

BCA Training & Equipment Working Group Meeting
29th November 2022

Minutes

In attendance:

Steve Gray SG (Training Officer and Convenor)
Mark Richards MR (CNCC Equipment Representative)
Fabian Ehlers (DCA Asst.Training Officer)
Rob Watson RW (CHECC Training Officer - standing down)
Amelia Oliver (CHECC Training Officer – incoming)
Richard Vooght (DCUC Equipment Officer)
Stephan Nantynczuk
Rich Hill (CCC Training Officer)
Russell Myers Recorder
Bob Mehew (Observer for rope testing rig item)

Apologies received from:

Nigel Atkins
Jo White
Vince Allkins
Ian Patrick

1. Acceptance of the minutes from the meeting held on 1st June 2022

Proposed Richard Vooght, seconded Fabian Ehlers– accepted unanimously.

2. Matters Arising

a) Other than the item below, all matters arising from the June meeting were to be considered in this meeting Agenda.

b) Ask the IT Manager to arrange uploading documents to the website – no progress
RM agreed to follow up.

3. Rope Testing Rigs

Bob Mehew gave a synopsis of progress to date for re-locating the rigs in Derbyshire following an offer from Glyn Roberts near Matlock. Bob also described the equipment which in essence are three separate units.

BCA Council had agreed at 22nd November 2022 Council meeting to fund the installation of the rig up to a limit of £1500 but subject to the appointment of a Rope Testing Officer. Bob explained that with current health issues he did not feel in a position to take up the role again but offered to mentor whoever did take on the position.

A discussion ensued and Fabian Ehlers offered to consider the position as he was located fairly close to Matlock. Offers of support were made to him and Fabian stated he would confirm his offer after further consideration.

4. Reports

- a) Received reports from the constituent bodies which were noted and accepted unanimously. (Copies attached as appendices to these minutes.)
- b) Arising from the reports were the following:
 - Ian Patrick raised a query about whether what he felt was increasing scrutiny of transparency/openness of the training process within CNCC, was being reflected in the other Regions. None of the other Regional representatives reported an issue with it. RM stated that there was no pressure being applied from BCA although historically, it had been raised (across the board) when the old Training Committee was being reviewed in 2020. As IP wasn't present the matter was left until his return.
 - Mark Richards raised the matter of "Coaching standards" from the DCA report and after a brief discussion, SG agreed to follow this up with the originator, Nigel Atkins and report back to the group.
 - The connection between this WG and QMC WG was discussed. RM explained how the Liaison Committee had been established to create a bridge between the two groups where matters of joint interest could be discussed – the testing of caving belts being an example. RM agreed to raise the matter with the QMC Chair and clarify the arrangement.
 - Arising from the last item above, Rich Hill reported that the results of the belt testing had been obtained via SG and a report of the findings was being prepared through QMC to publication on the BCA website. Succinctly, the testing confirmed that the belts performed satisfactorily in the situations envisaged.

5. Petzl Harness

SG had approached Petzl again but no response from them to report. However, he has an opportunity this coming weekend to raise the matter directly during a visit to their UK HQ. It was noted that delays in getting this information prevented a suitable warning being circulated and the degree of urgency to do this was mounting.

6. New to Caving

A query was asked about how this initiative was implemented in a practical sense, there did not appear to be a straightforward answer. SG offered to find out how it was happening round other groups and report back.

7. Training and Equipment WG Terms of Reference

This matter has not been resolved since the establishment of the Group and after a brief discussion, it was agreed to re-circulate the draft ToRs once again to the WG members. Any comments/amendments etc. should be returned to RM for collation and the draft ToRs put on the next meeting agenda for adoption.

8. Anchors

- The decision at the last CNCC Committee to recommend destruction of the stock of sub-specification anchors currently held by SG was noted and formed the basis for a proposal by SG to destroy the stock. With very little further discussion, the meeting agreed unanimously to have the sub-standard stock of anchors destroyed.
RM requested written confirmation from the company/organisation undertaking this, that the stock had been destroyed.
- Andrew Hinde CNCC Chair, had sent a request to the Group to find an alternative storage place for the current stock of IC anchors stored at his house. SG offered to undertake this but it was also suggested that the stock be distributed round the regions. The practicalities of doing this needed to be discussed with Allan Speight at CNCC which SG agreed to do and would report back to the next WG meeting. SG asked who had paid for these anchors (and by inference who owned them) which no one had the answer for; RM agreed to find out.
- MW raised a technical issue about single anchor rebelay and Bob Mehew confirmed that the testing rig could provide an answer to the concerns about this.

9. AOB

- SG reported that the tree used as a belay at Bull Pot of the Witches had been removed and CNCC are being approached about an alternative.
- MW raised the matter of where the friction krab should be attached when using a Petzl Stop and the discussion reached the conclusion it was down to Petzl to issue an instruction which was currently not forthcoming. SG agreed to pursue at his meeting with Petzl this weekend.
- RH asked Bob Mehew about updating the Radon information tables in the current guidance; currently wip.

10. Date and Time of next meeting / meetings

SG thanked the Training Officers for the activities they had been involved with and work with the WG. He suggested the next meeting of the WG be in late March.

11. Appendix

Regional Training Officers Reports

CNCC Training Officer Report

5th November 2022

CNCC Training Officer report to BCA "Training and Equipment" working group.

New training workshops added

We have had a very successful "summer program" of workshops with all of them going to "Full".

They have once again been extremely well received and some really positive feedback has been given. (Some examples later on).

The new trainers (Sam and Helen) have provided quality training and have seamlessly fitted into the CNCC training team, they are both great assets to the CNCC.

We have just put together the "winter" programme of training workshops. After a discussion between the trainers we have put on a few more 2 day workshops. This will give people chance to "consolidate" skills which get taught on day 1.

Where day 2 is underground, we need to keep the ratios low, this obviously has an effect on the overall numbers of people we can facilitate but the trainers believe there is a great deal of value in this format. Currently the take up of these workshops is very good.

Trainers "moderation" day.

We are having a day for all the 4 SRT trainers to get together and spend the full day going through all the skills, Techniques etc that we are teaching to ensure consistency throughout our delivery.

The trainers have agreed to this day based only on basic travel expenses.

The CNCC are covering the cost of the venue hire.

CNCC Training Officer "CPD" "Moderation"

Phill Baker has kindly allowed me to shadow on his CIC training training course in December. This will help ensure that the CNCC are current with what the QMC are teaching at the "caving instructor level."

Whilst there is a lot of relevance in these skills to "recreational" caver training, I also believe that slightly different skills, techniques and training approach are required when dealing with purely recreational cavers who cave with their mates and clubs.

Training Videos

I have an idea for a project "mulling" over for the future. A series of videos and documents showing various skills and techniques that we teach on the workshops. Primarily as a resource for people who have been on a workshop and want a reminder but also available to anyone.

The format I envisage are really short videos (maybe some only a few seconds long) showing a particular skill or technique in a really simple and clear way. This way people can pick which skills they want a reminder of. The other advantage of keeping it in a "separate" format is that it is far easier to update any particular one. A professional filming and editing appearance would really help. Some funding would be required.

I plan to discuss this at our trainers moderation day and maybe do some "demos".

New to caving / try caving days

The CNCC are looking to increase the opportunity for anyone who has never caved before to "Try caving".

The plan is to run "CNCC New to caving / Try Caving hosted by club"

The Craven Pothole Club have put one on for 12th February. This is a free event and at no cost to the CNCC.

Other clubs are invited to do the same, they can use the excellent CNCC website to manage "bookings" and help with publicity.

There will be a dedicated "home" on the CNCC website for these events and also other information that could be useful to anyone "New to Caving". This is to compliment the BCA's "New to Caving" website which is clearly linked to.

I am looking into the possibility of purchasing some caving equipment (Horizontal only) that can be used on these days. Giving people old and tatty overalls and helmets doesn't do well for first impressions 🤔

Anchors

At the recent CNCC meeting, a request (not by me) for a couple of extra anchors on the first pitch of Heron Pot to facilitate a better pull through was made.

After much debate the request was turned down, reasons of "we haven't had any reports of issues" and on grounds of "conservation" were given. The irony of the conservation argument was that the next item was a request for funding to put ALOT of scaffolding and concrete into a cave which was given overwhelming approval!!

A request by an instructor for an extra anchor at the start of one of the traverses in Simpsons was sent to the CNCC a few months ago.

I volunteered to go and have a look and report back. I used the situation to also report on some less than ideal anchor situations in both Simpsons and Swinsto.

After not too much debate, the committee agreed to allow a full audit of the anchor situation in both caves and to give "pre approval" for works as seen fit by the anchor installers. I plan to get started on the work as soon as possible.

Ian Patrick

Since making a return to caving at a somewhat advanced age, I have been very impressed by the role which CNCC is playing in the sport, in training, in access, in the provision and monitoring of anchors and in providing very detailed and accurate rigging information for a huge number of caves. Long may it continue to flourish!

> I've often struggled with following practical based courses in the past as I'm very much a 'must write everything down a million times before it sticks' type of gal, but last weekend was paced so well and with ample enough time to ask questions and check back through processes that I really got so much out of it, so genuinely, thanks ever so much! The CNCC training programme is a really great resource to have.

**CNCC
Training
Officer**

I had a fantastic weekend and I feel the CNCC is fulfilling a very important role by making high quality training such as this easily available to cavers for a reasonable fee. I don't think I could've picked up the skills that I learnt over the weekend without such a well organised and run course - or at least it would've taken me several years longer to 'pick it up' informally! I've already recommended the course to several of my caving friends.

12/02/2023	Ladder and lifelines underground
12/02/2023	New to caving - Try caving hosted by The Craven Pothole Club
21/01/2023	SRT rescue workshop (2 days)
14/01/2023	SRT improver and refresher (2 days)
17/12/2022	New to SRT / skills refresher (2 days)
10/12/2022	New to SRT rigging / refresher workshop (2 days)
13/11/2022	SRT rescue workshop

DCA TRAINING OFFICER

Report to Training Committee November 2022 DCA

Coaching Workshops

DCA is continuing to support caving clubs running their own training to a high standard which is achieved by training up their own club coaches. Continuity in techniques is important so that cavers don't get confused with differing opinions about things. This is where our coaching workshops are so valuable to be able to help keep techniques to a high standard.

DCA Caver Training Workshops

We have events for individual cavers running from November to March and are advertised on the training page of the DCA web site. The instructors on the DCA workshops are CIC holders/BCA trainers and assessors for the BCA awards.

Assistant DCA. Training officer Fabian Ehlers DCA.

Training officer Nigel Atkins

Cambrian Caving Council Training and Equipment meeting Nov 2022

CCC have continued to put on training events this Summer and Autumn.

Alan Bowring from Brecon Beacons National Park has run two Geology Walks and there has been 2 CCC SRT workshops this autumn with another early December.

We plan to put a couple more SRT events in the Spring and I have talked to Mark Burkey about running another photography course late winter/early spring.

Rich Hill