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ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON MEDICAL AND SAFETY STANDARDS AGENDA

Tuesday, October 24, 2023 6:00 p.m. - Conclusion of Business

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The meeting will not be cancelled if webcast is not available. Adjournment, if it is the only item that occurs after a closed session, may not be webcast.

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Providing your request at least five (5) business days before the meeting will help to ensure availability of the requested accommodations. TDD Line: (916) 322-1700.

OPEN SESSION

- 1. Call to Order/ Pledge of Allegiance/ Roll Call.
- 2. Opening Remarks by Chairperson.
- 3. Update on C3 Logix Testing.
- Discussion and Possible Action to Make Recommendations to the Commission Regarding the Investigation of the Medical Evacuation of Edy Valencia Mercado, Event # 4274 (Thompson Boxing Promotions) held at the Doubletree Ontario on July 21, 2023.
- 5. Public comment on items not on the agenda (The Committee may not discuss or take action on any matter raised during this public comment section, except to decide whether to place the matter on the agenda of a future meeting pursuant to Government Code §§ 11125, 11125.7(a)).

CLOSED SESSION

6. Pursuant to Government Code Section 11126(c)(2) the Committee will discuss matters that constitute an unwarranted invasion of the privacy of an individual licensee or applicant.

OPEN SESSION

7. ADJOURNMENT



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MEMORANDUM

DATE	October 24, 2023
то	Members of the Advisory Committee on Medical & Safety Standards
FROM	Andy Foster, Executive Officer California State Athletic Commission
SUBJECT	Agenda Item #3 – Update on C3 Logix Testing

Update on C3 Logix Sports Concussion Management Program

We continue to implement the C3 Logix concussion test at weigh ins and pre-licensing. As of October 18, 2023, the Commission staff has completed and uploaded approximately 2,817 baseline/follow-up tests since the program commenced.

Vice Chair Dr. Williams and I have been talking to Frank Carruba at Neurologic Tech to discuss the Commission sharing it's C3 Logix and weight data for analysis.



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MEMORANDUM

DATE	October 10, 2023
то	Members of the Advisory Committee on Medical & Safety Standards
VIA	Andy Foster, Executive Officer California State Athletic Commission
VIA	Mark Relyea, Chief Athletic Inspector California State Athletic Commission
FROM	David Infante, Athletic Inspector California State Athletic Commission
SUBJECT	Agenda Item # 4- Discussion and Possible Action to Make Recommendations to the Commission Regarding the Investigation of the Medical Evacuation of Edy Valencia Mercado, Event # 4274 (Thompson Boxing Promotions) held at the Doubletree Ontario on July 21, 2023.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The California State Athletic Commission sanctioned a boxing event that was held on July 21, 2023, at the DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel in Ontario, California. The event was promoted by Thompson Boxing Promotions. Symbiosis Ambulance Transport was contracted to provide paramedic and emergency medical technician personnel and transportation for fighter(s) who required emergent medical care.

One of the boxing bouts was an 8-round super featherweight between George Acosta (15-1, 2 KOs) and Edy Valencia Mercado (20-11-6, 7 KOs). At the request of Mr. Mercado's Chief Second Hector Morillo, Referee Ray Armendariz called a halt to the bout during the 1-minute rest period between the 5th and 6th rounds. The time was approximately 2155 hours.

Ringside Physician Doctor Tariq Ali Khan examined Mr. Mercado and requested Symbiosis Ambulance Transport personnel to immediately transport Mr. Mercado to the pre-designated Level 1 Trauma Center, Loma Linda University Medical Center, approximately 3 minutes after the bout was stopped by Referee Armendariz. The time was approximately 2158 hours. Agenda Item #4 October 10, 2023 Page **2** of **19**

> Mr. Mercado was escorted to the rear area of the hotel where he was seated and eventually placed on a gurney inside of the Symbiosis Ambulance Transport ambulance. The time was approximately 2208 hours. At approximately 2225 hours, Symbiosis Ambulance Transport personnel drove to the public street and met Ontario City Fire Department personnel on East Convention Center Way.

> At approximately 2234 hours, an American Medical Response ambulance met Symbiosis Ambulance Transport personnel and Ontario City Fire Department personnel on East Convention Center Way. At approximately 2237 hours, the gurney containing Mr. Mercado was removed from the Symbiosis Ambulance Transport ambulance, Mr. Mercado was transferred to another gurney, and he was placed inside the American Medical Response ambulance.

> At approximately 2239 hours, the American Medical Response ambulance departed the location and transported Mr. Mercado to San Antonio Regional Hospital.

The boxing event was streamed on YouTube and may be viewed at <u>https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GJq6QW4uLOE</u>. On the video, the bout between Mr. Acosta and Mr. Mercado begins at 1:43:00 and ends at 2:08:55. A copy of the bout is included in this investigative package on a DVD labeled "Mercado v Acosta."

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INVESTIGATIVE REPORT

The purpose of this report is to provide an overview and timeline of the "Thompson Boxing Promotions" bout that occurred on Friday, July 21, 2023, specifically detailing the circumstances regarding boxer Edy Valencia Mercado's transport from the venue to a medical facility. It is based upon the written statements of the involved personnel, oral interviews, and fixed post surveillance footage from the venue.

Staffing for the Thompson Boxing Promotions Boxing Bout

California State Athletic Commission Athletic Inspectors:

- Jesus Villarruel (Lead Athletic Inspector)
- Angel Berroteran
- Telisa Parker
- Byron Woods
- Eugene Valdez
- Joe Ulrey
- Dedrick Bates (Volunteer)
- Derrick Scales (Volunteer)
- Effi Schneider (Volunteer)

Referee:

• Ray Armendariz

Ringside Physicians:

- Doctor Andre V. Guerrero
- Doctor Tariq Ali Khan

Symbiosis Ambulance Transport:

- Noe Vasquez (Emergency Medical Technician)
- Derek Perkins (Emergency Medical Technician)
- Brandon Garcia (Paramedic)

Team Members from "Thompson Boxing Promotions"

- Javier Ortega
- Gerardo Espinoza (Transportation)

Boxers:

- Edy Valencia Mercado (17-11-6) Primarily a Spanish Speaker
 - Hector Morillo (Chief Second Cornerman/Trainer)
 - Shaddai Godoy (Second Cornerman/Manager)
 - Carlos Valdez (Second Cornerman)

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George Acosta (15-1)

 Jeff Flotree (Chief Second Cornerman)

Evacuation Plan Meeting

Lead Athletic Inspector Villarruel assigned Inspector Berroteran to document the Evacuation Plan meeting prior to the commencement of the bouts. The following individuals were present:

California State Athletic Commission (CSAC):

- Doctor Tariq Ali Khan
- Doctor Andre V. Guerrero
- Angel Berroteran, Athletic Inspector

Symbiosis Ambulance Transport:

- Noe Vasquez (Emergency Medical Technician)
- Derek Perkins (Emergency Medical Technician)
- Brandon Garcia (Paramedic)

Security Team member from "Thompson Boxing Promotions"

• Javier Ortega

Detailed Evacuation Plan

The Evacuation Plan was led by Doctor Guerrero and adhered to California State Athletic Commission protocols and included the following key points:

- Explanation of all evacuation procedures, regulations, and the roles and responsibilities of each individual present.
- Expressing the importance of transporting a fighter without delay to the designated Level 1 medical facility or alternate medical facility.
- Clearly marked pathways ensuring the safe and efficient evacuation of fighters requiring medical assistance from the ring, pathway, locker rooms, or any other respective location at the venue as needed.
- Compliance with California state standards for determining when an event needs to be halted and when it can safely resume, considering paramedic and ambulance presence in the venue.
- Doctor Guerrero discussed the potential of life-threatening emergencies, including intracranial hemorrhages and the importance of transporting the fighter(s) without delay if such an event were to occur. In particular, he

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> asked Paramedic Garcia and Emergency Medical Technicians Noe Vasquez and Derek Perkins if they were willing and able to transport a fighter without delay to which they answered, "Yes." Doctor Guerrero also discussed the importance of immediate rapid transport to maximize survival in case of an emergency. Doctor Guerrero confirmed that Symbiosis Ambulance Transport had another team immediately available to replace them if they left for an emergency to which they also answered, "Yes." Doctor Guerrero also confirmed that in the event of an emergency, the fighter(s) would be taken to a Level 1 trauma center, or a Level 2 trauma center if a Level 1 was not available. The team identified Loma Linda University Medical Center, located approximately 28 minutes from the venue, as the hospital to which emergencies should be taken to and Arrowhead Regional Medical Center or Pomona Valley Hospital as second options.

- Loma Linda University Medical Center (Level 1 Trauma Center)
 11234 Anderson Street, Loma Linda, CA 92354
- Arrowhead Regional Medical Center (Level 1 Trauma Center)
 0 400 N. Pepper Avenue, Colton, CA 92324
- Pomona Valley Hospital Medical Center (Level 2 Trauma Center)
 - \circ 1798 N. Garey Avenue, Pomona, CA 9500

The Symbiosis Ambulance Transport ambulance was staged at the rear of the hotel, and the paramedic crew was positioned near the back door leading to the ambulance during the event.

The printed and completed Evacuation Plan was submitted to Lead Athletic Inspector Villarruel, who reviewed and approved it.

Edy Valencia Mercado vs. George Acosta Bout

Referee Ray Armendariz was assigned to the bout, and Inspector Telisa Parker and Volunteer Inspector Dedrick Bates were assigned to Mr. Mercado's corner. Inspector Byron Woods and Volunteer Inspector Derrick Scales were assigned to Mr. Acosta's corner.

Prior to the bout, Inspector Woods witnessed Mr. Acosta have his hands wrapped by his Chief Second Jeff Flotree. The gauze and tape complied with the California State Athletic Commission rules and guidelines. After Mr. Acosta's hands were wrapped, Inspector Woods immediately marked the wraps with a permanent marker indicating that they were properly wrapped, approved, and in compliance. Inspector Woods physically inspected and approved each eight-ounce boxing glove that Mr. Acosta wore during the match. Prior to Chief Second Flotree placing the boxing gloves on Mr. Acosta's hands, Inspector Woods placed his hands inside each glove and inspected them a second time. After the boxing gloves were on Mr. Acosta's hands, Inspector Agenda Item #4 October 10, 2023 Page **6** of **19**

Woods secured the laces around Mr. Acosta's wrists with blue tape. At that point, Mr. Acosta never left Inspector Woods' sight and Inspector Woods escorted him to the boxing ring. After the bout, Inspector Woods witnessed the boxing gloves being removed from Mr. Acosta's hands in the ring. He also witnessed the wraps being cut off by Mr. Acosta's cornermen during the post-fight medical examination. During his visual inspection of the boxing gloves and wraps following the bout, Inspector Woods did not see any unusual discrepancies.

Doctor Tariq Ali Khan was assigned to be the primary ringside physician for this bout and Doctor Guerrero was his backup. They were seated ringside with unobstructed views into the boxing ring during the boxing bouts.

Referee Armendariz officiated the bout and closely monitored both fighters during each round. During the 1-minute rest period between each round, he visited the fighters' respective corners to evaluate their abilities to continue the bout. In the 4th round, Mr. Acosta knocked Mr. Mercado down with a legal overhand right cross punch to his head. Mr. Mercado stood back up and Referee Armendariz assessed Mr. Mercado. Referee Armendariz gave Mr. Mercado an eight-count and determined that he was both able and willing to continue the bout. Referee Armendariz allowed the fight to continue and a few seconds later, the bell sounded indicating the conclusion of the round. Referee Armendariz visited both fighters' corners, paying particular attention to Mr. Mercado's condition. Referee Armendariz assessed that Mr. Mercado was both able and willing to continue the bout. Mr. Mercado fought through the 5th round without receiving any particular apparent significant damage. During the break between the 5th and 6th rounds, Referee Armendariz visited Mr. Mercado's corner to assess his ability to continue the fight. Mr. Mercado complained of a headache to his Chief Second Morillo.

Referee Armendariz determined that Mr. Mercado should be evaluated by Doctor Khan. Referee Armendariz positioned himself in the center of the ring to pause the bout when the round began so Doctor Khan could evaluate Mr. Mercado's ability to continue the bout. Prior to the bell sounding indicating the start of the 6th round, Referee Armendariz saw Inspector Parker, Volunteer Inspector Bates, and Chief Second Morillo standing on the boxing ring apron waving the fight off, indicating they wanted the bout to end. Referee Armendariz called a halt to the bout.

After-Bout Medical Assessment

Doctor Khan entered the ring to examine Mr. Mercado. Mr. Mercado told Doctor Khan that he had a headache on the left side of his head and his eye was bothering him. Doctor Khan assessed that Mr. Mercado appeared to be neurologically intact and was able to ambulate without difficulty. Mr. Mercado was escorted from the boxing ring to the nearby Symbiosis Ambulance Transport medical team, where they continually evaluated his gait as stable. Doctor Khan advised the Symbiosis Ambulance Transport medical team that Mr. Mercado required to be transported to the previously designated medical facility immediately, as planned during the Evacuation Plan. This was approximately 2-3 minutes following the stoppage of the bout. Doctor Khan advised the second ringside

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physician, Doctor Guerrero, that Mr. Mercado had a headache and blurry vision. Doctor Guerrero expressed urgency that Mr. Mercado required to be transported to the hospital immediately. Inspector Parker advised Lead Inspector Villarruel that Mr. Mercado was going to be transported to Loma Linda University Medical Center, the pre-designated medical facility as directed by Doctor Khan.

Staging of Mr. Mercado

Doctors Khan and Guerrero, Inspector Parker, and Volunteer Inspector Bates escorted Mr. Mercado out of the boxing ring and to the area where Symbiosis Ambulance Transport personnel were staged.

While Lead Inspector Villarruel was seated ringside completing the necessary after-bout forms, Inspector Parker notified him that Mr. Mercado required to be transported to the designated medical hospital for evaluation and treatment. Lead Inspector Villarruel immediately responded to the area where the ambulance was staged to ensure the Evacuation Plan was adhered to. Inspectors Valdez and Berroteran also responded to the area where the area where the staged to assist as needed.

Doctor Khan informed Symbiosis Ambulance Transport personnel and Lead Inspector Villarruel that Mr. Mercado was experiencing a headache and blurry vision. He directed Symbiosis Ambulance Transport personnel to immediately transport Mr. Mercado to the pre-designated hospital due to suspicion of subdural hematoma. Doctor Guerrero also told Symbiosis Ambulance Transport personnel, "We need to get him out of here fast!" to expedite the process of getting Mr. Mercado to a hospital.

Inspector Berroteran alerted Doctor Guerrero that Mr. Jermaine Chico Whittington, a boxer from a previous bout, was inside his assigned locker room and had developed difficulty hearing. Doctor Guerrero informed Inspectors Parker and Berroteran and Doctor Khan that he would be going to Mr. Whittington's locker room to re-evaluate him to rule out an emergency. Prior to departing the area, Doctor Guerrero advised Doctor Khan, Lead Inspector Villarruel, and Inspector Parker to expedite the transferring of Mr. Mercado to the hospital. Doctor Guerrero and Inspector Berroteran responded to the boxer locker room to re-evaluate Mr. Whittington. Doctor Guerrero performed a physical examination on Mr. Whittington and provided him with an insurance form for further medical examination and treatment if needed.

Near the location where the Symbiosis Ambulance Transport personnel were staged, Mr. Mercado sat down on a chair. Symbiosis Ambulance Transport personnel prepared a gurney to transport him to the designated medical facility, which took between 5-10 minutes. While the gurney was being prepared, Paramedic Garcia entered the ambulance.

Mr. Mercado was placed into the ambulance by Emergency Medical Technicians Vasquez and Perkins. While Mr. Mercado was inside the ambulance, he told Doctor Agenda Item #4 October 10, 2023 Page **8** of **19**

Khan and Lead Inspector Villarruel that his headache had remained the same. Inspector Parker again reiterated several times to the Emergency Medical Technicians that Mr. Mercado needed to be immediately transported, considering the estimated transport time was 28 minutes to Loma Linda University Medical Center.

Doctor Guerrero and Inspector Berroteran returned to the staged ambulance and saw that Mr. Mercado had been placed inside the ambulance on a gurney. Inspector Berroteran estimated this was approximately 20 minutes later. Doctor Guerrero yelled, "Why the hell has he not been transported yet?" Doctor Guerrero expressed urgency of immediate transport with Doctor Khan, Lead Inspector Villarruel, and Inspectors Parker and Berroteran. Doctor Guerrero then told the Symbiosis Ambulance Transport personnel, "You need to go now." Doctor Guerrero looked inside the ambulance and saw that Paramedic Garcia was inside speaking on a cellular telephone. Doctor Guerrero attempted to interrupt him to convey his concerns, but Paramedic Garcia was not responsive and continued speaking on his cellular telephone. The Emergency Medical Technician personnel crew began administering an IV to Mr. Mercado. Doctor Guerrero asked them for his vitals. They stated that Mr. Mercado was stable, and his symptoms were not worsening. Doctor Guerrero repeatedly inquired about the delay in transporting Mr. Mercado.

While Paramedic Garcia was inside the ambulance, he telephoned his supervisor, Wendy Summers. She instructed him and the Symbiosis Ambulance Transport personnel to remain at the venue, not to proceed with the transportation, to contact the local city fire department (Ontario City Fire Department), and to request them to respond and transport Mr. Mercado to a medical facility. Paramedic Garcia relayed the instructions he received from Supervisor Summers to Doctors Khan and Guerrero and advised them Symbiosis Ambulance Transport did not have a second backup ambulance ready to respond. In response, Doctors Khan and Guerrero emphasized the urgency of Mr. Mercado's medical condition and urged them to initiate his immediate transportation.

Doctor Guerrero once again informed Doctor Khan, Lead Inspector Villarruel, and Inspectors Parker and Berroteran that the ambulance needed to leave immediately. The ambulance appeared to be getting ready to depart and Doctor Guerrero reminded the Symbiosis Ambulance Transport personnel to transport Mr. Mercado to the designated Level 1 or Level 2 Trauma Center, Loma Linda University Medical Center. He also advised them to be alert for potential decompensation and worsening of symptoms.

Inspector Berroteran and Doctor Guerrero heard Thompson Boxing Promoter Alex Camponovo voice his concerns that he had a "fight to run," and he wanted to know the estimated time of arrival of the backup ambulance so that the boxing event could resume.

Note: An ambulance must be onsite and available to examine and treat any additional fighter(s) in the event there are additional injuries to fighter(s) prior to the commencement of combat sports.

Inspector Valdez was notified by Doctor Khan that Mr. Mercado was going to be transported to the hospital. To expedite the process, Inspector Valdez walked out to the north parking lot area and ensured the path for the ambulance to depart was free of physical obstructions. From Inspector Valdez's perspective, he observed that the Symbiosis Ambulance Transport personnel were outside of the ambulance and did not appear to be preparing to leave the location. At that point, Mr. Mercado had already been placed inside the ambulance on a gurney. Inspector Valdez contacted Paramedic Garcia regarding the delay and Paramedic Garcia stated that his supervisor, Wendy Summers, had instructed them not to transport Mr. Mercado due to some "prior agreement." Paramedic Garcia did not elaborate on the "prior agreement."

The Symbiosis Ambulance Transport personnel had two options: 1) the boxing bouts could be temporarily halted and the Symbiosis Ambulance Transport personnel could immediately transport Mr. Mercado to Loma Linda University Medical Center and return to the venue at approximately 2330 hours to resume the bouts; or 2) the boxing bouts could be temporarily halted while Symbiosis Ambulance Transport personnel requested another ambulance to transport Mr. Mercado. Once the backup arrived and took over care and transportation responsibilities, the Symbiosis Ambulance Transport personnel could resume their duties at the venue and the bouts could resume.

Paramedic Garcia decided to follow the direction of his supervisor, Wendy Summers, and called for another paramedic ambulance to respond to the venue to transport Mr. Mercado to a medical facility. Unbeknownst to Doctor Khan or Lead Inspector Villarruel, instead of calling another ambulance from Symbiosis Ambulance Transport, Paramedic Garcia called 9-1-1 which connected him with the local emergency personnel, Ontario City Fire Department. Paramedic Garcia was unable to provide a time estimate for the backup ambulance to arrive as requested by Doctor Khan and Lead Inspector Villarruel. During this time, Mr. Mercado remained inside the staged ambulance as Symbiosis Ambulance Transport personnel performed their medical duties. Doctor Khan and Lead Inspector Villarruel stood outside of the ambulance and repeatedly asked for an estimated time of arrival of the backup ambulance and were told it would arrive in approximately 6 minutes.

While waiting for the second ambulance to arrive, Lead Inspector Villarruel directed Inspector Parker to go to the front of the hotel to guide the arriving backup ambulance to the rear of the hotel so Mr. Mercado could be transported. Inspector Parker responded to the front of the hotel, and she estimated that approximately 7-10 minutes later she observed an Ontario City Fire Department fire truck arrive with its overhead emergency lights and siren activated. The fire truck traveled to the rear of the hotel, eastbound on East Convention Center Way from southbound North Vineyard Avenue where the Symbiosis Ambulance Transport ambulance was staged. Inspector Parker returned to the rear of the hotel to assist as needed.

Medical Transport of Mr. Mercado

Without notifying Doctor Khan or Lead Inspector Villarruel, Symbiosis Ambulance Transport personnel secured the ambulance and drove it from the rear of the hotel to the adjacent public street, East Convention Center Way, where it parked. Simultaneously, an Ontario City Fire Department fire truck arrived and met with the Symbiosis Ambulance Transport personnel on the public street. Because Ontario City Fire Department personnel arrived in a fire truck, Mr. Mercado had to wait until another ambulance arrived to transport him to a medical facility.

Lead Inspector Villarruel and Doctor Khan responded to the public street where the Symbiosis Ambulance Transport ambulance and Ontario City Fire Department fire truck were parked. Doctor Khan spoke with the Ontario City Fire Department personnel who were examining Mr. Mercado. Doctor Khan stressed the need for Mr. Mercado's immediate transportation, citing the significant delay since the decision was made to transport him for medical examination and treatment. The Ontario City Fire Department personnel asserted that they were in control of the situation. Doctor Khan continued his insistence on the need for prompt transportation, but the Ontario City Fire Department personnel replied, "We got this. Thank you." Doctor Khan estimated this interaction was approximately 25 minutes following his medical decision that Mr. Mercado required immediate transportation to the designated Level 1 Trauma Center. Following this interaction, Doctor Khan and Lead Inspector Villarruel returned to the event center delivery ramp and observed from a distance.

Approximately 10 minutes later, an American Medical Response ambulance arrived and stopped near the Ontario City Fire Department fire truck and the Symbiosis Ambulance Transport ambulance. Inspectors Parker, Berroteran, and Valdez approached the American Medical Response personnel. Inspector Parker initiated a conversation with one of the personnel and advised him that based upon the pre-designated hospital being a Level 1 Trauma Center, the onsite medical personnel usually transport injured fighters to Level 1 Trauma Centers. Mr. Mercado was removed from the Symbiosis Ambulance Transport ambulance and transferred to another gurney. Mr. Mercado was placed inside the American Medical Response ambulance and ultimately transported to San Antonio Regional Hospital, located at 999 San Bernardino Road, Upland, CA 91786.

It is unknown why American Medical Response ambulance personnel transported Mr. Mercado to San Antonio Regional Hospital instead of the designated Level 1 Trauma Center at Loma Linda University Medical Center.

Inspector Parker estimated Mr. Mercado was transported from the venue approximately 40-50 minutes following Doctor Khan's initial decision that he required immediate transportation and further medical care. The second ambulance, American Medical Response, left the hotel at approximately 2240 hours.

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> Symbiosis Ambulance Transport Paramedic Garcia and Emergency Medical Technicians Vasquez and Perkins returned to the hotel venue and remained there for the completion of the boxing event.

Mr. Mercado's Cornermen Interviews

On August 1, 2023, Volunteer Inspector Felix Salazar, a Spanish speaker, interviewed Mr. Mercado's Chief Second Cornerman Hector Morillo, Second Cornerman Carlos Valdez, and Manager Shaddai Godoy regarding the condition of Mr. Mercado prior to the boxing bout and their respective actions during the bout.

Chief Second Hector Morillo Interview

Chief Second Morillo has been Mr. Mercado's boxing trainer for about 10 years and assisted him in his preparation for this bout. Mr. Mercado was in high spirits and looking forward to his fight against Mr. Acosta.

During the bout, Chief Second Morillo served as Mr. Mercado's Chief Second Cornerman and entered the boxing ring during each 1-minute rest period. Following the end of the first round, Mr. Mercado told Chief Second Morillo that his opponent had "heavy hands." Mr. Mercado continued the bout but was knocked down in the final seconds of the 4th round. Chief Second Morillo related that this was the first time in Mr. Mercado's professional boxing career that he had been knocked down. Mr. Mercado appeared to recover during the 1-minute rest period between the 4th and 5th rounds and appeared motivated to continue the fight.

During the 5th round, Chief Second Morillo noticed that Mr. Mercado did not "appear to be himself" and only threw a few punches. Following the end of the 5th round, Mr. Mercado returned to his corner, told Chief Second Morillo that his head hurt, and Mr. Mercado requested that the bout be stopped. Chief Second Morillo told Inspector Parker that he wanted the bout to be stopped, which she subsequently relayed to Referee Armendariz. Referee Armendariz immediately stopped the bout and requested Ringside Physician Doctor Khan to examine Mr. Mercado. Doctor Khan examined Mr. Mercado and told the cornermen that Mr. Mercado needed to be transported to a medical hospital for further evaluation and treatment.

Cornerman Valdez and additional personnel escorted Mr. Mercado from the ring to the area where the paramedic and emergency medical technician personnel were staged. Chief Second Morillo returned to the boxing ring corner area to retrieve his gear, then met Mr. Mercado at the staging area.

When Chief Second Morillo arrived at the ambulance staging area, he learned that Mr. Mercado had already been placed inside on a gurney. He estimated Mr. Mercado was inside the ambulance with the Symbiosis Ambulance Transport personnel for approximately 20 minutes. While they were inside the ambulance, the medical staff

performed their duties and repeatedly monitored Mr. Mercado's condition while interviewing him.

Shortly thereafter, a fire truck arrived followed by another ambulance. Mr. Mercado was transferred into the new ambulance where they remained for another estimated 20 minutes.

Outside the second ambulance, a ringside physician, California State Athletic Commission personnel, and Thompson Boxing Promotions personnel questioned the new ambulance staff why they were taking so long to transport Mr. Mercado to the hospital; however, Chief Second Morillo was unable to hear their response.

Chief Second Morillo entered the front passenger seat of the second ambulance and the crew transported Mr. Mercado to San Antonio Regional Hospital. Chief Second Morillo had a clear view of Mr. Mercado and saw him vomit while in transit. Chief Second Morillo estimated the second ambulance arrived at San Antonio Regional Hospital about an hour after the bout was stopped.

Second Cornerman Carlos Valdez Interview

Cornerman Valdez reported that prior to the boxing bout, Mr. Mercado appeared to be in high spirits, felt good, was excited, and had no concerns about it. Mr. Mercado had eaten a meal and appeared prepared.

Once the bout commenced, during the rest period following the first round, Cornerman Valdez stood on the boxing ring apron in Mr. Mercado's corner and heard Mr. Mercado tell Chief Second Morrillo that Mr. Acosta had "heavy hands" and he was "feeling the punches." Cornerman Valdez did not return to the apron area until the fight was stopped following the 5th round. Cornerman Valdez translated between Spanish and English between Doctor Khan and Mr. Mercado. Mr. Mercado said that he did not want to continue the bout because he felt a lot of pain in his forehead and back of his head. He added that he was dizzy, but not nauseated. Doctor Khan examined Mr. Mercado and informed his team that Mr. Mercado needed to be taken to a hospital by the onsite ambulance personnel for additional evaluation and treatment. Cornerman Valdez and his team assisted Mr. Mercado out of the boxing ring and to the area where the Symbiosis Ambulance Transport personnel were staged.

Cornerman Valdez left the area and met with Thompson Boxing Promotions personnel to retrieve Mr. Mercado's paycheck for the bout. After collecting the paycheck, he returned to the staged Symbiosis Ambulance Transport area at approximately 2225 hours and witnessed it driving away from the venue. He took a photograph with his cellular telephone which was timestamped at 2225 hours.

Cornerman Valdez learned that Mr. Mercado had been transported to San Antonio Regional Hospital rather than Loma Linda University Medical Center and responded there. Agenda Item #4 October 10, 2023 Page **13** of **19**

Manager Shaddai Godoy Interview

Mr. Godoy has been Mr. Mercado's manager for approximately 8 years. His observations of Mr. Mercado prior to the bout were that Mr. Mercado was in a good mood and confident in his ability to defeat Mr. Acosta.

Mr. Godoy was a second cornerman in Mr. Mercado's corner during the bout and felt that Mr. Mercado had lost the first three rounds. During the 1-minute rest period between the 3rd and 4th rounds, Mr. Godoy told Mr. Mercado he believed Mr. Mercado had lost the first three rounds and if he did not turn it around, the fight would be stopped. Mr. Mercado replied that he understood and that he would do whatever it took to win. Mr. Mercado boxed well in the 4th round, except for being knocked down with an uppercut a few seconds before the round ended; however, Mr. Mercado did not throw many punches in the 5th round according to Mr. Godoy.

Mr. Mercado returned to his corner for the 1-minute break between the 5th and 6th rounds and complained of a headache. Mr. Mercado asked that the fight be stopped.

Referee Armendariz stopped the bout and asked Doctor Khan to examine Mr. Mercado, who remained seated on the boxing stool. Mr. Mercado reported having a headache and blurry vision in his left eye. Doctor Khan ordered Mr. Mercado to be transported to a hospital by ambulance for further evaluation.

Mr. Mercado was escorted to the area of the venue near the staged ambulance. At the location, Thompson Boxing Promotions Alex Camponovo questioned the Symbiosis Ambulance Transport personnel how long it was going to take for the backup second ambulance to arrive at the venue. They replied that it would take 8 minutes.

Mr. Godoy estimated that the second ambulance did not arrive at the venue for approximately 40 minutes. When the second ambulance team arrived, Mr. Godoy heard Doctor Khan question them and advised them that Mr. Mercado needed to be transported immediately; however, the ambulance team ignored Doctor Khan.

Mr. Mercado was ultimately transported to San Antonio Regional Hospital.

Thompson Boxing Promotions Cutman Gerardo Espinoza Interview

Mr. Gerardo Espinoza is a former professional boxer and lives in Tijuana, Mexico. He was hired by Thompson Boxing Promotions to assist in the transportation of Mr. Mercado and his team. He also served as Mr. Mercado's cutman during his bout against Mr. Acosta. During the weekdays prior to the bout, Mr. Espinoza drove the team to various locations near the venue and heard both Mr. Mercado and Chief Second Morillo express confidence that Mr. Mercado would win his upcoming bout against Mr. Acosta.

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During Mr. Mercado's bout, Mr. Espinoza applied ice and Vaseline to Mr. Mercado during the 1-minute rest periods. Following the 5th round, the fight was stopped by Mr. Mercado after Mr. Mercado complained of a headache and pain in his left eye.

Mr. Espinoza had been assigned to be a cutman for several fighters during this boxing event. After completing Mr. Mercado's bout with Mr. Acosta, he moved onto his next bout to serve as a cutman as needed. He had no further contact with Mr. Mercado or his team.

Thompson Boxing Promotions Vice President and Matchmaker Alex Camponovo Interview

Mr. Camponovo learned that the bout between Mr. Mercado and Mr. Acosta had been stopped at approximately 2140 hours. From his ringside seat, he saw Referee Armendariz and the California State Athletic Inspectors inside the boxing ring. Mr. Camponovo asked how the fight ended and one of the inspectors advised him that Mr. Mercado complained to his cornermen of a headache and blurred vision. He was also advised that Mr. Mercado needed to be transported to a medical facility by the onsite ambulance personnel.

Mr. Camponovo walked to the area where the Symbiosis Ambulance Transport personnel were staged. As Mr. Mercado walked nearby, Mr. Camponovo asked him if he felt okay. Mr. Mercado was on his feet, fully responsive, and confirmed that he felt okay.

Following that brief exchange, and while Mr. Mercado was surrounded by his cornermen, doctors, and Symbiosis Ambulance Transport personnel, Mr. Mercado was placed on a gurney and moved to the ambulance, about 10 feet away from where he was standing.

At that point, one of the ambulance personnel, Paramedic Garcia, called his dispatch center with his cellular telephone. Approximately 10 minutes had passed since Mr. Mercado had been escorted from the boxing ring.

While Paramedic Garcia was on the cellular telephone, one of the California State Athletic Inspectors told him that the ambulance unit containing Mr. Mercado could not transport him to the hospital. Mr. Camponovo spoke with Paramedic Garcia who repeated that the ambulance containing Mr. Mercado could not transport him to the medical facility and added that a secondary ambulance was en route and estimated to arrive at the location in approximately 8 minutes.

Mr. Camponovo telephoned his executive assistant, Jeanette Gonzales, who was in the front of the venue, and requested her to call Symbiosis Ambulance Transport dispatch to request that the responding ambulance rush to the venue. Ms. Gonzales called Symbiosis Ambulance Transport dispatch, then called Mr. Camponovo back approximately 4 minutes later. She relayed that she received the same information; the

onsite ambulance would not transport Mr. Mercado and that the second responding one would have to transport him to a medical facility.

Meanwhile, the Symbiosis Ambulance Transport personnel were performing their duties and talking to Mr. Mercado, who appeared fully conscious and responsive. At that point, one of the ringside doctors asked the ambulance personnel what the estimated time of arrival for the responding ambulance was and reiterated that the time needed to travel to Loma Linda University Medical Center was 28 minutes.

Approximately 8 minutes elapsed, and the responding ambulance still had not arrived at the ambulance staging area. Mr. Camponovo asked the Symbiosis Ambulance Transport personnel inside the ambulance containing Mr. Mercado if they knew how long it would take for the backup ambulance to arrive because the boxing event could not continue until it was onsite. One of the personnel asked him for the address to the DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel. Mr. Camponovo provided the address, and the Symbiosis Ambulance Transport team member relayed the information to whomever he was speaking to on his cellular telephone.

The ringside physicians appeared concerned because of the amount of time that had elapsed, a backup ambulance had not arrived, and their requests to have Mr. Mercado transported immediately were not being followed. The minutes kept passing and nothing was happening at all.

Then, Symbiosis Ambulance Transport personnel closed the ambulance doors and drove away from the venue. Mr. Camponovo believed the ambulance personnel finally understood the directions given by the ringside physicians to transport Mr. Mercado to the medical facility and were acting upon their directions.

Mr. Camponovo discussed with Lead Athletic Inspector Villarruel his desire to request the incoming ambulance personnel to remain at the venue for the last remaining boxing bout of the event, so the event could continue. He was told that the incoming ambulance would not be on standby for the event.

Symbiosis Ambulance Transport personnel did not transport Mr. Mercado to the designated medical facility. They drove the ambulance to the public street near one of the entrances of the hotel, near the rear of the venue. While they were moving, an Ontario City Fire Department Engine fire truck stopped near them on the public street. Ontario City Fire Department personnel entered the Symbiosis Ambulance Transport ambulance and began their medical procedures on Mr. Mercado. Mr. Camponovo and an Inspector responded to their location and asked the personnel why Symbiosis Ambulance Transport could not transport Mr. Mercado to the medical facility. An Ontario City Fire Department member replied that it was a "liability." The inspector asked for the Ontario City Fire Department member's name, which he provided to the Inspector.

The ringside physicians responded to the location and instructed the Ontario City Fire Department personnel to transport Mr. Mercado to a medical facility immediately. In a

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very rude fashion, two Ontario City Fire Department members who were inside the ambulance assessing Mr. Mercado yelled back at the doctors and said, "He is our patient! This is on us!" to which the ringside physicians stood down.

Approximately 10-12 minutes later, an American Medical Response ambulance arrived at the location near the Ontario City Fire Department and Symbiosis Ambulance Transport. The personnel transferred Mr. Mercado into the American Medical Response ambulance which took approximately 5 additional minutes. Prior to the new ambulance leaving the location, Inspector Parker asked them which hospital Mr. Mercado was being transported to and the American Medical Response personnel responded that they were transporting Mr. Mercado to San Antonio Regional Hospital.

Mr. Camponovo estimated that it had taken approximately 45 minutes from the time Doctor Khan requested Mr. Mercado to be initially transported until the time the American Medical Response personnel left the venue with Mr. Mercado.

Symbiosis Ambulance Transport Interviews

On August 23, 2023, I visited the Symbiosis Ambulance Transport company's website at <u>https://symbiosiscare.com/contact/</u> and found a Dispatch contact number, (909) 880-0911. At 1340 hours, I telephoned the number and spoke to "Stephanie" and requested their policy and procedural information. She directed me to email Operations Manager Steve Koshmerl at <u>skoshmerl@symbiosiscare.com</u>. At 1342 hours, I sent him an email with several general questions. The email is included as part of this investigation.

On August 25, 2023, I received an email from Mr. Jeff Grange. It appears Mr. Koshmerl forwarded my email to Mr. Grange, who then provided answers to some of the questions. The email is included as part of this investigation.

On August 28, 2023, I sent Mr. Grange an email requesting an electronic copy of the contract for the Symbiosis Ambulance Transport services at the Thompson Boxing Promotions boxing event for the night of July 21, 2023, at the DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel in Ontario, California. The email is included as part of this investigation.

Supervisor Wendy Summers

On August 24, 2023, at 1142 hours, I telephoned Wendy Summers to gather additional information regarding procedural operations and additional information regarding Symbiosis Ambulance Transport. She declined to provide any information and directed me to contact Medical Director Doctor Jeff Grange at (909) 790-9950.

Fixed Post Surveillance Footage

The DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel, located at 222 North Vineyard Avenue, Ontario, CA 91764-4431, contains several fixed post surveillance cameras within the complex and surrounding areas. To obtain an objective and factual overview of the sequence of

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> events that occurred during the Thompson Boxing Productions professional boxing event on July 21, 2023, pursuant to Business and Professions Code Section 18845, California State Athletic Commission Executive Officer Andy Foster signed an Investigative Subpoena to Appear and Produce Documents to the Custodian of Records at the location, dated August 1, 2023. The investigative subpoena was authored by California Department of Consumer Affairs Legal Affairs Division Attorney III Kenneth L. Swenson, signed by Executive Officer Andy Foster and served on Hilton Legal Department Vice President and Senior Counsel Frank Connolly.

DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel personnel provided 9 DVD-R disks to Athletic Inspector Ernesto Martinez. He collected the disks at the hotel and delivered them to Chief Inspector Mark Relyea, who provided them to Inspector David Infante for review of the surveillance footage. The notable events related to the transportation of Mr. Mercado are highlighted below for future reference. The event times are based upon the recollection of the involved personnel and the marked timestamps of respective fixed post surveillance footage. Based upon the locations of the cameras, disks 1 and 9 contained footage relevant to the transportation of Mr. Mercado from the venue to a medical facility. All disks are included as part of this package for future reference if needed. It is unknown if the indicated timestamps on the respective video surveillance footage are synchronized with Greenwich Mean Time, but they appear relatively close.

<u>Disk 1</u>

Disk 1 depicts the rear area ("W BLDG 3") of the hotel where the Symbiosis Ambulance Transport ambulance was parked, backed into a parking space at the rear of the venue. The video footage from video file "ch_2020230721221439.mp4" is referenced and relevant to the investigation. The beginning of the footage is timestamped "2023/07/21 Friday 22:14:39" in the upper left area of the frame and captured the "W BLDG 3" according to the label in the lower right portion of the frame. The end of the footage is timestamped "2023/07/21 Friday 22:56:30" in the upper left area of the frame.

At 22:25:25 hours, the Symbiosis Ambulance Transport ambulance was driven from the parking space, and it exited the frame from left-to-right. At 22:41:23 hours, the Symbiosis Ambulance Transport ambulance re-entered the frame from right-to-left, and the driver backed it into the same parking space where it had previously been parked.

According to the timestamp of recording "ch_20230721225630.mp4"at 23:27:31 hours, the Symbiosis Ambulance Transport ambulance was driven out of the frame from left-to-right, seemingly at the conclusion of the boxing event.

<u>Disk 9</u>

Disk 9 depicts the DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel north parking lot and public street, East Convention Center Way, where Symbiosis Ambulance Transport personnel drove their

ambulance and met Ontario City Fire Department personnel on the public street near the hotel parking lot entrance/exit driveway.

The video footage from video file "ch47_20230721220305" is referenced and relevant to the investigation. It is labeled "NORTH GATES (0)" in the upper left area of the frame and captured footage beginning on "2023-07-21 22:03:05" and ending at "2023-07-21 22:59:01" according to the timestamp in the lower left area of the frame.

At 22:25:41 hours, an Ontario City Fire Department fire truck with its overhead emergency lights activated traveled eastbound on East Convention Center Way and stopped just west of the entrance/exit driveway of the hotel. Simultaneously, the Symbiosis Ambulance Transport ambulance exited the venue parking lot and stopped near the entrance/exit driveway. At 22:34:54 hours, an American Medical Response ambulance entered the frame traveling eastbound through the DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel parking lot with its overhead emergency lights activated. It stopped near the Symbiosis Ambulance Transport ambulance and its personnel disembarked. They removed a gurney from the ambulance and transferred Mr. Mercado from the Symbiosis Ambulance Transport gurney to the American Medical Response gurney. At 22:37:10 hours, the gurney containing Mr. Mercado was placed inside the American Medical Response ambulance. At 22:39:44 hours, the American Medical Response ambulance left the scene traveling westbound on East Convention Center Way. At 22:40:14 hours, the Ontario City Fire Department fire truck left the scene. It made a U-turn and traveled westbound on East Convention Center Way and out of frame. A few seconds later at 22:40:36 hours, the Symbiosis Ambulance Transport ambulance re-entered the hotel driveway and traveled southbound through the hotel parking lot and out of view from the camera.

<u>Timeline</u>

The timeline is based on interviews of multiple individuals associated with the boxing event, broadcasted video of the bout, and fixed post surveillance cameras at the venue.

- 2135 hours Approximate start of the bout between Edy Valencia Mercado and George Acosta.
- 2155 hours Approximate end of the bout between Edy Valencia Mercado and George Acosta.
- 2158 hours Approximate time when Doctor Khan notified Symbiosis Ambulance Transport personnel that Mr. Mercado required to be transported to the pre-designated medical facility as determined during the Evacuation Plan.
- 2208 hours Approximate time that Mr. Mercado was seated near the staging area.
- 2218 hours Approximate time that Mr. Mercado was placed on a gurney and

into the Symbiosis Ambulance Transport ambulance.

- 2225 hours The Symbiosis Ambulance Transport ambulance was moved from its staged parking stall.
- 2225 hours An Ontario City Fire Department fire truck arrived on East Convention Center Way.
- 2225 hours The Symbiosis Ambulance Transport ambulance personnel met Ontario City Fire Department fire truck on East Convention Center Way.
- 2234 hours An American Medical Response ambulance arrived at the venue.
- 2237 hours The gurney containing Mr. Mercado was removed from the Symbiosis Ambulance Transport ambulance and Mr. Mercado was transferred into another gurney and placed inside the American Medical Response ambulance.
- 2239 hours The American Medical Response ambulance departed the location.
- 2241 hours The Symbiosis Ambulance Transport ambulance was reparked in the previous staged parking stall behind the DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel.



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MEMORANDUM

DATE	October 13, 2023
то	Members of the Advisory Committee on Medical & Safety Standards
VIA	Andy Foster, Executive Officer California State Athletic Commission
VIA	Mark Relyea, Chief Athletic Inspector California State Athletic Commission
FROM	David Infante, Athletic Inspector California State Athletic Commission
SUBJECT	Agenda Item # 4- Discussion and Possible Action to Make Recommendations to the Commission Regarding the Investigation of the Medical Evacuation of Edy Valencia Mercado, Event # 4274 (Thompson Boxing Promotions) held at the Doubletree Ontario on July 21, 2023.

Scheduled Meeting with Doctor Jeff Grange

The purpose of this memorandum is to provide an overview of a scheduled meeting with "Symbiosis Ambulance Transport" President Dr. Jeff Grange to procure documentation for the California State Athletic Commission Medical Advisory Committee. This documentation pertains to the particulars surrounding the "Thompson Boxing Promotions" boxing event that took place on Friday, July 21, 2023. It specifically focuses on the circumstances surrounding the transportation of boxer Edy Valencia Mercado from the venue to a medical facility.

Email Communication with Doctor Grange

Over the past two months, I have been in correspondence with President Dr. Jeff Grange of "Symbiosis Ambulance Transport" through email. On August 23, 2023, Dr. Grange responded to some procedural inquiries I had made and extended an invitation to visit the "Symbiosis Ambulance Transport" headquarters, situated at 1801 Orange Tree Lane, Redlands. He expressed the readiness to assist with any further requirements, stating, "to stop by our headquarters and we can get you whatever is needed." Agenda Item #4 Supplemental Information October 13, 2023 Page **2** of **3**

• See the attached email for reference.

On October 3, 2023, we confirmed a meeting scheduled for October 11, 2023, at 12:00 p.m. to be conducted at the "Symbiosis Ambulance Transport" in Redlands. Prior to the meeting, I emailed Dr. Grange a request to produce:

- Any and all writings, as defined by Evidence Code section 250, constituting the contracts between Set Medics LLC, Thompson Boxing Promotions and/or Symons Emergency Medical Specialties, Inc. doing business as Symbiosis Ambulance, for the provision of ambulance and paramedic services at the event.
- Any and all writings, as defined by Evidence Code section 250, relating to the medical evacuation itself including the paramedic reports and run sheet for the evacuation.

October 11, 2023, Meeting

I visited the headquarters of "Symbiosis Ambulance Transport" and had a meeting with Dr. Jeff Grange, Critical Care Transport Nurse Manager Dawn Downs, and another individual named "Jerry" who was present during the meeting, though he did not actively participate. The meeting lasted approximately one hour and was conducted in an amicable manner. Dr. Grange promptly provided me with the "Symbiosis Patient Care Report" of Mr. Edy Valencia, dated July 21, 2023, purportedly authored by Brendon Garcia. A copy of this report is appended to the memorandum.

Dr. Grange and Nurse Manager Downs explained to me that their company is engaged by event promoters to furnish ambulance services for combat events in California through an intermediary. This intermediary forwards a request via email specifying the required number of ambulances and personnel for each event. Personnel from Symbiosis Ambulance Transport acknowledge the request and subsequently send an invoice to the intermediary following the event. All transactions are conducted via email, and no formal contracts are in place.

For the Thompson Boxing Promotions event at the DoubleTree in Ontario on July 21, 2023, "Symbiosis Ambulance Transport" was contacted to provide one ambulance along with the necessary staff. The event promoter did not make arrangements for a secondary or backup ambulance, nor did they cover the costs for additional resources.

I requested any electronic or other forms of communication between "Symbiosis Ambulance Transport" and the third party, promoter, or any other entity that would aid the CSAC Medical Advisory Committee in gaining a comprehensive understanding of the services and care rendered during the event. Dr. Grange promptly agreed to forward all relevant communications and documentation to me via email. Agenda Item #4 Supplemental Information October 13, 2023 Page **3** of **3**

As of October 16, 2023, I have not received any correspondence from Dr. Grange or any member of his staff.

Follow Up Subpoena

On October 12, 2023, California State Athletic Commission Chief Inspector Mark Relyea emailed me a copy of an Investigative Subpoena to Appear and Produce Documents signed by Executive Officer Andy Foster on October 10, 2023, directing the Custodian of Records for Symons Emergency Medical Specialties to provide specific records regarding the boxing event on July 21, 2023, at the DoubleTree Ontario Hotel.

On the same date, I emailed the Investigative Subpoena to Appear and Produce Documents to Doctor Jeff Grange (jgrange@symbiosiscare.com) and Critical Care Transport Nurse Manager Downs (ddowns@symbiosiscare.com), and carbon copied Chief Inspector Mark Relyea. In the narrative text of the email, I wrote:

"Doctor Grange and Critical Care Transport Nurse Manager Downs, thank you for taking the time to meet with me yesterday. As we discussed, the California State Athletic Commission is seeking clarification regarding the facts and circumstances on July 21, 2023, regarding Mr. Valencia Mercado's post-fight medical care. As we discussed, we seek to ensure the safety of best quality of care for combat sport participants.

I appreciate the ambulance report and would like to ensure that the CSAC Medical Advisory Committee receives any and all information regarding the circumstances of the event.

To further this, attached is a subpoena for specific information that will aid CSAC in fully understanding the events to improve our care when a fighter is injured. Executive Officer Andy Foster, through proper channels, has requested a subpoena for the listed documents and information listed in the attached subpoena.

I have informed Chief Inspector Mark Relyea of your request to provide additional information and feedback.

Athletic Inspector Larry Ervin traveled to your location today, October 12, 2023, to provide you with a copy of the attached subpoena.

Respectfully,

Athletic Inspector David Infante"

• See the attached email for reference.