



NORTHWEST TERRITORIES LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

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The Honourable Paul Delorey, Speaker

Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories

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(Great Slave)

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(Tu Nedhe)

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YELLOWKNIFE, NORTHWEST TERRITORIES**Wednesday, October 28, 2009****Members Present**

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

The House met at 1:33 p.m.

Prayer

---Prayer

SPEAKER (Hon. Paul Delorey): Good afternoon, colleagues. Welcome back to the House. Orders of the day. Item 2, Ministers' statements. The honourable Minister of Finance, Mr. Miltenberger.

Ministers' Statements

MINISTER'S STATEMENT 21-16(4):
DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE
STRATEGIC ACTION PLAN

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Mr. Speaker, I wish to inform the Legislative Assembly that at the appropriate time later today I will be tabling the Department of Finance's Strategic Action Plan 2009-2012.

This document is the first strategic plan for the new Department of Finance, which was created on April 1st of this year by combining the previous Department of Finance and the Financial Management Board Secretariat. It is a milestone in that it represents the first strategic plan for a central agency department in this government.

The new department's role in this government is multi-faceted. As a central agency, it provides advice and support to other GNWT departments and the Financial Management Board. It plays a leadership role in ensuring that this government has the necessary resources to deliver required programs, services and infrastructure to residents of the Northwest Territories. It is responsible for ensuring that the government's financial results are reported to the public, so that decision-makers can be held accountable. It provides services to the public through regulation of the NWT insurance industry, managing and regulating liquor distribution and sales in the NWT, and administering electricity rate subsidies.

Through Northerners Working Together, the 16th Legislative Assembly set out its goals and priorities. Achieving these goals will require significant resources, both human and financial. It is critical that the GNWT makes the right decisions, not only about allocating and managing the resources that we have, but also about how to increase the resources available to us, if we are to maximize our

progress toward achieving these goals. The Department of Finance will play a key role in helping us make those choices.

This strategic planning document will provide multi-year direction for the Department of Finance.

Progress against its objectives will be monitored and reported back to the Legislative Assembly. Public awareness, involvement, participation and feedback are critical factors in ensuring that the Department of Finance continues to operate in a transparent, accountable fashion.

The action plan lays out two strategic priorities:

1. achieving fiscal sustainability for the GNWT; and
2. adopting a modern management approach to financial management functions within the GNWT.

The Department of Finance will need to be in the forefront to develop and implement fiscal strategies that will enable the GNWT to achieve its goals. The strategic action plan describes the actions the department will be taking with respect to revenue, spending, borrowing and saving.

The strategic action plan also speaks to the GNWT's adopt of a modern management approach. To this end, I am pleased to report specifically on a key activity that supports the department's modern management priority and the GNWT's information, analytical reporting and business needs.

Mr. Speaker, on September 1, 2009, the GNWT began a new era in its financial administration and management when its 25-year-old financial information system was replaced with SAM, the System for Accountability and Management. SAM is a modern financial and reporting system which is expandable into what is termed an Enterprise Resource Planning system, or ERP. An ERP enables organizations to more fully integrate activities such as purchasing, asset management, project management and other activities into a single information system.

This project is a significant accomplishment. It has gone through various planning stages since 2003, and work began in earnest last fall. A dedicated project team of 38 staff and contractors worked

hard to bring the system into production, on time and on budget.

In addition to the dedicated team, more than 100 subject matter experts from all departments contributed many hours helping to shape the design of the system to ensure it meets the business requirements of the GNWT.

Go-live on September 1st was not without some bumps. However, this was to be expected for the implementation of such a large and complex information system. The project team continues to work hard to address issues as they arise and will continue to do so as they are fully committed to making the system a success.

Going forward, the biggest challenge we will face is to work with this new technology to exploit its potential to improve our financial management and reporting. Financial information is a cornerstone of effective management. The launch of SAM on September 1st was an important step on the path to creating a modern management organization within the GNWT.

I encourage the Members of the Legislative Assembly and all residents of the NWT to read the strategic action plan and to work closely with the staff of the Department of Finance to assist to develop and articulate the financial and strategic priorities of this government. Thank you.

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

MINISTER'S STATEMENT 22-16(4):
FUR INSTITUTE OF CANADA AWARDS

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Mr. Speaker, I wish to extend our congratulations to Mr. Robert Alexie Sr. of Fort McPherson and Mr. Glen Guthrie of Norman Wells. These gentlemen were recently acknowledged by the Fur Institute of Canada for their commitment of effort, outstanding achievements and valued contributions in the areas of wildlife management, conservation and trapping in Canada.

Mr. Robert Alexie Sr. of Fort McPherson was presented the Jim Bourque Award for his devotion to the principles of sustainable use of wildlife resources, improved animal welfare, the furthering of indigenous people's cultures and the vital stewardship role that trappers play in the conservation of our wildlife resources.

Mr. Glen Guthrie of Norman Wells was awarded the Lloyd Cook Award, recognizing his commitment to excellence in trapping, trapper education and public understanding of wildlife management. Mr. Guthrie facilitates and coordinates school projects with elders and trappers that focus on traditional wildlife economy, helping to ensure that young people

maintain ties to the region's wildlife resources and to their Dene and Metis culture.

Mr. Speaker, it is the dedication of people such as Mr. Alexie and Mr. Guthrie that helps to ensure the future of our traditional economy in the Northwest Territories; that, and the hardiness and skill of the more than 800 people actively trapping in the Northwest Territories this past year.

Partnerships, such as our partnership with the Fur Institute of Canada, also help ensure the viability of the fur industry. A national non-profit organization, the Fur Institute of Canada has acted as a roundtable for fur trade, animal welfare and fur-bearer conservation issues since 1983. The Fur Institute of Canada is the coordinator for the overall implementation of the agreement on International Humane Trapping Standards in Canada. The Government of the Northwest Territories has been an active participant sitting on the board of directors and the executive of the institute for many years.

Harvesting of fur is an essential part of the Northwest Territories aboriginal culture and of our traditional economy. Having options like this allows us to weather economic storms. This has been important for this Territory's economic health in the past year.

Mr. Speaker, it is a priority of the Department of Industry, Tourism and Investment to provide all communities and regions with opportunities and choices. Our support to the trapping and fur industry is an important part of achieving this commitment.

The Government of the Northwest Territories is, in fact, one of the very few governments in the world that actively supports harvesting and marketing of wild fur as a fundamental component of a modern and thriving economy. Fur from the Northwest Territories is now recognized as some of the finest wild fur in North America.

Mr. Alexie Sr. and Mr. Guthrie have shown remarkable commitment and leadership in the support of the Canadian Fur Industry and the traditional lifestyle of aboriginal people in the Northwest Territories. We are thankful for their contributions. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. The honourable Deputy Premier, Mr. Miltenberger.

MINISTER'S STATEMENT 23-16(4):
MINISTER ABSENT FROM THE HOUSE

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Mr. Speaker, I wish to advise Members that the Honourable Floyd Roland will be absent from the House today and tomorrow to attend a meeting of provincial and territorial Ministers of Aboriginal Affairs and leaders of national aboriginal organizations in Toronto, Ontario. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for Frame Lake, Ms. Bisaro.

Members' Statements

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON SENIORS' PARTICIPATION AT CANADA 55-PLUS GAMES

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In the last week we've heard a number of Members express their disappointment in the refusal of this government to provide financial assistance to NWT senior athletes for the 2010 55-plus Games to be held next August. I want to add my voice to those of my colleagues to protest the action, or lack of action, on the part of our government.

That this government can't afford \$50,000 to support NWT seniors in their attendance at these games is inexcusable.

AN HON. MEMBER: Shame.

MS. BISARO: And to quote from an e-mail from an elder that I have recently received, she said, "To avoid funding the attendance of seniors at the Canada 55-plus Games could be interpreted as blatant age discrimination."

On Monday I spoke about the value of recreation and physical activity in our daily life. Research shows that for seniors in particular, physical activity improves and maintains one's health.

We're fortunate to have many active seniors and elders in our communities. They're active because they're healthy.

AN HON. MEMBER: Hear! Hear!

MS. BISARO: And because they're healthy, they're active.

This government should be encouraging a trend of active seniors, but the recent refusal by the Minister responsible for Seniors to provide the necessary funding for the 2010 55-plus Games supports neither this trend of active seniors nor this Assembly's goal of healthy, educated people.

Past actions indicate that the NWT is committed to participation in, and funding of, multisport games. The 55-plus Games is one more avenue for our residents to benefit from multisport games. We know that Sport North is willing to take on the job of administering these games and it's only logical that they do so. They are a 35-year-old NGO that has, over the years, very successfully administered countless multisport games and trials.

As the Minister responsible for sport, maybe the Minister of MACA will realize that the multisport games buck stops with him. Will he be more receptive to the seniors' funding request? I find it hard to believe that we can spend \$2.5 million to

showcase the NWT at the 2010 Olympics but we can't find a measly \$50,000 to treat our elders with the respect they deserve.

NWT participant costs for the last 55-plus Games ran to \$3,000 or \$4,000 per person for some 100 participants. That is a total of over \$300,000 of which only \$50,000 was contributed by the GNWT.

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

---Unanimous consent granted.

MS. BISARO: I thank each of my colleagues. The rest of the \$300,000 was garnered through fundraising and individual athletes' personal contributions. I expect the Minister of MACA will follow the lead of the Minister of Health and Social Services and also refuse the request for funding from these athletes. If that is the case, and no one department can bear this huge burden, then maybe the Ministers of MACA, ITI, Health and Social Services plus the Minister responsible for Seniors and the Minister responsible for sport, these five can split the \$50,000 and ante up \$10,000 each.

Last week the Minister of ECE made a statement honouring elders in the NWT. He said elders hold a special place in our society. If that is so, the money will be found to assist our elders who are athletes. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON COLVILLE LAKE HOME CONSTRUCTION PROPOSAL

MR. YAKELEYA: Mr. Speaker, my Member's statement today is in regards to helping the people in the Sahtu, especially the people in Colville Lake who have asked me on numerous occasions if they can build their own home, simple homes in the communities where these young families, older people that could build a simple log home, simple home in the communities that would help the GNWT with these resources. The benefits of these people in my communities in the Sahtu, again Colville Lake, is to harvest the logs and have some skill capacity development going on in the community, get people working. This would support the vision and the goals of this 16th Assembly in terms of a vibrant, healthy, educated people in the Northwest Territories.

Mr. Speaker, the importance of this has many benefits to people who could build their own homes in terms of passing on tradition, looking at basic ways that they could build their homes in their communities by improving the economy in the communities.

Mr. Speaker, there are 16 percent of homes in the Sahtu that are considered overcrowded. There are

a lot of young families that want to build their own homes. However, they are looking forward to the initiatives under the Housing Corporation to see if this is a possibility where they can build some homes in the communities. I want to ask this government and this specific Crown corporation, the NWT Housing Corporation, if it is open to looking at ways that they can put more homes in the communities.

Mr. Speaker, the community of Colville Lake, again, expresses very strongly, the same with the people in Tulita and also in the other Sahtu communities, in terms of how do we get people into homeownership programs that would be basically having people feel that they have a home, something they can be proud of, something that they can pass on to the children, rather than living in public housing units from generation to generation.

At the appropriate time, I am going to ask the Minister of the NWT Housing Corporation what types of programs are there to help people to get into their own homes such as constructing simple log houses in their communities. Thank you.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON
"BABES FOR BREASTS" CANCER
RESEARCH FUNDRAISING EVENT

MR. ABERNETHY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In our lives, most, if not all of us, will have some experiences with cancer. Some of us will get cancer ourselves, where others will have either family members or close friends who experience cancer. I myself recently had a member of my family diagnosed with cancer. I have to tell you that it is a really scary and stressful time both for the family and for the family member who has cancer.

In the Northwest Territories, we may give the Minister of Health and Social Services a hard time about our health care system, but going through that with my family member, I saw how strong our health care system is. There are challenges, but it is a strong system.

---Applause

I'd really like to thank those health professionals who help those patients, who have cancer, through the system: the doctors, the nurses, the X-ray technicians. These are great people doing great work and they deserve accolades upon accolades. I'd really like to thank them.

I'm really proud to be a resident of the Northwest Territories where people give so freely of both their time and their money to support and help raise funds and awareness for cancer research and support the residents of the Northwest Territories who have cancer. In Yellowknife alone, as in other

areas of the Northwest Territories, there are events such as the Run for the Cure, the Terry Fox Run, the NWT Cancer Society has Daffodil Days, Sunshine Festival, Relay for Life. I can't even count the number of individuals who I've seen who have donated their hair or shaved their heads to raise money for cancer. We have a great Territory full of great people and I think those individuals who go out of their way to do these fundraising events also need to be applauded and congratulated for all of their hard work.

Soon, Thursday -- tomorrow -- there's going to be another fundraising event; it's Babes for Breasts. Babes for Breasts is a collective of female singer/songwriters taking on the human side of breast cancer one song at a time by volunteering their voices and skills to raise awareness and funds. Proceeds are donated to local and regional charities in each city, helping women and men who are living with breast cancer, from diagnosis to remission and beyond. This event tomorrow night includes artists such as Leela Gilday and Tanya Tagaq-Gillis as well as individuals from Ottawa, Ana Miura and Amanda Rheame, as well as a wonderful artist from Edmonton, Ann Vriend.

There are two reasons that this is important and this is a great event. The first is that the money is going to go to cancer research. The second is great, great music. So I encourage everybody, if you have time, go out and enjoy the music and help raise money for cancer. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON
PROPOSED TAXATION INITIATIVES

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We continue to discuss options for new revenues, and in light of the recovering economy and full scaling up of production at our mines, it is timely, indeed, to be instituting new measures. Through consultations by the Department of Finance, many discussions by the public and comments by several Members, a clear consensus has emerged that more progressive tax measures are needed.

I believe a first priority is to implement a resource income tax to serve us until devolution of responsibilities is achieved. We have the capacity now to implement such a tax in a moderate way and to invest the funds raised into a long-term heritage fund, without any real effect on corporate profitability and investment. A resource income tax is a tax on windfall profits and doesn't tax those not making profits. Our mineral and fossil fuels are being tapped at increasing rates and they won't last forever.

Also, we need to take stronger actions to redistribute wealth and bridge the gap between low

and high income earners. Lower taxes for the lowest income earners will put money into the economy immediately and improve the lives of those most in need. Very small adjustments at the lowest levels of income earners can achieve this important goal.

Mr. Speaker, we are fully aware of the leakage of tax revenue out of the Territory through workers from out of the Territory and the need to plug it. Three hundred seventy-one million dollars, almost one-fifth of total labour income in 2008, left the Territories last year. Steps such as a payroll tax for high income earners, an airport departure tax, a hotel tax will help decrease revenue leakage. Though Northerners would also end up paying these taxes, people needing assistance would be compensated by the decreased income taxes. Cost of living credits need to more realistically take into account the differences in cost of living between communities. A scaled approach based on our statistics for cost differentials between communities would provide the necessary recognition here.

Finally, this government must wrestle with how the cost to society of greenhouse gas production becomes a cost of doing business. Only this has proven to be an effective incentive to adopt operating measures that reduce greenhouse gas production and, hence, vulnerability to taxes. Accompanying this must be an array of measures...

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

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

---Unanimous consent granted.

MR. BROMLEY: Only recognizing the carbon content of fuels has proven to be an effective incentive to adopt operating measures that reduce greenhouse gas production and enhance vulnerability to taxes. Accompanying this must be an array of measures to assist people and businesses to shift from fossil fuels to the viable proven renewable energy uses that provide enhanced local employment opportunities, lower living costs and reduce harm to our environment.

Mr. Speaker, these measures taken together yield benefits on all fronts. They complement each other and must be advanced together. Some can start at low levels and become fully engaged as our economy revives. Let's get it done. Mahsi.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON H1N1 FLU VACCINATION CLINICS

MR. JACOBSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I'd like to have my Member's statement on the H1N1 flu vaccines in Nunakput. I wanted to talk

about the importance of getting your flu shot. I urge all residents in the Nunakput communities of Tuk, Ulukhaktok, Sachs Harbour and Paulatuk to go to their health centre and get their flu vaccinations. The flu shot is for everyone, for the children, our elders, our health care workers and for teachers. For people with other illnesses and people who are even healthy, Mr. Speaker, the flu shot will help keep the community residents healthy and safe, and our doctors and nurses have told us that it is safe and it will protect us from all the serious diseases from the H1N1 flu.

These are the dates, Mr. Speaker, that they are happening in my communities. Tuktoyaktuk on November the 9th will be from 6:00 to 9:00 p.m., probably at Kitty Hall, and the second day on the 10th will be in Tuk from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Sachs Harbour: from 10 o'clock in the morning until 7:00 p.m. Starting in Paulatuk on the 12th, 10:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. Ulukhaktok: 2:00 to 7:00 p.m. and Ulukhaktok again, 10:00 to 12:00. If there are any catch-up dates, I will be passing them on to the communities and to the health representatives in the community. So I urge everybody to get out there and get their flu shot so it doesn't affect us in the long run. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON ANIMAL PROTECTION LEGISLATION

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm going to speak today about the issue of animal neglect, cruelty and abuse. I last spoke about this issue back in March, when people across the country were floored by charges being stayed against a Behchoko man who was charged in September of 2008 after the local government in Behchoko called in a veterinarian to put down 34 of his dogs who were found to be badly malnourished. Well, Mr. Speaker, unfortunately, animal cruelty was back in the news when just last week three puppies were found at the dump in Behchoko, their throats having been cut; a reprehensible act committed on innocent animals.

Even if the authorities find those responsible, here, in the Northwest Territories people can, and do, get away with abusing animals. The Crown stays charges in these types of cases because it is highly unlikely that, given the current legislation, they would be successful at getting a conviction. That, Mr. Speaker, is a very unfortunate reality here in the Northwest Territories.

Last summer a Hay River man was charged while in Edmonton for leaving his dog unattended in a vehicle during a hot day. Had this same offence been committed in the Northwest Territories, the offence would likely go unpunished. This, again, is a very sad commentary, Mr. Speaker, on the

effectiveness and the usefulness of our current legislation.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to know exactly where animal protection legislation is at with this government. How many more times are we going to allow ourselves to be embarrassed both nationally and internationally with our archaic laws? We need to advance this legislation as soon as possible so those who commit these heinous crimes against animals are faced with some serious consequences.

Last spring the Minister of Justice, in response to some questions that I had about animal rights legislation, on page 2718 of Hansard states, "...it could be in the fall of this year. We will do what we can if we need to fast-track it. We are in the process of doing that." Well, Mr. Speaker, the fall is here, the snow is falling and Christmas is coming. Where exactly is this legislation? How come it has not even gone to committee yet? Mr. Speaker, I'll have questions for the Government House Leader at the appropriate time. Thank you.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON CLERGY APPRECIATION MONTH

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, a little known fact to some people may be that October is Clergy Appreciation Month. Mr. Speaker, I had the privilege of being raised in a home where I went to church all my life. I must say I love church. My father was a deacon in a church and back in those days we even had church on Sunday nights. When the rest of my siblings wanted to stay home and watch The Wonderful World of Disney, I wanted to go to church with my dad, and I certainly remember and value those precious times that I had with my dad and that constitutes a lot of my memories of him.

Mr. Speaker, I have been a member of the Hay River Pentecostal Chapel for over 35 years and then when I first came to Yellowknife, I had to find a church to go. But it was cool, because I told my kids whatever church they wanted to go to, that's where we would go. So I have had the privilege of going to the Baptist, Pentecostal, Alliance, Church of Christ and the Vineyard Church here in Yellowknife. Mr. Speaker, I tell you this to say that I have gotten to know many of the clergy throughout the Northwest Territories.

In Hay River, we have a really interesting thing. We have a Ministerial Association, which is the pastors of all the churches get together on a regular basis and they sponsor community events. When we see them out having coffee together, we call them the God Squad.

---Laughter

But over my years in the North, Mr. Speaker, as I have said, I have had a chance to meet clergy from all denominations.

Mr. Speaker, we have Nurses Week, we have Teachers Week, Social Workers Week, we celebrate the valued work of many different professions who serve our communities, and today I would like to recognize the valuable contribution of our clergy across the North, past and present; our bishops, pastors, priests, captains, youth pastors and lay-clergy. There are 168 hours in a week taking 1 percent of our time to pause and turn our minds to eternal things is only 1 percent of our entire week, Mr. Speaker, I would suggest, especially for families to help build a strong faith that will stand their children in good times, in highs and lows of life, is time well invested.

Unlike many other organizations, Mr. Speaker, churches rely on the support of our parishioners, so I also encourage people to support their churches and their clergy financially. You might be amazed at the blessings that will come when you bless other people. For those who work in our communities to provide spiritual guidance and support to families at times of loss, at times of joy, baby baptisms, dedications, those who are ill, who visit in our hospitals, who provide spiritual counsel in our prisons, Mr. Speaker, today I would like to thank them all. Thank you.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON HOUSING FOR TEACHERS IN LUTSELK'E

MR. BEAULIEU: Mahsi cho, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, today I would like to talk about the lack of adequate housing for teachers in Lutselk'e. This is a serious matter that could have many negative implications for the community.

Mr. Speaker, this is an urgent issue that needs to be addressed immediately. I first raised this issue in May of last year after meeting with the local district education authority in discussion with the South Slave Education Authority under which Lutselk'e falls. Both groups were experiencing frustration, because after raising the issue on numerous occasions with this government, they are not seeing enough action.

Also, Mr. Speaker, the NWT Teachers' Association has been raising the issue of housing for teachers in smaller communities, again getting no action.

Mr. Speaker, at this time of the year in the school calendar, teachers are focussing on getting their assessments and report cards ready for parent/teacher interviews, but not some of these new teachers in Lutselk'e. They are more

concerned about where they are going to live next month. Over the last few years, the community has been lucky to find suitable housing, but yet with former residents moving back to the community and existing housing needing major renovations, not as many places are available. This year with two new teachers hired in the community, there is definite need for immediate housing.

Mr. Speaker, the community should not have to be put into this kind of situation. We all know the important role teachers play in our communities and to the North. Mr. Speaker, in 2009, we should not be talking about this. With a situation like this in Lutselk'e, it is like we are failing the people of Lutselk'e.

This government has a responsibility to deliver a certain level of education to all its residents, and this has to include the provision of adequate housing for our teachers, especially in small communities, non-market communities like Lutselk'e.

Mr. Speaker, as stated before, the three main issues area availability, affordability and adequacy. For Lutselk'e, this is an urgent matter, so let's act now before we lose teachers and let down the students and residents of Lutselk'e. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON GNWT SUPPORT FOR THE FUR TRADE

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I would like to speak about the importance of the fur trade in the Northwest Territories. It is one of the oldest industries here. Mr. Speaker, when the Tetlit Gwich'in began turning from the Klondike ventures, they found that Fort McPherson was not changed much from the gold rush days. The Hudson's Bay Company post was still the mainstream of the community, even the same Hudson Bay trader was there to welcome them, which was my great-great-grandfather, John Firth, who first arrived in the Peel River country in 1872 and was the chief clerk of Fort McPherson from 1893 to 1919.

Over the next decade, the Gwich'in still spent most of their time in the headwaters of the Peel River and then the Richardson Mountains and heading downstream in their moose skin boats in the spring where they wintered and collected their furs and then basically brought them to Fort McPherson for sale. During World War I, the price of muskrat furs skyrocketed and the Gwich'in began to depend on the livelihood of the fur trade by way of muskrat harvesting in the spring, and also the importance of the Peel River, the Mackenzie Delta and the families of the Gwich'in people. But since then, Mr.

Speaker, the industry has continued to sustain itself and the people in our small communities still depend on this industry.

Mr. Speaker, I think it is important to realize that a lot of the economic spinoffs in regards to the fur trade in our communities is well in the millions of dollars. It still stimulates our communities, especially the hunters and trappers of our communities and especially for the younger generations who still want to maintain that lifestyle. Mr. Speaker, I think it is important to realize that this industry is just as important as the diamond industry and as the oil and gas industry and, more importantly, it will be there long after the diamonds are gone and the oil has been depleted, and also that the people will still depend on that lifestyle.

Mr. Speaker, at the appropriate time, I will be asking the Minister of ITI questions in regards to what this government is doing to ensure that we have a sustainable industry of the fur trade, which is one of the oldest industries in the Northwest Territories. Mahsi.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON BLACKWATER BRIDGE PROJECT

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Last year the community of Wrigley formed a partnership with Rowe's Construction and Nogha Enterprises to build the abutments for the Blackwater Bridge project. There were many barriers to overcome from joint venture agreements, last minute approvals from the Sahtu regulatory bodies; however, despite the obstacles which the government did not assist with, they were overcome. The project was completed successfully and on time and on budget. There were many benefits to the community of Wrigley: employment, contracts, and they even purchased new equipment. They, in short, used this opportunity to develop their capacity.

Today, Mr. Speaker, there is a different contract awarded to Stan Dean and Ruskin to complete the Blackwater Bridge. They have been mobilizing all summer and I have been getting concerned phone calls from the leadership of Wrigley, that they are receiving limited opportunities to date. Opportunities have been limited to catering contracts and camp maintenance.

The community has advised that they have tried to negotiate a fair rate for local equipment. The joint venture of the contract is offering very low rates. For example, they offer \$200 a day for a water truck. This is not economical for an eight-hour winter road trip. There would be no profit at this low rate. The contractors use an excuse to buy their own water truck. I support the community of Wrigley

and feel that low-balling on prices is unfair and detrimental to the community capacity building in Wrigley.

The community has met with DOT officials on several occasions and requested assistance on this matter, but they never did get any commitment. I would urge the Minister of Transportation to follow up on these concerns and to ensure that contractors in proximity communities provide more business opportunities and employment to those communities and especially the one in my riding: Wrigley. Mahsi cho.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. Item 4, returns to oral questions. Item 5, recognition of visitors in the gallery. Item 6, acknowledgements. Item 7, oral questions. The honourable Member for Tu Nedhe, Mr. Beaulieu.

Oral Questions

QUESTION 100-16(4):

HOUSING FOR TEACHERS IN LUTSELK'E

MR. BEAULIEU: Mahsi cho, Mr. Speaker. Today I talked about the lack of adequate housing for teachers in Lutselk'e. I would like to follow up on my statement with questions for the Minister of the NWT Housing Corporation. Mr. Speaker, will the Minister commit to working with me, and the local district education authority and the community, to see that an immediate solution is found for this situation? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. The honourable Minister responsible for the NWT Housing Corporation, Mr. Robert McLeod.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is an issue that continues to plague the small communities as having adequate housing for some of the professionals that go in there. I could inform the Member that in his community, through the good work of the North Slave Housing district housing office, they have come up with a solution to take care of the needs of two of the teachers. They have agreed to rent them an NWT Housing Corporation house, so that would take care of the issue. That will go on until the end of this school year and then we will look for a longer-term solution. Thank you.

MR. BEAULIEU: Mr. Speaker, can the Minister give myself in this House an update on what the NWT Housing Corporation is doing on the long-term solution? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Mr. Speaker, the longer-term solution is we are working with the Refocusing Government committee. We are in the process of speaking to a lot of the development corporations in the community. We have had some excellent buy-in. There has been a lot of interest expressed by the development corporations in

accessing some of the programs. We do have some incentives that we are proposing to them. Also, one of the incentives is using some of our existing houses and see if we could turn those into housing for staff, if there is a surplus in some of the communities. Thank you.

MR. BEAULIEU: Mr. Speaker, can the Minister advise this House when we can see some sort of program roll out so we can examine the long-term solution that the Minister speaks of? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Mr. Speaker, we are hoping to have something together very shortly here to share with committee before we go into the next session that would help address a lot of the concerns expressed by some of the MLAs from the small communities, especially the non-market communities. We are hoping to have something very shortly here put together. We will be able to share that with committee and get some feedback and input from committee too. Thank you.

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

MR. BEAULIEU: Mr. Speaker, as per an earlier commitment, during his next visit to Lutselk'e, can the Minister commit to meeting with the local DEA and the teachers so he can hear firsthand on the issue in Lutselk'e? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Mr. Speaker, I will commit to meet with the DEA. It is always in our best interest to hear what the communities are saying, because they know best what is needed in their communities. If we can work in cooperation with them, that would make the whole process a lot smoother and we will be able to provide housing for staff and a lot of the professionals in the small communities. Thank you.

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

QUESTION 101-16(4):

SENIORS' PARTICIPATION AT

CANADA 55-PLUS GAMES

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions today are addressed to the Minister for sport, also the Minister of MACA. I had a few questions in my statement. I would like to repeat them here in the hope of getting a positive answer. Does the Minister realize that the multisport games buck stops at his desk? Will he be more receptive to the 55-plus athletes' request for financial assistance? Thank you.

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

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish that were true that the buck stops

at my desk and I would be able to dole out the money to all those that asked, because we do get a lot of requests for funding. We do try and tend to look after the youth and try and get them out there and take part in a lot of these games. If there is a desire to fund adult games, I am not sure if that is where we want to go to, because the requests will start coming in from other adults.

We are always willing to have a list and see if there are ways that we can support all games. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MS. BISARO: That is, unfortunately, the answer I expected from the Minister. I appreciate that there is a focus on youth, but I have to remind all of us, the Minister particularly, youth become adults, and adults become seniors and elders. We need to keep them active. It has been stated earlier by another Member that active seniors reduce our hospital and medical care costs.

I think the Minister said that he might look into providing funding for seniors if this is something which is going to be ongoing. It has been ongoing for about four or five games now. What will the Minister do to find the \$50,000 to help our seniors get to the 2010 55-plus Games? Thank you.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Mr. Speaker, I said we will have a discussion as to the process of funding adult sports and I will put the adults in with the seniors, because there will be a lot of requests coming from other sporting organizations, other adult sports groups.

If we were to start this, we do have a mandate to focus the multisport games on the youth. I could have a conversation with my Cabinet colleagues and see if there are pots of money available, but I really can't make a commitment -- I don't think I did -- that we are going to fund this from the multisport budget. Thank you.

MS. BISARO: I don't want to thank the Minister, because I didn't really like that answer. The Minister said that we do, and I stated as well, we do support multisport games. The Seniors 55-plus Games are a multisport game. There aren't many adult multisport games. I would encourage the Minister to rethink supporting seniors versus supporting adults, because I don't think we have adult games. I would like to know from the Minister, considering that these 55-plus Games are a multisport game, will the Minister consider in the future on providing funding through the Sport and Recreation Council to fund it through to Sport North so they can assist the seniors in getting to the games? Thank you.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Mr. Speaker, I don't expect to be thanked for an answer that is not what the Members are looking for, but sometimes we have to give those answers whether they are popular or needed or not. If it opens me up for criticism as to the position I am taking focussing on

the youth of the Northwest Territories who will become adults, who will become seniors and they will be able to function better and be a better person for going to these games. I am not willing to make a commitment to fund the seniors multisport games out of the multisport game budget, because that mandate is for the youth and that budget is for the youth. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Your final supplementary, Ms. Bisaro.

MS. BISARO: To the Minister, then, if the Minister won't change that mandate and it is going to stay focused on youth for funding through the Sport and Recreation Council and lottery proceeds and so on, I would like to know from the Minister whether or not there is any possibility that he will take the lead, canvass four or five different departments and find \$5,000 to \$10,000 from each of these departments that will assist our seniors. Thank you.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Mr. Speaker, I will have discussions with my colleagues as to if there is anything we can do to support the seniors. We have supported them in the past. I think it is being noted by a lot of the participants from the other jurisdictions across the country that we do look after our seniors pretty good. They were the envy of the games, because a lot of it was financial backing that they got from this government it was noted. A lot of people appreciated that. So I will work with my Cabinet colleagues, and, also, we would like to support regional seniors' games if that opportunity arises, because we have regions all across the Territories where our seniors from those regions don't get an opportunity to participate in any kind of games at all. So anything we can do to help folks out there lead a healthy lifestyle is something that we're always willing to look at. Thank you.

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

QUESTION 102-16(4):

H1N1 FLU VACCINATION CLINICS

MR. JACOBSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today my Member's statement was on the H1N1 flu vaccinations in the communities. I didn't really have any questions, but got thinking about the issues and the dates that I was reading out. Health Canada said that the flu vaccinations will be given to our communities first, Mr. Speaker, and on the schedule I have here, Tuk is 10 days away, Sachs Harbour is 12, Paulatuk is 13, Ulukhaktok is 14 days away and 15 days away. Mr. Speaker, why is there such a holdup in the flu vaccinations? Why are they doing Yellowknife, Diavik Diamond Mine and the southern communities first when it's a more harsh environment in our riding? Thank you.

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

HON. SANDY LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. First of all, I would like to thank the Member for his leadership and speaking directly to his constituents in his riding to take advantage of this vaccination program, because it is safe and it is important.

Mr. Speaker, as we have communicated to the public, we have action teams travelling to the communities. A couple of things that people should know when they look at these lists on the websites are that even if communities are not listed there, there are vaccinations happening by the local staff. The second thing about the Beaufort-Delta region is that contrary to what we thought...Because our government fought hard, and I made it clear in our provincial and territorial Health Ministers telephone calls all through the summer that we needed to have the vaccine first, because we knew the fall and winter comes here first and our areas are remote and isolated and we do not have readily accessible acute care facilities everywhere, that we wanted to be first and we did become first, but within the region we do have to make some priority decisions. So far the Beaufort-Delta region is showing a lot less cases of H1N1 and I think that's the basis of those decisions.

MR. JACOBSON: Well, it just shows that the Minister's categorizing us again in regard to putting us on the backburner here in regard to our dates for our communities. So the Minister also told me, Mr. Speaker, that if I was to phone my health centres in my communities that I represent, they would say they have vaccine on hand.

HON. SANDY LEE: Yes, Mr. Speaker, the vaccines have been distributed and it's to communities. Communities have them and local staff are able to administer them. What we are doing with these action teams is that we know that our health care professionals, during the normal course of business, are short staffed and overworked in many cases. So we didn't want to burden them with the extra work that was required to do the vaccinations. So the action teams are augmenting the workload. But, yes, most of our health centres have supplies of the vaccine. Thank you.

MR. JACOBSON: Mr. Speaker, what are the plans if there's a big outbreak of the flu in our communities? What plans are there in place? Do communities know how to deal with this situation? How is it being dealt with by the local community governments?

HON. SANDY LEE: I can advise the House, all of the communities in the Territories are under close surveillance. There are staff ready to react on hours of notice. Inuvik office would react if there is a major breakout in some communities.

Mr. Speaker, I would also like to commit to the Member that I'm going to look at this list again and get information on what else is happening in Tuktoyaktuk and his region while they are waiting for the scheduled teams to arrive.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Lee. Your final supplementary, Mr. Jacobson.

MR. JACOBSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Health Canada said that the flu shot should have been given to our communities first and that should have been the way it should have been properly handled, but I do commend the Minister for the work that she's been doing so far. I look forward to bringing her to the communities and seeing it firsthand. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Jacobson. I don't think I heard a question there. I'll allow the Minister to answer is she wants to. Ms. Lee.

HON. SANDY LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. NWT is a priority list. We are moving very fast and so far we have vaccinated more than 4,000 people. I will get back to the Member on how we can move some of the communities around. Thank you.

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

QUESTION 103-16(4):
COLVILLE LAKE HOME
CONSTRUCTION PROPOSAL

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to ask the Minister of the Housing Corporation questions regarding the investments made into the Sahtu of the Northwest Territories in terms of having some simple homes such as log homes or some sort of simple homes in the communities like Colville Lake that could be built, in terms of being supportive of the GNWT's vision and goals for this Assembly.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. The honourable Minister responsible for the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation, Mr. Robert McLeod.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Mr. Speaker, we would like to see the local communities put more input into the houses that go into their communities. We are, for the basic shelter, just redoing that right now. We're hoping to be able to roll that out pretty soon and we're looking to get some input.

As far as the log homes go, there were a couple of pilot projects done in the past. At this point in time, it doesn't make economic sense. If we can do it a lot cheaper than the pilot projects were done, then it's something that we're willing to have a look at. Thank you.

MR. YAKELEYA: Mr. Speaker, the Minister is correct; there was some log construction homes done in the past and, certainly, we learned some

valuable lessons in there. I think there are some companies out there now that can design certain log homes and certain people could have certain ideas as to how to build.

I would ask more specifically in terms of Colville Lake, in terms of the trappers, in terms of a similar house that they could have a very basic home that when they want to go out to the trapline, they can close down their houses and come back when they open up. Something very simple, very basic, something that the community of Colville Lake or any other small communities in the Northwest Territories like Nahanni Butte or Tsiigehtchic could be appreciative of owning a home. Would the Minister look into that type of concept? Thank you.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: As I stated before, the basic shelter concept is one we're looking at right now. We need to make sure that we do our due diligence on this one and just not roll it out until we've been able to see that it's something that the communities really do want and something that will work in the communities, and that we won't have to be asked to go back later and install running water and other things, which has happened in the past. So we will be doing our due diligence on this one and making sure that when we do roll it out, it's something that's a worthwhile product. Thank you.

MR. YAKELEYA: Mr. Speaker, I think if the Minister were to embark on this concept, it would be very worthwhile to look at in terms of people, I can speak for the Sahtu and, more specifically, Colville Lake, in terms of where there is still a lot of independence in the people in terms of their lifestyle. So this concept would work very well in that community. I'm not going to speak for other communities, but my region would certainly benefit. I want to ask the Minister if he would give his officials some leeway and flexibility in exploring with the people of Colville Lake or in the Sahtu region in terms of seeing if these types of homes can be developed in the region. Can the Minister make that commitment?

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Mr. Speaker, I would make the commitment to the Member that we will have a serious look at this and we'll make sure that it's well thought out before we attempt to put it on the ground. We'll seek some input from a lot of the Members, because a lot of them do represent the small communities. We'll get as much input as we can before we attempt to roll this out. Thank you.

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

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Can the Minister also commit to working with other Cabinet colleagues in terms of how they could probably put together sort of a training package, if that makes more sense in terms of the Department of Education or Aurora College, in terms of looking

at a home like this in the Sahtu or any of the other communities in the North that makes sense?

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

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: The Housing Corporation will be willing and the Housing Corporation has been taking the lead on a lot of the training. They've provided packages to some of the schools where they can use that for training. So we are quite interested in making sure that we're able to have our Northerners trained in building these units. I would commit to the Member that I'll have discussions with my Cabinet colleagues as to some of the training monies that we're able to access to help see this come about. Thank you.

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

QUESTION 104-16(4):
BLACKWATER BRIDGE CONTRACT

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is for Minister McLeod, Minister Michael McLeod. I just wanted to follow up on my Member's statement and ask the Minister of Transportation with regard to some of the contracting opportunities that can be missed when they're out in our regions and communities. These are huge opportunities. They're big contracts. There's the Blackwater Bridge contract near the community of Wrigley. Residents have been advising myself, and probably the Minister's office as well, that they're missing opportunities. Some of it can be unfair practice, I believe. I would just like to know if some of our contracts that we let out, is there any policy or guidelines attached to that saying that they must use as much resources from proximity communities -- in this case, the community of Wrigley -- to employ their people, use their equipment? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. First of all, I'd like to thank the Member for recognizing the benefits that come from large projects, such as Blackwater, to the communities and to companies in the North. Yes, we do follow a policy. It's the Business Incentive Policy that requires us to have certain content that is listed in the contract that has to be adhered to, and we do monitor the situations and the projects very closely. Thank you.

MR. MENICOCHÉ: So the Minister is then aware of some of the complaints from the community of Wrigley, especially in the case...Like in the joint venture contract there right now offered the community of Wrigley I think it was \$200 to rent a water truck for the whole day. Mr. Speaker, that just

covers wages only. That's very unfair to ask the community to provide almost free services for the water and, as well, they use that very same excuse, Mr. Speaker, because they use a lowball figure, they use that very same excuse to bring in their own water truck and not use the community of Wrigley's. Our government is all about developing capacity and giving them opportunities. Like I said, in the spring contract, they purchased equipment and that's not even being used as well, Mr. Speaker.

Once again, is the Minister aware of the lack of working with the community of Wrigley to use their equipment and employ their people? Thank you.

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: Mr. Speaker, I am very familiar with this project. We went far above what was required to ensure that the community was involved. We gave a lot of flexibility to the community to become a partner and negotiate a contract. Six million dollars worth of work went to the partnership. We extended time frames. We facilitated discussions with subcontractors. So I think there's been a lot of work in this area and certainly our department has been involved every step of the way. We are well aware that there are some companies, some sub-trades are not able to negotiate good arrangements.

Mr. Speaker, we as a government cannot get involved with the discussions with every company that needs to work with a general contractor. We look at the bottom line. Right now the community has benefited close to \$7 million from this project and that's over 20 percent, Mr. Speaker. I think that the community should be very proud of their ability to take part in this project and generate revenue for their community. Thank you.

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Indeed. Like I mentioned in my Member's statement, it was quite an achievement, the work that they'd done in the springtime, but to complete the bridge, they've got some new contractors, Stan Dean and I believe it's Ruskin had joint ventured. But these are the people that the community are having difficulty with. They're giving the opportunities to meet and sit and negotiate for their equipment, but I don't believe that the rates they're using are fair and they're using that excuse to get their own equipment, employ their own people and, as a result, leaving out the community of Wrigley. They did have some opportunities, but they just cannot seem to be using their equipment. They've used that previous contract, they developed the capacity and we've got to continue to support it. So I'd like to ask the Minister, Mr. Speaker, what can be done in this instance to help continue to build the capacity of the community of Wrigley? Thank you.

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: As in every project with every community, there has to be a demonstrated capacity to take on some of the work. The

equipment has to be in good shape, whether it's a CAT or a grader or a truck, and the price has to be fair and the people that are going to operate it have to be experienced enough to ensure their safety. Our department has facilitated, we've worked with the community at every step and we'll continue to do so. If there is a situation here, I'm not sure what the water truck number is referring to, whether it's a municipal water truck or if they have one of their own, I wasn't aware of that. But we certainly can look into it. We encourage the company, we have inspections, we have discussions with the contractors to ensure that they're involved and they involve the community and we'll follow that up.

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

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I guess, overall, the biggest contract here is Ruskin and it can almost be viewed like they're an outside contractor. What I'd like to see is to ensure that there is proper follow-up, proper documentation that they use as much local content as possible. Can the Minister ensure a mechanism like that when they do their post-mortem at the completion of this project, to show how much local content that they have used on this \$50 million contract? Thank you.

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: We certainly can do that. Mr. Speaker, I have to point out I don't share the Member's concerns. The community, the job contract from the community requested to do the site preparation and they did the contract, they had that contract, they requested to do the earth works, they got the contract, they did that work, they wanted to do the gravel pit development, they requested that, they got that, and they did it, and they wanted to provide camp services, Mr. Speaker, and they are providing camp services. I wasn't aware there was water truck involvement in here. I only know that the Municipality of Wrigley has a water truck. If that's what we're talking about, then we'll follow that up. The post-mortem is going to be done, in any event. Our indication is that this project has exceeded all local and northern requirements and it's only going to improve as the time goes on. Thank you.

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

QUESTION 105-16(4):
ANIMAL PROTECTION LEGISLATION

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions today are for the Government House Leader and it gets back to my Member's statement where I was talking about animal rights legislation in the Northwest Territories and another incident just last week where three puppies were found in the dump in Behchoko with their throats cut. We start to ask the question again, the public asks us

questions, it makes us look bad both on a national stage and on an international stage when incidents like this happen. In the Northwest Territories, the legislation just has no teeth to do much about it, as was evidenced with the 34 dogs that had to be put down in Behchoko because the Crown felt they couldn't get a conviction against the person who did that.

So I'd like to ask the Government House Leader today, what is the current status of animal rights legislation in the Northwest Territories today and where is it going? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. The honourable Government House Leader, Mr. Miltenberger.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The government is taking a two-track approach to this particular issue. The amendments to the Dog Act are being worked on, there's a legislative proposal expected in November that will be ready by a review by committee and, hopefully, introduction in the winter session. That will give some immediate relief and more authority to the people dealing with issues of animal cruelty. At the same time, Justice is at work doing the necessary preliminary work on a whole new piece of legislation for animal cruelty, keeping in mind that our legislative cycle takes, on average, about two years. So because of that gap, the amendments to the Dog Act are being proceeded with. Thank you.

MR. RAMSAY: That's interesting, considering what happened yesterday with the Petroleum Tax Act that went through the House in one day. I'd like to ask the Minister, last spring the Justice Minister had talked about a working group that was being formulated by government to take a look at animal rights legislation here in the Northwest Territories. I'd like to know exactly what that working group has accomplished in the past six months, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: A full briefing on both these particular pieces of legislation has been offered to committee and the folks stand ready to sit down with committee to be able to go through in detail both pieces of legislation, the amendments to the Dog Act as well as the new legislation and the work that the working committee has done. Thank you.

MR. RAMSAY: I appreciate the work that is being done on the Dog Act, but that doesn't begin to address other domesticated animals in the Northwest Territories and cruelty or abuse that's inflicted on those animals, Mr. Speaker. I know the Minister said the legislative process takes two years. Is there any way, any possible way that the government can see to it that animal rights legislation in the Northwest Territories gets a higher priority than us waiting two years and that won't

even be conducted until the next government comes through the doors in two years? Thank you.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: As the Member noted, when the House puts its mind to issues of legislation, be it the Petroleum Products Act or in other legislation like the Family Violence Act, things can move relatively quickly. It would depend on the advice we get from the Legislative committee, if there's a piece of legislation that can be adapted and modified to the Northwest Territories without rewriting right from scratch. But I think it's an issue that if the will of the House is such, that could be looked at. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Final supplementary, Mr. Ramsay.

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate the Minister's response. The Yukon had a similar occurrence with some animal cruelty, which led them to bring in an act two and a half years ago; the Animal Cruelty Act in the Yukon. We don't have to look that far and wide to find a piece of legislation, I think, that we could take a look at here in the Northwest Territories. Again, I want to ask the Minister, I know the Justice Minister said this in March, but can we please get another piece of legislation and get moving on this sooner than two years? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: I will be talking about this issue with my Cabinet colleagues tomorrow morning and we'll look at what's possible and is there an ability to use existing legislation from other jurisdictions modified to the northern reality and not have to do this from scratch to see what's possible. Thank you.

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

QUESTION 106-16(4):

GNWT SUPPORT FOR THE FUR TRADE

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions are directed to the Minister of ITI, Mr. McLeod. Mr. Speaker, in regard to the importance of the harvesting industry in the Northwest Territories and the important role that it played in developing the Northwest Territories going back to the mid-1800s, I think it's important to realize that it is still a very good part of our communities and the subsistence dependence that people have is to still trap and still harvest as a means of sustaining themselves.

I'd like to ask the Minister in regard to this government's programs that they have, we have programs in regard to supporting the secondary industry for diamond polishing, we have funds available for the tourism industry, we have funds available in regard to APG and supporting their initiatives in regard to a pipeline, we have oil and

gas money in regard to providing that service and also we just learned that the outfitters businesses are receiving some \$300,000 in regard to the Barren Ground Outfitters. I'd just like to ask the Minister to explain exactly what are we doing as a government to support the trapping industry in the Northwest Territories?

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

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Our government has been involved with providing support to the trapping industry for many years and when I count up all the programs that we have, we're providing approximately \$1.75 million that we make available to assist trappers, and that's not counting the \$14.250 million that we've made available over the past some years since division as part of the Western Harvesters Assistance Program to allow harvesters to purchase new equipment. Thank you.

MR. KRUTKO: I know in the past, through economic development through our EDA agreement with the federal government, we have programs such as special Arctic grants where people were able to apply for grants to get snowmobiles, equipment, we have the Grubstake Program, which was there to assist people basically to stake claims and whatnot in the Northwest Territories. I'd just like to ask the Minister, in light of the economic dollars we're seeing from the federal government, have we looked at the possibility of implementing these types of programs which worked in the past and we're there to support harvesters like we do with the fishing industry, the diamond industry and the other sectors of our economies so that people can really see the benefit of sustaining this industry?

HON. BOB MCLEOD: The federal government recently announced the CanNor program. It's headquartered in Iqaluit and it has district offices in the Northwest Territories and the Yukon. Also they do have programs that are operated out of there. The Member is correct; in the past there was ARDA programs, special ARDA programs, and when I questioned the federal government about was there ever any potential for ARDA programs coming back, they said there were already ARDA programs in existence and the funding is going to aboriginal governments. Although instead of ARDA it's ARHDA funding. So as far as I understand, each of the aboriginal governments are receiving ARHDA money. Thank you.

MR. KRUTKO: Again, this government is doling out money to the outfitters industry because of so-called impacts, because of the numbers dropping in caribou. I mean, the same herd is going to affect the people that depend on subsistence harvesting, especially the aboriginal people that depend on

those herds for subsistence. You have to offer them an alternative for hunting or harvesting caribou. One of the areas that you can seriously make a difference in is the trapping industry so that those people can realize that if we support them in that sector, that they'll be able to continue to sustain the lifestyle that can sustain them, they're able to bring in the furs and have an industry in harvesting and expanding the processing of those products in the Northwest Territories. So, again, I'd like to ask the Minister, have you looked at the implications from the harvesters' perspective, not the outfitters, and what are we doing to realizing these decisions made in regard to not harvesting the Barren Ground caribou herd or whatever? It's going to have more of an impact on aboriginal harvesters than it will to the outfitting industry.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: We have looked at those sectors. The Barren Ground Outfitters probably provide something in the neighbourhood of four to five million dollars in direct economic benefits to the Northwest Territories. Similarly, we looked at trapping and it's very difficult to quantify other than the actual return, plus we estimate that if you had to go to the stores to buy country foods that the harvester provides, you'd probably be looking at something in the neighbourhood of \$20 million. So we think that both sectors do provide economic benefits to the Northwest Territories and we try to continue that they do survive. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I find it kind of hard to hear the Minister's comments regarding not being able to quantify the importance of the trapping industry in the Northwest Territories but we're doling out money to every industry that's from outside the Northwest Territories.

Mr. Speaker, my last question in regard to the importance of harvesting to people in our small rural and remote communities. People still have to sustain themselves by some sort, unless this government's willing to dole out more money for income support and put everybody in our communities on income support and make that an industry, because that's exactly where this government is going and not realizing the importance of this industry on rural and remote communities. So I'd like to ask the Minister again, exactly why is this government not taking the importance of the trapping industry in the Northwest Territories like we do the diamond industry?

HON. BOB MCLEOD: I like to think that trapping is a success story. We are contributing \$1.75 million in assistance for 800 trappers, and I think it's a very important way to maintain a way of life.

The diamond industry and about 1,200 miners that work and it contributes significant dollars to our

GDP. The diamond mines and the mining industry have resulted in the Northwest Territories having the highest GDP for the past 10 years. So it's very difficult to compare a billion dollar industry to a maybe one or two million dollar industry. But we are contributing to try to make all sectors successful in the Northwest Territories. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

QUESTION 107-16(4):
PROPOSED TAXATION INITIATIVES

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Following up on my Member's statement, my questions are for the Minister of Finance. Yesterday the Premier was asked about the current state of devolution negotiations and gave answers describing their status. Completion of a deal will take some time, and meanwhile, the revenues owed to our citizens for the sale of our resources go uncollected. Many Members have called for a resource tax as a desirable interim measure. Will the Minister commit to bringing forward a proposal for the increase of revenues through resource rents as part of his package of recommendations in the next budget? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Bromley. Honourable Minister responsible for Finance, Mr. Miltenberger.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We are committed to bringing forward a proposal for a heritage fund. We know that from some quarters there is an interest in a resource tax. We have indicated that we're looking at tax shifting at this point, given that we're still in a recession that while there are some weak signs of recovery, it's not clear that we're on the way out and that we don't have anything further to worry about. But we have committed, as a result of our roundtable, to do work on a resource tax, and look at the feedback we've received and put a discussion paper out there so that we could initiate that policy discussion to see. Keeping in mind the last time, about a year ago, when we talked about revenue options and looked at creating \$30 million in revenue and we talked about a whole host of things -- resource taxes, hotel taxes, road tolls, all these types of things -- there was almost unanimous denunciation in the House for any contemplation of raising taxes and the cost of living. So we will come forward with a discussion paper and we are going to move on the heritage fund. Thank you.

MR. BROMLEY: Very good news to hear about the heritage fund intent. I'm happy to hear that some work is being done on the resource tax. Of course, times change and, as I say, there has been quite a shift, as well, in our thinking on the resource tax that, of course, would not affect the cost of living.

The tax shifting is of interest, though. Studies show that when taxes are lowered for low and middle income people, the money is spent priming the economy and improving standards of living. The studies also show that high income earners who get tax cuts spend their money on imported goods or they put it into savings, providing only limited benefit to the community. Will the Minister commit to including a lowering of income taxes for lower and possibly middle income earners in his revenue recommendations? Mahsi.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: We would be prepared to look at all of the suggestions. I am not prepared to negotiate the contents of the upcoming budget in the House. At this point, there have been lots of recommendations made. We are looking at trying to maintain tax levels, so we are looking at things like tax shifting, recognizing, as well, it's a delicate balancing act.

The other concern is if you continue to raise taxes at the high income level as well, you have trouble attracting people when they look at the tax regime and where is the best place for them to come and provide their services. We recognize the pressures at both ends and we will try to find that appropriate balance. Thank you.

MR. BROMLEY: Thanks again for those comments. I recognize it's difficult to commit at this point and I am happy to see work is being done at this point. I hope we do go forward with that opportunity.

It's shocking, of course, that nearly 20 percent of our earned income in the NWT economy is paid to people who don't pay taxes in the NWT. I recognize that the MOU between the government and the diamond mines is working on that to base workers here in the North and that there is some effort to look at immigration to sort of help in an indirect way, however, tools do exist that can help us recover some of the loss in this area. What measures is the Minister contemplating and hopefully proposing to capture some of these escaping revenues right now? Thank you.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: As the Minister from ITI has pointed out, there were meetings held with the mines -- BHP, Diavik and De Beers -- about the MOU. One of the best ways is going to be what the mines have committed to doing, which is limiting the incentives for flying south. The pickup points are only going to be in the North, keeping in mind, then, that it's going to be the responsibility of communities that are going to be possibly places where these folks will stay. They have to make sure that they have housing available should these folks that fly in say that now they are prepared to live in the North, be it Yellowknife, Hay River, Fort Smith, Fort Providence, any community. We need housing available to hold up our end of the deal.

One of the things that we have looked at in the past that we have not moved on, of course, is a further increase to the payroll tax. That's another option that's there. It has, we think, fairly limited success given how much administration there is and all the requirements to refund or for people to have to claim back, but it's still an option that is there available to us as well. Thank you.

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

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I suppose the departure tax might be in line with some of the discussion that the Minister is having with the mines and so on to try to capture the entrance and exit of people from the Territories as they come to and fro from work. Will the Minister commit to leading the charge for ensuring that these measures are put together in an integrative and complementary way so we can enjoy the fullest range of benefits from them when we do put them in place? Will he recognize their relationship to each other and ensure that they take advantage of that opportunity? Mahsi.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: When the Member mentions leading the charge, of course, I think of the charge of the Light Brigade into the Valley of Death of 600. But, yes, we will play a leadership role and we will pull together an integrated comprehensive package, recognizing that some work will get done in time for this budget, but any significant restructuring of our tax system is going to take time to do the work and the consultations and hopefully reaching consensus, so that if it's not ready for this budget, it will be ready for the budget of '11-'12.

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

QUESTION 108-16(4):
PUBLIC SERVICE MEDICAL LEAVE
ENTITLEMENTS

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions are for the Minister responsible for the public service, for the Department of Human Resources, Mr. Bob McLeod. Mr. Speaker, we live in stressful times and we certainly know and believe that employees are entitled to all the benefits and all the leaves that are encompassed in their employment contracts. Mr. Speaker, we hear that at any given time in the public service, 10 percent of positions are not filled. They are vacant and people must be off the job in various other types of leave as well: education leave, stress leave and maternity leave and all different kinds; bereavement leave.

Mr. Speaker, today I'd like to ask particularly about the issue of stress leave. Does the Minister know at any given time how many employees on a

percentage basis, just an estimate, would be off from the public service in the Northwest Territories on stress leave? Thank you.

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

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would be only speculating. We don't, once a person has medical leave, categorize the reasons leaving for being on medical leave. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. So there is no such thing as stress leave, then. In fact, if a person is on stress leave, it just falls under the category of medical leave and they would then, I assume, be required to produce some kind of confirmation from a physician that they are entitled to be off. So just to understand, there is no differentiation between medical leave and stress leave? Thank you.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: I didn't say that. I just said that anybody that applies for medical leave, there are some requirements. If it's for more than three days, you have to get a medical certificate, and Human Resources or managers don't have the medical skills to be able to determine whether it's valid or not. So generally if it's for a longer term, it has to be vetted through our medical process. I think it's involved with Stanton Hospital. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: I'd like to ask what is the length of time an employee can be off on medical or stress leave with full paid benefits. Thank you.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: I think anything over three days would require a medical certificate and it's based on operational requirements. Thank you.

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

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you. I don't understand that answer, Mr. Speaker. If somebody is off on medical leave, is the Minister saying it could be indefinite? Like they could continue to receive full pay and be off on medical or stress leave indefinitely, or is there a time period at which some other type of disability-type pay would kick in? Thank you.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: If you are an employee earning leave credits for the amount of time that you worked and the amount of usage that you have, you are entitled to so much sick leave. If you use more than you are entitled to, then you have to enter into other arrangements, either leave without pay or you go on disability. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

QUESTION 109-16(4):
H1N1 FLU VACCINATIONS

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would ask the Minister of Health and Social Services in terms of the swine flu, the vaccine and the information. She said there was a 1-800 number to call for people who inquire for more information about it. Is this 1-800 number also being translated into the aboriginal languages for the people who want to use their language to get more information with regard to this flu?

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

HON. SANDY LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The 1-888, triple eight, number for the flu line as well as Health Line have services available in official languages. Thank you.

MR. YAKELEYA: So I am going to take it that when she says it's available in official languages, that's 24/7. Mr. Speaker, I will ask the Minister for the elders, in terms of elders' care when this vaccine team comes into the communities, that the team would be going to some of the elders' homes that are unable to get to the health centres, if they want to get their shots.

HON. SANDY LEE: First, a clarification. The flu line is on during the day and then after hours, you are probably encouraged to call the Health Line. The second thing, Mr. Speaker, the flu action teams are flying to the communities. They will be working very closely with the local staff to make sure that local languages are available. I am also encouraging the staff to work with the local staff to see if there are any elders or any other residents in small communities who are not able to get out. We do what we can to cover them. We are also doing that for any other...We are trying to cover as many people as possible in any way possible. Thank you.

MR. YAKELEYA: Mr. Speaker, some of the people I talked to, in my previous meetings with them, are somewhat sceptical as to the vaccine, because there were so many different reports on it and studies on it. Is the department also going to be advising the elders if they do not want to take the vaccine, that they are encouraged to use the traditional medicines -- that's one way also -- to see if this is an acceptable method by the health centres? I am not sure if that will be a message that this Minister wants to give. I want to make sure the elders are given this opportunity to see if they would also take their traditional medicines.

HON. SANDY LEE: Mr. Speaker, the NWT chief medical health officer and myself were on CKLB this morning for two hours and we had excellent questions from people from all over the communities, all over the regions. Mr. Speaker, I am aware of not just elders in the communities, but

in many quarters of our Territory people are seeking information. I would like to encourage all residents to find out where the flu clinic will be in their community and if they have any questions, including the elders, that they ask the staff those questions and that they get those answers. Then when they are comfortable with getting the flu shot, they will take it. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would again go back to the elders, to the aboriginal traditional medicine, if that is something the Minister is open to saying is acceptable if people don't want to take the vaccine. Some people are very afraid. Some of the elders go back to the 1928 flu epidemic and there is still lots of concern about that. There is a big scare out there right now. People should know that it's also okay to take traditional medicines in terms of dealing with this flu epidemic.

HON. SANDY LEE: I don't think myself as Minister or the chief medical health officer, even, could say, could give that kind of medical opinion that they can fight this H1N1 virus by using traditional methods of medication. I understand what the Member is saying. I think on an everyday basis, we should do everything we can to keep ourselves healthy, including taking traditional methods, herb medicine or anything else that works for them, including washing their hands and everything. Of course, all those apply. But with respect to H1N1 vaccine, our government's position is that the best way to prevent getting this is to wash your hands, sneeze into your sleeve, if you're sick, stay home and, fourthly, please go and take advantage of the vaccine. Thank you.

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

QUESTION 110-16(4):
H1N1 FLU VACCINATIONS

MR. YAKELEYA: Mr. Speaker, I guess I am really unclear in terms of the Minister not supporting the aboriginal traditional medicine in terms of encouraging some people who would want to use this. I think it's a view as to what is best for the people. I truly believe that what she is saying, this is the way to go; however, she hasn't given enough evidence in terms of showing me that traditional medicine is next best to the vaccine shots that people are going to get. I guess I want to hear more encouraging words from the Minister in terms of saying to the aboriginal people and elders, yes, you can take your medicine and that's something they would be free to do rather than try to scare them into taking the flu shots if they don't want them.

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

HON. SANDY LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. First of all, no one needs to take the vaccine if they don't want to. What we are trying to do is give as much information as possible so that people will make informed choices.

Mr. Speaker, I am not saying that the traditional way of healing is not good. That is not what I am saying. What I am saying is I am not medically qualified to say that the traditional way of medication would fight this H1N1 virus.

Mr. Speaker, I think it is important for people to know that this is a new virus. Nobody is immune from this virus, because it is new. It has a behaviour that is surprising people. We are at the very beginning of this second wave. We don't know where this flu will end up in four to five months from now. For all of the Ministers of Health in Canada and chief public health officers, in our opinion, looking at all of the data available, the best way to prevent major illness or death from H1N1 is to get the vaccine. That is not saying that you shouldn't be taking any other precautions. If you like Echinacea, or if you have...I know the Member for Sahtu relies on traditional medicine. The juice that they give from the local trees, those are all good. Take that, but I am not qualified to say that that would fight the H1N1 virus. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Lee. Time for oral questions has expired. Item 8, written questions. The honourable Member for Mackenzie Delta, Mr. Krutko.

Written Questions

WRITTEN QUESTION 7-16(4): BREAKDOWN OF HEALTH PROFESSIONAL VISITS TO TSIIGEHTCHIC

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions are for the Minister of Health and Social Services.

Please provide a precise breakdown of health care provided to the people who reside in Tsiigehtchic.

1. How many times this past year has the doctor provided care in the community, when the visits were scheduled and how long did the doctor stay in the community?
2. Also, can I get a breakdown of how many visits per year has a registered nurse been to the community and how long was the visit?
3. And finally, does the health and social services board provide care in the means of mental health counselling, and does the dentist visit this community?

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Krutko. 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. The honourable Minister of Finance, Mr. Miltenberger.

Tabling of Documents

TABLED DOCUMENT 27-16(4): DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE: STRATEGIC ACTION PLAN 2009-2010

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: I wish to table the following document entitled the Department of Finance: Strategic Action Plan 2009-2012. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

TABLED DOCUMENT 28-16(4): STATUS OF WOMEN COUNCIL OF THE NWT ANNUAL REPORT 2008-2009

HON. SANDY LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to table the following document entitled Status of Women Council of the NWT Annual Report 2008-2009. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Lee. Item 15, notices of motion. Item 16, notices of motion for first reading of bills. Item 17, motions. Item 18, first reading of bills. Item 19, second reading of bills. Item 20, consideration in Committee of the Whole of bills and other matters: Tabled Document 1-16(4), NWT Capital Estimates 2010-2011; Tabled Document 18-16(4), Supplementary Appropriation No. 2 (Operations Expenditures), 2009-2010; Tabled Document 19-16(4), Supplementary Appropriation No. 3 (Infrastructure Expenditures), 2009-2010; Committee Report 1-16(4), Standing Committee on Government Operations Report on the Review of the Information and Privacy Commissioner's 2006-2007 and 2007-2008 Annual Reports; and Committee Report 2-16(4), Standing Committee on Government Operations Report on the Review of the Auditor General on Contracting for Goods and Services in the Northwest Territories, 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 Committee of the Whole to order. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of bills and other matters: Tabled Document 1-16(4), Tabled Document 18-16(4), Tabled Document 19-16(4), Committee Report 1-16(4), and Committee Report 2-16(4).

What is the wish of the committee? Mrs. Groenewegen.

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The wish of the committee today is to deal with the infrastructure budget for the departments of Transportation and Public Works. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Does the committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): With that, we will take a short break and then deal with the Department of Transportation in Committee of the Whole.

---SHORT RECESS

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

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

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Margaret Melhorn, deputy minister of Finance; Russ Neudorf, deputy minister of Transportation.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Thank you, Mr. Minister. Welcome, witnesses. We are on Department of Transportation on page 9-2, department summary, so we will defer that. Are there any general comments in regards to Department of Transportation? Infrastructure investment summary, page 9-2. Mr. Yakeleya.

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Just for clarification, are you asking for general comments on Transportation?

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

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The comments I have would be on the projects that we have ongoing in terms of the long-term investment this department here is having in the Northwest Territories and the amount of work that is going to be carried out in different parts of the Northwest Territories and the challenges that we have with the projects that are before us. I want to ask the Minister in terms of these projects being done on time. There are certain unforeseeable incidents or circumstances that delay some of the projects. That is part of the nature of doing business in the Northwest Territories. I guess I'm going to ask the Minister somewhat in terms of the confidence of having this department carry out most of the projects through the scheduled time that they said they were going to do them.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Minister from that profile.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Mr. Chairman, the Member's question of whether we have

confidence that we will be able to carry out the projects, of course we have confidence in our staff. We will have to qualify that by stating that this past year and this year coming has produced a large number of projects, a very large budget, probably the biggest budget in our department's history, and it's really put a strain on our staff to deliver them. But we're quite pleased to state that 80-plus percent of our projects that are on our books are either at the tender stage or are in the actual construction stage. So we will probably have some carry-over, but I think we're doing very well in terms of getting all the projects out and in the process system. Thank you.

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I don't need to go through a list of projects that have been delayed or put over for another year, because of some of the work that wasn't done or was overlooked, maybe. I do know that there's very competent and capable people doing these projects and I'm grateful for the amount of infrastructure dollars that are going into the North, especially into our communities in terms of transportation. You can see the priority in terms of the federal government in terms of the dollars that this department is receiving in terms of funding for much needed infrastructure in our communities and the challenges by the people in the North here, by this department, to have these projects completed. I think this department has a fairly good record in terms of being completed on time. I'm not too sure how much is on budget. They state that they have their projects fairly on budget when they do go with the projects here.

So I guess what I'm looking at is in terms of the amount of work that's being done here and the challenge, I guess, in terms of the money that's going to be allocated here and the staff here. I know there's a need for engineers in the department. One of the things I always note is there are engineers needed right across Canada in terms of transportation. So that's why I asked. Sometimes we don't have the resources when we want them. We certainly need engineers. Engineers are spread very thinly across the North here. I'm just noting an observation here in terms of this much needed profession here such as engineers in this department here. That's what I'm asking. Are there other creative ways, rather than to exhaust the existing staff? You know, use contracting out to maybe engineering firms, that we have a good plan to keep these projects on the books, on time and on schedule. Because I know there are some projects that are not quite following what we said we were going to do. That's my concern.

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

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: Mr. Chairman, the Member is correct; I think historically we have had

some challenges filling some of the positions for engineers and project managers. Our senior staff over the last year or so have really worked hard to improve that. We had the opportunity to hire a number of people in the technical area. I think we're probably better positioned now with the people that we've brought on stream and some of the work being contracted out. So we are in a good position to move forward. We don't expect it's going to cause a lot of concern now that we've staffed up.

I have to admit, though, that there are some things that are causing delays, such as weather. We had some discussions already with the Member for Nahendeh about work that was delayed due to rain and wet weather that just couldn't be done. So those kinds of things are unforeseen and we're probably going to see more of that as time goes by.

For the most, and in response to the Member's question, we are doing a lot better than we have historically. We've been able to fill a lot of our positions and we've been able to contract a lot of the work out also, so it's really put us in a good position to move forward on these projects on our books. Thank you

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): Thank you, Minister McLeod. Mr. Yakeleya, any more general comments?

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I want to say to the Minister and the department that, certainly, there's always huge interest in terms of infrastructure in our smaller communities, especially the ones that seem to need it more in terms of bringing down the cost of living or just have accessibility to other things similar to where communities have all-season roads. I'm just talking about the access into the Sahtu and into other communities that have roads into their communities. I just wanted to say to the Minister that we certainly appreciate the infrastructure dollars coming into our region and how it gets spread across in terms of satisfying all the other regions also for their infrastructure needs. I know it's a challenge and I certainly hope that through the Minister and his department, to put together some creative arguments and solutions towards the federal government in terms of how do we get more dollars into building up our infrastructure in our communities. I know it's desperately long thought after in terms of, say, for example, the Bear River bridge in my region. It's something that we could certainly use. Also, the industries such as oil and gas companies coming, that they can use an extra month of drilling. That means extra dollars of money into the Northwest Territories. It does help us ease with the safety issue and now the discussion on climate change. So those kinds of things are important there.

So I guess what I wanted to say to the Minister is that I know there is a lot of work being done, a lot of

good work is going to get done in the North here, and we certainly appreciate the money being spent in our region in terms of building up our infrastructure. We're finally starting to see some of our equipment being worked more than three or four months of the year. It's stretched out to six or seven months, which is a good sign for us. So I just wanted to say that to the Minister in terms of his ability and his team members to go to Ottawa and continue to get more funding and look at other funding avenues to look at some creative ways as to how do we get infrastructure into our regions. That would probably make a lot of people happy on this issue here. I'll leave it at that, Mr. Chair. Just more comments to the Minister and his staff.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. I'm sure the Minister appreciates your comments. We'll go to the next person on my list, Mr. Krutko. Thank you.

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, in regard to the capital estimates, I think that the Department of Transportation has to seriously look at the high cost of maintenance in regard to our highway systems, but more importantly, with the changing climate and the effects that we're seeing, especially in regard to some sort of...You know, we talk about dust control, we talk about some sort of a road resurfacing appliance that we can put on our roads. I know there are different products that are out there, but I think, as a government, we have to seriously start testing these products on the highways that basically have a hardtop. I think that we've seen what it's done in regard to Highway No. 3 and how we've seen an increase in regard to paving and chipseal. I think we also have to look at other new initiatives that are out there for resurfacing. There are appliances we've put on our airports. I know in Aklavik they use it. Also, there are new products out there. I know in the past we have requested from the Dempster Highway to try to do some of this resurfacing as a pilot project. We can maybe try it out on the issue in regard to potholes and the cost of maintenance in regard to Highway No. 7, Highway No. 8, and especially where we have major O and M costs associated with having to go out every time there's a rainstorm, because of the potholes, or looking at the possibility of trying these new appliances for resurfacing.

So I would just like to ask the Minister of Transportation, would he consider looking at going forward in the capital budget to look at the possibility of doing some of these sorts of pilot projects? I mentioned Highway No. 7, Highway No. 8. Maybe just outside the communities so we can see how it holds up. Like, most of the communities, basically, do have some means of applying surface materials. Like in McPherson now we basically have chipseal on the main street, which the municipality sort of manages. Either from the community to the garbage dump or from the

community out to the ferry landing, whatever. But I think it's something that this government has to seriously consider looking at, especially looking at that as a pilot project. So I'd just like to ask the Minister, has your department considered looking at that in light of the high cost of O and M in regard to resurfacing our highways every time we have either a snowstorm or basically have a major downpour of rain in which we see potholes? That's when we seem to get the majority of the complaints from the general public. So I'd like to ask, is that something the department is considering looking at?

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

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chair, the Member raises an issue that has been somewhat of a challenge over the years for us as a department. We've looked at a number of ways that we can suppress the dust on our highways. We've also done the same in a lot of the communities. We've used different methods and products over the years, calcium, of course, being the cheapest one; however, a very limited lifespan, about one year for calcium. We've also used EK35 on some municipal roads and we also used it on airports. It's a product that's fairly cheap, but the lifespan of EK35 is somewhat limited, it doesn't stand up well to high speeds and turning vehicles. So we are kind of limited to a number of methods, one being chipseal, and we have applied the product on a lot of the southern parts of the Territories and we are starting to move forward on Highway No. 1 towards Fort Simpson.

The other products, of course the most favourable product but the most expensive is asphalt. It has a longer lifespan but is very, very costly to apply. So we are looking at new possibilities and other methods of applying dust suppressant. We are convinced it does lower our maintenance costs, but we need something that can be affordable. One product that has come forward that we are currently going to be testing is called Easy Street. It's cheaper than paving but it's more expensive than chipseal, and we are being told that it's also more durable.

All these different applications of dust suppressants on the roads are, of course, based on having a really good foundation. We need to have roads that are well reconstructed with good material. That's the case in the Member's riding. There has been a lot of work in the last while on reconstruction. Right now, it's still a priority that we'd like to consider and we're looking at ways we can do a test pilot project in his riding or on one of the roads in his riding. We, of course, have to look at the cost factor and we have to look at how do we maintain it. Right now, there is no equipment in that area and that would have to be purchased. So all things have to be considered. Having said that, it's something that

we'd like to keep in mind for the long term. Right now I think there's 35 kilometres towards the border that we'd like to focus on for this coming year and get completed over this year and next year, but it's not something we've ruled out yet. Thank you.

MR. KRUTKO: Mr. Chair, again, I think that is one way that we can look at it by way of, say, a pilot project on the different highway systems, Highway No. 7, Highway No. 8, and see exactly how this can be applied and tested in those different areas to see how it holds up. Because we are seeing a major difference in regard to the type of weather that's shifted by way of climate change, the major downpours that we're seeing by way of major rainstorms, which we haven't really seen in the past. Also, we're seeing with permafrost and the effect that it's having in regard to the changing climate and the temperature and the different weather patterns we're seeing it is very much affecting the overall condition of our highways. Again, if there is a way that we can find to resurface, protect the surface of our highways, avoid the affect we're seeing with moisture added to the road that is basically mostly built with gravel and mud that you can get by that.

So, again, you mentioned something about Easy Street. Well, hopefully we can go down the easy street and apply this stuff and we'll have a better product that we can drive on. Again, I'd just like to ask, would you consider seriously looking at coming forward with some sort of a pilot project in next year's budget to look at possibly applying some of this stuff to the two highways I mentioned, Highway No. 8 and Highway No. 7, and just see how it holds up on certain sections of the roads? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): Thank you, Mr. Krutko. For the record, Minister Miltenberger has directed me to Minister McLeod. Minister Michael McLeod.

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: Mr. Chairman, I can commit to the Member that we can do an analysis of what the cost would be to apply different types of dust suppression and highway top, whether chipseal or Easy Street asphalt, and look at the cost, look at the benefits and look at the possibilities, and share that information with the Member and have a discussion before next year's budget. We are still at a point where we don't know what the actual cost and benefit would be from Easy Street. The product is manufactured in Alberta and it's quite a distance to truck it all the way to the Dempster. So we'd have to see if there was another facility maybe in the Yukon or if there was something similar that could be utilized. But I can commit to the Member that we'll look at all possibilities and report back to him.

MR. KRUTKO: Just finishing off on my favourite subject in regard to access roads to gravel sources and I think if I don't respond to it, it won't be doing

justice to the residents of Aklavik. I think that we have to realize that it's critical that we look at opening up gravel sources around communities and, more importantly, it's not only for the community, it's for the regions, it's for the development of industry, it's for the expansion of connecting communities, and I think we have to look at these developments in regard to long-term investments. I noted that we have to realize there have been motions passed in this House to look at these as priorities.

Again, I'd just like to raise the issue with the Ministers of Finance and Transportation, just to realize the importance that government has to play in a supportive role to ensure that we assist communities. We have the expertise, we have the people in the department who basically are responsible for building highways, maintaining highways, building roads, airports and whatnot. By having that expertise and also accessing funds from the federal government, regardless if it's Building Canada Fund, P3 funds or even looking at the possibility of research and development funds, we have to be able to achieve these projects.

But more important for myself is the Aklavik access road to the gravel source. There has been a preliminary study done. They're now suggesting taking it to the second phase, which is more in regard to an in-depth engineering design phase. So I'd just like to know from the department exactly where is it going forward in the budget that those dollars can be accessed similar to the arrangement in regard to the Tuk access road project, which we're able to access Building Canada funds and I believe the community of Aklavik is requesting a similar arrangement so that they can also look at it. Again, we just heard from the P3 funds that's possibly out there. That could be another option. So I'd just like to know what options are out there for the community to move this project forward and assist other communities that have a similar challenge about having access to gravel, which is essential for community building. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Minister Miltenberger has directed me to go to Minister McLeod. Minister McLeod.

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I guess there are a couple of options out there. The community has done a very good job of doing a study that brought the information forward that brought us to this stage where we will probably need a project description report done on the route and the environmental side of it, and also look at the economics of it. Of course, a large stockpile by all stakeholders for gravel needs for the next five years is probably the cheapest way to go, but the community has been very determined that they need a gravel source and we've been very cooperative with them. The next step is still yet to

be determined. The report has just come out a couple of months ago and it was not something that was readily available for everybody to come up with an opinion.

My position is that there is the Community Adjustment Fund that I would like to see the community put an application in. I'd be happy to work with them on trying to secure the money, the \$1.2 million that's required for the next step, the next phase, which is the PDR. The Member mentioned that the P3 is available and it is. The community is free to apply for P3. It's going to require three-quarters of the dollars required for the project to be invested by someone, more than likely by the community. So there are a couple of options open. We would like to sit down and discuss the options with the steering committee and the leadership of the community as to what the next steps are going to be. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): Thank you, Minister McLeod. Next on my list is Mr. Beaulieu, but before we go there, we're on general comments. If we have specific questions, let's save the specific questions on individual projects to the detail line. Next on my list, Mr. Beaulieu.

MR. BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. First I'd like to ask if you could recognize Laura Boucher in the gallery from Fort Resolution.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. I think you already did. Welcome to the gallery. Back to Mr. Beaulieu, general comments.

MR. BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I guess I did have more specific questions, but I'll try to keep them as general as possible.

On the runway stabilization of the Department of Transportation, the projects, I noticed that there is a project cost only for this year in the plan. I'm curious as to what system the department uses to purchase the products, because the products are already in the communities but there's no prior year's cost.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. Minister Miltenberger is directing me to go to Mr. Neudorf. Mr. Neudorf.

MR. NEUDORF: Thank you, Mr. Chair. This is an ongoing project for the department. We have traditionally allocated \$300,000 per year. So there would be funding in the current year of \$300,000 that would have to be used to purchase the product. We typically purchase in the year prior and then over the next two years that follow would install the product on the runway. Thank you.

MR. BEAULIEU: Thank you. I don't wish to belay the issue, but I'm still not quite understanding how the system works. If there is no money allocated in a prior year but the product is already there, there's money allocated this year to apply the product. I'm

wondering if this substantiation is just incomplete or if there's another way that the product was purchased.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. For the record, Minister Miltenberger is directing me to go to Mr. Neudorf. Mr. Neudorf.

MR. NEUDORF: Thank you, Mr. Chair. This would be an ongoing project. So we would have \$300,000 in the current year for runway stabilization. Thank you.

MR. BEAULIEU: I just confused current year with the budget year that we're referring to for a second there. On the Highway No. 6, I guess to ask the question that I guess is a similar type of question to how the budgeting works, I noticed that the project title indicates that this project goes from kilometre 0 to kilometre 90, but the actual budget, prior year's budget plus this upcoming year's budget will all be spent on kilometre 67 to kilometre 90. So I'm wondering if this again is an item where the budget will eventually be cash flowed out at the same amount that's indicated in 2010-11 all the way to 2014-15.

MR. NEUDORF: The Member is correct that with the funding that shows in the capital plan here, both the current year and then 2010-11, we will be working toward putting a chipseal surface on the highway from kilometre 67 to kilometre 90 into the community. We do hope that once that gets done, we will be able to come forward through our capital planning process to see if we can find some additional funding so that we can continue with chipseal. Of course, that will have to go through the GNWT capital planning process to see if it's priority and see if we can find the funding that's available in GNWT capital. Thank you.

MR. BEAULIEU: So I'm wondering if the money was to be cash flowed out fully to essentially the next five years, counting this upcoming fiscal year, could that flow into the budget and becomes a part of the previously committed section of the acquisition plan.

MR. NEUDORF: I'm not sure I understand the question completely, so if I get it wrong, then perhaps the Member could clarify, but we identified the funding for this project. It initially came from one of the strategic initiatives of the government: reducing the cost of living. We were able to top that budget up somewhat with funding from the Build Canada Plan. So we're getting funding from the two sources, both the GNWT and then the federal Build Canada Plan. We had initially identified a source of funding and we put it forward in this project with I'm not sure exactly where we were going to spend the money, which kilometres we would focus the funding on. As we've done more engineering assessments, as we've talked to the communities we've realized we've got enough funding to do about that 23 kilometres that we mentioned before.

That is the highest priority from the DOT perspective, from the community perspective. So we're going to focus the funding that we have there.

As I mentioned before, as we go forward we will, of course, see if we can find some more money to continue with the chipseal. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): Thank you, Mr. Neudorf. Alright, next on my list is Mr. Jacobson.

MR. JACOBSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I'm happy to see the new air terminal buildings going up in three of my communities of Paulatuk, Sachs Harbour and Tuktoyaktuk, but how are the timelines of getting the materials into the communities? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): Thank you, Mr. Jacobson. Mr. Neudorf.

MR. NEUDORF: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The funding for the three terminal building projects that the Member mentioned is coming from the federal government underneath the stimulus funding. So DOT will have a total of \$3.4 million for those three terminal buildings cost shared 50/50 with the territorial government. Those projects were just officially approved by the federal government this summer and we are currently out for RFP design services on the terminals. We will finalize that this winter, get a contract in place, award that so that we can meet the first barge for delivery of material into the communities. If there is an opportunity to move some material into Tuk this winter, then, certainly, we'll take advantage of the winter road that's there. Since this is federal stimulus funding, we have to have the project complete by March 31, 2011, and that will be a challenge, but we have a plan to meet that target. Thank you.

MR. JACOBSON: I am really happy to hear what the deputy minister had to say. Regarding the contractors, in any of our contracts that are given out to the communities across this Territory, you know, priority should be given to local businesses, and through the RFP I hope that is going to happen and how, with the flow-through of the funding, just make sure that everything is utilized with northern businesses. That is more of a comment. I have more questions on the page by page. So thank you.

CHAIRMAN (MR. ABERNETHY): Thank you, Mr. Jacobson. Minister Miltenberger, to the comment.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The Government of the Northwest Territories will employ all the contracting standards and regulations that are there to promote maximum northern involvement in all these projects. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (MR. ABERNETHY): Thank you, Minister Miltenberger. Next on my list is Mr. Menicoche.

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you very much there, Mr. Chair. I just have a few general comments, no specific questions at this time. Just picking up from my colleague Mr. Jacobson's comment on maximizing benefits for communities through contracting services, I spoke earlier in my Member's statement about an issue in one of my communities, the community of Wrigley. There is a big \$15 million contract, seemingly little benefit flowing to the community. I believe government does have a role in it.

I believe we have to do our best to maximize opportunities, employment of those communities. We talk about it all the time. We talk about developing the capacity of our communities, developing training, and any time we got a contract or even a larger contract, it's an opportunity to benefit those communities. So I am glad to hear the Minister indicates some policy around it. But in its application, Mr. Chair, I believe we have to be more prudent. We have to be more involved.

The community of Wrigley spoke about requesting assistance from Department of Transportation officials and they weren't helpful at that point. I think they were trying to take hands-off opportunities. They're in a contract, they can do what they want. Still, we keep track of government dollars and that's a government contract and we should have a say and I think we do. It's just a matter of how we apply our persuasiveness, I suppose, Mr. Chair.

Just in terms of the Transportation capital plan, I believe that is a good investment. I believe the department works hard in trying to make sure everybody gets their fair share of projects, at the same time, identifying and completing priority infrastructure repairs and/or replacements.

In my riding, particularly with highways, there were a few deferred projects especially on one that was a priority, which is Highway No. 7. The portion from the B.C. border and Fort Liard, I think there is 34 kilometres. There was supposed to be \$4 million of investment there. That wasn't done at all. We deferred. As well as the collapse of Highway No. 7 at around 166. I kept checking all summer. We have secured the additional million dollars last year, if you remember, Mr. Chair, to ensure that we rebase that road, but I didn't see it done this year. The contract did go out, but once again it was delayed late into September and it does have an issue.

Community residents of Fort Liard, even in Nahanni Butte, are saying in July and August were good construction weather, but we wait until September to get mobilized and it rains the whole month of September. So they just don't see the logic at all, Mr. Chair. If anything, at this point, I would urge that any deferred projects, to try to get that done as soon as possible. I know there were many other projects happening and tied up equipment that

could have been available for those projects. But just the same, moving forward, I just wanted to reiterate the concerns of my constituents and myself that it is a priority for our region, and I would like to see it done early in the construction year for 2010.

As well, in the capital plan, I see provision for airport lighting for other communities throughout the North. That's something that has been high on my agenda for Jean Marie and Nahanni Butte. I will continue to convey that. I would like to see it as a priority for our communities as well. So I will continue to speak on that, Mr. Chair.

As well, I think I spoke many times, as our 16th Assembly, if we are going to leave a legacy behind us as an Assembly, I believe we should start moving towards chipsealing. That's a tangible asset that's something that constituents and residents throughout the North can see us actually physically working us. We've got lots of good programs and services, but I believe that the people only see something tangible like improved highways. Mr. Beaulieu spoke about that as well, as well as did Mr. Krutko on the Dempster Highway. I would like to see us work towards that in this Assembly. Expansion up until the year 2011 when we've got at least control over the budget and, of course, the 17th Assembly takes over after that. So I continue to push for that. I think that's a noble goal for this Assembly and our government to work towards. I am sure you will get support from this side of the House as we move through next year's budgeting process.

I am glad to see, as well, that we are getting some chipsealing from Fort Providence junction towards Fort Simpson, about 70 kilometres. There again, I am not sure of the reasoning, but once again that was delayed. However, I was given assurances that it will be done early in the new fiscal year in 2010 and people from our riding are looking forward to it. They were quite excited about it this year when it was first announced about May or June. In our lifetime, we are probably going to see chipsealing from Simpson towards Hay River and/or Yellowknife. I would like to see the continuation of that project in 2010 and include, as well, more reconstruction of the Highway No. 1 road towards Fort Simpson replacing more culverts, because as soon as we do that, we are certainly upgrading the road and making it wider to chipsealing standards. You know, it's a big goal, but if we are doing 70 or 60 kilometres of chipsealing a year, I think that's phenomenal and I am pleased that our government supports that and I certainly would continue to support that.

So with that, Mr. Chair, I've got no further questions. Just more of a comment. I look forward to deliberating the capital budget as we move forward this afternoon.

CHAIRMAN (MR. ABERNETHY): Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. Minister Michael McLeod.

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. There are a number of issues being raised here. First of all, the contract for Blackwater. I am sure the Member heard the disappointment in my voice when I responded to the question and especially the comments made that he was not happy with the government not responding.

Mr. Chairman, at the Member's request, we did carve out a portion for earth works, so it would be negotiated with the community. We did also extend the deadline for the contract. We also responded to his request for a negotiated contract. We found extra dollars so we could negotiate the contract. The community has received 20 percent of the benefits of this contract already and the contract is not over. So it's really hard to find substantiation to what more we can do. We can't be involved directly with the subcontractors to negotiate any deals. That has to be done by the person that has the individual companies or the equipment that needs to be worked on.

We've committed, at his request, to start working towards chipsealing Highway No. 1. We had to go find extra dollars to do that and we are doing 70 kilometres. We've also found extra dollars over the last while to work on Highway No. 7. All of these things are in his riding. The work was tendered, it was awarded. There are some things that have been delayed that we can't control if it's because of weather. So the goals that we have set, we've really tried to support. We will continue to try to do that. But I think it's really unfair for the Member to say we aren't supporting him and his riding. Thank you.

MR. MENICOCHÉ: I would like to thank the Minister for his explanations. I didn't mean to poke him in the ribs, as it were there, Mr. Chair.

---Laughter

I am only conveying what the residents of Wrigley pass on to me with their dealings with the Department of Transportation in the Wrigley contract. The Minister mentioned other good investments in the Nahendeh riding, absolutely. We have developed a good working relationship with the Minister and the government, that the needs of my constituents and communities are being met. Just with clarification, it's the current Blackwater Bridge contract that the community of Wrigley is having difficulties with and they conveyed that to me. I believe my role as MLA is to convey it to the Minister and to government that here we have some difficulties. We would like to work through these issues and when there is no movement on it, my role is to raise it publicly in the House. So I will continue to pursue my role, Mr. Chair. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (MR. ABERNETHY): Thank you, Minister Menicoche. I didn't hear a question. Thanks for the comment. We are still on general comments. The next on my list is Mr. Yakeleya. Before we go to Mr. Yakeleya, just a reminder that if you've got questions on specific projects, please save it for the detail. We are just on general comments. So to Mr. Yakeleya.

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to focus my comments on the big picture within the department here and even with the GNWT. I would look forward to looking into details of the program that the department has, the Drive Alive Program. It's a program for the public in terms of safety issues and adults, young kids having safety programs in our schools and communities. I would like to ask some questions in that area of the safety programs and that initiative, certainly for safety for the people in my region that have about 800 kilometres of winter road from Wrigley to Colville Lake.

Safety is a real major factor. I want to again be pressing the Minister and the department on what type of work is going to be looked at in improving the road system, the grade system in terms of safety for the travellers and people who do come up to the Sahtu to visit. I want to see where traditional knowledge will be applied in terms of transportation for the areas in the Sahtu, the winter roads, and meeting with our people, the local contractors and seeing what areas are dangerous, what areas need to be looked at by the department and that stretch of highway here.

Mr. Chairman, also I would like to have some discussions around some of the bridge work that's been done and the winter road. There are 36 bridges that have been completed. There are some that need to be worked on. There is always ongoing work on the bridges and the replacement of timber on the decks of the bridges. There is shifting of some of the bridges that our people have noticed over time. Certainly our department is well aware of this also. So I just wanted to look at some of the bridge work on the winter road system, particularly Oscar Creek. I know there is some planned work there. I think that is a long-standing bridge that people have also made comments as they drive by it on the way from Norman Wells to Fort Good Hope.

Mr. Chairman, the other one I want to ask the department is some of the projects that are happening in the Sahtu, some of the other ones like on the airport, so the road in terms of partnerships in terms of working with the department to see where partnerships can be sought after and discussed in terms of doing some work with the department here on their policy on partnerships.

Speaking of policy, Mr. Chairman, I understand that there is not a policy in terms of gravel source roads

or all-weather roads into gravel sources. I know that there was some discussion here. Mr. Krutko had talked about it somewhat. I know there are more communities that are interested in accessing an all-weather road to the gravel source. It becomes very complicated discussion because of the costing factor, in terms of if you are going to do this, you are going to look at a lot of communities. However, it is an important issue here. Hopefully we have some discussion as to how we go forward in terms of having some kind of policy like that. It certainly requires some attention here.

Mr. Chairman, two more things I have on my list here. The government's position has duly noted over here that the Mackenzie Valley Highway is a priority. I know the department has talked about doing some work in the future in terms of advancing some of that work in terms of some baseline studies. I understood that there is some economic analysis on the Mackenzie Valley Highway construction. I wouldn't mind having a report of that to look at in terms of continuous support on the Mackenzie Valley Highway. I am not too sure how this idea will be discussed within the department in terms of even a construction of a road here between Tulita and Norman Wells. That road here is quite expensive. I was hoping that people will be willing to look at it and have some discussion of working on this, similar to the Tuk gravel source 177. That source that the community of Tuktoyaktuk and the department worked successfully on together is on realignment of the Mackenzie Valley road from Inuvik to Tuktoyaktuk. These types of discussion, I would like to see where the department is at.

I want to ask the department in terms of the winter road. Is that on our core national highway standards or are we linked somewhere in terms of some standards of funding in terms of where that winter road is? Or is it just the all-season road in the Northwest Territories that is on this standard here? If that is not the case, then I don't know if we are going to be successful in trying to access dollars. That is something that I want to have a discussion on.

Lastly, Mr. Chairman, I want to just say to Mr. Krutko's comments in terms of the road up in Inuvik -- it's called Highway No. 8 -- I have driven it and I have also stated publicly that this road should have some attention in terms of dust control, suppressant or even chipsealing. That road is dusty and people out in Inuvik certainly need to have some attention in terms of having that road looked after in terms of having some dust control or suppressant on that whole highway or some kind of chipseal. It is a real shame that it doesn't have anything yet. I know there is a lot of work being done on that highway there. Hopefully it will get there one day, because I have noticed that people up there talk about the amount of dust and I have seen it myself.

Mr. Chairman, these are my opening comments to the department.

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

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Once again, the Member raises a lot of issues that are of concern in his riding. The issue of access road to gravel sources has become very popular or at least a common voiced concern here in this House and at a lot of our meetings. Right now we don't have a program that allows for investment in roads to gravel sources. It is something that this government hasn't had. I think the responsibility was devolved over to the municipalities through the New Deal program some years ago. We do have an Access Road Program that has a budget of \$300,000 that communities access for various reasons. However, it is very oversubscribed. The budget doesn't go very far. There has been some discussion through the Rural and Remote committee to see if there is any opportunity to encourage the government or redirect some money so that we could look at access roads to gravel sources. We have four communities in the Northwest Territories right now that have some challenges like finding gravel sources or hauling gravel from identified sources to the communities. I think that is a serious concern. We have to move forward on that.

The Mackenzie Valley Highway, of course, is a priority for this government. The Members of this House voted and passed a motion in this House here to recognize it as a priority. We, as a department, have been trying to find resources to make that move forward. We have hired a company to provide us with an analysis on the economic benefits. That report is in our hands now. The draft that we have looked at, or at least I have looked at, certainly shows that there are some very good returns on investment to create a Mackenzie Valley Highway. We also want to move forward to doing the project description report on all aspects of this road, the whole alignment, and we have identified \$1 million for this year's budget and another million for next year. That still leaves us quite short of what we actually require, which would be a total of \$7 million. The federal government has invested in the portion from Tuktoyaktuk to Inuvik to the tune of \$975,000, which should allow them to do the project description report. We are still trying to put together a plan to address the rest of the road. The Gwich'in have informed us that they are working with the feds to try to secure some dollars. They may need to come and work with us on finding some action funds. We, as a department, are having discussions or will be approaching the federal government to see if there are any dollars out there in any of the funding sources that are there.

The Member also raised the possibility of looking at a portion of the road to connect communities in his riding and whether the winter road would have to be recognized as part of the national highway system. In my opinion, there are programs that we can tap into for constructing and improving the grade. The new road is still the federal responsibility. The federal government will, of course, dictate how the criteria is drafted; they have up to now on all their programs. We certainly agree that Highway No. 8 is going to continue to need investment. We have enhanced our investment. It is roughly \$8 million a year. It is going to probably require about \$120 million or \$130 million to construct the whole road. It is at the lifecycle that it needs to be reconstructed, so it will get attention. We will continue to provide improvements. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Next on my list is Mr. Beaulieu. Once again, a reminder that we are on general comments. Thank you. Mr. Beaulieu.

MR. BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am interested in having the department look at expanding the Access Road Program. I think that we have several reasons for using the Access Road Program. I think one here has been to access gravel, as is the case in Tuktoyaktuk. I think Mr. Krutko has been asking for the same type of access to gravel for construction purposes and so on. The case has been used for better construction of infrastructure within the communities and so on.

There is also accessing communities, which, I guess, is essential, the development of access roads to access communities like Dettah, Nahanni Butte and so on and so forth. I would like to have the department consider looking at accessing traditional use areas. I think it, in my riding, has become probably the most important type of access that is needed. The accessing of gravel is not essential in the riding, because gravel is available along the highway in one community and, of course, within the community boundaries of another community or they have good access. But the community has a strong desire to look at accessing a traditional use area. I would like to start some sort of dialogue, I guess, with this department and also with the Energy department so that we can do something jointly or the Ministers' Energy committee to do something in conjunction with the mini-hydro that is proposed halfway to the community that would like to access traditional use area.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. Minister McLeod.

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: Mr. Chairman, I am certainly glad that the Member has recognized that there is a need for more money in our budget. Of course, once again, it is a matter of where our priorities are. We certainly could have set up our

budget a little differently, but there is so much need right across the Territories.

Our goal was to try to target investment on all our road systems. We also had a number of ACAP program projects that we used to improve our airport and we also had the federal government come forward and announce some projects in Nunakput for the air terminals. Mr. Chairman, it is a matter of how do we invest and get the best return for our dollars.

The government went through an exercise where they looked at new strategic investments, and gravel roads I don't believe made it as part of that. I am not sure if I am totally familiar with the mini-hydro project. That is something we would have to look at to see if there is any opportunity to piggyback on a project there or look at working and using some of the existing access dollars to help the community. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): Thank you, Minister McLeod. I have nobody else on my list. Does committee agree that we move on to detail?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): Okay. We are on page 9-2 with the Department of Transportation, but we will defer that page until after consideration of activity summary. We shall move to page 9-4. Does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): We are on page 9-4 which is the Department of Transportation, activity summary, airports, infrastructure investment summary, total infrastructure investment summary, \$17.510 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): We will move on to the next page which is 9-7, Department of Transportation, activity summary, marine, infrastructure investment summary, total infrastructure investment summary, \$300,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): We will move on to the next page which is going to be highways, page 9-10, Transportation, activity summary. Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, in regard to the Access Road Program -- and I know I've raised this before -- it comes in different types of access road. You have the upgrade to the road to connect communities such as the road to Nahanni Butte. You have the expansion of what used to be the Community Access Road Program which was used to put the road into Jean Marie. There again, it's another access road construction program. Then, also, you have the Access Road Program in regard to the Tuk access road program.

Again, I think that this issue has been around as long as I've been here, going back to the 13th Assembly. The whole idea of having the community access road was mostly for the communities in the Eastern Arctic so that they can access traditional areas close to their communities by way of fishing spots or, basically, recreation areas or even areas just to get out of the community.

I think that this government has to, you know, we talk about having a Highway Strategy, we have strategies in place. I'd just like to ask the Minister, I know that the Minister stated that they don't really have a program for that, but we have programs which are similar to what we're talking about but we use a different method of achieving it.

Again, I'll refer to the Nahanni Butte road program to connect that community to a highway. I mean, we can use that same argument in regard to the road to Tuk, which we've used. I can use the same argument in regard to Aklavik, from Aklavik connecting them to the Dempster Highway. We're able to achieve it in some communities, but we don't really have a program like the Minister mentioned.

I'd just like to ask the Minister, knowing it is definitely from the expression of interest by Members and also this program has been around, like I mentioned, since the 13th Assembly, it's very important to rural and remote communities that we continue to expand the program. But the whole program, it was sort of watered down over the years and now the Community Access Program is \$50,000 a year up to \$450,000. I mean, because it's so limited, I mean, you couldn't get two loads of gravel for \$50,000 in some communities. I think, if anything, it's unproductive by the way it was achieved, but yet we're able to achieve results using different methods.

So I'm just wondering from the Minister, do we actually have a framework or detail of a program that meets what we're talking about here in the House in regard to achieving the same results in regard to connecting communities to highways, connecting communities to resource rich areas, mining areas or even tourism potential areas? Because it seems like we're coming at it from all angles but we're talking about the same thing. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Mr. Neudorf.

MR. NEUDORF: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I'll provide a little bit of background on the Access Road Program. Within the Department of Transportation we do have a Community Local Access Road Program. It's in our O and M. It's been mentioned here. There's about \$300,000 in that budget. It allows us to provide contributions to half a dozen or eight communities, about \$40,000 a year. Its main purpose is to provide funding to communities in the

form of contributions so that they can construct a trail or an access road to a nearby attraction, recreation area, traditional area, that kind of thing. The Member is correct; funding for that is very limited. It's generally oversubscribed and hard to get a lot of work done for \$40,000, but we have made some good progress over a number of years working with communities.

In terms of the access road projects that are within the capital plan, those actually came out of a special initiative of the 15th Legislative Assembly when there was some capital funding identified for public highway access roads; specifically, Nahanni Butte, Hay River Reserve and Jean Marie River. There are still some remnants of the capital dollars in the budget here. Nahanni Butte, we were hoping it would be done this year. We got a little bit of weather challenges at the end, but it should be done early next year. It has a little bit of cleanup work to do, so there's still some ongoing capital here. Same with Hay River Reserve, there's still some more work to do on that. In Jean Marie, just because of the standard that it's constructed, we do need a modest amount of capital every year to keep that project going, to keep the road going.

In terms of gravel access, there is no program in DOT for constructing gravel access roads. We do work with Public Works and Services, with the Housing Corporation and the communities to coordinate the gravel requirements of the various GNWT departments. We work with communities so that we can provide a coordinated project when that makes sense to do that. But within DOT we certainly do take care of our own gravel needs. We have many of those for our highway system and then for our airports.

The Tuk gravel access road, again, it was a special initiative of the 16th Assembly. We were able to identify some funding under the Build Canada. We did have the strong support of Members to move forward with that. We, as a department, were very interested, because it is on the future Mackenzie Valley road alignment and we saw it as another positive way to demonstrate the government's support to that, building the road. Thank you.

MR. KRUTKO: In regard to the comments from the deputy minister, it's clearly illustrated that if a program is overprescribed, that tells me that people very much want access to the program and, if anything, if a program is overprescribed, don't you think that we should be putting more resources into that program, increase the amount of money we spend in the program and increase the threshold so it can really accomplish what we're trying to do? Like I say, this issue has been here as long as I have, going back to the 13th Assembly. Again, it has always come to this Legislature year after year after year, but yet we're still not really able to receive the maximum benefit out of it.

Again, with the comments from the deputy minister about having a program which has been overprescribed, is there any possibility of expanding the resource injection into that program either through the Department of Finance or the Minister of Transportation and realize that this is a critical program that has been in high demand over the years and still is? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Minister Miltenberger.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I believe there will be an opportunity tomorrow night with the meeting of the Rural and Remote communities to look at that as one of the possible options for recommendation. Thank you.

MR. KRUTKO: Just on another issue in regard to the talk about the Mackenzie Valley all-weather road. You talked about environmental engineering and alignment options. I'm just wondering on the question of various, what's the capital injection or what we're looking at by way of expenditures in that area for this work. Do you have any idea how much money we're talking about to do the work that's going to be needed to achieve that objective? Are we doing any research and development by way of trying to develop it? Because it is mentioned under various so I'm just wondering if it's a territorial program.

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

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: Mr. Chairman, the work that needs to be done in terms of PDR is roughly \$8 million. We need an additional \$7 million and we have identified a million dollars in this budget. If the Member is actually asking about the capital estimate to do an actual Mackenzie Valley all-weather road, we're probably looking anywhere from \$1.8 billion to \$2 billion. Thank you.

MR. KRUTKO: Just on that, I'd just like to ask exactly what is the relationship between this department and the so-called MAC Group which is looking at a similar objective but they're looking at...What are we doing to work with our partners to try to achieve this and also being able to leverage more federal funding or by way of some sort of a partnership arrangement to meet the final goal of eventually seeing a highway down the Mackenzie?

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: Mr. Chairman, the relationship we have with the MAC Group is through the Gwich'in Tribal Council and the president. They have had some discussions with myself and also with some of our staff and demonstrated an interest in doing some of the project description report work that we'd like to see done that's within their traditional area. They have indicated to us that they are getting close to some kind of agreement that would see some investment from the federal government and they've asked us

to stay in touch with them or to see if we'd be interested. I believe our Premier has given them a letter agreeing that we would work with them on this stretch of road.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): Thank you, Minister McLeod. Next on my list is Mr. Bromley.

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I'd like to start with the access road to Dettah. I'm wondering if the Minister could provide me with an update on what is being achieved this year and what the budget will cover for next year. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): Thank you, Mr. Bromley. Mr. Neudorf.

MR. NEUDORF: Thank you, Mr. Chair. We have a total of \$4 million for the Dettah access road this year and next. It's to be provided under the Build Canada Plan, so we just received official approval of that this summer. That did put us a bit behind the ball to get work underway, but we have hired a consulting engineering company to help us with the engineering work on the road and that is being undertaken now. We also have been talking to the Yellowknives Dene and their economic development branch to talk about possibilities of developing a pit that we can use for granular production. We do think that that would be moved forward and then we would look at producing some material this year. Then next year, with the funding in the budget here, we would apply that to the resurface and see if we can actually get a chipseal on at the end of the day too. Thank you.

MR. BROMLEY: That sounds like wonderful news. Just to confirm, we're talking about restructuring the Dettah road to the point where we can responsibly chipseal it. Is that correct?

MR. NEUDORF: Yes, our objective at the end of the day is to have a chipsealed surface. Prior to doing that, we do need to make sure that there's enough structural strength in the road so that we don't lose the chipseal surface again as has happened in the past. So there is quite a bit of expenditures, quite a bit of work to do just to increase the strength. We're not sure how far the \$4 million is actually going to get us yet. I mentioned the engineering work is still underway, but certainly our objective, our hope is that we'll be able to provide a chipseal over the entire length. We'll see how the engineering goes and how the contract prices come in to determine the full scope of the work there. Thank you.

MR. BROMLEY: That's an amazing turnaround from what I had been told previously. Somehow we're getting a cost efficiency of about 300 percent, which is wonderful news.

The Minister committed to me some time ago in the House that he would provide me with the plan and the full costing for the entire reconstruction of the Dettah road in preparation for chipsealing. I've

never received that, but I understand from Mr. Neudorf that perhaps that work is still going on. I'd be happy to provide Hansard, if that's of interest, but I'm still very interested in that and I'm encouraged to hear that perhaps we can do it with \$4 million, which would be amazing but wonderful. I think the expectation is that it would be done in a way that would last longer than the two weeks it lasted the last time. So I appreciate that. Perhaps, if there are any comments there before I continue, I'd appreciate hearing them now. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): Thank you, Mr. Bromley. Mr. Michael McLeod.

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: Mr. Chairman, the commitment still stands. The detail that we are looking for hasn't been compiled to a point where we'd be able to share it with the Member. We are looking at ways and trying to be very creative. The engineering work is being done. We are looking at ways to stabilize the base. We're looking at the cost factor and we've got to recognize that there was a change in leadership over this past while that kind of slowed things down. I say that because there had been some discussion as to their own priorities and we also had some discussion with a partner or our stakeholder and they don't have a direct equity interest in the project, but it's a mining company that wanted to explore the possibilities of working with the community and possibly assisting us in that area. So those discussions are ongoing and we'd be pleased to share that as soon as we have enough information put together as something that's concrete and move ahead. Thank you.

MR. BROMLEY: I appreciate the Minister's comments on that. Indeed there has been a change in leadership in all parties involved, I think, over the course so far and I really do appreciate this department working with the community of Dettah and other partners in getting this going. It sounds like there are some good efficiencies to be had there.

I know there's been some research done, I think, or perhaps it's just being done on the impact of climate change and I've never been able to determine the real objectives of it on Highway No. 3 so that we can improve how we do rehabilitation of that and so on. I'm just wondering if there are any results yet from that research or if I've got the timing of it wrong. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): Thank you, Mr. Bromley. Mr. Neudorf.

MR. NEUDORF: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The first pot of money that we're using to do some climate change related research is underneath the Build Canada Plan. We have allocated a portion of that funding for research and development and focus on climate change. So a total of \$1.85 million over seven years. It's an O and M item.

We talked about a number of the projects that are underway, one of which is just a vulnerability assessment for the highway. We also have a project in the capital plan here for Highway No. 3. We have, this summer, hired an engineering consulting company to do some additional work for us, quite an extensive study looking at all the different conditions that that highway is in right now and will be subjected to in the future with the objective of ensuring that we have the most appropriate plan from a cost perspective, from an operation perspective, from a safety perspective, the most effective plan going forward so that we can provide a good, safe highway for the users of it. That work is still underway, as I mentioned. It started probably a couple of months ago. So there's not any results for it yet.

MR. BROMLEY: I appreciate those comments and that update. My last question here is we seem to be getting pretty wet seasons and certainly our falls have become quite wet compared to what they used to be with a lot of freeze/thaw cycles to it. We've had a good amount of work going with the Ingraham Trail, some work on the Dettah road and the Highway No. 3 and so on. Are there any observations or insights being collected on what this means to the cost of our capital projects and transportation in the Yellowknife region? Thank you.

MR. NEUDORF: As a department we've actually noticed changes in the weather for the last 15 to 20 years and have been undertaking quite a number of different things to address that, ranging from constructing bridges on the Mackenzie Valley winter road to spray ice in enhanced effort to construct ice bridges both on the Dempster and on the Fort Providence crossing, to changing our O and M practices and devoting a lot more energy and effort into O and M of the highway and particularly at this time of year where we are.

In the past you would have very few freeze/thaw cycles, but lately it seems to us and we're seeing it in the actual on the groundwork that we are needing to provide a lot more effort in terms of maintaining the highways and maintaining the airports and providing a lot more consumables. So a lot more sand and gravel and the types of products that are required for getting good friction on our surfaces.

So we've made a number of changes over the years on that side of things and in our O and M activities, including increasing budgets and including expanding the services that we provide. So in the wintertime our O and M highway forces are on staff for seven days a week and 12 hours a day each day.

Capital projects, as we look at those projects and we do the design, climate change is one of the factors that is considered in that. I think that that's

perhaps still a little bit evolving in terms of what that actually means. We do hope that some of the research that is underway that we, as a department, want to undertake and that we are working with other jurisdictions to address will be able to help us guide that even more in the future. Thank you.

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

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Chair. My question is more in regard to the bridges in the Northwest Territories. It seems we've put a lot of focus on the bridges in the Mackenzie Valley. I mean the issue on that one was mostly around environmental liability issues in regard to Fisheries and Oceans and also extending the seasons for those roads. I know I've mentioned it in this House before. Have we looked at the possibility of replacing our ferry operations with permanent bridges so that we can get that 12 month a year access?

Also, looking at the studies, I know using the Peel River there were studies back in the '60s where they did some studies with Public Works Canada and again back in the mid-'80s again with Public Works Canada. I think as a department we seem to be not really looking at the long-term costs of replacing the ferries versus the cost at some point of putting permanent bridges in place like we've done in the Sahtu. I think that we have enough expertise now over the years of looking at bridges. Like you say with regards to Blackwater, it's a \$50 million bridge. I think we have to start looking at that aspect of it.

From the research I've done, a lot of the engineering and design work was done back in the '60s where a lot of the information available today on even the locations that they had for crossings where they did for studies is not ideal for a bridge.

So I'd like to ask the department in regard to planning dollars and money that you have, is there any possibility of any investment research funds looking at core sampling or looking at locations such as the Peel River to see where the ideal location will be and trying to find out if it's economically viable to do those studies to see exactly where the best economy crossing would be if you ever had to put a bridge in place knowing that the site that's there right now is not ideal for a bridge?

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

MR. NEUDORF: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I do appreciate your comments. The Member has raised the potential of a Peel River bridge on a number of different occasions. In terms of providing bridges where we have ferries right now, the first point I guess is that those are very expensive propositions. The Peel River bridge, our estimate is \$70 million to

replace that. So that would be a significant challenge to overcome. There were a number of engineering, geotechnical and environmental studies done when the Dempster was being constructed, when the Mackenzie Valley Highway was being constructed at all of the ferry crossings. That's been good background information as we move forward on the Deh Cho Bridge. It's also being used to guide our discussions on the Peel River bridge. So we have taken a look at that and then we updated that to come up with the revised \$70 million number. We've also taken a preliminary look at what the potential financing of that might be and that information has been shared with the Member. Thanks.

MR. KRUTKO: I also got some research done in that area. Number one, the location where the Peel Crossing is and where they were talking about the crossing, that one side alone, you have to go down 180 feet in order to hit bedrock. That is the reason that it is so costly. That's why I am saying that in order to make it economically viable, you have to have an ideal location where you can cross the river. There is a location upstream from the existing site and all we are asking the department to do is to do a bunch of core sampling to see if that is a more ideal position than what you are looking at. That one peer alone, where I mentioned, is 180 feet down. It's going to cost \$7 million. Just by that alone, the economics are not there. You have to look at a different location from where the existing ferry crossing is now in order to make the bridge economically viable. They have been looking at the numbers. You talk \$70 million. The number I got from the private sector is \$48 million. So there is a little difference between 70 and 48. I think like with anything with government, if government builds it, it's going to cost a lot more.

Again, we talked about P3 money, there is a \$50 million potential out there looking at a P3 project, replacement cost for ferry operations. You look at the cost for ice roads. You look at the cost in association with infrastructure, traffic, future pipelines and whatnot. The volumes are going to go up and the economics could be there.

Without these tests, I would like to ask would the department consider looking at \$100,000 or a \$75,000 investment to do some of the core sampling so we can identify the possibility of another ideal site or location which will make the economics more viable? Thank you.

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

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I think all the Members in the House recognize the cost of building bridges are very extreme and it certainly would be a fiscal challenge for our government to actually finance and provide the

resources to build one bridge in the typical fashion required for building a bridge.

We have considered, as part of what would be a Mackenzie Valley Highway, that the bridges along that route would be covered and part of the road, if there was ever federal resources to build that road. We do have, as the Member has indicated, expertise on a lot of the aspects of building bridges. We just don't have the dollars to do so.

There has been a lot of work that has been done, as the Member has referenced, in the '60s and '70s on all the major crossings. We have that information. There has also been other work on ice floes and ice patterns and breakup that has been studied and that information is available.

The Mackenzie Valley winter road has seen a lot of investment over the last while. That was as a result over federal programs that were available that targeted resource development areas and it allowed us to build quite a few bridges; 34 I think the last count was. As the Member has again indicated, some bridges along our highway transportation systems such as the Liard, the Ndulee, the Peel and the Tsiigehtchic crossing that don't have a mechanism to finance, we, of course, would be happy if there was some way to do it, but at this point fiscally it will be a challenge. We don't have the resources in our own coffers. Even if we do look at the P3 program, the P3 program would require some significant capital. It would only pay for the direct costs. So anything leading up to the actual construction would have to be covered by the proponent or a partner. We haven't been able to identify that partner or the resources as of yet to take advantage of that program for any of the bridges that have been identified. Thank you.

MR. KRUTKO: I believe we do have some perfect avenues to take. We have the Deh Cho Bridge Act to fall onto or whatever it is. It is in the process and legislation has passed in this House to take a look at that concept of building a bridge. We have the P3 policy that we are considering looking at with federal investment partnerships. I think that sometimes we have to think of unique ways of achieving these results. At the end of the day, in closing, I would just like to ask the Department of Transportation...This summer alone the ferry crossing on the Peel, because of flash floods or basically major rainstorms in the mountains, caused the ferry to shut down and there is a lot of concern by the residents of Fort McPherson and the people about the fish in that area. That the amount of gravel that is put into that river year after year after year, and having to replace that gravel every time you have a major flood, those materials, what effect is it having on the fish habitat? What effect is it having in regards to navigable waters?

I think that we, at the end of the day, have to realize that there is a liability associated with continuing to

run ferry operations, and realizing that we are having more severe flooding, that we are seeing more severe situations by way of having to close the ferry down because of simple high water, driftwood and everything else. We have to look at the possibility that at some point facing the piper in regards to having to realize that there is a liability associated with running ferry operations and what is the cost of that liability versus the environmental costs and the political and social costs to the communities that are seeing these implications. Thank you.

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: Mr. Chairman, it is very hard to challenge the Member's comments. There is a liability issue on any of our crossings. It has to be recognized that there is a contribution to the effects of greenhouse gases. Operating these vessels consume a lot of fuel. We have looked at and considered all the bridges within our road system and have looked at trying to be creative and find ways to construct bridges or replace the ferry systems with bridges.

The Deh Cho Bridge Project is a project that was viable because of the traffic volumes and, more specifically, the traffic volumes to the mines. We don't have that in other areas of the Territory. That may change in the future. We are always looking for opportunity and looking for federal investment and we continue to raise those issues. We will continue to push those forward.

The Peel River, as the Member has indicated, had concerns raised by the community, by a lot of his constituents that do use that area for traditional harvesting of fish and we have had some discussion with the Member and the leadership of his communities to see if we can find a way to offset the amount of gravel that is used to firm up the approaches. We agreed to do that. We are going to be applying to the water board for a new water licence this year, so I don't think...We have already been put on notice that we need to do a better job. We have already agreed. We have engaged the assistance of an engineer to design something that would work on the Peel that would allow the vehicles to have a firm approach so that we don't have to use as much gravel or we don't have to use any gravel in terms of firming up the approach. It is my understanding that we are getting there.

My department has already looked at some sketches that would have a design of some combination of steel and concrete that could be moved as the water levels fluctuate, and I am quite confident that we will have something that we can bring to the community and share that information with them so that we will remove at least that part of the concern. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): Thank you Minister McLeod. We are on to page 10, Transportation, activity summary, Mr. Yakeleya.

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you Mr. Chairman. I want to ask the Minister in terms of safety on the winter roads. There is 800 kilometres of winter roads between Wrigley and Colville Lake and the Minister, in the past, has indicated that safety measures were being done on the winter road by placing safety signage posts along the road. I witnessed this last winter, the contractors being out. Still there continues to need to be more signage on the roads, grade improvements on the roads, widening and realignment of the roads and I would ask the Minister that this work continue on for several more years in terms of improvements in safety until we get a Mackenzie Valley Highway built and to continue improving the safety as more and more vehicles are being used on the roads and younger and younger generations of people are using these roads. I think because the contractors have done such a good job on building these roads, that they drive pretty fast. That is the curse of having good contractors working on the winter roads, so I hope they continue working on the great improvements and safety of the winter roads.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Mr. McLeod.

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: This is an issue that I think the Member has raised every year from the time he was elected in this position. It is certainly an area that we have worked towards improving. I think that we have spent more than \$5 million in a number of key improvements and along the Mackenzie Valley winter road. We have, at his request, looked at putting a number of signs along the winter road so that the traffic could be informed of corners and hills and we also overall wanted to have a stronger presence with our highway enforcement officers and highway patrols and changed our permitting system and have replaced a lot of our highway patrol officers that were issuing permits at the weigh scales, to clerks and admin staff, so that our people could be out there and have a stronger presence. I think that is going to be reflected in the increased number of patrols along the Mackenzie Valley winter road system starting from now on.

MR. YAKELEYA: The Minister is correct that the department has shifted some of its focus onto the safety of the passengers in the Sahtu region on the winter road and they certainly appreciate the winter road improvements. I would ask the Minister if he would be open to having his staff talk to some of the local contractors in terms of some of the areas that they could certainly improve on, realignment, grade improvement, there are certainly discussions. We have driven the road, we know the road and certainly the department has some of the expertise

to put to use, so I wonder if we could work in collaboration as to which areas we feel needs to be improved by widening, realigning, cutting down some of the grades and use some of our expertise, traditional knowledge as to what part of the season is the best to do this work. Sometimes it is best to do it in the winter and sometimes it is more advantageous to do this in the summertime, so if we could have that kind of open discussion. Thank you.

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: We would be pleased to continue our consultations with the communities and also the contractors. We plan to continue with our grade improvements, working on the alignment and also with the signs. We have done a lot of work in the area with erosion controls at some of the crossings. We have also looked at doing additional clearing and other improvement work at some of the tighter corners and some of the areas that we need more visibility in terms of sight distances, and places that would allow for vehicles to pull over. We would be more than happy to talk to the contractors as we engage with the communities for our consultation. Thank you.

MR. YAKELEYA: The one concern, that I know the department has been in discussions with the leadership in Deline is the realignment of the road from the mouth of Great Bear Lake and Bennett Field, specifically at the mouth of Great Bear Lake where there is a burial site and the department has been talking with the community in terms of moving the road off the area where the burial site is. I know the Minister has had his staff go to Deline and are going to do work.

My understanding is there was some discussion as to how soon this can get done. My previous discussion with some of the officials is that they were waiting for Nahanni access road construction to be completed before they get into the Deline road construction, so I just want to make sure that this isn't the case and that they will continue to work with Deline and they will work on a time schedule that the Deline winter road realignment project will proceed and not wait until the Nahanni access road program is done to move equipment into the Sahtu from the Nahendeh in terms of the Department of Transportations' aspect. We certainly want to see mostly our equipment being used, rather than having the Department of Transportation equipment. It makes sense to have our own equipment there.

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: Mr. Chairman, we plan to move ahead with the realignment as planned. We have had consultation with the communities. We have talked about the areas of concern for a number of years. Two issues were raised. There is the burial grounds at the mouth of the Great Bear Lake where the ice takes a long time to form. We have planned and designed a route so that we can

have the road avoid the burial grounds and so that it crosses a location where the ice is thicker and freezes sooner, so I think we have dealt with all the concerns and our plan is to go ahead as we had discussed with the community.

MR. YAKELEYA: I am certainly pleased to hear from the Minister in terms of their plan to go ahead with the Deline realignment of the road project and certainly the people from Deline will be happy to hear that.

Another issue that I want to just touch on which Mr. Krutko, the MLA from the Delta, talked about is the bridging programs. Certainly one that we in the Sahtu are looking forward to, specifically in Norman Wells and the hamlet of Tulita was looking at the Bear River bridge. This somehow has become a challenge for this government and this department as to how you put together a package to make a project go of this size.

Certainly Mr. Krutko has given some discussion as to the bridge that he would like to see in the Mackenzie Delta. There are similar wishes of the people of the Sahtu to see a bridge at Bear River also happen. At the same time, you look at the challenges of Great Bear Lake where there is climate change and thinning of the ice, and I know that in future there is going to be discussion as to a bridge up on the Bear River further up to the mouth of Bear Lake in terms of that situation; to go back to the Bear River bridge in terms of seeing if there is any type of further funding to make this bridge a reality.

I want to ask the Minister the department's plans in terms of constructing bridges along the Mackenzie River. He talked about 30 bridges. We certainly see the benefits of having these bridges now in the Mackenzie Valley and we certainly want to see the Bear River bridge be one that can be constructed or one that could be at least funded in the life of this government.

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: Mr. Chairman, this bridge is a project that has been in the works for some time. At one point it was up for consideration for investment, however, the project costs came back with a dollar figure that was more than double what the budget was set at and in 2008 that budget was estimated to be \$60 million. It is a project that would probably eliminate one of the bigger obstacles of the opening of the Mackenzie Valley winter road. We have looked at pots of money that we thought we could tap into. We raised it a number of times in meetings with Canada and the reason for raising it, of course, is because it is a project that is already packaged and ready to go. The design is done. The calculation, all the technical aspects are completed. The federal government has indicated they are currently unwilling to fund this project, this bridge. It certainly is beyond the means of our department to find \$60

million from within. The project would have to stay and be considered as we move forward with the construction whenever there is a construction plan for the Mackenzie Valley Highway. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): Thank you, Minister McLeod. We are on page 9-10, Transportation, activity summary, highways. Mr. Yakeleya.

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Just on the Bear River bridge, has the department given any consideration to ask the federal government, the Minister of Infrastructure and Transportation or the Minister of Finance within the federal government if there was a project somewhere in Canada that somehow didn't make it or had some cancellation, can this bridge be considered as a possibility for funding, seeing if this bridge could get some support from the feds?

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: Mr. Chairman, we would be happy to consider all possibilities as we move forward. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): Thank you, Minister Michael McLeod. We are on page 9-10, Transportation, activity summary, highways, infrastructure investment summary, total infrastructure investment summary, \$63.919 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): We will move along to page 9-14, which is Transportation. Mr. Ramsay.

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just had a few questions as it pertains to the Deh Cho Bridge toll system. I know the bridge is being delayed for at least a year. The redesign isn't concluded so the logical question is, why does the government find it necessary to put \$600,000 in the capital plan? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. Minister McLeod.

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: Mr. Chairman, under our responsibilities and under the conditions of the concession agreement, it falls under our responsibility to develop and to design and supply, install, upgrade and manage the whole toll system. There are two components to the toll system. In the capital budget, we have already received approval for the \$400,000 for last year. This year, we are looking for an additional \$600,000 in this budget. There are two areas that will be considered or will be invested in. This is, first of all, to do with vehicle counts and classification. For the most part, that has already been started and being worked on, also, the toll collection and administrative portions for the next 2010-11. The plan is to have the tolls collected through a permanent call centre and an account-based system for larger commercial vehicles. We also need to build and develop the pullouts and install a direct line to the call centre.

The Member has indicated that the bridge has been delayed. Well, we haven't formally delayed the bridge. We have given all the indicators that there will be a delay. The plan was to have the bridge in place and completed with traffic crossing by November of 2010. We know that is going to be very difficult to achieve. We expect that the delay will be anywhere from six months to a year. We need to have all systems in place ready to go, depending on what the delay is. If we defer this portion of our responsibility for a year and the bridge is ready and traffic volumes are crossing, we will be losing out. We have to be ready to start counting traffic. We are already looking at classifying and trying to determine what the volumes that are going through this year, but to delay the whole system for a year would be very difficult.

In response to the Member's question, the actual use of the capital funding would be to install a traffic counting and classification system on the bridge, to install video monitoring equipment of traffic on the bridge, to install communication equipment for real-time access to traffic counting and video equipment on the bridge, to install a turnout, a self-serve kiosk on the south approach to the bridge to allow for the toll payment, to install a boundary reading equipment on the bridge, to develop software for tracking the traffic counts and toll collection.

Mr. Chairman, there are a number of things that need to be done. I guess if we deferred it for a year in our capital process, we would probably have to come back in the form of a special warrant or something to allow us to construct this portion of toll collection that would allow us to start whenever the bridge is ready. Thank you.

MR. RAMSAY: I thank the Minister for that. Just a couple of things. I am just wondering when the \$400,000 was approved initially for the toll system, because I maybe was out of the House that day or I was somewhere else, but I don't remember us approving \$400,000 for the toll booth on the Deh Cho Bridge. Maybe just a comment on that. Maybe the Minister could just refresh my memory as to why this Deh Cho Bridge toll system wasn't included in the initial concession agreement and whether or not we can renegotiate that concession agreement to include this price that is going to be borne on the taxpayer here in the Northwest Territories. There is the toll collection, the toll booth. Why can't it be included in the concession agreement? Why can't we open up that concession agreement to include it like it should have been in the first place? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: First question, I guess the \$400,000 that was approved was approved last year in the budget. The agreement to supply this was in the concession agreement. I think it would

be very difficult to go back and open it up at this point.

MR. RAMSAY: Maybe just a comment from the Minister on why this wasn't included in the original concession agreement. I think the residents in the Northwest Territories are going to be asking questions about why this wasn't included in the concession agreement and why it appears in the capital plan and why we are going to be spending \$1 million on the toll bridge operating system when, for all intents and purposes, it should have been included in the concession agreement. I am not sure who didn't negotiate that in, but that is a big oversight, in my mind. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: Mr. Chairman, it was always understood and it was in the agreement that we would be providing this portion of the toll collection. As to why it wasn't, I wasn't actually at the negotiating table, so I couldn't tell. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): Mr. Neudorf.

MR. NEUDORF: This was and is included in the concession agreement. It has been an agreed and negotiated item between the Deh Cho Bridge Corporation and ourselves that the GNWT would be responsible to count traffic on the bridge and then responsible to collect the toll. There are a couple of reasons there. First, it was felt that the Bridge Corporation couldn't take on that risk themselves. It was more appropriate for the GNWT to take on that risk so it helped the project be more financeable with the people that are providing the money to the project. It fit into DOT's operation. It would be easier for us to incorporate it with the existing infrastructure, the existing personnel that DOT has. One of the things that we are working on is a call centre for permits. It has been operational for several months now and it seems to be working quite well. We do think that we will be able -- the plan is anyway -- to allow them to issue tolls or the permit to cross the Deh Cho Bridge. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): Thank you, Mr. Neudorf. Mr. Ramsay.

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I guess I just don't agree with the rationale for not including it in the concession agreement. I guess I've gone on record as saying that before and I'll say it again today. It's happened in the past, so we need to move on anyway.

I want to ask, on an annual basis, what is it going to cost the government to operate the toll system. The Minister talks about a call centre. What's it going to cost us on an annual basis to operate this toll system? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

MR. NEUDORF: Thank you, Mr. Chair. As part of the negotiations on the concession agreement, we had reserved some funding to collect and administer the toll and count traffic. So we had a

portion of the savings from the operation of the ferry and the construction of the ice bridge remains in DOT and will be used to do our part of collecting and administering the toll. The exact cost we don't know yet, but as we finalize the system, as we work on these various aspects here, we will finalize that and will bring forward the required authorizations. We do think that we have enough money in what's in the budget now, what we've reserved as part of the agreement, to facilitate that. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): Thank you, Mr. Neudorf. Mr. Yakeleya.

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, the issue here in terms of the Deh Cho Bridge toll system, can this toll system be designed by a private company other than the GNWT? Is that the way this is being looked at? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Mr. Neudorf.

MR. NEUDORF: Thank you, Mr. Chair. We have previously engaged some private sector help to help us move this on. We've got that preliminary information. We're going to bring it into the DOT NWT context and, yes, we will need some more private expertise to help us as we finalize the design and as we look to implementation.

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Chair. So, Mr. Chair, from what I'm hearing, the toll system design will be done outside of the GNWT where a private company would design the system and work in conjunction with the Department of Transportation to set up this toll for the Deh Cho Bridge? This is what they're budgeting for in terms of this work?

MR. NEUDORF: Yes, that's essentially correct. As I mentioned, we've already got some preliminary design work done. We have talked about that with working with...(inaudible)...and the Bridge Corporation to make sure that it's doable, fits into our own system. So we have a general plan moving forward. As we do that, we will need to engage some additional expertise just to finalize, to get all the technical details together for that particular project. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): Thank you, Mr. Neudorf. We're on page 9-14, Transportation, activity summary, road licensing and safety, infrastructure investment summary, total infrastructure investment summary, \$1.210 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): That concludes that page. Let's move back to page 9-2, Department of Transportation, department summary, infrastructure investment summary, total infrastructure investment summary, \$82.939 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): Does committee agree that this concludes the review of the

Department of Transportation under the capital estimates?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): What is the wish of the committee? Mrs. Groenewegen.

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Mr. Chairman, I move that we report progress.

---Carried

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy): Mr. Minister, if you could please thank your staff and, Sergeant-at-Arms, if you could please escort them out, that would be great. I will now rise and report progress.

Report of Committee of the Whole

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

MR. ABERNETHY: Mr. Speaker, your committee has been considering Tabled Document 1-16(4), NWT Capital Estimates 2010-2011, and would like to report progress. Mr. Speaker, I move that the report of Committee of the Whole be concurred with.

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

---Carried

Item 22, third reading of bills. Madam Clerk, orders of the day.

Orders of the Day

PRINCIPAL CLERK OF COMMITTEES (Ms. Knowlan): Orders of the day for Thursday, October 29th, 1:30 p.m.:

1. Prayer
2. Ministers' Statements
3. Members' Statements
4. Reports of Standing and Special Committees
5. Returns to Oral Questions
6. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery
7. Acknowledgements
8. Oral Questions
9. Written Questions
10. Returns to Written Questions
11. Replies to Opening Address

12. Petitions
 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
 - Bill 2, Forgiveness of Debts Act, 2009-2010
 - Bill 3, Medical Profession Act
 19. Second Reading of Bills
 20. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters
 - Tabled Document 1-16(4), NWT Capital Estimates 2010-2011
 - Tabled Document 18-16(4), Supplementary Appropriation No. 2 (Operations Expenditures), 2009-2010
 - Tabled Document 19-16(4), Supplementary Appropriation No. 3 (Infrastructure Expenditures), 2009-2010
 - Committee Report 1-16(4), Report on the Review of the Information and Privacy Commissioner's 2006-2007 and 2007-2008 Annual Reports
 - Committee Report 2-16(4), Report on the Review of the Auditor General on Contracting for Goods and Services in the Northwest Territories
 21. Report of Committee of the Whole
 22. Third Reading of Bills
 23. Orders of the Day
- MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Madam Clerk. Accordingly, this House stands adjourned until Thursday, October 29th, at 1:30 p.m.
- ADJOURNMENT
- The House adjourned at 17:49 p.m.

