



Quirk had power to upgrade radios, says MP

Labor 'hypocrisy': Ellis

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Brian Ellis has accused Shadow Police Minister Margaret Quirk of performing a political stunt regarding her claims that police communications equipment are inadequate.

In Geraldton last week, Ms Quirk said police regional radio networks needed to be urgently replaced.

She brought attention to a situation last year when police attended a



Brian Ellis

serious motor vehicle accident near Geraldton and had to flag down passing trucks to use their two-way radios.

Although Mr Ellis firmly believed in her argument he said it was the ultimate form of hypocrisy because he had fought for this very cause when the Labor Government was in power.

"Where was Margaret Quirk's concern between February and June 2008 when I lobbied the then Labor Government four times for a commitment to upgrading country police radio systems?" Mr Ellis said.

"She's blaming us for a situation they should have taken care of in the last seven and a half years."

Mr Ellis said Ms Quirk should "hang her head in shame" because a near mirror situation occurred when her party was in power and they sat idly by and didn't upgrade the police communications network.

"Margaret Quirk was a Minister during the period police officers between Geraldton and Dongara were having to ask passing truckies to radio for help for accident victims.

"Sometimes police had to leave the scene of an incident to make radio contact from the nearest high ground."

Mr Ellis said he had brought this to the attention of the Government of the day time after time but it was met with inaction.

According to Ms Quirk there has been no funding allocated in the forward estimates for the new network, which she said would cost between \$80 million and \$100 million.

"The current Government is operating in constrained economic times, but I spoke with Police Minister Rob Johnson on Friday morning and he has assured me that he remains committed to improving the country police radio network," Mr Ellis said.