



British Caving Association

Minutes of the National Co-ordinating Panel meeting held on
Monday 4th October 2010 at Staffordshire Council Staff Club, Stafford

1. Present

Tom Peacock (TP)	Chair & ALO - South Wales Panel
Dena Proctor (DP)	ALO - North Wales Panel
Graham Mollard (GM)	Training Officer
Martin Barry (MB)	ALO - Joint Services Mtn Trng Wing Panel
Tony Smith (TS)	ALO - Southern England Panel
Dave Baines (DB)	ALO - Derbyshire Panel
Tony Boyle (TB)	ALO - Northern England Panel
John Cliffe (JC)	Southern England Panel
Mary Wilde (MW)	Training Administrator

The meeting commenced at 10:10

2. Apologies for Absence

Lee Paskin
Tony Flanagan

3. Minutes of the Meeting Held on 1st Feb 2010.

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

4. Matters arising

4.1 Emergency Cards.

GM reported that Hitch and Hike were unable to contribute at present. Caving Supplies had verbally agreed to give £50 but had not responded to requests to finalise the contribution. Iain Rennie has already agreed to contribute and a request to the DCA is pending. **MW** added that Jenny Potts to request £100 from the DCA at a meeting in October. **GM** said that the funding for Iain Rennie and the DCA would allow us to have a £1000 cards printed. **DB** said that at the last Derbyshire panel meeting Phil Baker had asked if the card could show the logo of any contributing business. This was confirmed. **GM** added that cards would be sent out with all new registrations but that we do not have sufficient to send one to all 'sims' and 'dms'.

4.2 SRT Training in North Wales.

DB asked if the proposal on SRT training in North Wales (item 11.1 on the previous minutes) had been passed by Training Committee. **GM** explained that there had not been a Training Committee Meeting since the last NCP but that he was not aware of any objections and that it would be discussed at Training committee on 16th October 2010. **DP** asked if the new courses could be advertised and **GM** said to go ahead and if for any reason the proposal was not ratified, any new format training that had been carried out would stand.

TS asked if it could be adopted for Southern England but **GM** said no as some Southern England caves have SRT options. **DB** informed the meeting that there was now one site in the Northern Pennines with pitches (Proud Sump through trip to Smallcleugh Mine).

4.3 Joint Services Panel

DB asked if the concerns raised at the end of the last meeting with regard to the Joint Services Panel, had been raised with **GM** yet. **GM** was well aware of the concerns and explained that no further action would be taken and that the issue was now closed.

MB expressed his desire that the Joint Services Panel be accepted. The panel is very active and aims to promote caving. He was concerned that there was still some resistance within the Northern England Panel. It had been suggested that it might be possible for someone from the military to be awarded a civilian certificate without proper BCA authorisation. **TP** and **MW** explained that this was not possible as all candidates have to be registered through **MW** and that certificates can only be issued if the candidate has been registered.

MB added that there was a new aspirant panel member who on completion of his CIC would undergo the standard process for joining a panel.

TB stated that the Northern Panel was concerned at the speed the new panel was set up. **GM** agreed that it had been set up swiftly but that it would now operate as any other panel. **MB** is hoping to join the Northern Panel and will therefore go through the standard process in order to do this.

5. Training Committee Report

As there had been no TC meeting **GM** instead reported on the Executive Committee Meeting on 02/10/2010.

GM reported that as no-one had come forward to stand for the position of Training Officer, he had agreed to stay on. This would be on condition that the Exec fully defined the role and agreed that the role had the power to make policy decisions.

With regard to business overlap between the NCP, CIC and TC meetings, the EXEC agreed in principle to a merger between the NCP and TC. Some discussion followed on the background and history of these meetings. **GM** explained that any change or merger would need to take into account the views of regional council representatives and bodies such as the ALS. To this end **GM** is to canvas the various representatives for their views and will report back to the next Exec in January 2011.

GM was pleased to report that the Exec had fully endorsed the Manchester/Goyden document. Marcus Irving did want to make some small changes after which it would receive the official BCA stamp. **JC** said that leaders need this information but that shorter version would be useful for the 'info log'.

GM then explained that current issues with Revalidation Workshop cancellations had been discussed (this is covered as an agenda item later).

GM said that the Exec also discussed the Grey Mares Tail fatality. This generated some discussion focussing particularly on the broad nature of skills appropriate to gorge scrambling and the issues that would arise were an activity specific qualification to be set up. The consensus was that a leader with experience plus a CIC would be suitably qualified to BE A TECHNICAL ADVISOR on ch trips, and that a national qualification would be unworkable.

6. CIC and LCMLA Revalidation - Proposed Changes

GM said the CIC rewrite had been dragging on and he has asked **NB** to finish his draft and to circulate it for comments within two weeks (of sending it out). There is some urgency because new people registering only receive a copy of the old CIC Handbook on CD, and it is out of date. **TP** suggested that if secretarial services were available via MW for the CIC Panel meeting, this might ease the pressure on **NB**.

GM outlined the current problems with CIC and LCMLA Revalidation Workshops. Late bookings and last minute cancellations have resulted in workshops being cancelled or being run at a loss. He proposed to remove the current 12-month revalidation window but allow leaders to revalidate up to 18 month in advance of their award expiry date. However, if their award expires they would not be qualified or insured. There would have to be a mechanism to enable them to revalidate after expiry, but this should carry some sort of disadvantage.

JC was concerned. For example, he paid for his revalidation but the workshop cancelled. **GM** explained that extenuating circumstances would of course be taken into account and extensions may be granted in such cases.

TP asked if this was a matter on which the NCP would vote and **GM** said that it could be but it had been an Exec decision. The general feeling of the meeting was in favour. **DP** added that any decision regarding LCMLA decision must to be ratified at TC.

In order to implement such a change the meeting discussed three key issues: -

- A period of grace
- The time period for reminders
- The mechanism for revalidation if an award expires.

With regard to a period of grace, **GM** suggested that the new process should come in immediately but that any workshops currently planned could run even if under subscribed. The changes will become mandatory from 01/01/2012 giving a reasonable length of time for the changes to be communicated.

With regard to reminders it was agreed that these should change from 1 year and 6 months to 18 months and 9 months.

With regard to revalidation after expiry **DP**, proposed that leaders should undergo a 1 to 1 reassessment followed by a normal revalidation workshop.

JC added that after expiry a leader could continue to work if he or she has the employers 'blessing'.

JC made a counter proposal that they just undertake a Core Skills Revalidation, which would be expanded to include a revalidation day.

Further discussion took place and the final proposal was for anyone whose award expires to undertake a Core Skills Reassessment, which would include all revalidation elements plus an element of further training and development. This would have to be completed within 6 months following the expiry of the award. Anyone failing to complete this in time would be required to undergo a full reassessment at the level at which they were previously qualified.

To recap the following proposals were generally agreed to by the meeting although no formal vote took place.

- The current 12-month revalidation window will be removed.
- Revalidation may take place up to 18 month in advance of award expiry date

- The new process will come in immediately but that any workshops currently planned could run even if under subscribed.
- The changes will become mandatory from 01/01/2012.
- Reminders will be sent at 18 months and 9 months before award expiry date.
- Anyone whose award expires must undertake a Core Skills Reassessment, which will include all revalidation elements plus an element of further training and development. This will have to be completed within 6 months following the expiry of the award. Anyone failing to complete this in time will be required to undergo a full reassessment at the level at which they were previously qualified.

MW was asked to provide a list to each ALO of award holders in their area due to expire within the next 18 months. This will be repeated every 6 months. Initially the ALO's will require a list of those who under the current rules have a revalidation window that will run out before the end of 2012.

MW added that all requests to revalidate an expired award must come via her to **GM** for authorisation. A Section 4A special record will be issued in each case.

MW also emphasised that revalidation workshop dates must come to her promptly when set.

DB asked whether the issue regarding CIC mines module revalidating an LCLMA mines award had been implemented and **GM** agreed that it had.

The issue of revalidation expenses was brought up again but **GM** was adamant that it would not be changed and that the issue was closed.

7. Criteria for panel membership, i.e. is there a 5 year wait after qualification?

An issue was raised regarding the recent stipulation that anyone wishing to join a panel must have operated as a CIC for at least 5 years. **DP** felt this was draconian and that the panels should be given the authority to make a judgement as to when someone could become an aspirational or probationary member.

GM agreed to this.

8. Geology document - bring photos of limestone features (surface and underground)

GM has all the material he requires other than photographs of limestone features and speleotherms. **JC** suggested he list his specific requirements for photographs and send it to all T/A's. **GM** will do this.

9. Future of Training Officer's post

Already discussed.

10. NCP/Training Committee - The Future

A further discussion took place regarding the NCP/Training committee 'merger'. Issues were raised regarding: -

- Meeting day – weekday or weekend.

- Regional council representatives attendance

TP suggested that one of the three meetings each year should take place at the weekend and regional council business could be covered first to allow them to leave if the remaining agenda items were not relevant to them.

JC suggested that CIC business could be conducted first, again to free up attendees from irrelevant agendas items.

DP felt that the use of sub-committees to address specific items of business might be a way forward too.

GM said that nothing had been finalised but did want everyone to know what the Exec had agreed.

TP acknowledged that the NCP was generally in favour of a merger.

GM reported that the BMC have a list of technical experts who will appear in court as expert witnesses and that the Exec suggested the BCA do so too. **JC** asked if this would merely be a register or a list of people who would require vetting. **GM** replied that it would simply be a register.

11. Regional Reports by ALOs

11.1 DP for North Wales

- At the last NW T/A Workshop various recommendations were made. **DP** suggested that there should be a formal mechanism for progressing such recommendations as much professional time and effort goes into T/A workshops. **TP** added that the SW panel had asked the same question. **GM** suggested that this become a standard item on the NCP meeting agenda and that all T/A workshop minutes should go to **TP** in order for these issues to be picked up. **GM** added that this process should work in both directions with items from the NCP feeding into T/A Workshops. **DB** agreed with this.
- A week of training and assessments is being planned to take place in January 2011.

11.2 DB for Derbyshire

- **DB** asked if all panels had submitted their glossary of mining terms. **MW** is to check this.
- Nigel Ball had posed the question ‘What constitutes a pass at a Level 1 group day?’ This question would put forward for discussion at T/A workshops.
- Nigel Ball had also suggested that a central calendar be set up to hold all relevant meeting dates etc. **GM** said that Nigel would be discussing this with **MW** soon.
- Revalidation workshop dates have now been set and a list passed to **MW**.
- Dave Carlisle will be carrying out some more inspections and Steve Pope will be accompanying him as his ‘understudy’.
- Giants Hole has sustained some blatant vandalism in the Upper Streamway.
- A leaflet on Conservation is now available from Dave Webb
- Daryl Godfrey is running a T/A Workshop in Derbyshire during March 2011.
- Use of the Military Hanger was promoted at the meeting.
- **JC** raised a possible issue with ‘pirating’ of Dave Carlisle’s reports. **TS** asked if there were any safety implications and **DB** agreed to check this out.

11.3 TS for Southern England

- Robbie Warke has withdrawn his request to be on the Southern Panel
- John Whitely has resigned and has been thanked for all his work by **TS**.

- Dave Carlisle's inspections will now take place in March after the bat hibernation season has ended.
- The panel asked why a new application form had been sent out for T/A Workshops. It was felt that this form was too extensive. **MW** said that the form had been set up before she took over the role of administrator but may never have been sent out before. **MW** will set up a more appropriate form.
- The panel asked if there was any core element that should be covered at the next T/A Workshop. (**GM** said later in the meeting that the level 2 skills check list needs to be reviewed and should be more prescriptive, and workshops should review how they practice and instruct traverse rescues at Level 2).
- **TP and GM** will put something together in time for the workshop in 11th November.
- The number of panel meetings per year was queried and **TP** confirmed that there must be 3 per year and each T/A must attend at least one.

11.4 MB for the Joint Services Panel

- The inaugural Joint Service Caving Panel meeting took place with representatives from various outstations that are stakeholders in the caving scheme.
- The T/A workshop planned for 2nd Oct was regrettably cancelled due to lack of numbers. **MB** expressed his disappointment in the lack of support from other panels.
- **TP** raised an issue regarding military trips in Porth yr Ogof during 'lights out' exercises. It would seem that other groups had been told to turn off their lights too. **MB** will follow this up.

11.5 TB for Northern England

- The setting up of the Joint Service panel had again been discussed.
- A new route was agreed in Goyden Pot and a new plan issued to **MW**.
- Revalidation workshop cancellations had been raised but this has now been dealt with.
- Paul Plat resigned from the panel.
- Martin Barry was accepted as a probationary member. .
- Iain Rennie was accepted as an aspirant T/A.

11.6 TP for South Wales

- The issue of fees had again been raised. One member felt that £50 was not enough for expenses and that there should be more flexibility such as £50 per tutor.
- Gary Evans ran a revalidation workshop with only two people, which had been authorised by **GM**
- An issue with administration was raised whereby the course leader receives cheques but **MW** sends out receipts later. This administrative split is seen as a problem
- The T/A Workshop planned for 26th November may be cancelled as various panel members are attending workshops with other panels.
- Ian Healy has withdrawn from the panel but would still like to receive the panel meeting minutes.
- Llanelly Quarry Pot, Darren Cilau, Pwll Coeden Gnau, and Waterfall cave have been removed from the master list.
- The panel are to put together a list of criteria for adding or removing caves from the site list.
- The panel asked for national agenda items for T/A Workshops. **GM** said that the level 2 skills check list needs to be reviewed and should be more prescriptive. All workshops are to review how they practice and instruct traverse rescues at Level 2.

12. AOB

12.1 Site Lists

- **MW** raised an issue regarding site lists for Level Two initial assessments. Sometimes all that is listed are the new sites. MW asked that T/A's state if the Level One sites are still required or if any now have restrictions removed (such as Carlswark Cavern which has Eyam Dale shaft excluded at Level One but included at Level Two). It is not necessary to list all Level One sites as long as the S4B states 'All level one sites plus the following Level Two sites.....'

- **T/A Workshop Costs**

TS asked if any T/A workshop costs could be claimed. **GM** said that the BCA would only pay for room hire and no other fees or charges are made.

12.3 CIC Issue

MB raised a question regarding an L2 competent leader who was phobic on big pitches. Could such a person operate as a CIC? This provoked some discussion. It was noted that such a person might be called upon to aid another group on a big pitch if an emergency occurred. Also it was noted that a technical advisor may or may not say that that person is competent to teach SRT.

13. Dates of Next Meetings

31/01/2011

11/06/2011

03/10/2011

Meeting closed at 15:10.

14. NCP Action Register

No	Action	By	Deadline	Done
	05/10/2009			
029	DB to broker a meeting between Dave Carlisle and Steve Pope.	DB	ASAP	Ongoing
	01/02/2010			
030	GM to approach Ben Lyon for emergency card funding	GM	ASAP	
031	MW to create a copy of the emergency card for the website.	MW	By Next NCP	
032	Glossary / local Terms document. All ALO's to produce a document reflecting their region and send them to MW to collate in table format	ALOs	ASAP	
033	MW to collate Local Terms document	MW	ASAP	
034	MW to email T/As requesting photographs of caves in dry and wet weather for the Weather and Flooding doc.	MW	ASAP	
037	All NCP members to send photocopies of	ALL	ASAP	

	any suitable diagrams to Nigel Ball for the Geology Document			
038	MW to send out approved site lists to panels for review.	MW	ASAP	
039	GM to ensure the North Wales SRT exemption proposal be put forward at the next TC meeting	GM	10/05/2010	
	04/10/10			
040	GM to canvas regional reps for their views on their involvement at the TC.	GM	January 2011	
041	MW to provide ALO's with lists of award holders due to expire	MW	November 2010	
042	GM to circulate a list of geology document photo requirements	GM	ASAP	
043	MW to check that all lists of local mining terms have been received.	MW	ASAP	
044	DB to check if there are any safety implications were Dave Carlisle's reports 'pirated'.	DB	By next meeting	
045	MW to set up a simple T/A workshop application form.	MW	ASAP	
046	TP and GM to agree any core items to be covered at the next round of T/A Workshops	TP/GM	ASAP	
047	MB to follow up the 'lights of' issue in PYO.	MB	Next meeting	