

REPORT BY THE
AUDITOR GENERAL
OF CALIFORNIA

**THE STATE ATHLETIC COMMISSION
NEEDS TO IMPROVE ITS ENFORCEMENT OF
BOXING SAFETY LAWS AND REGULATIONS**

REPORT BY THE
OFFICE OF THE AUDITOR GENERAL
TO THE
JOINT LEGISLATIVE AUDIT COMMITTEE

P-386

THE STATE ATHLETIC COMMISSION
NEEDS TO IMPROVE ITS ENFORCEMENT
OF BOXING SAFETY LAWS AND REGULATIONS

MAY 1984



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May 30, 1984

P-386

Honorable Art Agnos, Chairman
Members, Joint Legislative
Audit Committee
State Capitol, Room 3151
Sacramento, California 95814

Dear Mr. Chairman and Members:

The Office of the Auditor General presents its report concerning the State Athletic Commission's (commission) enforcement of professional boxing safety laws and regulations. The report indicates a need for improvement in the commission's system for approving boxing contests, its use of officials who have attended appropriate training clinics, and its suspension of injured boxers. Also to fulfill its mandated responsibilities, the commission needs additional clerical staff. Finally, we found that the commission has no standard procedures for handling serious injuries to boxers.

Respectfully submitted,


THOMAS W. HAYES
Auditor General

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SUMMARY

Because boxing is an inherently dangerous sport, the California State Legislature directed the State Athletic Commission (commission) to enforce the State's safety laws for professional boxing. However, the commission does not currently enforce all boxing safety laws and regulations. In a February 1984 letter to the Governor, the commission stated that it cannot fulfill many of its responsibilities because of budget constraints and insufficient personnel. We found that the commission has used informal procedures and inaccurate records when approving boxing contests, has used boxing show officials who have not attended required training clinics, has not evaluated referees' performances, and has not suspended all boxers who have been knocked out. We also found that the commission has no standard procedures for handling boxers who have been seriously injured. As a result of these deficiencies, the commission may be compromising the safety of professional boxers.

The Commission Does Not Enforce Professional Boxing Safety Laws and Regulations Consistently

The commission's system for approving boxing contests has deficiencies. The commission has no written procedures for approving the boxing contests that make up boxing shows, and chief athletic inspectors do not document their approvals or indicate what steps they have taken to review a boxer's fitness to participate in a contest. In our review of 10 of the 187 professional boxing shows that the commission regulated during calendar year 1983, we identified one boxer whom the commission had retired for consistently poor performance who was later approved to fight in a boxing contest.

Also, the commission does not assign to boxing contests only those referees who have attended training clinics, and it does not evaluate referees' performances at boxing contests. State law requires

the referee, who is responsible for directing and controlling boxing matches, to attend a training clinic at least six months before the commission assigns him to a boxing contest. In addition, state regulations require the commission to evaluate each referee's performance for every boxing contest at which he officiates. Because it is not fulfilling these requirements, the commission may not be assigning properly qualified referees to officiate at contests and may thus be endangering the contestants.

Furthermore, the commission is not using inspectors and ringside physicians who have attended appropriate training clinics. Inspectors are responsible for enforcing boxing safety laws and regulations at boxing contests, and ringside physicians are responsible for observing the physical condition of the boxers during the contests. State laws that became effective January 1, 1984, require inspectors and ringside physicians to attend training clinics at least six months before boxing shows at which they officiate. The commission currently uses inspectors and ringside physicians who have not attended the required training clinics and who therefore may not be aware of changes in boxing safety laws.

Finally, the commission is not consistently suspending boxers who are knocked out or who sustain serious injuries during boxing contests. State regulations require the commission to suspend from boxing and from contact training any boxer who has been knocked out or who has lost a fight by technical knockout. Our review of the 10 boxing shows revealed 24 boxers who were knocked out and therefore should have been suspended. Yet we could not find any evidence that the commission had suspended 17 of those 24 boxers. Moreover, the commission does not regularly communicate suspensions to training gymnasiums and to individuals responsible for arranging boxing contests. As a result, boxers who are high risks for injury may be participating in contact training and in boxing contests.

The commission said it cannot fulfill its mandated responsibilities because of insufficient staff, and it requested one additional assistant chief athletic inspector position and four additional clerical positions for fiscal year 1984-85. We were unable to confirm its need for an additional assistant chief athletic inspector because the commission has not maintained adequate data on the workload for this position. The commission's information on its clerical workload indicates that the commission may need only three additional clerical staff positions to help it fulfill its mandated responsibilities. The Department of Finance denied the commission's request for additional staff because the Athletic Commission Fund had insufficient funds to support new positions.

The Commission Does Not Have
Procedures for Handling Boxers
Who Have Been Seriously Injured

The commission needs detailed procedures for handling boxers who have sustained serious injuries. In a boxing contest in September 1983, a boxer was injured and subsequently died. Although a more prompt emergency response may not have altered the outcome of this case, this incident did cause us to question how well commission officials handle emergencies at boxing contests. The call for emergency medical personnel was inexplicably delayed at least 28 minutes, and the caller did not fully inform emergency medical personnel about the nature of the injury. In addition, the ringside physician and one of the paramedics who responded to the call disagreed over how the physician should have handled the injured boxer before the arrival of the paramedics. The commission plans to consider establishing an advisory medical committee that could prescribe a strict set of procedures for commission officials to follow when handling boxers who are seriously injured.

Recommendations

To help the State Athletic Commission enforce boxing safety laws and regulations consistently, the Legislature should authorize three temporary clerical positions for the commission. The Legislature should also require the commission to maintain workload data for use in future staffing decisions.

The commission should fulfill all of its mandated responsibilities for protecting the safety of boxers, and it should establish an advisory medical committee that would prescribe strict procedures for ringside officials to follow when handling boxers who are seriously injured during a contest. In addition, to help correct its shortage of staff, the commission should evaluate methods to increase revenues to its Athletic Commission Fund so that it can support additional staff positions. The commission should also assess the effectiveness of existing statutory and regulatory requirements to determine which mandates can be eliminated so that current staff have more time to complete the commission's most important tasks.

INTRODUCTION

In 1924, the California voters approved an initiative measure that created the State Athletic Commission (commission) to supervise and to regulate the sport of boxing. The commission itself describes boxing as inherently dangerous, and it regulates the sport to protect professional boxers from injury. The commission enforces state laws and regulations for professional boxing by licensing boxers and by sending commission representatives to boxing shows, which typically comprise four to six boxing contests. The commission also regulates amateur boxing, wrestling, kickboxing, and full-contact karate.

Part of the Department of Consumer Affairs, the commission has a governing body of eight commissioners. The Governor appoints six commissioners; the Senate Rules Committee and the Speaker of the Assembly each appoint one commissioner. The commissioners appoint an executive officer to carry out the commission's duties.

The commission operates two offices with eight full-time staff. The executive officer, assistant executive officer, staff services analyst, and two clerical staff work in the Sacramento office. The other office, located in Los Angeles, is staffed by the district chief athletic inspector, assistant chief athletic inspector, and one clerical staff person.

The commission receives appropriations for its operations from the Athletic Commission Fund. For fiscal year 1983-84, the commission's budget is \$430,000. In fiscal year 1982-83, the commission received its appropriations from the General Fund, and its expenditures were approximately \$490,000. It operated 3 offices with 12 full-time positions. The commission closed its third office, located in San Francisco, in November 1983 so that it could operate within its reduced budget of \$430,000 for fiscal year 1983-84.

SCOPE AND METHODOLOGY

We limited our review to the commission's enforcement of safety laws and regulations for professional boxing. We reviewed the state laws and regulations that the commission reported it cannot enforce without additional staff, and we interviewed commission staff to determine the effects of the commission's failure to enforce these requirements. We did not fully evaluate the effectiveness of existing laws and regulations for protecting the safety of boxers.

We examined ten reports on boxing shows to determine whether the commission has any problems enforcing boxing safety laws and regulations in addition to those problems that it had already identified. These show reports contained numerous documents that we tested to determine whether the commission is ensuring that boxers and their managers are licensed, that boxers pass physical and ophthalmological examinations before the commission licenses them, that the district chief

athletic inspector approves each boxing contest, that boxers pass a physical examination on the day of the boxing contest, that an inspector evaluates each referee's performance at every boxing contest, that boxers who are knocked out in a boxing contest are suspended for the appropriate time period, and that commission staff post accurately the results of boxing contests to the contestants' boxing records.

The commission requested additional staff positions for fiscal year 1984-85, so we performed a limited review of the workload estimates that the commission submitted to the Department of Finance to justify its request for a staffing increase. To judge whether the workload estimates were reasonable, we compared them with the commission's records for its activities during the prior year and with our observations of commission activities.

To determine how the commission responds to boxers who sustain serious injuries, we reviewed the cases of two injured boxers. We examined the commission's records for the boxing contests in which these boxers were seriously injured. In addition, we interviewed commission officials, the physicians involved in treating one of the boxers, and the paramedics summoned to the two boxing shows. Using this information, we evaluated the commission's handling of a case involving a boxer who died after he was injured in a Los Angeles contest. However, we could not draw conclusions about the commission's handling of the boxer who became comatose during a San Diego contest because information about this contest was incomplete.

AUDIT RESULTS

I

THE STATE ATHLETIC COMMISSION DOES NOT ENFORCE PROFESSIONAL BOXING SAFETY LAWS AND REGULATIONS CONSISTENTLY

The State Athletic Commission (commission) is deficient in its system for approving boxing contests, in its assignment and evaluation of referees, in its use of inspectors and ringside physicians who have not attended required training clinics, and in its suspension of boxers who have been knocked out. As a result, the commission is not complying with state laws and regulations and may be compromising the safety of professional boxers.

The commission sent a letter dated February 16, 1984, to the Governor and to several members of the Legislature stating that the commission is unable to carry out many of the Legislature's legal requirements for protecting the safety of professional boxers. The letter identified the specific areas in which the commission was either doing nothing or was not providing adequate service, citing current budget constraints and insufficient personnel as the reasons for the commission's inability to enforce boxing safety laws and regulations properly.

Believing that additional staff would help it to fulfill its mandated responsibilities, the commission also submitted a request for

one additional assistant chief athletic inspector and four additional clerical positions. We reviewed the commission's request and determined that the commission may need three additional clerical positions for fiscal year 1984-85.

The Commission Needs
Written Procedures for
Approving Boxing Contests

State regulations require that a chief athletic inspector or his designee approve all boxing contests. However, the commission has no record that it complies with these regulations because chief athletic inspectors do not document their approvals of boxing contests. Furthermore, the commission does not have any written procedures specifying what steps chief athletic inspectors should take when reviewing a boxer's fitness to fight in a proposed contest and when deciding whether two potential opponents are well-matched in ability and experience.

Chief athletic inspectors stated that they do review each proposed boxing contest to determine whether it should be approved and that they check the boxer's ring record and the boxer's permanent file during their review. The boxer's ring record, which the commission maintains, shows the results of each of the boxer's contests; the boxer's permanent file contains the boxer's license and record of medical examinations.

However, we found that boxers' ring records and permanent files were inaccurate, incomplete, and difficult to locate. For the 98 boxers we reviewed, we were initially unable to find 15 files (15 percent). The office assistant in charge of files still could not locate 5 of these files after several days of searching for them.

Since August 1983, the commission has had five different individuals in three clerical positions that are responsible for maintaining boxers' permanent files. The current office assistant, who began working for the commission in February 1984, explained that she has found some license applications misfiled and has also found other applications stacked in drawers, on top of cabinets, and in other unusual locations.

Clerical staff are also responsible for posting the results of boxing contests to the boxers' ring records. Of the 98 ring records that we reviewed, 3 contained contest results that staff had posted inaccurately. We also found that 19 ring records were incomplete; results of boxing shows since February 22 had not been posted as of March 23, 1984.

Because chief athletic inspectors must review ring records before approving boxing contests, the records must be accurate and complete. Otherwise, chief inspectors could approve contests between unfit or mismatched boxers and thus endanger the boxers. For example, our review of 10 boxing shows that included 50 contests revealed that a

chief athletic inspector had approved a boxing contest involving a boxer whom the commission had retired. When the commission retires a boxer, it revokes his license to participate in boxing contests in California. The commission had ordered this boxer into retirement for consistently poor performance; he had been knocked out in the first round of each of his four professional fights. A high risk for serious injury, the boxer was also knocked out in the third round of the boxing contest that he fought when he should have been in retirement.

The commission's assistant executive officer, who functions as the chief athletic inspector for the Sacramento office, approved this fight involving the retired boxer. The officer could not explain how the boxer's retirement escaped his attention, even though the retirement notice was prominently displayed both on the boxer's ring record and in his permanent file. We conclude that either the commission's files were not up-to-date or that the assistant executive officer did not follow the procedures that chief inspectors normally use or did not see the retirement notice. If the commission had written procedures and required chief inspectors to document approvals, this inappropriate boxing contest might not have occurred.

Referees Should Attend
Training Clinics and
Receive Performance Evaluations

The commission licenses each boxing contest referee, who is responsible for directing and controlling boxing contests and for

enforcing the State's rules governing the conduct of boxing contests. The referee is the only person permitted in the ring with the boxers during their contest. If the referee judges that a boxer might suffer serious injury, the referee has the authority to stop a boxing contest.

Since 1957, state law has required that the commission assign to a boxing contest only a referee who has attended a referees training clinic within six months before that contest. The assistant executive officer stated that training clinics are necessary to apprise referees of changes in boxing laws and regulations and to inform them of any recent special problems related to enforcing boxing laws and regulations.

Nevertheless, the commission is not assigning to boxing contests only referees who have attended these clinics. The executive officer explained that the commission itself does not have time to develop and conduct these clinics because it does not have enough clerical staff to complete the administrative work necessary to run the clinics. The Los Angeles office held a referees clinic in July 1983 but has not yet scheduled one for 1984. The assistant executive officer was not certain when the Sacramento office last conducted a referees clinic. He did say that he is trying to develop a clinic now but does not know when it will take place.

State regulations also require that the commission delineate the qualifications its referees must possess. However, the commission has never done so. As a result, it cannot comply with its regulatory

responsibility to evaluate each referee's performance for every boxing contest. The executive officer explained that, without standards for judging a referee's performance, his inspectors have no basis for conducting evaluations. Without established qualifications or regular evaluations for its referees, the commission cannot be certain that it assigns properly qualified referees to boxing contests, and it thus may risk the safety of contestants.

Inspectors and Ringside
Physicians Should
Attend Training Clinics

State law requires that a commission inspector attend each boxing contest. The inspector's responsibilities include checking the boxers' hand bandages and gloves before the boxing contest and ensuring that other equipment, such as the boxing ring, meets the commission's safety specifications. The commission has three full-time inspectors and numerous part-time inspectors. At least one full-time inspector and usually two to three part-time inspectors attend each boxing contest.

State law also requires that a physician approved by the commission attend each boxing contest. The boxing club that is promoting the boxing show assigns and employs the ringside physician, who is responsible for examining boxers before boxing contests and for observing the physical condition of each boxer during the boxing contest. The ringside physician has the power to stop a boxing contest if the physician sees that a boxer might suffer serious injury.

Since January 1, 1984, state law has required the commission to use as contest officials only inspectors and ringside physicians who have attended an appropriate training clinic within the six months preceding a given boxing contest. The commission's executive officer stated that the inspectors and the physicians training clinics, like those for referees, are necessary to inform these officials of changes in boxing laws and of special problems related to enforcing boxing regulations.

Despite the legal requirement, the commission has not conducted a training clinic for inspectors, and the executive officer stated that he cannot say when the commission will schedule one. In addition, the commission has not given inspectors on duty at boxing contests a current procedures manual that explains the inspectors' regulatory responsibilities during contests. The commission's existing manual, which is approximately ten years old, does not include several recent changes that have been made to boxing safety regulations, and it contains outdated examples of the forms that inspectors are to use during boxing shows.

Also, the commission has not yet begun to develop a physicians clinic. The assistant executive officer said that the commissioners intend to consider establishing an advisory medical committee that will, as one of its duties, assist the commission in developing a physicians clinic. Since 1979, state regulation has required the commission to establish an advisory medical committee for conducting special medical examinations and for determining medical and safety standards for the

sport of boxing. The assistant executive officer plans to place the topic of this committee on the agenda for the May 1984 meeting of the State Athletic Commission.

The Commission Should Process Suspensions Consistently

State regulations require the commission to suspend any boxer who has been knocked out or who has lost a fight by technical knockout. A technical knockout occurs when the referee stops a boxing contest because a boxer has been seriously cut or otherwise injured or because a boxer can no longer continue to fight. Without the approval of a commission physician, a suspended boxer may not participate in contact training, that is, training in which he may be struck by another boxer, for at least 30 days. He also may not participate in a boxing contest for at least 45 days.

Our examination of reports for 10 boxing shows revealed that 24 boxers had been knocked out during these shows. However, we could not find any evidence that the commission had suspended 17 (71 percent) of the 24 boxers. The executive officer explained that we probably could not find documentation for these suspensions because his clerical staff had not processed boxers' suspensions consistently during the period from September 1983 to March 1984. Clerical staff members have been working overtime recently, and they report that they have processed suspensions for all boxers who should be suspended currently.

According to state regulation, the commission must place a suspended boxer on an "ill and unavailable" list. The commission's policy is to send this list to other states' athletic commissions, to training gymnasiums, and to boxing promoters and matchmakers who arrange boxing contests. The executive officer feels that, to be effective, the commission should prepare and mail the list weekly since professional boxing shows are held in California virtually every week throughout the year. However, the commission did not develop or issue an "ill and unavailable" list from July 1983 until March 19, 1984. The executive officer explained that the commission has not maintained the "ill and unavailable" list because of insufficient clerical help.

The Commission May
Need Additional Staff

The commission attributed many of the problems that we discussed in the previous sections of this report to insufficient staff. For fiscal year 1984-85, the commission requested four additional clerical positions and one additional assistant chief athletic inspector position as well as a budget increase of \$130,000. According to the commission's executive officer, the commission requested that the Legislature appropriate this budget increase from the General Fund because its Athletic Commission Fund cannot currently support the additional positions.

We were unable to determine whether the commission needs an additional assistant chief athletic inspector. In its request for

additional staff, the commission listed only the number of overtime hours that the assistant chief athletic inspector must work attending the boxing shows and other sporting events that are under the commission's jurisdiction. The commission's request did not list all the other tasks required of an inspector. We were able to ascertain the additional tasks an assistant chief athletic inspector must perform, but we could not obtain data on the time requirements for those tasks because the commission does not maintain workload data. Ironically, the commission stated that it has not maintained workload information because it lacks sufficient staff to record the data.

Our review of the commission's request for four additional clerical positions indicated that the commission may have miscalculated its projected clerical workload and that it may need only three additional clerical positions. In some of its calculations, the commission assumed that there are 264 working days in the year rather than the 251 that we derived using the formula in Section 8740 of the State Administrative Manual. As a result, the commission's request overstated the clerical time required to handle telephone calls, to process mail, and to perform general filing. The commission may also have overestimated the number of licenses that it processes annually because it based its estimate on its computer record of the total number of people it has licensed rather than on the number of licenses that it issued in one year. Furthermore, the commission's request listed clerical tasks that are not specifically included in the state laws and regulations governing commission activities. For example, the

commission's request listed the hours required to distribute boxing show results, to type contracts between boxers and managers, and to maintain statistics on officials' earnings at boxing shows. Based on our review, we conclude that the commission may need three rather than four additional clerical positions to help it to comply with state boxing laws and regulations.

The commission's assistant executive officer stated that, on March 20, 1984, the Department of Finance turned down the commission's entire request for additional staff. According to commission officials, the Department of Finance explained that the Legislature reduced the commission's budget in fiscal year 1983-84 and expected the commission to stay within the new budget by reducing commission activities.

We contacted the Department of Finance to determine why it rejected the commission's request for additional staff. A program manager at the Department of Finance told us that the Legislature recently established the Athletic Commission Fund for the deposit of commission revenues and for the sole support of commission operations. The Department of Finance stated that the commission must therefore restrict its expenditures to the amount of money available in the Athletic Commission Fund.

According to the 1984-85 Governor's Budget, projected commission revenues from taxes and license fees will not be sufficient to fund additional staff positions for the commission. Unless the

Legislature provides funding for the additional positions, the commission may have to examine current regulatory requirements and propose eliminating those mandates that prevent its current staff from fulfilling the commission's most important responsibilities.

CONCLUSION

The State Athletic Commission is not enforcing all state laws and regulations pertaining to boxing safety. First, its system for approving boxing contests has deficiencies. For example, records that chief athletic inspectors must review when they approve boxing contests are inaccurate and incomplete. Second, the commission is not using referees, inspectors, and physicians who have attended appropriate training clinics. Finally, the commission is not suspending injured boxers consistently. In our examination of 10 boxing shows, we determined that the commission should have suspended 24 boxers but found evidence of only seven suspensions. In addition, the commission does not regularly communicate suspensions to training gymnasiums and to individuals responsible for arranging boxing contests.

The commission attributes all of these problems to insufficient clerical staff. It requested additional staff for fiscal year 1984-85, but the Department of Finance denied the request. Based on our review of the commission's justification for its

request, we conclude that the commission may need three additional clerical positions to fulfill its mandated responsibilities for fiscal year 1984-85.

RECOMMENDATIONS

To help the State Athletic Commission enforce boxing safety laws and regulations, the Legislature should do the following:

- Authorize three additional clerical positions that would be temporary until they are proved necessary to the commission's fulfillment of its mandated responsibilities. Since it appears that the Athletic Commission Fund cannot support these positions, the Legislature will have to provide funds for the three additional positions from some other source.
- Require the commission to maintain workload information for use in future staffing decisions.

To help correct its current staffing problems, the commission should do the following:

- Evaluate methods to increase revenues to the Athletic Commission Fund, such as increasing fees. It should then request the Legislature to authorize these methods so that the fund can support additional positions.

- Assess the effectiveness of existing statutory and regulatory requirements and propose eliminating the requirements that prevent its current staff from completing those tasks most essential to fulfilling the commission's basic responsibility to protect boxers from injury.

To fulfill its mandated responsibilities, the State Athletic Commission should take the following actions:

- Develop written procedures for approving boxing contests and a checklist for chief athletic inspectors to complete and sign when they approve boxing contests. The commission should retain the checklist in its records.
- Comply with state regulations that require it to establish qualifications for its referees and to evaluate each referee's performance for every boxing contest.
- Comply with the state regulation that requires it to establish an advisory medical committee for conducting special medical examinations and for determining safety standards for professional boxing.
- Develop and schedule training clinics for referees, ringside physicians, and inspectors so that it can comply

with state laws requiring it to use only officials who have attended appropriate training clinics.

- Comply with the regulations requiring it to suspend boxers who have been knocked out or seriously injured and to maintain an "ill and unavailable" list of suspended boxers.

II

THE STATE ATHLETIC COMMISSION DOES NOT HAVE PROCEDURES FOR HANDLING BOXERS WHO HAVE BEEN SERIOUSLY INJURED

In September 1983, a boxer was seriously injured during a boxing contest and subsequently died. Although a more prompt emergency response may not have altered the outcome, this incident did demonstrate that the commission does not have established procedures to assure that calls for emergency medical personnel will be prompt. This case also illustrates that the commission lacks guidelines for the ringside physician to follow when handling an injured boxer before emergency medical personnel arrive.

At the Olympic Auditorium in Los Angeles on September 1, 1983, a boxer became unconscious and then comatose after he was struck in the head. Never regaining consciousness, he died on September 4, 1983. The ringside physician reported that the boxer was seriously injured as soon as he received the blow. The neurosurgeon who operated on the boxer said that it is difficult to tell whether a more prompt emergency response would have made any difference.

When the boxer was injured, the ringside physician entered the ring to attend to the boxer. The physician said that he immediately ordered a stretcher and instructed a policeman who was at ringside to call for an ambulance. When the stretcher arrived, the physician had the

boxer moved to the dressing room. Until the paramedics arrived, the physician hyperextended the boxer's neck to ensure that the boxer's windpipe remained open.

One of the paramedics from the Los Angeles Fire Department who responded to the call criticized the ringside physician's handling of the emergency. First, the call for emergency medical personnel was delayed at least 28 minutes. The paramedic said that he did not receive a satisfactory explanation for the call's delay. Second, whoever called the paramedics did not fully explain the nature of the boxer's injury; the caller stated only that someone was injured, not that a boxer was unconscious. The paramedics thus lost valuable time after they arrived at the ring because they had to return to their truck for the proper equipment. According to the paramedic, if the caller had fully informed the paramedics about the nature of the boxer's injury, they would have brought the proper equipment initially.

The paramedic and the ringside physician also had different medical opinions concerning how the injured boxer should have been handled. The paramedic said that the ringside physician did not take proper precautions when he had the boxer transported from the ring to the dressing room. The paramedic also felt that the physician should have employed advanced life-support techniques. Responding to the paramedic's concerns, the ringside physician said that, based on his diagnosis of the boxer's condition, he used all the procedures and caution required. The ringside physician also believed that the boxer's condition had

stabilized to the point that the advanced life-support techniques recommended by the paramedic were not required.

We cannot resolve this difference of medical opinion about proper procedures for handling injured boxers before the arrival of emergency medical personnel because we have no standards by which to evaluate the physician's actions. The commission has not developed any guidelines for handling boxers who are seriously injured during a boxing contest. According to the assistant executive officer, an advisory medical committee would be an appropriate entity to draft such guidelines. Although state regulations require the State Athletic Commission to have an advisory medical committee, the commission has never created one. The commission does not plan to consider establishing such a committee at its May 1984 meeting.

CONCLUSION

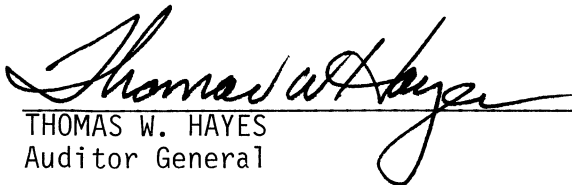
The injury and subsequent death of a boxer in 1983 demonstrated that the State Athletic Commission needs to establish clear, detailed procedures for commission officials to follow when handling boxers who have been seriously injured. The commission plans to consider establishing an advisory medical committee that could draft rules for handling boxers who sustain serious injuries during professional boxing shows.

RECOMMENDATION

The State Athletic Commission should establish an advisory medical committee that would, in addition to other duties, prescribe a strict set of procedures for handling boxers who are seriously injured. These procedures should assure that calls for emergency medical personnel are prompt and that callers provide all pertinent information about the injuries. These procedures should also include steps for the ringside physician to follow until emergency medical personnel arrive.

We conducted this review under the authority vested in the Auditor General by Section 10500 et seq. of the California Government Code and according to generally accepted governmental auditing standards. We limited our review to those areas specified in the audit scope section of this report.

Respectfully submitted,


THOMAS W. HAYES
Auditor General

Date: May 3, 1984

Staff: Steve Schutte, Audit Manager
Ann Arneill
Michael R. Tritz
Donald A. Davison

Memorandum

To : Marie Shibuya-Snell
Director
Department of Consumer Affairs

Date : April 30 1984
Subject: Auditor General Report P-38
Telephone: ATSS ()
()

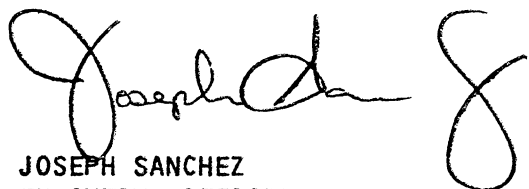
From : **Athletic Commission**

From the outset let me say that I concur with many of the findings in the Auditor General Report #P-386 although I would like to address two areas in which we are in disagreement.

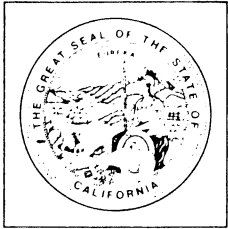
The report states that the Athletic Commission has no record that it complies with regulations requiring the commission to approve all boxing contests and that there is no documentation that boxing contests are approved. The commission does approve each and every boxing contest that occurs in California by comparing each contestant's boxing history and status with the other and the written boxing show results contain the specific contests that have been approved by the commission.

The report recommends that the commission evaluate methods to increase revenues to the Athletic Commission Fund. Legislation increasing state taxes from 2 % to 5 % and increasing licensing fees went into effect July 1, 1983 and January 1, 1984 respectively and the commission strongly supported a bill this year to tax all boxing events shown on cable television in California. This measure was defeated on the Senate floor.

For the report to be most effective I had also hoped that it would also have included a recommendation to the effect that the legislature before passing any bills which would increase the commission workload or areas of responsibilities would first determine whether the commission in fact had both the money and personnel to ensure proper compliance of those laws and if the commission did not have either that it be allocated to the existing budget.



JOSEPH SANCHEZ
EXECUTIVE OFFICER
ATHLETIC COMMISSION



State and Consumer Services Agency

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
915 Capitol Mall, Suite 200
Sacramento, CA 95814

May 1, 1984

Thomas W. Hayes
Auditor General
660 J Street, Suite 300
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Mr. Hayes:

Thank you for the opportunity to review and provide comments on your report entitled, "The State Athletic Commission Needs to Improve Its Enforcement of Boxing Safety Laws and Regulations." (Reference P-386.)

Because of the nature of the findings and recommendations, the staff of the State Athletic Commission was asked to review the report and provide comments. I have attached a copy of their reply.

On Page 17 of the draft report, you recommend that the Commission be authorized three additional clerical positions on a temporary basis. It should be noted that this Agency, along with the Department of Consumer Affairs, has reviewed requests from the Commission for additional clerical staff and found their workload justification inadequate. Without substantiating workload, neither the Department of Consumer Affairs nor my Office is in a position to support the additional staff requested.*

Sincerely,

SHIRLEY R. CHILTON
Secretary of the Agency

SRC:jy

Attachment

cc: Department of Consumer Affairs

* Auditor General's Comment: We disagree that the commission cannot support its request for additional clerical staff. We identified many instances in which the commission did not comply with laws and regulations because it lacked sufficient clerical staff. Pages 14 and 15 of our report demonstrate that the commission needs three additional temporary clerical staff.

cc: Members of the Legislature
Office of the Governor
Office of the Lieutenant Governor
State Controller
Legislative Analyst
Assembly Office of Research
Senate Office of Research
Assembly Majority/Minority Consultants
Senate Majority/Minority Consultants
Capitol Press Corps