

NATIONAL CAVING ASSOCIATION

Minutes of the meeting of the Equipment Committee held on 28.1.95 at Stafford.

1. Administrative

1.1 Present:

Dave George, Les Sykes (CNCC), Les Williams (CSCC), Jenny Potts (chair), Nick Williams (secretary), Matt Robbins (DCA), Dave George (DCA), Mark Lowe (DCA), Ivan Wooley (DCA).

1.2 Apologies for Absence:

1.2.1 Owen Clarke, Adrian Fawcett, Nigel Atkins. Rowena Magdan

1.2.2 A written submission from Paul Ramsden was received and his comments were incorporated at the relevant part of the meeting.

1.3 The meeting was chaired by Jenny.

1.4 The minutes of the previous meeting were accepted as read.

1.5 At Jenny's suggestion, the meeting agreed to ignore the circulated agenda and concentrate for the whole meeting on bolting.

1.6 It was agreed that it was neither desirable nor necessary to form a sub-committee to consider bolting since the Equipment Committee as a whole should be concentrating resources on the bolting programme for as long as it takes to get this sorted out.

2. Insurance:

2.1 Pete Mellors has discussed this with Bryan Ellis. It has been suggested that we should insure all those currently involved or who have been placed bolts in the past. The insurance will run from July to July of each year, and a list of names will need to be provided retrospectively each June. The insurers have accepted the risk already, and anyone joining the scheme is now covered. Insurance will cost £1.00 per named person. Named people will need to be on the list only for so long as they are active and as each area replaces the personnel involved in the bolting programme the new named people will take on responsibility for the bolts. Apparently the insurance did cover us already but the feeling of the meeting was that the explicit acceptance of the risk would simplify any claims.

2.2 It is expected that the regional council will be responsible for payment of the insurance fees, which will be billed by NCA and paid en block to BCRA. At present we will set no maximum numbers of people included in the programme.

2.3 Concern was expressed by those present regarding the placing of anchors specifically for the use of people earning income from caving. It was agreed that this should not, as a rule, be undertaken but that obviously no restriction could be placed on who uses the bolts and the interests of amateur cavers should be the priority.

- 2.4 The insurance must also cover the placement of bolts on the surface for training purposes but only those bolts properly documented under the scheme and in positions agreed by the regional council are covered.

3. Training

- 3.1 The meeting was unanimous that we now know more about the use of these bolts than both DMM and Hilti, and therefore neither supplier need have any further direct involvement in the training programme.
- 3.2 It was agreed that we should design a training programme which could be used by any suitably qualified person to train any other person to place bolts. Once this procedure had been agreed it would be possible to hand the administration of the procedure over to the training committee although the Equipment Committee would need to be responsible for any changes in the training procedure.
- 3.3 Rather than try to hammer out a training procedure at the meeting, it was decided that we should decide a series of points which should be included and then ask Les to ensure that it is incorporated in the programme.
- 3.3.1 Training must result in adequately placed anchors!
- 3.3.2 Adequate records of who was trained and when
- 3.3.3 A refresher course to be held every couple of years
- 3.3.4 A system of feedback to ensure that any knowledge gained by the people placing the bolts can be included in the programme.
- 3.3.5 It should not be necessary to test pull a sample bolt placed by the trainee as part of the training procedure.
- 3.3.6 Training will need to be co-ordinated through the national Council.
- 3.3.7 An assessment to ensure that the trainee is competent to judge the position for placing the anchor(s).
- 3.3.8 Provision of course notes to each trainee describing the bolt placement procedure in detail.
- 3.3.9 Persons trained to place bolts must also be competent to maintain them and this should be reflected in the training course
- 3.3.10 The procedure to test bolts is considered to be an important part of the maintenance procedure.

4. Maintenance

- 4.1 Les read the maintenance procedure developed for CNCC and it was generally accepted by those present. It was agreed that we should develop test gear (such as anchor torque testers) for the programme and if necessary NCA funds would be used to assist with the purchase of such equipment for each region.
- 4.2 It was unanimously agreed that the use of a pull test on bolts in situ was undesirable. The reason for this is that any pull test giving useful results will mean a significant stress in comparison to the strength of the anchor which could potentially weaken it. Alternative tests

which do not stress the anchor to a level significant in comparison to its ultimate strength should be developed. This situation should be reviewed regularly.

5. Policy Document

5.1 NW said that he should be able to get the next revision of the Bolting Policy (draft 2) to interested parties by mid February.

6. Equipment Committee Report

6.1 Owen had circulated a draft report prior to the meeting. There were several comments.

6.1.1 The report should be updated in the light of the progress made at today's meeting. Jenny will draft half a page and Nick and Les S will approve prior to circulation.

6.1.2 No money was spent on the rope testing project. Other figures in the report are rather nebulous and could be replaced with more general figure.

6.1.3 NW has attended BSI committee meetings on behalf of the equipment committee.

6.2 Nick explained that any further expenditure should not be a problem but properly costed proposals should be brought to an equipment committee meeting prior to the money being spent.

7. Next meeting

The next meeting will be announced nearer the time.

The meeting closed at 13.30.

Nick Williams
17.2.95
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