

# Response to Minister Kennedy – October 9 Letter

**Subject:** Manitoba Combative Sports Regulation – Transparency and BJJ Licensing

Dear Minister Kennedy,

Thank you for your October 9 correspondence regarding Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu (BJJ) under the *Combative Sports Regulation*. I appreciate your acknowledgement of our continued engagement and the opportunity to respond.

To be very clear, every event I have organized has met or exceeded MCSC standards: permits submitted, competitor lists provided, licensed athletes verified (if known), and event safety protocols exceeded. Despite this consistent compliance, recent correspondence from both the MCSC and your office continues to reference sanctions including fines and **even imprisonment**. This language is deeply discouraging to those of us who have been partners in building safe, transparent sport in Manitoba.

## 1. Longstanding Compliance and Contribution

Since the beginning of regulation development, I have supported oversight for our sport.

- I was the **first BJJ promoter to endorse the MCSC regulation** concept, and was in the Legislation gallery when it was first introduced.
- I am the **author of the “Sport and Event Safety Requirements Standard”**—the very document referenced on the MCSC’s official *BJJ Event Permit Application*.
- I have hosted multiple referee-training sessions for Manitoba officials and offered the MCSC use of the **BJJ athlete-tracking software** used by all provincial BJJ events to streamline licensing and compliance.

These contributions were made to strengthen—not challenge—the regulatory framework.

## 2. Timeline of Engagement and Contradictory Commitments

Our community’s primary concern has always been **transparency around licensing fees**, not control of them.

- **April 2024 – August 2024:** Government and MCSC representatives, including Julia Tetrault and John McDonald, repeatedly stated that the \$30 licensing fee would be **reinvested back into the sport**.
- **May 20 2025:** We met with the full MCSC specifically to discuss fee utilization.
  - **MCSC Exec Director: John MacDonald (Meeting Chair)**
  - **Board Members: Anita Prawdzik, Ronald Murray Allan, and**
  - **Directors: Joel Fingard, and Keenan Rumpel**

During that meeting, members clearly stated for example:

“The Commission is 100 percent behind giving the money back into the community.”

“We asked the government ‘Do you have a problem with us giving it back?’ They said that’s up to us to decide.”

The Commission further discussed establishing a **subcommittee with community representation** and even outlined options for quarterly or as-needed distributions for referee training, safety initiatives, and athlete development.

- **June 2025:** As a promoter, I fully complied at our sanctioned event, submitting all competitor data three days in advance. The Commission’s licensing process itself, not our compliance, caused the only delays that weekend regarding unlicensed athletes..
- **October 2025:** The MCSC public communiqué and your letter reversed the earlier position, now asserting that license fees are “limited to operational use.”

This abrupt change directly contradicts the Commission’s own statements made in the presence of multiple board members and recorded contemporaneously. No explanation or legal interpretation has been provided to justify this reversal.

While over \$30,000 was allocated for MMA referee training and certification, yet we apparently cannot secure referee training funding for our sport.

### 3. Impact and Request for Clarity

The inconsistency between the May commitments and the current stance has eroded trust within Manitoba’s largest combat-sport community. Our athletes—hundreds across dozens of academies—were told their fees would return to sport development. Nearly a year later, no transparent accounting or reinvestment has occurred, despite thousands of dollars collected.

Accordingly, the Manitoba Jiu-Jitsu Association respectfully requests:

1. A written explanation of the legal or policy change that now restricts license-fee use to internal operations restricting the MCSC ability to fund our sports growth and development; and
2. A transparent accounting of what the BJJ license-fee revenues can be and will be used towards.

### 4. Path Forward

The Manitoba Jiu-Jitsu Association remains fully committed to collaboration. We seek (and always have) **accountability, clarity, and transparency** in how the fees paid by our hundreds of athletes are used. We would welcome a joint meeting with your department and MCSC leadership to reconcile the May 2025 record with the current interpretation and to re-establish a transparent process that supports athlete safety and sport development.

Thank you for your attention and for your continued service to Manitoba's sport community. I look forward to your clarification and to a renewed spirit of cooperation between the government, the MCSC, and the BJJ community.

Sincerely,

**Randal Boiteau**

President, Manitoba Jiu-Jitsu Association

Organizer, Manitoba Open Organizer

Owner, Socius Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu

cc: Premier Wab Kinew | Deputy Minister Jeff Hnatiuk | MCSC Co-Executive Directors Keenan Rumpel & Joel Fingard | MJA Board of directors | MJA Members