PIA Standard Operating Procedure SOP-312v1.1
Parachute Industry Association Publications
September 11, 2004

Technical Committee

I. General

This document defines the policies and procedures that the Technical Committee (Techcom) operates under. 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 here is meant to conflict with the association's by-laws or articles of incorporation. In the event of such conflict, the by-laws or articles of incorporation shall take precedence.

The Techcom shall consist of an elected chairperson and at least four other voting members appointed by the chair. 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 its PIA Technical documents up to date to the greatest extent practical, with the nominal goal of issuing revised documents at 4 to 6 year intervals.

The primary goals of the Committee are:
- To improve the overall safety of users of personnel parachute assemblies.
- To provide technical standards for the manufacture and use of personnel parachutes to the parachute industry.

The PIA Executive Committee must approve any change in the scope of the Techcom's activities.

III. Document update/revision process

Techcom Technical Standards, and Technical Bulletins, will be accompanied with a revision list. The revision list will describe all changes and the reason for each change. These documents and their revision list will only be modified once specific verbiage is approved by committee vote.

All changes will be initially sourced from a change proposal. Change proposals will be evaluated by the committee in numerical order. Following the approval of a change proposal by committee vote, the document and revision list will be updated and distributed to all on the mailing lists. The revision list and Techdoc date will be revised each time the document is revised. Document dates will be in the format dd/mo/yyyy.

Upon Techcom approval of a final draft, the document will be forwarded to the PIA membership for approval. If approved by the PIA membership the document will then be forwarded to PIA document publications, the FAA, and any other government agency requesting copies.

IV. Change Proposals

All document revisions 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 chairman, by mail to the PIA headquarters, or through the PIA web site. 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 Techcom committee or additional, new, substantiating data is presented.

All valid change proposals will be assigned a change proposal number. Unique change proposal subjects, (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 chairman shall initially determine the grouping of change proposals. However, this grouping may be overridden by committee petition.

Any document changes since the last document that are re-evaluated and voted on by the committee 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 Techdoc reverts back to the previous committee approved change. If no previous committee approved changes exist, the section reverts back to the last PIA membership approved version.

V. Voting Policy

When an issue, change, or full revision of a document 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 total 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 chairman 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 waved 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 voting window the voting window may be extended or the vote discontinued as designated by the chairman.

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 should use MS Word for attached documents whenever possible. Graphs shall be in MS Excel format if possible. 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.

The chairperson is responsible for maintaining the Techcom mailing list. 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 two times per year with the meetings being held in conjunction with the PIA business meetings (typically in Jan./Feb. and Aug./Sept.). 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 Techcom mailing list.

The chairman 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

Committee members may have an alternate member attend committee meetings. 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.

Committee members who fail to respond to emails in a timely manner, fail to participate in email discussions, or fail to participate in email votes may be removed from the committee. All committee members are expected to respond to committee emails within 7 days. 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.

Committee members who fail to complete assigned and agreed to tasks in a timely manner may be removed from the committee.

The chairperson shall evaluate all extenuating circumstances before making the decision to remove a committee member.

IX. Meeting 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 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 members appointed by the chairman to serve on the committee. Members are expected to contribute to the advancement of parachute technical standards and testing methods. Committee members must be affiliate, full, or sustaining members of the PIA in order to have voting rights. 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 members 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; the committee chairperson 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 (Optional),
- 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 Technical Committee

Parachute Industry Association
Technical Committee
6499 S. Kings Ranch Road #6-12
Gold Canyon, AZ 85118