

Minutes of the National Co-ordinating Panel Meeting  
Friday 9th June 2006 Stafford

1. Present: Dave Baines, Tom Peacock, Tony Smith, Graham Mollard (Chair), Dena Proctor.

2. Apologies: Idris Williams, Tony Boyle, Tony Flanagan. (Nothing has been heard from Steve Tomalin (Forest of Dean) who may not be receiving emails?).

3. Previous minutes:

3.1 The minutes of the last meeting were read and approved.

4. Matters arising:

3.2 Nothing has moved forward on the matter of whether candidates doing CIC training should have to do Level 2 assessment prior to training. Some of the CIC Panel feel they should have training and assessment (as do the Derbs. Panel) as there is no time to train for SRT proficiency in CIC training; the Training Committee disagree.

There is no progress on Trade Deals, but hopefully BCA will be buying replacement SRT kits on a deal. These will be for use by anyone employed by BCA.

4. Military (CVP) is moving forward, some criteria still need to be discussed.

5.1 Hidden Earth - nothing has been received from Idris but Training Committee want a provision. GM is expecting to contribute on the Saturday and a Derbs. Rep is to ask Nigel to do similar on Sunday. There may be some SRT training and also novice caving trips for families. Expenses (but not pay) and insurance will be covered by the BCA. Dates 23/24th Sept in Leek.

6.1 CIC revalidation: lifers have been complaining but trainers and assessors do have to jump through this hoop. Agreed that lifers don't have to revalidate unless they want to stay trainer/assessors.

6.2.1 LCMLA revalidation: this was taken back to panels and discussed.

Revalidations have been causing a lot of problems. The BCA's coming down hard on the 3 years and 6 years are a problem too.

DP had produced a paper proposing a 5 year revalidation in the style of the current 6 years. Nothing should reset the clock other than completion of level 2.

Discussion followed and GM questioned whether new modules such as SRT should reset the clock.

The 4 panels present supported the proposal with no resetting of the clock as above, and with the normal clause of doing the workshop up to 12 months early with no penalty. GM is to take the proposal to Training Committee for approval.

Problems with revalidations: a number of recent examples were discussed and it was agreed that many of these issues would disappear in the new system:

a. Sites from different regions - causes difficulties. In N.Wales a candidate had moved from S.Wales and needed Cave-Mine conversion as well as revalidation at level 2. A Level 1 only assessor had done this, which was acceptable for the conversion but not for the level 2 sites or S.Wales sites. The matter had been referred to DP who had issued new paperwork. T/As must work within their remit. T/As must consult assessors in other regions unless they are very familiar with and have recently visited the sites required. This is acceptable at revalidation but not at assessment when consultation must take place. GM is to write this up and provide guidelines to Pat.

b. TS questioned the format of assessments in the South. Candidates are able to demonstrate everything on their core skills day which is done out of region, but not everything can be seen on the group day. It was accepted that you can only see what a region can offer on a group day and that he should continue on this basis.

c. GM raised the matter of a candidate who had undergone assessment for Level 2 and SRT for the leader in the North. Only three 'simple' caves were on his list but a rider had been added to say 'addition of more complex sites is subject to further practical assessment with a group'. Much discussion followed but it was agreed that the rider should not be necessary - the sites should limit what the candidate can do. To add a rider could suggest the candidate is not at level 2. Problems can occur on any 'even simple' pitch and the candidate must be able to show complete competence. It was suggested that this is taken back to the assessor who should remove the comment or reassess the candidate.

d. GM had had a candidate way out of date (missed 3 year reval). Candidates are allowed 12 months grace. T/As to use their discretion if the candidate has continuing experience but email GM with the situation, as it does need to be on record. Any dates on revalidations in this situation are as the date that should have been.

e. Dave Carlisle will continue with inspections/covered by insurance, but is not going to revalidate his award (up next month). This has implications for mine assessments in the North.

7. Forest of Dean: Were supposed to meet and provide an action plan. Though a meeting has been held there are no minutes yet and GM is not aware of anything else happening. If they are no further forward, GM advises that the panel should be dissolved at the next meeting. The work will go to S.Wales and Mendip Panels. It is not known whether the FOD apprentice T/As have been completed. John Elliot and Steve Tomalin could be involved in local vetting only. It is a shame to loose the region But John and Steve would still have scope to move forwards and have more support for this.

8. Criteria for maintaining Trainer/Assessor

This was cleared at the last Training Committee (TC) meeting so is in force now.

9. Items from Panels:

9.1 S.Wales: 'Deep Water'. TC felt that their original words were reasonable. S.Wales strongly disagree and would prefer 'Deep water excluded' as otherwise it is the opposite from the way we normally vet. IW wants candidates to be assessed in the resurgence/ or questioned in depth. TP questioned attendance at TC meetings. The last meeting was thought to have been poorly attended (4?) when this matter was discussed. TP requested this matter is returned to TC.

9.2 Derbs. No movement on insurance but it is being looked at.

9.6.3 IW questioned lists of mines. It is not the job of the BCA to check that sites have a mine engineers report. It is the responsibility of the candidate to check for current approved routes and this could change within the validity of their award. The reports in N.Wales will be electronic in the future and changed in style to not be accumulative. This should make access easier.

9.6.5 Reminder: Send Pat up to date lists of sites in your area.

The minutes were signed as a true copy of the last meeting.

5. Matters from the Administrator

Pat has many problems with what resets the clock. With the new system these should reduce. Discussion as to whether a CIC training course should reset the clock - no, because it doesn't cover sites, updates etc. A level 1 completion starts the clock; level 2 completion is the only way to reset the clock and 5 yearly revalidations follow. Formal wording will need to go into the handbook before operation.

Discussion followed as to whether SRT should be a compulsory part of level 2 - the panel was not in favour as it is not appropriate in some regions.

#### 6. Canyoning/Gorgewalking

There is no qualification or 'bolt on' to cover these activities in this country. Many MIAs do not have swift water rescue experience. Much canyon/gorge is more akin to caving than mountaineering. The BMC already has a big hat and it could be useful for the BCA to look at this. It is easy to see how a gorge qualification could parallel the LCMLA Scheme. The qualification would need to 'stand alone' as not all participants would be cavers. It would be very site specific as well as having different levels. If we don't write this then others will. A brain storming followed and raised the following for consideration: There are 3 identifiable levels -1. river walks, 2. 'easy pitches' and tyroleans, and 3. canyons (committing, deep water/swimming). Gorges can be dry or wet. How do we grade gorges - by level, rope work skills, and fast flowing/rising water risk...? We would need to cover navigation skills, weather and river hydrology, rope work skills, and swift water rescue skills. Include personal and group equipment, rigging pitches, tyroleans and traverses, natural and bolt anchors, placement of protection, throw line, use of rope to safeguard, swimming, deep water, river crossing, assisted hand line, clean line principles, checking of pools, water quality, group management, personnel placement, environmental interest and conservation. Candidates should be able to enter at any level.

Sites would need to be documented for each region: those present suggested a list. Liaison with mountaineers in the Lakes and Scotland particularly would be needed. Gorges would need to be graded.

Some literature already exists: French syllabi and 'bolt on' TS, a French translation TP, AALA Rock and Water activity notes DP, Afon Ddu booklet DP.

Riverside walks and pond dipping activities would be exempt.

DP agreed to coordinate, circulate thoughts so far in August and have a draft syllabus by the next meeting.

#### 7. Revalidations out of area

Take back to the Panel - don't revalidate anyone outside the remit of your assessor status. Costings - make a minimum of £150/day for your self. If only revalidating 2 candidates then charge £80. Fees to Pat: modules £15, 5 year revalidation £30.

#### 8. Matters from panels

S.Wales: business largely covered in the above business. Gary Evans has completed his apprenticeship for level 1 assessor status.

N.Wales: Poor practice in Wrysgan had been brought to the attention of Heads of Centres via a presentation at an AHOEC meeting. Dave Carlisle is due to visit next 25 - 29th Sept. Rhiwbach access is still under discussion with forestry. Leadership revalidations are planned for 10th Dec contact DP, Trainer/Assessor workshop scheduled for 3rd Feb 07 contact Barry Ellis and Mike Cousins.

Derbs: DB had heard that Panel applicants could be appointed by another panel as in CIC T/A. i.e. a BCA appointed panel. TS: S. Panel are happy with the apprentice scheme. It is a question of size (18 in the North) if there were 40 no one would get any work. The main opposition to 'Open Panels' is that if T/A not involved then lose skills. It was felt that this was a local issue and

shouldn't be decided centrally. GM would oppose centralisation. Discussion followed as to the role of the TC and who is involved. DB raised the example of a candidate who had been assessed by Nigel Atkins but outside the 12 month rule (though not the candidates fault). GM said that if the anomaly is not the candidates fault then email GM who would rubber stamp and inform Pat. S.Eng. Six year revalidations are not working.

## 9. AOB

9.1 DB didn't apply to be a T/A for the CIC Scheme in the normal way. It was put forward by GM and IW that DB should be a Mines Assessor but the CIC Panel threw it out. CIC wanted mines to be a paper exercise and not a practical. GM feels there would be opposition if DB applied to the N.Panel as just a 'mines assessor'. GM suggests DB is taken on as a National Mines Assessor. He could then do the Mine Assessments in N.England though it doesn't solve the whole problem as each person should be seen by two assessors. Consideration should be given to changing the assessment procedure to allow for this. This would not affect other panels. DB would be in communication as he is already involved in 2 panels and would not need to be a Northern Panel member. GM to take to TC.

## 9.2 DB The form for prospective T/A has anomalies:

Level 1 training: Observe and then run a significant part of the programme (so observed teaching).

Level 2 training: same

Level 1 assessment: Day 1 Observe

Day 2 Observe

Day 1 They run (no longer run day 2 previously

agreed)

Level 2 assessment: Day 3 Observe

Day 4 Observe

Day 3 They run (no longer run day 4)

There is no box to tick for a transfer module e.g. Mines, and thus no check on their ability to assess mines. If a T/A is approving mines on a list they should have the CIC mines module.

## 10. Dates of next meetings

10.1 Further meetings were planned for 5th October 2006, 9th February and June 15th 2007.

The meeting closed at 13.00