

ULSAC Committee meeting 26th July 2007

To-Do list from this meeting

Fitz – call EGM at next biggish social event

Vicks – check the SAS website for locks that will fit the fuel tanks; write finance guidelines for the Summer Trip and check with other committee members; measure old jockey wheel shafts and tell Michelle.

Michelle – buy new jockey wheels

Al – Write and laminate a towing checklist; (re)write the new tower's guide.

OUR NEXT MEETING IS 18:30 ON FRIDAY, 5TH OCTOBER

Apologies for absence

Rebecca, Sarah C, Mark B, Martin, Sarah T, Alex L, Al, Dan

Review of last meeting's minutes

Corrections of last week's minutes which people emailed to secretary:

The insurance changes were suggested by the boat and equipment teams, not just by Richard.

The radio we bought was found by Michelle and paid for by Anjali; it wasn't all done by Nathan.

Fitz was tasked with talking to ULU about the fuel theft.

Emergency cylinders need servicing every 30 months. While it's sometimes cheaper to replace them than to repair them, this is unusual.

Actions from last meeting

Proxy Voting (Fitz)

Proxy voting fall into a loophole in ULU regulations: while there's no protocol for it, it isn't forbidden by the constitution. The committee voted that we should ask our members to vote on the issue. This vote will be part of an EGM held during a social event sometime soon (no specific date or event mentioned). This means that if members want it, proxy voting can be introduced at the next AGM.

ULU Vehicles (Fitz)

Fitz spoke to Angela about the ULU vehicles. The vehicles' lease is up in November, but ULU got them on a really good deal that they're reluctant to change. Additionally, we're the only society which uses them for towing so there isn't much demand for change. We'll submit a formal proposal to change the vehicles to Angeli and relevant Sabbatical officer(s) in October.

Al suggested (by proxy) that we consider getting vehicles with better braking, to better handle to boats' inertia. Andy said that the van's braking power is unimportant:

if the van decelerates faster than the trailer, the trailer will just begin to twist round and try to overtake the van. Therefore the most important brakes are the ones on the trailers themselves.

One of Fitz's (I think) friends might soon be buying a horsebox. There's a chance we'll be able to borrow it for towing test practice. Vicks reiterated the requirements for the towing test: Trailer must obscure rear view (horsebox is ideal) and have a loading capacity of at least a tonne.

Fuel Theft (Fitz)

Fitz got back the advice "empty the fuel tanks and buy lockable caps". No fuel has been stolen between the Salcombe and Wet Bay trips. This time happens to overlap the university undergrads' holidays.

Andy didn't see anyone stealing fuel after all – someone told Paul that they'd seen the theft, but that's all the detail we have.

Lockable caps are a possible problem, as salt water could make them rust and ULSAC efficiency could make the keys vanish into thin air at a crucial moment.

Vicks will check the SAS website for locks.

Finance guidelines (Vic)

Still nothing sorted out, as Vic hasn't had any responses from Dave. We could use the preliminary guidelines from this year's Easter training for the summer trip, but Vic offered to write out some sensible guidelines herself. The guidelines will be checked by other committee members but we'll avoid fully collaborative writing in the interests of speed.

Diver Recalls (Jer)

Six diver recalls are finished, using the carabiners we got free from Amphibian. By the end of the meeting we only had five, as one fell apart when Richard touched it. Fortunately this was just the tag detaching from the carabiner, so easily fixable. Nick suggested we try to get some more. There was the most uproar I've ever seen about fonts and punctuation. The font was agreed to be readable, but Andy and a few others suggested that the "begin ascent now" message should end with an exclamation mark to stress the message's urgency.

Jer has been banging poles together in his garden then telling irate neighbours that he was just testing a recall system. They're not very loud so his builder is looking out for bigger sections of pole to try.

Debtor List (Anjali and others)

The updated debtor list was handed out (see appendix). Many of them have now been contacted; the rest of the list was read through for people to recognise names.

The Will Looker saga continues: Nathan is now in correspondance, but hasn't mentioned the debt yet because there's a danger "he'll go underground".

Nathan expects around £200 back from people he's contacted. Shalini has a pile of old membership forms, which she'll check for debtors' contact details. Sarah C has passed some old membership forms to Anjali. Nathan suggested that in future we collect members' permanent addresses in addition to their term-time ones. We can just keep photocopies of the ULU forms. Keeping all of this information in a

spreadsheet could be very time-consuming. It might be better to scan the ULU forms and archive them as .pdf files.

Insurance claim for skegs

Al wasn't at the meeting.

Scraping damages tank and removing from insurance (Richard and Anjali)

It turns out that the cylinder valve is fine after all – the only problem was a broken plastic handle.

Items for attention

The future of ULU boathouse

All the information we have about ULU's plans for the boathouse was recently emailed out by Nathan. [I won't attach it to the minutes, but if you need a copy I'll forward it to you – Bugs] Briefly, the boathouse is a large drain on ULU's overstretched funds and they might be planning to shut it down. This information was relayed to us via Nathan from a closed meeting, so we shouldn't know. The whole issue is still contentious and highly politicised.

Andy said that ULU can't sell the boathouse because it's held in trust. They can, however, let it lie empty.

We're guests in the boathouse so any fuss would be better coming from the boat clubs, but we can offer support. There are about 5 rowing clubs operating from there; we could contact their presidents and/or attend one of their monthly meetings. We can find their contact details from the boathouse manager. We should say we've heard a rumour and get whatever information the boat clubs have.

King's and Imperial don't use the boathouse, where do they keep their boats? Apparently Imperial keep theirs on campus, according to "the crazy bloke on the Isle of Man".

Possible contingencies include contacting the Sea Cadets, who have at least one boathouse with large grounds. We shouldn't let anyone know we're considering contingencies, because if we have an alternative site ULU will have a better argument to shut the boathouse down.

Garmin offer and fundraising

Garmin do "nice pretty things" and a 50% discount would be great, but we don't have one. However, when we bought a top-quality aquapack for our new radio they gave us another three free. We also have a discount code which will give us 50% off a list of products until December 1st. This date is uncertain, but "there was definitely an 'ember' in it" (Andy). Andy was kind enough to test the discount for us and found that it works for individuals too.

Towing

Jockey wheels

The shafts of our new jockey wheels are too thin to safely use with our trailers – the wheels can fall down and jam under the trailer (this happened on the West Bay trip). We'll need to replace at least the shafts, possibly the entire thing. Vicks will measure the old jockey wheels to find the correct diameters; Michelle will buy new ones.

Towing Checklist

Need to be written and laminated. Al will sort this out.

New tower guidelines

Need to be (re)written. Al will sort this out.

Shortening Rascal's steering cable

Cables come at fixed lengths and can't be shortened. It'll have to stay as it is.

Trailer Clamps

One of the trailer clamps is broken. We might be able to replace the bolt (~£6) but the problem is so bad this might be impossible. If we can't fix it a new clamp costs ~£80. Vicks will sort out the new part or clamp as she is the SAS queen. We talked about getting a bunch of allan keys for the DM bag. They need to be quite long to reach all the way into the clamp. The type that looks like a pen-knife would be ideal, as the handle gives good leverage. We've had some before, which disappeared because they get used for people's kit; if we buy some more now we have to be careful they're always returned to the bag.

Treasurer's report

We have about £1000, without anything coming in to Barclay's this month.

Upcoming bills: £60 to BHD, £640 to MCS

The net result of the club's creditors and debtors list is that we owe our members about £1000.

The boats team had an expensive year and equipment went over budget as well. Neither of these is likely to repeat next year.

DO Report

Nathan had sent out an email about the club's policy on deco stops. If a sports diver wants to do deco stops, they must ask the trip organiser, who in turn must ask the club's DO. As with all the club's diving, the DO takes ultimate responsibility for members' safety and therefore has the final say. Michelle noted that experienced divers don't always know whether they'll want to go into deco before the start of the dive. Nathan replied that more experienced divers may be allowed to decide to make deco dives "on the hoof". This will be decided on a diver-by-diver basis before the trips. Nathan emphasised that this is intended as a safety measure, and is not intended to prevent experienced divers from making planned deco stops.

All divers ought to carry a mini set of tables and ideally a backup gauge / timer in case of computer failure, which has happened a few times on our trips.

Finally, the West Bay trip was great and we saw more fish than on any other wreck this season. The guys in the air shop were disappointed we didn't pick up a bucket of scallops while we were down there.

TO Report

All but three of the Ocean Divers from this year's Easter Training have qualified as Sports Divers. [Good training, or were we just an awesome year? Probably a bit of both!]

There will be a training trip the weekend after this meeting. It's mostly for the advanced divers, but there will be a couple of ocean divers too. Then the next training event is the internal Boat Handling course. [Here my notes quote someone as saying "the bitches will get what's coming to them", but for the life of me I can't remember who or why. Shame!]

When talking about the summer trip to Ireland, it was noted that the MPVs insurance is a problem if they're taken outside the UK. This shouldn't be a problem for our trip.

Finally, Freshers' Fair is on Friday 5th October; we need people to help run the stall.

Membership report

Sarah T and Shalini are getting the ULU forms up to date, preparing for new members and generally drowning in paperwork.

Equipment officer's report

No servicing ongoing because there's no money to spend. All our gear is fine for the moment. 6 cylinders will go out of test next month, but they're not needed for the Summer Trip. Because they're already full before the test date, they can be kept for try-dives. There's a minor problem with one MDE valve which Richard will fix.

We need to chase ULU about damage to the wall by the cage. Richard is also getting some old yoga mats from EnergyBase to add cushioning and grip to the floor between the cage and the pool doors.

BOC account: we rent the Marinox oxygen cylinders at £3.20 per cylinder per month. The total is £450 per year. We pay approx. £3 per fill plus approx £30 for delivery. In total we have 9 cylinders, i.e. one packed with each kit and six spares. Every 2-3 years BOC test the cylinders while refilling and cycle the old ones out, so we don't need to worry about it. We must never refill the oxygen cylinders at air shops because it's illegal and the cylinders will eventually go out of test.

During an oxygen administration course we use 2 cylinders, at a total cost of approx. £40. The Dive Leader course uses "a lot" of oxygen. The oxygen costs will be factored into the price of future courses. We should try to keep the number of deliveries to a minimum and make sure all the cylinders are refilled – and therefore tested – at least once every 2 years.

Do we need all 9 cylinders? It seems a lot, but it's possible we'd use them all on a long trip and we don't want to cut corners on safety. However, we are paying £108 / year on equipment that's arguably in excess.

Trip organisers must remember to check the marinox kits before leaving and to tell the equipment officer if used. We considered rewriting the trip organiser's pack to

update it and include checking marinox on the checklist. We'll discuss this next meeting. On the subject of checklists, Andy pointed out that we have loads of checklists that no-one ever seems to read. For example, the towing checklist is huge and out of date.

Boat Officers' report

Absent

Social Secretary's report

No report

Any Other Business

After the last meeting, our inventory was checked against the insurance policies. We had also discussed insuring the emergency cylinders. After consulting Divemaster, if we insure the additional kit excluding cylinders (e.g. the Annies), it adds about £6 to our premium. Insuring the emergency cylinders adds £71, about 10% of our current premium. We decided not to name the emergency cylinders on the insurance policy, but the Annies etc. will be added.

Next Meeting

Our next meeting will be on Friday 5th October.