



Council of Southern Caving Clubs

A constituent member of the British Caving Association

General Meeting 12th Sept 2009, Hunters Lodge Inn, Priddy

Present: A. Butcher (SMCC), L. Williams (WCC, C&A), M. Williams (MCG obs.), H. Clark (MCG), G. Price (CSS), DG. Cooke (ChCC, Webmaster), A. Dempster (Avon Scouts), S. Gardiner (BEC)

Apologies: C. Smith, C. Binding, D. Cundy, M. Richards, A. Atkinson, A. Gray, G. Mullen

Meeting started at 10.40am.

- 1) Minutes of the previous meeting (AGM)
 - a. Hill Slocker, should have read 'Heal Farm Slocker'
 - b. Repair to Swildons Wall, states receipt, should read 'quotation'
 - c. 2006, 2007 Accounts scrutineers to include DGC.
 - d. Include AA's Charterhouse Pitch report and record formal vote.
 - e. Mention formation of ASCT.
 - f. D. Cooke to update the draft minutes with amendments. Approval deferred until next meeting. **ACTION DGC**
- 2) Chairman's Report
No Chairman.
- 3) Secretary's Reports.
No Secretary
- 4) Treasurer's Report
No report received.
- 5) Conservation & Access Officer's Report
 - a. Heal Farm Slocker has been reopened although digging is still required at the bottom of the entrance slope. We now have better connections with Aggregate Industries
 - b. Potentially loose Cloveford Quarry Cave – Stack rocks to protect
 - c. Cuckoo Cleaves has been unilaterally closed by a group of concerned cavers due to measuring high levels of CO₂. It was agreed that a permanent sign warning that high levels of CO₂ have been measured should be placed. DGC felt that an additional temporary sign addressing the current issue and giving the actual figures measured would better mitigate our liability. The sign should be placed on the cave and key issuing points. Subject to placing the sign it was agreed that the cave should be re-opened as soon as possible.
 - i. A permanent sign is to be constructed and placed by CSCC. **ACTION LW**
 - ii. L. Williams to install a temporary sign and place notices on the caving forums and key issuing points and re-open the cave asap. **ACTION LW**
 - d. It was noted that CSCC controls access to Cuckoo Cleaves on behalf of the landowner. The cave must not be closed without contacting the CSCC's C&A Officer.
 - e. It was noted that before placing CO₂ measurements on the national Caving Forum some thought should be given to the consequences for access to caves in general, not just Cuckoo Cleaves alone.
 - f. New perimeter fencing has been erected around Fairy Cave Quarry. The climbers are now in the process of negotiating an access agreement with the owners. Cavers have a long standing agreement and access continues as before except that a



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CSCC key is now required to open the main perimeter gate. Note climbers using the cavers key to access the climbs in the quarry could jeopardise the cavers access agreement.

- g. G. Price has ordered 20 new CSCC locks on behalf of L. Williams.

6) Equipment Officer's Report.

- a. No report received.
- b. The CSCC concerns from the last meeting (See AGM minutes) were raised at BCA National Council. See Appendix 1 for the E&T Committee's reply and Appendix 2 for an extract of the BCA minutes. The answers are not wholly satisfactory. A Atkinson and D Cooke will submit the CSCC's concerns to the next E&T meeting in writing. **ACTION AA, DGC**
- c. The CSCC continues to be concerned that due process is not being followed in adopting the "Permanent Resin Bonded Anchors – Installation Procedure, Training & Documentation". In particular its circulation is restricted thus preventing those who should be part of the consultation process from viewing the document.

It was proposed that "**The CSCC believe that all BCA documentation should be in the public domain unless there are justifiable & overriding reasons why circulation should be restricted. Such restrictions shall be approved by the BCA council.**" Proposed D Cooke, Seconded S. Gardiner. Passed nem con.

7) Training Officer's Report

- a. C. Binding to provisionally book SRT training event, details are to be circulated to the Mendip clubs. **ACTION CB**

8) BCA Rep's Report

- a. BCA has agreed to provide £5k to help fund the British Caving Library for 2009. There is a proposal to provide £10k towards 2010. The detailed proposal is available in the documents section of the CSCC website.
- b. Bob Mehew has stood down as Equipment & Techniques Committee Chairman. Glenn Jones was appointed Acting Chairman.
- c. BCA will be offering Clubs the option of allowing their members to upgrade their BCA membership to include the BCA and/or BCRA publications (Handbook, Speleology, Cave & Karst Science) via their club. This will be known as CIM+ (CIM Plus) membership.

9) Webmaster's Report

- a. Officers and Reps advised to login and update their section of the Wiki pages. News items are especially sought. **ACTION ALL**

10) Forthcoming Events.

- a. Hidden Earth 2009, to be held at the School in Churchill (Mendip) 25-27th Sept. 2009
- b. Cavers Fair, proposed for the 2nd Weekend in June 2010. L. Williams to check the availability of Priddy Village Hall, L. Williams to coordinate the event. Other suggestions included holding the BCRA regional meeting, a caver's stomp and possibly speaking with Martin Compton DJ to provide music. D. Cooke mentioned that any surplus should go to CSCC since BCA funding alone doesn't cover all our activities. **ACTION LW**

11) A.O.B

- a. L. Williams **proposed G. Price as CSCC Chairman**, A. Butcher seconded. Agreed
D. Cooke **proposed H. Clarke as CSCC Secretary**, L. Williams seconded. Agreed
S. Gardiner **proposed M. Williams as BCA Rep**, D. Cooke seconded. Agreed



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- b. L. Williams has received a quotation for the repair to the Swildons wall of £350.00, this is on the public footpath from Eastwater lane to Priddy village hall and is regularly used by cavers. It was decided not to pursue this at present.
- c. S. Gardiner is liaising with SWT reference the recently discovered mine on Draycott Sleights

Next Meeting: 05th December 2009.

Meeting Closed: 12:55pm



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Appendix 1. Extract from BCA National Council Meeting 20th June 2009

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

10.1 CSCC Paper (*Appendix 2 of Reports*)

GJ: GJ is extremely disappointed and frustrated that CSCC have chosen to present this paper at BCA National Council. Concerns of this nature should, in the first instance, be addressed to the Equipment Committee, and only escalated to National Council if there is no satisfactory response from E&T. It is equally frustrating that the E&T Convener offered to attend the CSCC AGM to answer queries of this nature (he was in the same building!) but for whatever reason, this offer was not taken up. I make this statement as I consider all the points raised in the CSCC document to be trivial issues which really should be addressed to E&T.

DC: Suspects a lot of this is simply bad communication. The only issue of substance is probably the Anchor Installation Manual document. How widely available is it?

GJ: It is the Training Manual given to anyone on the course and has been so for 17 years. It is not likely that it will be given to anyone who asks for it, but it is available to E&T Committee members and Council Members on request. CSCC E&T Rep saw the last draft and it was discussed at the last E&T meeting.

DC: Why is it withheld?

GJ: Nobody has ever suggested it should be made available so the previous *status quo* has been maintained.

DC: Formally requested that it be made available.

GJ: It will be discussed at the next E&T Committee.

DC: What is the process for approval of the *BCA's PERMANENT RESIN BONDED ANCHOR SCHEME* document?

GJ: It is being presented by BM at the meeting today as Appendix 1 of the Reports document.

LW: CSCC need removal of SRT competence because some pitches on Mendip don't require SRT. Therefore competence is not necessary.

GJ: To date the objections have not been adequately explained to the E&T Committee.

NW: Competence of the Installer is an integral part of the safety of the Scheme and of the Insurance cover for the Scheme. The removal of the word SRT would not be appropriate.

DC: What is the availability of the test data on BCA-installed ECO-anchors?

JP: The DCA meeting discussed this at length. The installation data is extensive and unnecessary for publication. What is necessary for cavers is published in the Rigging Guides issued by CNCC and DCA.

DC: What is needed that currently is not published is the last test date.

NW: Industrially this would be important, but it is not necessary according to the procedures adopted by the Installation Procedure.

DC: The CSCC will submit these concerns in a written document for the consideration of next E&T meeting.

Appendix 2. E&T Committee's Reply to Concerns Raised in CSCC's AGM Minutes

Response to the extract from the CSCC AGM Minutes - 16th May presented for discussion at the 20th June BCA Meeting (Appendix 2).

I would appreciate if the following comments are included in the minutes:

"I am extremely disappointed and frustrated that CSCC have chosen to present this paper at BCA National Council. Concerns of this nature should, in the first instance, be addressed to the Equipment Committee, and only escalated to National Council if there is no satisfactory response from E&T. It is equally frustrating that the E&T Convener offered to attend the CSCC AGM to answer queries of this nature (he was in the same building!) but for whatever reason, this offer was not taken up. I make this statement as I consider all the points raised in the CSCC document to be trivial issues which really should be addressed to E&T"



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“ Following the CSCC AGM May 16th it came to our attention that there has been a proposal from the E&T committee to keep the Training Procedures for Installation of Eco Hangers under the BCA scheme a secret “.

*“The CSCC believes to avoid the problems of the past, open publication supported by a distribution list, is the best practice method. CSCC does not support the need for **such documents to be kept secret**, particularly where the BCA is not operating at Industry level, where this practice is only undertaken to protect commercial advantage and profit.”* and *“ It is also noted that Permanent Resin Bonded Anchors Installation Procedure, Training and Documentation is the Primary Document of the scheme, therefore how can it only be given to people that have attended the training course”.*

The course notes (documentation) given to installers on completion of training have never (in nearly 20 years of the scheme) been available to a wider audience – as is standard practice for course notes. There is no conspiracy theory here!

“ Furthermore CSCC believe that there are errors and issues that need clarification in the current (V3 Feb 09) Permanent Resin Bonded Anchors Procedure, Training & Documentation, the crucial issue of the expiry date only covers one form of labelling out of the 2 types that have been in circulation to the current installers, however, are not privileged to the documents therefore cannot fully assess this”.

This is the first I have heard of this, why was it not addressed via the Equipment Committee? I will ensure that this will be addressed at the next E&T meeting. The current document is Issue 4 – March 2009

“CSCC seeks to encourage the use of an online-meaningful List of all bolts placed under the BCA scheme as to their current status.

The current system of anchor records has successfully been in place for the best part of 20 years and works well – further, each RCC has published where the anchors are in their region. This question has been debated at length by the E&T committee and has found no good reason to change the current system

“This would aid a sport caver in determining a bolts suitability or not. Without this there is no way for a caver to tell, as it is known that identical anchors were sold openly for many years”.

This is nonsense “sport cavers” should always check the suitability of an anchor (of whatever type) before use. Further, I do not accept that “identical anchors were sold openly for many years” is applicable to caving and would be interested to know where non BCA ECO anchors are installed in caves.

“ The CSCC is also worried about the audit trail for the installation of anchors, while the openness will help, surely a central record kept and available to a selected group is critical for such a safety and insurance liability”.

The audit trail for BCA installed anchors is available to anyone on request to the appropriate Regional Council – this proven process has been in place for nearly 20 years – as CSCC are well aware.

“CSCC would like further information as to why the E&T has reinstated the pulling test method after the placement of new bolts, having dismissed it 2 years ago as damaging the anchors, before it goes any way to accepting the new Anchor scheme”.

It has not been reinstated.

“ The CSCC would also like to see the word SRT removed from the installation procedure where it states “Installers must be competent in SRT, rigging and identify new positions”.

Why would CSCC want to dilute the standard of the system?

“ The CSCC also question the rigour in which the documents have been assembled. Basic details, such as the date of change from the current system to the new system are not specified, or how the anchors already placed will be brought into the proposed scheme”.

The document supersedes the previous document on the date that it is accepted by the E&T Committee i.e. March 09. Anchors placed after this date will conform to the requirements of the new installation procedure and any before it will conform to the requirements of the previous issue.

Glenn Jones