

TOURISM EVENTS — MARGARET RIVER PRO

**268. Mr D.T. PUNCH to the Minister for Tourism:**

How did this government secure the future of the Margaret River Pro and what impact will this have on the south west economy?

Several members interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** Members!

**Mr P. PAPALIA replied:**

I thank the member for Bunbury.

**Mr J.E. McGrath:** Sell the naming rights!

**The SPEAKER:** Yes, I have got your naming rights! Member for South Perth, I call you to order.

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** I thank the member for Bunbury for his interest in all things south west, including the Margaret River Pro, from his previous profession as well as his current one.

**Ms L. Mettam** interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** Member for Vasse!

**Mr D.T. Redman:** Welcome to my electorate!

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** It is not the member for Warren-Blackwood's anymore, is it? It is the member for Vasse's.

**The SPEAKER:** Minister, through the Chair!

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** The interesting thing about the Margaret River Pro, noting some of the interjections that I have received in the last couple of minutes, is that on becoming the Minister for Tourism, one of the very first briefing notes I read from Tourism Western Australia was notification that we had lost the Margaret River Pro as a world championship tour event. Not that we, as in the current government, had lost it, but the ineptitude and lack of action of the previous government had lost it. It was gone.

**Mr D.T. Redman:** Did you read the bit of the briefing note that said what was invested over the last four years?

**The SPEAKER:** No, but you are going to lose a bit of investment, member for Warren-Blackwood.

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** In the words of Mark Lane from Surfing WA, it had no pulse, and the member knows that because she was at the press conference in Margaret River when he said that. It was dead and buried. We went out of our way to publicly support it.

*Point of Order*

**Mr S.K. L'ESTRANGE:** The minister is referring to a document that he received that said that the Margaret River Pro had been cancelled. I ask that the minister table that document.

**The SPEAKER:** That is not a point of order. He said that the first thing he got when he became the minister was a briefing note. He did not say that he has the briefing note here.

*Questions without Notice Resumed*

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** Regardless of that, I was not reading from anything; I was speaking from memory, and it is not very difficult to remember what I read.

We directed Tourism Western Australia and Surfing WA to go as hard as they could to recover that event. It is a significant event and it would not have been a significant event if it had dropped down to a world surfing leg event.

**Mr S.K. L'Estrange** interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** Leader of government business.

**Mr S.K. L'Estrange:** Manager.

**The SPEAKER:** The manager of government business.

**Mr S.K. L'Estrange:** Manager of opposition business.

**The SPEAKER:** The member has gone up in the world.

**Mr S.K. L'Estrange:** No, that's always been the case.

**The SPEAKER:** I call you to order for the first time whatever you are!

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** As a world championship tour event, the Margaret River Pro results in double the number of overnight visitor stays to the region during the course of the event. It is a significant event, and it would have been a significant blow if it had been lost. Fortunately, we have managed to recover it. It is not just a significant tourism event; it is also probably—in fact, it is—the only annual world-class, top-tier sporting event that is held in this state on a regular basis. That is why it was so important to try to retain it, not just because it has an incredible reach, with the webcast reaching 3.5 million people, 80 per cent of whom are overseas. Unlike some of the fluffy figures that have been claimed —

**Ms L. Mettam** interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** Member for Vasse, you have come back very exuberant. Just be quiet so you can hear the answer. I call you to order for the first time.

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** Unlike some of the fluffy figures that have been claimed about television audiences, naming rights and the like, the difference with a webcast is the ability to know exactly who is watching, where they are watching and how long they are watching for. It is real data and real numbers, and it is a valid argument that that event has a significant reach. It is an incredible event. Between now and the termination of this agreement, we will be —

**Ms L. Mettam** interjected.

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** Does the member want to make herself heard or just make noise when I am speaking?

**The SPEAKER:** Minister, through the Chair.

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** Over the next two years we will work with Tourism WA and Surfing WA in an endeavour to extend that event as a championship tour event into the future, because it is an incredibly valuable event and I am very thankful that we were able to recover it.