCA Insurance Managers report to BCA November 2020

The Insurance Manager gave a synopsis of his report.

Liability policy Renewal 2021:

- 1) Generally Insurance companies are not writing new business as the world is so unpredictable. Hence companies are renewing known policies but not chasing new ones. So pricing is flat and there is little chance of price reductions. However with inflation at zero any rate increase on our policy should be small. Should not expect a rate increase on the BCA policy, similar to the last 2 years. PL policies for outdoor activities still unattractive following BMC £10m claim in 2019.
- 2) BCA has 2 new claims on-going on the policy which is not ideal timing in a renewal process.
- 3) Member numbers for 2020 shared with Howden's, similar to 2019, but as vast majority of members join before end of February there will be no Covid impact on member numbers yet.
- 4) Activity levels for members in the year will be lower than previous year, an estimate of 2/3 of normal for the year. Hence a reduction in premium for 2020 was asked for and not dismissed, so might get something.
- 5) BCRC issued resolved and BCRC pleased with the outcome plugs a gap between the 2 policies and increases the scope of the policy cover for the third year running.
- 6) We won't know membership Covid impact until half way through 2021, so 2021 renewal will be at a minimum deposit basis with a top up in premium at end of September 2021 when numbers better known. No saving in cost but will help cash flow.

Claims

We have two potential claims which we are discussing with the underwriters. This may impact renewal. BCA will pay the excess on the first claim by agreement and can decide whether to pay the second excess or not. Excess is £2,500.

Brexit

Despite leaving the EU last December there is little clarity on how this will affect us from an insurance perspective as yet.

HJJ November 2020

The Chair thanked the Insurance Manager for his report commenting that he thought people did not appreciate how much time goes into carrying out these tasks and dealing with the enquires asked about the BCA insurance policy.

SF asked if BCA was providing insurance cover for commercial providers of caving as opposed to sport cavers. The Treasurer clarified that position stating that BCA public liability insurance policy would not cover a professional cave instructor who was employed by himself or someone else to take people caving. It was the instructors' responsibility to ensure they are properly insured.

(10) Welsh Government Judicial Review Update

See **Appendix B** for the full CRoW update report.

The CroW Convenor DR introduced his report with a brief synopsis of recent events and commented on key elements. SF contributed to the discussion by describing how we had arrived at this position.

The Chair thanked the Convenor DR and SF for their efforts and asked if we knew when the Appeal may take place. DR wasn't sure and would refer back the Solicitor acting in the case and report back.

(11) Proposal for the future running of BCA Council Meetings and AGM

The Treasurer introduced his proposal pointing out the benefits to be gained such as environmental issues, saving £5000 per year in travel expenses to attend face-to-face meetings as in the past. Democratically, we have had five times as many members voting at an AGM than ever in the Associations history.

Given the environmental and financial benefits of online meetings and the fact that technology is now easy to use and affordable, it is proposed that all future BCA Council meetings and AGMs be held electronically generally as the first choice

H Jones treasurer 23/10/2020

The Chair PJR seconded the proposal, which was carried with one abstention, no votes against.

(12) Proposal for the Purchase of Stainless Steel Anchors for BCA Bolting Programme

The E&T Officer introduced his proposal with nothing further to add.

Equipment & Techniques Officer report to November 2020 council meeting

The committee had a constructive Zoom meeting last month, covering several different topics. Full details are (or will be) available in the full minutes, but this gives a summary of the key points:

- The committee were in favour of a proposal that BCA purchase a batch of IC anchors for use by all regions (see below).
- The committee were in favour of adopting Fischer FIS EM Plus 390 S resin under the scheme based on test results and on data provided by Fischer, due to favourable strength and shrinkage properties. Stopping the use of Fischer FIS V 360 S was not considered necessary, particularly in the absence of tests of the EM Plus in rock types other than limestone.
- Corrosion-resistant BP anchors are no longer available to buy. The committee are looking into alternatives.

- The DCA have reported that their drill needs replacement. The committee were supportive of a replacement being purchased.

Below is a proposal to BCA Council from the E&T committee:

The anchors currently being installed under the BCA anchor scheme are the Bolt Products (BP) GP8-100-16A4 and the IC anchor. Currently IC anchors are only available to the CNCC. Nationally, stocks of BP anchors are relatively low (tens rather than hundreds per region), so a new batch of anchors will be needed sooner rather than later. It is now possible for BCA to purchase IC anchors from Lima Engineering, which would enable the use of either BP anchors or IC anchors by all regional councils.

The most cost-effective way to purchase IC anchors is in batches of 650 anchors (the number obtainable from a full sheet of 8 mm steel). The approximate cost (depending on the exact price of steel) is £6 per anchor, giving an approximate cost of £3900 for a batch of 650 anchors.

The E&T committee propose that BCA make a purchase of one batch of 650 IC anchors for use by all regional councils.

Mark Sims (E&T convener)

The Treasurer HJJ commented that the cost of the proposal had been built into his budget, which had just been approved by Council.

The Chair PJR opened discussion and MS pointed out difficulties in supply when asked about timescales, which AH (CNCC) gave a generous offer to solve this problem, where stock held by CNCC, could be given to other regional councils in the short term with the CNCC stock replenished when these new anchors were manufactured. This offer was subject to the agreement of the other CNCC officers. The Chair thanked AH for this, and said it was fantastic to see cooperation happening between the Regional Councils. That's how the BCA can work helping each other and thanks for that.

(13) Applications for Membership

1. Canyoning

The following email was received about BCA considering an application from a Canyoning group to become members. Council may wish to consider the request as it is outside our Constitution guiding principles at 2.1.... "with an interest in caving, mining or other subterranean phenomena."

Subject: New club
Date: 2020-09-02 12:26
From: Phil Gudgin
To: secretary@british-caving.org.uk

Good afternoon,

A little left field with this one. I am part of a group attempting to form a Canyoning club. As there is no UK Canyoning body in place we are

looking who we could align with. So my question is who within the BCA we could talk to, to see if it would be desirable / possible to align with the BCA. From my stance Canyoning has more in common with caving than any other recreational sport.

Thank you for your time
Phil

The Secretary RM pointed out that such an organisation may be in conflict with the qualifying definition for membership in the Constitution. AC-D pointed out that a national body for canyoning already exists.

Council considered the application for membership from the Canyoning Club and rejected it on a proposal by HJJ, seconded LW with 13 for 1 against and 7 abstentions on the grounds that the proposed Club would not be covered by BCA insurance and there already exists a national body to represent them and notify them accordingly.

2. South Wales Mines Exploration Group (SWMEG)

South Wales Mines Exploration Group, hereinafter known as "SWMEG" would like to apply to join the BCA as a Club. Our aims are as stated in our constitution:

- To further the sport of speleology.
- To provide equipment and facilities for the exploration of mines and caves.
- To further Group members interests in associated outdoor activities.
- To represent the interests of Group members on regional and national caving bodies.
- The objectives of the Group shall be consistent with the furthering of equal opportunities for all.

We are a group of like-minded cavers based mainly in South Wales with an interest in exploring the many interesting and unique mine systems the country has to offer.

As we mainly concentrate on the exploration of mines, we find that this is sometimes not catered for within the current club environments available locally and have been exploring independently now for some years with most of us holding BCA DIM memberships and some members also working towards their LCMLA awards.

We feel that by joining the BCA as a club we would be better placed to expand our membership base whilst safely sharing our experience and skills with other like-minded cavers who share the same interest.

It was pointed out that by decision from the AGM, providing applications met the requirements for membership, they were no longer required to be approved by Council and SWMEG were accepted as members.

(14) P&I Media Voting position

Proposal from the AGM regarding the P&I Officer Vote

I would like to propose that we recognise the will of the 2019 AGM and maintain the P&I Officer vote without a standing committee as it is not explicitly stated in the 2019 AGM Minutes.

The reason for doing so was that it was discussed and voted upon, the subsequent meetings at Council have all had the P&I Officer vote and the current wording already implies it with the all current functions clause, one of which is a vote at Council. I would strongly urge that this be reviewed by the Constitution and Operations Working Group. If this is not passed we will have created a role with the responsibility to communicate and listen to our membership but without the power to vote on what is said.

P&I Officer Rostam Namaghi

There were no questions and the proposal was put to the vote, seconded by NA and carried unanimously.

(15) Training Officer and QMC

See **Appendix C** for the Training Officer Report

See **Appendix D** The Executive also forwarded a draft report on Recommendations of changes to BCA and BCA Training prior to the meeting, a draft report resulting from analysis done on BCA training, with recommendations both for changes in procedures for BCA itself and those for the Training Officer/Training Committee and QMC. Included in this was also an interview with Alan Butcher, and a document outlining the current terms and reference for the Training officer/Training committee.

The Chair PJR briefed Council on the current situation with regard to this matter and that meetings were being arranged with the interested parties shortly. Having regard to the limited amount of time left in the meeting, he suggested deferring it to the next meeting when the Executive would present a full report to which no one objected. AH asked that the item is listed high in the Agenda order to which the Chair agreed together with a suggestion from SF to split the Executive Report first page from the rest and create two separate items dealing with BCA improvements and Training.

(16) Any other business

1. DR requested articles for the Newsletter and in particular from JG, LL and AC-P
2. Secretary RM informed the meeting that a sub-group comprising LW, JW, DR and RM, had formed to consider Mental Health across the whole of the Association. Whilst still in its infancy the group had met and pulled ideas together on which to continue further work.

Chair closed the meeting at 9.45 pm with a brief roundup and thanks to everyone for attending and the contributions made.

(17) Action Plan from the 4th November 2020 Council Meeting

Issue	Who	By when	Signed off
Radon group - forward plan.	GT	03/12/2020	
Prepare short report on UIS Year of Caves and Karst 2021	JG	03/12/2020	
Contribution to Mick Day Memorial	Secretary	As required	
Distribution of IC Anchors by CNCC	AH	03/12/2020	
FES/UIS cost/benefit review group	DB/AH/SF	03/12/2020	

DRAFT

Reports:

Appendix A - BCA Membership Administrator - November 2020

DIMs

	2020		2019	
	Caving	Non Caving	Caving	Non Caving
BCA only	476	7	489	10
BCRA	230	69	241	65
Students	24		28	
U18s	29		4	

CIMs

	2020		2019	
	Caving	Non Caving	Caving	Non Caving
Caving	4445	836	4073	844
Students	463		515	
U18s	137		152	

Wendy Williams

Oct 2020

Appendix B - CroW Convenor Update Report

On October 12, at a remote hearing at the High Court in Cardiff, our barrister Annabel Graham-Paul made a strong case in support of our renewed application for a judicial review of the decision to exclude caving from the Welsh Government's (WG) Access Reform Group (ARAG) expert panel. We had already been turned down on paper in August by another judge.

Unfortunately, the second judge appeared to have made up his mind before the hearing. Having listened politely, he read from a pre-prepared judgment from his computer screen, and refused our application.

This was, of course, deeply disappointing. He accepted the WG's argument that because ARAG and its panels can only advise, rather than make policy, its proceedings can't be subject to review by a court. However, in our view, and that of our lawyers, this was missing the point. ARAG itself may only be able to make recommendations, but what we were seeking to challenge was the act by its "Steering Group" – which was, self-evidently, making a policy decision, namely that cavers can't even be part of the discussion process that may lead to ARAG giving access policy advice.

Moreover, the reason given by this Steering Group is that caving is not covered by the provisions of the CROW Act. Yet the ARAG might well advise that the law should be changed so that it is. Meanwhile, the WG ministerial statement that led to the setting up of ARAG barely mentions CROW at all. Indeed, it is cited just once, 25th in a list of issues that the group may consider.

In other words, ARAG has little to do with CROW. Many of the things it is considering with regard to conservation and access are, nonetheless, of interest to cavers, and we should, we believe, as frequent users of the Welsh countryside, have our voices heard. Also, the ARAG is considering plenty of land where CROW access does not apply to anyone *where there are also caves*.

It's also clear that if the chairman of the ARAG Steering Group, WG civil servant Simon Pickering, had decided to exclude cavers while wearing his civil service "hat", rather than as chair of the Steering Group, then that same decision *would* have been judicially reviewable.

I realise this is getting somewhat technical, and that this is rather an arcane area of the law – whether or not a decision of the ARAG Steering Group is "justiciable". Our lawyers, Annabel and our solicitor, Richard Buxton, both strongly believe that both of the judges who have heard the application so far have got it wrong, and that we as cavers are being treated unjustly. They have advised us to lodge a further appeal, this time at the Court of Appeal in London.

Indeed, so strong is their belief that they have offered to conduct this which only involves the filing of documents, not a further hearing without charging us, other than the court fee of around £560. This is a generous offer we cannot really refuse especially since, if we did, we would have no chance of recovering our costs to date. If we fight the appeal, win it, and so get a full judicial review and win that too, we will get all our costs reimbursed by the WG.

A few days after the hearing Richard explained all this on a zoom call with the executive, Phil, Russell and Howard, who all agreed to follow his advice.

So the appeal has been lodged. We are waiting for a transcript of the last court's judgment, and then we will file our argument. I will update Council when the next developments occur.

David Rose
CROW working party convenor

Appendix C The Training Officer Report

BCA Training Officer Report November 2020

I have built up training committee from 2 people in early 2018 to a membership of 15+ and still growing 2 years later. I have toured all over the UK to clubs, climbing walls, adventure clubs and attended 2 Hidden Earth conferences giving my free talks as the BCA training officer promoting both the training committee and the BCA award schemes run by QMC. I have also during the last 2 years worked with trainers and assessors setting up Cornwall as a new area now ready to be taken on by the Southern Panel.

I am proud to have held this position in BCA, however it has been a very rough ride. I wish to thank all of those members of BCA council that have been there at the end of the phone and have responded to emails to help me keep the peace during the times of the training committee and QMC split.

BCA Training Officer

An updated BCA Training Officers terms of reference based on recent conversations with council members is included at the end of this report as the TO position comes up for election in 2021. *Appendix 1.*

BCA council to discuss and include or remove any of points 6 to 10.

The terms of reference for both training committee and QMC have been completed. **Appendix 2.** The training officer's role and terms or reference were not changed during these meetings with Butch as this was advised to be taken to council.

NOTE: *If BCA wish to have the training officer involved in QMC, I suggest the Training Officer works closely with BCA Executive and the Convenor of QMC to agree together what they can and would like to take on.*

This has still not taken place and probably the reason why a few things are still uncertain.

BCA Training Officer and the QMC

A discussion at BCA council about the training officer and QMC is long overdue.

What people are saying to me does not match the minutes of meetings so it is vital now that council decides what it wants and expects from the training officer and where it sits, if at all in the QMC. I personally have no agenda here and I have always worked in my capacity as the training officer with many emails and phone calls with members of council about my role.

I do not mind at all what decisions are made as long as it comes from BCA council. I make no recommendations and I will abstain from any voting. I urge BCA council members to look into this very carefully, **check past minutes of meetings, check the constitution** and explain to everyone what is in place so that everybody is clear.

I have protected the training officer position as elected in 2018 AGM as best I can with very awkward conversations with a couple of members of QMC. You will see from the minutes of all the meetings that individuals have tried to change things against what was set by BCA council at the 2017 AGM/council and the 2018 AGM.

Since 2017 there have been questions raised as some people are not aware of the TO's duties in QMC. I have commented on each of them so that council can clarify this and confirm what they expect, if anything from the TO in the QMC. I have had many conversations with BCA council members, QMC members with concerns and trainers/assessors for the awards all with differing views of what has gone on with the training officer's role. I am happy working within any parameters set by BCA council and it would be good to discuss any issues before locking them into place once and for all.

I was at the meeting in 2017 when the chair of the QMC informed BCA council in his reporting that the training officer did not have a place in the QMC, however I was sitting next to a council member that immediately informed me that this was definitely not the case. It is all there in the minutes and make up of QMC that the training officer is an ex-officio member. This is what was in place when training committee approved it, I should know, it was myself and 1 other that got QMC passed through in the first place. The training officer as an ex-officio member was confirmed to the 2nd chair of QMC in 2018 by BCA exec member Robin Weare during an on line meeting and training officer was reinstated into the QMC by BCA secretary Nick Williams. I was fully aware of what had been going on as I had many conversations with the previous training Officer who told me that a member of QMC was trying to remove him. He resigned and I have been unhappy about this ever since. The full report on 'the attempts to remove the training officer' from QMC is enclosed in **Appendix 3**.

I have continued as the training officer being a member of QMC and helping support the work that goes on. I have also amended the training officer's terms of reference after a conversation with the present chair and submitted this in my 2019 report to the AGM. I have known Juliet for a very long time, I trust her and I have supported her with everything in QMC.

I am not sure what changes went on in 2017 with training officer being part of the BCA disciplinary process or the reporting of concerns that are being sent to training officer instead of the QMC chair for whatever reason.

Some members of QMC are not comfortable to raise issues with the chair and come to me. I have been happy to do this and things get sorted quite easily with no fuss. Topics such as whether QMC has a mandate to change policy, remove training officers function etc I cannot answer and have raised this many times with the BCA exec. Due to other issues in BCA, these have all been overlooked or ignored which is the basis of all of these confusions. The BCA exec has also suffered many changes with new people coming in from scratch and may not be aware of what has been going on since the QMC was set up.

I was happy to be the training officer, convenor of the training committee, member of the QMC and fulfil any duties in the BCA award scheme handbook set up and approved by BCA council when I took on the position in 2018. I had no intention and never had to interfere with QMC and its work, which is moving on at a brilliant pace thanks to its members.

I was also happy to be the training officer, convenor of the training committee with no part of the QMC if that was what BCA council decided. I have always said this for the last 3 years!

I am still getting grief for all sides and that is not fair on me. I am also getting into arguments with my friends in QMC who I believe are told wrong information and I am still receiving emails telling me that I am the recreational training officer that has no part of QMC. You may recall that this was raised at the 2018 AGM and was thrown out. The BCA membership wished for the training officer to remain as it was and I accepted the role on that basis.

It is proving difficult to continue as the training officer and BCA council need look at this and let us all know what is actually in place so that BCA can move on without the new training officer getting personal opinions on what other people think is in place.

Questions to be discussed at BCA council regarding the terms of reference of the training officer

- *To authorise all award certificates and sign all Cave Instructor Certificates before they are issued. Can BCA check that this is ok as there is nothing mentioned in any BCA council meetings about this being removed? I personally have no problem with the QMC chair doing this, however this has been raised so it should be discussed and clarified.*
- *Normally LCMLA and CIC candidates have little reason to contact the Training Officer other than to lodge an appeal.*
-

Can BCA council check that this is ok as there is nothing mentioned in any BCA council meetings about this being removed. If candidates do not wish to contact the chair for any reason, they go to the training officer who can sort it by raising it with the chair of QMC or take it to BCA exec. If this is removed will they now go directly to the BCA exec?

- *To deal with applications for exemptions from formal assessment, to arbitrate and make decisions regarding reassessments, technical and procedural queries and to resolve disputes relating to individual candidates.*
-

Can BCA council check if the training officer has a function here as there is nothing mentioned in any BCA council meetings about this being removed.

- *To oversee the disciplinary process but play no part in the investigation stage.*

Can BCA council check if the training officer has a function here in the disciplinary process as there is nothing mentioned in any BCA council meetings about this being removed.

Can BCA trainers and assessors contact the QMC chair if they do not wish to contact the ALO of their panel for any reason?

Can BCA trainers and assessors contact the training officer if they do not wish to contact either the ALO of their panel or the QMC chair for any reason? The training officer can raise this with the ALO, QMC chair or take it to BCA exec where appropriate.

BCA Training Committee

The membership is getting stronger and we have recently invited in Tony Seddon, a CIC holder who is involved with retailing equipment and is a valuable asset to training committee. Tony and I spent some quality time together recently at the CHECC event in Sheffield where we managed to discuss some important issues regarding training techniques and equipment.

BCA Training Grants

All training grant applications are sent in by the regional training officers who look after training events in their regions. Any clubs and organisations falling outside regions with a training officer can apply directly to the BCA training officer.

BCA Training Events

Nothing to report since the AGM apart from an event coming SRT masterclass later in November run by the BCA training officer.

Regional Training Officers Running BCA Training Events

This was raised about regional training officers being paid to run workshops themselves and submitted in the last AGM report. If a regional training officer holds the appropriate qualification, wants to run a training event themselves with the approval by their regional body they can now be paid to do this.

BCA Training Continuity

This has always been top of my list as TO and together with TC the E&T committee, ACI and QMC are now looking at agreed 'best' practice.

DCA together with BCA training committee will run workshops for club coaches after lock down to start opening the doors nationally to cavers who wish to train other cavers.

BCA to possibly fund the insurance cover of the new mines inspector

I have been involved with mine inspections for many years and my surveys have been used in the early days. I was involved when Dave Carlisle was undertaking them and also when Les Riley and Steve Pope first got involved.

I know a user group in Cornwall are looking for some mine inspections in the very near future. Steve Pope has no insurance to do this at the moment and he wasn't sure how many inspections he would get from BCA. My concern was that a problem occurred in Cornwall when a commercial provider booked Les Riley in without BCA's knowledge to undertake mine inspections and the BCA TA's were told that they were not able to use them. To help with all of this and to give Steve Pope some trust, I said I would look into trying to get that insurance cover paid for somehow.

My thought was if the BCA paid this, Steve would share his reports in the future with BCA TA's for that region. A perfect solution.

I contacted Juliet to see if the mine inspections come under QMC at all and they do not. Therefore it would be good for BCA council to look at this. In Cornwall, by supporting the scheme, many more people would get access to the mines promoting mine exploration and BCA at the same time. This is all part of the bigger picture to promote BCA, get more people underground and build up the membership.

I asked Howard if BCA could pay £220.80 to Steve Pope as I believe this to be in BCA's best interest as support to the Cornwall user group and excellent investment for BCA in the future. Phil (BCA chair) came back and spoke with me about this and I agreed that this should be discussed by BCA first.

I know Steve Pope is assisting Les in November for the PICA inspections so I guess he would not need any insurance until after this.

Nigel Atkins. BCA Training Officer 01/11/20

Appendix 1.

BCA TRAINING OFFICER

Terms of Reference

BCA Training Officers Terms of Reference November 2020:

1. The post is a voluntary position and is filled by election every three years.
2. The Training Officer sits on BCA Council, the QMC and reports the work of the Training Committee to Council.
3. The Training Officer as a member of the QMC reports the work of the Training Committee to the QMC and reports the work of the QMC to the Training Committee.
4. The training officer is the contact for all training activities of the BCA. For any enquiries relating to specific topics, such as Equipment, Insurance, QMC etc - the BCA training officer will direct these to the appropriate contacts.
5. To liaise and build relationships with caver training nationally and support the work of the BCA training committee.

[BCA council to include or remove any of 6 to 10.](#)

6. To authorise all award certificates and sign all Cave Instructor Certificates before they are issued.
7. Normally LCMLA and CIC candidates have little reason to contact the Training Officer other than to lodge an appeal.
8. To deal with applications for exemptions from formal assessment, to arbitrate and make decisions regarding reassessments, technical and procedural queries and to resolve disputes relating to individual candidates.
9. To oversee the disciplinary process but play no part in the investigation stage.
10. BCA trainers and assessors may contact the training officer if they do not wish to contact the ALO of their panel or QMC chair for any reason. The training officer will raise this with the ALO, QMC chair or take it to BCA exec where appropriate.

Appendix 2.

THE BCA TRAINING COMMITTEE & THE BCA QUALIFICATIONS MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Both these committees who deal with training matters as part of the BCA Structure have specific roles within the organisation. The QMC deals with the management of BCA awards and qualifications; the LCMLA and CIC awards, the Training Committee deals with all other matters of training within the BCA.

The Training Committee needs specific Terms of Reference to properly encompass its role within the BCA. These are:

- i) The organisation of training, club and regional training events and the administration of training grants. (other than for BCA awards administered by the QMC)
- ii) Liaison with other BCA Committees including E&T and C&A on matters affecting training and, where necessary, the dissemination of information relating to training to cavers, clubs and regional councils.
- iii) Liaising with regional councils and other bodies to address matters relating to training as they arise.
- iv) Promoting training for cavers and clubs by way of best practice on effective training methods, such guidelines to be provided on a non-mandatory basis.
- v) Liaising with the QMC on matters of training when required.
- vi) Responsible in association with the QMC and BCA National Council in formulating and maintaining an effective training policy.
- vii) Representing, within established protocols, matters of training and training process raised by any major incident involving cavers.

The QMC also needs its Terms of Reference as a working party clarified:

- i) The management of current BCA awards and qualifications including the updating and re-writing of the syllabus, updating training methods and ensuring that the awards reflect to needs of users.
- ii) Liaising with the Training Committee on matters of mutual interest.
- iii) Liaising with the BCA National Council and Training Committee on matters related to BCA Training Policy.
- iv) Representing, within established protocols, matters of training and training process raised by any major incident involving cavers and award holders in association with the Training Officer.
- v) The QMC operates on the basis agreed by the BCA AGM and National Council.

Alan Butcher

19th November 2018 – V3

Nothing changed with Training Officers Roles or Terms of reference

Appendix 3.

BCA Training Officers report on the attempted removal of The elected BCA Training Officer from QMC

This report is to highlight various activities that have gone on and to see where the problems originated from.

As far as any minutes of meetings held, the training officer's role and responsibilities in the award schemes have not been changed or approved by council and this needs to be looked at.

Minutes of BCA Council Meeting held on Saturday 25th March, 2017 at the Red Lion Inn, Alvechurch

Nothing done with Training Committee or QMC

Nothing changed with Training Officers Roles or Terms of reference

Minutes of BCA Annual General Meeting held on Sunday 11 June 2017 at the Rotary Centre, Castleton

The meeting went to a vote on the amended motion:

This meeting instructs Council to set up a working party called "the BCA Qualifications Management Committee" be established to develop the BCA training awards and the current Training Committee be henceforth solely responsible for recreational training.

No votes were made against the motion or abstaining from it in both Houses.

Result of Vote

Individuals – Unanimously in favour

Groups – Unanimously in favour

The amended motion was therefore passed

Nothing changed with Training Officers Roles or Terms of reference

Minutes of BCA Council Meeting held on Sunday 11 June 2017 at the Rotary Centre, Castleton

5. Creation of a working group to manage the professional training scheme, provisionally designated Qualifications Management Committee, and setting the membership and terms of reference of that working group.

RW proposed that the QMC be set up as a BCA Working Party as per the document submitted (see Annex 2) subject to a review after 6 months. BM suggested that the Terms of Reference be reviewed at the same time so as to allow the Training Committee to review and revise its terms in the light of the setting up of QMC. AE asked if there were any objections to setting QMC up as a working party and using the document as terms of reference. No objections were raised.

Action 209 the Chair of QMC WP to report to the January 2018 Council meeting with a revised Terms of Reference

Nothing changed with Training Officers Roles or Terms of reference

The 6 month review never took place

Annex 2

GM QMC paper

Proposed changes to the organisation and administration of the B.C.A. Award schemes following the agreed meeting with two Council members. Over quite a long period of time the National Co-ordinating Panel (NCP) have been looking at ways of improving its own efficiency within the BCA award schemes and improving its relationship with the BCA Council. The norm of Training Committee members from Regional Councils have been represented by professional cavers except for CSCC. The professional cavers have always had two views on decisions to be made: a professional approach and a recreational approach. Frequently the professional view point supersedes the recreational view point. Much conversation and debate has taken place and at long last decisions have been made. These points were votes upon by the NCP and were passed unanimously. From there they were passed on to the BCA Training Committee where they were also voted on and passed with only one representative voting against it. This decision would reflect the bottom up structure of BCA. let was suggested a long time ago at Training Committee, that LCML and CIC would be run by the relevant panels and their decisions would not be interfered with by Training Committee. Unfortunately, this has not been the case. Significant, positive changes within the schemes have been **regularly block by Training Committee** as being seen often as a possibility of losing income for Training Committee members.

The decisions that were passed at both panels/committee will have the following impact. The name of NCP should change to the British Caving Association Qualifications Management Committee (BCA-QMC). This newly titled organisation will be self governing within the BCA and it will have its own code of conduct and discipline process for BCA qualified people with either Local Cave and Mine leader or Cave Instructor Awards. The members that will make up the BCA-QMC are as follows:

Two named representatives from BCA Council - they are recreational cavers who do not hold BCA awards

- One named rep from Council should have involvement with equipment and techniques so that they can make direct input to QMC from their field of knowledge

- One named rep from Council should have involvement with access and conservation to help any conflict between recreational and professional use of cave system.
- One Area Liaisons Officer from each of the LCML regions. That is Northern, Derbyshire, North Wales, South Wales and Southern. 5 in total.
- One representative from CIC Panel
- **The Training Officer**

Additional people can be invited for a fixed term if a focus is need in a particular direction The two recreational cavers from Council would strengthen QMC's links to Council and also ensure continuity between Council and QMC. These two people, along with the Professional Training Officer will report back to Exec and Council.

The chair of QMC should be voted in by all QMC vote holders

The role of the Training Committee should change so that it can concentrate on the organisation and support of recreational training with an additional Training Officer to deliver that. This person's role will also include the allocation of training grants that are applied for from BCA caving clubs.

All of the above will not change the influence of Council its two representatives will always be in direct contact with Council, Executive or both Training will still be available to recreational cavers if they so des re it but in a less formal basis than the qualification route.

QMC will run its own code of conduct and disciplinary process to ensure that the BCA schemes have credibility and it is not undermined in any way. The above would be relevant to anyone holding a BCA qualification.

The QMC has no agenda to try and impose, in any way, a code of conduct or disciplinary processes on recreational cavers as this is the responsibility of Regional Councils/dubs. The QMC just whistles to ensure the BCA schemes of LCML and CCC move forward with the times and have an established

level of party across the UK with panel's Idiowncrasies acknowledged and accepted within the schemes. The QMC has no intention to approach land owners and introduce a charging system for access to caves.

We acknowledge that this may take some time but we need a commitment to the change at least in principle. We have modified our initial requests so that BCA can have more of a positive link to its

Qualifications at Council level.

Regularly block by Training Committee - this is not true. It was blocked by 1 person

- **The Training Officer** - The Training Officer is an ex-officio member of QMC

from Council would strengthen QMC's links to Council and also ensure continuity between Council and QMC. These two people, along with the Professional Training Officer will report back to Exec and Council. - The existing training officer is recognised as the Professional Training Officer in the QMC

Training Officers is an ex-officio member of QMC

Nothing changed with Training Officers Roles or Terms of reference

Minutes of BCA Council Meeting held on Saturday 7th October, 2017 at The Red Lion Inn, Alvechurch

DISCUSSION:

13. Training Officer (Acting) - NA

NA: Training committee would like continued and even increased support from BCA council on cave access agreements.

NA: QMC – there are differences in training techniques being used at club committee, & having Rich reporting back is useful, but need a BCA rep on QMC meetings who can feed back any changes on a

professional level – NA asked if we should, in principle, have a formal BCA representative on the committee.

GM replied that it's not currently formalised & has no real intention of being so – there was an agreement with CSCC as to what the new training committee will provide – what NA has written down is far in excess of this agreement & there are concerns over this. AH highlighted this as one of the problems of major reports coming out so close to a committee meeting. AE responded that NA & GM need to set up a separate meeting to discuss this more fully. AE stated he had always appreciated the split between recreational & professional but he felt this could be a step in the right direction to a more harmonious relationship between the two. GM suggested meeting be comprised of himself, NA, a representative from each Council who has strong feelings in the matter (Chair or similar position) & who could discuss legal & insurance implications. LesW also suggested Alan Butcher. AE suggested Webex/Skype discussions as a starting point with the aim of having something to report back to the January meeting.

NA: Clubs are less interested in BCA money than in BCA support – they don't want paperwork but are happy to use laptops, etc. Suggested funding for BCA workshops in which DCA hosts the event but it's run by BCA, beginning in Derbyshire but with rollout to other areas. Trainers are keen to do this & Training Officers from CNCC are also turning up to current events. RW said he was happy to discuss a proposal for funding. NA formally thanked GM for all his work on the training committee & the energy he's put in.

Nothing changed with Training Officers Roles or Terms of reference

Minutes of BCA Council Meeting held on January 1st, 2018 at The Red Lion Inn, Alvechurch

DISCUSSION:

RW: NA has asked for more money to be available to Training – I am prepared to propose the budget for Training Committee needs to be increased.

NW I'm prepared to second.

NA: Just to update on a few things, it's been clear to me that there's been individuals who have done quite a bit of damage in the past, but thank goodness NA, Hill and Ball have been involved to mitigate this. I feel that post of Training officer has been tried to be watered down, BUT we are losing a lot of experience and the post of Training Officer is the first port of call. Formally the Training Officer has been excluded from QMC, which is unfortunate, as gripes and issues tend to come to the Training Officer -they don't go to QMC, and Nigel can handle them.

With regards to access for BCA trainers - CNCC have given access for BCA officer training permits. As there was an informal bridge it could be sorted out.

Things have been set up informally in place.

AE: I think you should move to action points.

1. For BCA to fully support the Training Officers and secondly, increase the funding. We are spending up to £2000 already and we don't have the money to do what we want. There isn't a coaching scheme for BCA available at the moment - just competencies. We now have had two training officers come to workshops to run DCA schemes in their areas, with good feedback. Support DCA events = two reports of arrogance, one club did not like trainer being very prescriptive.

NA felt that this was a terrible attitude to have, if someone is safe to use something, let them. There have also been commercial cavers applying for grants through clubs to get work. Some of these couldn't be sanctified because of timing, which caused some ill feeling. There are grants available however. NA is happy to go to Yorkshire and other areas to support training events and help to filter out

information to other clubs. It isn't the money that's the issue with clubs, what they need is direction,

help and support. We can use the 25-year anniversary with Walking In The Air for getting BCA out there.

Kev West wrote the Derbyshire scheme years ago – they are resources for people out there – one of our

events is funding surveys – we would like people to get involved with this sort of thing.

Schemes should be run by themselves and we should rubber stamp them... I got called down for this as

arrogance but it's about supporting the schemes. We should make a formal bridge between QMC and others.

Also, set up as QMC, Training Officer should be part of it – it has been removed, but it should be in there. NA needs to be able to bring reports from QMC rather than having it come in piecemeal – he is quite happy to bring that forward.

SN: Next QMC meeting is 25th

Feb at library, see you there. NA: No, I won't I won't be there unless you

vote me. SN: I don't.. I can't.... TA: can you just vote for it?

AE: Can't we just block vote unless anyone has objections?

LesW: We can't vote in a Training Officer, it's not an AGM. You are the Training Officer, your appointment to role wasn't through the correct route, therefore you have not been approved by ballot,

but you are the Training Officer. DC: The word "Acting" is just there until the next AGM. Are there any consequences if the officer so chooses if they don't use it?

AE: technically they should use it. RW: What's your thoughts?

NW: Well as far as outside world knows, you are Training Officer. DC: Exactly.

NW: Small concern ... proper to have linkage between QMC and training, just slightly worried about being bounced into it as we haven't actually got any QMC input on this. NA: The fact I'm not there on QMC is incorrect. NW: Just flagging up we may be making life more difficult by doing that today, whereas if we had a formal proposal from QMC it could just go straight through.

NA: I take that but can't BCA vote in?

AB: QMC is part of this council, why can't we tell them what to do with it?

NW: I had to backtrack a decision at last meeting.

AB: I can see what NA is getting at that something is different to what was expected, and I don't want to

be running off in the wrong direction on that.

AE: This comes back to virtually everything is decided in the Committees not the Council.

NA: Are you confusing that QMC might have to report to the training officer? No...consensus... DC: pointed out that if NA has the original document, then Council has already approved it.

NW: Again, my reluctance is that I only saw the paperwork yesterday and I don't want to cause any more problems.

NA: All I'm trying to do is reinstate what was set up.

AB: We had a document that was set up and approved of by Council. All we need to do is make sure it is

the same document here today.

NW: If that document is the same one, all we need to say is we reiterated our decision but I cannot verify that document right now.

SN: I am not a member of QMC but if you can give me a copy of that document, I can present it to QMC.

Are you absolutely sure this document is an original? NA: Yes.

AB: Is there someone on QMC Council to monitor what is going on?

NW: Yes, that is happening, although I have not been able to sit on every meeting.

AB: You can see where my concern is coming from, it may just run on.

AE: Can we move this on and vote on all seven points?

NA: We still have a BCA tri ops in position that means this panel will no longer hear the gripes but they will have the backing of the Training Officer.

NW: Are you creating a situation where QMC reports to you and you then report to Council?

NA: No, just to reinstate that Training Officer is notified of meetings and can go to them So can answer on behalf of QMC, if someone else from QMC is not present in meetings.

AE: If we want to modify point seven and say "ratified by QMC meeting", we can move on.

NA: We can remove point 3. LW: You can use the words Training Officer to describe yourself.

AB: I have a problem with the word "scheme", I think it should be "coaching guidelines". NA: It can be called whatever you like, as long as it works for us. AB: No problem with that.

TA: I would just like to say every time we get stuff from Training it comes at last minute and it's very difficult when it's the first time you've seen it at the meeting. NA: Maybe in future we can get this sorted

out earlier – there's just so much going on.

AE: It's good stuff.

AE: With regards to the wording of these seven points, what do we want to do? LW: Remove it.

Point 4. Remove the word "scheme" and put in "BCA coaching guidelines".

Point 7. To be ratified by the next QMC meeting

AE: Stephan are you happy with that? SN: As much as I have the power to, yes.

AE: With those modifications, can we accept these points.

PROPOSAL:

To accept all seven points, subject to modifications listed above.

Proposed: Badger

Seconded: JP In Favour:

All Abstained/Against:

None

Appendix 1. AE: With regards to Appendix 1, do you want to say any more? NA: No, if I'm not doing it, that's what I'd like to bring on board. I feel the danger here is that some people think it is just recreational caving – the focus is, but there are other things that link into it and the point of contact is still with NA.

LesW: The recreational grants you are administering, they are available for wider than just rope and ladder...?

NA: First Aid can go through QMC as that's a qualification – but a workshop can get a grant . It absolutely is wider than rope and ladder

Nothing changed with Training Officers Roles or Terms of reference

Minutes of BCA Council Meeting held on April 14th, 2018 at The Red Lion Inn, Alvechurch

Report to BCA Council from the Training Officers experience of the QMC meeting on Monday February 26th 2018

I signed into the QMC meeting as BCA training officer (acting) as discussed and voted on at the January 2018 council meeting with 2 witnesses and I took a photo of the page which has subsequently shown up as 'TC rep' and NOT training officer on the minutes. This new position of TC rep was not set up until after I had signed in. Training Officer (acting) was a title I was offered by BCA council and is the position I was in at both BCA council meetings that I attended. At the start of the meeting I wanted to update the QMC with what I had learned and input a lot of the work that I had done but my report was not discussed as it was not on the agenda. I felt very uncomfortable there to the point that I got up and informed them that I would go but the QMC members present asked me to stay. This was a really nice thing for them to do and I am grateful to them for doing this as it felt like they really wanted the training officer back in place. This was all down to a misunderstanding in the past about the original QMC set up. In the absence of my input, they went on to discuss someone from training committee having a position on the QMC which is a positive step forward as the training committee would have a voice on the QMC and the QMC can talk directly to training committee. Training committee are looking at caving techniques and standards on behalf of BCA members and this information is also useful to QMC and the award schemes. Recreational and professional

techniques should be the same. BCA needs to have the highest standards and this is where training committee can be a useful resource to QMC.

This position from the training committee was duly voted in as a full voting member of the QMC which is a brilliant step forward for BCA and QMC, however it had nothing to do with why I was there. At the next QMC meeting I can clarify what I am able and willing to do to help.

This was followed by a discussion on the title of this representative from the training committee and they wanted to change this to be the 'recreational training officer'. I stopped the meeting voting on this I was concerned for 3 reasons:

1 - I am pretty sure that this not in the QMC's remit to change BCA officers role titles, what I have learnt as a member of council is that we need to stick to what BCA set up, agreed and voted on. Things like this have to be done properly.

2 - The title of BCA training officer has always been associated with the training committee and the BCA award schemes in the past. It is deeply embedded into all of the BCA award schemes and everybody in BCA recognises it as a main point of contact for training in the BCA.

3 - A couple of members at the start of the meeting explained to me how they missed having the BCA training officer on QMC, but sadly Nigel Ball resigned last year which is a huge loss to BCA as Nigel knew just about every nut and bolt of the schemes. Over the years Nigel Ball and I have worked out and agreed lots of BCA 'approved' ways of doing things which have been shared to both recreational cavers and instructors. As the QMC had now co opted in a rep from the training committee as a full and voting member, I was able to input and help make decisions. What I took back to training committee was their wish to change the title of the training committee rep to something like 'recreational training officer' or 'sports training officer' which is what they proposed and tried to vote on but I think this will still cause confusion to many people as any title with the words training officer in it points to QMC and CIC as this is the title of the role that is in print on everything out there in the award schemes. Hopefully at the next QMC meeting I can clarify my position and help move things on smoothly and take a lot of pressure off the chair and other members.

Conclusion

Training committee are happy for this new position on QMC to remain simply as 'Training Committee Rep' which is what this person will sign into the next QMC meeting as. I will attend as BCA training officer (Acting) as Nigel Ball did in the past. It looks like we now have things back in place where there should be and the future of BCA training is very positive indeed.

My personal thanks go to all those on BCA council, the past training officers, Exec members Nick and Andy and especially Robin who has put me on the straight a narrow on a number of occasions helping me through a tough time during the last couple of months.

Appendix 2

Training Officer has continued in doing what has always been done and is still working hard behind the scenes.

I am writing to raise my concerns about a couple of things which are to me incorrect about our QMC.

1. Historically I believe that what is constitutionally correct is how QMC was set up & run 1 year ago. GM was chair because a) he was there as ALO for Yorkshire, then b) he was elected from among us. Thus I don't believe we can (constitutionally) offer this role to anyone from outside QMC.

2. A year ago Nigel Ball was T.O. and therefore had a voting role on QMC. As TO he should have been like NA dealing with sport caving too. Therefore it is quite correct that NA does this now as acting TO. He should retain this title.

It strikes me as pragmatic & sensible to have a chair of QMC who may also attend BCA council as an invited person, in the same way the AHOEC rep attends QMC. Whether our chair has a vote at your meeting is up to you. I would like to see this mess sorted out amicably ASAP so that we can function once again as a good team & get on with the job we were given to do! Please can you help us.

Regards

ALO Rep

Regarding QMC and training Officer. This is all a bit of a mess and possibly because there is poor communication and lack of common purpose. The agreement at last Council is crucial here as that should be what everyone expects. Not sure why things are not joining up, could be 'ghosts in the machine' though not sure about details on this.

All good wishes

ALO Rep

Report from North Wales Panel Meeting 2018

1.1. Highlighted how the role of Training Officer had been taken on by Nigel Atkins. Nigel presented to QMC that the original agreement at BCA AGM was that the role of Training Officer would sit in both the sport "Training Committee" and QMC. QMC agreed the Training Officer should have a seat at the QMC table with full voting rights. BCA Training Officer (acting) applies for cave permits for use in the CIC scheme. Training officer does this as a member of the CIC panel. This has nothing to do with recreational caving confirming that training officer function still crosses over to the professional awards. 4 permits have been granted to BCA training officer this year for CIC panel members.

QMC and Training Committee matters will be discussed under their own headings but I would draw Council's attention to the following:

- QMC have been very active with all members showing a high level of commitment and activity.
- There appears to be much confusion over role of the Training Officer, not least from the Acting Training

Officer from whom I have had 146 e-mails since the start of the year. The 2017 AGM set QMC up to report

directly to Council, in parallel with original TC which now deals solely with recreational training. Originally,

the TO was to have an ex-officio position on QMC, this seems to have been quietly dropped. It needs to be properly re-instated.

- There is confusion over the name of the Training Committee and the Training Officer title. I suggest the Committee is re-named as 'Recreational Training Committee' and the officer post is renamed to 'Recreational Training Officer'.

- (Recreational) Training Committee appear to be moving forward with proposals for training schemes which might be mistaken for qualifications for recreational cavers. Regional Council representatives and others

who might be concerned by this need to pay attention and participate in the activities of the Committee.

- (Recreational) TC have a plan for a young person's award, BCA's Youth & Development group need to

engage with this to get the best result for BCA's members.

I propose that a motion be put before the AGM that Training Committee is re-named as 'Recreational Training

Committee' and the officer post is renamed to 'Recreational Training Officer'.

AB: I am very much against changing the name to Recreational Training Committee as I don't think it encourages cavers to take the training seriously. There was a paper at the AGM or council meeting where the terms of reference were set as the role of the Training Committee should change to concentrate on recreational caving. This should have been reviewed but never was. I think we are in danger of casting the Training Committee adrift without a paddle – we need to give proper terms of reference to it and we won't need to change the name on it.

AE: We want to have a discussion on this, but we need to speak when Phil is here. AB: Am quite happy to discuss then. NW: Can I particularly draw your attention to my point on recreational training schemes as, at the moment, the training committee is going ahead with that and is in the process of sorting out awards. AB: We discussed how this might go forward before it was set up and we discussed provision of some form of advisory guidelines to give to clubs to provide training for members – this

was never done, and the way it was stated in the training report of Sept last year (which Chris Binding wrote) caused distress. NW: I am in complete agreement, I do not think this is heading in the direction intended as the Regional Councils are not engaging.

PROPOSAL:

That a motion be put before the AGM that Training Committee is re-named as 'Recreational Training Committee' and the officer post is renamed to 'Recreational Training Officer'.

Nothing changed with Training Officers Roles or Terms of reference

Minutes of BCA AGM held on June 3rd, 2018 at The DEAN FIELD STUDIES CENTRE, PARKEND, FOREST OF DEAN

I would like to end by thanking a few people who have been very supportive through these last few difficult months. Robin Weare is without doubt one of BCA's biggest assets. Without him, I could not have done things professionally and in line with BCA policy. I also wish to thank Nick Williams for supporting TC in setting up our meetings, without him we would have really struggled and Andy Eavis who I have had some meaty discussions with but has kept me on track to get me to come up with a workable solution for BCA training. Thank you to Andrew Hinde who inspired me to write up this report instead of a resignation letter to explain what has gone on and what I have had to endure.

I also wish to thank all of the past training officers and a lot of you BCA council members for your wisdom and advice in looking at the BCA training concerns. I know a few of you have had many emails to and fro but it was needed to clear up what was a real mess.

Thanks and best wishes go to all on QMC which has been a struggle as this is where all the confusion sat with my role being messed with, however, none of us were to blame and I wish you all success, you are doing a great job. Whatever the outcome of the AGM, I would like to thank every BCA member for their support and enthusiasm they have shown me as BCA Training Officer (acting).

Nigel Atkins

BCA Training Officer (Acting)

30/05/1

BCA Training Officer

We need to tie this training officer business down once and for all. BCA wanted someone not involved with the professional schemes. I personally can't see any credibility in this position unless we take it seriously and move forward:

BCA Training Officer Terms of Reference

BCA Training Officers Duties 2017:

The post is a voluntary position and is filled by election every three years. The Training Officer sits on BCA Council, the QMC and reports the work of the Training Committee to Council. Normally LCMLA and CIC candidates have little reason to contact the Training Officer other than to lodge an appeal.

- To deal with applications for exemptions from formal assessment, to arbitrate and make decisions regarding reassessments, technical and procedural queries and to resolve disputes relating to individual candidates.
- To oversee the disciplinary process but play no part in the investigation stage.
- The Training Officer is responsible for ensuring the training schemes are maintained and generally promote the development of training in all areas of caving in the BCA.
- Then training officer is the contact for all training activities of the BCA. For any enquiries relating to specific topics, the BCA training officer will direct these to the appropriate contacts.
- To authorise all award certificates and sign all Cave Instructor Certificates before they are issued.
- To operate as Line Manager for the Training Administrator
- To liaise and build relationships with the recreational side of caver training and support the work of the BCA training committee

NOTE: Since the AGM last year, the chair of QMC has taken on most of the duties above leaving nothing for the training officer. **Has this been authorised by council?**

DISCUSSION:

AE requested if anything further to add. Only a statement by NA added: "not really, it's just been a lot of confusion out there and am not blaming anybody – everyone is just doing what they have been asked to do – I've loved doing what I'm doing and if there are changes ahead, and I'm not convinced they are for the right reasons but will work with BCA and do whatever they want me to do."

HA noted a need to take into account NA's comments with regards to the state of harmony within BCA.

Proposed – Report accepted in full

Proposed by: JP

Seconded by: TR

In favour: All

Against/Abstained: None

Training Officer

AE asked if NA would be continuing as Acting Training Officer. NA stated he would like to propose HA as Training Officer for the BCA.

NW pointed out HA would have to accept. HA stated that she believed they were voting on the position exactly as it was written (Training Officer – Acting) and anything beyond this would constitute a change. She suggested that NA was voted in to his current position for now and review could take place later in the meeting.

27. That Training Committee is re-named as 'Recreational Training Committee' and the officer post is re-named to 'Recreational Training Officer'. Proposed by National Council

After lengthy discussion the meeting was adjourned at 13.15 for a break and to change rooms Meeting recommenced 14. 14

Following further discussion it was decided to withdraw Item 27 totally, with the feelings of the meeting noted. Item 28 was decided to be the more important issue and covered a great deal of Item 27.

CONCLUSION: WITHDRAWN

28. Training Committee terms of reference

That the Training Committee be responsible for:

- All matters relating to recreational caver training including the administration of recreational caver training grants.
- The provision of non-mandatory training guidelines for use by caving clubs, recreational cavers and groups.
- All other training related matters excluding those associated with the BCA award schemes and the QMC.
- An overview of BCA training policy, in conjunction with the QMC and the BCA National Council. The detail of responsibilities and operations shall be confirmed by BCA National Council.

Proposed by AB

Seconded by NW

After lengthy discussion which included several suggestions for alternative wording the proposal was withdrawn

CONCLUSION: WITHDRAWN

Nothing changed with Training Officers Roles or Terms of reference

**Minutes of BCA Council Meeting held on June 3rd, 2018 at The
DEAN FIELD STUDIES CENTRE, PARKEND, FOREST OF DEAN**

APPOINTMENT OF NON ELECTED POSITIONS:

NA requested a clarification of who the QMC members were.

LesW: Working group is created here, conveners are appointed here and the conveners report back here. NA: So, the convener is simply the Chair of the QMC – NA & SN both stated that the QMC was about to advertise the Chair position.

NW stated that the job of the convener was to report back to the Committee, but it was up to the QMC to decide who was their Chair – and there could be a difference between the two. We need to appoint the convener, and whilst we could technically override the QMC Chair, that would not be advisable. However, we could appoint Stephan as the convener, whether, or not he chose to apply as QMC Chair.

Nothing changed with Training Officers Roles or Terms of reference

Training Officer
Nigel Atkins
November 2020

DRAFT

Appendix D - BCA Executive Recommendations of changes to BCA and BCA Training

BCA general

1) Email system - for clarity and handovers

- b) All officers should use the BCA email system when conducting any BCA business.
- c) All emails sent to private email should be up loaded to the BCA system if not already there.
- d) Backups of the email system should be done regularly and at random times, organised by IT Working group

2) BCA meetings

All BCA meetings (Exec council, working parties etc, investigations etc) should be recorded by Zoom, and archived in the BCA system. Method of retrieval needs to be agreed i.e. who can authorise, how many licences required etc.

3) Data protection and legal matters

Guidance needs to be developed so that officers are aware of the current legislation regarding aspects such as data protection. In addition, a code of conduct between officers needs to be developed.

4) Conflict of Interest

A conflict of interest guidance/policy needs developing.

5) Complaints

Clear definition of what is a complaint, a legitimate concern or just a gripe is required. It is recommended that all complaints / concerns are sent to the BCA secretary (or to a member of council if levelled against a member of the Exec). The Exec will decide how to process this complaint/concern in accordance with BCA procedures, passing it on where deemed appropriate.

The requirement to go to the Secretary is so that complaints/ concerns can be looked at independently of any officer. It will also allow the Exec to have a tally of complaints/concerns receive and act accordingly. Hopefully, the level of concerns/complaints will be low, however if the secretary is receiving a large number of concerns / complaints then the Exec should be one of the first to know so that the can take the appropriate action.

BCA Training

Training oversight Group.

A higher oversight group needs to be established consisting of the Recreational caving training convener, Commercial Caving instructor award scheme Working party convener, the E&T group convener and the Exec (or members of). This is to ensure all groups are liaising correctly, agreeing methods and uses of equipment that the BCA recommend and producing similar documentation. See diagram.

Website Training Pages

Clear clarification is required for BCA training, especially the roles of the Commercial training and recreational training to avoid any further confusion. The diagram referred to above, is necessary to make this absolutely obvious. The agreed contacts for both sections to be only placed on this page.

Recreational Training

The Recreational Training Officer

This is a post to facilitate recreational training only NOT for any commercial company linked to cave training. It should be held by a non CIC person. If the person is a CIC person then some scrutiny of that individual must be agreed to avoid any possible (or any suggestion of) conflict of interest.

BCA Training Events

A review of how BCA use trainers (if required or revert to pier to pier) for BCA recreational training is required. It is also suggested that as part of the Commercial Award scheme, trainers must do a number of free training days for BCA organised recreational training events. The work must be shared out amongst those who are interested in a fair, unbiased and transparent way.

Recreational Training committee

Training committee should revert to a working group, but in the terms of reference it should be stated that an individual rep from each regional council must have a seat. All other positions should be reviewed as TC is now too big and unwieldy.

Commercial Training

Name Change:

The renaming of QMC to something more appropriate led by the working party convener. (Large scale confusion due to the name has occurred in the past).

Working Group:

The word Chair is removed and replaced with convener. No other titles are to be given to other members. (this has been a source of controversy in the past).

Training panels.

A transparent and fair method of a training assessor becoming a member of a panel needs to be developed, and is the same across all panels. Consideration on how many panels a T/A should be on to be considered

Disciplinary procedures.

Clear disciplinary procedures need to be developed for Award holders who have acted outside the rules of the scheme. If they have not acted in the interest of the BCA, then the BCA disciplinary procedures will apply.

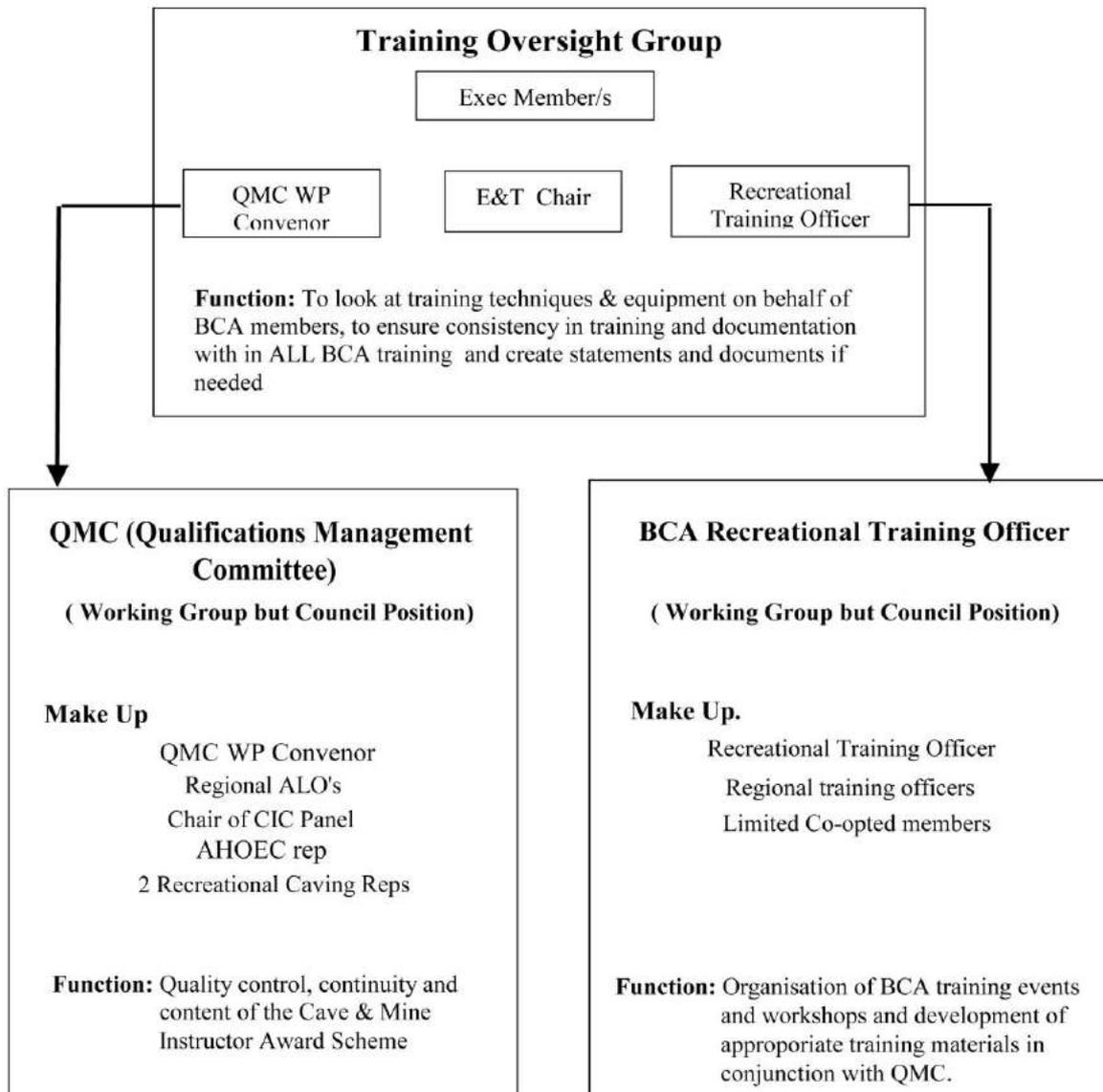
Recreational caving representation.

Two members of the working group should be well respected recreational cavers with a long active caving history. These may or may not be council members and are appointed by council

Clarification of BCA membership.

Clarification of who needs to be a BCA member when partaking in the training scheme, and a better method of checking that BCA award holders are current members of the BCA incorporated within the new BCA membership system. If Award Holders are found not to be members of the BCA then their award will be invalidated.

Proposed New BCA Training Layout



Transcript of a Meeting between the Chair and Allan (Butch) Butcher

20201019 Butch.m4a Note that the content is a literal version of the audio recording and not checked 100%

Hello

Phil - How are you doing - alright. So thanks for meeting yesterday, sorry I've got to make you do it again. Thanks for the chat about all the training officer stuff that was useful. I think we have to do another couple of chats because chatting to people in my position is the way to go.

Butch – I will agree. Today we need consensus not conflict.

Phil - I agree 100%.

Phil - The purpose of this is to record your comments on the stuff you did in 2018.

Butch – 2018 and 2019 the final version went to the 2019 AGM.

Phil - That's my understanding too and my first thinking yesterday look at the diagram was that the QMC and the training officer sit equal.

Butch - That's right.

Phil - In that respect looking at the terms and reference and conditions, the training officer has actually no remit to QMC bar sitting on the panel.

Butch – I'm not even sure he sits on the panel

Phil – I think that was agreed a bit later that the training officer could actually sit on the panel.

Butch – When we agreed it it was they were two separate committees basically and they met only to discuss matters of mutual interest and to act with the Executive and the council on training policy. It was agreed at the time there was no need for the training officer to be involved with the QMC, if that was added in later, that's fine.

Phil – OK you also kind of said that really the training officer is dealing with recreational cavers training rather than any of the commercial instructor training award.

Butch – Yes the awards basically, Yes that's right the training officer the training committee is to do with recreational training in the grounds to provide it an input to clubs and cavers about training to deal with liaison with things like the equipment committee for equipment updates or equipment problems and also deal with the conservation and access committee about conservation issues when it comes to training and things like that, so it's a sort of information gathering role as well to pass on to neighbours as things develop. You know like we've done in the past when a piece of equipment has been a bit duff. It goes to the equipment but it also goes to the training officer via all the trainers and the clubs.

Phil – When you say the trainers, that's the recreational trainers is it not.

Butch – Recreational and the QMC people because of course they need to know as well, as that would be of mutual interest something perhaps a training officer would pass along to QMC.

Phil – Yes.

Phil - So the training officer in your opinion would then pass along that to QMC to disseminate to its trainers,

Butch – Yes if they don't already know that's that mutual interest is training officer has got is liaising with all the other committees. Phil and vice versa when the QMC may be had a problem with equipment, to me they would all get together and decide the best route of action to be able to disseminate it to their members.

Butch – Yes absolutely right. Its not two different tribes we are all singing off the same hymn sheet we are all doing in a slightly different way.

Phil – What would you say if there was a QMC or a commercial instructor award problem that came to the training officer or recreational training officer. Butch it was agreed I thought that he would pass that onto the Chairman of the QMC Phil and effectively do nothing and allow QMC Butch a conduit for that complaint or problem is to go to the QMC. There is a question of judgement, if it was something fundamental then he might well consider taking it to the Executive but I can't imagine anything that would be that fundamental. So you know as I said it was really some current training officer obviously knows loads of people so if you say you know that bloke so and so is causing me a problem with my training and its up to him to go to the Chairman of the QMC and say there's this problem can you sort it out. Its not for him to take it on board himself.

Phil – No ok.

Butch – He has no input there has he.

Phil – Do you think that's a good idea or should we have a completely independent complaining body for the training. Sometimes I worry that people might not complain because they might feel that particularly on the commercial instructor training that because there's a QMC panel made up of trainer assessors it might be better that was an independent process.

Butch – I suppose you could do that yes. There are two independent people on the QMC aren't there. I don't see there's a reason why not.

Phil – I sit on it,

Butch – yes you sit on it.

Phil – Before I was Chair, who would be the two independent people then.

Butch - Well I thought it was two representatives from the national council I can't remember whether those were ever specified I guess they were. I think it used to be the Secretary and ..

Phil - That's interesting, that's quite interesting. Because the two council reps I don't think actually sit on QMC.

Butch – Well they should do.

Phil – Yes that's fine. Its something to bring up with QMC.

Butch – Yes well the reason for that obviously was to make sure the QMC didn't run off and do something that was detriment to the BCA, so you needed that little bit of a check and a balance you know.

Phil – Your obviously once step ahead of me because that was half my motive of actually sitting on QMC just for those points that get highlighted.

Phil – I don't really have much more to ask you really because we had a great chat on Sunday and again I think we ought to have a few more because I think that's great.

Butch – Yes it was simple it was just set up and that was all agreed passed on the nod in the 2019 AGM and at the time Nigel was happy with it and everybody was happy with it. It was a good resolution to what had been a bit of a problem 6 or 7 months before.

Phil – You did say that you'd had three meetings with both Juliet and Nigel and it only seemed to be on the third meeting that Nigel actually understands.

Butch – Well I had a little word with him beforehand and I think it finally clicked that that was what we were trying to do and you know I think beforehand he thought it was still if you go back to 2018 before there was a lot of paperwork produced about how that should work but it sort of floundered in the past if you know what I mean it was and what I said to Nigel at the time I said look we've torn all that up we are starting completely from fresh and it's a new way of doing it and this is what it says on the paper and that is what we are going to do.

Phil – Prior to that Nigel was in effect the head honcho of the whole training? Butch well yes before the QMC declared UDI basically the training officer was supposedly dealing with all of that the recreational stuff plus managing the commercial side the awards side basically. Phil and that all changed and QMC was formed and it didn't work very well and you renegotiated all that in 2019 and it was brought to AGM in 2019, I think my report was the 10th April and that's the final ones and that was what was agreed.

Phil – OK that's awesome. Brilliant I really appreciate your time.

Butch - No problem I'll speak to you again soon.

Phil- Yes we might be going on the Mendips again on the 31st to do the tramway repair but am waiting permission from Historic England. Bye

Review of the Training Officer's remit

for discussion at the 04/11/20 BCA Council Meeting

By Rostam Namaghi



I have been asked to provide an opinion as to the full remit of the training officer's role. Please see the summary for the concise opinion.

Definition of an Officer

Officers can be split into three categories:

1. Voting: Ones that are brought into the organisation under clause 6.1 of the constitution
2. Non-voting: Working party convenors have been assigned the title officer and are bound by their terms of reference of their group, under clause 6.10
3. Assistant Officers: Also a non-voting role however these are posts co-opted by council to administer things in an adhoc fashion under clause 6.6

Note that several officers have moved categories over the years with Youth and Development having gone from 3 to 2 to 1 and then back to 2 over the last 7 years. The Training Officer is in **category 1**.

Remit

Clause 6.1 as of the 02/11:

'The Association shall have the following officers: Council Chairman, Secretary, Treasurer together with Chairmen of the Standing Committees (Section 7) who shall be elected from the individual membership of the Association at an Annual General Meeting (AGM). Uncontested candidates will be elected. If there are multiple applicants, they will go forward to an online vote after the AGM. Each officer shall serve for a term of three years from the AGM'

This means that the remit of the officer is the same as that of the Standing Committee, i.e. its terms of reference. The terms of reference for the training committee are clearly outlined as below (approved by council in Oct 2018, Apr 2019 and by the 2019 AGM):

BCA Training Standing Committee Terms of Reference (accepted at AGM 9th June 2019)

- *The organisation of training, club and regional training events and the administration of training grants. (other than for BCA awards administered by the QMC)*
- *Liaison with other BCA Committees including E&T and C&A on matters affecting training and, where necessary, the dissemination of information relating to training to cavers, clubs and regional councils.*
- *Liaising with regional councils and other bodies to address matters relating to training as they arise.*
- *Promoting training for cavers and clubs by way of good practice on effective training methods, such guidelines to be provided on a non-mandatory basis.*
- *Liaising with the QMC on matters of training when required.*
- *Responsible in association with the QMC and BCA National Council in formulating and maintaining an effective training policy.*
- *Representing, within established protocols, matters of training and training process raised by any major incident involving cavers.*

Roles may be further defined by that group but not extend the remit agreed by council. There are no internal minutes currently available and so whether any part of the above has been delegated cannot be determined. There are no current Standard Operating Procedures in the Manual of Operations.

Oversight and relation to QMC

BCA oversight of QMC is not the role of the Training Committee nor its Officer. That responsibility is reserved for the National Council (of which the Training Officer is a part). Should issues be raised or a concern highlighted then it should be escalated via the executive as per the current complaints procedure. This was not the case prior to the reorganisation when it was explicitly part of the remit (see Appendix 2).

There is a representative role in making sure that BCA members' interests are fully taken into account with regards to matters of training and that is the principal reason for the Training Officer's position on QMC. Note that there are other BCA representatives on QMC to ensure adequate oversight and communication. The following extract from when QMC was set up clarifies the roles of the two bodies.

'Although there has been lack of understanding of how this split is set up, I think it is now clear that one organisation handles the training of trainers and the qualifications involved with this. The other organisation handles recreational training at general club level and also reports separately directly to BCA Council. Representatives of each organisation will sit on both committees as they decide between them.'

A. Eavis BCA 2018 AGM

Summary

The Training Officer's role is to organise and promote training for recreational cavers on behalf of the BCA. They must also co-ordinate matters regarding training with the other bodies within BCA. They are responsible for convening the Training Committee which has a representative role on QMC.

If complaints are received by the Training Officer then they must follow BCA complaints procedure and be passed to the Executive. If serious concerns are raised then they should be raised with the relevant body; be it QMC or the Executive as a matter of urgency.

Appendix

1. THE BCA TRAINING COMMITTEE & THE BCA QUALIFICATIONS MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE – DISCUSSION PAPER.

Both these committees who deal with training matters as part of the BCA Structure have specific roles within the organisation. The QMC deals with the management of BCA qualifications; the LCMLA and CIC qualifications, the Training Committee deals with all other matters of training within the BCA.

The recent proposal to change the name of the Training Committee by including the word “Recreational”, subsequently withdrawn, failed to appreciate that the majority of cavers (and potholers) consider themselves to be cavers and that, in fact, the minority of cavers who receive some form of payment for providing caving services are often referred to as “commercial cavers”. It is those cavers, caving clubs and regional councils and other bodies who need to be represented by the Training Committee; recently though the impression has been given that these bodies and the training committee are, in some way, less important than the QMC and its functions despite the fact that the training committee has been and remains an important Standing Committee of the BCA and before that the NCA.

The Training Committee needs specific Terms of Reference to properly encompass its role within the BCA. These are:

- i) The organisation of caver training, club and regional training events and the administration of training grants.
- ii) Liaison with other BCA Committees including E&T and C&A on matters affecting training and, where necessary, the dissemination of information relating to training to cavers, clubs and regional councils.
- iii) Liaising with regional councils and other bodies to address matters relating to training as they arise.
- iv) Promoting training for cavers and clubs by way of guidelines on effective training methods, such guidelines to be provided on a non-mandatory basis.
- v) Liaising with the QMC on matters of training when required.
- vi) Responsible in association with the QMC and BCA National Council in formulating and maintaining an effective training policy.
- vii) Representing, within established protocols, matters of training and training process raised by any major incident involving cavers.

The QMC also needs its Terms of Reference as a working party clarified:

- i) The management of current BCA qualifications.
- ii) Liaising with the Training Committee on matters of mutual interest.
- iii) Liaising with the BCA National Council and Training Committee on matters related to BCA Training Policy.
- iv) The QMC operates on the basis agreed by the BCA AGM and National Council.

Alan Butcher

30th September 2018

2. BCA Training Officers Duties 2017 (from the Training Officer’s report at the 2018 AGM)

The post is a voluntary position and is filled by election every three years. The Training Officer sits on BCA Council, the QMC and reports the work of the Training Committee to Council. Normally LCMLA and CIC candidates have little reason to contact the Training Officer other than to lodge an appeal.

- To deal with applications for exemptions from formal assessment, to arbitrate and make decisions regarding reassessments, technical and procedural queries and to resolve disputes relating to individual candidates.
- To oversee the disciplinary process but play no part in the investigation stage. The Training Officer is responsible for ensuring the training schemes are maintained and generally promote the development of training in all areas of caving in the BCA. Then training officer is the contact for all training activities of the BCA.
- For any enquiries relating to specific topics, the BCA training officer will direct these to the

appropriate contacts.

- To authorise all award certificates and sign all Cave Instructor Certificates before they are issued. •
- To operate as Line Manager for the Training Administrator
- To liaise and build relationships with the recreational side of caver training and support the work of the BCA training committee

These have been superseded by the reorganisation of QMC and the Training Committee and so no longer stand. There are reports containing roles and remits, and suggested qualities but none of these have been proposed neither as a Terms of Reference at an AGM nor as changes to the Manual of Operations. The reports have merely been accepted by the AGM and therefore do not stand.

Appendix E - Phil Rowsell's letter of support from UIS Vice Chairman



Zdeněk Motyčka
UIS Vice – President of Administration
Titov trg 2
6230, Postojna - Slovenia
Email: z.motycka@mediform.cz

30 October 2020

To: Dr. Philip John Rowsell

Dear Dr. Rowsell,

Following our discussion about International Union of Speleology I would like to express my support to your candidacy to the next UIS Bureau.

I personally know you as experienced caver and reliable person, and who beside this, also personally build fellowship among speleologists and promote speleology in global scale. I am sure, that you fully understand purpose of UIS and have the best qualification to serve to the International Union of Speleology.

I hope this letter helps you to obtain the official candidacy from British Caving Association for the UIS Bureau 2021 – 2025.

Sincerely yours

Zdeněk Motyčka
Vice - President
Union Internationale de Spéléologie

*Union Internationale de Spéléologie • Founded in 1965
Titov trg 2 - 6230, Postojna - Slovenia • www.uis-speleo.org*