

Elferink returns fire over 'smoko van' accusation

NIGEL ADLAM

March 4th, 2010

DOES CLP MLA John Elferink's van smoke?

Labor MLA Karl Hampton says the 1976 Nissan smokes like a chimney and is an environmental hazard.

Mr Elferink says: "That's rubbish. It doesn't smoke - I've just checked."

The van dominated political debate this week after the Opposition finance spokesman said he was proud to drive his NT Government-issued Prius hybrid car because it saved on greenhouse gases.

He said it disappointed him that some other MLAs didn't show the same "restraint".

Mr Hampton insinuated Mr Elferink was being hypocritical because he also had a "little bus".

"I thought you got rid of it," he told the Member for Port Darwin. "I was going to congratulate you because I have seen it a couple of times and there has been a lot of smoke coming out. I am worried about what sort of impact that might have."

Mr Elferink said he only potted about his inner city electorate in the van, which he bought in 2008 for \$3600.

The van even has a sponsor - former chief minister Shane Stone pays the registration and insurance.

"I'm proud of my little van," Mr Elferink said.

"It does a good job. And it does not smoke."

And he brought the bus to the Northern Territory News office and turned on the engine to prove it.



John Elferink denies accusations that his van is a smoking environmental hazard. Picture: KATRINA BRIDGEFORD