



British Caving Association

Minutes of the National Co-ordinating Panel held on Monday, 4 February 2008

1. Present

Tom Peacock (TP)	NCP Chair & ALO – South Wales Panel
Dena Proctor (DP)	ALO - North Wales Panel
Dave Baines (DB)	ALO - Derbyshire Panel
Graham Mollard (GM)	Training Officer
Tony Boyle (TB)	ALO – Northern Panel
Karen Slatcher (KS)	Training Administrator
John Cliffe (JC)	On behalf of Forest of Dean Panel

The meeting commenced at 10:30 am.

1. Apologies for Absence

Tony Smith (AS)	ALO – Southern Panel
Steve Tomalin (ST)	ALO – Forest of Dean Panel
Steve Long (SL)	Secretary, MLT UK

2. Minutes of the meeting held on 8 October 2007

- 2.1 The last meeting was chaired by TP as NCP Chair, rather than GM.
- 2.2 **6.2 Weather & Flooding booklet** - DB's thesis was put together using the same format as an article in Caves & Caving.
- 2.3 **9.1 Jez Parr** – DB asked whether Jez has been accepted. KS confirmed that he has been accepted by Training Committee and has had his TA paperwork.
- 2.4 **9.5 North Wales** - Tal y Goch not Tal y Garth.

3. Matters arising from the minutes

- 3.1 **8.1 Grandfather Rights** – DB said that Dave Carlisle is very important to BCA and suggested that he is classed as a Technical Expert until such time as BCA can insure him. There is still the issue of him being lapsed, but DB added that he is running a revalidation workshop in that area shortly. GM gave DB the go ahead to ask Dave Carlisle to join this workshop.
- 3.2 **4.6 & 3.4 Canyoning/Gorge Walking Scheme** – There is a lot of concern in North Wales regarding this and Doug Oliver of CCW is calling a meeting on 9 April at Plas y Brenin, which DP will be attending to represent Plas Dol y Moch OE Centre. Certain venues are being heavily used by one group. CCW do not want to stop people going into the gorge. Scottish Combined Rock & Water have also put a document together.

10:45 GM & TB arrived.

- 3.3 **3.6 Rory Gregory** – DB asked at what point should he consider him not part of the panel. GM said that as he has not paid his TA fees for two years and has not attended a CIC revalidation, he is no longer a member of the panel.
- 3.4 **3.7 Robbie Warke** – GM has emailed him to say that he could join the Southern panel, but that there would be some requirements before he could and that he must keep his CIC up to date. TS now has a copy of the relevant paperwork. The Panel want him to observe and take part in a training course and also run a course and be observed doing that before he is able to rejoin.
- 8.2 **8.2 Technical Experts** – Just to clarify... they can assess Modules 1 & 2.
JC said that The Doward “Caves” should be treated as mines as they are caves infilled with iron ore, so therefore technically mines. The Symonds Yat Caves are the same. GM recommended that NCP agree that Steve Tomalin and John Elliott are allowed to assess Modules 1 and 2 in both of these systems. JC to take this back to the Forest of Dean Panel.

- 3.5 **8.3 Procedures for accepting people to Panels** – Des Marshall has approached the North Wales Panel regarding joining them. Normal procedures are that the panel should approve a person joining, they should attend a panel meeting, be accepted by NCP and take two trips out with Panel to prove that they know the systems.
Alan Braybrook has also applied to be a probationary TA.
- 3.6 **9.1 Ogof Clogwyn** – JC said that there is no cable, but there are good, well-positioned anchors.
- 3.7 **10.1 Fees** – GM said that this was not as urgent as it had appeared at the time, so any raise in fees has been postponed.

5. Training Committee report

- 5.1 **4.1 Geology Booklet** – This needs reading through by everyone. **KS to email/post to all.** The plan is that it will go out with all LCMLA/CIC packs, although we may have to raise costs for registration to cover the printing. DP suggested putting both docs on CD, with an extra payment for a hard copy. GM said that John Forder has given permission for it to be used. TP's reservation is that it could be seen as a little 'heavy' as it more Level 2 LCMLA or CIC.
- 5.2 **3.3 Hidden Earth** – This was discussed at the last Council meeting when GM reported that there will not be any training next year.
- 5.3 **5.2 CIC Scheme Changes** – Training Committee approved the ruling that a candidate needs to be Level 2 + SRT before they attend a CIC training course, increasing the length of a training course from 3 to 4 days and Nigel Ball's idea for a new marking scheme to give conformity from one assessor to the next.
- 5.4 **Mines Module** – This was left up in the air at the last CIC Panel meeting although the principle was agreed – **Nigel Ball/DB to write this.**
- 5.5 **Serious Incidents** – The CIC Panel felt that BCA, as NGB, should comment on this. GM said that the Executive had been reticent about this, however he put forward this view at the last Council meeting and it went through without comment. From now, we will be the first point of contact for HSE – Gavin Howat is keen for all NGBs to do this – and also involved with AALA on drawing up points learned afterwards. The Training Officer will represent BCA and comment on good practice rather than specifics, after consultation with Training Committee, CIC Panel and NCP.
- 5.6 **Advertise for CIC TAs** – KS to send out the necessary paperwork for this and ask Mick Day to Chair, and Juliet Parker-Smith and Nigel Ball to attend.
- 5.7 **CIC Assessment Modules** – A few problems on how the modules are run has been fed back to Nigel. If all goes ahead, the new marking scheme and a new checklist should overcome this to make it possible to check that Trainer/Assessors have covered what they are supposed to.
- 5.8 **CIC Handbook Changes** – Any changes will be decided by the CIC Panel. They plan to look at emergency techniques and whether they are still relevant for assessment or not.
- 5.9 **Porth yr Ogof** – The leaflet was brought up at the Council meeting again, but only briefly this time
- 5.10 **BCA Home Page** – This has been updated slightly following problems with candidates completing membership application forms instead of LCMLA registration forms.

6. Terms of reference of NCP and Training Committee

At the last meeting it was decided to go back to the Panels to check whether they were happy with Terms of Reference for NCP and Training Committee (6.2.1 page 64)/TC. South Wales discussed them for NCP, but not for Training Committee.

6.1 Terms of Reference for NCP

6.2.1.1 NCP 2nd Para - Training Committee have never appointed two people to sit on NCP.

Terms of Ref Bullet Point 6 - To prepare and operate a budget... In practice it is the Training Officer and Training Administrator that do this. If the schemes are not operating at a profit, the Training Officer would suggest raising fees to NCP. GM suggested leaving this as it is.

Terms of Ref Bullet Point 8 – Reports of all meetings... The NCP minutes cover this. GM said that NCP does not have an Annual Report so this can be taken out and could be changed at a later date to read: To provide a report of all meetings to Training Committee to be included in their report.

Most panels have not had the chance to discuss the Terms of Reference and will report back to the next NCP.

6.2 Terms of Reference for Training Committee

GM suggested asking the Panels what the Terms of Reference for Training Committee should be. Jenny Potts may have some old Terms of Reference for Training Committee. GM is still concerned that few people attend Training Committee meetings, but JC commented that this has always been the case if there are no issues to be discussed.

7. Booklets for LCMLA Syllabus

7.1 Weather & Flooding Booklet - DB asked what the panel felt was the level of weather input to the document. There was some discussion and it was felt that the chapter in Steve Long's book covers this well and that the effects of this weather could be related back to Dave's original thesis.

The document really starts on page 4. Synoptic chart interpreted – DB suggested a section on clouds. TP suggested showing common synoptic charts to show common weather. JC said that what is 'really' done is to download a forecast from the internet.

DP - Section on effects is very good. TP liked boxes on effects – can be expanded upon with photos.

Page 7 Resurgences – Peak Cavern (percolation-fed) replaced with Speedwell Cavern.

DP – how to get weather forecast, what it means, what the effects are. GM said that pages 4 to 18 are fine, may need some expanding on.

ALOs to ask panels for good photos of weather, showing good and bad conditions.

DB to talk to Steve Long.

Barry Albutt has sent copies of Combined Services' presentations to GM. GM to forward to all.

7.2 Geology & Karst Booklet - John Forder's document is complete, it just needs photographs and particularly a cover photo.

8. Suggested dates for Revalidations 2009 / Assessor Workshops

It is NCP's job to organise dates for Trainer/Assessor Workshops, which should now be attended every three years - a change was made to bring them in line with CIC Revalidations, which are also every three years. Those TAs with Level 2 LCMLA also need to attend a TA Workshop every three years.

8.1 Revalidation Workshops

KS said that the list is fairly full for 2008.

Derbyshire:

1 Mar 08 – Nigel Atkins

27 Sep 08 – TBA

29 Nov 08 – TBA

South Wales:

Jan 2009 – Des Marshall - L1

Jun 2009 – Richard Hill - L2

DB said that he is negotiating a Northern England Mines Revalidation as a one off, with one or two people also attended to add Ramp Ghyll as an additional site.

8.2 TA Workshops

Last few workshops: Southern England (Jun 05), Derbyshire (Nov 05), South Wales (May 06), Northern England (Nov 06), North Wales (Feb 07).

This year, already arranged: Southern England (Mar 08).

To be arranged: Derbyshire (Sep/Oct 08), Forest of Dean (Nov/Dec 08).

2009 – South Wales, Northern England and North Wales.

9. Evaluation Forms - ideas

9.1 DP handed out the one they use, which is fairly vague and open. JC suggested having a feedback form that is specific to BCA, or collect feedback from Heads of Centre. TP suggested that feedback from non-caving Heads would be particularly useful. JC suggested rep from Advisors Panel, county scouts advisors.

Once GM has put the form together, KS to send to all.

10. Core Skills 2.3.1.2(a) : change wording to include 'fast water'

10.1 Page 12-ish – change to deep or fast.

11. Accidents and Near Misses

11.1 **DCRO/CRO/CNCC** GM has been in contact with all these organisation regarding the recent spate of fatalities and near misses.

Marian Dunn emailed him representing both CNCC and CRO, saying that they do not feel it is appropriate for them to put a document out, but do feel that BCA should put forward some good advice to meet the recent situations. GM said that he is taking this information to NCP for discussion and also to CIC Panel, to decide what should be said and what should not, with particular emphasis on what can be learnt.

At Level 2 GM proposes including that it is mandatory to take along an emergency travelling rope at least 10% longer than the longest pitch to be rigged – this is standard MIA practice.

DP to distill Marian's suggested words into bullet points. GM to respond to Marian to say BCA will be putting something together.

11.2 **Porth yr Ogof** – A discussion took place over the PYO Resurgence Good Practice document and it was suggested that a rider along the lines of the one that the BMC has, which reads:

“The BMC (British Mountaineering Council) is the representative body that exists to protect the freedoms and promote the interests of climbers, hill walkers and mountaineers, including ski-mountaineers. The BMC recognises that climbing, hill walking and mountaineering are activities with a danger of personal injury or death. Participants in these activities should be aware of and accept these risks and be responsible for their own actions.”

The final version would have to be approved by the BCA Executive.

12. ALOs Regional reports

12.1 Derbyshire

LCMLA Training Courses – Cave Leader training courses generally take two days to run. The Derbyshire panel have always done Cave & Mine training courses in two days in the past, but after discussion at a recent panel meeting it had been suggested that this should be changed to three days to cave *and* mine.

Steve Pope, a Mines Engineer in his forties, who is involved with scouts and is county advisor for Leicestershire, has been put forward as a potential person to support Dave Carlisle with mines inspections and possibly take over if and when Dave retires. DB was unsure whether he is a practicing engineer and it was suggested that he ask for a CV as soon as possible to check. GM said if he is a practising mines engineer, BCA would almost certainly insure him.

Dave Carlisle – GM suggested to DB that Dave attend the Alston revalidation course to help run it, which will mean that he is then revalidated. He can then help with mines revalidation courses because he will be insured by BCA to run revalidations, but not insured for assessments (at this stage).

12.2 North Wales

Rhiwbach - still having problems. The land agent of the Forestry Commision is insisting on having a letter from each Centres insurer to state cover for mine exploration is included. This matter has gone on since last June and so those Centres who did get the paperwork done are now out of date.

Ongoing!

A meeting was held in late December between Ewan Stevens of the Forestry, the CCW, Gwynedd bat group, Andy Cornford and I with reference to access to Pandora, Aberllyn and Parc level 3. An action plan was drawn up which includes surveying, bringing in Dave Carlisle and escorting the bat group underground to verify as to whether any areas should be sanctioned for bats. The meeting was very positive.

12.3 Northern England

Nothing to report as no meeting since last NCP.

Dave Carlisle – TB will raise this at next Thursday's meeting.

12.4 Forest of Dean

Mines Inspections - Find out which mines local centres want to use and get Dave Carlisle down to look at those routes to improve them.

12.5 South Wales

Radon - Clarke Friend placed some radon meters in Eglws Faen and Aggie and results are very high. Juliet circulated results via email last week, so could send them to GM.

Porth yr Ogof – TP circulated the latest version of the document - added some new wording (second paragraph by diagram) to satisfy CCC and entered diagram. Added to the back is the map from the car park noticeboard, which mentions the strong currents. TP has changed the shading on the map – for White Horse Pool and the resurgence pool - to show deep water. It still need a photo from Clive Westlake and it was suggested to remove “recommends” and add the BMC-type rider as above (11.2).

13. Any Other Business

13.1 **GM: Sport England** – Mick Day's letter giving BCA's response was circulated.

13.2 **GM: L2 Training & SRT** – At a CIC Revalidation a couple of weeks ago, one participant said that not everything that is covered in other areas is covered on a Derbyshire Level 2 training courses. DB agreed that this has not happened in the past and suggested that the entire syllabus should not be covered as training SRT would take up too much time. JC said that the way the syllabus reads is that Modules 3 and 4 should be covered at Level 2 training, Module 5 is separate day.

13.3 GM has been asked to join a National Park body to discuss recreational and educational use of caves and cliffs and has accepted.

14. Dates and place of next meetings

10:00am Monday, 9 June 2008 – now Friday 20 June

10:00am Monday, 6 October 2008

10:00am Monday, 9 February 2009

The meeting closed at 1:55pm