



# **NORTHWEST TERRITORIES LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY**

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## **HANSARD**

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**The Honourable Tony Whitford, Speaker**

# Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories

## Members of the Legislative Assembly

### Speaker

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(Kam Lake)

### Hon. Stephen Kakfwi

(Sahtu)  
*Premier*  
*Executive Council*  
*Minister Responsible for*  
*Intergovernmental Affairs*  
*Minister Responsible for the Status of*  
*Women*

### Hon. Jim Antoine

(Nahendeh)  
*Deputy Premier*  
*Minister of Aboriginal Affairs*  
*Minister Responsible for the*  
*Intergovernmental Forum*  
*Minister of Resources, Wildlife and*  
*Economic Development*

### Hon. Roger T. Allen

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### Mr. Bill Braden

(Great Slave)

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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

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#### Editor of Hansard

Michele Vanthull

Box 1320

Yellowknife, Northwest Territories

Tel: (867) 669-2200 Fax: (867) 920-4735 Toll-Free: 1-800-661-0784

<http://www.assembly.gov.nt.ca>

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**YELLOWKNIFE, NORTHWEST TERRITORIES****Wednesday, March 5, 2003****Members Present**

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

**ITEM 1: PRAYER**

-- Prayer

**DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr. Krutko):** Thank you. Item 2, Ministers' statements. Mr. Allen.

**ITEM 2: MINISTERS' STATEMENTS****Minister's Statement 28-14(6): Harmonization Of Income Support And Public Housing**

**HON. ROGER ALLEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, during the past few weeks, we have heard considerable discussion regarding the implementation of the harmonization of the income support and public housing programs. Some Members have made comments suggesting that changes should be made to the initiative, others have encouraged us to move ahead with the planned April 1<sup>st</sup> implementation.

My Cabinet colleagues and I have given consideration to the comments that have been made in this House and to the comments of the Standing Committee on Social Programs.

This morning Cabinet agreed to proceed with the implementation of the harmonization initiative on April 1<sup>st</sup> of this year. We feel that the initiative is important and that the result of the planned changes will be positive.

However, we have also listened carefully to the comments that have been made. As a result, we have made an important change to our plans. This change will mean that seniors living in public housing on April 1, 2003, will not have their incomes assessed for rent purposes. In other words, Mr. Speaker, seniors currently living in public housing will continue to be treated in a similar manner to the way they are treated now.

Mr. Speaker, the harmonization initiative is an important activity for this government. It will result in a consistent rent scale and improved equity in benefits. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Item 2, Ministers' statements. Mr. Antoine.

**Minister's Statement 29-14(6): International Women's Week, International Women's Day**

**HON. JIM ANTOINE:** This is International Women's Week and this Saturday, March 8<sup>th</sup>, is International Women's Day. These days provide a forum for people around the world to celebrate and recognize the achievements and contributions of women to our lives.

On behalf of the Premier and Minister responsible for the Status of Women, the Honourable Stephen Kakfwi, I would like to take this opportunity to recognize the contributions that northern women in particular have made in advancing equality issues for all people of the Northwest Territories.

Last year, we as Members of the Legislative Assembly passed the NWT Human Rights Act. Last week, we pledged to work together to develop and pass effective family violence legislation before the term of our government ends.

Together with the advancement of the GNWT's commitment to the social agenda and the ongoing work of the NWT Family Violence Coalition to develop an action plan on family violence for the Northwest Territories, these undertakings reflect a small part of the immense contributions northern women have made to the well-being of our families, our communities and our territory.

I would also like to recognize the work, guidance and expertise provided by organizations such as the Status of Women Council of the NWT, the Native Women's Association and the numerous community groups and individuals who work so tirelessly on women's equality issues.

Mr. Speaker, 2003 marks the 11<sup>th</sup> year for the Status of Women Council's Wise Women Awards awarded annually in recognition of the dedication and service women have given to the communities in which they live.

This year, five women were selected by members of the Status of Women Council of the NWT to receive this award: Lena Anikina from Tuktoyaktuk; Edith Squirrel from Fort Providence; Florencia Dacanay, of Yellowknife; Janet Grandjambe of Fort Good Hope; and, Leslie Paulette of Fort Smith.

Mr. Speaker, the positive and caring contribution that these wise women have made to their communities will be formally recognized tomorrow at the Bread and Roses luncheon to be held in the Great Hall beginning at 12:00 noon.

I invite all Members to participate in this special occasion. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Item 2, Ministers' statements. Mr. Antoine.

**Minister's Statement 30-14(6): Premier Absent From The House**

**HON. JIM ANTOINE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I wish to advise members that the Honourable Stephen Kakfwi will be absent from the House for the remainder of this week to

attend the Arctic Gas Symposium in Calgary. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you. Item 2, Ministers' statements. Item 3, Members' statements. Mr. Braden.

### ITEM 3: MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

#### Member's Statement On Lack Of Affordable Rental Housing In Yellowknife

**MR. BRADEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, for the past three to four years, our Territory has been leading Canada as the fastest growing economy in the country. We have been blessed with diamonds and petroleum development that promises to sustain us for years to come, but that superheated economic activity comes with a price, a very tangible price that we are paying as our social infrastructure struggles to keep pace. One of the most pronounced problems we face, and it isn't restricted to the city of Yellowknife, is dramatic pressure on our housing stock. Mr. Speaker, we just can't keep up with the demand. The consequence, sadly, is what used to be an affordable and relatively available housing market is virtually non-existent. It's played havoc with the lives and the pocketbooks of the low and middle income earners, the single families, the young people trying to get a start on life and the elderly trying to make for a comfortable retirement.

Last fall, two Yellowknife business people, renters themselves, told me they wanted to do something and started a petition. I was pleased that Barry Newman and Mark Zimmer accepted my offer to help and today, Mr. Speaker, I will have the privilege of tabling a petition with the signatures of 405 Yellowknifers who agree with us.

What we are seeing is a better way to end and resolve the sky rocketing costs of rent. We want this government to do more to help developers build affordable rental housing. We want all Northerners to be able to afford to live comfortably, safely and within their means and share in the amazing future we have ahead of us. When I was in the malls and grocery stores looking for signatures, Mr. Speaker, I heard more stories from families and people, young and old, about the daunting rent hikes they are facing. Increases of 10, 12 and 14 percent every year for the past three years. Grandparents forced to accommodate their own grandchildren who, as young adults, can't afford to strike out on their own. Single-parent students facing a rent bill of over \$1,300 a month.

I also heard from landlords, Mr. Speaker, who need better ways of coping with problems that arise when tenants can't or won't hold up their end of the deal. Our objective, Mr. Speaker, is to get the government's attention and recognize that our 15-year-old landlord and tenant legislation just isn't helping us as we move forward into a new economy in the new NWT. Mr. Speaker, I seek unanimous consent to conclude my statement.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** The Member is seeking unanimous consent. Are there any nays? You have unanimous consent, Mr. Braden.

**MR. BRADEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The problem is that there are too many people with almost no alternatives when it comes to affordable rental housing. Mr. Speaker, the 405 signatures that I will put before the Assembly later today are ample evidence that government needs to look at the situation.

To those who have dismissed our efforts as a thinly disguised effort at rent control, I say you are ignoring a very real problem that is affecting many people around us. This is not rent control. I do not want such a blunt and clumsy barrier to development. Both renters and tenants deserve better ways to resolve issues than our laws afford them today. Mr. Speaker, Mr. Newman, Mr. Zimmer and I are under no illusions that the issues we are bringing forward are going to be solved right away. Finding good answers will take time, good research and a good deal of consultation. I appeal to the government to pay attention to the 405 people I represent today and make that commitment to the future. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Item 3, Members' statements. Member for Inuvik Boot Lake, Mr. Roland.

#### Member's Statement On Beaufort-Delta Oil And Gas Development

**MR. ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it's been some time since we've heard of the Mackenzie gas project and where it's going. There have been meetings continually held around the North, but not too much news has come out until recently. Mr. Speaker, I would like to acknowledge the fact that yesterday Imperial Oil Resources, on behalf of the Mackenzie gas project proponents, announced that work will begin immediately in the Inuvialuit settlement region to help determine the optimum location of facilities in gathering pipelines. Mr. Speaker, it's good news, indeed, to see we are continuing to move ahead in developing our own resources in the NWT so that someday we may take advantage of those resources and hopefully have some coming back, more so than now, to the Government of the Northwest Territories so that we can truly help our own people.

Mr. Speaker, hopefully we will hear more in the near future as to where they are going to go and how they are proceeding, as many people are waiting to see if there is going to be more movement and this definitely shows the momentum is still there and work is continuing and we will hopefully see the benefits from that throughout the NWT. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Item 3, Members' statements. Member for Frame Lake, Mr. Dent.

#### Member's Statement On GNWT Electronic Mail And Internet Usage Policy

**MR. DENT:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, earlier in this session, I asked the Minister responsible for the FMBS about the policy that we have today covering e-mail and Internet usage. From his response, I am concerned that there is a need to revisit the policy. He read a line from the policy that said, and I quote from unedited Hansard, February 25, 2003: "The use of this equipment or technology for any other purpose is not appropriate." Mr. Speaker, he then went on to say, again according to Hansard, that: "When inappropriate use is detected, employees are normally advised of this." Mr. Speaker, the policy says no use except business use is acceptable and the Minister has advised us in the House that normally when this happens, employees are advised of it.

Later, in speaking to the media, the Minister said the rules are not absolute.

Mr. Speaker, to me that means the policy as it stands is open to manipulation. There is a potential for supervisors to pick and choose when to enforce it. I think that's too arbitrary. It allows for selective enforcement. Right now, the way the policy is written forbids any personal use. Yet, Mr. Speaker, even our telephone policy admits that the GNWT allows, and I quote from that policy: "Employees to have reasonable use of government phones for personal reasons." The entire item covering phone use is about two paragraphs long. There is no question about the policy, as to what is or what is not permitted under it. There is no room for selective enforcement by supervisors. Mr. Speaker, how can the government monitor whether supervisors are selectively dealing with our Internet policy as it now stands? The Minister stated in this House that there have been individuals disciplined under the policy. I am quite sure that other than those few select individuals, there are many others who use the Internet and e-mail for personal reasons.

Mr. Speaker, GNWT employees are using the Internet for personal use, just as they use the telephone for personal reasons. That's a fact. So why not recognize it as being used and come up with a simple and reasonable policy? If we are going to say it's okay some of the time, then let's say that. Perhaps we should say if you are going to use the Internet or e-mail for personal use, use it during coffee breaks or lunch hour or after work. Let's have something that makes sense and is consistent. Let's develop a policy that is simple, reasonable, clear and one that can be monitored across the board. Let's be fair to everyone. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Item 3, Members' statements. Member for Tu Nedhe, Mr. Nitah.

#### **Member's Statement On Impacts Of Harmonization Of Income Support And Social Housing Strategy**

**MR. NITAH:** Mahsi cho, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in the last couple of weeks, we have spent a lot of time on harmonization. I never spoke about harmonization until today. Mr. Speaker, my only stand on harmonization is that we are taking one income program we have now and totally changing that and adding something new. The reason for income support, to my understanding, is to help people get the basics. What income support is doing now is trying to make it a little more difficult for clients to be on income support so they could go and get a job. In the NWT, that shouldn't be a problem.

Mr. Speaker, in our smaller communities, that's not an option. If we are going to treat clients with dignity and respect, we should also recognize that there are no jobs that they could just get off income support and get a job. If we are going to be doing that, we should be providing an option for these communities, for these people in communities who are on income support because they don't have a choice, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, we are trying to make it more difficult for people to be on income support, so they could go get a job, but what are we doing? We have regional organizations that are just another bureaucracy taking up the jobs, so that they could control communities by making them a social state. Now we have income support that says we are going to make it more difficult for you to be on income support and make it a viable option for you to go get a job, which means leaving town. The resulting

factor is moving away from our smaller communities, into the regional centres, into the capital. My colleague, Mr. Braden, talks about the tight housing market in Yellowknife. They are all coming from our communities. Why? Because we can't give them housing there, we can't give them jobs there. Most of them can't get a job because we haven't educated them well enough. Now we are going to make it more difficult for them to live in public housing, to be on income support, which is a basic right of this government. We don't even understand how income is assessed. We understand that IBA payments will be clawed back. We understand that the child tax benefit will be clawed back. We understand that parents who get child support will be assessed as well. I asked them in my communities, have you been consulted? Mr. Speaker, I seek unanimous consent to conclude my statement.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** The Member is seeking unanimous consent. Are there any nays? You have unanimous consent, Mr. Nitah.

**MR. NITAH:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, we live in one of the highest costing environments in Canada and in the world. Yet, we have governments who have people in our communities that assess income on people who win at bingo, Mr. Speaker. While we can't even create jobs in our communities, we have government bureaucrats assessing people who win at bingo as part of their income. That's assessed as an income. Therefore, the next time they go to income support, they get a little bit less and their rent goes up a little bit higher. Does that make sense? Are we running a welfare state in our communities? What's our definition of consultation? I am going to be asking the acting Premier this question. There is a court case in British Columbia called *Delgamuukw* where consultation is a meaningful dialogue between those who are being consulted and those who are doing the consultation. My understanding is that a letter was sent out. That's not consultation, Mr. Speaker. That is just telling them this is what we are going to do. We don't know how you feel, but this is what we are going to do.

Until you provide options to people in our smaller communities with jobs, other than income support, let's try to treat our income support clientele and the housing clientele with a little bit more dignity and respect. They deserve that at least, Mr. Speaker. We fail in other areas, like I said education. That's one area where we fail big time. Now we are trying to degrade them because they have to be on income support. We try to force them to get a job. They are going to have to go to the mines. What happens to their children? There are a lot of single parents in our communities. Have we given them any thoughts? What training do our staff at local housing authorities have? I don't know, Mr. Speaker. Nobody has told me yet. I have talked to some people in our communities. They try to train them, but because of glitches they never really complete those training courses. So a lot of our frontline workers don't understand harmonization and if they don't understand it, how are they going to deliver it? I will be asking the Minister responsible or the Deputy Premier on the meaning of consultation. What does consultation mean to this government? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** I would just remind Members that there is a time limit on Members' statements. It's two-and-a-half minutes and we hope you can try to do it within the time limit. If

you ask for unanimous consent, try to keep it brief and wrap up your statement in a short time frame. Item 3, Members' statements. Member for Range Lake, Ms. Lee.

**Member's Statement On Valuable Work Of Parent Advisory Committees In NWT Schools**

**MS. LEE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, on every first Wednesday of the month since becoming an MLA unless I am out of town, I have attended a parents' advisory group meeting at Range Lake North School. I will be doing that again tonight and, in their honour, I would like to speak about the enormously valuable work they do in the school and in our community. I also know that a similar group exists in all other schools in the city and in the Territories and I would like to honour all of them as well. Mr. Speaker, the Range Lake North School PAC is made up of parents who volunteer their time, knowledge and resources for one reason and one reason only: because they care about the education their children receive and they want to contribute to that process. They don't expect anything else in return and they certainly don't get any remuneration for all their hard work. Sometimes they do get very disappointed when they hear public statements by leaders who seem to have less appreciation for the work they do than they ought to.

From my own experience, Mr. Speaker, I don't know any other organization more focused and effective in achieving their stated mission and objective. I was there at the end of last school year when they divvied up the money they raised by various means throughout the year. They voted to give \$3,500 for band instruments and another \$3,500 to be divvied between all classes, so that every home room teacher can buy supplies for their students. They also put \$1,000 towards a science video collection so that their students could have access to this internationally renowned learning tool. They provide a snack program, so that every student would have a snack when they need it if they don't have their own for various reasons. In the past, they have provided hats and mitts to students who don't come to school properly dressed, they make available reflective tape for students, so that they can travel safely in the darkness of the winter, they lobbied for flashing lights in school zones near the school to ensure the safety of the children as well. There is so much they do, it's too numerous to mention, Mr. Speaker. We also know about work being done by groups in other schools, Mr. Speaker.

PAC at J.H. Sissons this year made by hand a neck warmer with the school logo for every student. This was not only to keep the students warm, but to promote and enhance the school spirit. They plan to do it for a whole new set of students who will be entering their school next year.

I know that the committee in K'alemi Dene School in Ndilo is the driving force behind the success of that school as well. Mr. Speaker, I must tell you they do much more than organizing a fund raiser. They are deeply involved in every aspect of the functioning of the school. They are there to support teachers when they go through the stress of preparing report cards and parent teacher interviews. Mr. Speaker, may I seek unanimous consent to conclude my statement?

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** The Member for Range Lake is seeking unanimous consent to conclude her statement. Do I hear any nays? There are no nays. You have unanimous consent, Ms. Lee.

**MS. LEE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, colleagues. Mr. Speaker, may I conclude by saying the parents advisory groups and committees are deeply involved in every aspect of the functioning of a school. They are there to support teachers when they go through the stress of preparing report cards and parent teacher interviews. They are intimately aware of the needs and ups and downs of all the staff and keep in close touch with the school administration, who also take active roles in the workings of PAC because they also know happy teachers make for a good learning environment for the students. Last year, Range Lake North School PAC also organized a forum on class sizes and signed petitions for action and submitted it to the Minister and the school board. Mr. Speaker, I know I speak for every Member in this House when I say we fully appreciate and recognize the important work they do in every school and in every community in the Territories. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you. I would just like to remind Members in the House, there are certain rules we follow with regard to what we bring into the House. I have been notified that a few jaws are moving. I hope you are chewing ice because we do not allow food in the Chamber. Water is allowed, you can be chewing on your ice. Just a reminder to Members. Item 3, Members' statements. Member for Deh Cho, Mr. McLeod.

**Member's Statement On Kamba Carnival On Hay River Reserve**

**MR. MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, we have been experiencing some very cold weather over the last couple of months, but it's not cold enough to discourage event organizers of the Kamba Carnival to see the show go on. The Kamba Carnival celebrated its 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary last week on the Hay River Reserve and it's an annual event organized and overseen by many volunteers who donate their time and energy to bring entertainment and fun to the community. It was a time for old friends around the North to come together and for new friends to be made.

This year's event was not unlike others. It was cold, but that didn't deter the many volunteers, the visitors and participants from enjoying the festivities. There were activities and games for all ages. The talent show which includes singing, jigging and break dancing was sold out at the Chief Sunrise Education Centre. The adult talent show was no different. It was filled to capacity with a lot of toe tapping going on. Richard Lafferty, once again, shared his skill on the fiddle. Karen Lafferty and Adrian Ducharme sang their way to first place in the women's and men's singing competition. A real crowd pleaser, the jigging event, allowed spectators the privilege of watching Anna Coleman and Eddie McKay float and jig their way to first place in the over 50 category.

---Applause

Mr. Speaker, another important event is the dog team races. This event is captivating and it not only provides for excitement, but it allows for reflection of the past and the importance of the dog teams as transportation for aboriginal people in the North.

Mr. Speaker, other events included snowshoe races, sled pull, hand games, all of which were well attended and participated

in. Mr. Speaker, no event would be complete without some northern delights and no one was disappointed this year as there was plenty of fish, bannock and other types of country foods. Mr. Speaker, the winters are long and cold in the North. The volunteers who make events such as Kamba Carnival help people shake off the winter blues while working to keep the tradition alive and exposing our young people to those traditional ways that were once important to survival.

In closing, I would like to acknowledge and congratulate the Hay River reserve, the many volunteers, the participants and spectators who took part in and made this year's Kamba Carnival a success. For this, I will applaud them and encourage them to continue the tradition. Thank you.

---Applause

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Item 3, Members' statements. Member for Hay River North, Mr. Delorey.

#### **Member's Statement On New Hay River Playschool Building**

**MR. DELOREY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to bring accolades to a wonderful initiative established by a very dedicated group of parents in Hay River, that being the new Hay River playschool building. The new building has been the dream of many parents in Hay River for several years.

Mr. Speaker, the building that the playschool had previously been housed in was built back in the 1950s and the playschool took occupancy in 1993. By 1999, through a number of fundraising initiatives, the playschool managed to pay off the mortgage and even accumulate a sizable building fund. This was no small feat, Mr. Speaker. Due to the extremely poor condition of the building by year 2000 or so, the playschool executive knew that something had to be done with the building. In looking at the amount of renovation that it would take to bring the building up to standard, it was determined that their only option was to build a new building.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity, once again, to thank the Honourable Roger Allen, Minister responsible for the Housing Corporation for the donations of two Housing Corporation lots in Hay River to the playschool. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to announce that as I speak, the floor is being laid in the new playschool building, the electrical, heating, mechanical and carpentry finishing will commence within the next couple of days. The final inspection on the building is scheduled for March 31<sup>st</sup> and it is the playschool's hope that they can move into their new building over the spring break in April. Mr. Speaker, it goes without saying that a tremendous amount of work has been done over several years by the parents and volunteers towards this very worthwhile project.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to recognize these parents. The members of the past building committee were Candy Carlton, Kathy Sperry, Ron Tordiff, Donna Dean, Leanne McLeod, Heather Desautels and Robert Fraser. Mr. Speaker, the current board building committee members are Louise Schumann, who is the building committee chairperson, Melanie Carter, Tracey Hill, Laurie Fraser and Rhonda Latimer, who is the playschool coordinator and also a teacher at the playschool. Mr. Speaker, I would like my colleagues to join me in congratulating the parents of the Hay River playschool on a job well done.

---Applause

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Item 3, Members' statements. Member for North Slave, Mr. Lafferty.

#### **Member's Statement On Consistency In Government Policies And Initiatives**

**MR. LAFFERTY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I would like to address the need for this government to be consistent in the initiatives that it brings forward. I would like to focus on two examples which have come up during the last year, which emphasizes how important it is to build on a common vision in order to create a unified territory, which is the goal of the document Towards A Better Tomorrow.

One of the much talked about issues during this session has been the government's proposed harmonization initiative. There has been a lot of debate about this initiative, both for and against, Mr. Speaker. During the discussions, I have been deeply disturbed at the lack of knowledge that Cabinet has about what impact this initiative will have on seniors, students and single parents. Mr. Speaker, I am concerned that Cabinet is promoting a strategy that is set to begin on April 1<sup>st</sup> without having considered its impact on target groups. At the other extreme, Mr. Speaker, Cabinet refuses to address the issue of a one-rate zone for power throughout the Territories. We have information on what power users are paying in the communities and the Northwest Territories. The Power Corporation has a profit margin that they have to meet and using this, the Public Utilities Board could easily establish a one-rate zone for the territories. Mr. Speaker, on February 20<sup>th</sup>, I asked the Minister responsible for the Power Corporation to put the issue of a one-rate zone back on the table for discussion. I was told that I would have to wait until the energy strategy was done. We have all the information, but Cabinet refuses to discuss this issue.

This is where we are not consistent in the way we do things. In this case, we have all the information we need to proceed and we know what the impact will be, both positive and negative, but Cabinet refuses to discuss this issue. In the case of harmonization, information is not available, impacts are unknown, but Cabinet is still going ahead with this. As we know, the harmonization initiative and Cabinet dropping the one-rate zone for electric power will both have a negative impact for the smaller communities. I think this government needs to look at why we are here. Is it to meet the needs of all Northerners or is it to follow the wishes of Cabinet? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Item 3, Members' statements. Item 4, returns to oral questions. Minister of Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Ootes.

#### **ITEM 4: RETURNS TO ORAL QUESTIONS**

##### **Return To Question 112-14(6): Income Support Clients In Public Housing**

**HON. JAKE OOTES:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I have a return to oral question asked by Mr. Lafferty on February 27, 2003 regarding the amount of rent paid by Education, Culture and Employment for income support clients that are currently living in public housing. For the 2002

calendar year, the amount paid was approximately \$155,000.00. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Item 4, returns to oral questions. Item 5, recognition of visitors in the gallery. Item 6, oral questions. Ms. Lee.

#### ITEM 6: ORAL QUESTIONS

##### Question 154-14(6): Recognition Of Parent Advisory Committees

**MS. LEE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is to follow up on my Member's statement about the important role that the parents' advisory group and parent advisory committees play at many levels, Mr. Speaker. I would like to ask a question to the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment. My colleague from Hay River North talked about establishing something formal to recognize the work that is being done by firefighters. Has the Minister considered or has he ever communicated with these parents' advisory committees and groups to show that their work is valuable and appreciated? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Minister of Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Ootes.

##### Return To Question 154-14(6): Recognition Of Parent Advisory Committees

**HON. JAKE OOTES:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We don't have a formal process, Mr. Speaker, to recognize the many individuals that are involved in the education system from administrators to teachers to classroom assistants, support teachers and so forth, including the volunteer groups like the DEAs in some cases and certainly the volunteer groups that are in the parent advisory groups. We should do that, Mr. Speaker, and I'm glad that the Member brought that up. Thank you.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Supplementary, Ms. Lee.

##### Supplementary To Question 154-14(6): Recognition Of Parent Advisory Committees

**MS. LEE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I think this is a section of our community that gives a lot that has been ignored. These are not boards that are appointed, they are not remunerated, they don't run for the office, they just silently go about doing their work, but they do important work. I wonder if the Minister could commit to look into this and see what sort of things he can do as a Minister to recognize and show that their work is appreciated? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Minister of Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Ootes.

##### Further Return To Question 154-14(6): Recognition Of Parent Advisory Committees

**HON. JAKE OOTES:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Member is absolutely correct. These are volunteer individuals who spend a lot of time providing assistance and guidance to our educational bodies. I agree with the Member that we should formalize a method by which we can recognize these individuals and I'll proceed to do that, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Supplementary, Ms. Lee.

##### Supplementary To Question 154-14(6): Recognition Of Parent Advisory Committees

**MS. LEE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate the Minister's willingness to look into this and to take action on it. May I ask the Minister to conclude that deliberation and advise us by the June session as to what precise action that he would be taking in that regard? Thank you.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Minister of Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Ootes.

##### Further Return To Question 154-14(6): Recognition Of Parent Advisory Committees

**HON. JAKE OOTES:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will certainly work on it immediately. I'm not sure if we can give the details as to what we can possibly do for recognition by the end of this session, but I'm sure that we can get some things rolling fairly quickly, Mr. Speaker, because we will be nearing the year end within a couple of months and we want to ensure that those parent advisory groups are recognized and the individuals that are working on them. Thank you.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Final supplementary, Ms. Lee.

##### Supplementary To Question 154-14(6): Recognition Of Parent Advisory Committees

**MS. LEE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I was going along so well and it looks like I hit a bump there. Mr. Speaker, what I was suggesting to the Minister is to have a response by the June session, not by the end of this session. I believe that is enough time for the Minister to...I don't mean a lot of money or anything like that, but I think there is a lot that can be done to recognize them and to show them that they are appreciated. Thank you.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Minister of Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Ootes.

##### Further Return To Question 154-14(6): Recognition Of Parent Advisory Committees

**HON. JAKE OOTES:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, we can certainly do that. It would be my desire to have this done before June, Mr. Speaker, because, as I said, the representation on some of the parent advisory groups may change next year and the school year end is approaching at the end of June. Thank you.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Item 6, oral questions. Member for Inuvik Boot Lake, Mr. Roland.

##### Question 155-14(6): High School Graduation Requirements In The NWT

**MR. ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, over the last couple of days, I've questioned the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment on the quality of the education in our schools and some of the testing that goes on and what it actually means. I would like to continue with that, Mr. Speaker. The question I have for the Minister is, at one point in the Northwest Territories and throughout Canada a grade 12 diploma meant something, it told potential employers

that you'd achieved a certain quality and that you were able to step into the workforce and begin some tasks in that scenario. Mr. Speaker, what I understand now is that a grade 12 certificate is not of much value nowadays and I would like to confirm if it is or not by asking the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment if, in fact, a grade 12 diploma is required when students to go college or university.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Minister of Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Ootes.

**Return To Question 155-14(6): High School Graduation Requirements In The NWT**

**HON. JAKE OOTES:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, my understanding is that for university programs, a high school graduation certificate is required and in order to get that high school certificate, the student must pass 100 credits of coursework, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Supplementary, Mr. Roland.

**Supplementary To Question 155-14(6): High School Graduation Requirements In The NWT**

**MR. ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. So what is required to receive a grade 12 diploma in the NWT? What is required? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Minister of Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Ootes.

**Further Return To Question 155-14(6): High School Graduation Requirements In The NWT**

**HON. JAKE OOTES:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the student must obtain 100 credits worth of coursework and there is a variety of areas an individual can obtain those credits in. There are some core subjects the individual must have; for example, English. They must have 15 credits in English, mathematics and science, for example. Thank you.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Supplementary, Mr. Roland.

**Supplementary To Question 155-14(6): High School Graduation Requirements In The NWT**

**MR. ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Minister stated English. Is it English 30, English 13, English 15? What level of English do they need to receive that diploma?

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Minister of Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Ootes.

**Further Return To Question 155-14(6): High School Graduation Requirements In The NWT**

**HON. JAKE OOTES:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, they must have grade 12 level courses of English 30 or 33. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Supplementary, Mr. Roland.

**Supplementary To Question 155-14(6): High School Graduation Requirements In The NWT**

**MR. ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, can the Minister inform us if English 33 is good enough for entrance

into any college or university programs? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Minister of Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Ootes.

**Further Return To Question 155-14(6): High School Graduation Requirements In The NWT**

**HON. JAKE OOTES:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I don't have that information at hand here, whether that would apply to any and all courses that a student wishes to enter into at university. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Final supplementary, Mr. Roland.

**Supplementary To Question 155-14(6): High School Graduation Requirements In The NWT**

**MR. ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I hope the Minister can get that information. My understanding is that English 33 does not meet the requirement and many universities or colleges, depending on what course you are going into or what specialty you enter into, will not accept that. How many of our graduates are graduating with English 33? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Minister of Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Ootes.

**Further Return To Question 155-14(6): High School Graduation Requirements In The NWT**

**HON. JAKE OOTES:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would have to get back to the Member with the number of students who would be in that category.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Item 6, oral questions. Member for Tu Nedhe, Mr. Nitah.

**Question 156-14(6): GNWT Definition Of Consultation**

**MR. NITAH:** Mahsi cho, Mr. Speaker. Under harmonization, we've been told that communities, community governments, Aboriginal governments and non-governmental organizations have been consulted. Our frontline workers have been trained to deliver harmonization. I would like to ask the Deputy Premier, Mr. Antoine, what is the policy of this government in terms of consultation. What does consultation mean to this government?

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Deputy Premier, Mr. Antoine.

**Return To Question 156-14(6): GNWT Definition Of Consultation**

**HON. JIM ANTOINE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in this particular case on harmonization, my understanding is once this issue was agreed upon by Cabinet, there was a communication strategy put together by the Housing Corporation to move this initiative forward. So, as Cabinet, we agreed upon a strategy and that's what's being implemented. In terms of what I think consultation means to us as a government, whenever there is an initiative we need to get that information out and there are different forms of communication, either through letters, newspaper or radio or TV. We have staff out there. As Ministers, we try to do it as personally as

possible, but in this case, the Housing Corporation initiated their staff to go out and do that work. Thank you.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Supplementary, Mr. Nitah.

**Supplementary To Question 156-14(6): GNWT Definition Of Consultation**

**MR. NITAH:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the Deputy Premier mentioned a communications strategy. When I called the people that I represent, they haven't been communicated with. The Delgamuukw decision on consultation is adequate consultation and informed consent. That means the other party has to understand what they've been told. As far as I am concerned, there is no understanding of harmonization. So I ask the Minister, has the communications strategy been...What is the communications strategy and has that been used? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Deputy Premier, Mr. Antoine.

**Further Return To Question 156-14(6): GNWT Definition Of Consultation**

**HON. JIM ANTOINE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In this case, from what I have been told and my information here, the NWT Housing Corporation has been working with the staff in the regions, as early as last September, to start looking at how they could implement this. I understand there were letters that went out to individuals and regions. I have seen copies of the letter. In this case, I don't know the detail of what happened in the communities, but from what I am told, the work is to try to get the information to the people who are going to be affected and that is the responsibility of the people in the region to provide that consultation. Thank you.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Supplementary, Mr. Nitah.

**Supplementary To Question 156-14(6): GNWT Definition Of Consultation**

**MR. NITAH:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, recognizing the Supreme Court of Canada put a legal definition on consultation, is the Deputy Premier comfortable that his government's departments have consulted and gotten informed consent from the clients and those who represent the clients at the community level, so that the government could go out and assess their bingo incomes, their IBA incomes, their child tax income, their support payment incomes and use that as assessed income which would be put towards their rent in public housing and the amount of money they would get from income support? Is the Minister comfortable with the legal definition of consultation and that his government's departments have done this consultation and gotten informed consent from the communities and people that represent the clients of public housing? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Deputy Premier, Mr. Antoine.

**HON. JIM ANTOINE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am not familiar with that detail of consultation at the community level. The Minister responsible, Minister Roger Allen, has that detail, so I would refer that question to him for the detail. Thank you.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** The question has been referred to the Minister responsible for the Housing Corporation, Mr. Allen.

**Further Return To Question 156-14(6): GNWT Definition Of Consultation**

**HON. ROGER ALLEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This is a pretty detailed question. Our obligation under the harmonization policy was to consult with all the stakeholders, the local housing organizations who are, under legal statutes, an agent of the NWT Housing Corporation. So they have assumed that mandate. Now if it requires consultation of the leadership, then we have already developed that process. We have consulted with those who have a vested interest in the administration of social housing in the communities, as well as in the regions. We have certainly addressed those key interest groups. Thank you.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Mr. Nitah, your final supplementary.

**Supplementary To Question 156-14(6): GNWT Definition Of Consultation**

**MR. NITAH:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, people in the communities, a great many of them are in public housing. They make up part of the fabric of the community. As such, their local elected leaders, the chief and council, the Metis council, the mayors, have to deal with this clientele. If members of the communities have been assessed as income earners, that affects the fabric of the community. When communities stop reporting bingo winners on local radios because they are afraid that this government is going to use that information to claw back the money, then you should consult the leaders of the community to make sure that when you are clawing back IBA payments to band members who negotiate based on treaties... I know this government doesn't want to get into the legal definition of that, but you should consult the chief and councils on that issue.

---Interjection

**MR. NITAH:** As far as I am concerned, there is no consent here. Will the government go and consult the leaders of communities, the clientele of public housing and get informed consent before they push this harmonization through and disrupt community life? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Minister responsible for the Housing Corporation.

**Further Return To Question 156-14(6): GNWT Definition Of Consultation**

**HON. ROGER ALLEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We are sensitive to the situation, but if we want to talk about legal terms, then the local housing organizations are a legally elected board. They are responsible for acting as agents of the NWT Housing Corporation and this government in this specific area of questioning here. So we have those who deal with those legal boards and legal authorities and will continue to do so. If it involves other leadership in the communities, yes, we are prepared to sit down and talk to them to see what their issues are. But in the context of the question, we do have a legal authority which we have dealt with. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Item 6, oral questions. Member for Deh Cho, Mr. McLeod.

**Question 157-14(6): Consultation On The Harmonization Initiative**

**MR. MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is also to Minister Roger Allen, Minister of housing. I listened with interest as he made a weak attempt to repair this terrible initiative that's been thrown in our laps. I wanted to ask the Minister, I have had the opportunity to follow up on some of his comments stating that there has been a communication plan and he's contacted the people in the different communities. Well, I am not finding that. I can't find that. I have talked to people from the seniors' society who state they don't support some of this initiative. In this day and age, where we are moving into land claim settlements and self-government negotiations, we have to take into consideration other governments that are out there. I want to ask the Minister responsible, if you could give me a list of all the band councils, all the aboriginal organizations, the Metis councils and the town councils who were informed of these changes that are going to be brought about as a result of the harmonization strategy and if he's also talked to the Aboriginal Summit, Mr. Speaker.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Minister responsible for the Housing Corporation, Mr. Allen.

**Return To Question 157-14(6): Consultation On The Harmonization Initiative**

**HON. ROGER ALLEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I hear another question and rightfully so, but again we are talking about a communication strategy that has been followed through, definitely. Yes, I have a series of dates, times and who participated in those workshops. Also, Mr. Speaker, one of the things that we have done was that the people on the Standing Committee on Social Programs on several occasions, as well as AOC, briefed members what was involved in the policy. It's pretty difficult to defend the rationale here. If the questions arise, I will speak definitely to the South Slave. One of the workshops was held at the Fort Providence Snowshoe Inn February 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup>, 2002; with district staff, February 6<sup>th</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup>, 2002; with LHO staff, and it goes on to list a number of other agencies: Hay River Housing Authority, Fort Providence Housing Association, Fort Resolution Housing Authority, Fort Smith Housing Authority, Fort Simpson Housing Authority. So there have been a number of attempts to provide training sessions. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Supplementary, Mr. McLeod.

**Supplementary To Question 157-14(6): Consultation On The Harmonization Initiative**

**MR. MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the Minister has given us a long list of his staff and his LHOs. My question was what political bodies has he talked to? Mr. Speaker, the Minister states it's hard to define his position. Well, it's hard for us to support it because we've asked for financial information which he has not provided to us. How do we know what the financial implications of this whole document are going to be if we have not seen any information on the cost implications of this whole initiative? Can the Minister supply that to us, Mr. Speaker?

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Minister responsible for the Housing Corporation, Mr. Allen.

**Further Return To Question 157-14(6): Consultation On The Harmonization Initiative**

**HON. ROGER ALLEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have been asked through a written question by a Member. I have been asked by AOC to provide a detailed analysis of the cost. I have been asked a number of questions and I said I needed sufficient time to have our officials from the NWT Housing Corporation detail those responses and they will respond as soon as possible. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Supplementary, Mr. McLeod.

**Supplementary To Question 157-14(6): Consultation On The Harmonization Initiative**

**MR. MCLEOD:** Mr. Speaker, we are running out of time. This House is going to be concluding soon. I would like to ask the Minister if he could provide this information we have been asking for by Monday? Can we have that before the closing of this House?

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Minister responsible for the Housing Corporation, Mr. Allen.

**Further Return To Question 157-14(6): Consultation On The Harmonization Initiative**

**HON. ROGER ALLEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, I have requested transcripts of a number of meetings and a number of requests. The unfortunate part is much of the information that is requested is detailed specifically to a committee or a series of committees and that is taking a bit of time to compile, but I will find out as soon as I can, Mr. Speaker.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Final supplementary, Mr. McLeod.

**Supplementary To Question 157-14(6): Consultation On The Harmonization Initiative**

**MR. MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Along with that commitment, would the Minister also commit to providing information as to what organizations were contacted, what governments were contacted and when? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Minister responsible for the Housing Corporation, Mr. Allen.

**Further Return To Question 157-14(6): Consultation On The Harmonization Initiative**

**HON. ROGER ALLEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will concur with that request. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Item 6, oral questions. Member for North Slave, Mr. Lafferty.

**Question 158-14(6): A Single Power Rate Zone And The Energy Strategy**

**MR. LAFFERTY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I said in my statement, there is an energy strategy out there. I am sorry, Mr. Speaker. My question is for the honourable Member for Nahendeh, the Deputy Premier. Since we have an energy strategy happening, we are using that as an excuse not to go with a one-rate zone for electrical power in the communities. Why, if we have all the information we need already, do we

have to wait for the energy strategy to go forward with putting one rate zone in the NWT? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** The question is directed to the Deputy Premier, Mr. Antoine.

**Return To Question 158-14(6): A Single Power Rate Zone And The Energy Strategy**

**HON. JIM ANTOINE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The energy strategy that this government initiated about a year-and-a-half ago is scheduled to be in place by June. We are going through community-by-community consultations at this point in time. We are trying to develop the whole strategy. The one-rate zone is part of that whole package. To pull it out of that whole package to pursue it, we didn't go down that track because we want to have it in one single package, along with everything else. Thank you.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Supplementary, Mr. Lafferty.

**Supplementary To Question 158-14(6): A Single Power Rate Zone And The Energy Strategy**

**MR. LAFFERTY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As we heard questions about harmonization and we heard what it might do to our people, we don't have all the information but we are going forward with it. I would like to ask the Deputy Minister what the difference is between the one-rate zone versus harmonization? What is the difference? We have more information here, but we don't go forward. Why don't we go forward? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Deputy Premier, Mr. Antoine.

**Further Return To Question 158-14(6): A Single Power Rate Zone And The Energy Strategy**

**HON. JIM ANTOINE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. There are lots of differences and a lot of similarities, as well. But I guess the main difference is in terms of the strategy, we wanted to look at all the different ways we view energy in the NWT. One aspect of it is the way we provide power in our communities. Some communities have hydro, some communities have diesel, and now we have communities that have natural gas up in Inuvik. So there are different forms of energy. Before we get any further into it and rushing into it, we wanted to get the views of people in the NWT and come out with a good, comprehensive energy strategy that looks at all of these different approaches. We are talking about a natural gas pipeline coming down the valley and how we are going to deal with it. Are we going to ask for the pipeline to be close to communities, so we can access natural gas or is it going to be far away from them? All these different ideas are out there. There is talk about hydro as well. So, that is the approach that we're taking and I really believe that we need to have a good energy strategy and it takes time to have a high level of discussion in the communities and that is what people are saying in the communities, from the reports I've been getting. Thank you.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Supplementary, Mr. Lafferty.

**Supplementary To Question 158-14(6): A Single Power Rate Zone And The Energy Strategy**

**MR. LAFFERTY:** Thank you, that was a long answer but it wasn't the answer I was looking for. I would like to ask the

Deputy Premier if he can answer my question: why the government doesn't want to go forward, if they have all the information because the strategy is going to be in June. Right now people are paying different rates of power in the community. In Rae-Edzo, they are paying almost twice the power as Yellowknife, and we are on the same hydro line, so, it is not fair to tell the smaller communities to pay more when everybody is trying to say, well, we're harmonized, we make everybody equal. Well, if we want the same medical care but then this government is doing wrong to the other thing, not trying to be fair and equal. I would like to ask the Deputy Minister, will he talk to his Cabinet and see if they can push forward without waiting for the strategy? Thank you.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Questions for the Deputy Premier, Mr. Antoine.

**Further Return To Question 158-14(6): A Single Power Rate Zone And The Energy Strategy**

**HON. JIM ANTOINE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the one-rate zone is not the only option but a lot of people in the House know this, that there are different options to look at it. Yes, I will address Cabinet to see if we could look at it in light of the fact that there is still a strategy process in place. I don't know how that is going to be done but I will ask. Thank you.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Final supplementary, Mr. Lafferty.

**Supplementary To Question 158-14(6): A Single Power Rate Zone And The Energy Strategy**

**MR. LAFFERTY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to remind the Deputy Premier in the Cabinet that there was no strategy in place and they did try to implement the one-rate zone and we almost had it and then it was scrapped for whatever reason. I would like to ask him if he can work with the Regular MLAs on this side and see how we can work together as a consensus government. Thank you.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Deputy Premier, Mr. Antoine.

**Further Return To Question 158-14(6): A Single Power Rate Zone And The Energy Strategy**

**HON. JIM ANTOINE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, yes, I always like to work with Members on the other side. We are all here for one reason, to work with and for people in the whole North, that is, every community in the North and certainly we hear what the Member is saying and we will address that at the Cabinet. Thank you.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Oral questions. Member for Frame Lake, Mr. Dent.

**Question 159-14(6): Discretionary Enforcement Of GNWT Human Resource Policies**

**MR. DENT:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister responsible for FMBS. Mr. Speaker, we in the government pride ourselves on having a dedicated and professional civil service and I know that our supervisors are doing their best to ensure that they are being fair. I expect that the Minister would agree that we don't want to put supervisors in a position where they can be accused of selectively enforcing personnel policies. I think we have that

right now with our Internet and e-mail policy. I would like to ask the Minister; is it common, in other personnel policies other than the Internet and e-mail, for it to be left up to the supervisor whether or not they are enforced?

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Minister responsible for the FMBS.

**Return To Question 159-14(6): Discretionary Enforcement Of GNWT Human Resource Policies**

**HON. JOE HANDLEY:** Mr. Speaker, certainly there is always discretion with managers, supervisors. Managing people, managing an office environment is a matter of following the policies but also using a lot of common sense, and we do allow managers and supervisors that ability to make good decisions and maintain a good working environment, so, certainly they have some discretion. Thank you.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Supplementary, Mr. Dent.

**Supplementary To Question 159-14(6): Discretionary Enforcement Of GNWT Human Resource Policies**

**MR. DENT:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, so if there is a level of discretion, let's say for instance, when a government employee is conducting a private business from their office, does the supervisor have the opportunity to ignore that or turn a blind eye to government offices being used for private business?

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Minister responsible for FMBS, Mr. Handley.

**Further Return To Question 159-14(6): Discretionary Enforcement Of GNWT Human Resource Policies**

**HON. JOE HANDLEY:** Mr. Speaker, the policy with regard to the code of conduct and use of e-mail and Internet is very clear, that people cannot conduct a private business from their office. In that kind of situation where the manager is absolutely clear that this is what is happening, then there is no discretion and the manager should not be overlooking that. That is very clear in our policies. Thank you.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Supplementary, Mr. Dent.

**Supplementary To Question 159-14(6): Discretionary Enforcement Of GNWT Human Resource Policies**

**MR. DENT:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as the policy is written on Internet and e-mail use, it is absolutely prohibited to be used for personal use. So, given that that is practically unenforceable, would the Minister undertake to see if a reasonable policy, like the one covering phones, can be developed for e-mail and Internet use?

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Minister responsible for the FMBS, Mr. Handley.

**Further Return To Question 159-14(6): Discretionary Enforcement Of GNWT Human Resource Policies**

**HON. JOE HANDLEY:** Mr. Speaker, certainly I can do that. I don't know what the Member is referring to as a policy on telephones. There is a section of the code of conduct that deals with using government equipment and property. So, maybe that is the section you are referring to. The Internet and e-mail policy is also very clear. Now, there are always some

areas where some discretion is allowed and, Mr. Speaker, I'd say that we cannot ask of our civil service any more than we ask of ourselves. I would say to all of us, we are managers too, we all have staff, we manage, we use these things. I think we have to put this same test to ourselves and I'm certainly prepared to do that, take a look at what is happening and ensure that we have a policy that is workable... maybe start right here in our Legislative Assembly. Thank you.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Final supplementary, Mr. Dent.

**Supplementary To Question 159-14(6): Discretionary Enforcement Of GNWT Human Resource Policies**

**MR. DENT:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, maybe the Minister wasn't listening to my statement. I didn't say that I thought we should have a policy that prohibited use; I said that is the way the policy reads now. I say that our policy, right now, is wrong. Let's recognize that it is wrong and let's develop a policy that is fair to our employees and recognizes that the Internet and e-mail services are being used. Can the Minister undertake to examine our policy with that in mind?

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Minister responsible for the FMBS, Mr. Handley.

**Further Return To Question 159-14(6): Discretionary Enforcement Of GNWT Human Resource Policies**

**HON. JOE HANDLEY:** Mr. Speaker, I do not believe our policy is wrong. I believe our policy allows discretion in the use, for example, of e-mail and Internet and I think that the managers and the employees have to use good judgment in how they are using it, but there are some areas that are absolutely prohibited. Running a business in your office is prohibited but using the Internet or using a telephone to check on the weather tomorrow, that may be something that is accepted in an office. So, this doesn't make the policy wrong, Mr. Speaker. We have to allow some discretion. The world isn't all black and white and there is no way you are ever going to manager-proof every office in any government organization, whether it is here or in one of the government departments downtown. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Oral questions. Member for Great Slave, Mr. Braden.

**Question 160-14(6): Need For Changes To The Landlord And Tenancy Act**

**MR. BRADEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions this afternoon are for the Minister of Justice in his responsibility for the office of the territorial rentals officer and the landlord and tenancy legislation. Mr. Speaker, over the past few months, I along with other Members here have drawn attention to the issues of an escalating rental market and the increased costs for tenants. But you know landlords, as well, have issues with our 15-year-old legislation and I would like to ask the Minister about the landlords who face situations where tenants are failing to pay, are committing vandalism in their units, are causing problems for the neighbours because of bad behaviour and it takes weeks and months to remove these tenants. What can be done, Mr. Speaker, to make sure our laws are more responsive to the issues facing landlords? Thank you.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Minister of Justice, Mr. Allen.

**Return To Question 160-14(6): Need For Changes To The Landlord And Tenancy Act**

**HON. ROGER ALLEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Since my last question, I believe that just occurred in June with regard to what are we doing to try to help speed up the process. Well I have been working within our statutes to see where we can count on the Residential Tenancies Act to assist those landlords who are having problems with unsuitable tenants. It has been a difficult process, trying to reassess the level of detail required. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Supplementary, Mr. Braden.

**Supplementary To Question 160-14(6): Need For Changes To The Landlord And Tenancy Act**

**MR. BRADEN:** Thank you, it is interesting that the Minister allows that it is difficult to get detail on the way things are going in the situation we have, especially when I see, Mr. Speaker, after checking with our library here and the library is a pretty good source, that we haven't seen an annual report from the rentals officer since 1996-97, six years. Mr. Speaker, will the Minister explain why a report has not been filed on this very valuable and important part of our service? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Minister of Justice, Mr. Allen.

**Further Return To Question 160-14(6): Need For Changes To The Landlord And Tenancy Act**

**HON. ROGER ALLEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am glad the Member raised the point. I don't have any explanation at this time, but I will definitely undertake to find out. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Supplementary, Mr. Braden.

**Supplementary To Question 160-14(6): Need For Changes To The Landlord And Tenancy Act**

**MR. BRADEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate the answer and I do look forward to getting reports about this office. Regarding this office, Mr. Speaker, by one of the information flyers that the rental office sent out, our own department of Education, Culture and Employment, through its services as the income support office, is not a landlord and, therefore, the provisions regarding rent increases do not apply to subsidized public housing. So I wanted to ask, how is it that our government which is, in fact, a landlord to hundreds of families across the North, why is it that we are not subject to the same privileges, even though they are somewhat inadequate, as other landlords? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Minister of Justice, Mr. Allen.

**HON. ROGER ALLEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I don't have an answer for that. I will take that question as notice.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you. The question has been taken as notice. Item 6, oral questions. Member for Hay River North, Mr. Delorey.

**Question 161-14(6): Re-Designation Of Young Offenders Facility In Hay River**

**MR. DELOREY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my questions today are for the Minister of Justice. Mr. Speaker, for a number of years now, I have been raising issues in this House about the young offenders' facility in Hay River, the Dene K'Onia Centre. There was an initiative in place to change the designation of that centre from young offenders to an open custody facility. It's been talked about considerably, also the jobs surrounding that centre. I would like the Minister to bring me up to date as to where that whole initiative is with Dene K'Onia. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Minister of Justice, Mr. Allen.

**Return To Question 161-14(6): Re-Designation Of Young Offenders Facility In Hay River**

**HON. ROGER ALLEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, the Dene K'Onia Young Offenders' Facility remains in operation today. It is scheduled to be re-designated from a closed custody facility to an open custody facility in the next year. We still will retain a complement of staff and programs. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Supplementary, Mr. Delorey.

**Supplementary To Question 161-14(6): Re-Designation Of Young Offenders Facility In Hay River**

**MR. DELOREY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the Minister said it will be re-designated within the next year and they will retain a complement of staff. When exactly is the centre supposed to start taking in inmates or clients under the open custody designation? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Minister of Justice, Mr. Allen.

**Further Return To Question 161-14(6): Re-Designation Of Young Offenders Facility In Hay River**

**HON. ROGER ALLEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As of today, it still remains a triple secure facility and we still accept open custody clients. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Supplementary, Mr. Delorey.

**Supplementary To Question 161-14(6): Re-Designation Of Young Offenders Facility In Hay River**

**MR. DELOREY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I didn't quite get that answer, Mr. Speaker. When I brought this up in the House before, both with this Minister and the Minister of Justice in the past, there was a commitment made that through the transfer and re-designation of Dene K'Onia to open custody, that there would be no loss of jobs. I am wondering if the Minister could state that the same number of jobs are still there and that those jobs are protected and there is no intention of this department to do away with jobs at Dene K'Onia. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Minister of Justice, Mr. Allen.

**Further Return To Question 161-14(6): Re-Designation Of Young Offenders Facility In Hay River**

**HON. ROGER ALLEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We have committed to retain the complement of 15 staff members from the Dene K'Onia Young Offenders Facility and we will continue to do so for the life of the facility. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Supplementary, Mr. Delorey.

**Supplementary To Question 161-14(6): Re-Designation Of Young Offenders Facility In Hay River**

**MR. DELOREY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I am aware that there is some training going on at the centre right now in preparing for open custody. One of the fears that we had with open custody was that there are examples of that same type of facility being operated under a contract basis. Is the Minister aware of any proposals out there right now to do the service that the open custody facility would do on a contract basis? And if there was, would he be in support of that or is he committed to maintaining Dene K'Onia as an open custody facility? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Minister of Justice, Mr. Allen.

**Further Return To Question 161-14(6): Re-Designation Of Young Offenders Facility In Hay River**

**HON. ROGER ALLEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We are committed to retaining the same number of staff members and also retaining the same way of operating based on previous consultations with the community. Certainly our ambition is to make sure you retain the same number of jobs and the same level of service in that community. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Item 6, oral questions. Member for Yellowknife South, Mr. Bell.

**Question 162-14(6): Phasing In Of Increases Under Harmonization**

**MR. BELL:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is for the Minister responsible for the Housing Corporation. I think it's clear to us all, Mr. Speaker, there is an eye toward trying to rehabilitate this harmonization program and save it before the wheels absolutely fall off. I think they've gone some measure to dealing with some concerns of Members as far as freezing rents for seniors. It's a good start. I would like to know from the Minister if they also considered phasing in rent increases to all families. There are a number of families who will get over \$200 a month increases, not a lot, but I am asking the Minister if there was consideration given to phasing in those rents. Thank you.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Minister responsible for the Housing Corporation, Mr. Allen.

**Return To Question 162-14(6): Phasing In Of Increases Under Harmonization**

**HON. ROGER ALLEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Our first attempt was to try to reconcile the differences between the various issues that were raised. We thought perhaps they would be more sensitive to the seniors' needs. We also looked at the other 53 families who would be adversely affected. We have, in the course of time, developed and modified a number

of housing programs to address that. We will continue to work on an individual basis. I committed to that last week. We are doing that, as we speak. So there are a number of other options we are looking at very closely to address those who will be adversely affected. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Supplementary, Mr. Bell.

**Supplementary To Question 162-14(6): Phasing In Of Increases Under Harmonization**

**MR. BELL:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I know the Minister's department is working as hard as they can with some of these folks who are going to get the big increases, trying to encourage them to move into home ownership programs like the EDAP program. I am wondering if the Minister is aware though that some of the people getting these big increases won't meet the minimum threshold requirement for a program like EDAP and will be sort of in limbo? I wonder if the Minister is aware that there is this gap? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Minister responsible for the Housing Corporation, Mr. Allen.

**Further Return To Question 162-14(6): Phasing In Of Increases Under Harmonization**

**HON. ROGER ALLEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We certainly have addressed that on an interim basis. We have looked at the core need income threshold levels. We've tried to modify a number of our homeownership programs to assist those, as I stated earlier, who are adversely affected with the proposed rent increases. We need to evaluate their financial position and we will provide the counselling to help guide them through to that finality. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Supplementary, Mr. Bell.

**Supplementary To Question 162-14(6): Phasing In Of Increases Under Harmonization**

**MR. BELL:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This gets a bit more specific. Maybe the Minister can provide me with this information about potential phased-in increase options. I know they looked at grandfathering for seniors. I am wondering if they did a study to determine what it would have cost to phase-in all families equally, everybody in public housing, with this \$50, \$200 and then \$400 max option. Did they look at all families and could he give me some information on what that would have cost? Thank you.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Minister responsible for the Housing Corporation, Mr. Allen.

**Further Return To Question 162-14(6): Phasing In Of Increases Under Harmonization**

**HON. ROGER ALLEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We are constantly under the radar gun to do a cost-analysis as well as some further assessment of impacts. We felt we identified a number we could assist, as I said earlier, a process. We will continue to do so in good faith. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Item 6, oral questions. Member for Deh Cho, Mr. McLeod.

**Question 163-14(6): Cabinet Deferral Of Harmonization Strategy**

**MR. MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions are for the Deputy Premier regarding harmonization. Today we heard the Minister announce that this initiative would change to allow for a few seniors to be grandfathered and I say that's not enough. I believe a lot of people in my riding feel the same way. Mr. Speaker, I have said from the beginning, this whole initiative is lacking focus, leadership and political will. I would like to know if the Deputy Premier will look at considering further changes to this whole initiative? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Just for clarification, Mr. McLeod, who are you referring your question to?

**MR. MCLEOD:** Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Deputy Premier.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Deputy Premier, Mr. Antoine.

**Return To Question 163-14(6): Cabinet Deferral Of Harmonization Strategy**

**HON. JIM ANTOINE:** Mr. Speaker, this initiative is something that we've been working on and the Minister responsible for implementation, Roger Allen, indicated that he is prepared to look at the different options. I think I would like to hear more about it. I am sure until the end of this session, we will hear more about it. I guess you could say it's a work in progress. We will continue to try to massage this, so that it will be suitable once it's finally agreed upon. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Supplementary, Mr. McLeod.

**Supplementary To Question 163-14(6): Cabinet Deferral Of Harmonization Strategy**

**MR. MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. That's welcome news to hear we still have some options out there. I would like to ask if the Deputy Premier could tell us if Cabinet is planning to discuss this whole initiative again, talk about it further prior to April 1<sup>st</sup> of this year? Thank you.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Deputy Premier, Mr. Antoine.

**Further Return To Question 163-14(6): Cabinet Deferral Of Harmonization Strategy**

**HON. JIM ANTOINE:** Yes, we are continuing to look at it.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Supplementary, Mr. McLeod.

**Supplementary To Question 163-14(6): Cabinet Deferral Of Harmonization Strategy**

**MR. MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also would like to ask the Deputy Premier if he would consider withdrawing this whole initiative until we can make some changes to meet some of the serious shortcomings of this whole issue that needs to be addressed. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Deputy Premier, Mr. Antoine.

**Further Return To Question 163-14(6): Cabinet Deferral Of Harmonization Strategy**

**HON. JIM ANTOINE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, this is a Cabinet initiative. I can't make that decision on my own. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Final supplementary, Mr. McLeod.

**Supplementary To Question 163-14(6): Cabinet Deferral Of Harmonization Strategy**

**MR. MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Then I would like to ask the Deputy Premier if he would consider making that recommendation to Cabinet? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Deputy Premier, Mr. Antoine.

**Further Return To Question 163-14(6): Cabinet Deferral Of Harmonization Strategy**

**HON. JIM ANTOINE:** Yes, I will take the question to Cabinet. Thank you.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Item 6, oral questions. Member for Tu Nedhe, Mr. Nitah.

**Question 164-14(6): Income Support In Small Communities**

**MR. NITAH:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment. Mr. Speaker, all this discussion on harmonization, I believe, was bringing out a very ugly part of government programs and services delivery. That is the intrusive nature of the income support area of responsibility where the sharing of information between departments, I believe, is infringing on privacy and confidentiality of these clients. Mr. Speaker, the Minister and his department are trying to encourage people to get jobs. I would like to ask him, as Minister responsible for employment, what is he doing to provide options in the smaller communities where employment is an option rather than income support? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Minister of Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Ootes.

**Return To Question 164-14(6): Income Support In Small Communities**

**HON. JAKE OOTES:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, our income support programs have built in a productive choice portion and that is to encourage people to ensure that they have the opportunity to further their education, also to obtain work if such is available in and around communities, Mr. Speaker. We have designed a number of programs to help communities fulfill that need. The Maximizing Northern Employment Program, for example, developed a number of initiatives that may be of help in that area. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Supplementary, Mr. Nitah.

**Supplementary To Question 164-14(6): Income Support In Small Communities**

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the Minister a very specific question. How

many jobs has he created in Lutselk'e and Fort Resolution during the term of this Assembly? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Minister of Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Ootes.

**Further Return To Question 164-14(6): Income Support In Small Communities**

**HON. JAKE OOTES:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the Member is asking a very specific question, which I don't have the details to what specific jobs have been created in particular communities. Our programs are tailored to assist various organizations, various communities in developing and promoting the opportunity to advance individuals for employment and they're education-related types of programs, Mr. Speaker. In terms of maximizing employment, for instance, we have the public/private sector partnership. It's a \$1 million program that organizations can access to help create employment. We also have, within our department, a small budget to help communities work on the human resource development plans, Mr. Speaker. So there are a number of those types of programs available that are there to assist communities in employment improvement.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Supplementary, Mr. Nitah.

**Supplementary To Question 164-14(6): Income Support In Small Communities**

**MR. NITAH:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I probably could tell you that there is no employment created in Fort Resolution or in Lutselk'e. I would like to ask the Minister though, who is delivering these programs and services at the community level? Where is it coming from? Who is assisting the delivery of it at the community level? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Minister of Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Ootes.

**Further Return To Question 164-14(6): Income Support In Small Communities**

**HON. JAKE OOTES:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Again, Mr. Speaker, we have a variety of areas. The college delivers programs to assist people in training programs. I will give an example of the mobile welding unit that went into a variety of communities; I believe Lutselk'e was one. It's a program that assists people to gain some experience in the welding trade. They could move on from there to enter further training or see if they wish to be employed in that field in some capacity where the ability is available to gain employment. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Final supplementary, Mr. Nitah.

**Supplementary To Question 164-14(6): Income Support In Small Communities**

**MR. NITAH:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, this government, in general, has spent a lot of dollars promoting diamonds and diamond mining companies and jobs and a lot of oil and gas companies and the jobs associated with that industry. When are we going to start promoting the creation of employment opportunities in our communities? We need an economic base. Not everybody can work out of the

communities. There are family units to consider. There are obligations at the community level. Will the Minister work with his Cabinet colleagues to start looking at creating government positions in our communities so that we can create an economic base and provide an option other than income support? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Minister of Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Ootes.

**Further Return To Question 164-14(6): Income Support In Small Communities**

**HON. JAKE OOTES:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the attempt has been there to design programs to help people obtain the credentials to move into the labour force. Our programs are designed along those lines. More and more, we are looking for direct type of experiences for individuals, be it apprenticeships or, as I mentioned, the training program, the welding program we have in place. There are a number of those, Mr. Speaker. There is also the opportunity for individuals to gain employment with the various mine sites and so forth. There is an opportunity within communities to gain employment. The School of Community Government with MACA helps to train individuals who work for municipalities and local groups. That's another opportunity for individuals to gain experience, so they can obtain possible employment in their local setting. We all know that the employment levels in the territory are extremely high. The unemployment levels are very low. More and more opportunities are arising for individuals to enter the workforce, but they may not always be specifically in the community in which the individual lives. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Item 6, oral questions. Member for North Slave, Mr. Lafferty.

**Question 165-14(6): Harmonization Strategy Creates Three Classes Of Students**

**MR. LAFFERTY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. One of the messages the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment is trying to get across is that the harmonization strategy is simply a method of standardizing the way income is calculated between two government departments. I might suggest to the Minister here that this is too simple a rationalization given the effects of the harmonization strategy that have come to light over the past couple of weeks. Is the Minister aware that by implementing the harmonization strategy, the government could create three different classes of students receiving student financial assistance? The students who are in college housing, students in public housing, students renting on the open market. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Minister of Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Ootes.

**Return To Question 165-14(6): Harmonization Strategy Creates Three Classes Of Students**

**HON. JAKE OOTES:** That's correct, Mr. Speaker.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Supplementary, Mr. Lafferty.

**Supplementary To Question 165-14(6): Harmonization Strategy Creates Three Classes Of Students**

**MR. LAFFERTY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to ask the Minister, because of the harmonization strategy, will he be committed to raising the rent on housing that is available on the campuses of Aurora College to ensure there is an equal rent scale? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Minister of Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Ootes.

**Further Return To Question 165-14(6): Harmonization Strategy Creates Three Classes Of Students**

**HON. JAKE OOTES:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The rent scales for the college are established by a board of governors, Mr. Speaker.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Supplementary, Mr. Lafferty.

**Supplementary To Question 165-14(6): Harmonization Strategy Creates Three Classes Of Students**

**MR. LAFFERTY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As Aurora College is an arm of this government, will the Minister be in contact with them to tell them that they are committed to raising their rents? They have to equalize everyone. Will he be doing that?

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Minister of Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Ootes.

**Further Return To Question 165-14(6): Harmonization Strategy Creates Three Classes Of Students**

**HON. JAKE OOTES:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as I mentioned, the running of the college is the responsibility of the board of governors of the college. I can certainly pass on a comment to them to see if they wish to address the issue of rents for their students, but I think that's a decision I will leave to them.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Final supplementary, Mr. Lafferty.

**Supplementary To Question 165-14(6): Harmonization Strategy Creates Three Classes Of Students**

**MR. LAFFERTY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. He repeated the same answer twice. Will the Minister commit to raising the amount of student financial assistance to those students who are unable to secure subsidized accommodation on campus or to access public housing because of this harmonization program? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Minister of Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Ootes.

**Further Return To Question 165-14(6): Harmonization Strategy Creates Three Classes Of Students**

**HON. JAKE OOTES:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, we provide a living allowance, an accommodation allowance, within the subsidy at the moment and that is there to take care of the cost of housing for students, Mr. Speaker.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Item 6, oral questions. Member for Frame Lake, Mr. Dent.

**Question 166-14(6): Reasonable Approach To Employees' Use Of Internet**

**MR. DENT:** Mr. Speaker, my questions are for the Minister responsible for the Financial Management Board Secretariat. If I heard him right earlier today, Mr. Speaker, the Minister said that the Internet policy of the government was not black and white. I would like to quote from that policy, Mr. Speaker: "Using the Internet for any activities that are not job related, e.g. searching or browsing for material of personal interest, is not acceptable." Contrast that, Mr. Speaker, with the policy on phone use. The GNWT acknowledges the requirement for employees to have reasonable use of government phones for personal reasons. Why will the Minister not take the same approach to Internet use that the government does to the use of phones?

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Minister responsible for the FMBS, Mr. Handley.

**Return To Question 166-14(6): Reasonable Approach To Employees' Use Of Internet**

**HON. JOE HANDLEY:** Mr. Speaker, the Member is reading selectively out of a policy. I can go back to the Internet policy as well. In it, it says "e-mail is an effective communication tool which fosters cooperation, teamwork and partnering. It provides access to a wide variety of information, resources, communication tools that assist employees in performing their duties." It goes on to say what is acceptable, "...including access to external databases, libraries, newspapers, news letters, magazines..." There's a whole list of things that are acceptable. None of this is black and white. What it does do, Mr. Speaker, is it breaks it into categories. Some things are acceptable and judgment by both the employee and the manager has to be used there. Some things are not acceptable, and that is they shouldn't be done. There is a section here that lists things that are absolutely prohibited. So, Mr. Speaker, you can't pick and choose and take one section or one paragraph and say that's the whole intent of the policy. You have to read the document as a whole. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Supplementary, Mr. Dent.

**Supplementary To Question 166-14(6): Reasonable Approach To Employees' Use Of Internet**

**MR. DENT:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I guess we can argue about who can read more selectively because, at the beginning of the section he quoted, it says, "Job related uses, include the accessing of external data bases, libraries, newspapers..." So, yes, you can read this selectively, but the bottom line is all throughout it keeps saying the use of Internet for anything that is not job related is wrong. I think we should take a look at the phone policy, which says government employees can use the phone system for personal reasons, but then in a very short amount of time what is strictly prohibited. Let's simplify it. Let's make it simple so there isn't so much danger of being accused of selective enforcement. Why will the Minister not take a look at the two policies with an eye to bringing them together?

---Interjection

---Laughter

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Minister responsible for the FMBS, Mr. Handley.

**Further Return To Question 166-14(6): Reasonable Approach To Employees' Use Of Internet**

**HON. JOE HANDLEY:** Again, I could take two comparable sections. This is from the old code of conduct and it has to do with telephone calls: "The government acknowledges reasonable use of government telephone for personal reasons, however the following uses are strictly prohibited..." and it lists a number of things that are prohibited. If you go to the Internet policies, it says "inappropriate or prohibited use of government e-mail or Internet services include..." and it gives a long list of things. It's the same thing. If we are going to compare one policy or code of conduct regarding the use of government equipment, including telephones with Internet, then let's use the comparable paragraphs. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** The time for oral questions is over, but I will allow the Member to use up his one supplementary and his final supplementary. Mr. Dent.

**Supplementary To Question 166-14(6): Reasonable Approach To Employees' Use Of Internet**

**MR. DENT:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the Minister is obviously more interested in arguing semantics with me than trying to deal with a reasonable concern of a number of employees.

---Interjection

**MR. DENT:** That's fine, we can go on and argue about it, but the fact is that right now our employees have to sign a note when they come into our employ that says they have read our policy on Internet use and that they understand it. It says in this policy that they may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including dismissal if they fail to abide by it. Mr. Speaker, the current policy is putting too many of our employees at risk. I think this Minister has a responsibility to take a look at the policy again and try to bring it into line with reality. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Minister responsible for the FMBS, Mr. Handley.

**Further Return To Question 166-14(6): Reasonable Approach To Employees' Use Of Internet**

**HON. JOE HANDLEY:** Mr. Speaker, I look at all of our policies of the government continually and if there is ever any way of improving on a policy, then certainly I am 100 percent in favour of doing that. But, Mr. Speaker, I wouldn't bet the farm on this one just being a terrible policy. I think this is a good policy. This is one that is responsible. It ensures that the employee has read it and that they understand there are consequences if they don't abide by it. Mr. Speaker, the bottom line is all our policies are subject to review and I will look at this one as well. Thank you.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Item 7, written questions. Item 8, returns to written questions. Item 9, replies to Opening Address. Item 10, petitions. Mr. Braden.

**ITEM 10: PETITIONS**

**Petition 2-14(6): Rental Rates And Affordable Housing In The NWT**

**MR. BRADEN:** Mr. Speaker, I would like to present today a petition dealing with the matter of rental rates and affordable housing in the NWT. Mr. Speaker, the petition contains 405 signatures of Yellowknife residents and, Mr. Speaker, the petitions request that the Government of the Northwest Territories create effective ways for tenants and landlords to resolve disputes regarding excess rent increases, and that the government work with developers to enable construction of affordable rental housing units in the NWT. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you. Item 10, petitions. Item 11, reports of standing and special committees. Item 12, reports of committees on the review of bills. Mr. Roland.

**ITEM 12: REPORTS OF COMMITTEES ON THE REVIEW OF BILLS**

**Bill 4: An Act To Amend The Consumer Protection Act**

**MR. ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to report to the Assembly that the Standing Committee on Governance and Economic Development has reviewed Bill 4, An Act to Amend the Consumer Protection Act, and wishes to report that Bill 4 is now ready for further consideration in Committee of the Whole. Thank you.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Item 13, reports of committees on the review of bills. Item 13, tabling of documents. Mr. Miltenberger.

**ITEM 13: TABLING OF DOCUMENTS**

**Tabled Document 35-14(6): NWT Health And Social Services System: Accountability Framework**

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I wish to table the following document entitled NWT Health and Social Services System: Accountability Framework.

**Tabled Document 36-14(6): Stanton Territorial Health Authority Operational Review: Implementation Team Status Report – January 31, 2003**

Mr. Speaker, I wish to table Stanton Territorial Health Authority Operational Review: Implementation Team Status Report – January 31, 2002.

**Tabled Document 37-14(6): Discussion Paper: Territorial Law To Control Tobacco Use. What Do You Think? January 2003**

Mr. Speaker, I wish to table Discussion Paper: Territorial Law to Control Tobacco Use. What Do You Think? January 2003.

**Tabled Document 38-14(6): HSS System Action Plan 2002-2005: February 2003 Update**

Mr. Speaker, I wish to table Health and Social Services System Action Plan 2002-2005: February 2003 Update. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you. Item 13, tabling of documents. Item 14, notices of motion. Item 15, notices of motions for first reading of bills. Mr. Miltenberger.

**ITEM 15: NOTICES OF MOTIONS  
FOR FIRST READING OF BILLS**

**Bill 12: Nursing Profession Act**

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Mr. Speaker, I give notice that on Friday, March 7, 2003, I will move that Bill 12, the Nursing Profession Act, be read for the first time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Item 15, notices of motions for first reading of bills. Mr. Handley.

**Bill 13: Deh Cho Bridge Act**

**HON. JOE HANDLEY:** Mr. Speaker, I have notice of motion for first reading of three bills. Mr. Speaker I give notice that on Friday, March 7, 2003, I will move that Bill 13, Deh Cho Bridge Act, be read for the first time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Bill 14: An Act To Amend The Public Service Act**

Mr. Speaker, I give notice that on Friday, March 7, 2003, I will move that Bill 14, An Act to Amend the Public Service Act, be read for the first time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Bill 15: An Act To Amend The Workers' Compensation Act**

Mr. Speaker, I give notice that on Friday, March 7, 2003, I will move that Bill 15, An Act to Amend the Workers' Compensation Act, be read for the first time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Item 15, notices of motions for first reading of bills. Item 16, motions. Mr. Lafferty.

**MR. LAFFERTY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I seek unanimous consent to waive Rule 44 to deal with Motion 6-14(6) today. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** The Member is seeking unanimous consent. Are there any nays? You have unanimous consent, Mr. Lafferty.

**ITEM 16: MOTIONS**

**Motion 6-14(6): To Discontinue The Strategy To Harmonize Income Support And Social Housing, Defeated**

**MR. LAFFERTY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

WHEREAS the harmonization strategy fails to meet the needs of seniors and students in the NWT;

AND WHEREAS the strategy penalizes seniors who are forced to take in family members when there are no other accommodations available in communities, by adding the seniors' pension income to the household calculations;

AND WHEREAS a complete lack of rental accommodation available in small communities is not conducive to family members moving out of a seniors' home;

AND WHEREAS the strategy continues to place the responsibility for rental remuneration with the head of the household, in many cases the senior on a fixed income rather than apportioning it among working members of the household;

AND WHEREAS some seniors are on fixed incomes who have secured loans based on their available income who will have difficulty serving their debt due to rent increases;

AND WHEREAS the harmonization strategy will treat student financial assistance loans as income for the purpose of calculating rent assessment in public housing;

AND WHEREAS there are still too many inequities and fundamental unfairness in defining and calculating income for the purposes of income support and rent assessment in public housing;

NOW THEREFORE I MOVE, seconded by the honourable Member for Deh Cho, that the implementation of the harmonization of income support and social housing strategy be discontinued in its entirety;

AND FURTHER that any future initiative to address income support and public housing inequities consider the inherent difficulties encountered by seniors and students in the North. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** The motion is in order. To the motion.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Question.

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

---Defeated

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Item 16, motions. Item 17, first reading of bills. Mr. Miltenberger.

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Nunakput, that Bill 10, An Act to Amend the Hospital Insurance and Health and Social Services Administration Act, be read for the first time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Sorry, Mr. Miltenberger. We have not received copies of this bill and it's not before the House. Item 17, first reading of bills. Item 18, second reading of bills. Item 19, consideration in Committee of the Whole of bills and other matters: Bill 2, Bill 3, committee reports 3-14(6), 4-14(6), 5-14(6), 6-14(6), 8-14(6) and 9-14(6), with Mr. Delorey in the chair.

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

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** I will call Committee of the Whole to order. We have a number of issues to consider. We left off with RWED yesterday. What is the wish of the committee? Mr. Roland.

**MR. ROLAND:** Mr. Chairman, that we continue with Bill 3 and committee reports 3-14(6), 4-14(6), and 5-14(6) and continue with the Department of Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Does the committee agree?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

---Agreed

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Roland. Mr. Nitah.

**MR. NITAH:** Mr. Chairman, I move that we report progress.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** The motion is in order. The motion is not debatable. All those in favour? All those opposed? The motion is defeated.

---Defeated

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** The Chair calls a 15-minute break and we'll come back and carry on with RWED.

---SHORT RECESS

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

#### **Department Of Resources, Wildlife And Economic Development**

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** I'll call Committee of the Whole back to order. We'll continue on with the Department of Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development. Does the Minister wish to bring in any witnesses? Mr. Antoine.

**HON. JIM ANTOINE:** Mr. Chairman, yes, I have witnesses.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Does the committee agree?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

---Agreed

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Sergeant-at-Arms, would you escort the witnesses in, please?

Mr. Minister, for the record, could you introduce your witnesses, please?

**HON. JIM ANTOINE:** Mr. Chairman, I have with me today Bob McLeod to my left who is the deputy minister of Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development; to my immediate right is Jim Kennedy, director of corporate services; and to my far right is Fred Koe who is still the president of the NWT Development Corporation. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Antoine. When we left off yesterday, we were on general comments and Mr. Bell was on the list. Mr. Bell.

#### **General Comments**

**MR. BELL:** Thank you. I did have a couple of questions about the Minister's comments, specifically I'll start with the Business Credit Corporation. I recently wrote the Minister a letter. In that letter I asked him some questions about the overall lending policies of the BCC, really of this government. I wanted to ask him about the BCC's lending portfolio and how it weighs various sectors. My understanding is proposals come forward to regional RWED staff and are evaluated sort of on their merits. If they get the go-ahead, they're passed on up -- if they're of the right amount of money -- to the BCC. At some

point either the board deals with it if it's a big enough loan, or it's dealt with strictly by staff if it's a smaller loan. I'm wondering if the Minister can tell me, after this risk analysis is done, is there still some chance that it gets the go-ahead from the RWED staff that the BCC will not agree not so much with that evaluation, but I think after considering how their overall lending portfolio looks, they may determine that they're overweight in the hotel industry, for instance, or an airport or in airplanes or something like this. So a good proposal might come forward, but it just might be the case that the BCC feels it's too heavily exposed to a certain sector. Is that the case? Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Bell. Mr. Antoine.

**HON. JIM ANTOINE:** Thank you. The Member's thoughts in regard to the way the proposal moves through the system, through RWED and then to the BCC are correct. On that part, we look at the different sectors and we monitor it through the different sectors. I'm going to ask the deputy minister to elaborate further. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Antoine. Mr. McLeod.

**MR. BOB MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We keep track of the economic sectors and the size of the credit facilities for each sector, but it is not a determining factor in whether a loan is accepted or rejected. We don't set a limit and if a loan will exceed that limit, we don't reject it for that basis. We just track it on the basis of economic sectors for the purposes of reporting to the public and to this Assembly. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Mr. Bell.

**MR. BELL:** Okay, thank you. That's the kind of information I was looking for. So in a situation where I may approach a charter bank with a business plan and say I'm looking for a loan in the hospitality sector, it could be the case that the bank might say to me well, this loan looks to be a safe loan, this looks to be a good business plan, but the truth of the matter is we're just not handing out any more hospitality loans because we're overweight in that sector for the next couple of years. It appears that we don't treat it in the same manner as charter banks in that regard.

I would like to ask a question about the ability of the RWED staff who have initially evaluated the loan to advocate for that application in front of the BCC. Does that happen? Does somebody from the regional RWED staff who have initially seen the loan, do they go forward and sort of make the case as to why it has been passed up to the BCC level?

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Bell. Mr. Antoine.

**HON. JIM ANTOINE:** The RWED staff initially would work with the different applicants and try to prepare the applicants for having the Credit Corporation review their application in a favourable light. They work with the proponent. Again, I would like to refer to the deputy minister for more detail. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Antoine. Mr. McLeod.

**MR. BOB MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Working with BCC and our regional staff, we are trying to provide a service to businesses that are out there. It's not unusual for our staff to

approach the BCC officials to give readings on applications and to get some direction on areas how they could improve upon an application. So our regional staff is working very closely with the BCC staff and the boards. Also very recently to improve the level of service and to improve on the time and decision-making, we've established credit committees so that the BCC board only requires a smaller amount of members to have a quorum, rather than pulling the full board together. So the service and response has increased significantly in the last year or so. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Mr. Bell.

**MR. BELL:** Thank you. I'd like to thank the Minister and the deputy for that answer. I think that's the kind of client focus that government needs to show, and I'm glad to see that that is going on. I think at times we tend to be too rigid and too stuck to policies, but it appears here that we're being flexible in order to try to meet the requirement for time limits on the part of applicants. So I do appreciate that.

Let me ask about whether or not there's a specific sector considered, that being manufacturing. There is some discussion on manufacturing in one of the last paragraphs in the Minister's opening comments. I'm wondering if at the BCC level there are any priority areas, whether it be loans, grant monies, contributions that are targeted exclusively for manufacturing or value-added sectors; or, if they aren't specifically targeted that way, whether or not manufacturers would have some sort of advantage if they make the case that they're import replacing. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Bell. Mr. Antoine.

**HON. JIM ANTOINE:** On the manufacturing sector we've been focusing on creating a more stand-alone sector. The manufacturing sector was attached to the Business Incentive Policy, and we've been working fairly hard with the manufacturers to break that out and have an area of focus. Our intention is to have a focus on the manufacturing sector very shortly. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Antoine. Mr. Bell.

**MR. BELL:** Thank you. I'm certainly glad to hear that, as well. I think it's important that we focus where we can, despite the fact that we do have limited markets to a large degree. Where there are businesses that appear to be viable and could engage in important replacing, I think it's important to support them.

Let me just ask the Minister, he indicates that there is going to be the development and implementation of a strategy to support and encourage growth in this sector. Can the Minister give me some sort of indication when we might see a strategy? Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Bell. Mr. Antoine.

**HON. JIM ANTOINE:** We have a draft of how we'd like to see this manufacturing sector dealt with. Very shortly we are going to public review on this. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Antoine. Mr. Bell.

**MR. BELL:** Okay, thank you. That's all the questions I have, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Bell. General comments. Mr. Nitah.

**MR. NITAH:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, in his opening remarks, the Minister talked about the unprecedented level of economic growth during the past few years. I know this government spent a lot of dollars, a lot of time, a lot of human resources on seeing that those opportunities go to Northerners. I'd like to ask the Minister, in the area of economic development, how many staff members does he have and what's the budget?

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Nitah. Mr. Antoine.

**HON. JIM ANTOINE:** Right now we have a total staff of 453, with a total budget of \$85 million. That whole department is geared, in one form or another, to economic development, whether it's in wildlife or tourism or any of those sectors. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Antoine. I'll remind Members that 11-28 is a full list of active positions. Mr. Nitah.

**MR. NITAH:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I thought we were still on general comments. Is that correct?

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Yes, Mr. Nitah.

**MR. NITAH:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, can the Minister give us an indication of what those 400 people, including that big budget, is doing in promoting economic development in the Northwest Territories? What kinds of programs? Just give us a general idea. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Nitah. Mr. Antoine.

**HON. JIM ANTOINE:** We're doing a lot of work in the area of business development. There are all kinds of different sectors out there, and we work in that area giving out loans through the business loan fund to the Business Development Corporation. Through the investment and economic analysis, we also provide that. We have wildlife programs and fisheries activities. There's a sector on minerals, oil and gas, that is more or less keeping an eye on what's going on in the oil and gas area and keeping an eye on the natural gas pipeline that has been in the works for a few years. We have a diamond project and we have some people working in that area to make sure that our framework policy is adhered to, and we monitor the manufacturing of diamonds in the North. We have a sector in parks and tourism. We have a lot of different parks throughout the North. We build them, we maintain them and we operate them.

In the forest management area there's the whole area of forest development. Fire suppression is in there, including pre-suppression and the whole management of the forest management area.

We also have environmental protection services where we have program management. We look at energy management, as well, and there's an environmental protection aspect of this program. All these different programs are more or less out in the regions and communities, and we have a corporate

management that more or less looks after the policy and the legislation and communication. It's just like corporate services of running this huge department. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Antoine. Mr. Nitah.

**MR. NITAH:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, obviously the department is very well run on the economic base of the Northwest Territories. I'll just mention offhand the many programs and services that the department provides. I'd like to ask of the 400 people who are working for that department, how many are there at the ground level in communities such as Lutselk'e and Fort Resolution that help deliver those programs and services, that help the communities to understand those programs and services so they can take advantage of it? Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Nitah. Mr. Antoine.

**HON. JIM ANTOINE:** Mr. Chairman, in the regions we have regional operations and usually have a superintendent who is responsible for providing the programs and services in the regions. The two communities the honourable Member mentioned -- Lutselk'e and Fort Resolution -- fall under the South Slave region. They run the programs, and we want to make sure that they do what they're supposed to through the different officers that we have on the ground in the communities. We have wildlife officers, we have economic development officers that if they're not there, they're responsible for the community. In some cases we fund the band for economic development officer positions. This is a method that the region normally runs. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Antoine. Mr. Nitah.

**MR. NITAH:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I would like to ask the Minister to provide information on what the regional office in Fort Smith has ever done for the communities of Lutselk'e and Fort Resolution. With the many opportunities in the economic area, how can the Minister expect one individual to manage all the opportunities? Communities are losing out on a lot of opportunities because this is only a one-man show. The Minister has 400 people and \$200 million and some in this department to deliver these programs, but the communities can't take advantage of it because they don't have the human resources to understand, let alone take advantage of all these programs and services. We know through harmonization, Mr. Chairman, that the Minister responsible for the bingo police is introducing programs and services that are going to encourage people to get out of income support, and we're not providing them with an option in those communities. What is this department doing to provide an option for people in our communities to get out of income support? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Nitah. Mr. Antoine.

**HON. JIM ANTOINE:** Mr. Chairman, our role as a government is hopefully not to go into communities and create initiatives for people. We work with the communities. If they create economic development corporations or community corporations or individual companies, then we work with them to try to get the necessary funding in place to pursue the different economic

development initiatives that are there. We work with the bands and we work with different community councils. We try to see how we can help them develop economically in their communities. So our task is mainly to have the programs and services that are there available, and in communities that are in the position to utilize those programs and services we work with them to see how we can have these programs available and how we can utilize these programs. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Antoine. Mr. Nitah.

**MR. NITAH:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, once again, this department has 400 employees to understand these programs and services. How can the Minister expect one individual that they fund in the communities to understand all these programs and services and take advantage of them? Don't you think that the millions of dollars that we're spending promoting these business activities and economic opportunities, that it would be a wise business investment to put some people in the communities so they can help deliver the programs and services and help the communities take advantage of their businesses and economic opportunities? Instead of just having one person who is overworked, over-utilized, where we have a bureaucracy that's just top heavy and not looking at the delivery mechanism. We see what we put in. What comes out of it? We know the input. What's the outcome, Mr. Chairman? What's the outcome?

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Nitah. Mr. Antoine.

**HON. JIM ANTOINE:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, in the Northwest Territories it's a growing economy. We have unprecedented economic growth, and obviously we are not prepared. The word and the discussion that we have with different aboriginal governments is that there's lack of capacity. There is need to build capacity in communities. This is an area where we, as a government, provide programs through MNE -- the maximizing northern employment initiatives. We do a number of different programs out there to try to develop the expertise in the communities, although there are overwhelming opportunities out there in some communities and in some communities they don't have that opportunity. However, our task in these communities is to provide the programs and services. We have a number of people; a couple of people, I think, in Lutselk'e. We have two contract crews and fire crews. We also have regular visits by the regional staff. I think there is good communication with the chief and band of Lutselk'e to see any way we can help. Again, we work with the community governments to identify if they need additional resources to do the different things that they want to do. I think that's what we've been doing. If we can do it more efficiently, then I would like to hear it and pass it on to the department, and perhaps we could do a lot better than what we have. But our intention here is to continue to work with the regions, and keep instructing the regions to respond to what the community needs are and what the communities are asking them to do. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Antoine. The Chair will recognize Ms. Lee.

**MS. LEE:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I want to further my discussion and questions to the Minister from the opening remarks. Yesterday, the last section I discussed with

the Minister was with respect to the role of this government in the environmental impact review process, as it relates to the diamond industry. Mr. Chairman, what I neglected to mention in my statement yesterday is the fact that I do understand and appreciate and acknowledge the role that this government has to play in ensuring that we have a comprehensive and thorough environmental review process, and that any industry and major projects such as the diamond mines that are being established in the Territories should go through the environmental review process. I understand that.

I guess what we are talking about and the area I have concerns about is the details and the matter in which we get involved. The questions I was pursuing with the Minister is whenever - - and there were times in this House when this issue has been brought up, and routinely the Minister responsible for either this department or just in government, would say that this government has no direct role with respect to the Mackenzie Valley Environmental Impact Review Board. But the fact of the matter is, we do participate as a keen observer, and this government does present issues and questions that it asks the potential diamond mines to respond to.

So what I wanted to know was, what are the government's positions? What is the government's goal or policy on how it wants to participate in this process? Perhaps the Minister could confirm this, but my information is that these companies get binders and binders full of questions to the company that comes from this government. For me, if these questions are necessary and relevant to what the government wants to establish, that's fine. But I think it would be helpful if we could be advised of what is the position, what is the thing that says we stand for this, and to achieve this, we need to ask these 100,000 questions or pages or binders full of information that you're seeking. So could I be provided with any statement or any position that the government has as to what it wants to obtain from the environmental impact review process?

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Ms. Lee. Mr. Antoine.

**HON. JIM ANTOINE:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, in the environmental impact review process under the Mackenzie Valley Resource Management Act, we're talking about the diamond mine that is going through the process right now. I understand that there have been a lot of questions posed through this process. As a government, our position in these types of talks, right from the time the first diamond mine was going through this process, is to maximize the benefits for people in the North and companies in the North, as well as to protect the environment. So once we take those types of positions, and if the application to put a mine in there is not very clear, then as the Department of Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development, we have to ask these questions to see how we can maximize the benefit of our resources in the North, as well as the big emphasis on protection of the environment. That is very key to us as well. So we need to know through the application, if we have questions, we need answers to these questions. If the applicant's package is not clear in certain areas, then we need to ask questions of clarification.

Our department is to coordinate this government's participation in the environmental impact review hearings. There are other departments in this government -- for example, Education, Culture and Employment; also Health and Social Services -- and if they have their own questions pertaining to training and social aspects of a new mine, then we as RWED cannot tell

them not to ask these questions. They have to ask these questions. So the intention of this government is not to slow down the process or to impede this whole thing. But the Environmental Impact Review Board has a board and they have set up a process to allow for us as a government to ask these questions, based on the position of maximizing benefits to people in the North, as well as protecting our environment. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Antoine. Ms. Lee.

**MS. LEE:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Following up on that, is it possible to get a copy of the questions that are being asked by this government as it participates in the Mackenzie Valley Environmental Review process? I'd like to start off with the questions being asked by RWED, and any questions that ECE and any other government department is asking. If the details of those questions are confidential or not for public information or not to be available to me, at least could I get a summary of the areas in which the questions are asked? For example, subject line of job creation, 50 questions; environmental sector, 100 questions. I'd like to know if the Minister could provide me with that.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Ms. Lee. Mr. Antoine.

**HON. JIM ANTOINE:** Yes, from RWED we could provide the questions that we posed, that we've asked through the process. We can't speak for the other departments. But through the Mackenzie Valley Environmental Impact Review Board there's a public registry of the transcripts of that whole process, and we could request that they provide the questions for the other departments. We could probably ask the other departments, as well, to provide that list to us and provide it to the Member as well. There are two ways of doing it. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Antoine. Ms. Lee.

**MS. LEE:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would appreciate getting that information. I have another question related to this in another aspect. The Minister has mentioned that one of the government's objectives is to maximize the benefits from the diamond industry, and it's one that is agreed on, I'm sure, by everyone. But one thing that I keep having brought up to me, and it happens in every meeting I've had at Tim Horton's or when I am out grocery shopping, there is more and more anecdotal information from long term Northerners who have been trying to get a job with the diamond mines and are having a very difficult time.

Once again, I have to say it for the record and I have said on many occasions, that I appreciate the very positive economic impact these diamond mine companies have had on our economy. I know that a lot of jobs have been created and lots of businesses here are turning profits from working and getting contracts with the diamond mines. Having said that, at the same time, I get a lot of people, more and more all the time, saying, you know I have this ticket in this and a ticket in that, I'm trained to do this. I'm a blaster. I'm qualified to do this job, I'm a medically trained occupational health worker, I trained here, I live here, I own a house here, I pay taxes here and I've been applying for jobs with the diamond mines and I don't even get an interview, and then I find out that those jobs were filled by someone who was coming from down South. I know that these companies are private companies and the government

doesn't have a direct role in that, but at the same time we do have some influence and we are trying to maximize economic benefit. So, I would like to ask the Minister how does the government keep in touch and communicate with these companies so that we ensure that they hire the aboriginal people from the Territories and the Northerners first before they bring somebody from the South? Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Ms. Lee. Mr. Antoine.

**HON. JIM ANTOINE:** Yes, as the government, we meet with the diamond companies on a regular basis and this is a good point to raise. The different Northerners that are not able to get employment at the mines, we raise these kinds of issues with the mining companies when we do meet on a regular basis. It is good to know the specifics of who these people are and we could move that forward through this regular meeting that we have. Although, Education, Culture and Employment are responsible for the employment side, we could try this approach. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Antoine. The Chair recognizes Mr. Nitah.

**MR. NITAH:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, the Minister asked, if I had some ideas that I would communicate with his department. Mr. Chairman, I asked the Minister why in this day and age, the communication age, why do we need policy developers living in Yellowknife? Why do we need legislative drafters living in Yellowknife? Why do we need regional centers to represent communities when we have an overload of people here at the headquarters? Mr. Chairman, what I see in the smaller communities is income support policies forcing people to stop using income support and move them out of the communities into regional centers. The result, in fact is, Mr. Chairman, that because of the government funding relationship with the communities is based on per capita, our budgets are getting smaller. Because of the Constitution and the recognition of representation by population, with our population getting smaller, the population in the regional centres and the capital of this territory are getting higher, so more seats are going to be required in this House.

We have already seen the demonstration by the Cabinet that they are ignorant to the needs of the communities and the harmonization is one glaring example of that. So, I ask the Minister, as we live in the communication age, why can't we put three or four or five people in the communities to help the vast array of programs and services within the department so you could deliver them and people could take advantage of them, so they could assist people at the community level to take advantage of them. Those are my ideas, Mr. Chairman, and I would like to get a response from the Minister. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Nitah. Mr. Antoine.

**HON. JIM ANTOINE:** These sorts of ideas are very good. I think there is an opportunity to do these sorts of initiatives in the near future. There is work internally on the transition review team to look at how this government exists and operates. RWED is a huge department that amalgamated not too long ago and the way the regions were structured as a result of the amalgamation... There's nothing saying that this is the way it should be forever. I think there are ways open here to suggest changes. I think that the way we have been

operating now is not the way we've been operating four or five years ago, things are always changing. Through land claims and self government arrangements, it is going to change. Things are going to change in the future, so, if we solve the problem of housing in the smaller communities and communities other than the centres, solve the problem of office space, I don't see it would be any problem in the future for the transition review team to see if some of these positions could be moved out of the centre. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Antoine. Mr. Nitah.

**MR. NITAH:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I am sure the Minister could appreciate the catch 22 position that we are in here. Because of lack of housing, we can't bring people into the communities. Without a population base, you don't have an argument for more of a housing budget, so, what are the consequences? I would like to suggest to the Minister, that maybe he should take the South Slave responsibility, the regional administrative body that represents RWED and the business development side and put those positions into the communities of Fort Res and Lutselk'e. These communities are different. All communities are not the same. They are very different in their opportunities and desires. We need people that could address those opportunities and desires at the community level, not a blanket approach from a regional perspective. So, I ask the Minister, maybe one action item that he could bring about before the end of this term is to look at resolving the regional business economic development that is under RWED and put those positions in the communities so that they could help the communities develop business opportunities and other areas of opportunities. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Nitah. Mr. Antoine.

**HON. JIM ANTOINE:** Yes, I think through the transition review team work on those same aspects of what the Member is saying have been looked at. I think it is something that needs to be done. I understand what the Member is saying, I represent six communities in my riding. Each one of them is totally different from each other and they all have their own economic dreams of what they want to do in their own respective areas. So, I understand what the Member is saying. I think we, as a government, we have to look at all our communities and look at the regions, look at how we are currently structured. Perhaps, it is time to really seriously look at all these different structures and see how we could better utilize resources that we have, trying to provide service in all the communities. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Antoine. The Chair recognizes Mr. Roland.

**MR. ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, the department was lead in some work that was done in the Beaufort-Delta recently and as a result of that the government signed an MOU with the Gwich'in regarding 50 percent of the contracts in the Gwich'in settlement area. I'd like to get some more details on that and how that would impact on, for example, this budget we are dealing with now. There are a number of projects, large ones that are already occurring in the upcoming fiscal year. So, I would like to know how that would impact, and I guess the reason I ask it here is because RWED

did do a fair bit of the work on that one. I've had the capital acquisition plan pulled together on projects for Inuvik specifically. I'd like to know how in fact some of this stuff would work out. Now there's a campus or college being built there this year, but that was approved in prior years, and there is some money in this fiscal year. The regional hospital is almost completed, but there is some money in it for this year. Then there are a number of other smaller projects. How would those numbers play? Would it be specific community projects? I know that the GNWT, when it does its capital acquisition plan and spreads it out by constituency, for example, it spreads it out on community-specific projects, then regional and then territorial. A couple of these are regional by nature, so how would they be involved in this process? Is it just a matter of any project in Inuvik, total that up and then try to come up with a figure, or are there other factors in this process? Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Roland. Mr. Antoine.

**HON. JIM ANTOINE:** Thank you. I'm just going to reply and then turn it over to the deputy because he was quite involved in the detail of putting the MOU together. There is an agreement between the Gwich'in and the Government of the Northwest Territories to sit down and try to flesh this agreement out. There is going to be a process in which you look at what is going to be within the Gwich'in settlement area. There are multi-year contracts that are already in existence that will be looked at. I think the Gwich'in have also put in their own Gwich'in business policy. That's what they said they were going to do through this MOU, so they have a process in their own organization. We do have our own contracting process, our own way of giving out these contracts. We stick to those, but there's a place where there's going to be planning and analysis of what's available to be included in the Gwich'in by the Inuvialuit. I'd like to turn it over to the deputy for more detail. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Antoine. Mr. McLeod.

**MR. BOB MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I guess the Member is correct; this initiative was an inter-departmental initiative, although RWED chairs the committee. I want to indicate that we're not talking about an exact science here. What we're aiming at is 50 percent of the contracting by value going to the Gwich'in within the Gwich'in settlement area over a five-year period. I guess the way we see the process going is that we would identify projects, which we're in the process of doing now, and then our government would meet with the Gwich'in and review the projects and identify which ones the Gwich'in would be interested in. Then we would follow the negotiated policy guidelines of the government. If the expectation is it would be cost competitive, the 50 percent that is not negotiated would go out to competition. If Gwich'in businesses were successful in obtaining part of the additional 50 percent through the tendering process, that would be counted as part of the overall objective of 50 percent over five years. So that's the way we see it operating. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Mr. Roland.

**MR. ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and I thank the Minister and his deputy for that. Some of the projects right now, as the Minister stated, are ongoing projects. The hospital

was a negotiated contract, the Aurora Campus is a negotiated contract. So taking it as it's stated, the money identified for this fiscal year coming up in this budget that we have before us, would be a factor in coming up with that 50 percent. Just for the record to be clear, it's my understanding, having seen the MOU, that in Inuvik that 50 percent is further split 25 Inuvialuit, 25 Gwich'in. Right?

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Roland. Mr. McLeod.

**MR. BOB MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The MOU states that we still have to finalize those guidelines. What we were envisaging was that if you apply the 50 percent, then because Inuvik and Aklavik are communities that are both designated as either Inuvialuit or Gwich'in, depending on which land claim you look at, we were looking at possibly doing it on a population percentage basis. I guess when we go to the communities to discuss it, at that time we are hoping to finalize it. But generally, I think if you look at the percentages, Inuvik and Aklavik, if we go by those percentages that's how we would work it. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Mr. Roland.

**MR. ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The deputy did state in the claimant agreements that Inuvik is included in both agreements, the Inuvialuit agreement as well as the Gwich'in agreement. But just for the record, they are named because of Gwich'in and Inuvialuit peoples living in those communities. Are they in fact claim territory, or is the municipality still a municipality under the GNWT law? Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Roland. Mr. McLeod.

**MR. BOB MCLEOD:** I'm not sure of what the Member is asking. All I can tell you is for the purposes of the MOU, we have included Inuvik, and Aklavik. In developing the guidelines, we're leaning towards using population figures in terms of that breakout. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Mr. Roland.

**MR. ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Aside from the figuring and the formula that might be worked out -- and it's my understanding that that still has to be worked out between the groups -- my question is more in the actual legal claim area. Because Inuvik is both named Inuvialuit and Gwich'in -- and the same as Aklavik, and there will be other ones down the valley as things are going on, as we realize from some of the claims that are going on in the overlap issues -- for the purposes of the claim itself, when the claims are settled, was Inuvik proper claimed by either land claim group, or does the land claim go up to the existing boundaries of the community? Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Roland. Mr. McLeod.

**MR. BOB MCLEOD:** Thank you. I can give him what my understanding is, but I guess in order to answer that question I'd have to get a copy of the land claim and get a legal opinion on that. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. McLeod. General comments.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Detail.

**Detail**

**Corporate Management**

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Detail. On page 11-9, corporate management, operations expense, total operations expense, \$17,227 million.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

---Agreed

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Page 11-10, corporate management, grants and contributions, contributions. Continued on page 11-11, total contributions, \$1.410 million. Mr. Dent.

**MR. DENT:** Thanks, Mr. Chairman. I was just noticing that one of the contributions on page 11-10, Diavik Monitoring Agency, is shown for last year and this year. It doesn't show anything for the budget year 2003-2004. Why is that?

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Dent. Mr. McLeod.

**MR. BOB MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The reason for that is when the negotiations were going on for an environmental agreement among Diavik, the federal government, the Government of the Northwest Territories and the aboriginal governments from the impacted communities, it was recognized that there were some initial set-up costs that were over and above what the federal government and Diavik were willing to contribute. So the Government of the Northwest Territories and Diavik agreed to cost share start-up costs for the first year. It was a one-time, one-year cost. So that's why it's falling off this year, because it was for two years. After that, it was no longer a requirement because the expectation is the participants would be fully trained and the start-up costs would no longer be required.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Mr. Dent.

**MR. DENT:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate that explanation. The next item on the page -- the Diavik socio-economic agreement -- we show contributions of \$250,000 to support the board. I'm just wondering how is the Diavik socio-economic agreement different from the BHP one, and why do we not see anything in here for monitoring the BHP socio-economic agreement?

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Dent. Mr. McLeod.

**MR. BOB MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I guess it reflects the differences in the periods when the mines were established and built. When the BHP mine was built, at that time the government of the day felt that with the socio-economic agreement it was sufficient to have the reporting done through the Legislative Assembly. For the Diavik socio-economic agreement it was felt that more of a community-based approach was required. So there is a board that has

been negotiated with representatives from each of the impacted communities, including the Government of the Northwest Territories and Diavik. The cost of the board and the agreement is cost shared between Diavik and the Government of the Northwest Territories on a 50/50 basis. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Mr. Dent.

**MR. DENT:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Can we find out is there any difference in the definition of a Northerner in terms of employment between the two agreements, whether it's the one with BHP or the one with Diavik? Is there any difference in the way in we measure whether or not targets are being met for northern employment? Are they dealt with differently through the two agreements? For instance, does this board have something to say if Diavik doesn't meet targets? Can they bring some pressure to bear? Is there something similar to that in the BHP agreement?

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Dent. Mr. McLeod.

**MR. BOB MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, the socio-economic agreements are fairly similar in a lot of areas. They cover a lot of the same areas of agreement, particularly in target areas such as northern employment, aboriginal employment, northern preference or northern purchases. There are some differences with regard to northern residency and access to information. We do monitor and we do report on both agreements, so that information is available. There are some small differences in the definition of a Northerner. But both of those agreements were negotiated agreements, and I think they're fairly difficult to change unless there's agreement on all sides. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Mr. Dent.

**MR. DENT:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'd be interested in having Members get the information on what the differences might be, and the definition of Northerners for the purposes of employment. Mr. Chairman, I know I've had, over the past few years, a number of calls from constituents who have expressed some concern about whether or not the agreements we've negotiated are in fact maximizing northern employment, a concern that people who are reported as being northern probably wouldn't be considered northern by most standards. Knowing that those concerns have been out there -- I'm sure the Minister has heard them as well -- as we move into negotiating the next two, are we looking for some way to tighten up the definition so that we know that Northerners, and particularly aboriginal Northerners are going to be finding good job opportunities?

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Dent. Mr. Antoine.

**HON. JIM ANTOINE:** Mr. Chairman, the first two mines that are operating now, we learned from there. The first one was a real learning experience, and the second one we learned, and the third one we will continue to learn. I'm told that through our process we are going to be tightening up in certain areas, and this is one of them: the definition of Northerner. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Antoine. Mr. Dent.

**MR. DENT:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have no further questions on this page, but on page 11-11 we have Mackenzie Valley development contributions. I see that the contribution here is dropping from just over \$1 million to just over \$600,000. In the description it relates to the Non-Renewable Resource Development Strategy, or NRRDS. I know that we had put this strategy together in an effort to obtain some support for infrastructure funding from the federal government, and we were not terrifically successful. I was just wondering, are we still pushing the federal government on this one or is this now considered a dead horse?

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Dent. Mr. Antoine.

**HON. JIM ANTOINE:** It's an ongoing process. We are still raising this concern. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Antoine. Mr. Dent.

**MR. DENT:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. If it is still an ongoing concern, if it's something that we're pushing, given that it was for a total of over \$100 million, if we're only going to put \$620,000 into it, we're not going to get very far. Is there any realistic hope of achieving anything with this strategy, and why have we dropped our contribution by 40 percent if we in fact believe that there is some possibility of making some successful moves here?

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Dent. Mr. Antoine.

**HON. JIM ANTOINE:** Thank you. I'm going to ask the director of corporate affairs, Jim Kennedy, to respond. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Antoine. Mr. Kennedy.

**MR. KENNEDY:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In fact what has happened is that \$250,000 was a sunset from the previous year, that we had only got a certain portion for that year. Another \$200,000 was transferred from the contribution into O and M, so it's a total reduction for the Mackenzie Valley of the \$450,000. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Kennedy. The Chair will recognize Ms. Lee.

**MS. LEE:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just wanted to follow up on the answers that the deputy minister provided to Mr. Dent's question in regards to the monitoring of these socio-economic agreements. I believe he mentioned that there are reports available monitoring the impact of those agreements. I wonder if those could be made available to us. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Ms. Lee. Mr. Antoine.

**HON. JIM ANTOINE:** Yes, those reports are public documents. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Antoine. Ms. Lee.

**MS. LEE:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. May I be provided with a copy of that, or have they been tabled or have we gotten them? Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Ms. Lee. Mr. Antoine.

**HON. JIM ANTOINE:** Yes, we will get the reports and provide them to Members. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Antoine. The Chair will recognize Mr. Roland.

**MR. ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, the Mackenzie River is a very important feature of the Northwest Territories, especially in my region where the river empties out into the Beaufort Sea and water levels play a very important factor in the wildlife and where it stays during the summer season, as well as how people can travel throughout the Delta.

During different times of the year, the natural cycle, I guess, would be in spring there's a high water level filling a lot of the lakes that don't normally hook up to the river systems and so on. But there have been a number of years where, in fact, we've seen either low water levels throughout the year, which is not a normal process, or high water levels. During freeze-up it would begin to freeze at that level, and then the water levels would drop causing shelf ice, as one term would be used, and being quite dangerous for those who use the waterways in the wintertime: hunters and trappers with snow machines and so on, and even building ice roads.

I see here you have the Mackenzie River Basin Board, and it's a contribution to properly manage the aquatic ecosystem. I'd like to know what has been done on that in recent years, and what impact we can have. I'm looking more to the future here, because watching the news and so on, we hear about Alberta's situation and the prairie provinces situation with droughts and low snow levels, even in the mountains, and that run-off not being there. Is there a potential here that they could hold water back on us through the dams that they have in place? I know that's where we seem to get the most effect from, when they either let some water run off or else they hold back on water being spilled over. So I'd like to know what we manage to accomplish or get through this board. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Roland. Mr. Antoine.

**HON. JIM ANTOINE:** Mr. Chairman, the Mackenzie River Basin Board is a board that is very important to us. There's cooperation with Yukon, B.C., Alberta and the Saskatchewan governments in looking at the ecosystem. As you know, the Mackenzie River is a huge river basin. The headwaters are in all the different provinces and the other territory is mentioned. So there is a working relationship there. We have representation on there that expresses all these concerns. There is monitoring going on on the Bennett Dam, as well as on global warming in the North. There definitely are changes to our weather system and, as a result, it has an impact on our waters. We're very concerned about the quality of the water and the flow. Certainly this board was put in place to look at all aspects of it, and I think it will continue to play a bigger role in the future. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Antoine. Mr. Roland.

**MR. ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Through this board, is there opportunity to impact the amount of water that is let out, for example through the Bennett Dam, because as provinces conserve their water supplies or possibly cut back on that, it significantly impacts throughout the Mackenzie Valley.

So through this board, is there opportunity to address those kinds of issues? Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Roland. Mr. Antoine, you're indicating the question to Mr. McLeod. Mr. Antoine.

**HON. JIM ANTOINE:** Yes, Mr. Chairman, I'd like to ask the deputy to reply to that. He has more details on the different bilateral agreements with the other jurisdictions that are in place or being developed. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Antoine. Mr. McLeod.

**MR. BOB MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The Mackenzie River Basin Board was 25 years in the making. I guess the original idea started with the original oil and gas rush in the Beaufort-Delta. What happened is that a master agreement was negotiated with all of the jurisdictions that had water flowing into the Mackenzie River Basin. The master agreement sets out the process, which establishes a board and jurisdiction and some dispute resolution mechanisms. It's also envisaged that each jurisdiction would negotiate bilaterals with each other, which would include water quality and water quantity objectives, as well as ecosystem indicators. So on the water quality side, that's where the concerns are addressed about run-of-the-river issues, water being held back by the Bennett Dam, and having seasonal flow stream patterns. So those are the kinds of issues that we envisage the board dealing with when it's fully operational. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. McLeod. General comments. Sorry, I have no one on my list. On page 11-11, corporate management, grants and contributions, total contributions. Mr. Bell.

**MR. BELL:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Just quickly before we move past 11-11. I'm wondering if the Minister could indicate the \$620,000 for Mackenzie Valley development contributions, an ongoing NRRDS strategy initiative. Can the Minister indicate what those strategies are?

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Bell. Mr. Antoine.

**HON. JIM ANTOINE:** Mr. Chairman, we have such a big pile of paper here so we just want to find the list. In these main estimates we're requesting \$620,000, and there is a list of strategies through the Non-Renewable Resource Development Strategy that we have. We just need to get that information provided here. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Antoine. Mr. Bell.

**MR. BELL:** Thank you. If the Minister doesn't have that handy as to what these initiatives are that we're funding, then I'll take the information in writing and he could provide that if he doesn't have it in front of him.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Bell. Mr. Antoine.

**HON. JIM ANTOINE:** Yes, we have the information here. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Antoine. Mr. McLeod.

**MR. BOB MCLEOD:** Thank you. The largest part of the expenditures in previous years was the funding that was provided to the Aboriginal Pipeline Group for the Mackenzie Valley pipeline. That is dropping off because of the successful completion of the business plan for the Aboriginal Pipeline Group. The \$620,000 essentially is funding for capacity building that's provided to the Inuvialuit Regional Corporation, the Gwich'in Tribal Council, the Sahtu Secretariat, and a number of communities in the Deh Cho. Essentially that's the money that's accounted for under the \$620,000. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Mr. Bell.

**MR. BELL:** Thank you. Are those contributions just sort of general contributions in the area of capacity building, or are there some programs that they were expecting or are being delivered? Is it a contribution, or is it specifically tied to certain programs that relate to capacity building?

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Bell. Mr. McLeod.

**MR. BOB MCLEOD:** Yes, they are all contributions.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Page 11-11, grants and contributions, total contributions, \$1.410 million.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

---Agreed

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Total grants and contributions, \$1,410 million.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

---Agreed

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you. Before I go on, I'm just going to take a moment to recognize a former Member of this government, a former MLA visiting us in the gallery, Bill Lafferty and his wife Ernestine. Welcome to the Legislative Assembly.

---Applause

#### **Environmental Protection Services**

We'll go to page 11-13, environmental protection services, operations expense, total operations expense, \$1.937 million.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

---Agreed

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** We're on page 11-15, environmental protection services, contributions, total contributions, \$580,000.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

---Agreed

#### **Resource Management And Economic Development**

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** We'll go on to 11-17, resource management and economic development, operations expense, total operations expense, \$36.270 million. Mr. Braden.

**MR. BRADEN:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In this area here I wanted to ask about a specific part of our tourism industry, and about the support that this government gives to the NWT Arctic Tourism Association, Mr. Chairman. Specifically, I understand that the tourism training component, which has been delivered by NWT Arctic Tourism for the past three or four years, has fallen on hard times and may not be continuing. I'm wondering if the department can advise on any information that it has there, and any options that we might be considering continuing this really vital aspect of our tourism industry. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Braden. Mr. McLeod.

**MR. BOB MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The tourism training group is a very important aspect of developing our tourism industry. It's a program that was long standing and has had a rough ride in the last four or five years. Five years ago, the tourism training group disintegrated for a number of reasons, and nothing was done until about two years ago when NWT Arctic Tourism resurrected it and got the program reinstated. Recently it has fallen on hard times again, mainly because of some fiscal issues. We will continue to work with NWT Arctic Tourism to ensure that this important component of tourism survives, and we'll work with NWT Arctic Tourism and various operators. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Mr. Braden.

**MR. BRADEN:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That is a very reassuring message. If I have it right, Mr. McLeod is saying that the department wants to ensure that the program survives. I don't have a lot of background information on just what the situation may be there. The tourism industry does indeed have its ups and downs. But can I take that as an assurance that there will not be any interruption in the programming that is underway now?

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Braden. Mr. Antoine.

**HON. JIM ANTOINE:** Yes, this component is going to be...I think it's a component of the contribution that we make to the Northwest Territories Tourism Association. It's a contribution agreement, and it's an important initiative that we need to find the funds for and we'll do that. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Antoine. Mr. Braden.

**MR. BRADEN:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm pleased to hear on the training side that we're going to have continuity. The programs that we have arrangements with the Arctic tourism organization, are they also assured...There's some indication of some financial problems there. Are we working with the organization to help see them through? Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Braden. Mr. Antoine.

**HON. JIM ANTOINE:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, the tourism association has a new president and a new board, and they're looking at their finances and they're working very closely with our department. We've found a way to make sure they keep on operating, and they are working to

find a way to resolve the financial difficulty that they're going through. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Antoine. The Chair will recognize Mr. Roland.

**MR. ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Under resource management and economic development, there are a number of areas that I have some concerns with. It's more, I guess, past experience. For example, when we went through a lot of reduction scenarios, the Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development, more wildlife officers, I guess is the term -- renewable resources officers, I guess they used to be termed, I think they're still along those lines. There were some additional responsibilities put on to them as part of their existing duties, but there wasn't really any other resources to address the extra workload. There were some training initiatives put in place, and so on. I'd like to know if the Minister has in fact done anything to improve on this, because we have situations where a lot of their responsibility as officers is to go out on the land. That's where they need to be. With the reductions that happened, there was less and less of that happening. I must say, though, the crew in the Inuvik region have done quite a job with the resources they have, so I have to acknowledge that. Have there been any changes here to up the amount of resources that offices would have? Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Roland. Mr. Antoine.

**HON. JIM ANTOINE:** Yes, Mr. Chairman, with the change that happened to RWED wildlife officers when amalgamation took place, the region also had to find its footing and try to work as a unit in the region. We focused a lot on training and we continue to do so, the officers, to be more effective and efficient in the regions. If you are asking if we are going to inject a whole lot of new dollars into this area, the way we are focusing is there is forced growth in all areas of the department and we will continue to focus on training. If that is required and requested, we will provide that. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Antoine. Mr. Roland.

**MR. ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. What about in the area of equipment? Snow machines, trucks, boats, especially in the communities. A renewable resources officer uses those to a large degree. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you. Mr. Antoine.

**HON. JIM ANTOINE:** Mr. Chairman, I try to make a point of visiting all the communities in all the regions and also make a very big point of visiting the renewable resources officers to make sure that their equipment is suitable and is safe and we've been adding new equipment, small equipment, to a lot of the different places where we have officers. We have that in our capital. The assets under \$50,000 we have identified quite a lot of small equipment to be purchased this year.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Antoine. Mr. Roland.

**MR. ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Hopefully that will help out in the roles that they have to fulfill. In another area, I would like to get some answers in the area of the diamond

projects. When the diamond industry was just beginning in the NWT and talk of mines, there was a fair bit of work to try to come up to speed by our government in the whole area of diamonds. Right now, we do have a number of cutting and polishing facilities. We are well into it now and it seems like that is starting to grow and continue and have a bit of momentum. I would like to know, with that area, what's to become of it? Is it going to be streamlined or downsized? It's understandable when something is first coming into place, that we try to ensure we are prepared through legislative initiatives or policy, but once it's up and running, the private sector has proven that it can take on and move on with some of those initiatives. Are there any plans from within the department in this area? Thank you.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Roland. Mr. Antoine.

**HON. JIM ANTOINE:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, we have a diamond project section in RWED. It's been very helpful and useful for our government. We have no plans at this time to downsize it or eliminate it. The reason I say that is the whole diamond industry is totally unique and different from any other mineral producers in this country to date. The NWT is now one of the largest producers of diamonds in the world. I think we are going to be third. There are a lot of national issues in terms of the Competition Bureau definition. There are also other jurisdictions in this country, Ontario, Quebec, Saskatchewan and Manitoba where there is major diamond exploration going on and I would like to say that we are the leading expert in Canada on diamonds. There is also international work through the Kimberly Process to track the whole area of blood diamonds. At a national level as well, there is the excise tax matter that we need to keep track of.

There is a lot of work, not only in the North to monitor our existing arrangements with BHP Billiton and Diavik and the work that needs to continue with De Beers and Snap Lake. We have a framework policy requiring the different producers to have a memorandum of understanding with us, so that 10 percent of the rough they produce every five weeks is allocated to northern manufacturers. We also have a certification program to track the diamonds from the mine to manufacturing to the finished product. I think this is a very useful tool for us. Through the work of this project we are able to get the different diamond mines to supply rough to manufacturers in the North. I know there is work to be done in looking at that policy with regard to the smaller diamonds. We need to look at that. There is still a lot of work to be done in this sector. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Antoine. Mr. Roland.

**MR. ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The Minister named quite a few things that the diamond project involves. A fair number of them are ongoing. The certification process, I understand, is up and running. Once you sign an MOU, it's pretty well a template for the other groups, to a large degree. The Minister talked about being the leading edge in the NWT, which is a good thing. We need a few things that we can brag about on the national stage. But I guess more from a management of resources end is...A few areas we are working on right now to try to benefit the industry in the North or our government and a sense of resources. The Minister touched on excise tax, but my understanding is that we were quite caught by surprise that that was going to be removed or had been removed by the federal government. That came up in the

House yesterday or the day before. Those things are examples that Members can look at for positive results or benefits we are receiving from expenditures. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you. Mr. Antoine.

**HON. JIM ANTOINE:** Yes, the definition of Canadian diamonds under the Competition Bureau, which is an agency of the federal Department of Industry is threatening our secondary industry, in that the Competition Bureau about two years ago came out with a definition of Canadian diamonds as a diamond that is mined in Canada, but you can take it anywhere in the world and cut it and it would still be a Canadian diamond. So we have a very big problem with that. There is ongoing work we are doing to try to change the definition of Canadian diamond at the Competition Bureau. We are working with the federal government. The Minister of Industry, Allan Rock, is responsible for that, but the Competition Bureau is at arm's length from him, so there needs to be work there.

There is also the whole area of the certification program and certifying the diamonds that are mined, cut and polished in the North by our existing manufacturers. That is ongoing as well. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Antoine. The Chair will recognize Ms. Lee.

**MS. LEE:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have some questions under diamond projects as well. The first question I have is just to follow up on what the Minister just stated. He indicated that there is more work to be done in terms of the questions and issues surrounding the definition of Canadian diamond. I would like to ask the Minister, what is the time frame that we have to work with this and when might we expect to see the result of this, or are we looking at something that would be an ongoing process, an ongoing struggle with the federal government? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you. Mr. Antoine.

**HON. JIM ANTOINE:** On the Competition Bureau's definition of a Canadian diamond, they have already done that. They have already identified it about two years ago and we have been opposed to that definition from the beginning. It's an ongoing process and we can't just do it on our own. We have to convince the board and we are working with the federal Ministers. We are also talking to our counterparts in the other provinces, as they are eventually going to become Canadian producers. Our intention is to try to change this definition. The way the Competition Bureau views it is you can take a Canadian diamond that is mined from BHP or Diavik and you can take it out of the country and have it cut and polished outside the country and bring it back and still say it's a Canadian diamond. We are saying the true Canadian diamond should be one that is mined in the North and cut and polished in the North, preferably here in the NWT in Yellowknife where the existing manufacturers are. This will create a secondary industry and have more diamonds cut here. We have employment here. We have training here. We already have some manufacturing facilities out at the airport. They are expanding them and there are new ones coming up. So it's frightening us. If that definition sticks, then we are going to have a problem in the future. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you. Ms. Lee.

**MS. LEE:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate the Minister reiterating very clearly what the problem is, except that wasn't my question. It seems to me the Minister is saying this is going to be an ongoing process and the department is working on it, but obviously the longer we leave this definition hanging, it's going to get affirmed and it would become the fact. I would like to know – and I have other questions, so I don't want to pursue this for a long time – the task we have on this is to convince the board, and when will we know whether we have succeeded or not in changing their mind about this definition?

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you. Mr. Antoine.

**HON. JIM ANTOINE:** We have written to the Competition Bureau, we have met with them. We have written to the different federal Ministers, and the Competition Bureau is saying they are not going to change the definition. The federal Ministers we have contacted have indicated support for the Competition Bureau. We will continue to raise this issue. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** Thank you, Mr. Antoine. Ms. Lee.

**MS. LEE:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to see the government taking more drastic action, if necessary, to bring this issue to the fore. We can't just wait for the board to do it. I don't know, maybe litigation or some kind of heavy handed response is required here. It seems to me that this is a done deal and that's just the way it's going to be unless some drastic action is taken. So I think that there has to be some proactive aggressive movement needed there.

I have another question on the diamond projects and it has to do with cutting and sorting facilities, Mr. Chairman. We know that there is the newest plant being proposed in Yellowknife by Tiffany's and, as was discussed earlier about the diamond industry in general, now that we are at the third time around, starting with BHP, Diavik and De Beers, the government has learned a lot and industry has learned a lot. But the information I have is that the government is not imposing the same kind of requirements or expectations on the newest company as it did for the previous ones. I have to admit that I am not aware of all of the details of these negotiations. Could the Minister confirm whether the government is expecting, asking and seeking the same kind of deal from Tiffany's as it did from the previous companies in terms of economic benefits or what the government expects companies to contribute when they move here and set up an operation? Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you. Mr. Antoine.

**HON. JIM ANTOINE:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. First of all, on the Competition Bureau, I will welcome any suggestions from the Member on how we can proceed. We have approached all the different MPs in the different provinces. Our task here is to try to educate southern politicians. That's what we are doing at this point in time. On the question regarding Tiffany & Co. and the other process, there is currently, for Diavik, a process in place for the companies that want to be considered for manufacturing the 10 percent of rough for Rio Tinto. So there is a process in place. The different companies that are applying for this allocation are told that we do have a framework agreement policy. We, in the NWT, are a small territory, but we still have our own policies to try to maximize the return from our natural resources. We are telling them that

we expect them to follow criteria and framework agreements. So nobody is getting any special treatment. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you. Ms. Lee.

**MS. LEE:** So will there be an agreement of some sort between the government and Tiffany's or any of the mines that are going to be working with them, or is this a private company that's going to establish a business where the business is and they are free to do what they want to do? As a government, what sort of influence or input can you have in the way this new company wants to operate here?

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you. Mr. Antoine.

**HON. JIM ANTOINE:** We have a memorandum of understanding with Diavik that Rio Tinto Diamonds is going to be allocating their share of Diavik diamonds. The MOU with the Government of the NWT is similar to BHP Billiton where 10 percent of production every five weeks will be made available to manufacturers in the North. The framework sets out criteria that we follow and the manufacturers, in order to be approved, will have to be within those criteria. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Antoine. Ms. Lee.

**MS. LEE:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I will just accept that answer for now. I just want to follow up on the definition of diamonds that are being considered by the Competition Bureau. Can I get clarification on whether or not the decision has been made already by the Competition Bureau and if that's the case, then I would think the only recourse the government may have is to challenge their decision on the definition of diamond through a court or something under an administrative law tribunal. Or is it the case that they are still considering it and you are trying to influence the process, the decision? Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you. Mr. Antoine.

**HON. JIM ANTOINE:** The Competition Bureau made their decision two years ago. I am told that that decision is not challengeable through court and the only recourse is trying to influence them to change their definition via the Minister who is responsible for the Competition Bureau, Minister of Industry Allan Rock and the other Ministers in the government probably have influence. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you. The Chair will recognize Mr. Roland.

**MR. ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, to continue on with diamond projects, we have heard a number of things. With respect to the Competition Bureau, it sounds like we have done everything we can and the federal government has made a decision and Ministers seem to agree with that decision. So the idea of carrying a big stick is not too good for us because, as was previously pointed out to us, we don't have much of a stick to hold onto.

We need to work with what we already have, not with what we're trying to make the government or Competition Bureau do – we tried that and it doesn't seem to be working. The Minister talked about a portion of rough being made available to the polishers and those groups in the NWT. My understanding is it's about 10 percent. What kind of take-up have we had on that through the polishing companies, cutting and manufacturing

companies? Do they regularly access the 10 percent that's being made available?

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Roland. Mr. Antoine.

**HON. JIM ANTOINE:** Yes, in the beginning of this development of the diamond manufacturing companies in the NWT, not all the allocations have been used up. Recently the three existing manufacturers have restructured and they have taken on partnerships. Bigger experienced and known diamond companies have bought into all three of them, made partnerships with all three existing diamond manufacturers. In fact, there is a plan to expand some of their factories to make them bigger. So we anticipate that as Diavik gets into production and the different manufacturers line up to be considered, I think there is going to be more of a take-up in the North. Some of the plans are to get diamonds that are bought separately. So there are major plans to do more with these manufacturing companies in Yellowknife. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Antoine. Mr. Roland.

**MR. ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Can the Minister inform us when we might see an increase in production or the uptake on that percentage of diamonds?

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Roland. Mr. Antoine.

**HON. JIM ANTOINE:** Yes, the way I would like to answer it is that the companies, Arslanian Cutting Works and Sirius, are probably going to be taking all the allocation. Schechter Nimda, who has partnered up with the band in Ndilo, have restructured there as well. We anticipate that once they are geared up, they will be taking the full allotment. The whole situation with Tiffany's is going on the right track as well. Tiffany's plans are big. They have big plans of fully utilizing their manufacturing site as well. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Antoine. Mr. Roland.

**MR. ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. What's the total amount budgeted for diamond projects?

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Roland. Mr. Antoine.

**HON. JIM ANTOINE:** The total amount budgeted for diamond projects is \$1.273 million.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you. Mr. Roland.

**MR. ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Does that include travel within that amount, the total travel that they can allot within that part of the budget?

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you. Mr. Antoine.

**HON. JIM ANTOINE:** Yes, that includes the travel.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you. Mr. Roland.

**MR. ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. How much of the budget actually goes towards travel?

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Roland. Mr. Antoine.

**HON. JIM ANTOINE:** There is \$248,000 towards travel and transportation.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Antoine. Mr. Roland.

**MR. ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Of that, how much is used for outside consultants?

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Roland. Mr. Antoine.

**HON. JIM ANTOINE:** For contract services, we budgeted \$320,000.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Antoine. Mr. Roland.

**MR. ROLAND:** Mr. Chairman, we are paying a fair sum of money for... is it one individual or is it more than one? Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Roland. Mr. Antoine.

**HON. JIM ANTOINE:** We have two on contract. One is negotiated with us, De Beers. The other we have on contract 10 days a month. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Antoine. Mr. Roland.

**MR. ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am looking at the numbers. We are at almost \$600,000 for travel and by the sounds of it two-and-a-half consultants, 10 days a month. That's fairly expensive for a very busy shop by what earlier comments were made by the Minister. So hopefully we are getting value here in that sense and actually accomplishing something. For example, since the Minister has my attention, with the 10 days that we have for a consultant a month, what is that contract costing the department on a yearly basis? Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Roland. Mr. Antoine.

**HON. JIM ANTOINE:** I don't have that exact breakdown. It's lumped in here together. I could get that number for the Member. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Antoine. Mr. Roland.

**MR. ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to receive that information, so if the Minister could make it available, that would be much appreciated. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Page 11-17. Mr. Dent.

**MR. DENT:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I was reading through the description of the activity on page 11-16, and couldn't help but notice that under diamond projects, we talk about the development of a skilled workforce. I had thought that ECE was providing the subsidies for training on the job and that the

college was involved in training. What is RWED doing here that can be classified as development of a skilled workforce?

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Dent. Mr. Antoine.

**HON. JIM ANTOINE:** Yes, in RWED we work with ECE, as well as Arctic College on the different training committees and also in the job strategies, job descriptions. We are working with the Diamond High Council. They are also involved with us from Antwerp to give us ideas on what kind of jobs are there because we don't have the expertise there and we need that to develop the training. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Antoine. Mr. Dent.

**MR. DENT:** Thanks, Mr. Chairman. I know that ECE has been extensively involved with the Diamond High Council in developing the standards for certification for the trade of polishing. I was just a little surprised to see that RWED was also involved in that. I wonder if I could get an understanding of what is meant by regulation of the new industry trade. That almost sounds like regulating polishers, which is the trade that is certified. Again, I thought that was an ECE responsibility. Why do we have overlapping responsibilities in the areas of training? I thought it was the role of Education to look after all of that.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Dent. Mr. Antoine.

**HON. JIM ANTOINE:** I think it's a shared responsibility because ECE has the training expertise and within the diamond project and working relationship with the diamond industry, there is diamond expertise there. So there is co-development of certification and development of the job descriptions. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Antoine. Mr. Dent.

**MR. DENT:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As I understood it, the job descriptions and the descriptions for certification were developed in conjunction with not only the Diamond High Council, but people who have been in the trade for many years, from Europe in particular. Hasn't that all been done? We've got the trades out there and we have young people being certified, so why would we still have any involvement in this? It's an ongoing thing. I would think Education has got the staff to cover certification. They were involved in developing the standards. Why do we have to duplicate?

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Dent. Mr. Antoine.

**HON. JIM ANTOINE:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The intention is not to duplicate, but we are working together with Education, Culture and Employment and Arctic College in developing a diamond industry. By making sure that we have all the different jobs in the industry -- the diamond industry is very complex, as the Member probably knows -- there are different jobs throughout the whole system and we continue to work closely with Arctic College to develop the type of work that is required so that we have a truly successful diamond industry here in the North. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Antoine. Mr. Dent.

**MR. DENT:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I guess another question I would have is what role does the government play in an efficient, polished distribution system? I assume that that

means that we play some role in the sale of polished diamonds once they have been polished in the North. I wasn't aware that the government was involved in that. I thought the factories worked with wholesalers and some directly with retailers throughout North America. I am just wondering what our role is in the polished distribution system, in other words, the sale system.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Dent. Mr. Antoine.

**HON. JIM ANTOINE:** In the efficient polished distribution system, we are approached by the manufacturers in the North of the type of diamonds they get when they buy from their allotment from BHP Billiton. This is probably going to be the case once the Diavik distribution happens where the type of allotment that the producers sell to the manufacturers is an assortment of diamonds. They have the large ones with different colours and different qualities right down to the small ones. It's been raised in the House already and I mentioned that we, in the government, have to look at the package and have to work with the manufacturers now to see what is feasible to do in the North. We are told that the very tiny small ones are not economically feasible to do in the North. There's a certain size we can do in the North and the price is comparable to say New York cutting. So we are going to have to look at that and try to be efficient.

Like I said, the factories are gearing up. Through our efforts here and through our certificate program, we are told that a diamond that's cut and polished in the NWT and certified, there is a 10 to 15 percent premium for those diamonds. There is beginning to be a very high demand for the diamonds. I think the indication that the bigger players are buying into our operations here is an indication that the consumer is identifying with a Canadian diamond. It's a very big promotional tour for us. We also need to be involved in the certificate program to make sure it's efficient, to make sure the marketing is there and we interact with the producers to try to convince them to make the allotment to our manufacturers bigger and better. I think that's basically how we see the efficient polished distribution system. We interact all the time with the different manufacturers and different producers to make sure we have our manufacturing going in the right direction.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Antoine. Mr. Dent.

**MR. DENT:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. If I understood the Minister correctly, what he spoke positively about is the government may have some influences on the packages of rough that the northern manufacturers can access. If that's the case, I would agree that that's an important role for the government to play. I was just concerned about the efficient polished distribution system, which the way I read it looked like we were trying to insinuate ourselves into the sales system of the finished goods. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That's all the questions I have right now.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Dent. Mr. Antoine, do you want to respond?

**HON. JIM ANTOINE:** Yes, I take that comment. Our intention is not to be directly involved in the manufacturing of the diamonds, but we want to make sure that the secondary industry grows here. We are more or less concerned that the manufacturers are doing what they say they're going to do, producing their allotment of the diamonds that they get, and the

products to be produced in the North. I think that is going to happen. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Antoine. At this time I'd like to recognize a few visitors we have in the gallery. We always welcome anyone to come in and observe our proceedings here, so welcome to the Legislative Assembly.

---Applause

Mr. Nitah.

**MR. NITAH:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, just picking up on the questions and some answers between the Minister and Mr. Dent, is the Minister suggesting or saying that our government is able to influence the producers in the types of diamonds that are made available to the manufacturers in the Northwest Territories? Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Nitah. Mr. Antoine.

**HON. JIM ANTOINE:** I didn't say we influence them to give them bigger and better diamonds, but this is what the manufacturers are requesting and we pass that concern along. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Antoine. Mr. Nitah.

**MR. NITAH:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, at the end of the day yesterday I did cover this a little bit. I find it hard to believe that as a government we will be able to influence the types of diamonds that the producers are going to be able to sell to the manufacturers, as this is a very accepted practice -- an assortment of diamonds being made available to manufacturers, cutters and polishers throughout the world. I think the area that we have to concentrate on as a government is the policy under which we govern our secondary diamond industry; the restrictive policy of not being able to take the lower quality, smaller diamonds which is costing our manufacturers dollars that they may not...it's costing more to cut and polish these diamonds than it generates in revenues. I think that's an area that as a government we should concentrate on. Give them a little bit of breathing room in that area, if we can influence the producers and the types of diamonds that they make available to our manufacturers. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Nitah. Mr. Antoine.

**HON. JIM ANTOINE:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, our manufacturers have been telling us that they would like to get a better assortment. We bring that to the producers, and the producers are telling us that they will try to accommodate as best they can what the manufacturers are requesting. Our role is to try to bring the concerns forward. The response we got is that it is being considered, and I don't know whether it's actually being done. That's a different thing. But that's the role that we play. I know the industry is such that a producer has a package and usually there's an assortment. What they've told us is that they're trying to put in the assortment the best that they can for the manufacturers in the Territories.

As for the high cost of producing the small diamonds, it has been indicated earlier that we as a government are going to have a look at our policy again to see if we can accommodate the request from the manufacturers of how you deal with the smaller diamonds that are not economical to produce in the North. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Antoine. Mr. Nitah.

**MR. NITAH:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I think that's a wise move if we have the Minister start working on the areas that we do have some control over. I would like to ask a question under compensation benefits, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, we have \$14.775 million under that. I'd like to ask what percentage of this is going to the South Slave district office in the area of economic development? This office is supposed to be providing programs and services and assisting the communities such as Lutselk'e and Fort Resolution in that area to develop business opportunities. How much of this budget is going to that office? How many personnel are we talking about? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Nitah. Mr. Antoine. You're indicating that question be referred to Mr. Kennedy.

**MR. KENNEDY:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The salaries for the South Slave region is \$2.68 million. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Kennedy. Mr. Nitah.

**MR. NITAH:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, how many people are we talking about? How many people occupy that office? Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Nitah. Mr. Kennedy.

**MR. KENNEDY:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The total number of employees we have in that region is 108. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Kennedy. Mr. Nitah.

**MR. NITAH:** Mr. Chairman, thank you. Mr. Chairman, are they all in Fort Smith? Is that where the regional office is? Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Nitah. Mr. Kennedy.

**MR. KENNEDY:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. No, that's the total region, all communities. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Kennedy. Mr. Nitah.

**MR. NITAH:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, can the Minister provide the information on where those personnel are located, excluding the RWED officers in our communities and those who are contracted or working for RWED in the fire suppression area? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Nitah. Mr. Antoine.

**HON. JIM ANTOINE:** Yes, we have that information and we'll provide that information to the Member. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Antoine. Mr. Nitah.

**MR. NITAH:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, does the Minister have that information at this point in time for the record? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Nitah. Mr. Antoine.

**HON. JIM ANTOINE:** Yes, we have the information right here.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Antoine. Mr. Nitah.

**MR. NITAH:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, can the Minister or one of his staff read the information out into Committee of the Whole for the record? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Nitah. Mr. Antoine, is it a fairly long list?

**HON. JIM ANTOINE:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The deputy minister has the list.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you, Mr. Antoine. Mr. McLeod.

**MR. BOB MCLEOD:** A tower person, Buffalo River; economic development officer, Fort Providence; renewable resource officer II, Fort Providence; renewable resource officer II trainee, Fort Providence; community support clerk, Fort Providence; economic development officer, Fort Providence; renewable resource officer II, Fort Resolution; crew coordinator, Fort Resolution; crew boss, Fort Resolution; five crew members, Fort Resolution; crew boss, Fort Resolution; five crew members, Fort Resolution; fire clerk, Fort Resolution; manager, forests, Fort Smith; forest and compliance specialist, Fort Smith; renewable officer II, Fort Smith; renewable officer III, Fort Smith; renewable officer II, Fort Smith; superintendent, South Slave; stores person; assistant stores person; bison biologist; wildlife technician; manager of corporate services; senior corporate services clerk; regional planning coordinator; renewable program manager; manager of wildlife, environment, parks and tourism; energy...

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Thank you. I don't mean to cut you off, Mr. McLeod, but the Chair has to recognize the clock, and maybe you can provide the information to the Member first thing tomorrow. The Chair will recognize the clock and rise and report progress. Thank you, Mr. Minister and your witnesses for appearing.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Can I have the report of Committee of the Whole?

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

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey):** Your committee has been considering Bill 3, Appropriation Act, 2003-2004 and Committee Report 4-14(6), and I would like to report progress. Mr. Speaker, I move that the report of Committee of the Whole be concurred with.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Do you have a seconder for that? The Member for Inuvik Boot Lake, Mr. Roland. The motion is in order.

**AN HON. MEMBER:** Question.

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

---Carried

The Member for Deh Cho, Mr. McLeod.

**MR. MCLEOD:** Mr. Speaker, I seek unanimous consent to return to item 14, notices of motion. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** The Member is seeking unanimous consent to go back to item 14. Are there any nays? You have unanimous consent to go back to item 14.

#### REVERT TO ITEM 14: NOTICES OF MOTION

**Motion 7-14(6): To Change The Implementation Date Of The Strategy To Harmonize Income Support And Social Housing**

**MR. MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker, thank you, colleagues. Mr. Speaker, I give notice that on Friday, March 7, 2003, I will move the following motion: I move, seconded by the honourable Member for North Slave, that the implementation of the harmonization of income support and social housing strategy be rescheduled to April 1, 2004. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Item 14, notices of motion. Item 21, third reading of bills. Mr. Clerk, item 22, orders of the day.

#### ITEM 22: ORDERS OF THE DAY

**CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Hamilton):** Mr. Speaker, there will be a meeting of the Standing Committee on Accountability and Oversight at 9:00 a.m. tomorrow morning.

Orders of the day for Thursday, March 6, 2003:

1. Prayer
2. Ministers' Statements
3. Members' Statements
4. Reports of Standing and Special Committees
5. Returns to Oral Questions
6. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery
7. Oral Questions
8. Written Questions
9. Returns to Written Questions
10. Replies to Opening Address
11. Petitions
12. Reports of Committees on the Review of Bills

13. Tabling of Documents
14. Notices of Motion
15. Notices of Motions for First Reading of Bills
16. Motions
17. First Reading of Bills
  - Bill 9, Youth Justice Statutes Amendment Act
  - Bill 10, An Act to Amend the Hospital Insurance and Health and Social Services Administration Act
  - Bill 11, Supplementary Appropriation Act, No. 3, 2002-2003
18. Second Reading of Bills
19. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters
  - Bill 2, An Act to Amend the Territorial Parks Act
  - Bill 3, Appropriation Act, 2003-2004
  - 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
  - Committee Report 6-14(6), Report on the Review of the Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Commissioner's 2001-2002 Annual Report
  - Committee Report 8-14(6), Report on the Review of the Report of the Auditor General to the NWT Legislative Assembly for 2000 and 2001
  - Committee Report 9-14(6), One Land, Many Voices, The Final Report of the Special Committee on the Review of the Official Languages Act
20. Report of Committee of the Whole
21. Third Reading of Bills
22. Orders of the Day

**DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Clerk. This House stands adjourned until 1:30 p.m., Thursday, March 6, 2003.

---ADJOURNMENT

The House adjourned at 6:00 p.m.

