

MINUTES OF THE NCA EQUIPMENT AND TECHNIQUES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON THE
16th DECEMBER 1995 IN THE SHREWSBURY ARMS, EASTGATE STREET, STAFFORD.

- 1/ ATTENDANCE Owen Clarke NCA Equipment Officer
Adrian Fawcett Cambrian C. C. Equipment Officer
Dave George DCA Equipment Officer
- 2/ APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE received from Jenny Potts and Les Sykes.
- 3/ The MINUTES OF THE MEETING of 23rd September were accepted as a true record.
- 4/ MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF 23-9-95
- 7/ Adrian reported that the anchors have now been placed in Portland Stone by CSCC.
- 10/ The absence of a meaning for W was queried. This is missing in the original report. ACTION LS
- 14.1/ A reply had been given by Ben Lyon which can be published in Speleoscene. (copies of all to Jenny) ACTION OC JP
- 14.2/ Owen had considered that the correct answer was to apply lubricating oil sparingly to the hinge and wipe off any excess. Others felt that the effect of WD40 transferred to the rope should be positively studied in case a warning against this is required. ACTION OC
- 5/ CONVENERS CORRESPONDANCE Significant items were
- 5.1 Letter to DMM and reply on the subject of risk of fatigue failure in Ecoanchors. Since the reply was vague it was felt that the committee should carry out further research into the fatigue resistance of 316 Stainless steel. ACTION DG
- 5.2 Manufacturers data from Edelrid and Beal giving the expected life of SRT ropes under various situations. Comparative data is needed from other rope manufacturers ACTION OC
- 6/ ANCHOR REPORT IN CNCC ZONE NOTHING FROM LES SYKES
- 7/ ANCHOR REPORT IN THE DCA ZONE NOTHING FROM MARK LOWE
- 8/ ANCHOR REPORT IN THE CSCC ZONE NOTHING FROM LES WILLIAMS
- 9/ ANCHOR REPORT IN THE CCC ZONE Adrian reported that another placer had been trained, and that 8 anchors had been placed in Ogof Draenen 3 more are required here, and another 3 in Llanelly Quarry Pot. Placings for rescue purposes had been discussed with SWCRO, but were on hold awaiting the safe working load of Ecoanchors. ACTION OC
There has been no reply from the Forest of Dean, but N. Wales are interested. ACTION AF
- 10/ ROPE TESTING REPORT Owen reported that 21 ropes had been tested at the BCRA conference, providing a full schedule in the parts of the two days that were available. If it had not been for 4 kilometres of Lancaster Uni rope requiring testing there would have been only 8 ropes to be tested. Ropes are continuing to be sent in by post, and there has been interest overseas in Mallorca and New Zealand. The position with the Edelrid 10mm Superstatic Lnglife rope that was causing worry has changed. Instead of being a reduced strength rope in relation to NCA experience, it is now a rope that corresponds to Edelrid's expectations, whereas normal ropes exceed this. Manufacturers data sheets give Edelrid life 3 years at optimum storage without use, 2 years occasional use without wear. Beal gives weekly use 2-3 yrs, occasional use 4-5 years, use + storage 10yrs Obtain info on others and publish all in SPELEOscene ACTION OC

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- 11/ REPORT OF CONTACT WITH BRITISH STANDARDS NOTHING FROM NICK WILLIAMS
- 12/ ROPE FUND ACCOUNTS These were tabled, showing expenditure of £23-90 and a £2 donation at Southport, leaving a balance of £34-79.
- 13/ ROPE TESTING AT THE NEXT CAVERS FAIR
The problems of getting more participants to bring ropes for testing was discussed and it was felt that it is essential that OC is informed as soon as the Fair organisers are known so that the presence of rope testing can appear in all adverts. ACTION FSB PLEASE
Dave offered to copy sufficient current versions of the NCA ROPE TEST RECORD free of charge so that the issue of SPELEOscene that gives the details of the 1996 Cavers Fair including the availability of rope testing can also carry the form as a direct reminder to prepare and bring a test length. ACTION DG, JEP
The question of manning the tester was discussed. OC feels that the expected number of ropes will only need one rig operator. The difficult problem of keeping the paper work correct could be eased by providing instructions and materials for people to do their own documentation ACTION OC
- 14/ ANY OTHER BUSINESS
- 14.1 The draft Equipment and Techniques Committee Report for 1995 was distributed for consideration and discussion. Only minor changes were suggested and the filling-in of the missing figures. A copy of the draft is included with these minutes for all non-attending committee members and assisters.
- 14.2 The use of the full title of Equipment and Techniques Committee in the now defunct Four Year Plan and the confirmation of its validity by council was discussed and it was accepted that this role should be revived. The change of title has been adopted immediately, and the methods of actioning this will be discussed at the next committee meeting.
- 14.3 The need for more communication with other caving bodies on anchors and rope testing in order to share experience and co-ordinate pressure on manufacturers was discussed. It was agreed that Owen should make formal contact with other european national bodies through Andy Eavis, and also that he should prepare documents on rope testing and anchor placing which would be put in the caving pages of the internet by Adrian. ACTION OC AF
- 14.4 Adrian raised his concern with the lack of precision of some of the instructions in the Anchor Placing documentation that he had received. It was agreed that he should prepare suggested modifications and discuss these with Les Sykes ACTION AF LS
It is noted that copies of these documents have not been sent to the Equipment Officer.
- 14.5 Dave suggested that a write-up on anchor placing and rope testing should be prepared for inclusion in the next edition of Caving Practice and Equipment. Since the last edition is dated 1991 this may not be too urgent ACTION OC to contact BCRA
- 15/ NEXT MEETING 10:30am Saturday 10th Feb 1996 IN STAFFS C C CLUB
Owen Clarke Equipment Officer 17th December 1995