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The Honourable Paul Delorey, Speaker

Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories

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YELLOWKNIFE, NORTHWEST TERRITORIES**Friday, February 20, 2009****Members Present**

Mr. Abernethy, Mr. Beaulieu, Ms. Bisaro, Mr. Bromley, Hon. Paul Delorey, Mrs. Groenewegen, Mr. Hawkins, Mr. Jacobson, Mr. Krutko, Hon. Jackson Lafferty, Hon. Sandy Lee, Hon. Bob McLeod, Hon. Michael McLeod, Hon. Robert McLeod, Mr. Menicoche, Hon. Michael Miltenberger, Hon. Floyd Roland, Mr. Yakeleya

The House met at 10:06 a.m.

Prayer

---Prayer

SPEAKER (Hon. Paul Delorey): Good morning, colleagues. Welcome back to the Chamber. Orders of the day. Item 2, Ministers' statements. The honourable Minister of Justice, Mr. Lafferty.

Ministers' Statements

**MINISTER'S STATEMENT 31-16(3):
WILDERNESS CAMPS**

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, today I am pleased to announce the start of our fourth annual Elder Wilderness Camp Project for adult male offenders from the Sahtu.

This program runs for six weeks each winter. It is a specialty program that returns inmates to their home regions to participate in a camp with local elders. They learn from their own elders in a traditional setting close to home. Last year, the team of elders and department staff were honoured with a Premier's Collaboration Award. It is truly an example of working together to benefit the entire community.

Charlie and Laura Tobac and Angus Shae are the elders in charge of this program. They provide regular one-on-one counseling to offenders and teach them traditional skills they may never have learned. The direct connection with elders from their own regions also gives offenders the confidence to ask them for support in their communities once they leave the camp.

It is important to note, Mr. Speaker, that this is a specialty program, it may not be appropriate for everyone. Our full-time correctional camp at Kozo Lake is also available for minimum to medium-security adult male offenders who would benefit from this sort of program and are interested in participating. About seven offenders are there each day. They learn bush skills like trapping and fishing, and many of them come away with an improved

sense of who they are. It is an excellent program for reconnecting offenders with the land.

Mr. Speaker, these are not business opportunities. There are other GNWT programs that support outfitters and traditional hunters and trappers. These programs are developed to meet the needs of our inmates. It is not as simple as placing inmates at an existing camp. We have to design programs that meet their needs, and keep them in a camp that will provide appropriate security for the inmates, the staff and the public. Our corrections service has started work to develop other correctional wilderness programming that meets the needs of offenders. When people are in our custody, we have an obligation to provide programs that help them to stay out of trouble in the future. Our current programs are excellent for certain offenders, but they are not what others may need. That is why we are trying to develop land programs that will specifically deal with the needs of a larger group of offenders.

To address this effectively, a Land Program Development Committee has been established. This committee, comprised of five aboriginal case managers and liaison officers, will initially develop program objectives and identify inmate needs that can be met in camp settings. Once that work is done, they will help operators develop appropriate programs and will monitor their implementation. This is an important initiative that will provide greater focus on a very important aspect of our corrections programming. I look forward to the results of their work, and will be pleased to report back to this Assembly on their progress.

The department also funds a range of community justice committee activities. Whereas correctional wilderness programs are just for sentenced offenders in custody, community justice committees have much more flexibility in the programming they offer. These programs are developed and implemented at the local level. The GNWT's role is to provide financial, programming and training support. Every community is different, so the programs will not be the same from one region to another. But some of the most common activities are diversion programs and crime prevention programs.

In diversion, the committee accepts cases from the Crown and RCMP. These are minor cases, usually property crimes, and the offenders have agreed to plead guilty. The committee reviews these cases and comes up with a sentence that best fits the situation. In this context, on-the-land programming isn't part of a sentence; it's a way to reconnect youth with the land and encourage them to stay out of trouble in the future.

Crime prevention programs can be short or long; they can be at established camps or bush-style programs. The justice committee, interested residents and elders often participate in the development of these programs. I am always proud when communities take the initiative to deal with their own justice issues. Our crime rates are far too high. Mr. Speaker, we have to take responsibility for our own actions, and put programs in place that will work for us. It all comes down to community support, community planning, and community partnerships.

Mr. Speaker, I am very proud of these initiatives. They have been developed at the local level to address specific local needs. I would encourage all residents to become more involved in their local justice committees and the activities they run. That will ensure that our system truly represents the people it serves. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

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

MINISTER'S STATEMENT 32-16(3):
MACKENZIE GAS PROJECT

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Mr. Speaker, the proposed Mackenzie Gas Project promises to be one of the single most important projects for the future of the Northwest Territories and one of the biggest economic development initiatives in Canada in the foreseeable future.

This project alone has the potential to build a thriving economy in our region and provide us with many of the choices and opportunities we require in order to create a vibrant, healthy and sustainable future for the Northwest Territories. It also has the potential to provide jobs, benefits to our country as a whole, and to serve as a much needed stimulus to the national economy.

The current economic downturn has given us the opportunity to highlight to our country's leaders that ours is a region whose economic potential and success promises to have direct and significant impacts on other provinces.

I discussed this potential with the Honourable Lisa Raitt, Minister of Natural Resources Canada, in

January. I emphasized to her that support of the Mackenzie Gas Project would contribute to the economic recovery of almost every other Canadian jurisdiction. By way of our example, the Wright Mansell Report we commissioned determined that Alberta would see an increase in GDP of \$9.9 billion and Ontario would see a GDP benefit of \$5.1 billion from the construction and operation of the project.

I was pleased to see this support reflected in both announcements by Minister Prentice prior to the federal budget, as well as in the federal budget introduced on January 27, 2009. Minister Prentice indicated that the federal government is moving to work closely with the proponents of the Mackenzie Gas Project to ensure that the financial conditions were right to move forward with this project following the regulatory process. The federal government committed \$ 37.5 million in their recent budget to ensure that the regulatory process could continue to conclusion and federal departments could continue to work on the project for the 2009-10 fiscal year. These are strong signals that the federal government is prepared to support the Mackenzie Gas Project as one of the cornerstones of the new Canadian economy. Clearly this project is of the utmost importance to Canada and indeed to the energy future of North America.

Mr. Speaker, the Mackenzie Gas Project represents our best option to enhance opportunities for our youth and ensure that the population of the Northwest Territories grows in the future. It also offers us the opportunity to reduce the cost of living through gas conversion and reduce greenhouse gas emissions not only in the Northwest Territories, but across North America.

It is the reason why this government continues to support this project, subject to the regulatory review outcome, because of its importance on a continental scale. This is why we are advancing our support to it as a strategic initiative and one of our highest priorities.

Our objective is to see this project completed in a manner that minimizes potential impacts and maximizes benefits to all people of the Northwest Territories.

In the past four years, we have made significant advances towards preparing our residents, businesses and communities to take advantage of the opportunities that this project will offer. We signed a socio-economic agreement with the project proponents which will result in employment and business opportunities, training, reporting and will serve to mitigate impacts on our roads, health care, and social support systems.

We worked with the federal government to realize the Mackenzie Gas Project Impact Fund which will provide half a billion dollars over 10 years to address potential socio-economic impacts in regions affected by the proposed Mackenzie Gas Project.

We have fully participated in the environmental assessment and regulatory processes for this project and eagerly await their conclusion.

Looking forward, we will continue to harmonize our efforts with those of other regulators to ensure no more process hurdles impede the conclusion of the Mackenzie Gas Project regulatory process.

We will continue to be diligent in representing our positions and interests in the National Energy Board process to make certain that the best interests of present and future generations of Northwest Territories residents are heard and taken into account.

And we will continue to support aboriginal organizations such as the Aboriginal Pipeline Group and other Northwest Territories businesses and corporations who will provide the means through which our people will benefit.

Mr. Speaker, we are fully aware that the Mackenzie Gas Project still faces many challenges but we remain confident that it can and will be built.

Our work and role as the Government of the Northwest Territories will be critical to the realization of this goal in a timely, coordinated and consistent manner that will result in the dawn of a new and bright economic future for our residents as a strong and proud part of our Nation. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER. Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for Sahtu, Mr. Yakeleya.

Members' Statements

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON APOLOGY TO MINISTER MILTENBERGER

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, on Wednesday, February 18th, I said some things in the heat of things in terms of the board reform. I have been thinking now for a couple of days about my words that came out in this discussion.

Last night I was with my children at home and was thinking about words that my mother taught me. Especially my grandmother, she always said to strive to work better with other people. Not too long

ago, some of the elders in the Sahtu told me to think about what I am going to say and how I am going to say it because words in the olden days were very powerful. They had a strong message and they could help you or they could hurt you in terms of what you want to do with your life or your people.

So I was thinking about this last night, Mr. Speaker, about the last couple of days here and I remember having some discussions. I want to say, for the record, Mr. Speaker, and I want to say it very sincerely, that I have said some things to Minister Miltenberger in terms of his style. I said something personally to him saying he acted like a dictator in a heated initiative that was happening in the Northwest Territories. I thought about this for a bit and I don't feel very good about saying that very publicly, because I wanted to say that this is not what my elders have taught me. Sometimes you have to eat your words.

So I want to say that to Mr. Miltenberger himself, and his family, that I do wish to take back those words and say I want to work in cooperation on certain issues and that sometimes words slip out and sometimes you want to take them back. But sometimes it's very hard. So I want to say that in terms of the teachings of my elders that I'm taking responsibility for looking at where we can work together on this initiative.

These are not the sentiments of the Sahtu people to name call people...

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Yakeleya, your time for Member's statement has expired.

MR. YAKELEYA: Mr. Speaker, I seek unanimous consent to conclude my statement.

---Unanimous consent granted

MR. YAKELEYA: So on behalf of the people of the Sahtu region I do apologize to the Minister and his family for those remarks I made and I will keep an eye on what I have to say in the future.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON NWT POWER CORPORATION BASKETBALL CHAMPIONSHIPS

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I'd like to take my once a year opportunity to highlight my favourite sport and that would be basketball.

AN HON. MEMBER: Hear! Hear!

MS. BISARO: Far better than hockey.

---Interjection

AN HON. MEMBER: I take it back.

MS. BISARO: Over the next two weekends NWT and Nunavut basketball teams will battle it out in Yellowknife at the Annual NWT Power Corporation Junior Cager and Senior Cager Basketball Championships. Starting at 4:00 p.m. today all Members can enjoy watching 37 different junior basketball teams from six Yellowknife schools, Princess Alexandra school in Hay River, SAMS school in Inuvik, the Tulita Wolves, and a team from the Kugluktuk High School right through until late Sunday afternoon. Next weekend the Senior Cagers go to work, again from Friday afternoon until late Sunday. Yellowknife's high school teams will go up against teams from Fort Simpson, Cambridge Bay, and Inuvik.

These two weekends will showcase both our young up and coming athletes and our current star athletes in the great sport of basketball. There will be competition in five different categories: Grade 6 category, Grade 7, and Grade 8 for the Junior Cager; and under 15 and under 19 divisions in the Senior Cager. Some of these players will represent the NWT at the 2009 Canada Summer Games in August of this year being held in PEI.

This is a big tournament. Last year Yellowknife hosted 39 teams from nine schools with more than 379 athletes who played 88 basketball games in 2.5 days. And that's just the numbers for the juniors' weekend. You can almost double that for the two weekends' totals.

These two tournaments would not be possible without the efforts of volunteers: the numerous teachers and community members who coached the teams, the Yellowknife members of Basketball NWT who volunteer tirelessly before and during these championship weekends to ensure that the kids have a great time and enjoy the competition. Nor would a tournament of this magnitude be possible without the corporate sponsorship of the NWT Power Corporation. As much as we love to hate the Power Corporation, they recognize the value that sports and an active lifestyle can have for our young people. The Power Corporation's donation of \$7,000 to the Cager tourneys shows their commitment to NWT youth and ensures successful championships.

In closing, I encourage all Members to find a noisy gym this weekend or next and watch our young people in action. I promise you will not be disappointed.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON BOARD REFORM ISSUES

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Now that the dust has settled on those two dreaded words, "board reform," I have some suggestions to offer going forward.

Some have suggested a special committee. A special committee is something that is struck by the Legislative Assembly, funded by the Legislative Assembly, commissioned by the Legislative Assembly, and the findings of the special committee reports back to the Legislative Assembly. In the past we've had some of these to deal with major issues on our agenda. Very costly. I don't think we've had one yet that's come back at a cost of under \$1 million. I don't know what we would actually find out if we had a special committee on board reform, so I can't support that.

I don't think that a joint committee of Cabinet and MLAs at this point would really serve this purpose very well either because when I mentioned the words "constitutional development" I was suggesting that what we were proposing as a government in terms of board reform could launch us into constitutional development talks and a full constitutional forum, because the federal government devolves authority to our territorial government and our territorial government devolves authority to the regions and communities. If we were going to, with one fell swoop, wipe out that participation in the communities and regions, I would suggest that we would have some extremely unhappy aboriginal governments throughout our Territory. And they would necessarily be looking to the federal government to come in here and solve this problem. I wouldn't really support just Cabinet and Regular Members either. I think if we want to go back to our priorities of the 16th Assembly and talk about political development, we have to be very cognizant and inclusive of our aboriginal leaders as well.

We have something under our Refocusing Government Strategic Initiative Committee called the program review office. I think that we would be wise to encourage that committee and that office to continue to look at efficiencies and effectiveness department by department, and wait for and invite regions to come forward with efficiencies that they may be able to identify themselves. I've said before we have a lot of very pressing issues on our plate right now and I think we should totally dial back any further actions with respect to board reform.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON
BRIDGES OVER THE LIARD AND
MACKENZIE RIVERS

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I have always supported the Mackenzie Valley Highway Expansion Project and the benefits that this project will bring to communities throughout the Mackenzie Valley.

The key piece of infrastructure in this expansion project is the construction of permanent bridges over the Liard and Mackenzie rivers. Not only would these bridges complete the Mackenzie Highway and open up the Mackenzie Valley to the Arctic Coast, it would also provide much needed benefits to my people in my region and riding of Nahendeh. Permanent all-weather bridges for the residents of Fort Simpson and other Deh Cho communities would reduce the cost of living, expand economic opportunities, increase tourism opportunities, and overall enhance their quality of life. All of these benefits are fundamental to the goals that we established in this Assembly.

Residents of Fort Simpson in particular have waited a long time for some indication that a bridge over the Liard may be a reality. I am requesting that the Department of Transportation works with the communities to begin baseline studies, conceptual plans, and the Class D estimate process in order to move these projects into the government's capital planning process. I would be asking the Minister questions at the appropriate time.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. The honourable Member for Great Slave, Mr. Abernethy.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON
GNWT PRIVACY POLICIES AND ISSUES

MR. ABERNETHY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In the debate about board reform on Wednesday the Premier identified that privacy policies seemed to block departments from working together. The issue was identified as one of the reasons for board reform. I guess the idea is that if nurses and teachers as well as housing and income support officials were co-located under one CEO they could freely exchange personal information about their clients. I'm not sure that it would work that way and it concerns me for two reasons.

First, if privacy policies are not operating now, then that's a problem we need to work on and solve. Board reform won't automatically solve that problem. The Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act was prepared and enacted by this government. If it needs to be amended or changed, then the Minister of Justice should bring forward

those proposals. It seems like an awfully long detour around a problem to rearrange a government structure of three major departments in order to improve employee access to personal information of their clients when that information is held by another agency.

Second, both the Premier and the Minister of Finance have talked about improving case management in the context of access to personal information of clients. The basis of good case management is client participation. The basis of being able to access and share a client's personal information is client consent. If a client with various problems refuses to participate in understanding and determining his or her own needs and next steps, then the good deeds of social workers and nurses and housing representatives are not likely to help. If a client does not consent to letting social workers and teachers have access to his or her medical records, then our laws say that we have to respect that. I, for one, don't think that an income support worker should be able to access a client's medical records without his or her consent.

I think this is a topic that deserves more work and attention as opposed to board amalgamation. Privacy issues often take two forms: to share individual information such as the case and topic that I just mentioned or in the form of the management of program IT systems which have lots and lots of personal information in them. Perhaps the Ministers were suggesting that the teachers should be able to access the income support records or electronic health records. This goes far beyond one worker dipping into a person's file or another worker. This would start a move towards Big Brother of George Orwell's 1984, the government keeping a master file on its citizens. This is what the privacy laws are intended to prevent.

I do think the government needs to make more of an effort to tackle these issues. I do think the government needs to acquire additional expertise and privacy issues and work with relevant boards...

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Abernethy, your time for your Member's statement has expired.

MR. ABERNETHY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I seek unanimous consent to conclude my statement.

---Unanimous consent granted

MR. ABERNETHY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I do think the government needs to acquire additional expertise in privacy issues and work with relevant boards and authorities to develop the lawful protocols and agreements that would support improved case management and improved system

practices. There are methods and ways to properly sort through some of these issues. Agencies in southern provinces have figured out many of these issues.

Mr. Speaker, at the appropriate time, I will be asking the Premier some questions. Thank you.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON LACK OF TERRITORIAL RENEWABLE ENERGY TRAINING PROGRAMS

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, this government has recognized the need to reduce our environmental impacts, our cost of living by moving away from fossil fuels and mitigating climate change.

In fact, we've said we are going to dedicate \$60 million over the next few years to energy initiatives. We have already started on the installation of biomass heating systems, wood pellet boilers and so on. We are looking at wood gasification. Mr. Speaker, every single community in the NWT is required to have an energy plan by 2010. They are working frantically to complete those and you will notice a lot of consultants throughout the Territory from down south working on this.

Mr. Speaker, in May of last year, the Standing Committee on Social Programs recommended that we get going on a Renewable Energy Technician Program at Aurora College and a Sustainable Communities Program to develop the expertise we need here.

The Alberta Energy Plan, which just came out, in every section of that plan they highlight the need to develop the professionals and the expertise needed to achieve their goals. Mr. Speaker, where are our efforts in this area?

We know that expertise is needed in areas like home energy retrofits which we are embarking on through the Housing Corporation and so on in the area of renewable energy such as wind, solar, geothermal, biomass energy and, of course, the whole area of energy efficiency that can enter all aspects of our community systems and homes.

Mr. Speaker, we know that there are hundreds or thousands of opportunities for replacing fossil fuel systems or enhancing them with renewable energy systems throughout the NWT with attractive payback times of one to seven years. Solar hot water heating is an example of that, biomass space heating, et cetera.

Where are our programs to meet these training needs, Mr. Speaker? We've raised this before. There are so many opportunities out there. I am aware of training programs across Canada in communities or jurisdictions like New Brunswick, a number of community colleges: Seneca College Native Education Centre, Landon College, and other areas. Clearly there is a current and accelerating need for expertise and...

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

---Unanimous consent granted

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you, colleagues. Clearly there is a current and accelerating need for expertise in community energy systems, energy efficiency and renewable energy, both for technical planning, administrative and government purposes. Let's get these training programs on the ground now. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Bromley. The honourable Member for Mackenzie Delta, Mr. Krutko.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON MENTAL HEALTH WORKERS IN THE MACKENZIE DELTA

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, we all got elected to the 16th Assembly from our constituents who gave us the direction to represent them in this House regardless of who they voted for or who they didn't vote for. I think, Mr. Speaker, we have to ensure that we represent all our constituents in this Legislature and not just one group over another.

Mr. Speaker, we all have similar problems regardless of whether it's in our larger centres or communities; the issue with regard to health and social services and delivery of programs and services. We cannot pit one group off against the other.

Mr. Speaker, the Inuvik region expends some \$13 million with regard to health care, but in a lot of the communities I represent, a lot of these services that are being paid for by this government are not being delivered.

Mr. Speaker, to take an example, this government spends in the area of mental health and addictions \$1.2 million in the Inuvik region. Yet, Mr. Speaker, I had to beg the Minister of Health to get money into my community so we could fill that position and not have the money sitting in the Inuvik board of health office to send someone to my community once a

month. Mr. Speaker, there again it shows that this government is not listening.

Mr. Speaker, the budget for mental health in Fort McPherson is \$184,000. The Minister is committed to give the community \$75,000, again shortchanging the community. Mr. Speaker, I, for one, will not take the injustice with regard to programs and services or even with regard to how capital is being allocated by this government. I think it's very much underhandedly driven. I think it's important that we sit down with those organizations and work with them and not work against them by using policy decisions or saying sorry you don't have a qualified position or you don't have a business case.

Mr. Speaker, I am still frustrated after yesterday's events, but I think this government has to do something more than little gestures to say here, I'll write you a letter and give it to the chair of the Beaufort-Delta Health Authority and see if they react to it. Mr. Speaker, the Minister has to do more than sending out a letter.

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Krutko, your time for your Member's statement has expired.

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I seek unanimous consent to conclude my statement.

---Unanimous consent granted

MR. KRUTKO: Mr. Speaker, at the appropriate time I will be asking the Minister of Health and Social Services what action has been taken with regard to her letter.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The honourable Member for Nunakput, Mr. Jacobson.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON WATER TREATMENT FACILITY IN SACHS HARBOUR

MR. JACOBSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I am speaking again on water treatment facility deficiencies in Sachs Harbour.

Mr. Speaker, I have always supported drinking tap water to eliminate the unnecessary use of bottled water. But for the community of Sachs Harbour, it would be irresponsible to do so.

I have spoken about the boil water advisory and the water treatment facility problems in Sachs Harbour recently. This problem is so important for the people of Sachs Harbour it must be mentioned again and again.

Mr. Speaker, when I think of Sachs Harbour now, I think about the water treatment plant. According to

leadership in the community, the water treatment facility is the only type still in Canada and it's so problematic, when parts are needed they must come from the United States or other parts of the world. I believe the primary responsibility of this government is to provide basic necessities of life to the residents of the Northwest Territories. I also believe the water is one of those necessities, so I can say I don't...Sorry. So I can understand why this government is taking so long to resolve this problem with the water treatment facility. With the cost of electricity, boiling water in Sachs Harbour is not only time consuming, but is also costly.

This is another issue with a long list of disparages between small isolated communities like Sachs Harbour and larger centres.

Mr. Speaker, I know the Minister of MACA and his predecessor have forwarded me correspondence on this issue and I greatly appreciate that. But the frustration of the community is still boiling over, no pun intended.

---Laughter

The cost is escalating year after year. According to the community members, it makes more cost saving sense to just replace the entire facility.

Why is MACA so persistent in signing over the water treatment plant to the community when there are so many problems unresolved?

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

---Unanimous consent granted

MR. JACOBSON: Why is MACA so committed to trying to sign this program over to the community? The proper way has always been to fix the problem, develop a plan. This will ensure the problems won't occur again. Mr. Speaker, I'll have questions for the Minister of MACA at the appropriate time. Thank you.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON NEED FOR NWT OMBUDSMAN

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. There are times when people believe very strongly that government has made a decision that is wrong, bad and even sometimes can be described as unfair and unbalanced. There have been numerous cases over the years where MLAs have had difficulty getting full information about circumstances and to be able to get to the bottom of an issue because

often we hit a wall when the reply comes back as this is an internal decision and the details cannot be pursued further due to reasons related to internal management, confidentiality, et cetera.

Mr. Speaker, some of those reasons are fair, and I can respect that, but not all. There are cases out there, for example, when a person has a concern with a staffing issue, whether it was fair or not, the UNW and the government have an appeal mechanism for people to use. Even income support assistance has an appeal board where applicants can have their chance to request their concern to be reviewed. Conversely though, if a person is denied public housing there is no available appeal mechanism. What's typically left is the person has to request their MLA to write to the department to get the Minister to go back and review the earlier decision. Guess what happens. The person who just said no goes back to their notes to say no again.

Mr. Speaker, I believe there's a straightforward process and a solution that we could move forward to help our constituents and our people of the North. Many provinces across Canada including the Yukon have established an ombudsman. An ombudsman is an independent and objective investigator who follows up on people's complaints. Mr. Speaker, they take into consideration the privacy issues and are able to balance them in a fair, respectful and certainly an objective way. The ombudsman can help all parties understand the differences and help resolve the decision and find a solution. This ombudsman could be a statutory officer, of which we have several, and they could be accountable to the government as are other statutory officers, Mr. Speaker, such as we have access to information, privacy protection, language and human rights. We also have ombudsman who could deal with various...Sorry. I'll have questions for the Premier later today.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT IN TU NEDHE

MR. BEAULIEU: Mahsi cho, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, today I want to talk about business development in Tu Nedhe. Mr. Speaker, today I wish to talk about the need for this government to increase support to communities in the area of business development. Mr. Speaker, in Tu Nedhe we have very few small businesses and very few government and private industry jobs. The people of Tu Nedhe can work in the traditional economy by hunting and trapping; however, that is never enough to sustain a family for the full year. Mr. Speaker, the current alternatives are few and many

families need income support to make ends meet. However, Mr. Speaker, this government may be able to help these small businesses by stepping up their support for development of small businesses.

Mr. Speaker, currently the Department of Industry, Tourism and Investment along with the Business Development and Investment Corporation are mandated to develop businesses across the North. For various reasons, Mr. Speaker, the system does not seem to work. Mr. Speaker, any time you have an organization that is set up to rely on another organization to complete their work for them but have no authority over that organization, it doesn't work well. Currently, the Business Development and Investment Corporation is responsible for small business development or business development, however, they have to ask the ITI regional staff to complete community work for them. At this time the structure does not work. Mr. Speaker, these types of organizational structures usually do not work. The ITI staff have their own work and staff tend to do the work that is directed by their supervisors and not a corporation that has no direct authority over them. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. The honourable Member for Inuvik Twin Lakes, Mr. Robert McLeod.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT IN APPRECIATION OF CANADIAN NORTH'S CONTRIBUTION TO MINOR HOCKEY

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Mr. Speaker, I was on the phone this morning with the president of the Inuvik Minor Hockey Association, Mr. Les Skinner, and he informed me that he'd received a call the other day from Canadian North asking him if he could find 10 kids to bring down to Edmonton to take part in an Oilers game. After some negotiating, Mr. Skinner managed to get 16 nine and 10-year-old kids down to Edmonton. Canadian North in partnership with the Edmonton Oilers...

They get to go down to Rexall Place, they'll practice tomorrow with the Oiler coaching staff, and tomorrow night they're going to be part of the honour guard. They'll get to go into the dressing room and meet the players. They're also going to be on the after-hours show, again, I think that's the game tomorrow night that's televised on CBC.

Our colleague from Frame Lake pointed out to one of the corporate citizens sponsoring the basketball tournament this weekend and I think we don't do enough to acknowledge the corporate citizenship across the Northwest Territories who put a lot of money into giving these kids an opportunity which a lot of them may not have had if not for this. I think we should acknowledge the work of Canadian

North in bringing these kids down and the Edmonton Oilers for taking time out in their busy day to mingle with the kids. I've always said that anything we do for children across the Northwest Territories, if we could make a difference in the life of one child across the Northwest Territories then anything we have done will have been worth it. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Item 4, returns to oral questions. Item 5, recognition of visitors in the gallery. Colleagues, it's my pleasure today to introduce a constituent of mine in the gallery today, Karen Bouchard. She's here as a chaperone for two lovely young ladies that are here paging for us this week from Hay River North, Desiree Bouchard and Chantel Beck. Both of these gals are students from Ecole Boreale in Hay River. The honourable Member for Inuvik Twin Lakes, Mr. Robert McLeod.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It gives me great pleasure to recognize my wife, Judy, who's down here for a few days taking a course and visiting me. I'm trying to talk a little longer until she comes right around the corner there. She's not quite in there yet but she'll appear shortly. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Item 6, acknowledgements. No acknowledgements today. Item 7, oral questions. The honourable Member for Nunakput, Mr. Jacobson.

Oral Questions

QUESTION 174-16(3): REPAIR OF WATER TREATMENT PLANT IN SACHS HARBOUR

MR. JACOBSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This is for the Minister of MACA. Given the complexities of the problem with the water treatment plant in Sachs Harbour, the repair costs associated and continued uncertainty of the water treatment plant operations, is the government committed to having the repair completed prior to transferring responsibilities for the water treatment facility over to the Hamlet of Sachs Harbour? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Mr. Speaker, it is government's position that anything that we do

decide to turn over to the communities has to be in top working order before it's turned over. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. The honourable Member for Mackenzie Delta, Mr. Krutko.

QUESTION 175-16(3): MENTAL HEALTH AND ADDICTIONS FUNDING FOR MACKENZIE DELTA

MR. KRUTKO: Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Health and Social Services and it's in regard to a letter that she wrote to myself saying that she was going direct the Beaufort-Delta Health and Social Services Authority to transfer \$75,000 to the community of Fort McPherson to administer the program. Yet, Mr. Speaker, I noted under the budget item for mental health in the Inuvik region that for Fort McPherson it's \$184,000 for mental health and addictions. I'd like to ask the Minister, have you received a response to that letter? More importantly, why is it the community is being short changed by way of \$75,000 versus the \$185,000 that is in the budget?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Krutko. The honourable Minister of Health and Social Services, Ms. Lee.

HON. SANDY LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The letter that I wrote to the Beaufort Health and Social Services Authority directing them to transfer \$75,000 to a community government who may be willing to deliver this program is as a result of the fact that the TI'oondih Healing Society and the authority, their discussions have not resulted in a resolution as to how this program could be delivered there. The amount of \$75,000 is in line with the money that the authority had given to TI'oondih Healing Society in the last fiscal year. The dollar amount that the Member is speaking about is bigger than the contribution that the authority used to give to TI'oondih Healing Society. The Member is mistaken in mixing the two funds. I just want to indicate to the Member I did this because that was what the Member wanted for the community. If he would like me to revisit that and tell the authority not to do it, I would be happy to do that as well. Thank you.

MR. KRUTKO: Mr. Speaker, I have been getting calls from my leadership wondering where is this position, how soon can they see the money and how soon can they fill that position. I would like to ask the Minister, have you got any direction back that the health authority will agree to releasing that money to the community? How soon will it happen?

HON. SANDY LEE: Mr. Speaker, I directed the authority last week. I would be happy to check with the Member if that is what he wishes me to do and to make sure this has been followed through. I have no reason to believe that it would not be. Thank you.

MR. KRUTKO: The Minister is more hopeful than I am. This is something I have been dealing with for 12 years. Again, I would like to get back to the original question. Mental health and addiction services in Fort McPherson is \$184,815 for two positions. One is a mental health position and one is an alcohol and drug position. The mental health position is more costly than the alcohol and drug position. Also there is O and M dollars there to operate and maintain an office. I would like to ask the Minister, in light of this budget item, can the Minister direct the health authority to give all the dollars that are for that position including the O and M that goes along with it?

HON. SANDY LEE: My discussion with the Member from Mackenzie Delta for the last six months has revolved around the contract the Tl'oondih Healing Society has had with the Beaufort-Delta Health and Social Services Authority. The Member would like us to expend that. Mr. Speaker, I think it is important we ask the authority and the band office or the community government to work on this position and then see from there how we could expend that. We know that there are two or three positions on the Mental Health and Wellness Program. The focus right now is to use the money that used to be allocated to the Tl'oondih Healing Society which has not been used for a very long time. I am hearing from the communities as well as the Member that we need to do something there right away. I would like to ask the Member to let us just focus on this first and then go from there as to how we expend that. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Lee. Final supplementary, Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Can the Minister get back to me and the community leaders as soon as possible that this has been prescribed and in which direction it has been given. The divisional board of health in Inuvik has agreed they will transfer that money and will allow the community to fill that position in regards to who they like to run the programs and services. Can the Minister keep me and the community involved in when this decision is made and when the action is going to take place to move on it? Thank you.

HON. SANDY LEE: Yes, Mr. Speaker. I would be happy to do that. Thank you.

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

QUESTION 176-16(3):
CREATION OF OMBUDSMAN OFFICE

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Despite my flu, I am still willing to go at it. Mr. Speaker, the issue I raised today in my Member's statement is the idea of establishing an ombudsman's office. I can go into numerous examples, but I think even our good Premier has probably had some experience where some decisions have been made in the past when he was a Regular MLA. It was tough to get to the bottom of them. What I am suggesting is that we establish an ombudsman's office, not unlike any of the other statutory offices we have here in the Northwest Territories, to help both constituents and ourselves to get to the bottom of why certain decisions are made and to make sure that they are both fair, balanced and definitely respectful. Mr. Speaker, my question directed to the Premier, of course, is would he take a look at this initiative and see if there are certain merits to do something similar as they do in the Yukon to establish an NWT ombudsman's office here in the North? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. The honourable Premier, Mr. Roland.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would be prepared to, through our business planning process and cycle, work with Members of the Assembly if they feel that this is an initiative that should be added to that process for consideration. I would be prepared to do that. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you. The honourable Member for Great Slave, Mr. Abernethy.

QUESTION 177-16(3):
PRIVACY ISSUES AFFECTING
CASE MANAGEMENT PROCESSES

MR. ABERNETHY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions today are for the Premier and a follow up to my Member's statement. Can the Premier explain to me how an improved case management approach to clients with multiple issues could be based on something other than consent and participation of the client in determining his or her needs whether or not the various case workers are employed by the same board? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Abernethy. The honourable Premier, Mr. Roland.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. That response will probably require taking up a fair

bit of time. If we want to go into all the details of our processes that are in place, some of it existing in legislation, some of it on professional responsibilities and all the different professions, but there are examples where people fall between the cracks between one department and another and it is a case management process that we need to look at. It is not an issue of the access to information piece; it is more our own process whether it is in legislation or professional responsibility. If we are to proceed down this path, we would have to look at that type of area and make some changes which would have been, I believe, incorporated in the process we were initially undertaking. But we could look at trying to do something in a different manner as we progress forward. Thank you.

MR. ABERNETHY: I appreciate that response. Following up on that, currently there is only one position allocated in the GNWT as the GNWT's resource for access to information and protection of privacy legislation. That position is located within the Department of Justice. Does the Premier agree that, since privacy is an issue, the government needs to allocate more than one position to this responsibility? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Mr. Speaker, if going with the issue of case management on these files, again, I don't believe that is an issue of access to information. It is the professionals working together and looking at our legislation that we have in place or regulations. The access to information office, again, if they feel that they are in need of expanding their services, we would have to look through that as the next business planning cycle approaches us. Thank you.

MR. ABERNETHY: I think that the two are actually related. Training could be an issue. I don't believe that all the staff is aware that there are ways to share information legally and work together. The departments tend to live in silos. Client consent is effective. Would the Premier commit to ensure that staff from senior managers down to program delivery staff are adequately trained and understand the concepts of consent for release and sharing of information? I believe that many residents wouldn't resist releasing their information if they understand why it is in their best interest and how it could help government provide holistic care. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Mr. Speaker, I think this is a systematic issue that we need to deal with where we talk about what the Members have mentioned, silos and departments working from time to time, we have been trying to change that approach and that work environment. I think that with the work that we can do, if we want to move

forward, we can look at options of trying to level that out. If it requires on the other side trying to come up with a process for staff to better share information, we can do that, but that work will have to be undertaken. We will have to look at professional designations, our legislation and regulations as well. We are prepared to look at that. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Roland. Final supplementary, Mr. Abernethy.

MR. ABERNETHY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to thank the Premier for that response. He did talk about legislation. Would the Premier commit to reviewing legislation related to providing health, housing and education services to residents of the North that ensures certain necessary pieces of information can be shared without unnecessarily or inappropriately compromising the privacy of our residents? For example, when is it appropriate or reasonable for a department to share generic information with another department, things like health care and cards for determining residency? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Mr. Speaker, I believe the fact is that our employees all swear an oath to confidentiality on the files, that should be a fairly clear step that we should be able to share information. But there are a lot of groups out there in other areas outside of government that look at how we hold information or use that information and how it is shared even amongst departments within one government. We will have to take a good look at this and take the appropriate approach and work with Members to come up with a solution that would work. I believe we all work, our staff work, whether it is health, education, justice or housing, they work for the Government of the Northwest Territories. Whether it is through an authority or not, the funding does flow. The legislation exists at this level and we should be able to make it work. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Roland. The honourable Member for the Sahtu, Mr. Yakeleya.

QUESTION 178-16(3):
AVAILABILITY OF ENERGY
MONITORING DEVICES

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On October 23, 2008, I had questions for the Minister of NTPC on initiatives that the communities can use in terms of how they can conserve their energy in terms of a device that was used in B.C. I think it is called an electrical monitoring device. The Minister responded very favourably to my question. I would like to ask the Minister in regards to these monitoring devices, when will they be available to the residents in the Northwest Territories to use as

a tool to conserve the energy and also to save on the power bill?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. The Minister responsible for the NWT Power Corporation, Mr. Roland.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The monitoring device is one that would measure the use of electricity in homes and the homeowner could then decide what appliances they are using, how much energy and if they should be changing that appliance or changing the method of use of that appliance. It is something that we are in the process of purchasing additional monitors. They would be, in a sense, not just for one unit. We would have to use them in different communities and places so that they are transferable. They would be, in a sense, borrowed or put on a unit for a number of days or a week or so. I am not sure the extent. Once the homeowner finds out the type of consumption, maybe they can do some adjustment in that manner and then that unit would be taken to the next home in a community. We would rotate them. That is the process we are looking at doing. I know that we have ordered additional units and looking at how we can get them out to communities. Thank you.

MR. YAKELEYA: Mr. Speaker, certainly the Minister is correct in terms of the usage and the advantages of having monitoring devices in the communities. I would ask the Minister in terms of identifying locations and where these offices are situated throughout the Northwest Territories, if he would give some careful consideration to some of the communities that are more isolated communities that would help them with their consumption or monitoring, educating the people in terms of the use of energy in their homes and that they be provided some direction also in terms of how they can take advantage of these monitoring devices.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Mr. Speaker, that is the reason why we are ordering additional monitors, so that we can spread it around the Territory. We would look at a number of communities or areas when it comes to the high cost of living and try to spread it out as much as possible. Again, there are only so many units we can have and rotate around the communities in the Territory. Once we get this plan set up, I will share that with the Members. Thank you.

MR. YAKELEYA: Mr. Speaker, I also understand from the response from the Minister's office in terms of these monitoring devices, that they are available at some of the local hardware stores in the Northwest Territories. Is there any way that some of the private homeowners that may not be eligible but would like some of these monitoring

devices be put in their houses, any way within NTPC's operations that they somehow can get some reimbursement or a discount in terms of when they purchase it through these local hardware stores as in terms of their effort to conserve energy and to reduce the cost of living in their communities?

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Mr. Speaker, the Power Corporation itself has set up a process where real purchase and real use of those devices around the Territory, we are not in a position to buy them and give them away. That process may be better used through Arctic Energy Alliance's process where there could be that type of support through a number of other departments. Our goal within the Power Corporation, because of the structure and the way we have to account for our funding, we have agreed to purchase more of these units and rotate them around the North to try and help out as many people across the North. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Roland. Your final supplementary, Mr. Yakeleya.

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Can the Minister then somehow communicate to the Arctic Energy Alliance in terms if residents knowing that the NTPC has a limited amount of power monitoring devices that he can communicate this to the Power Corp to meet with the Arctic Energy Alliance to see if they are willing to set aside a certain amount of dollars so individuals who are in private units in small communities and somehow can work out an arrangement to receive these monitoring devices in the North?

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Mr. Speaker, the approach I will take is work with the Ministers, the Energy Coordinating Committee, and make the approach to the appropriate bodies, whether it would be the Arctic Energy Alliance or through this process. We will look at what we can do to try to expand this program as much as possible. Thank you.

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

QUESTION 179-16(3):
AVAILABILITY OF ENERGY TECHNICIAN
TRAINING PROGRAMS

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is for the Minister of Education, Culture and environment. I am wondering, as a follow up to my statement earlier today, what renewable energy, energy efficiency and energy planning programs are currently available at Aurora College or other institutions in the Northwest Territories and/or under planning to be implemented soon. My question, of

course, is based on the opportunity we have here to achieve many of the goals of this Assembly by using our own people to address this very important...I think we have seen it reflected in the questions already today. I would appreciate that response. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Bromley. The honourable Minister of Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Lafferty.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Certainly we have a partnership through Aurora College and Aurora Research Institute which is the hub of the Arctic Research Initiative. Certainly through that avenue students are taking specific programs through Aurora College with the partnership with southern institutions as well and the universities. There is the pan-territorial discussion on how we can expand with our programming at that level. We are open to suggestions and ideas. I think we are making great progress in the North. Mahsi.

MR. BROMLEY: Somehow that doesn't develop my confidence a lot. I am not aware of any training programs currently offered in this area in Aurora College, but I would be happy to learn anything specific the Minister is aware of. This was awarded a year ago by the Standing Committee on Social Programs to the department. What partnerships are we currently developing specifically with other institutions? Thank you.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mr. Speaker, there was some discussion on environmental studies, possibly programming at the Aurora College facility. We are working close with ENR in that area, along with environmental monitoring boards. There is been some discussion and it's at the preliminary stages. Certainly we will be making strides in that area because it is important to have that programming in the North. Certainly the ARI, Aurora Research Institute, will be actively involved in this area.

MR. BROMLEY: I appreciate the comments from the Minister. Mr. Speaker, we're planning to spend \$15 million this year on energy initiatives. Those are new initiatives and that's not to mention the programs that we've already got going, so there is an urgency to this. I know we're filling up our planes with consultants from the South but that's not the best use of our resources. We do have some progressive entrepreneurs in the North; for example, Arctic Green Energy, which is working with pellet boilers and so on. I think there's an Energy Wall Construction company and probably several people could mention companies in their own towns. Are we planning strong, effective and immediate support for an apprenticeship program to ensure that we get the technical expertise

developed by our own people with these progressive companies that are actually struggling because of the shortage of expertise now and would appreciate that support? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mr. Speaker, with apprenticeship programming there has been a review in that area. We're always looking for suggestions and ideas on how or where we can improve in our programming. Certainly working along with other various boards and agencies throughout the North we get valuable input into our educational system. Certainly I'll be more than willing to hear from the Member on what he has to provide to our educational system.

With respect to if it's going to be an environmental aspect, he's talking about trades, that's another area. Those are the areas that we are currently working with. Like I said, we're open to any suggestions from the Members. Mahsi.

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you for that response by the Minister and the openness that he's extended. Would the Minister, therefore, commit to modifying the existing programs of building maintainer, electrician, plumber and gas fitting courses to incorporate energy savings into their curriculum and will the Minister commit immediately to developing apprenticeship opportunities for the progressive companies in this area? Thank you.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mr. Speaker, certainly, like I said earlier, there has been a review being done on the programming within Aurora College. Certainly we'll take those into consideration during our review of the programming again. I think we are at a stage where we need to integrate those into our programs, what the Member has alluded to. I think it's an important aspect. On a moving-forward basis, we will be going through the business planning process and we'll certainly take those into consideration. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

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

QUESTION 180-16(3):

MANDATE OF REFOCUSING GOVERNMENT COMMITTEE AND PROGRAMS REVIEW OFFICE

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm not sure who these questions should be directed to; at first I thought the Premier, but maybe actually the Minister in charge of the Refocusing Government Strategic Initiative Committee.

Mr. Speaker, we have a committee concentrating on refocusing government. I'd like, for the public's

benefit, to hear what the mandate of that Strategic Initiative committee is and maybe also have the Minister or Premier elaborate a bit on what is the program review office. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. The honourable Premier, Mr. Roland.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, we're having a side discussion here on the approach to being the lead Minister. On the Strategic Initiative committees, as we've structured them, Refocusing Government Initiative is looking at the broad categories within government and how we operate and deliver programs and services. The specific area of program services review office has structured within the Refocusing Government Initiative and that is an area where we would be looking at the type of programming we're delivering now in the environment, looking at is that the best way of delivery of a program. For example, we're gathering information in a number of areas to get the baseline data on how the initiatives are working or how existing programs are working and then going to look at are there ways of improving on that service delivery or changing the way it's delivered in our communities so it makes better use of the dollars. For the actual structure set-up, I will make that available again to Members and provide that. Thank you.

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: I'd like to ask the Premier if the review of the programs of various departments, department by department, if that would include the governance related to the delivery of those programs and services. Thank you.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Mr. Speaker, the program review office right now looks at the effective and efficiency side of current government operations. For example, a number of areas we've started doing some work on earlier this winter and gathering the initial information was, for example, the growth and health expenditures, adult education and training aspect, the K to 12 schooling program and the impact of the funding changes related to, for example, the pupil-teacher ratio. Those are things we're gathering information on, that type of system. We've not looked at the governance side of things as of yet. Thank you.

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Could the examination of the governance within a department related to the delivery of programs and services be an appropriate thing to look into under the mandate of the program review office? Thank you.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Mr. Speaker, right now we're structured...For example, one of the other areas is within the Refocusing Government Initiative the appropriate deputies and Ministers

lead their conduct of ongoing program reviews by interdepartmental working groups and clarify and confirm mandates. At that level we're doing the work. We haven't looked at the expansion to, for example, the governance section, how authorities work and so on. We're looking more at the program delivery side. We could sit down with Members and look at should we expand that look and do that work in that area. It is an opportunity, but right now it is more specific to actual program delivery area. Thank you.

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

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: I think that looking at those mechanisms for management and advisory within departments would be a natural fit for a program review office. I think that we are trying to create a separate vehicle here to look for effectiveness and efficiencies and I think we've already got it set right up there. How many people work in the program review office? How many people are dedicated to this exercise? Thank you.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Mr. Speaker, the program review office is four staff working in this specific area. Again, the delivery side is what our focus is on and I'm sure we can do some work to look at a better efficiency process of doing work on behalf of the people of the Northwest Territories. The governance structures and so on are, right now, outside that mandate, but I'm prepared to talk to Members if we should look at that avenue. Thank you.

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

QUESTION 181-16(3):
RESPITE CARE POLICY

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my questions today are addressed to the Minister of Health and Social Services. I know that the Minister is aware of the respite service that is run out of Stanton Hospital for caregivers of patients with chronic conditions. I know that the Minister also knows of difficulties experienced by one of my constituents last year who is now so frustrated with the inconsistency of the service that she hasn't used it in almost a year. I want to ask the Minister, first, have there been any improvements in the guidelines for the Respite Care Program since last fall when we discussed this issue? Thank you.

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

HON. SANDY LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I thank the Member for the question and

I'm very familiar with the individual situation that she's been working on. I can advise the Member, yes, the authority issued a guideline that specifies more clearly about what the procedure is in terms of how that one respite care bed at the hospital is to be used for those who need it. Thank you.

MS. BISARO: I think those guidelines are the ones that I was referencing, so I presume they haven't changed. The major concern with the program for my constituent is that the system does not guarantee that the dates booked by the caregiver will be honoured. How is a family supposed to plan for a holiday when the respite booking can be cancelled mere days before it's going to start? I want to know if the Minister finds this acceptable and, if not, what she is prepared to do about it. Thank you.

HON. SANDY LEE: I would agree with the Member that this is not adequate. It's not possible for a hospital to be able to guarantee these respite beds. Hospital administrators have to be able to make decisions under last minute notice. I think at best a respite bed here could be confirmed with a week in advance, but I know that for many families, especially large families with a holiday planned, they need to be able to plan months in advance.

What's being done about it? The Territorial Dementia Centre, which is on time right now and hopefully it will be open by the end of the year, and it will have respite beds as well as day programming which I think will help a lot. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MS. BISARO: I thank the Minister for the explanation. I do understand that there are emergency situations when the respite bed cannot be released as has been booked, but except for emergency situations, can the Minister advise that one week's notice...The caregiver is required to provide a one-week, kind of, confirmation to the hospital that the patient or the client will be coming in. So it seems unfair to me that the hospital cannot also provide the same one-week notice to the caregiver when a cancellation has to be done. Emergent situations aside, can the Minister advise that the guidelines will guarantee one week's notice if a cancellation has to occur? Thank you.

HON. SANDY LEE: My information is that the authority has put this in practice to increase the chance of being able to do that. I think we need to be mindful of the fact, Mr. Speaker, that all beds have to be available in situations, and especially with this respite care bed, if a patient walks in who goes into a palliative care with no notice or less than a week's notice, it is really hard to guarantee the bed for respite services. Because respite service, as important as it is to families, will not be on top of the priorities.

Mr. Speaker, I totally agree with the Member and the family that this is less than an ideal situation and we need to increase the respite care beds outside of the hospital. We are doing that with the Territorial Dementia Centre. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Lee. Final supplementary, Ms. Bisaro.

MS. BISARO: I'm looking for a guarantee outside of emergency situations. It's understood that there may be situations as the one that the Minister has mentioned with palliative care. It may be that the previous user of the respite bed isn't picked up on time. Those things are understood. But all things being equal, if a cancellation has to be made for a reason other than an emergency, where is the one-week notice? Can the Minister guarantee that? Thank you.

HON. SANDY LEE: I suppose I could guarantee outside of emergency, yes, you could have that bed, but to me that's almost a meaningless guarantee because my understanding is that family wants to be able to book respite care, plan accordingly, and be able to take advantage of this. Under the current system that's not possible because there are always emergencies that could come in. I will make the commitment to the Member that I will revisit the policy and see how it works, have we had any problems with the last-minute cancellation on the part of the hospital, and we will continue to work on this until we get the real respite beds at the Territorial Dementia Centre. Thank you.

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

QUESTION 182-16(3):
CONSTRUCTION OF LIARD RIVER BRIDGE

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. In my Member's statement I raised the issue of the permanent bridges across the Liard and Mackenzie Rivers as part of the Mackenzie Highway expansion. My questions are for the Minister of Transportation. Can the Minister advise me of any previous work that was done on the bridge at the Liard River Crossing near Fort Simpson, any cost estimates and/or scoping? As well, can that information be shared? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. The honourable Minister of Transportation, Mr. Michael McLeod.

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: Mr. Chairman, I believe most of our river crossings, the major river crossings in the Northwest Territories have been reviewed by the federal government in the '70s and perhaps even earlier. I certainly would be happy to have our staff go see what kind of documents were

put together in those days and anything pertaining to the Liard River and share it with the Member. Thank you.

MR. MENICOCHÉ: I would like to know if the Minister will know how much work would be involved in developing a new and current cost estimate and/or scoping plan for the Liard River Bridge. Thank you.

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: Mr. Speaker, I'm not an engineer and it would be very difficult for me to assess what it would cost. I would assume it would be fairly significant and we would probably not be very willing to do that until we knew there was a potential project in the works. Thank you.

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Well, I'd like to help him with a potential project there, Mr. Speaker.

---Laughter

Mr. Speaker, in my Member's statement I spoke about capital planning process and a bridge. I just want to clarify that my request for the capital planning process was for the planning and engineering costs not so much as a resource to build a bridge. Will the Minister consider resourcing some dollars in the capital planning process to provide resources for an engineering and/or scoping study? Thank you.

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: Mr. Speaker, it's always been our intention to try to encourage the federal government to move on to larger projects, especially in this day and age as an economic stimulus. The Mackenzie Valley Highway is a very good project for the long term. It would involve many businesses across the North, many companies that are currently looking for work. We expect, as we move forward, that we would include bridges such as Liard and the Bear and Ndulee as part of these projects. We also have to recognize, Mr. Speaker, that there are other bridge projects that are being actively promoted. The Peel River and the crossing at Tsiigehtchic are ones that we have to look at.

Mr. Speaker, at this point, our resources are stretched to the limit and we would be very reluctant to engage in doing any more research until we have further discussions and there are indicators where new dollars would be invested by the federal government. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Final supplementary, Mr. Menicoché.

MR. MENICOCHÉ: I think that if the Minister and his engineers are doing some scoping work for other bridges, I don't think it would take up that much time and energy to look at the Liard Bridge

project. As well, I would like to ask the Minister to consider that when they're doing their work. Also, just again, I know that any more detailed cost will expend some financial resources and I ask him to consider that as well in the next budgeting cycle, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: Mr. Speaker, I have to clarify first of all that we are not scoping out any new bridge projects at this point. There are some companies in some communities that are doing some of their own internal work and looking at providing some unsolicited proposals.

To do the work that the Member's asking is going to be a fairly significant cost and we are not sure where we would get additional resources, especially in the area of engineers and people that do the bridge designs. We are already pretty well at our limits given the capital budget that we have in front of us and given the probability that we'll be accelerating the Building Canada projects and especially the new dollars that are coming through with housing. It's really straining the resources we have to accommodate all these projects and so it would be very difficult to accommodate the Member's request.

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

QUESTION 183-16(3): NWT OPPORTUNITIES FUND

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. There's a picture of the Minister of ITI on the front page of today's Yellowknifer that says "\$16 million bailout cash available says Minister." Just to clarify this, before we get into a frenzy of people looking to get bailed out, this is not the sole intent of the Opportunities Fund to serve as a lender for companies that require a bailout. Could we clarify that?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. The honourable Minister responsible for Industry, Tourism and Investment, Mr. Bob McLeod.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I guess it just goes to show you that you shouldn't believe everything you read in the newspaper because I never did reference a bailout. It's an investment fund for the Government of the Northwest Territories.

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: I do look forward to working with the Minister of ITI as we set out the parameters of what an application-based delivery of the Opportunities Fund might look like. I just wanted to clarify that I didn't think it was a bailout. I didn't

necessarily think the Minister did, but I just don't want the public to be misled out there.

This is actually a lending source available to companies that is unique in a few ways, not the least of which it's a fairly high interest rate and there's a balloon payment after a short period of time. Could the Minister, again for clarity to people out there who think this might be a good idea, describe that part of this Opportunities Fund?

HON. BOB MCLEOD: I don't want to get too far ahead of myself because I've committed to working with the standing committees on reviewing the guidelines and the investment policies. Part of the criteria of the fund is that we get investments of \$400,000 from immigrant investors for five years and we have to repay the amount within the five-year period. It's like a revolving fund where we get money coming in and we have to repay it after five years. The conditions are very tight. There's no provision that...if we have any losses we have to cover it. So we want to make sure that we have well secured loans with good returns.

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: So before people get too excited out there they should know that it requires a high level of security, it's a high interest rate, and it's for a very short period of time. It's a very short-term loan. I think that's good for people to know because we don't want to raise people's expectations about this. But to that issue of how we as a government might use that money through structures already in place, like the BDIC for example, is it out of the realm of possibility for the GNWT to take that \$60 million into their lending capital portfolio and distribute it through our programs on the premise that it would be paid back in four years? Is that a possibility? Because then the criteria, our lending criteria would apply and it might actually help more people.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Certainly that is a possibility and it's something that we've looked at. We've essentially put it on hold pending our review with the standing committee. But I should point out that BDIC's loan loss is at about 14 percent to 20 percent, I believe, so we have to take that into consideration.

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

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would just say that there are options out there and we look forward to working with the Minister. We are in a difficult economic time and anything, I suppose, that could serve to stimulate our economy and perhaps help some businesses through a rough patch I think would be good on the part of this government to take initiatives and steps to make that available.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you. I didn't hear a question there. The honourable Member for Frame Lake, Ms. Bisaro.

QUESTION 184-16(3):
AUTHORITY OF RENTAL OFFICER
REGARDING RENT INCREASES

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wanted to follow up on some questions posed by Mr. Hawkins yesterday. My questions are addressed to the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment. The questions yesterday were regarding the rental act and the rental act regulations and increases in rent. The Minister stated that there is an opportunity for appeal that if there is a rental increase and there is a complaint in regard to the rental increase that they could appeal to the rental officer. But I would like to ask the Minister how he feels this is an avenue of appeal when the Residential Tenancies Act doesn't give the rental officer any authority, no jurisdiction, in terms of an increase in rent except that it's allowed once a year? If it's considered to be a large increase and I complain to the rental officer, my understanding is he has absolutely no jurisdiction. So if the Minister could explain how that could be appealed to him I would appreciate it.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. The honourable Minister responsible for Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Lafferty.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Certainly that's one of the areas that was established as a rental office area and also have staff to deal with the tenant issues. Whether it be an increase in rent on an annual basis, if they're not satisfied with that then that's the avenue that they can certainly file a complaint and the rental officer will certainly look into that. It would be like a mediator between the landlord and the tenant.

MS. BISARO: Thanks to the Minister. I'm struggling to understand where the authority lies, though, for the rental officer. There's nothing in the act that I can see which gives the rental officer the authority to declare a rental increase invalid if it's above 10 percent, say. I don't know where it states that the rental officer can indicate that's invalid. If the Minister could reference me to the particular part of the act where that authority is given to the rental officer that would be particularly helpful. And if he has to take it under advisement and provide me with it later that would be great.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Certainly at this point in time we are working on the regulations within the act and we'll take the Member's note into consideration. It has been brought to our attention as well. It is something to work with. Especially with the process of having to file a complaint, where

does it go from there. That's still in the works within the regulations of the act that was passed by this Legislative Assembly.

MS. BISARO: Thanks to the Minister. It hasn't been my experience that renters are able to appeal on those particular grounds based on current regulations. So I'd like to ask the Minister, if they're working on regulations, is it a consideration of these new regulations that are being considered to implement rent caps?

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: My understanding is that the rent caps have been brought forward by the standing committee and that's another area we also need to look at, probably not within this act alone. To date, as I stated in the House earlier, there haven't been any applications brought forward on any complaints yet on the rent increase. So there is an avenue where we can certainly deal with the rental officer. At this point there hasn't been any application.

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

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I guess I certainly have had applications to my office, complaints about high rent, and I raised it last fall when I had received some applications. I would suggest to the Minister that people are not complaining about rental increases or exorbitant rental increases because the rental officer does not tell them that he has the authority to deal with it. So if rental caps are thrown out in the consideration of regulations, would the Minister be also looking at if not a specific amount, then wording something like fair and reasonable rent increases? Could that be part of regulations?

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Certainly with the rental officer it could be just a matter of spreading the word out that he is the one that can deal with all these issues and complaints. To be fair and reasonable, certainly we'll take that into consideration when we're discussing the regulations within the act.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. The honourable Member for Great Slave, Mr. Abernethy.

QUESTION 185-16(3):
VOLUNTEER SUMMIT

MR. ABERNETHY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I've got some questions for the Minister of MACA and I'm asking specifically about the Volunteer Summit that's going to be coming up March 6th and 7th. We've talked about the summit in the last budget session and it's now going to be delivered on the 6th and 7th. Could I get the Minister of MACA to give

me a bit of an idea of what the intent does, what the agenda is going to look like for this Volunteer Summit?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Abernethy. The honourable Minister responsible for Municipal and Community Affairs, Mr. Robert McLeod.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The intent of the Volunteer Summit is to have folks come from across the Northwest Territories and try to share common ideas to see what the best way to move forward is. As we all know, volunteers are an important part across the Northwest Territories. We're starting to find that a lot of volunteers in the smaller communities especially are having some issues, they're being burned out. We're hoping to bring everyone together, to come up and share ideas, share thoughts, and have a plan to move this forward.

MR. ABERNETHY: I'd like to thank the Minister of MACA for that information. The voluntary sector, which includes NGOs, is quite a large sector in the Northwest Territories. Can the Minister responsible for MACA give me a bit of an idea of how many participants they expect in this summit and will most of the regions, including Yellowknife, be covered?

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: We are hoping to get a good cross-section of folks from across the Northwest Territories, all regions. That would include Yellowknife. Throughout all of this we're hoping to get a report and have it possibly incorporated into the business plan with some of the ideas and recommendations this summit comes up with.

MR. ABERNETHY: I've heard from a couple of the NGOs in town who say they haven't seen an invite or anything yet, groups such as the Centre for Northern Families and the John Howard Society. Could I get the Minister to commit to having his department review the list of NGOs in the voluntary sector organizations within the North to make sure we've captured everybody? I think this is an important summit and we should have as many people there as we can.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: MACA recognizes the importance of the summit and this is something that we're hoping to use as a tool to gather all the information. If we can capture all the different volunteer groups out there and the NGOs and bring them into the same place and come up with some ideas I think it will be something that will serve this government and the volunteer sector well.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Final supplementary, Mr. Abernethy.

MR. ABERNETHY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thanks to the Minister for that. I've heard through the grapevine that during this summit there's also going to be a separate meeting going on at the same time to discuss funding NGOs under the current policy and setting up some frameworks for funding around how we as a government work and deal with the NGOs. I believe that's being done by Finance or the FMB. Could the Minister tell me if he's aware of that meeting? I've also heard that it's going to be a very small group of people who will be participating in that side of the thing that's going on at the same time. If he could give me any insight into that it would be fantastic.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: The Volunteer Summit is being co-hosted by MACA and the FMB and the FMB is hoping to, I can't speak for the Minister, but their intent is to get all the NGOs and work on...Well, I can't answer for him and I won't even try. But it is being co-hosted by MACA and FMB and the FMB intent is to speak to the NGOs.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. The honourable Member for Sahtu, Mr. Yakeleya.

QUESTION 186-16(3):
WATER QUALITY MONITORING

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the Minister of ENR in terms of the water issue in northern Alberta. We heard reports of leakage of the Fort McMurray oil sands. We hear other reports of other potential contamination of the waters. The Minister's riding is the gatekeeper of our water sources down the Mackenzie Valley. I would ask the Minister, in terms of his recent meetings with the Alberta officials, what he can tell the people of the Northwest Territories, especially in my region, who will feel the effects of the water quality in the Mackenzie River in terms of our fish, our wildlife, and the animals that use the water to survive. How is he going to communicate to the people that water is taken very seriously and that it will be monitored in the Mackenzie River?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. The honourable Minister responsible for Environment and Natural Resources, Mr. Miltenberger.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. At the meeting with the Alberta Minister of Finance we raised the issue of prior notification when there are spills of any substantive nature and the need to have an agreement for that notification. Right now we don't have a formal notification. For example, a few weeks back there was almost 400,000 litres of water released unknowingly. We heard about it in the news. We talked to her about the need to get our bilateral agreement signed under the Mackenzie River Basin

Trans-boundary Agreement. We updated her on our Water Strategy. As part of the MOU, of course, we're going to be meeting regularly on these issues as well. Finally, we talked about the need for assessing cumulative impact and the need for integrated watershed management between all the jurisdictions in the Mackenzie River Basin.

MR. YAKELEYA: I certainly look forward to the Minister's updates in terms of this MOU with the Alberta government. Yesterday I was listening to my father-in-law, who used to fish on Great Slave Lake and the quality of fish that they used to have. It was a very interesting story in terms of how now, today, we have mega projects happening in Alberta that have an effect on fishermen in this area here. Has this government been doing monitoring checks in terms of the quality of the water in Great Slave Lake and the fish so that it could cause some significant changes in terms of the way of life of people who live around the lake here?

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: We work with the federal government, who has the authority and responsibility to deal with the monitoring of water and lakes and rivers. We have, as well, our own involvement through the Mackenzie River Basin Board where we are the signatory and we do some work as well. We see it as a joint effort, but clearly we encourage and we'd like to push the federal government to increase its monitoring as the rate of development increases.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. The time for question period has expired. I will allow the Member a supplementary question. Mr. Yakeleya.

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In terms of the quality of water insurance states clearly in some of the land claim agreements and within the treaty rights, I believe, in terms of having the standard be kept to a level that has been enjoyed by the original people of the Northwest Territories. Certainly we want to continue with this. Is the Minister and his plans monitoring certain levels of water down the Mackenzie Valley so that we feel satisfied enough that we can still continue to drink water from the river and have our fish not be altered by any type of long-term effects of the Fort McMurray developments in the land?

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: We're looking to continue to provide the monitoring. There's a relationship with Public Works and Services, ENR, Health, MACA where we all have a role to play, especially when it comes to water for communities. The monitoring of the waterways in collaboration with the federal government is going to be a big issue. As we move forward on any developments, requirements are going to have to be built into the agreements and assessments to ensure that the in-depth monitoring is going to be there for all the

potential substances that may be going into the water as a result of the development.

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

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would ask if the Minister would communicate the Water Strategy plan with the people in the Sahtu and also people in the Northwest Territories for them to realize the significant impacts that the developments in northern Alberta are going to have on our lifestyle. I'd like to know when the Minister can communicate this to all the people in the Northwest Territories on this important issue.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: For the last year or so we have been developing the NWT Water Strategy: Northern Voices, Northern Water, and we have been and continue to consult extensively across the North in every region, including the Member's. There have been conferences there. We've had our people in there consulting with communities. We've hired some very capable people. Former Premier Kakfwi has been working on this; a passion and interest of his. We have as well been using Francois Paulette, a former chief and another passionate individual when it comes to water, to consult across the North with this strategy and we're going to continue to do that as we look at the final months of concluding this policy.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Item 8, written questions. The honourable Member for Great Slave, Mr. Abernethy.

MR. ABERNETHY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I seek unanimous consent to go back to item 7 on orders of the day.

---Unanimous consent granted

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Member for Hay River South, Mrs. Groenewegen.

Oral Questions (Reversion)

QUESTION 187-16(3):

HAY RIVER HOSPITAL GOVERNANCE MODELS

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions are for the Minister of Health and Social Services. For quite some time now Hay River has not had a health authority board. We have had a public administrator appointed and it has been the deputy or acting deputy minister of Health and Social Services. I'd like to ask the Minister if she sees any opportunity in the near

future for the replacement of the public administrator by either an advisor...well, I don't know about a board of management, but an advisory board at least for Hay River.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. The honourable Minister responsible for Health and Social Services, Ms. Lee.

HON. SANDY LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have chosen not to make changes to status quo. We do have public administrators at Stanton as well as Hay River and the other authorities have boards of trustees. I've chosen not to change the status quo pending all the discussions we've been having on board reform. That's where it's at. But if the Member is interested in considering other situations, I'd be happy to discuss that with her.

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Yes, I would be interested in the Minister pursuing a board of trustees to act in an advisory capacity. I don't want this to conflict with the work that's being done in terms of defining the roles and responsibilities of boards. I know there have been problems in other health regions with respect to deficits and so on. That may necessitate a change in the type of governance boards that are in place in the other regions as well. A board of trustees or, at the very least, a local public administrator I think would go some way toward that. I'd like to ask the Minister on a more immediate basis if she would consider entertaining names of candidates for a local public administrator.

HON. SANDY LEE: I'd be more than willing to consider names of local Hay Riverites who may be willing, able, and qualified to serve as public administrator. I will undertake to reach out to community leadership organizations to seek names for that consideration.

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: We greatly appreciate the stability that has been re-established with our health and social services authority with the presence of a new CEO there. I'm not saying it didn't exist with the previous CEO, but in the transition, Mr. Al Woods has brought experience and stability to that role again and we really do appreciate that. I would like to ask the Minister what the status is of the master development plan for the renovation or replacement of the Hay River hospital.

HON. SANDY LEE: On that note I should say that we did concentrate on trying to maintain stability at the CEO level. We know that the previous CEO was thinking of leaving and we had to work on a succession plan. We will work on a public administrator level. With respect to the capital project, it's in the planning study process. I believe the study's almost completed. I don't have that

information on me, but the last information I saw is it should be ready by this spring or summertime. I will get back to the Member on exactly when that is.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Lee. Final supplementary, Mrs. Groenewegen. The honourable Member for Weledeh, Mr. Bromley.

QUESTION 188-16(3):
PROGRAMS TO FACILITATE COMMUNITIES IN
DEVELOPING ENERGY PLANS

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is for the Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs and the environment. I seem to be adding the environment to every department here. I want to follow up on my statement earlier today. We have some real opportunities to enjoy some energy savings, reduce costs. There are community energy plans under the New Deal that are required for every community by 2010. Some are already completed. What programs does MACA have through their School of Community Government that helps train energy efficiency, energy planning, renewable energy technology to help facilitate and actually get these plans implemented and in place?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Bromley. The honourable Minister responsible for Municipal and Community Affairs, Mr. Robert McLeod.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This is a new area that's getting more and more attention lately. Not quite sure at the moment, but we are probably in the process of trying to put some information together to see what we can offer along these lines that would benefit the communities.

MR. BROMLEY: I appreciate that commitment of the Minister and I'll look forward to hearing back from him. Perhaps he can suggest a date when he might know something about that. I'm wondering, even in our capital plans, each community is required to do a five-year capital plan and there are five criteria, I believe, for rating capital. The environment has not been one of those. In speaking with people working with that in the department they agreed that it's probably something that should be in place. Would the Minister commit to also reviewing the capital planning process under the New Deal and see if we can get that in as a routine part of the operation?

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: I do know that communities know that this is something that's becoming more and more prominent in the landscape, they are working on their community energy plans when they submit their capital plans to Municipal and Community Affairs.

MR. BROMLEY: Thanks for the comments from the Minister. I just want to clarify whether that was a commitment to review the capital process and make sure that one of the criteria would be environmental criteria.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: I will commit to working with the NWT Association of Communities to see what kind of progress we can make on this issue. If the Member wants to take that as a commitment, yes that is a commitment to review it.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. The honourable Member for Great Slave, Mr. Abernethy.

QUESTION 189-16(3):
MEETING TO DISCUSS NGO FUNDING POLICY

MR. ABERNETHY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is for the Minister responsible for Finance and I'd like to applaud both the Minister responsible for FMB and Minister responsible for MACA for co-hosting the Volunteer Summit on March 6th and 7th. I also understand that during that summit there will be a separate meeting going on to discuss what is possible with regard to funding NGOs under the current policy and then to discuss possible changes that NGOs wish to see in the GNWT funding policies. Could the Minister of Finance tell me who will be attending that secondary or separate meeting? Who has been invited to participate?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Abernethy. The honourable Minister responsible for Finance, Mr. Miltenberger.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As much as I hate to do this, I'm going to have to take that as notice.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Item 9, returns to written questions. The honourable Member for Sahtu, Mr. Yakeleya.

MR. YAKELEYA: Mr. Speaker, I seek unanimous consent to return to item 5, recognition of visitors in the gallery.

---Unanimous consent granted

MR. SPEAKER: Item 5, recognition of visitors in the gallery. The honourable Member for Sahtu, Mr. Yakeleya.

**Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery
(Reversion)**

MR. YAKELEYA: I'd like to recognize a constituent from Fort Good Hope in the Sahtu region, Mr. Jerry Lennie, who's here to see democracy in progress.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. The honourable Member for Deh Cho, Mr. McLeod.

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: I'm glad to see a couple of constituents in the gallery today from Kakisa. Andrea Landry and Chris Bonnetrouge are here visiting us and watching the proceedings.

MR. SPEAKER: Welcome to everyone in the gallery today. I hope you're enjoying the proceedings. Item 10, replies to opening address. Item 11, petitions. Item 12, reports of standing and special committees. Item 13, reports of committees on the review of bills. Item 14, tabling of documents. Item 15, notices of motion. The honourable Member for Sahtu, Mr. Yakeleya.

Notices of Motion

MOTION 12-16(3): NORTHWEST TERRITORIES TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION COMMISSION

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I give notice that on Monday, February 23rd, 2009, I will move the following motion: I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Mackenzie Delta, that the Government of the Northwest Territories urge the federal government to implement the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and have the commission schedule their commission hearings in the Northwest Territories;

And further, that the Government of the Northwest Territories work with the federal government to establish the Northwest Territories Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Item 16, notices of motion for first reading of bills. Item 17, motions. Item 18, first reading of bills. Item 19, second reading of bills.

Before we go to the next item on the orders of the day I'd like to just take a moment to recognize and thank the Pages that have been working for us in the Assembly this week. We have two Pages from Hay River North, two Pages from Sachs Harbour and four Pages from two of the schools in Yellowknife that alternate days. Thank you very much for the work you do for us, Pages.

Item 20, consideration in Committee of the Whole of bills and other matters: Tabled Document 7-16(3), Ministerial Benefits Policy; Committee Report 2-16(3), Standing Committee on Rules and Procedures Report on Matters Referred to the Committee; Tabled Document 11-16(3), NWT Main Estimates 2009-2010; Bill 1, An Act to Amend the Historical Resources Act; Bill 3, International

Interest in Mobile Aircraft Equipment Act; Bill 4, Public Library Act; Bill 5, Professional Corporations Act; and Bill 7, An Act to Amend the Student Financial Assistance Act. By the authority given me...

---Interjection

MR. SPEAKER: ...with Mr. Bromley in the chair.

Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Greetings, colleagues. I'd like to call the Committee of the Whole to order. We have before us consideration of Tabled Document 7-16(3), Committee Report 2-16(3), Tabled Document 11-16(3), and Bills 1, 3, 4, 5, and 7. What is the wish of the committee? Mrs. Groenewegen.

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: The wish of the committee is to proceed with the Department of Aboriginal Affairs and Intergovernmental Relations department budget today.

---Interjection

Oh, and time permitting, moving on to Public Works and Services.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. Does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Thank you. We'll get on to that, but first we'll start with lunch.

---SHORT RECESS

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): Thank you. I will call Committee of the Whole back to order. We have agreed to review Tabled Document 11-16(3) with the Department of Aboriginal Affairs and Intergovernmental Relations. I will go to the Minister responsible, Premier Roland, for some opening comments.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I am pleased to present the 2009-2010 main estimates for the Department of Aboriginal Affairs and Intergovernmental Relations, DAAIR. The resources provided through this budget will enable the department to meet its core responsibilities. These are to represent the interests of all NWT residents at aboriginal rights tables and through our intergovernmental relations with aboriginal, provincial, federal and territorial governments.

The department is requesting \$6.807 million in operating expenses for the 2009-2010 fiscal year. This represents an increase of 4.7 percent or \$307,000 from 2008-2009, needed primarily because of a substantive increase in the number of negotiating tables.

In the coming months, an additional four tables are expected to be created by the federal government, bringing the total number of tables in the NWT to 15. This represents an increase of 50 percent from a year ago. Mr. Chairman, while I recognize the challenges associated with community as opposed to regionally based negotiations, Canada and the GNWT are obligated to enter into community-based self-government negotiations with both the Sahtu and the Gwich'in through provisions contained in their respective land claim agreements. Furthermore, First Nations in the NWT retain the right to trigger community-based land claim negotiations. Once Canada agrees to enter into these negotiations, the GNWT is compelled to participate in these new negotiating tables.

With this reality in mind, the GNWT needs to focus its efforts on shaping the negotiations to work towards an outcome that supports sustainable, workable and affordable systems of governance. We simply cannot and should not rely on Canada to represent our interests at negotiations. And just showing up at negotiations won't be enough. We also need to be sure that our negotiators have mandates that are current. As I indicated previously, we will need to conduct a comprehensive mandate review which is grounded in a discussion about a vision for the NWT and the role of the GNWT.

Such a discussion will need to involve all Members of this Legislative Assembly and I look forward to initiating a series of briefings and discussions with you in the near future.

To ensure that DAAIR, on behalf of the GNWT, is well positioned to represent and promote the interests of all NWT residents at each aboriginal rights table, the department's 2009-2010 main estimates include:

- forced growth increases in the amount of \$146,000 to support the incremental costs of negotiating a community-based land, resources and self-government agreement with the Acho Dene Koe First Nation; and
- strategic investments from the Managing This Land Initiative in the amount of \$926,000 to continue work to finalize and implement land, resources and self-government agreements.

Mr. Chairman, as you know, the GNWT has a legal duty to consult with aboriginal governments and

organizations where a government action may infringe upon an affirmed or asserted aboriginal or treaty right. In its recent budget, I was pleased to hear the federal government commit to working closely with provinces and territories to ensure that our collective consultation obligations with aboriginal people are addressed as efficiently as possible.

Commencing in 2009-2010, DAAIR will assume the responsibility for implementing the GNWT consultation framework. As consultation is ultimately about building mutually respectful relationships between the GNWT and aboriginal governments and organizations, this responsibility fits well within the department's mandate. DAAIR's primary role will be to assist GNWT departments in developing appropriate consultation plans and conducting proper consultation. The department will also focus its efforts on developing and delivering consultation training modules for GNWT staff in all regions. To assist in meeting these objectives, the 2009-2010 main estimates include strategic investments from the Managing This Land Initiative in the amount of \$64,000.

Mr. Chairman, I acknowledge the concerns expressed by Members on the number of aboriginal managers and employees in the department. The Department of Aboriginal Affairs and Intergovernmental Relations along with all other departments are facing challenges in achieving workforce diversity representative of the population. Because the situation is complex and not well understood, we need to resist the temptation to resort to quick fixes, which may not have the desired results.

To better understand why the GNWT has had difficulty in increasing the representation of aboriginal people at all levels of our organization, the Department of Human Resources was commissioned to develop a Corporate Human Resource Strategy that will include a comprehensive affirmative action strategy. The completion of this overall strategy will provide a framework for the development of departmental human resource plans and initiatives, including the development of departmental succession and affirmative action plans. This work will be undertaken during the 2009-2010 fiscal year and will ensure a consistent and coordinated approach across government, providing equitable opportunities for all staff.

In the meantime, DAAIR has utilized innovative approaches in its recruitment efforts that have proven to be successful. In the past two years, five assistant negotiator positions have been staffed through a trainee program. This program provides one-year developmental opportunities to candidates

who do not possess the level of experience required to compete for these jobs and I am pleased to report that the program has been successful. Each individual who has gone through this program has successfully secured indeterminate employment within the department. Three of these employees are indigenous aboriginal persons and I am pleased to report that one has been promoted to a chief negotiator position. To build on our success, we are currently working on further refining this program and allowing more flexibility respecting entry requirements.

To assist employees in meeting their career development goals, DAAIR has supported four employees with education leave over the past two years, three of whom are indigenous aboriginal persons and one indigenous non-aboriginal person. I am pleased to advise that two of these employees have secured more senior level positions within the GNWT.

In the immediate short term, I can assure you the department will make every effort to hire aboriginal summer students and interns this year and continue to work closely with the Department of Human Resources on the development of the overall Corporate Human Resource Strategy.

That concludes my opening remarks. I am prepared to answer any questions committee members may have.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): Thank you, Mr. Roland. Would you like to bring witnesses into the House?

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Yes, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): Does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): Thank you, committee. Sergeant-at-Arms, please escort the witnesses into the Chamber.

Thank you, Premier Roland. Can I please get you to introduce your witnesses.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Yes, Mr. Chairman. To my left is the deputy minister, Ms. Gabriela Sparling, of Aboriginal Affairs and Intergovernmental Relations. To my right is Mr. Richard Robertson, director of policy, legislation and communications.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): Thank you, Premier Roland. I'll now open the floor up to general comments on the Department of Aboriginal Affairs and Intergovernmental Relations. Before I do, does

committee agree that we'll go through general comments of all Members before going to the Premier for his responses?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): Thank you. First on my list is Mr. Menicoche.

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. Our Department of Aboriginal Affairs and Intergovernmental Relations, I just want to maybe address aboriginal affairs. I know that they continue to be involved in a lot of the negotiations and maintainable discussions. I had a curious discussion...I know that the Minister and his staff came to Fort Simpson. I think it was in early January. I had a curious discussion with the leadership and they actually didn't know the staff that was travelling with the Minister. It got me thinking that even though we're at the main tables, the people that are involved there are familiar with the people involved in the negotiations. But my thoughts are about, well, just how much does our staff travel to the communities and engage the different chief and bands. I don't know if it's part of a strategy to go out and meet the leadership and be exposed at the different leadership meetings, and I don't know if staff turnover has a role to play here, but I think what I'd like to see, Mr. Chair, is that the Department of Aboriginal Affairs is present, that they develop a repertoire, a working relationship with the different communities in different regions and different leadership so that they know who is travelling with the Premier if he travels again in his purview as the Minister of DAAIR.

I think that's key because communications are always important in developing any working relationship and developing trust. I would urge the ministry to look at this area and develop a strategy about travelling around. Maybe they're already doing that, I'm not quite sure, but just with those few comments that I did receive, it kind of indicates to me that people weren't aware of the staff at DAAIR or their specific duties. I know that some other, maybe federally or...I know that in the past that some people do go to the communities and travel around and develop this working relationship. It doesn't have to be a specific visit; sometimes it's just a knock at the band offices or the Dehcho First Nations office or the regional offices just to say hi and we're in the neighbourhood kind of thing. The key thing is to develop that working relationship to develop consistency, to develop knowledge of who's in DAAIR and what are they doing. I just wanted to bring that forward.

As well, of course, the second thing is I know that the Minister has indicated about the difficulty in being a representative department as well of our great northern Territory. I would urge him to

continue to work on their strategy to develop a more aboriginal representative in DAAIR. We'll do whatever we can to support their initiative with recruitment and/or training and/or even transfer assignments from other departments; there are people that may express interest. I look forward to whatever strategy they develop to present to committee and maybe we can have some thoughts about their model because there are many, many, many different models out there about increasing interest from outside government and within government as well. I think that will really, really help the department and it will create further exposure too that they're actually out there being proactive with the communities and saying, you know, is anybody interested in working with us, here's what's needed and if those levels aren't there we'd be prepared to in-house train or whatever it takes there, Mr. Chair. Those are my thoughts on the opening remarks. Mahsi cho.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. General comments. I have nobody else on my list. Does committee agree that there are no further general comments?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): I will allow the Premier an opportunity to respond to the general comments. Premier Roland.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Mr. Chairman, the point about getting out to communities is one that's well taken. One of the things that we have to work on with our shrinking travel budgets is to operate within our allotment so we try to get the teams out with the meetings, for example, as the Member highlighted, the regional leadership meeting we just held in Fort Simpson. That team was a different team. The negotiation team does work a lot with the negotiation tables and the leaders of those communities. With the new set of meetings that we've established now with aboriginal leadership we bring our intergovernmental relations team now to the table and we've had an addition to that workforce and that member joined us on this recent trip. In a sense, it is becoming a familiarizing process amongst our staff in IG. We usually take those teams to provincial meetings, to pan-territorial meetings and to federal/provincial meetings as well. This is an extension of that now dealing with the regional aboriginal leadership meetings that we set up and structured. I believe, as we progress through this, we will make more and more contact and people will become familiar with our team and build that relationship that we're working on. I thank the Member for his comments in that area and we'll do our best to continue to grow and strengthen in that area. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): Thank you, Premier Roland. As there are no further comments is committee agreed that we proceed with detail? Mr. Menicoche.

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. I just want to get the Minister's comments on recruitment strategy and what are they looking at in this coming year. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. I believe we can actually deal with that particular question when we get to active position summary. Keep it specific to the detail of the main estimates. Rather than going to the Premier, I'll save that opportunity for you later. We'll go to the detail. Is committee agreed that we go to detail?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): We're on section four of Aboriginal Affairs and Intergovernmental Relations, page 4-7. We'll defer until we have gone through the activity summary pages. The first one to consider is page 4-8. It's an information item, infrastructure investment summary.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): We're on page 4-9. Information item, active position summaries. Mr. Menicoche.

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you very much. I'd like to talk about aboriginal recruitment there, Mr. Chair.

---Laughter

One of my colleagues, too, was typically asking about the break-out numbers in terms of all our full-time staff in terms of P1, P2, P3. If I can ask those allocations, as well as by management positions. I know that initial numbers are low in terms of P1 and the Minister did talk about it in his opening remarks. I'm very curious about their recruitment strategy, whether it be internal or external, of how they plan to manage this in the upcoming year. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. Premier Roland.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I apologize for not responding to that one piece the Member mentioned earlier. As I highlighted in my opening comments, the recruitment of aboriginal peoples has been a challenge within the department. That's why we've undertaken this one step of training in-house, especially with the negotiator positions and, in fact, moved one up to a chief negotiator. We've had some success, as well, on the education leave piece where we've had a number of our aboriginal staff go for further education. When that happens,

that opens more doors. In fact, we've had two of those staff on, one with the federal government, higher responsibilities and one within our government, another taking on higher responsibilities. We've had success but so much success they've moved on to other places within governments.

The package we will be working with on two corporate human resources is on the succession planning and further training of aboriginal employees under affirmative action. We've tried to do what we can internally through that training package and we will continue to look at more flexibility. That is, for example, the level of entry when it comes into some of these positions are fairly high. A negotiator position is an example where we've done the one-year training module with those interested. We have had good success in that area and we're looking to continue on that path. Thank you.

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Are there other strategies that they're looking at besides the existing model he's talking about? For those that did get trained and had other opportunity to move on, I commend them as well, but I don't think the ministry should be discouraged by it. I think they should continue along those lines. I'm just curious about any other strategies that they may have.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Mr. Chairman, we're working with the Department of Human Resources; they're the lead on that file. Once we come up with a comprehensive approach, then we'll be able to plug into that and use that as a tool specifically for our department. That work is ongoing and we will be working with the Department of Human Resources in coming up with the implementation once the structure has been agreed to. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): Thank you, Premier Roland. Next on my list, Mr. Beaulieu.

MR. BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Chair. In the active positions side, just a comment. I think that the system that they are using to run people through the system and through a training program is a very good system. I think that this government had some major successes with this program in the '70s and '80s. Then basically the In-Service Training Program was discontinued back then. I think that this idea of bringing trainees in to train them and even if they do end up outside the GNWT unfortunately...If they do end up in the GNWT somewhere else in higher positions, I view it as a positive thing. Just a comment from me in this area. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. As there is no question, I'll go to the next person on my list. Mr. Menicoché.

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I just wanted to follow up on the Minister's comment with regard to working with HR and with further strategy. Is he aware of...Has he been utilizing the Public Service Career Training Program that's within HR? If he has...Well, maybe I'll just ask that question there, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): Thank you, Mr. Menicoché. Premier Roland.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Mr. Chairman, that program that was in place some time ago is no longer fully in effect and that's why we're coming up with a Corporate Human Resource Strategy. Hence, in our way of trying to move people from within, we have come up with this training module and process and looking to continue to use that while the Department of Human Resources comes up with an overall strategy. We don't want to get into overall government departments running off and doing their own piece and confusing what actually happens, but in the meantime this process is working and we will continue to work with that. Hopefully, we can even have it incorporated government-wide, if that initiative is agreed to. Thank you.

MR. MENICOCHÉ: I just wanted to comment, and Mr. Beaulieu mentioned it as well, but it's something that indeed occurred in the past or were some best practices involved in there. I would urge the ministry to work with HR, look at what they were and see if we could translate those same successes into a new type of program that will benefit not only your ministry but the other departments that we have in our government. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): Thank you, Mr. Menicoché. More of a comment. Comments on page 4-9? Questions? Page 4-9, information item, active position summary.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): Moving along to page 4-11, activity summary, corporate management, operations expenditure. Mr. Bromley.

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The Standing Committee on Economic Development and Infrastructure commented to the government that they recommended that where the department's mandate is related to supporting the collective ability of the NWT to create political stability and certainty, a balance of encouraging investments, economic development and environmental sustainability is both sought and expressed in departmental documents. What's new in those three items, investments, economic development and environmental sustainability, is, of

course, the environmental sustainability clause. The department agreed that ensuring environmental sustainability should be included in the negotiating mandates and the department will incorporate an environmental sustainability aspect into the comprehensive mandate review project.

I'm wondering where this is brought in, if it's under corporate management, if this comprehensive mandate review project is bringing this in as the department indicated, and what the cost of that project is and is it represented here in one of these line items. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): Thank you, Mr. Bromley. Premier Roland.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Mr. Chairman, the work that will be targeted in this area will be through the mandate review process where we look at changing the mandate of the department. There are quite a number of them out there. We did not receive new money for that particular area, so we're going to do it in-house starting this year and then we'll have to see how that progresses and if we'll need to come back to the Assembly for more funds for either speeding network up in the future. At this point, we're going to do it in-house. Thank you.

MR. BROMLEY: I appreciate those comments from the Minister. I think this is a good move and I'm happy to hear that there is work going on here. I also wanted to say -- I didn't get a chance for general comments -- but I do appreciate that the department is taking on a lot more with very little more financial resources. It's quite an addition to the tables and I'll be bringing that up a little later under intergovernmental relations. I'll leave it at that for now. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): Thank you, Mr. Bromley. We're on page 4-11, activity summary, corporate management, operations expenditure summary, \$2.129 million. Mr. Yakeleya.

MR. YAKELEYA: Mr. Chairman, the one question I have for the Minister in terms of the negotiations that are happening in the communities with self-government. Are we in a position as a territorial government to strike the fine balance in terms of what our roles would be in the future or do we somewhat leave that to the course to kind of determine in terms of who supersedes who? I know there are some clear lines here, however, because of the evolving of the agreements and the different interpretations of these agreements, sometimes it might put us in a position of us asking some serious questions in terms of the legitimacy of the self-government, the legitimacy of the territorial government programs. I just want to ask the Minister in terms of working with the respective communities that are dealing either in land claims

negotiations that have settled or in self-government negotiations.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. This is just a reminder that we are under corporate management. Those questions might be better on either negotiations or implementation, but I will go to the Premier to respond. Thank you. Premier Roland.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The process would be when you talk about governance would be through the negotiations at the tables. That will definitely have an impact on what the government will look like in future years, as the tables are negotiated and the draw down of those agreements will affect the level of program delivery and governance structures of the GNWT. It is through the negotiations process. We do at times come in through a process that may involve the courts which comes to the implementation side of this, and that from time to time does involve the courts in coming up with a common understanding that both parties could agree to. That does happen from time to time, but the preferred approach would be through the normal negotiation process and then implementation cycle. As I said, though, there are times when the courts end up being the ones that would clarify positions. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Roland. Mr. Yakeleya, do you have more questions on corporate management?

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I certainly seek to be guided in terms of some of the finer details. Mr. Chairman, I would like to ask about the policy, legislation and communication in the corporate management here in terms of the mandates from our government that are going forward to look at issues that, for me, are not quite clear because of the issues are still yet being involved. There is still not any type of signal from the federal government or the courts. Of course, we have to make a judgment in terms of, well, we think this is what it means. We are going to push this issue at the tables but it is not yet quite settled as to, okay, this and sometimes that could hurt us and sometimes that could put us at an advantage. That is where I am trying to get the question in terms of the policy, the legislation and the communication. Some of our legislation, I believe, Mr. Chairman, would have to be revised, would have to drop off the table. I guess, in that sense, I am trying to figure where there are grey areas, because the federal government also hasn't taken the steps to say, well, this is what we agreed. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Mr. Chairman, the area of the mandates and what happens at the tables is the work that we talked about doing the

comprehensive mandate review. There are over 114 different mandates. Many of those were done prior to 1999, so before the Tlicho Government was put in place, before we got down to the community self-government discussions as well. We are coming back to the table with members and that mandate review process and look at revising those mandates to make them more current and fit the existing governance structures that are developing in the Northwest Territories. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): Thank you, Premier Roland. Next on my list is Ms. Bisaro.

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just have a couple of questions. I hope I'm in the right department here because they are kind of general questions. Last year in discussing this department, the standing committee and also when we were in Committee of the Whole, there were questions and, I believe, a motion as well that this department ought to be moved back under the Executive. That wasn't accepted. I'm just wondering if the Minister has given any further thought to rolling Aboriginal Affairs back under the Department of the Executive. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. Minister Roland.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Mr. Chairman, the involvement or rolling it back into Executive, the concern we have there was that for quite a number of years it was felt that Aboriginal Affairs and Intergovernmental Relations was wrapped up in another department and that it didn't give it the proper level of identity when it came to dealing with our aboriginal governments and organizations in the Northwest Territories. That is why it was set aside. We do continue to operate in partnership with the Executive on a number of fronts, but it was felt at that time that we continue with the operation structures as they are now. Thank you.

MS. BISARO: Thank you for that answer. It is as I expected. I am not suggesting the department is not doing good work. I just wanted to know whether or not the issue had been revisited.

I have another question as well. I am relating to staffing levels. Last year the department was what I could say gutted in terms of number of staff and the reductions that were put in place. It seems to be that, in looking at this year's budget, there has been an increase in staff in the department. Could the Minister comment on that, whether that is in fact the case? Thank you.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Mr. Chairman, it is the case with the expanded negotiation tables that we are going to be taking part in. We have had to put a request in for additional negotiators and chief

negotiators, assistant negotiators and a couple of other staff within the department. There is an increase this year as being requested through this process. Thank you.

MS. BISARO: Thank you to the Minister for that answer. That is, again, as I expected. I think I am glad to see that there are a few more bodies in that department. I think that we went a little too far last year in cutting. I wanted to just ask a general question. Actually, no. I will leave it for another section. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. We are on page 4-11, activity summary, corporate management, operations expenditure summary, \$2.129 million. Ms. Bisaro.

MS. BISARO: Sorry, I do have another question. In the summary that we looked at during business plans, it indicated that there was a strategic initiative. It is listed under developing negotiations I think but then it references special events funding and I just noticed it in page 4-11, special events funding to aboriginal organizations. Could the Minister comment to me why that is considered a strategic initiative? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. Premier Roland.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Mr. Chairman, the original amount that was in there under normal department business was removed and we put a request to put it back in, keep it going. It would have dropped off this year's budget. Because of our structure of the initiative committees, that is where it got highlighted. It was an ongoing piece. We keep it after that, hopefully.

MS. BISARO: Could I get an explanation as to the value of this \$75,000? How does it assist negotiations? I will leave it at that. Thank you.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Mr. Chairman, this breaks down to an allotment that is applied for. It is a \$5,000 amount for special events. For example, National Aboriginal Day, the different groups can make their application for that or, for example, things like Dene Assembly, that they can make their application for it. It is those types of things that they can make application to this fund. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): Thank you, Premier Roland. Mr. Yakeleya.

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The issue I wanted to talk with the Premier about is the contribution funding to the Metis local organizations. Can the Premier provide me some details as to the amount each Metis organization is

receiving, the \$225,000 that he would give to them? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Minister Roland.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Mr. Chairman, the amount breaks down for each Metis operation is \$13,235 each. There are 17 potential Metis locals that can access this if they are in good standing with the NWT Societies Act. In 2008-09, there were 10 that qualified and this last year we are up to 11 as another has made that. Again, it is an application. If they keep in good standing, they are eligible for the funds. Thank you.

MR. YAKELEYA: Mr. Chairman, I also understand that the territorial government is probably the only government that I know of so far that has made a contribution to the Metis locals in the communities. Are there some other avenues that the Metis organizations and the Metis governments receive through other funding arrangements through settled land claim agreements? Are there other areas where the Metis locals have yet to settle? They are still in negotiations. Is it something that this government here sees going forward in some type of strategy to ask the federal government?

I know the special provisions in the section under the Indian Act where aboriginal Dene First Nations receive funding. That has been a long-standing issue. In terms of giving some support to the political government of the Metis, is this government here going to see how they could increase funding by asking the federal government? I know we are pretty well living on what we can provide. There is \$13,235 per organization for the Metis government. I think this is something that the federal government should have a good splash of water in the face to wake them up in terms of the Constitution of Canada.

Mr. Chairman, I guess what I am asking is, have we gone to bat for the Metis in terms of funding that we are giving to our people to run their own affairs? When you look at this amount compared to other amounts that we give to other organizations in the Northwest Territories, it is not quite the same. I want to ask the Premier here, in spite of what we may hear from the federal government I think that we should really take a serious look as to how we fund our own people, especially the Metis people who have similar rights under treaties, what they call their Metis script. Is this something that the Premier could maybe enlighten me in terms of some of the challenges he made and this Cabinet made or this government, or we just don't want to go in there because it opens up other issues that we have not yet prepared ourselves to do?

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Mr. Chairman, the Metis locals funding issue is one that has been brought forward to the regional office for an increase or even to recognize the support. We haven't had success from the federal government moving on that because it is an issue that, at least from their side, they say on the national front it grows too much. We continue to support that and support that there should be some recognition. As the Member is aware and Members of the Assembly are aware, as the GNWT, we recognize the Metis through a number of avenues, whether it is the health program or, in this case, the Metis local core funding. No, it is not a lot, but it helps to offset their annual costs. Thank you.

MR. YAKELEYA: Certainly the people I know that deal with the south describe themselves as Metis in the communities. I certainly appreciate the efforts by this government here to look at issues around the health benefits for them. We are certainly grateful for that because they are certainly not getting it from the federal government. Metis people have always said that they are a very distinct culture of people with their own language and culture. With the territorial government providing them with some funding to offset some of their political ambition, their economic ambition, even their cultural ambition, that I haven't yet to date seen in the Aboriginal Affairs as to what steps can be taken to have the federal government acknowledge that there are 17 Metis governments in the Northwest Territories that need to be recognized. There are some settled in the land claims that distinctly says Metis along with Dene in settled land claims. I need to update some of the information myself. I am thinking about some of the ones that do not have opportunities to really see where they could benefit.

Again, I would ask a question and a comment from the Premier in terms of what things can this Assembly do to work with the Cabinet, with the message to the federal government that this is long overdue. It is no wonder that they call the Metis people the forgotten people. There are lots of things that could be said but hopefully I could see, an increase in the funding for this specific item on the budget here for the land owners, people who were born in the North who come from two different distinct cultures to call themselves the Metis. They fought long and hard. I think there should be some efforts to see if this could be an issue that could support them. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Mr. Chairman, as the Government of the Northwest Territories, we have been supportive of the Metis and establishing the processes or funding sources, programs, and will continue to be supportive in that area. As for this line item, to look at an increase we would have to,

again, go through the next business plan cycle. We could look at that. We have to recognize, as well, the tight fiscal framework we are in. But if the Assembly agrees that we should increase this allotment, then we would be prepared to work with Members. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): Thank you, Premier Roland. Next on my list is Mr. Beaulieu.

MR. BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Along the same lines, I would support the increase to core funding for the Metis local but I have a question for the Minister on that item. Are the Metis supported by the other organizations aside from this funding that comes from the GNWT?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. Premier Roland.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Mr. Chairman, I am not aware of other organizations and the level of support they may have for the Metis. I know that in some regions, and maybe this is not the comparison, whether it be the Sahtu or the Gwich'in, there is a combined role and involvement that they support the Metis through their initiatives. There are examples of that throughout the valley of that type of joint partnership approach. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): Thank you, Mr. Roland. We are on page 4-11, activity summary, corporate management, operations expenditure summary, \$2.129 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): We are moving along to page 4-12, activity summary, corporate management, grants and contributions, grants, \$300,000, total grants and contributions, \$300,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): We are moving along to page 4-13 which is just an information item, corporate management, active positions.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): On page 4-15, activity summary, negotiations, operations expenditure summary. Ms. Bisaro.

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have a couple of questions related to this section. The first one goes to sort of the overall business plan as it was presented and is a general comment, but most of the additional expenses related to this section of the department are identified as strategic initiatives. There is a small amount that is identified as forced growth. But if I look at the definitions of the expenses that are strategic initiatives, it seems to

be that they are related to additional persons to deal with more negotiations tables, adding positions back in that were cut last year but now need to be put back in. Very few of them seem to be funding or positions or new approaches. So I'd like an explanation from the Minister as to why we are funding sort of ongoing increases to the costs of the operations of the department as a strategic initiative when it seems to be a continuation of work that was already started a year or two years ago. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. Premier Roland.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I guess when we look at it, the old way of coming forward and building a budget, we would say that would be a forced growth or there would...Although there wasn't a category identified and there wasn't language used in the description, it did fall under new initiatives to add an additional program. Although we have a negotiation mandate and tables, when we add new tables that is the form it would fall under.

So in this sense of trying to look at the initiatives across government Managing This Land has an area that involves this program and again the way we are initially looking at this, those initiative committees would probably fall more into the policy side and less the budget allocation inside. This is the manner it came forward in because we are trying to categorize different areas right now as to what areas they would fall in within our strategic initiatives and the goals of the Assembly. Thank you.

MS. BISARO: Thank you and thanks for the explanation. I guess I would choose to disagree with this particular approach and I would just ask that the department reconsider that for next year's budget and business plans.

I have another question related to negotiations and it has to do with the concern that was expressed by the committee when business plans were reviewed relative to community-based negotiations tables. I realize communities have the right to start their own negotiations with the Government of Canada, but I would like to know from the Minister what the position is of the department relative to the costs that are involved with these extra tables. If we end up with 33 communities each having their own agreement negotiated, it's going to be a huge increase in costs. My position is the federal government ought to be bearing these additional costs, but I would like to know what the department is saying to the federal government at these negotiation tables where we are dealing with community governments. Thank you.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: We did share our concerns with the federal government about establishing a level of tables. The more tables we have, the more it costs. We also discussed with the federal government our concerns about the capacity of negotiations at these tables and what would end up being the capacity of self-government signed with the community government in trying to build up their abilities to actually implement. So that's a concern that we've shared. When it comes right down to it, when the federal government accepts these tables we end up being party to them because of our program delivery side of the equation and being at the table.

So we've shared our concerns about that, but the reality is as the federal government accepts these tables, we end up party to them and that's why, for example, we've got chief negotiators that serve more than one table, sometimes up to three different tables. Thank you.

MS. BISARO: I appreciate the response from the Minister. I guess my concern is if push comes to shove and the federal government determines that they are going to negotiate with a community, what recourse does the territorial government have to say no thank you, we're not going to accept the additional costs? If the federal government simply says that's fine, here is another agreement, go ahead and implement it and oh, by the way, the costs are up to you, do we have any recourse as a government to basically tell the federal government no, thank you, not until you give us the money? Thank you.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, on a couple of fronts, one, when it comes down to the actual mandates we are involved in, right now as the table is established we end up taking part at that table. We've raised the concern about the funding situation, the workload on our existing staff. In fact, as this budget shows, we are coming in for additional resources. The decision would come down in the existing framework. If we don't want to bear the additional cost, then we have to make a choice. Do we go to the table or do we stay away from the table? That's the decision we have right now. As it comes to trying to have the federal government provide more funds for it, they haven't been very receptive. We've made our arguments. We continue to make our arguments and even on a larger front, when it comes to all the self-government tables now, the federal government's tone on incremental costs, as we term it, they've turned their stance to a rather negative one where they are saying that the aboriginal government and the GNWT will have to deal with those additional costs from existing resources or from own-source revenues. So that's a concern.

We are working jointly now through the regional aboriginal tables through raising the concern of this self-government piece and working to come up with a comprehensive approach in the North to approach the federal government to put before them our business case as to why that needs to be reconsidered. Thank you.

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I appreciate where the Minister is coming from. Unfortunately for me, expressing concern is not actually going to deal with the financial pressures that may be the result of some of these excess negotiated agreements.

I didn't hear the Minister say that we have any recourse, except I thought I heard him say that if we stay away from the table, then we are as much as saying no, we aren't going to take part in this and no, we won't be responsible for any costs. Could I get a clarification on my interpretation? Thank you.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Mr. Chairman, right now in the existing framework we have in place, if we don't want to incur additional costs at the negotiation phase, we can choose not to be at the tables. All that does is leave us outside the discussions that are happening and what the federal government may put in place or not and doesn't prepare us for what might come through in the implementation phase, because there could be agreements that totally don't align themselves with the level of programs that are now in place to what impact they will have in the delivery and communities. So the avenue right now is if we don't want to incur the cost at the negotiation phase, we would have to choose not to be there. The choice has always been, as this budget highlights, to be at those tables and come forward for additional dollars to do that. Thank you.

MS. BISARO: It's a very difficult situation, I understand. It might be something that perhaps the Premier might want to discuss with all Members to see whether or not our policy in terms of these negotiations should be amended. Thank you. No question.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): Thank you, Mr. Bisaro. Next on my list is Mr. Beaulieu.

MR. BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Chair. How functional would negotiations be if the negotiators, new negotiators, were to be located at the regional levels?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. Premier Roland.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, the support for negotiations, because we share a number of tables, we don't just have one chief negotiator, assistant negotiator just

for one table. It would be fairly difficult in keeping them supported around the different discussions and as to locations of actual negotiations, they do happen. Some groups decide to do negotiations in their communities and regions. Some travel, whether it is to the capital or to Ottawa or other places that they choose. Each, for example, the aboriginal government that is negotiating and the GNWT all have a selection that they can put on the table for where they'd like to hold their meeting and that does bounce around substantially between regions. So it would be difficult.

We have no support structure right now in regional centres that would support the role of Aboriginal Affairs and Intergovernmental Relations. That's not to say that at some point that couldn't be looked at. The difficulty would be right now because we are such a small department and taking it apart that way, the support structure would be diminished somewhat. Thank you.

MR. BEAULIEU: As for the reconciling in my mind how many tables there are, in your opening comments, Minister, you indicated the additional four tables were expected that would bring the number to 15 which represents a 50 percent increase. I am just trying to...If four is a 50 percent increase, does that mean we had eight? Could I get the numbers instead, because this doesn't really help.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Mr. Chairman, the compression is done from January 2008. At that point we had 10 tables that we were having some discussions on that were actual tables and active. There were a number of exploratory discussions going on. From January we had 10 tables active. So 50 percent of that number, so we add an additional five tables now to go active. So we are from 10 in January 2008, to now we are going to be at 15 tables. A 50 percent increase from January 2008, and that goes all the way from the Inuvialuit, Gwich'in, Deline, Tulita, Norman Wells, Deh Cho, Akaitcho, Northwest Territories Metis, Manitoba Denesuline, Saskatchewan Denesuline, Acho Dene Koe First Nations, Katlodeeche First Nation, First Nation of Na-Cho Nyak Dun of Fort Good Hope, I believe, and Dene Tha'. Thank you.

MR. BEAULIEU: Okay. Having heard that, you lead me to believe that you are expecting four tables to be created by the federal government, bringing the total to 15. Does that mean that you actually have only one additional table now from 10 to 11 and then the new four expected brings it up to 15?

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Mr. Chairman, the way the process works, active negotiation tables or they become active when the natural framework agreement has been reached. There are some

exploratory discussions going on so we are at those tables or those meetings and then, when the federal government does establish them with the framework agreement with the organization or group, then it kicks up to the active negotiation table. We've got Katlodeeche and the Na-Cho Nyak Dun have additional frameworks put in place now and we are expecting the Fort Good Hope and Dene Tha' will have frameworks established with them next year. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): Thank you, Premier Roland. Next on my list is Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO: Mr. Chairman, my questions are to the Minister in regards to aboriginal affairs in the area of negotiations. There has been some time since a lot of land claims were settled, especially the ones in my riding from 1992 and 17 years later, but there are still a lot of provisions of those agreements that still haven't been negotiated or implemented through territorial legislation.

I will use the Wildlife Act for instance. That has been outstanding for some time. We have an economic section that government doesn't seem to want to touch because it might do something good for the Gwich'in and also dealing with forestry, which the government has the responsibility in the forestry provisions of the Gwich'in agreement, the same as the Sahtu. And also in other areas in regards to protected areas with the establishment of territorial parks in our settlement areas, whether it is the Gwich'in Territorial Park or the CANOL Trail. Those were negotiated in those agreements. Again, they are still not fully implemented.

I think the same thing also applies to lands in municipalities. We have municipal lands in all of our communities and also in Inuvik which is in the Gwich'in Settlement Area. I'd like to know why is it that this government is not moving on fully legislating those sections, those land claim agreements into territorial legislation when this government has legislative authority which has been devolved to this government from the federal government in such areas as wildlife, forestry and other areas in regards to protected areas which was the establishment of territorial parks. I would just like to ask the Minister exactly why is it taking so long and what is this government doing to implement those sections of those agreements.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Premier Roland.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Mr. Chairman, the Member has highlighted that under the implementation side there are a number of areas at the actual implementation tables. The groups all have their committee representatives from each group. For example, the Gwich'in have their person

they have named at the table. The federal government has their person named and we would have a person named. At the actual implementation side of those tables, I have been informed there are no outstanding issues. Now there are issues that are being discussed at the political level about the level of implementation or what is expected or the interpretation of those and that is the area we find ourselves more challenged in.

The Member has used a number of things, for example, the Wildlife Act, the Species at Risk Act, the Canol Trail, and the Gwich'in Territorial Park. To a certain level or another, other departments have devolved. For example, Environment and Natural Resources are dealing with the Species at Risk Act that is out there now. They are involved in the development of the Wildlife Act that is being co-developed now with the aboriginal groups. The challenge is because there are so many tables being negotiated from right up and down the valley from Inuvialuit, Gwich'in, Sahtu, who have signed land claim agreements and other groups that are negotiating and some are doing a comprehensive approach, both land and self-government is the challenge that we face as to what kind of legislation can be brought in to implement some of the claims groups and not affect the negotiations of other groups. Because when legislation comes in, that's the concern that it starts to take away from the negotiation approaches of some of the groups. That's been a concern.

Where we can find the agreement amongst groups, like the Wildlife Act, like the species at Risk Act, come up with an approach that is beginning to bear fruit, I guess is the term, that is showing some results there...

One of the concerns the Member has raised talked about municipal lands within communities. The Member is aware, because of his own past experience as a negotiator, that those lands within a community are selected and operated within the jurisdiction of the municipality. For example, if there are exchanges of land between the self-government body and the federal government, they can select some land within a community but those lands would still be operated under the operation that is in place. So taxes and so on would still be due unless the federal government sets up how they would pay the tax piece of it to the community that the exchange has occurred in.

So that is the process that is there in place. We use existing processes that are in place and understood and follow on those processes.

As for your continued interpretation of some of those things, that can come up from time to time and be challenging in trying to come up with the understanding and have parties agree that that

interpretation or an older interpretation still applies. So that is something that continues to be worked on. Thank you.

MR. KRUTKO: Mr. Chair, the point I was trying to make is that you can negotiate everything into a nice, fancy binder. At the end of the day, that's all it is; a nice, fancy binder. Until you take that binder and you take the sections out of it and put it into legislation and put the legislation into force, then it enacts that legislation. Right now there are certain provisions or sections of these land claim agreements that have not legislatively been given that authority.

So in order for this government to bring life to that agreement, you have to legislate those sections of the agreement into territorial/federal legislation. That was the question I was asking. Like the Wildlife Act, you have to enact those sections so the agreement to give the power and intent of the agreement through legislative authority. So I would like to ask the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs again, why is it that this government is not moving and acting on those sections of legislation which will bring it into force by way of legislative enforcement which will have to be passed in this Legislature or even in the House of Commons by way of legislative effect?

I would like to ask again. Why is it that those sections of those agreements have not been legislatively entrenched such as the Wildlife Act? The Gwich'in claims have been signed some 17 years ago. In regards to the Inuvialuit, we are looking at over 20 years ago. I think that is why those agreements aren't working. In order for those agreements to work, you have to legislate those agreements into force and give them the legislative tools that they need to really have the force and intent of those agreements. When can we see the legislative enforcement legislation brought forward to enforce those sections of the agreements which need those pieces of legislation passed or amended to allow for those sections, those agreements to be enacted under territorial legislation?

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Mr. Chairman, for the record, we have been working with the groups to bring that legislation forward. The Member is aware, from our past experience, even myself and other governments, where we have worked jointly to try to come up with that. We have provided funds to the organizations and aboriginal governments to work on initiatives within the lands claim and the Species at Risk. The Species at Risk is before committee I understand. The Minister of Environment and Natural Resources is committed to putting the Wildlife Act on the table in this House for movement. He has established a renewed

process with the aboriginal organizations and governments and the GNWT and the co-management approach to developing that piece of legislation and that work is ongoing. We are hoping that we would have that brought and delivered to this House at the end of this Assembly. It is work that is ongoing. It is stuff that we are trying to do. Our goal is to have it done before the end of this government. Thank you.

MR. KRUTKO: Again, I am glad to see the Wildlife Act moving forward and hope to have it passed in this legislation. As long as I have been here, that has always been my priority getting that section of legislation, but there are other sections of the land claim agreements that still need to be enacted.

I mentioned forestry. There is a forestry provision in the land claim agreements that basically talks about commercial harvesting. It talks about forest management plans. It talks about how the forest is going to be managed in those settlement areas. In order for them to be able to have that authority, they have to get it by way of legislative authority.

Again, that is another section I feel this government has to deal with. I know the economic measures have been controversial over the time. That is why we went with the MOU thing. Again, at some point, we have to make a decision of moving on the economic measures. I think, for ourselves, it is pretty clear.

I will use the Gwich'in agreement. It basically states section 10.1.4 that where government carries out public activities in the settlement area which gives rise to employment and other economic opportunities, the government elects to enter into a contract with respect to those activities. The Government of the Northwest Territories preferential contracting policies, procedures and approaches intended to maximize regional and northern employment and business opportunities should be followed respectively by Canada and the Government of the Northwest Territories, and then again it goes on to talk about the Government of the Northwest Territories consult the Gwich'in Tribal Council in developing and modifying its preferential contracting policies and procedures.

Again, that section flows from the Gwich'in economic measures. But for some reason this government totally does not want to touch it, but it clearly says the Government of the Northwest Territories. I would like to know, when is this part of the legislation going to be implemented to bring it into force and effect? That legislation is just like what they have in the Inuvialuit agreement which talk about protected measures agreement in that agreement. There is a section in Nunavut's agreement that talks about protected measures. That is why you don't have to put out contracts in

the Inuvialuit settlement region. Basically, the preferential policies are exactly what is in the economic policies in the Gwich'in agreement, the Sahtu agreement and the Tlicho agreement. When can we see that legislation get enacted as it was negotiated in the land claim agreements?

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Mr. Chairman, the provisions of the claim itself, there are spaces and spots in it, as the Member for Mackenzie Delta has highlighted, that require action on government, not necessarily legislative action but whether it is, for example, he used 10.1.5 about the Government of the Northwest Territories shall consult with the Gwich'in Tribal Council on developing modifications to preferential contracting policies, procedures and approaches. We, for example, on the preferential treatment, have negotiated contracts. When we were looking at making any changes, we set that out for their input as to the potential changes we are looking at. We did it to every organization. So we have done that. On 10.1.6, for example, when it talks about the Government of the Northwest Territories intends, when we intend to carry out activities on settlement lands, and that is important on settlement lands, which give rise to employment or other economic opportunities. When the Government of the Northwest Territories elects to enter into contracts with respect to those activities without going to public tender, that is a critical area. Participants shall be given first opportunity to negotiate such contracts. We follow that practice.

The problem comes in when we look at the other areas and again when we talk about settlement lands and other self-government bodies or negotiations, that is when we have problems about who gets the first opportunity and the MOUs was a process where we established outside of the claims process to try and come up with a management process that would allow the groups to have opportunity to look at what was happening. For example, the government's infrastructure plan would be shared with the groups to say, here it is in that region and that settlement area. What areas would you like to see and have interest in and work back and forth with that? The Minister of ITI is the lead on those MOUs. The Gwich'in was the first one signed. The Sahtu recently signed one. There are other negotiations happening right now in those areas to do that.

The section of 10.1.4 about when government carries out public activities in areas that give rise to employment, economic opportunities, the government elects to enter into contracts with respect to those activities. Section B is the Government of the Northwest Territories preferential contracting policies, procedures and approaches intended to maximize regional and northern employment and business opportunities

should be followed respectively by Canada and the Government of the Northwest Territories. Again, when we established preferential treatment, policies and processes, that is when that would apply. There are a number of occasions across the government that we use that provision in trying to access that. I believe, again, the MOU would show good results in that area of bringing more dollars to those organizations when it comes to opportunities for employment and contracting. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): Thank you, Premier Roland. Next on my list is Mr. Yakeleya.

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would ask that the Premier, in his discussions with the different self-government land claims organization areas where they are not settled yet in terms of land claim and his discussions with leaders who are in self-government negotiations and other communities that wish to enter into negotiations, as an intergovernmental affairs issue, has the Premier and staff worked with the other communities to say that we need to get together, provided that we find some time, money and strategies, and say this is what we need to really sit down and talk to Ottawa about? These are some of the big ticket items that need to be negotiated in the Tlicho Self-Government Agreement. There are some provisions in there that really need to get Ottawa's attention. There is no clarity in terms of my understanding with the Inuvialuit agreement, the Sahtu agreement, some of the agreements that we're not quite sure where we sit as a territorial government in terms of legislative authority. Even in the Inuvialuit Final Agreement, the wildlife committees are given the authority to create bylaws under the wildlife, bylaws to hunt for the communities. We have to enforce these laws that are created by the Inuvialuit communities that have these bylaws. Under the bylaws, because self-government agreements are constitutionally protected under section 35, we need to get issues like that...Maybe I'm going a little too far but I think that's something that we should be looking at even within the aboriginal public governments.

The big question is under the land claim agreements, the self-government agreements, these agreements are constitutionally protected. Do we have a public government that falls under section 35 that's constitutionally protected? I guess my question to the Premier in terms of some of these big ticket items going forward on some of these agreements that put us in a very difficult position, have there been discussions with the aboriginal leaders, people in the Northwest Territories saying there are some significant changes coming down since 1995, even the '70s to '95. Aboriginal people have not had this type of opportunity to assert what could be their rights.

Never. Only 1960, the first time that people had a right to vote in the Confederation of Canada.

Mr. Chairman, what I'm trying to say is because there's going to be some significant changes in the Northwest Territories, how it's going to be carved out, status quo is not going to remain the same. I'm trying to find a way where we could look at these issues that are going to have an impact. There are some really good questions around the table that I've heard this afternoon in terms of things we would be looking at. Are these issues here not yet magnified to a level that we want them to be or is it just my view here? Are we dealing with other avenues that will continue on operating as the best we can until we know there's enough people holding up the sign saying we should be looking at some of these issues here?

Mr. Chair, I would ask the Premier for his comments to my statement. There may be some questions in there.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Premier Roland.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Mr. Chairman, I don't know if the Member was hoping I would have questions for him as a response...

---Laughter

As he raised the issues here there are, in fact, a number of things happening that address these larger items that are I guess we'd say pan-regional to all the aboriginal governments in the Northwest Territories.

One of the things, as I had highlighted before, that we've put in place during this government is to formalize our relationship with aboriginal governments with the establishment of the regional leaders meetings. Since November 2007 we've had five regional leaders meetings. The first one was here in Yellowknife in November 2007. We had one in Inuvik in February 2008 and again in July 2008. In October 2008 we had one in Norman Wells, and this winter -- 2009 -- we had one in Fort Simpson. Along with those there's also a commitment to deal with the regional leaders and bilateral, so all of their chiefs or leaders, for example, in October 2008 we met with the Sahtu leadership. In November we met with the ADFN group. In January the Deh Cho group. For example, with the Gwich'in and the Inuvialuit, we've met with them on a number of occasions since November.

These are the meetings, especially at the regional level, where we deal with, for example, the self-government financing piece. The self-government financing piece, as we're starting to hear now from the federal government, is their stance is changing

when it comes to incremental costs and how they'll support self-governments after they're signed. We are very concerned with that approach so we brought it to the table. We did a presentation to the regional leadership at the Fort Simpson meeting, and there was agreement that we need to take a common approach and develop a strategy of how we're going to engage the federal government so that they, in fact, honour their commitment when it comes to self-government, implementation and funding of those pieces. That's an example of how it's starting to work and it will deal with those big picture items that we need to focus on as a group of leaders in the Territories. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): Thank you, Premier Roland. We're on page 4-15, activity summary, negotiations, operations expenditure summary. Mr. Yakeleya.

MR. YAKELEYA: I guess the point I was looking and hoping that maybe...I appreciate the Premier going out to the regional leadership and initiating some regional meetings in our communities. I want to commend him on that for making these meetings happen in our regions with the leadership. I guess what I'm looking at is hoping that throughout these meetings that there will be a point in time when we get consensus strong enough from our leadership and our Cabinet, the Premier, to go down to Ottawa and say enough is enough in terms of the issues that we need to deal with.

Right now, Mr. Chairman, we are put in the situation like this whole next couple of weeks here. We are put in the situation where we, as Members, come from various communities that have to deal with a budget that, you know, everybody wants something very desperately in their communities and the federal government puts an amount of \$1.3 billion, I believe, \$1.2 billion, into the Northwest Territories. Yet it's so slow in terms of having us be a real partner in Canada and with these negotiations within our region here because of the amount of billions and billions of dollars they stand to lose if we are to alter any type of authority or jurisdiction in terms of our negotiations.

I think that's what I was looking for. Maybe that will require another table at another time, Mr. Chair. Something has to be done to shake things and not have the status quo. I'm not too sure if we're at that point yet where we're going to have a real radical change in terms of...Otherwise, if we don't do it, these self-governments and these land claim agreements are going to do it for us.

Believe me, people in the communities are not happy with how they are being serviced by the federal government. We are sometimes, even with the existing Assembly here, we have to manage \$1.2 billion in the vast amount of needs in our

communities. That's what I'm looking for. Again, I'm going to ask the Premier is that something that's been somewhat discussed and if that is, is it seeking a lukewarm reaction or is it something that we should really consider in the Northwest Territories, maybe in the next Assembly? I'm just trying to get some signals from the Premier in terms of his meetings with the aboriginal and the people in the North in terms of what I've spoke on.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): Thank you, Mr. Abernethy. Premier Roland.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Mr. Chairman, let me try this approach to the Member's questions and concerns. The regional level leaders' table does and is starting to deal with these picture items and how we would approach the federal government and our position. This is sort of based around the work that has been done in the past around devolution and resource revenue sharing where the government-of-the-day worked with the leadership, a majority of the group signed off on an approach, sent it into the federal government. That side of it, a response was not given as elections were called on that piece. That is one of those issues we've brought to the regional leaders' table to say, okay, we have an offer that was on the table that hasn't been responded to. How do we progress?

Some of the stuff needs to be done. We need to come up with an agreement in the North before we can get to Ottawa because we have a number of groups who have said, well, devolution and resource revenue sharing, we're negotiating, we don't want to deal with that right now, so leave it alone. We've got others who say we're ready to go. We're trying to find some common ground where we can come up with a package that's acceptable to the large group of leaders in the North that we feel we can present to the federal government.

Self-government financing, the example I gave already, we are working together on an approach to the federal government. Some of the other issues that we established and brought to the table and have a joint working group now is, for example, on the Water Strategy. That was developed and brought to the table at the regional leaders' table. The Land Use Framework is another initiative that we've brought to that table and we will continue coming up with a common approach that I believe will help us in settling some of those other areas when it comes to legislation that we come up with that common approach. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): Thank you, Premier Roland. Noting the clock, committee members, I will now rise and report progress. Thank you, Premier Roland, and thank you to your witnesses. Mr. Sergeant-at-Arms, could you please escort the witnesses out of the Chamber.

Report of Committee of the Whole

MR. SPEAKER: Can I have the report of Committee of the Whole, please, Mr. Abernethy.

MR. ABERNETHY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Your committee has been considering Tabled Document 11-16(3), NWT Main Estimates 2009-2010, and would like to report progress. Mr. Speaker, I move that the report of Committee of the Whole be concurred with.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Abernethy. Do we have a seconder? The honourable Member for Tu Nedhe, Mr. Beaulieu.

---Carried

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

Orders of the Day

CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Mercer): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Orders of the day for Monday, February 23, 2009, at 1:30 p.m.:

1. Prayer
2. Ministers' Statements
3. Members' Statements
4. Returns to Oral Questions
5. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery
6. Acknowledgements
7. Oral Questions
8. Written Questions
9. Returns to Written Questions
10. Replies to Opening Address
11. Petitions
12. Reports of Standing and Special Committees
13. Reports of Committees on the Review of Bills
14. Tabling of Documents
15. Notices of Motion

16. Notices of Motion for First Reading of Bills

17. Motions

- Motion 12-16(3), Northwest Territories Truth and Reconciliation Commission

18. First Reading of Bills

19. Second Reading of Bills

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

- Tabled Document 7-16(3), Ministerial Benefits Policy

- Tabled Document 11-16(3), Northwest Territories Main Estimates 2009-2010

- Committee Report 2-16(3), Standing Committee on Rules and Procedures Report on Matters Referred to the Committee

- Bill 1, An Act to Amend the Historical Resources Act

- Bill 3, International Interest in Mobile Aircraft Equipment Act

- Bill 4, Public Library Act

- Bill 5, Professional Corporations Act

- Bill 7, An Act to Amend the Student Financial Assistance Act

21. Report of Committee of the Whole

22. Third Reading of Bills

23. Orders of the Day

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Clerk. Accordingly, this House stands adjourned until Monday, February 23, 2009, at 1:30 p.m.

---ADJOURNMENT

The House adjourned at 2:04 p.m.

