



# **NORTHWEST TERRITORIES LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY**

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## **HANSARD**

**Wednesday, March 14, 2018**

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**The Honourable Jackson Lafferty, Speaker**

# Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories

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**YELLOWKNIFE, NORTHWEST TERRITORIES****Wednesday, March 14, 2018****Members Present**

Hon. Glen Abernethy, Mr. Beaulieu, Ms. Green, Hon. Jackson Lafferty, Hon. Robert McLeod, Hon. Alfred Moses, Mr. Nadli, Mr. O'Reilly, Hon. Wally Schumann, Hon. Louis Sebert, Mr. Simpson, Mr. Testart, Mr. Thompson, Mr. Vanthuyne.

The House met at 1:29 p.m.

**Prayer**

---Prayer

**SPEAKER (Hon. Jackson Lafferty):** Good afternoon, Members. Item 2, Ministers' statements. Deputy Premier.

**Ministers' Statements**

MINISTER'S STATEMENT 65-18(3):  
PASSING OF MS. CECE HODGSON-MCCAULEY

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to offer my condolences and pay tribute to Cece Hodgson-McCauley, who passed away last Sunday at the age of 95.

The Northwest Territories is built on the legacy of those who come before us and paved a way for the next generation, the people who stood tall and were the outspoken voices in the crowds when change was needed most. These people and their legacy are part of what makes the North strong and unique, and Cece Hodgson-McCauley is one of these people.

Born on the shores of Great Bear Lake in 1922, Cece lived her life as a proud Indigenous Northerner. At an early age, Cece attended Sacred Heart Mission School in Fort Providence after the loss of her mother. She always had the best interest of others at heart and was continually encouraging others to stand up for what they believed in and reminding them to always be truthful and do the right thing.

Mr. Speaker, Cece was a pioneer and inspiration for all people, but especially Indigenous women in leadership. She was the first female chief in the NWT and the founding chief of the Inuvik Band. She was also a former president of the Norman Wells Land Corporation. A fierce "Woman Warrior of the Sahtu," Cece worked until the very end writing her outspoken column for News North.

In her column and in life, Cece always spoke her mind and wasn't afraid to be herself. Throughout her life and career, she touched many people and

communities across the North and Canada. She was a supporter, and often a critic, of government and encouraged Northerners to get involved in causes that mattered to them. She is a reminder that sometimes to see change, you need to make your voice heard and showed us this first-hand as a strong voice for the Mackenzie Valley highway. Cece was a leader in all respects. In 2017 she received an Indspire Award for Politics.

Cece recently wrote her final editorial for News North. In it, she acknowledged that she had a wonderful life and felt blessed for her family and the things she was able to do with her time on Earth. We are all grateful to have known Cece and know that even though she may be gone, her memory and impressions she has left on this Territory will forever remain.

Mr. Speaker, the Premier, along with some of his colleagues from this House, are in Norman Wells today to attend Cece's memorial service. On behalf of him and the Government of the Northwest Territories, I would like to pass along our sincere condolences to the family of Cece Hodgson-McCauley. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. Our condolences to the family, as well. Ministers' statements. Deputy Premier.

MINISTER'S STATEMENT 66-18(3):  
MINISTERS ABSENT FROM THE HOUSE

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I wish to advise Members that the Premier and the Minister responsible for the Status of Women will be absent from the House today to attend a funeral in Norman Wells. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. Ministers' statements. Item 3, Members' statements. Member for Nahendeh.

**Members' Statements**

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON  
MENTAL HEALTH CHALLENGES IN NAHENDEH

**MR. THOMPSON:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in May and June of 2017, a series of meetings were held to solidify feedback from age

groups in Fort Simpson regarding community wellness. Information was gathered, compiled, and a community wellness plan was completed in July 2017 that addressed some of the concerns of the community Members. They were:

- bullying and cyber bullying;
- not enough activities for youth and families offered;
- unresolved grief and trauma associated with residential schools;
- not enough mental health services and counsellors available in the community, and information about these services were not disseminated effectively; and
- drug and alcohol abuse;

to name a number of them, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, on April 1, 2017, to date, I would like to highlight some of these things that the community has been doing.

- Interagency meetings were reinstated to improve communication between community agencies and service providers between ourselves and the community.
- A 10-day youth-on-the-land camp was held at the Culture Camp from July 31 to August 9, 2017, and another one is planned this year,
- A three-day on-the-land camp. A workshop for adults, Grieving to Self-Healing, was held in July.
- Liidlii Kue in the Village of Fort Simpson hosted the week long regional youth Dene Games in August.
- The Reel Youth anti-bullying and film workshop was undertaken in October. All students from grades 7 through 12 were given the opportunity to participate, and several films were created.
- The Lights On program started in October. Paid supervisors and adult volunteers kept the high school open on Friday and Saturday night from 8:00 to 12:00 midnight for students from grades 7 to 12. Between 25 and 50 youth attended each night.
- An Elders' Appreciation Dinner was held in December where elders were honoured, received gifts, and were served by a group of volunteer high school students.
- LFKN assisted with planning, presentation, and delivering evening programs for the youth

mental health conference that was held at the high school February 2018. I will be doing a Member's statement tomorrow on this.

- A group of 10 students and two chaperones travelled to the Wisdom to Action Youth-Led Suicide Prevention Program conference in Vancouver. I will be doing a Member's statement later on this next sitting.
- An elders and youth film making project is beginning in March. Northern studies students will be creating films of their interviews with the community elders.
- LKFN will operate a four-plex unit that will host four people who have been ---

Mr. Speaker. I seek unanimous consent to conclude my statement.

---Unanimous consent granted

**MR. THOMPSON:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thanks, colleagues. As I said, LKFN will be operating a four-plex housing unit that will be housing four people who have been homeless for 180 days in the past year. The program is called Pathways to Housing, and it is a solid beginning to solve our homeless issue. The project will be fully under way by April 1<sup>st</sup>.

I would like to thank the various departments that help with these projects; Municipal and Community Affairs, Education, Culture and Employment, Health and Social Services, Housing, and Environment and Natural Resources. If I missed any other departments, I thank them for helping this community. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. Members' statements. Member for Yellowknife North.

#### MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION

**MR. VANTHUYNE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, we have spent a lot of time in the 18<sup>th</sup> Assembly talking about the importance of a diversified economy. We want to rely less on one big sector, so we are supporting other sectors like tourism, agriculture, and the creative arts. We will continue to nurture and grow these areas so that they become sustainable sources of jobs and wealth.

How do we get there, Mr. Speaker? We need to have more post-secondary choices available here in the North. We also need to make sure that our students who choose to go to school elsewhere are well-equipped to face those challenges. In particular, we need to encourage Indigenous students to pursue post-secondary programs.

A study from the Canada Millennium Scholarship Foundation finds that there are barriers to post-secondary education for Indigenous students. Those barriers include a lack of financial resources and a lack of academic preparation. Indigenous students feel unwelcome on post-secondary campuses, plus more Indigenous students are already married and raising children, or are single and raising children at the age when they are eligible for post-secondary programs.

Mr. Speaker, the common phrase is that "our young people are our future." If that's true, and we imagine a future full of possibility and growth, we need to remove these barriers to allow our young people to follow their dreams.

Our post-secondary programs that succeed, such as Aurora College and Dechinta Bush University, offer students the chance to achieve the skills needed to build their lives and careers without leaving the North. That is a capacity that we must build and grow, Mr. Speaker, and we can build on it on our terms.

That is also the lesson of the Dechinta Bush University, which takes a unique, northern approach to higher learning. It incorporates the knowledge of Dene elders and knowledge holders. Instead of bringing students inside a classroom, it takes education onto the land. It provides full daycare services focused on Dene language and traditions, so young families don't have to choose between education and the wage economy. Significantly, Dechinta has a dropout rate of zero.

Mr. Speaker, I see unanimous consent to conclude my statement. Thank you.

---Unanimous consent granted.

**MR. VANTHUYNE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you, colleagues. Mr. Speaker, our students who choose to leave the North to pursue their educational dreams must be well-equipped. Our generous Student Financial Assistance program ensures that financial factors should not be a barrier to their success. Our system must focus on producing students who are well-rounded, confident, and capable as any in the world.

Mr. Speaker, we need to continue to build an education system that reduces barriers to success. Our young people may choose to stay home or to venture beyond our borders. Either way, our system must make sure that they are ready to face those challenges, to build the future that they dream is possible. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. Members' statements. Member for Kam Lake.

#### MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON ACCREDITATION OF POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS

**MR. TESTART:** Merci, Monsieur le President. The Department of Education, Culture and Employment recently released a discussion paper on Governance of Post-Secondary Education in the Northwest Territories, a discussion paper that I've been eagerly awaiting for some time given my commitment to accountable and relevant post-secondary education in the Northwest Territories.

The mandate of our Government states that the GNWT will begin to "expand opportunities for post-secondary education, trades-oriented learning, and northern education institutions." This discussion paper contains some important statements. The discussion paper focuses on the need for quality assurance to ensure that, if students study in the NWT, then their qualifications will stand up anywhere in the world.

What this discussion paper lays out explicitly is that quality assurance is critical to sound fiscal investment in post-secondary education. However, there is currently no quality assurance for Aurora College Programs that are not rented from other jurisdictions. As I understand it, it is the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment who approves these programs.

How is it then fiscally and socially responsible, as suggested by this discussion paper, that Aurora College will not be subject to the rigors of the changes to the Education Act? Further to the discussion paper, Mr. Speaker, how is it that Aurora College, with the vast majority of its programs unaccredited, will remain the only public-funded body that can provide adult-learning in the Northwest Territories?

We need to lead as a jurisdiction to implement evidence-based best practices for all of our financial investments.

Given what little data on success rates and success outcomes are at the college, how can this government continue to support a post-secondary governance position where the future of NWT post-secondary education will be monopolized by a failing arm of Education, Culture and Employment when Indigenous self-governments and student-focused success stories like Dechinta are relegated to private Indigenous institutions that can only be privately funded, with only the possibility of small and uncertain government grants?

The situation of accreditation at the college is even more curious when you consider that a post-secondary institution in the NWT already has a form of quality assurance for its courses without a need

for legislative change or a foundational review. That's Dechinta Bush University, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, sound and accountable investment in post-secondary education is the cornerstone of future labour market success. We need to do this now, we need to move on, and we need to make sure we are supporting all of our institutions, not just those that are run by this government. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. Members' statements. Member for Deh Cho.

#### MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON DECHINTA CENTRE FOR RESEARCH AND LEARNING

**MR. NADLI:** Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. This government's mandate calls for expanded post-secondary education for our students and to act on the recommendations of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. Right in the mandate, it is stated that 83 per cent of our people with post-secondary education have a job.

Despite pressure from standing committees, Regular Members, and the public, we have seen course offerings from Aurora College cut, not expanded, even in areas where future demand will be high.

Neither have we seen expansion of post-secondary opportunities at other institutions. There is still no practical pathway to establish colleges or universities. We are still waiting for this legislation, Mr. Speaker.

Where is the government's vision? There are tremendous opportunities for Indigenous education and research that could benefit our territory for generations.

This summer, for example, students from Dechinta Bush University travelled up to Deh Cho for a semester. Their learning was led by such professors as Sam Gargan, Jim Antione, and Ethel Lamothe, partnered with the Dene Zhati Language program. Students learned Dene place names, family history, and the history of colonization.

Both Dene and non-Indigenous students were immersed in Dene culture and heritage. This is how we build a future, Mr. Speaker. In addition, I am told this program brought more than \$600,000 of outside investment to the Deh Cho, Sahtu, and Beaufort Delta regions. This is the knowledge economy in action.

Dechinta has the potential to expand this economy and offer new and exciting opportunities to our students. It is highly regarded, with programs open to all and accredited by three Canadian universities.

Half of our population is Indigenous, our traditional knowledge is strong, and we could be leaders in Indigenous education in Canada.

Mr. Speaker, it has taken this government two years to do a discussion paper on the future of post-secondary education, and yet, there is no detail of best practices in Indigenous education, just a mention of private Indigenous institutes. There is no mention of the TRC's calls to action in education.

Indigenous education represents our greatest opportunity, but I am sorry to note that there was a similar lack of vision for other growing post-secondary institutions, including College nordique. I will have questions for the Education Minister. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. Members' statements. Member for Yellowknife Centre.

#### MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON AURORA COLLEGE SOCIAL WORK PROGRAM REVIEW

**MS. GREEN:** Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, about a year ago, the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment announced that the Social Work Program and the Teacher Education Program offered at Aurora College would be phased out. He said that he made the decision on the basis of low graduation rates from both programs. When I questioned him at the time, he was unsure why the rates were so low or what barriers students faced in completing the programs. The lingering question is whether the Minister was willing to invest any effort into improving the programs before axing them.

Mr. Speaker, Aurora College decided to find answers to these questions themselves by launching a review of the Social Work Program under the leadership of the vice president of education and training. The review is to gauge how to improve student retention and success, to document barriers, recommend the best approach to achieve the objectives of the program, and to assess the quality of the program offered. This is the work that should have been done before the Minister made the decision to phase out the program.

Mr. Speaker, the Social Work Program has been around in different forms since 1982, and it has been reviewed and revamped several times, most recently 20 years ago. Students who finish the current program earn a certificate in social work and have the option to continue on to complete a degree.

Mr. Speaker, as of the year 2000, there were over 100 Social Work Diploma graduates in the NWT, so



the number today is obviously much greater. Demand for social workers in the NWT is strong. The Department of Education, Culture and Employment estimates the NWT will need an additional 158 social workers between 2015 and 2030. These are good jobs that pay an average of \$69,000 a year. These are also jobs that are typically filled by women.

Mr. Speaker, social workers are the primary drivers of community development in the places that they work. They are an indispensable support for community wellness. Having northern social workers driver northern community development is obviously a good idea. Training northern residents to be social workers in the North also makes sense, with a record of success stretching back two decades. The program review under way now will help improve the program, but only if the Minister accepts its recommendations. I will have questions. Mahsi.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. Members' statements. Member for Tu Nedhe-Wiilideh.

#### MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON SUMMER EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR POST-SECONDARY STUDENTS

**MR. BEAULIEU:** Marci cho, Mr. Speaker. [No English translation provided.]

Mr. Speaker, in recent years, this government has truly begun to prioritize summer students, whether by enhancing our summer student financial assistance or helping them find employment within the graduate internship or summer student employment programs. The success of the GNWT's efforts in this regard is demonstrated by our government consistently winning accolades as one of Canada's Top Employers, specifically as one of Canada's Top Employers for young people in Canada and a Best Diversity Employer.

Mr. Speaker, it is great that our achievements can be recognized, and we should all be proud of that. However, we cannot lose the momentum that we have gained in helping our students. We must continue to work diligently in providing fruitful opportunities for our students because, quite simply, they are our future.

Mr. Speaker, today, I would like to bring forth some new ideas that can help expand opportunities for summer students in the NWT. While I strongly support employing as many students as possible, I believe our government can go beyond only trying to employ students within the GNWT, as there are other ways to widen the job pool for students.

Mr. Speaker, in Alberta, there is a wage subsidy program that provides funding to eligible employees

as a way to financially incentivize the hiring of high school and post-secondary students into summer jobs. In essence, the provincial government pays for a part of the student's salary while they work during the summer.

Another idea, Mr. Speaker, is to create a new tax credit that would be conducive for northern employers in helping to offset the costs of hiring summer students. With this idea, businesses would be allowed to claim the cost on their tax returns. Mr. Speaker, our students should have a diverse selection of job opportunities that spans across all economic sectors. I urge our government to consider these investments in the future in order to best serve our future leaders of the territory, our students. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. Members' statements. Member for Frame Lake.

#### MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON COMPARING MINIMUM AND LIVING WAGES

**MR. O'REILLY:** Merci, Monsieur le President. The NWT's minimum wage is increasing April 1<sup>st</sup> from \$12.50 to \$13.46 per hour. It is good news that more money is going into the pockets of our underemployed workers, but in the end, the minimum wage is a blunt instrument for addressing poverty. We need to stop tinkering and take a more comprehensive approach.

As the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment says, his decision to raise the minimum wage follows recommendations of the Minimum Wage Committee report, which is itself not a very satisfactory or independent process. The committee has two government representatives, one of whom chairs; two employee representatives; two from employers; and one from a social agency. Two other government employees with Finance served as consultants. This is the committee's second report, which is almost verbatim the same as the report produced in 2014.

Both reports presented three options for a minimum wage rate, linking it to the Average Industrial Hourly Wage. This year, the committee recommended three options: no change; or an increase to \$13.46 or \$14.96 per hour. The report observes raising the minimum wage rate will have "little bearing" on many Northerners living in poverty because fewer than 1,100 of the 21,000 workers in the NWT make less than \$15 an hour. The additional fact that the minimum wage isn't even indexed adds to this problem.

The work done on a living wage in Yellowknife highlights the problems with our low minimum wage. Twice now, rigorously researched reports have set a living wage for Yellowknife, according to

a nationally recognized calculation of the actual expenses for an extremely basic standard of living. It sets the necessary income for a family of four with a child in school and a child in daycare at almost \$9 per hour higher than the minimum wage; and that's Yellowknife, not the much more costly smaller communities.

Recommendations from the living wage report point out that, by readjusting income thresholds for government programs, a lower living wage is possible, if wealth were being progressively redistributed. In the end, a minimum wage is a little more than a statement of political acceptability. If you start with the premise that someone who is working for a minimum wage should be out of poverty, a living wage is what we should be aiming for. I'll have questions for the Minister later today. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. Members' statements. Item 4, returns to oral questions. Item 5, recognition of visitors in the gallery.

### Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery

**MR. SPEAKER:** Gallery, I would like to turn your attention to visitors in the gallery. We have with us Mr. Sam Gargan, former Speaker, former Member, and also former chief as well, and I'd like to recognize Chief Eddie Sangris, Chief of Detah. Welcome to our Assembly. Recognition of visitors in the gallery. Member for Tu Nedhe-Wiilideh.

**MR. BEAULIEU:** Marci cho, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I, too, would like to recognize Chief Eddie Sangris, Chief of YK Dene First Nations, and also I'd like to recognize Catherine Lafferty, Director of Operations at Dechinta University.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. Recognition of visitors in the gallery. Member for Nahendeh.

**MR. THOMPSON:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'd like to recognize my youngest grandson, Ezra James Whelly, first time in the Legislative Assembly, with his mother Jaqueline Whelly, and her father-in-law, Sean Whelly, who is a Council Member for the Village of Fort Simpson. Welcome to the Legislative Assembly.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. Recognition of visitors in the gallery. Member for Yellowknife North.

**MR. VANTHUYNE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I, too, would like to recognize the representatives from Dechinta, in particular, Catherine Lafferty, who is here as the director of operations. Also Elder Sam Gargan, and I also would like to recognize Chief Eddie Sangris at this time. Welcome to the House. Thank you for being here.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. Recognition of visitors in the gallery. Member for Deh Cho.

**MR. NADLI:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I, too, would like to recognize Chief Eddie Sangris. Also, at the same time, Sam Gargan, a constituent of mine from Fort Providence, and also, I did recognize him as a professor, I recognize him as an elder, of course, a former Speaker from the Assembly, so I'd like to recognize him. And plus, from the Dechinta University, Catherine Lafferty. Marci.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. Recognition of visitors in the gallery. Member for Inuvik Boot Lake.

**HON. ALFRED MOSES:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'd like to also welcome and recognize Catherine Lafferty, Director of Community Development and Indigenous Education for Dechinta Centre for Research and Learning, as well her little entourage of supporters and people that do the work in the organization. Welcome. Mahsi.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. Recognition of visitors in the gallery. If we missed anyone in the gallery, welcome to our Assembly. It's always nice to have an audience as part of our proceedings. Masi. Item 6, acknowledgements. Item 7, oral questions. Member for Kam Lake.

### Oral Questions

#### QUESTION 258-18(3): FUTURE OF AURORA COLLEGE AND NORTHERN POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION

**MR. TESTART:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have questions for the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment about the future of post-secondary in the Northwest Territories. I want to be crystal clear; I appreciate the hard work that happens at Aurora College, and I think if there are any issues that need to be addressed, it needs to be addressed by this government. Aurora college is unique in Canada and perhaps the world in how it is funded, how it is operated, and we see a lot of involvement from this department in the day-to-day operations, program course offerings, all those kinds of things. We need to cut the strings on this, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to ask the Minister if he envisions a future for Aurora College where it will become an independent university or post-secondary institution that is research-driven and has the academic freedom to be accountable to government funding but completely separate from the GNWT? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. Minister of Education, Culture and Employment.

**HON. ALFRED MOSES:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Currently at this time, no. We do have public funds that fund the Aurora college, and we partner with them to look at their program services that they provide to residents of the Northwest Territories. What I can let the Member know is that we are working currently on an over-arching legislation that will bring other possibilities of post-secondary institutes here to the Northwest Territories as well working with Dechinta Research and Learning Centre, College nordique, that will offer those opportunities. So we are on the right path. Right now, we're going to work with Aurora College. We do fund them through public dollars to do those programs and services for the people of the North, but I think as we move forward, after the foundation review is complete as well the legislation, working on developing that, we'll start to see that this government is moving in that direction. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. TESTART:** I'm not advocating that the public funding for the Aurora College be cut; far from it. There are other universities in Canada that receive public funding, but are independent academic institutions. So can the Minister reassure me and others that, for the nearly \$30 million we invest in Aurora College's operations, we are delivering the highest-quality programs that can stand up in other jurisdictions, without proper accreditation? Can the Minister confirm that what the students are learning at Aurora College can be used elsewhere in Canada?

**HON. ALFRED MOSES:** Yes, I know one of our best programs that we do have at Aurora College is the Nursing Degree Program, and we're also working on this foundational review that's going to address some of the accreditation quality assurance concerns that Members have brought up on numerous occasions. That foundational review, we should have that to me by the end of this month, and we'll be taking a look at those recommendations that are going to be in that final report moving forward. I hear what the Member is saying, and moving forward, we want to make sure that anyone who takes any programs with any of our post-secondary institutions will be able to have that opportunity to go and practice their career and their training elsewhere throughout Canada.

**MR. TESTART:** I heard one program involved. So out of all of the program offerings at Aurora College, can the Minister give me a percentage of how many of those meet accreditation standards outside the Northwest Territories?

**HON. ALFRED MOSES:** I don't have that detail of the percentage of programs that are being currently run throughout any of our three campuses in the Northwest Territories at the moment, but I can look

at getting that information for the Member and sharing it with him.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. Oral questions. Member for Kam Lake.

**MR. TESTART:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I appreciate the Minister's commitment. Mr. Speaker, the other areas that are required for a successful university or post-secondary institution are independence and, of course, an institution driven by research. Aurora College has ARI, the Aurora Research Institute, but what it doesn't have is an independent board. When will the Minister reappoint an independent board so the college can be at arm's length from government and control its own affairs? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**HON. ALFRED MOSES:** As Members of the House know, and I'm sure the public knows, we are currently going through a foundational review. I did mention that that review is going to be given to me by the end of this month, and we will be creating a management response to that review. In that review, governance is a topic of priority to take a look at. So once we get that foundational review, we will develop a management response to some of those recommendations. Should the board be one of the recommendations, we will take a look at it, and once the management response and the review is complete, we will be sharing that with committee members, all Members of the Legislative Assembly, and our stakeholders. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. Oral questions. Member for Nahendeh.

#### QUESTION 259-18(3):

#### MENTAL HEALTH CHALLENGES IN NAHENDEH

**MR. THOMPSON:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in my Member's statement today, I spoke about some of the things that the community of Fort Simpson has done to address the tragedies that have occurred in the past year. I have some questions for the Minister of Health and Social Services to hopefully clear up some stuff. Can the Minister tell us what the department has been able to do in response to the number of tragedies in the Deh Cho region in 2017? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. Minister of Health and Social Services.

**HON. GLEN ABERNETHY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, our first priority when a tragedy like this happens is to work with the families, to make sure that we have counsellors and other supports meeting with the family to help them address their grief and their loss. That has always

the first priority. That is something that we made available in the Deh Cho region.

We also recognize that, given the large number of incidents and crises that were happening in the Deh Cho, there was a significant demand on all the workers in the community and the region who were reaching out to community members and families. We also made counsellors from other communities from across the Northwest Territories available so that they could come in and provide some backfill and some additional supports to the community, given that there were a large number of people who were seeking help and wanted to receive supports during these crises.

We also had individuals from the headquarters come down, as well, and meet with the communities. There was first reach-out to the families. Then there were additional community people, additional supports came in from different communities. Then the departments were able to provide some support in the communities.

We had a number of good conversations with residents in the community about the types of things they need, and we are continuing to work with the community and the region to try to find some additional solutions. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. THOMPSON:** I thank the Minister and his department for the work that they were doing. Thanks for that information. As I said in my Member's statement today, there were a lot of departments that have been part of the support network. Can the Minister advise how the department has been working with other departments and organizations to ensure that everybody is aware of each other's services, including the mental health and addiction staff, Child and Family Services staff, Victims Services staff, and Education, Culture and Employment staff?

**HON. GLEN ABERNETHY:** As a government, this is certainly one area that we can do better in, break down some of our silos and make sure that staff in one department know what is going on in another department. We have been trying to work with our partners to make sure information is shared. We have been able to collaborate on a number of initiatives. We have been able to work with community members in the Deh Cho region. We have participated with them on different events.

For example, on February 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup>, the department staff attended workshops in Fort Simpson that offered mental wellness, suicide prevention, as well as What Will it Take Program and Talk About Mental Illness, which is often referred to as TAMI Program. The speakers travelled with our staff, so we had an opportunity to

talk about the types of programs that are available both through Health and Social Services, but also through communities and other agencies. I know that the federal government has supports that they have provided in different situations at different times.

I think we all need to work together to try to get the information that we are all doing. This isn't something that one department, one government can solve. This is something that is going to take everybody working together. We are going to work harder to make sure the information of the programs we are offering is out there. I look forward to working with the Member to help get some of that information out over time.

**MR. THOMPSON:** I appreciate that answer from the Minister. In regard to the plan to support family, staff, and communities who have been impacted by these tragedies, can the Minister advise some of the things the department is able to offer?

**HON. GLEN ABERNETHY:** First and, I guess, foremost is that we do offer, and we do make our counsellors available to the families who are struggling so that they can continue to work through their grief process and come to terms with the horrible incidents that have occurred. We want to do more than that. We want to support communities, as well.

We strongly encourage residents of communities to attend things like the Mental Health First Aid program as well as the Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training. The more people who can attend these things in the communities, the better. That includes the families, as well. We work with the territorial authority, Health and Social Services Authority, and community leadership to develop a wellness and suicide prevention plan. That work is still under way. We haven't completely reached our resolution on that plan.

The department offers On-The-Land Healing Fund \$125,000 a year, which goes to the Dehcho First Nations so that they can facilitate on the land programs that lead towards healing and supporting individuals who are going through crisis.

There is also always the helpline available to residents. Should they need to speak to somebody and speak to somebody now, I would strongly encourage people to use that helpline and engage with the practitioners we have in the community, whether it is community health nurse or a counsellor. In September of next year, the new youth mental health counsellors, we encourage them to reach out and get in touch with the providers that are out there.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. Oral Questions. Member for Nahendeh.

**MR. THOMPSON:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I greatly appreciate the Minister's ability to provide that information here to the House as we can share it with our residents. Mr. Speaker, can the Minister provide a brief summary of some of the things the department has been able to do in regard to the suicide prevention treatment and after-care as part of the mental health and addiction recovery in NWT Strategic Framework 2016-2021? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**HON. GLEN ABERNETHY:** The framework that the Member is referencing is a foundational document that sets the direction we are going to move forward in a number of different areas. It is going to result in three different action plans. One of the action plans, the Youth Mental Health and Addictions Action Plan, has already been released. The Addictions Recovery Action Plan and the mental health recovery action plan are still in development. They will be developed during the 2018-2019 fiscal year.

Having said that, with respect to the Youth Mental Health and Addictions Action Plan, one of the key items that, I think, residents of the Deh Cho and I think other communities will recognize is the implementation of the youth mental health and addictions counsellors who will be Health and Social Services employees working in the schools, providing supports for our youth.

There is also the Territorial Suicide Prevention and Crisis Response Network, which is something that the Members told us clearly that we needed to put in place to support communities in times of crisis. We are moving forward with that. It was a great recommendation. We have some financial support from the federal government that has allowed us to make this happen. This is about pulling together and developing a culturally-safe, common suicide risk assessment. It is about ensuring there are seamless pathways so that when a community is in crisis, we can get them the support they need, both internally but externally. It is about establishing clear processes to allow these things to happen so that the responses are swift, timely, appropriate, and respectful. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. Oral Questions. Member for Yellowknife Centre.

QUESTION 260-18(3):  
AURORA COLLEGE SOCIAL WORK PROGRAM  
REVIEW

**MS. GREEN:** Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as I said in my Member's statement, there is a review of the social work program under way now at Aurora College. The report is due on April 10<sup>th</sup>. My

question is for the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment: why wasn't this review completed prior to making the decision to phase out the social work program? Mahsi.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. Minister of Education, Culture and Employment.

**HON. ALFRED MOSES:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, we made the decision to phase out the social work program based on low enrolment and low graduation rates. It had a history of low rates over the years. The Aurora College decided to an independent, internal review on its own. I do understand that review is going to be completed in April 2018. We will see where that review and what recommendations that review has in terms of moving forward with the long-term strategic plan for the Aurora College. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MS. GREEN:** When the Minister gets the report, can the Minister request the report? What does he plan to do with it?

**HON. ALFRED MOSES:** We can possibly review that report. Because it is an internal document and an internal review that the Aurora College has taken on, my understanding is that because it is an internal document, that is not planned for release to the public. I can follow up with the Aurora College on that, though. Because it is their own internal review, it is something that will not be released to the public. As I mentioned earlier, that can help position what that program is in terms of looking at a long-term strategic plan for Aurora College, after all of our other work around the foundational review is completed as well.

**MS. GREEN:** What I am asking the Minister is: this college is under administration, so he has a direct role in its governance. When he asks for this report and receives it, what is he going to do with the results? I am not asking him to make it public. He has a terrible record of making things public. I am asking what he is going to do with the report.

**HON. ALFRED MOSES:** We are excited to see what this internal review is going to recommend at the end. As I mentioned, we do have a diploma program with the social work students that are coming out of the program, and we continue to support them to go and get their degree, whether it is in a southern institution or going over to Yukon College.

What comes out of that review, we are not too sure what it is going to look like, but we will take it into consideration. When the foundational review is complete and we have that managerial response complete as well, it will help us set a stage for the long-term strategic plan at Aurora College. We will

see what recommendations come out of this internal review and how that will impact it as well.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. Oral questions. Member for Yellowknife Centre.

**MS. GREEN:** Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, if the foundational review and/or the review of the Social Work Program recommends that the program be continued or expanded into a degree program, is the Minister willing to reverse his decision to phase the program out? Thank you.

**HON. ALFRED MOSES:** We have a lot of things that we are doing right now in post-secondary initiatives. It is a very ambitious agenda. We have the foundational review that is going to help us decide the direction of how Aurora College will be providing its programs and services, but we also have this overarching legislation that is going to help other post-secondary institutions come up, do research, and also possibly look at providing degree-granting programs. We have Dechinta Centre for Research and Learning and College Nordique that will soon be involved in that.

If it looks like we can look at providing a degree-granting program, we will definitely look hard at that, because we want to make sure that we do meet the needs of the labour market here in the Northwest Territories, as well as in all three northern territories and, if possible, other jurisdictions. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. Oral questions. Member for Deh Cho.

QUESTION 261-18(3):

POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION  
OPPORTUNITIES FOR INDIGENOUS STUDENTS

**MR. NADLI:** Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my questions are to the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment. Earlier, I spoke about the link between post-secondary education and people's ability to get good jobs. We are all aware of the earning disparity between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people in the Northwest Territories, yet this government is cutting Aurora College programs and failing to expand support for other growing institutions, such as Dechinta Bush University. Why has the government taken this course? Mahsi.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. Minister of Education, Culture and Employment.

**HON. ALFRED MOSES:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, we want to ensure that any programs that we provide to residents of the Northwest Territories have the supports and that they have the skills necessary to be into the labour market within the Northwest Territories. We also want to make

sure that, when we are investing dollars into our programs, we are getting a good output of skilled, trained workers to meet the labour market demands.

We also support a lot of our other programs. We support College nordique. We signed a multi-year agreement with Dechinta Centre for Research and Learning, and we also increased funding with Dechinta over the past couple of years.

We are continuing to support our post-secondary institutions, whether it is Aurora College, College nordique, Dechinta, and we are also looking at ways that we can invite and bring other post-secondary institutions up to do research and provide other services to our residents. We are continuing to work on our agenda for post-secondary education, and I think we are doing a great job on that. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. NADLI:** I clearly understand the Minister supports all of the initiatives that he has outlined. Yet, Mr. Speaker, Ontario has nine Indigenous governed and operated post-secondary institutions. New legislation provides a pathway for them to offer post-secondary degrees, certificates, and diplomas. The province will spend \$56 million over the next three years to expand the capacity of Indigenous institutes. Will the Minister look at this model and revise his discussion paper to reflect best practices?

**HON. ALFRED MOSES:** We see the important work that Dechinta is doing, as well as other organizations here in the Northwest Territories that promote culture and language, and we work with those organizations to continue to support it.

Although there is none such as the Member has mentioned here in the Northwest Territories, it is unique, and it is something that we do need to look at it, because we are already doing it in our JK-to-12 system, and that is something we can look at moving forward as we embark on our post-secondary agenda, looking at improving some of the work in that area that the Member has specifically identified.

**MR. NADLI:** It may not be possible for institutions like Dechinta and College nordique to grow and prosper without more public funding than they get now. This funding could open the door to much more investment beyond our territory. For example, this summer, Dechinta went on the river. What is the Minister going to do about this and live up to the mandate commitment to expand post-secondary students for our students?

**HON. ALFRED MOSES:** I do know that College nordique as well as Dechinta are looking to expand their roles. I think that was a great program that

they did this summer, travelling up and down the Mackenzie River. We continue to support these post-secondary institutions, as well as looking at ways we can help sustain the work that they do. That is one of the reasons that we did enter into that multi-year agreement with Dechinta and increased their funding.

As I have mentioned in this House, over a period of time we are creating this overarching legislation that is going to look at accreditation, quality assurance, and also look at opportunities that will give Dechinta and College nordique more opportunities to expand and have accredited courses.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. Oral questions. Member for Deh Cho.

**MR. NADLI:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, this time of the year, there might be students out there listening to this debate and discussion, and more than likely, those students are looking for ideas and assurances that when they enter, perhaps, Aurora College for programs this fall, that there will be programs; there will be a classroom; they will have a desk; they will have resources; they will have professors. My question to the Minister is: what kind of hope can he give to students that potentially may enter, say, Aurora College for the Social Work Program this fall? Mahsi.

**HON. ALFRED MOSES:** As we mentioned, we are going through the business planning process, and I did say in this House that this fall we won't be taking any more intakes into the Social Work Program. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. Oral questions. Member for Tu Nedhe-Willideh.

QUESTION 262-18(3):  
SUMMER EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR  
POST-SECONDARY STUDENTS

**MR. BEAULIEU:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in my Member's statement, I talked about the upcoming summer student program. I have questions for the Minister of Finance. I would like to ask the Minister of Finance a question on what happened last year. Last year, the Government of the Northwest Territories set a record for probably the most summer students ever hired in the GNWT. I would like to ask the Minister if he plans to exceed that number this year. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. Minister of Finance.

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the Member is correct. Last year, we had 349 summer students. We were quite pleased with that number. They were spread across

the departments and across the government. I am just going to read off the top three departments, just to let them out there know who would be hiring all the summer students.

Number one was the Department of Infrastructure, but that included Public Works and Transportation, so we are not sure if that really counts. Number two was NWT Health and Social Services authorities. They had 62 summer students last year. Number three was ENR at 51.

We have encouraged our departments to try to bring on more summer students. We would like to see that number increase and we will work very hard to see that number increase. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. BEAULIEU:** I would like to thank the Minister for that response. I would like to ask the Minister if the Minister would look at other subsidies. I know that we get around 600 applications for summer students. Hiring 350 is good and 400 is better, but there are other incentives around what I talked about; wage subsidies, what the Government of Alberta is doing. Would the Minister consider looking at something like wage subsidies for employers other than the GNWT who hire summer students?

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** When I quoted the numbers before, the 349, I have asked a couple times now, and I will follow up on it today on the number of summer students that agencies that we fund also hire. We have 23, I think, local housing authorities, maybe 24 now. I am sure they bring on summer students, as well. If you average out two or three per LHO, that would increase the number.

We have the community governments whom we fund that bring on summer students. They are not included in the 349. I would think that number would be a lot higher. I have been trying to gather that information for a while now. Once I do, I will share that with the Member because I think that will be more of a good news story. As far as the Member's question is concerned, I mean, I am willing to look at any other options we have out there if that means increasing the number of summer students that we hire. We are always willing to look at a number of different options. We will do that.

**MR. BEAULIEU:** I have talked to some small business owners here in the city mostly. I don't have a lot of small business owners in my riding. I talked to some of the people here where the majority of the summer students get employment. One of the things I mentioned in my Member's statement was tax credits. I was wondering if the Minister of Finance would look at some sort of tax

credit for industry or other small business for hiring of summer students?

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** As I said in my previous comment, that is another option. It is a very interesting concept. These are options that are worth exploring. I will commit to the Member that we will do that. I mean, there is probably a lot to it. We will see how burdensome it is administratively. I am sure there are ways we can overcome that. To answer the Member's question, we will look at that. We will explore that.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. Oral questions. Member for Tu Nedhe-Wiillideh.

**MR. BEAULIEU:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, we have about a month and a half before the students start arriving from wherever they are going to school, coming back, looking for work. I would like to ask the Minister if he agrees to have his staff, human resources division, work with the other departments as soon as possible to start planning for the hiring of summer students. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** Absolutely. On the Department of Finance human resources website, we have a portal there for summer students to put in applications. I am not sure what the status of the number of applications is right now. I will gather that information and I will flip it to the Member. We are always looking. Summer students who are coming back from school know that there are opportunities. They know where they need to apply. Again, I will check on the status of the number of applications we may have received and share the information with the Member. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. Oral questions. Member for Hay River North.

QUESTION 263-18(3):  
DREDGING IN THE PORT OF HAY RIVER

**MR. SIMPSON:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have questions for the Minister of Infrastructure. This is something I have brought up multiple times. It is something that gets brought up to me a lot. It is dredging in the port of Hay River. This is more important than ever, that government has committed to invest millions of dollars in a new fish plant to revitalize the fishery. It now owns Marine Transportation Services, which requires use of those waterways. We are looking to encourage tourism, so we need a safe harbour. The Minister has stated many times that safety is his number one priority. I would like an update: what progress has been made getting the port of Hay River dredged? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. Minister of Infrastructure.

**HON. WALLY SCHUMANN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We are pursuing federal funding through the Ocean Protection Plan. For Members of this House, that is a different pot of money from the bilaterals that we have signed. The federal government has set aside \$1.5 billion for the nation for five years moving forward from 2017-2018 on this. Our Department of Infrastructure has been in conversations with different federal agencies because this pot of money has more than one federal minister in charge of it. It has Transport Canada. It has Canadian Coast Guard. I believe the Minister of Environment is also involved in that.

It is funny that the Member asks me this question today, because our staff is actually down in Ottawa today meeting with Canadian Coast Guard and pursuing what kind of opportunities we have through this funding arrangement that is coming forward with the federal government on this project. When I get more information on the exact funding advancements that are possible through this program, I will update the House on that. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SIMPSON:** That is great information. I realize it is early days for the Minister. Does he have a schedule as to when we might know about the amount of funding and when this work might actually begin?

**HON. WALLY SCHUMANN:** As I have said, we are in discussions. I believe that the federal government wants to sign off on some of this money moving forward. They have five different programs, I believe, under this with 57 different initiatives for all of Canada.

For the one that they announced in last August for the Northern three territories, I guess that would be us, Nunavut, Nunavik, is the Safety Equipment and Basic Marine Infrastructure program. That is the one we are in discussions with the federal government on this right now. Under this initiative, they want to look at doing something with 30 Northern communities, including all three territories. That is what we are negotiating with them and having discussions on how this is going to move forward.

Once we get something signed up, I will have a better idea of a schedule and the funding opportunities and what that is going to go towards. We have a significant ask around a number of things. The dredging of the port of Hay River is a priority, but it is only one of the things on the list.

**MR. SIMPSON:** Does the Minister have any information about the costs of dredging the port? I know when you are asking for money, you usually have to ask for a specific amount of money. Does the Minister have that information for us?



**HON. WALLY SCHUMANN:** I don't have that level of detail in front of me. I know that the stuff that we identified under marine priorities comes to about \$55 million for our ask. When I said that this pot of money that they are talking about right now for \$94 million, I don't know what we are going to get funded. I can get the breakout, what it would be looking to restore the harbour in Hay River for the Member.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. Oral questions. Member for Hay River North.

**MR. SIMPSON:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I mentioned fishing, marine transportation, tourism. There is also talk of GNWT taking more responsibility from the Department of Fisheries and Oceans. We have the new marine training facility, which is a federal facility. There is a lot going on in regards to the port of Hay River. Is the Minister confident that, before the end of this term, given the fact that the feds are more invested now than ever, we will have that port dredged or at least work begun? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**HON. WALLY SCHUMANN:** My hope is to have the port of Hay River at least started on the dredging. We have to secure funding. We will have to see what the appetite of the federal government is to help partner with us to do this. We know it is a priority for us now that we own MTS. Federal dollars are invested in some of the marine stuff in Hay River; the Canadian Coast Guard also has an investment in it. We are pursuing these dollars as best we can. Yes, I certainly hope we can be able to say we are going to at least start looking after the restoration of the harbour in Hay River. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. Oral questions. Member for Yellowknife North.

QUESTION 264-18(3):

BARRIERS TO POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION

**MR. VANTHUYNE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my questions today are for the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment. Earlier today I spoke a little bit about the barriers and some of the challenges that, in particular, Indigenous people have in accessing post-secondary education. Sometimes I think we need to look at what some of the gaps are between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people, and I would just like to start, maybe, by asking the Minister if the department has done any work with regard to identifying those gaps that we have here in the North between Indigenous and non-Indigenous children or students. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. Minister of Education, Culture and Employment.

**HON. ALFRED MOSES:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I think we can start off in terms of how we support our post-secondary students, Indigenous or non, with our Student Financial Assistance program. We have made some improvements and enhancements to those over the years, but really, what it comes down to is starting very young, and we have made some very big investments in early childhood.

We are looking at our educational renewal initiatives from the JK-to-12 system. We are looking at creating new pathways to graduation in the high school system. It takes a combination of all of those investments that will see more success in our Indigenous students and families, right from JK up to grade 12. Then, hopefully, they do graduate, and we can get them into a path that they choose to do, whether it's post-secondary education or getting right into the career workforce.

We want to support our students to succeed right across the Northwest Territories. It is a combination of a lot of investments, Mr. Speaker, and our productive choices with people who are on income assistance as well, but it takes a lot of factors into consideration to ensure that all of our students succeed in the Northwest Territories. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. VANTHUYNE:** Yes, I appreciate the Minister's comments, and we are certainly grateful for a lot of the good work that the department does. Student Financial Assistance is something that is in many ways unique to the North, and we benefit greatly as a society for it.

I just want to go back to the gaps again. One thing that we have to identify is that, clearly, we have statistical information that indicates that Indigenous students are behind as it relates to graduation rates, et cetera, moving forward. I just want to, again, ask the Minister: what kind of work have they done to identify those gaps? What kind of measures or statistics are they keeping so that they can be aware of what work still lies ahead to lessen those gaps?

**HON. ALFRED MOSES:** I think a focus for any jurisdiction is how do we identify gaps and challenges and how do we mitigate them so that we have our students succeeding to completion of either their programs or getting the degrees that they need so that they can be part of the working society. Ways that we do that are through counselling; we are also looking at creating better supports within the post-secondary systems, within Aurora College or within our other post-secondary partners that we work with.

It is always a challenge, and we have got to find unique ways to identify those challenges. I know

that the Member for Deh Cho had mentioned some around promoting culture and traditions to help succeeding in those areas. We have got to find a way to make sure that we address those barriers so that our students get to succeed in life, really, and like I said, it is a combination of all of the work that we are doing right now, and it starts with early childhood and the work that we are doing around education renewal to set them up for post-secondary.

**MR. VANTHUYNE:** I also talked about some of the challenges of parents, and sometimes single parents, who are trying to make their way in post-secondary education. Children are obviously the greatest gift that we have, but, of course, they are an expense. Student Financial Assistance is doing good things to help us afford to go to post-secondary education, but can the Minister let us know: are there any additional resources or financial supports that a single parent or parents could apply for to help with childcare while they are working towards getting a post-secondary diploma or degree?

**HON. ALFRED MOSES:** As Members know, we did make some changes when the Canada Child Benefit came into place, as well as changes to our own legislation for the NWT Child Benefit, to help more low-to-moderate-income families on that area. We have been working with the campuses in Fort Smith, Inuvik, and Yellowknife to address those, and we have heard that as a concern that childcare is important for students who are going to school. We are also working on how to create affordable and accessible childcare in the 11 communities that don't have childcare currently. That poses a barrier in itself, and we have to find ways to address those so that single parents or even families have that opportunity to a healthy education.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. Oral questions. Member for Yellowknife North.

**MR. VANTHUYNE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you to the Minister for identifying what it is that we are trying to accomplish with regard to helping out with childcare here in the North, but can the Minister describe any resources or supports that a young individual who is taking post-secondary in the South might have access to or additional supports that our government might be able to provide to help them with childcare while going to school in the South? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**HON. ALFRED MOSES:** I encourage any of the students who experience any kind of concerns or issues going down to post-secondary education in the South for the first time to possibly call their client service officer at the Student Financial Assistance office. We also have supports through

our Indigenous governments and our partnerships, and we work with them on how to identify some of those barriers and challenges.

I also know that a lot of our Indigenous governments take students who are about to graduate on tours of post-secondary institutions down in the South to give them an idea of how it is going to be when they get down there, but anyone who is having trouble, I encourage them to call their client service officers here at the office and get some assistance. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. Oral questions. Member for Frame Lake.

QUESTION 265-18(3):  
MINIMUM AND LIVING WAGES

**MR. O'REILLY:** Merci, Monsieur le President. My questions are for the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment, who is responsible for the minimum wage. As I pointed out earlier today, the latest report on minimum wage is a rehash of the 2014 report that was produced by a committee that is not at arm's length from government, and it contained no preferred recommendation. Is the Minister willing to revise the terms of reference for the Minimum Wage Committee to make it more independent of government and give direction that a preferred recommendation needs to be put forward? Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. Minister of Education, Culture and Employment.

**HON. ALFRED MOSES:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Just a little information for Members and the public: the Minimum Wage Committee was made in 2013, and its sole purpose was to meet and review relevant information, research, and data to determine suitable options for a change to the minimum wage.

Every two years, they review this area of the minimum wage. They bring options to myself, and we make the decisions on what meets the needs of not only the employees, but also the employers. We have to make sure that there is a fine balance and that we don't put extra hardships on our employers when we do look at increases to the minimum wage. The committee is made up of business individuals as well as non-government organizations, and I think it brings a very good, balanced perspective, and at this time, I do not see a need for change in that area. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. O'REILLY:** Well, I am disappointed to hear that. When you have two reports and they are virtually carbon copies of each other, something is not right, and I have made a suggestion about how

the Minister can improve it, but he doesn't seem to want to take that. I will try a different tack here.

Another issue is indexing. Eight other Canadian jurisdictions now index their minimum wage, or intend to begin this practice soon. This is something the Minister could begin to do now without waiting for the next round of review. Will the Minister direct that the NWT minimum wage now be indexed to inflation or cost of living?

**HON. ALFRED MOSES:** Setting the minimum wage to increase with inflation could actually limit our ability to explore other options for adjusting the minimum wage rates. Prior to the forming of the Minimum Wage Committee, they did look at such measures as the Consumer Price Index. At that time, it was felt that having this committee of business, labour organizations, and the community was the best way to go to look at all areas that would help set the options for minimum wage. At this time, the minimum wage will be indexed to inflation. We're not looking at it at this time.

**MR. O'REILLY:** Well, I'm getting some straight answers from the Minister today, which is a little unusual. I have described the living wage, which is a defensible figure calculated through a nationally recognized procedure. Our territorial data does not allow for detailed calculation of a living wage for each of our communities. Will the Minister commit to working with his colleague the Minister of Finance and, where necessary, Statistics Canada to expand the range of data collection in our communities to enable calculation of a local living wage?

**HON. ALFRED MOSES:** Currently, there is no jurisdiction in all of Canada that has legislated living wage as part of minimum wage policy. I feel that, the way we look at our minimum wage and review that minimum wage every two years, we are doing what is best for not only the employees, but as I mentioned earlier, what's best for the employers. I can bring this to Cabinet and have those discussions. At this time, we are going to continue with the process of how we develop and determine what a minimum wage is every two years.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. Oral questions. Member for Frame Lake.

**MR. O'REILLY:** Merci, Monsieur le President. I guess what I am hearing from the Minister is the status quo is okay, and when Alberta has a higher minimum wage than we do this fall, people should just move to Alberta. Currently, recipients of income support receive allowances that are adjusted according to where a person lives, and that reflects a difference in cost of living. If this principle applies to income support, why don't we apply it to the minimum wage? Will the Minister commit to

beginning the work to develop a methodology to calculate a local living wage for all of our communities, and move the minimum wage to a living wage? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**HON. ALFRED MOSES:** Just to give you a little information here. When we increase the minimum wage come April 1<sup>st</sup> of this year, about 700 people in the Northwest Territories will be affected, will be getting an increase. Having a living wage, as I mentioned, would possibly have some impacts on our employers. We all know that a lot of our businesses and people who do business in the Northwest Territories don't even pay the minimum wage; they pay a lot higher than that. In the tax-based communities, it gets even higher. You won't be looking at a living wage, and we will continue the same route that we are on. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. Oral questions. Member for Yellowknife Centre.

QUESTION 266-18(3):  
FUTURE OF THE AURORA COLLEGE SOCIAL  
WORK PROGRAM

**MS. GREEN:** Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, Members on this side of the House have received variable answers about the future of the Social Work Program. We have heard both that the program is phased out, and will continue to be phased out; and we've also heard that the results of the foundational review are important to the future of the program. Mr. Speaker, my question for the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment is: which one is it? Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Minister of Education, Culture and Employment.

**HON. ALFRED MOSES:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The foundational review was a process that we took on as a government, and we are looking at a whole bunch of different areas, and it's not all focused on programs. There's governance. There's operations and administration. There's recruitment, retention, just give a direction of where the college is going. We are going to use that information to help set the long-term strategic plan for Aurora College. That review, the internal review that Aurora College is doing on their own, that will also possibly help us set the direction moving forward. The main focus right now is to get that foundational review complete with the management response, and help us move forward with other supporting documents such as the Skills 4 Success, as well as our labour markets needs assessment and information that we have that data will all help us plan a good direction for Aurora College going to the future.

**MS. GREEN:** The Minister has given me another and/or answer. He said that the results of the social work program review will possibly figure into what happens to the program there. For the second time, I'm asking: how is the Minister approaching the results of the foundational review and the Social Work Program review with respect to the future of this program? Does it have a future?

**HON. ALFRED MOSES:** We don't know what's going to be in the internal review of the Social Work Program. We don't know what's in the final report of the foundational review. Once we get those, we are going to develop a management response, as I've mentioned in this House, that's going to work on looking at the recommendations. It's going to give us an opportunity to consider the feasibility of each of the recommendations. It also is going to talk about the analysis of the recommendations, and how we implement them so that all our stakeholders, that all Members of this House can make evidence-based decisions. Until we know what those are, we can't really make a decision here, and everything will be taken into consideration. As I mentioned, the main priority right now is to get this foundational review complete.

**MS. GREEN:** I'm going to ask the simplest question possible: is the Minister committed to phasing out the Social Work Program?

**HON. ALFRED MOSES:** With the current budget and the current steps we've taken, we are looking at phasing this current program that is currently at the college out after this year. That's why there are no intakes. What comes out of the foundational review, the direction of the college, we will use that information to make evidence-based decisions, and whether or not they will have the degree granting program, or whether they are going to change direction and do other types of degree granting bachelor programs, but we'll have to get that foundational review complete first.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Oral questions. Member for Yellowknife Centre.

**MS. GREEN:** Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, if I was one of the students in this program, I would be very confused about what the future held for me in September at Aurora College. The Minister is trying to have it both ways; that it's phased out, but the foundational review is going to be important to its future. I'll just ask this from another direction. The Minister says he's all about the evidence, which is great. What evidence does the Minister need to reinstate the Social Work Program?

**HON. ALFRED MOSES:** Mr. Speaker, the students who are currently in the Social Work Program were given all the information that they needed in terms

of moving forward. They are also getting the supports they need to graduate and to complete their program. Once the whole discussion started about the Social Work Program, they understood it, the staff understood it, and Aurora College senior management understood it. The kind of data they we need to look at is evidence-based decisions that are coming out of this foundational review. We'll look at the recommendations. I said, that's the most important piece of work that needs to be completed first. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Oral questions. Member for Nahendeh.

QUESTION 267-18(3):  
MENTAL HEALTH AND ADDICTIONS

**MR. THOMPSON:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I have some follow-up questions for the Minister of Health and Social Services. My first question is: what is the next action plan that is coming out of the Mental Health and Addictions Strategy Framework? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. Minister of Health and Social Services.

**HON. GLEN ABERNETHY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, there are to be three different action plans coming out of the framework. The first one, the Youth Mental Health and Addictions Action Plan, is out, and we are already moving forward with that. The next two action plans are the Mental Health Recovery Action Plan, and the next one would be the Addictions Recovery Plan. We are working on both of those now. We hope to have them out in the 2018-2019 fiscal year, preferably in time to help inform the next round of business planning. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. THOMPSON:** I thank the Minister for that answer. In this House today and during the budget, we have heard about the Departments of Health and Social Services and Education, Culture and Employment are partnered together to create this new position called Child and Youth Career Counselling. Where are these positions going to be located during the school year and non-school year?

**HON. GLEN ABERNETHY:** We are going forward with two regions this year. One of the regions that we happen to be going forward with is the Deh Cho, and what we are looking for in the Deh Cho is to establish three new counsellor positions, as well as one new clinical supervisor. The three counselling positions, one is going to be located in Fort Liard, one is going to be in Fort Simpson, and the other one is going to be in Fort Providence. The clinical supervisor is going to be in Fort Simpson.

**MR. THOMPSON:** I think I may have given the wrong question here, and I will have to clarify it. I know there are three positions that are going into Fort Liard, Fort Providence, and Fort Simpson. Are they going to be in the schools year-round, or are they just in the schools during the school year, or is there going to be combination of these positions being placed?

**HON. GLEN ABERNETHY:** What we heard clearly from the residents of the Northwest Territories, in particular the youth that we engaged during our planning for this action plan, is that youth wanted access year-round to counsellors, not just during the academic year, but they still wanted access to the counsellors through the schools. We will be working with the DEAs in the schools to set up some sort of agreements to articulate how much time these individuals will be spending in the schools. It is our expectation that, during the school year, the majority of their time will be spent in the schools. Outside the school year, the majority or all of their life will be spent out of the Health and Social Services offices that exist. There may be time for them to come out of the school during the school year, because one of the other things we heard is that some of the youth who are struggling the most aren't attending school. We want to make sure that we don't miss those youth as well.

During the school year, the majority of the time will be in the schools. The rest of the time, out of the health centres.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. Oral questions. Member for Nahendeh.

**MR. THOMPSON:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I thank the Minister for that answer. I think it's a very positive step. How will the youth from the smaller communities be able to address their concerns? How are we going to be able to address that? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**HON. GLEN ABERNETHY:** We did have a public meeting with the committee, and the information on how we determined where the counsellors were going was included in that presentation, including the indication that, for some of the smaller communities where the school sizes are much smaller, we wouldn't be putting a counsellor in those communities.

Having said that, one of the reasons that we have gone with the clinical supervisor is not only to provide clinical direction and support to the counsellors, but also to help coordinate the outreach to the smaller communities. Our counsellors will be setting up relationships with the youth in those smaller communities. We have also got the travelling counselling support team that exists through Education, Culture and Employment

that are going to be reaching out to the communities as well.

There are a number of ways that we are intending to reach out to the kids in small communities, including person-to-person contact and follow-up by phones and other media that exist. We can use other things like teleconferencing or telehealth or even Skype, if it's appropriate, depending on the situation, but we are definitely planning to have outreach to youth in all of the smaller communities as well as the communities where the positions are located. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. The time for oral questions has expired. Item 8, written questions. Member for Kam Lake.

### Written Questions

#### WRITTEN QUESTION 8-18(3): HEALTH INFORMATION SYSTEMS

**MR. TESTART:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, given the concerns that have been raised by the Information and Privacy Commissioner in her 2016-2017 annual report in regard to the ability of the Department of Health and Social Services to meet its statutory requirements under the Health Information Act with its existing information technology systems, I have questions for the Minister responsible:

1. Please provide a comprehensive list of all proprietary and non-proprietary information systems currently used by the health authorities, including descriptions of each system and the developers of any proprietary systems;
2. Please indicate which health information systems are used to manage healthcare patient information, including details of what information is contained in those systems;
3. Please provide details on any work that is being done by the Department of Health and Social Services to modify existing information systems to be compliant with the Health Information Act; and
4. Please provide a cost estimate of any modification to existing healthcare information systems to be compliant with the Health Information Act.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. Written questions. Item 9, returns to written questions. Item 10, replies to Commissioner's opening address. Item 11,

petitions. Item 12, reports of standing and special committees. Member for Kam Lake.

### Reports of Standing and Special Committees

**MR. TESTART:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the Standing Committee on Government Operations is pleased to present its Report on the Review of the 2017 Report of the Auditor General on Climate Change in the Northwest Territories.

The Auditor General's report was tabled in the Legislative Assembly on October 18, 2017. The Standing Committee on Government Operations held its public review of this performance audit report on January 17, 2018.

Committee members thank the Auditor General and officials from his office for preparing the report, for travelling to Yellowknife when the report was tabled and again when it was reviewed, and for assisting the committee during the public review.

The committee also thanks the deputy minister of Environment and Natural Resources, the deputy minister of Infrastructure, and officials from their respective departments, for their appearances before the committee.

Mr. Speaker, although the government is a small emitter of greenhouse gases, the Northwest Territories is particularly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change which threaten the livelihood of our residents and their way of life, particularly in remote, Indigenous NWT communities. The impacts wrought by climate change include warming, increased variation in precipitation, and extreme weather events.

For these reasons, the Auditor General's report points out that responding to the impacts of climate change is a shared responsibility, requiring partnerships within and across governments and with non-governmental organizations, industry and the public.

#### The Role of the Departments

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources is the lead department for climate change for the Northwest Territories, with the responsibility to:

- Lead the development of strategies to address greenhouse gas emissions and to adapt to climate change impacts;
- Lead the sharing of climate change information to support government departments and the public in their adaptation efforts;

- Promote the use of scientific research, traditional knowledge, and public education to understand climate change in the Northwest Territories; and
- Represent the territorial government in national climate change initiatives.

The department is also responsible to maintain, conserve, and protect the condition, quality, diversity, and abundance of the environment, including water, air, wildlife, habitat, and forests in the Northwest Territories.

The Department of Infrastructure is responsible for promoting energy efficiency in the management of GNWT assets and adapting them to the impacts of climate change. It is also responsible for adapting the Northwest Territories' transportation infrastructure to the impacts of climate change.

#### Audit Findings

Overall, the Auditor General found that the Department of Environment and Natural Resources did not:

- Fulfill its leadership role and meet its commitments on climate change;
- Address long-standing deficiencies affecting its leadership on climate change; or
- Assess what authorities and resources it required to fulfill its leadership role.

For example, the department committed to put a climate change network in place in 2007, to share information and promote climate change action and collaboration. The Auditor General found that "the department did not establish this network, despite two attempts, and was unable to explain why."

The audit further found that the department did not identify the risks to the Northwest Territories posed by climate change, or provide departments and communities with easy access to the information needed to take action on climate change. Despite a commitment to do so almost ten years ago, the department failed to establish a territorial strategy to adapt to climate change.

This lack of leadership led to a piecemeal approach, as departments and communities pursued their own adaptation efforts. This left ENR without the ability to know what the NWT was doing to adapt to climate change, whether it was doing enough to mitigate the greatest risks, or whether individual adaptation actions negatively affected one another.

Additionally, the audit found that, while ENR focused its climate change efforts on developing

greenhouse gas strategies, it did not set meaningful emission targets or focus on the greatest emitters. As a result, the 2011-2015 territorial greenhouse gas strategy did not have a significant impact on reducing emissions levels.

Finally, with respect to adapting to climate change impacts, the audit found that while the department did set out protections for some vulnerable wildlife species, it had no overall adaptation plan to better protect wildlife and ensure that areas of greatest risk were being addressed.

**Department of Infrastructure**

With respect to adapting to climate change impacts, the audit found that the Department of Infrastructure identified specific adaptation actions to protect public roads and buildings from the risks posed by climate change, but these were only routinely carried out for roads.

The department assessed the climate change risks for public buildings, such as health centres and hospitals, and determined the two greatest risks to be permafrost degradation affecting foundations, and snow loads affecting roof stability. The audit found that the department did not develop a formal climate change adaptation plan for public buildings, and often did not follow its own practices for the operations and maintenance of public buildings. For example, 63 per cent of the buildings reviewed by the Auditor General did not undergo required annual roof inspections, and snow removal occurred on only 50 per cent of the buildings examined.

The audit found that the Department of Infrastructure developed a climate change plan for transportation infrastructure in 2013. This plan identified all-weather and winter roads as the greatest areas of risk and committed to a range of adaptive actions to manage these risks, including:

- Testing and using new technologies to manage the impacts of permafrost degradation and changing ice conditions;
- Conducting research on the viability of winter roads; and
- Changing operations and maintenance practices to better protect roads from impacts such as melting ice.

The audit found that the department did not regularly conduct required inspections of all-weather roads, to identify necessary maintenance and rehabilitation. While the department inspected 90 per cent of large culverts, approximately 50 per cent of the small culverts the department should have inspected were not inspected.

Despite these issues, the Auditor General found that Infrastructure did take some positive steps to manage the impacts of climate change. The audit found that the department worked with various partners to undertake research and test new technologies for climate change adaptation.

The committee takes this opportunity to acknowledge the Department of Infrastructure for this work.

**Audit Recommendations**

The report of the Auditor General contains a total of eight recommendations. For Department of Environment and Natural Resources, five recommendations are related to its leadership role for climate change and one is related to wildlife management actions to adequately adapt to climate change. The final two recommendations of the Auditor General are directed toward the Department of Infrastructure's work relating to adapting to climate change impacts.

The standing committee endorses all of the recommendations made by the Office of the Auditor General and recommends that the departments ensure these are implemented in a timely manner.

**Committee Observations and Recommendations**

Although compliance audits are backwards-looking, the value of such an exercise lies in assessing past performance shortfalls with a view to improving future performance. In this vein, the standing committee's observations and recommendations are intended to provide the departments with additional insight to assist them in implementing actions that will ultimately help fulfill the recommendations made by the Auditor General.

The Auditor General's key finding in the 2017 Report on Climate Change in the Northwest Territories is that the Department of Environment and Natural Resources failed, in a very fundamental way, and over an extended period of time, to fulfill the leadership role that is necessary for the Northwest Territories to plan for, mitigate, and adapt to climate change and the dramatic consequences it holds for the Northwest Territories. This is a very concerning finding that should be met with serious consideration.

The committee notes that, of the five recommendations of the Office of the Auditor General related to the department's failure to show leadership, all five responses point to the department's Climate Change Strategic Framework as the answer to this failure. This suggests to the committee that the department, on a very foundational level, fails to appreciate the gravity of the Auditor General's finding. ENR also does not

recognize that improvement will take a concerted effort, on a number of fronts, and will not be achieved solely through the delivery of a strategic framework, something that the department has repeatedly failed to do in the past decade.

The committee has heard both the deputy minister, during the public hearing, and the Minister, in this Legislative Assembly, make the point that the audit period did not address the department's work on the Climate Change Strategic Framework, with the inference being that the utility of the audit was, therefore, limited.

The committee is disappointed with this dismissive response, which attempts to minimize the Auditor General's findings. The committee would have preferred to hear some acknowledgement that the audit findings point to deep-rooted, systemic problems that have persisted over a decade or more. For these problems to be adequately addressed, they must first be acknowledged.

The committee encourages the Minister of Environment and Natural Resources, his Cabinet colleagues, and the department's senior management to do some soul-searching, reflect on past mistakes and ensure those mistakes are not repeated.

The committee takes this opportunity to recognize, with sincerity, the effort, dedication and hard work of the employees of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources. The committee's observations should not be construed, in any way, as criticism of the department's hard-working public servants, but rather as a critique of poor management decisions which resulted in the department's hard work being less effective than it might have been.

### **Conclusion**

According to the Auditor General, the measures taken by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources and the Department of Infrastructure were not adequate to fulfill the government's climate change commitments to reduce territorial greenhouse gas emissions and to adapt to climate change impacts in the Northwest Territories.

While the committee is encouraged that the Department of Environment and Natural Resources accepted the Auditor General's recommendations, the responses to some of these recommendations were so vague as to leave the standing committee with little assurance that appropriate steps will be taken by the department to meet the challenge of fulfilling its leadership role.

The standing committee makes the following eleven recommendations. Further detail specific to each

recommendation is contained in the body of the report. As previously noted, these recommendations are largely designed to help the departments meet the recommendations made by the Auditor General and to assist the department to address the deficiencies found by the audit.

### **Recommendation 1**

The Standing Committee on Government Operations endorses the eight recommendations made by the Office of the Auditor General in its report and recommends that the Department of Environment and Natural Resources and the Department of Infrastructure take the steps necessary to ensure that all recommendations are fully implemented in a timely manner.

### **Recommendation 2**

The Standing Committee on Government Operations again recommends that, in future, any GNWT department being audited provide the Standing Committee on Government Operations with a copy of its action or implementation plan at the earliest possible opportunity and no later than three business days prior to the public review on the Auditor General's Report, consistent with the Process Convention on Communications between Cabinet Ministers, Standing Committees and Regular Members.

### **Recommendation 3**

The Standing Committee on Government Operations recommends that, in future, any GNWT department selected for an audit provide the Standing Committee on Government Operations with a copy of its action or implementation plan in draft format and, further, that the document not be finalized until the department has had an opportunity to consider the recommendations made as a result of the standing committee's review.

### **Recommendation 4**

The Standing Committee on Government Operations recommends that the Department of Environment and Natural Resources acknowledge and reference the Auditor General's Report and recommendations in the Climate Change Strategic Framework.

### **Recommendation 5**

The Standing Committee on Government Operations recommends that the Department of Environment and Natural Resources bring forward a draft Climate Change Strategic Framework Action Plan for the consideration of the standing committee, no later than May 11, 2018, which identifies specific activities to be undertaken by the department in support of the Climate Change



Strategic Framework and in response to the recommendations of the Auditor General.

#### **Recommendation 6**

The Standing Committee on Government Operations recommends that the Department of Environment and Natural Resources bring forward a draft Knowledge Agenda Action Plan for the consideration of the standing committee, no later than May 11, 2018, which identifies specific activities to be undertaken by the department in support of the Climate Change Strategic Framework and in response to the recommendations of the Auditor General.

#### **Recommendation 7**

The Standing Committee on Government Operations recommends that the Department of Environment and Natural Resources report annually on progress being made to meet the greenhouse gas emissions targets, established in the Climate Change Strategic Framework, and remain open to the possibility of making target adjustments, as required, to meet the overall emissions reduction target by 2030.

#### **Recommendation 8**

The Standing Committee on Government Operations recommends that the Minister of Environment and Natural Resources, with Cabinet endorsement and participation, hold a Ministerial round table on climate change in the Northwest Territories as a method for seeking industry input into the Climate Change Strategic Framework and to secure commitments, at the political level, that industry will work to meet the targets set in the CCSF.

#### **Recommendation 9**

The Standing Committee on Government Operations recommends that the Department of Environment and Natural Resources give consideration to the development of the following procedural authoritative instruments:

- A territorial Climate Change Act;
- A formal GNWT Climate Change Policy;
- Memoranda of understanding identifying ministerial and departmental responsibilities for climate change initiatives; and
- An assessment exercise designed to identify and provide the department with sufficient capacity to fulfill its leadership role.

The standing committee further recommends that ENR report back to the Committee on its consideration of these recommendations,

identifying those procedural authoritative instruments it will adopt, together with reasons for any decision to not proceed with these instruments.

#### **Recommendation 10**

The Standing Committee on Government Operations recommends that the Department of Environment and Natural Resources identify, in its Climate Change Strategic Framework Action Plan, specific measures that will be undertaken, with associated timelines, to fulfill the wildlife management actions recommended by the Auditor General, including the development of an inventory of commitments already identified as important to addressing climate change impacts on wildlife, with a view to ensuring those commitments are met.

#### **Recommendation 11**

The Standing Committee on Government Operations recommends that the Government of the Northwest Territories provide a response to this report within 120 days.

I will conclude, Mr. Speaker, by noting that the standing committee will be monitoring the departments' progress on this work and looks forward to receiving substantive progress reports. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I now move, seconded by the honourable Member for Hay River North, that committee report 6-18(3) be deemed read and printed in Hansard in its entirety. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. The motion is in order. All those in favour? All those opposed? Motion carried.

---Carried

The report on the review of the 2017 Report of the Auditor General of Canada on Climate Change in the Northwest Territories is deemed as read.

### STANDING COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS REPORT ON THE REVIEW OF THE 2017 REPORT OF THE AUDITOR GENERAL OF CANADA ON CLIMATE CHANGE IN THE NORTHWEST TERRITORIES

#### **Introduction**

The Standing Committee on Government Operations ("the standing committee") is pleased to report on its review of the 2017 Report of the Auditor General of Canada on Climate Change in the Northwest Territories.

#### **Tabling and Public Review**

The 2017 Report of the Auditor General of Canada on Climate Change in the Northwest Territories was tabled in the Legislative Assembly on October 18,

2017. The standing committee held its public review of this performance audit report on January 17, 2018.

Committee Members thank Auditor General Mr. Michael Ferguson, Principal Mr. Glenn Wheeler, and Director Ms. Erin Jellinek for preparing the report, for travelling to Yellowknife when the report was tabled and again when it was reviewed, and for assisting the committee during the public review.

The standing committee also thanks the deputy minister of Environment and Natural Resources (ENR), Dr. Joe Dragon, the deputy minister of Infrastructure (INF), Mr. Paul Guy, and officials from their respective departments for their appearances before the committee.

### **The Role of the Auditor General in Canada**

The Auditor General of Canada is the Auditor of record for the Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT), and reports to the Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories in accordance with Section 41 of the federal Northwest Territories Act.

The Office of the Auditor General of Canada (OAG) conducts financial and performance audits in all three northern territories. Financial audits tell the Legislative Assembly and the public whether the government is keeping proper records and presenting its financial information fairly and in accordance with public sector accounting standards.

Performance audits, on the other hand, consider whether programs are being run according to the department's own legislation, regulations, directives and policies, and with due regard for economy, efficiency, effectiveness, and environmental impacts. In the last decade, the Auditor General has completed more than ten performance audits in the Northwest Territories, including one status report evaluating progress on the recommendations of previous audits, one special audit, and the most recent audit on climate change in the Northwest Territories, which is the subject of this report.

The Legislative Assembly's Standing Committee on Government Operations is mandated to review the reports of the Auditor General and make recommendations to the Government of the Northwest Territories on the basis of those reports. Members look for efficiencies, best practices, and gaps, with the intent of improving services to residents. The Auditor General's reports play a crucial role in Members' scrutiny of government spending and performance.

### **Climate Change in the Northwest Territories**

According to the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (ENR) the impact of climate change in the Northwest Territories is significant, widespread, and has resulted in a surface temperature increase averaging 2 degrees Celsius since the 1940s, as compared with an average 0.74 degree Celsius increase worldwide.

The Auditor General's report outlines a number of changes wrought by climate change and resulting impacts for which climate change is identified as a major factor. This information is drawn from a variety of GNWT sources, listed at page 2 of the OAG report. Changes include: warming; increased variation in precipitation; and extreme weather events.

#### **Warming**

Warming has resulted in the reduction of sea ice which has caused significant coastal erosion in some Northwest Territories communities, such as Tuktoyaktuk. In addition to the impacts on the physical environment, erosion has damaged and destroyed cultural and heritage sites and necessitated the relocation of buildings and cost millions of dollars to protect the shoreline.

Warming has resulted in the thawing of permafrost, which has caused shifting, foundational cracks and structural problems in buildings. It has also impacted transportation for communities and industry and increased road maintenance costs as a result of road damage due to slumping, shifting and sinkholes.

Another negative impact associated with warming is that ice forms later in the fall and melts earlier in the spring. This has a significant impact in the Northwest Territories, where communities and mining operations rely on ice roads for winter travel outside of communities and for the resupply of food, fuel and construction materials. Increased incidents of winter road closures, a shortened winter road season and reduced load weight limits have resulted in higher costs for the delivery of supplies to communities and concerns about safety.

The shortened season also has negative consequences for those living traditional lifestyles, as they have a shorter timeframe for safe travel to traplines and travel conditions are less predictable.

#### **Increased Variation in Precipitation**

Increased precipitation, including wetter, heavier snowfalls, have led to road flooding and washouts, and damage to building foundations and roofs. Low water levels have an impact on remote communities that rely on barges to supply essential goods and those that rely on hydroelectric power.

#### **Extreme Weather Events**

Extreme weather events, including storms, floods and droughts, occur more frequently as a result of climate change. In the Northwest Territories, the frequency and intensity of boreal forest fires have affected residents' health and safety and impacted lands and wildlife used by residents for traditional lifestyles and subsistence living.

The summer of 2014 was one of the worst forest fires seasons on record in the Northwest Territories, when 385 fires burned 3.4 million hectares of land and cost the GNWT over \$56 million.

Although the GNWT is a small emitter of greenhouse gases, it is particularly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change, which threaten the livelihood of residents and the way of life, particularly in remote, Indigenous NWT communities. For this reason, the Auditor General's report points out, responding to the impacts of climate change is a shared responsibility, requiring partnerships within and across governments and with non-governmental organizations, industry and the public.

#### **The Role of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources**

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources is the lead department for climate change for the Northwest Territories, with the responsibility to:

- Lead the development of strategies to address greenhouse gas emissions and to adapt to climate change impacts;
- Lead the sharing of climate change information to support GNWT departments and the public in their adaptation efforts;
- Promote the use of scientific research, traditional knowledge, and public education to understand climate change in the Northwest Territories; and
- Represent the territorial government in national climate change initiatives.

ENR is also responsible to maintain, conserve and protect the condition, quality, diversity and abundance of the environment, including water, air, wildlife, habitat and forests in the NWT.

#### **The Role of the Department of Infrastructure**

The Department of Infrastructure is responsible for promoting energy efficiency in the management of GNWT assets and adapting them to the impacts of climate change. It is also responsible for adapting the Northwest Territories' transportation infrastructure to the impacts of climate change.

#### **About the Audit**

The Auditor General's performance audit covered the period from April 1, 2013, to June 30, 2017. However, to gain a more complete understanding of ENR's leadership role for climate change, the OAG examined matters dating back to 2001.

It may be of interest to note that the work done by the Office of the Auditor General on behalf of the residents of the Northwest Territories is not paid for or reimbursed by the Legislative Assembly or the Government of the Northwest Territories. This gives the Office of the Auditor General the ability to independently select the subject of a performance audit and provide objective assessment and recommendations based on the information that is evaluated during the audit and the findings contained within.

The Office of the Auditor General works closely with departments during the audit process and obtains confirmation from senior management that the findings in the Auditor General's report are factually based. Additionally, it should be noted that the Departments' formal responses to each of the Auditor General's recommendations are included within the report itself.

The audit examined whether the Department of Environment and Natural Resources and the Department of Infrastructure took adequate steps to meet their commitments to reduce territorial greenhouse gas emissions and to adapt to climate change impacts in the Northwest Territories.

The standing committee points out that the audit does not compare the work of government departments against similar work done in other jurisdictions. Similarly, the audit does not examine whether the budget allocated to each department by the Legislative Assembly is sufficient, nor does it consider whether the legislation, regulations and policies governing a department's work are adequate or appropriate. The audit simply accepts these things as given and looks only at whether or not the department in question is meeting the obligations that exist under the current legislative and policy framework.

The Office of the Auditor General works with the departments in question to define the scope of the audit. Only those parameters that fall within the scope of the audit are examined. It is important to note that, in this case, the scope of the audit did not include an examination of the role of other GNWT departments, community governments, associations, the federal government, or the private sector, in managing greenhouse gas emissions or in adapting to climate change impacts.

Additionally, the standing committee wishes to point out that an estimated 6,000 hours of work by the Office of the Auditor General went into the audit. This does not include the hours put in by the departments in responding to the information needs of the auditors. The committee notes it here, to give people a sense of the amount of time and effort involved in conducting a compliance audit.

### **Key Audit Findings**

#### **Department of Environment and Natural Resources**

Overall, the Auditor General found that ENR did not fulfill its leadership role and meet its commitments on climate change, nor did it address long-standing deficiencies affecting its leadership on climate change. It did not assess what authorities and resources it required to fulfill its leadership role. For example, the department committed to put a climate change network in place in 2007, to share information and promote climate change action and collaboration. The OAG found that "the department did not establish this network, despite two attempts, and was unable to explain why."

The audit further found that the department did not identify the risks to the Northwest Territories posed by climate change, or provide departments and communities with easy access to the information needed to take action on climate change. Despite a commitment to do so almost 10 years ago, ENR failed to establish a territorial strategy to adapt to climate change.

This lack of leadership led to a piecemeal approach, as departments and communities pursued their own adaptation efforts. This left ENR without the ability to know what the NWT was doing to adapt to climate change, whether it was enough to mitigate the greatest risks, or whether individual adaptation actions negatively affected one another.

Additionally, the audit found that, while ENR "focused its climate change efforts on developing greenhouse gas strategies, it did not set meaningful emission targets or focus on the greatest emitters." As a result, the 2011-2015 territorial greenhouse gas strategy did not have a significant impact on reducing emissions levels.

Finally, the audit found that, with respect to adapting to climate change impacts, the department did set out protections for some vulnerable wildlife species, but had no overall adaptation plan to better protect wildlife and ensure that areas of greatest risk were being addressed.

#### **Department of Infrastructure**

With respect to adapting to climate change impacts, the audit found that the Department of

Infrastructure identified specific adaptation actions to protect public roads and buildings from the risks posed by climate change, but these were only routinely carried out for roads.

The department assessed the climate change risks for public buildings such as health centres and hospitals and determined the two greatest risks to be permafrost degradation affecting foundations, and snow loads affecting roof stability. The audit found that the department did not develop a formal climate change adaptation plan for public buildings, and often did not follow its own practices for operations and maintenance of public buildings. For example, 63 per cent of the buildings reviewed by the OAG did not undergo required annual roof inspections, and snow removal occurred on only 50 per cent of the buildings examined.

The audit found that the Department of Infrastructure developed a climate change plan for transportation infrastructure in 2013. This plan identified all-weather and winter roads as the greatest areas of risk and committed to a range of adaptive actions to manage these risks, including: testing and using new technologies to manage the impacts of permafrost degradation and changing ice conditions; conducting research on the viability of winter roads; and changing operations and maintenance practices to better protect roads from impacts such as melting ice.

The audit found that the department did not regularly conduct required inspections of all-weather roads, to identify required maintenance and rehabilitation. While the department inspected 90 per cent of large culverts, approximately 50 per cent of the small culverts the department should have inspected were not inspected.

Despite these issues, Infrastructure, the OAG found, did take some positive steps to manage the impacts of climate change. The audit found that the department worked with various partners to undertake research and test new technologies for climate change adaptation. The committee takes this opportunity to acknowledge the Department of Infrastructure for this work.

#### **Audit Recommendations**

The report of the Auditor General contains a total of eight recommendations. For Department of Environment and Natural Resources, five recommendations are related to its leadership role for climate change and one is related to wildlife management actions to adequately adapt to climate change. The final two recommendations are directed toward the Department of Infrastructure's work relating to adapting to climate change impacts.

The standing committee endorses all of the recommendations made by the Office of the Auditor General and recommends that the departments ensure these are implemented in a timely manner.

### **Recommendation 1**

The Standing Committee on Government Operations endorses the eight recommendations made by the Office of the Auditor General in its report and recommends that the Department of Environment and Natural Resources and the Department of Infrastructure take the steps necessary to ensure that all recommendations are fully implemented in a timely manner.

### **Committee Recommendations - General**

Although compliance audits are backwards-looking, the value of such an exercise lies in assessing past performance shortfalls with a view to improving future performance. In this vein, the standing committee's observations and recommendations are intended to provide departments with additional insight that may assist them in implementing actions that will ultimately help fulfill the recommendations made by the Auditor General.

The Auditor General's key finding in the 2017 Report on Climate Change in the Northwest Territories is that the Department of Environment and Natural Resources failed, in a very fundamental way and over an extended period of time, to fulfill the leadership role that is necessary for the Northwest Territories to plan for, mitigate, and adapt to climate change and the dramatic consequences it holds for the Northwest Territories. This is a very concerning finding that should be met with serious consideration.

The committee notes that, of the five recommendations of the OAG related to the Department's failure to show leadership, all five responses point to the Climate Change Strategic Framework (CCSF) as the answer to this failure. This suggests to the committee that the department, on a very foundational level, fails to appreciate the gravity of the Auditor General's finding and does not recognize that improvement will take a concerted effort on a number of fronts and will not be achieved solely through the delivery of a strategic framework.

The committee has heard both the deputy minister, during the public hearing, and the Minister, in the Legislative Assembly, make the point that the audit period did not address the department's work on the Climate Change Strategic Framework, with the inference being that the utility of the audit was, therefore, limited. The committee is disappointed with this dismissive response, which attempts to minimize the Auditor General's findings. Committee

would have preferred to hear some acknowledgement that the audit findings point to deep-rooted, systemic problems that have persisted over a decade or more. For these problems to be adequately addressed they must first be acknowledged.

The standing committee takes this opportunity to recognize, with sincerity, the effort, dedication and hard work of the employees of ENR. The committee's observations should not be construed, in any way, as criticism of the department's hard-working public servants, but rather as a critique of poor management decisions which resulted in the department's hard work being less effective than it might have been. The committee encourages the Minister, his Cabinet colleagues and the department's senior management to do some soul-searching, reflect on past mistakes and ensure those mistakes are not repeated.

### **Timely Transmittal of Materials**

The standing committee received the presentation materials and ENR's draft Action Plan at midday on January 15, 2018, a day and a half before the start of the public hearing. Section 10 of the Process Convention on Communications between Cabinet Ministers, standing committees and Regular Members requires that such materials be transmitted no later than three business days prior to the meeting at which the materials will be considered.

Unfortunately, this is not the first time a contravention of the process convention has occurred with respect to the public review of an audit report. The committee again reminds Ministers and their senior officials of their obligation to ensure the timely transmittal of materials. Accordingly, the committee makes the following recommendation:

### **Recommendation 2**

The Standing Committee on Government Operations again recommends that, in future, any GNWT department being audited provide the Standing Committee on Government Operations with a copy of its action or implementation plan at the earliest possible opportunity and no later than three business days prior to the public review on the Auditor General's report consistent with the Process Convention on Communications between Cabinet Ministers, standing committees and Regular Members.

### **Receipt of the Action Plan in Draft Format**

The standing committee has an excellent working relationship with Office of the Auditor General and, as a matter of course, has in-depth discussions, both in camera and in public, with the Auditor

General and his staff. This gives the committee insight into the findings and recommendations made in the audit, and as importantly, into the purpose of the Auditor General's recommendations and the outcome that his office hopes the audit will achieve. This dialogue informs the production of this report and the committee's recommendations, which may be of some benefit to the audited department in refining its approach to addressing the concerns the Auditor General raises.

The committee notes that ENR's Action Plan was provided in a draft format. The recommendation, below, is intended with respect to future audits.

### **Recommendation 3**

The Standing Committee on Government Operations recommends that, in future, any GNWT department selected for an audit provide the Standing Committee on Government Operations with a copy of its action or implementation plan in draft format and, further, that the document not be finalized until the department has had an opportunity to consider the recommendations made as a result of the standing committee's review.

### **Committee Observations and Recommendations - Specific**

The standing committee has identified a number of recommendations that are specific to the audit and related to the recommendations made by the Office of the Auditor General. These are identified below:

#### **OAG Recommendation 1: Develop and Implement a Climate Change Strategy**

The OAG recommends that ENR develop and implement a strategy outlining how the Northwest Territories will adapt to climate change that includes a territory-wide assessment of climate change risks; is developed with input from other GNWT departments and NWT residents; takes into account a number of factors including regional diversity; and uses indicators to facilitate tracking of climate change adaptation.

The department's response indicates that the implementation of the CCSF will require an action plan, to be developed over the 2017-2018 fiscal year. This action plan will include a performance measurement framework with specific indicators to help track the progress and commitments made in the CCSF. Ongoing assessment of adaptation efforts in the Northwest Territories will be assessed as part of the action plan.

The standing committee makes the following recommendations related to the development of the Climate Change Strategic Framework and accompanying Action Plan:

#### **Recommendation 4**

The Standing Committee on Government Operations recommends that the Department of Environment and Natural Resources acknowledge and reference the Auditor General's Report and recommendations in the Climate Change Strategic Framework.

#### **Recommendation 5**

The Standing Committee on Government Operations recommends that the Department of Environment and Natural Resources bring forward a draft Climate Change Strategic Framework Action Plan for the consideration of the standing committee, no later than May 11, 2018, which identifies specific activities to be undertaken by the department in support of the Climate Change Strategic Framework and in response to the recommendations of the Auditor General.

#### **OAG Recommendation 2: Identify Climate Change Information Needs and Make Information Available**

The OAG recommends that, to better support climate change information needs and adaptation decisions, ENR should:

- Identify the climate change information needs of Government of the Northwest Territories departments as well as those of communities.
- Provide departments and others with access to relevant climate change information to make informed adaptation decisions. This would include collecting new information, accessing information already available, and establishing mechanisms to house and share this information. The department should work with other government departments, agencies, communities, and research institutions to identify existing climate change-related information.
- Monitor implementation of the Knowledge Agenda: Northern Research for Northern Priorities.

The Knowledge Agenda is an aspirational document that identifies high-level strategic goals for research the following areas: cultural sustainability, environmental stewardship; health and wellness; natural resource management and sustainable communities. An action plan should identify how the strategic goals of the Knowledge Agenda will be achieved, including which partnership agencies will be involved in the collection and storage of information and how that information will be warehoused and shared.

The Action Plan should ensure there is a clear role for traditional knowledge in managing and adapting to climate change and should include the development of a central repository of the traditional knowledge currently provided to or collected by field staff working in all GNWT program departments. The committee makes the following recommendation:

#### **Recommendation 6**

The Standing Committee on Government Operations recommends that the Department of Environment and Natural Resources bring forward a draft Knowledge Agenda Action Plan for the consideration of the standing committee, no later than May 11, 2018, which identifies specific activities to be undertaken by the department in support of the Climate Change Strategic Framework and in response to the recommendations of the Auditor General.

#### **OAG Recommendation 3: Develop a New Greenhouse Gas Strategy and Report Regularly on Progress Made and Results Achieved**

In response to the above recommendation, ENR notes that the draft Climate Change Strategic Framework (CCSF) includes mitigation of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions in the Northwest Territories. Emissions targets are identified for the years 2020, 2025 and 2030.

The CCSF sets out ENR's intention to undertake a five-year planning timeline to support the implementation of the priorities and activities outlined in the CCSF. The five-year review process contemplates the development of successive five-year action plans, with the first review scheduled for 2024 and the second in 2030.

The committee is concerned that, if target necessary target adjustments are only made at the conclusion of the five-year review process, will lack the flexibility necessary to allow for target adjustments to occur before 2024, and again before 2030, if required.

The committee notes that the CCSF indicates that "as actions are implemented, annual tracking and report is required to measure progress and prepare for a formal review" of the CCSF. This commitment to annual reporting is repeated in the Department's response to the Auditor General's recommendation:

"The performance measurement framework, as part of the action plan, will monitor how actions are addressing emissions and monitor commitments made in the CCSF and the 2030 Energy Strategy. The Department of Environment and Natural Resources commits to reporting annually to the public."

To ensure that the process has the flexibility to accommodate any necessary target adjustments prior to 2024 and in the period between 2024 and 2030, the committee makes the following recommendation:

#### **Recommendation 7**

The Standing Committee on Government Operations recommends that the Department of Environment and Natural Resources report annually on progress being made to meet the greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions targets established in the Climate Change Strategic Framework and remain open to the possibility of making target adjustments, as required, to meet the overall emissions reduction target by 2030.

#### **OAG Recommendation 4: Stakeholder Engagement on new Greenhouse Gas Strategy**

The Auditor General recommended that, in developing and implementing its greenhouse gas (GHG) strategy, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources should engage with stakeholders, including industry, to clearly identify commitments to address GHG emissions in each sector across the Northwest Territories" (emphasis added). Committee notes that the engagement of industry will be critical to the success of the first goal set out in the CCSF, which is to transition to a lower carbon economy. Industry buy-in is essential if the GNWT hopes to meet the sector-specific targets set in the CCSF.

The Department's response to the OAG's recommendation makes no reference to industry. When questioned, ENR provided the committee with additional information about a meeting that had taken place between department officials and industry representatives during the development of the draft CCSF.

The standing committee is of the view that the department's efforts to engage industry have, to date, been inadequate. Additional work is needed, not at the officials' level but at the political level, to ensure that the GNWT secures the cooperation of industry in meeting the goals of the CCSF. The committee urges the Minister and his Cabinet colleagues to show leadership in this regard, by adopting and implementing the following recommendation:

#### **Recommendation 8**

The Standing Committee on Government Operations recommends that the Minister of Environment and Natural Resources, with Cabinet endorsement and participation, hold a Ministerial round table on climate change in the Northwest Territories as a method for seeking industry input into the Climate Change Strategic Framework and

to secure commitments, at the political level, that industry will work to meet the targets set in the CCSF.

The Ministerial roundtable could serve as an ongoing mechanism for securing the input of industry representatives during development and implementation of the Action Plan and could include other stakeholders such as non-governmental organizations. The committee would welcome the opportunity to review any draft Terms of Reference developed to support this approach.

#### **OAG Recommendation 5: Climate Change Leadership**

As stated earlier, the standing committee believes that the most significant finding in the Auditor General's report is the failure of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources to provide leadership, on behalf of the Government of the Northwest Territories, for the climate change file. The Auditor General recommended that ENR consider options for how best to fulfill its responsibilities as the lead for climate change, including considering what authority is needed, and identifying the resources required to fulfill its responsibilities.

The department responded by stating that, as part of the exercise to develop a CCSF Action Plan, ENR will look at its authority, roles, and responsibilities, and the resources required to effectively carry out the CCSF. This response, together with answers provided to the committee's questions during the public hearing, suggest to the committee that the department lacks sufficient clarity as to what the OAG means by the use of the term "authority."

The committee understands the use of the term "authority," in this context, to mean the strategic development and deployment of procedural authoritative instruments -- i.e. laws, policies, and procedures -- designed to ensure that ENR has the appropriate mandate to act in a leadership capacity and can compel other departments, through this mandate, to assist in the attainment of desired outcomes.

If it is ENR's preference to consider these questions of authority in the context of developing a CCSF Action Plan, that is the department's prerogative. Whether this exercise takes place in this context, or as a separate initiative, the committee recommends that the ENR give consideration to the development of the following:

The establishment of a Climate Change Act, which could:

- Provide for the carbon tax; formalize any commitments made on a sectoral basis to meet

GHG emissions targets;

- Provide for consequential changes to the Financial Administration Act, if necessary, to ensure climate change impact analysis is included as part of any program and service submissions and budgeting; and
- Establish the authority and requirements for public reporting;

The development of a formal GNWT Climate Change Policy, for the approval of the Premier in Executive Council, which could:

- Set forth the principles that the GNWT will uphold when addressing climate change;
- Establish the authorities of the Minister and of the Department of ENR to lead the GNWT's climate change response;
- Make clear how conflicting mandates will be addressed (such as the potential conflicts between carbon pricing and emissions targets);
- Formalize the establishment of the Assistant Deputy Ministers Climate Change Committee, including ENR's leadership of the committee; and
- Include provisions identifying how the GNWT will prioritize and approve federal funding applications, and
- Include provisions identifying how submissions for the consideration of Cabinet and the Financial Management board will be screened and assessed for climate change impacts by GNWT analysts.

The development and implementation of Memoranda of Understanding, pursuant to the above-noted policy, which clearly identify Ministerial and departmental responsibilities for any climate change initiatives, including those undertaken pursuant to the CCSF Action Plan, the Knowledge Agenda Action Plan and any action plan developed for the 2030 Energy Strategy.

An assessment exercise intended to determine what resources are needed by ENR to provide the department with sufficient capacity to complete the CCSF and Action Plan, and implementation of both within the identified timeframes, given that there have been significant delays to date.

#### **Recommendation 9**

The Standing Committee on Government Operations recommends that the Department of Environment and Natural Resources give consideration to the development of the following



procedural authoritative instruments: a territorial Climate Change Act; a formal GNWT Climate Change Policy; Memoranda of Understanding identifying Ministerial and departmental responsibilities for climate change initiatives; and an assessment exercise designed to identify and provide the department with sufficient capacity to fulfill its leadership role.

The standing committee further recommends that ENR report back to the committee on its consideration of these recommendations, identifying those procedural authoritative instruments it will adopt, together with reasons for any decision to not proceed with these instruments.

For the consideration of the Minister and his Cabinet colleagues, committee closes this section by emphasizing that ENR will be best supported to lead at the departmental level only if it is complemented by climate change leadership at the political level, with all Ministers fully engaged and leading within their respective areas, including working with industry, stakeholders, Indigenous Governments and non-governmental organizations.

#### **OAG Recommendation 6: Impacts on Wildlife**

The Auditor General recommended that ENR identify and implement wildlife management actions to adequately adapt to climate change, including:

- Conducting an assessment of risk for its overall wildlife management strategy to ensure that all climate change risks to wildlife have been identified;
- Collecting the information required to understand climate change impacts on wildlife, including the status of species in the territory;
- Taking action to address the risks identified; and
- Working to fulfill those commitments it had already identified as important to addressing climate change impacts on wildlife.

The committee is troubled that the department's response to this recommendation which, while ostensibly agreeing with the recommendation, essentially states that the Department intends to continue doing what it is already doing, that is, monitoring wildlife on a species-specific basis. The only commitment by ENR to change what it already does is a vague reference to "include efforts to identify and better understand climate change impacts on individual species, its contribution to cumulative effects, and species-specific options to mitigate cumulative effects and enhance population health and resilience" (emphasis added).

ENR should identify what efforts, specifically, it intends to employ to identify and manage the impacts of climate change on wildlife in the NWT. The department should consider modelling climate change impacts on keystone species and landscapes, risk assessments, and the identification of actions to deal with the risks. The species-specific management plans should be amended to deal with climate change on some kind of a priority basis, with a firm timetable for the implementation of specific actions.

The committee makes the following recommendation:

#### **Recommendation 10**

The Standing Committee on Government Operations recommends that the Department of Environment and Natural Resources identify, in its CCSF Action Plan, specific measures that will be undertaken, with associated timelines, to fulfill the wildlife management actions recommended by the OAG, including the development of an inventory of commitments already identified as important to addressing climate change impacts on wildlife, with a view to ensuring those commitments are met.

#### **OAG Recommendations 7 and 8: Public Building Infrastructure and Transportation Infrastructure (INF)**

For the Department of Infrastructure, the Auditor General recommended that the department should consistently carry out those operational practices that it committed to, in order to manage the impacts of climate change on public buildings and roads. For roads, in particular, the department should carry out the operational practices identified for small culverts and ice roads.

The standing committee encourages the department to ensure that lessons learned from climate change adaptation lead to improved building and road design.

#### **Conclusions**

According to the Auditor General, the measures taken by the Departments of ENR and Infrastructure were not adequate to fulfill the government's climate change commitments to reduce territorial greenhouse gas emissions and to adapt to climate change impacts in the Northwest Territories.

For the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, in particular, while the committee is encouraged that the department accepted the Auditor General's recommendations, the responses to some of these were so vague as to leave the standing committee with little assurance that appropriate steps will be taken to ensure that the

department meets the challenge of fulfilling its leadership role. The standing committee's recommendations, therefore, are intended to further assist the department to address the deficiencies found by the audit.

The standing committee will be monitoring the department's progress and looks forward to receiving substantive progress reports.

The committee makes the following, final recommendation:

#### **Recommendation 11**

The Standing Committee on Government Operations recommends that the Government of the Northwest Territories provide a response to this report within 120 days.

This concludes the Standing Committee on Government Operations review of the 2017 Report of the Auditor General of Canada on Climate Change in the Northwest Territories.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Reports of standing and special committees. Item 13, reports of committees on the review of bills. Item 14, tabling of documents. Minister of Finance.

#### **Tabling of Documents**

TABLED DOCUMENT 140-18(3):  
SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES (OPERATIONS  
EXPENDITURES), NO. 1, 2018-2019

TABLED DOCUMENT 141-18(3):  
INTER-ACTIVITY TRANSFERS EXCEEDING  
\$250,000 (APRIL 1 TO SEPTEMBER 30, 2017)

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I wish to table the following two documents entitled "Supplementary Estimates (Operations Expenditures), No. 1, 2018-2019"; and "Inter-activity Transfers Exceeding \$250,000 (April 1 to September 30, 2017)." Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. Tabling of documents. Government House Leader.

TABLED DOCUMENT 142-18(3):  
CORRESPONDENCE WITH PRIME MINISTER  
TRUDEAU REGARDING NWT LEGISLATIVE  
ASSEMBLY MOTION – APOLOGY AND  
COMPENSATION TO THE YELLOWKNIVES  
DENE FIRST NATION RELATING TO DAMAGES  
FROM THE GIANT MINE

TABLED DOCUMENT 143-18(3):  
WORKERS' SAFETY AND COMPENSATION

COMMISSION ANNUAL REPORT 2016  
NORTHWEST TERRITORIES AND NUNAVUT

TABLED DOCUMENT 144-18(3):  
WORKERS' ADVISOR OFFICE FOR THE  
NORTHWEST TERRITORIES AND NUNAVUT  
ANNUAL REPORT 2017

**HON. GLEN ABERNETHY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, on behalf of my Cabinet colleagues, I wish to table the following three documents entitled "Correspondence with Prime Minister Trudeau Regarding NWT Legislative Assembly Motion – Apology and Compensation to the Yellowknives Dene First Nation Relating to Damages from the Giant Mine"; "Workers' Safety and Compensation Commission Annual Report 2016 Northwest Territories and Nunavut"; and "Workers' Advisor Office for the Northwest Territories and Nunavut Annual Report 2017." Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. Tabling of documents. Minister of Education, Culture and Employment.

TABLED DOCUMENT 145-18(3):  
CONSOLIDATED ANNUAL FINANCIAL REPORTS  
FOR ALL NORTHWEST TERRITORIES DISTRICT  
EDUCATION AUTHORITIES AND DIVISIONAL  
EDUCATION COUNCILS, JUNE 30, 2017

**HON. ALFRED MOSES:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I wish to table the following document entitled "Consolidated Annual Financial Reports for all Northwest Territories District Education Authorities and Divisional Education Councils, June 30, 2017." Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. Tabling of documents. Minister of Industry, Tourism and Investment.

TABLED DOCUMENT 146-18(3):  
FOLLOW-UP LETTER FOR ORAL QUESTION  
122-18(3): PROCUREMENT POLICIES AND  
IMPACTS ON NON-GOVERNMENTAL  
ORGANIZATIONS

**HON. WALLY SCHUMANN:** Mr. Speaker, I wish to table the following document entitled "Follow-up Letter for Oral Question 122-18(3): Procurement Policies and Impacts on Non-Governmental Organizations." Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. Tabling of documents. Member for Frame Lake.

TABLED DOCUMENT 147-18(3):  
1984 RELEASE FOR PRAIRIE CREEK MINE SITE

TABLED DOCUMENT 148-18(3):  
1987 SURFACE LEASE FOR PRAIRIE CREEK  
MINE SITE

TABLED DOCUMENT 149-18(3):  
2003 SURFACE LEASE FOR PRAIRIE CREEK  
MINE SITE

**MR. O'REILLY:** Merci, Monsieur le President. I wish to table the following three documents. The first is a 1984 release for Prairie Creek Mine Site. The second is a 1987 surface lease for Prairie Creek Mine Site. The third document is a 2003 surface lease for Prairie Creek Mine Site. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. Tabling of documents.

TABLED DOCUMENT 150-18(3):  
2017-2018 AND 2018-2019 NWT HUMAN RIGHTS  
COMMISSION BUDGETS

**MR. SPEAKER:** Pursuant to section 28 of the Financial Administration Act, I wish to table the following, "2017-2018 and 2018-2019 NWT Human Rights Commission Budgets." Item 15, notices of motion. Item 16, notices of motion for first reading of bills. Item 17, motions. Item 18, first reading of bills. Government House Leader.

### First Reading of Bills

BILL 8:  
EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT ACT

**HON. GLEN ABERNETHY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Hay River South, that Bill 8, Emergency Management Act, be read for the first time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. The motion is in order. The motion is non-debatable. All those in favour? All those opposed? The motion is carried.

---Carried

Bill 8 has had its first reading. First reading of bills. Minister of Finance.

BILL 10:  
SUPPLEMENTARY APPROPRIATION ACT  
(INFRASTRUCTURE EXPENDITURES), NO. 4,  
2017-2018

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** Thank you Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Hay River South, that Bill 10, Supplementary Appropriation Act (Infrastructure Expenditures), No. 4, 2017-2018, be read for the first time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. The motion is in order. The motion is non-debatable. All those in favour? All those opposed? The motion is carried.

---Carried

Bill 10 has had its first reading. First reading of bills. Minister of Finance.

BILL 11:  
SUPPLEMENTARY APPROPRIATION ACT  
(OPERATION EXPENDITURES), NO. 4, 2017-  
2018

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** Thank you Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Great Slave, that Bill 11, Supplementary Appropriation Act (Operation Expenditures), No. 4, 2017-2018, be read for the first time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. The motion is in order. The motion is non-debatable. All those in favour? All those opposed? The motion is carried.

---Carried

Bill 11 has had its first reading. First reading of bills. Item 19, second reading of bills. Minister of Finance.

### Second Reading of Bills

BILL 10:  
SUPPLEMENTARY APPROPRIATION ACT  
(INFRASTRUCTURE EXPENDITURES), NO. 4,  
2017-2018

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** Thank you Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Hay River South, that Bill 10, Supplementary Appropriation Act (Infrastructure Expenditures), No. 4, 2017-2018, be read for the second time. Mr. Speaker, this bill makes supplementary appropriations for infrastructure expenditures for the Government of the Northwest Territories for the 2017-2018 fiscal year. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. The motion is in order. To the principle of the bill.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Question.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Question has been called. All those in favour? All those opposed? The motion is carried.

---Carried

Bill 10 has had its second reading. Second reading of bills. Minister of Finance.

**BILL 11:  
SUPPLEMENTARY APPROPRIATION ACT  
(OPERATION EXPENDITURES), NO. 4, 2017-  
2018**

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** Thank you Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Great Slave, that Bill 11, Supplementary Appropriation Act (Operation Expenditures), No. 4, 2017-2018, be read for the second time. Mr. Speaker, this bill makes supplementary appropriations for operation expenditures for the Government of the Northwest Territories for the 2017-2018 fiscal year. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. The motion is in order. To the principle of the bill.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Question.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Question has been called. All those in favour? All those opposed? The motion is carried.

---Carried

Bill 11 has had its second reading. Second reading of bills. Item 20, consideration in committee of the whole of bills and other matters: Minister's Statement 1-18(3), North Slave Correctional Complex Inmate Concerns; Minister's Statement 19-18(3), Aurora College Foundational Review Process; Tabled Document 140-18(3), Supplementary Estimates (Operations Expenditures), No. 1, 2018-2019, with Member for Hay River North in the Chair.

**Consideration in Committee of the Whole  
of Bills and Other Matters**

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson):** I will now call Committee of the Whole to order. What is the wish of committee? Mr. Beaulieu.

**MR. BEAULIEU:** Marsi cho, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, committee would like to consider Tabled Document 140-18(3), Supplementary Estimates (Operations Expenditures), No. 1, 2018-2019. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson):** Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. Does committee agree?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson):** Thank you, committee. We have agreed to consider Tabled Document 140-18(3). Does the Minister of Finance have any opening remarks? Minister McLeod.

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, I am here to present Supplementary

Estimates (Operations Expenditures), No. 1, 2018-2019. This document provides for an increase of \$1.1 million to the operations budget. These supplementary estimates include:

- \$200,000 for funding for the NWT Arts Council;
- \$300,000 to establish two new government service officer positions in Jean Marie River and Sambaa K'e; and
- \$578,000 to establish two new land specialist positions to address equity lease issues over the next three years.

That concludes my opening remarks. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson):** Thank you, Minister. Do you wish to bring witnesses into the chamber?

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** I would, Mr. Chair. Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson):** Thank you. Sergeant-at-Arms, please escort the witnesses into the Chamber. Minister, would you please introduce your witness for the record.

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** Yes, thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, I have with me today Mr. David Stewart, who is the deputy minister of the Department of Finance. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson):** Thank you, Minister. Committee, we have agreed to forgo general comments. We will move directly into the detail. Please turn to page 4 of the tabled document. Do we have comments or questions on this detail? Page 4. Mr. Testart.

**MR. TESTART:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Can the Minister just confirm if this is ongoing funding or a single one-time appropriation? Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson):** Thank you, Minister.

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. It is ongoing.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson):** Thank you, Mr. Testart.

**MR. TESTART:** Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you to the Minister for that clarification. I think this is, again, something that we heard very loudly from the arts community. I am really pleased that the Minister has brought this forward, happy to support it, and I am happy even more so that it is ongoing funding. Hopefully, we can get a few more dollars next business plan. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson):** Thank you, Mr. Testart. Anything further from committee? Seeing none, Supplementary Estimates (Operations Expenditures) No. 1, 2018-2019, Education, Culture and Employment, operations expenditures, culture, heritage, and languages, not previously authorized, \$200,000. Does committee agree?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson):** Thank you, committee. Education, Culture and Employment, operations expenditures, total department, not previously authorized, \$200,000. Does committee agree?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson):** Thank you, committee. Please turn to page 5. Supplementary Estimates, (Operations Expenditures) No. 1, 2018-2019, Executive and Indigenous Affairs, operations expenditures, directorate, not previously authorized, \$300,000. Does committee agree?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson):** Thank you, committee. Executive and Indigenous Affairs, operations expenditures, total department, not previously authorized, \$300,000. Does committee agree?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson):** Thank you, committee. Please continue to page 6. Supplementary Estimates, (Operations Expenditures) No. 1, 2018-2019, Lands, operations expenditures, operations, not previously authorized, \$578,000. Does committee agree? Mr. O'Reilly.

**MR. O'REILLY:** Thanks, Mr. Chair. Can someone just explain what this funding is for? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson):** Thank you, Minister.

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, this money is for additional positions to -- I've got to get my glasses on here -- establish two new positions to address equity leases over the next three years. That is in addition to the three positions that were already there. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson):** Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly.

**MR. O'REILLY:** Thanks, Mr. Chair. Can the Minister or his staff tell us where these three positions are going to be located? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson):** Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Minister.

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. In addition to the previous three that I have just spoken to plus the two that we are adding now, there are going to be two in Fort Smith, one in Inuvik, one in Fort Simpson, and one in Yellowknife. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson):** Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly.

**MR. O'REILLY:** Thanks, Mr. Chair. I think the three that were in the 2018-2019 budget itself, they were going to be located in Fort Smith. Is that correct? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson):** Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Minister.

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** Yes, thank you, Mr. Chair. It was initially three, but two are going into Fort Smith, one in Inuvik, one in Fort Simpson, and one in Yellowknife. That gives us the five positions. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson):** Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly.

**MR. O'REILLY:** Thanks, Mr. Chair. Now I am more confused than ever. How many positions are there going to be created as a result of the supplementary appropriation and what's in the 2018-2019 budget already? How many total positions, and where are they all going to be located? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson):** Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Minister.

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, the supplementary appropriation will add two new positions in addition to the three that were identified in the main budget document. I believe, in the main budget document, the three that were identified were actually going to go to Fort Smith, but after having some discussions with committee, we determined that we will add two new positions, recognizing that there are a number of leases that need to be taken care of. That would have brought the total to five, and we decided that two would go in Fort Smith, one would go in Inuvik, one in Fort Simpson, and one in Yellowknife; so two new positions as a result of this supplementary appropriation. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson):** Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly.

**MR. O'REILLY:** Some information was provided to committee in terms of where the outstanding equity leases were located. The most equity leases are

actually found in Fort Providence at 58. There are only six in Fort Smith. Has there been any consideration given to having one of these positions located in Fort Providence where most of the equity leases are located? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson):** Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Minister.

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, there are a couple of factors. I mean, I take the Member's point. I have seen the numbers. We would have to look at the availability of office space and being able to set up in the community.

I don't know if the final decision has been made yet. I suppose the Department of Lands would have to look at all of the information that is provided and then make a final decision as to whether it's going to be in Fort Simpson or Fort Providence. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson):** Thank you, Minister. The Minister of Lands has indicated that he would like to speak to this. Minister Sebert.

**HON. LOUIS SEBERT:** Yes. After the initial discussions, Mr. Chair, with respect to this matter, we went from three to five positions, as there was an interest to resolve this matter faster. We will have to make the allocation of positions dependent, of course, on office space and some other considerations. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson):** Thank you for that, Minister. Mr. O'Reilly.

**MR. O'REILLY:** Thanks, Mr. Chair. I think that one way to get this done faster is to actually probably move one of those positions from Fort Smith and put it in Fort Providence, where most of the equity leases are located.

I will just make that recommendation to my friend, the Minister of Lands, and to my colleague, the Minister of Finance. If they would like to respond, I would be happy to hear it, but that would be my recommendation. If you want to deal with this faster, put the bodies where the problems are. Not that there are problems with Fort Providence, but there is an outstanding number of equity leases there that is the highest number of any of the communities. Put the person there so that they can resolve it faster. Thanks, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson):** Thank you. Do you wish to respond, any Minister? Minister McLeod.

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Chair, and recommendation noted.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson):** Thank you. Supplementary Estimates (Operations Expenditures) No. 1, 2018-2019. Mr. Nadli.

**MR. NADLI:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I wanted to speak on this matter here. The idea, I am trying to create two positions to address the equity of these issues, and just to try and move forward on the matter. There has been at least an assessment of whether indeed the position could be realized for the community of Fort Providence. I understand that there had been an indication of just the current office space that houses the current employees, GNWT employees at Sun Centre, and I understand there is available office space that could be quickly mobilized to at least create a position in the community. I am just seeking whether a decision has been formalized and this is a go forward, or would a small community, once again, maybe realize some benefits at least from most of the government positions being in headquarters or else regional centres, but at least for a small community to be considered to receive positions such as this so that you have actually feet on the ground to at least get an understanding of the issue and to try and move forward? Mahsi.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson):** Thank you. Minister McLeod.

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** Yes, thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, again, I am not sure if the decision has been finalized. What I do know is we brought forward a supplementary appropriation after discussions and the committee recognizing the need to get more bodies on the ground to deal with equity leases. As far as the actual physical location, I am not sure if that has been finalized. I will have a discussion again with my colleague, the Minister of Lands. If there are opportunities, again, we said before, and I think the Minister said it as well, that there are a number of factors they look at. Of course, this government wants to see a lot of positions go to small communities, but there has to be a fit there as well. We will explore that, and we will have a discussion with committee.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson):** Thank you, Minister. Would anyone else like to chime in? Mr. Nadli. Nothing further from Mr. Nadli.

Supplementary Estimates (Operations Expenditures), No. 1, 2018-2019, Lands, operations expenditures, operations not previously authorized, \$578,000. Does committee agree?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson):** Thank you, committee. Lands, operations expenditures, total department not previously authorized \$578,000. Does committee agree?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson):** Thank you, committee. Do you agree that we have concluded our consideration of Tabled Document 140-18(3), Supplementary Estimates (Operations Expenditures), No. 1, 2018-2019?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson):** Thank you, committee. Thank you to the Minister and your witness for appearing before us. Sergeant-at-Arms, please escort the witness from the Chamber. Mr. Testart.

COMMITTEE MOTION 37-18(3):  
CONCURRENCE OF Tabled DOCUMENT 140-  
18(3): SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES  
(OPERATIONS EXPENDITURES), NO. 1, 2018-  
2019,  
CARRIED

**MR. TESTART:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I move that consideration of Tabled Document 140-18(3) Supplementary Estimates (Operations Expenditures), No. 1, 2018-2019 now be concluded, and that Tabled Document 140-18(3) be reported and recommended as ready for further consideration in formal session to the form of an appropriation bill. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson):** Thank you, Mr. Testart. There is a motion. All those in favour? All those opposed?

---Carried

What is the wish of Committee? Mr. Testart.

**MR. TESTART:** Thanks, Mr. Chair. I move that the Chairman of Committee of the Whole leave the chair to report progress. Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson):** There is a motion to report progress. The motion is in order and non-debatable. All those in favour? All those opposed?

---Carried

I will rise and report progress.

**MR. SPEAKER:** May I have the report, Member for Hay River North?

### Report of Committee of the Whole

**MR. SIMPSON:** Mr. Speaker, your committee has been considering Tabled Document 140-18(3), Supplementary Estimates, (Operations Expenditures), No. 1, 2018-2019, and would like to report progress with one motion carried; and that consideration of Tabled Document 140-18(3) has

been concluded, and that the House concur in those estimates, and that an appropriation bill to be based thereon be introduced without delay. Mr. Speaker, I move that the report to the Committee of the Whole be concurred with.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. Do we have a seconder? Member for Kam Lake. The motion is in order. All those in favour? All those opposed?

---Carried

Masi. Item 22, third reading of bills. Minister of Finance.

### Third Reading of Bills

BILL 10:  
SUPPLEMENTARY APPROPRIATION ACT  
(INFRASTRUCTURE EXPENDITURES), NO. 4,  
2017-2018

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Hay River South, that Bill 10, Supplementary Appropriation Act (Infrastructure Expenditures), No. 4, 2017-2018, be read for the third time. Mr. Speaker, I request a recorded vote. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. The Member has requested for a recorded vote. The motion is in order. To the motion.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Question.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Question has been called. All those in favour, please stand.

### RECORDED VOTE

**CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Mercer):** The Member for Inuvik Twin Lakes, the Member for Hay River South, the Member for Thebacha, the Member for Hay River North, the Member for Kam Lake, the Member for Nahendeh, the Member for Frame Lake, the Member for Yellowknife Centre, the Member for Deh Cho, the Member for Inuvik Boot Lake, the Member for Great Slave.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. All those opposed, please stand. All those abstaining, please stand. Masi. The results of the recorded vote: 11 in favour, zero opposed, zero abstentions.

---Carried

Bill 10 has had its third reading. Third reading of bills. Minister of Finance.

BILL 11:  
SUPPLEMENTARY APPROPRIATION ACT

(OPERATIONS EXPENDITURES), NO. 4, 2017-2018

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Great Slave, that Bill 11, Supplementary Appropriation Act (Operations Expenditures), No. 4, 2017-2018, be read for the third time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. The motion is in order. To the motion. Member for Kam Lake.

**MR. TESTART:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to request a recorded vote.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. The Member has requested for a recorded vote. The motion is in order. To the motion.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Question.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Question has been called. All those in favour, please stand. Madam Clerk.

#### RECORDED VOTE

**DEPUTY CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Ms. Kay):** The Member for Inuvik Twin Lakes, the Member for Hay River South, the Member for Thebacha, the Member for Hay River North, the Member for Kam Lake, the Member for Nahendeh, the Member for Frame Lake, the Member for Yellowknife Centre, the Member for Deh Cho, the Member for Inuvik Boot Lake, and the Member for Great Slave.

**MR. SPEAKER:** All those opposed, please stand. All those abstaining, please stand.

The results of the recorded vote: 11 in favour, zero opposed, zero abstentions.

---Carried

Bill 11 has had its third reading.

Third reading of bills. Mr. Clerk, orders of the day.

#### Orders of the Day

**CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Mercer):** Orders of the day for Thursday, March 15, 2018, at 1:30 p.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 Commissioner's Opening Address
  11. Petitions
  12. Reports of Standing and Special Committees
  13. Reports of Committees on the Review of Bills
  14. Tabling of Documents
  15. Notices of Motion
  16. Notices of Motion for First Reading of Bills
  17. Motions
    - Motion 14-18(3), Extended Adjournment of the House to May 24, 2018
  18. First Reading of Bills
  19. Second Reading of Bills
    - Bill 8, Emergency Management Act
  20. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters
    - Minister's Statement 1-18(3), North Slave Correctional Complex Inmate Concerns
    - Minister's Statement 19-18(3), Aurora College Foundational Review Process
  21. Report of Committee of the Whole
  22. Third Reading of Bills
  23. Orders of the Day
- MR. SPEAKER:** Masi, Mr. Clerk. This House stands adjourned until Thursday, March 15, 2018, at 1:30 p.m.

---ADJOURNMENT

The House adjourned at 3:44 p.m.