



# British Caving Association

Minutes of the National Co-ordinating Panel meeting held on  
Monday, 6 October 2008 at Staffordshire Council Staff Club, Stafford

## 1. Present

Tom Peacock (TP)	Chair & ALO – South Wales Panel
Graham Mollard (GM)	Training Officer
Dena Proctor (DP)	ALO - North Wales Panel
Dave Baines (DB)	ALO - Derbyshire Panel
Tony Smith (AS)	ALO – Southern Panel
Karen Slatcher (KS)	Training Administrator
Lee Paskin (LP)	On behalf of Tony Flanagan, ACI Rep
Paul Rafferty (PR)	On behalf of Nigel Ball, CIC Panel Chair
Steve Higgins (SH)	Joint Services Mountain Training Wing Rep

The meeting commenced at 10:15 am.

## 2. Apologies for Absence

Tony Boyle ALO – Northern Panel

## 3. Minutes of the meeting held on Monday, 2 June 2008

It was agreed that they were a true record.

## 4. Matters arising from the minutes

Nothing that will not arise in later areas.

## 5. Training Committee Report

- 5.1 **New Aspirant CIC Trainer/Assessors** – Tom Peacock, Duncan Morrison and Phil Baker (who will start his probationary period in 12 months' time) have been chosen.
- 5.2 **Weather & Flooding Booklet** – This needs to be done as soon as possible, but in the meantime a brief information sheet needs to be circulated as a matter of urgency, stressing the apparent change of weather patterns with more dramatic and localised storms happening more often

10:25 Tony Smith arrived.

- 5.3 **Emergency Cards** – The only minor amendment made by Training Committee was regarding who to ask for when dialling 999. There will be room for a short piece on flooding, aimed at novice groups and also something about use of new equipment - do you know how to use it/escape from it.

10:30 Paul Rafferty and Steve Higgins arrived.

- 5.4 **Aspirant CIC Trainer/Assessor** – The Trainer/Assessor in question had actually done one module, but the paperwork did not reflect this.
- 5.5 **Letter from Cambrian Caving Council** – This letter said that the principal officers of CCC were of the opinion that they cannot endorse any site-specific advice, that they do not want people going through the resurgence and that the National Park also does not support it.
- 5.6 **Multi-activity Insurance** – GM has agreed an all-inclusive insurance policy with Jardine Lloyd-Thompson at two levels, which will cover caving, gorge walking, canyoning, rock climbing and mountain walking, with bolt-ons for canoeing etc.  
For those at CIC and Trainer/Assessor level, this also includes all verbal and written information given to clients, at a cost of £189 for £5m cover. At LCMLA level it will be £210 for £5m.
- 5.7 **Recreational Training Grants** – Grants have been paid to Nigel Atkins, Elysium Underground Group, Kelso and YSS, but there is still a small sum available.

- 5.8 **HSE** – They have recently given Bewerley Park another Improvement Notice following another incident related to the swimming pool. The Director of Young People’s Services in Yorkshire has been asked for an interview, under caution or as a solicited statement, regarding details about Manchester Hole.

GM has another meeting with Pam Waldron and Gavin Howat just before Christmas.

PR to become involved with information regarding flooding in Goyden in an attempt to clear up misconceptions about Manchester Hole. This will be added to the web page, together with information regarding Long Churn Cave.

- 5.9 **New Section 4Bs** – These have now been circulated to all Trainer/Assessors. GM apologised for having added Abseil for Group as a separate box when it should not be. There is now a Section for Training courses and a box for ‘Incomplete Revalidation’ for those candidates who do not have enough personal and/or group experience.

TP suggested that we should consider having on-line forms to save on postage costs. GM agreed that this is the way forward, along with various other documents – something for future discussion.

- 5.10 **New Training Administrator** – GM is aware of three people who are interested in the position. GM, KS and Nick Williams to conduct interviews.

## 6. Thoughts on making the scheme self-financing

- 6.1 TP was asked to discuss this with the South Wales panel, but as they did not have any figures to get an idea of a possible shortfall it was difficult to discuss. The general feeling was that anything that puts more expense onto candidates at centres would not be popular.

Efforts have been made recently by Council to contact UK Sport regarding funding, but because caving is not an Olympic sport and the scheme does not fall in line with their coaching guidelines it was once again refused.

- 6.2 **YTD Training Figures** - GM had put figures together for January to September 2008 for the Council meeting last Saturday. These show income at just over £15,000 including £2,100 from revalidations and spending of approximately £5,800, plus the Training Administrator’s wages of £7,500 - £8,000, including expenses.
- 6.3 **LCMLA Revalidation Workshops** - GM agreed at the Council meeting that Trainer/Assessor fees for LCMLA Revalidation Workshops will rise from £150 per day to £175 and said that he is happy to pay around £25 for room hire, but will not pay any expenses for travel or use of a minibus. The cost to candidates will rise by £15 from a total of £65 (including the £15 admin fee) to £80.
- 6.4 **Trainer/Assessor Annual Fees** – The cost for an LCMLA or CIC only Trainer/Assessor will rise from £30 to £50. The cost for an LCMLA and CIC Trainer/Assessor will rise from £40 to £80.
- 6.5 **Registration Fees** – As this is a one off payment, currently standing at £40 for LCMLA and £20 for CIC, or £50 for both, it was suggested that fees rise by £5 to £45 for LCMLA, £25 for CIC and £55 for both. Annual LCMLA registrations currently stand at around 200. As with all decisions at NCP this would have to be ratified by Training Committee.
- 6.6 **Sponsorship** – PR suggested that this may be worth exploring with caving equipment manufacturers such as Ben Lyon and Colin Boothroyd at Enterprise. PR to liaise with GM and then speak to Ben Lyon to see if he might sponsor the training scheme(s).
- 6.7 **Modules 1 to 4** - DP suggested adding the £15 admin fee to these modules, which are currently free. This will mean that the admin fee applies to any assessment.
- All of the above to start as at 1 January 2009.*
- 6.8 **New TA Agreement** – As of 1 January 2009, this will take the form of a renewable agreement that will run for three years, although payment of fees will still be annual.

## 7. Progress on Weather & Flooding Booklet

- 7.1 Steve Long is asking MLT UK for permission for us to use the diagrams in his book. DB has made a good start on the work and will do his best to produce a draft document for the NCP meeting in February. Since the meeting Steve Long has confirmed that we can use both the text and the diagrams from his book “Hillwalking” as long as we acknowledge him and the publisher.

PR asked about what had happened to the work that he and Des Marshall had put together some years before. GM said that he has some information and at least some of Jo Ellis's drawings. **PR to send a copy of his PowerPoint presentation to DB.**

DB had originally planned to publish this document himself and requested confirmation that all the people involved in putting it together be acknowledged. He said that the idea behind the work that Des Marshall had done originally was for a modular document along the lines of the BCRA booklets and GM agreed that this is still the plan. The reason for needing this document is that the candidates, particularly at LCMLA level, need to have an idea of what is expected of them at assessment, in particular the minimum knowledge they should have.

- 7.2 **Geology Booklet** – This has ground to a halt as it was viewed as inaccurate by John Gunn, who reviewed it. There appears to be some confusion as to who is leading this.

## 8. **New insurance scheme**

See 5.6 - Training Committee report.

## 9. **Code of Practice for deep water in Porth yr Ogof**

As GM mentioned in the Training Committee report there is still a problem with this. However, it transpired at last Saturday's Council meeting that the minute in the Training Committee report (see 5.5) was incorrect in as much as it was NOT the view of Cambrian Caving Council that they do not want people to go through the resurgence, it was the view of the individual who wrote it.

TP has taken a copy of the Porth yr Ogof document to Helen Pye at the National Park, on behalf of NCP and Training Committee, and they agree with the content of it but are not prepared to put up notices above ground and do not feel that they can make a decision on the content. TP said that the worry is that it could be seen as 'advertising' the resurgence, which might encourage people to go through it. It has been suggested that it should be posted at the point where the last current sign is to make groups aware of what equipment they should have, so that they can challenge their leader if they do not have that equipment. TP said that the document is already being used for training courses etc, but that candidates are not allowed to keep it at the moment as it is still at the 'draft' stage.

SH said that the military have a document for deep water generally, anywhere that is over 1m deep and not necessarily underground. TP responded that the idea behind the document was that it was not too prescriptive and also not generic, but site-specific. GM said that there is now also a need for a generic document for deep water, along the lines of the one that the Irish scheme has.

GM said that the document will now be supported by Council and that this should be ratified in January. **TP to send a copy of the latest version of the document to GM for circulation to all Council members.** This is to include an updated survey.

SH requested that if BCA uses any information supplied by Joint Services, that this be acknowledged.

## 10. **ALO regional reports**

### 10.1 **North Wales - DP**

Panel Meeting / Prospective TAs - The Panel meeting in July was very poorly attended even though a midweek meeting had been requested and set up. However, Alan Braybrooke and Des Marshall, the two new prospective Trainer/Assessors had attended and most of the meeting was spent on their induction.

Level 1/2 Traverse Lines – There appears to still be some confusion from some centres as to the equipment that should be used on traverses. In Gywern, on a traverse that is a top Level 1, one centre has started using new belts plus a tail with karabiner, where they have used harnesses and cowstails in the past. GM advised that if they are wearing belts then they must have two tails with karabiners. Ultimately, GM said that this needs to be the decision of the local panel, but he also suggested that if a decision cannot be reached to contact him.

### 10.2 **Derbyshire - DB**

Out of Date Qualifications - DB has two Level 2 people who are overdue by possibly as much as seven years. He was going to do a Core Skills Reassessment with each of them, but as they were

advised by DP twelve months ago to send their information to GM for his decision and did not do so, they will definitely need to send their logbooks to GM now.

New Trainer/Assessors - Iain Rennie's paperwork was presented at Training Committee by Nigel Atkins, but Phil Baker's paperwork has not yet been received. DB passed on Adam Evans' paperwork to GM to take to Training Committee - KS to let him know that he can start now.

CICs with LCMLA L2 Mines – At the Trainer/Assessor Workshop in Derbyshire on 13 September, DB raised the question of how CICs who have an LML qualification revalidate it. There was some discussion about this and two trains of thought. Some felt that it should be necessary to attend an LCMLA Revalidation Workshop to revalidate a Level 2 Mines, along with a CIC Revalidation Workshop, but others felt that this financially penalised the Trainer/Assessor. PR suggested this is discussed at CIC Panel before being firmly agreed.

*Tony Smith proposed that if someone goes for a CIC Revalidation, the person running the CIC Revalidation should be able to revalidate their L2 Mines by contacting someone knowledgeable in the local area. This was agreed, with two against and one abstention.*

Geology, Hydrology & Cave Formation – The question was also raised about what we expect candidates to know. The TA Workshop elected to form a sub-committee and Adam Evans and Des Marshall, will make a list of things that should be in the Glossary and a list of 'desirable', 'essential' and 'extras'. They will report back at the next Derbyshire panel meeting, and DB will bring their findings to NCP.

### 10.3 South Wales – TP

Porth yr Ogof and the new insurance with Jardine Lloyd-Thomson have already been mentioned.

Booklet information – The issue of work done by various people in the past was raised. The concern being that this work and effort should not be wasted – see 7.1 and 7.2

Boulder Choke in Bridge Cave – This has definitely changed. Instructors at Sennybridge had some film of clear water coming out of the wall at the entrance. There may be a change in hydrology. TP suggested that it would be a good idea if Sennybridge could come "into the loop" for the sharing of information regarding all outdoor activity venues in the area. SH will contact Mark Field (Camp CO) to arrange this. TP has contacted Juliet Parker-Smith to help to facilitate this. Gary Evans has contacted Cambrian Caving Council to ask their view on the state of the Bridge Choke.

### 10.3 Southern England – AS

Panel Meeting – This is to happen in a couple of weeks.

SE Mines Inspections – SE Mines were due to be inspected about three weeks ago. Now that Dave Carlisle has sorted out his insurance (see 11.2), he will be doing the inspections the week after next.

### 10.4 Joint Services Mountain Training Wing - SH

They want to keep in close contact with what the BCA schemes are doing and PR, Barry Albutt and now Andy Phillips are involved.

LCMLA Registration – Their trainees are often not registered with the LCMLA scheme when they do their training. GM/KS confirmed that they have up to 30 days after the course date to register. SH said that they will be advised of this.

GM said that he proposes to attend one of their cave leader assessment course soon.

#### **Northern England**

Nothing to report.

## 11. Any Other Business

11.1 **GM: Child Protection** – Dave Judson put out a statement regarding Child Protection, saying that BCA should not be encouraging taking children under 14 underground. Although this was aimed at club caving, GM challenged it at the Council meeting last Saturday. BCA to put out a press release statement to the effect that they will actively encourage children being taken underground. The BCA Child Protection Policy will be totally re-written with input from Training.

11.2 **GM: Mines Inspections** – Dave Carlisle had thought he was insured for the last two years. However, due to an oversight on the part of the insurance company, he was not. GM has helped to sort this out

and Dave is now on the JLT insurance, which has been paid for by BCA but not from the Training budget.

- 11.3 **GM: SRT Training** – Another idea that came from the Derbyshire TA Workshop was that there may be some credibility in a Level 2a (or Level 3) assessment for enabling people to train others to do SRT. This is just an idea at this stage and has come from the CICs – it is seen as a step towards becoming a CIC. There would need to be limitations, ie pitches under 18m with a single hang, no re-belay and no deviations, with candidates trained on a cut and lower or release and lower system. SH said that this something that they are looking into.  
[All ALOs to take this to their respective panels for their input / other possible constraints etc.](#)
- 11.4 **GM: Ratio of Candidates/TA on Revalidation Workshops** – GM asked whether it was felt that the current ratio of 6:1 was still sufficient or whether it could be raised to 8:1. The general feeling was that it was better to keep the numbers down to keep the quality of the revalidation.
- 11.5 **GM: Weather etc** – GM requested that if anyone is aware of photos or video that has been taken of dramatic weather events, could they please ask for a copy of it to be send to GM as a PowerPoint for inclusion on the website.
- 11.6 **GM: CICs** – GM asked what should be done if a CIC is reported to GM as having spoken inappropriately to other people, as in a recent incident. There was some discussion, but no specific outcome.

## 12. Dates and place of next meetings

Please note – can I change the February meeting to Friday 30<sup>th</sup> January 2009?

10:00am ~~Monday, 9 February 2009~~

10:00am Monday, 1 June 2009

10:00am Monday, 5 October 2009

The meeting closed at 13:45.