

MIXED MARTIAL ARTS — SAFETY ENCLOSURE

**86. Ms A. SANDERSON to the Minister for Sport and Recreation:**

I refer to the sport of mixed martial arts.

- (1) Can the minister explain to the house how the safety enclosure will protect competitors?
- (2) Where else in Australia or the world is the enclosure used?
- (3) Whose advice has this government followed in approving the enclosure?

**Mr M.P. MURRAY replied:**

- (1)–(3) Today we fulfilled another Labor Party pre-election promise to allow the mesh perimeter to be used in martial arts contests. After some discussions and some reports were completed, we were really pleased to be able to do this. It was something that did not happen under a Liberal government, despite the sport itself pleading to have that mesh around the outside of the ring to look after the safety of people in the arena. Western Australia was the only place in the world that was allowing mixed martial arts without a mesh perimeter. People were falling through the boxing ring-type situations they were using, falling onto the concourse. They were not getting hurt in the ring under the previous government's rules; they were getting hurt outside of the ring!

**Ms M.J. Davies** interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** Leader of the National Party, I call you to order for the second time.

**Mr M.P. MURRAY:** Where was I? Not only that, requests to run martial arts competitions in Western Australia have been knocked back because the organisers could not continue with the process without the mesh around the ring. Now, we not only have safety for the competitors—in Western Australia, it is a small sport; it is not a huge sport—but, if we wanted a major event, we had to do that for them to come over, and be able to be safe and fair.

**Ms M.J. Davies:** It is not about safety.

**Mr M.P. MURRAY:** I have not been in this job very long, but I think I have made more decisions in a couple of weeks than you made in a couple of years. I am not too fussed about what the member is saying; I am saying to her that we are getting on with the job. We will allow people to act out their sports in a safe environment.