



# British Caving Association

Minutes of the National Co-ordinating Panel meeting held on  
Monday 5<sup>th</sup> October 2009 at Staffordshire Council Staff Club, Stafford

## 1 Present

Tom Peacock (TP)	Chair & ALO – South Wales Panel
Dave Baines (DB)	ALO - Derbyshire Panel
Lee Paskin (LP)	ACI Rep
Dena Proctor (DP)	ALO – North Wales Panel
Tony Smith (TS)	ALO – Southern England Panel
Martin Barry (MB)	Joint Services Mtn Trng Wing (on behalf of Steve Higgins)
Mary Wilde (MW)	Training Administrator

The meeting commenced at 10:05 am.

## 2 Apologies for Absence

Graham Mollard, Tony Boyle

## 3 Minutes of the meeting held on Monday 1<sup>st</sup> June 2009

3.1 Lee Paskin to be listed as ACI rep in his own right.

3.2 The meeting agreed that the minutes were a true record of the last meeting.

## 4 Matters arising from the minutes

4.1 A discussion took place regarding the 'quality trips' requirements. The wording from the minutes of the last meeting was deemed to be misleading: '30 days caving in at least 10 different caves including at least 5 quality trips in at least two different regions'. This might suggest that the quality trips must be in two different regions. After input from **TP, DP, TS and DB**, the following wording was agreed: -

'30 days caving in at least 10 different systems across at least two different regions, and including at least five quality trips'

'30 days mining including at least 5 quality trips, including mines of different types such as metal, stone and or slate'.

**TS** added that where a leader has a mixture of caving and mining trips the T/A should use discretion with regard to the requirements specified above.

4.2 Regarding the Training Committee Report, **DP** asked for the minutes from Training committee Meetings to be circulated to ALO's. **MW** to implement this.

4.3 All other 'matters arising' were covered by agenda items.

## 5 Training Committee Report

In the absence of **Graham Mollard**, **TP** reported back from the last Training Committee meeting minutes.

5.1 The Child Protection document was discussed at the TC meeting.

**5.2** The new military scheme was presented to the meeting by Steve Higgins. Juliet Parker-Smith was to experience the new scheme in action and report back. (It was noted that this has since taken place and her feedback was favourable).

There was some discussion at the NCP meeting regarding the military scheme. **TS** highlighted an issue regarding scheme parity due to the site specific element of the BCA scheme.

**MB** explained that they were aiming for closer parity. As the military candidates may only be in the military for a limited time it would be beneficial for them to be able to gain a civilian award at the same time. However, more 'dual' assessors are required in order to make this a workable option and it was noted that he and 'Chips' Rafferty are both very busy working with both schemes.

**5.3** Porth yr Ogof. The National Park does not wish to have provisions other than the current warning signs at Porth yr Ogof and this issue would be dropped at present. A document does exist even if it is not being used. **TP** is preparing site specific advice on generic deep water issues.

**5.4** LCMLA Core and Group Day Modular. **GM** said that there were some differences in level 2 training between Derbyshire and N. Eng, and perhaps we should look at standardisation at least in duration. After much discussion the following statement was agreed by the TC: -

'Personal SRT progression for the leader and its problems would be included in all L2 training courses throughout the country from Jan 2010'.

**5.5** Training Officer and Training Committee Response to Flooding. Although there had been no progress, the flooding message is going out. The pictures in the CRO report is an example of how the flooding message is being disseminated. **GM** added that the Manchester Hole case is going to court in January. Tom Redfern added that HSE has instructed its inspectors to ensure that practical caving elements are covered during inspections.

**5.6** Finance. There is a small buffer in the training budget but not as much as anticipated. . The Exec has agreed to support any shortfall. There was a discussion on why, when the TC had decided not to raise the fees for revalidations, the topic had received further attention. **GM** stated that he had a personal view that the fees should rise and that the issue would no doubt be raised again in the New Year.

**5.7** Revalidation. One LCL is still unhappy regarding the possible routes for revalidation but **GM** was adamant that there should be no change. Revalidation of level one is via a workshop or by doing level two. Level Two revalidation is via a workshop or by completing assessment of modules one and two of CIC.

**5.8** CIC Report. Nigel Ball explained the background to the CIC scheme module changes and handed out copies of the CIC panel recommendations. (**N.B.** **MW** is still waiting for copy of this to be sent to her for the minutes).

**5.9** CIC Mines Module. A document describing the new mines module was discussed. (**N.B.** **MW** is still waiting for copy of this to be sent to her for the minutes). Nigel Ball explained that this should be a formal assessment rather than simply a logbook check.

At the **NCP**, **DB** described how he runs '1 to 1 CIC mines modules' over two days taking in different mines and covering theory during evening sessions. A discussion took place on whether completing the CIC mines module should automatically provide LCMLA Level 2 Cave T/A's with Level 2 Mine assessor status.

**5.10.** Emergency Card. The emergency card was ready for production. Various committee members were to try and get funding for the cards.

**MW** explained at the NCP that an initial run of 1000 cards has been produced and are being included in registration packs. **GM** currently has the main stock of cards. The NCP meeting felt that the emergency card should also be sent out to new BCA insurance subscribers. **MW** to arrange for this to take place.

**5.11.** New Trainer Assessors.

Adam Evans has been accepted as a L1 and L2 assessor.

Nigel Atkins has been accepted as CIC T/A.

Applications have been received from Lee Paskin and Steve Banks.

**5.12** The new S4B's are going to be electronic. This will be in the form of document that will be distributed to the T/A's via email. They will be able either to complete the form electronically, or if they wish, to print it out and complete it by hand. The candidate will receive a printed and signed version. A copy will be emailed to **MW** who will provide an email receipt. **MW** is to create a mock up and circulate for comment. She will also create a process document that will explain how they are to be used.

**5.13** BCA Training Grants

- The following training grant requests were received and granted: -
- Eldon Pothole Club £150
- Elysium £100
- Shepton Mallet Caving Club for training to be provided by Chris binding £168
- DCA for SRT specialist training £100

**5.14** LCL Theory Document. This has now been circulated. **GM** noted that it was not totally comprehensive but panels could add regional specific terms as appropriate.

**5.15** The Ripon Caving Hangar is available for use by the BCA but only for non-paying groups.

**5.16** The Cave Archaeology Leaflet is to be included with registration packs.

**5.17** Cave to Mine Transfer Charge. **MW** had raised a query regarding an admin charge for cave to mine or mine to cave transfer. Her instructions had been that a £15 charge was payable. However, **DB** had disputed this and cited that fact that in the past no charge had been made. **GM** had discussed this before the meeting with Nigel Ball and agreed that there should NOT be a charge.

**5.18** CIC Assessment. Nigel Ball raised the issue that some candidates had been allowed to start their CIC assessment process without his authority. It was agreed that a log book page be introduced which specifies that Nigel Ball has given his authority for assessment to start.

**5.19** The next edition of the LCMLA Handbook will be issued on DVD and may include other documents such as 'Weil's Disease' and 'Protect Our Caves'.

## **6 Flooding and Weather Documents**

**7**

These agenda items were taken together. **TP** stated that his panel had seen the document and felt that it required more local examples and that some examples currently included were above typical L1 and L2 cave sites. **DB** felt that local trainers should provide information about local cave examples. He also noted that some panels have not reviewed the document. **DP** said that it was not clear which information emanating from the NCP should be sent only to ALO's and which to all T/A's. A discussion took place regarding this and the general business flow between the NCP TC and Panels. **TP** noted at this point that meeting dates and therefore businesses flow, was to be covered later by an agenda item.

Returning to the document, **DP** said that it was generally good but required some refinement. **TS** noted that the use of percentages in relation to rescue statistics was misleading and it was agreed to use actual figures instead. **TP** said that John Cliffe had suggested the inclusion of information on where 'safe' areas might be found within systems, which could be used in an emergency. After much discussion it was agreed to include the following statement in the document.

'Cavers should be aware of possible emergency escape route or 'safer' areas to sit out the flood if available'. It was agreed that various diagrams showing catchment areas should be added.

Both the flooding and weather documents were reviewed and local cave examples added. All changes are to be documented by **MW**, and submitted to the next TC meeting (which is on 13<sup>th</sup> October).

## **8 Proposed Changes to Level Two**

A discussion took place regarding the proposed changes to Level 2, where SRT is to be taught on all L2 Training courses.

**DP** felt that the extended training would not be relevant to her region.

**TP** noted that the Northern Panel was in favour of this change.

**DB** was very concerned that this had not been passed by the NCP. **TP** had discussed this point previously with **GM** who stated that the TC is empowered to make decisions. **TP** was unhappy that this did not go through NCP.

**TS** said that the training should be two days plus one day SRT bolt on.

**DB** asked for it to be minuted that the Derbyshire Panel considered that adoption at the TC of this outline proposal was undemocratic.

**TP** said that the SW panel felt that teaching SRT is the remit of the CIC scheme not the LCMLA scheme.

**TP** made the following comments on behalf of Tony Boyle from the Northern Panel.

'**DB** gave a summary of other panels' opinions and how it was felt this development was most suited to N England. Discussion followed. **Tom Redfern** commented it might lead to L2 leaders having a diminished list due to a lack of suitable caves to their module. It may also confuse employers. **Duncan Morrison** felt it would be a better option for CIC's instead allowing for a form of pre CIC assessment certification to lead at L2 using single ropes on single pitches provided there was some form of assessment. He also felt that there was no

real need for it and the panel were discussing it needlessly. The panel decided to disregard the proposal and instead to pass the matter onto the CIC panel who can amend their scheme. Proposed by **GM** seconded by **Duncan Morrison**. N England panel were not in favour of such changes and have dismissed the issue passing it on to the CIC panel'.

**DP** presented the following views from the NW Panel.

'This had been discussed previously by the panel but feelings had changed:

- a. All agreed that there was no place for this in N Wales where most level 2 trips involved abseil/lowering trips with exits at bottom. Very rarely had there been demand for SRT as leader module. Most delegates on level 2 training courses were already MIA/C – many successful level 2 training courses had been done in N Wales in just one long day. N Wales wouldn't sell 3 day training courses!
- b. SRT should properly be taught as a 2 day course.
- c. Novices should be taught by the most qualified (CIC) – this is where good practice is learnt + most hang ups happen with novices
- d. There could be a problem with client perception – they are life lined by leaders but not instructors!
- e. Care should be taken with the term 'SRT' – when they are life lined this is not 'Single Rope'.
- f. Clients progressing would quickly 'outgrow' the need for a life line – what then!
- g. Who would want it? Is this a different market?
- h. General conclusion from the panel : SRT should be the domain of the CIC'

**DB** added that the Derbyshire panel did not wish to stop other panels from adopting the changes if they wished.

A vote was taken with all panels and the ACI rep being against except the Derbyshire Panel. It was therefore rejected 5 to 1 against.

## 9 Panel Reports

### 9.1 DP for North Wales

The panel met on 18<sup>th</sup> September. 'Level 3' was discussed (already covered).

The mines glossary is not yet complete but Nigel Atkins has agreed to work on it and it should be ready for discussion at the next T/A workshop.

The panel is to try and share work out more evenly in the future. Level 1 training is scheduled as well as an LCMLA Revalidation Workshop on 12<sup>th</sup> December, which currently has 4 candidates.

**DP** asked for any relevant items that should be covered at the next T/A workshop on 13<sup>th</sup> December.

Des Marshall was approved as a full NW Panel member.

**DB** suggested revalidation should be allowed by completing Mine/Cave conversion modules as these include an element of local vetting and assessment. The panel was largely in agreement though the idea of new revalidations was not to reset the clock as this would

dilute or even make unviable numbers for revalidation workshops. Further discussion is required on this topic and the ALO's were asked at the NCP to take it back to panel meetings. **MW** to include it on the agenda for the next NCP Meeting.

There is an issue regarding caving belts, which are labelled 'not for PPE use'. Although it is known that there are suitable for use as prescribed via the LCMLA scheme, there is an issue of client confidence. This has been exacerbated by the lack of choice in caving belt products since Caving Supplies stopped making them.

The revalidation fee of £175 was deemed insufficient to cover preparation and administration etc particularly when the remuneration for room hire is only £25.00, and expenses such as mini bus hire are not covered. It was also pointed out that the use of a mini bus is more environmentally friendly than using individual cars and also that parking at some sites is very restricted.

## **9.2 TP on Behalf of Tony Boyle and the Northern Panel.**

The Northern Panels' views on 'Level 2' have already been covered.

Quality Trips. A working party reported on quality trips and their recommendations were as follows:-

'Candidates who are "ready" for assessment at LCMLA Level 1 will typically have logged experience amounting to an absolute minimum of 30 caving trips in at least 10 different caving venues and in two caving regions. In appraising the experience gained an assessor will be looking for a broad variety of caving experience, both personal and in a leader context. At least six (note the NCP was in agreement that this should be five) of the candidates' personal trips should be quality caving experiences.

A "quality" caving experience should satisfy at least four of the following criteria: -

- Exploration of a new route (new to the candidate that is...)
- Incorporate at least 3 to 4 hours of underground exploration
- An experience that "stretches" an individuals caving knowledge, skills and awareness
- Incorporates caving skills above the Level 1 range of skills
- Of candidates own making (i.e. not a led experience such that they are being taken caving
- Involves the application of vertical skills
- Exploration of "active" cave systems'

The panel discussed this and Duncan Morrison proposed that criteria three were removed. The panel voted on this and it was decided to leave it by a majority of nine to one. Nigel Ball sought clarification as to what the term "active" means in the last criteria. Tony Flanagan responded that it should have water flowing through it and respond to rainfall. SB pointed out that a training course should make it clear as to what each criterion means.

Discussion then followed as to whether the panel should produce examples of caves matching these criteria. It was generally felt that such a list would lead to candidates simply visiting those on the list rather than carrying out quality trips of their own. It was decided that it would be far better if candidates were to nominate five of their logged trips as the quality experiences and then justify this using the above criteria.

The panel then voted in favour of accepting these proposals and the above criteria.

**MB** suggested at the NCP that regarding criterion 3, 'develops' would be a better term than 'stretching'.

Tony Boyle informed the panel of the NCP's request that panel meetings are better held before the NCP meeting to ensure the smooth flow of information. The panel felt this was not necessary as most meetings were generally before the NCP meeting and sometimes it is better the other way around.

### **9.3 DB Derbyshire Panel**

It was the view of the panel that £25 is no longer a realistic amount to cover room hire for workshops and asked how that figure was arrived at. They felt that it was useful only as a guide. **TP** stated at the NCP that this topic should be discussed further at the TC.

**DB** commented that he asks for a small 'voluntary' contribution to his expenses, which has never caused an issue.

The Derbyshire Panel were to write to Steve Pope regarding his declared interest in the role of mines inspection, noting that nothing would be done until Dave Carlisle wished to vacate the role. **DP** stated at the NCP that Dave Carlisle was already aware of this and was in favour. **DB** is to discuss it with Dave Carlisle and broker a meeting between Dave and Steve.

The panel questioned when the 'quality trips' changes should be introduced. It was the view of the NCP that this should not happen until T/A's had been formally notified.

Des Marshal has resigned from the Derbyshire Panel.

Chris Wilson conservation Officer from the DCA now attends Derbyshire Panel meetings. A 'bat' workshop is being planned.

Jez Parr has completed his Level Two T/A requirements and was ratified as an L2 T/A by the NCP.

### **9.4 TP South Wales Panel**

The panel discussed 'Level 2' and were against the proposals.

(The panel's views on the flooding and weather document are already covered)

John Crowsley was ratified as a full panel member

Des Marshall wishes to become a mines assessor for FoD mines.

Expenses were also discussed but as noted before this issue is to be taken to the next TC meeting.

The panel agreed in general with the proposal regarding the timing of meetings.

**DP** has resigned from the SW Panel.

## 9.5 TS Southern England Panel

The last planned SE panel meeting was cancelled as so few members were able to attend.

The prerequisite trips for Level 1 were discussed and it was felt that it might dissuade candidates from undertaking assessment. The panel was generally in agreement about the prerequisites as long as they are able to use a degree of discretion.

The panel felt that 3 meetings a year was too many for this region and would prefer 2. On reflection at home TP felt that this might not work; linking in with NCP minutes and meetings might be a problem if the panel only had two meetings.

Regarding the quality trips requirement, the panel questioned whether Devon and the Mendip would be considered as different regions. The NCP felt that this was appropriate for these purposes.

## 9.6 MB Military Scheme

**MB** reiterated that the Ripon Caving Hanger is available for use on a non-commercial basis such as educational groups, but not for freelance trainers. He also said they were working towards closer parity between the military and BCA schemes.

9.7 LP for the ACI had nothing to report

## 10 NCP/PANEL Meeting Dates

There was a proposal to bring the NCP meetings and panel meetings inline so that panel meetings take place before NCP meetings (i.e. once the minutes from the previous NCP meeting have been issued). **TP** proposed that the next three NCP meeting dates were set now to allow this to happen. The Northern panel do not feel this is necessary and feel it is sometime better to have them the other way round! **DP** said that the idea was acceptable in principal but some discretion would be required. It was generally felt that we would try to achieve this if possible.

**DP** also felt it was important for the ALO's to have the TC minutes in a timely manner and requested that GM be asked to action this.

## 11 Any Other Business

### 11.1 Cornwall

**DB** reported that he had recently been invited to Cornwall to undertake some mines trips and raised the possibility that in the future there may be a requirement for Cornwall to become a new region.

Dates of the next Meetings

01/02/2010

07/06/2010

04/10/2010

The meeting closed at 14:10

## NCP Action Register

<b>No</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>By</b>	<b>Deadline</b>	<b>Done</b>
	<b>03/03/2009</b>			
<b>001</b>	Bring Geology booklet to next meeting	<b>DB</b>	<b>01/06/2009</b>	
<b>003</b>	Pass callout and casualty information to DB	<b>CM</b>	<b>ASAP</b>	
<b>007</b>	Pass military information on flooding to DB	<b>CM</b>	<b>ASAP</b>	
<b>010</b>	Review mines glossary	<b>DP/TS</b>	<b>ASAP</b>	
<b>012</b>	Suggest a 3rd signatory for cheques	<b>GM</b>	<b>ASAP</b>	
	<b>01/06/2009</b>			
<b>014</b>	MW to include revalidation workshop dates in the six monthly reminders.	<b>MW</b>	<b>ASAP</b>	<b>Discharged</b>
<b>015</b>	<b>TB</b> and <b>DB</b> to ensure that the Northern and Derbyshire Panels submit a list of quality trips to <b>MW</b> .	<b>TB and DB</b>	<b>June</b>	<b>Still awaiting Northern Panel input</b>
<b>016</b>	<b>MW</b> to check if all regions have submitted their next three revalidation workshop dates and to chase any outstanding regions	<b>MW</b>	<b>June</b>	
<b>017</b>	<b>DB</b> to summarise and incorporate the document on weather written by Steve Long into the cave flooding leaflet, and pass the next draft to <b>TB</b> .	<b>DB</b>	<b>End of June</b>	<b>Discharged</b>
<b>018</b>	<b>TB</b> to reformat the draft and forward to MW for circulation and feedback	<b>TB</b>	<b>End of July</b>	<b>Discharged</b>
<b>019</b>	<b>MW</b> to circulate the weather and flooding document	<b>MW</b>	<b>End of July</b>	<b>Discharged</b>
<b>020</b>	<b>SH</b> to forward flooding section from military document to DB.	<b>SH</b>		
<b>021</b>	<b>MW</b> to get a quote for 200/500 emergency cards	<b>MW</b>	<b>End June</b>	<b>Discharged</b>
<b>022</b>	<b>MW</b> to update the emergency card and send the final draft to <b>GM</b>	<b>MW</b>	<b>15<sup>th</sup> June</b>	<b>Discharged</b>
<b>23</b>	<b>SH</b> to send the Town Drain incident report to <b>GM</b>	<b>SH</b>	<b>ASAP</b>	
<b>024</b>	<b>MW</b> to mock up an electronic S4B for comment	<b>MW</b>	<b>ASAP</b>	<b>Ongoing</b>
	<b>05/10/2009</b>			
<b>025</b>	<b>MW</b> to ensure TC meeting minutes are circulated to all ALO's	<b>MW</b>	<b>From next meeting</b>	
<b>026</b>	<b>MW</b> to arrange for emergency cards to go out with new BCA insurance subscribers	<b>MW</b>	<b>ASAP</b>	
<b>027</b>	<b>MW</b> to produce an updated version of the weather and flooding document for the next TC meeting.	<b>MW</b>	<b>By 13<sup>th</sup> October</b>	

<b>028</b>	<b>MW</b> to include 'cave to mine' conversions as revalidation on the agenda for the next NCP.	<b>MW</b>	<b>By Next NCP</b>	
<b>029</b>	<b>DB</b> to broker a meeting between Dave Carlisle and Steve Pope.	<b>DB</b>	<b>ASAP</b>	