

Pages of spreadsheet documents seen by Business News provide a window into the normally secret world of tourism-related spending by the state government.

The leaked documents include purchase order numbers, suppliers' names, requisition details, foreign currency payments and explanatory notes. Since coming to office in 2017, the government's default position has been one of refusing to tell the public what it spends to bring sports teams, musical acts and other forms of entertainment to Western Australia.

The premier, tourism and sports ministers have held backslapping press conferences trumpeting their success in having secured an event. Taxpayers, however, have been left in the dark when it comes to how much of their money was used to get the deal done.

They repeat ad nauseum how reckless it would be to disclose the dollar amounts poured into showcasing soccer teams or cage-fighting contests.

The arguments behind the commercial-in-confidence stance taken by this and other governments might well be sound, but the political hypocrisy attached to the position must not be overlooked.

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