



Minutes of BCA Council Meeting held on Saturday 3rd October 2009 at Alvechurch Church Hall, Alvechurch

Present:

Andy Eavis (AE)	BCA Chairman / BCA UIS Rep.
David Cooke (DC)	BCA Treasurer / Cave Registry Sec
Damian Weare (DW)	BCA Secretary / Handbook Editor
David Judson (DJu)	BCA Legal & Insurance Officer
Les Williams (LW)	BCA Publications & Information Officer / BCA Webmaster
Nick Williams (NW)	BCA Insurance Manager
Glenn Jones (GJ)	BCA Membership Administrator / Acting Equipment & Techniques Officer / CNCC Rep.
Jenny Potts (JP)	BCA Publication Sales / DCA Rep.
David Jean (DJe)	DCUC Rep.
Mark Williams	CSCC Rep.
Stephan Natynczuk (SN)	ACI Rep.
Idris Williams (IW)	ASCT Rep.
Dave Checkley (DCh)	BCRA Rep.
Alan Finch (AF)	WPCST Rep.
Boyd Potts (BP)	Club Rep.: Orpheus Caving Club
Charles Milton (CM)	Club Rep.: Combined Services Caving Association

The meeting commenced at 10:40am.

1. Chairman's Welcome

AE welcomed members to this Council Meeting.

2. Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from: Steve Holding, Chris Jewell, Ged Campion, Bob Mehew, Emma Porter, Mike Clayton, Bernie Woodley, Mick Day, Elsie Little, Ed Waters and Graham Mollard.

3. Applications for Club Membership

GJ reported no new applications for club membership.

4. Minutes of the last Council Meeting on 20th June 2009 (previously circulated)

Proposal: *That the Minutes from 20th June 2009 be accepted as a true record*

Prop: BP, Sec: NW *agreed unanimously*

5. Matters Arising for the Minutes of the last Council Meeting

Item 10.1 - GJ asked DC to ensure CSCC's concerns about Anchor document are presented to the next E&T meeting on Saturday. DC said that he would do so this weekend.

Officers' Reports

6. Chairman's Report

Nothing to report.

7. Secretary's Report (written report previously circulated)

7.1 Constitutional Amendments

NW: Do we really need to check annual accounts at both Council and the following AGM in the event of uncertified accounts being presented to an AGM?

DW: It does mean that potential problems can be picked up quicker. If the new amendments are implemented, it is also much less likely to be an issue.

DC: Is there a need for the Constitution to actually specify this? Should it become a Bylaw and, as such, be able to be changed by the AGM rather than a full postal vote of members?

GJ: What is it that means we are struggling to get out accounts in time?

LW: There is a heavy workload for the Treasurer to complete in a short period of time, while also continuing with their full-time job.

LW: Concerned about lack of democratic nature of Council adding proposals and nominations after the deadline that is imposed on other members. Could we change the date of the deadline to the Council meeting date?

DW: Yes, with exactly the same effect as my proposals. Agrees this is a much better idea and will amend proposals accordingly.

NW: Regarding the single-signature accounts – would it be better to insert a clause limiting the amount any one signatory can transfer in a period? Are we not over-complicating things because we are really looking at online accounts here which have their own controls anyway?

LW: A dishonest person can get around dual signatures and we need to rely on their honesty. Could we not have a general clause about the accounts being subject to rules designed by Council?

NW: The best solutions for security of accounts, especially online ones, involve someone checking statements or other people having logins with read-only access.

DC: The Charities Commission require 2 signatories on online accounts but there are very few accounts that offer this, such as CAF. The BCRA Constitution has some wording that might be worth investigating.

LW: Would it not be preferable to have more vague wording on use of “e-mail” for online voting perhaps widening the scope to “electronic means of voting”.

DC: Suggest removal of more administrative bits of Constitution to a “Manual of Operations”.

NW: This is not a trivial change and we ought to move that way, but it is a serious job to do it well. We need to get Officers to try to define what their standing orders are and try to define a document from there.

DW to consider the comments of the meeting and redraft Proposals for Constitutional Amendments before submitting them to Council by e-mail for further comments. Consideration will also be given to the possibility of removing certain detail and introducing it as Bylaws.

Proposal: *That the Secretary's Report be accepted*

Prop: LW Sec: GJ *agreed unanimously*

8. Treasurer's Report (*written report circulated*)

8.1 BCA Financial Reserves

LW: Will the interest from the reserves go back into the general fund?

DC: Yes.

IW: Could the Insurance Reserve also cover the Organisation's reserve? Are we actually over-covering ourselves?

DC: It is just a guideline and we can always reconsider in the future.

8.2 2010 Budgets

NW: We should be spending more money on *Speleology* and I would like a budget for a UK-based Commissioning Editor to chase and write articles. We should also have a budget to pay other contributors a nominal amount. This would allow us to be more competitive and produce a higher quality product.

LW: This is a good idea. *Speleology* needs the money and we currently have £10k left over in 2010 to spend. It would also help BCA to have more control over *Speleology* because it is currently largely run by BCRA.

Proposal: *An additional budget of £7k be allocated to Speleology for 2009-10 to be spent as deemed appropriate by a sub committee of LW, NW and AE.*

Prop: LW Sec: DC *agreed unanimously*

LW, NW and AE to set up sub committee to consider additional spending on *Speleology*.

DC: Subscription income has dropped but I am not yet sure why. Membership has dropped slightly but not by £4k.

DW: There doesn't appear to be a budget for Publications and Information.

DC: That is because the cost is dependent on how many issues of *Speleology* we choose to publish. Publications are factored into the accounts though.

8.3 British Caving Library

NW: What is the commitment to Council in terms of feedback in exchange for the proposed £10k?

DCh: We will provide a regular cycle of annual reports on expenditure and proposals for the following year, plus feedback on usage.

Proposal: *That a budget of £10k is given to the British Caving Library for 2010.*

Prop: DC Sec: LW *agreed unanimously*

Proposal: ***That the Treasurer's Report be accepted***

Prop: LW Sec: GJ *agreed unanimously*

9. Conservation & Access Report (*written report circulated*)

DJ: There is likely to be a joint C&A and L&I meeting. Formal invites will go out shortly.

DCh: What is "Access to Coast"?

DJ: It is an extension to CRoW to cover Coastal Access and is very important to NAMHO in particular.

DJ: Can anyone clarify the change to Chairman of NAMHO as being Kevin Baker? **DW to contact BCA NAMHO Rep.**

NW: At some point we are going to have to push up the indemnity cover on the insurance premium to £5m. When I looked at this last year it was a high cost for access to a very small number of sites. Please will the RCCs feed back on this? **RCCs to feed back to NW at the March meeting on the desirability of increasing liability cover to £5m.**

Proposal: ***That the Conservation & Access Report be accepted***

Prop: CM Sec: SN *agreed unanimously*

10. Equipment & Techniques Report (*written report previously circulated*)

GJ: Can anyone confirm who the CSCC E&T rep is?

LW: Andy Atkinson was reelected at the AGM.

a. Rope-Test Report (*written report previously circulated*)

LW: Would have been nice if it had attended Hidden Earth.

JP: Bob was unable to attend at the last minute and sent forms etc to JP to display on the BCA stand.

Proposal: ***To accept Equipment & Techniques Officer's Report.***

Prop: LW Sec: BP *agreed unanimously*

11. Training Report

No report received.

12. Publications & Information Report

LW: *Speleology* is currently up to date with its issues and the third 2009 issue is due in December. The Regional Correspondents do not appear to be active but, following NW's proposal, we appear to be dealing with this.

JP: There were enquiries at Hidden Earth about when the Radon book will be published.

LW: The booklet is ready but there are currently technical issues being discussed. **AE to liaise with interested parties with a view to speeding up publication.**

CM: **Will liaise with CF and then speak to Defence Radiological Department.**

LW: The current booklet is now out of date and we shouldn't really be sending them out.

JP: I have been telling people who request it to wait for the new one for a while now.

Proposal: ***That the remaining stocks of the Radon Booklet be scrapped with immediate effect.***

Prop: LW Sec: JP *agreed unanimously*

a. Webmaster's Report (*written report previously circulated*)

b. Newsletter Editor's Report

c. Handbook Editor's Report (*written report previously circulated*)

DW: The update to the Handbook is now on the website. Discussions with our potential new printer are ongoing, but appear to have stalled when the printer realised we are not about to be giving them thousands of academic journals to print. **DW to continue to speak to potential new printer.**

Proposal: ***To accept Publications & Information Officer's Report.***

Prop: DJ Sec: GJ *agreed unanimously*

13. Legal & Insurance Report

DJ: EL and DJ are working with National Trust. The access guidelines have been finalised but the NT have gone on to produce a "model agreement". There are some minor issues with this but it is under control and DJ is also liaising with NAMHO on this.

JP: The National Trust have always been very co-operative in the Peak District.

Proposal: **To accept Legal & Insurance Officer's Report.**

Prop: BP Sec: GJ *agreed unanimously*

14. Youth & Development Report (*written report previously circulated*)

JP: Cliffhanger took place in Sheffield this year but unfortunately we were not able to find anyone to collect the Speleo Olympics from Mendip. Consequently a stand was put on but without the Speleo Olympics and the money BCA had offered for transport of the Speleo Olympics wasn't used. We have been asked to put on a stand again next year plus another one at an event in Buxton. We are hoping to build our own version of Speleo Olympics for use in the future and may well need a small amount of money to build it.

AE: Is it worth looking for sponsors?

DCh: It might be worth asking Colin Boothroyd to build one.

AE: There is money available under Youth & Development budget, so go ahead and get on with it!

Proposal: **To accept Youth & Development Officer's Report.**

Prop: JP Sec: DW *agreed unanimously*

Other Reports

15. Membership Administrator's Report (*written report previously circulated*)

GJ: If the will is to implement CIM + then it is not going to happen as we currently are. GJ and DW have done what the last meeting requested. There are outstanding issues around concerns raised by DC relating to the renewal spreadsheet but they are currently unresolved.

DC: They are concerns about the renewal spreadsheet, some of which are related to CIM+.

NW: Is happy to adjudicate on this if the meeting agrees.

NW to liaise with GJ and DC and agree a way forward in time for next year's renewals to be processed.

Proposal: **To accept Publications & Information Officer's Report.**

Prop: JP Sec: LW *agreed unanimously*

16. Insurance Manager's Report

All matters have been covered elsewhere. Nothing further to report.

17. Radon Working Party Convenor's Report

Nothing to report.

18. Cave Registry Coordinator's Report

Nothing to report.

19. International Representative's Report (*written report previously circulated*)

AE to forward UIS Report to Newsletter Editor for inclusion in December newsletter.

a. FSE Report (*written report previously circulated*)

AE: There was very positive feedback from the European contingent on Hidden Earth. There are some very well-meaning and hard-working people in Europe doing work on conservation. EL is now working with these people.

An International Code of Ethics is now nearly publishable. The content of it is good and relates largely to the ethics of foreign exploration.

Proposal: **To accept International Representatives' Reports.**

Prop: BP Sec: DC *agreed unanimously*

20. British Caving Library

DCh: We do not foresee any drastic increases in costs. Library use is increasing and we are very pleased.

DJe: Costs could shoot up as usage increases.

JP: Currently it is free to members for "reasonable usage". This is how we would like it to remain, but obviously we could charge if we felt usage exceeded "reasonable" levels.

NW: The audio library is excellent. Will it suffer if Sid is no longer available?

DCh: We are trying to appoint regional reps to carry on his work at a local level.

Proposal: **To accept British Caving Library Report.**

Prop: GJ Sec: CM *agreed unanimously*

21. Any Other Business

LW: Hidden Earth 2010 will almost certainly be 24th-26th September at Leek High School.

CM: Can we review the Action Log from last meeting?

Action 1: ongoing

Action 2: done and discussed under Item 8.

Action 3: not yet done, but GM has not chased it.

Action 4: done as part of Constitutional Amendments review.

Action 5: DC has replied to Julian Griffiths to say we are happy. This is now in the hands of him and Tim Gilson. Done

Action 6: ongoing – completed forms received from AE and DW but the bank keeps sending DC the wrong forms.

Action 7: done

Action 8: done

Action 9: DC to submit CSCC's concerns this weekend.

Action 10: DC has the bill for the cards, so they have been printed. Done

Action 11: DW has e-mailed Erin asking to be notified of deadlines, but has received nothing back. DW will liaise with Erin again. Ongoing.

Action 12: DW has had a meeting with the new printer and will continue to liaise. Ongoing.

Action 13: done

Action 14: NW has had some info from RCCs. Done

Action 15: NW has had no time to do the work as yet – Ongoing.

Action 16: done - 2017 will be in Australia.

Action 17: DCh thinks he has received it. Will confirm next meeting. Ongoing.

Action 18: JP forgot but will do. Ongoing.

DW: In future this can happen under "Matters Arising". DW to indicate this on Agenda.

AE: Gavin Newman has just won an Emmy Award for his work in China.

AE: Has been asked to represent BCA on BCRA Council and has been happy to do this.

AE: Has had a long conversation with MD. AE has been invited to a Sports Technology meeting and will attend on Thursday to allow him to network with other sports organisations. He would be happy to attend other such functions.

22. Date, Time & Place of next meeting

The next Council Meeting will be held on Saturday 9th January 2010 at 10.30am at Alvechurch Church Hall, Alvechurch.

Meeting ended: 14:30

Action Log – October 2009

No.	Action by ...	Details of Action
1	DC	Clarify with Inland Revenue the tax status of Training Income.
3	DC	Check and report back to GM on "Caver Training" heading in 2008 accounts.
6	DC	Update Bank Mandates.
9	DC	Submit CSCC's concerns to next E&T meeting.
11	DW	Liaise with Erin Lynch on editorial deadlines for <i>Speleology</i> magazine.
12	LW	Liaise with DW and David Gibson on finding a new printer for publications.
15	NW	Draft wording on disciplining members and liaise with RCCs.
17	MD	Send information on CCPR grant application process to DC and DCh.
18	JP	To pass public-address system to NW for storage.
19	DW	To redraft Proposals for Constitutional Amendments following discussion at October Council Meeting. DW to then consult with Council by e-mail before publishing Proposals in time for January deadline.
20	LW, NW & AE	To set up sub committee to consider expenditure on <i>Speleology</i> .

21	RCC Reps	To feed back to NW at March Council meeting on desirability of increasing liability insurance limit to £5m.
22	DW	To clarify change of NAMHO chairman with Steve Holding.
23	AE	To liaise with interested parties in Radon booklet with a view to speeding up publication.
24	CM	To speak to CF and then speak to MoD Radiological Department re: Radon booklet.
25	NW	NW to liaise with GJ and DC and agree a way forward for CIM+ and renewals spreadsheet in time for next year's renewals to be processed.
26	AE	Forward UIS Report to Newsletter Editor for inclusion in December newsletter.
27	DW	To indicate "Action Log Review" under "Matters Arising" item on Agenda.



BRITISH CAVING ASSOCIATION

Council Meeting, 3rd October 2009

OFFICERS' REPORTS

Item 6: Chairman's Report

Nothing to report.

Andy Eavis, October 2009

Item 7: Secretary's Report

Reports: I am sorry to see such a small number of written reports reaching me in time for the meeting. Quite apart from being helpful to Council Members to see things in advance of the meeting, it also makes my life easier! Should we consider moving the October Council Meeting to be a few weeks apart from Hidden Earth in future?

Constitutional Amendments: My main area of work since the last meeting has been consulting on proposed changes to the BCA Constitution and putting together a proposed set of changes for discussion at this meeting. If we are to put them before the next AGM it is important that these are amended and agreed on at this Council Meeting. The draft proposals for amendments are shown in Appendix 1.

To summarise the main areas of change are:

- 1) Moving the AGM date to June to make it easier for the Treasurer to complete the final accounts and have them certified.
- 2) Changing from 9 to 12 weeks the time in advance of the AGM when nominations are due and from 12 to 18 weeks the time by which members must be notified of the AGM. Also allowing Council to add its own nominations after this date.
- 3) Removing the need for signatures on membership applications to allow us to have online registrations.
- 4) Subtle changes to the wording of rules surrounding SGMs and EGMs to bring them into line with the AGM.
- 5) Changes to the rules about signatories to accounts to allow for single-signature online accounts.
- 6) Changes to rules surrounding certification of the accounts.
- 7) Removal of requirements for Special Committees to produce independent income and expenditure statements.
- 8) Definitions of "publish", "circulate" and "postal ballot" to allow for modern technology should we see fit in the future.

Summaries of Meetings: I have continued to produce my own summaries of Council Meetings for inclusion in the newsletter. When I wrote the last one a number of Council Members suggested it would be good to place it on the website as well. Since most of the content seems very out of date by the time a newsletter reaches members anyway, I think this is a good idea. So in future I would like to put it into the "news" section of the website as soon as it has been approved by the Executive.

Damian Weare, October 2009

Item 8: Treasurer's Report

The tax for 2008 has been paid (£1231). I am still hoping to persuade the taxman that we should not pay tax for Training Services on the basis that it is not operated for profit. If successful the tax bill would reduce by some £270.

The Insurance Manager and I reviewed the level of the Insurance Fund. We agreed that it should be able to cope with paying the excess for two claims and a doubling of the premium in one year. That gives rise to a figure of £31,335 + 2 * £10,000 = £52,000 (rounded up)

The rule of thumb that our reserves excluding the Insurance Fund should equal one year's turnover was also reviewed. It should now be one year's turnover less one insurance premium. Based on the last set of accounts (2008) that would be 122K – 31K = 91K. Adding the Insurance Fund that would give a target of 91K + 52K = 143K for total reserves. Compare that with the actual total reserves (2008) of 124K.

This meeting should set the budgets for the forthcoming year. The responses I've had from Officers indicate they should be similar to last year, which were:

Conservation & Access	£500	Ghar Parau Foundation	£5000
Equipment & Techniques	£4000	Youth Development	£500
Training	Breakeven	Meetings & Conferences	£500 (reduced)
Recreational Caver Training	£2000	Legal & Insurance	£0
Voluntary Sector Support	£1000	International Liaison	£500

This meeting needs to set the subscription for 2010. Our subscription income for 2009 to date is £86K compared to £90K total for 2008. In 2010 the income earned from interest (£4K) will be much reduced and we will probably be contributing 10K towards the Library. However our surplus in 2008 excluding the £7K exceptional item was £29K. All other income and costs, to a first approximation, remain much the same. So despite these negative factors we should still return a surplus of the order of £10K. Given that our reserves, as mentioned above, are still below target I recommend that our subscription stays the same.

I attended a productive meeting at Glutton Bridge to finalise The British Caving Library proposal. The result has been circulated. Today we need to decide if it is worthy of £10K funding in 2010.

Dave Cooke, October 2009

Item 9: Conservation & Access Officer's Report

David Judson and I have had talks with the National Trust about agreements for caving and mining. These will be continuing after the next C&A meeting on 7th November.

Access to the Coast continues well. There are no other real problems to report.

Elsie Little, October 2009

Item 10: Acting Equipment & Techniques Officer's Report

Following the resignation of Bob Mehew in June this year, I offered to take on the role of caretaker convener until the BCA AGM so as not to lose any impetus. In practice, not a lot has happened during the summer months, and our next meeting is on October 10th. It is hoped that CSCC will provide further detail on their objections raised at the last Council Meeting so we can make progress.

Glenn Jones, October 2009

a) Rope Test Officer's Report

Work has started on developing a capability to measure the force time profile of a dynamic rope test.

Bob Mehew, October 2009

Item 11: Training Officer's Report

No report submitted.

Graham Mollard, October 2009

Item 12: Publication & Information Officer's Report

I don't have too much to report to this meeting, as Hidden Earth has taken a substantial part of my time recently. The "stand in" Newsletter Editor, Ed Waters, has taken over from Mike Clayton and is currently "finding his feet". It would be really helpful if officers were to send their news, etc. to him so he doesn't have to chase them.

I am still awaiting the go ahead for the new Radon book, it is still with Bob Mehew at this time for review.

Jenny Potts has identified the need for us to update and print a new run of "Save Our Caves" leaflets. These are in demand and this is something I feel we should be pressing forward with asap.

Les Williams, October 2009

a) Webmaster's Report

The website is working well. Damian has been keeping it up to date and I would extend my thanks to him for this work. I would really like to see the other officers keeping their sections current. People are actually using this site as a resource and it is imperative it is kept up to date and informative. I intend to give the site a revamp over winter. This will be primarily cosmetic but I also intend to upload some publications content (leaflet pdf's, etc.) on the issues that people are concerned with.

Web Services: Hosted sites are still being moved across to our new server. This involves a vast amount of work, mostly being carried out by Dave Cooke, to whom I am very grateful. The new server gives us much more control over the facilities offered and the hosting packages offer real value for money for the caving organisations that are taking advantage of this service.

Les Williams, October 2009

b) Caretaker Newsletter Editor's Report

No report submitted

Ed Waters, October 2009

c) Handbook Editor's Report

All invoices relating to the 2009-10 Handbook advertising have now been paid. I try to keep the online version up-to-date and I am aware that there are a number of amendments needed to the current version. Pressure of work and family have delayed this somewhat and I offer my apologies to the meeting. The latest update should be completed by the end of next weekend.

Damian Weare, October 2009

Item 13: Legal & Insurance Officer's Report

No written report submitted.

David Judson, October 2009

Item 14: Youth & Development Officer's Report

Since the last meeting I've responded to the usual occasional request about caving via the Try Caving website but generally speaking it has been a quiet quarter – particularly because it has been the busy summer expedition season for me.

Since the last meeting I have made one decision – that I am looking for a replacement to take over my role. This is because I lack the time for any large initiatives and grand plans and also because at least partly I feel that large initiatives and grand plans may not be required, that things have improved and are ticking over nicely, from a 'Youth and Development' point of view.

With that said I'm sure that more can be done and James Collings has expressed an interest in being involved. The first step will be to hand over some of the admin functions to James and get him to attend the next BCA meeting with me to introduce him to how council runs.

Chris Jewell, October 2009

Item 15: Membership Administrator's Report

2009 BCA Membership (as of 01/10/09):

DIMs caving: 325

DIMs non caving: 36

BCRA: 213 (includes 8 Honorary)

BCRA Honorary: 8

CIMs caving: 3921

CIMs non caving: 1090

Clubs: 156

Associates: 13

Access: 5

New Clubs: No new clubs this period.

Admin: Definitely the quiet period!

CIM Plus: Despite a protracted (and frustrating) exchange of emails, no decision has been made on CIM Plus. Unless this meeting can make a positive decision today, it is unlikely that CIM Plus will be implemented for 2010.

Glenn Jones, October 2009

Item 16: Insurance Manager's Report

No written report submitted.

Nick Williams, October 2009

Item 17: Convenor of the Radon Working Party's Report

No report submitted.

Clark Friend, October 2009

Item 18: Cave Registry Co-ordinator's Report

No written report submitted.

Dave Cooke, October 2009

Item 19: International Representative's Report

The main item to report from the last Council Meeting is the International Congress that took place in Texas in July 17th to 27th. This was the biggest and probably best International Congress there has ever been. It is the 15th and celebrated 60 years of the International Union of Speleology being in existence.

There were nearly 2,000 participants with 600 or so from outside of the USA. Everything was bigger and better as you would expect in Texas.

The only negative was some of the Europeans complained of not enough alcohol consumption and not the perfect party/bar arrangements.

As ever there was a slightly disappointing turnout from Britain, with only about 20 participants.

The next International Congress in 2013 will be in Bruno the Czech Republic. The Czechs are already putting an enormous amount of effort into this so it may be even better than Texas.

The excursions in connection with the next Congress will undoubtedly be very good and spread throughout Eastern Europe. Many Eastern European countries are being involved and many of the longest and deepest caves in Europe will be available to be visited over this period.

I was re-elected as UIS President for another 4 years, but that will be my final period as you are only allowed to do two terms. It will however mean that Britain firmly keeps its involvement in International Caving and there are many suggestions of things to do to the benefit of British Cavers over the next few years.

There is a feeling that Britain should host a European Conference in 2016 one year before the next but one Congress.

Andy Eavis, October 2009

Item 19a: FSE Report

Since the last meeting of the BCA Council, there have been a number of FSE Bureau meetings held at the UIS in Texas (August 09) and the Hidden Earth conference in Churchill. Two Bureau meetings and the General Assembly Meeting (GAM) of the FSE were held at the Hidden Earth Conference. Most of what follows was from the GAM:

Delegates present at the GAM were from Bulgaria, Switzerland, Germany, Spain, France, GB, Greece, Croatia, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, The Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania and Sweden. Proxy votes were received from Belgium, Monaco, Macedonia, Serbia and Slovakia. The GAM concentrated on a number of issues which are for information but pertinent to the BCA Council. These are as follows:

- There are a number of new members in the FSE and the Federation is expanding with more 'geographically' European national bodies wanting to be present at the table.
- Some countries across Europe have more than one organisation/body who want representation at the FSE and in most of these cases the FSE is asking them to determine their own domestic issues before submitting a body/organisation for representation. This has happened in Belgium, Greece and more latterly Croatia. However, a decision was made by vote at the GAM on the Croatian representation
- It was agreed that there will be a GAM held each year rather than twice a year.
- The annual report of the European Cave Protection Commission (ECPC) 2008/09 was verbally submitted to the FSE by a representative from Romania in the absence of the ECPC chair (Germany). The most important issues were around the WD66 that went to the European Parliament last year attempting to get support for protection of caves across Europe. As Council will know, this did not receive sufficient support from MEPs. However, further work on this is planned to raise the profile of cave protection. Also there are a number of ideas from the ECPC included the idea of a European Cave Day in October 2010. This would obviously require organisation and co-ordination
- In addition to the above, new draft internal regulations of the ECPC were submitted to the GAM. Elsie Little has agreed to review this draft because there may be implications for our internal policy on cave protection. Elsie has further agreed to liaise directly with our Romanian counterpart.
- A report was submitted from Alexei Zhalov from Bulgaria (Vice Secretary to the FSE) concerning the progress of the Euro Speleo Projects. A detailed breakdown can be found in Appendix 2. It would be encouraging to see more UK cavers involved in ESPs in the future. These may need more promotion in UK.
- In addition to this, it was agreed that attempts should be made for the ESPs to be strongly favoured if expeditions/projects involve African/Middle East countries. This had previously been mooted at the UIS in Texas where it was felt that there was an absence of expeditions visiting these regions.

- Agreement was reached from the GAM on the development of an international expedition caving database and all members of the FSE will be asked to submit details of caving expeditions that will ultimately be logged on a “European” database.
- Given the increasing agenda that the FSE is dealing with, it was agreed that more decisions could be arrived at through electronic vote/procedures rather than having to wait for GAMs
- The official HQ of the FSE, which is a postal address, will move from Luxembourg to Madrid in order to receive a generous Spanish subsidy in the region of €12,000.
- Further Euro Speleo forums are planned for 2010, 2011 and 2012 and the possibility of a Speleo Congress (along the lines of Vercors 08) in the UK in 2016.
- The election of Bureau members this year included the positions of the President and Secretary General. Unanimous result as follows:
 - Juan Carlos Lopez, Spain, voted as President
 - Olivier Vidal, France, voted as Secretary General
- The next Bureau meeting of the FSE is likely to take place in January or May next year depending upon hosting countries.

The most important issues for Council are the European Expeditions Database and the draft internal regulations from the European Cave Protection Commission – see appendix 2.

Ged Campion, October 2009

Item 20: British Caving Library

Appendix 1: Proposed Amendments to the BCA Constitution

1) Membership:

5.2 Applications for the class of Individual Membership shall:

a) be submitted on an application form duly completed and signed by the applicant and accompanied by the appropriate subscription for the class of membership, and [...]

5.3 Applications for the class of Group Membership shall:

a) be submitted on an application form duly completed and signed by the applicant and accompanied by the appropriate subscription for the class of membership and a copy of the constitution of the applicant, and [...]

5.4 Applications for the class of Associate Membership shall:

a) be submitted on an application form duly completed and signed by the applicant and accompanied by the appropriate subscription for the class of membership, and [...]

Change(s):

*From 5.2, 5.3 and 5.4 sub sections a) **remove** "and signed by the applicant"*

Purpose:

To allow for the completion of online membership applications.

2) General Meetings of the Association:

8.3 The time, date and place of a General Meeting shall be published at least 12 weeks in advance of the meeting.

8.4 Notice of any matters to be raised at a General Meeting of the Association, including all proposals for constitutional change, must reach the Secretary at least 9 weeks before the date of that meeting.

Change(s):

*In 8.3 **change** "12" to "18" weeks.*

*In 8.4 **change** "9" to "12" weeks and add to the end of the sentence "save that the National Council may, by resolution at a Meeting, add such matters to the agenda as it sees fit, which may include nominations for Officers' posts."*

Purpose:

This then sets up a system whereby by late December the time, date and place is published and by early March the motions etc from members are with the Secretary. Council can add what it wants at its March meeting and then the Secretary has several weeks to get out the agenda before the 6 week deadline. This not only gives plenty of time for the Secretary to prepare the documentation but also gets around a potential current problem that Council might be "ambushed" after it meets either with respect to a motion or an unsuitable nomination for the post of Officer.

8.12 There shall be an Annual General Meeting of the Association which shall be held during the month of March each year or as soon as practicable thereafter.

Change(s):

***Change** "March" to "June".*

***Change** "practicable" to "reasonable".*

Purpose: The change to June ensures adequate time for the preparation of certified accounts. The second change is a less onerous requirement than "as soon as practicable".

8.14 A Special General Meeting shall be called if requested either by National Council or by the Executive or in writing by not less than twenty members eligible to vote. In this case 12 weeks' notice shall be given to all members. The business of a Special General Meeting shall be constrained to the matter or matters put in the request. The Chairman may accept other related business during the course of the Special General Meeting.

8.15 An Emergency General Meeting may be called by any two members of the Executive

with only two weeks notice. Only the subject giving rise to the emergency may be discussed.

Change(s):

i) In 8.14 delete 2nd sentence and replace with "The Secretary shall ensure than an agenda is prepared and circulated to all Members, not less than 12 weeks before the date called for."

ii) In 8.14 replace "business" in 3rd sentence by "Agenda".

iii) In 8.15 replace whole sub section by: "An Emergency General Meeting may be called by any two members of the Executive. One member of the Executive shall ensure than an agenda is prepared and circulated to all Members, not less than 2 weeks before the date called for. Only the subject giving rise to the emergency may be discussed."

Purpose: This brings the wording of dealing with a SGM & EGM into line with an AGM, thus enabling the definitions of certain words to apply to all 3 GMs to enable changes to distribution of notices etc - see Section 13 proposals below.

10) FINANCE:

10.6 All accounts holding the Association's funds shall have at least three signatories, one of whom shall be the Association's Treasurer. Authorisation of any transaction shall require a minimum of two signatories.

Change(s): Add to end of 2nd sentence "except where National Council may by specific resolution permits only one signature, in which case the resolution must specify the name of the account and the signatory." Also add 3rd sentence "No one individual may be a single signature to more than one account of BCA. Any individual who is a single signature to an account of BCA must be an Individual Member of BCA."

Purpose: To permit use of single signature accounts such as on-line accounts.

Change(s): Add new subsections 10.6a & 10.6b

10.6a The National Council may by specific resolution authorise other suitable organisations to collect some or all of its subscriptions and or other income. The resolution must specify the organisation and must be accompanied by documentary evidence of the suitability of that organisation, including arrangements for dealing with mistakes, errors and liabilities which might arise from them. Any material change in such evidence shall require reauthorisation of the organisation within 6 months of that change taking place.

10.6b The National Council may by specific resolution authorise other suitable organisations to hold some of the funds of BCA. The resolution must specify the organisation and must be accompanied by documentary evidence of the suitability of that organisation, including arrangements for dealing with mistakes, errors and liabilities which might arise from them. Any material change in such evidence shall require reauthorisation of the organisation within 6 months of that change taking place.

Purpose: To formalise use of a sub-collection body or a pseudo-banker who may use BCA's name and authority.

10.7 The accounts of the Association shall be made up annually to 31st December and shall be certified by a qualified accountant before presentation to the Annual General Meeting. The qualified accountant shall be appointed by the Annual General Meeting. In the case of a casual vacancy, the National Council shall have the power to appoint a qualified accountant. Such a person so appointed shall remain in office until the next Annual General Meeting of the Association and shall be eligible for reappointment.

Change(s): Replace "qualified accountant" by "suitably qualified person" in the 1st and current 2nd sentences. Delete "before presentation to the Annual General Meeting" in the 1st sentence. Insert two new sentences immediately following current 1st sentence "Either a certified set of accounts shall be presented to the Annual General Meeting following the year end or a draft set of accounts shall be presented to the Annual General Meeting following the year end but in such a case, the subsequently certified set of accounts shall be presented to a subsequent meeting of the National Council together with a list of items identifying changes of greater than £10 between the draft and certified sets of accounts. The certified set of accounts shall be published as shall be the draft set of accounts if produced and the list of items identifying changes."

Purpose: To expand the range of eligible persons to include persons such as "Independent Examiners" (see Charity Commission document CC31 "Accounting & Reporting Independent Examination of Charity Accounts Trustees' Guide"). Second amendment formalises presentation of either certified set of accounts or draft set to AGM and follow-up list of changes.

10.8 The National Council shall be responsible for all income and expenditure of the Association and shall delegate the control of such expenditure to the Treasurer. The National Council shall require Standing Committees and others allocated funds, to prepare and submit for approval, annual budgets detailing proposed income and expenditure, and subsequently, to submit for annual examination statements of the actual income and expenditure. Such statements shall be incorporated within the annual accounts of the Association.

Change(s): Delete from 2nd sentence ", and subsequently, to submit for annual examination statements of the actual income and expenditure" and also delete 3rd sentence.

Purpose: To place control of all accounts within the hands of the Treasurer. (This current wording allows each committee to run their own bank account and prepare accounts at year end as was the practice pre 2000. This would lift a substantial work load from the Treasurer.

13) INTERPRETATION:

Insert new sub sections 13.3 & 13.4

13.3 For the purposes of Sections 8 and 9 of this Constitution:

"publish" means placed in a publication produced by BCA, or placed on BCA's web site, or both.

"circulated" means circulated by post, or by email if the member has elected to receive communications from BCA in that manner, or by publishing the information, or by any combination of these methods.

"postal ballot" can if a member has elected to receive communications from BCA by email, mean in such circumstances that the ballot is sent by email instead of by post and that the return has come from the email address to which the ballot was sent.

13.4 Council shall set up a procedure for satisfying to itself that where a member wishes to elect that they receive communications by email, that that election has come from that person. Council may, if it has reasonable grounds for believing that the vote cast has not come from that member, reject that vote. It is the responsibility of the member to ensure that the email address is valid and that BCA shall take no responsibility if the email sending the communication fails to arrive with the member or the member's response fails to arrive with BCA.

Purpose: To formalise the current convention on publishing, expand the convention on circulating and allow the introduction of email-based correspondence to improve efficiency.

Damian Weare, October 2009

Appendix 2: Euro Speleo Projects Report