

# BOARD ROUNDS



## Regulatory review of professional and amateur combat sports in Victoria

The Board is participating in this review that has been commissioned by the Department of Jobs, Skills, Industry and Regions and is being conducted by KPMG. The review is being conducted because recent reviews, including coronial findings and the current coronial inquest involving a young amateur boxer have made it clear that there is a need to carefully consider the risks to participants in professional and amateur contest and training environments. There are a range of ways you can participate and contribute to this review, including through attendance

at workshops with KPMG, completion of short online surveys and provision of written submissions. If you have not participated and want to be involved, the contact is Will Stapp at KPMG ([wstapp@kpmg.com.au](mailto:wstapp@kpmg.com.au)).

## Hearing from our community of licence holders

Earlier this year the Board convened a series of discussions to meet and hear from licence holders, including promoters, referees, judges and trainers, about the challenges and issues that are important to them. This was an important opportunity and several key issues that were

raised were common across these discussions. **Better accessibility** to Board information, policies and key information relevant to licences, registration, promotion permits and contestant health and safety were clear call outs. Clarity was sought around the factors that are driving the **Board's consideration of proposed match-ups** as well as clear information in relation to **pathways and accreditation requirements applicable to officials and support for officials**.

The Board intends to convene regular rounds of these discussions to ensure it continues to engage and provide opportunities to hear from the combat sports community. The next round of discussions will occur in November this year and feedback on progress on matters raised will be provided on an ongoing basis.

## Introducing new Board member – Uyen Ha

As a result of the departure of long standing Board member, Mick Ashton who finished up with the Board earlier this year, Ms Uyen 'Win' Ha has been appointed by the Minister for Sport, Tourism and Events. Win is a retired professional MMA athlete, former Australian National Team wrestler, fight coach, and lawyer. With Win's firsthand experience as a contestant, she brings a passion about progressing combat sports in Victoria and is a great addition to the membership of the Board. The Board is very grateful to Mick for his long service in supporting the work of the Board and wishes him well for the future.

## Priority actions in response to what licence holders called for

Over the next 12 months, the Board will take action in relation to the key issues identified by the sector as a priority. This will commence with the delivery of a **digital platform and an independent website** that will automate the application and payment process for promotion permits, contestant registrations and licences. Short concussion and traumatic brain injury education videos produced for the combat sports community will be integrated into this digital platform as a mandatory component of the application process. The digital platform will be launched in the next few months and will enable a modern and more efficient application process. At the same time the Board will launch its independent website that will

provide a gateway to the digital platform as well as enable easier access to current Board information and updates about key issues that can be shared across the combat sports sector. Supporting our officials is another key priority that the Board has commenced action on. It has completed a **review of minimum officials fees** that were set in 2016 and will be engaging with promoters to provide opportunities to consider the proposed updates and provide comment. The Board is currently exploring options for providing officials with **uniforms** and the development of a **training strategy** to ensure that the broad combat sports sector is supported by a pool of officials relevant to each discipline.

**Matchmaking** that is premised on the protection of contestant safety and ensuring the integrity of a proposed contest is an important focus for the Board. The Board will issue information to assist matchmakers with the Board's assessment of the adequacy and suitability of proposed match-ups and what factors it considers when seeking further rationale necessary to ensure the safeguarding of contestant safety and the integrity of the contest. The Board is also extending its efforts to **support contestants to manage their health post competition**, by providing additional advice to drive increased awareness of appropriate injury and health management at the time that suspension periods are notified.