



# **NORTHWEST TERRITORIES LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY**

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**The Honourable Tony Whitford, Speaker**

# Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories

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(Hay River North)

### Mr. Charles Dent

(Frame Lake)

### Mrs. Jane Groenewegen

(Hay River South)

### Mr. David Krutko

(Mackenzie Delta)

### Mr. Leon Lafferty

(North Slave)

### Ms. Sandy Lee

(Range Lake)

### Mr. Michael McLeod

(Deh Cho)

### Mr. Steven Nitah

(Tu Nedhe)

### Mr. Floyd Roland

(Inuvik Boot Lake)

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**YELLOWKNIFE, NORTHWEST TERRITORIES**

Thursday, February 20, 2003

**Members Present**

Honourable Roger Allen, Honourable Jim Antoine, Mr. Bell, Mr. Braden, Mr. Delorey, Mr. Dent, Mrs. Groenewegen, Honourable Joe Handley, Mr. Lafferty, Ms. Lee, Mr. McLeod, Honourable Michael Miltenberger, Mr. Nitah, Honourable Jake Ootes, Mr. Roland, Honourable Vince Steen

**ITEM 1: PRAYER**

-- Prayer

**CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Hamilton):** I wish to inform the House of the unavoidable absence of both our honourable Speaker and Deputy Speaker. Pursuant to section 48 of the Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act, I would request the House to elect a Member to take the chair as Speaker. Mr. Dent.

**Motion To Elect Acting Speaker, Carried**

**MR. DENT:** Mr. Clerk, I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Weledeh, that the Member for Hay River North, Mr. Paul Delorey, be appointed Acting Speaker. Thank you.

**CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Hamilton):** Thank you. The motion is in order. To the motion.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Question.

**CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Hamilton):** All those in favour? All those opposed? The motion is carried.

---Applause

Mr. Delorey, will you please take the chair as Speaker.

**ACTING SPEAKER (Mr. Delorey):** I am honoured to take the chair as your Speaker today, but unfortunately it is under very sad circumstances. I only hope that I am able to be as impartial as our honourable Speaker. At this time, I would like to say that our thoughts and prayers are with Elaine, Tony and their boys. We will now move to the orders of the day. Item 2, Ministers' statements. The Honourable Jim Antoine.

**ITEM 2: MINISTERS' STATEMENTS****Minister's Statement 18-14(6): Territorial Premiers' Meeting With Prime Minister**

**HON. JIM ANTOINE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, this morning Premiers Kakwi, Okalik and Fentie met with the Prime Minister to discuss federal funding for health care in the territories.

The meeting was arranged because the three territorial Premiers could not support the health care reform package which First Ministers agreed to when they met in Ottawa on February 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup>. The major problem they had with the

package was the per capita formula used to determine the federal share of health care funding which would flow to each territorial government. Very simply, our small populations meant that we would receive limited funding. In our case, the additional federal funding would have paid to run the NWT health system for one week per year.

Since the First Ministers' meetings, the territorial Premiers have made a strong case in support of additional federal health care funding and the need to address the per capita formula issue.

Fortunately, shortly after the First Ministers' meeting, both the Prime Minister and Health Minister McLellan acknowledged in the House of Commons question period that per capita funding does not work for the territories.

Also while there were no formal meetings, territorial officials held information discussions with their federal counterparts on how best to respond to the territories' concerns.

The media were used very effectively by the Premiers to make sure our issues remained before the Canadian public and on the federal agenda. Mr. Speaker, this is the background which led up to this morning's meeting.

The Premier has briefed the Ministers and asked that I report the following to the Legislative Assembly. The meeting was positive. In addition to the Prime Minister and Premiers, territorial Members of Parliament, Health Minister McLellan and the federal clerk were also in attendance.

In response to the need for more federal health care funding in the short term, the Prime Minister has agreed to set up a territorial fund with a floor of \$60 million to be allocated on the basis of \$20 million for each territory.

This funding is in addition to per capita funding which each territory will receive through the Canadian Health Care Accord 2003. The Prime Minister has directed that the Clerk of the Privy Council, the most senior official in the federal bureaucracy, act as his delegate and work with territorial officials on the details of the territorial health care fund. A deadline of March 31, 2003, has been set.

A second health related feature of the meeting included a commitment from the Prime Minister to provide health reform funding on the basis of proposals prepared by each territorial government. Minister McLellan has agreed to come north and meet with her territorial counterparts on this initiative.

---Applause

Finally, the Prime Minister has directed the Clerk to develop a process for addressing per capita funding inequities by April 1, 2003 and the fiscal challenges facing the territories generally by April 1, 2004. The Premier said he is most encouraged by the Prime Minister's commitment to have his Ministers and officials work with their territorial counterparts to find solutions within a set time frame.

Mr. Speaker, the Premier has asked that I convey, on behalf of Cabinet, our appreciation to the Prime Minister for taking action on the health funding issue and also the problem which the territories have with per capita funding, not only for health care but for a wide range of other federal government programs.

In addition, we want to thank our territorial colleagues, provincial Premiers, former health care commissioner Roy Romanow, our Member of Parliament and Senator for their involvement and support.

The support of this Legislative Assembly and the people of the Northwest Territories has also been essential to achieving our objectives.

Cabinet will continue to keep this Legislative Assembly and the public informed as events unfold. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**ACTING SPEAKER:** Thank you. Item 2, Ministers' statements. Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for Boot Lake, Mr. Roland.

### ITEM 3: MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

#### Member's Statement On GNWT Pay Deductions For Mandatory Christmas Leave

**MR. ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, today I would like to rise to speak on the issue of treatment of the government employees. Mr. Speaker, some time ago, a decision was made by the 13<sup>th</sup> Legislative Assembly that there would be mandatory days off during the Christmas period. Mr. Speaker, the employees were told they would have to do with five days less pay. It would happen between Christmas and New Year's and many Members of the Assembly felt it wasn't fair for our employees to go without a pay cheque or half a pay cheque during that critical time of year when expenses are high, especially around Christmas. So we urged the government to make the change necessary and felt that they had come to a reasonable compromise. Mr. Speaker, the government began taking off 1.92 percent from employees' payroll to cover off that one week, so throughout the year they would have an equal amount every two weeks of the year, so that five days of mandatory leave would not be harshly felt.

Mr. Speaker, it has just recently come to my attention that our government has dealt with the employees in a way that seems quite arbitrary and unfair. We know the 1.92 percent is taken off from salary they have earned throughout the year, but what I have heard is if an employee is to resign or step out of this government before they receive that pay cheque in December, that they forfeit that money, that one week's pay, if they have been employed all year.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Shame!

**MR. ROLAND:** Now I understand the union has agreed and signed this, but still, Mr. Speaker, it seems arbitrary that as an employee the government would take some of my own money and rebalance my pay cheque so that every two weeks I would have an equal pay cheque. Then if I leave the government, whether I go south or move to another job in my community, I am told, thank you for your money, you can go on and we are going to keep it and use it for something else. It's arbitrary and absolutely unfair. It's the employees' money, it's taken from their pay cheque and it should go to those employees that pay. I will be asking questions of the appropriate Minister during question period. Thank you.

---Applause

**ACTING SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Roland. Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for Deh Cho, Mr. McLeod.

#### Member's Statement On Community Self-Government Liaison Officers

**MR. MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the NWT Association of Municipalities, now called the NWT Association of Communities, was formed in 1967 and has stayed the course by adapting to the changing political landscape by providing a forum in which member communities can discuss and exchange information on common issues.

Mr. Speaker, over the last several decades, communities in the NWT have had to focus on land claims and what impact it would have, not only on individuals, but also on the communities as a whole. As aboriginal claims are settled, and aboriginal self-government becomes a topic, the same communities must now become informed on the impact that will have on communities. It is stated in the document, *Securing Our Future*, that the Government of the Northwest Territories must work with the aboriginal and community governments to clarify new roles brought on by aboriginal self-government.

Mr. Speaker, the association wishes to put action to that statement by taking up the challenge to assist each of its member communities in understanding aboriginal self-government and self-government implementation processes at the community level. With encouragement from the Premier, the association submitted a proposal to MACA requesting funds for the purpose of employing a self-government liaison officer whose duties will include providing communities with the information and support required to better understand the impact of self-government and self-government implementation may have at the community level.

This government now has the opportunity to live up to its commitment by supporting the proposal submitted to the Minister of MACA by the NWT Association of Communities. It's an excellent and timely opportunity for this government to develop a partnership with the communities for the delivery and communication of information on self-government. Who better to have as a partner than an organization with member community governments that interact with local residents on a daily basis.

Mr. Speaker, self-government may lead to a change in the way community government is structured and delivered. Therefore, it is important that we provide every resource to the communities in order that they better understand aboriginal self-government. Mr. Speaker, I stand in support of this request from the NWT Association of Communities and I recommend this government show its support by considering this initiative, an initiative that will result in informed communities and individuals. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

**ACTING SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Member for Yellowknife South, Mr. Bell.

#### **Member's Statement On Apprenticeship Support Materials For Trades Entrance Exams**

**MR. BELL:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I would like to highlight a government and industry partnership that kicks off today across town, actually at Northern United Place, with the launch of the apprenticeship support materials. Mr. Speaker, we all know the northern economy is booming and with that boom has come an increased demand for skilled trades people. More and more people and certainly more young people, when we go around to schools that we have had a chance to talk to, are becoming interested in apprenticeships, but there is a major hurdle, Mr. Speaker. That is the trades entrance exam. In some communities, mostly the smaller communities, fewer than 10 percent of those taking the exam get a passing grade on their first attempt. That's not a big surprise, Mr. Speaker, when you consider that until now, there have been no support materials or training available.

De Beers Canada Mining has recognized this, Mr. Speaker. They knew it would be a problem to achieve the goal of having a northern workforce able to participate in meaningful occupations, but these materials, Mr. Speaker, should address that shortcoming. The focus will be in the areas of math, science and reading comprehension, all of the components required to be successful in the trades entrance exam. If you are wondering about the format, it will be available in the traditional paper-based format, but also in CD and web-based and that will allow it to be easily expandable and adaptable.

I know many of the Members will be wondering if you have to come to Yellowknife to access these materials and the answer is no, Mr. Speaker. Training is going to take place across the Northwest Territories. Training will be offered, I understand, at apprenticeship offices, career development centres, community learning centres, at college campuses and in high schools right across the NWT. I should highlight the partners, Mr. Speaker. De Beers Canada obviously have been very influential, but ECE and the federal government, various departments, Aurora College, Skills Canada, the NWT and Nunavut branches, and also, Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize the Genesis Group, a local firm who are very influential and were behind the development of these specific materials.

So, Mr. Speaker, I think we all look forward to good things that I believe will come from this partnership. Thank you.

---Applause

**ACTING SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Bell. Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for North Slave, Mr. Lafferty.

#### **Member's Statement On Equitable Rate Structure Needed For Power In The North**

**MR. LAFFERTY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In the October sitting of this Legislature, one of the issues in the spotlight was the issue of energy rates. The government had been considering changing the rate structure from a community-based rate to a flat rate, but because of the lack of clear communication, direction and discussion, this initiative was dropped and the community-based rate was readopted.

A community-based rate for power systems means that each community pays for its own power use. On the surface, this might seem fair. In reality, it isn't. The service and delivery costs in the smaller communities are higher than in the regional centres, as there is a small population base to draw from in order to cover the costs. Mr. Speaker, the case for a one-rate system for power use is the same as the case my colleagues are making for health care.

Yesterday in the House, some of my colleagues pointed out that there is a three-tiered health care system in the North because of the benefits the status people get. They stated that this was unfair. I feel the same way about community-based power rates. When I turn on the light switch in my home in Rae, why should I pay more than my colleagues in Yellowknife, Hay River or Fort Smith? I am not getting enhanced services. The light beams do not come out as a rainbow. We are all receiving the same service and, in fairness, we should all be paying the same rate.

In this Legislature, we are confronted continually with inequities that exist whether it be equal pay for work of equal value, the levels of basic health care service or the rates Northerners pay for their power. As elected officials who are going to work for all Northerners, one of the things we have done for this Assembly is pass a Human Rights Act which recognizes the equality of all Northerners.

I think we need to continue with our work by ensuring that the equality of Northerners extends to ensuring that we pay the same power rate regardless of where we live in the North. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

**ACTING SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. The honourable Member for Great Slave, Mr. Braden.

#### **Member's Statement On Cancellation Of Caribou Carnival**

**MR. BRADEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It was with a sense of regret and surprise, Mr. Speaker, that Yellowknifers heard this morning that the Caribou Carnival won't happen this year. There have been hundreds of volunteers over the years who have put thousands of hours into making this truly unique northern event happen. We've watched the event flow from good years to bad, from stone to flood, from one quirky controversy to another, but this year it seems it was the final

straw as the support the volunteers needed to build a strong committee, raise the money and carry through failed to materialize. This is not a time to point fingers. Indeed, it is the time to salute those who came forward this year and did their best to carry off the carnival. I also salute them, Mr. Speaker, for making a brave decision to cut the event loose and declare it lost for this year. They have accepted the reality that I believe, will result in this community taking a good long look at what we really value, what our identity is and what we do to celebrate it. I'm confident that what comes out of this will be the renewal of the NWT's biggest winter festival into something that reflects a new Yellowknife, new NWT or hopefully we will keep the values and traditions that we call ours. One of the values that have to change, Mr. Speaker, is how this community supports its volunteers. In the early 90's, I was carnival president for three years and I know what it is like to scramble together an event that takes months to organize, upwards of \$200,000 dollars to stage with a skeleton crew and a cap in hand approach to generating support and finding people ready to roll up their sleeves. I also note the personal satisfaction, Mr. Speaker, that comes in seeing something that really works well and seeing smiles on faces and the relief we all got by having some fun after a long cold winter. With the weather we are getting these days, we are really going to miss it this year. I believe the business community, this city of Yellowknife and this government should all rethink the value of this event, the value we put in our volunteers and what this means to the pride and spirit of this community. Political and financial support are essential. Mr. Speaker, next year would have been the 50<sup>th</sup> year of this remarkable event, let's let it go. I appeal to the people of Yellowknife to resolve to start new, start fresh and create the first year of a winter festival that we can again be proud of. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

**ACTING SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Braden. The honourable Member for Tu Nedhe, Mr. Nitah.

#### **Member's Statement On Recognizing The Value Of Communication During Aurora College Week**

**MR. NITAH:** Mahsi cho, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, this week is Aurora College Week and I'd like to recognize the fine work the Aurora College does for the people in the Northwest Territories. Aurora College, being the deliverer of education, I'd like to speak a little bit on the value of education, specifically communications, Mr. Speaker. Communication is one of the most important tools that we have as human beings in society. Words, Mr. Speaker, put in the right context, steer emotions in us and those around us. Those emotions lead to action and those actions that result in the lives that we lead. The importance of education and the importance of teaching our people and our youngsters to communicate is very important. A study done, some 50 years ago, in the penal institutions of the United States demonstrated very clearly that those that don't communicate well, tend to react very violently because of frustration. I sometimes wonder maybe it is that lack of communication skills that we see such high instances of violence against one another in Northwest Territories. The statistics in the Northwest Territories are deplorable. So, today, I just wanted to stand up and recognize the Aurora College and speak to the importance of education, specifically in the area of communication. Congratulations. I believe there are events

happening throughout the Territories for Aurora College Week. I know there is a drum dance at the Yellowknife Campus between 7 and ten; we're all encouraged to attend if we can. Mahsi cho.

---Applause

**ACTING SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Nitah. The honourable Member for Range Lake, Ms. Lee.

#### **Member's Statement On Labour Standards Board Process**

**MS. LEE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like today to draw the attention to, in particular the Minister of Justice, a deficiency that we seem to have in the labour standards process, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I have a constituent who took an issue to the Labour Standards Board because he was short changed on his wages and while it took him a long time in getting there, he did eventually succeed in getting a favourable decision to have his wage paid. This decision of the board was made back in 1998 and five years later, he still hasn't seen a cent of his judgment. I don't think that we should take lightly the possibility that someone could be out of their wages and then have to go through a process like this to win a decision and then not be able to collect it. I do believe the very purpose and the reason why we have a law that governs the labour standards process is for people like that to go to and to avoid the expensive court system. Something that is happening is not meeting this obligation, Mr. Speaker. I have been in touch with the Minister on this and what I see as the problem of not being able to collect is that the employer keeps appealing the decision, and the more the employer delays it, he doesn't have to meet the obligation of the standards board. What I have been suggesting to the Minister of Justice is to sit up, change the law, make the law whereby the employer, or whoever loses the decision, is forced to put a deposit of the money that they are supposed to pay to the employees. In other words, Mr. Speaker, if someone has been short changed in wages of \$5,000 dollars, the employer should be obligated or to pay that money and put it on deposit so that we avoid situations where the employer keeps appealing the decision as a way to avoid payment. I have urged the Minister to look into this. I have been told that this will probably not make it to the legislative agenda because of the crowded situation. But, I do believe that this is a very important issue and one that should be looked at by the Minister as well as the Cabinet. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

**ACTING SPEAKER:** Thank you Ms. Lee. Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member, Mr. Antoine.

#### **Member's Statement On Update On Activities In Wrigley**

**HON. JIM ANTOINE:** Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I am going to speak in my language, I have an interpreter today. (Translation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I don't get the opportunity to speak my language too often so I am thankful there is someone here to interpret for me. As an elected MLA, I want to say something about Wrigley today. I'm MLA for six communities and Wrigley is one of them. This week there was a meeting there of the leaders of the Deh Cho First Nation.

They met there and this is their yearly meeting. The chiefs and the counsellors all met in Wrigley and they spoke about important issues and the one that is the most important thing was the Interim Measures Agreement. They have been working on this for over a year and they are talking about the land claims and self-government and so they have been discussing all these issues amongst themselves and the other thing is that, although they are speaking about the land claims issues, oil exploration, oil companies, they are talking about how all these things will come about and are gathering in Wrigley, although it is a small community and they really appreciate the opportunity to meet like this. This is why I am telling you about the things that are going on in Wrigley. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**ACTING SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Antoine. Item 3, Members' statements. Item 4, reports of standing and special committees. Mr. Dent.

#### **ITEM 4: REPORTS OF STANDING AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES**

##### **Committee Report 6-14(6): Report On The Review Of The Access To Information And Protection Of Privacy Commissioner's 2001-2002 Annual Report**

**MR. DENT:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to present the Standing Committee on Accountability and Oversight's Report on the Review of the Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Commissioner's Annual Report for 2001-2002.

#### **Background**

The Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories enacted its first Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act, ATIPP, on December 31, 1996. The stated intention of the act is to "promote, uphold and protect access to the information that government creates and receives and to protect the privacy rights of individuals".

The Information and Privacy Commissioner is an independent officer of the Legislative Assembly, but is required under section 68 of the Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act to prepare and submit an annual report on the commissioner's activities to the Legislative Assembly. Ms. Elaine Keenan-Bengts was re-appointed as the Northwest Territories' Information and Privacy Commissioner on July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2000 and will serve a five-year term.

The Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act provides the public with a means of accessing the information that government collects through its departments and various regulatory bodies. The legislation was also designed to place restrictions on the disbursement of certain information in order to protect the privacy rights of individuals. The Act also gives individuals the right to see and make corrections to the information about themselves.

#### **General Comments**

Mr. Speaker, the Standing Committee on Accountability and Oversight met with the Access to Information and Protection of

Privacy Commissioner, Elaine Keenan-Bengts, on December 4, 2002, to review the Commissioner's annual report for the year 2001-2002.

The standing committee noted the ATIPP commissioner's increasing frustration with the lack of progress to date on recommendations made in her previous reports to the government. The committee agreed that the government's lack of action could be considered a "deemed refusal" of both the commissioner's recommendations and the committee's own recommendations made in their annual review of the ATIPP report.

The committee notes the government agreed with many of the recommendations made by both the commissioner and the standing committee after the review of the ATIPP Commissioner's 1999/2000, annual report. In its response to the standing committee's report the government committed to the implementation of several amendments to the act. However, as of the end of 2002 the standing committee has yet to receive a legislative proposal for the amendments, let alone a draft of the amendments to consider. The committee feels that the government has had considerable time in which these amendments could have been prepared.

The committee does not believe that the government is deliberately attempting to halt the implementation of the proposed amendments to the ATIPP Act. However the committee does suggest the drafting of said amendments has been put on the back burner while the government addresses other issues it considers more vital to the public interest. The committee maintains that the proposed amendments, especially the amendment that would protect citizens from the distribution of personal medical information held by private companies, is vital to the public interest and should be placed higher on the government's list of current priorities. The committee would like to see these amendments passed before the end of the 14<sup>th</sup> Assembly: The Standing Committee on Accountability and Oversight recommends that the government table the agreed-upon draft amendments to the ATIPP Act as soon as possible, preferably in the February/March session.

#### **Recommendations From The ATIPP Commissioner's 2001-2002 Report**

##### **The Inclusion Of Municipalities As Public Bodies Under The Current Act**

As the commissioner has pointed out in the past three annual reports, municipalities currently have no legislation regulating the release of names, addresses or other private information on web pages or in other public documents. Municipal officials from both Yellowknife and Hay River have identified this as a serious concern.

During the review of the commissioner's 1999-2000 report, the government committed to providing information and consulting with communities about the possibility of including municipalities under the current NWT ATIPP Act. Recent letters to the committee updating us on the status of this amendment show that there has been little action taken to address this issue.

The standing committee fully supports the commissioner's recommendation that municipalities be included under the territorial ATIPP law or new legislation be drafted to deal with municipalities' use of public information.

#### **Canadian Territories Considered "Federal Works"**

The commissioner has also repeatedly pointed out that new federal legislation entitled Personal Information and Electronic Documents Act, PIPEDA, regulating the collection, storage and use of personal information in the private sector will come into full force on January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2004. As of January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2001 this legislation came into effect for "federal works" and for companies who transfer information over provincial/territorial borders.

The federal privacy commissioner considers the Northwest Territories, Yukon and Nunavut as being "federal works" under the act and therefore the federal commissioner has now taken on the responsibility of investigating all complaints made in this area.

The NWT ATIPP Commissioner recommends the establishment of territorial legislation in order to avoid having local issues handled by a federal body.

The standing committee noted that despite a letter from all territorial justice Ministers questioning the federal commissioner's interpretation of "federal works" he has refused to alter his opinion.

The committee also noted the GNWT continues to maintain that it will review the federal legislation and its effect on the NWT in 2006, two years after the federal PIPED Act goes into full force for all of Canada. However, Members note that the act has actually been "in force" for all of Canada's territories since its inception in 2001, at least in the view of the federal commissioner. Therefore the standing committee has two recommendations to make on this issue: Mr. Speaker, the Standing Committee on Accountability and Oversight once again recommends that the Government of the Northwest Territories establish privacy legislation dealing with private sector businesses in order to avoid federal jurisdiction in this area of law; and, the Standing Committee on Accountability and Oversight also recommends that the Government of the Northwest Territories review the effect of the federal Personal Information and Electronic Documents Act on the NWT as soon as possible rather than in 2006.

#### **Regulation Of Private Health Industries**

The commissioner is concerned that while publicly run health bodies are subject to the ATIPP Act, other private health companies such as pharmacists, dentists, chiropractors, et cetera, are not. Given concerns about the practice of companies selling health information to drug manufacturers and potential invasion of privacy issues, the commissioner would like to see legislation such as the Health Information Act of Alberta. This legislation regulates the practices of all public and private health organizations and companies in respect to the release of information, among other issues.

In response to concerns raised by the standing committee, the government stated that private health care information will be covered by the federal PIPED Act as of January 2004. The government therefore does not deem it necessary to pass an amendment of this nature to the current NWT ATIPP Act.

The Standing Committee on Accountability and Oversight agrees with the commissioner that there is a need to protect the public from disclosure of health information by private health care companies. The federal government's PIPED Act was designed to be implemented in stages to allow territories and provinces the time necessary to establish their own privacy legislation. This legislated protection should either be included under the current Northwest Territories ATIPP legislation or should be a part of a new territorial law designed to protect NWT citizens. The Standing Committee on Accountability and Oversight once again recommends that the government either expands the current NWT Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act or establishes new legislation to protect NWT citizens from the disclosure of personal information by private health care companies.

Mr. Speaker, I would now like to request, with your consent, to have the deputy chair of the committee, the honourable Member for Inuvik Boot Lake, continue with the report.

**ACTING SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Dent. The honourable Member for Inuvik Boot Lake, Mr. Roland.

#### **Deemed Acceptance/Refusal Within 30 Days Amendment**

**MR. ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The NWT ATIPP commissioner referred to her 1999/2000 annual report suggesting that an amendment be added to the ATIPP Act specifying that the head of a public body would be deemed to have accepted the commissioner's recommendation if that public body had not responded within 30 days.

In the review of the commissioner's 1999/2000 annual report, the committee noted that no other ATIPP or Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Acts in other Canadian jurisdictions currently contain a "deemed acceptance clause". In fact the committee noted most other jurisdictions use a "deemed refusal" clause. The AOC did not agree with the commissioner's recommendation at that time and instead suggested an amendment stating that the head of a public body would be deemed to have refused the commissioner's recommendation if that public body has not responded within 30 days.

The government agreed with the committee and stated it would implement a "deemed refusal" amendment to the act. The committee notes however, that as of the end of 2002 the committee has yet to see a proposed amendment to the NWT ATIPP Act.

As the standing committee reviewed the privacy commissioner's 2001-2002 report, it reconsidered the commissioner's concerns regarding the use of the "deemed refusal" clause and the concern she had that it would be used to, in effect, reverse the recommendation of the commissioner.

The standing committee consulted with other Canadian jurisdictions and found that, in practice, the "deemed refusal" clause is considered a refusal to release the records in question. Given the commissioner's concerns about the possible misinterpretation of a "deemed refusal of the commissioner's recommendation" clause the standing committee would like to suggest alternative wording. The committee suggests that the government adopt a "deemed refusal to release the documents" clause. This amendment would address both the commissioner's concerns about clarity within the act and would protect the public from the inadvertent release of private documents.

The committee asked the commissioner if this new wording would satisfy the commissioner's concerns about a "deemed refusal" clause. The commissioner stated that while it does provide more clarity it still leaves the complainant with no further option than a costly appeal to the NWT courts.

The committee considered the commissioner's concerns, however, ultimately decided that the deemed refusal of release of documents clause was a more appropriate action for the government to take: The Standing Committee on Accountability and Oversight once again recommends that the Government adopt a "deemed refusal" amendment to the Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act. The committee further recommends the wording be such that should the head of a public body not respond within the required 30 days to the Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act Commissioner's recommendation(s) the head is deemed to have refused access to the records in question.

### **Privacy Complaints**

The commissioner reiterated her need for an amendment to the ATIPP Act clarifying her authority to investigate and make recommendations in the event of a breach of privacy provisions in the act. The commissioner states that although she currently lacks the official authority to do so, she has been reviewing, investigating and making recommendations with respect to breaches of provisions of the act dealing with personal privacy. In the absence of such a review and recommendations, the only other option would be for a government employee to be prosecuted under the act. As the commissioner points out in her report, most of the offences are accidental and therefore should not proceed to the courts.

The standing committee agreed with the commissioner's initial recommendation in her 1999-2000 report and recommended to the government that the act be amended to give the commissioner authority to investigate and make recommendations in the event of a breach of privacy provisions in the act. The government stated that it also agreed and committed to an amendment of the act. Again, however the standing committee has yet to see the proposed change to the act.

### **Use Of Public Registries On-line**

The commissioner informed the committee in her report that ATIPP officers across Canada are increasingly concerned about the use of public registries, such as personal property registry information, on-line. While this type of information has always been publicly available it has enjoyed what some have

described as "practical obscurity", due to the relative difficulty in accessing a specific file. Now that such databases are becoming available on-line, new software can sort and sift through vast amounts of information in a short period of time. This could allow for the substantial violations of privacy provisions and could allow stalkers to obtain victims' addresses or criminals to commit identity fraud. The commissioner recommends that the government investigate the possibility of limiting access to such databases on-line in order to protect the public.

### **Records Data And Directory**

The commissioner spoke of the need for government departmental ATIPP personnel to keep accurate records of all contacts and requests made in relation to their department. While the commissioner has records for her own investigations she feels that data about the number of information requests received and filled by the department would be of value as well.

The committee agreed that any future need for training of staff in government departments could only be identified through the use of such data on information requests. The committee would like to encourage departmental ATIPP coordinators to maintain records on information requests, filled or denied, and supply them to the commissioner on an annual basis.

The commissioner would also like to see an up to date directory listing each departmental ATIPP coordinator with current contact numbers. The commissioner feels that, by publicly listing the personnel, access to information will be more easily obtained.

### **Conclusion**

In conclusion the Standing Committee on Accountability and Oversight would like to thank the commissioner, Ms. Elaine Keenan-Bengts and her staff for appearing before the committee to present the 2001-2002 annual report. The committee looks forward to reviewing a bill shortly bringing forward many of the recommendations the commissioner has provided over the years: The Standing Committee on Accountability and Oversight requests the Executive Council table a comprehensive response to this report within 120 days in accordance with Rule 93(5) of the Rules of the Legislative Assembly.

Mr. Speaker, that concludes the report of the Accountability and Oversight committee on the review of the Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Commissioner's 2001-2002 annual report.

### **Motion To Move Committee Report 6-14(6) Into Committee Of The Whole, Carried**

Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Frame Lake, that Committee Report 6-14(6) be moved into Committee of the Whole for further consideration. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**ACTING SPEAKER:** Thank you. There is a motion on the floor. The motion is in order. To the motion.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Question.

**ACTING SPEAKER:** Question is being called. All those in favour? All those opposed? The motion is carried.

---Carried

Committee Report 6-14(6) will be moved to Committee of the Whole for further consideration. Item 4, reports of standing and special committees. Item 5, returns to oral questions. Item 6, recognition of visitors in the gallery. The honourable Member for Tu Nedhe, Mr. Nitah.

#### **ITEM 6: RECOGNITION OF VISITORS IN THE GALLERY**

**MR. NITAH:** Mahsi cho, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize Connie Tsetta from the Yellowknives Dene Band. I would also like to recognize a little mistake I made. The drum dance that I announced for tomorrow is actually today from 7:00 to 10:00. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**ACTING SPEAKER:** I would like to remind Members what recognition of visitors in the gallery is for. The honourable Member for Yellowknife Centre, Mr. Ootes.

**HON. JAKE OOTES:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's with a great deal of pleasure that I wish to recognize 16 students from the teacher education program, first year, at the Yellowknife Campus, Aurora College, here in Yellowknife and their instructor Rai Brown who teaches them history. So please help me welcome our future teachers.

---Applause

**ACTING SPEAKER:** The honourable Member for Nunakput, Mr. Steen.

**HON. VINCE STEEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize a former resident of Tuktoyaktuk, Mr. Gord Norberg. Mr. Gord Norberg now lives in Hay River and works for NTCL. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

**ACTING SPEAKER:** Thank you. Item 6, recognition of visitors in the gallery. I would like to take this opportunity recognize my constituent as well, Mr. Gordon Norbert, who is manager of marketing and traffic coordinator for Western Arctic Northern Transportation Company Limited. Gordon is no stranger to all of us. I think he knows pretty well everyone here. Gordon is here to observe his son Gordon who is a Page here in the Assembly, along with Ms. Ashley Leblanc. I would like to thank those two Pages for coming over.

---Applause

**ACTING SPEAKER:** Item 6, recognition of visitors in the gallery. Item 7, oral questions. The honourable Member for North Slave, Mr. Lafferty.

#### **ITEM 7: ORAL QUESTIONS**

**Question 57-14(6): Need For A Single-Rate Zone For The NWT**

**MR. LAFFERTY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is for the Minister responsible for the Northwest Territories Power Corporation, the Honourable Joe Handley. Mr. Speaker, I reviewed the mission statement of the power corporation and within that statement, it commits to the following guidelines: "To treat employees, customers and others with fairness, dignity and respect. To be responsive to our customers and their changing needs and to communicate in an open and timely manner."

Before the beginning of the Legislature each day, we say a prayer asking for guidance as we work for the benefit of all our people. Mr. Speaker, I take this to mean equal benefit to all Northerners regardless of where they live. Mr. Speaker, my question for the Minister is what is the Cabinet doing to bring the issue of a one-rate zone back on the table? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**ACTING SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. The honourable Member for Weledeh, Mr. Handley.

**Return To Question 57-14(6): Need For A Single-Rate Zone For The NWT**

**HON. JOE HANDLEY:** Mr. Speaker, as Cabinet Members will recall, Cabinet direction was that the issue of a one-rate zone would not be revisited during this current application by the Power Corporation for new rates. We would wait until after the energy strategy was finalized to deal with any of the recommendations from the Robertson report and the recommendation for a one-rate zone was part of that recommendation. So for the time being, that is on hold until we have the energy strategy completed. Thank you.

**ACTING SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Handley. Supplementary, Mr. Lafferty.

**Supplementary To Question 57-14(6): Need For A Single-Rate Zone For The NWT**

**MR. LAFFERTY:** I had the opportunity to travel with the energy strategy group and in their meetings, there is no mention of the one-rate zone. There is no mention at all. Questions were not asked of people whether they agreed with it or not. So how can they say they are going to wait for the strategy when the strategy is not involving the one-rate zone? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**ACTING SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. The honourable Member for Weledeh, Mr. Handley.

**Further Return To Question 57-14(6): Need For A Single-Rate Zone For The NWT**

**HON. JOE HANDLEY:** I can't speak to the detail of the discussions that the staff who are putting together the energy discussion paper are having in their consultations. They don't

report to me as Minister responsible for the Power Corporation. They report to the Minister of RWED. Let's not mix up the energy strategy, which is not yet prepared, with the energy discussion paper that's currently being reviewed and discussed in the communities. Mr. Speaker, I have to say that I don't direct that group and I don't know the exact details of their discussions. Thank you.

---Interjection

**ACTING SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Handley. Mr. Lafferty.

**Supplementary To Question 57-14(6): Need For A Single-Rate Zone For The NWT**

**MR. LAFFERTY:** Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the Minister if the strategy is not going to involve putting the one-rate zone in, why are they picking and choosing what they want? Why isn't this Cabinet working for all Northerners like they should be doing? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**ACTING SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. The honourable Member for Weledeh, Mr. Handley.

**Further Return To Question 57-14(6): Need For A Single-Rate Zone For The NWT**

**HON. JOE HANDLEY:** Mr. Speaker, the Cabinet is not picking and choosing what they want. We do have the Robertson report that makes a number of recommendations. Certainly those have to be considered. It was Cabinet's decision to wait until after the energy strategy was completed. So that is where we are at. We are waiting until that strategy is completed. We will see what recommendations they come up with. In the meantime, Mr. Speaker, we do have a system with the Power Corporation where the power corporation makes rate applications to the Public Utilities Board. They can apply for community-by-community rates, they can apply for a one-rate zone. They could apply for whatever they want, but in this case they were directed to apply for community-rate zones by Cabinet and that is what they have done. Certainly this does not prevent anyone from intervening and saying I don't agree with that approach, I would recommend that we do it this way instead. So people can intervene and there will be public hearings held. I don't know if it's too late to put their name on the list with the Public Utilities Board for interventions, but there is opportunity for all communities, all clients, to make interventions. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**ACTING SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Handley. Supplementary, Mr. Lafferty.

**Supplementary To Question 57-14(6): Need For A Single-Rate Zone For The NWT**

**MR. LAFFERTY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Why is the Cabinet not asking for a one-rate zone when they are here in the Northwest Territories representing all of the territories and to be fair to all territorial power users? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**ACTING SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. The honourable Member for Weledeh, Mr. Handley.

**Further Return To Question 57-14(6): Need For A Single-Rate Zone For The NWT**

**HON. JOE HANDLEY:** Mr. Speaker, I am, sure there are a lot of different views on which one is the fairest to individuals in one community or another community. I am sure we could have a lot of debate over one-zone versus community-by-community rate zones. The decision of Cabinet was to not change the present system we have now, which is community-rate zones until after we have this other document, the energy strategy, completed and before Cabinet. Cabinet said stay with the status quo and directed the Power Corporation to apply for community rate zones through the Public Utilities Board until we get that document. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**ACTING SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Handley. Item 7, oral questions. The honourable Member for Great Slave, Mr. Braden.

**Question 58-14(6): Increase To The National Child Tax Credit**

**MR. BRADEN:** Mr. Speaker, in the federal budget of a couple of days ago, there were changes announced to the National Child Benefit and I would like to ask the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment some questions related to this. The news from Ottawa tells us that the National Child Benefit supplement will increase \$150 per child in July of this year and \$185 in July of 2006, if I have my information correct. The question I would like to ask, Mr. Speaker, is will the Government of the Northwest Territories allow recipients to keep this cash directly or are we going to continue to scoop it and put it into other less focused child programs? Thank you.

**ACTING SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Braden. The honourable Minister of Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Ootes.

**Return To Question 58-14(6): Increase To The National Child Tax Credit**

**HON. JAKE OOTES:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it was a good announcement that was made in the budget and it provided money for the NCB with additional money in the NCBS, as Mr. Braden has stated of some \$150 additional in the first year and eventually to increase it to a total of \$3,243 for the first child. On the matter of the process of funding usage of that money, Mr. Speaker, it will go to the low income and working families. Right in the statement made by Mr. Handley...Manley, pardon me...

---Laughter

I had stated that it's for children to break through the welfare wall and take control of their future. So it says in the statement that it's for working families, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

**ACTING SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Ootes. Supplementary, Mr. Braden.

**Supplementary To Question 58-14(6): Increase To The National Child Tax Credit**

**MR. BRADEN:** The twin brother Finance Ministers here. Yes, it seems they have given some good news to Canadians and indeed Northerners. Perhaps I need some clarification, Mr. Speaker. It's my understanding that the program up to now is made available to individuals by the federal government, but the discretion is given to provinces and territories to take that money if they wish and redirect it to other child programs. That's what we do. Will this supplement be gathered up again to go into programs of our choice or will the cash stay with those families? Thank you.

**ACTING SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Braden. The honourable Minister of Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Ootes.

**Further Return To Question 58-14(6): Increase To The National Child Tax Credit**

**HON. JAKE OOTES:** Mr. Speaker, the budget came out on Tuesday. We didn't know what the conditions of the budget would be and we still have to look at the implications of that particular part of the announcement, Mr. Speaker.

**ACTING SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Ootes. Supplementary, Mr. Braden.

**Supplementary To Question 58-14(6): Increase To The National Child Tax Credit**

**MR. BRADEN:** Perhaps on a related aspect then, when this income is directed to income support clients, if they are going to be allowed to keep some of this, is it going to continue to be counted as income and, therefore, perhaps be deflected to other programs? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**ACTING SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Braden. The honourable Minister of Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Ootes.

**Further Return To Question 58-14(6): Increase To The National Child Tax Credit**

**HON. JAKE OOTES:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. That is what I meant. But to the honourable Member, we still have to analyze that and see how it will impact on us, how it will impact on the territory and how we can treat this particular money. It states right in the federal document, "to help working families," so I need clarification on that from our part as well.

**ACTING SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Ootes. Final supplementary, Mr. Braden.

**Supplementary To Question 58-14(6): Increase To The National Child Tax Credit**

**MR. BRADEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Fine. There is a lot of detail to this and I am certainly prepared to see some good analysis done. Just given that the increase is scheduled to take effect as of July of this year, that's not very much time. Would

the Minister be able to perhaps give us that information some time during this session? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**ACTING SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Braden. The honourable Minister of Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Ootes.

**Further Return To Question 58-14(6): Increase To The National Child Tax Credit**

**HON. JAKE OOTES:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We are somewhat dependent on the federal government supplying the information to us, so I can't guarantee what it will be, but we will certainly do our best to get as much information as we can and to resolve this particular question, Mr. Speaker. However, we are dependent on federal information to be provided to us. Thank you.

**ACTING SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Ootes. Item 7, oral questions. The honourable Member for Yellowknife South, Mr. Bell.

**Question 59-14(6): Costing Of Supplementary Health Benefits**

**MR. BELL:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is for the Minister of Health and Social Services. There's been a lot of back and forth, especially the last couple of days in Committee of the Whole, about supplementary health benefits and specifically the co-payments, which some people have to pay and others don't. First I would like to applaud the Minister for improving the third party insurance for Metis people. I think that's a great idea and a good first step, but I believe that one of the principles we should be looking to is universality. We certainly shouldn't be trying to generate revenue on the backs of an unfortunate few, Mr. Speaker. I think we need to make an informed decision on some realistic costed options. There has been a real shortage of accurate information from the department until now. Mr. Speaker, I would like to see a commitment from this Minister to come back with some costed options, including expanding this third party insurance coverage to everybody the next time we meet, Mr. Speaker. Is that too much to expect? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**ACTING SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Bell. The honourable Minister of Health and Social Services, Mr. Miltenberger.

**Return To Question 59-14(6): Costing Of Supplementary Health Benefits**

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the Member is correct. This has been an issue. There has been lots of back and forth over the last few days and as I indicated in Committee of the Whole, we are committed to coming forward and move our timelines up and attempt to honour the commitment and come forward with a package before this coming June of next year, not next year, this June. June 2003. Thank you.

**ACTING SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Supplementary, Mr. Bell.

**Supplementary To Question 59-14(6): Costing Of Supplementary Health Benefits**

**MR. BELL:** Well, I am glad to hear it will be prior to the election. Mr. Speaker, I guess what we are looking for is a commitment that the Minister is prepared to work with special programs and bring forward these accurately costed options to social programs before the next session so that we can have a discussion on them instead of just dropping them on us as we walk out the door at the end of next session. Will the Minister commit to that?

**ACTING SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Bell. The honourable Minister of Health and Social Services, Mr. Miltenberger.

**Further Return To Question 59-14(6): Costing Of Supplementary Health Benefits**

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am wounded to the quick by the thought that I would do something like that. Mr. Speaker, as I indicated, once again, during the debate of the health and social services budget, I am committed to continuing to work with the Social Programs committee. We will bring forward the information and we will keep closely engaged with the Social Programs committee, so there will be no surprises and by the time the June session rolls around, we should be able to have a very informed debate. Thank you.

**ACTING SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Item 6, oral questions. The honourable Member for Deh Cho, Mr. McLeod.

**Question 60-14(6): Self-Government Liaison Officer Proposal**

**MR. MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in my Member's statement, I indicated the NWT Association of Communities submitted a proposal to MACA for a position for self-government liaison officer. I am wondering if the Minister of MACA has had the opportunity to review the proposal. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**ACTING SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. McLeod. The honourable Minister of MACA, Mr. Steen.

**Return To Question 60-14(6): Self-Government Liaison Officer Proposal**

**HON. VINCE STEEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. That's correct, I have had time to review it. We received the initial proposal over a year ago and we took that to FMBS for funding, but it was one of the initiatives that was put on the back burner for the time being. We received the second proposal again from the NWTAC and we reconsidered the proposal. MACA supports the proposal. What we had to do was take the proposal to our colleagues in Aboriginal Affairs to ensure there were no problems with us funding this initiative. I believe that consultation is over with now and I have signed off on a submission to FMBS for the funding. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**ACTING SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Steen. Mr. McLeod.

**Supplementary To Question 60-14(6): Self-Government Liaison Officer Proposal**

**MR. MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the Minister for his answer. I am quite happy there is some movement on this issue. I would like to ask the Minister if he would commit to meeting with the NWT Association of Communities to discuss his proposal and explain where it's at. There seems to be quite a bit of confusion as to the response to this. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**ACTING SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. McLeod. The honourable Minister of MACA, Mr. Steen.

**Further Return To Question 60-14(6): Self-Government Liaison Officer Proposal**

**HON. VINCE STEEN:** Mr. Speaker, we have had ongoing discussions with the NWTAM proposal. What was necessary was for the NWTAC to meet with Aboriginal Affairs to ensure there were no problems with us funding that initiative. That has been done. So the submission is now before FMBS for the funding to pass it on to the NWTAC. Once I get that authority, it goes ahead.

**ACTING SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Steen. Supplementary, Mr. McLeod.

**Supplementary To Question 60-14(6): Self-Government Liaison Officer Proposal**

**MR. MCLEOD:** Mr. Speaker, it's not clear to me from the Minister's response. It seems this request has been rejected once before and I really don't know why. It's on the table for Cabinet to review once again, but I am not clear why it was rejected the first time. Could the Minister provide that information to us? Thank you.

**ACTING SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. McLeod. The honourable Minister of MACA, Mr. Steen.

**Further Return To Question 60-14(6): Self-Government Liaison Officer Proposal**

**HON. VINCE STEEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the initial proposal was never refused by FMBS. We were told we would have to find the funding from within and we didn't have that capacity. So what we are doing now is putting the request in to FMBS for the funding.

**ACTING SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Steen. Final supplementary, Mr. McLeod.

**Supplementary To Question 60-14(6): Self-Government Liaison Officer Proposal**

**MR. MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am glad the Minister has clarified that issue. I would like to ask the Minister if that position is put to him again by FMBS to fund the resources from within, will he commit to do so? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**ACTING SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. McLeod. The honourable Minister of MACA, Mr. Steen.

**Further Return To Question 60-14(6): Self-Government Liaison Officer Proposal**

**HON. VINCE STEEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I am reluctant to respond to this until I have had a response from FMBS as to whether I am going to be turned down.

---Laughter

**ACTING SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Minister. Item 7, oral questions. The honourable Member for Inuvik Boot Lake, Mr. Roland.

**Question 61-14(6): Employees' Mandatory Leave Pay Deductions**

**MR. ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is directed to the Minister responsible for the Financial Management Board Secretariat, following on my Member's statement regarding the treatment of government employees. It's my understanding that the union has signed off on the agreement, but it still doesn't sit right when you are an employee of this government and what the government does to balance out your pay cheque so you don't do without half a cheque come December, they've taken off the 1.92 percent and then balanced it out, but as a government we inform them, probably afterwards, that if you plan to leave this government prior to December 20<sup>th</sup>, I think is the date, you forfeit those dollars. So I would like to know from the Minister if he would consider changing that and allowing that money, which is rightly the employees' money to go back to them no matter what time they leave this government. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**ACTING SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Roland. The honourable Minister responsible for the FMB, Mr. Handley.

**Return To Question 61-14(6): Employees' Mandatory Leave Pay Deductions**

**HON. JOE HANDLEY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, that is an agreement we have with the union, so if we were going to change it, we would have to discuss it with the union. Mr. Speaker, let me explain why this happens. It's very simple. We have employees who leave the government during every month of the year. We have employees who join the government every month of the year. If we were to say to employees that whether or not you got a full pay cheque during those Donnie Days at Christmastime would depend on whether or not you put in a full year first, then it would be an administrative nightmare to try to adjust everybody's pay. Somebody would join in January and they would have a full year. Somebody would join at the end of June, they would have a half a year's salary and so on. We don't give them half their pay if they start halfway through the year, they get full pay as if they worked all year. For those who leave, in order to balance this all out, for those who leave early, it balances. If you leave early, you won't get your cheque. You can't have it one way, it's got to work both ways. So it balances out nicely. The union

agrees it's the fairest way of doing it. No, we would not change it without the union's concurrence and I would have real doubts because it would be a real nightmare to try to administer. Thank you.

**ACTING SPEAKER:** Thank you, Minister Handley. Supplementary, Mr. Roland.

**Supplementary To Question 61-14(6): Employees' Mandatory Leave Pay Deductions**

**MR. ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I think the Minister's nickname must be Scrooge, especially come Christmastime if anybody plans to leave the government.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Scrooge!

**MR. ROLAND:** Mr. Speaker, the Minister stated that it can be confusing, that in fact the money that is deducted off an employee's payroll is their money, they've earned it on their salary. So can't he look at some other way of doing it? We've managed to do it prorated for holiday pay. We don't keep that money away from individuals or is that the case, too? Thank you.

**ACTING SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Roland. The Minister responsible for the FMB, Mr. Handley.

**Further Return To Question 61-14(6): Employees' Mandatory Leave Pay Deductions**

**HON. JOE HANDLEY:** Mr. Speaker, this agreement, as I said, is an agreement with the union. Everybody gets a full pay cheque over the Christmas period. The person who starts in November doesn't only get one-twelfth of their pay cheque during these Donnie Days at Christmastime, they get a full pay cheque. When we negotiated the collective agreement back in '96, in agreement with the union, part of this compensation package for union employees would include this provision. So it's an agreement with the union. I can't change any particular piece of that collective agreement without the union agreeing to it. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**ACTING SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Handley. Supplementary, Mr. Roland.

**Supplementary To Question 61-14(6): Employees' Mandatory Leave Pay Deductions**

**MR. ROLAND:** Mr. Speaker, the recent years have shown that the turnover rate of our government employees can go up as high as 20 percent. So with that amount when you take that deduction off those people, is all the money put back into the upcoming months? We know that once an individual leaves, the government doesn't fill that position the very next day. So what are you doing with that money? Thank you.

**ACTING SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Roland. The honourable Minister responsible for the FMB, Mr. Handley.

**Further Return To Question 61-14(6): Employees' Mandatory Leave Pay Deductions**

**HON. JOE HANDLEY:** We use money in government to meet our obligations under the collective agreement as well as other program and services costs. So we meet the obligations as laid out in the collective agreement. We don't take that money and set it aside in a pool someplace to be used by other employees for the Donnie Days they have off at Christmastime. Mr. Speaker, again I just want to repeat this is in the collective agreement. The unions agreed with us that it was the fairest way to treat our public service members as a whole. While some individuals feel they've been wronged by this, I am sure the ones that join the government late in the year appreciate that they get an added benefit. So it's part of a whole compensation package. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**ACTING SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Handley. Final supplementary, Mr. Roland.

**Supplementary To Question 61-14(6): Employees' Mandatory Leave Pay Deductions**

**MR. ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I think I will have to pull our Hansard from today to find out because the Minister said when one employee leaves, before that, they take that money and use it for another employee, but he just told me they don't use it for other employees. So what is it? Mr. Speaker, there is up to a 20 percent turnaround. What kind of money would that lead up to and is it all going back to other employees? We know that in all of our communities, jobs lie empty for quite some time, so what is he doing with that money? Thank you.

**ACTING SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Roland. The honourable Minister responsible for the FMB, Mr. Handley.

**Further Return To Question 61-14(6): Employees' Mandatory Leave Pay Deductions**

**HON. JOE HANDLEY:** Mr. Speaker, the bottom line is we meet all of our payroll obligations. Someone may leave, for example, at a higher salary than we fill the position with. So we will have some savings in there. We may be paying one person \$80,000 and the next guy who comes in with no experience gets \$70,000. We don't put that money into some special account somewhere. We meet our obligations. If a department has a surplus at the end of the year, those surpluses come back into the consolidated revenue fund. The obligation we have as a government is to meet our obligations through the collective agreement. We don't set this money aside into some secret fund as the Member seems to think we might be doing. We don't do that. Thank you.

**ACTING SPEAKER:** Thank you. Item 7, oral questions. The honourable Member for Hay River South, Mrs. Groenewegen.

**Question 62-14(6): Substantiation For Hay River Hospital Renovation**

**MRS. GROENEWEGEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I have had a chance to look at the Hansard from yesterday's Committee of the Whole and I have a few

questions I would like to ask the Minister of Health and Social Services because I would like some clarification on some discussion we had late in the day yesterday with respect to capital projects and renovations to the Hay River Health Centre. Mr. Speaker, I quote from unedited Hansard: "I would just like to point out that I made a considerable effort to make sure that we moved Hay River up a year and that it stayed on the list." From this, Mr. Speaker, I take it - and I would like confirmation from the Minister - that he is committed to and believes that the project and renovation of the Hay River hospital has been well substantiated and has been moved forward by him and he supports it. Thank you.

**ACTING SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. The honourable Minister of Health and Social Services, Mr. Miltenberger.

**Return To Question 62-14(6): Substantiation For Hay River Hospital Renovation**

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, one of the first places I travelled to when I first became Minister was Hay River and confirmed the need for that project. It is in the capital plan. It's slated to go and it's been funded. Very clearly it's been supported every step of the way and that's why it's still there. Thank you.

**ACTING SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Supplementary, Mrs. Groenewegen.

**Supplementary To Question 62-14(6): Substantiation For Hay River Hospital Renovation**

**MRS. GROENEWEGEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate that commitment from the Minister and part of the reason why I was becoming a little bit concerned was because of some other comments that had been made by the Minister. He's talking about Fort Smith and Hay River and saying the projects are very similar and if the committee doesn't want them, that's fine. As I pointed out yesterday, there was no issue raised by the committee with the Hay River facility, so I would like the Minister to confirm for us today in the House that there is no linkage between the capital renovations in Hay River and Fort Smith. Thank you.

**ACTING SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. The honourable Minister of Health and Social Services, Mr. Miltenberger.

**Further Return To Question 62-14(6): Substantiation For Hay River Hospital Renovation**

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I am not sure what the Member means by linkage. They are both health and social services facilities, they are both capital projects scheduled to be done. They are both in their mid-life renovations and they are both in these main estimates in different years. Is one dependent upon the other? No. But they are definitely within the mandate of this department and are being brought forward as such. Thank you.

**ACTING SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Supplementary, Mrs. Groenewegen.

**Supplementary To Question 62-14(6): Substantiation For Hay River Hospital Renovation**

**MRS. GROENEWEGEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. With respect, Mr. Speaker, to the committee's concerns about the substantiation and some of the information that the committee was seeking about Fort Smith renovation, I certainly did get the impression from the Minister's remarks that somehow these two projects were related, interrelated, and if the committee couldn't support Fort Smith that they shouldn't support Hay River either. I would just like to ask again if there are difficulties with getting the renovations for Fort Smith, as that substantiation and explanation comes forward, I would like to know for sure that that is not going to negatively impact on the renovations for the Hay River hospital. Thank you.

**ACTING SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. The honourable Minister of Health and Social Services, Mr. Miltenberger.

**Further Return To Question 62-14(6): Substantiation For Hay River Hospital Renovation**

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the intent was to demonstrate that both projects are both worthwhile and both needed following the appropriate process. The Hay River project is slated to commence this year and will be well along by next year. The Fort Smith one follows subsequent to that. So there is no plan. The Hay River project should be complete before the Fort Smith one gets up and running. So we are not going to go and dismantle the Hay River facility if something happens to Fort Smith. The plan is to build and renovate as it's laid out in the capital plan. Hay River is to start this year and next year and be done hopefully on time and on budget. If all goes well, the Fort Smith renovations will follow subsequent to that. Thank you.

**ACTING SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Final supplementary, Mrs. Groenewegen.

**Supplementary To Question 62-14(6): Substantiation For Hay River Hospital Renovation**

**MRS. GROENEWEGEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I keep hearing the Minister refer to the Fort Smith health centre. I represent Hay River constituents. I want to know about the capital allocation and project for the Hay River hospital. Again, by the way the Minister phrases it and says Hay River should go ahead and then Fort Smith in the subsequent year, I am asking about Hay River. Is there a commitment on the part of this Minister irrespective of what happens in Fort Smith to keep the renovations for the Hay River hospital on track? Thank you.

**ACTING SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. The honourable Minister of Health and Social Services, Mr. Miltenberger.

**Further Return To Question 62-14(6): Substantiation For Hay River Hospital Renovation**

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I don't know how much clearer I can be. The capital plan is laid out. The budget has been approved. I can do a statutory declaration. The Hay River project is going to go ahead. This Assembly did the health and social services budget yesterday. It's going to be confirmed. We've made every effort to make sure it's in the budget, it's there. The funds will be voted and we will proceed as planned. I can't give greater assurance than that, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

**ACTING SPEAKER:** Thank you. Item 7, oral questions. The honourable Member for Tu Nedhe, Mr. Nitah.

**Question 63-14(6): Communities Targeted For Housing Development**

**MR. NITAH:** Mahsi cho, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Honourable Roger T. Allen, Minister responsible for the Housing Corporation. Mr. Speaker, as we all know, housing is a major, major issue in the Northwest Territories, the shortage of housing. Through the work of the Housing Corporation, studying the needs of housing in the Northwest Territories, the corporation has determined six communities that need to be targeted this fiscal year. The Minister, in his Minister's statement, mentioned those six communities. I would like to ask the Minister to reiterate those six communities once again, for the record. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**ACTING SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Nitah. The honourable Minister responsible for the NWT Housing Corporation, Mr. Allen.

**Return To Question 63-14(6): Communities Targeted For Housing Development**

**HON. ROGER ALLEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, I am prepared to advise the Member of those six communities, not necessarily in alphabetical order: Lutselk'e, Hay River Reserve, Fort Providence, Fort Good Hope, Wha Ti, and Fort Liard. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**ACTING SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Allen. Supplementary, Mr. Nitah.

**Supplementary To Question 63-14(6): Communities Targeted For Housing Development**

**MR. NITAH:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Those housing projects in those targeted communities alone are challenged every construction season. I would like to ask the Minister to commit in the House that the pads and access roads and power poles that will be needed to make sure that these houses are running in proper order will be done as soon as possible in the new construction year. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**ACTING SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Nitah. The honourable Minister responsible for the Housing Corporation, Mr. Allen.

**Further Return To Question 63-14(6): Communities Targeted For Housing Development**

**HON. ROGER ALLEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Our budget allocations remain fairly flexible so if there is funding allocated to that community, we are prepared to help those communities. We are prepared to help those communities develop lot development and other services that may be required. So we are fairly flexible in permitting that and we will continue to work with our program officers to ensure that that level of service is maintained. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**ACTING SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Allen. Supplementary, Mr. Nitah.

**Supplementary To Question 63-14(6): Communities Targeted For Housing Development**

**MR. NITAH:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, every season communities are challenged with the same problem, identifying lots. Most communities have community plans, but the lots seem to come in just before the construction season, resulting in major shifting of the houses resulting from the permafrost. I would like to ask the Minister to work with the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs to determine the long-term housing needs in those communities and develop those plans and develop the lots, so that the lots are ready for the short construction season. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**ACTING SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Nitah. The honourable Minister responsible for the Housing Corporation, Mr. Allen.

**Further Return To Question 63-14(6): Communities Targeted For Housing Development**

**HON. ROGER ALLEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am very pleased to make reference to that very question. We have been in the past collaborating with MACA to identify raw land that we may be able to develop for future housing needs, as this is a common occurrence in many small communities. We are also looking at some of the geotechnical work required to make sure those lots are suitable for future housing development. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**ACTING SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Allen. Final supplementary, Mr. Nitah.

**Supplementary To Question 63-14(6): Communities Targeted For Housing Development**

**MR. NITAH:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the Minister for his positive response. Mr. Speaker, the Minister has indicated that the Housing Corporation and Municipal and Community Affairs have been collaborating on this very issue. I would like to ask the Minister, if they could share any information that they have and if they will commit to share that information with the communities as soon as possible, so that the communities have a long-term plan and an idea of where the housing will be going and other community developments will be going. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**ACTING SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Nitah. The honourable Minister responsible for the Housing Corporation, Mr. Allen.

**Further Return To Question 63-14(6): Communities Targeted For Housing Development**

**HON. ROGER ALLEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, we will provide that level of information. I will speak only for the NWT Housing Corporation for our technical people to work with the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs to further those discussions and we will provide the sufficient detail that is required. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**ACTING SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Allen. Item 7, oral questions. The Member for Range Lake, Ms. Lee.

**Question 64-14(6): Territorial Health Care Fund**

**MS. LEE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question today is for the Deputy Premier and it's regarding the statement he made earlier about the results coming out of the Premier's meeting in Ottawa regarding health care funding. Mr. Speaker, I must say the last thing I did last night before going to sleep was to hope for good news this morning, and I was happy to hear about the extra money that will be coming our way when I heard it for the first time this morning. I appreciate that the details are not final yet, but I do think that we have reached a historical milestone in that a separate territorial health fund has been created. My question to the Deputy Premier is for more elaboration on what's meant by a floor of \$60 million to be allocated on the basis of \$20 million. Can you elaborate any more than what is stated there? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**ACTING SPEAKER:** Thank you, Ms. Lee Deputy Premier, Mr. Antoine.

**Return To Question 64-14(6): Territorial Health Care Fund**

**HON. JIM ANTOINE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I will try to elaborate with the information briefing that we got over the phone and the work our staff is trying to compile of this news. We know there is a commitment. It's a short-term one-time commitment of territorial funds of \$60 million to be divided equally between Nunavut, Northwest Territories and Yukon of \$20 million each. There are other details on how it's going to work but I don't have it at this point in time. The Premier is on his way back today. He should hopefully be in the House tomorrow. Thank you.

**ACTING SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Antoine. Supplementary, Ms. Lee.

**Supplementary To Question 64-14(6): Territorial Health Care Fund**

**MS. LEE:** I think I heard the Deputy Premier saying this is a short-term, one-time deal. So as of now we don't have dollar figures. Do we have certainty that this territorial fund that's been set up is for just one time? There is no question about it being continued any further than this year or one time? Thank you.

**ACTING SPEAKER:** Thank you, Ms. Lee. Deputy Premier, Mr. Antoine.

**Further Return To Question 64-14(6): Territorial Health Care Fund**

**HON. JIM ANTOINE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I just wanted to also add that there are other components to the meeting from this morning. I understand there is also a commitment to work towards a longer-term solution, which addresses health funding on a per capita basis. I think I said that. Also, there is commitment to ensure that the territories can access federal health reform funding as well. There is a commitment that solutions must be developed with the territorial Ministers and officials within a set time frame. What the Prime Minister is committed to do is to provide in the short-term real money that will provide real help to our constituents. We can't ignore that. We have accepted on good faith the assurance that more will be done in the future. But for the territorial fund itself, it's a one-time help to help the three territories and it's \$20 million a year. I think it's over a three-year period or you could use it upfront as well, that's my understanding. Oh, sorry, it's a five-year period. Thank you.

**ACTING SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Antoine. Supplementary, Ms. Lee.

**Supplementary To Question 64-14(6): Territorial Health Care Fund**

**MS. LEE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Then it appears that there is a lot more to be done in terms of following up on the commitment made by the Prime Minister. Mr. Speaker, I wonder if the Deputy Premier could elaborate on something else he said today on the same topic. Could he say any more about the fiscal challenges, the commitment on the part of the Prime Minister to work out the fiscal challenges faced by the territories by 2004? It's in the same statement. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**ACTING SPEAKER:** Thank you, Ms. Lee. Deputy Premier, Mr. Antoine.

**Further Return To Question 64-14(6): Territorial Health Care Fund**

**HON. JIM ANTOINE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, according to our Premier and the other two Premiers from Yukon and Nunavut, they view this as a start in addressing the needs of the territories in a number of ways, both in the short-term and long-term basis. Also, the Prime Minister indicated to them he understands there are many systematic problems in the way the territories receive federal funding and that the Prime Minister has indicated that he wants solutions to these problems, not only for health care but for other northern priorities like infrastructure, for example. Dealing with these systematic problems is especially important for us here in the Northwest Territories because of all the different resource developments that are occurring around us as we speak. So I think the Prime Minister has started a process here with us. We intend to work very closely, our officials, and the federal officials. They have assigned the top federal bureaucrat to oversee this on behalf of the Prime Minister, so for us it's a

good sign and we are going to take up the challenge to push this envelope further. Thank you.

**ACTING SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Antoine. Final supplementary, Ms. Lee.

**Supplementary To Question 64-14(6): Territorial Health Care Fund**

**MS. LEE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Given the work that still needs to be done to follow up on the agreements reached this morning and we are looking at deadlines on the territorial fund details by March 31, 2003, developing a process to address per capita funding by April 1, 2003 and another one until April 1, 2004, on fiscal challenges, I am wondering if the government has any plan on how to go about addressing this? Is there a task team, is there a senior bureaucrat that is going to sit in Ottawa? Will there be a Minister? Is it going to be brought to the House? Can he indicate any plan as to what we are preparing to do? Thank you.

**ACTING SPEAKER:** Thank you, Ms. Lee. Deputy Premier, Mr. Antoine.

**Further Return To Question 64-14(6): Territorial Health Care Fund**

**HON. JIM ANTOINE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, these are all the crucial questions we also have here in Cabinet. As you know, the Prime Minister and the Premiers' meeting just took place this morning. Our Premier is en route and as soon as he is back, we will tackle these same questions. The answer is it's too soon to come up with detailed replies to her questions. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**ACTING SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Antoine. Item 7, oral questions. The honourable Member for Yellowknife South, Mr. Bell.

**Question 65-14(6): Residential Alcohol And Drug Treatment For Youth**

**MR. BELL:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is for the Minister of Health and Social Services and it's about the need for residential youth treatment, Mr. Speaker. The recent Chalmers report, I think it was called State of the Emergency, had maybe 29 recommendations. We are in the process of trying to implement the first number of those and obviously we don't have enough money to implement them all. I can accept that. Certainly one of the major recommendations was a need for residential youth treatment. Given that we've just come into some new health care funding, I am hoping that this will be considered a top priority. I recognize we will get a better bang for our buck if we focus on programs and services first, as opposed to bricks and mortar. But at some point, we can't avoid the obvious fact that we need a residential youth treatment centre in the North. Will the Minister consider this with the new dollars flowing from Ottawa? Thank you.

**ACTING SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Bell. The honourable Minister of Health and Social Services, Mr. Miltenberger.

**Return To Question 65-14(6): Residential Alcohol And Drug Treatment For Youth**

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. First I would just like to point out that we have just increased the health budget by 13 percent and we are spending money, which is adding to our deficit, trying to run the programs and enhance them where possible. So the money we get from the federal government, it's not new money, it's just the federal government finally starting to pay part of their share and help cover some of the investments we have made. The funds that do come available will be added to the mix. We will be working with Cabinet, the Legislature, the Social Programs committee to look at the priorities, both in terms of program development and whatever bricks and mortar that may be urgently required. The Member knows, as do I, that there are some pressing areas, specifically youth, as well as the cognitively impaired. So our pressing list is still there, so if there is a potential to do any other things and someone's got the money, we will work together to do that.

**ACTING SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Supplementary, Mr. Bell.

**Supplementary To Question 65-14(6): Residential Alcohol And Drug Treatment For Youth**

**MR. BELL:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I think Members on this side of the House certainly applaud the investments this government has made in the area of health. They have been critically needed investments, but we need to do more, Mr. Speaker. I wonder specifically then how something gets on the capital plan. We know in education, if you hit 85 percent capacity, you are over that, you are to plan for building new schools. What do we do for alcohol and drug facilities because clearly we see a need here, but I am wondering how we decide that something gets on the capital plan? How bad does it have to get?

**ACTING SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Bell. The honourable Minister of Health and Social Services, Mr. Miltenberger.

**Further Return To Question 65-14(6): Residential Alcohol And Drug Treatment For Youth**

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in this particular area, as the Member knows from the briefing yesterday, there were 29 recommendations brought forward under the area of alcohol and drugs, mental health and family violence. We had to prioritize to spend the \$1.4 million that we were given. It was on the list. As we look at the upcoming business plan process, we will be looking at our priorities and how to adjust them. The Social Programs committee will be fully involved in that particular process. We know that we are going to have to keep adjusting. Some issues will become more pressing than others and we will adjust accordingly. Thank you.

**ACTING SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Supplementary, Mr. Bell.

**Supplementary To Question 65-14(6): Residential Alcohol And Drug Treatment For Youth**

**MR. BELL:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Until such time as we get adequate youth treatment facilities in the North, we will continue to ship our youth out to facilities in the south. What can the Minister offer to the families of these young people? How is he prepared to work with the families of these young people who are undergoing treatment in the south? Thank you.

**ACTING SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Bell. The honourable Minister of Health and Social Services, Mr. Miltenberger.

**Further Return To Question 65-14(6): Residential Alcohol And Drug Treatment For Youth**

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the plan is to continue to work with the youth and the families according to the practices and protocol that is currently in place and try to address the needs as they arise with the most appropriate placements that we can find with the resources we have available. Thank you.

**ACTING SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Final supplementary, Mr. Bell.

**Supplementary To Question 65-14(6): Residential Alcohol And Drug Treatment For Youth**

**MR. BELL:** One of the roles I think the department can play is certainly in heightening profile, especially around drug addiction. It's something that we, Mr. Speaker, tend not to talk a lot about. We know that until we started speaking about family violence, we were making no inroads and I think the same is true with drug abuse. When we finally start to acknowledge and recognize what is going on in our communities, I think we will certainly be some measure closer to dealing with it. Would the Minister not agree that the department has a critical role to play in addressing this issue by leading a dialogue and engaging community partners in the discussion of how we might meet these challenges. Thank you.

**ACTING SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Bell. The honourable Minister of Health and Social Services, Mr. Miltenberger.

**Further Return To Question 65-14(6): Residential Alcohol And Drug Treatment For Youth**

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, the Minister would agree.

**ACTING SPEAKER:** Thank you. Item 7, oral questions. Item 8, written questions. Item 9, returns to written questions. Item 10, replies to Opening Address. Item 11, replies to Budget Address. Mr. Roland.

**ITEM 11: REPLIES TO BUDGET ADDRESS****Mr. Roland's Reply**

**MR. ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, Members of the Assembly, I want to start with a previous response I made to a previous Budget Address. We, once again, have the opportunity to look at the big picture. Let's look at the fiscal situation that we first had opportunity to look at as Members of the 14<sup>th</sup> Legislative Assembly. We were told that 74 percent of our revenues come from the formula financing agreement, another seven percent in transfer payments comes from Ottawa as well. We are told if we try to raise our own revenues through taxes and such, there is little impact on our budget. An example is that an increase in taxes would net us 1.5 percent. Without new revenues, the next few years would be characterized by cuts and deficits.

What has changed so drastically that we are now in a position of surplus? Once again, when we first came in as Members of the 14<sup>th</sup> Assembly, the fiscal project stated that revenues of 2001-2002 would be \$726 million in expenditures and expenditures would be \$814 million. By year end, we would have a \$160 million deficit. We were also told that we would hit our borrowing limit by year end. I recall being told that only source revenues are a small portion of total revenues and increases have virtually no impact on our fiscal situation. Mr. Speaker, in the 2001-2002 Budget Address, Minister Handley states that our short-term fiscal position is significantly improved over last year's forecast from a \$313 million deficit to a \$23 million surplus and that 2001-2002 he is predicting a surplus of a couple of million dollars. He states from page 5 of his 2001-2002 address: "This turnaround is directly attributable to our successful efforts to constrain spending, coupled with a much more positive revenue picture."

Mr. Speaker, in the detail provided in the Budget Address document, this government spent \$47.62 million more than was spent by year end March 2000, \$47 million more and predicting \$16 million from April 1<sup>st</sup> to March 2002. This, Mr. Speaker, is considered constraint spending?

Mr. Speaker, this one item I see as a contributing factor of our remarkable turnaround is the fact that we see corporate taxes as never seen before in the NWT. Mr. Speaker, corporate taxes jumped from \$7.6 million in 1999-2000 to \$102 million in this fiscal year. The Minister goes on to predict another banner year of 2001-2002, \$116 million in corporate taxes. If this is the case, why do we need fee increases?

I do recall a statement when we first became aware of an increase in corporate tax revenues, the Minister stating that this was a one-time anomaly. Now we are budgeting it to grow and we are basing our expenditures on it. Mr. Speaker, just over a year ago we were presented with a gloomy picture. We were told that trying to raise revenues from our own sources through fees was not a good idea. Now we are making a high strategy on it. Why such a change in direction? Mr. Speaker, it is obvious to me that our need for a resource revenue sharing agreement will become critical as we set sail for another year in the Good Ship NWT.

Mr. Speaker, I refer to the 2001-2002 budget as a star gazer's budget. I had hoped that Minister Handley's stars were not just someone hanging Christmas lights in the distance. With the information now provided in this Budget Address, it appears that the stars were just late New Year's fireworks going off, as the Minister of Finance has now revised those earlier expectations, expectations that Members of this Assembly bought into. Things were indeed looking rather good by the end of the year 2001-2002. As we were told, we were in a surplus situation. A surplus of \$120 million, to be exact. We were told that we needed to keep up with the plan to spend our way through the months to come. The 2002-2003 update shows how much we spent trying to keep up with the ever growing economy as we were now looking at a \$106 million deficit. Mr. Speaker, that's a whopping \$226 million turnaround.

The finance Minister goes on to state that the 2003-2004 outlook will have the next government looking at total debt of \$214 million. Mr. Speaker, it appears that the Minister has gone to the well once too often as there seems to be no more water in the well.

---Interjection

**MR. ROLAND:** He hopes. In our thirst to show how much we can do as a government, we have almost bankrupt the government. Mr. Speaker, I went back to our first official budget as a 14<sup>th</sup> Legislative Assembly. In that Budget Address, on Page 32, the summary of net debt and an estimated borrowing capacity is given. It shows revised estimates for 1999-2000, an accumulated cash deficit position of \$70.328 million. In this year's budget, the numbers show and state, by the end of the fiscal year 2003-04, the next government will be looking at a cash deficit of \$85.264 million. Mr. Speaker, in comparing what we've done as a government when we look at the documents, and I look at the 2000-2001 Budget Address, page 25, summary of operations expense by department, total operations expense shows for 2000-2001, planned expenditures worth \$756.835 million. Mr. Speaker, in this Budget Address for 2003-04, in appendix B-15, we have a summary of operation expenditures by department, total operational expenditures for 2003 is scheduled to be \$923.991 million. Mr. Speaker, that is a growth of over \$167 million dollars in O and M increase alone. With that kind of money, we should have been able to pave a few streets with gold.

Mr. Speaker, we have tried to keep pace with the growing economy. We have done it with taxpayers' dollars but, Mr. Speaker, we have left ourselves little room to be able to grow. In fact, as we are leaving this government, the Finance Minister stated we are leaving it better than we found it. How much better than we found it, I'm not sure, as the numbers are awfully close. In fact, because we have increased spending on O and M by over \$160 million in those years, we have built an expectation by our residents that they are going to have a certain level of dollars and programs and services. That will quickly eat away at any dollars that we might receive, even the \$20 million dollars that has been announced today that we might get in special funding. Hopefully, as the details are worked out, we will find out that we'll get many millions more than that because that is what we are going to need, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, all these expenditures, increased expenditures, that we have approved in this House, and that is why I say Members of this Assembly should have been brought into the picture that was being presented because it looked like it was going to be good for a long time to come but in one year, in the short time, we found ourselves going to a turnaround of \$226 million from a surplus of \$120 million to a deficit of \$106 million, and the year is not over yet. Wait till we see the next supplementary appropriation, Mr. Speaker. How much more will we add to that? All this, Mr. Speaker, in the name of For A Better Tomorrow. I think we should have called it For a Better Today Because Tomorrow Never Comes. I can only hope the assumptions used in the forecast of what this fiscal year will bring turn out to be as good as they are predicting.

Mr. Speaker, we know that budgets are built on assumptions and the finance Minister said he would base his on fairly conservative figures but there are still a number of things that have to come our way that can directly impact on how things will proceed from here. How the government will look in its last days, what we can give to the people of the Northwest Territories and what will be our real lasting legacy. Will it be that the next government that comes into place will be able to do nothing but look at reductions in services and wages again?

I hope not. I hope that we get more banner years of corporate taxes. I hope that the federal government will come to the table but I can recall in the earliest days of our Assembly when we were told that royalty revenue sharing was going to be had and we will get money from the federal government. That was three years ago, Mr. Speaker. We are still negotiating and nowhere close to seeing any cheques being written on the basis of royalty revenues.

Mr. Speaker, I don't want to end on a totally negative note, there have been many positives that have been accomplished. We have finally closed the issue of pay equity. We have had signoff on that. I wonder how much that cost us over the many years that we fought with the union on that. If we had settled much earlier, how many millions of dollars we might have been able to save, but that was brought to a close at least during this government. Mr. Speaker, there are again other programs and services that we have enhanced as a government. I say enhanced because we've never really changed our government programs and services. We've altered them from time to time. We've changed criteria from time to time but it has been a long time since any department has had to go back and ask itself why it runs a certain program and doesn't need the dollars it has in its budget to run that program. All we do is add on top of it.

I think it is time to go back to the drawing board as a government. Look into the future and say what is this government going to look like, especially when we tie on self-government and the tables that are happening right now. What is this government's role going to be if we are going to negotiate out the responsibilities and authorities to regional self-governments. Then I think we won't be much more than what the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs is to the Government of the Northwest Territories right now. We will have to look at those roles and we will have to ensure that we set up the right monitoring processes to ensure that the dollars being spent on behalf of residents are going to meet the requirements intended.

Mr. Speaker, in closing, hopefully, the well will start to fill once again so that when the finance Minister goes to dump his bucket in, he will find some water there, or in our case, money that he can continue on with expenditures and programs. But I've seen from one hand a very difficult situation that we have come in, go to the very high and look at a very good budget when we have had surpluses. In a matter of a three-year cycle, we are now once again looking at a debt wall that is very close and again, I say, we are not done with our term as Members of the 14<sup>th</sup> Legislative Assembly. I guess one thing I can say in closing is maybe we better start praying again for those one-time anomalies because we need them and the Lord knows it. Thank you.

---Applause

**ACTING SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Roland. Item 11, replies to the Budget Address. Item 12, petitions. Item 13, reports of committees on the review of bills. Item 14, tabling of documents. The honourable Member for Nahendeh, Mr. Antoine.

#### ITEM 14: TABLING OF DOCUMENTS

##### **Tabled Document 17-14(6): Ministerial Travel Report For The Period April 1, 2002 to September 30, 2002**

**HON. JIM ANTOINE:** Mr. Speaker, I wish to table the following document entitled, Minister's Travel Report for the Period of April 1, 2002 to September 30, 2002. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

**ACTING SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Antoine. Item 14, tabling of documents, Mr. Lafferty.

##### **Tabled Document 18-14(6): Photographs Of Highway No. 3 Between Rae And Yellowknife**

**MR. LAFFERTY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to table a document, I've got seven pictures of Highway No. 3 taken on Tuesday, the 18<sup>th</sup> and I'm going to say the 19<sup>th</sup>. Thank you.

---Applause

**ACTING SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. Item 14, tabling of documents, Mr. Dent.

##### **Tabled Document 19-14(6): AOC Report On The Review Of The 2003-2006 Departmental Business Plans**

**MR. DENT:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I wish to table the report of the Standing Committee on Accountability and Oversight on our Review of the 2003-2006 Business Plans. Mr. Speaker, this report contains the committee's views for the time of review of the business held September 16<sup>th</sup> to the 27<sup>th</sup>, 2002. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**ACTING SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Dent. Item 4, tabling of documents, honourable Member for Boot Lake, Mr. Roland.

**Tabled Document 20-14(6): GED Report On The Review Of The 2003-2006 Departmental Business Plans**

**MR. ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to table the report of the Standing Committee on Governance and Economic Development on a Review of the 2003-2006 Business Plans. Mr. Speaker, this report contains the committee's views at the time of review of the business held September 16<sup>th</sup> to the 27<sup>th</sup>, 2002. Thank you.

**ACTING SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Roland. Tabling of documents, the honourable Member for Yellowknife South, Mr. Bell.

**Tabled Document 21-14(6): Social Programs Report On The Review Of The 2003-2006 Departmental Business Plans**

**MR. BELL:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I wish to table the report of the Standing Committee on Social Programs on a Review of the 2003-2006 Business Plans. Mr. Speaker, this report contains the committee's views for the time of review of the business held September 16<sup>th</sup> to the 27<sup>th</sup>, 2002. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**ACTING SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Bell. Item 14, tabling of documents. Item 15, notices of motion. The honourable Member for Deh Cho, Mr. McLeod.

**ITEM 15: NOTICES OF MOTION**

**Motion 3-14(6): Extension Of Mandate Of The Special Joint Committee On Non-Tax-Based Community Affairs**

**MR. MCLEOD:** Mr. Speaker, I give notice that on Monday, February 24<sup>th</sup>, 2003, I will move the following motion, seconded by the honourable Member for North Slave, that the special joint committee shall continue as a special committee of the Legislative Assembly until it presents its final report to the House in June, 2003 and further, that it shall continue under all other terms or provisions as established by Motion 6-14(5). Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**ACTING SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Notices of motion, the honourable Member for Frame Lake, Mr. Dent.

**Motion 4-14(6): Setting Of Sitting Hours By Speaker**

**MR. DENT:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I give notice that on Monday, February 24<sup>th</sup>, 2003, I will move the following motion:

I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Weledeh, that the Speaker be authorized to set such sitting hours as the Speaker, after consultation, deems fit to assist with the business before the House. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**ACTING SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Dent. Item 15, notices of motion. Item 16, notices of motions for first reading of bills. Item 17, motions. Item 18, first reading of bills. Item 19, second reading of bills. Item 20, consideration in Committee of

the Whole of bills and other matters: Bill 3, Bill 6, Bill 7, Bill 8, committee reports 3-14(6), 4-14(6) and 5-14(6), with Mr. Lafferty in the chair.

**ITEM 20: CONSIDERATION IN COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE OF BILLS AND OTHER MATTERS**

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty):** Thank you. The committee is considering Bill 3, Committee Report 3-14(6), Committee Report 4-14(6) and Committee Report 5-14(6). What is the wish of the committee? Mr. Dent.

**MR. DENT:** Mr. Chairman, I'd like to recommend the committee continue consideration of Bill 3 and committee reports 3-14(6), 4-14(6) and 5-14(6) concurrently, specifically to deal, first of all, with the budget of the Department of MACA.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty):** Thank you. Does the committee agree?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**Bill 3: Appropriation Act, 2003-2004**

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty):** At this time we'll take a break.

---SHORT RECESS

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty):** In the Committee of the Whole we are considering Municipal and Community Affairs. I'd like to ask the Minister if he'd like to invite in his witnesses.

**HON. VINCE STEEN:** Yes, I do.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty):** Can the Sergeant-at-Arms please escort in the witnesses, please.

We are continuing the general comments, and I'd like the Minister to introduce his witnesses, please.

**Department Of Municipal And Community Affairs**

**HON. VINCE STEEN:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, on my right is Debbie DeLancey, deputy minister of Municipal and Community Affairs, and on my right is Sheila Bassi-Kellett, director of corporate affairs.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty):** Thank you. General comments. Mr. Roland.

**General Comments**

**MR. ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, the committee highlighted in its report a couple of areas of concern, and I'd just like to put out some information and time lines as to how things had evolved from a committee perspective in the area of main street paving for non-tax-based communities. During business plan review it had come up that the department was going to initiate the actions of a motion in the House. Upon further request for information, from the pen

of Minister Handley as Government House Leader, he forwarded information to our committee. In that information, I believe it was October, when we were given information as to what communities would be selected for the initial programs for paving for main streets. The committee was given the communities' list and maps attached. It was stated it was preliminary. The communities were Fort Resolution, Fort Liard, Fort Providence, Fort McPherson and Rae-Edzo, and that the paving style would be chipsealing. It wasn't until later on that the committee became aware that Tuktoyaktuk was on the list that was forwarded to us by the department near the end of our review of their draft main estimates. That's when it became a concern to Members. At no point during the review was the committee made aware that Cabinet had extended the mandate or the motion that was done in the House, that they extended the mandate to include other communities. The way the committee was operating was on the previous information, that it was fitting with exactly what the motion was in the House and that's the way the committee had approached it. When we received the further information of what communities would be funded during this fiscal year, we took our concerns up to the regular Members at AOC, and a letter was sent to Cabinet as to the concerns of regular Members about the funding going ahead for the community, which didn't fit the criteria as the committee had initially seen it.

It was after that, we were given the letter from Minister Handley that stated that in fact Cabinet had extended the program that now made the community of Tuktoyaktuk eligible for this funding. It's under the pretense, Mr. Chairman, that committee raised its concerns and put it in its report about the flow of information that we had and the understanding that committee had of the program and the criteria that was to be available. So I just wanted to put that on record so that Members and the Minister and his staff are aware from what side the committee was coming to when we reviewed the report, as well as for other Members of this House. It was an area of concern, and there still is some concern and there might be questions as we go through detail, as to what criteria, what type of crushing and other things that are going on at this point, Mr. Chairman. That would be all my general comments for now. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty):** Thank you. Minister Steen.

**HON. VINCE STEEN:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, there is obviously some need for clarification there in how the changes came into effect in regard to which communities would be eligible for the chipsealing program. Up until this fall, the plan was to follow the motion that was put forward by the recommendation of Committee of the Whole, and it was to apply to the five major communities that were identified.

However, when we took the program to FMB, we then had to justify it within the criteria that is established in the capital planning process. We had to show what it is; whether it's a political wish, whether it's a people need, whether it's related to health in order to justify the expenditures and the program. We indicated to FMB that this was a people need, as well as health related, because it was the only form of dust control the department has now. That's because we have to phase out calcium chloride in the near future. At the present time, we fund some communities, or almost all communities in the Territories, small ones, with some calcium chloride funding.

Whether they use it or not is up to them. We don't ask them to account for this expenditure. Some communities use it, some don't, for calcium chloride.

The results of that was that FMB said that it has to then apply to all those communities where we could possibly reach, either through the winter road as well as highways or even barging if necessary. But it would have to be in relation to Department of Transportation activities, otherwise we couldn't afford to do it. We initially put forward a figure of roughly \$3 million to do those jobs. To stay within that figure over five years was going to be very, very challenging if we went and implemented a program without taking into consideration Transportation equipment and their activities.

Therefore, we came back. We had to take this all back to the drawing board with Transportation, and asked Transportation where their equipment would be and what activities they'd be undertaking. Tuk got into the picture because Transportation was undertaking a major crushing project in Tuk, which was related to resurfacing of the runway. This was already a program underway. As a matter of fact, I believe Tuk was the last of four communities that Transportation was resurfacing their runway. Then the crusher would move out of the Beaufort. This is Transportation's own crusher.

Because Transportation's crushing program was taking place, we then wanted to take advantage of the program and the crushing. I'm sure Members know that Tuk has no gravel. The closest crushable gravel is about a 60-mile haul, and that's what makes it very expensive. The type of crusher Transportation uses is not the normal type for highway crushing.

With those things in mind, we had to draw up a new schedule and Tuk was shown, when we passed out the early draft of the communities that we would be applying the program to the first year, it was shown as Tuk receiving approximately \$600,000 for crushing and stock piling. I think there's some misunderstanding here that Tuk was going to get paving in the first year as well. There's no possibility Tuk would get paving at the same time as the crushing and stock piling, because Transportation doesn't have a chipsealer in Tuk. It would have to wait. As a matter of fact, on the sheet that we presented, Tuk was in the years 2006-2007, I believe, for chipsealing. That's the way it was laid out.

Even though the committee wrote to us and asked us to reconsider this, it was not possible for us to redo Tuk at a later date because once the crusher moves out of Tuk, the option to haul crush material into Tuk brings the price from up to \$80 a metre. That would be from hauling from Inuvik because that's the only option we have. That's one of the major factors driving why Tuk was chosen the first year, and why we're doing the project in the first year in Tuk.

Mr. Chairman, I took a revised schedule to FMB for the crushing program just recently, and I believe it's available if the committee would like to see the rescheduling of the communities and which communities have already had chipsealing done. We have four communities now that have chipsealing; two of them under Transportation programs, one under their own initiative, and one as a pilot project for MACA. The one MACA did as a pilot project was while Transportation

was chipsealing the road into Detah, we asked that they chipseal the main street into Detah as a pilot project because the program was already taking place there. I'm quite happy to say we managed to do it at a very reasonable rate of \$12,500 - something like that -- to chipseal that short stretch of street in Detah.

What we're now doing is working with the communities to see what they have to have in place in order to maintain the chipseal without damaging it through maintenance of roads. So we're working with the communities now to see what they have to do in order to maintain the chipseal.

For your information, Mr. Chairman, Fort Liard chipsealed their own road -- I believe it was somewhere around early fall, around Labour Day, something like that -- at their own cost, because there was a chipsealing program on the highway at that time. They took on the cost themselves and they chipsealed their own road.

Rae and the Hay River Reserve are chipsealed under Transportation programs, because they're considered part of the highway. So MACA doesn't have to make any expenditures in those communities at this time. We may have to respond in some form to Fort Liard requesting reimbursement now that the program is in place, but we can deal with that in future. I hope I clarified how we got Tuk into this picture, Mr. Chairman. But like I said, I have amended schedules if the committee wants to see them.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty):** Thank you, Minister Steen. General comments. Mr. McLeod.

**MR. MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm glad the Minister is taking some time to lay out some of the initiatives to deal with the dust problem in our communities. It's been an ongoing problem. We've tried to address it with the calcium, however, the funding there is only for one street or the main street. It's never enough and it's going to continue to be a problem. So I'm hoping that chipseal will be something that will be eventually put on all the streets in the communities.

But as a Member of the GED, I'd like to see the amended schedule because I'm not clear from the information we got as to what order we'll be progressing in. I was not clear that Tuk was going to be part of the program. My understanding was that Fort Providence was going to do prep work this year, so that's the information I relayed. Now if that's changed, I'd certainly like to get a copy of that. I think it will be useful information, and we could avoid some of the confusion if we could see what the formula is for determining what communities are going to get chipsealed in what order over the next years. It's something that all the small communities need and all the small communities want. So we need to be able to explain to them the process of qualifying.

The Minister has indicated that Tuk is going to have a lot of gravel crushing that has to be done. We've been in that situation for many, many years, and we've had to utilize rejected gravel, gravel that didn't qualify as road-worthy, or gravel good enough to use on a road because of the mixture of dirt in it. If you walk in some of these smaller communities, you'll see a lot of the communities are in that situation. There's

so much mud in the mixing of the gravel, it's really not a gravel. We couldn't consider it a gravel. It sticks to your tires and sticks to your shoes. It has really caused a lot of problems, because we need to use that gravel source for house pads, driveways, and a lot of the airports need it. So I'm glad, that at least in my riding, we've seen some crushing done over this last while and we'll do alright for awhile. However, I'm really concerned that it has to be an ongoing process. There has to be a system in place that addresses it. We can't be left in a situation where we don't have the material to do anymore development.

I was also quite happy to see that there was an increase to the smaller communities in terms of budgeted expenditures. But if you look at it and start to calculate it out, a lot of it is for water and sewer. That really points that there is a need out there that hasn't been addressed for some time. Water and sewer, water quality is something that we have to, on an ongoing basis, make sure that it's looked after. I think there's been some neglect in the last number of years, and we're really trying to play catch-up now. So even though it looks like a lot more money flowing to the smaller communities, it's something that maybe should have been done some time ago.

I also want to voice my concern regarding emergency measures in the small communities. Emergency measures is something that is the responsibility of this government, of MACA, and I'm not satisfied that all the communities have emergency measures plans in place and they're all familiar and updated to be utilized in time of tragedy or emergency. All the communities that I represent are on the highway system. In most cases, there's only one road leading out of the community. If it was for some reason blocked by a vehicle accident or a chemical tanker truck or fire, we have to be satisfied that we have alternate routes.

We also need to ensure that we have some type of transportation system so we could utilize helicopters, we could utilize an aircraft landing in the community. In three of the communities that I represent, three out of the four, there is no real system in place. We had the Minister come down, and I certainly appreciate his consideration to look at widening a portion of the road in Kakisa so that in the event of an emergency, we could land a plane there. Other than that, we don't have anywhere that we could bring in a helicopter. We probably could use the ball diamond in most cases, but there should be a system in place that everyone is satisfied with.

We've raised it as part of a theme day and part of AOC and also GED, our dissatisfaction with the system for capital planning that was adopted a couple years ago. For two or three years now we've been utilizing this system, and for a number of years there's really been no attention paid to what was needed and required in communities because they couldn't meet the criteria. So I think we saw a lot of projects that should have been in place go by the wayside. To add and compound the problem, in the smaller communities at the regional level there's always quite a few vacancies and we've had to live with that for quite a number of years now, and it has resulted in a lot of discussion at the community level with the councils to have capital planning. That's something that this government has to ensure is being done on an ongoing basis. I know when I was in the position of mayor, there was really nobody in the system. We requested it for four years in a row

to have somebody come in and meet with us and review the capital planning process and what was in the capital plan, and we couldn't attract anybody because there was nobody. There were so many vacancies at the regional level.

I mentioned today a concern that was raised to me by the Association of Municipalities. It has also been raised to me by individual communities in my riding, that there is a lot of activity happening in the area of self-government, land claims, land management, land withdrawals and that whole area of aboriginal groups taking control over some of their decision-making. There are communities that are kind of left out of the loop. At some of the meetings that I've had, it's been raised to me that there is a lack of information flowing. I think this government has to have somebody in place or an avenue where we can bring people into the communities to explain what is happening in their immediate area, especially in communities that have a small aboriginal population.

A couple more things. I'm still concerned that as part of the emergency measures, that we don't have community protection plans for forest fires. What was once considered to be a comprehensive community protection plan to deal with forest fires, fire breaks, fire guards, tree thinning and all that was going to take place, it seems to be something that has been rejected or gone by the wayside. When community protection plans are discussed now, we have one lonely renewable resources officer that takes a couple pictures and says, well, maybe we should trim a few branches off that tree. We no longer have a community comprehensive plan.

If you look at some of the communities in my riding, they've been targeted as high risk. They have a lot of flammable material that surrounds the community. Even some of the ferry crossings; at Dory Point there are houses there, there's a government base there. It's all huge timber in there that is very high risk.

I was asked to commend the government that they did a good job at looking at including some recreation facilities, such as swimming pools. A lot of the communities are built and constructed that are situated along the banks of rivers and lakes. The riverside pool system or the lakeside pool program doesn't work. We've had them in two of the communities, in Fort Providence and on the Hay River Reserve. Very few of the children want to go to swim. Even the ones who want to, their parents won't let them. It's dangerous, it's not a healthy situation, and there's real concern. So I'm very happy that under MACA, as part of the capital planning, it qualifies. I think we have to ensure that we put proper, safe pools in all of the communities in the North. I've seen some of the pools that the communities have tried to build themselves. They're very unsafe and the whole structure is probably questionable.

I also want to mention, Mr. Chairman, that there are a number of communities that we consider communities that are not recognized by this government: Ndilo, West Point, and even the reserve. For a lot of funding capital projects that they should qualify for they don't get. They're really left out in the cold on their own because of their situation, because of their location. In many instances, the communities that I refer to are older and have been located there longer than the newer, modern community that has grown right alongside of it. Yet these are the ones that are ignored. They don't get a core fund

of any kind in a lot of cases, and they're really suffering. We should have been looking at a mechanism to include them. It's very difficult, especially for the community of the Hay River Reserve in my riding, to talk about a number of different things -- sewage lagoons and all these things -- because we have a larger, modern community right next door.

So I wanted to raise those things and raise my concerns with them, and ask if the Minister would respond to some of these issues. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty):** Thank you. Minister Steen.

**HON. VINCE STEEN:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, first of all in an effort to respond here, I could pass out copies of this revised implementation schedule for main street chipsealing in non-tax-based communities. I believe I may have enough copies here. But it would give an indication of where we're planning to work within the next five years.

One important point I should point out, Mr. Chairman, is that the department doesn't think that this program is going to stop all of a sudden with the change of government or whatever, because we don't really have another option for dust control. If we phase out calcium chloride like we're supposed to, we will have to come up with another form. This is basically what we're replacing.

The schedule you're going to see does not include a certain number of communities in the first five years, because those are communities that would take an extreme effort on the part of either Transportation's and the department in order to reach them. They're neither on the barge system or, like for instance Colville Lake, although it's on the winter road now and some of the communities in the North Slave, in order to bring chipsealing into those communities it would require tying up the equipment for a year mainly because the chipsealing can only be done with a certain temperature, and that's in the middle of the summer when it's the hottest time. So we don't really have a choice of when we can do this work. It has to be done at certain times and at a certain temperature. That's one of the governing factors.

The other factors, like I said earlier, would rely on Transportation taking on some other programs within the area in order to bring down the cost. For instance, if they have road resurfacing or runway resurfacing, that then gives us opportunity for crush material. We have to have crush material of a certain size to use. We just can't use just ordinary pit run or material that's bigger than 16 millimeters. That's one of the governing factors.

If you look at the layout, the old schedule we had showed only \$800,000 for the first year, and a carry over in the next year of \$200,000, which is 2004-2005. This schedule is showing it all in the years it's supposed to happen. So we've done another thing, and that's in an effort to assure that there's some work in every riding. We've included the Sahtu for \$100,000 worth of crush material in 2003-2004 for stockpiling. We increased Fort McPherson's stock piling and crush by \$100,000 and we've reduced Tuktoyaktuk by \$50,000. The engineers tell us that there's really no other option. We can't reduce that anymore or the project won't be viable. So that's what we've done there.

But what we've done; if you have the old schedule, you can see the differences that Fort McPherson was reduced in 2004-2005, and we've included Good Hope for crush and stockpile in the second 2004-2005, \$315,000. Another change in the first year, and I believe it's in the second year as well, is that we've included the engineering costs in those areas where there are still engineering needs. Like assessment and design, Fort Providence shows \$20,000 for engineering. But they're probably the first community that's going to be chipsealed under this program, in 2005-2006. The chipsealing further down in the Mackenzie Delta and Beaufort won't happen until 2006-2007.

So this allows the communities to prepare themselves for chipsealing because in some communities where it will be necessary to establish by-laws to prevent the use of lugs and chains on chipseal roads, most communities don't have that by-law right now. It will also allow them time to have training for the use of chipseal and the repairing of chipseal.

Now if I may respond to another point the Member brought up, and that's the requirement for gravel in the communities. MACA and Public Works are both working out a program, and we're doing an assessment in the communities. I believe some of the communities have already been assessed as to what their needs are in relation to gravel. But once we've done that, we can put together a program that we can take to FMB for supplying gravel to those communities that need it.

In relation to emergency measures plan, I can commit to having the emergency measures people draw up a schedule that would show which communities they'll be doing to assess, and I suppose doing an inspection in the communities as to what they have for emergency measures plan, and work with the community to put together what their future needs are. I think that's a good idea that the Member put forward.

The capital planning process; I believe both myself and the Finance Minister responded to questions in the House recently as to the capital planning process that we're planning to undertake now in regards to consultations with communities and then coming up with a final report on the capital planning process, and involve the communities in this capital planning process. I fully agree with the Member that in the past we had a system where communities got used to departments coming in and going over their capital plan needs on a yearly basis. That was replaced with MACA being responsible to go to all the communities on behalf of all the departments, but it didn't quite work out. So I agree with the Member, that we have to take a different process. I believe the Finance Minister outlined that process. It will involve communities sitting down with the department and identifying their needs.

In regards to staff vacancies in the South Mackenzie, I'm happy to say that we're in the process of advertising for a senior position of regional superintendent for the South Slave. We've now repositioned the person who was in the South Slave. We've put them in the North Slave, so we're advertising now for a position in the South Slave. I don't have the information when this closes. I'm told it closes tomorrow, so we should be making a decision shortly.

In regard to the NWTAC's request for funding, I believe I responded to that in the House today, but the department has been working with the agency for over a year now on this. We definitely agree with them that there's a need for more information into the communities. The only question we had was how they were going to go about getting this. We had to have them work with and consult with Aboriginal Affairs as to how they're going to be involved at the negotiating table, if at all, what the process would be that they would use to get their information, and how do they see themselves distributing this information to the communities without upsetting Aboriginal Affairs or the aboriginal groups. So I think that process is over. I took the proposal again back to FMB for funding, and I'm hoping that this time it will be approved.

In regards to fire guards around the communities, I'm well aware that it's been a while since these fire guards have been upgraded, and I'm prepared to sit down with RWED and see what kind of program they could come up with that would have these fire guards redone around these bush communities. I don't need them in my riding, but I understand the concern of the Members. I understand from talking with the department that we've already had some talks with RWED on the fire guards.

In regards to smaller communities and their ability to receive program funding, I'm told that Ndilo, for instance, is funded by Indian Affairs and they have a deal with the city as to services for that particular community, although it's not recognized as a community as such. I think, Mr. Chairman, if I may, I will ask my deputy if she could elaborate just a little on the small communities.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty):** Thank you. Ms. DeLancey.

**MS. DELANCEY:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, the Minister is correct. Some of these smaller communities, if they are band communities, do have access to funding outside MACA funding. Ndilo is one example. But in most cases, the larger tax-based municipality is funded to provide services to those communities. So for example in Yellowknife, our formula funding to Yellowknife, part of it is population based and part of it is infrastructure based, and that calculation takes into consideration the population and the infrastructure in Ndilo. So until such time as those communities take on a different status, they are receiving services through the larger tax-based municipalities with which they're associated. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty):** Thank you. General comments. Mr. Nitah.

**MR. NITAH:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, on the fire guard issue, my communities are growing into where the fire guards used to be, so there's definitely a need for it. One thing that's for sure here, Mr. Chairman, is that the fire guards... A lot of times, Mr. Chairman, when Members from smaller communities argue for programs and services to be delivered in communities, it seems that the Minister's riding gets the benefit from those arguments first. This fire guard is one area we're guaranteed that the Minister won't take first.

Which leads me to the schedule for the main street chipsealing for dust control for health purposes, Mr. Chairman. Mr.

Chairman, I was the Member that really pushed this, made it a health issue, and got government to accept that the dust level in the communities is a health concern. But I see my community of Lutselk'e is not even on this list, even though it's easily accessible. It takes a barge in in the early summer and one out in the fall. We have an arena project going in there that needs crushed gravel, and they could easily do enough crushing for both projects. I don't understand why we see so many...If it's a health issue, why are we taking this long-term look at it? It's just like we're doing it because we want to, not because of a health concern. As far as I know, Mr. Chairman, the dust season is a lot longer in the south side of the lake than it is up in Tuktoyaktuk. Where's the logic in this thing here? I don't see any logic. Fort Resolution is a community at the end of a highway. Yet we're not even scheduled to start work on this until 2006. There are dust problems today. They have roads, they have a drainage system in Fort Res. You don't need to do all that. But yet way over there we're currently chipsealing on a yearly basis Highway 6, which leads into Fort Resolution. So your argument, Mr. Minister, just doesn't fly with me here. I'd like to get a response to those issues, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty):** Thank you. Minister Steen.

**HON. VINCE STEEN:** Mr. Chairman, I think we pointed out quite clearly that we turned this program over to Transportation to have a look to see where they could see chipsealing take place in communities at the same time they're doing their own projects. We're not asking them to change their schedules or anything. But I agree with the Member, that if there is chipsealing outside of Fort Resolution and we're not chipsealing the community, I will certainly get back to Transportation to see whether or not this would have been possible. I don't know the answer to that at this time.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty):** Thank you. Mr. Nitah.

**MR. NITAH:** Mr. Chairman, I don't want to just be stuck on my constituency here, but what's the case with Lutselk'e because they're not even on the board here? There's a dust problem there. There's a dust problem in every community in the Northwest Territories, but I know there's a major dust problem in the community of Lutselk'e. People complain to me on a daily basis during the summer. There are health issues. Elders are concerned for their breathing. Children with lung problems stay home. People use way more water in the summer; a lot less than the standard that is acceptable in Canada, but try keeping a dust-free home in any of these communities. You can't. But this schedule does not reflect the dire needs of today. This looks like a laid-back, let's do it, take our time, et cetera, et cetera.

We pushed for the dust control through chipsealing because there is a need now. It's a health issue. This schedule does not reflect that health issue, Mr. Chairman. What can we do to speed up this schedule, so we can get into the communities and start controlling the dust? We are talking about the high rates of cancer. Maybe there's a connection with dust there, we don't know. Twelve out of 14 people who die are dying of cancer here. We easily blame smoking and increase the taxes, but are there other things? I know people who don't smoke who are dying from cancer. I'm not directly relating it, but there's a possibility. I'm just trying to pinpoint and elaborate as

strong as I can, Mr. Chairman, that this is a health issue, this is not a program because we want to develop that program. It's a health issue.

Calcium doesn't work, it never has worked, and now it's not an accepted component anymore for dust control. Why can't we speed this up? Let's target some communities. Fort Resolution is a prime one that can start right now, this summer. Like I said, chipsealing in the communities is going on right now. Lutselk'e is building an arena, we need crushed gravel for that. Why can't we crush enough gravel and start that program as soon as possible? Let's look at it from a logical point of view. There are short summers up north and the summers are longer in the south, therefore, there's most dust in the south. That's where we should be targeting our projects. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty):** Thank you. Minister Steen.

**HON. VINCE STEEN:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, the Member asked how we could possibly address the needs of all the communities, including Lutselk'e. I guess the best way to answer the question would have been if we had enough funding to do the job, we could do it. We are really limited in our ability by the amount of funding we have for this particular program. That's why we stressed that it's so important that we work with Transportation. I think the standing committee and Committee of the Whole recognized this because the motion directed us to work with Transportation to do the job. Like I said, I am not trying to change Transportation's schedule for their airport resurfacing or highway jobs, but that's where we are limited, our ability to chipseal communities. If there was a program in Lutselk'e where there was stockpiling, crushing and chipsealing, then it could be done in the short-term and we could bring it in again by barge and out again by barge. That is something we can look at, but at this point in time all I can do is take that proposal to Transportation and see what the cost would be.

I think one of the things the government will be looking at from this program is that it's so effective in dust control and it's so popular that we are going to have to look at putting more money towards it. That's about all we can look at for addressing all the communities. I have communities in my own riding that are in the same situation as you. They are never going to see a chipsealing over there. On the other hand, we have to keep certain things in mind as far as trying to prioritize these things. It can't be all based on politics. There has to be some practical decisions here. How many vehicles are in the community? It's one thing to say that all communities have dust, but we should look at how many vehicles are in the communities and the populations of the communities. As a matter of fact, I think that's one of the conditions that was recently put on this program was it had to have a population of 500 or more. This department has made an effort to make the supply to those communities even though they are smaller than 500, but are still in need, like the Member said. Everyone has a need to control dust. We don't disagree with that.

So all I can suggest is that we can keep working on the program to improve the program, but we are limited in our ability to actually see where the chipsealing goes because we don't have the equipment. The equipment is with Transportation. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty):** Thank you. General comments. Mr. Nitah.

**MR. NITAH:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Maybe the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs should have a serious look at purchasing the equipment necessary since this is a health issue. I am not sure what kind of communications there are between the Department of Transportation and the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs. If there is any kind of communication, they would have known that the highway has been chipsealed to Fort Resolution on Highway No. 6. What does it take? Do you have to wait until they pave the road right to the community and only then is it feasible to bring the chipsealing to that community? Does it make sense just to drive the one hour down the road and there is Fort Resolution and there is the chipsealing equipment? What kind of communication is there if they can't even realize that? There is an arena being built in Lutselk'e and there is a requirement for crushed rock. Why not kill two birds with one stone, Mr. Chairman. Sometimes I question the thinking by departments. This is one area and one time I do have to question it. Is it politics? Yes, it is politics. Obviously, it's politics. Why do you think we are chipsealing Tuktoyaktuk first? If you are trying to exclude politics from this, then we are fooling ourselves.

In fact, Mr. Chairman, why are we even discussing this? This chipsealing should have been done years ago. The only reason it's done now is we are pushing it from this side of the House using the health issue. I do recommend and strongly suggest that the department get together with the Department of Transportation and see so that the left hand knows what the right hand is doing in this matter. I do agree with the Minister, the money is short and maybe we do need more money in this program. This is one of the areas also, Mr. Chairman, that by chipsealing community roads, putting in decent sidewalks, reinforces the positive psyche of people in the communities leading to healthier lives. This is part of the For a Better Tomorrow program. I am not agreeable to the Minister's answers. In fact, I am a little peeved at them. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty):** Thank you. Minister Steen.

**HON. VINCE STEEN:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, MACA certainly appreciates the support from this committee and other committees in order to assist us to get our message to the rest of the government and the needs of the smaller communities. It's motions like the one made by the Committee of the Whole that actually helps us to put our programs in place. I am told that probably the biggest factor that is involved in Fort Resolution not having chipsealing is there is no crushing program there right now. I am also informed by Public Works that we have 2,000 metres of crush sitting in Lutselk'e right now, but it's not the type that's used for chipsealing. It's too big. It's normal crush material for airports, but not the stuff you use for chipsealing. That's the advice I have been given.

Like I said, if we can go back to Transportation, we can probably get some figures from Transportation as to what it would cost to bring in the crusher, bring in the chipsealer into Lutselk'e and come back to the Member to show him what it would cost to do that particular community. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty):** Mr. Nitah.

**MR. NITAH:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Has the department considered using the private sector to do the job? Here's an opportunity for a business person or a community development corporation to take on this challenge. What's to stop a community corporation or a business person from purchasing chipsealing equipment, and being contracted from the government to do the chipseals in the communities? I would like to get a cost breakdown for Lutselk'e. It's a one-day barge ride from Hay River to Lutselk'e, to bring up the chipseal equipment. If the chipsealing program on Highway No. 6 is any indication, you could do it within a week. There is a guy named Dave Smith that travels out of here doing barging services. He does it on contract for supplies. He goes there five or six times in the summer season. So the transportation issue is not an issue for me. We put chipseal into Fort Good Hope first before Lutselk'e, before Fort Res. You are saying it's not politics. Give me a break, Mr. Chairman. The question is will the department consider using the private sector to do chipsealing communities or does the department only have to rely on the Department of Transportation? I sometimes wonder if I have to wait for government, I will be grey by the time I see chipsealing in my communities. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty):** Thank you. Minister Steen.

**HON. VINCE STEEN:** Mr. Chairman, I indicated earlier that we are prepared to go to Transportation and ask them to put together whatever it costs to bring in a chipsealer or crusher into Lutselk'e to do the job. I presume that same price would apply to private enterprise. So it would give us an indication what it would cost the community to do the job. Whether the community can do it on its own, that's beyond me to say. We are not prioritizing this particular program on anything political. We are prioritizing it on where the equipment is. I am told that Transportation, when they are finished crushing for the airport in Tuktoyaktuk, the crusher will be going up the river to do those communities up the river for the airport resurfacing up there. That's why the communities up the river are next on the list. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty):** Mr. Nitah.

**MR. NITAH:** Mr. Chairman, maybe the Minister has the information that I don't. Is there only one piece of chipsealing equipment and one crusher in this whole territory or country? Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty):** Minister Steen.

**HON. VINCE STEEN:** Mr. Chairman, I will ask the deputy to respond, Mr. Chairman.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty):** Thank you. Ms. DeLancey.

**MS. DELANCEY:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am not an expert on this, but in our discussions with the Department of Transportation, I understand that the department only owns one crusher and that they do generally use private sector crushing equipment where it's readily available and this crusher is kept to go into communities where there is not easy access

to private sector crushing. More detailed than that, we would have to refer back to Transportation and get back to the committee. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty):** Thank you. I think the Member did ask about the chipsealing machine and not only the crusher. Mr. Nitah.

**MR. NITAH:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I think the deputy did answer my question. The department does use private industry to do the chipsealing where the department can't put in their chipsealing equipment. So to me, that means there are people who do this for a living. I know there are people who do this for a living, but by the response from the Minister is it seems that there is only one piece of chipsealing equipment and it's owned by the Department of Transportation and for the first ten years of this program, it's going to be coming down the Mackenzie River. I may be exaggerating a little bit, but just to give you the gist of how I am feeling right now. The Minister indicated that there is no crushed gravel in Fort Resolution. I believe they are doing some extensive crushing in the old Pine Point site. I would appreciate it if the Minister could ask that question of the Minister of Transportation or his department to confirm that, but I strongly believe there is crushed gravel material on Highway No. 6. What does it take to get some of that material into Fort Resolution, Mr. Chairman?

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty):** Thank you, Minister Steen.

**HON. VINCE STEEN:** Mr. Chairman, I am not suggesting Transportation even has a chipsealer, but I do know they have a crusher and I do know that crushers are used for resurfacing runways under a program and that is what we are taking advantage of. There is no chipsealing in each community other than for these main roads. Transportation is not taking any chipsealing of airports. What we are doing is simply chipsealing the main roads. Transportation has the crusher. They crush one year, two years later or three years later, we bring in a chipsealer. There is no relation to having it being done at the same time unless you barge them both in at the same time to take advantage and get the job done in one year. That's the only time the two would be done at once. If you see the schedule, you don't see it happening at one time. It's because the chipsealer has to come in at a later date. I agree with the Member, Transportation may not own a chipsealer. Maybe it is the public sector that owns the chipsealers, but they definitely own the crusher.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty):** Thank you. Mr. Nitah.

**MR. NITAH:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. What is this schedule based on? Is it based on availability of the crusher? That's it?

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty):** Thank you. Minister Steen.

**HON. VINCE STEEN:** Mr. Chairman, stockpiling, crushing and chipsealing. That is what it's based on.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty):** Thank you. Mr. Nitah.

**MR. NITAH:** The Minister suggested maybe we should consider population, there again. Let's represent those communities that have a population. When we heard before

that, we don't deal with communities based on population, that's another issue. What happened to the health issue? Shouldn't we do some tests to determine the dust levels of communities and plan accordingly? If we looked at the population and number of vehicles, Fort Resolution has a lot more vehicles than Tuktoyaktuk. It has a lot more vehicle traffic than Fort Good Hope. There's a highway there. Almost every member of every household has a vehicle or two. That's 1,000 vehicles almost, not to mention the resupply vehicles such as fuel trucks and grocery trucks, logging trucks, tourism. So if it's a health issue and it's a need issue, why are we basing our schedule on availability of equipment? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty):** Thank you. Minister Steen.

**HON. VINCE STEEN:** Mr. Chairman, the short answer is because we don't have any more money. We don't have enough money. We have to take the availability of equipment into consideration. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty):** Thank you. Mr. Nitah.

**MR. NITAH:** Mr. Chairman, what is the Minister doing to try to secure more money for this without taking away from already committed programs and services?

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty):** Thank you. Minister Steen.

**HON. VINCE STEEN:** Mr. Chairman, if I could get support for more money for this program, it would have to come from the ordinary Members and I take that to Cabinet. It would be there that they decide whether there is more money, We all know what the financial situation is in the government, so I can't say whether we are going to get more money or not. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty):** Thank you. At this moment, I must step away from the table for a few moments. Would the committee agree that Mrs. Groenewegen now take the chair?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty):** Thank you. Mrs. Groenewegen, please come forward.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):** General comments. I have Mr. Lafferty next on the list.

**MR. LAFFERTY:** Thank you, Mrs. Chair. From the comments, I have listened to some of the Members talking about the problems and the most important item I think I see now in front us is the changeover from calcium chloride treatment on roads and streets to chipsealing. So the criteria for chipsealing when we first put this forward was health. Now it seems that we are not considering health. It looks to me more and more, like my colleague has said, it's more politics. If you look at the schedule and you look at the justification for all this, chipsealing is chipsealing. It's not crushing gravel. I know you have to crush gravel, you have to stockpile to do the work, but you can't chipseal in Tuktoyaktuk on the winter road. It's impossible. Maybe you would be able to do it in the summer when you barge the chipsealer in, but you can't chipseal it. If

you can't crush and chipseal in the same year, then in Lutselk'e, you can bring it in on a barge in the summertime, crush and chipseal in the same year, then that's where you should go first. I would like to ask the Minister, where is this crusher at this moment? Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):** Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. Mr. Steen.

**HON. VINCE STEEN:** Mrs. Chair, Transportation's crusher is located in Tuktoyaktuk.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):** Thank you, Mr. Minister. Mr. Lafferty.

**MR. LAFFERTY:** Thank you. Chipseal is a chipseal project, like I said and it's not a crushing project. The way it looks right now, is if you look at the way it's working for Tuktoyaktuk, you are stockpiling gravel. You are stockpiling gravel over two years and only then do you do an assessment and design. We are working backwards. What's going on? Then you are doing upgrade and drainage and you don't even know how much stockpile you are going to need. You don't know how much you are going to need. So why are you stockpiling and crushing before you even do the upgrade, drainage or system and design? Why is this department working backwards? It's impossible to know how much stockpile you need. To use a project of Transportation down there and you want your chipseal in 2007 and 2008, you are in the same shoes as Lutselk'e. You can get your chipseal and your stockpile in the summer on the barge just like they can. So what's the difference between Resolution and Lutselk'e? Lutselk'e is accessible by barge in the summer. A chipsealer and a crusher can come in the same day, crush and be out in a week. That's possible. Also, like Mr. Nitah said, there is private enterprise out there. They are willing to go in any time. It's probably going to cost the same amount of money just to ship it in and ship it out anyway. The only thing is there is somebody else crushing. So you can't exclude Lutselk'e from this. Lutselk'e qualifies more than Tuktoyaktuk does because they are using the winter road as criteria and you can't chip in the winter. It's impossible to chip in the winter. I can tell you, you can't chip in the winter. So what's happening here is all politics. This is just a continuation of the supplementary appropriation that happened last fall just after session. The supplementary appropriation was a resurfacing of roads and airports and all thrown together. It was a supp and then it's becoming a chipseal project. I can't accept that. This is just politics. I have other issues here.

You are doing redesign and assessment of our roads and everything. You chipseal Rae, 300 metres of road; \$300,000 for 300 metres of road that was done for Transportation. How can you justify \$300,000 for 300 metres of road? It's impossible to cost that much especially if Transportation is doing it. What did you lay under it, gold or diamonds? Three hundred thousand dollars was never spent in Rae. Edzo is part of Rae-Edzo, there was nothing spent in Edzo. In order to do a chipseal in all the other communities, you have a system and design. When was a system and design done in Rae-Edzo? When was the stockpile of gravel done? There was no stockpile of gravel done?

As far as I am concerned, Mr. Nitah is right. It's politics. You are doing this in relation to projects. He's right. You could have gone into Resolution and chipped it the same time as you did a project. You did a project on Highway No. 3 last weekend and they brought the chipper into Rae. Rae was about an hour away and you were able to do it, but you still can't do it for Fort Resolution? What's the difference? There is no difference. As for what Mr. Nitah said, this is a health situation and we are going to wait seven years before you put in chipseal in Fort Resolution or Lutselk'e. That's not acceptable. Why do you put your community first, above everybody else? That's not acceptable. I have seen supplementary appropriations happening in your riding and I see it happening again. You are putting \$1.2 million. How many vehicles are in Tuktoyaktuk? How many vehicles are there in Rae-Edzo? Why does it only get \$300,000 of chipseal? You just turn your wheel a little and you are off the chipseal. It's not even a footprint. Rae-Edzo has 7.2 kilometres of road, including Edzo it's 10 and you are putting \$300,000 in there. Maybe if I was the Minister, I would have gotten \$1.2 million for my road. It's not the case, I am not a Minister. So what I am saying is Tuktoyaktuk doesn't meet the criteria because you can't chip in the winter. Lutselk'e, Resolution, they can't get access to chipseal from a private company from either Yellowknife or Hay River, so you can't deny them their chipsealing. If it's money has to be moved or whatever, you can't chipseal in the winter, so you take the money from Tuktoyaktuk and give it to Lutselk'e and Resolution.

I have another area they want to talk about. What is the Minister of MACA doing building airstrips? You are building an airstrip in Kakisa. That's the responsibility of Transportation, not the responsibility of MACA. If you are going to build an airstrip in Kakisa, why didn't you support Rae-Edzo when they built their airstrip? Why didn't this government support Rae-Edzo when they built their airstrip? They gave them training dollars and that's about it. Why didn't they give them that \$3 million they spent on it? Is MACA going to reimburse Rae-Edzo? If you are going to build one, you might as well build for everybody.

Also for emergency measures, we are on a highway system. This is not the first time it's been talked about. The Member from Hay River has been talking about an emergency vehicle for quite awhile. I think that's going to become a reality, but then you have to think of Fort Providence and Rae-Edzo. There are no emergency vehicles there. There is no emergency extraction equipment or anything. Rae-Edzo is just a roadblock at Rae at the junction. If something happens at the junction, we are blocked in, just like Kakisa is. So the only access out of there is by water or helicopter. What if there is a fire? We have to have emergency measures. Maybe you should build a bridge from Rae to Edzo, so we can have an escape route. We are building bridges at the Mackenzie River, build one for Rae and Edzo. Politics, wherever things are needed to go your way, this is the way all the projects are going. I see that. Kakisa airstrip was never in the capital plan, but it's in there. We see other projects in other areas, I will get the detail when it comes, but to me, politics is a big step into what we are doing here. I only have 22 seconds and I am going to save a lot of my comments for detail, but I think the Minister and Cabinet and what they are doing is... I don't know what kind of word I can put to it without being called on a point of order, so I will stop there. Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):** Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. I just want to remind Members that when they are doing their general comments in responses to the detail that we have a process where you have to go through the Chair and it's not appropriate to speak directly to the witnesses or to the Minister in terms of... You could refer to "Madam Chair, he..." refer to it in the third party, but you can't talk directly to the witness. Mr. Steen, would you like to respond to Mr. Lafferty's general comments?

**HON. VINCE STEEN:** Yes, Madam Chair. I will respond to some of his comments. If I take them as he mentioned them, the question of the amount of gravel that will be needed for chipsealing is based on the length of the road that was planned to be chipsealed and an estimate of how much of a life is needed on the road in order to protect the chipseal. That's what the engineers are using to arrive at how much gravel is needed in a community. MACA is not crushing gravel for airports. I don't build airports, Transportation does. So we are just taking advantage of the fact that Transportation is crushing in those particular communities for resurfacing of airports. That's what we are using as a way of reducing the cost, so to speak.

Unfortunately, Tuktoyaktuk doesn't have the option of bringing in gravel at any time. They have to haul it over a winter haul and I believe they went through that discussion some time this fall, but it is a \$60 per mile haul and that's what drives the cost up in that particular community as far as crushing and stockpiling is concerned in the price of gravel. In relation to how much resurfacing was done in the community of Rae-Edzo, Rae-Edzo chipsealing is done under a Transportation program. Most of it had been done already. What we are planning to do is approximately 280 metres that's left that has to be done on main street and that's it. The figure of \$300,000 is for the future. It's not what we are applying at this time. That's where that figure comes from. Most of Rae is done because Transportation considers their main street as part of highways and that's why it's done under the Transportation program.

In relation to emergency measures programs, like I said, I am prepared to have my emergency measures people go into every community and upgrade their emergency measure response, including coming back to the department and in consultation with the community identify what's needed to upgrade the emergency measures response plan. That includes those areas where, like I said earlier, where the iron guards are in the communities. Thank you, Madam Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):** Thank you, Mr. Minister. Ms. Lee.

**MS. LEE:** Thank you, Madam Chair. I have a couple of topics that I would like to discuss with the Minister and the first one has to do with the sports and recreation policy. This is a discussion paper that was released by the department over a year ago, I think. I understand that the department has been engaged in back and forth discussions with stakeholders about the policy and we have also discussed it in the committee. I would like the Minister to update us on where he is at with this policy as of now. Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):** Thank you, Ms. Lee. Minister Steen.

**HON. VINCE STEEN:** Thank you, Madam Chair. Perhaps it would be shorter if I just have my deputy respond to that.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):** Thank you. Ms. DeLancey.

**MS. DELANCEY:** Thank you, Madam Chair. Where the policy paper stands right now is we did convene a workshop of all the stakeholders that are involved in the sport and recreation discussions last fall in October. They spent two days working through the proposals in the paper looking at options for creating a new territorial sport and recreation board, how that board should be structured, what the role of existing organizations would be and so on and they set some evaluation criteria. That included things like making sure there was adequate representation from smaller communities, making sure that the lottery revenues were distributed equally throughout the Northwest Territories. They generated a number of different options for a structure for a new board. Since that time, the partners have been consulting with their membership and they have a final workshop scheduled for March, at which time they are going to be asked to come forward with a recommendation to the Minister for a new board structure. Concurrently with that, we are also looking at reviewing and updating the lottery regulations, so hopefully we will have some progress on this early in the new fiscal year. Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):** Thank you, Ms. DeLancey. Ms. Lee.

**MS. LEE:** Thank you, Madam Chair. This has been an ongoing issue. Since the policy discussion paper was released, I hear from the people at the grassroots level involved in sports and managing of the sports and so on. I will get their feedback and then I talk to the department and then the standard answer seems to be we are having a workshop. Then when I ask questions again, we haven't had that workshop yet but we are going to have another one in March. Last time I asked, I thought there were workshops for October already and there might have been some other type of workshop to tighten this up in December, but it appears now that we are going to have another workshop in March. I guess my question would be is it safe to assume now that the department has enough consensus or buy-in or willingness or whatever? Is it safe to assume that we are going to see the department going with the new form of board, sports and...I forget the exact name for this. The new board that's going to take over the whole sporting structure. Is that an accepted premise that we are going to see this happening and that the task now is to just work out the details of the membership and so forth? Is that something that's been agreed on?

**CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):** Thank you. Ms. DeLancey.

**MS. DELANCEY:** Thank you, Madam Chair. That's a correct assumption. At the workshop in October all the partners did agree with the proposal. They did agree in concept to the idea of a new board. They set some criteria for what they thought was needed to make the board work. They've gone back and consulted and the goal for the March workshop is to finalize that new structure and make a recommendation to the Minister. The Member is correct, originally that second workshop was scheduled for December, but because of people's schedules it

was put off until March at a time when everybody could participate. Thank you, Madam Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):** Thank you, Ms. DeLancey. Ms. Lee.

**MS. LEE:** Then where does the board for Sport North fit into the new board structure?

**CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):** Ms. DeLancey.

**MS. DELANCEY:** Thank you, Madam Chair. Sport North has been an active participant in the discussions and, as I said, the partners at the last meeting generated four or five different options for structure of a new board, but all of the options do accommodate the existing organizations and so the board of Sport North would certainly be an active part of Sport North. Their structure might change and their administration might change, depending on how the partners decide to recommend to the Minister that we move forward. Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):** Thank you, Ms. DeLancey. Ms. Lee.

**MS. LEE:** Thank you, Madam Chair. When this discussion paper came out, one of the major concerns that the people had was that - - and I am sure it continues to be -- an additional layer of board structure is being created on top of all the other ones, which might help in coordinating some things, but it might work against some, in that we are dealing with limited resources in the board structures. The more money it's going to cost and the more decisions, steps and so on that have to be taken into account. So I am wondering if I could get information as to where Sport North stands on this extra layer of a board being created on top of them?

**CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):** Thank you, Ms. Lee. Ms. DeLancey.

**MS. DELANCEY:** Thank you, Madam Chair. I did mention at the meeting in October, the partners did agree to some evaluation criteria for a new board. They are very aware that they do not want to create another layer. They are also very aware that they don't want to take any of the funding that's available for sport and recreation activities away and siphon it into administration. So some of their evaluation criteria for deciding on how to move forward include the fact that they would not increase the layers of decision-making or the layers of administration. As I say, there were several options developed but certainly the common goal of everybody is to move towards this new structure without creating any extra layers. Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):** Thank you, Ms. DeLancey. Ms. Lee.

**MS. LEE:** Could I get information on what's to happen to the lottery that's being administered by Sport North? I understand that the lottery contract that the government has with them will expire at the end of March. Given the information that I have today, it looks like there will be more time required to get this

policy implementation worked out. So where is the department with respect to that issue? Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):** Ms. DeLancey.

**MS. DELANCEY:** The Member is correct. The agreement does expire March 31<sup>st</sup>. We are in the process of extending that agreement for a one-year period. We are also in the process of undergoing some consultation with Sport North and the other partners on the current lottery regulations to see what issues might be addressed as we update them. Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):** Thank you, Ms. DeLancey. Ms. Lee.

**MS. LEE:** I will leave that issue there and ask a question on another area. It has to do with infrastructure funding for municipalities, in particular the City of Yellowknife. It's impossible to know all the details of all this because it's very complex and that's probably why I am trying to learn from the experts. We went through changes in formula financing or how we give money to cities and municipalities and one of the changes was to have the city line up with the rest of communities on extraordinary water and sewer funds that are available. I am wondering if the extra costs that are going into Fort McPherson or any other communities that have water problems - I am not making a judgment call on that - does the money for that come out of the same pot that would be set up for cities like Yellowknife?

**CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):** Thank you, Ms. Lee. Ms. DeLancey.

**MS. DELANCEY:** Thank you, Madam Chair. Actually, the tax-based municipalities are eligible to apply to the department for assistance with funding of up to one half of their water/sewer capital costs or infrastructure costs and that is an ongoing line item in our budget. The water/sewer subsidy policy program is to help fund operating costs and that is also available to tax-based municipalities. Any increased funding that might go to communities with special needs would not be taken away from other communities. Thank you, Madam Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):** Ms. Lee, your 10 minutes are up. Are there any other general comments? Mr. Lafferty.

**MR. LAFFERTY:** Thank you, Madam Chair. I have some more concerns, I just didn't have time to complete them all at the first crack at it. The other concern I have is in how MACA is dealing with the water and sewer program in Rae-Edzo and in some of the other three communities that have agreements with Public Works and Services.

The agreements, I think, should not be with Public Works and Services, but with MACA because MACA funds these communities. So if there is going to be any kind of agreement with Public Works and Services, it should be a contract agreement between them and the hamlet where Public Works can do services for the hamlet. It should be the hamlet making agreement to take over the water from DPW. DPW doesn't know that system, MACA does.

We are working backwards here when we are doing things. I have seen it in this government so many times now where we are doing things backwards. DPW is just an answering machine to most of the contractors in the Territories. You go to Rae-Edzo. If you have a problem there, you have DPW. They will go check on the program, whatever is wrong in the community, they will make a phone call and get the contractor to do the job. Rae-Edzo can do that themselves. They don't need to go through another party to make a phone call. That's another long distance call they have to make. We could save that dollar. MACA and the hamlet can make a deal between themselves for the water and sewer takeover. They don't have to make a deal with Public Works and Services. If the hamlet wants to use Public Works and Services for some of the plumbing or some of the services they do offer, manual labour or mechanical or technical labour, then that's up to the hamlet to choose them. If the hamlet wants to choose some other engineering company or some other energy outfit, then it's up to the hamlet. They can do that. They shouldn't have to be forced to sign an agreement with DPW. As far as I am concerned, DPW is just another contractor out there. They don't do anything different from anybody else out there.

I don't want to get into specifics, but we identify projects, we put the dollars out there and then we see projects going over budget, \$20,000, \$25,000. A lot of it has to do with the charges to these communities. The percentage they charge is the overrun. It's not the contractors who are doing the work themselves, it's the charges DPW gives to the community. For example, the hamlet of Rae-Edzo was in a debt recovery program. They were just above the debt. They were getting out of it and then DPW comes back in and starts taking over the services. Now they are in debt again. They are going into another new year in debt all because of Public Works and Services. The hamlet used to run the whole system on a monthly basis for \$63,000. Now they are paying DPW over \$130,000. It's twice the amount they used to run it with and the services are not any better, but they continue to do that. This government gives you money with one hand and takes it away with another hand. The communities are looking bad because of this. It's not only Rae-Edzo, but McPherson is like that and other communities are like that.

So I am telling you right now if there is going to be an agreement done, and I think the House should look at it even more closely. It's not only my concern, but everybody's concern here, if you are going to have an agreement for water and sewer, it should be with MACA and the hamlets, not with Public Works. Public Works is just another contractor out there. They want to make an agreement with Public Works, then it should be up to the hamlet. The government shouldn't force them to do this. Maybe that policy was there and it's time to be changed.

Also, we are building airstrips for communities. Well, why don't we build a winter road from Rae to Edzo so they can have easier access? It's within the municipality. MACA is in charge of that. They should give them the extra funding so they can have a winter road going across the lake, so they can have easier access. We do it for Detah. Detah gets a beautiful road every year and they have a nice chipseal road all the way to their door from the Ingraham Trail. A beautiful road, but they still get a winter road. What's the difference between Detah and Rae-Edzo? Maybe MACA can look at giving them more funding so they can build their winter road.

I know Transportation is going to be called on this and they don't have responsibility and it used to be the federal government. I know all the excuses that are going to be out there, but it's time to just quit giving excuses and start doing things.

There's one more thing I wanted to talk about. Earlier I talked about assessments, upgrading and drainage, which all comes with chipsealing. It never happened in Rae-Edzo. The Transportation department came into town and slapped down a coat of chipseal and went home on a rainy day. Now where's the profiling? Where's the drainage? Where's the assessment? None of it happened. Why is Rae-Edzo different from Tuktoyaktuk? Why is it different from Fort Good Hope? Why did they just come in and slap chipseal down and go home? No profiling, no drainage. Why? There are too many questions here.

The other thing, you said that the \$300,000 is not done. But in your own document it says it's done. Monitoring will be undertaken. You say the money is spent, it's done. Rae-Edzo is two communities. Maybe you slapped a little chipseal in Rae, but what about Edzo? Edzo has its own main street. It's on the highway system. The Transportation department is in Edzo. There's a main street that you totally forgot. Maybe you need to put more money into Rae-Edzo. Why did you only think of Rae?

Somebody might say the chipseal was done because I live in Rae and I don't live in Edzo, so I don't want that going around. Politics. So that's about all I have until we get into detail, and then maybe I will have a few more. Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):** Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. Mr. Steen.

**HON. VINCE STEEN:** Madam Chair, I'll try to keep it short. The process the Member describes for water and sewer program administration in the small communities, in particular Rae-Edzo, is exactly what MACA is promoting. It's exactly what we want the community to do, is take it over themselves. I agree with the Member, it's not necessary for Public Works to do the work for them. They can do it themselves, or they can contract it to another contractor. They don't have to use Public Works.

If we go back a little ways, we'll find that Rae had that program. They took over the management of water and sewer in Rae. They did it themselves for years. But they ran into a \$400,000 deficit. We bailed them out. MACA bailed them out, and what happened then was that they didn't want to take the management anymore. They signed it back to MACA and we gave it to Public Works. Public Works is actually doing it now for the community, and charging the community back for what it would have cost them to do it themselves. The Member could be right, maybe Public Works is costing them more than they would to do the job themselves. But what we're working with the community now is that we will phase it over to them, and they have agreed to work towards phasing and taking it back, including training people. There's a certain process for training. When they reach that level, building capacity, then we would eventually have them take over the whole process again. That's exactly what we want. Public Works doesn't want to do this if they don't have to. I'm sorry. I suppose I'm speaking as

the Minister of Public Works and Services, but I can assure the Member that Public Works does not want to do it if the community wishes to do it themselves.

In relation to the winter road, the ice road outside of Rae, all I can say is MACA is not funding the winter ice road from Yellowknife over to Detah. That's something Transportation does. We don't fund them, as far as I know anyway. So if Rae wants to build a road out like they've done, they have to do it at their own expense. We don't have money for that. We give them money to maintain X number of kilometres of road within the community. If they have a surplus and they want to run their grader or loader out and make a shortcut, that's fine. Obviously they save some cost because of shortcut. Other communities do the same thing. But they don't come back to MACA for more funding, because we can't fund those roads. Well, half of the time they're not there anyway, so... That's the policy we have for those types of situations. Thank you, Madam Chairman.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):** Thank you, Mr. Steen. General comments, I have Ms. Lee again.

**MS. LEE:** Thank you, Madam Chair. I have a line of questions in another area, but I just want to follow up on what's being discussed here. In the cases like Rae, and I understand there are three or four communities where there have been over expenditures because of the need for more money to be spent on water and sewer facilities, where does that money come from? Is there a pot that's designated for situations like that? Where is it, and how much is it, and how do you pay for the extraordinary cost overruns that we have been seeing? Have you had to go and get the money elsewhere in the department, or do you go to FMBS for more? Could I just get an explanation of that? Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):** Thank you, Ms. Lee. Mr. Steen.

**HON. VINCE STEEN:** Madam Chair, it comes through the supplementary appropriation process. We would put a request to FMB for the funding. It's approved through this process here. If it's ongoing, we would then show it like we've done in this year's budget. We show an ongoing fund for McPherson, that we gave them \$250,000 for last year and we've shown another \$250,000 for this year. We show it under water and sewage programming. But there are no extra dollars in the program. If it's all spoken for and if we need more, then we have to go back to FMB and we have to go through the supplementary process. Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):** Thank you, Mr. Steen. Ms. Lee.

**MS. LEE:** Thank you. Thanks for that answer, and I'm going to try to get back to what I was trying to ask before. I should know this, but I remember two or three years ago MACA engaged in a huge initiative to change the formula because it was found that the way the communities were being funded at the time was not standardized or it was not equal. I'm just wondering are we into the new formula now? Has that been implemented? I'm sorry for asking something that I should know, and then I have another question after that.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):** Thank you, Ms. Lee. Mr. Steen.

**HON. VINCE STEEN:** Madam Chair, we're in the new formula process, but it doesn't include water and sewage programs. We're still using the old water and sewage formula funding programs, which is based on a separate equation than the formula funding for communities. Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):** Thank you, Mr. Steen. Ms. Lee.

**MS. LEE:** So under the new way of doing things then, where does the water and sewer infrastructure funding come from for the tax-based communities?

**CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):** Thank you, Ms. Lee. Mr. Steen.

**HON. VINCE STEEN:** Madam Chair, there is some funding, I believe, for tax-based communities under the block funding program, but there's also a funding program that we share with the federal government and the community where I believe it's one-third, one-third, one-third right now with the federal government, the territorial government and the community. I believe the city has been taking advantage of the program over the last couple of years. Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):** Thank you, Mr. Steen. Ms. Lee.

**MS. LEE:** In that pot then, one-third, one-third, one-third; a three-government funding. So there are six communities in that pot, six communities that can apply for the funding under that pot and you have to line up on the basis of needs or level of extraordinariness of your emergency.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):** Thank you, Ms. Lee. Mr. Steen.

**HON. VINCE STEEN:** Madam Chair, it's based on applications from communities, but it's also based on a fixed fund from the feds. For instance, in this year's budget you might see \$2.5 million. We're going to have to divide that up between communities as they apply. What they've been getting in the past will be taken into consideration, of course, from this program.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):** Thank you, Mr. Steen. Ms. Lee.

**MS. LEE:** I could understand it if the Minister doesn't have this on him right now, but could I get historical figures of what Yellowknife has been getting under block funding, plus the emergency water and sewer program for the last three years? Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):** Thank you, Ms. Lee. Mr. Steen.

**HON. VINCE STEEN:** Madam Chair, I'll ask the deputy to respond to that.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):** Ms. DeLancey.

**MS. DELANCEY:** Thank you, Madam Chair. I don't have all the historical information for Yellowknife's block funding. Under the shared Canada/NWT infrastructure program that the Minister referred to, for the current fiscal year, 2002-2003, Yellowknife's total project cost was \$3.3 million, of which \$600,000 was a federal contribution and MACA contributed \$800,000 and the community covered the rest. I can provide information on what Yellowknife was scheduled to receive in 2003-2004 under MACA's community formula funding. I'm not quite sure if that was what the Member was looking for. Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):** Thank you, Ms. DeLancey. Ms. Lee.

**MS. LEE:** I was interested in figures from prior years, prior to 2002 and 2003, if the Minister has it. Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):** Thank you, Ms. Lee. Do you have those figures for prior years, Ms. DeLancey?

**MS. DELANCEY:** We would have to provide that information tomorrow, Madam Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):** Thank you. Anything further, Ms. Lee?

**MS. LEE:** Thank you, that's it for me for now.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):** I have you next on the list Mr. Lafferty.

**MR. LAFFERTY:** Thank you, Madam Chair. Just to go back to the first line of questioning that I did, where I talked about the hamlet spending a lot of money. The Minister did reply that they were in a deficit for \$400,000 and they were built up. It was just the right thing to do, because it was because of this department and DPW that they were in debt. MACA forced DPW on them. In the prior years to their takeover, MACA forced DPW on them. So it accumulated debt because of overcharging from DPW, and that was the reason. The other thing, using the old formula they were under funded. They're still under funded. Maybe this is the time to look at how they're funded. We have two communities here. Right now you overlooked Edzo when you did the chipseal. How many times in the past have you overlooked Edzo? You know nobody can tell us that, but maybe you've done that in the past. Maybe Edzo is not even being funded for and Rae is carrying Edzo. Maybe it's time we looked at it. We're being thrown in the same category as Rankin Inlet at one time, and that's the formula how we were based, by population. The separation of the two communities never came into effect, they never even considered it. Then when the Minister said where the takeover was a failure, of course it had to be a failure. There was agreement by Public Works that they would bring people in to train the staff that were there. It never happened. It was part of the agreement. They failed on their agreement. MACA and DPW failed on their agreement. They were supposed to give

them extra dollars for training for the staff out there. They never did that, they failed. This government failed Rae-Edzo great big time. Underfunding, forcing DPW on them, and not giving them the dollars for the training, and that was a service agreement they failed on.

That's where the Transportation responsibility has said that the winter road is a responsibility of Transportation, well then maybe everybody should keep their own responsibilities to themselves. Sorry, Madam Chair.

The department has no right building airstrips in communities, because it's not their responsibility. It's the responsibility of the Minister of Transportation, and they're still continuing to build airstrips. So if it's good for one, then it should be good for another. Now they can't just pick and choose who they feel like building airstrips for or winter roads. If you're going to do for one you do it for the other. You know, it has to be done. So I'd just like to get that clear, and I know we are running out of time and I want him to give me a good answer that's something that we can use. Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):** Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. Mr. Steen.

**HON. VINCE STEEN:** Thank you, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, I agree with the Member that water and sewage program funding of programs should have another look at it, and the department has been doing that. We're trying to come up with a different type of formula, because a lot of the communities are not happy with the formula. But whatever we come up with, before we're going to put it in place, we're going to take it to the NWTAC and we're going to take it to the communities to have their consultation and input.

But Edzo is included with Rae as part of formula funding for that community, including the water and sewage programs. The only problem with Edzo is it's not one of the 33 communities. So it's not on the chipseal program. It's not a community under MACA's programs. It's considered part of Rae. It's the same problem that one of the Members identified earlier with Ndilo and I believe with West Channel. Same problem. So that's why it's not obvious that Edzo is separate, funded for itself. It's funded through Rae-Edzo.

In regards to the overall program in relation to roads; like I said earlier, we identified how we fund roads. I identified to the Member how we do that. I'm sorry if the Member feels that MACA should be doing the winter road from Rae to Edzo, but we don't do it. We don't do that road, we don't do the road in the bay down here. We don't have a program for that.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):** Thank you, Mr. Steen. Mr. Lafferty.

**MR. LAFFERTY:** Thank you, Madam Chair. The Minister is right that Edzo is not on the map. It's part of Rae-Edzo. Maybe it is time we started funding Edzo by itself. You said it was similar to the reserve, it's not similar to the reserve. It's within a municipality. The reserve is separate in your books and Hay River is separate in your books. It isn't in Edzo. So if you were going to consider main street, Edzo has a main street. Why didn't you take 140 metres of that Rae chipseal

and throw it in Edzo if that's the case, so we can have two little footprints in both communities? Maybe you should have done that. You totally ignored Edzo. It has its own main street, and I think it's time we look at the way we're doing the funding over there.

As for the Transportation responsibility, I just threw that in as an example, and you're picking and choosing what you can do. You're building an airstrip for a community, and the winter road was just an example I threw at you. So I will be asking Transportation, when it comes Transportation time, for my winter road. But it was just an example of what you're picking and choosing, and this government is very good at picking and choosing and including politics in it. So for the shortfalls that Rae-Edzo has been getting, I think it's time this government looks at for the transition period of the new Legislative Assembly. Because we were supposed to fix all the wrongs we've been doing, and that's one place where we've been doing something wrong. We haven't been recognizing Edzo. Maybe it's time they put their own community hall in there. Maybe it's time that we gave them their own grader to maintain their roads. Maybe it's time that they had their own DPW staff there. You know, DPW is such a lovely group of people there, and maybe we can have their own group there. That's all I have. Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):** Mr. Steen, we have 10 seconds to go until I recognize the clock. Would you like to have a final word, Mr. Steen?

**HON. VINCE STEEN:** Thank you, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, I'm prepared to put in place a policy that would recognize the community with the criteria to define the community, and take that to all the ordinary Members and to the Cabinet, then we could have it. We have three different requests now for this particular need to define communities, and maybe that's what's needed, is a policy that will actually define a community, and I'm prepared to do that.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):** Thank you, Mr. Steen. It's 6:00, so I'll now recognize the clock and rise and report progress. Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Steen, Ms. DeLancey and Ms. Bassi-Kellett. Thank you.

**ACTING SPEAKER:** I'll call the House back to order. May I have the report of Committee of the Whole? The honourable Member for Hay River South, Mrs. Groenewegen.

#### ITEM 20: REPORT OF COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

**CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):** Mr. Speaker, your committee has been considering Bill 3, Appropriation Act, 2003-2004, and would like to report progress. Mr. Speaker, I move that the report of Committee of the Whole be concurred with. Thank you.

**ACTING SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. Do we have a seconder? The Chair will recognize the Member for Nahendeh, Mr. Antoine. There is a motion on the floor. The motion is in order. To the motion.

**AN. HON. MEMBER:** Question.

**ACTING SPEAKER:** Question has been called. All in favour? Opposed? The motion is carried.

---Carried

Item 22, third reading of bills. Mr. Clerk, item 23, orders of the day.

#### ITEM 23: ORDERS OF THE DAY

**CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Hamilton):** Mr. Speaker, a meeting of the Special Committee on Self-Government and the Sunset Clause at adjournment tonight, at 9:00 a.m. tomorrow morning of the Standing Committee on Accountability and Oversight. Orders of the day for Friday, February 21, 2003:

1. Prayer
2. Ministers' Statements
3. Members' Statements
4. Returns to Oral Questions
5. Recognitions of Visitors in the Gallery
6. Oral Questions
7. Written Questions
8. Returns to Written Questions
9. Replies to Opening Address
10. Replies to Budget 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 Motions for First Reading of Bills
17. Motions
18. First Reading of Bills
19. Second Reading of Bills
20. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters

- Bill 3, Appropriation Act, 2003-2004

- Bill 6, Electoral Boundaries Commission Act
- Bill 7, An Act to Amend the Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act
- Bill 8, An Act to Amend the Elections Act
- Committee Report 3-14(6), Standing Committee on Accountability and Oversight Report on the Review of the Draft 2003-2004 Main Estimates
- Committee Report 4-14(6), Standing Committee on Governance and Economic Development Report on the Review of the Draft 2003-2004 Main Estimates
- Committee Report 5-14(6), Standing Committee on Social Programs Report on the Review of the Draft 2003-2004 Main Estimates

21. Report of Committee of the Whole

22. Third Reading of Bills

23. Orders of the Day

**ACTING SPEAKER:** This House stands adjourned until 10:00 a.m., February 21, 2003.

---ADJOURNMENT

The House adjourned at 6:00 p.m.

