

NATIONAL CAVING ASSOCIATION

NATIONAL CO-ORDINATING PANEL

Minutes of meeting held on FRIDAY 15TH MARCH 2002, at Stafford County Council Sports and Social Club, Stafford

Present:

Dave Baines (Derbyshire ALO) DB
John Crowsley (South of England ALO) JCr
Bob Mehew (NCA Treasurer & Pro Tem Training Officer) BM Chair
Graham Mollard (Designate Chair for NCP) GM
Dena Proctor (N Wales ALO) DP
Pat Ramsden (RAM Business Services) RAM BS

The meeting opened at 10.35 am.

1) Apologies for absence

Alan Butcher, John Cliffe, Dave Edwards, Eric Hoole, Greg Jones, Duncan Morrison, Jenny Potts

2) Minutes of the last meeting

DP asked that the final sentence of Item 2 of the minutes be altered to "Some work has been undertaken on the entrance and access is available." The minutes were then accepted as a true record and signed.

3) Matters Arising of immediate import

Item 3.15 re dates of Trainer / Assessor workshops were confirmed as 8 April on Mendip and 16 November in Northern England.

Item 4.3.2 re mechanism for bringing new trainer assessors onto an Area Panel; details had been considered (see Sec 4.1.2 of formalisation document), but NCP was specifically asked to accept that Area Panels may set a limit on the total number of trainer / assessors in their panel. It was agreed that the words in the formalisation document "The Area Panel as well as considering whether there is a need for more Trainer / Assessors in that area" provided sufficient authority for the Panel to limit numbers. This was agreed.

All other actions from meeting of 9 November were left to the following meeting

Action BM to ensure carried forward.

BM reported that the CIC Panel meet on 12 March and had accepted the CIC formalisation document.

BM explained that Alan Butcher had been nominated unopposed to the post of Training Officer by the due date in January and thus would take back the role. BM acknowledged that he had not anticipated this arising. A hand over had been agreed. BM would remain as Training Officer for the purposes of signing Section 5s until Training Committee meet on 6 April when a motion would transfer the function. Several additional steps had been taken. These included accepting the offer of GM to help at NCP. Formally, GM would be co-opted onto Training Committee at its next meeting on 6 April and then would be delegated by Alan

Butcher as Training Officer to become chair of NCP. GM had thus been invited to this meeting.

4) Action on unpaid Trainers/Assessors

This item was deferred until after Item 5.

5) LCMLA Formalisation document

BM first thanked JCr for all his work which was beyond that originally envisaged. BM claim that the work had substantially kept to its original intention of not improving the LCMLA scheme, though a number of changes had been put forward. In addition there had been some changes to improve clarity c.f. Days 1 to 6 were now were called Modules 1 to 6 and the 3 & 6 year revalidation were now called standard and leadership revalidation.

BM noted that coming out the workshop were a number of items which his E Mail of 8 March covered (copy appended as Annex 1). The workshop considered that NCP was needed to specifically rule on these items since they were substantive changes. (NB Parts of the E Mail are extracted within these minutes within " " marks.)

5.1 re 3.2.2.1 PRIOR EXPERIENCE

LEVEL ONE

The current draft proposes that "Candidates with less than 12 trips experience can be accepted on specially designed courses. However the training report issued to the candidate at the end of the course should note this fact and advise the candidate that more training may be required before assessment. NCP were asked to confirm the discretionary approach."

JCr expressed Southern's agreement with the discretionary approach. DP emphasised N Wales' experience over the need for being able to provide specially designed courses. DB agreed with the discretionary approach. GM said that Northern Panel would not find the discretionary approach acceptable. GM accepted BM's point that Northern Panel Trainer / Assessors need not provide specially designed courses.

NCP confirmed this item should be included as discretionary.

LEVEL TWO

The current draft proposes that "Candidates must have completed a Level 1 training course. NCP were asked to confirm the mandatory requirement."

DP expressed the view that attendance at level 1 course was essential. GM, JCr & DB concurred.

NCP confirmed this item should be included as mandatory.

5.2 re 3.5.2. INITIATING ASSESSMENT

The current draft proposes that :

Assessment ratios are:

- 1 Trainer/Assessor to 2 candidates for Module 1 or 3 or 5 or 6

- 1 Trainer/Assessor to 1 candidate for Module 2 or 4
- These ratios need to be reduced to 1:1 if combining modules.

NCP were asked to delete the existing clause which required the ratio to be reduced if modules were combined.

No opinion was expressed against its removal. It was generally felt to be a matter that the Trainer / Assessor should be competent to deal with.

NCP confirmed the deletion of "These ratios need to be reduced to 1:1 if combining modules".

5.3 re 3.5.3. THE ASSESSMENT

The workshop identified a need for an item on declaring medical fitness prior to undertaking training or assessment and some words had been put forward. However, the CIC Panel had developed the wording further and had put forward: "The candidate should advise the Trainer / Assessor if s/he has any medical problems that may affect their own or other persons safety."

NCP in its discussion identified the need for the same item to be inserted at 3.2.3.1 page 19 and in 3.7.3 page 30 both at the end of the existing text. The words were accepted.

It had also been suggested that another item should be inserted reminding the candidate about medical conditions. A proposal had been put forward, namely:

3.1.6 Medical Conditions

Caving is a strenuous activity and emergency situations (e.g. carrying out a hoist on a climb or pitch) can be both physically and mentally exhausting. It is the responsibility of the LCMLA leader to ensure that he/she is physically able to carry out their anticipated and unforeseen roles in caring for their groups/clients. Medical advice should be sought if a condition or disability may limit the ability to perform these roles. During training or assessment it is essential that candidates do not put themselves or others at risk and therefore must notify the trainer/assessor of any condition which may significantly affect their caving activities.

The words were accepted. BM noted that both sets of words needed checking with the Legal & Insurance Officer.

Action BM check acceptability of wording with L&I Officer.

NCP agreed with both insertions, subject to L&I views.

5.4 re 3.6.1 WORKING WITH UNDER 18s

NCP was reminded of the NCA policy on child protection which had required the insertion of a cross reference: "Anyone taking under 18s underground will need to comply with the NCA's policy on Child Protection."

The policy was discussed. Clarification was sought on who were agents & officers. BM noted that LCMLA holders using their LCMLA award with persons under 18 would not be agents or officers. This was because the work was not with NCA, but was a specific contract between the award holder and the under 18. BM stated that work by persons undertaking the functions of ALOs or members of

NCP would be undertaken as officers of NCA. BM also noted that LCMLA Trainer / Assessors cannot interact with persons under the age of 18 since no one could seek the award whilst under the age of 18. The implications of the legal requirements of child protection were discussed. It was noted that BCU ensured that candidates on their courses were required to read and sign a form that they had read and understood the BCU policy on child protection. It was also noted that NCP should consider looking at all legal requirements to ensure that a reference was made in training courses to them.

NCP agreed to the insertion.

Action BM to initiate work to identify all relevant legal provisions relevant to training and provide guidance for inclusion in training course material.

5.5 re 3.7.2 STANDARD REVALIDATION

NCP was asked for a view on specifying a standard specifying a minimum experience during the preceding 3 years for revalidation (i.e. in the first 3 years following gaining the LCMLA award). The meeting reaffirmed that by using the word minimum, then the requirement was mandatory. The meeting discussed the possibility of candidates presenting themselves without the minimum experience. It was considered that given the standard revalidation was a paper based assessment, then the trainer / assessor should advise the candidate of the short fall rather than issue a qualified Section 7 which stated that the candidate needed to achieve the experience requirement before a full Section 7 could be issued. It was also noted that the candidate could bypass this requirement by submitting themselves to a practical assessment under any part of the scheme which would provide evidence of the candidate's ability and automatically provide for a standard revalidation. The meeting discussed and agreed the insertion of the words "minimum" and "each" (see items in [] brackets below). The following wording was adopted:

The [minimum] experience required is as follows:

- 6 trips leading groups in caves reflecting a cross section of the difficulty of the caves on the candidates list, and
- 6 different personal exploration trips, (they may be repeats of trips done in the previous 3 year period).

For Level 2 Awards, the number of trips is increased to 10 [each], some of which may be experience at Level 1.

NCP agreed to a mandatory minimum experience.

5.6 re 3.7.3. LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT REVALIDATION.

NCP was asked for a view on specifying a standard specifying a minimum experience during the preceding 3 years prior to leadership development revalidation (i.e. during year 4 to 6 following gaining a LCMLA award). The proposal used the same words and standard as for item 5.5 above. The meeting discussed the topic and agreed that it was appropriate to use the same minimum experience criteria for each 3 year period.

NCP agreed to the same mandatory principle as for the standard revalidation.

5.7 re 3.7.3.1. LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT REVALIDATION WORKSHOP.

NCP was asked for its views on the ratio of trainer / assessors to candidates that the impact of having other CIC holders present. GM raised a point for

noting by the meeting that Northern Panel was concerned about the control of the Area Panel in organising Leadership Development Revalidation Workshops using several Trainer / Assessors rather than individual Trainer / Assessors conducting them by themselves, save for certain circumstances. The meeting agreed that it was a matter for the Area Panel to control and that the wording should reflect both approaches.

DB sought clarification about the ALO being able to advise about workshops. It was confirmed that the statement did not mean that the ALO organised all workshops. However at least one Area Panel required the ALO to be advised of all workshops. RAM BS noted that by providing her with dates, she could include them on the web site and in the Training Bulletin. It was accepted that this was a benefit to candidates.

BM raised a query about whether a candidate could attend a workshop in any region provided they then sought assessment of their local knowledge from Trainer / Assessors from the relevant area. JCr replied that 3.7.2 and 3.7.3 did make it clear that "the Candidate should contact a Trainer / Assessor from the Area Panel which covers their list of sites". The section does also deal with the situation where the list of sites covers more than one Panel.

The meeting debated the point about inclusion or rejection of CIC in assessing the ratio. It was noted that CIC holders would not have assessing skills. It was agreed that there was no problem in CIC holders being assistants but they should not be included in the ratio. It was confirmed that only approved Trainer / Assessors could be part of the ratio. The entry was therefore modified to read:

The course must be run by an approved Trainer / Assessor who is present at all times. A ratio of 1 Trainer/Assessor per 6 candidates must be maintained. Other appropriate speakers can be used but cannot be included in the ratio. There is no minimum or maximum size course.

NCP agreed to the ratio of trainer / assessors to candidates not taking account of assistants.

NCP was then asked for its views on whether the stated elements of a workshop should be mandatory. It was confirmed that the wording did not require the practical element to be conducted underground.

NCP agreed without further debate that these were minimum mandatory elements.

The text was therefor modified to read :

The workshop must include the following elements:

- An update on developments including as appropriate:
- Equipment
- Legal requirements
- National Caving Association policies
- Local issues
- A practical training element which reflects the candidate's aspirations within the scheme or any competencies that the Trainer/Assessor considers may be weak, in the light of reviewing the candidate's logged experience.

NCP were asked fir its views on whether the length of the workshop should be mandatory. DP noted that she had run workshops which had achieved their aims

within 8 hours due to having only 3 candidates. The wording was modified to emphasise this, namely:

The workshop should normally last 8 hours which may be run as several sessions.

NCP agreed that it was guidance.

DP queried if it was optional for the Trainer / Assessor to collect the NCA fee. RAM BS noted that failure of some candidates to pay due to misunderstanding this point. DP noted the administrative burden it would place on her Centre. It was confirmed that it was optional for Trainer / Assessors to collect the NCA fee, but if they did not do so, then they should clearly point out to the candidate that a fee was outstanding.

5.8 re 3.7.5 EVIDENCE OF REVALIDATION

NCP was asked for its views on the provision of records of evidence. The currently accepted process had been summarised as

On successful completion, the Trainer/Assessor will send the candidate an Assessment Report. The candidate should send the Assessment Report to TASP. (The T/A will send a copy of the completed Assessment Report and administration fees to the Training Administration Service Provider. The Assessment Report and the Award will be sent to the candidate with a new Section 5.

The workshop had debated the process and noted that currently the Trainer / Assessor sends:

For Training, Section 4 to candidate, Log sheet to Pat & retains copy of Section 4

For Assessment, Section 7 to candidate, Log sheet to Pat, copy of Section 7 to Pat & retains copy of Section 7.

For Revalidation, Section 7 to Pat & retains copy of Section 7.

Two options to unify this process were identified, namely to either

a) Trainer / Assessor gives Section 4 / 7 to candidate, retains a copy of Section and send a log sheet to Pat, or

b) Trainer / Assessor sends Section 4 / 7 to Pat and retains a copy of Section, then Pat forwards Section 4 / 7 to candidate.

RAM BS noted the wide variation of Trainer / Assessors in fulfilling this requirement and the need for her to chase up copies. DP noted the problem of some Trainer / Assessors have in duplicating records. It was accepted that the normal practice was that the candidate did not receive a copy of the report at the end of the session, rather it was sent afterwards.

JCr proposed the use of triplicating sets of record forms. This would permit a single entry to be made and the top copy could be handed or sent to the candidate, the second copy sent to RAM BS and the third copy kept. BM noted the current content of a report would require it to be A4 size. It was agreed that it would be acceptable to fold the copy to insert it into the log book provided punched holes had been made in the pad. A query was raised over the use of electronic based forms. It was noted that only two Trainer / Assessors had so far use electronic forms, which in any case still required a signature. Whilst it was accepted that the proposal could be seen as a retrograde step, there were clear benefits to be gained in both simplification and clarity of process.

There was general agreement that the current system did not work well and adopting a simpler system should improve the situation.

In discussion it was agreed that an assessment report should be written for each module, rather than cover several modules in one report. RAM BS had a process which would provide for the issue of the Section 5 when the reports had been received. As a back stop the candidate also had their copies of the reports. It was accepted that old style reports would remain being presented for some while to come.

A point was raised about the date of signature of the report. It was noted that some Trainer / Assessors left a considerable period of time between the date of assessment and the signing of the report. BM noted that in response to a previous query, it had been agreed that the Section 5 would be related the signature date since the Trainer / Assessor may have required additional evidence to be supplied after the practical assessment date. BM went on to state that if candidates were aggrieved over the delay in issue of the Section 7, then it was solely a matter between them and their Trainer / Assessor, not with NCA who had no control.

Comment was made about problems with using duplicating pad but these were felt to be soluble. The cost of the pad was raised and whether Trainer / Assessors should be charged for them. An estimate of £5 per 100 was obtained (Viking Direct Trplicate Book). BM expressed the view that this cost should be coverable within the system. It was accepted that the cost of the pads might result in an increase in costs for Trainer/ Assessor fees for 2003. It was agreed that the pads could be split for issue to Trainer / Assessors.

There was some discussion about the content of the report, including the need to retain the comment part. There was a view that the comments space needed to be filled in. NCP initially agreed that this was not required. However, it was later noted that comments space was required if a Trainer / Assessor had a reservation such as may arise from a limited experienced candidate on a training course. NCP then agreed that that the comments space should remain.

Given the desired time frame for introducing the revised syllabus, it was agreed to consult with the ALOs on the new style combined report prior to ordering the pack. RAM BS agreed to collect feed back from the exercise.

NCP agreed in principle to moving to a single record form.

Action BM draft new report form and consult with ALOs.

JCr noted that by combining the Section 4 & 7 reports, the log book could be reduced to

Sec 1 Enrolment Page (as current)

Sec 2 Experience Record (covers pre application, during obtaining award and after gaining award)

Sec 3 Related Experience / Awards (replicating Sec 8)

Sec 4 Assessment Reports (combined Sec 4 & 7 including space to identify previous assessor and also keep comments box being a 2 page form)

Sec 5 Award

GM in reflecting on the history of the scheme, noted that the Section 5 was now commonly referred to as an award and it was timely to incorporate this. It was

accepted that the scheme was an LCML assessment scheme which provide a successful candidate with a LCMLA award.

NCP agreed to using the word "award" for Section 5.

It was noted that this requires the whole document to be edited to reflect the changes.

Action BM edit the whole document to reflect the use of award.

The need for a flow sheet was debated. It had been suggested in place of the existing summary. JCr felt that it became too complicated to fit in if one included variations and also the revalidation process.

NCP agreed in principle to a 5 section log book.

Action BM consult on a 5 section log book.

5.10 re 5.2.4.4. ADDITION OF SINGLE ROPE TECHNIQUE FOR OWN PROGRESSION and ADDITION OF ABSESS FOR GROUP.

A debate on the assessor / candidature ratio for Module 5 resulted in agreement that it was not necessary.

NCP agreed to reject a need for a specified maximum assessor / candidate ratio.

The proposal's identification of the inclusion of assessing Module 5 at the same time as Module 3 provoked a debate on whether Module 5 should be split, with abseiling brought into Module 3 to complement existing rope lowering techniques. The idea found favour on the basis of bringing rope work activities together and removing some of the artificiality in splitting lowering on a rope and abseiling.

NCP agreed to switch abseiling from Module 5 to Module 3. It was also recognised that the check lists would have to be modified to transfer the relevant material including rigging & belays.

Action BM redraft Module 3 to include abseiling from Module 5 and associated check lists and necessary consequential amendments.

NCP agreed to the following text in 5.2.4.4 being amended to

5.2.4.4. ADDITION OF SINGLE ROPE TECHNIQUE FOR OWN PROGRESSION.

Can be done separately or together with Module 3, (in which case it is a 1:1, Trainer/Assessor : candidate ratio), or as a stand-alone assessment, Module 5. The Training Administration Service Provider will need to check that the candidate is Level 2, if the Module 5 Assessment Report, does not come with the Level 2, Modules 3 and 4, Assessment Reports.

It was noted that this was a significant change and should be highlighted. It was proposed to send a letter to Trainer / Assessors on the change.

5.11 re D Edwards' Comments (see attachment 2)

Comments 1 & 2

Dave's proposal to link CIC training into the provision of exemptions from LCMLA training was debated. It was noted that CIC training tends to be on an individual basis and covered more aspects than LCMLA training. Whilst there was a recognition that there should be some equivalence, concern was expressed about the differences between the two awards, namely LCMLA was only focused on leadership skills whilst CIC focused on instructional skills. It was also noted that the CIC training takes fewer days, though this was compensated to some extent by CIC candidates being required to hold far more experience. Concern was expressed that CIC training may not provide enough time to permit correction of any inappropriate skills which candidates may have acquired. It was agreed that there was insufficient merit in the idea.

NCP agreed to not accept the two proposals.

Comment 3

Dave proposed ideas on extending the training for mine LCMLA awards. The point was made that the level of mine expertise required for LCMLA could be relatively small if the candidate only wanted say 1 or 2 sites on their Section 5. A comment was made that the idea of enhanced training had already been discussed elsewhere though not taken forward. A view was also expressed that this idea needed debate with Dave Carlise, Neil Rushton & Adrian Pearce before it should be further debated.

NCP therefore did not support the concept.

Action BM advise Dave Edwards to discuss his idea with Dave Carlise, Neil Rushton & Adrian Pearce and come back with their views.

Comment 4

Dave proposed the provision of mentorship by LCMLA Trainer / Assessors for CIC candidates. It was felt that there would be little enthusiasm to provide such a service. Comment was also made that perhaps this might be more appropriate for the ACI to consider.

NCP did not support the proposal.

Comment 5

Dave asked if the role out of the formalised schemes should be synchronised. After a short debate, it was concluded that there was little need to do so and the role out of the LCMLA scheme would take much longer than for the CIC.

NCP did not support the proposal.

5.12 Items referred from the Workshop

- a) renegotiate TTASP contract to require attendance at NCP

This was supported and referred to Training Committee for consideration.

Action BM refer to Training Committee.

- b) review terms of ref of NCP

It was accepted that there was a need to do so.

Action BM ensure item in next NCP agenda on review of NCP's terms of reference.

c) change quorum of NCP

In the light of the development regarding GM volunteering to take over the chair of NCP, it was proposed that the quorum should be reviewed to permit the chairmanship of NCP by some one other than the Training Officer but who should be a co-opted member of Training Committee. This was referred to Training Committee for consideration.

Action BM arrange for the item to be referred to Training Committee for consideration.

d) NCP need to identify secretary who produces minutes & circ them

DP made a proposal that the task should be rotated amongst the members of NCP. BM noted the need for ALOs to ensure Panel minutes were produced and for the Chair of NCP to identify any decisions which could do with consideration by NCP.

Comment was also made over the need for ALOs to either attend or ensure a substitute was sent. The point was noted.

It was agreed to defer discussion on this topic.

Action BM ensure item on production of minutes is in next NCP agenda.

5.13 BM asked that NCP accept that "There are a number of decision processes within the paper which call for the Training Administration Service Provider (TASP) to present the detail to the Technical Training Advise Service Provider (TTASP) for consideration, who is expected to make a recommendation to the Training Officer (TO) to make a decision. In difficult cases, the TO can decide to refer the issue to the NCP for a decision. NCP is asked to note this process."

BM noted that the intended switch of chair of NCP to some one different from the TO raised a question of a need for change to the proposal. Following discussion, it was agreed that a change was required. BM pointed out that the question had arisen because the TTASP did not have delegated powers of decision making where precedent had not already been set. It was also noted that the current decision point was with the TO. The proposed change of chair of NCP to GM lead to the question should the decision point move to Chair of NCP. The view was that the decision point should be NCP Chair. NCP also accepted that authority to make decisions should not be delegated. In the absence of the NCP Chair, TTASP should consult with the TO.

NCP agreed that TTASP can make decisions on the basis of precedent and provide clarification and interpretation of the scheme to the TASP. However, TTASP should seek confirmation of proposed decisions setting new precedent with NCP Chair. NCP Chair may refer to NCP any proposals which are considered to need debate. In the absence of NCP Chair, the TO may be consulted for a decision.

It was noted that this view was required to be endorsed by Training Committee.

Action BM to pass principle to Training Committee for endorsement.

BM then went on to note that "I would also like to point out a basic principle. The paper leaves some areas deliberately without detail. This was to permit regional variation. If the paper does not provide sufficient detail to resolve a query and that enquiries with the TTASP or TASP do not provide an answer, then there are two means of resolving it. The first is that the Area Panel makes a decision. In such cases it is asked that NCP & TTASP are advised of such decisions, so a record can be set up and a check on consistency be provided. (In addition this will form a useful source of potential improvements to the scheme.) The alternative is that the query be put before NCP. NCP is asked to accept this process."

GM indicated that this was a useful line of communication. JCr noted that the proposed line would enable communication to take place if a post fell vacant. NCP endorsed the principle.

5.13 Re - edit of document

BM in noting that there had been a number of changes agreed by the debate, stated that there would need to be a final editing of the document. BM asked for permission to decide on whether consultation was needed. The proposal was accepted.

Action BM undertake final edit of document.

5.14 Acceptance of Paper

BM asked if NCP accepted the paper subject to the changes identified by discussion and the final edit.

NCP agreed to the paper, subject to implementing changes and a final edit.

5.15 Implementation

BM proposed that NCP should organise afternoon Area Panel Meetings where Trainer / Assessors should receive a copy of the document, a presentation on the changes and a question and answer session. When all areas had been covered, an implementation date could then be confirmed, possibly 1 January 2003. BM had floated a proposal to raise a contract for a person to undertake the presentation elsewhere.

JCr noted that workshop alternative would have similarly difficulties. GM noted the problem of getting 100% attendance. BM indicated that this was not intended, but all Trainer / Assessors would get the document plus the presentation. The idea of having launch meetings was floated. The point was noted that by linking to Area Panels, discussion could take place on Area customisation. It was also noted that Trainer / Assessors could attend other Area Panels if they were unable to attend their own meeting. The point of availability in mid week verses week end was discussed. It was accepted that the only way to reduce this problem was to offer the dates months in advance so as to maximise the chance of free dates. A query was raised as to whether the meeting would be mandatory. The feeling was that it should be mandatory. It was considered that running 4 meetings (Southern, Derbyshire, a combined Wales and the North) should provide sufficient alternative dates to permit the meeting being mandatory.

The question was raised as to whether the meeting could be taken as a Trainer / Assessor workshop. It was noted that since some information would be Area specific and the area would discuss area business, Trainer / Assessors attending

a different area would miss some aspects. It was agreed that the meeting could be taken as a Trainer / Assessor workshop provided that the Trainer / Assessor attended the meeting of his own panel. Attendance would reset the clock to the date of the meeting.

NCP agreed to a role out per area (possibly condensing those in Wales to one) with Trainer / Assessors permitted to attend alternative areas if they were unable to get to their own area. NCP agreed that attendance was mandatory. NCP agreed that attending a meeting at their own area would be considered equivalent to attending a Trainer / Assessor workshop. NCP agreed that the meeting could also be claimed as an Area Panel Meeting. NCP agreed with aiming for an implementation date of 1 January 2003.

NCP also agreed that the paper should be used to guide any decisions which may be needed in the mean time.

5.16 Subsequent Review of Scheme

BM noted that the document had made a number of changes to existing practice. He therefore proposed that a review should be conducted some time, perhaps 6 months, after implementation. He suggested that all Trainer / Assessors should keep notes of problems arising so that a decision could be made as to whether a review should be undertaken. NCP agreed with the proposal.

Action GM consider need for review of scheme 6 months after implementation.

4) Action on unpaid Trainers/Assessors

The meeting debated the status of Trainer / Assessors who were not fulfilling the requirements.

It was agreed to issue a dispensation for J Elliot since he was booked on the April workshop.

It was understood that D Morrison had written to S Baggs. NCP agreed that it should wait to hear the outcome of that correspondence.

NCP agreed that G Fiander and E Hoole should be granted a dispensation for the year.

It was noted that D Morrison was following up the state of P Goodwin's trainee Trainer / Assessor status. NCP agreed that it should wait to hear the outcome of that communication.

It was noted that P Elliot had failed to pay her fee as trainee Trainer / Assessor. GM noted that D Morrison had been actioned by the Northern Area Panel to write to both P & D Elliot on their intentions, given their apparent lack of interest. It was noted that D Elliot had paid his fee for the year. NCP agreed that it should wait to hear the outcome of that communication.

Following a brief debate over the state of health of J Wright, NCP agreed to endorse a recommendation that J Wright's position be suspended until further notice.

BM noted that Training Committee would have to confirm decisions made.

It was also proposed that CIC revalidations should be acceptable up to one year early without resetting the clock. BM agreed to take this forward.

Action BM to discuss with D Edwards CIC revalidation process.

6) Next Meeting and meetings for 2002/2003

It was agreed to hold the next meeting at the earlier time of 10 am at Stafford on SATURDAY 13 July.

Action BM book the room.

It was agreed to not set any further dates.

7) Any Other Business

7.1 Forest of Dean Area Panel

It was reported that the Forest of Dean (FoD) Panel had become dormant. A suggestion had been made for its activities to be taken over by the South Wales Panel. A query was raised over S Wales ability to provide advice on mines. DP noted that the North Wales Panel could provide some support.

It was reported that a few FoD Panel members remained willing to help but were understood to be reluctant to organise and attend meetings. BM gave a view that FoD Area Panel needed to undertake all the administrative aspects of running the scheme, including assessments and meetings, for it to remain on an acceptable standing. JCr expressed the view that the key problem was that no one was prepared to act as ALO.

RAM BS enquired if she should remove FoD Area Panel from the list. This was rejected for the time being.

JCr offered to make enquiries with FoD Panel members. BM asked that JCr indicate that NCP did expect a minimum standard but this was open for debate. It was noted that JCr was a member of the FoD Panel and might call a meeting. GM asked that his apologies be given to the Panel.

Action JCr to make enquiries with FoD Panel members on possible ways forward.

7.2 CIC Annual Fee

A query was raised as to whether CICs should be required to pay an annual fee given that some of them were issuing "qualifications" for persons to lead trips under ground. BM noted that he had made some enquiries into the extent of this practice. He felt that there was some indication that whilst the practice had been very limited, it was now growing. JCr noted the opposition to this process from a number of persons. NCP agreed that the practice of non NCA site specific "qualifications" was abundant with different approaches in different areas. It was noted that the process had been accepted by AALA on the basis of CICs making the judgement. BM noted that the CIC syllabus did not contain any element of assessing other persons. BM recalled that JCr had floated an idea of NCA creating a site specific award. However, there was a need to determine if the numbers involved would make the effort of setting up such a scheme worthwhile. GM noted that there would a large number of persons objecting to the idea on the basis that only cavers should lead trips. However, he felt that it was better

to have some form of control over the system than none. JCr felt that perhaps 90% of the lead trips on Mendip were under this alternative scheme. DB indicated that the concept was not prevalent in Derbyshire. He felt that it would undermine the concept of LCMLA. It was noted that the Mines Inspectorate had stated that they would only accept either CIC or LCMLA award holders or specially agreed situations with themselves. BM wondered if the CIC scheme should develop an extra module to cover assessment. It was suggested that a letter should be sent to AALA expressing NCP's concern. Following some further discussion, it was agreed that the question of setting up a site specific award should be raised as an adjunct to the role out.

Action BM to ensure the topic of producing a site specific award be put on the agenda of Area Panel meetings.

7.3 J Crowsley's work on formalisation of the LCMLA scheme

BM proposed that NCP formally thank JCr for all of his effort in producing the document. NCP agreed with the proposal and noted that his effort went substantially beyond that originally envisaged.

to consider need for review of scheme 6 months on from introduction.

The meeting closed at 3.20 pm.

Attachment 1 - E Mail Bob Mehew to NCP members

From: Bob Mehew [mmehew@lineone.net]
Sent: 08 March 2002 07:25
To: 'John Crowsley'; 'Paul Ramsden'; 'Pat Ramsden'; 'John Cliffe'; 'Dave Edwards'; 'ALO Greg Jones'; 'ALO Duncan Morrison'; 'ALO Dena Proctor'; 'Eric Hoole'; 'Alan Butcher'
Subject: RE: formalisation draft 2

Importance: High

Hi all

Beneath is a paper which I wish to use to manage the consideration of the draft paper on the formalisation of the LCMLA scheme by John Crowsley.

Looking forward to the meeting

Bob

PS feel free to onward circulate this paper and Draft 2 to whom you feel appropriate

IMPLEMENTATION OF PAPER ON FORMALISATION OF LCMLA SCHEME

Thanks to the sterling work of John Crowsley, we now have before us final draft paper which seek to formalise the LCMLA scheme. I would like to remind all members of NCP that the original terms of the process were to commit the existing practices to paper, identify any significant differences for resolution and publish the result. It was a clear intention stated at the outset, that improvements to the two awards would not be taken at this time, since it would make the task almost impossible. I believe this intention has broadly been complied with.

I have to acknowledge that the LCMLA did run into some challenging problems. As a consequence, a workshop was held in early February to discuss the paper in detail. Some changes have been made to aide clarity and frankly dig us out of

inconsistencies / muddles etc. Notable for example, is the change in name of assessment Days to Modules and 3 and 6 year reassessment to standard and leadership development revalidation. However, the workshop identified several items where NCP's judgement was considered necessary. They are appended to this paper.

NCP are asked to make decisions on these items.

In addition, there are a number of decision processes within the paper which call for the TASP to present the detail to the TTASP for consideration, who is expected to make a recommendation to the Training Officer to make a decision. In difficult cases, the Training Officer can decide to refer the issue to the NCP for a decision.

NCP is asked to note this process.

I would also like to point out a basic principle. The paper leaves some areas deliberately without detail. This was to permit regional variation. If the paper does not provide sufficient detail to resolve a query and that enquiries with the Technical Training Advice Service Provider (TTASP) or Training Administrator Service Provider (TASP) do not provide an answer, then there are two means of resolving it.

The first is that the Area Panel makes a decision. In such cases it is asked that NCP & TTASP are advised of such decisions, so a record can be set up and a check on consistency be provided. (In addition this will form a useful source of potential improvements to the scheme.)

The alternative is that the query be put before NCP.

NCP is asked to accept this process.

The contracts were awarded on the basis of being completed by the end of 2001, bar presenting to committees for agreement.

NCP is asked to accept the paper, subject to implementing those decisions made earlier.

It is intended to pass the paper to Training Committee for endorsement.

Following endorsement, there needs to be a period of training and briefing for all Trainer / Assessors. Details have not been worked out, but it is considered that this should take place during the rest of 2002. The Training Officer is responsible for organising training and / or briefing to introduce the paper for use. It is therefore proposed that the paper be brought into effect on 1 January 2003.

NCP is asked to endorse this item scale for implementation.

In the mean time, it is proposed that the paper is used to guide such decisions as may be required.

NCP is asked to endorse this approach.

I also propose that NCP review the paper in Summer of 2003 to identify any improvements which may have been revealed by its use. This would allow a reasonable time for the scheme to bed down and provide persons with the opportunity for including their ideas into the scheme.

Bob Mehew

Almost Ex Pro Tem Training Officer

7 March 2002

Points for NCP Resolution

The points below are shown in context, however it is only the wording in italics that need clarifying as per the demand made within [NCP to ...].

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3.2.2.1 PRIOR EXPERIENCE

LEVEL ONE

The only requirement is that the candidate has a basic level of competence as cavers or mine explorers.

The minimum experience prior to undertaking a Level one training course is 12 cave or mine exploration trips.

Candidates with less than 12 trips experience can be accepted on specially designed courses. However the training report issued to the candidate at the end of the course should note this fact and advise the candidate that more training may be required before assessment.

[NCP to confirm or delete]

LEVEL TWO

The only requirement is that the candidate has done some verticle caving
Candidates must have completed a Level 1 training course.

[NCP to confirm or delete]

Course directors shall have the right to refuse attendance on a training course if the candidate has insufficient experience. The candidate shall have a right of appeal to the Training Officer.

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3.5.2. INITIATING ASSESSMENT

Assessment ratios are:

- * 1 Trainer/Assessor to 2 candidates for Module 1 or 3 or 5 or 6
- * 1 Trainer/Assessor to 1 candidate for Module 2 or 4
- * These ratios need to be reduced to 1:1 if combining modules.

[NCP to confirm or alter]

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3.5.3. THE ASSESSMENT

The candidate should advise the Trainer / Assessor if s/he has any medical problems that may affect their own or other persons safety.

[NCP to keep discretionary or make mandatory]

Any candidate who has a medical problem which may affect their or other persons safety should provide medical opinion that that problem does not disbar them from leading parties.

[NCP to keep discretionary, make mandatory or reject]

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3.6.1 WORKING WITH UNDER 18s

Anyone charging to take under 18s underground will probably need to hold an Adventure Activities Licence or be working for someone who holds such a licence. The AALA can advise on applying for a licence.

Anyone taking under 18s underground will need to comply with the NCA's policy on Child protection.

[NCP for noting as imposed by NCA policy requirement]

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3.7.2 STANDARD REVALIDATION.

The onus is on the candidate to apply to a Trainer/Assessor for Revalidation. The Trainer/Assessor will ask for a copy of logged experience and last award. The experience required is as follows:

- * 6 trips leading groups in caves reflecting a cross section of the difficulty of the caves on the candidates list, and
- * 6 different personal exploration trips, (they may be repeats of trips done in the previous 3 year period).

For Level 2 Awards, the number of trips is increased to 10, some of which may be experience at Level 1.

[NCP to confirm or make discretionary]

The Trainer / Assessor will, on the basis of the extent of the continued experience, make a judgement on the extent and nature of the revalidation process. The trainer / assessor may also cover assessment of any requested additions of sites which are in the Trainer / assessor's area.

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3.7.3. LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT REVALIDATION.

Includes same wording as above.

[NCP to confirm or make discretionary]
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3.7.3.1. LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT REVALIDATION WORKSHOP.

Leadership Development Revalidation Workshops are run either by the area panel or individual Trainer/Assessors. The Area Liaison Officer should be able to advise the candidate what is happening in their area.

The course must be run by an Approved Trainer/Assessor who is present at all times. Cave Instructor Certificate holders can work on the course as well, provided the ratio of 1 Cave Instructor Certificate holder or Trainer/Assessor per 6 candidates is maintained. Other appropriate speakers can be used but cannot be included in the ratio. There is no minimum or maximum size course.

[NCP to confirm or reject inclusion of CIC holder]

The workshop should include the following elements:

- * An update on developments including:
 - * Equipment
 - * Legal requirements
 - * National Caving Association policies
 - * Local issues
- * A practical training element which reflects the candidate's aspirations within the scheme or any competencies that the Trainer/Assessor considers may be weak, in the light of reviewing the candidate's logged experience.

[NCP to keep discretionary or make requirement]

The workshop should be of 8 hour duration which may be run as several sessions.

[NCP to keep discretionary or make requirement]

The candidate will be advised of the Trainer/Assessor fees and may be asked to include the National Caving Association administration fee at the same time.
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3.7.5 EVIDENCE OF REVALIDATION

On successful completion, the Trainer/Assessor will send the candidate an Assessment Report. The candidate should send the Assessment Report to TASP. (The T/A will send a copy of the completed Assessment Report and administration fees to the Training Administration Service Provider. The Assessment Report and the Award will be sent to the candidate with a new Section 5.

This raised a query about why the process is different. Currently the Trainer / Assessor sends -

For Training Section 4 to candidate

Log sheet to Pat

Retains copy of Section 4

For Assessment Section 7 to candidate

Log sheet to Pat

Copy of Section 7 to Pat

Retains copy of Section 7

For Revalidation Section 7 to Pat

Retains copy of Section 7

There are two options to unify this process

a) Trainer / Assessor gives Section 4 / 7 to candidate, retains a copy of Section and send a log sheet to Pat, or

b) Trainer / Assessor sends Section 4 /7 to Pat and retains a copy of Section, then Pat forwards Section 4 / 7 to candidate.

[NCP to select a or b]

In addition, should the difference between Sec 4 & 7 be done away with ie a simple "Report Form"?

[NCP to decide Yes or no]

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5.2.4.4. ADDITION OF SINGLE ROPE TECHNIQUE FOR OWN PROGRESSION and ADDITION OF ABSEIL FOR GROUP.

Can be done separately or together with Module 3, (in which case it is a 1:1, Trainer/Assessor : candidate ratio), or as a stand-alone assessment, Module 5 (in which case the ratio 1:2 Trainer/Assessor to candidate applies). The Training Administration Service Provider will need to check that the candidate is Level 2, if the Module 5 Assessment Report, does not come with the Level 2, Modules 3 and 4, Assessment Reports.

[NCP to confirm or reject]

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Attachment 2 - Comments by D Edwards

CIC SCHEME CHANGES : IMPLICATIONS FOR THE LCMLA SCHEME

1. Candidates for the CIC Scheme who do not hold the LCMLA L2 award are likely to be interested in a "fast track" route to obtaining the L2 award. Direct entry to L2 assessment after completing CIC training is likely to be more frequently required. Combining core skills assessment days 1 & 3 (possibly 5) will be required followed by combining group day assessments 2 & 4. Do we need to streamline the processes to approve applications for such assessments?

2. Can attendance on the CIC training course be viewed as an acceptable alternative to L1 & L2 training (the added personal experience required adequately compensates for shortened training time)? It would be essential to ensure that candidates have had suitable experience of working with less technical novice caving sessions.

3. To support the Mines Extension Module LCMLA Mine panels may wish to consider the type of additional/further training that could be made available to aspirant holders of the mine extension.

Examples might be :

Assist with LCMLA trainers in running mine core skills training.

Shadow/support mine core skills assessments.

Support/assist with mine inspections.

Assist with special conservation/restoration projects.

4. Provision of "Mentorship" support to CIC candidates. Some LCMLA Panels or individual trainers/assessors (if CIC holders) may wish to offer mentorship support to candidates.

5. Do the LCMLA & CIC formalisation processes need to be synchronised? Ie same implementation date? Direct entry to L2 assessment by candidates who have plenty of experience and have completed CIC training should not compromise the LCMLA Scheme. My view is that once the NCP has approved item 2 above then the 2 formalisation processes can happen in their own time frames.

Dave Edwards 10/3/03