

## Appendix 1 – Regulatory frameworks applicable to NGBs and White Collar Boxing

NGBs	WCB Promoters	Effect of Increased Regulation
<b>Policy</b>		
The governing body reviews and updates policy in light of new information, medical opinion, technological advances and legal principles, for example safeguarding.	Because white-collar boxing is conducted by independent gyms and promoters who are competing in business, there is no regulatory body ensuring policy is in place.	
<b>Accountability</b>		
Being a member of a global federation means that each subdivision of the main organisation is accountable for anything that might go wrong. The accountability extends to the individual or governing body as a whole.	Not applicable	
<b>Disciplinary process and sanctions</b>		
Where there is an allegation of wrongdoing the individual club, NGB or IABA have disciplinary processes with sanctions which includes a total ban from the sport in any capacity.	There is no disciplinary process in play for any of the participants or officials at any white-collar even	
<b>Transparency</b>		
From record-keeping of individual boxers and officials to financial accounting, each club, regional division or international body is required to be able to show transparency in its processes and financial dealings.	There is no mandatory record keeping of a participant's experience in the ring. There is no record keeping of the performance of those officiating. There is no record of a participant's medical history in the ring, for instance, whether they had been stopped after receiving a head blow.	
<b>Consistency worldwide</b>		
To ensure the safety of the participants, each club, division and national body is required to follow the same rules, regulations and general policy with regard to how they	As autonomous fitness establishments vying for clientele, lacking the oversight of a regulatory body governing their practices precludes the attainment of consistency. Being private enterprises, the financial accounts of these gyms remain unscrutinised. Although ostensibly portrayed as charitable endeavours, it is	

<p>operate. This includes the qualifications required for officials, boxing rules and medical standards.</p>	<p>frequently the case that only the proceeds generated from event-related raffles, orchestrated by promoters, are directed toward charitable causes. Participants are obligated to solicit funds for charity, yet the mechanism for auditing the allocation of these funds remains undisclosed.</p>	
<p><b>Insurance</b></p>		
<p>Each individual club and every boxer is fully insured. The only way a referee, for instance, becomes personally liable is if they recklessly disregards rules. Similarly, a coach can become liable if they use training techniques that are not approved by NGB. NGB officials are not permitted to take part in any unlicensed boxing , primarily because of the lack of governance, training, safeguards etc.</p>	<p>Although a disclaimer is executed, ostensibly releasing the business from liability concerning fatalities or injuries, the legal legitimacy and efficacy of such disclaimers remain untested and may lack substantive legal weight. It remains unclear, for example, whether such a disclaimer would encompass scenarios where an unqualified referee neglects to intervene appropriately during a bout. It is within my understanding that white-collar boxing events carry public liability insurance coverage, safeguarding against incidents such as a spectator tripping and encountering injuries from broken glass at the venue. However, it should be noted that this insurance does not extend to providing coverage for the participants involved in the event.</p>	
<p><b>Coaches</b></p>		
<p>NGB coaches are required to be qualified in all aspects of boxing coaching to a standard which is accepted worldwide by the AIBA13. There is a clear and consistent pathway to qualification to club, regional, national and international level. Inactive coaches returning to boxing must requalify and each coach is required to be regularly police checked and obtain first aid and safeguarding certificates.</p>	<p>Several individuals with a background in amateur boxing have transitioned to operating white-collar enterprises within gym facilities. The majority of these possess qualifications as certified personal trainers with prior experience in boxing, and some have undergone training programs, such as those offered by the 'Hatton Academy' It is noteworthy, however, that none of these qualifications adhere to the standards prescribed by the international governing body. The 'Hatton' certification primarily addresses boxing for fitness from the vantage point of personal trainers and excludes sparring components. Consequently, it becomes important to recognise that individuals lacking the requisite qualification level as boxing coaches are overseeing the training regimen of participants over an eight-week duration, preparing them for participation in ring-based competitions. Notably, there is an absence of boxing coaches possessing</p>	

	qualifications conforming to the standards mandated by the AIBA within the domain of white-collar boxing.	
<b>Cornermen</b>		
Only coaches qualified to a particular level are permitted to operate in the corner during a bout, although an assistant coach may assist from outside the ring. The importance of this is that the coach is not simply there to advise during the breaks between the rounds but also to observe their charge and, if necessary, throw the towel in to prevent undue punishment.	There exists no requirement stipulating the necessity of a certified boxing coach to be present in the corner providing guidance to the participant. This consideration becomes particularly salient in instances where an unqualified referee also presides over the bout and may neglect to halt the contest at the appropriate juncture.	
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<b>Officials</b>		
<p>AIBA qualified officials include the referee, judges, the timekeeper and the supervisor. Each official is required to qualify in their role and oversight of the entire show is provided by the supervisor who ensures that the matching is conducted properly and fairly, that the weigh-in is carried out according to the rules and that the referee and judges are operating to the required standard.</p> <p>The Supervisor reports back to NGB to ensure performance of all the officials is monitored. Studies consistently show that regulated amateur boxing has become safer. Indeed, in a 2007 study it was concluded that the current evidence for chronic traumatic brain injury as a consequence of amateur boxing is not strong. Credit for the ever-improving safety has</p>	There is no equivalent as the officials are either unqualified or, if operating without the sanction of NGB, not being monitored and susceptible to influence from the promoters. Anecdotally, in one recent event the unqualified referee had a bottle of beer in the corner and was drinking between rounds.	

<p>included the higher standard of officials, especially referees in the regulated amateur sport.</p>		
<p><b>Medical</b></p>		
<p>Every boxer must undergo a detailed and specific medical examination when joining a club. A boxer must also undergo a full medical examination prior to taking part in a bout by a doctor registered with NGB. The results are recorded in the boxer's record book.</p> <p>No boxer may compete at any tournament without the production of his/her record book. As safety is the single most important aspect of regulated boxing it would be too much to put into this document. The AIBA Medical Handbook for Boxing16, which contains a list of pathological findings that preclude a person from becoming a boxer.</p> <p>During a tournament, on the day of the bout the ringside doctor carries out a physical examination before the competition to ensure that the boxer is fully fit to box. This medical check-up is also recorded in the boxer's record book. During the bout, the ringside doctor has the right to stop the bout for medical reasons. In the case of a knockout, the management follows the guidelines of the Medical handbook of amateur boxing.</p> <p>If there is transient confusion, no loss of consciousness, and the symptoms resolve in 15 minutes (grade I), the doctor should perform a thorough medical examination to determine the need and nature of further medical observation or hospital admission. If the concussion symptoms last for 15 minutes, but there is no loss of consciousness (grade II), after a medical examination the boxer is taken to hospital for a neurological examination and computed tomography.</p> <p>If there is any loss of consciousness, either brief (seconds) or prolonged (minutes), the boxer is immediately transferred to the nearest emergency department by ambulance.</p>	<p>Anecdotally, a recent participant, who at 30 years old was not in good physical condition, having not taken part in any strenuous exercise since leaving school did not have any kind of medical examination prior to starting the 8 weeks training before stepping between the ropes. The participant had a cursory examination by a doctor on fight night, which examination was not designed to assess any medical conditions that would disqualify them from boxing if conducted by an NGB registered doctor. After the fight, the participant was checked over by a member of St John's ambulance. In 2019 a young boxer with a broken thumb and damaged hand ligaments, had a letter from a consultant at the hospital to say that she should not be participating in a forthcoming WC event. The boxer, under pressure from the promoters, nevertheless took part. The financial motivation for the promoters in losing the bout that evening outweighed any concern for the person who had been considered medically unfit to take part.</p> <p>In 2019 a participant posted on social media how he was permitted to box with a broken bone in his foot. A misconception promoted is that white-collar boxing is a safe way to get fit. The glaring truth is, that without strict regulation, it is not. Research published by the Journal of Science and Medicine in Sport concluded: 'The development and implementation of standardised, enforceable regulatory frameworks for full contact combat sports in England is urgently needed'. 18</p>	

Return to boxing depends on the severity of the concussion, but a 28-day rest period is the minimum. Before a boxer is allowed to fight again, he must be passed fit by a Neurologist, after examinations by computed tomography or magnetic resonance imaging (MRI). The decision of the neurologist is recorded in the boxer's record book.

Repetitive concussion or subconcussive blows to the brain may lead to chronic traumatic brain injury. Although studies indicate that amateur boxers do not exhibit any particular signs of neuropsychological or cerebral blood flow dysfunction, to minimise the risk of this, after repeated KO or RSC-H the rest period is one year or even enforced retirement.

In amateur boxing the referees watch the athletes more closely than in many other contact sports, and they stop the bout immediately if a boxer is unfit to continue. The increasing rate of RSC (referee stopping the contest) indicates the increased control in the ring.

The modifications of the AIBA rules over the last two decades based on medical considerations have served to protect the boxers.

**Training**

A proper boxing coach would know that a boxer must not only be physically fit to fight, but they must also be conditioned. It takes a long time to condition a person to absorb blows aimed to the head. A newly registered boxer, with no prior experience, would need to train for over a year to get to the level where a coach would even consider them ready to box.

Before being permitted to box the boxer would need to be proficient in at least the very basics of footwork, defensive and offensive moves and a knowledge of the rules of boxing.

It is not permitted under NGB rules for any boxer to engage in any sparring sessions unless either a Level 2 coach or referee is present. Clearly this is for safety reasons as the

The compressed 8 or 9-week training duration, in my perspective, appears inherently unwise. It remains implausible to sufficiently condition the human body within this timeframe to safely absorb head blows.

Attendance at every training session is not obligatory, and a significant number of participants opt not to do so.

Instruction provided to participants primarily encompasses rudimentary offensive manoeuvres, with minimal emphasis on defensive techniques and essential aspects of boxing mobility, such as footwork.

<p>opportunities for a boxer to be injured in training is just as prevalent, if not more so than in a single 3 round bout. A boxer may box hundreds of rounds prior to the night of their competitive boxing.</p>	<p>The constrained timeframe may contribute to the omission of defensive skills development.</p> <p>While this approach may generate an exhilarating spectacle for an enthusiastic, alcohol-fuelled audience, it exposes participants to heightened vulnerability.</p> <p>Participants are actively encouraged to engage in sparring sessions extensively leading up to the 'fight night.' This practice involves the exchange of blows with inadequate training, under the supervision of coaches lacking boxing coaching qualifications at a sufficient level.</p> <p>It can be contended that if unregulated boxing is determined to be legally impermissible, the same legal categorisation would be applicable to sparring activities.</p>	
<p><b>Matching</b></p>		
<p>Boxers are matched according to weight, experience and, in the case of youngsters, age. This is carried out in line with global standards and supervised throughout. The purpose of this is to ensure a fair competition and minimise the likelihood of injury through a mismatch.</p>	<p>Evidently, within the context of white-collar boxing, the participants' boxing experience is unlikely to uniformly align and cannot be assured.</p> <p>An illustrative example involves a participant with a few years of boxing experience in the 1980's who re-entered the ring in a whitecollar exhibition.</p> <p>Despite an understandable diminished level of fitness, the individual retained substantial skill, knowledge, and experience, affording a discernible advantage over their opponent.</p> <p>Furthermore, in a recent bout one participant exhibited a weight disparity of at least 5 kilograms compared to their opponent. Additionally, in a separate contest on November 13, 2021, an extraordinary incongruity in weight was observed, with one participant being 18 kilograms heavier than their opponent.</p> <p>It appears clear that the welfare of the participants is not the primary concern of the organisers.</p>	

	<p>A further anecdotal account tells of one participant in his early 50s fought against a 22-year-old. He was knocked unconscious and taken by ambulance to hospital.</p> <p>Furthermore, on a recent white-collar show, due to a participant pulling out, a currently NGB registered boxer, with some 70 amateur bouts experience, was boxing under a false name, against another experienced fighter from another discipline.</p> <p>This was not part of the typically understood white-collar concept, however this development shows that these events have evolved into something more akin to the type of unlicensed boxing outlawed in the UK, such as fairground boxing.</p>	
<b>Motivation</b>		
<p>All those involved in amateur boxing do so as volunteers. They are committed to bringing the best out of their boxers, but their welfare and safety is of paramount importance. There are no shortcuts but there are checks and balances in place to ensure that the boxers are as safe as they can be in a contact sport. The boxing clubs do not run for profit but for the furtherance of a well-regulated sporting activity that has many health and social benefits for those who take part and the wider community. On a good night, a club might make £3,000 profit for a show, all of which is returned to the boxers by, for instance funding their trips to box in the championships in the UK.</p>	<p>The common misconception is that whitecollar is done to raise money for charity. Ironically, Headway being a regular recipient of some donations usually from the proceeds of a raffle held on the night.</p> <p>Participants are encouraged to raise money for charity by opening a JustGiving type account. The participants are required to raise £500 each for charity and to also sell 1 table of tickets for the show. This means that the participants and not the promoting business are giving to the charity.</p> <p>It is uncertain as to whether the ‘charitable’ aspect, which is a major part of their marketing drive, has ever been audited. In theory the charitable sum generated should be at least £11,000 per show from the participants plus any monies raised in the raffle.</p> <p>The obvious opportunity for exploitation by individuals wishing to launder illicit funds through this business model cannot be ignored.</p>	