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The Honourable Jackie Jacobson, Speaker

Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories

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YELLOWKNIFE, NORTHWEST TERRITORIES**Thursday, February 7, 2013****Members Present**

Hon. Glen Abernethy, Hon. Tom Beaulieu, Ms. Bisaro, Mr. Blake, Mr. Bouchard, Mr. Bromley, Mr. Dolynny, Mrs. Groenewegen, Mr. Hawkins, Hon. Jackie Jacobson, Hon. Jackson Lafferty, Hon. Bob McLeod, Hon. Robert McLeod, Mr. Menicoche, Hon. Michael Miltenberger, Mr. Moses, Mr. Nadli, Hon. David Ramsay, Mr. Yakeleya

The House met at 1:30 p.m.

Budget Address**Prayer**

---Prayer

SPEAKER (Hon. Jackie Jacobson): Before we get started, I would like to take this opportunity to recognize one of the greatest pilots from the North, Robert Murray Heath, and to extend my condolences on behalf of the House and the Northwest Territories to his wife and family.

Bob Heath did what many only yearn for; he followed his dream to be a pilot, adventurer, husband, father and best friend to all he met. His flying career brought him many adventures to all parts of our world, many with his work family at Kenn Borek and Aklak Air in Inuvik. Everyone in the Beaufort-Delta and all my constituents can say they flew with him. Every community member will sadly miss Bob. He was always willing to openly share his wisdom, sense of humor, and empathy with all that joined his journey.

Grandpa Bob, or Captain Bob, leaves a path of admiration and inspiration for all those he knew. He was always willing to share his expertise, and inspired to absorb new knowledge every day. He would always say, "Strive to learn something new each day of your life." Bob travelled his path through love for his family, love for his work, and love for all the people in all the communities he visited.

Bob is survived by his wife, Lucy Heath, and their children Angela Sinclair, Helen (Joe) Prest, and Warren Geno; six grandchildren, Cheney, Delareese, Marshall, Gordon, Miguel, Tyler and Rainalee. Also left to cherish his memory are his nephews Cory (Erica) Domenichini and Kerry Haslett, and niece Kelly Haslett.

Bob was predeceased by his parents, Robert Heath Sr., and mother, Elizabeth "Betty" nee Hunt, and his beloved sister Gail Haslett.

My thoughts and prayers are with his family and loved ones. May you find strength and comfort in one another.

Item 2, budget address. Mr. Miltenberger.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This Assembly started with a four-year budget plan, the first two years focussing on fiscal discipline to build our cash reserve in order that in the final two years we would have an enhanced infrastructure budget. The budget presented today is the second budget of the 17th Legislative Assembly and represents a cooperative approach, enabling us to meet the objectives of our four-year plan.

We have been consistent in our message that the government's fiscal plan must include operating surpluses to fund infrastructure and pay down short-term debt. While we are prepared to borrow for infrastructure, we must ensure that borrowing is affordable and that we retain the required fiscal capacity to continue to deliver high quality programs and services in future years.

Our reality is that revenue growth is slowing, making budgeting choices even more difficult. Members of this Legislative Assembly, through the various standing committees, have helped work through the implications of those choices, and I want to thank them for their efforts and support during this process.

Last fall we brought the discussion about budgeting choices to the seven regional centres, in Budget Dialogue 2012, to explain our fiscal challenges to Northerners and give people the opportunity to offer feedback on whether we are getting these choices right. Participants provided valuable ideas about ways to do better with what we have and where any new funding should be spent. We heard that participants wanted to address immediate needs through prevention, fix current programs by doing things better or more efficiently, put more resources into infrastructure, and take full advantage of economic opportunities in an environmentally sustainable way.

This budget directly reflects the input we received from the standing committees and Budget Dialogue 2012, with investments in mental health and addictions prevention, midwifery services, support for economic development, energy efficiency, and innovation in health service delivery.

By working more efficiently and effectively, we can continue to provide a high level of services and

make strategic investments to achieve our vision of strong individuals, families and communities while maintaining fiscal sustainability.

This Assembly's continuing collaboration in managing expenditure growth is critical, given the uncertainty still evident in the global economy. We may feel far away from the turmoil in global markets, but shifts in the global economy impact us directly and swiftly. There are many areas of concern, including the continuing European debt crisis, fragile economic recovery in the United States, slowing growth in key developing economies such as China and India, and the accumulation of household debt in Canada. All of these situations pose risks for the NWT economy and the GNWT budget.

Here at home there are some positive economic signs. Several key measures of economic health, including labour income, wholesale trade and retail trade, have recovered to pre-recession levels. The number of Northerners working has returned to 2008 levels. Expenditures for mineral exploration grew 44 percent in 2012.

Despite our steady economic situation, real gross domestic product growth in the territory lags other jurisdictions. This is largely because we are heavily influenced by carat production at our diamond mines, which has peaked. The forecast for 2013 is also flat. At the same time, the absence of growth in our population is affecting employers as well as government revenues.

We know we must do more to diversify our economy.

We need to do what we can to support a healthy mineral exploration sector and to provide strategic investments to help create the right economic conditions for new mines to develop. We look forward to the completion of the Mineral Development Strategy started last year for this reason. New resource developments are critical for the economic growth as our current mines begin to wind down.

Pending regulatory approvals and the right economic conditions, up to seven new mines could begin production in the next five years to help keep our mining sector strong. Additionally, the socio-economic agreements negotiated with these major mining interests help ensure maximum benefits go to the people and businesses of the NWT.

Opportunities outside mining are coming from the Sahtu where companies have committed to more than \$600 million in exploration over the next five years. This year, spending in the Sahtu could be over \$100 million, with hundreds of associated jobs.

We also celebrate the recent efforts of our northern entrepreneurs in the NWT who are diversifying our economy with ventures in egg production, market gardens, wood pellets, film, and diamond polishing.

In the future, projects such as the Mackenzie Valley Fibre Optic Link and the continued development of the Inuvik Satellite Station Facility will provide opportunities for further diversification of the NWT economy.

The NWT's outlook for revenue growth over the medium term is modest. Overall, we expect less than 2 percent growth in revenues over the next three years; a fraction of the 6 percent annual growth we experienced over the last decade. The primary reason is that the Territorial Formula Financing, which is 70 percent of our revenues, is not expected to grow over the next two years as our population growth remains stagnant and provinces reduce spending.

Slower revenue growth makes living within our means an even greater challenge. Combining spending pressures with the need for operating surpluses to fund much needed infrastructure reinforces the importance of keeping spending growth below revenue growth to ensure we have operating surpluses to make these projects happen. Without surpluses, every dollar spent on infrastructure is borrowed money, bringing us closer to our borrowing limit and leaving no flexibility to respond to potential economic downturn or make strategic investments to support economic development and grow our economy.

To ensure operating surpluses, the fiscal strategy going forward will be to constrain expenditure growth in existing programs and services. This means capping forced growth at \$25 million in 2014-2015 and 1.5 percent growth thereafter. This will allow us to start addressing our growing infrastructure deficit by increasing infrastructure investment by \$50 million in 2014-2015 and 2015-2016. This strategy also allows us to make additional investments, such as the Inuvik to Tuktoyaktuk highway and the Mackenzie Valley Fibre Optic Link.

Restrained operating expenditure growth ensures that infrastructure investment can be maintained. It will also allow us to maintain a \$100 million emergency cushion between our debt and the federally legislated borrowing limit of \$800 million. We currently have \$190 million in borrowing room, but without surpluses to help fund infrastructure, that borrowing room could quickly erode.

With debt servicing costs at less than 1 percent of revenues, one of the lowest debt-to-GDP ratios in the country, we are confident in our ability to meet financial obligations without having to limit programs and services to pay our debt. Our commitment to the Fiscal Responsibility Policy, which requires us to generate sufficient operating surpluses to pay for half our capital costs and limits debt service payments to 5 percent of revenues, is critical to keeping debt levels sustainable. Our

seventh straight top-rated Aa1 credit rating from Moody's Investors supports this.

This government is committed to responsible management of resource revenues for the benefit of current and future generations. This means we will not use revenues from non-renewable resources to fund government programs and services. Our fiscal strategy provides for infrastructure investment, and as such, our share of resource revenues will fund additional strategic infrastructure, pay down debt, and be saved in the Heritage Fund so that future generations can share in the benefits.

Mr. Speaker, this budget's \$113 million operating surplus demonstrates our commitment to living within our means and generates the cash required to fund half of the capital budget we approved last fall. Total budgeted expenditures will grow by \$56 million in 2013-14 over last year's budgeted amount. This includes \$42 million to address increased salary costs and other forced growth pressures for existing services, \$22 million for investments in priority initiatives, and \$19 million allocated to other adjustments and amortization. These increases will be partially offset by \$27 million in sunsets.

Despite our fiscal constraints, supporting healthy and educated individuals living in safe communities continues to be a priority for the GNWT. Nearly 60 cents of every dollar are budgeted for education, health care, social services, housing, policing and corrections programs.

The increase in our operations expenditures will be financed through an estimated \$1.6 billion in revenue, an increase of 2.6 percent from the 2012-13 revised estimates.

Short-term debt is projected to be \$151 million at the end of 2013-14. When combined with our long-term debt, and the debt of the NWT Power Corporation, NWT Housing Corporation and other public agencies, total GNWT borrowing will be \$581 million on March 31, 2014, providing \$219 million in borrowing room.

Mr. Speaker, we will not be asking Northerners to bear a greater tax burden, and have not introduced new taxes or raised rates in this budget. In an environment with a high cost of living and doing business, stagnant population growth, and economic uncertainty, leaving less money in the pockets of Northerners would be a deterrent to economic growth.

This budget does continue our policy of indexing fees to inflation where possible and practical. Steady and stable indexing avoids large, painful adjustments in the future.

Mr. Speaker, our approach to spending in this budget reflects the discussions in this Assembly and the broad priorities we heard during Budget

Dialogue 2012 sessions. First, we are targeting spending in key front-line services that emphasize prevention and a holistic approach to well-being. Second, we are targeting spending to support sustainable economic development. Understanding the pressures that slowing revenue growth will have in the future, participants advocated growing our revenue base by growing the economy, not introducing new taxes. And third, we are making investments to improve the effectiveness and efficiencies of existing programs.

The saying "an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure" was true when we heard it from our grandparents and parents, and it is true today.

Prevention spans a wide spectrum of how we do things, from immunizing children against disease to providing the same children with an educational foundation for a great future. Using a proactive and preventative approach will help achieve this Assembly's vision of strong individuals, families and communities.

Dealing more effectively with mental health and addictions reduces other societal ills. Enhancing addictions treatment programs is one of the priorities of this government and was echoed repeatedly in budget dialogue discussions.

This budget responds with \$1.15 million in support of the initiatives within A Shared Path Towards Wellness, the mental health and addictions action plan which was launched last year. Of this, \$250,000 focuses on youth, including investments for at-risk youth, mental health and addictions integration into the school health curriculum, and development of a youth treatment model. Prevention, early intervention and education programs for our young people have the greatest potential for reducing the burden of addictions in the Northwest Territories.

As part of the \$1.15 million, we will use \$200,000 to fund work with communities to expand on-the-land addictions program options, building on recommendations from the Minister's Forum on Addictions and Wellness. The investment also covers initiatives aimed at improving collaborative case management for clients accessing services from various government departments. Frustration with duplication and poor client management across departments was repeatedly heard in our budget dialogue consultations, where a client-centred approach was advocated. We are working hard to address this issue. The remainder of the \$1.15 million will be targeted to developing detox program models, improving case management for people dealing with mental health issues, and ensuring that all NWT residents have access to mental health treatment and follow-up services through the use of telehealth.

Addictions have many impacts on society, not the least of which is crime. Most offenders admitted into

NWT corrections facilities suffer from some sort of substance abuse problem. The need to address addictions in the correctional system is profound. This budget provides \$339,000 to continue the pilot Alcohol and Drug Treatment Program at the South Mackenzie Correctional Centre.

Prevention is also about getting all our children off to the right start, so that happy and healthy childhoods lay the foundation for healthy and productive adults. Every year there are over 700 births in the NWT, or about two babies every day. This budget makes several investments that will put those little ones on the best possible footing.

This year the GNWT invested over \$1 million in early childhood development. As part of this, work is underway for a renewed framework for early childhood development in the NWT, a public awareness campaign, and the opening of child and family resource centres in two communities. This investment in promoting healthy childhoods will continue in 2013-14.

We know that support for mothers during pregnancy and childbirth contributes significantly to how well their children do later on. Midwifery services can be an important component of this support. This budget invests \$449,000 as a first step to expand access to midwifery care throughout the NWT. This investment will stabilize Fort Smith's Midwifery Program, establish a set of program standards, engage communities on expanding the program further, and support planning activities for a Hay River Community Midwifery Program.

We are also investing in children by setting aside \$142,000 to expand the vaccination program for children in response to recommendations made by national expert bodies on pediatric immunization programs. Immunization is one of the most cost-effective public health programs, and universal coverage of vaccines for children and youth offers them better protection against potentially life-threatening diseases.

Investing in our children is the wisest move we can make. Last year we celebrated several important moments in supporting our children's education with the opening of Inuvik's East Three School and the launch of the residential school curriculum, the first comprehensive teaching guide of its kind in Canada. This year we are investing over \$150 million in K to 12 education.

Just as we need to pay attention to our youth, we need to focus on our elders. Seniors are an important resource for families and communities and also the fastest growing segment of the NWT population. Investing in long-term care facilities, such as replacing the Jimmy Erasmus Seniors Centre in Behchoko with a larger facility, will ensure we have the spaces needed to meet this growing need.

But bricks and mortar only enable care. They don't provide it. Adequate staffing ensures quality care in our facilities. This budget commits \$1.13 million to increase staffing levels at three existing long-term care facilities in Fort Smith, Fort Simpson, and Yellowknife to provide effective, safe and culturally appropriate care.

Mr. Speaker, this budget also continues to invest in initiatives that implement the Family Violence Action Plan, including funds to complete implementation of the Program for Men Who Abuse. This is a program directed at men who use violence in their relationships, and adds another essential ingredient in a holistic approach to healing from family violence.

We look forward to the completion later this year of the Anti-Poverty Strategy, a priority of the Legislature, and will address recommendations for new resource requirements under the strategy through a supplementary appropriation. Taking action on poverty with a broad-based strategy will help us fulfill the goals of this Assembly and the people it represents.

Creating and taking advantage of new economic opportunities is our surest path to a prosperous NWT as long as it is done in an environmentally sustainable way.

We have an abundance of natural wealth, providing numerous economic opportunities. If we proactively support those opportunities, our revenues will continue to grow, helping pay for our critical programs. At the same time, we want to make sure that we do not separate this support from our work to protect our environment.

This budget supports building a sustainable economy with investments in tourism, and maximizing opportunities from oil and gas exploration while also investing in environmental protection, water management and development of alternative energy. In the oil and gas sector alone, this territory's potential is pegged at 81 trillion cubic feet of natural gas and nearly seven billion barrels of oil. The Sahtu is one region where the opportunity is now. Our challenge today is developing these resources in a sustainable manner, and ensuring local residents and NWT businesses benefit as much as possible.

This budget invests nearly \$1.2 million to help Northerners capture the benefits associated with Sahtu oil and gas exploration and to mitigate some of the associated impacts. This will fund career development and training programs and supports for local business. We will also fund the collection of additional environmental baseline data for groundwater, surface water and wildlife, environmental assessments and permitting, and increase resources for monitoring oil and gas activities. These funds also provide for additional RCMP resources and victim services programming

to help front-line staff respond to additional demands, contributing to this Assembly's goal of safe communities.

Our natural wealth extends well beyond the non-renewable resources under our feet. Our water, land, animals and people are all natural endowments that can grow our economy. The range of these gifts is incredible, from tourism to food and energy production. This year's record fur sales at auction, the opening of the egg plant in Hay River, the pending opening of wood pellet manufacturing near Enterprise, and a new diamond polishing plant in Yellowknife highlight some of what is happening now. These initiatives by Northerners should dispel the myth that "you can't make it here," and help spur a rebound in the manufacturing industry.

As promised last year, we are investing in the development of a sustainable Economic Opportunities Strategy that will allow us to keep pace with the incredible opportunities and growth potential that our territory has, to ensure we are positioned to guide and manage this investment and growth, and to use it to build capacity in our communities and self-sufficiency in our people.

Supporting and encouraging local business is the path to a more stable and diversified economy. The GNWT continues to support small businesses taking the risks needed to grow our economy. We do this by providing a competitive and stable tax system, direct support through programs such as those provided through the Support to Entrepreneurs and Economic Development Policy, providing funding for traditional economy initiatives and access to capital through the NWT Business Development and Investment Corporation.

Tourism remains a key economic priority in both developing and diversifying our economy. Tourism is a \$100 million industry in the NWT that supports economies in all our regions. We are adding \$600,000 in this budget for NWT marketing efforts that promote the NWT as a travel destination. This additional investment brings our total tourism marketing support to \$3.1 million per year, in addition to \$1.2 million in direct support to tourism businesses to build and diversify tourism products. Territorial parks and campgrounds are also a key component of our efforts to grow the tourism industry. This coming year we are making capital improvements of \$2 million in NWT parks and trails.

The Deh Cho Bridge is not only on tourists' bucket lists but is also a key investment for the rest of our economy by providing year-round access to the North Slave region. We continue to reduce our infrastructure gap through the \$138 million capital investment approved last November for fiscal year 2013-14. Infrastructure investment has the dual benefit of generating jobs and training opportunities, especially in small communities

where opportunities may be limited, and leaving lasting benefits in the form of roads, schools and health centres. Over the longer term, infrastructure supports our goal of creating a prosperous NWT by providing access to supplies and markets.

Mr. Speaker, our government remains committed to mitigating the high cost of energy to NWT families and businesses, as well as reducing the impacts of our energy use on the environment.

Last year we lessened the impact of the NWT Power Corporation's 2012-13 rate increase through an offset of a portion of the rate increase. In the 2013-14 budget, we are including \$9.4 million to continue to offset a portion of the rate increase, thereby continuing this government's commitment to provide rate stability to Northerners during the corporation's transition to higher rates.

We are also continuing our commitment to invest in long-term solutions to reduce energy consumption and costs with \$5.15 million in operating and capital initiatives for 2013-14. We have some of the world's greatest renewable energy potential, and investments in realizing that potential are critical to our long-term growth.

About \$400,000 of our investment will lower the costs to consumers, businesses and communities of new technologies through enhanced rebate programs and grants. Another \$250,000 is allocated towards the development of a regulatory application for the proposed Whatì transmission line that could transform Whatì from a diesel community to a hydro community.

We remain steadfastly committed to diversifying our energy base with investments in alternative energy, including those aligned with the NWT Solar Energy Strategy and the NWT Biomass Energy Strategy. An investment of \$250,000 will establish solar energy systems in two diesel communities, building upon our success with the recently expanded Fort Simpson Solar Project. Another \$100,000 will be invested in developing a community scale wind project.

Over \$2 million of our investment focuses on biomass initiatives, including the \$1.6 million supplementary approval we will be seeking to convert the Norman Wells school and airport to biomass. These two projects will be the first large-scale biomass projects outside of the North and South Slave regions, and they demonstrate our commitment to expanding the biomass supply chain to communities throughout the Mackenzie Valley. We continue to work on finding long-term energy solutions in communities facing uncertainty in energy supplies, including \$100,000 to advance a liquid natural gas solution for Inuvik.

We are currently working on an overarching energy plan that builds on input gathered from across the North. We have received many suggestions with

regard to what we need to do to address the challenges and opportunities facing the territory today. It is clear that improving our economy depends on providing energy at affordable rates to industry and communities. The government looks forward to working with all Members of the Legislative Assembly to finalize the Energy Plan for release later this spring.

Investments in alternative energies present significant economic opportunities and improve the health of our environment. A healthy environment that sustains present and future generations is not at odds with economic growth but is a foundation for that growth. The 2013-2014 budget invests \$72 million in protecting the environment. Work continues on implementing the Greenhouse Gas Strategy, working collaboratively on management actions for barren ground caribou herds, and completing a new Wildlife Act. This budget includes an extra \$523,000 to support transboundary water negotiations as part of our efforts to implement the NWT Water Stewardship Strategy. Finalizing transboundary water management agreements is a cornerstone in ensuring the health and ecological integrity of our northern waters.

One of the goals of the 17th Assembly is to continue to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of government, and in the current environment of slow revenue growth, where we need to do more with less, this goal is even more pressing. As part of our efforts for continuous improvement, our program review office is working closely with departments and Members of the Legislature to help ensure we get the most from our limited resources.

During Budget Dialogue 2012, people discussed opportunities to improve the delivery of government programs and services by redeploying funds within programs and removing duplication and other "red tape." We are still reviewing the suggestions, but through this budget have made several important investments to improve our current services through innovation, keeping services in the North, and energy-efficiency gains.

The world of health care is changing, and new technology presents great opportunities to transform service delivery by bringing services directly to our residents. Electronic medical records can provide continuity of care so that locum physicians and nurses have instant access to a patient's history. They also provide an essential tool for chronic disease management, providing automatic reminders for scheduled treatments, and allowing health care practitioners to request real-time consultations with specialists. This will ensure that all Northerners have access to a consistent level of care, often without having to travel. This budget commits \$489,000 to support a partial deployment of the Electronic Medical Records

System, providing the foundation for future territory-wide implementation.

Medical travel costs are a key consideration in the budget and we continue to try to reduce the need for medical travel, and changes to chronic disease management so that we can treat more diseases locally and reduce the need for patients to travel south for care. In 1996 we began providing dialysis services in-territory, and in this budget we are investing an extra \$229,000 to keep these critical services in the NWT. Without this investment, the NWT would be unable to keep the dialysis units open and would spend over \$1.8 million annually to send current patients to Alberta for treatment.

Another \$472,000 will be invested in improving medevac services, ensuring all Northerners receive similar high standard levels of care. Medevac services are lifesaving essential services for all NWT communities. This initial investment supports medevac triage and coordination, ensuring life-dependent resources are available to the right patients at the right times.

Finally, the budget includes \$550,000 to establish system-wide clinical leadership. This will help to ensure consistent levels of patient care throughout the NWT and ensure that our system has the capacity to keep current as new standards of care are established nationally.

This budget also continues our efforts to improve our government's overall energy efficiency. In addition to the \$1.2 million passed in October as part of the Capital Asset Retrofit Fund Program, this budget earmarks \$700,000 for installation of energy-efficient wood pellet boilers in public housing units. Every year we spend about \$7 million on heating fuel for the Public Housing Program. We continue to look for opportunities to increase energy and cost efficiencies of existing government assets.

One of the priorities of the 17th Legislative Assembly is increasing employment opportunities where they are most needed. One way we can do this is by decentralizing more GNWT positions and bringing our government closer to the people it serves. We can see the importance of that in the success of the single window service centres that help residents in rural and remote communities navigate and access territorial and federal programs. In 2013-2014 we will open three more single window service centres, building on the success of the 13 already in existence across the NWT.

We are not stopping there. In total, 2013-2014 will see 18 decentralized positions outside Yellowknife. This is in addition to the 12 new positions proposed under various programs already outlined, including the government's response to the activity in the Sahtu. Equitable distribution of the economic benefits associated with public service employment

ensures every region benefits, and we will continue to work to maintain this distribution across the territory.

This is the second year of this Assembly and we have made progress on several of our priorities, including increasing our borrowing limit, implementing new public housing rent scales, and investing to address our health facilities deficit. The investments outlined in this budget tackle many of the remaining priorities we set a year and a half ago.

Looking forward, we know that revenue growth is slowing. We have worked hard to ensure federal transfers reflect our unique circumstances, and in December the federal Finance Minister announced that Territorial Formula Financing will continue using its gap-filling formula that recognizes the increased costs of providing services in the North. This reassurance is critical for a program that makes up the majority of our revenues. Nevertheless, this reassurance does not remove the reality of very little growth in the Territorial Formula Financing over the next two years. In these fragile economic conditions, growing revenues through additional taxes is not prudent and, given our small tax base, would be ineffective. Instead, we intend to live within the means we have now.

We will continue to work with the federal government on a long-term plan for public infrastructure beyond the 2014 expiry of the Building Canada Plan. Under this plan, the NWT has benefitted from hundreds of millions of dollars in infrastructure funding. We are looking to partner with the federal government on a new plan for strategic infrastructure investments that support long-term economic growth and prosperity. Partnerships are critical for projects such as the long awaited Inuvik to Tuktoyaktuk highway.

We are moving ahead on strategic opportunities such as the Mackenzie Valley Fibre Optic Link Project. This project will provide a high-speed data link up the valley and will have significant positive impacts for economic and community development and the delivery of government services. This budget commits \$7 million to continue advancing the fibre link project.

Moving forward on these opportunities is made possible through our commitment to generating operating surpluses through our fiscal strategy. We know this will be made increasingly difficult as revenue growth slows, but we have already made great progress in protecting existing programs and making priority investments, and are poised to meet the challenge by working collaboratively to manage the growth of our operating budget.

We look forward to the finalization of the Devolution Agreement in the near future. The authority and control of our resources is one of the most

immediate and tangible ways we can grow our revenues and economy in the coming years. We have put ourselves on a sustainable fiscal path so that resource revenues from the final Devolution Agreement can be used for investments in infrastructure to grow the economy, paying down our debt and, when appropriate, saving in the Heritage Fund for future generations. To further support economic growth across the NWT and extend the benefits of devolution, we have also committed to sharing a portion of these resource revenues with participating Aboriginal governments, helping to build capacity and opportunities in regions and communities.

This budget keeps us on the path we set last year to continue living within our means, while allowing us to make some strategic investments in areas that need attention. Our new spending initiatives address the issues raised by Members of the Legislative Assembly, and reflect concerns and ideas shared during our budget dialogue process.

This budget makes investments in Caucus priorities such as prevention, early childhood development, addictions programming, and improvements and innovation in health care delivery to ensure a fair and sustainable health care system. Investments that strengthen and diversify our economy, such as the Mackenzie Valley Fibre Optic Link, tourism marketing, and decentralization of positions to increase opportunities throughout the territory, are critical in building a prosperous future. This budget also devotes resources to ensuring responsible stewardship of our land and water through partnerships and continued negotiation of devolution.

We have collectively made a conscious decision to push ourselves fiscally as a Legislature, maintaining and protecting programs and services, while at the same time investing in critical major infrastructure like the bridge and now the Inuvik to Tuktoyaktuk highway. We were able to achieve all these investments while maintaining the operating surplus needed to fund infrastructure. But our work is not done. We must stay the course and continue to control expenditure growth so that we can remain fiscally sustainable, and at the same time invest in infrastructure to position ourselves for a self-sufficient and diverse economic future.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger.

---Technical difficulties

MR. SPEAKER: Colleagues, item 3, Ministers' statements. Item 4, Members' statements. Mr. Yakeleya.

Members' Statements

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON FEDERAL INVESTMENT IN THE SAHTU

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In the Sahtu we have always known there would be another oil strike, a big boom. The only question was when. Now we believe that the time is here. Unprecedented, record-setting, record breaking amounts of money is being spent in the Sahtu, and is being committed in the Sahtu has begun. Now it is our time. Over the last two seasons we have seen work ramping up. All you need to know is the recent traffic jam we had on our winter roads, and the number of people working and all the activity that's been happening in the Sahtu.

While this has brought a lot of benefits to the region, it is also taxing our capacity. We are feeling it. We need major investment in human resource development and infrastructure. We need to look at the Voisey's Bay model and develop a Canol Sahtu model. The Sahtu region is of natural interest. We have a major play. It's time to wake up, Canada. We may be talking billions of barrels of oil in those hills. Now is the time for this federal government to step in and help, as they did a few years ago with the Voisey's Bay region of Labrador with the human resource and development funding.

We're also in desperate need of an all-weather road, because it just makes more sense more than ever. Earlier this year we saw how the winter road between Wrigley and Tulita could not stand up to the heavy traffic bringing in supplies and materials. It was like the Wild West with the semi-trucks heading into the land of prosperity.

These investments are far beyond the GNWT's ability, but we are the national interest and it will be paid back many times over in jobs and economic growth. This is the perfect opportunity for the federal government to reinvest some of the profits they have gained over the last few decades of their ownership in the Norman Wells pipeline and the Norman Wells field in order to create even more prosperity for the people in the Northwest Territories.

I would urge this government, if it hasn't already done so, to make a strong case to Canada for human resource development and infrastructure investment in the Sahtu so that we can see the tremendous potential for jobs and growth in this region realized. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. The honourable Member for Nahendeh, Mr. Menicoche.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON ECONOMIC ZONE INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENT

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm very pleased to see the expenditure in the budget to support the Sahtu. The impact of oil and gas development in the Sahtu is being felt throughout the Mackenzie Valley. Businesses in Fort Simpson and Wrigley have benefitted, but they are impacted, and local resources are stretched to the limit.

Recent weather conditions shut down the ice road into the Sahtu, and trucks were backed up all the way to Hay River. It was impossible to find a room in Fort Simpson until the road reopened. This is just one example of how the impacts on Nahendeh communities are noticeable.

Both territorial and federal governments need to recognize the effects of this development on our communities. We need federal support to respond to this rapid increased demand for resources on Aboriginal lands. The Nahendeh region has great potential for development itself, and will be a corridor to the riches of the central Mackenzie Valley if oil and gas development goes ahead in the Sahtu.

I see this as an opportunity to extend the Mackenzie Valley Highway north from Wrigley. An all-weather road has been needed there for decades. My people want to see this road become a reality. This initiative would receive strong support from industry and benefit the Northwest Territories as a whole.

Now is the time to start planning to ensure we have adequate infrastructure and personnel in our communities to address needs like health centres, policing and schools. We need to ensure that the people of Nahendeh benefit from the impacts on their communities. Increased business is good for the community, but it places added demands on staff, training, supplies and all local resources.

As my colleague Mr. Yakeleya has said, the federal government had made special provisions to introduce workforce development initiatives related to resource development on Aboriginal lands in provinces like Labrador with the Voisey's Bay project. In fact, I think our own government spent millions on the Ingraham Trail, Highway No. 4, to service the diamond mines. Why not our region? This assistance recognizes lasting effects of development in our communities and our cultures.

All of these considerations make strong arguments for the Government of the Northwest Territories to assist our region, and to lobby the federal government for additional support to respond to the impacts of resource development. Mahsi cho.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. The honourable Member for Frame Lake, Ms. Bisaro.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON
DENE KO DAY SHELTER FUNDING

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am extremely concerned that a viable, much needed three-year pilot project here in Yellowknife will soon be losing its funding and forced to close its doors. I am, of course, speaking about the Dene Ko Shelter. The benefits of this shelter to the city of Yellowknife are recognized and much appreciated. Just ask the RCMP or Stanton Hospital if the shelter has had a positive impact on their operations. The closing of the day shelter for a month this summer gave everyone involved a true picture of the contribution that the shelter is making to our city.

What is not so well known and appreciated is the benefit that this shelter provides to NWT residents from many other communities. It is not uncommon for community residents to come to Yellowknife for a visit for medical reasons, for school or for other services. It is not uncommon for some of these residents to stay here in the city. But without housing or other basic necessities, these residents become regular users of the Dene Ko Shelter. According to the most recent statistics available, 13 of our 19 NWT ridings have residents who used the shelter in 2011, and 26 of our 33 communities have residents who used the shelter in 2011.

The shelter has been funded for the last three years by three different funders, BHP Billiton, the GNWT Department of Health and Social Services, and the City of Yellowknife. Together they have provided annual funding for the operation and maintenance of the shelter. The City of Yellowknife has recently renewed their funding commitment. In fact, they have agreed to double their funding if the GNWT also increases their funding. BHP's three-year commitment has ended and it's not likely to be renewed. To date, the GNWT has given no indication of any financial support for the shelter in the fiscal year 2013-14.

This government has to step up to the plate and needs to acknowledge the importance of the Dene Ko Shelter in providing a service to our residents, all of our residents. The government needs to recognize their financial responsibility and confirm funding for the Dene Ko for 2013-14. Better yet, add the funding to the base funding for the Health and Social Services department and, by that action, commit to long-term, sustained funding for the shelter.

The three-year pilot project has shown that the shelter is a success. To withdraw funding at this point would be a huge step backwards.

I will have questions for the Minister of Health and Social Services at the appropriate time. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. The honourable Member for Hay River North, Mr. Bouchard.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON
REFLECTIONS ON THE BUDGET ADDRESS

MR. BOUCHARD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Seeing as it is budget address day, I would like to discuss some of the issues that were presented in the budget. I am looking forward to criticizing some of the issues there, but today I think it's kind of a day where we like to see some of the benefits that are there.

We are seeing some revenue growth. It's good to hear that the economy is recovering a little bit better. Also, I like to see that our government is investing money into prevention, into the infrastructure in the Northwest Territories. I think it's great for the people of the Northwest Territories.

Obviously, from my community, we are strongly interested in the Midwifery Program. It is great to see that there are dollars going into that initiative and also the biomass initiatives that are out there. We have an opportunity in the community of Hay River in Aurora Pellets looking to develop in the region. We are obviously interested in all the biomass initiatives in the current budget.

For the general public, no new taxes. That's great news for everybody.

From the community of Hay River, we are also interested in the 18 decentralized positions. I know Hay River is going to receive some of those positions, as well as the 11 new positions in the Sahtu. So it's great to see some of the positions going out to the regions.

Also, the additional money into tourism, it's good to see that there's more money, more initiatives going into tourism. We think that's a viable option in the South Slave as well.

Over the next couple of weeks, we will be critical of some of the things the government does. Can we do things better with our money? Are we investing in the right infrastructure? Is the federal government putting up the proper percentages?

I would just like to pass those comments on to the Minister of Finance and thank their team for all the hard work on the budget. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Bouchard. The honourable Member for Range Lake, Mr. Dolynny.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON
SECONDARY DIAMOND INDUSTRY
POLICY RENEWAL

MR. DOLYNNY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Let's take a minute to review some key words from a document that is no stranger to this House: sharing, partnerships, effective and efficient government, strengthening our relationships, and working with our partners. These words form the moral fabric of our 17th Assembly Caucus priorities. Admittedly, these words should send a clear meaning to our

residents of our promise to them, and these words should equally reflect our moral compass when we deal with one another in this House.

All things being equal, I am disappointed to say that yesterday in this House I was left with no other option than to table a written question as to the recent diamond business travel itinerary of the Minister of ITI. I was forced to do so as my attempts weeks earlier produced a reply of a couple of lines and a department e-mail on nothing more than a city is being visited.

Why should an elected Member to this House whose riding represents the physical locations of the secondary manufacturing facilities be shunned from receiving such information when asked? Furthermore, adding insult to injury, why would the media receive such same detailed information just days ago but no sharing of such information to the department, its riding representative, Regular Members or standing committee? Again, my question from before: Why the secrecy?

We are at a critical impasse in our efforts to re-invent our secondary polishing industry with the Department of ITI on a mission to establish future potential manufacturers and operations in the NWT. We need, now more than ever, the proper policy and framework to deal with the secure certification process to enhance the marketing of the polar bear brand, to establish innovative trading solutions with stakeholders, and to define all real commercial advantages in being a future central training hub in Canada.

This new vision cannot be achieved with the current November 2010 Diamond Policy Framework mentioned by the Minister. We need more. We need a commitment from this department, and this Minister, to do the right thing and forgo political divisiveness or personal agenda.

I expect a Cabinet of sharing, especially of public achievement, and a Cabinet that is more about positive creation. The people of Range Lake and the people of the NWT have spoken.

Will the Minister of ITI step up to the plate, apply the moral principles of the 17th Assembly Caucus priorities, and work with Regular Members to create a strategy or a plan of action for our second attempt at the diamond manufacturing industry? The clock is ticking and the diamond world will not wait. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Dolynny. The honourable Member for Inuvik Boot Lake, Mr. Moses.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON
REFLECTIONS ON THE
BUDGET PLANNING PROCESS

MR. MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Along the same lines as my colleague for Hay River North

here, I would like to make comments on the budget address today.

For the public that really doesn't want to know how we got here today and the message that was delivered, at the beginning of the Assembly, we created priorities. We've had a lot of dialogue since the Assembly started. Specifically with this 2013-14 fiscal budget, it started back in September and looking at how we can look at our priorities, and making healthy, educated people away from poverty, increasing our economic development strategies; those kinds of things. All the hard work that went into the meetings in September and the dialogue that we've had since then up until last week when committee got back together and the session in the House here today.

I just want to commend the government for listening to this side of the House. That's what consensus government is about, although there is still some work that needs to be hashed out over the next six weeks. I think we are going to be working on those details in the days to come.

Some of the things that we did ask for I think we're going to look at continuing to push for to see if we can get those addressed. Even before we continue on, I'd just like to thank all Members on this side of the House for all the hard work that they've done in committee meetings, attending the meetings, bringing up their concerns, and actually taking the approach of creating our own priorities on this side to see what we want to see in our fiscal budget that will protect our people, create jobs and some of the stuff that we're actually putting into the budget here today.

As I told one of my colleagues, as the budget address was being written out, it was really nice to see that we did have our footprint in this budget address moving forward for the '13-14 fiscal year, putting money into things that we talked about, mental health and addictions, midwifery, early childhood development, things that we're slowly building on and continuing to create that momentum, so that for the next two and a half years we are going to try to create a more efficient government that is going to protect the people of the Northwest Territories and our residents.

I look forward to the next two and a half years and continue to look forward to these six weeks because there are going to be a lot of discussions and debates that are going to happen in this House. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Moses. The Member for Hay River South, Mrs. Groenewegen.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON
REFLECTIONS ON THE BUDGET ADDRESS

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's hard to decide what to talk about on budget day,

but I think I'll follow the lead of my colleague for Hay River North and we'll say nice things today. We've got six weeks to get into all the rest, right?

So it is a time of restraint and it is a time of kind of holding the line in our government, and in view of that, we still see some good things in there, and I will speak specifically about Hay River. As well, the Midwifery Program for Hay River, something long awaited and really looking forward to.

I look at the reintroduction of the Drug and Alcohol Treatment Program in the South Mackenzie Correctional Centre, and I thank the Minister of Justice for hearing from us on that and reinstating that program. That not only means programs and services to people who are incarcerated, but it also creates some jobs in Hay River.

Now, there are 4,500 jobs in the public service and 18 of them are being decentralized out of Yellowknife. Maybe that doesn't sound like a lot, but it is a start, and I hope it is just the start, because it's more than what we've had in the past and I know that some of those are coming to Hay River. Unfortunately, we can't give you all the details about that yet, but I do thank the Cabinet again for not just paying lip service to decentralization but for there actually being something in this budget, which is going to put actions to those words and we're going to see some positions decentralized to other communities, including Hay River. So we're really happy about that.

This government's commitment to biomass is good news for Hay River too. It's good news for the environment; it's good news for the North. Certainly with the up and coming establishment of a pellet manufacturing plant very close to Hay River, which will economically benefit Hay River, everything this government does to switch from fossil fuels to biomass is something that will indirectly benefit Hay River as well. It will create that demand for this product in the North, which will now be produced in the North.

The \$700,000 for pellet stoves in public housing units, long overdue. It should have been done a long time ago, but I think we should go one step further. I think we should offer pellet stoves to any person in the Northwest Territories for free from this government, as a tangible commitment to the fact that we are concerned about the cost of living and we support them. I don't think we should make it all tied up in a big rebate program and make it difficult for people. Let's just do it. It's good for the environment, it's good for the people and, hey, it will be good for Hay River because we're going to sell you the pellets.

---Laughter

So I am pleased with the budget overall. I know it's not everything we'd like it to be, but we also have to keep in mind that we are on the cusp of devolution,

royalties, more jobs in the Northwest Territories, and I think that next year at this time we'll see a very different looking budget. For this one we are holding the line, we're trying to be responsible. It is somewhat of fiscal restraint, but we are on the verge of many exciting things.

I think somebody forgot to hit the timer on here because I'm getting way more than my time here today.

So, kudos to the Cabinet. Like I said, we'll get into the detail and some of the things we're not so happy about, perhaps, in the weeks ahead, but for today, it's a day of celebration in the Northwest Territories, and thank you for all your hard work.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. The Member for Weledeh, Mr. Bromley.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT CONFERENCE

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I salute the work of last month's Improving our Children's Future Conference on early childhood development held here in Yellowknife. Community delegates, educators, program professionals and world-class experts in the science and practice of early childhood development gathered to share and learn. The leadership presence that Ministers Lafferty and Beaulieu emphasized about the increasing importance being placed upon this work. Participants learned of the critical role the child/parent relationship plays in enabling brain development, how self-regulation works and develops, and the conditions for learning, which are developed through this relationship, the effects of toxic stress and how to measure progress in young children.

They heard presentations on healthy families and head start programs, and they discussed the challenges and principles for a multi-sector integrated approach to early childhood in the Northwest Territories, priorities for the renewed Early Childhood Development Framework and action steps for the next 18 months. We all look forward very much to receiving their report from these deliberations.

During budget discussions a year ago, there was \$1.3 million in additional funds added for early childhood work, including development of two child and family resource centres, later identified to be in Tulita and Ndilo. Today, 85 percent through the fiscal year, I understand there have been no funds provided to Ndilo, no development of such a centre there and that the community has been told the money would be for one year only. With such lost opportunities, it is the children who suffer.

Given the year end in seven weeks – the year end in seven weeks – I have questions on when the

Minister is going to get this family resource centre in place and operational. Science, Early Childhood Development Program results elsewhere, and pure common sense tell us the opportunity to give children the best chance to flourish begins during pregnancy. The benefits of ECD to the economy, individual health and education and through reduced social and justice system, costs are crystal clear. The growing awareness and commitment in government to the importance of this work is great.

As we await the revised Early Childhood Framework, we need to know that when we turn our hand to implementing programs, they will, in fact, be done effectively and well. To date I don't see this happening. We can't afford to miss another year of helping new minds and bodies to get their best.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Bromley. The Member for Deh Cho, Mr. Nadli.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON EMERGENCY SERVICES ON HIGHWAYS

MR. NADLI: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mahsi. There were 124 vehicle collisions on Northwest Territories highways in 2011. There was close to a 10 percent increase over the number of collisions from 2010. In spite of prevention efforts, driving conditions on our highway system can be challenging due to many factors beyond our control. Low visibility at certain times of the year, severe weather conditions, wildlife, rough road surfaces and long stretches of highway between communities with limited telecommunication services are just some of the things we contend with.

The Department of Municipal and Community Affairs and other departments have worked on ground ambulance and highway rescue initiatives for a long time, as well as community capacity to respond to emergencies. A preliminary assessment in 2010-2011 concluded that approximately 25 out of the NWT's 33 fire departments were unable to respond to basic fire emergencies. We have no organized response measures for vehicle fires or other emergencies on our highways. The communities apply for reimbursement when they send emergency vehicles outside of their municipal boundaries.

The NWT Association of Communities has consistently called on the Government of the Northwest Territories to support firefighter training. It also passed a resolution last year, asking the government to develop and implement a formal multi-year contribution program that would allow communities to offer essential emergency services, and that would also allow the safe and reliable servicing of highways.

The Government of the Northwest Territories must move ahead on this program. I'm pleased that the government has a Ground Ambulance and Highway

Rescue Committee and that there's ongoing funding to support this initiative. I understand the government is reviewing its program and MACA promises updates in the coming fiscal year. However, I urge this committee to move forward to identify appropriate service levels, funding and performance measures, and to continue to engage stakeholders to fully implement a safe, reliable ground ambulance and highway rescue.

Vehicle fires and fires in communities are relatively uncommon, but one emergency in which lives are threatened or lost is one too many. There were 120 vehicle collisions on our highways in a single year. Increasing traffic increases the risk of emergency. We want people to drive with caution, and spend millions in capital dollars to maintain our roads, but we must expect the unexpected. We must be prepared to respond to the worst scenario. One moment can be one moment too late. One life lost is one too many. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Nadli. The Member for Mackenzie Delta, Mr. Blake.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON NURSE IN TSIIGEHTCHIC

MR. BLAKE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. For many years the community of Tsiigehtchic has been asking to have a nurse on a full-time basis. I was very surprised that this wasn't a part of this budget, even though there are a lot of good initiatives in the budget.

How much longer does the community have to wait for this very important service which is needed in Tsiigehtchic?

I will have questions for the Minister later today. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Blake. The Member for Yellowknife Centre, Mr. Hawkins.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON REFLECTIONS ON THE BUDGET ADDRESS

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to use this opportunity to thank Minister Miltenberger for his fifth budget to lead the territory. Mr. Miltenberger brings forward a steady as she goes budget and that's typically the way he runs the ship: pretty straightforward, not that fancy. When I hear a strategy about two years of belt tightening and then two years of spending, I liken it more like he's going to be the Grinch for two years and then, hopefully, be Santa for two more years after that.

The primary concern I heard that I think resonates deeply amongst many Members, of course, is revenue growth is slow. An important strategy needs to be developed here on how we want to change the ship on this measure. We need more made-in-the-NWT philosophies, roll-outs, whether

it's manufacturing, whether it's more innovation, or things that further build upon those ideas. We need more homegrown solutions to many of our revenue problems.

What I also saw lacking but not necessarily glaring, I'll say that, is this committee on our side of the House that is, had great support for midwifery and I feel saddened that it didn't meet the challenges we tried to put out to you.

Tourism, in the same vein, received significant support, if not buttressed by great enthusiasm from all Members where we wanted way more than what was given here today. The industry has been suffering for many, many years and it needs the further investment to help do the things it needs to do to get new money injected into our territorial economy. Oddly enough, that goes right back to one of my first statements, which is it's highlighted that revenue growth is slow. How do we do that? We help foster, develop and build small businesses such as our tourism industry.

There were some interesting things highlighted in this budget. I want to thank him for that, although I wish there were more details. He talked about the medical travel costs. Forever that's always been a target that we never know what we're really dealing with, whether that budget is high or that budget is low. I do applaud him for highlighting it because it's one of these quagmire numbers we can't really get a handle on, but it always seems to be there weighing us down.

Eighteen decentralized positions I have to admit to some degree is news to me. We had some talk about the philosophy of this, but I'd have to say at this point, from a Yellowknife perspective, it is news to me, and I'll assure you it's news to many Members here.

That said, I exercise caution as we move forward and I do insist there will be great discussion as the days go forward.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. The honourable Member for Tu Nedhe, Mr. Beaulieu.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON
PASSING OF YVONNE DESJARLAIS

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: Mahsi cho, Mr. Speaker. [English translation not provided.]

Today I send my deepest condolences to the family of the late Yvonne Eva Desjarlais of Lutselk'e. Funeral services were held in her memory on January 9, 2013.

Yvonne was born and raised in Lutselk'e until she went to residential school in Fort Smith. In 1966 she married Napoleon Michel and that same year, unfortunately, her husband passed away, leaving her with two small children. In December 1982 she

remarried. Her second husband was Joseph Desjarlais.

Yvonne provided for her family by doing numerous jobs such as janitor, home care worker, Dene Yati translator, dental receptionist and classroom assistant. Yvonne taught traditional skills to prenatal and postnatal program students and teachers at the Lutselk'e Dene School about life out on the land. She loved reading romance novels, making dry fish, dry meat, bannock, and was very good at those skills.

Yvonne had a very good sense of humour, making people laugh always as she had a kind word to say.

Yvonne passed away on December 30, 2012, at the age of 63, here in Yellowknife. She was predeceased by her parents, Tom and Rose Abel, her brother Germaine, her first husband Napoleon, and her grandson Christian. She is survived by her second husband, Joe Desjarlais, sons Richard, Bernard, Walter, Christopher, and Clifford, the grandson that she raised. Her daughters are Pauline, Marlene, Sharon and Jennifer. Her siblings are Alfred, Raymond, Joe, Harry and Paul Abel. Her sisters are Therese and Mary Louise. She had numerous grandchildren, great-grandchildren, nephews, nieces, cousins and many friends.

My deepest condolences go to Yvonne's husband, Joe, her children, grandchildren, siblings, nephews, nieces and many friends.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. The honourable Member for Monfwi, Mr. Lafferty.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON
MONFWI RECIPIENTS OF THE
QUEEN'S DIAMOND JUBILEE AWARD

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. [Translation] Mr. Speaker, I would like to make an announcement. At seven o'clock there will be an award given to four people here, and they are going to be receiving a Jubilee Award and it's one of the top honours to receive.

The first one is Mr. Wah-Shee. He has worked for the GNWT. He was also an MLA and a Minister. He is now working with the Tlicho Government and has done lots of work for the Tlicho Government. He also started the Indian Brotherhood in the past, and he has worked on many things in the North. I want to make it known that he is one of the persons that wants to make it known that he has always supported the people in the Tlicho Government and GNWT. Now that we can see all the results that he has worked on, that is one of the reasons he is being recognized.

The other one is Mary Richardson. She is going to be recognized and is being awarded too. She is a foster parent and she is always an advocate for foster children. In the last 30 years, she has been supporting foster children in the community.

Michael Botermans is the other person. He is one of the persons that are always working with youth in the community and he has accomplished lots of things with the children. He is always the one that is leading with the children.

I just wanted to congratulate all those individuals who are going to be awarded this Jubilee Award.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. Item 5, reports of standing and special committees. Item 6, returns to oral questions. Item 7, recognition of visitors in the gallery. Mr. McLeod.

Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to recognize a few residents of Inuvik. We have Lisa Semmler up there. Mr. Jozef Carnogurski. Topsy Cockney is up there. I'd also like to recognize Caroline Lennie from Tsiigehtchic. Welcome to the Assembly.

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Miltenberger.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to recognize Mr. Chuck Tolley and his wife, Mrs. Muriel Tolley, and one of their pride and joys, young James Tolley, who has the hard job of looking after me as my executive assistant. Welcome to the Assembly.

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Ramsay.

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to recognize Ms. Jenni Bruce, the chair of the Northwest Territories Tourism, as well as Brian Desjardins, the executive director at NWT Tourism, Mr. Ron Ostrom, the marketing director at NWT Tourism, and former colleague Mr. David Krutko from the Mackenzie Delta, and also a constituent of mine, a board of trustee with YK1, Ms. Mira Hall.

MR. SPEAKER: Mrs. Groenewegen.

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure today to introduce in the visitors gallery a resident of Hay River South Mr. Brad Mapes, who is a local businessperson in Hay River and also the deputy mayor of Hay River.

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Hawkins.

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I, too, wish to acknowledge and recognize both Chuck and Muriel Tolley, and I wish to agree with Mr. Miltenberger that James Tolley does have a tough job working for the Finance Minister. I, as well, wish to acknowledge NWT Tourism as a whole and recognize our good friend Mr. David Krutko, a former Member here.

MR. SPEAKER: Ms. Bisaro.

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure today to recognize a constituent who has already been recognized, Jenni Bruce. Welcome to the House, Jenni. I'd also like to recognize Mira

Hall, trustee for YK Education District No. 1. Mr. Krutko, I cannot forget you, a former colleague. I'd like to also especially give my personal thanks to Mr. Mike Olson, who was a great assistant to me coming home on Sunday night from Edmonton.

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Nadli.

MR. NADLI: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's not very often I rise and recognize individuals from my constituency, but I'd like to recognize a friend, hockey player, husband, and leader Chief Lloyd Chicot of Kakisa, who has been a long-serving leader for the Dehcho First Nation.

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Moses.

MR. MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to welcome the following constituents to the Legislative Assembly and the House: Lisa and Jozef Carnogurski, welcome. I'd also like to recognize Topsy Cockney and Caroline Blake. Welcome. I did some good work with them over the last little while. I'd also like to make a special recognition of the NWT Tourism crew that did a great job with Spectacular NWT and the NWT Gala for NWT Days.

Mr. Brian Desjardins, Mr. Ron Ostrom, Ms. Jenni Bruce, and I'd also make one special recognition to Ms. Jackie Frederick, who has been working with communities such as Hay River and Inuvik to create tourism packages to bring people from the South up to the North to experience the spectacular NWT. I'd also like to welcome Mr. David Krutko to the House as well.

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Bromley.

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to recognize Mr. Anthony Whitford, resident and MLA. I'd also like to recognize a previous colleague, David Krutko. Also Mira Hall, a YK1 board trustee. Jenni Bruce and Brian Desjardins, again we've mentioned their names from NWT Tourism. Great to see them here.

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Yakeleya.

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd also like to recognize a former colleague, Mr. Krutko, in the gallery. I also recognize the hard work of the NWT Tourism that had a great display in Ottawa. Thank you very much. Also the crew from Mackenzie Delta, Joe and wife Lisa and my former schoolmate at Samuel Hearne Topsy Cockney, and Ms. Jenni Bruce from Tsiigehtchic, and the Chief Lloyd Chicot from Kakisa.

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Bouchard.

MR. BOUCHARD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to also recognize Mr. Brad Mapes, a proponent for Aurora Pellets and our deputy mayor of Hay River and also a former basketball coach of mine. Also Lloyd Chicot, the chief for Kakisa. I've worked with Lloyd in his community before. Welcome.

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Blake.

MR. BLAKE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to recognize the president of the Gwich'ya Gwich'in Council, Caroline Blake Lennie who is also my sister; also the president of the Nihtat Gwich'in Council, Mr. Jozef Carnogurski and his wife, Lisa; also Topsy Cockney; also former Member for the Mackenzie Delta Mr. David Krutko; also Mr. Mervin Gruben.

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Moses.

MR. MOSES: I appreciate that, Mr. Speaker. I didn't have the eyes in the back of my head so I didn't recognize the mayor of Tuk and president of the NWT Association of Communities, Mr. Mervin Gruben. He's been a very strong advocate for some of our big infrastructure projects that we are looking at going forward with this fiscal year.

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. McLeod.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to recognize Mr. Sonny Lenoir and Lee Mandeville from the Dene Nation. I also see John Hazenberg, who is here working on the sports-plex for Behchoko.

MR. SPEAKER: I'd like to welcome all visitors in the public gallery today. Thank you for taking an interest in our proceedings here today.

Item 8, acknowledgements. Item 9, oral questions. The honourable Member for Sahtu, Mr. Yakeleya.

Oral Questions

QUESTION 13-17(4): CANOL SHALE OIL DEVELOPMENT

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions are for the Minister of ITI. I talked about, in my Member's statement, the Sahtu's potential for the oil and gas activity and billions of barrels that are on reserves and untapped in the Sahtu.

I want to ask the Minister of ITI if our assessments of the Sahtu Canol shale play is coming to fruition with the amount of activity going on in the Sahtu, and what is his department doing to deal with the impacts of that type of activity that could be happening in the next 25 or 30 years.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. The honourable Minister of Industry, Tourism and Investment, Mr. Ramsay.

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I do hope the Member's correct. I think the Canol shale oil play in the central Mackenzie is sustainable, a real development that could be taking place for generations in the Sahtu. We look forward to trying to manage this in the early stages.

Companies are there drilling, trying to get a better idea of what is in the ground. We understand there are, perhaps, billions of barrels of oil in the ground

in the central Mackenzie, but companies have to find out what the rate of flow is on those wells. That work is continuing. There are more wells being drilled this winter.

Whether or not the commercialization of that oil play does get into production at some point in time, that remains to be seen. But certainly it has had a profound impact on the region and on the infrastructure and on the people in the region, and we're watching it very closely. I know the Member and other Members were playing close attention to Minister Miltenberger's budget address. We have answered the call as a government to the concerns that are apparent in the Sahtu, and we will continue to monitor that situation. Thank you.

MR. YAKELEYA: According to some of the geologists and some of the preliminary work that's been done in the Sahtu and the Sahtu Canol shale play, the similarities to the Sahtu Canol shale play is similar to the Bakken fields in North Dakota or Eagle Ford in Texas. The Bakken fields in North Dakota are estimated at about 20 billion barrels of oil. That's a similar type of play that's going to happen in the Sahtu, again, depending on more work that has to be done.

I want to ask the Minister, is his department looking at some special considerations in terms of the infrastructure for the Sahtu, if that type of activity is going to happen in the Sahtu. We just want to know when it's going to happen.

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: Certainly, the word prolific comes to mind when you look at a play like the Bakken and the Eagle Ford in Texas, and what they've done to the economy in a place like North Dakota. Certainly, we could use that type of economic activity here in the Northwest Territories. Again, it's activity that's going to carry itself on for generations.

We continue to see and work with industry, see what industry is up to. We've had readiness sessions in the Sahtu. We've met with industry at any and every opportunity that I get as Minister. I know I'm the Minister of Industry, Tourism and Investment, but I'm also the Minister of Transportation, and certainly, in discussion with industry, the talk of infrastructure certainly is at the top of the agenda. Any chance I get to talk about potential industry involvement in building infrastructure in the region and building the economy there, that's front and centre and that will continue to be the case.

We have a number of other projects currently here in the Northwest Territories that we're trying to move forward, and if we get to a stage where that shale oil can be developed commercially, that certainly is a big game changer, and I think then the talks will certainly ramp up on industry involvement in building infrastructure in the central Mackenzie.

MR. YAKELEYA: It is our hope in the Sahtu and other communities around the Sahtu that are working in the Sahtu and want to see this oilfield possibly go to production and development stages.

I want to ask the Minister, has his department looked at other models in Canada, specifically the Voisey's Bay model, where the federal government stepped in to help out those communities up in the Labrador area. Is that something that can be considered with the Sahtu should the proven resources be at a point where saying, yes, this oil's got to go? It's there for production and that's something that this government can look at, looking at the Sahtu as a special economic zone.

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: I'm familiar with the situation in Voisey's Bay, and it was ACOA, the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency, that set up a development zone in and around Voisey's Bay.

Here in the Northwest Territories the landscape is going to change. We're advancing talks on devolution. Eventually, the Northwest Territories government would be able to make a determination like that. Currently, discussions would have to take place with the federal government on a special economic zone through, perhaps, CanNor. Those are discussions that could take place.

I know the issue was raised, certainly with the leadership in the Sahtu, and through our Economic Opportunities Strategy that we're moving forward, we believe there perhaps is some opportunity there to take a look at what is happening in the central Mackenzie and treat it accordingly.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. Final, short supplementary, Mr. Yakeleya.

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to ask the Minister, due to the amount of winter road jamming of the semi-trucks, I want to ask the Minister, is he asking the GNWT Cabinet Ministers to look at some more investments into the Mackenzie Valley winter road, or even to looking at advancing the Mackenzie Valley Highway because of the potential that's happening in the Sahtu.

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: Certainly, everybody was paying close attention to the weather conditions and the fact that there's a lot of heavy equipment moving on the winter road in the Sahtu and down the Mackenzie Valley. Nothing says we need an all-weather road more than the activity that's happening there. There were a couple of unfortunate incidents. The Department of Transportation has put a lot of time and effort into clearing those up, those situations up. We've taken some measures to get more highway patrol officers out there to ensure that equipment is moving in a coordinated fashion. We're working with industry to see that happen.

But certainly, we have the beginnings of this Mackenzie Valley all-weather road in the Tuk-Inuvik

highway. We're anxious to see that project move forward. Again, if the commercialization of that Canol shale oil play is there and it can get into production, I think that changes a lot of things, and again, the discussion with industry will continue to happen.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. The honourable Member for Weledeh, Mr. Bromley.

QUESTION 14-17(4):
EARLY CHILDHOOD
DEVELOPMENT CONFERENCE

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions today are for the Minister of ECE. I spoke today about the valuable deliberations and insight shared at the recent Improving Our Children's Future Conference on early childhood development. The momentum is here and now. Can the Minister say when we will be getting a report on the lessons gained at the conference and his proposals for actions as a result? Mahsi.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Bromley. Minister Lafferty.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. The recommendations and the report should be available within the next few months. I was hoping to deliver that by the end of March or early April. That's the target, in a draft format. Then in the May-June session, I would like to table the document. That is the target date.

I'm working closely with the Minister of Health and Social Services, Mr. Beaulieu, on this particular piece of work. It's a very important document that's before us and we had a lot of input from the general public of the Northwest Territories, the stakeholders, the elders, the parents. It is a document that will be tabled in this House.

MR. BROMLEY: Thanks to the Minister. I'm wondering if that report will actually be the early childhood development framework, and if so, a considerable amount of expertise was brought up for the conference, and of course, we have our own exceptionally qualified Dr. Andre Corriveau expert. Will all of this expertise be available to help guide the development of this document? I'm assuming we're talking about the framework here.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: That's correct. Dr. Andre Corriveau is the lead when it comes to dealing with the experts, the stakeholders. He also led the team, the group, during the engagement with the community, general public. It is part of the framework that has been over a decade. There haven't been any changes. So that is before us and that is what I was referring to. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

MR. BROMLEY: Thanks to the Minister. The lack of promised on-the-ground resource centre programs in Ndilo is disappointing at the end of the year here. I know one kaffuffle is that it had been the

Minister's insistence that it be a one-year-only program and who would want to invest effort in a flash in the pan kind of program when consistent long-term programs are obviously what's required.

Given the failure to date, how can the full year allocation of funds for this project in Ndilo possibly be spent in a responsible way in the next few weeks before year end? Mahsi.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mr. Speaker, my understanding is that, of course, my department is working closely with Ndilo and also Tulita, and dealing with the family resource centres. With Ndilo over the past several months, they have been working on establishing a child and family resource centre and will be getting implementation. We have been diligently working with them. My understanding, also, is that \$125,000 funding has been allocated last fall. Those are just some of the initiatives that have been worked on, but I can provide the latest update to the Member from my department. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. Final, short supplementary, Mr. Bromley.

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I understand the dollars have been allocated but not handed over. There is a major difference there.

Two family resource initiatives were announced, the other being in Tulita. Can the Minister tell me what the status of this work is and are funds going to the communities on these pilot programs as well? Thank you.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mr. Speaker, the information I have is they received \$125,000, but I will double check with my department. The funds should be flowing to the organization to start implementing their establishment. I can assure the Member that I will follow through with this and get back to the Member. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. The honourable Member for Hay River South, Mrs. Groenewegen.

QUESTION 15-17(4):
FEDERAL FUNDING FOR
HIGHWAY INFRASTRUCTURE

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In follow-up to my colleagues from Sahtu and Nahendeh about the extension of the Mackenzie Valley Highway from Wrigley and Norman Wells, given the level of economic activity going on in the Sahtu and the projected level of activity, not wanting to rain on anybody's parade, but I have to ask the question.

Inuvik-Tuk, I know the federal government is talking about putting 75 percent of that money into that road, but in your recent trips to Ottawa and in your recent discussions, has the idea ever surfaced of

putting a higher priority on the Wrigley-Norman Wells portion of the road over the Inuvik-Tuk portion? I'd like to ask the Minister of Transportation or the Premier, I guess, has that ever been considered, given the level of activity in the Sahtu at this time. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. The Minister of Transportation, Mr. Ramsay.

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The money that we are going to be receiving from the federal government to construct the Inuvik-Tuktoyaktuk road is earmarked for that purpose. The communities in the Beaufort-Delta have worked many years at securing that funding, working with our government. Our intention is to construct the Inuvik-Tuk portion as the first portion of the Mackenzie Valley Highway.

In response to Member Yakeleya's questions earlier, should commercialization happen and these wells be brought into production, that is going to change a lot of things in the central Mackenzie. Once construction starts on the Inuvik-Tuk highway, yes, our focus will certainly switch to southern portions of the Mackenzie Valley Highway. Thank you.

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Mr. Speaker, the Minister said that the funds of the federal government have been earmarked. I guess that's good news. I mean, 75 cent dollars from the federal government is very good news. It's been earmarked.

I'd like to ask the Minister if in fact there are not still many hurdles with respect to the commencement of a project like that, and if we as a government should not be paying due diligence to the Wrigley-Norman Wells in view of the activity, in case the other project does not proceed. I don't want to wait until we turn the soil on one project before we start paying attention to the other.

Are these two considerations being applied concurrently? Is it not true that there are many hurdles to overcome yet before we can start the Inuvik-Tuk highway? Thank you.

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: Mr. Speaker, we currently don't have a commitment from the federal government on any other sections of the Mackenzie Valley Highway. That commitment is for the Inuvik-Tuk portion of the Mackenzie Valley Highway. That's where we're going to start.

There are a few items that we have to overcome here in the near term, but our anticipation and expectation is that we will overcome those items. We'll get the decision made here in the House, and hopefully that decision can be made during the life of this sitting here over the next six weeks. That's our expectation. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Mr. Speaker, at the beginning of this session, I rather barged into the

Premier's office, where Mr. Ramsay was, and suggested that we should turn our attention to the lower portion of the highway and forget about the upper portion. But Mr. Ramsay assured me we will do both. Industry will participate in the Wrigley-Norman Wells portion.

What gives him confidence to say that industry will come to the table? Thank you.

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: Mr. Speaker, as I mentioned earlier to Member Yakeleya, in any discussion I've had with industry – and I've had a number of discussions with industry, the companies that are doing work in the Sahtu – there's a genuine interest by them to have infrastructure put in place. All you have to do is look at Husky constructing a 40 kilometre all-weather road on the other side of the Mackenzie River into one of their ELs to see that there's some commitment there. As this moves forward, as those wells are proven up and if they are going to be brought into production, certainly industry is going to be a big partner of our government.

Again, we'll talk to the federal government. I think it has to be an initiative that sees people working together, and that is industry, our government and the federal government. I think that's going to happen sooner rather than later. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. Final, short supplementary, Mrs. Groenewegen.

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will keep this short. The federal government has expressed a great interest in opening up the North; they have expressed great interest in the development of energy sources in the country. With that in mind, Mr. Ramsay speaks of the federal government coming to the table.

I'd like to know when this government would intend to put forward any kind of formal proposal to the federal government to participate in that part of the highway, as well, the Wrigley to Norman Wells. Thank you.

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: Mr. Speaker, I mentioned earlier, our focus right now is getting construction started on the Inuvik-Tuk highway. I know the department and the government are working on other initiatives that include the lower section of the Mackenzie Valley Highway. We look forward to, at the earliest opportunity, sharing that information with the Standing Committee on Economic Development and Infrastructure and the Regular Members so that we can start looking at other opportunities here to build the infrastructure necessary to get our resources to market. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. The honourable Member for Mackenzie Delta, Mr. Blake.

QUESTION 16-17(4):
NURSE IN TSIIGHEHTCHIC

MR. BLAKE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I mentioned earlier today in my Member's statement, the community of Tsiigehtchic has been without a nurse for the last 15 years. We did have a nurse in Tsiigehtchic for many years before this position was removed. I would like to ask the Minister of Health and Social Services what is the department's plan for a nurse for the community of Tsiigehtchic. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Blake. The Minister of Health and Social Services, Mr. Beaulieu.

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The department plans to continue to work with community leaders and the health authority out of Inuvik, the Beaufort-Delta Health Authority, to try to provide nursing services, physician services into Tsiigehtchic. Ultimately, we would like to somehow place a nurse or two in Tsiigehtchic, but because of the Integrated Service Delivery Model there is not enough work for two full-time nurses. So we're going to try to work something with the authority and Fort McPherson to try to do something where they can have emergency coverage, which is really, I think, the main issue, that even though the nurses go there during the day, there's never coverage in the evening. If something happens in the evening, we have to find a way to try to provide that coverage. So we're having those discussions now. Thank you.

MR. BLAKE: Thank you. The Minister said they were in discussions with the department. So at what stage are the discussions that he's having with the department with regard to a nurse in Tsiigehtchic?

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: Thank you. We are at the very initial stages of this new idea of trying to somehow have a situation where the nurses can actually live in Tsiigehtchic. There are a few things that must fall into place. One is security when the nurses are called out. Right now, because there are no RCMP officers located in Tsiigehtchic, we're going to try to find a way that the local community can provide security. Number two is housing. We have to find some housing where we're going to place two there. There may be room for one nurse now, or there may be room for both nurses, but somehow we've got to find suitable housing, and then the most difficult task of actually putting the job out and attracting someone that would be prepared to work that type of schedule, which may mean working in Fort McPherson and Tsiigehtchic both. Thank you.

MR. BLAKE: Just for the Minister's information, the community does have one unit designated for a nurse in Tsiigehtchic. I'm sure they'd free up another unit if that was made available.

I'd also like to ask the Minister, will he enter into an agreement with the community of Tsiigehtchic for a pilot project for a licenced practical nurse as an interim measure. Thank you.

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: It sounds like it would be a good idea, a good way to pilot something. I know that a type of restriction sometimes that governs registered nurses on whether or not one registered nurse can remain in a small community by themselves doesn't restrict the licenced practical nurse in the same way.

We think that the majority of the work within the Integrated Service Delivery Model can be done by an LPN. So I would be prepared to look at that. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. Final, short supplementary, Mr. Blake.

MR. BLAKE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. So is that a yes? Thank you.

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: Thank you. Yes.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. The Member for Frame Lake, Ms. Bisaro.

QUESTION 17-17(4):

DENE KO DAY SHELTER FUNDING

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions are addressed to the Minister of Health and Social Services.

I want to follow up from my statement that I made earlier about the Dene Ko Day Shelter here in Yellowknife, and whether or not there's going to be funding once we come to the end of March of 2013, whether it's going to be able to continue its work into the next fiscal year. So I'd like to ask the Minister, first of all – it wasn't referenced in the Finance Minister's budget address – what amount of money is identified in the 2013-14 budget for the Dene Ko Day Shelter in Yellowknife. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. The Minister of Health and Social Services, Mr. Beaulieu.

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The department has identified their portion of \$125,000 plus the portion that has expired from BHP. So that would be, I guess, \$175,000 we would be putting into it this fiscal year; and if there was an agreement to continue beyond March 31st, then it would be \$175,000 the following year. Thank you.

MS. BISARO: Thanks to the Minister for the information. He said if it's determined to go beyond, then it would be that amount in '13-14, I think is what he referenced. So my question to the Minister is, if we're putting in \$175,000 in this fiscal year, is there something which has yet to be determined for

'13-14 to allow the Dene Ko Shelter to be funded. Thank you.

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: We were just having a couple of little issues here with the contribution agreement year-end report and proposal. So we need to get some of this administrative stuff out of the way and then the department, seeing all those things and everything being in order and finding somebody to run the facility, if the organization is still prepared to do so, then we will fund for the following year. Thank you.

MS. BISARO: Thanks. I'm still confused. The Minister said we will fund for the following year. I would really appreciate it if he could give me some numbers so I'm sure of what years he's referencing. I would think if the money is identified – and I would hope that the money is identified – I guess I want to hear from the Minister that, yes, the money is going to be in the '13-14 budget or, no, if we can't get a contract by the end of March, it's not going to be there. I would like that clarification. Thank you.

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: Thank you. The Department of Health and Social Services is earmarking \$175,000 for the fiscal year '13-14 for the operation of that facility. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. Final, short supplementary, Ms. Bisaro.

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thanks to the Minister for that clarification. I'm very glad to hear that.

I would like to know from the Minister if it is the intention of the department to continue that funding over more than one year, or is this going to be a one year to one year to one year where they are always waiting for confirmation of funding. Thank you.

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: Thank you. No, we're not sure that we will continue beyond '13-14. This was initially a three-year pilot project, and at the end of the three-year pilot project, which would end on '12-13, there was supposed to be evaluations and a year-end report and proposal for the ongoing years. None of that has been received. So we're going to fund it for one more year. Hopefully, that will give us an opportunity for Health and Social Services to work with the society that runs the day shelter to be able to get that information together so that we could plan for maybe the longer term. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. The Member for Range Lake, Mr. Dolynny.

QUESTION 18-17(4):

HEALTH CARE CARD RENEWAL

MR. DOLYNNY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions today will be for the Minister of Health as well. A valid health care card is the difference between getting service and getting no service if it's

invalid, and I have to applaud the Department of Health for recently putting a lot of emphasis on putting advertisements in the paper looking at updating the expired cards or health care cards that are about to expire. However, I must admit that, as of late, some of us are hearing some noise from our constituents that those people whose health care cards expired in January did not receive notifications from the Department of Health or from Inuvik as well.

Can the Minister of Health indicate did he indeed hear that very same message regarding the fact that notices were not being issued for expiry dates in January of 2013? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Dolynny. The honourable Minister of Health and Social Services, Mr. Beaulieu.

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. There should be notifications going out to everyone. I think the hope at one point was that, just like a driver's licence, when your birthday came up you'd check to see if your health care card was expiring and then you would go down and deal with it. However, it seems like the same attention is not paid to someone's health card as it is to their driver's licence, so we've mailed out information saying that your health card would be expiring on a specific date, your upcoming birthday and so on. My understanding is that everyone whose health card is expiring early this year has received notification.

MR. DOLYNNY: I appreciate the Minister's response to that; however, if everyone was receiving notifications, I guess our phones wouldn't be ringing off the hook from people upset that they did not get a notification card.

My question again to the Minister is: There has been a glitch in the system with respect to notifications being issued for many health care card users across the Northwest Territories, systematically causing disruptions in services for those people who require those updated cards to receive such services in the Northwest Territories. Has the Minister or the department made provisions for basically causing a little bit of a backlog here and has the department made provisions for this backlog?

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: If there is some bit of a backlog because people were not notified through the regular notification system, then the department will do what it can to get that caught up as soon as possible. If we have specific individuals that have not received notification advice either through their MLA or one of the authorities or even Stanton to let people know in the system that they haven't received their health card, then we will get on that and try to get the health cards to individuals as soon as possible.

MR. DOLYNNY: Again, I do stress the integrity of the health care system is paramount and with these delays. I can assure you there is going to be lots of frustration out there in the Northwest Territories for receiving such services. Further, it has been brought to my attention that we have got some other issues with respect to information. With everything that we've heard about keeping of information, people's information, and the privacy, there appears to be some files, from what we have been told, from patients that have been lost from the Inuvik office. The fact that these files are in the process of trying to be retrieved, can the Minister assure this House and the people of the Northwest Territories that, indeed, no patient files have been lost and the integrity of our system is intact?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Dolynny. That is a new line of questioning, but I'll give it to the Minister if he wants to take it. Mr. Beaulieu.

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I indicated, I thought that everybody had received notice. There was an attempt to try to make people personally responsible for their health care cards. If the individuals have sent in information on their health care card and have not received anything, I've advised the office in Inuvik and they said the information was lost. Naturally, we're going to do all we can to recover the information. I heard that there are people who may have information lost, but I haven't received any specifics. If I can get specifics from the Member, I will follow up on it and try to find that information.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. Final supplementary, Mr. Dolynny.

MR. DOLYNNY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate that. It wasn't quite a new question because it was regarding the health care card information being lost. I tried to tie them together, but I do respect the Speaker's point on that.

What I'm asking here from the Minister, quite clearly, is there are obviously some issues here involving people's health care card renewals and now information. Can the Minister actually assure the House and assure the standing committee here in the future that the integrities are in place, and can we get something back in writing from the Minister of that integrity?

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: The department will do everything possible to make sure that people are notified. We will confirm that.

We recognize we're talking about a volume of about 3,000 people each month whose health care cards will expire. If everyone has not received notification, we will follow up with those individuals and also with anybody who has indicated that there's a possibility that their information has gotten lost, either going to Inuvik or coming back from Inuvik.

We will track that and get to the bottom of any of these issues.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. The honourable Member for Nahendeh, Mr. Menicoche.

QUESTION 19-17(4):
ECONOMIC ZONE
INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENTS

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I just want to follow up on my Member's statement as well. Basically, it's a new and emerging issue the impact that is happening in the Sahtu and my riding of Nahendeh and the need for expenditures on the road north of Wrigley. I just wanted to take a different angle though.

We mentioned here several times about the Voisey's Bay template, about spending money in the special development zones and the federal government did it for Voisey's Bay. We actually did it for Highway No. 4 and the Ingraham Trail. I would like to ask the Minister of ITI if he could look at this as a special development zone and can we start putting some resources to it. I know the Minister indicated that he's going to wait and see that the play is actually developed. In these other areas we spent money before they were developed. I would like to ask the Minister of ITI if he will start focusing and work with his Cabinet colleagues to develop a strategy for the Sahtu and develop our Mackenzie Valley Highway north.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. The honourable Minister of Industry, Tourism and Investment, Mr. David Ramsay.

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the Member. That was a good statement that he had earlier.

Certainly, we need to be looking at what is happening in the Sahtu. I know I answered a number of questions today from Mr. Yakeleya regarding what is happening in the Sahtu. We need to look at opportunities. I mentioned to Mr. Yakeleya about the Economic Opportunities Strategy that is underway. I think it's a good opportunity to put the concerns of the region of Nahendeh and the Sahtu on the table and see what we can do.

I know with Voisey's Bay, I believe, it was after the mine was developed at Voisey's Bay that ACOA had put a special economic zone in place at Voisey's Bay. I don't know if it was pre-development of that mine. I'd have to double check that.

Certainly, we've got a lot happening in the Sahtu, and I know the roads in the Member's riding are being impacted and we really do need to pay special attention here. If there's a way to develop the economy in both the Nahendeh and the Sahtu I think the most important thing is the agencies that

are there aren't tripping over themselves. I think there's a possibility that if you get too many people involved in it, that's not a good thing either. I think it has to be focused and it has to be action oriented in order to get results. I think we will get there. It's early days.

MR. MENICOCHÉ: We missed, of course, a huge opportunity during NWT Days, because this is a new and emerging issue for us to advise that the Sahtu is having impact on the region and our Northwest Territories. Will the Minister of ITI develop this strategy so that we can work with the federal government and let them know that we will need their assistance in developing impact funding for this region? Just like they committed \$500 million for the pipeline, this is special development that is happening and if we can work towards developing some kind of strategy to get impact funding from the federal government.

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: I guess I'm very well situated in that I am the Minister of Industry, Tourism and Investment and Minister of Transportation, and in the meetings we had with our federal counterparts in Ottawa, I, again, never miss an opportunity to let them know what is happening in the central Mackenzie, talk about it, talk about the need of a Mackenzie Valley all-weather road. Certainly, that is going to be front and centre.

We have a big project that we need to get construction started on. As soon as that is moved forward, our focus will certainly shift south to the central Mackenzie and we will take our best effort.

I mentioned earlier that we want to work with Regular Members on an approach with the federal government, and how we're going to go about trying to work with industry and the federal government to get some more funding for the Mackenzie Valley Highway. We've had some success with CanNor. Thus far they've just recently given us a little bit more money to continue the momentum that we have there, so we'll continue to work with CanNor and other partners on moving this whole thing forward.

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Certainly, the other regions are getting their special projects, and it's time now to use the momentum of the Sahtu play to develop the highways in the Nahendeh system and the Sahtu. Just with that focus, it's not about taking away from other regions but about our government identifying that it is important, and to work with the federal government to identify a strategy for impact funding. Can the Minister work with his Cabinet colleagues to continue that momentum?

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: ITI certainly was working with the other departments. When you look at this year's budget you'll see a number of items in there specific to the Sahtu. That is a direct result of what is happening in the Sahtu.

The government has had to react and take action. Working with the other departments, we've identified areas where we need to be looking at putting more resources. We have done that.

I believe this is still relatively early days in the development of the Canol shale oil play. Those wells will be tested. If they have a commercial rate flow and get into production, that will change many, many things here in the Northwest Territories.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. Final supplementary, Mr. Menicoche.

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Just to continue that momentum, if the ITI Minister will also work with his Cabinet colleagues that my riding of Nahendeh, Fort Simpson and Wrigley are being impacted, and that some resources will have to be identified for them as well.

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: As this all moves forward, I certainly look forward to working with the Member and the communities in Nahendeh to see how they've been impacted, and working with the government to try to find ways to get more resources there.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. The honourable Member for Inuvik Boot Lake, Mr. Moses.

QUESTION 20-17(4):

ADDICTIONS DETOXIFICATION BEDS

MR. MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions today are also for the Minister of Health and Social Services. In the Mental Health and Addictions Action Plan: A Shared Path Towards Wellness, it states that the Department of Health and Social Services spends \$9 million each year to support mental health and addictions, yet there are 11 service gaps that are presented.

I'd like to quote the Minister of Health and Social Services during the TLC, where he states, "When I speak to community health providers, there is a need for alcohol counselling, there is a need for treatment to be close to the people where the people live. We need to have those services at the community level and on the land where the people can work together in healing." Yet this Minister sent the Minister's Forum on the road at a cost of \$300,000 and he didn't feel that money could be spent better anywhere else.

My question to the Minister in that sense, some stuff that was laid out in the budget process, he did mention detox beds. Can I ask the Minister of Health and Social Services how many detox beds are there going to be in the Northwest Territories and where are they going to be located?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Moses. The honourable Minister of Health and Social Services, Mr. Beaulieu.

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The determination of detox beds had come as a result of some questioning in the House here where we had determined that there are no detox beds available anywhere in the health care system. What that indicated then was that beds can be made available at the Stanton Hospital and the Beaufort-Delta hospital. What we will do is ensure that if somebody needs detox around those two centres, that detox beds can be made available to individuals for detoxification.

MR. MOSES: There are so many different areas from the budget address and what we've discussed in the past here, but the Minister did mention Yellowknife and Inuvik. With all the services that Yellowknife does have, even though it is a growing problem here in Yellowknife – and I appreciate that – I'd like to make a recommendation that we have one detox or two detox beds in the north and two in the south where we also have a lot of issues and concerns but don't have the resources. Will the Minister commit to putting those detox beds, one or two detox beds in the north and one or two detox beds in the south? Will he commit to that?

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: I can commit to making beds available for detoxification, two in the North and two in the South.

MR. MOSES: It was really good news to hear that we did get the \$1.15 million and the commitment, as well, into mental health and addictions, and it says that the money is going to be supported in the initiatives with the shared plan towards wellness. Was this \$1.15 million allocated to this action plan in the initial budget before the budget dialogue process happened? Was that \$1.15 million allocated in the initial budget?

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: In order to fully implement the action, the department would need, I think, \$1.4 million ongoing for the three full years for the implementation of the action plan. Some of the action plan may indicate that we look at programs. Like the Member had indicated, we're spending about \$9 million in community counselling, residential treatment and so on. That could be part of the action plan as well, the programs that we currently have in place. But this is what we think we would need in order to fully implement the action plan for the next three years so that we actually complete the action plan.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. Final, short supplementary, Mr. Moses.

MR. MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I do appreciate the challenges that we face. We do have an action plan here, and the action plan says we need action. How is he going to address this shortfall in funding so that we don't continue to take care and treatment, rather than we can start making preventative measures sooner than later?

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: At the department we don't think we have a shortfall in funding. We think that the action plan is something that would work within our current framework. The goals are to promote and understand awareness and acceptance for mental health. We focus on the person. We talk about improving availability and access to services, so the services that are available, we would try to make them more accessible to improve the efficiency of the services that we have in place. I think that's going to save money, not cost us money. Some of those goals are what we're looking at in this action plan.

As a department we are fairly comfortable that we're moving forward with the money that we have and that there will be some results.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. The honourable Member for Hay River North, Mr. Bouchard.

QUESTION 21-17(4):
FEDERAL FUNDING FOR
TERRITORIAL INFRASTRUCTURE

MR. BOUCHARD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions today are for the Minister of Transportation. He has indicated that he had the opportunity to meet with the Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure when he was in Ottawa last week. I'm just wondering if he was able to get any commitment on cost sharing of the Tuk to Inuvik highway, the 75/25 for the complete cost of that construction.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Bouchard. The Minister of Transportation, Mr. Ramsay.

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. That question was raised with Minister Lebel when we had the meeting with him and it wasn't confirmed nor denied whether they would be willing to look at 75/25. Our belief is that that will be the case. He didn't say otherwise, so we're going on that premise that it will be 75/25.

MR. BOUCHARD: I'm just wondering, with the meetings with Minister Lebel, if there was discussion of other infrastructure such as the Mackenzie Highway and the potential of needing funds for that, and is the federal government interested in the responsibility for constructing roads on the Mackenzie Highway; specifically, the Sahtu area.

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: In other meetings we had with other federal Ministers, the subject of the Mackenzie Valley Highway did come up. Certainly, we let them know what was happening in the central Mackenzie in terms of the shale oil development there and the need for further infrastructure investment in our territory.

In terms of the discussion about dredging in the port of Hay River, that discussion did come up as

well with the parliamentary secretary, Mr. Steven Fletcher.

MR. BOUCHARD: The Minister must be reading my mind. My next question was about the port of Hay River and the dredging that the federal government is responsible for.

What is the next step in confirming some of this funding? We currently have no commitments from the federal government. What is the next step? Do we have another meeting planned with Minister Lebel to confirm some of these infrastructure dollars that we require?

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: First, with the Inuvik-Tuk highway, we are going to, hopefully, be working toward a funding arrangement with the federal government here in the very near future.

Secondly, on the Mackenzie Valley Highway, we thanked all the federal Ministers that we met with for their involvement with the help we've gotten from CanNor to continue the work on the Mackenzie Valley Highway. I mentioned earlier we had just recently got another \$600,000 through CanNor to allow us to work with communities up and down the Mackenzie Valley to continue that momentum on the Mackenzie Valley all-weather road.

On the port of Hay River and the dredging program there, it was suggested to me by the parliamentary secretary that we engage in a letter writing campaign to himself and to the Minister of Transportation, Mr. Denis Lebel. We certainly will take him up on that offer and get those letters out as soon as possible.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. Final, short supplementary, Mr. Bouchard.

MR. BOUCHARD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The question on the Hay River dredging, I'm just wondering if the Minister has any dollars to commit to doing, other than letter writing. Any dollars for assessing the value and the cost of dredging the Hay River?

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: The federal government didn't commit any dollars during these meetings, but we did mention to them that at one point in time they had a \$50 million program for dredging and how detrimental the lack of having a program is to a community like Hay River. That was quite clearly articulated to Minister Fletcher. We will try our best to get some funding from the federal government to look at a dredging program in the port of Hay River.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. The honourable Member for Yellowknife Centre, Mr. Hawkins.

QUESTION 22-17(4):
DENE KO DAY SHELTER FUNDING

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate the opportunity to ask some questions. I'm going to follow up on some questions mentioned by Member Bisaro. She asked about the downtown day shelter. What I found very odd was the fact that the Minister of Health and Social Services is now saying they're going to continue the existing vendor to run that facility. With all the concerns and issues that have been raised and the coverage on that particular facility on the quality of the way it has been run, why is he just sort of rolling it over and going to another year contract with the same vendor?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. The Minister of Health and Social Services, Mr. Beaulieu.

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. There are not a whole lot of people lining up to run a day shelter, but right now what we're doing is finding a department or an organization that's prepared to do that work. We don't have a final proposal or agreement with them either, but the assumption is that that's what we'll do there. There is a possibility, even though we are having some difficulty, that YK Health and Social Services Authority, once they go through an RFP process, and we are questioning whether or not we can get the RFP process completed by the end of this fiscal year. Because we don't think that we can do a proper process, we thought that we'd extend it a year before we went through that process.

MR. HAWKINS: Mr. Speaker, what I'm hearing from the Minister is the department can't put their paperwork together in order to ask for a proper proposal. We have the Tree of Peace less than two blocks away. We have the Salvation Army just a few blocks north to that particular thing. The Salvation Army has even expressed interest in this particular project if they'd like to take it on. We would rather be satisfied with a substandard or an extensively inadequate product rather than sort of reaching out to what's good.

Why is it better to continue on with the same people who can't even force reasonable policies such as no drinking on premises? Why don't we just shut it down and start fresh properly? Thank you.

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: Mr. Speaker, I think that running a day shelter is a difficult task. Like I indicated, we're not sure if it's better to continue with our current vendor. We don't even know if the current vendor will continue beyond March 31st. All we know is that right now we haven't received a contribution agreement between ourselves and the YK Health and Social Services Authority so the money can flow to an operator or an organization that can run that facility.

What we do know is that we'll continue the funding so that we don't have to close it down. It seemed to have some value. Some Members think that there is value in keeping the day shelter open, so we'll keep the money flowing. It was intended for a three-year pilot project and we've decided not to shut it down after the first three years. Thank you.

MR. HAWKINS: Mr. Speaker, the day shelter services are so important here in the city and they do help a lot of people. But the reality is, if it's going to keep being run into the ground by the same bunch of people, we might as well just stop, refresh our mandate and policy, and ask ourselves why do we do this and how do we do it right.

Why doesn't the Minister just say, let's take this money that we're committing into going forward, shut it down and put out a real proposal so we get the services we need that help people who need services such as the day shelter provides, rather than allowing it in its existing form which does more harm than good? Thank you.

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: Mr. Speaker, there are a lot of people using that shelter now. So I'll have the department look at that. Maybe if the most prudent thing to do is shut the shelter down until we get a proper proposal and operator, or an organization that we think can improve the services to the shelter, then we'll wait until it gets a little warmer and then we'll shut it down. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. Final, short supplementary, Mr. Hawkins.

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I think the Minister sort of answered my last question in that form.

What would it take to just sort of pause at the end of this fiscal contract to re-write and re-evaluate what we need and what we want as objectives, and to start fresh, maybe in May or June, and do it right, rather than continuing to limp on in a bad form as we are presently existing now?

The whole town knows it, the whole neighbourhood knows it, and certainly the people that are there know that. So what will it take for you to do that? Thank you.

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: Not much, actually. We could actually let the funding expire on March 31st, shut it down and then start from scratch, look at that building or another building, whatever, and then see if we can provide a better service. We're prepared to do that.

We are looking, more or less, at the individuals who were using the shelter, the tremendous high use of the shelter, and the weather. Even though we were not receiving some information that we needed to continue, we decided to continue to flow the funding until the fall. But if the Members in the Legislative Assembly think the best thing to do is shut it down

and start over, we're prepared to do that. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. The preamble today was a little bit long on everybody's questions, so I'm going to allow Mr. Nadli to finish off his oral questions for the day. Mr. Nadli.

QUESTION 23-17(4):
COMMUNITY FIRE SERVICES

MR. NADLI: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I promise to keep it short.

My question today is to the Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs. Right now at the local level we have a lot of volunteers that participate quite graciously in the fire department. I just wanted to ask the Minister, can he comment further on the assessment of community fire services. Mahsi.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Nadli. The Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs, Mr. McLeod.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Through the office of the assistant fire marshal in each region, we're working with community fire departments to identify training and anything else they may need. I believe that work has been done and we are just waiting to hear. Once shortcomings are identified, we will work with the communities and try and get them trained up, or work with them in identifying potential pieces of equipment they may need. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. NADLI: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to thank the Minister for his response. I understand that there's an Emergency Management Training Strategy in place. It's in the development stages. Most of the training that local fire departments receive is defensive for dwelling structures or home structures.

What are some of the results that have been achieved through the department's Emergency Management Training Strategy? Thank you.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Mr. Speaker, one of the things we heard from NWTAC and a lot of the communities that are on the highway system, is their lack of capacity to respond to accidents that might be outside the town. We have \$200,000 that was earmarked for ground ambulance and highway service rescue. We have decided that we're going to allocate some of that for training. So we'll have a lot of people in communities that are trained to be first responders. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. NADLI: Mr. Speaker, what is the status of the ground ambulance and highway rescue services funding review? This has been going on for some time there. Mahsi.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Mr. Speaker, we had identified \$200,000 in the past for ground

ambulance and highway services. We had some communities take us up on that money. Once they realized there is a huge liability without the proper training, they kind of backed off a bit.

We are looking at the overall picture. There is a departmental advisory committee that's looking at it right now, and we're waiting to see what they come back with, what some of their recommendations might be. So we are looking forward to that. Once we get that, we'll be able to share it with the Members. We will share it with NWTAC, and look forward to ensuring that our folks in the front lines are trained as proper first responders. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Final, short supplementary, Mr. Nadli.

MR. NADLI: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The summer travel season, especially for tourist travellers, is coming up here fairly soon. When can this House expect to see the results of this review that the Minister is referring to? Mahsi.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Mr. Speaker, it is an ongoing review. I will contact those that are involved, and see where they're at, and see if there are any preliminary findings that I can share with the Members. I will be sure to give that. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Oral questions are now expired. Item 10, written questions. Mr. Menicoche.

Written Questions

WRITTEN QUESTION 3-17(4):
AFFIRMATIVE ACTION HIRING STATISTICS

MR. MENICOCHÉ: My questions are for the Minister of Human Resources.

1. How many GNWT employment opportunities were advertised in 2011 and 2012?
2. How many of these positions were filled by Priority 1 candidates as identified under the Affirmative Action Policy?
3. How many of these positions were filled by Priority 2 candidates?
4. What was the total number of applicants in 2011 and 2012 and how many of the applicants were Priority 1 or Priority 2 candidates?

Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. Item 11, returns to written questions. Item 12, replies to opening address. Item 13, replies to budget address, day one of seven. Item 14, petitions. Item 15, reports of committee on the review of bills. Item 16, tabling of documents. Mr. Abernethy.

Tabling of Documents

TABLED DOCUMENT 6-17(4):
2011-2012 REPORT OF THE
LEGAL SERVICES BOARD OF THE NWT

TABLED DOCUMENT 7-17(4):
NORTHWEST TERRITORIES LAW FOUNDATION
THIRTIETH ANNUAL REPORT FOR THE
FISCAL YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2012

TABLED DOCUMENT 8-17(4):
NORTHWEST TERRITORIES CORONERS
SERVICE 2011 ANNUAL REPORT

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to table the following three documents, entitled 2011-2012 Report of the Legal Services Board of the Northwest Territories, the NWT Law Foundation's 30th Annual Report for the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 2012, and the NWT Coroners Service 2011 Annual Report. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Miltenberger.

TABLED DOCUMENT 9-17(4):
MAIN ESTIMATES 2013-2014,
NORTHWEST TERRITORIES

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to table the following document, entitled Northwest Territories Main Estimates, 2013-2014. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Mr. Hawkins.

TABLED DOCUMENT 10-17(4):
SENIOR MANAGEMENT SALARY RANGES –
RESPONSE TO WRITTEN QUESTION 12-17(3)

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to table a letter addressed to me. It's in response to a written question I wrote, Written Question 12-17(3), regarding senior management bonus salary ranges. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. Item 17, notices of motion. Item 18, notices of motion for first reading of bills. Item 19, motions. Item 20, first reading of bills. Item 21, second reading of bills. Item 22, consideration in Committee of the Whole of bills and other matters, with Mrs. Groenewegen in the chair.

Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and other Matters

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): I'd like to call Committee of the Whole to order. The only item in Committee of the Whole today is Tabled

Document 9-17(4). What is the wish of the committee? Mr. Menicoche.

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you, Madam Chair. I move that we report progress.

---Carried

Report of Committee of the Whole

MR. SPEAKER: Item 23, report of Committee of the Whole, Madam Chair.

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Your committee has been considering Tabled Document 9-17(4) and would like to report progress. Mr. Speaker, I move that report of the Committee of the Whole be concurred with. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Madam Chair. Do I have a seconder? Mr. Beaulieu.

---Carried

Item 24, third reading of bills. Mr. Clerk, orders of the day.

Orders of the Day

HONOURARY TABLE OFFICER (Mr. Tony Whitford): Mr. Speaker, orders of the day for Friday, February 8, 2013, 10:00 a.m.:

1. Prayer
2. Ministers' Statements
3. Members' Statements
4. Returns to Oral Questions
5. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery
6. Acknowledgements
7. Oral Questions
8. Written Questions
9. Returns to Written Questions
10. Replies to Opening Address
11. Replies to Budget Address
12. Petitions
13. Reports of Standing and Special Committees
14. Reports of Committees on the Review of Bills
15. Tabling of Documents
16. Notices of Motion
17. Notices of Motion for First Reading of Bills
18. Motions
 - Motion 1-17(4), Setting of Session Hours by Speaker
19. First Reading of Bills
20. Second Reading of Bills

21. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters

- Tabled Document 9-17(4), NWT Main Estimates, 2013-2014

22. Report of Committee of the Whole

23. Third Reading of Bills

24. Orders of the Day

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Clerk. Accordingly, this House stands adjourned until Friday, November 8th, at 10:00 a.m.

---ADJOURNMENT

The House adjourned at 4:43 p.m.

