



British Caving Association

Draft Minutes of the Special Qualifications Management Committee meeting held on 6th December 2017 at the Cedar Hotel Wakefield.

1. Present and Apologies

| | | |
|----------------|------|----------------------------|
| Graham Mollard | (GM) | Chair QMC |
| Nigel Ball | (NB) | Northern England Panel Rep |
| Gethin Thomas | (GT) | ALO North Wales Panel |
| Phil Baker | (PB) | CIC Chairman |
| Dave Baines | (DB) | ALO Derbyshire Panel |
| Andy Eavis | (AE) | BCA Chair and Exec Rep |
| Nick Williams | (NW) | BCA Secretary (acting) |
| Mary Wilde | (MW) | Training Administrator |
| John Crowsley | (JC) | Southern Panel Rep |

Apologies

| | | |
|---------------------|---------|-----------------------|
| Tony Radmall | (TR) | ASCT |
| Rich Hill | (RH) | ALO South Wales Panel |
| David Hollingham | (DH) | AHOEC |
| Stephan Natynczuk | (SN) | ALO Southern Panel |
| Juliet Parker-Smith | (J P-S) | CIC Panel Rep |

| | |
|----------------------|--|
| Abbreviations | T/A Trainer Assessor |
| | T/Adv Technical Advisor |
| | TC Training Committee |
| | QMC British Caving Association Qualification Management Committee |
| | (previously NCP) |

Meeting commenced at 09:50 am.

2. AHOEC meeting update and 3. Updates/Revalidations and the Council's decree that either way they must have teeth

(Note this agenda item was intended to provide an update from the recent AHOEC workshop by Graham Mollard but the discussion encompassed item 3 on the agenda too).

The long and somewhat convoluted discussion basically covered the following topics.

- The purpose of updates and how to address weaknesses.
- The need to provide an entry level award for cavers.

The purpose of updates and how to address weaknesses.



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GM explained that AHOEC responded to the directive from council that weaknesses identified during LCMLA updates must be addressed and could result in the withdrawal of a certificate.

AHOEC were in favour of continuing professional development (CPD) but not certificate withdrawal.

NW explained that his initial view had been changed after discussions at the AHOEC meeting and that CPD might be the way forward.

GM said that AHOEC want updates every three years for L2, and L1 CPD every three years. PB had the AHOEC minutes and read out their comments which were that they didn't support 3 year L1 updates. He offered to provide the AHOEC report to circulate with these minutes

NW said that documenting an action plan on the reverse of certificates where any weaknesses are identified had been suggested. A discussion followed on what action would be taken if the weaknesses were not addressed. JC asked what would happen if someone did not update their certificate before the expiry date. GM said that they would be given an extension if there were extenuating circumstances or if not their award would become invalid (as now).

PB pointed out that the emphasis on update rather than revalidation (which implies a level of assessment) has already been removed for both schemes by QMC and CIC panel and communicated to award holders via change notice. Several people said it was not possible to assess each person individually on a one day update anyway. NW asked what other governing bodies do and it transpires that there is no consistent approach.

AE said that we should think long and hard about taking an award away - there must be a route to get them back up to speed. The discussion continued with points being made on 'were there real safety issues occurring', 'whether the BCA would be liable if an incident occurred' and whether there was a 'consistent approach to updates by all T/As'. GM said that his concerns are about skills fade and failure to keep up with new equipment and techniques.

NW suggested that updates be replaced by CPD modules. AE said that this was too much detail for Council to be involved in and that we were here to discuss whether or not awards can be withdrawn. The discussion then moved on to the structure of the QMC, line of governance and accountability to Council. JC brought up an issue regarding a change notice and item of the T/A agreement about duty of care. He stated that some from the Southern Panel had signed the T/A agreement but crossed out the duty of care statement. GM pointed out that his intentions regarding duty of care and near miss reports were to protect T/As.

Eventually the meeting returned to the topic of updates and action plans and the consensus was that Updates as CPD workshops should continue with a documented action plan on the certificate where weaknesses were observed. The form of words for this to be agreed as per last QMC meeting minutes and actioned. As there is no comprehensive assessment element awards should not be suspended at this point although the form of words should recommend that they don't practice at this level until rectified.



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GM announced he had intended to resign after the next QMC meeting in February but had now decided to do so at the close of this meeting.

The need to provide an entry level award for cavers.

AHOEC highlighted the fact that many certificate holders are not active cavers personally and simply need a small number of easy local caves on their certificates. If they are required to fulfil the current prerequisites for update which include quality days and personal caving trips, they tend to use the site specific route rather than joining the scheme.

Some of the meeting attendees were sceptical about introducing an entry level award as there is an intention to develop people as cavers. A level '0' had been proposed several times in the past and rejected.

However, it was accepted that having people in the scheme rather than losing them to 'site specifics' was positive for them and the scheme. It was also responding to market demand.

PB expressed a concern that not all QMC members had been able to attend and that their views must be considered before any decision was made. However, an outline of an entry level award was proposed and would be taken to the next QMC meeting for further discussion/progress. In principle, the entry level award will be the same as level 1 but without the quality days.

Each panel would identify an entry level list of sites in their area which would be easy with minimal risk. An entry level award would be issued in one area and only sites identified as entry level would be listed on the certificate. Full details including prerequisites, update period and progression route are to be discussed.

4. Position of CIC - it is part of and responsible to QMC or does it stand alone. (If it stands alone there will be no place for a rep on QMC)

This item was not discussed.

5. Two applications for T/A probationary status and one pending disciplinary.

It was agreed to leave these until the next QMC meeting in February.

At this point JC reported back from the Southern Panel highlighting their unease with several changes including the duty of care change notice and the edict that T/As must not choose sites for



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group day assessments. AE and PB felt that some of the changes were correct in essence but that the wording was not appropriate.

JC also reported that they felt that some CIC T/As were not operating equivalent CIC standards citing a recent workshop by NB T/A as the case in point. PB asked that such concerns were given to CIC Panel to consider at next meeting as this was a CIC Panel matter in first instance. JC handed the minutes of the last Southern Panel to PB for this purpose.

DB raised concerns about the functioning of the Northern Panel. NW said that as BCA committees, panels are expected to conduct their business in an appropriate manner and that Council could take action if individuals acted unprofessionally. However, Council could not take any action unless it received a formal report or complaint.

MW was asked to send out the minutes of the last Northern Panel meeting and ask the panel to elect a new ALO at the next meeting on 8th February.

MW said that an interim arrangement was needed regarding the QMC chair. PB agreed to chair the next QMC and asked MW to issue a list of activities that must be picked up now - such as who will sign certificates

The meeting closed at 13:30

Action Points

| No | Action | Who | By | Done |
|------|---|--------------|--------------|------|
| | 6/12/2017 | | | |
| S001 | PB Provide the AHOEC report to circulate with these minutes | PB | ASAP | |
| S002 | Outline of an entry level award to be discuss at the next QMC | PB/MW | Next meeting | |
| S003 | MW to send out the minutes of the last N Panel meeting with a request for a new ALO to be elected. | MW | ASAP | |
| S004 | MW to issue a list of activities that must be picked up between now and the next QMC | MW | ASAP | |