



NORTHWEST TERRITORIES LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

3rd Session

Day 16

16th Assembly

HANSARD

Monday, February 23, 2009

Pages 2461 - 2512

The Honourable Paul Delorey, Speaker

Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories

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Published under the authority of the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories

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YELLOWKNIFE, NORTHWEST TERRITORIES**Monday, February 23, 2009****Members Present**

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

The House met at 1:35 p.m.

Prayer

---Prayer

SPEAKER (Hon. Paul Delorey): Good afternoon, colleagues. Welcome back to the Chamber. Before we begin, colleagues, for your information and the information of our guests, interpreters in the House this week will be channel two, South Slavey; channel three, North Slavey. Orders of the day. Item 2, Ministers' statements. The honourable Premier, Mr. Roland.

Ministers' Statements

**MINISTER'S STATEMENT 33-16(3):
ENERGY AND THE GNWT APPROACH TO
REDUCING THE COST OF LIVING**

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Mr. Speaker, today I would like to speak to our government's overall approach to energy, and specifically to the processes that are now underway that will help shape the future of the electricity system in the Northwest Territories.

Building upon the NWT Energy Plan and Greenhouse Gas Strategy, the vision and priorities identified by all Members of the 16th Legislative Assembly, and with further input of all Members, the GNWT released our Energy Priorities Framework last October. This document clearly outlines our priorities, from enhanced efforts in energy conservation and efficiency to fundamentally changing our energy supply and reducing our dependence on imported diesel.

As the Minister of Finance outlined in his budget speech, our government has made an unprecedented financial commitment to bring about real change and reduce the cost of living, especially in our remote communities.

Mr. Speaker, we need to examine all opportunities to reduce energy costs and this includes looking at our electricity sector, how our electricity is generated and delivered, and how our electricity

rates are established. Our key process for this is our review of electricity regulation, rates and subsidy programs, which Minister Bob McLeod will be speaking to today.

In the context of the overall electricity review, there are two related processes I have committed to undertake. The first is a review of the NTPC. Members of this House and the Association of Communities have called on the government to review the structure and the efficiency of the NWT Power Corporation. Concerned about high electricity rates, customers and leaders have asked the government to confirm that the corporation operates as efficiently as it can. As Minister responsible for the Power Corporation, I plan to appoint an expert panel of industry and audit professionals. Before the end of this session, I will provide the names of the members of the panel to all Regular Members and inform the public.

Mr. Speaker, the panel will examine the financial statements, PUB rate applications, and general operations of the NTPC. I will be asking the panel members to meet with the PUB. A comparison of costs, rates, and practices will be done between NTPC and NUL, so that residents can obtain a fair comparison of community rates and the reasons for differences. The panel members will conduct comparative analyses of similar utilities, though, admittedly, there are few simple comparisons to our Power Corporation.

The panel members will then share the understanding they gain from their detailed analysis by conducting a series of meetings with important stakeholders. The goal of this exercise is to build a common understanding of the reasons underlying our current electricity costs, and to discuss opportunities for change. Our Power Corporation is a valuable asset of this government. If it can be improved, we ought to pursue those improvements. If services can be improved, and rates lowered or at least stabilized, we need to pursue those changes.

Mr. Speaker, there is an important link between the NTPC and electricity reviews. The electricity review is intended to discuss the implications of adding or reducing the number of companies operating in the NWT's electricity sector. The NTPC review will provide data on the opportunities and implications

of reducing the number of utility players to one, whether it be private or public.

The second is a review of the ATCO proposal for a partnership arrangement in the development and delivery of power in the Northwest Territories, which I announced in January. This review should be considered as due diligence on the part of our government, in response to an unsolicited proposal. I am expecting an initial report in April to help determine whether this proposal should be pursued further.

The ATCO review will help us understand how a merged and privatized utility would operate in NWT, including changes to the way NTPC currently operates. The preliminary review of this proposal will help government understand the issues related to electrical utility privatization, and regulatory implications of additional privatization.

Mr. Speaker, again, there is an important link between the ATCO and electricity reviews. The electricity review will comment on privatization issues within the NWT electricity sector, and the appropriateness of our electricity sector regulation. It will also address how government may need to change its ability to direct its regulatory body, the Public Utilities Board.

I commit to working closely with all Members of the Legislative Assembly as we examine these complex issues and I urge all residents to take an active part in the public discussions that will take place over the coming months. Thank you.

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

MINISTER'S STATEMENT 34-16(3): ELECTRICITY REVIEW

MR. BOB MCLEOD: Mr. Speaker, as the Premier has noted, our government's current review of Review of Electricity Regulation, Rates, and Subsidy Programs will work to identify those values Northwest Territories residents wish to see reflected in their electricity system. An examination of the way our system is regulated, how electricity rates are established, and the effectiveness of our subsidy program will help us to collectively shape the future of our Territory's electrical system.

This critical dialogue with Northwest Territories residents, aboriginal governments and key energy stakeholders will be led by a professional team well versed in northern energy challenges and the complex public policy issues that we face.

These individuals represent an expert balance of knowledge and experience in areas of energy policy development and northern affairs.

Mr. Gerry Forrest possesses a great deal of experience in national and provincial electrical issues and has recently been involved in a similar review for the Province of Saskatchewan in addition to being a past chair of the Manitoba Public Utilities Board.

Mr. Doug Matthew's hands on knowledge of northern energy issues began with his career in Tuktoyaktuk in 1978. His experience and expertise will be a valuable resource for our public discussions on the future of our electricity system.

Mr. Mark Cleveland's long career with the Government of the Northwest Territories, and his experience working with communities on northern policy issues, will ensure that our discussions with communities and residents are effective.

Mr. Speaker, the first public meeting for this team is scheduled for the evening of March 4th in Inuvik. Mayor Lindsay has graciously agreed to host this public meeting and I look forward to hearing the results of this discussion.

Subsequent meetings are being scheduled for the regional centres of Norman Wells, Fort Simpson, Hay River, Fort Smith and Yellowknife. We are also working with the Northwest Territories Association of Communities to hold a separate workshop for all non-tax-based communities, in Yellowknife on March 30th and 31st.

Mr. Speaker, the Government of the Northwest Territories will be widely advertising our public engagement sessions and we look forward to working closely with communities, residents, and all Members of the Legislative Assembly as we discuss the future of the electricity system in the Northwest Territories. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. The honourable Minister responsible for the Status of Women, Ms. Lee.

MINISTER'S STATEMENT 35-16(3): NORTHERN MEDAL AND ORDER OF CANADA AWARDS

HON. SANDY LEE: Mr. Speaker, as Minister responsible for the Status of Women, I wish to offer my congratulations and best wishes to two well-known women who have dedicated themselves to advancing the lives of northern and aboriginal women.

First, Ms. Bertha Allen was honoured by the Governor General of Canada with the Northern

Medal, specifically dedicated to Northerners whose "actions and achievements have contributed to the evolution and constant reaffirmation of the Canadian North as part of our national identity." Ms. Allen has been recognized often over the years and such recognition is well-deserved. Her legacy remains strong in the North and in the Beaufort-Delta region through the lives of aboriginal women and their families over the years.

Ms. Allen has suffered enormous tragedy this past year and we wish to say that we think of her and her work and wish her well. The NWT is a better place because of her.

I also wish to recognize Ms. Arlene Hache who has been admitted into the Order of Canada. The Order of Canada was established to recognize outstanding achievement and service and is Canada's highest civilian honour. Ms. Hache has worked tirelessly throughout the years to advocate for women and children to have programs and services work for them and effect change when change is needed. She is a well-loved woman, a fact very apparent when one visits the Centre for Northern Families in Yellowknife and meets her "extended" family.

Mr. Speaker, I offer my congratulations and best wishes to both these women.

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

MINISTER'S STATEMENT 36-16(3):
MINISTER ABSENT FROM THE HOUSE

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Mr. Speaker, I wish to advise Members that the Honourable Jackson Lafferty will be absent from the House today, tomorrow and Wednesday to attend the Council of Ministers of Education Canada meetings in Saskatoon. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Premier Roland. Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for Great Slave, Mr. Abernethy.

Members' Statements

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON
RECOGNITION OF YWCA CONTRIBUTIONS

MR. ABERNETHY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, today I wish to draw the attention of the House to the significant contributions that the YWCA of Yellowknife makes to the Northwest Territories and their effort to increase the well-being and independence of some of the North's most vulnerable people. The YWCA provides emergency

and transitional housing, family violence prevention programs and community support services, as well as after school programs at six Yellowknife schools and the Taiga Adventure Camp for young women.

The YWCA is an NWT-wide resource. It operates the Sutherland House in Fort Smith, which is a shelter for women and children fleeing violence. The YWCA's programs that help children deal with the impact of family violence are delivered in a number of northern communities.

The Allison MacAteer House is a 12-bed crisis shelter in Yellowknife for women and children up to age 16 who are victims of domestic violence. The shelter offers a safe place for abused women and children as well as numerous support and counselling programs.

The YWCA will also assist in issuing emergency protection orders. Additionally, the YWCA operates Rockhill Apartments in the Great Slave riding offering both emergency and transitional housing units. It is a key resource for homeless families. Most of the residents are often single mothers, but there are also single fathers and close to 140 children. It also operates four supportive housing homes that provide life skills, training, community inclusion and a 24-hour in-home support for adults with intellectual disabilities or chronic psychiatric illness.

The Taiga Adventure Camp, currently operating out of Fort Smith, is a summer camp providing girls from ages 12 to 17 with a fun, positive personal growth experience. The camp helps develop life skills that carry well beyond the summer months and teenage years.

Invited north in 1966 by the Commissioner with the original mandate to provide housing, the YWCA has since broadened its outreach to meet the needs of our communities. Ninety-five percent of people who access the YWCA services are aboriginal. It is the lead agency on pan-territorial research on homelessness in northern women.

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

---Unanimous consent granted

MR. ABERNETHY: The YWCA's challenges are great not only to meet the needs of its clientele but also to secure funding for their staff and keep the facilities in good repair. The YWCA is in an excellent relationship with its funders and a broad donor base in the northern business community. However, staff at the YWCA make only 60 percent of a typical government salary, which contributes to the high turnover and constant need for staff training. It also highlights the dedication and

perseverance of its long-time workers and volunteers.

The YWCA has been an important part of our community and a turning point for northern families for over 40 years. Mr. Speaker, I ask Members of this House and the public to join me in offering support and wishing them continued success. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON CAPITAL INFRASTRUCTURE FOR MUNICIPAL WASTEWATER TREATMENT

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, last week the Minister of the Environment made a statement from the meeting held in Whitehorse with the Canadian Council of Environment Ministers. In his statement, he made reference that: "I am pleased to advise this House that after six years in development, the majority of CCME members endorsed national standards for municipal wastewater effluent."

Mr. Speaker, it's a long time coming but it's also important to realize that this is a major capital investment that has to be made in our communities and throughout the Northwest Territories.

Mr. Speaker, we are talking about 33 communities. Right now we are having a challenge just to put water treatment plants in our communities. For this major infrastructure to be taken on by this government is going to be a major capital expenditure. I think that we have to find a way to work with the municipalities and communities to deliver such a change. I think it's important to take a close look at the services we do have, especially in a lot of our communities where we do depend on vacuum trucks to take the sewage out of the communities, take it to the lagoon, dump it off, and then return to the community. We do have to find a way to develop infrastructure in our communities, treat the wastewater, and protect the environment of the Northwest Territories and the wildlife.

I'd like to support the Minister's endorsement on this, but more importantly the issue for me is how we, as the government of the 16th Assembly, are going to be able to finance such a major undertaking that we have to have a major layout of capital dollars to implement this policy decision made by the Environment Ministers.

At the appropriate time I will be asking the Minister of Environment questions on what he signed and when we are going to see the infrastructure fund flow to the Northwest Territories.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON ENERGY INITIATIVES IN THE SAHTU

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The government-proposed investment in energy is good news for the Northwest Territories. I'm pleased to see that the plans include funding for a feasibility study for the hydro potential on the Bear River and conversion to natural gas in Fort Good Hope and Tulita. These projects, if they move into development stage, will benefit the Sahtu and reduce our dependency on expensive and polluting fossil fuels.

While these projects get ahead in the right direction, it will take many years before they have any direct impact on the residents and the environment. People in the Sahtu want immediate solutions that can help them reduce their energy costs and consumption as quickly as possible. It seems that many initiatives under the energy priority framework will have more immediate benefits to the people who live in the southern part of the Territory. They already benefit from cheaper electricity costs and each year have access to alternative energy solutions like the wood pellet stoves and boilers.

For this energy framework to have real meaning, it is important that the smaller, more isolated communities have the tools they need to use energy wisely and efficiently. I hope that the new Biomass Strategy and other energy initiatives will have direct support for the people of the Sahtu. We need to balance these initiatives with investments that can make an immediate difference for our people in the Sahtu. I'll have questions for the Minister responsible for the energy corporation at the appropriate time.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. The honourable Member for Kam Lake, Mr. Ramsay.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON CHANGES TO CONSENSUS GOVERNMENT

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to speak again today about consensus government. Last Thursday I asked the Premier a number of questions about Cabinet solidarity and why it was that we conduct business the way we do. In my line of questioning last week I may have hit a nerve with some Cabinet Ministers, but believe me when I say it was not my intention to insult anyone or their abilities in any way. What I was doing in saying and suggesting that, is there is a better approach to how we govern.

With our system of government there is not a consensus manual or a guide. Our system of government was born and has evolved because of its elected leaders. From time to time adjustments need to be made.

Because our system of government is one of convention, it is up to us to make any changes. I appreciate the Premier's offer to put communications on the table and develop protocols, but our problems run much deeper than what is on the table, as the Premier mentions.

I'm not looking to throw the doors wide open on a constitutional development and I was surprised that the Premier, in answering questions last week, would even suggest that. The fact is we can change the way we operate this government. What I was suggesting last week is all we need to do is take the lock off of Cabinet Ministers. I agree with the Premier that this is about more than protocols. It's having the courage to change the way we do things. Just because we do things the way we do doesn't necessarily make it right.

I don't make a suggestion like this lightly. Believe me that I have given this a great deal of thought. My background and my formal education is in political science and I arrive at my suggestion with the best interest of this House and of our residents in mind; those who are demanding sound decision making from this government, something to be sure we haven't seen much of in the first 17 months. The good news is we can change this if we want to and it could be the change that gets us back on track, gets us back to the roots and true spirit and intent of consensus government.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON PROPOSED CHANGES TO LOCAL AUTHORITIES ELECTIONS ACT

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Members of this House and NWT residents are all aware that every three or four years our communities hold elections for mayors and municipal councillors. These elections are governed by a piece of territorial legislation called the Local Authorities Elections Act, which is currently under discussion for possible changes and updates.

The NWT Association of Communities, representing all of our 33 communities, has been advocating for change to the Local Authorities Elections Act for many years. It needs to be brought up to date and made more efficient and workable.

The Department of Municipal and Community Affairs, in the last six months or so, in conjunction

with a number of non-departmental representatives, has done some work on this outdated act and the department is proposing changes to the act and is looking for input.

What kind of changes are they? A possible shortening of the election period, which is currently seven weeks, down to anywhere from three to five weeks; allowing for alternate voting methods; allowing for more voting opportunities as voters now only have two days in which they can vote in comparison with up to two weeks for territorial elections in some ridings; allowing electronic vote counting; reconsideration of the process for tie votes and recounts; adding prohibitions on campaign advertising; allowing municipalities to require reporting of candidates' campaign contributions; clarifying and expanding the powers of the chief municipal electoral officer; increasing offences and penalties related to election signs -- always a hot topic; and increasing fines for elections offences.

The Department of Municipal and Community Affairs has had a discussion paper out for a couple of months now, but the opportunity for input ends soon; February 28th, to be exact. Anyone with an interest in municipal elections should take advantage of MACA's invitation to provide their ideas and help to shape the amendments to the act. As a former municipal politician, I know I will be providing my comments and I look forward to seeing the recommendations from this work in short order.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON SUMMER STUDENT OPPORTUNITIES IN THE GNWT

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. In Nahendeh we are proud of the success of our high school, college, and university students. We want our students to have opportunities to make choices for happy and productive futures. We hope many of our children will remain or return after completing education to work at jobs, including government jobs, in our communities.

In the past, students have had opportunities to work full time for the GNWT in the summer. This has provided them with a number of things: work experience, a better understanding of what kind of jobs are available in our communities, on-the-job skills and knowledge, and money to help them be more self-sufficient.

I call upon the government to support our summer students this coming spring with full-time summer jobs. I think all departments should have student

placements. I hear that cutbacks have led to only half-time positions, but this does not provide the most valuable work experience as time is so limited. Also, it doesn't provide enough money for students, particularly those attending college and university. I urge our Ministers to be flexible and creative and ensure that full-time positions to our students are available.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON
COMMERCIAL FISHING OPPORTUNITIES
IN TU NEDHE COMMUNITIES

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

Today I would like to talk about the need to assist Tu Nedhe communities with establishing and operating a freshwater fishing operation. Both Lutselk'e and Fort Resolution are located in prime fishing locations. Lutselk'e is in the heart of the East Arm of the Great Slave Lake where world-class trout, whitefish, and Arctic grayling spawn. Fort Resolution is located on the south shore of Great Slave Lake where cod, whitefish, and pickerel have been fished for generations.

The Great Slave Lake is the ninth largest freshwater lake in the world and the deepest in North America, yet the fishing industry on this great lake seems to be waning over the last few years. With limited employment opportunities in these smaller communities, a modest fishing operation in Lutselk'e and Fort Resolution will give residents new opportunities for income. Being a traditional-based activity, many residents already fish, so there will be no problem recruiting and retaining workers for this. Mr. Speaker, currently the two communities have small fish camps outside the community where the local people fish for subsistence purposes where they smoke and dry fish for preservation purposes. In Fort Resolution, the Buffalo River fishing camp sees a lot of tourists during the fall fishing season, thus indicating a small fishing industry can exist.

Mr. Speaker, in Lutselk'e the local people market their daily trout catches when visitors come to the community. Some governments report this could be a small vibrant industry that could keep a few people employed on a seasonal basis.

Mr. Speaker, with some support to Lutselk'e and Fort Resolution for this, the whole North will benefit. In addition, Mr. Speaker, there are many nutritional benefits of fish, diversification of income and, of course, promotion and preservation of an important traditional activity. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. Item 3, Members' statements. Item 4, returns to oral questions. Item 5, recognition of visitors in the gallery. The honourable Member for Weledeh, Mr. Bromley.

Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to recognize Arlene Hache, a member of the Order of Canada and a proud constituent in Weledeh.

---Applause

I would also like to thank the Pages for the wonderful care we have been getting from them and recognize Kaitlyn Menard also from Weledeh.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Bromley. The honourable Member for Range Lake, Ms. Lee.

HON. SANDY LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. If I may, I would also like to recognize Ms. Arlene Hache who has been an advocate in the community of Yellowknife and the North for many, many years and who has just received outstanding recognition and been called into the Order of Canada. Thank you.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Lee. The honourable Member for Kam Lake, Mr. Ramsay.

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wanted to recognize a Page that we have working from the riding of Kam Lake, Ms. Madison Phillips and also to the rest of the Pages for all the hard work that they do. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. Item 6, acknowledgements. Item 7, oral questions. The honourable Member for Mackenzie Delta, Mr. Krutko.

Oral Questions

QUESTION 190-16(3):
CAPITAL INFRASTRUCTURE FOR MUNICIPAL
WASTEWATER TREATMENT

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions are to the Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs. It is in regard to the statement made last week by the Minister of Environment in regard to the agreement that was signed in Whitehorse regarding the establishment of

standards dealing with municipal wastewater input. Mr. Speaker, the Minister also endorsed a Canadian-wide strategy on managing the wastewater input and the framework to manage discharge of wastewater infrastructure in Canada. I would like to ask the Minister of MACA, do we have any idea what the cost is going to be to implement this strategy and this agreement, which was signed by the Minister of Environment, in all of our communities in the Northwest Territories to treat wastewater? Thank you.

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

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We are in the early stages of this whole process. As of right now, we are not quite sure of the costing. That is something that, as we go further into this, is going to have to be worked out. Thank you.

MR. KRUTKO: Mr. Speaker, we do have a lot of different types of communities. We have large municipalities such as Yellowknife, Hay River, Inuvik, which depend on their utilidor systems or their sewer systems which most of them already have some types of infrastructure to deal with treatment, but the other communities we have basically depend on water delivery systems, vacuum trucks and whatnot to deliver water to the community to the homes and then basically dispose of the water into a vacuum truck and dispose of it into a lagoon. Is there going to be a territorial strategy to deal with this issue, realizing that we have different levels of communities which depend on different types of services? Is there going to be criteria that we all have to follow? Is there going to be criteria which is different for smaller communities than, say, larger communities? Thank you.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Mr. Speaker, as we go further into the standards and what is going to be required of each community there will have to be a strategy, because one system is not going to work for every community across the Northwest Territories. That is something that, as we go further into the strategy, then we will have to decide what is best for each community at that time. Thank you.

MR. KRUTKO: Mr. Speaker, one thing that we have seen and the challenges we have seen with the new water treatment plants that are going into the communities, they are all high tech. They have bells and whistles. They go off every once in a while. You practically need a computer technician to come in and try to reboot these things. I would just like to ask the Minister, whatever system we have, we have to make sure it is user friendly to the North and also that people are trained to be able to provide those services. Is there going to be some

sort of standard system we use across the board that is simple and easy to use and that we don't have to get some high-tech engineer to come in to figure out our problems every time they go down? Is that something that the Minister can also develop into his strategy?

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Mr. Speaker, the lessons that we learn from the water treatment plants are going to be used to go a long way in deciding what kind of systems, if any, we are going to have to come up with for the wastewater part of it. If there is a standardized system that we can come up with across the Northwest Territories, then that is something that we would have to seriously consider. It would be cost beneficial to the Northwest Territories too. Thank you.

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

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Again, there is going to be a major capital cost to this. I would like to ask the Minister, knowing that we are already expending the \$185 million to the Building Canada Fund, is there going to be a special fund from the federal government to deal with implementing this strategy throughout the Northwest Territories and you are talking possibly hundreds of millions of dollars to make these changes throughout the Northwest Territories?

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Mr. Speaker, absolutely. We would expect the federal government to have to pony up some cash here, because it is something that using the money that would supply the communities right now. It is going to be quite an expensive undertaking to have this wastewater sewage treatment facility. It is a discussion that we are going to have to have with the federal government and make sure that they come up with some financing, because it would be too expensive for the communities to finance it on their own. Thank you.

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

QUESTION 191-16(3):
SUMMER STUDENT EMPLOYMENT
OPPORTUNITIES

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to follow up on my Member's statement and ask questions to the Minister of Human Resources. What is the government strategy for continued support of our summer students? Is there an overall target for this coming year? How many students are we targeting to employ? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. The honourable Minister of Human Resources, Mr. Bob McLeod.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Hiring of summer students is a priority for our government. Every year we work very closely with departments to identify many summer student hiring opportunities. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. MENICOCHÉ: I am pleased to hear that it certainly is a priority. It is a priority of mine as well. How many students are we targeting in the Territory as a whole? Does the Minister have any details of how many in my riding? Thank you.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Last year we had 281 summer students that worked for us. This is a number that is down. I think the highest we ever had was 351 summer students. Our average usually runs around 315 summer students a year. We are hoping that we will get back to our average this year. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. MENICOCHÉ: I am pleased to hear those numbers are very high. I certainly urge the government to continue that. In my riding, I have done some checking there. We have some .5 positions. I mentioned that in my Member's statement. Is there a way to not do this, Mr. Speaker? Full-time positions, I think, are critical and should be encouraged. Thank you.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Mr. Speaker, I agree with the Member that we feel it's in the best interests of summer students to be employed fully for the whole summer and we'll continue to work closely with the departments to endeavour to increase their allocations for summer students.

For the Nahendeh region I think there are about 15 to 21 summer students that are hired. Thank you.

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

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to hear that the Minister is willing to work with his colleagues and the other departments to be creative and flexible in looking at that issue of .5 summer students. I'd just like to ask his commitment to work towards that once again, Mr. Speaker.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: We are currently working with the departments to identify summer student opportunities and we will endeavour to have the departments increase those .5 summer student positions. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

QUESTION 192-16(3):
HOMELESSNESS FUNDING

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions today are addressed to the Minister responsible for homelessness. In her statement on Wednesday, February 11th of this year, the Minister made a statement about homelessness initiatives, talked about a Small Community Homelessness Fund, an application-based program which benefits homeless individuals in small communities. By that statement it specifically excludes the City of Yellowknife. I'd like to know from the Minister, is there an application-based program for larger communities that's similar to the one for small communities? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. The honourable Minister responsible for the homeless, Ms. Lee.

HON. SANDY LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The homelessness small community fund was created because of the fact that there are not any established homeless shelters or programming in the communities so that we could accommodate such programming in small communities. In Yellowknife all of the established agencies like YWCA, Centre for Northern Families, Salvation Army, SideDoor, a slew of organizations, they apply for their funding whether it's on a per bed basis, per programming, we fund even core funding, so to speak, to YWCA and many other agencies. Thank you.

MS. BISARO: I guess I would like to then know what kind of funding is available for the City of Yellowknife in the '09-10 budget. What kind of dollars are we talking about?

HON. SANDY LEE: The City of Yellowknife, I believe it adds up to over a million dollars. I don't know if we're talking about the City of Yellowknife as in municipality because the City of Yellowknife received funding from the federal government, which went straight from the federal government to the municipal government. The Homelessness Coalition in Yellowknife is working with the city to work on city-wide projects. Thank you.

MS. BISARO: I guess I would caution that we don't include federal dollars in anything that we assume we're giving to Yellowknife. Basically, I don't want us to pad the figures just because it happens to be the city and a million dollars sounds like it's a lot.

—Interjection

MS. BISARO: In the long term, it's not a hell of a lot of money. Pardon me, Mr. Speaker.

The Minister also spoke in her statement about an interdepartmental homelessness committee which

has begun the work of revising the GNWT framework on homelessness. I'm really glad to hear that that's happening. I think it is time that we go back and revisit that framework. I'd like to ask the Minister when we might expect to see a revised framework. Thank you.

HON. SANDY LEE: I believe the Standing Committee on Social Programs has asked me and other Ministers responsible for the homelessness plan to come and meet with them and it's scheduled for Monday. I want to say, in answering the Member's question, that in the most recent year we provided \$1.3 million in combination to the SideDoor, Centre for Northern Families, Salvation Army, a whole slew of emergency shelter funding, about half-a-million dollars for transitional housing funding; we provide funding to Bailey House. The Homelessness Assistance Fund and Small Community Homeless Fund are about \$100,000 to \$200,000, so in comparison, we need to make our inroads into funding smaller communities. Thank you.

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

MS. BISARO: I thank the Minister for explaining those numbers so that she can show that Yellowknife is getting the lion's share. However, that said, when this framework for homelessness is revised can the Minister advise whether or not there's going to be any extra funding that will assist small communities greater than what's already there? Two hundred thousand dollars is not much money.

HON. SANDY LEE: I look forward to having more in-depth discussion on that next week, Mr. Speaker. The short answer is yes. The major thrust of the second phase of the Family Violence Action Plan is to expand the programs in communities and we have a specific program to enhance services in the communities where there are no shelters. We want to work with families who don't necessarily want to make use of shelters. We want to work with children who witness violence. Also, part of the second phase of the action plan is to stabilize existing shelters because there are some shelters outside of Yellowknife, in Inuvik, Hay River and Fort Smith, that are constantly struggling to maintain their shelters. There are a number of phases to the action plan. Thank you.

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

QUESTION 193-16(3):
COMMERCIAL FISHING OPPORTUNITIES
IN TU NEDHE COMMUNITIES

MR. BEAULIEU: Mahsi cho, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, during my Member's statement I talked about some sort of support for small fishing industry in Tu Nedhe communities. I have questions pertaining to that Member's statement today for the Minister of ITI.

Mr. Speaker, can the Minister commit to meeting with some of the local -- or his department, it doesn't have to be the Minister himself -- fishermen in Lutselk'e and Fort Resolution to scope out what assistance his department can provide to create some sort of regular income for the fishermen? Thank you.

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

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Great Slave Lake fishery is a federal responsibility and is administered by the Freshwater Fish Marketing Corporation, but over the years there have been efforts to more fully involve the fishermen from the Great Slave Lake communities. We have a number of business programs that we can work with people in those communities that are interested in becoming fishermen, because certainly we want to revive the Great Slave Lake fishery. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. BEAULIEU: I think I realize that the Great Slave Lake commercial fishery was more a federal responsibility, however, I was kind of thinking about it from the perspective of developing a small business using this renewable resource for the creation of small business. I wasn't really thinking about the actual lake and the fish -- that's kind of weird. Anyway, can the Minister commit to completing some sort of survey like the staff doing some sort of survey of local fishermen in both of those communities so that they can somehow maximize use of this renewable resource? Thank you.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Certainly this is an area we would like to see an increase in activity. Generally, there has to be some indication of a quota or how much of a catch can be sustainable, so we would have to work in conjunction with the Freshwater Fish Marketing Corporation. Certainly we have business programs that have been developed to assist the small businesses in the communities and I think that the number of programs we have would fit the bill for those people that are interested in small fisheries. Thank you.

MR. BEAULIEU: I'd like to thank the Minister for that answer. My understanding, in any event, would

be that we are a ways away from the quota. That's what I understand. I'm fairly certain that the market for these fish can be easily...Most of anything that can be caught by the few fishermen in these communities can be consumed within the NWT.

A question for the Minister would be to see if he could commit to some sort of support, assuming that everything, when moving along and the surveys and everything, seems to be okay and we're at the stage where the fishermen are able to start to look for marketing distribution opportunities. I was wondering if the department could help the fishermen with that.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Certainly anything we can do to assist, we'd be pleased to participate. We do provide significant funding to the Freshwater Fishermen's Federation for marketing of their fish, but we're prepared to look at any avenue that would increase the production.

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

MR. BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd just like to thank the Minister for the answers. I think I have the answers I need to proceed with this. I would ask the Minister, just in a general sense, for some sort of support for the fishermen in both Lutselk'e and Fort Resolution to expand their operations. Right now they do go out and catch the fish, but they're unorganized. Maybe some support there.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: One of our goals is to provide for development in all 33 of our communities. We'd be very pleased to assist in Lutselk'e and Tu Nedhe.

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

QUESTION 194-16(3):
ELECTRICITY REVIEW

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to follow up on the Premier's statement on his approach to energy and reducing the cost of living. As he noted, enhanced efforts in energy conservation and efficiency to fundamentally change our energy supply and reducing our dependence on imported diesel is a priority for this government.

In the review of the NWT Power Corporation I'm wondering if the review will include the performance of the Power Corporation in the area of innovation and bringing in renewable and cheaper energy from the renewable energy alternative energy standpoint.

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

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We'll be looking at all aspects of the operation of the Power Corporation and its review from existing delivery points and methods to what could be looked at. Yes, we would be looking at those types of avenues.

MR. BROMLEY: Will the Premier be tabling the terms of reference and will Members on this side of the House have input to the terms of reference for the review?

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Before we table them I'd be prepared to sit down with the Members to go over them and discuss if they would be good enough and we could move forward on that basis.

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you to the Premier for those comments and that offer. It's much appreciated. I'm wondering if the panel will include a representative from the alternative energy corporate world, if a representative of somebody with experience at providing small communities with renewable energy systems might be considered for a position on that review panel.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: The first step is the review of the existing structures, how they operate, what they've tried to do. As well, the Power Corporation has tried to look at some enhancements in a number of communities, so we're looking for the expertise in the area of how we operate and in comparison to other jurisdictions. We could take that into consideration as well.

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

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thanks again for those comments. The last question is the Premier noted that the review will provide data on the opportunities and implications of reducing the number of utility players to one, whether it be private or public. I'm wondering if he could just provide some more details on his thinking there.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: That would come out of the fact that as a small jurisdiction, although spread out across a large area, 43,000 people having the number of structures existing in place in the North, that's one of the questions we should be asking ourselves is, is that a good system Should we be looking at other alternatives? That's where that comes from.

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

QUESTION 195-16(3):
ENERGY INITIATIVES IN THE SAHTU

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In my Member's statement I talked about the energy initiatives that are happening in the Northwest Territories or are going to happen in the Northwest Territories. My question to the lead Minister for the energy coordinating ministerial committee is how are these funds divided up in terms of which communities will receive these strategy dollars to reduce the cost of energy in the Northwest Territories?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. The lead Minister for the Energy Coordinating Committee, the honourable Robert McLeod.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In determining the budget that we put forward in this year's business plan we worked very closely with the standing committees, and I think we all realized that we wanted to see some substantial projects that could be completed in the term of this government. Some of the larger projects take some time to get through the regulatory process and doing the tendering and construction. One of the things that we tried to do as best we could was put in funding for those projects that likely had the most opportunity for success. Then we tried to put something in for every region.

MR. YAKELEYA: Certainly the key here is in terms of the opportunities for success for businesses. I understand what the Minister is saying. The Sahtu is certainly appreciative of the monies that will be going into the Sahtu region for their initiatives to bring down the cost of energy. However, it's over a period of a number of years and I want to ask the Minister in terms of looking at the communities and the isolated communities versus the business initiatives that could be generated through these initiatives under the strategy here. Sometimes the communities seem to be the last in line in terms of helping them. I want to ask the Minister when he goes back to the Energy Coordinating Committee if some of these small communities with high power and energy costs can bring forward some type of initiatives that would see the cost of energy reduced in their communities.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: There are a number of categories that are seen as territorial-wide funds which communities could apply for. Certainly in the areas of energy conservation, retrofits, and so on.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Short supplementary, Mr. Yakeleya.

MR. YAKELEYA: Mr. Speaker, certainly with the construction on the books for Fort Good Hope's new school, certainly I would have liked to see that the school in Fort Good Hope could have got a

biomass initiative going in there with the same school that's coming up, probably in different sizes, in Yellowknife here where we have a wood pellet initiative happening here. In the smaller communities we don't have initiatives like that going in there. Why is this?

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: I'm not totally familiar with the details of the Fort Good Hope school but I would surmise that it probably has something to do with the fact that there's no locally produced wood pellets and it would have to be transported from up river, probably Hay River or perhaps even as far as Edmonton. Until such time as we have developed our pilot projects to indicate that we can use locally produced biomass to heat some of the large facilities like schools, I would suspect that's what happened in this case, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

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

MR. YAKELEYA: Mr. Speaker, this is one initiative that needs to be investigated the same as with the school here in Yellowknife. You're looking at a wood pellet boiler here. There is no facility here in the Northwest Territories that can produce it. I understand La Crete is probably the closest in terms of the transportation. I'm looking at this school in Fort Good Hope. Why hasn't that system been included in the Fort Good Hope school as similar to Yellowknife? I think this is where the government needs to look at the smaller communities because of the unique challenges there that need to be included in their discussions for energy initiatives. Again, Mr. Speaker, I ask the Minister of ITI when he goes forward with this, can he look at the unique challenges of these issues in the Sahtu that we would receive a fair shake in terms of these initiatives going forward on the energy framework?

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: In the near future we would hope that every community that has biomass material in the vicinity would be able to stand alone and be self-sufficient. In the meantime, we're developing pilot projects to show that it can work in every community. Also, you need a sufficient mass of customers or people who will use wood biomass for heating their homes. When you look at Yellowknife there's quite a large group who are using wood pellets so it's feasible here. I think that would be part of the issue. With pilot projects we foresee a day when every community will be utilizing biomass. Thank you.

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

QUESTION 196-16(3):
GRAVEL HAUL IN AKLAVIK

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister responsible for Public Works and also Housing. Mr. Speaker, the community of Aklavik is presently in the process of conducting a community gravel haul. They've received all the permits in regard to road access and the grader permits if needed to abstract the gravel. Mr. Speaker, I was alarmed to hear in a phone call I received this morning from the community that the Housing Corporation is in the process of putting out a tender for some 1,500 cubic metres of gravel. Yet, Mr. Speaker, the community is working together to try to basically use as many resources as they can for this gravel haul because it is somewhere in the range of \$60,000 to \$70,000 just to put the road into the gravel source and get the gravel in. I'd like to ask the Minister exactly why is it that the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation is not working with the Department of Public Works and Services to identify the gravel needs of all government departments so that we can all do a gravel haul together and save everyone money rather than having to go out on your own? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Krutko. The honourable Minister of Public Works and Services, Mr. Michael McLeod.

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I believe I got the same phone call as the Member did this morning and I want to assure the Member that the Housing Corporation is working with the community as of a couple of hours ago. Thank you.

MR. KRUTKO: Mr. Speaker, we are running out of time here. I don't think we can afford to have a tender go out, because whoever gets the contract has to get a permit from the Gwich'in Land and Water Board and also they have to get an access agreement from the Gwich'in. I think that with about a month left for this year's season to haul the gravel, to get it out and get to the gravel source, that we're running out of time. I'd like to ask the Minister if he can work along with the Minister of Housing, who is now the Minister of Public Works, and see if somehow they can connect together here and work to simplify this process and make it not so tough just to get 1,500 cubic yards into a community. Thank you.

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: Mr. Speaker, I certainly recognize the Member's concerns. As of a couple of hours ago we have talked to the Corporation officials and Public Works has also been able to communicate with our guys at the Housing Corporation and have decided to partner

up with the community and Public Works and all the others that are involved in the gravel haul. Providing they can still provide the allowance for us to be involved in that gravel haul, we will not go to a public tender for the Housing Corporation portion. Thank you.

MR. KRUTKO: Mr. Speaker, I think it would be great if the Minister can work with the other departments but, more importantly, work with the Members on this side of the House and keep us in the loop on how much gravel is needed in our communities so that we also can tell the contractors in the communities that this project is coming up in the next couple of years, this is how much gravel you're going to need. I'd like to ask the Minister if he can find a way to give us that information that he receives when the departments coordinate their efforts to find what the granular needs are in all our communities so we know what's needed and what's out there. Thank you.

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: I certainly can commit to doing that. I think this issue today really points to the need to have better communications. We need all the partners involved in the gravel hauls and stockpiles to communicate better. I certainly will bring that information forward to the different departments that I represent and provide the information to the Members as we move through our strategy and identify the areas that we're going to be doing stockpiles and work of this nature. Thank you.

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

QUESTION 197-16(3):
APPEAL OF ELECTRICAL POWER RATES

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to address my questions to the Premier in light of the statement that he made today in regard to energy and the reviews that are currently ongoing. The Premier mentioned two reviews, the review of NTPC and a review of the ATCO proposal. My question to the Premier is whether or not either of these reviews will look at the operations of Northland Utilities Ltd. on whether it be here in Yellowknife or south of the lake. Thank you.

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

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The NWTPC or Power Corporation review would be specifically on the Power Corporation. There would be a comparison between how we operate under our structure and the NUL, what they go by. An actual review of NUL would not be in our work unless we decided to proceed, for example, with the ATCO proposal. Then we would have to start to

get into further work as to how they operate versus how we operate. Thank you.

MS. BISARO: I think everybody in this room as well as any residents who happen to be listening who live in Yellowknife will know that over the last several months we've experienced a few problems with our power bills and Northland Utilities. There are inconsistencies; there are increasing numbers. I would like to know from the Premier, for a customer like myself, who's seen my bill change only upward over the last several months, what exists for me when I have a problem with a private industry like Northland Utilities where I believe that in this case, for instance, that my usage numbers are wrong and I've been overbilled? What exists for me to deal with this? Thank you.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: I'd have to get some information on their operation. I'm not familiar with NUL, their billing process, complaints, customer relations. I would expect there would be a similar approach that customers of the NWT Power Corporation would have as their avenue. The only thing we find is that because this government is a shareholder, we tend to get the issues addressed right up into this level as well.

MS. BISARO: Thanks to the Premier. So I guess you're telling me that there is no avenue of appeal to the government per se. It's a private business and even though they are, well, they're not a subsidiary of NTPC. Okay. So there's no avenue. So I'd like to know from the Premier, then, whether or not he would feel there is an opportunity here for some sort of an appeal mechanism, whether it be an appeal board or an ombudsman, which has been referenced by myself earlier in the last session. Because it's a private industry, because the client gets absolutely no help when they have difficulty, what kind of an appeal, what kind of ombudsman office might be put in place?

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: There is a process that would be available to a customer of NUL, because NUL, for example, go through the same process for a rate application and a change to that and they would have to apply to the PUB and there would be a process for the customers to make presentations. There would also be a process, I believe, that they could go to the PUB on their own behalf. I'd have to advise that Minister Bob McLeod is the lead on that initiative or area. For ourselves, looking at what can be done and putting in an ombudsman and so on, we'd have to have a look at a number of things that could work in this situation. What can an appeal process be when it comes to the private sector? So there's quite a number of questions that would have to be looked at before I can make any commitment in that area, but I'm willing to sit down with the Member and have further discussions.

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

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thanks for that answer. I recognize that the process is to go through the Public Utilities Board, but that's a really long process and it's sort of a long-term solution to a problem. If my problem is that I have had my power bill jumped by \$150 and I don't have the money to pay for it right now and they're telling me that it's going to go up another \$100 next month, that's not a solution for me. I appreciate the Premier saying he's willing to work through this, but I would like to, I guess, encourage both the Premier and Minister McLeod to look at some sort of an appeal mechanism for private industry where we've got such a difficult situation as we have with our power rates right now. Thank you. No question.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will sit down with my colleague Minister Bob McLeod in the area of what's available to the private sector customers. We'll get that information and supply it to Members.

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

QUESTION 198-16(3):
ENERGY INITIATIVES IN THE SAHTU

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to continue my questions with the Minister of the Ministerial Energy Coordinating Committee, Mr. Bob McLeod. In terms of the wood pellet boilers, in the isolated communities, as the Minister knows very well, the limited transportation availability in terms of getting material up there in a more economic fashion here. Would the Minister look at initiatives generated by the Sahtu? They have very good ideas of how to reduce their costs in small communities like Colville Lake, where they should have put in a wood pellet boiler into the school. Because of the information that the Minister provided me, the small, isolated communities are being penalized for living in those communities. We seem to serve more of the larger centres where there's easy accessibility of supplies to come. Would the Minister look at communities where they could get some additional support faced with the unique challenges to have energy initiatives be driven in their communities to lower the cost of energy?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. The lead Minister on energy initiatives, Mr. Bob McLeod.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We are, through ENR, in the process of developing a Biomass Strategy. We also know that almost every community up and down the valley, except for some of those communities on the Arctic Coast,

have access to biomass material. As part of developing our Biomass Strategy we will be developing a pilot project to show that it can be done in a small community whereby you can be self-sufficient using biomass material to generate electricity or energy.

MR. YAKELEYA: I certainly hope the Sahtu community would be considered as one of the pilot projects to generate this initiative in terms of the biomass energy. Is the Minister thinking outside these larger centres where the real cost of energy is very high in the small communities such as he has mentioned in Nunakput and the Sahtu and maybe some in the other regions here? Is that something the Sahtu people can look forward to?

HON. BOB MCLEOD: We are looking at one of the smaller communities. Some place in the Sahtu would be an ideal location. I'll be consulting with my colleagues as we go forward with the development of the Biomass Strategy.

MR. YAKELEYA: I look forward to his final decision if the Sahtu is going to be considered for the decision to go ahead with the pilot project for this initiative. I think that in terms of these other initiatives I'd like to ask the Minister if his office has been speaking to anybody in Norman Wells who has other alternatives that can reduce the cost of fossil fuels in their small communities. I know there's one company in Norman Wells that can make a big difference. Has this department gotten in touch with this one company to see if they can do some business to reduce the cost of fossil fuel in the smaller communities?

HON. BOB MCLEOD: We've had some communications with Norman Wells, the town and the mayor, but the lead with regard to moving off of fossil fuels has been with Public Works. They've been dealing with the community and the mayor with regard to specific alternatives. The Town of Norman Wells has also been looking at propane and ways to move more to propane. The Government of the Northwest Territories has converted almost all of their facilities to using propane.

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

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. These wood pellet furnaces or boilers...Does the Minister have some indication as to how much these boilers are going to be needed for the school that's going to be built here in Yellowknife or other areas that are being used in the communities in terms of how much wood pellets would be required for just one house using them? Is it economical and feasible for the amount that's going to be required for houses or schools?

HON. BOB MCLEOD: I don't have specific information as to how much is actually being utilized with regard to wood pellets, but anecdotal information from people who are using it to heat their homes would indicate it is very feasible to use wood pellets to heat their homes.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Item 8, written questions. Item 9, returns to written questions. 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. Item 16, notices of motion for first reading of bills. Item 17, motions. The honourable Member for Sahtu, Mr. Yakeleya.

Motions

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

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

WHEREAS the federal government implemented a national policy to educate aboriginal children through establishing residential schools, mission schools, and federal day schools in Canada;

AND WHEREAS the federal government acknowledged the wrongs these residential schools, mission schools, and federal day schools have done and the significant impact there has been on aboriginal people in Canada;

AND WHEREAS the federal government has established a Truth and Reconciliation Commission to hear directly from survivors and communities on their experiences at these residential schools, missions schools, and federal day schools;

AND WHEREAS the Truth and Reconciliation Commission has not yet held any hearings and residential school survivors are waiting to tell their stories to the commission;

AND WHEREAS elders in the Northwest Territories need to have the opportunity to tell their stories;

NOW THEREFORE 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 commission hearings in the Northwest Territories;

AND FURTHERMORE, that the Government of the Northwest Territories work with the federal government to establish a Northwest Territories Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. A motion is on the floor. The motion is in order. To the motion. The honourable Member for Sahtu, Mr. Yakeleya.

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Over the period of a number of years this government in the Northwest Territories has been a leading force in the residential schools. The significant historical landmarks have happened here in the Northwest Territories in terms of urging the federal government to move ahead with this very issue here. This is another point I'd like to make with this motion here. There will be other Members speaking on it, but I think this is another point where this government and the people of the Northwest Territories need to push the federal government to do the right thing for the residential schools not only in Canada, but more importantly, for the thousands of members and survivors in the Northwest Territories. That's all I'll be saying. I would have the other Members who wish to speak on it and I'll be closing with my comments.

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

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I, too, will support this motion as the seconder of the motion. I think it is long overdue that we get the federal government, along with the Government of the Northwest Territories, to move on the commitment of setting up the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. More importantly for them to take the stories of the survivors of the residential school, especially the elders who have seen how it has affected them and, more importantly, their children and grandchildren.

I think in the Northwest Territories it's a way of dealing with a bad blend of our history. Most people don't really understand, but it still has a very important impact on the North's history and the lives of First Nations people in the North and how the children were dealt with in residential school. I think it's important that we as a government do everything we can to get the federal government to establish some commission in the Northwest Territories.

As we heard, there's going to be one hearing in the Northwest Territories. I personally do not believe that is adequate. There are a lot of elders passing on every day in the North and, sure, they may have gotten a payout but, if anything, it just brought back

the pain and suffering they had to deal with when they went through residential school.

I think it's also important that we don't lose sight of what has happened and hear the stories of the survivors so they can say what they've gone through, but, more importantly, that we never repeat this again in Canadian history.

With that, I look forward to the comments of the other Members. I will be supporting this motion.

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

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Truth and Reconciliation Committee is mandated under the Indian Residential School Settlement Agreement negotiated by former students, the Assembly of First Nations and other aboriginal organizations, churches, and the Government of Canada who will create an accurate and public historical record, support meaningful community events, and guide and inspire aboriginal people and Canadians in a process of truth, healing, and reconciliation. As specified in the mandate, the process is a sincere indication and acknowledgement of the injustices and harms experienced by aboriginal people and the need for continued healing.

There are good reasons for wanting to see this commission get off the ground and started on their important work. Speaking your truth, voicing your experience is an important step on the road to healing and reconciliation. In fact, it is well established that it can be the most important step for many. With this step comes the opportunity for reconciliation, for the ease of pain, for the increased engagement in family and society and, most importantly, for peace.

As we know, many survivors of residential schools are elderly or ailing and their chance to experience healing and reconciliation is narrowing. The need for peace for all survivors is great. The time for the Truth and Reconciliation Commission is overdue. I am in support of this motion.

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

MOTION TO AMEND MOTION 12-16(3)
CARRIED

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Tu Nedhe that motion 12-16(3) be amended by adding the following wording at the last paragraph after the words "establish a Northwest Territories Truth and Reconciliation Commission": "that will conduct hearings in each

regional centre within the Territory to assist the federal commission in the performance of its duties in bringing to light the stories of residential school survivors."

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. There is a motion on the floor. To the motion.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

MR. SPEAKER: Question has been called.

---Carried

MR. SPEAKER: To the motion as amended. The honourable Member for Nahendeh, Mr. Menicoche.

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I thank my colleagues for amending the motion. It only speaks about getting our northern story told. But in terms of the federal commitment in the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, this part of the healing process is not to have unfinished business. This federal commission was about having a chance for people affected, people who lived in residential schools to tell their story to this commission.

I believe it's important that our government urges the federal commission to pick up this work as soon as it can and also to go with them, to ask them for resources so that we in the Northwest Territories, who had many residential schools, to give us the opportunity to tell our stories in the regional centres. Then because they were only scheduled to have one hearing in the Northwest Territories this gives us a huge opportunity to tell our full story from the Northwest Territories at the Truth and Reconciliation Commission hearing. It may be slated for Yellowknife, I believe, but the way it's structured right now it's not going to have the opportunity for regions and our communities and the people who live there to make a presentation in person. So this is one way we can speak to that.

With that, I will be supporting the motion.

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

MR. BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I, too, will be supporting the motion. I attended residential school, but the greatest impact upon me in residential school has been the fact that my father attended residential school. I grew up as a kid listening to some incredible stories of abuse at residential schools. If my father was alive today he would be 80 years old. A lot of people who are in their late 70s and early 80s need an opportunity to tell about the incredible abuse that occurred in the schools.

My father went to St. Joseph Residential School, I think it was called St. Joseph, in Fort Resolution and he told us many stories about the amount of abuse that individuals in the school had. I just want to repeat one story very quickly here.

One time my father said that a young boy would work in the kitchen. They ate mostly fish. But when he went into the kitchen the smell was so great from bacon cooking in the morning that the kid stole a piece of bacon. When he got caught they drove holes in the bacon, strapped it to his back, put a sign on his chest that said "I'm a thief" and he had to walk around for one week with that bacon tied to his back. Just to give you an idea of some of the stories that we'll hear from people who are in their early 80s that attended residential school. I think the people who ran the residential schools at that time felt they had the right and obligation to abuse the kids that were in school.

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

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am in support of this motion. I think the commission is well behind in its duties and it's unfortunate that it's lost all its members and has to start again. I think this motion is an opportunity for us to encourage the federal government to make sure the commission gets started sooner rather than later. I note in some of the documentation that we have relative to the way the commission is supposed to lay out that it's intended that community events will be designed by communities and respond to the needs of the former students, their families, and those affected by the legacy.

I think the amendment to the motion encourages the federal government to allow the Territories to have far more than the one national event that's currently scheduled. We have an awful lot of our residents who were affected by residential school and to expect them to travel to Yellowknife for one particular event is just not on, in my estimation.

I just think it's good for us to do this. One of the other things that is in here in the documentation as well is it's part of the commission's responsibility to support community events designed by communities to meet their unique needs. Certainly the needs in Yellowknife are far different than they are in, say, Fort Resolution or Fort Simpson. I think we need more than just the one event.

Apart from that, I'm totally in support of the motion. It is time that the commission get started and do its work sooner rather than later.

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

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission was put in place by the federal government to establish an independent body to do the work. Unfortunately it did run into some problems, but I've been informed that Mr. Frank Iacobucci, who is chair right now, is in a process that is going to select a new chair and two new commissioners. There will be representatives from the aboriginal community, survivors represented, churches and the federal government. Within a matter of weeks they should have named a new chair and commissioners to that truth and reconciliation commission and be ready to do their work and start up again.

I would say with this motion when that new chair and commission get underway that we would send our comments on to that new commission as it operates as an independent body.

As to the reference to the Government of the Northwest Territories and the work we need to do, as our protocol is, Cabinet will be abstaining from the motion.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Roland. I'll allow the mover of the motion to make closing comments. Mr. Yakeleya.

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, Members, for speaking for the motion. Thank you for your support.

The Canadian government, when they formed the Truth and Reconciliation Commission it was as a result of the court approved Indian Residential School Settlement Agreement. This agreement was negotiated between legal counsel for former students, churches, and the Government of Canada, and the Assembly of First Nations, and other aboriginal organizations.

This Truth and Reconciliation Commission is the cornerstone of the settlement agreement settled June 1st, 2008. It has a mandate of five years. It has been noted that it was somewhat delayed because of internal issues. I'm hoping that the new commission will be revisiting the mandate, because now we're in the fourth year of this five-year mandate.

The commission is an official, independent body that provides students and anyone who has been affected by the Indian residential schools legacy with an opportunity to share their individual experience in a safe and culturally appropriate manner. It will be an opportunity for people to tell their stories about the significant part of Canadian history that is still unknown today to most Canadians.

The purpose of the commission is not to determine guilt or innocence, but to create an historical

account of the residential schools to help them to heal and encourage reconciliation between aboriginal and non-aboriginal Canadians. The commission will also host events across the Northwest Territories and Canada to raise awareness about the residential schools and their impacts.

The chair of the commission was Justice Harry LaForme, however, he resigned in October 2008. The two other commissioners have since resigned from the commission. This meant that a new selection process was put underway to identify people who would be appointed as commissioners. This has delayed the other activities of the commission, such as hearings to be held across Canada.

In Canada, my historical research shows that the first residential school was set up in the 1800s in Quebec. From there the residential school has taken many turns in terms of how this system is going to have an impact specifically on aboriginal people in Canada. Throughout the 1800s there were several very important acts that were implemented and carried out with Parliament and the residential school system. There was the Gradual Citizens Act. That act said we are going to take aboriginal children and assimilate them into the British society. There were other acts that forced the aboriginal people throughout history to see how they could become involved in mainstream society. There was an act that they could forcibly take your children. The authorities could take the children away from their communities and families and if you disobeyed, you were punished by jail time. These stories I have heard throughout my communities of these different enforcements, these different laws that scared a lot of my people.

In my research I've noted there were 25 such schools in the Northwest Territories. The earliest is in 1865 where there was an orphanage home in Tulita that was considered a residential school. It burned down in 1866. The next school that opened up was in Fort Providence: Sacred Heart, in 1867, followed by St. Joe's in Resolution, up in Mackenzie Delta and Nahendeh and down in even Hay River where my grandmother went for a number of years. I believe it was about nine years, but I could be wrong. In total, when I did my research, the most amount of students that went to a residential school was at Grollier Hall. Twenty-five hundred students went to Grollier Hall from 13 to 16 different communities. That was followed by the Sacred Heart School in Fort Providence, which was opened in 1867. The number of students that attended Sacred Heart School was 1,460 students. These students there had the greatest impact in terms of the truth and reconciliation. St. Joseph's School in Fort Resolution had 1,300 students attend. Breynat Hall, 2,200. There are significant numbers I have

researched. I was trying to think, what was the significance? That must have been over 10,000 students that went to these different schools. The population of the aboriginal people was about 15,000. See the significant impacts in our communities who have attended the residential schools. As my colleague Mr. Beaulieu indicated, his story is one of thousands. That is minor compared to the other stories that I have heard that happened to these elders.

The other day I talked about visiting an elder from Fort Good Hope who was at Stanton Hospital. She is 86 years old. She speaks very good English. Who is going to give her the opportunity to sit in front of some very distinguished commissioners? Any way that she can tell her story, good or bad, right or wrong, her experiences, who is going to give that opportunity to that 86-year-old lady? There are many elders who are not here today to tell their stories. We can only tell them by what they told us.

Mr. Speaker, I was looking at the significance of the various laws that were passed throughout Canada specific for aboriginal children, aboriginal people, to get into the education system and it is about having an opportunity to have this. This is why there is shame on the federal government for delaying this implementation of the truth and reconciliation. That is why I welcome the motion from my colleague Mr. Menicoche, from Nahendeh, to look at regional centres where we could create if you look at ways that how do we work with the federal government with this Cabinet to say with the amount of residential schools in the Northwest Territories, small communities, how can we have the elders, the sickly people, come forward and tell their stories in a respectful manner?

There are many, many stories, Mr. Speaker, in terms of going forward on the truth and reconciliation. Certainly it is the federal government's responsibility. Certainly we look forward to their guidance. However, we have a responsibility within the government of this Northwest Territories to help us, former students, to help the elders start looking at what we can do. If we are to wait for the federal government, I don't know how long it will take to get that commission up and running, to organize themselves.

Look in the past year, Mr. Speaker, how many elders have passed from our communities, have passed on with their stories. In my community alone, I believe there were about 10, maybe eight I should say, that have passed on. We need to look very seriously at where we can work with the federal government, within this government, to do the right thing and look at our regional centres to see where and how many students actually have gone on and who are still alive today. Has this government looked at the communities and said are

you interested in going to a hearing? How many elders have been asked that question? If you are, when can we come and talk to you? Right now we are waiting for the federal government to come forward and say we are going to have one or several hearings in the Northwest Territories.

We somehow put this responsibility more to the federal government and we somehow said this is what we are going to do in support in the health tool, in terms of healthy survivors telling their story. There are certain avenues that we need to look at again seriously.

I go back again to that elder lady at Stanton Hospital. She has a story to tell. What have we done for her in terms of getting her ready, recording her? There are elders today that are sick. We don't know if they are going to last a day, next week, next month. Do we have faith in the federal government to come to the Northwest Territories and look at our numbers and say I think we need to do something, we're here to hear their story before they pass on or will it be like Mr. Beaulieu from Tu Nedhe has said? This is what my father has told me about his experience at the residential school. I think it would be more powerful, more respectful, more appreciative if they were to sit down with our living elders today and have them tell their stories of their experiences so those stories can be brought into our history books and talk in our schools for children to know that this is what truly happened at the residential schools. This is how it carved our way of thinking. This is what carved our way of doing things in the community. Again, Mr. Speaker, there is no right or wrong about this. It is just how things are today and the elders carried this burden for many, many years. It is very powerful.

Mr. Speaker, I read a report in 2003 of the Dene Nation and territorial government on the residential schools. I did a workshop with the elders for three days. From their report, I will read one line here. The elders said the elders see that the church and the government in our communities have a lot of control over them and the effects still continue today. This is very important, that one line there. So this is what we need to encourage the federal government, because if the elders are saying that today, they need to let go of some feelings. They need to let go of some of their experiences. That would help us in our communities.

In closing, Mr. Speaker, I look forward to this Cabinet working closely with the federal government to see how they can start looking at the truth and reconciliation. Bring it to the North. If not, I look forward to some leadership in this government to kick start the territorial truth and reconciliation to help our people. I look forward to one day that, again, the Government of the Northwest Territories is the first government in Canada to recognize truth

and reconciliation on Human Day, May 26th. No other government has done that. It is the first government to kick start the Alternative Dispute Resolution pilot projects with the federal government. It is one of the first governments to settle these claims on abuse. This government has come a long way in terms of being the first. I hope that this government, again, follows up on their leads in terms of leadership in this motion here in terms of having a strong reconciliation commission in the Northwest Territories. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. To the motion as amended.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

MR. SPEAKER: Question has been called.

---Carried

Item 18, first reading of bills. Item 19, second reading of bills. Item 20, consideration in Committee of the Whole of bills and other matters: 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), Northwest Territories 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 to me as Speaker by Motion 10-16(2), I hereby authorize the House to sit beyond the daily hour of adjournment to consider the business before the House, with Mr. Krutko in the Chair.

Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): I would like to call the Committee of the Whole to order. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of bills and other matters: Tabled Document 7, Committee Report 2, Tabled Document 11-16(3), Bills 1, 3, 4, 5 and 7. What is the wish of the committee? Mr. Beaulieu.

MR. BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The committee moves to continue the main estimates review 2009-10 with Aboriginal Affairs, Public Works and if the time is there before we shut 'er down, also to get into the ITI department. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Is committee agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Thank you. We will take a short recess and begin with Aboriginal Affairs.

---SHORT RECESS

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): I'd like to call Committee of the Whole back to order. I'd like to ask the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs if he'd like to bring in any witnesses. Mr. Roland.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Yes, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Does committee agree the Minister brings in his witnesses?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Agreed. Sergeant-at-Arms, escort the witnesses in.

For the record, Mr. Minister, please introduce your witnesses.

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

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Welcome, witnesses. With that, we are on page 4-15, operations expenditure summary, negotiations, activity summary, \$2.708 million. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Information item, page 4-16, active positions, negotiations.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): No questions there? Mr. Beaulieu.

MR. BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Again, positions have gone from 14 to 19 in area negotiations. So I know there would be one additional table immediately now and then four more tables to be added. I am wondering if that's the sole reason for the team going up from 14 to 19.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Minister of Aboriginal Affairs, Mr. Roland.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It's the number of negotiating tables that is driving this number. So it's two new chief negotiators, two new assistant negotiators, one researcher and assistant admin position. Thank you.

MR. BEAULIEU: Thank you. No, that's good, Mr. Chair. I am happy with that answer.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Thank you. Page 4-16, active positions, negotiations.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Page 4-18, 4-19, implementation, operations expenditure summary, activity summary, \$606,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Agreed. Mr. Yakeleya, page 4-19.

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, a couple of questions for the Minister in terms of the implementation process. There are various views on implementing these land claim agreements and also some of the self-government agreements and the agreement that's been settled with the Tlicho. I want more focus on the Sahtu land claim implementation process and the certain chapters in the agreement itself. I know there are some challenges with the federal government, however, I want to thank the Minister. Prior to Christmas, he instructed his staff to get in contact with me to have some discussions around implementation issues and I didn't follow through and I wanted to thank him for making that offer to me. So I know that he's a man of his word when he said he was going to work with me on this issue here.

So I wanted to ask the Minister in terms of the implementation and some of the concerns we recently have in terms of some of the other issues we don't foresee in terms of the CANOL Trail Heritage Park implementation. It's been a while, so I know there are other issues in terms of how do we start implementing this park here. There are progressions going towards it.

I'd like to ask the Minister in terms of the implementation on the overall Sahtu Land Claim Agreement. It's a 15-year mark in terms of our agreement. Can the Minister provide to me an update in terms of the implementation process in the Sahtu on the chapters that we are responsible for as the Government of the Northwest Territories and if there are other areas that need to be looked at in terms of full implementation? Our obligation. I don't want to hammer on the federal government because that has to be done through the Sahtu Secretariat. In terms of the GNWT's obligations with the implementation.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Minister of Aboriginal Affairs, Mr. Roland.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The implementation process is once the claimant is signed by all parties, the implementation process kicks in. Each group has representation at the party, so they nominate a representative. In this case there would be representation from the federal government, the Government of the Northwest Territories, and the Sahtu organization group as well. Each group has an opportunity to put items on the agenda. The minutes are kept of each meeting and signed off by all parties. I'm informed there are no outstanding issues that have been brought to the table. Other areas, as the Member has related to the CANOL Trail, those processes would either be in the works through departments' budgeting exercises trying to get acceptance of certain plans. When it comes to actual implementation I'm informed there are no outstanding issues. We'll have to have a look at the reference to the CANOL Trail and where that sits within the appropriate departments.

MR. YAKELEYA: The information that the Minister has may be correct. I've wanted to ask him in terms of there's no outstanding issues that he's noted here solely about the CANOL Trail and in terms of implementation of the CANOL Heritage Trail, the park, the issues may be discussed right now. The government may think it's not an outstanding issue, but it's an ongoing issue that's through an implementation process that the parties may have different views. The Sahtu may have a different view than the government, but it's in the process of the full implementation to where we'd like to see it. I'm working closely with the Minister of ITI to look at these issues. They are quite complex. That's where we have a different view of what's outstanding and what's not settled yet. I guess generally the Minister may be correct in terms of within that frame of the CANOL Heritage Trail there are outstanding issues here for us. That's where I guess I'm digging a little more in. That's kind of what I want to look into. I know there's lots of work. The federal government certainly does play a big part in this specific issue here. The territorial government certainly has a role in it. I'm asking the Minister in terms of the implementation and maybe I'll ask a little bit more in terms of where he deems that there's no outstanding issues. There are other issues that still need to be concluded by the Sahtu Secretariat and he is correct that parties are named, issues are put on the table for discussion and they signed off on issues. The Minister is totally correct on that and certainly that requires three heads working together to see what the true meaning is of this certain part of the land claim agreement.

That's the type of information I'm hoping the Minister can provide. I'm not too sure if he can, but some information on that would be appreciated to see where we can conclude some of these

agreements where we feel in the Sahtu are concluded. The government may then also sign off on them as concluded deals. That's what I'm looking for.

Chapter 12 in our agreement on economic measures is being implemented. Again, the Minister of ITI and myself have been looking at this with the Sahtu Settlement Secretariat in terms of the memorandum of understanding on economic measures. Certainly there are issues there. We feel that because we signed an MOU last year with Mr. Handley and I think the Minister at that time was Mr. Brendan Bell, we thought the MOU was an issue that was outstanding that maybe had been concluded. But we haven't finished baking the cake yet in terms of the ingredients of this MOU. That's what I'm looking for. Where we can work with this department and this Minister on some of the implementation. We may have started, but we haven't done it yet. We've just started the journey on implementation. I want to ask the Minister regarding these big ticket items that are possibly holding up some of the programs and services in our communities.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: The implementation process is one that will always continue throughout the agreements until it is fully realized what was negotiated through the claims process. Right now, as I'm informed, there are no outstanding issues directly with the implementation table. There are, the Member is correct, outstanding issues with some of the parts of the claim that involve all the parties.

In reference to the CANOL Trail, Minister Bob McLeod has just given me information that we are awaiting the federal government to transfer the lands and there are environmental issues attached to that. That's why those transfers haven't occurred as of yet. That's what's holding up that process, is my understanding. So it is waiting for a transfer of the land. But our groups have to decide and agree on environmental issues that are outstanding along that CANOL Trail.

Along with the economic measures piece, the Member referenced chapter 12 of their agreement and the MOU. Just for the record, I have to state that the MOUs are something that were established originally with the Gwich'in and continue to be worked at that level. One that is worked on and initially an agreement is put in place with the Sahtu and others working down the valley as well. Those are not tied directly to the land claims. Those are agreements we've reached outside of that through a memorandum of understanding so that we can in fact, as a government, try to work with the aboriginal groups and governments to help with the capacity issues and business environment and so on. In a sense it's a matter of working together and

creating better partnerships, but it is not directly tied to the claim itself.

We continue. We know it's a work in progress around the MOUs; it continues to be up and down the valley. There's renegotiation going to be happening with the Gwich'in. The one that was signed with the Sahtu and the Inuvialuit, we've engaged in discussions.

MR. YAKELEYA: I notice that with the CANOL Trail, I know the Minister and I have had some discussions. Certainly there are millions and millions of potential damage to the heritage trail on CANOL left by the United States government and the United States army. There are contamination issues there that are too huge for this government or the federal government to even look at the possibility of cleanup and transfer of lands. Also, Mr. Chair, there are certain parts of the CANOL Trail that certainly should be developed and looked at. It's not the whole trail; it's certain parts that are a chemical hazard waste site. I've walked on that trail, on over 170 miles on that trail, and I'm still not glowing at night so I must be okay. I'd like to think that's a real big issue here and I know that the territorial government is going to work hard on this issue with our people. That's another issue that needs to be discussed at another time. I think that we need to look at the implementation, keep a close eye on this one here with the Minister and his department, with the government here with the Sahtu beneficiaries.

Mr. Chair, the issue that I'd like to get some...We agreed to disagree on the MOU. Certainly the Minister has stated the government's position and their interpretation as to the memorandum of understanding. The chapter 12 that I'm making reference to is the economic measures. Mr. Chair, I was the chief negotiator on the Sahtu land claim, the last 14, 15 months of Sahtu land claim settlement, and certainly that wasn't the spirit and intent of our agreement. In the current legislation or the current policy, maybe that's what the territorial government is looking at in terms of this certain clause. This clause here we discussed many times over with our people, with the negotiators. The intent when we signed off, it was that we were going to speak directly to the benefits of this chapter 12 and we thought we had agreement that the MOUs would be the one that we wanted to go with our people there. I agree to disagree with the Minister's view on this, this government's position. That's not the views of the Sahtu people when they signed off on chapter 12. That's where we have some hiccups on the interpretation and implementation. However, we're willing to work and see where we could get benefits as stated in our chapter 12 in our agreement. We did not fight to get to the table to only know this is what they think we're talking about. I was there. Other negotiators

were there and we know what we we're talking about when we wrote chapter 12. Some of these staff people weren't even there. They only interpret what they think. I think that's something that needs to be stated very clearly here. I don't want to get into it. I'd just like you to know that's where our differences are going to be held until we know exactly what they were intended to be. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Mr. Minister, do you want to agree to disagree? You can respond to that but it's up to you.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Mr. Chairman, I guess you can say there are a couple of Members of this House who have past experience at the negotiation table themselves and they know very clearly in their minds what they were negotiating at the time. But for those of us and for the future generations who refer to those agreements and they read the words on the page, you will not find government will sign MOUs. There will be activities that the government is involved with that will, when it comes to preferential treatment, work with the land claim group or self-government, as agreements will in the future identify that the government will then give that group the preferential treatment when it comes to, for example, negotiated contracts, sole-source contracts and that nature. There is much work to be done.

In areas further to implementation, I think we all agree that as these agreements are in place, many of them have taken a long time to get certain pieces in place. Part of it is because as the Government of the Northwest Territories when we look at the whole of the Territory and try to come up with legislation that works for the Territory, it's quite difficult when we have some groups that have signed, settled and are getting down to work, as they say, and for other groups, they're in the negotiation process and they say, well, we don't want to be a part of that just yet because they feel they're in the negotiation phase and this may hinder them in certain aspects. We've always tried to put our language and our legislation and policies that with any agreement and legislation we put in place will not take away from the aboriginal rights of people in the Northwest Territories. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Next on the list I have Ms. Bisaro.

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I have a question with regard to the costs of implementation. I know we discussed it when we reviewed business plans. I think we touched on it earlier when the department started but...It's my understanding that the GNWT may be responsible for some of the costs of implementation of some of the agreements

which are concluded. I would like to know whether or not I could get the Minister to clarify or answer that question. Is that correct? If that's the case, how much are we on the hook for, so to speak, for an agreement which technically we're not party to? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): The Minister of Aboriginal Affairs, Mr. Roland.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Mr. Chairman, the way the claims in the past have been settled, signed off, is the federal government agreed to the additional costs of implementation. This funding goes through what we call a vote 4/5 process that the federal government is actually forwarding the revenues to us so that we can carry on our portion of the implementation. Approximately, of the compensation and benefits, for example, of this category which identifies \$550,000, I believe we're looking in the neighbourhood of about \$509,000 covered by the federal government. Then there are a few other smaller amounts that make up the amount; almost \$525,000. Not right to the dollar -- I wouldn't quote right to the dollar -- but approximately \$525,000 is funded by the federal government in this area. Thank you.

MS. BISARO: I guess I would like to follow that up. If we are paying some money, even if it's \$25,000, that's going to accumulate over time and I'm sure this doesn't refer to all the self-government agreements that are out there and those that are to come as well. I'd like to know from the Minister whether or not there's a concern on his part that we will end up funding the implementation of self-government agreements which are decided by another party or another two parties. Thank you.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Mr. Chairman, I better set the record straight. It's not \$525,000, it's \$525 million across all of government that the federal government has helped us in that area. Our portion, within that, I'll have to get a proper breakdown of this specific area, but it is vote 4/5 funding which comes from the federal government.

The issue of the cost, additional cost of self-government, talks are going on right now and things that would be signed off falls into a different area. I'll have to go to Ms. Sparling for more detail on that.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Ms. Sparling.

MS. SPARLING: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The territorial government signed a memorandum of understanding with the federal government around the implementation costs for land claims and at the time were successful to have Canada pay 100 percent of the GNWT's costs associated with the implementation of all the agreements. When we

approached Canada to negotiate a similar arrangement for our incremental costs associated with the implementation of self-government, we were advised by Canada unequivocally no. That self-government implementation is a shared responsibility to be shared by all three parties to self-government agreements and there is clearly an expectation that the Government of the Northwest Territories will pay for its own incremental costs associated with the implementation of self-government agreements, that the aboriginal governments will also pay for their implementation of the agreements and Canada would assume their own costs. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Thank you, Ms. Sparling. Ms. Bisaro.

MS. BISARO: Just to follow up then, I understand if the Minister can't answer the question, but is that a concern on the part of the Minister and the department that we're going to be having to put more and more dollars into implementing these agreements? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Minister Roland.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: We are very concerned. In fact, we've raised this level to the regional aboriginal leadership table. We've prepared a presentation and, in fact, at our last regional leadership meeting, provided information and are sitting down at all the negotiations tables to inform them of our concerns and that we will need to develop a comprehensive approach to dealing with the federal government from Northerners' viewpoint, aboriginal governments and the GNWT. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO: Mr. Chair, I just couldn't hold myself back from not responding to this section after hearing Mr. Yakeleya talk, who is a former negotiator with the Sahtu claim and also myself being involved with Dene-Metis process and the Gwich'in claim. I think that the most contentious part was the implementation of the agreement and I think today we still have a lot of contentious issues that we still feel that this government is obligated to enact, especially the ones that fall within the domain of this government. We talked about the wildlife section. I mean, that thing's been there since claims began and that's the thickest part of any land claim agreement, is dealing with the wildlife provisions of those agreements. Again, for the claim to come into force and into effect, you have to implement those sections by legislatively giving them the legislative authority to implement. Implementation is not just the section where you get money from the feds and the feds basically say, well, you know, this is what we think.

The other areas are dealing with those components of the agreements where this government is responsible, such as developing the land use plans for those different regions. The Sahtu, for instance, hasn't concluded their land use plan but in regard to the Gwich'in, it is the only group in the Territories that have completed land use plans, which the Government of the Northwest Territories are party to. I think it's important to note that the economic measures, and for the record clarify my understanding of the economic measures, is that when we're negotiating the Dene-Metis claim, the government-of-the-day would not allow us to negotiate what's in the Inuvialuit agreement, which is participation agreements which clearly identify how you would basically work within the Inuvialuit area when it comes to job opportunities, businesses and whatnot. But because of that, the federal government insisted that we will negotiate an economic measures section which will be strengthened by the Northern Accord or devolution section to build into those benefit agreements through devolution and also through the Northern Accord. Because we haven't come to that state yet, that is why one of the important elements of the Dene-Metis claim has never been enacted. That's why the government does not insist on agreeing to the economic measures section, because it was supposed to be something similar to what's in the Inuvialuit agreement and also the NTL agreement in Nunavut which talks about the participation agreements. Again, because of not being able to do that, and not concluding the devolution or Northern Accord negotiations, and again in those agreements it clearly stipulates, especially in the Gwich'in and the Sahtu agreements, it says the government shall negotiate with the Gwich'in and the Sahtu when it comes to the Northern Accord or devolution. It's an obligation spelled out in black and white which says you shall do this.

I think, for me, I think that you either have to live up to the fact that as a government you are responsible for programs and services, yes, but you're also responsible for ensuring that those agreements are adhered to by way of implementing those sections of those agreements that this government has responsibility for. Mr. Yakeleya touched on protected areas. I raised it in the House last week in regard to the Gwich'in Territorial Park — the Sahtu Dodo Canyon Park that was established under the Sahtu agreement. Again, there are also other provisions that talk about the forestry section of the agreements. This government is responsible for forestry in the Northwest Territories but they totally do not see that those forestry sections of those land claim agreements really fall within the domain of the Government of the Northwest Territories. It does because you have those powers which have devolved to you from the federal government.

Again, we can sit here and argue all day about whose perception is right and who's wrong, but at the end of the day the government has to change its mindset on exactly what you're obligated to and what you're not obligated to, but simply implement those sections of those agreements that you presently have the authority under territorial legal authority which was devolved to the Government of the Northwest Territories. Like I mentioned, forestry, I've mentioned wildlife, I've mentioned in regard to establishing territorial parks which are protected areas in the sense of the Territorial Park Act. I think that those are the sections that we have to look at.

Again, I'd like to ask the Minister responsible for Aboriginal Affairs if there's a way that you can ensure that from the aboriginal perspective that those obligations are really territorial government obligations.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Mr. Roland.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Mr. Chairman, the process of implementation is one where we have the duty to implement and it falls squarely on our shoulders. We're working to do that. For example, Species at Risk and the Wildlife Act, as the Member has highlighted, have been a challenge for previous governments to try to do that. In fact, previous governments had provided funds to the aboriginal organizations and governments so that they could take part in an activity in trying to bring those around to completion. Thankfully, in October the Minister of ENR brought forward his legislation, received first and second reading for the Species at Risk Act and that is now in the hands of the Assembly and committee. For the Wildlife Act a similar working group was structured to get the Species at Risk Act to its place so it could move forward. They've used the same model now, and in January they held their first meetings with the parties at the table. Hopefully, as was identified by the Minister of ENR, he would have at least a document for tabling for this Assembly through that process.

The area of forestry is another one where the Member is right. There is a working group and agreements in place that deal with Forest Management Plan that apply on Crown lands and in Gwich'in settlement lands and through the Gwich'in Tribal Council is part of that advisory committee that looks after that section of how that goes and the work that's being done.

Overall, the GNWT, yes, across the North has had difficulties with the whole forest management issue for quite a number of years, but the committees are in place and working within a specific area. The Gwich'in Territorial Park is another one where, yes,

there are issues there. A memorandum of agreement was signed back in 1991 so that any work done on that park was going to be done with the Gwich'in forces and if that's not being done, we're going to have to remind the appropriate departments that there's an agreement in place and that those contracts should fall to the parties or the own forces of the Gwich'in when it comes to that piece of the work that needs to be done.

There are a number of areas that are outstanding, that work is continuing and at times it's out of our hands in the sense the federal government has a big part to play. But we continue to work on those, and the ones we have an agreement on within the implementation committees are moving ahead. I would say because where there are no outstanding processes at the implementation committee doesn't mean there are other issues that still need to be ironed out between the parties. Thank you.

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Minister, for that because I think it's those types of efforts that will eventually see the land claim agreement fully implemented and, more importantly, see the benefits that can flow from those agreements. If we really take the time to realize the important segments of those different agreements regardless if it is forestry, park management or looking at wildlife management or even looking at the whole area of land management. At the end of the day, those agreements basically, if anything, should be enhanced in the Northwest Territories and make it a better place for everyone, but, more importantly, to let people know exactly what is out there, what the opportunities are and how we can work together.

I think that one thing that I very much have to state is that the aboriginal groups that have negotiated the land claim agreements had to pay for their own negotiators to negotiate that claim. They had to pay back whatever money that they borrowed to negotiate those land claims out of the claim settlement. I think it was somewhere in the range of \$50 million that was expended on claims negotiations over 30 years. Those improvements, I know for a fact in the case of the Gwich'in, they agreed to pay one-fifth of whatever the Dene/Metis total was when they negotiated their claim. They paid it back over the implementation of their claim, which I think was almost \$9 million. I think it is in those types of understandings...People don't realize that land claim organizations and the aboriginal organizations had to pay for these negotiations. It wasn't a freebee. I think a lot of people in the public presume that these negotiations are paid by the federal government. Well, the federal government paid their costs. The aboriginal groups paid their costs. The GNWT pays for their costs. That is negotiations. I think, at the end of the day, in regards of what the outcome is, that the negotiations, there is a question of give and take.

Everybody didn't get what they wanted. Everybody didn't walk away at the end of it all knowing that there were no winners or losers. If anything, everybody was a winner regardless of what the outcome was.

Again, I am just wondering if there is a possibility if...I know that you have these different aboriginal committees in place but also have a system in place that Aboriginal Affairs works with the different government agencies and educate them on exactly what is in the different agreements. I know I raised a question about the Gwich'in Territorial Park. There was some miscommunication. Somebody thought I was talking about the Gwich'in MOU. I was talking about a Park Management Plan that was established for that park. There was part of the Park Management Plan that included an implementation plan that would identify what phases of construction was going to take place and what the cost was to implement that. I would like to ask the Minister exactly what is the role that the Aboriginal Affairs plays in educating the different government departments in regards to the rights and obligations that are under the claim and the government's responsibility to implement those sections or understand those sections. Thank you.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Mr. Chairman, Aboriginal Affairs and Intergovernmental Relations plays a number of roles here as well as other departments. For example, we are one party at the table. The Department of Justice is another party at the table and then each specific department. For example, we will use the Gwich'in Territorial Park. We would have ITI at the table on that matter as well. So there would be three parties at the table. Aboriginal Affairs and Intergovernmental Relations would work informing the appropriate departments of their responsibility under the claim that they would follow the claim process.

Further to that, one of the things we have done and we have put on the leadership table as well is the consultation framework document where all departments are now, through Aboriginal Affairs and Intergovernmental Affairs and through this budget as well, expanding the role of one of our positions to deal with the consultation framework and working with the organizations and the Government of the Northwest Territories when it comes to fulfilling its obligation of consultation with aboriginal governments and groups on the work that is being done, on the legislation that is on the ground, on the agreements that haven't been signed. For example, any court case across the country that has further defied aboriginal rights in Canada is stuff we work on and prepare for information when we talk about matters in the Northwest Territories and we work with departments on making sure that that is recognized. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Thank you, Mr. Roland. We are on page 4-19, activity summary, implementation, operations expenditure summary, \$606,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Information item on page 4-20, implementation, active positions.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Mr. Yakeleya.

MR. YAKELEYA: Mr. Chairman, if we can go to page 4-20, I just have a couple of questions. Mr. Chairman, on the active positions, our negotiators and the amount of resources we have, I know you have some of the negotiators working on several files. Are we confident enough because of the amount of work that goes on in negotiations with the staff, with the complexity of the issues, are we comfortable with the dollars that we have assigned to these people with the experience? Also you go into self-government with the aboriginal people learning about the culture, values and the way of life and where they are coming from to start seeing how they want to implement in their own terms and ways. Sometimes that requires our negotiators to be sensitive, because not everything that is going to be implemented in our communities is going to go in this existing system. That is where we have some of the issues here. Can we have with the active numbers of negotiators comfortable enough to...Are they going to press hard on the lines or are they open enough to say, okay, from the aboriginal world view, this is how we will give you the benefit of the doubt to look at programs this way in terms of implementation? Or they will say, no, this is my mandate. This is what I am going to go home with. I will be darned if I am going to change in terms of signing off on this agreement. I just want to get a sense from the Minister.

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

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Mr. Chairman, this section of implementation follows the negotiation phase in signing of agreements. Although the Member talks about the intent of the negotiations and then implementing those agreements, our goal within Aboriginal Affairs, as I spoke to it the last time it was sitting at the table here, when it comes to training programs in the opening comments, we are trying to recruit aboriginal people to become involved in our negotiation process so that they are familiar with what they are dealing with and as much as even in the implementation side. Implementation side becomes one of the languages itself that were there. Not everybody in the future years will have experience at the table as the

Member does. It will rely on what words are put in those agreements that give clarity to how things would be implemented. I think that is going to be really important.

On this section, we feel that the implementation side is fairly straightforward. When it comes to the negotiation side, that is one of the reasons we have applied or come back to the table for more revenues through this process, because we feel, with the additional tables, we need more human resources in a sense of dealing with the actual negotiation tables that are coming up. As I informed Members, there are times that we have negotiators hold two different tables, sometimes three in a couple of cases. The workload is there. We know we have to put a bit more resources at the table and this budget, if approved, permits that. Thank you.

MR. YAKELEYA: I am just looking from the perspective of my own region, Mr. Chairman. The land claim negotiation is the first to have been settled. Now you are looking at the self-government negotiations in Deline, Tulita, Norman Wells, and Fort Good Hope. I know they are in exploratory. Fort Good Hope may be in exploratory negotiations and Colville Lake is certainly entertaining the idea of self-government. The different issues of the different communities with the amount of negotiations going on I certainly look at and that is just only one region. I am not talking about the Mackenzie Delta, Beaufort region or any other tables that are presently being entertained by this government right now.

Mr. Chairman, I guess I am looking at the number of negotiators at the head of the table of this government here. I certainly am advocating or pushing for more negotiators for our region here, regions that need to be having more attention paid to the issues because of the number of negotiating tables going on.

Mr. Chairman, these four active negotiators I guess I need to ask. Are they from the Northwest Territories? Are these negotiators from outside the Northwest Territories? Do these negotiators have experience with negotiating with aboriginal governments? Are there any senior negotiators that are within this four here that are from the Northwest Territories aboriginal?

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Mr. Chairman, the four positions identified here are for implementation. They are not in the negotiation process but, as I had highlighted in my opening comments on the negotiator positions, it has been very difficult to fill the negotiator positions. That is why we have gone to this training process of taking people within the department who are familiar with the processes already that don't quite meet the qualifications. We

bring them in to the negotiator position. We give them a year of training. In fact, we have had one of our positions then move up a further step up to chief negotiator position within one of the files or within a couple of files. It is starting to show that that is working. We will continue to work along those lines to fill those positions with aboriginal people in the North. Hopefully we can continue to do that, but also recognizing the additional tables that we have. We have requested additional funds through this budgeting process to ensure that we have representation at all the tables. Right now we do have representation at all the tables, but we fully recognize once those tables kick up the full negotiation mandates, the workload will increase and that is why we have asked for additional resources. Thank you.

MR. YAKELEYA: Mr. Chairman, I want to thank the Minister for the correction here. I guess I was looking at implementation. I got into chief negotiator so I do want to thank the Minister for the correction. I would stay on the implementation as we hear. I guess I am looking at this in terms of these active positions within the government on the Aboriginal Affairs. I am looking forward to seeing an active number of aboriginal people to fill these positions. Certainly the Minister has given me some explanation as to the process of where they are looking at but, so far, we are not seeing too much in terms of these senior levels of negotiators that come in either negotiators or implementation negotiators from the aboriginal senior management personnel. I just had comments there to the Minister. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Roland, do you want to respond to the comments?

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I guess, for the record, I will highlight a couple of things here on this page. The four positions identified under implementation are ones that we're directly involved in. There are, as I talked about earlier, about four or five where the federal government funds the other positions so they are outside of that. Out of the four identified here, two are P1 designations. We have that. We have one at a P3 position. There are another three positions, again, part of about four or five so there are seven in total and three of those are indigenous and aboriginal peoples as well within this whole group. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): We are on page 4-20, information item, implementation, active positions.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): We are moving on to intergovernmental relations, 4-22 and 23. Mr. Bromley.

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I wanted to follow up on the cost of individually negotiating self-government agreements with communities that was brought up earlier on another category. I am wondering whether we can take a proactive approach. I think I have heard that we have been thinking about that by drawing on a record of the higher costs apparently that go with an individual community negotiations and apparently little gains and additional difficulties with implementation. I am wondering, are we recording those sorts of relatively higher costs in a way that we can take two regions that start dealing with self-government negotiations? Obviously we have several to go yet. Are we documenting these costs, inefficiencies and sufficiently highlighting the advantage of our GNWT's experience at delivering community services in a way that can prevent us from going into those individual community negotiations and stick with a regional approach? Thank you.

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

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Mr. Chairman, the approach of community self-governments is, number one, we had discussion with the federal government to raise our concerns of the additional costs that would be faced not only by us as GNWT but the community self-governments themselves when we do look at those economies of scale or lack thereof, because it is broken down into a smaller and smaller group. We shared our concerns with the federal government.

On the financing of self-government pieces, we now, as I highlighted, brought our concerns about self-government financing to the regional leadership table and are now bringing that information to all of the negotiation tables in that area. As well, we request -- and many groups are starting to do this -- when it comes to do the financing, instead of punting the financing piece to after the agreement-in-principle stage, they are agreeing to have the discussion up front first with the federal government, which is a much better approach to the way it has been done in the past. Yes, we now have been bringing the cost of self-government financing to the tables right to the negotiation tables of the community as well as to the federal government. Our concern is that the right is there that if the community chooses to go that route, it is there established and that the federal government will honour that and by the federal government honouring it, then we end up bearing the cost to be at that table as well. Thank you.

MR. BROMLEY: I appreciate those comments. What I am wondering was, do we have sufficient rapport or do we have sufficient confidence from communities that we can be even more proactive

and perhaps be visiting with them about this before we get to the negotiating table? Is there a strong enough case to be made to support our position on this? Are we actually doing that if the opportunity is there? Thank you.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Mr. Chairman, we continue at the tables to build on a relationship that has been laid before us by previous Assemblies. That is, for example, one of the reasons where we have gone to the regional leadership model of meetings that we can all put agenda items on the table and the self-government financing piece is one of those. The fact that they have requested that we go to the tables, the negotiators themselves and put this information out there and prepare in their discussions.

As for going in before a negotiations table is set up, the community self-government phase, we are starting to share that now with the leadership of our concerns and the cost of that. Will we be able to convince groups that that might not be the best process when it comes to the cost of doing business, I am not sure yet. Again, if a community feels that that is the route they want to go, they chose it, the federal government honours it and that drives us then in a certain area to either decide do we take part of the table or do we have the federal government represent the interest of Northerners at the table. That is where a catch-22 comes into place for ourselves as the Government of the Northwest Territories. But we are sharing that self-government information, the financing piece and the financing models with the groups so that they could be more aware of the impacts coming down the road. Thank you.

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you again for those comments. I am wondering whether it is at all possible to make a stab at what an estimate of what the greater costs would for our regional approach versus, say, 4 or 5 communities in the region. Is there is any kind of an estimate could be made of the greater costs if the community approach engenders? Thank you.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Mr. Chairman, we have been taking that style of information from, for example, we do have our experience with the Tlicho Government and their approach to the government structure they put in place. We have the next community which is very close to an agreement, and that would be Deline, and we have done our costing model around that community so we could, and that is sort of the basis of what we have been going forward on, is the cost of what we could be implementing on those agreements in the community and who would be responsible for those costs. The tone has changed from the land claims process. The federal government said yes we will cover implementation costs for both aboriginal

groups and GNWT, to the point where they are now saying self-government, aboriginal groups and government and the GNWT, you will have to pay for those additional costs, and that is a very big concern of ours. So we have gathered the information on the Deline model, for example, and we do have on our model for the Tlicho, as well, and other tables that are in discussions. So I think we do have probably a pretty good grasp on what it is and it is enough to put it on the table. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Next I have on the list Ms. Bisaro.

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have a couple of questions in this section. The first one has to do with our relationship with the federal government and our office in Ottawa. Could I get an update on the status of that office and how many employees there are? The second part of that is the Minister's comment on the value of that office to us.

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

HON. MINISTER ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, we have one employee down in Ottawa managing that office for us. At times you get a mixed reaction as to that office. It is not just used for Government of the Northwest Territories departments' Ministers that travel to Ottawa. In fact, I recently received an e-mail from a group that travelled down to Ottawa from the Sahtu who was fortunate to use that and was sent back a very good e-mail to say that they were very pleased with that operation, saying that it helped them in their meetings and their staff position down there was very supportive of them. It is used not only for GNWT but for aboriginal groups, organizations and bodies that would travel to Ottawa and make use of those facilities. We try to accommodate those groups that do travel down there, so it is mixed, our approach. We have begun to do the review on it as committed to Members during the last business cycle. We haven't finished our federal engagement process and that office would play a part and a role in that engagement strategy. Thank you.

MS. BISARO: Thanks for that answer. I look forward to the results of the review, if and when the government can get that done. The Minister, in his opening remarks, indicated, talked a bit about a discussion about a vision for the NWT and the role of the GNWT and that, you know, this sort of discussion on constitutional development will have to involve all Members. That is a good thing, but it made me think about the situation that we are in currently that we have the Premier meeting with regional leadership tables and discussing self-government and devolution and revenue resource sharing. As a Member representing Yellowknife, I wondered to myself where does Yellowknife fit into

this scenario or this philosophy. I don't begrudge the fact that the Minister and the Premier are meeting with regional leadership tables. I don't have a problem with that at all, but I just wondered if the Minister can advise whether or not there is a vision at this point or even a sense of where the city of Yellowknife would fit into the picture of the whole as we go forward and relative to, sort of, the leadership tables. You know, the phrase that popped into my mind is whether or not Yellowknife would be a city state, which has yet to be defined. But if I could get a comment from the Minister on whether or not the department has any sense on where Yellowknife would fit into the grand scheme of things when we are all said and done. Thank you.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Mr. Chairman, the vision for the NWT, where we look at how we do business, I think is one that is evolving in a sense of what will the GNWT be after all of the negotiation tables are agreed to, signed off and implemented. That would have a direct impact on our municipalities in the Northwest Territories, so the City of Yellowknife would be into that mix. Yes, we do have meetings at the regional aboriginal leadership tables and formalize those arrangements within the life of this government.

Our process of budget evaluation, legislation, policy comes to Members of the Assembly and we work through that process. Although most of the municipalities and community governments would say that they are community governments on their own, they are established underneath our legislation here and the members' representation at the meetings would do that; I would say does justice to the groups, our municipalities in the Northwest Territories and what type of services they receive from us. Going forward as to what might be the future of our municipal governments in the Northwest Territories is fairly hard to define. It is pretty hard to say, we have a vision for that, because a lot of it will be driven by the self-government tables and what they actually agree to here in the Northwest Territories. I can use, for example, the Beaufort-Delta. There was a combined negotiation process for self-government. They were looking at a public government model. Shared governance structures, that could have an impact as to how we deliver services in our communities and how that would impact our community governments. Since then, that has changed. If a group goes purely to aboriginal government representation, then that changes what that may look like in operation of services within a community. We are quite a ways away from that in a number of tables that are there. The Akaitcho fall in this region and Yellowknife falls within that area, so it is hard, at this table, to put out there what might be the future. It all depends on the level of

negotiation and what is agreed to. As those negotiations get to the self-government phase, that would have a direct impact on how we would work with all levels of government, and we would at that point start involving them as to how things would flow and the types of impacts that would happen. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Next I have on the list I have Mr. Beaulieu.

MR. BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just have a quick question here on the math. In 4-23 your actual for the compensation and benefits is \$874,000 and you budget \$872,000 the next two years and then dropped it by \$60,000 but there is actually no change in the amount of employees, so I am wondering why that occurred, just out of curiosity, I guess.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Minister of Aboriginal Affairs, Mr. Roland.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. This plan's following on the second year of our two-year reduction phase. The position, this is the final adjustment. The position was removed, but the final dollars come out in this budget cycle because when we do have affected employees there's a cost to that that we use some of the dollars to deal with the affected status and the transfer of employees.

MR. BEAULIEU: Just for clarification purposes, there were seven positions in this spot here in 2007-2008. Is that what you're telling me?

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: I'll go to Mr. Robertson for that detail, just so I don't get any numbers in the wrong place.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Robertson.

MR. ROBERTSON: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The Member is correct. In 2007-2008 we had seven positions in this area. The position that was eliminated was a director's secretary, to leave us with the six we have now.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Beaulieu.

MR. BEAULIEU: I'm done, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Yakeleya.

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Somewhat to the same questions as my colleague here Ms. Bisaro in terms of the future of the Northwest Territories Legislative Assembly. The agreements of the aboriginal self-government, the land claim agreements, the settlement of these two agreements would certainly have a huge, significant impact on our Assembly here. I know the Premier in

his address over the past year has discussed the priorities of the Legislative Assembly with each of the goals that he's indicated. One of the goals and priorities was to work towards a common vision for the political development in the Northwest Territories. This will be some time because of the significant negotiations going on on these two agreements; the self-government agreement and the land claim agreement. Has the Minister considered looking at future negotiations in terms of developing some type of framework for going ahead on the intergovernmental relationships with the aboriginal governments and the federal government? Because once these agreements are starting to take effect and starting to be implemented I think the Assembly here is going to be impacted quite significantly in terms of the jurisdictions going to regions and communities. The same question as Ms. Bisaro had in terms of what we will look like five or 10 years from now. Do we have a framework on where we're going with this?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Minister of Aboriginal Affairs.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. One of the mandates or the mandate we operate under at Aboriginal Affairs and Intergovernmental Relations does speak directly to our role with aboriginal governments and what we will be like, what we will look like, the arrangements we have with the partnerships in the Northwest Territories. Each table that is discussed and further negotiated and sets further definition as to what will be managed and how it will be managed in the Northwest Territories.

The area of self-government agreements, the land claim agreements, and the impacts on this Assembly are very real. We're seeing them already in the way we deliver programs and services, the way we set up agreements, our legislative work is impacted by those agreements. In fact, in this area I think one of the big areas we will have to deal with as Members of this Assembly is the mandate review. There are over 100 mandates that are operated and held within Aboriginal Affairs and Intergovernmental Relations and our vision, those mandates will be built off the vision that we foresee, to a certain degree, of where we would see the Government of the Northwest Territories. So I think the upcoming work we're going to do with Members in the area of mandate reviews is going to be critical as we look forward to see what could be, at least to a certain degree that we can define now the Government of the Northwest Territories.

Further to that, I've held a number of discussions, and I know it was discussed at the Dene leadership but I don't believe they got to a motion, was about constitutional work process for the Northwest Territories. I understand that they'll probably have

to look at their next leadership meeting in the spring. But within the framework we have to operate, the mandate review will probably be the next big item that we can further define the work that needs to be done by the Government of the Northwest Territories and I look forward to working with Members on that.

MR. YAKELEYA: Certainly the Minister is correct in terms of reviewing some of the mandates that are before this government. Those are the marching orders to his generals and captains in terms of the process we're going to be involved in. They have to answer to the Minister who answers to the Assembly in terms of the direction of the Northwest Territories. I think the Premier is certainly correct on his assessment here. I guess I was getting around in terms of a framework and our political development.

Certainly once the Gwich'in and the Inuvialuit start drawing down on their powers in terms of their jurisdiction, you're going to see a major shift in this Assembly. The Tlicho are already in their self-governance. I guess I'm looking at in terms of a framework within this intergovernmental relationship with...and he may have more insights as to this discussion here and where it's going. I guess what I'm looking at is a framework for a vision. Look at the board reform. See the result in the board reform. We had a framework with that type of guidance and I'm not too sure how it would be today, but the resource revenue sharing and devolution are certainly going to have a political and constitutional impact on this government within this Assembly.

That's what I'm looking for and maybe the Premier through his department already has something that in fact would help us with our discussions. He's made mention of the mandates that certainly we have to bring them forward and have discussions on them. Maybe that's the start of building something. I'm afraid this House is going to fall down if we don't look at serious stuff of the agreements that are happening now. The constitutional impacts of these agreements. I think in five or 10 years we should start preparing ourselves for some of these. I guess that's what I'm saying. I'm hoping that we'll have some direction before we pass the Assembly to the next group of MLAs. At least for the government in terms of intergovernmental relationships with the other governments, that's what I'm looking for. These are some of my comments that I pass on. Certainly the Minister can respond or he can take them as comments and I look forward to the mandates review.

Just on closing, the mandate reviews that we're going to have and the mandates that this current

government has in terms of how to deal with the communities in our regions.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: The framework the Member is talking about I think is one that right now would be a fairly general one, the fact that there will need to be a public government in place. There's a diversity in the Northwest Territories. There's a public government. What role it would play, to what level it would be, and maybe this is just too simple of a comparison. But right now the arrangement we have with Ottawa, for example, to the Government of the Northwest Territories is there are some funding lines, agreements in place, and within those agreements there are certain minimum standards that have to be met and we have to deliver on that basis. Will it go down to that level? It definitely will be more complex than that. But we will, as each table becomes more defined about what's being negotiated and the authorities that are being negotiated to a self-government, change the level of authority we have. We know that directly from the Tlicho Government itself. So that is indeed what is in place right now.

Some of the mandates we have operating with Aboriginal Affairs and Intergovernmental Relations fall back prior to these agreements. We know we have to update them. That will help us set a clear path where we go forward.

As for further development of that framework, I think that's where, for example in the discussions with the Dene National Chief Mr. Erasmus about the future of the North and trying to begin a dialogue about what it could be, what it could mean with aboriginal leadership in the North. I think that discussion, there's a recognition that the landscape has changed, that the field is different, and we must now look forward to what could be and what potentially will be in the Northwest Territories. We need to set about that work. Our sense, the Government of the Northwest Territories, is the mandate review is a starting point that will help us define some of that area, what will be the framework, and start building from there.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Thank you, Mr. Roland. We're on page 4-23, intergovernmental relations, operations expenditure summary, \$1.364 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Activity summary, grants and contributions, intergovernmental relations, grants, \$350,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Information item, intergovernmental relations, active positions.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Lease commitments - infrastructure, information item, page 4-26.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Moving on to page 4-27, information item, work performed on behalf of others.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Moving on to page 4-28, information item, work performed on behalf of others, \$509,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): I'll get you to move back to department summary, page 4-7, operations and expenditure summary, expenditure category, \$6.807 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Does the committee agree that we've concluded the Department of Aboriginal Affairs and Intergovernmental Relations?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): With that, I would like to thank the Minister and his witnesses. Sergeant-at-Arms, could you escort the witnesses out?

As agreed, the next department is the Department of Public Works and Services. At this time I would like to ask the Minister responsible for the department if he has any opening comments. Mr. Michael McLeod.

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: Yes, I do, Mr. Chairman. I am pleased to present the Department of Public Works and Services' main estimates for the fiscal year 2009-2010.

The main estimates propose a department operations and maintenance budget for 2009-2010 of \$56.1 million which represents a 2.8 per cent decrease in O and M funding over 2008-2009.

Public Works and Services is an essential partner in the achievement of government-wide goals, and the department continually strives to deliver high-quality services to its clients, while achieving the best value for government, communities, businesses and residents. The department achieves this through support and leadership in the areas of:

- asset management
- information and communication technology
- procurement
- records management
- community fuel provision

- electrical and mechanical safety

The department also manages an additional \$159 million for projects and services on behalf of its clients through revolving funds, chargebacks and capital transfers. These funds are used to provide:

- computer and data communications for government offices; fuel services for residents, businesses and the NWT Power Corporation in 22 communities; and
- delivery of capital infrastructure for our clients.

PWS is working to improve how we do business. In response to the direction given by the 16th Legislative Assembly, and specifically the stated priority of achieving effective and efficient government, Public Works is leading a change in the way the GNWT approaches infrastructure. Under the guidance and direction of the Ministerial Subcommittee for Infrastructure, implementation of the revisions to the capital planning process will continue in 2009-10. Examples of changes include:

- planning studies
- peer reviews of large capital projects
- value analysis of large capital projects
- development of standardized designs

In 2009-10, we will see the continued implementation of programs in one of the department's key areas of focus: facility risk management and safety. Safe, reliable infrastructure is essential for the delivery of GNWT programs and services. The department maintains 760 buildings, of which 60 have an age of over 30 years. To date, assessments have identified over \$387 million in deferred maintenance costs for GNWT facilities. It is expected that costs will continue to increase as PWS carries out assessments on the remaining facilities.

The two programs covered by funding in this area are the Deferred Maintenance Program and the Woodpile Remediation Program. In 2009-10, PWS will spend \$8 million on the work plan for the Deferred Maintenance Program, dealing with the highest priorities identified in the latest GNWT asset assessments. The Woodpile Remediation Program has been extended into 2009-10 with funding of \$550,000 to allow for completion of the inspection and remediation of woodpile foundations across the Territory.

The department has initiated several energy conservation projects to reduce energy consumption and greenhouse gas emissions in GNWT facilities over the last couple of years a wood pellet heating system in the North Slave Correctional Facility, Chief Jimmy Bruneau School, Kalemi Dene School, St. Joseph School; the

application of Eco-Energy Validation Program standards in the design of schools for Ndilo, Gameti, Tulita, Fort Good Hope and Inuvik; energy audits of GNWT and community buildings, and accessing surplus power from the Taltson dam to provide electric heat for three facilities in Fort Smith all in support of the GNWT Energy Conservation Action Plan. Subject to funding becoming available, we will be pursuing other opportunities across the NWT.

In addition to the facilities owned and maintained by the GNWT, Public Works currently manages a lease portfolio valued at \$17.3 million with 58 leases across the Territory. Public Works reviews this portfolio regularly to ensure that occupied space meets the program needs of our clients.

Through the Technology Service Centre, the department provides information technology support and services to meet the business objectives of the GNWT. More and more, the ability of the government to provide services to NWT residents is dependent upon the availability of secure and reliable information and communication systems.

Finally, I would like to mention the provision of essential fuel services. Through the Petroleum Products Revolving Fund, Public Works and Services funds the provision of heating fuel and gasoline in communities where a commercial operation does not exist. Through the Fuel Management Services Agreement, the petroleum products division provides the Northwest Territories Power Corporation with all of its fuel requirements and manages and operates its tank farms in 20 communities across the NWT. Under this agreement, PPD maintains safe tank farms in many remote locations, as well as contracting with and training local fuel delivery agents to provide necessary services. These agents have an important function in their communities, and Public Works and Services works with them to carry out this important service.

In response to the challenge of rising oil prices and increased variability in the market, the petroleum products division is focused on exploring strategic partnerships and ways to stabilize the cost of fuel products for people in communities served by the program.

To effectively reduce the cost of transportation, the petroleum products division will maximize the volume of fuel transported to the GNWT by bulk marine tanker via the Alaskan "over the top" route, and reduce the volume of fuel transported via the traditional Mackenzie River route. In 2008-2009, this exercise saved approximately \$2 million for the Beaufort-Delta communities served by the petroleum products division.

Market prices for fuel have dropped substantially since the summer of 2008. Unfortunately, many of our remote communities have yet to benefit, as fuel has not been purchased and delivered to these communities at the current lower prices. To assist these communities and help provide some financial relief from these higher fuel costs, on January 26th the retail prices of heating oil and gasoline were reduced by 16 cents per litre for all communities served by the petroleum products division. Fuel prices will be adjusted again for all communities after annual 2009 fuel supplies are delivered. If current petroleum market prices continue, additional reductions in the retail prices for petroleum products can be expected in 2009.

In order to achieve the department's mandate and achieve our reduction target, PWS concentrated on looking for opportunities to become more efficient in the "administrative" side of our business through amalgamating positions where possible and eliminating those vacant positions whose duties could be absorbed by existing staff.

The proposed O and M reductions have been targeted at areas where savings could be achieved by improving operational efficiencies through procedural changes and better use of in-house and contracted resources in achieving the reductions without adversely affecting the delivery of our mandated programs.

As a part of the target reduction exercise, PWS has identified five positions for elimination. Of these five positions, only one will be laid off as two positions have employees who will be retiring before the 2008-09 year-end. One position is occupied on a term basis that will expire on March 31, 2009, and the last position is vacant.

While PWS eliminated five positions as part of the target reduction exercise for 2009-10, five trades positions, including one apprentice electrician, have been created in the South Slave in addition to the electrical inspector position being created in the North Slave. Overall, Public Works will show an increase of two positions in 2009-10.

Public Works and Services continues to be responsive to its many clients and strives to provide high-quality services to departments and the people of the NWT. The budget that we are reviewing today will contribute to achieving this objective.

That concludes my opening remarks and I would be happy to answer any questions Members may have. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Thank you, Mr. Minister. At this time, I would like to ask if you will be bringing in any witnesses.

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: Yes, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Does committee agree that the Minister brings in his witnesses?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Sergeant-at-Arms, if you would escort the witnesses in.

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

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. With me on my right I have Mike Aumond, deputy minister of Public Works and Services; and, Laurie Gault, director of Technology Service Centre.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Thank you, Mr. Minister. Welcome, witnesses. General comments on the Department of Public Works and Services. Mr. Bromley.

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I appreciated the Minister's general remarks, overview, here. I am happy to see a slight reduction in O and M budget for this department. Just going through it, some of the things that come up for me and I will likely ask questions on later, but some I will pose now in case he chooses to comment on them in his reply, I notice that asset management is one of the first areas of support. That, I assume, includes determining the energy systems that we put into new assets, the energy systems and energy efficiency opportunities. I am just wondering, is there a way of ensuring that there is a continual seeking out of the most efficient technologies to be employed there. I have often found in the past that this government has been quite slow in adopting some of the technologies. We seem to be getting better now. There is a highlighted sensitivity there, but I am wondering what the mechanism is for ensuring that we stay on top of that in a better way than we have in the past.

I am also noticing that we provide a service of supplying fuel for the NWT Power Corporation. I am wondering if the cost of that service is incorporated into the cost of the energy charge by the Power Corporation or whether there is some other arrangement there.

We've talked before about deferred maintenance costs, the accumulation we're facing and it's noted again here, over \$387 million with the added comment that that is expected to increase as the remaining facilities are assessed. So I am naturally wondering what proportion of the facilities we have accessed to date.

The Woodpile Remediation Program, \$555,000 this year. I wonder how long this program has existed, what our funding has been in the past. It's presented here as if this will complete the

inspection and remediation of woodpile foundations across the Territory or it could be interpreted as this is one step towards that. So I am wondering how far along on that we are and I will have other questions related to that as we get to it.

There is quite a list of projects of infrastructure that have adopted the pellet boilers and so on. I am wondering, just to determine the significance of this, whether we are able to take out any tank farms or whether we are making any savings on that magnitude yet. Of course, there will be the significant measure and whether our maintenance costs for those are going down. I will leave it at that for now, Mr. Chair. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Minister.

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Most of these areas are areas that we will be providing a lot more detail, but I will give some general comments regarding the issues that Mr. Bromley has raised.

First of all, the review of energy systems is a certain part of our asset management responsibilities and we always look for best practices as to what is happening in other jurisdictions and new technology, of course, we are always very mindful of cost and climate, being able to operate in this type of environment and climate.

The NWT Power Corporation has come on stream as to our petroleum products division responsibilities. It was an attempt to lower the cost of fuel through economies of scale, and, absolutely, they do charge for the cost of the fuel through this. It's actually of benefit to them to work with us.

The Deferred Maintenance Program is something that is much needed. We have certainly tried to get as much investment in this area to tackle the deficit that we're dealing with. We are completing our final inspections in this coming year and it's the same as the Woodpile Program; we are in our third year in that program and any further repairs through the Woodpile Program will be done through the new program called Deferred Maintenance.

The question was raised about the possibility of closing down some of the tank farms as a result of wood pellets. We're not quite at that stage. I'm not sure if we'd ever remove a tank farm until at some point we were totally comfortable. We have been working towards increasing the use of pellets and in a lot of our facilities we've added a number this year and will continue to do so. So far the potential for pellets has only been demonstrated in the southern part of the NWT and we've got to be starting to look at how we can accommodate that as we look at the cost of operation of our facilities further north. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): General comments. Mr. Ramsay.

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'd like to thank the Minister for providing his opening comments. Welcome, Mr. Aumond, and it's good to see Ms. Gault here as well.

I have just a few comments, Mr. Chairman, and I'll start at the beginning. I think hopefully other departments are paying attention when you look at your opening comments, Mr. Minister, and some of the work that your department has done over the past 17 months and even carrying on a little bit further back into the last government. Out of all the departments, this one here has listened to concerns that Members have had, they've reacted positively, and they've done some very good and thorough research and analysis and the data collection, I mean, that's been there. When we've had briefings with the Minister and his staff they were able to answer questions, they have done their work. That doesn't go unnoticed, Mr. Chairman, and I wanted to give them some thanks for that today. Especially on the way the government approaches infrastructure and the capital planning process, we're moving into this new system and I think time will tell that we're doing the right thing. I think it's being managed in an effective manner as well.

We've got some big things ahead of us. I appreciate the facility risk management and safety. I think there's a lot of work that's going to have to be required there. The department's also done a good job on the Woodpile Remediation Program and the Deferred Maintenance Program as well. I see some pretty good things happening with Public Works.

The other thing I wanted to give them credit for, Mr. Chairman, and the reason I say this is that they listen. When the resupply happened and fuel prices fell, I think dropping the price 16 cents, that's a real government that's listening, a department that's listening to the Regular Members and listening to the people that we're here to serve. Again, some kudos for listening. I

If you look at Public Works and Services, too, they don't just say they're trying to find new ways to do business. They're trying to become more efficient in the way they do things and that's not lost on me either. I think they're trying to do more with less. It seems to me to be a fairly forward-thinking department as well. Mr. Minister, you've got some good staff there that are doing some good things. Again, I think some other departments could take some of the work that you've done as a template to do some of their own work. When Ministers show up to briefings they should have done their research and they should have most of the answers. Far too often some departments come

forward and they're unable to answer questions, they haven't done the background, the research. But in most cases I think Public Works has done a stand-up job in that area. Also, on the energy efficiency side of things, too, I think as funding becomes available we'd be looking at more wood pellet boilers and I think that's a step in the right direction again.

No negative comments, Mr. Chairman. Again, I do appreciate the hard work that the department and the Minister are putting into this area and they're juggling a lot of complex things as well. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Thank you very much, Mr. Ramsay. Are colleagues okay? Having had the benefit of a response myself, I think normal protocol is to accumulate our input before. Yes. Okay. Before I go to the Minister, is there anybody else that would like to make general comments? Mr. Yakeleya.

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I'm going to somewhat put a damper on the department here in terms of my colleague Mr. Ramsay's comments. Certainly they are well taken.

I know the Minister has certainly listened in terms of when I went back home in terms of the price of fuel in our communities. They certainly appreciate the quick response. I'd like to say in terms of what Mr. Ramsay has said in terms of this department here responding to some of the needs in our communities in terms of lowering the costs of gasoline and heating fuel in my communities where they are so high that it was very scary for people to pursue their traditional lifestyle on the land. I want to say thank you to the Minister and staff for making some decisions for leadership to reduce the cost to make it bearable, just bearable, for my people to hunt, fish and trap in my communities. Also, to reduce the cost of living. I do want to say thank you to the Minister.

I do look at this department as putting some emphasis on some of the smaller communities. I will always state that some of the smaller communities need to be looked at in terms of the energy audits that are available from this government. There are certainly some good workers in the Sahtu that possibly could do some of the work. Also, having the energy audits into our facilities you also need to have some backup resources to support what the audits find out.

I'm somewhat lost for words in terms of the wood pellet heating systems. Again, more centralized around the larger centres. For the reasons, for the staff that had looked into these types of designs and certainly when you see these statements for these communities in part of the plans for DPW, it certainly makes you wonder if they forget some of

the smaller communities in the other ridings where some of these communities could have some other opportunities for the wood pellet heating systems or wood furnaces in our communities. When you look at probably the lowest cost of energy in the communities of the Northwest Territories, Fort Smith is rated as the lowest paying cost of energy and this government here is going to be looking at three facilities in Fort Smith to do some work to reduce the costs more for businesses. That's somewhat mindboggling when you look at other operations in the Northwest Territories where we don't have the luxury of the mines, the hydro-producing facilities built by the federal government, low cost of energy in the southern parts when you're trying to do business in the northern parts that we seem to be third or fourth on the list to say this is where we need to look at reducing costs in our community.

I'm going to leave those comments to the Minister and I hope that this doesn't become the trend of future governments or even this government again to look at where do we really need to put the dollars into some of these isolated communities that are paying the high, exorbitant costs of energy. That's something that I think we missed the boat on in some of our smaller communities.

Mr. Chair, the local fuel delivery agencies are probably one of the hardest working people in the communities. Some of the facilities that this department has brought into the communities are well deserved and I see these facilities in our communities. I'm going to advocate for the one in Tulita. I've seen Deline's facility, Fort Good Hope's facility. I know the one in Tulita, the fuel delivery agency has been asking me about their facility and I hope that somewhere along the lines, in the books, this facility...I think he called it a shack compared to the other facilities that I saw that are operated by the petroleum products division. I know the one in Tulita over the years has contributed a high number of sales to this government in terms of volume of fuel spent in that one community. I'm going to advocate on his behalf and certainly for the people in my community. When they go drive up to that fuel tank it's not a very good-looking picture. It's not something you want to send home and be proud of. I would ask this department here to where they can find some movement to look at this facility.

Mr. Chair, I do want to say to the department here in terms of the woodpile remediation that it's a very good project. As you know, a lot of our facilities were built with the woodpiles. Some of the facilities were built on muskeg, some were built on riverbeds, and when these woodpiles went in there they shifted and moved and it costs them dearly now. This is no fault to the department, but I think that in future some of these types of decisions should be made in consultation with our

community's traditional knowledge of elders, for the sake of future construction of buildings. Sometimes we have a one-sided view of engineers or structural engineers and this is with their evidence in terms of ground testing, but sometimes the elders know a little more than the engineers. Case in point, in Deline the school is going through some woodpile remediation work and that, and there are other issues that we need to work together on in terms of building the best facility for our communities.

The Minister has indicated lots of money into the Deferred Maintenance Program. Again, when you look at some of our facilities, for example in Tulita, the old facility that's there is an old building that's sitting there. We have workers there who we expect to do standard, quality work in our community. That's something that should be looked at.

In closing, Mr. Chair, I want to see if this department's ever thinking about regionalization in terms of our workers. Right now we operate out of the Inuvik region. We have workers in the Sahtu but most of the direction is coming from the Inuvik regional office that flows into the Sahtu. We want to look at seeing where our regional office would have some more autonomy, more authority, more credence in terms of them making their own decisions in the Sahtu region rather than have the Inuvik region say what they can and can't spend on certain projects, certain initiatives, certain things. They're always waiting for the Inuvik region.

I do want to thank the Minister for acting fast on the school in Colville Lake on the furnace. I had been aware of it, but not until recently when Colville Lake called me. I want to thank the Minister for initiating a quick response to getting the furnace in there right away. I know if we had some regional autonomy, I think the region could have made that decision to fix that furnace as soon as possible.

Those are my comments to the Minister. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Mr. Menicoche.

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. I appreciate the opportunity to comment on some of the initiatives of Public Works and Services. I know that when it comes to the community of Fort Simpson and the riding of Nahendeh, one of the biggest driving things, of course, was our Deh Cho Hall. Even though it's closed up now, it still seems to be an item of concern for the community.

I thought the Minister could have been more proactive in assisting with our library needs as opposed to just not having the ability to extend the hall. At the same time, we do still need assistance

with our library. There are some short-term solutions, but in the long term I call upon the Minister to work with his colleagues and maybe his assistants in providing resources or working with the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment as one way that I look at his assistance.

I understand that there is a pressing need to close down the hall and I think that's what they've done. I think a lot of issues stem from the issue of the Deh Cho Hall. Now there's the disposal idea of what's the best way to divest it from the government, if that's what they want, or to decommission it totally. Just decommissioning it and finding a way of how to dispose of it has created some other concerns there, as well, Mr. Chair, that I just want to raise with the Minister. In terms of when I asked the Minister on behalf of the LKFN of disposal methods -- and I think there are guidelines and policies the government uses -- and the response we got, the LKFN took it, I think, very negatively only because the disposal guidelines say that first they'll, I think, offer it to government department, second they'll offer it to any businesses out there and/or organizations. Sorry, and/or local government organizations. The third one was they listed the LKFN as a society and the chief and the leadership took exception to that only because in terms of recognizing local governments and working with our aboriginal leadership, LKFN and many, many band organizations have taken great care and great attention to be an alternative government, especially the Dehcho. They are working towards that. They are using their Dehcho process to provide this. Then to have our government call them a society as opposed to a local government organization is something that I think we should stay away from. In fact, if it is a clause here or a guideline, Mr. Chairman, I believe that is something that should be addressed maybe with his Cabinet colleagues as well.

The other one was another issue stemming from our Deh Cho Hall in Fort Simpson. Of course, it is the whole initiative around this central heating and the providing of additional boiler systems for the community. I am not too sure where the department is heading with that. Maybe on the appropriate page I will ask that, Mr. Chairman. It is something that the community is interested in. I would sure like to get some answers as we deliberate this department.

I notice that, in the opening statements too, I have to commend the ministry as well for saving \$200 in fuel costs and the ability to pass that on to our residents. It is a big thing. Primarily the big costs, of course, were up in the High Arctic. At the same time, there is still the ability to pass on some savings to the remote communities that are in my riding, Nahanni Butte and Trout Lake as well as Wrigley. Even though it is small change of a

downward nature, Mr. Chairman, I appreciate that. I would like to see more of the costs passed on again. I know that we are doing another winter haul here, which may or may not be completed, but passing on any costs in terms of petroleum products would sure go a long way. Just with that, Mr. Chairman, I will conclude my remarks to the department. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. Mr. Beaulieu.

MR. BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just have a couple topics I would like to touch on as well. I am very pleased with the Deferred Maintenance Program. I think that is something that is a positive thing to extend the life of the assets that we do have, the assets that we are not planning on replacing. In my communities there is very little infrastructure spending. Therefore, the deferred maintenance I think that is scheduled to go into the schools is very welcome. They have, like I said, aside from that, within the community boundaries there is very little activity except perhaps some of the work that the municipality is doing with the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs.

I was pleased with the department on the costs of the fuel reduction. There is no question about that. If you buy a full tank of fuel, the costs would be astronomical to buy a full tank of fuel for a homeowner. If he wants to buy a full tank he would save himself almost \$200. That is good. I think that people, especially the smaller volumes of gasoline that people were saying were right on the borderline of whether or not it was even feasible to hunt caribou, if it was just more feasible to just buy that amount of meat from the store than buy the gasoline to hunt the caribou, especially outside of Lutselk'e and Fort Resolution where there is quite a distance to travel to get to the caribou. In Lutselk'e this year they were four hours about. That is quite a bit of fuel to go get a few caribou. They would be able to get together and kill more caribou and make it more economically feasible for them to do the hunt. That small reduction in costs I think it is about at least 10 percent reduction in costs, which was welcome by communities I am sure. I haven't talked to anybody about it, but I talked to them before you guys actually dropped the price, without thinking that you should drop the price. So people thought it was a good idea. I was pleased to be able to write to the chief in Lutselk'e to advise him that, after I got your letter, these were the new prices now. That was very good.

I continue to have an issue with the cost of TSC. I feel that the cost of TSC keeps growing and this is over a long period of time. It would be interesting to actually see what the original mandate or the original concept of TSC was. I think that one of the

objectives, I believe, was to save costs. I am not 100 percent sure, but I was thinking a mix back then and I thought that was one of the objectives was to save costs and also to improve services. I think that the Technology Services Centre has, over a period of time, improved the skills of the people working for the government, because you had to improve your skills in order to continue to run the computer because the server system is more readily available at your fingertips like you used to have when the technical services was in the departments. I think we have blown the idea that this is going to be more economical, for sure. I think we will find that the costs are very high. I think that one of the things the department should maybe look at is trying to find a way to control the cost. I think that just going to the departments and asking for a chunk of money from every department...I am not sure the departments are in a position to evaluate what they are paying for at this point. Or maybe changing the way you evergreen a computer, something so that it is just not...I'm not saying it is totally out of control, but it is just so that it doesn't appear totally out of control, that there is some control to the cost and there is some idea that the cost is going to stop growing.

I agree that the service is improving. I don't think there is better service if you have a good technical services team for computers in your own department. That is the ultimate. I think that saves all kinds of problems. I think that would have probably even helped with the whole HR systems that were introduced to the employees and so on. I look forward to maybe over the next couple of years seeing if there could be some more cost control over here on the Technology Services Centre; just to let the department know that we are watching the costs. I know that during the business plan review I think every department came up with the cost of TSC. It wasn't like the MLAs are sitting there going this is a high cost. It was, like, the actual departments. It was fairly apparent, as the costs were coming out, that it was fairly substantial.

I, too, agree with my colleague Mr. Ramsay. I think the department is very responsive. I think that when we as MLAs have issues in the community that pertain to this department, they are fairly quick in responding and fairly positive as well. That is all I have to say. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. We are moving on to Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The issue for me, especially in my riding is that the biggest challenge we face as government is probably dealing with global warming, dealing with the problems we are seeing with permafrost. I noticed that you still have the Woodpile Remediation Program. I think, if anything, it is going

to be there for a long time. We are starting to see more shifting of the ground because of the global warming effects, shoreline erosion, lack of resources by way of granular resources. I think also we have to adapt to the different changes by way of climate, especially in the higher Arctic. What happens in the southern part of the Territories may not always be what meets our challenges in the North, but I think the North probably has...We are going to see a bigger challenge by way of structural failures by way of shifting ground because of the permafrost.

I think, also, we have to look at the way that we construct buildings and the different types of engineering designs that we have to go forward with is that things are going to change and we have to change with that. I think, also, that we have to be able to adapt to those changes by way of government design and, more importantly, the type of infrastructure that we build in part of the Northwest Territories.

The other issue that I think is important is dealing with the area of capacity in a lot of our northern communities. A lot of times Public Works is the only department that we depend on to deal with a lot of our infrastructure in the North, the schools, the health centres, dealing with those other things. But I think also we have to expand the capacity in those areas where it is hard to get the trades people that are going to be needed for maintenance and supply either working with the hamlets, working with the different municipalities, dealing with the Department of Transportation and try to find ways to identify that capacity but, more importantly, working together to basically fill in those voids where we know that there are challenges, especially dealing with trades people and dealing with people that have the skill set of what we are looking for. I think it is important that we expand that program so that we are able to identify those people, but also know that the Public Works used to do a lot more by way of maintenance and support for departments. I think that we are starting to realize that we have to find a system that will meet with those territorial challenges. I think we are seeing that even not only from the construction community but also dealing with identifying the people within different industries.

Again, I think it is important that we do find a way to deal with the high price of energy. I know that, through the resupply of fuel over the top, we had \$2 million worth of savings but if you look at the price of fuel when we purchased it to where it is today, I think that somehow you are going to have to find a way that we can offset those costs by whatever supply that we get in the summer while the price is still low, that we are able to top up a lot of these fuel tanks we have in our communities and also for the Power Corporation and whatnot so we can bring

down the cost of power generation and also with the cost of heating bills to ensure you might have brought it down by 16 cents, but a lot of these communities are still paying \$1.50 a litre for diesel fuel. That is still pretty high. I know private individuals in my communities are delivering fuel for \$1.20 a litre in Fort McPherson and Aklavik privately. I think we do have to work around that.

I know the other area you talked about expanding is in regards to the wood pellet heat system. I know it probably works great in the southern part of the Territory, but I think you are going to have a lot of logistical challenges in the North by way of storage, transportation and also ensuring that you do have the product on hand and be able to get access to it. The only means is to either haul it in over the winter road or bring it in by barge shipments in the summer months. I think we have to look at other alternatives. I know there is potential for wood boilers in communities, large wood boilers that basically use cord wood versus wood pellets. I think we have a lot of areas that basically because of the forest fires that we had over the years, there's probably a lot of wood product out there that we can use. It is just a matter of how you develop that product. I know for a fact Old Crow in the Yukon, basically their school is heated by way of big wood boiler systems where basically they pay people to cut the wood and haul the wood to the community and keep the boilers going 24/7. I think it should generate some employment in communities, but also it uses a local fuel source versus bringing in diesel fuel. Again, at some point, there has to be a breakeven point in regards to the cost of wood pellets versus the cost of fuel versus ensuring that through supply and demand the price of wood pellets doesn't start skyrocketing. Because as soon as you start looking at one producer and he knows that he has the market share of the business, he will find ways to increase his profit margins. I think that is something that we have to look at as a corporation.

The other issue that I don't really want to get too carried away with is the projects in Inuvik in regard to the school and the office buildings. In regards to those projects, I know there have been efforts made to formulate partnerships and working together. There are different proposals that were put out over the last number of years in which there was a proposal to lease/purchase by way of proposal that we received that, again, because of taxation implications, that proposal wasn't looked at. Again, a lot of that work was already done. A lot of the design work was done. A lot of the legwork was done in regards to the office design and also for an office complex in Inuvik. Again, I think it is something that we should maybe use. Also that the mediation of the different sites around there, I think that again that project has been going on.

Just for the record, maybe I can ask information in regards to this school in Inuvik. I mean the new school, the work that is being done in regards to site development. My understanding is that was part and parcel of the negotiating contract in regards to Dowland doing the work which included the landscaping work and the school as part of one contract that wasn't two separate contracts. Again, if you could answer that question later.

Again, I think that we do have to work together in the different regions regardless of the amount of capital infrastructure but, more importantly, finding ways that we can accommodate other small business people to work within these large projects so they can also benefit from any major capital investment by way of government. Just in Inuvik alone, I believe there is over \$140 million worth of capital being expended from the school to the office building and other work that is going on in Inuvik. There is potential of another water treatment plant of \$12 million. Again, we do have to work in conjunction with that.

In regards to Inuvik, I know there was a problem with the hospital when they built it. There was a pressure ridge under the school by way of permafrost which was pushing up. I know there were a lot of expenditures paid to try to deal with that problem. I just would like to know if that has been solved. Are those costs associated with the deficit at the hospital running because of the infrastructure problem dealing with the permafrost issue with the hospital in Inuvik? Those are some of my questions. If the Minister can answer a couple of those, I would be happy.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Minister McLeod.

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: Mr. Chairman, a number of issues are raised here. Certainly I appreciate the comments or the compliments from some of the Members regarding the department's work. I certainly agree that the staff are working very hard to make some changes, hopefully for the better.

Mr. Chairman, there are a number of areas that we have really tried to work better and more efficiently. That includes the delivery of capital, the process, energy efficiency in dealing with the different maintenance. We also were quite concerned regarding the level of fuel, the cost of fuel that we provide to the communities. I am glad we have been able to make some changes. The fuel has been raised as an issue. Most Members are aware that this is a product that we deliver in full cost recovery and we expect as we move forward, now that we are providing fuel through the winter roads, we will be able to reduce our costs and pass on the savings to the communities.

A number of Members have raised the issue of biomass or pellets to the communities. Biomass is not restricted only to pellets, and in some areas wood would make just as much sense. We have to start looking at doing those type of projects that could determine whether or not it is feasible to put in wood boilers and things of that nature in the more northern part of the Northwest Territories where we know hauling truck loads or barge loads of pellets is certainly not feasible. We have been trying to target areas where we know have proven technology and can work. Fort Smith, for example, and Hay River, it does make sense to go into the schools and start putting in facilities that can provide heat through pellets. The technology is still fairly new, Mr. Chairman, and the cost for incorporating these new systems are all around half a million dollars, so it is not cheap.

In some other areas of the Territories hydro still makes a lot of sense and the Energy Committee is looking at how we can accommodate that. The woodpile remediation, as Mr. Krutko put it, will probably be something that needs to be done on an ongoing basis for many, many years, and we are hoping that we can look after the concerns and the different facilities that need attention through the new Deferred Maintenance Program, which is a little bit better funded.

Mr. Chairman, Mr. Yakeleya, indicated that we need to incorporate traditional knowledge. I certainly agree. We have had proven examples where site selection and natural contaminants in the soil and historical use probably could have helped us avoid very costly initiatives that we had to end up either redoing or moving. The Clement Building in Tulita has been a concern for the community and for ourselves as we lease the facility, and of course that doesn't qualify for remediation dollars from us as it is owned by somebody else, but we certainly could try to work with them to see if there is anything we can do and we also have been looking, with interest, to see, as other departments work with the Sahtu to create more independence in that area, to see what we can do. It is a challenge, of course, Mr. Chairman, because it would require new funding that we don't have in this budget.

I am pleased to hear that the Member is quite happy with the new furnace at Colville School. That furnace was scheduled to be replaced at a later date, but we felt it was no longer proper for the school to be experiencing that many problems with that facility because of that one item, so it was a decision that the region recommended and we certainly supported.

Mr. Menicoche raised the issue of Deh Cho Hall and I certainly can appreciate the concern from the Member as this is a large facility in his community

and has been part of the community for many, many years. However, when we have orders from the fire marshal and we ask for extensions and extensions, and we have a new facility there, it is very difficult and probably not appropriate for us to try to squeeze or push the fire marshal anymore. He has been pretty lenient with us on that facility and we don't expect that he would have given us any more extensions.

Mr. Chairman, the library really does not fall under the responsibility of Public Works and it wouldn't be proper for us to start doing the work that really rightfully belongs to ECE.

The other issues regarding the policy which deals with disposal, we certainly can agree to look at that. We agree that band councils and Metis Nation organizations should probably fall in the same category as municipal governments. Band governments do right now fall under that category, but in the case where there is another municipal government in the community, it doesn't.

Mr. Beaulieu raised the issue of the TSE costs. The costs for the TSE are basically the same as they were last year. We are seeing a slight increase in our budget of \$45,000 for this upcoming year because of providing the BlackBerries and the service, and that is causing the increase and the budget for TSE still remains at pretty well the same as last year. The only time we have had increase in it was, as the Member indicated, brought up during our business plans, was when we had to expand the bandwidth, I think it was last year, and also we had to accommodate the Collective Agreement.

Mr. Chairman, there are a lot of concerns in the Delta and across the North, as Mr. Krutko indicated, about facilities, buildings shifting, piles and foundations also causing a lot of concern. We agree that we need to adapt. We need to come up with better designs and that is something we continue to work on.

We also recognize, and completely agree, that we have to continue to try to enhance and develop our capacity at the community level. This year we are adding one more apprenticeship position to the nine that we have already hired, and we want to continue to support and expand that program. Hopefully it will stay as an ongoing area that we can hire and train people in the communities.

This year we are quite fortunate that we are able to offset some of the high costs of energy and we are looking right now to see when is the best time to buy our next supply of fuel for the barge season, and we are delivering now that the winter roads are open and hopefully that is going to result in some significant savings.

Mr. Chairman, I made the comment or a responded comment that pellets versus wood boilers and the other comment I wanted to make in that area now, through our discussions with some of the people who are quite involved with the wood pellet industry, that a pellet producer probably would not have a very viable operation at this point because of the low number of communities, buildings and private homes that are actually on pellets. So that is something that would have to come as part of future development.

Certainly a number of issues have come out during the business plan process, during the capital process on the Inuvik schools, and we are really trying to work with the contractor there to ensure that they do hire local and hire as many from the aboriginal governments that are in the community. That has been raised as a concern and they have indicated that they will be doing that. Right now it is still fairly early in the project to really take a measured statement on it. The question was raised whether the site development was part of the negotiated contract. The site development was part of a separate tender and that was awarded to a local company. The pilings were part of the negotiations. The site development was one contract and the pilings are part of the negotiated contract and we have, as the Member indicated, gone out with a tender for the office complex.

There was an issue raised on the deficiency at the hospital in Inuvik; permafrost issue. For the Member's information, that has been looked after and has been rectified. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley): Thank you for those comments, Minister McLeod. That concludes general comments, opening remarks. We're ready to move on, but before we do that, how about if we take a break.

---SHORT RECESS

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Okay. I will call Committee of the Whole back to order. We have concluded general comments. We'll just take a quick glance at the department summary, 7-7. Then we're moving onto 7-8, infrastructure and investment summary, information item.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Agreed. Page 7-9, information item, revenue summary. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Page 7-10, information item, active positions.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Moving on to page 7-12, directorate, activity summary. Page 7-13, directorate, operations expenditure summary, \$6.363 million. Mr. Yakeleya.

MR. YAKELEYA: On the one issue there, I understand that some of the communities that are negotiating the aboriginal self-governance in terms of their process, is this something the department is assisting with the negotiations in terms of assets that are in the community looking at part of these self-government agreements that communities would be taking over? Are we giving them the opportunity to own a fairly good piece of asset in these negotiations when the committees do take over the buildings and so forth? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Minister of Public Works, Mr. Michael McLeod.

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: Yes, Mr. Chairman. The support we provide is an area of assets and appraisals and condition ratings. We do work in supporting the departments that are in the lead.

MR. YAKELEYA: I thank the Minister for that. Now, in terms of some of the assets that you have in the communities that are fairly old, how is this working in terms of recommendations to the negotiators that the facility that's fairly old and the community doesn't really want to take over the building? How do we rectify that in terms of some of the facilities that are not too desirable to be included? Once that happens and the communities don't really want to take this over because...Well, there are reasons why the community doesn't want to take over certain assets in their self-government negotiations. I'd like to ask the Minister, it may require some other work, but how is this being rectified with the self-government agreements?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Just for the record, on page 7-13. Mr. McLeod.

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: We take the same position as MACA with their New Deal. We try to ensure their facilities or infrastructure that's being transferred over is in fair condition. We would make the assessment and let the community decide. It may involve some negotiations whether or not they want to have it upgraded or not accept it at all. It's brought forward in a number of different ways. The only areas that have had that discussion are the people in the Tlicho and I think Deline has now embarked on that process. That's usually the position we take.

MR. YAKELEYA: The Minister is correct; there have been discussions in the community of Deline regarding asset management in terms of facilities they would like to assume in their self-government negotiations. I'm glad to hear that the Minister is

somewhat open to how these facilities or assets are transferred over to community governments. Sometimes it requires additional dollars to upgrade these facilities. I'm not sure if that falls within the overall financial structure of concluding these agreements. That's what I'm asking right now. I have not done enough research. I have done some, however, I know the community right now is talking with the territorial government and there are discussions happening as to what facilities are going to be included in the self-government arrangements. I'll leave it at that. I know what the Minister has said and I'll take that as a means to go forward on some other questions in the future.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): That's more of a comment, but, Mr. McLeod, if you want to respond. We're on page 7-13, activity summary, directorate, operations expenditure summary, \$6.363 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Moving on to information item, page 7-14, directorate, active positions.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Moving on to page 7-16 and 7-17, asset management, activity summary, operations expenditure summary, \$46.727 million. Mr. Yakeleya.

MR. YAKELEYA: Mr. Chairman, the role of contracting and procurement services, I'd like to ask the department about the principle and philosophy of contracting and procurement services in terms of agreements that the territorial government has with the aboriginal land claim settlement groups, some of the discussions we had with the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs regarding certain agreements in the land claims. I kind of expect I know what the response will be by the government's position on these contracts with this department, but I want to hear from the Minister in terms of the role of contracting and the services this provides with working with qualified contractors in the region who could do the work if given the chance to negotiate some of these contracts.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Minister of Public Works and Services.

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We try hard to ensure that a lot of the work we have out for contract or negotiation stays local. It's something we like to see happen. We certainly try to abide by the different chapters in the land claim agreements. For the most part, the aboriginal governments have been focusing or been more specific in terms of drafting MOUs with our government that we also are required to abide

by as a department. That's our intention and that's the procedure we take forward.

MR. YAKELEYA: Certainly with the contracts and procurement services to our people in our region, I agree with the Minister in terms of trying to stay local as much as possible within the means of how community-based contractors could do the work. Certainly there are efforts all the time to improve what we do in the communities. The Minister indicated he was working within the chapters of certain land claim settlements. I think the position or what I know from the work here is that I think this is right across the board. It doesn't matter if you have a land claim settlement or no land claim settlement. I think some of the work has been...It kind of looks the same in terms of some of the communities that are in negotiations are also receiving negotiated sole-sourced work in areas as when some land claim groups are in that same boat. I'm not too sure as to how this policy is Territory-wide or if it is more in the negotiations in land claims looking at this specific area of work that we think the territorial government is interpreting. A little bit of confusion in terms of the contracting and procurement services of work out by DPW.

When I look at the numbers in the book, I see a lot of other companies who are still negotiating. Through their regional governments, through land claim settlement or treaty entitlement, those companies in those regions are also receiving similar services as to the region like the Sahtu who settle and who have specific agreements with Canada. I'm not too sure how this is being interpreted and rolled out. It's kind of a double-edged sword here. I want to ask the Minister where the role of contracting and procurement services, especially with self-government or land claim groups, fit into it.

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: This is probably a better question posed to the Minister of ITI, but the position across the government has been to try to keep as much of the work local. Try to use the contractors and businesspeople in the communities to develop and improve the market. Negotiated contracts and sole-sourced contracts are not only restricted to land claim traditional areas, it's used across the board as a tool to stimulate the economy and keep the companies in the different regions.

The difference is, I guess from my standpoint, that in a number of areas that have settled land claims, there is an MOU, there is an economic chapter that we have to abide by and it really spells out and makes it more specific as to the conditions. It also includes, in most cases, a mandatory review every year to look at how many contracts, talk about the percentages, see if it's working right or not working right, sets targets that we as a government have to work towards, and it usually requires us to provide

advance notice to the different governments. It also usually spells out who is a qualified contractor or the list of aboriginal contractors that fall under that land claim.

MR. YAKELEYA: It would probably be better if we had some discussions with the ITI Minister on this here. I agree with the Minister that other discussion needs to happen at another ministerial level. I'll leave that for the Minister of ITI.

Just on the energy management with this department on government facilities, would it be possible for this Minister to provide to me a record of the government facilities in the Sahtu and when they have done any type of energy audit in the infrared thermal scanning, any type of updates on the buildings that they have and own in the Sahtu. There are certainly some buildings there that need some tender loving care. I'd like to know these here and would like the Minister to provide that to me. I'm not too sure I have any other questions, but I want to let the Minister know that I certainly appreciate his comments regarding his department trying to work and have the work stay local in the communities or region in terms of the contracting. There are other questions I need, but he is not the Minister to answer some of the specific questions.

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In every jurisdiction and region across the Territories, we have buildings that need tender loving care. Some just need outright replacement. We'll certainly commit to the Member to put that information as to the work that's been done in the Sahtu.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Thank you. Next I have Ms. Bisaro.

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Just a quick question. It's kind of related to capital, but it does have to do with assets and management of assets with the changes that we've made in the capital planning process. Coming up in the fall, we'll be looking at the capital budget. I'm just wondering if the Minister knew at this point approximately when Members might be able to have some input into the capital plan for 2010-2011.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Minister of Public Works and Services.

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: Mr. Chairman, I'm just checking with Mr. Aumond as to when the first opportunity for some of the capital would be available for review. We expect it will be late spring or early summer so that we can have some ability to have good discussions in the business planning process in the fall.

MS. BISARO: I thank you for that timeline. I'm a little concerned when the Minister uses the word

"review," that there will be items available for review. Is there an opportunity for Members to provide their wish list to the department prior to a list being developed for review?

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: As the Minister responsible for infrastructure, my mandate is to look at the capital delivery process and also the Building Canada Fund. If there's any wish list that the Members want to submit, it would have to go to the Minister of Finance. I'm not in charge or responsible for the infrastructure projects across the board. That's still a Finance responsibility.

MS. BISARO: Well, I don't know if I have another question to match that one. I'll have to wait for the Minister of Finance.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Any questions in regard to asset management, page 7-17, operations expenditure summary, \$46.727 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Information item, active positions, asset management.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Move on to page 7-20 and 7-21. Technology Service Centre, operations expenditure summary, summary, \$1.267 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Moving on to page 7-22 and 7-23, petroleum products, activity summary. Mr. Yakeleya.

MR. YAKELEYA: Mr. Chairman, the one question I do have for the Minister is in terms of facilities and local delivery agents in our communities. I spoke earlier about some of the facilities in the communities and specifically in the Sahtu communities. The one that I know needs some tender loving care or downright tear down and replacement is the Tulita facility. I know that somewhere in the books I've seen that there are some dollars for future years. I've seen the amount of work that these people in our communities have to operate outside at minus 35, minus 40, minus 45, delivering fuel to customers at this shack here. This shack is not very well insulated. It's pretty dangerous, actually, because you have some heating devices in that shack that could be pretty dangerous if there's any type of shortage on the electrical circuit or things like that. These are pretty potential for the fuel that we have in our community. I'm making a plea to the Minister, looking at this shack, to see if we can get some proper facilities for these people who are on contract to deliver fuel for the Government of the Northwest Territories. I know the Minister is aware of it. The Minister knows this

is probably something that could be looked at, but in some of the information I have it is somewhere in the future years. I'm asking the Minister to have some serious thought and consideration in terms of this facility.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. McLeod.

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The building the Member's referring to is the operator's shelter. It's something that we have been informed needs to be evaluated. It will be considered as we do our deferred maintenance review. That's another facility that is on the list.

MR. YAKELEYA: The Minister has indicated to look at the deferred maintenance review. What exactly -- I'm not sure if I'm putting the Minister on the spot in regard to this shack in Tulita -- is expected to happen with this facility in Tulita?

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: I raised the issue of our point to the deferred maintenance budget as that's the area that we would draw some dollars down, provided this facility fits the criteria as we do an assessment. It wouldn't come out of the petroleum product's budget to replace that facility.

MR. YAKELEYA: Thanks for the clarification, Minister. I certainly hope that these types of facilities, the people who are operating here in the North and the one I speak for in Tulita does fit the criteria under the deferred maintenance facility so that it could be seriously considered for some improvements. I'll leave it at that. I'll leave it in the Minister's hands and thank him for this consideration.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Next on the list I have Mr. Jacobson.

MR. JACOBSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Three out of the four communities I represent get the subsidy for the 16 cents per litre. Can the Minister tell me if the fourth community of Tuktoyaktuk...How could we help people either at the pump or local businesses to try to get any fuel rebates put in for the community? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Minister of Public Works.

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: Mr. Chairman, that would be very difficult to do. The community of Tuk is serviced by private industry. The other communities that he's referred to are part of the petroleum products division resupply. They pay into the program and this surplus is accumulated from these communities. Right now we don't have the ability to include other communities such as Tuk. We have, however, had some discussion with some of the fuel suppliers in the area to see if there's any way we can assist them, maybe by them coming

along with us or other mechanisms to allow them to save some money. However, some of those discussions have really gone by the wayside as the fuel prices have dropped recently. We stay in touch with the suppliers but outside of the program, and with the community not part of the program, we really are limited as to what we can do.

MR. JACOBSON: I brought this up last week in a Member's statement. The price of gas is \$1.69 a litre at the pump, heating fuel is \$1.44, diesel fuel is \$1.89 a litre. I think this should really be looked at either to get that incentive for local businesses for the... Something should be looked at with the Building Canada Fund if it's possible or, like the Minister said, the opportunity to buy the product when they're doing their summer resupply. People can't go hunting because it costs too much to do so. I think it should be really looked at again. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: Several MLAs have raised the issue of high cost of fuel in the communities. Right now we're quite limited. We can't take it out of the Petroleum Revolving Fund as it's only communities that are part of the program that qualify for the subsidy and it's really actually money that they've paid into it. Given that these communities are serviced by a private supplier, it's really, again, difficult to do anything. I certainly can appreciate the circumstances the community is in and I will undertake to raise that issue with the Minister of Finance as we look at any ways to lower the cost of living.

MR. JACOBSON: Can the Minister tell me how can we get back on the list? Thank you.

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: Mr. Chairman, that would be very difficult as the reason we're not in Tuk is we don't go into any communities to compete if there is a private supplier. Right now there is a private supplier that is probably in the business to make a living and we certainly won't compete with any individuals or companies that are doing the same thing we do. Thank you.

MR. JACOBSON: Well, Mr. Minister, I think it should be looked at again. There are two providers; one is the local store that sells us gas and you've got a private person that sells the gasoline and the diesel. I think it should really be looked at again to try to bring the costs down for the people of Tuk. I mean, you know, this is basically not right on the high price that they have to pay when they could go to Inuvik and pay \$1.22 at the pump, to \$1.69, that's not right. It should be looked at again. Thank you.

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: Mr. Chairman, the petroleum products division did supply fuel in the community of Tuk until the year 2000, then there

was a request for us to allow a private supplier to move in. That was supported by the community. It has resulted in us selling our inventory, all our stock and all our facilities, so we would be in a very difficult situation to even look at going back into the community. As there are two suppliers there, we really don't want to be in the business of competing against private industry.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): We're on page 7-23. Mr. Yakeleya.

MR. YAKELEYA: Mr. Chair, the petroleum products division purchases and stores the fuel for our communities. Mr. Chair, can the Minister let this House know in terms of the transportation of this fuel, where lies the responsibility of transferring all the fuel once it gets to the community, unloaded and into their tanks? From there it goes to another sector in terms of delivery. So they have a sense of their control, even on the Mackenzie River. I guess the point I'm getting at is that this past August, I believe it was, one of the barging companies that ran ashore just outside of Wrigley, was hauling fuel. I don't know if it was a private stock or this was transportation of fuel for the government. If I could get clarification on that, then I'll have to have my questions answered with another department.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Minister of Public Works.

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: Mr. Chairman, that wasn't our fuel. I'm not sure whose it was.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Petroleum products, operations expenditure summary, \$1.779 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Information item, lease commitments - infrastructure, page 7-24.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Page 7-26, information item, Technology Service Centre, chargebacks.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Page 7-27, Technology Services Centre, active positions, information item.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Moving on to page 7-28, information item, Public Stores Revolving Fund.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Again, information item, page 7-30, Petroleum Products Revolving Fund.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Moving on to page 7-31, information item, Petroleum Products Revolving Fund, active positions.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Moving on to page 7-32, information item, work performed on behalf of others.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Page 7-33, again, information item, work performed on behalf of others.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Page 7-34, information item, work performed on behalf of others, \$2.403 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Move back to page 7-7, department summary, operations expenditure summary, \$56.136 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Does the committee agree that we've concluded the Department of Public Works and Services?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): With that, I'd like to thank the Minister and thank the witnesses. Sergeant-at-Arms, could you escort the witnesses out, please.

As we agreed, we'll move to the next department which is Industry, Tourism and Investment. With that, I'll ask the Minister if he has any opening comments for the department.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Mr. Chairman, as elected leaders we have stated that one of our goals is to realize an independent North built on partnerships and a diversified economy.

Today I am pleased to return to this House with proposed main estimates that I believe will allow us to build on this balanced and targeted approach.

Our goal is to promote economic activity in every one of our 33 Northwest Territories communities and to provide the opportunities and choices of a fully diversified economy to improve the quality of life for all Northwest Territories residents.

In total, the Department of Industry, Tourism and Investment's business plan proposes total operating expenses of \$50.87 million for the coming fiscal year. This represents an increase of \$4.85

million or 10.5 percent over the previous year. Of this amount, over 46 percent totalling \$23.5 million will be directed to Northerners and northern businesses and organizations as grants and contributions in support of our economic agenda. The overall main estimates also includes \$11.7 million in targeted strategic initiatives.

While many of the decisions that shape the economy are made by people and organizations outside of government, government activities can have a significant effect on the economy contributing to the stabilization and growth of the economy. The stabilization and growth of the Northwest Territories' economy is a goal that, in large part, falls on the Department of Industry, Tourism and Investment.

We all know that a vibrant and flourishing economy will mean more choices for our people, more opportunities for our businesses and increased quality of life for our residents.

We have identified and secured resources for our strategic initiatives through our annual business planning process. We have been able to maximize funding opportunities presented to us by the federal government in areas such as investment in economic development, traditional economy, agriculture and energy initiatives. We have been successful in leveraging funding from other sources.

The National Marketing Campaign leverages funding for our territories to promote the three territories as great places to visit, live and invest. We have also been successful in restructuring and coordinating our programs and services to realize as much support for Northwest Territories businesses as we can from the resources that we do have. Specifically, the SEED program was launched in September 2008, replacing the Grants to Small Businesses and Business Development Fund.

With the valued input and participation of all Members of this House, and stakeholders like the Northwest Territories Aboriginal Business Association, the NWT Chamber of Commerce, the regional chambers of commerce, NWT Tourism, the Tourism Marketing Advisory Committee and the NWT Chamber of Mines, the department has identified and delivered proposed main estimates that reflects areas of support for every type of organization and business in need in our Territory.

As Members can appreciate, our consideration and approach to these proposed main estimates has been heavily impacted by the current economic crisis. But while we respect the effects that this economic slowdown is having, particularly in the exploration and development of our region's

resources sector, we recognize the cyclical nature of this downturn, and we are confident that in time the nature and magnitude of our region's natural resources will allow us to rebound from the challenges that now exist.

In the interim, it is critical that we work to counter the impacts of this downturn and to, as much as we can, keep building capacity in our people, business and communities, and by doing so, in our economy. Our economy is reliant on the economic stimulus and diversification that is provided by the small business sector. They are the backbone of our northern economy.

These proposed main estimates reflect this. In this time of economic uncertainty, the department's focus will be to support the entrepreneurs that are taking the risks in our economy. These men and women have been the financial basis of our industry for many years, transforming their ideas into solid businesses and providing the energy and innovation to fuel our competitive and prosperous northern business environment.

Our tourism industry is a prime example built almost entirely on the commitment, hard work and endurance of small enterprises and their owner operators. These proposed main estimates will provide year four of our five-year investment in the Tourism 2010 plan; a plan that represents one of the most significant commitments ever taken for tourism in the Northwest Territories and has resulted in a \$6.5 million investment in marketing, research, training and product and infrastructure development. In acknowledgement of the good work that NWT Tourism does in promoting the Northwest Territories as a tourism destination, the department has increased its annual contribution for the operations of NWT Tourism by \$120,000, resulting in a total contribution of \$2.54 million annually.

These proposed main estimates also include \$1.4 million in new investment to capitalize on unprecedented opportunities presented by the upcoming 2010 Olympics and Paralympics in Vancouver.

The natural combination of our environment, people, culture and arts and crafts, provide a travel experience that is unmatched. The Olympic Games will offer an opportunity to promote this and our region to the world and to bring forward investment that will provide dividends for our tourism and culture and arts and fine crafts sector for many years to come.

The investment in the Olympic Games will be complemented by the proposed national marketing campaign, a joint effort with the two other territories. A total of \$400,000 for '09-10 is contemplated to

build on the attention gained from the 2010 Olympics to foster significant positive brand awareness for Canada's North among national and international audiences by positioning the North and each of Canada's territories as great places to visit, live and invest.

The introduction of the Tourism Diversification and Marketing Program last year has already enabled many of our operators to take steps to better position their operations to meet this future demand and match emerging trends in tourism. We will further supplement our contributions, totalling \$1.55 million, to this program in 2009-10.

We have also allocated \$300,000 in these proposed main estimates to market our barren ground caribou and polar bear sport hunting products in light of shrinking market shares, fluctuations in caribou populations and political actions taken by the U.S. regarding the protection of polar bears.

In economic terms, our tourism product is a renewable resource that is the object of rising global demand. More than any other, investment in this sector holds the potential to advance and develop a myriad of jobs, business opportunities and benefits in just about every corner of our Territory.

Thanks to partnerships with the Canadian Tourism Commission, and the Government of Canada and with the valued guidance of the NWT Tourism and the Tourism Marketing Advisory Committee, our industry is better positioned than it ever has been to look forward.

Programs and services to support small, community-based businesses and the traditional economy are also proposed. In collaboration with my colleague, the Honourable Michael Miltenberger, Minister of Environment and Natural Resources, the department will continue its support for the traditional economy through providing funds to local wildlife committees, to the Community Harvesters Assistance Program and the Western Harvesters Assistance Program, to name a few. We will also continue support to our fur industry.

Investment in trapper training and youth trapping initiatives has resulted in an increase in the quality and demand of Northwest Territories furs at auction. Thanks in large part to our ongoing collaboration with both the departments of Environment and Natural Resources and Municipal and Community Affairs, our wild fur is now recognized as among the finest in North America.

During this economic downturn, we are building on this success to broaden consumer demand and markets for Genuine Mackenzie Valley Furs

beyond our traditional market base. There is reason for this optimism; sales figures from the January fur harvesters auction indicate that demand is still strong for Northwest Territories fur sold under the Genuine Mackenzie Valley Fur label.

Commercial fisheries are another important, community-based industry that the department is supporting. Funding is proposed to be \$250,000 for 2009-2010 and we will continue to work with the NWT Fishermen's Federation to revive the commercial fisheries industry in the Northwest Territories.

In the area of agriculture, the department will continue to support the Community Gardens Initiative. With the input of the Territorial Farmers Association, the department anticipates renewing the Agricultural Policy Framework, Growing Forward, with the federal government. Mr. Chairman, our government's vision for the Northwest Territories is characterized by the title "Northerners Working Together."

Last fall, with the valued guidance of the Standing Committee on Economic Development and Infrastructure, we introduced the new Support for Entrepreneurs and Economic Development, or SEED policy. The department proposes a total investment in SEED of \$3.267 million in these main estimates.

I would like to thank Members for the advice and insight that they provided in the development of this policy.

The SEED policy reflects your input that business programs should provide a chance for growth, employment and self-sufficiency to businesses outside of our major centres. It is a policy that focuses on the needs of our clients, works more effectively with banks and other partners and incorporates a streamlined and simple approach.

I can assure you today that the SEED policy is meeting all of the challenges and with the ongoing investment identified will continue to develop, promote, and sustain small business in the Northwest Territories.

We are continuing our investment in the Northwest Territories through this policy.

We will also continue to invest in the strength and diversity of our network of individuals and organizations who work with us to build our region's economic capacity and development.

The NWT Business Development and Investment Corporation is an integral part of this work, as are the dedicated men and women who make up Community Futures organizations in our communities.

Of course, we cannot have a healthy business community without people. People empower our businesses and provide the market for goods and services that will create more businesses. We must continue to invest in ways to attract and retain people to our Territory.

Our budget's support of the Falcon Communications Broadband Infrastructure Project is an example of government spending that will provide increased access to the World Wide Web to our communities.

The collaborative approach that we have initiated with our Territory's diamond mines is another example. A memorandum of understanding signed in late 2008 will provide a framework for a strong and positive working relationship that will help government and the mines find even more ways to develop the skills and capacities of Northwest Territories residents to meet the needs of our industry and attract even more new residents to the Northwest Territories.

I would like to thank and recognize the work of my colleague, the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment, and his department for sharing the lead on this important and industry-leading initiative.

This time of economic change can and will provide an opportunity for us to showcase and highlight the opportunities for investment and employment in the Northwest Territories.

For prospective residents or investors now looking north, the potential for success is clearly evidenced throughout our Territory and is implicit in our community of successful northern companies, corporations, joint ventures and partnerships.

Locally owned airlines, hotels, restaurants, construction firms, telecommunications and logistics companies, service and supply industries all pay testament to our capacity for growth and to take a direct role in our region's economic growth as business owners, operators and investors.

But while the rewards of working and operating in the Northwest Territories can be attractive, we do recognize that the cost of doing business in this environment is also high. The cost of energy, in particular, is a common challenge that is faced by industry and government alike.

Using the Energy Priorities Framework as our guide, these main estimates provide resources totalling \$5.54 million to address both the Northwest Territories energy issues and potential. It continues funding to the NTEC and the Deze Energy Corporation to advance and invest in the expansion of the Taltson Hydro Project. It also includes continued investment in the future of hydro power

for our Territory, recognizing that investing in the future of our world-class hydro potential will work to extend the lives of our diamond mines, reduce our dependency on fossil fuels and facilitate access for our communities to varying forms of hydro power.

Funding is included to develop and act on the recommendations that will result from the Territory-wide dialogue that we have begun with Northwest Territories residents and stakeholders on the regulation, distribution and cost of electricity in the Northwest Territories; the electricity review.

Finally, we will continue to invest in preparing our people, business and communities for the eventuality of the Mackenzie Gas Project, the biggest and most important energy development initiative in Canada in the foreseeable future.

These proposed main estimates extend the contribution to the Aboriginal Pipeline Group to support their ongoing work to secure an equitable share in the Mackenzie Valley Pipeline on behalf of our Territory's aboriginal people.

Funding is also identified to support and coordinate the Government of the Northwest Territories continued planning and preparation for this significant infrastructure project.

Mr. Chairman, in conclusion, I would like to thank Members for their ongoing support and guidance in the preparation and development of the ITI business plan and proposed main estimates.

Together I believe we have charted a path by which this Assembly and this government will work to increase diversity and value, not only in the Northwest Territories economy but in the businesses, communities and lives of the people who must be the beneficiaries of our economy. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Thank you, Mr. Minister. At this time, I would like to ask if you will be bringing in witnesses.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Yes, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Does committee agree that Minister brings in his witnesses?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Sergeant-at-Arms, can you bring the witnesses in? For the record, Mr. Minister, can you introduce your witnesses?

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. On my left is Mr. Peter Vician, deputy minister. On my right I have Mr. Jeff Dalley, director of shared services, finance division. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Thank you, Mr. Minister. Welcome, witnesses. Are there general comments? Mr. Jacobson.

MR. JACOBSON: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to thank the Minister for his opening remarks and thank him again for working with me in regards to my polar bear issue that I have been dealing with since I have been down here.

I would like to correct the Minister in regards to his statement in regards to shrinking market. It is not a shrinking market. It is just the biggest thing that we have been seeing in the United States, being fish and game, putting the polar bear on the endangered species list, and dictating to us in regards to the polar bear hides not being able to cross the border. Again, I would like to thank the Minister in regards to all the work he has done to date in regards to the polar bear and seeing if we can get them taken off the list. Again, it is a really important market. It is a \$1.7 million industry in my region, which is really needed this time of year with regard to the global economy.

Oil and gas work has really been minimal in the Delta. People do rely on this. I really stress how important it is to keep the pressure on fish and game in the United States, making sure the federal government doesn't put this on the endangered species list. Talking to hunters in my community of Tuk, there's no shortage of polar bears and we'd be the first ones to stop if we thought they were endangered. Due to global warming they're even drowning now. The polar bear, we don't even fill out our quota. I think we only fill about 25 percent of the tags in the hunts that we do get. I stress to the Minister how important it is to keep the polar bear off the endangered species list. For ourselves, being dictated to and told what to do by people from the South, that's not right. We take care of our own. I always said that.

With regard to the Mackenzie Valley Pipeline, keep that pressure going too. There are local businesses in the Beaufort-Delta that are really hurting. The sooner this project gets off and running, the better, because it's going to generate work. That will really stimulate the economy in the Beaufort-Delta.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Thank you, Mr. Jacobson. Next on the list I have Mr. Abernethy.

MR. ABERNETHY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm going to be quick. I'll save most of my questions for the page by page, the detail.

Following up on Mr. Jacobson's comments, you've indicated that you've allocated \$300,000 in the proposed main estimates to market bear, barren land caribou and polar bears. I'm curious if you're working with ENR. The number of tags the outfitters

have for barren land caribou seem to be shrinking. We're down to I think 750 now, which has actually put a significant hit on the industry, a multi-million dollar industry bringing new dollars into the Northwest Territories. I'm glad to see you're trying to do something, but if we continue to drop the number of tags it's not going to be worth doing anything. I'd like to hear that you're working with ENR to try to keep that industry alive.

Quite happy to hear about the markets for the genuine Mackenzie Valley furs. I think that's great. A lot of good work is being done there.

When we get into the page by page I want to know a little bit more about what it is that you're proposing to do with the NWT Fishermen's Federation. We're not even coming close to getting our quota used, which seems like a real shame. It's a good product. We should be doing anything we can to help them. I see you say you're doing something for \$250,000, but I'm really curious what that is. Are you working with the Freshwater Fish Marketing Board -- I believe they're in Winnipeg -- to try to find ways to get our product to market, allowing us to charge slightly different rates so that we can actually sell the stuff? I'd be very curious to hear what you're doing there.

Happy to hear that you're working with the Territorial Farmers' Association in the area of agriculture, however, it seems to be pretty focused on the Community Gardens Initiative. I think farming and agriculture, we have a huge opportunity here to create some local economy around that. I'd like to know what you're doing with the Territorial Farmers' Association. Are you engaging them about bigger projects or are you guys spending all your time focusing on the Community Gardens Initiative, which is good, but not enough.

You didn't talk very much in here at all about collaborating with Education, Culture and Employment in the way of arts. I do see that you are working with them on other stuff, and that's good because I like to see the silos breaking down a little bit. But I know that you're doing a lot of work with the Olympics 2010 and whatnot. I know you're doing things to promote arts and crafts, but if you're going to be getting involved with the 2010 Olympics, Education, Culture and Employment provides a significant number of grants to local artists; painters, sculptors, musicians, singers, songwriters. I know they give a lot of money. A lot of really talented people are making albums and producing unique projects with ECE money. If you're going to be going down and working for the Olympics, trying to get our image down there, I think it would be really important for you to engage with Education, Culture and Employment and find out who's getting those grants to do projects.

The reason I say that is because I know that a lot of people in the past have received the grants from Education, Culture and Employment, they get the money and nobody knows what they've done. Nobody sees the product. I know the CDs are out there, I know the paintings are out there, but I never see the government standing up and saying we're supporting these people, these are the products they're producing, this is the music they're writing, this is the music they're out there singing. I'd like to see those individuals. If you're going to engage anybody, get them down to the Olympics as part of your initiative to support and promote the Northwest Territories in there. I'd like to hear from you if, in fact, you guys are working with Education, Culture and Employment getting those names and finding out what those people are up to.

I do have a number of questions, but mostly I'm just responding to your opening remarks. When we get into the detail, I'll ask some specific questions page by page.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Next on the list is Mr. Beaulieu.

MR. BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I, too, just have a few comments and will save my questions for page by page. I'm very pleased with all the support that's provided to the trapping industry. I think that's something that at this point, with some people getting laid off, a bit of a... Even the community where there weren't many people working, they feel the economic downturn a bit and the high cost of living and everything. With trapping getting such good support, I think that it's helped a lot of the local people. I know they have a high number of furs being sold out of Tu Nedhe.

I'd like to get more into small business development. I think with this department, like, you know, some of the people, just an example, woodcutters. I think they're a group of people that could be supported in the region. I think ultimately homeowners should go back to burning firewood as a means of reducing costs and so on and also placing some woodstoves in the homes of the elders that get their fuel subsidies to income support. I think that's an opportunity for the woodcutters to have a little business in the community, provide for their family and provide something that's less harmful to the environment than diesel fuel. In the long run, it would facilitate some cheaper energy at the community level.

In my Member's statement today, I talked a bit about a fishing industry. I wasn't really talking about the whole commercial fishing industry, but rather a small market fishing type of industry similar to trapping and so on. I'm not sure it could ever get as big as trapping, but if you look at some of the same types of support that trappers at the small

community level receive from this department, it may be something that is possible for fishing as well.

I know that in our communities we have a small motel and a couple of bed and breakfasts that certainly could use the support of the department.

People have been involved in some of the arts and crafts that could use support. It's kind of an interesting dynamic that occurred, I think, with the involvement of a department to go into purchasing moose hides to try to make that product available for people who need to sew moccasins and so on. The way it kind of evolved is that the people actually making the product could no longer afford the moose hides. I guess that's what you really call a double-edged sword. On one hand you try to provide a little bit of economy to the individuals making the moose hides and, at the same time, you kind of pushed the product costs out of range for the sewers, the craftspeople that are making the product. I guess that's something that maybe could be looked at for subsidizing this small sector of the business that I'm sure would be much appreciated by the people making the products. We don't want that to die as a result of the products being too expensive for them to afford.

I guess I'd like to get a bit into the process in which the Business Development Investment Corporation do their business, whether or not they're going to continue. Are things improving with the department staff in this department; staff doing the actual grassroots work or legwork at the community level and then involving Business Development Investment Corporation, which is a headquarters organization? It would be interesting to hear what the Minister has to say about that. I'll ask questions about that during the review.

I may have questions on parks, but nothing that really comes to mind at this point with the exception of perhaps looking at sponsorship of the protected areas and so on. Aside from that, I'll save the rest for page by page.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): General comments. Mr. Yakeleya.

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The comments I have will just be general. In terms of page by page, I'll get more into it. I would like to thank the Minister and staff for the presentation.

My comments would be more of supporting the small business sectors in our communities. As the Minister indicated on page 3 of 8, they are the backbone of our northern economy. These small business sectors are the ones that contribute greatly to the people in our communities. They pay the taxes. They deal with the high cost of energy

and fuel and electricity payments to the workers in the wage economy. These small business sectors contribute to the community through donations and contributions and in volunteering their machinery or their time to hold community events. These small business sectors are men and women who grew up in the communities and started out with loans, started out with nothing, sometimes starting out with grants from the government, that evolved into a strong community business. Certainly I agree with the Minister that these small business sectors with the entrepreneurial people are the backbone of our northern economy. They are there in the good times and they are there in the bad times. With the economy the way it is looking right now and the current crisis that we are dealing with, certainly these small businesspeople, these entrepreneurial people need to be supported 110 percent by this government in terms of being able to continue in our communities. That's something I want to probably speak to you about when we get to those items in the budget here. There are various forms of how to continue supporting these small business sectors and supporting the entrepreneurship. These people are the backbone, as you say, in our communities and our northern economy. Most likely these people are going to stay in the community, specifically in our region. Now, granted there are various regions in the Northwest Territories that sometimes businesspeople and people who are going after business do come into other regions to bring the costs down on fuel and equipment. That is sometimes an appetite that this government looks at favourably because of the budget and numbers we have to operate it. But that's where, I guess, there's a fine balance in terms of pricing. Sometimes these small business people and entrepreneurship feel that this government sometimes doesn't support them that much. But that's up for debate. I'll leave it at that.

The other one is the Tourism Plan. Lots of money going into tourism. I think there are some good opportunities to look at tourism. There are some areas that certainly should be supported and continued. There are some areas that need more support in terms of clientele or bringing people to the Northwest Territories.

I look forward to the Minister's comments on page 4 of 8 on brand awareness for Canada's North and the Olympic issues in terms of what type of branding we are going to showcase.

There are other areas I look forward to talking to the Minister about on tourism regarding sport hunting. Certainly the partnership on the Canadian Tourism Commission, I certainly want to say thank you to them. If it wasn't for them and this department, a group of people from my region would not have had the opportunity to play hockey in London, England. It was with a contribution from

this department and its partners in NWT Tourism and the Canadian Tourism Commission that they got wind of this government declaring Deline as the birthplace of ice hockey in Canada. Somehow they got wind of that and they supported the team to go over and play at Trafalgar Square. So I wanted to say that to the Minister. If I haven't said thank you already to the Canadian Tourism Commission for allowing something like that to happen. I think the birthplace of ice hockey in Canada should be continued, but that's another story at another table.

I certainly look forward to having some lively discussions as to the different projects and initiatives under traditional economy. I think traditional economy is taken very lightly. It's actually our traditional way of life. The economy is what we get from it. I think when you look down to it, it's our way of life. It's in our blood. These young people with the elders, it's something that they, it's like breathing for some of them. They just have to go out there. Because there's a demand for these beautiful furs that are caught in the Northwest Territories, they make money off it. For a huge part of it, I really support this program because they're supporting a way of life that will continue to be supported. Some of these youth trappers who have gone out to trap, I think the government should be commended to continue to really support them.

Like I said before, not all people want to be heavy equipment operators or office managers or deputy ministers or directors. I think a good group of them want to become trappers and practice that way of life as their grandfathers, great-grandfathers, and great-great-grandfathers have done. It's a beautiful life. It's a very peaceful life; a very simple life. As I spoke with my father-in-law the other day, it's a very hard life. But it is a life that should be commended, held high. We should hold it very high in terms of these men and women who want to go into this section of their life. I think that should be looked at and I think we should do more to promote it. So I'm really happy that the Minister is giving some thought to this.

Also with our commercial fishermen around the lake here I'm very concerned with the contaminants that are leaking down from Fort McMurray into the Slave River and into Great Slave Lake. I talked about this again the other day with my father-in-law. He's been fishing for a number of years around Great Slave Lake and he has noticed that there's been a change in the fish over the years. He notices that there's changing of the land, so I'm very concerned and I hope we can do some things on that.

Mr. Chair, the SEED policy, the NWT Development and Investment Corporation, I hope that there's enough flexibility that would really see the money going to communities. I hope that the economic development officers in the communities really,

really help our people, really sit down with them, explain to them and work with them. I hope that these economic development officers are told that. Just don't push paper, but sit down and spend some quality time with our people. That's the way it's going to work. Those regional officers come into our communities and they sit down and talk about these programs. I'd like to see where money has been lapsed or where our money is not being used, and people get frustrated. In small communities word goes around really fast and they give up, there's apathy there. So I hope we can change it around, Minister.

The last comment I make to you is around the hydroelectricity and there's going to be more questions in there in terms of issues that I spoke about earlier. The cost of energy is very important and I wanted to make note that I'm going to speak on these when they come up very strongly in terms of what's going to happen in our region. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): General comments. Mr. Beaulieu.

MR. BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Committee moves to report progress.

---Carried

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): I will rise and report progress. I'd like to thank the Minister and his witnesses. Sergeant-at-Arms, could you escort the witnesses out.

Report of Committee of the Whole

MR. SPEAKER: Could I have the report of Committee of the Whole, please, Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO: 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. Krutko. Motion is on the floor. Do we have a seconder? The honourable Member for Nunakput, Mr. Jacobson.

---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): Orders of the day for Tuesday, February 24, 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
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

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Clerk. Accordingly, this House stands adjourned until Tuesday, February 24, 2009, at 1:30 p.m.

---ADJOURNMENT

The House adjourned at 8:06 p.m.