



## WA government phone and laptop losses rise

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The theft and loss of taxpayer-funded mobile phones and laptops in WA has risen to more than \$480,000 in the past year, despite a promised crack down on missing equipment, the opposition says.

More than 700 laptops and mobile phones worth a total of \$484,000 went missing last year, which is about \$40,000 more than the previous year, opposition leader Mark McGowan says.

Labor says the Education Department lost 280 computers and 29 mobile phones, worth a total of \$242,900.

Police lost \$61,212 and the Health Department lost \$34,581 worth of laptops and phones.

Mr McGowan said when the issue was raised last year, Premier Colin Barnett said the losses were unacceptable and promised a strategy to stop the thefts and losses.

This is an extraordinary waste of taxpayers' money and once again Mr Barnett has made a promise that he has failed to keep, Mr McGowan said on Sunday.

There were serious security issues related to the loss of equipment from WA Police and the Health Department due to the data they might contain, he said.

Parents will be especially angry that Mr Barnett has allowed so much waste from the Department of Education at a time when he is cutting millions of dollars from WA schools, Mr McGowan said.

The premier said the losses represented a "small proportion" of the devices issued to government departments but were still a significant concern.

"The security of these items is a departmental responsibility and I am disappointed agencies have not succeeded in reducing losses," Mr Barnett said.

"I will soon be meeting with the auditor-general on a range of matters and as part of this will be seeking his assistance on steps available to agencies to better address this issue."

Mr Barnett said the issue of loss and theft within government agencies had been an one faced by successive governments.

<http://www.watoday.com.au/it-pro/government-it/wa-government-phone-and-laptop-losses-rise-20140817-1051dg.html>