



PIA Standard Operating Procedure SOP-311v.1.3
Parachute Industry Association Publications
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Parachute Certification Standards Committee

I. General

This document defines the policies and procedures under which the Parachute Certifications Standards Committee (PCSC), of the Parachute Industry Association (PIA) shall operate. It includes methods for submitting change proposals, procedures for the committee to evaluate such proposals, committee voting policies and procedures, document updating procedures and membership policies.

Nothing within this document is meant to conflict with the by-laws or articles of incorporation of the PIA. In the event of such conflict, the by-laws or articles of incorporation shall take precedence.

The PCSC shall consist of an elected Chairperson and at least eight other voting members appointed by the chair. The chair shall be nominated and elected into office by the general membership of the PIA during the first regular meeting on even numbered years and shall serve a two-year term. The Chairperson will endeavor to establish and maintain a balanced committee so that all points of view might be heard in an open forum.

II. Purpose

The committee will endeavor to keep PIA-TS-135 up to date to the greatest extent practical, with the nominal goal of issuing a revised document at 4 to 6 year intervals. However, given that the parachute industry must gain some experience with the new specification and that the FAA itself must issue the TSO revision document after its own review process, it is anticipated that the committee may periodically have periods of inactivity between the publication of a revision and beginning the work on the next draft document.

The primary goals of the committee are:

- To improve the overall safety of users of personnel parachute assemblies
- To provide standards for the performance testing of personal parachutes
- To keep PIA-TS-135 up to date to reflect changes in personnel parachute applications, technology and testing methods
- That PIA-TS-135 will become an internationally accepted standard in use throughout the world

The PIA Executive Committee must approve any change in the scope of the activities of the PCSC.

III. Document update/revision process

During the revision process, the working draft of the PIA-TS-135 document will be accompanied by a revision list. The revision list will describe all changes and the reason for each change. The working draft of PIA-TS-135 and the revision list will only be modified once specific verbiage is approved by committee vote.

All changes will be initially sourced from a change proposal. The committee will evaluate change proposals in numerical order. Following the approval of a change proposal by committee vote, the draft document and revision list will be updated and distributed to all on the mailing lists. The revision list, of the working draft, shall be kept up to date during the revision process. The issue date of the PIA-TS-135 document itself will be revised only when the document is formally reviewed, accepted and published by the PIA (see following paragraph). Document dates will be in the format dd month yyyy and will display a revision level in the format of "Revision aa". Each page of the document shall have a footer in the format of "PIA-TS-135, Revision aa, Issued dd month yyyy, page # of #".

Upon PCSC approval of a final draft, the PIA-TS-135 document will be forwarded to the PIA membership for approval. If approved by the PIA membership, the document will then be forwarded to the FAA for approval. It may also be forwarded to any other US government agency, and any equivalent international agency requesting copies. It shall also be forwarded to the PIA Executive Committee for publication.

In order to prevent the accumulation of a massive amount of largely irrelevant information in the document itself, the history of changes to the working document will be submitted to the PIA as justification for the changes **but will not become part of the document itself**. The PIA Executive Committee and PCSC will maintain a copy of this document in its files in perpetuity. The history of changes and the justifications thereof will be submitted to the FAA only if requested; and, if submitted, it shall be clearly stated to the FAA that the notes are **NOT** intended to become part of the document itself. If requested by the FAA or an equivalent international agency, **the committee may elect to attach the revision list** as an addendum that shall be clearly labeled as background information and that **the revision list is specifically not part of the document** itself and that PIA-TS-135 is complete within itself.

IV. Change Proposals

All document revisions shall originate from a change proposal. Both committee members and non-members may submit change proposals. Change proposals must be submitted in writing, by email to the committee Chairperson or by mail to the PIA headquarters. Change proposals should be in outline form and must contain the following:

- Section to be changed
- Change being requested
- Reason for change

- Supporting data
- Submitter's name, organization (if applicable), postal address, email address, phone number, and fax number

Incomplete or invalid change proposals may be discarded. Change proposals that are the same or similar to proposals already discussed, voted on, and rejected will be considered invalid if submitted within one year of ballot vote date unless supported by a petition endorsed by the majority of the PCSC committee or additional, new, substantiating data is presented.

All valid change proposals will be assigned a change proposal number. Unique change proposal subjects, (i.e. proposals that do not deal with subjects in existing proposals scheduled to be evaluated) will be assigned the next available change proposal number starting at 1000 and incrementing in units of 1000. Change proposals that are similar to an existing proposal, deal with the same subject, and/or deal with the same document sections as an existing pending change proposal may be grouped with an existing pending change proposal. In this case the right side three characters in the previous similar change proposal number will be incremented sequentially and the resulting number will be assigned to the new change proposal. The Chairperson shall initially determine the grouping of change proposals. However, this grouping may be overridden by committee petition.

Any proposed changes to the PIA-TS-135 document (i.e. those to be considered since the most recent performance specification in effect within TSO C-23) must be voted on by more than 50% of the voting committee members. If the change fails to attain approval by 60% of the vote, the change is eliminated and that section of the working draft of PIA-TS-135 reverts back to the previous committee approved change. If no previous committee approved changes exist, the section reverts back to that within the most recent specification in effect within TSO C-23.

V. Voting Policy

When any issue, change, or full revision of PIA-TS-135 is ready for a vote, the vote will be conducted as follows:

1. Minimum of 50% response from the total voting membership is required
2. Minimum of 60% of those responding must approve
3. No more than 20% of the voting members may waive a vote on a particular document
4. All voting percentage calculations will be rounded to the nearest whole number

If a member is unable to attend a meeting or vote by email, the member may supply the Chairperson a statement of position in writing on particular subject. Position statements will be considered by the committee, but will only constitute a vote as a tiebreaker.

For email voting, there will be a standard comment/discussion period of 30 days from the time voting members are notified of an issue until the time it comes up for vote unless this is waived by more than 50% of the voting members.

In a normal meeting there would be an initial vote to end discussion and a second vote on the issue would follow. For email voting it would be excessively time consuming to have two separate consecutive votes. In an effort to speed the email voting process for each issue there will be two separate but simultaneous votes. The first vote will be to end discussion and to use the results of the vote on the issue. A minimum of 50% of the voting members must vote in favor of ending the discussion for the issue vote to count. If less than 50% of the voting members vote within the time allowed the voting window may be extended in 7 day increments, the issue may be left open for discussion at the next meeting, the issue may be closed (e.g. recorded as not approved), or the vote discontinued (e.g. noted as still open) at the discretion of the Chairperson.

VI. Correspondence Policy

The Chairperson shall act as a clearing point for all committee correspondence so that all members are kept informed of correspondence. The primary means of correspondence among the committee members shall be by email. Members are encouraged to keep email text messages to less than one page if possible. Longer documents must use MS Word for attached documents. Graphs and tables must be in MS Excel format. All members are requested to put their name, the subject matter and the date on the header section of attached documents. Please limit the use of the “panic flag” on email to items that are truly time critical.

The Chairperson’s primary goal shall be to process change proposals through the committee in numerical sequence as expediently as possible. However, the Chairperson shall allow a free-form discussion of any relevant issue through email. The Chairperson shall guide discussions to a logical conclusion in the shortest practical time. When it appears that an issue is ready for vote the Chairperson may start an email vote or schedule the vote for the next meeting at the discretion of the chair.

Two email lists will be maintained. The PCSC list will only contain committee members and individuals that the committee desires to have involved in all highly detailed discussions. The PCSC2 list is a general mailing list that is open to all PIA members and other individuals with a valid interest in the development and advancement of new personnel parachute standards. In an effort to eliminate a great deal of needless emails which are usually regarded as ‘spam’, only change proposals, final approved changes, and document updates will be circulated to PCSC2 mailing list members. Committee discussion and voting will not be circulated to PCSC2 mailing list members. The Chairperson must approve non-PIA members before being added to a PCSC mailing list. All significant correspondence (in the opinion of the Chairperson) will be copied to the PIA Executive Committee.

The Chairperson is responsible for maintaining the PCSC and PCSC2 mailing lists. However, it is the mailing list member’s responsibility to keep the Chairperson updated with any changes or corrections.

VII. Meetings

The committee shall normally meet between two and four times per year with two of the meetings being held in conjunction with the PIA business meetings (typically in Jan/Feb and Aug/Sept). The other meetings shall be held as determined by the Chairperson. Other additional meetings may be held from time to time as required by the work. The Chairperson will attempt to hold meetings at times and places that maximize the number of members that can attend each meeting.

Committee meetings will normally be announced at least 60 days in advance of the scheduled date. Meeting announcements will be sent via email to all members of the PCSC and PCSC2 mailing lists.

The Chairperson will maintain a running agenda of items to be discussed at the next meeting. As much as possible, the agenda will consist of review and evaluation of change requests in sequential order. Any other items to be considered can be added as new business during the meeting.

The meetings will be loosely governed under Robert's Rules of Order. A quorum of 50% of the full members shall be required in order to take any official action of the committee. Members may be considered present and included in the quorum count if communicating with the committee by telephone or other electronic means acceptable to the Chairperson. In certain appropriate instances, the Chairperson may elect to poll members by email, FAX, or other means in order to take action on an issue.

VIII. Attendance and Work Policies

The Chairperson shall maintain the committee membership in whatever arrangement the chair deems appropriate to the work of the committee; i.e. the chair may add, remove, suspend, make temporary appointments or take any other action needed to further the work of the committee. Committee members may have an alternate member attend committee meetings and act on their behalf. An alternate member will only be considered to meet the committee member's attendance responsibilities if the alternate is knowledgeable on the subject matter, current on the issues being discussed, current on the status of the document, and actively participates in the meetings.

If a committee member will be unable to participate in committee business via email for greater than two weeks, the committee Chairperson should be notified.

IX. Meeting Minutes

The Chairperson shall appoint a recording secretary for each meeting to keep the minutes. Members are reminded that the minutes are a legal document, which could conceivably be subpoenaed by a court of law. Therefore, the record shall not be a verbatim record of the discussion, but shall include specific, relevant and concise statements from members and other attendees. Any member wishing to insert a verbatim comment into the records shall supply it in writing to the Chairperson and recording secretary before the end of the meeting; written

submittals for insertion into the minutes will not be accepted after the close of the meeting. A summary of committee activity that has taken place between the last meeting and the current meeting will be included.

The official minutes of the meetings shall specifically reflect the exact wording and the recorded votes of the members, for action items only.

The minutes shall specifically include a roster of those in attendance to be filled in by hand on a form provided for that purpose.

X. Membership

Committee Members – are persons appointed by the Chairperson to serve on the committee. Members are expected to contribute to the advancement of parachute performance standards and testing methods. Committee members must be affiliate, full, or sustaining members of the PIA in order to have voting privileges. Members are expected to participate actively in the work of the committee. Members who find themselves unable or unwilling to participate are expected to tender their resignation in a timely manner. Each member shall have one vote when voting on committee issues regardless of the number of companies or organizations they may represent within the PIA.

Alternate Member – are persons who are given the authority to act on behalf of a particular member in the event that a member is unable to attend a meeting. Each member who desires to do so may formally propose an alternate member and the Chair may accept or reject a proposed alternate as deemed appropriate. Alternate members are encouraged to attend all meetings so that they may keep abreast of the activities.

XI. Prospective Membership

Interested persons who wish to become members should contact the Chairperson and provide the following:

- a detailed resume of their qualifications
- a statement of their willingness to contribute the appropriate time and effort

In further regards to membership matters, the Chairperson:

- shall maintain a list of suitable prospective members, each of whom will be encouraged to attend at least three meetings as an observer prior to being installed as a full member
- shall maintain appropriate balance among the membership
- shall endeavor to find prospective members among all groups affected by the committee
- shall endeavor to find appropriate international candidates for liaison memberships

XII. Mailing Address for PIA PCSC Committee

Parachute Industry Association
Parachute Certification Standards Committee
3839 W. Oakton Street
Skokie, IL 60076-3438