



NORTHWEST TERRITORIES LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

2nd Session

Day 24

18th Assembly

HANSARD

Thursday, June 23, 2016

Pages 787 – 860

The Honourable Jackson Lafferty, Speaker

Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories

Members of the Legislative Assembly

Speaker

Hon. Jackson Lafferty

(Monfwi)

Hon. Glen Abernethy

(Great Slave)

Government House Leader

Minister of Health and Social Services;

Minister of Human Resources;

Minister responsible for Seniors;

*Minister responsible for Persons with
Disabilities*

Mr. Tom Beaulieu

(Tu Nedhe-Wiilideh)

Mr. Frederick Blake

(Mackenzie Delta)

Hon. Caroline Cochrane

(Range Lake)

Minister responsible for the Northwest

Territories Housing Corporation

Minister of Public Works and Services

*Minister responsible for the Status of
Women*

Ms. Julie Green

(Yellowknife Centre)

Hon. Bob McLeod

(Yellowknife South)

Premier

Minister of the Executive

Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and

Intergovernmental Relations

Minister of Industry, Tourism, and

Investment

Minister responsible for the Public

Utilities Board

Hon. Robert C. McLeod

(Inuvik Twin Lakes)

Deputy Premier

Minister of Finance

Minister of Lands

Minister of Municipal and Community

Affairs

Mr. Daniel McNeely

(Sahtu)

Hon. Alfred Moses

(Inuvik Boot Lake)

Minister of Education, Culture, and

Employment

Minister responsible for Youth

Mr. Michael Nadli

(Deh Cho)

Mr. Herbert Nakimayak

(Nunakput)

Mr. Kevin O'Reilly

(Frame Lake)

Hon. Wally Schumann

(Hay River South)

Minister of Environment and Natural

Resources

Minister of Transportation

Hon. Louis Sebert

(Thebacha)

Minister of Justice

Minister responsible for the Northwest

Territories Power Corporation

Minister responsible for the Workers'

Safety and Compensation

Commission

Mr. R.J. Simpson

(Hay River North)

Mr. Kieron Testart

(Kam Lake)

Mr. Shane Thompson

(Nahendeh)

Mr. Cory Vanthuynne

(Yellowknife North)

Officers

Clerk of the Legislative Assembly

Mr. Tim Mercer

Deputy Clerk

Mr. Doug Schauerte

**Principal Clerk,
Committees and Public
Affairs**

Mr. Michael Ball

**Principal Clerk,
Corporate and
Interparliamentary Affairs**

Ms. Gail Bennett

Law Clerks

Ms. Sheila MacPherson

Mr. Glen Rutland

Box 1320

Yellowknife, Northwest Territories

Tel: (867) 767-9010 Fax: (867) 920-4735 Toll-Free: 1-800-661-0784

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

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

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PRAYER	787
SPEAKER'S RULING.....	787
MINISTERS' STATEMENTS	788
62-18(2) – Education Hall of Fame (Moses)	788
63-18(2) – GNWT Occupational Health and Safety Program (Abernethy)	789
64-18(2) – Celebration of NWT Trapping on the Occasion of the Fur Institute of Canada's AGM in Yellowknife (R. McLeod)	789
65-18(2) – Building Partnership with Canada in the Delivery of Airport and Highway Capital Projects (Schumann).....	790
MEMBERS' STATEMENTS.....	791
Northwest Territories Youth Ambassador Program (Thompson)	791
Northwest Territories Agricultural Strategy (Vanthuyn)	792
Yellowknives Dene First Nation Skills Development Programs (Beaulieu)	792
Recognition of Vivian Pellissey, Education Hall of Fame Inductee, and Sahtu Dene and Metis Comprehensive Land Claim Agreement Anniversary (McNeely)	793
Dechinta Centre for Research and Learning (Testart)	793
Recognition of Sarah Jerome, Education Hall of Fame Inductee (Blake)	794
GNWT Action Regarding Declining Bathurst Caribou Herd (O'Reilly).....	794
Northern Food Production (Nadli)	794
Office of the Public Guardian (Green).....	795
RECOGNITION OF VISITORS IN THE GALLERY	795, 826
ORAL QUESTIONS.....	796
RETURNS TO WRITTEN QUESTIONS	806
TABLING OF DOCUMENTS	807
CONSIDERATION IN COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE OF BILLS AND OTHER MATTERS	808
REPORT OF COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE	859
ORDERS OF THE DAY	859

YELLOWKNIFE, NORTHWEST TERRITORIES

Thursday, June 23, 2016

Members Present

Hon. Glen Abernethy, Mr. Beaulieu, Mr. Blake, Hon. Caroline Cochrane, Ms. Julie Green, Hon. Jackson Lafferty, Hon. Bob McLeod, Hon. Robert McLeod, Mr. McNeely, Hon. Alfred Moses, Mr. Nadli, Mr. Nakimayak, Mr. O'Reilly, Hon. Wally Schumann, Hon. Louis Sebert, Mr. Simpson, Mr. Testart, Mr. Thompson, Mr. Vanthuyne

The House met at 1:30 p.m.

Prayer

---Prayer

SPEAKER (Hon. Jackson Lafferty): Good afternoon, Members.

Speaker's Ruling

MR. SPEAKER: Colleagues, after consideration of the matter, I wish to give my ruling on the point of order raised by the Government House Leader on June 17, 2016, regarding comments made by the Member for Yellowknife Centre on the previous day. I recognize that we have a great deal of business before us, so I will endeavour to be brief.

In raising the point of order, the government House Leader cited Rule 24(k) of the Rules of the Legislative Assembly, "use of abusive or insulting language of a nature likely to create disorder."

I have now had the opportunity to review the unedited transcripts from June 16, 2016, and have carefully considered the remarks which gave rise to the point of order. In her Member's statement, the Member for Yellowknife Centre stated that recent increases to Government of the Northwest Territories' sole-source contracting limits "raise the possibility of malfeasance and corruption in the spending of public funds," and further stated that, "these elevated amounts increase the possibility of kickbacks and preferment."

I am guided by the second edition of the House of Commons Procedure and Practice, 2009, which states at page 619: "In dealing with unparliamentary language, the Speaker takes into account the tone, manner and intention of the Member speaking; the person to whom the words at issue were directed, the degree of provocation; and most importantly, whether or not the remarks created disorder in the Chamber. Thus, language deemed unparliamentary one day may not necessarily be deemed un-parliamentary the following day," and further, "expressions which are considered unparliamentary when applied to an individual Member have not always been considered so when applied in a general sense."

Colleagues, it can be difficult to evaluate the words spoken by a Member in terms of tone, manner, and intention. As Speaker of the House, I must trust that all Members will choose their words with care and attention and also to speak with integrity and also respect. As Members of this House, we enjoy and are protected by parliamentary privileges when we speak in this House. When we exercise this privilege, we must do so in a manner that is fitting for this House, and demonstrates respect for the people that we represent.

Whether or not a statement made in this House violates the rules of this Assembly, our words can have unintended consequences. Every time we speak we must carefully consider our words and the impacts they may have. Our freedom of speech as Members does not outweigh our responsibilities to this House, our colleagues, and the people of the Northwest Territories.

After careful consideration of the Member's comments, as set out in the unedited Hansard as well as remarks during the debate on the point of order, I conclude that there is no point of order at this point.

There is no doubt that the Member for Yellowknife Centre used strong and inflammatory language to describe the possibility of a very serious issue. However, on its own, such language does not necessarily constitute a violation of the rules of this Assembly.

During debate on the point of order, the Member for Yellowknife Centre reiterated her view that recent increases to Government of the Northwest Territories sole-source contracting limits increases the risk of "improper conduct" but went on to recognize that the Government of the Northwest Territories has been vigilant in responding to this increased risk. At no point did the Member state that any individual is guilty of a violation of the law or Government of the Northwest Territories' procurement policies.

Democracy relies on a certain level of tension between the various branches of government. In our consensus system, we try to keep that tension at a healthy and productive level. While there is no point of order, I caution the Member, and all Members of this House, to choose their words carefully in the future. I would just like to say masi.

Item 2, Ministers' statements. Minister of Education, Culture and Employment.

Ministers' Statements

MINISTER'S STATEMENT 62-18(2): EDUCATION HALL OF FAME

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to advise this House that a ceremony was held earlier today to celebrate seven individuals who have made tremendous contributions to education in the Northwest Territories. The Department of Education, Culture and Employment launched the Education Hall of Fame in 2010 to recognize the many Northerners that play an important role in supporting the education of our children. It reflects the valuable contributions made by various educators, volunteers, board members, administrators, and other community members across the territory.

Mr. Speaker, for this year's celebration, nominations poured in from every region, and seven people were chosen from across the territory. The 2016 inductees embody the commitment, diligence, creativity, and passion that we want education to inspire in us all.

From the Beaufort Delta Region, Sarah Jerome is a Gwich'in Elder who was among one of the first Northwest Territories' residents to become a certified teacher. Sarah began working in the education system with the teaching and learning centre in the Beaufort Delta sharing her passion for language and culture. That passion continued throughout her lifetime as a teacher, principal, assistant superintendent of the Beaufort Delta Education Council, Languages Commissioner of the Northwest Territories, and most recently as a guest lecturer at Harvard University.

From the Dehcho Region, Valerie Gendron is a tireless advocate for education and activity. A teacher in Fort Simpson for more than 25 years, her commitment to education encompasses coaching curling, hockey, track and field, soccer, figure skating, speed skating, gymnastics, and table tennis. She has lobbied for funding to improve the cooking program and volunteered at the local pool, running classes for parents and children.

From the Sahtu Region, Vivian Pellissey has been a teacher in Tulita for over 35 years. Her dedication to ensuring that her students understand their culture and speak their language has been a driving force for her. She has taught generations of children, and continues teaching today.

From the South Slave Region, Jane Dragon has been active in her community since the 1960s. Acting as a key parent volunteer during the years her six children went to school, she could be counted on for field trips, teaching students about

cooking traditional foods, skinning a muskrat, as well as travelling as a coach or a chaperone on numerous school trips and competitions. She has helped guide the development of Chipewyan resources in the community, has extensive traditional knowledge, and maintained an open house to any student that needed a place to stay or home-cooked meals.

From the Tlicho Region, Jim Martin is a Senior Policy Advisor with the Tlicho Government. His efforts in education in the Tlicho region span many years through numerous positions. He has always focused on transforming the education system through leading from behind and empowering local people to take responsibility for their learning and leadership for themselves and their communities. He has been a teacher, principal, superintendent, and the Tlicho Community Service Agency's first Chief Executive Officer. In 2006, under his leadership, the TCSA received the prestigious Silver Innovative Management Award from the Institute of Public Administrators of Canada, and the Public Service Award from the United Nations in 2007.

In the North Slave Region, Rita Mueller has been involved with youth since she arrived in the North in the late 1980s. She has been a lifeguard, a coach, a teacher, a principal, and the Chief Executive Officer of the Tlicho Community Services Agency. At the Department of Education, Culture and Employment, she was the Director of Early Childhood and School Services and now holds the position of assistant deputy minister of Education and Culture. She has consistently encouraged students to set their goals high, and helped them reach those goals through her passion and dedication. Under Rita's principal leadership, Chief Jimmy Bruneau School in Behchoko was selected as one of the top Aboriginal schools in Canada.

For the Minister's Choice Award, Muriel Tolley from Yellowknife has been a passionate advocate for education for many years. A pioneer in teacher preparation and induction, as well a long-time teacher and educator at all levels of education in both Nunavut and the NWT, Muriel has a deep knowledge of the history and policies of education in the North. She has made a professional career through advancing education in the NWT focusing on the importance of Aboriginal peoples' history, traditions, culture, and language and has been a dedicated advocate for positive change to take place at the community level, seeing education at all levels as the path for growth.

Of these distinguished people, some are with us today in the Gallery. Mr. Speaker, this is our seventh group of inductees into the Education Hall of Fame. They are truly remarkable people who reflect the principles of dedication and passion in

education and inspire us to do more and believe in ourselves.

Education is one of the priorities of this Assembly, and the 2016 Education Hall of Fame inductees are shining examples of reaching beyond barriers and challenges and inherently understanding the need to invest in our students and communities. Please join me in honouring the 2016 inductees and thank them for dedicating their life's work to the students, families, and communities of the Northwest Territories. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Ministers' statements. Minister of Human Resources.

MINISTER'S STATEMENT 63-18(2):
GNWT OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY
PROGRAM

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Mr. Speaker, the Government of the Northwest Territories is a diverse workplace, with employees working in many different locations and in a variety of capacities. Regardless of the kind of work they do, all employees have a fundamental right to be healthy and safe in the workplace. Ensuring we have a strong, safe, and healthy workplace allows the GNWT to deliver key services and programs to residents of the Northwest Territories.

As the biggest employer in the Northwest Territories, it is important that the GNWT leads by example. By creating a safe and healthy work environment, the GNWT can maintain its position as an employer of choice. I am committed to ensuring that the Department of Human Resources continues its leadership on the corporate framework that supports the implementation of the GNWT's occupational health and safety program in its departments and agencies.

Mr. Speaker, the Department of Human Resources is developing an overarching occupational health and safety framework that will assist with streamlining GNWT health and safety procedures. More importantly, the framework will put consistent standards and directives into place across all departments and agencies to ensure that we are all doing the right things for our employees. The Department is also working to strengthen the occupational health and safety culture of the GNWT through the development of a suite of policies that will complement the existing Occupational Health and Safety Policy.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to announce that for the 2015-16 fiscal year, the GNWT has been successful on the Worker's Safety and Compensation Commission's Safe Advantage Program and the Management Practice Questionnaire. This is an annual process that involves a 48-point questionnaire, as well as a rigorous audit by the WSCC to confirm our

responses. This significant achievement demonstrates the government's commitment to health and safety in the workplace and provides us with valuable, objective feedback on how we can continue to improve.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to extend my congratulations to the GNWT departments, boards, and agencies for our recent success on the Safe Advantage Program and to challenge our entire government to continue to meet and exceed standards for health and safety in the workplace. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Ministers' statements. Minister of Industry, Tourism and Investment.

MINISTER'S STATEMENT 64-18(2):
CELEBRATION OF NWT TRAPPING ON THE
OCCASION OF THE FUR INSTITUTE OF
CANADA'S AGM IN YELLOWKNIFE

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Mr. Speaker, the Northwest Territories has a centuries-long history in trapping and the fur trade. We have a high regard for the cultural values entrenched in this tradition, which set Northerners apart from other Canadians, and for the activities of the traditional economy, which have helped shape our North and remain in many of our communities today. As a proud founder and partner of the Fur Institute of Canada, the Government of the Northwest Territories continues its tradition of leadership in this industry.

This week, the Fur Institute of Canada will hold its Annual General Meeting in Yellowknife. This is an ideal time to reflect on the important role trapping plays in our Northwest Territories economy and what our government is doing to support it. Mr. Speaker, Northwest Territories trappers are the very best in their trade and so is the fur they ship to market. The Genuine Mackenzie Valley Fur Program and the similarly targeted Hide and Fur Procurement Program are testaments to this fact and reflect this government's commitment to support and promote excellence in our traditional economy, from the trap line through to the marketplace.

Mr. Speaker, with over \$2.5 million in contributions to the economy, last year, trapping provides individuals in our territory valuable opportunities for income and employment and is as important to the northern economy as small-scale farming is in southern Canada. Mr. Speaker, this is particularly true in our most remote communities where the fur industry has sustained Aboriginal populations for hundreds of years, providing food, clothing, shelter, tools, and goods for trade. An industry that can continue to offer a reliable and sustainable safe haven against the fluctuations of a boom-and-bust economy and helps us diversify and balance our economy in a manner that respects the social and cultural values and aspirations of our people.

Mr. Speaker, trapping also instills a respect for, and knowledge of, our land and wildlife. It requires careful, consistent observation of the environment and the animals which interact with it. Reports back from trappers have long played an important role in the Northwest Territories' conservation efforts. Mr. Speaker, through trapping, our Aboriginal populations pass the practices of our ancestors to new generations. By bringing youth into the fold, cultural pride and an appreciation for getting out on the land can be fostered and encouraged for a lifetime.

Mr. Speaker, it is for these reasons our Government has chosen to remain ahead of the curve in our proactive approach to this important sector, jointly led by the Departments of Industry, Tourism and Investment and Environment and Natural Resources. We continue to connect our trappers to international markets while educating and training resident trappers to maximize their returns with consistent and best practices for trapping and pelt preparation with the world-renowned Genuine Mackenzie Valley Fur brand. Through our Hide and Fur Procurement Program, we also connect local artisans with traditional materials to support their arts and their livelihoods, reinvigorating community-based sewing groups, bringing youth and elders together to pass on traditional skills and hear stories of the past.

Mr. Speaker, The Department of Environment and Natural Resources works with trappers to deliver the Take a Kid Trapping Program, and provide fur remnants to schools across the territory for use in crafting projects every year. The Northwest Territories is one of very few jurisdictions offering this kind of support for traditional practices. We are proud of this and of the fact that our programs are the envy of the Canadian trapping industry. The benefits of these small, but extremely dynamic, made-in-the-Northwest-Territories programs to our trapping industry continue to impress. Our government will continue to support and encourage this sector and the socio-economic benefits it brings to our residents. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Ministers' statements. Minister of Transportation.

MINISTER'S STATEMENT 65-18(2):
BUILDING PARTNERSHIPS WITH CANADA IN
THE DELIVERY OF AIRPORT AND HIGHWAY
CAPITAL PROJECTS

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: Mr. Speaker, investments in the transportation system will help to improve the safety of the travelling public, lower the cost of living, adapt to the effects of climate change, and support economic opportunities. Successful funding agreements with Canada are critical to see these projects to completion.

Last summer, we received federal approval for the first bundle of projects submitted under the New Building Canada Plan, creating significant opportunities to improve Northwest Territories highways. Now, with the summer construction season upon us again, the Department of Transportation will continue to make improvements to highways and airports across the territory.

Mr. Speaker, work is currently being done on nearly every NWT highway. I would like to provide a brief summary of these ongoing improvements, starting in the south and moving north.

The section of Highway No. 1 between Fort Simpson and the junction with Highway No. 3 will see improvements ranging from road widening to drainage improvements and resurfacing. Highway No. 6 to Fort Resolution will also see road widening and drainage improvements, along with sub-base and base course construction. Rehabilitation to increase the structural integrity of Highway No. 7 will take place near Fort Liard. Structural strengthening, road widening, drainage, and resurfacing work will take place on Highway No. 3 between Behchoko and Yellowknife. Final work on the realigned section of Highway No. 4, including clearing the right of way, installing permanent signage, and bridge improvements will be completed this summer. Finally, on the Dempster Highway, embankment will be widened in various sections.

In addition to this work, the 2016-17 federal budget included \$21.6 million in funding to pave the section of Highway No. 5 that runs through Wood Buffalo National Park. Parks Canada will be taking responsibility for the project and will identify the full scope and design. We have been in contact with Parks Canada to discuss available granular resources for the project and will assist our federal partners as required.

Mr. Speaker, all airports in the NWT are federally regulated. Improvements to air services and airport infrastructure are mutually beneficial to both our government and the Government of Canada.

The federal Airport Capital Assistance Program, or ACAP, was developed in 1995 to help regional airports pay for up to 100 per cent of the costs of projects aimed at improving safety, protecting assets, and reducing operating costs. The Department of Transportation has taken advantage of this program in the past and there are currently several projects benefitting from its funding. A total of \$1.3 million has been dedicated to rehabilitating runway lighting at the airport in Tuktoyaktuk beginning in 2016-17, to enhance operational safety and improve maintenance ability at the airport. In 2016, the Department of Transportation will also finish rehabilitating the runway lighting at

the Norman Wells airport. That project received \$1.4 million from ACAP, back in 2014. Finally, the Department has received \$800,000 to replace the emergency response crash truck at the airport in Yellowknife.

Mr. Speaker, a great deal is being done to strengthen and improve our existing transportation system. However, the list of priorities continues to grow and additional resources are required on an ongoing basis. Our government must continue to take every opportunity to highlight the infrastructure needs of our territory and work with the federal government to achieve our mutual priorities. The final report of the Canada Transportation Act Review Panel, which was released in February 2016, included a list of recommendations for federal investment in some of our top transportation infrastructure priorities, including investment in the development of three corridors: the Mackenzie Valley Highway, the Tlicho All-Season Road and access to the Slave Geological Province. This summer, the federal government is engaging with key stakeholders, governments, and the general public in all jurisdictions to talk about the findings of this report. Our government will use this opportunity to support the implementation of these important recommendations.

Mr. Speaker, it is important to strengthen our partnership with Canada by ensuring that the priorities and challenges of our territory are being recognized. Our government has made significant commitments to increasing NWT transportation infrastructure by contributing 25 per cent of the costs for projects funded under the New Building Canada Plan and delivering project management and ongoing operations and maintenance. Infrastructure improvements provide significant economic and social benefits for NWT residents, including employment and training opportunities, reducing the cost of living in remote communities, supporting local businesses and local economies, and providing more efficient means to bring non-renewable resources to markets. The Department of Transportation is committed to identifying new prospects to increase investment in the NWT transportation system in collaboration with our federal counterparts. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Ministers' statements. Item 3, Members' statements. Member for Nahendeh.

Members' Statements

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON NORTHWEST TERRITORIES YOUTH AMBASSADOR PROGRAM

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today, Mr. Speaker, I'm fulfilling the commitment I made to

some youth ambassadors who are part of the NWT Association of Communities 50th Anniversary Conference. It was great to see them work hard and engaged in the process.

Mr. Speaker, the NWT Youth Ambassador Program was a pilot project at the 2007 Canada Winter Games. With this event being a success, the program had expanded to 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games in Vancouver. With the success of these two pilot projects, the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs made the program permanent. The amazing part of this program is to watch youth develop into strong leaders through a lead and organized experience, whether it's at territorial events like the Circumpolar Games, national events like the Federal/Territorial/Provincial meeting in the NWT, and international events like the Para-Pan and PanAm Games. It is a model that is recognized by other governments and expanded to Greenland this year, which is very impressive.

Mr. Speaker, at all these events they have an opportunity to develop life and job skills while building on their confidence necessary to deal with challenges that they face throughout their life journey.

Mr. Speaker, I could spend hours telling you stories about some of their feats. With limited time, I want to share one story with you about a young man who liked working late shifts. This young man would spend hours and hours switching shifts so he could work in the evening. At the end of the evening he would actually take boxes of food and come back home to the residence. Unfortunately food would never ever make it back home and we couldn't understand what was happening with this food.

About two days before the end of the event, a fellow youth ambassador came to us and explained what was happening. This young man was taking the food and giving it to people on the street, the homeless, and making a difference. This is the young peoples and leaders of our territories, which I'm very proud to say I was part of.

Mr. Speaker, at the end of the events the ambassadors were asked to fill out a form that's called "Describe the Most Significant Change." Mr. Speaker, I've asked and received permission to share one with you here today. Youth ambassadors -- and this is her words exactly: "Youth ambassadors offer a door to endless possibilities and success. For many of us, having a point in your life where you think there is nothing you can do and you feel your life is going nowhere, and then coming to a program and then meet people like MACA sport and recreation staff and peers would make a difference in our lives." Mr. Speaker, I'd like

to seek unanimous consent to conclude my statement. Thank you.

---unanimous consent granted

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I thank my colleagues for allowing me to conclude my statement. "Knowing that there are people in the North constantly working towards providing and sharing the opportunity for our opinions and leadership is refreshing, it fills us with the empowerment for change, self-discipline and the chance to voice the thoughts, feelings and solution of the youth. On behalf of all the NWT youth, please acknowledge the efforts of the youth. If we are struggling, mentor us, do not leave us. If we are succeeding, encourage us and do not tear us down. For me, making a difference in the future is a guarantee if I have the support." Mr. Speaker, I will have questions for the Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Members' statements. Member for Yellowknife North.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON NORTHWEST TERRITORIES AGRICULTURAL STRATEGY

MR. VANTHUYNE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I'd like to talk about the Agriculture Strategy for the Northwest Territories. Mr. Speaker, people everywhere have certain basic needs that unite us as humans, such things as shelter, family, clothing, and the need for food. To thrive and flourish, every human being requires access to a healthy diet. Without that, none of the other elements of a healthy and happy life are possible. Like a lot of things, getting access to a healthy diet presents the North with more challenges than most other Canadian regions. Our communities are smaller and sparsely located, we're challenged by transportation between communities and access to the rest of the country, and our climate doesn't favour growing in abundance or during all periods of the year.

Nevertheless, the land has provided for people here, for as long as any of us can remember. Many types of foods thrive on our land, and have sustained people for many generations. There's a history of producing local crops in many northern communities in all regions. Recent years have seen innovation and new initiatives that make producing some of our own foods a reality in most NWT communities.

Mr. Speaker, like anything, food production takes knowledge and hard work. Anyone who has worked the land will tell you, it's not a matter of throwing down some seeds and then harvesting supper. But it is possible to supplement imported processed

and packaged food with locally grown crops. Not only does that provide us with a healthy alternative in many cases, it also helps us to become more independent, and less reliant on southern producers. It helps us to be more secure in our own supply of our own foods and ultimately our own health. Most certainly there are economic benefits to our communities that result from spending here at home, as well as reducing the cost of living.

Mr. Speaker, last summer the government consulted with people in the agriculture community. Northerners are excited, and many are passionate, about the potential for growing our own food. In our mandate discussions earlier this year, this Assembly committed to investing in our agricultural sector, and specifically to developing and implementing an Agriculture Strategy, that I am now pleased to see is underway. At the appropriate time today, I'll have questions about the strategy for the Minister of Industry, Tourism and Investment. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Members' statements. Member for Tu Nedhe-Wiilideh.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON YELLOWKNIFE'S DENE FIRST NATION SKILLS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS

MR. BEAULIEU: Marci cho, Mr. Speaker. I would like to use this time to speak about the important work the Yellowknives Dene First Nation are doing to enhance skills and employment for members in Ndilo and Dettah.

Through strategic planning, the YKDFN have identified gaps and areas of need for skills development. Mr. Speaker, both of YKDFN's Community Readiness Plan and their Labour Force Development Strategy analyze local job market and skill gaps for Members in Ndilo, Dettah, and Yellowknife. These studies demonstrate a need for skills development and education upgrading in these communities. Approximately 46.6 per cent of residents in Ndilo and Dettah have a high school diploma, which is below the territorial average of 73.6 per cent. As well, Mr. Speaker, employment rates in Ndilo and Dettah are very low. As is the case in most of the small communities.

Mr. Speaker, YKDFN's solution is a locally delivered skills training to employment program that offers job counselling, personal counselling, targeted skills training, and work integrated training opportunities, all while retaining important connections to culture and tradition. The program, Dechita Naowo, is an upgraded version of a skills development program already delivered by YKDFN's Wellness Department that was successful in moving members from training to employment.

The Dechita Naowo program is an implementation of recommendations outlined in our Labour Force Development Strategy. Dechita Naowo also closely aligns with the GNWT's Skills 4 Success initiative. For instance, goal one of Skills 4 Success is to increase skill levels through relevant education and training. Dechita Naowo has built-in training programs and educational upgrading programs that prepare members to work in emerging jobs in the NWT. Dechita Naowo aligns with goal two of Skills 4 Success through bridging employment gaps through targeted supports by developing targeted training programs. Mr. Speaker, I seek unanimous consent to conclude my statement.

---Unanimous consent granted

MR. BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. By developing targeted training programs to participants that are based on needs of the industry. As well, information about Dechita Naowo participants will be tracked and maintained in YKDFN's labour force database. YKDFN will be able to better monitor their labour force and develop skills training that align with labour market trends. There is alignment between Skills 4 Success, YKDFN's Labour Force Strategy, and the Dechita Naowo program, but there is little synergy between the strategies to implement local skills development. The YKDFN have worked very hard to strategically identify and find solutions to these local skills gaps. Thank you Mr. Speaker

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Members' statements. Member for Sahtu.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON
RECOGNITION OF VIVIAN PELLISSEY,
EDUCATION HALL OF FAME INDUCTEE, AND
SAHTU DENE AND METIS COMPREHENSIVE
LAND CLAIM AGREEMENT ANNIVERSARY

MR. MCNEELY: Mr. Speaker, today I'd like to use this time here to share a couple announcements here. One is to Ms. Vivian Pellissey there who the Minister earlier mentioned on receiving the Education Hall of Fame. Congratulations Ms. Pellissey on your over 30 years of dedication to strengthening the educational foundation of the Community of Tulita, truly a large and most recognized reward and I extend my support to you.

The second one is to recognize this day here, 23 years ago we seen the conclusion of the Sahtu Dene and Metis Comprehensive Land Claim, which was signed on this day and received a royal assent that following fall. So it's a contributed recognized achievement for the people of the Sahtu region, so I'd certainly like to share that with my colleagues in this House and the people in the gallery. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Members' statements. Member for Kam Lake.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON
DECHINTA CENTRE FOR RESEARCH AND
LEARNING

MR. TESTART: Mr. Speaker, both on the hustings and in this House, I've spoken about the NWT's need to evolve into a knowledge economy. That is the key to breaking the boom-and-bust cycle that prevents the North from transforming into the long-term sustainable economy we are all working so hard to build. Though this government avoids taking the steps required to achieving this, luckily, a group of Northerners is already taking the caribou by the horns, so to speak, in actively building our knowledge economy.

Since its inception in 2009, Dechinta Bush University Centre for Research and Learning has become a flexible, innovative, and responsive institution that is filling the need for a northern university. It should be noted, Mr. Speaker, that Canada is the only circumpolar country without a university in their northern territories, yet the demand for one has long existed and only keeps growing. Last year alone, Dechinta had 104 potential applicants and a mere 30 spaces. They're receiving three times as many applications as they have funding for and cannot meet this ever-growing demand for potential students. Moreover, 97 per cent of those students who are able to attend are Aboriginal, and 72 per cent are women. And, Mr. Speaker, they have an astonishing zero per cent dropout rate and 100 per cent program completion record. They have built this successful record almost purely on their own resources, tenacity, and devotion to higher learning. They could do so much more for our students and our economy if the government supported them with more resources and legislative change.

Dechinta's commitment to building a knowledge economy is unparalleled, and their graduates are already participating in achieving that shared goal, with all of them either having pursued higher education or have entered the labour force. Breaking that down even more, Mr. Speaker, 49 per cent pursued further post-secondary and 57 per cent are employed, 97 of these in the NWT labour force. This clearly demonstrates they are quickly becoming a major contributor to our future economy and social growth, yet they could do so much more. If Dechinta was given both core funding and recognition under the Education Act, they would create 158 new jobs with 153 of those jobs outside of the capital. Mr. Speaker, I speak unanimous consent to conclude my statement.

---Unanimous consent granted

MR. TESTART: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, colleagues. Mr. Speaker, an increase in university graduation is directly tied to GDP growth, poverty alleviation, and rise in real income, and we have a responsibility as a maturing jurisdiction to offer the ability to pursue such a degree here, at home. Dechinta has already taken the first steps, the hardest steps, and this government should now assist them with the funding and accreditation to climb even further in their pursuit of achieving a knowledge economy that we can all share and participate in. We need this if we are to attain a truly sustainable future for all peoples of the Northwest Territories. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Item 3, Members' statements. Member for Mackenzie Delta.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON
RECOGNITION OF SARAH JEROME,
EDUCATION HALL OF FAME INDUCTEE

MR. BLAKE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I, too, would like to congratulate Sarah Jerome on her achievement today with the Education Hall of Fame. Mr. Speaker, Sarah was also my teacher while I was at Grollier Hall, and I'm sure she taught our Minister of Education, as well, but many, many people throughout the Delta, Mr. Speaker. She has also encouraged many of the teachers that we have today and worked very closely with all those that work with the Gwich'in language. Mr. Speaker, it's so important now because our language is at a critical state, and we need to encourage more of our youth and those that get involved in the Gwich'in language. And I'd just like to say on behalf of the all the people of the Beaufort Delta a big mahsi cho. Mahsi.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Item 3, Members' statements. Member for Frame Lake.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON
GNWT ACTION REGARDING DECLINING
BATHURST CARIBOU HERD

MR. O'REILLY: Merci, monsieur le President. The Wek'eezhii Renewable Resources Board released part A of its decision on the joint Tlicho Government and GNWT management proposal for the Bathurst caribou herd on May 26th of this year. This decision focused on the state of the herd, harvest restrictions in time for the 2016-17 season, and wolf control. Part B will come later this summer and will feature recommendations on biological and environment monitoring and cumulative effects.

Mr. Speaker, the board found that "despite all the management actions taken over the past seven years, the herd is still declining and recovery of the herd remains uncertain," and that "this is an issue of serious conservation concern." Furthermore, the

board said, "With the Bathurst herd in such a perilous state, all peoples who harvest in Wek'eezhii must do their part to ensure the recovery of the herd. Users and managers must act now in whatever way is possible to protect the herd so future recovery may be possible."

What is our government doing to help with recovery of the Bathurst caribou herd? This government actively opposes resource development in the calving ground of the herd on the Nunavut side of the border. This was the GNWT position taken in the recent review of the Sabina Gold and Silver project by the Nunavut Impact Review Board. I commend our government for taking such action, but what are we doing on our side of the border?

While we have set up mobile caribou protection areas to restrict harvesting, there has been no such protection from disturbance caused by mining activities. Such measures were used in the 1980s in the Kivalliq region to help protect the Beverly and Qamanirjuaq caribou herds from disturbance caused by mineral exploration. In addition, there has been no temporary or permanent protection of important caribou habitat on the GNWT side of the border. There are no thresholds for disturbance that have been established for the herd. No legally binding land use plans for Crown land exist for the herd's range on the NWT side of the border. Can we afford to wait for the Bathurst range planning exercise to be completed before our government finally starts to act to protect habitat?

I have raised the issue of who bears the burden of management responses in our efforts to save the Bathurst caribou herd. I will have questions for the Minister of Environment and Natural Resources later today.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Item 3, Members' statements. Member for Deh Cho.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON
NORTHERN FOOD PRODUCTION

MR. NADLI: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, northern agriculture is a success story waiting to happen, and residents of the Deh Cho want to be part of the local-food movement that is enhancing the health and sustainability of our communities.

Mr. Speaker, [English translation not provided].

Mr. Speaker, an enterprising resident of Fort Providence wants to put locally produced food on the shelves at northern grocery stores. He is trying to spearhead an initiative that would eventually see locally grown produce in our stores all year. With support from the Northern Farm Training Institute and community members, he is now developing a proposal to launch a greenhouse pilot project to

grow produce year round. The concept could eventually be expanded to become a commercial operation in the future.

Mr. Speaker, greenhouse technology is advancing all the time. The Yukon Research Centre's Agridomes grow upwards of 600 plants throughout the winter months in 32 square feet of space, using as little as 1.9 kilowatts per hour. The University of Guelph is working with NASA in experimenting with the idea of growing food on Mars. They have taken interest in Fort Providence and want to build a prototype greenhouse in the NWT that could be monitored remotely from Guelph while local residents assist with day-to-day operations.

Mr. Speaker, northern food production is nothing new. It is only since southern foods became more easily and cheaply imported that the local sector declined. Now, as food prices continue to climb and people are beginning to understand the benefits of local food production for the community and the planet, we are experiencing a resurgence of interest and enthusiasm for northern agriculture. Dollars are available for greenhouse projects like the one we want to see in the Deh Cho.

Mr. Speaker, action on the NWT Agriculture Strategy is long overdue. Northerners want to produce, process, sell, and enjoy locally grown food on their own plates. As the expression goes, the time is ripe. Let's make strategic investments in northern agriculture right away and reap the benefits in all of our communities. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Item 3, Members' statements. Member for Yellowknife Centre.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON OFFICE OF THE PUBLIC GUARDIAN

MS. GREEN: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, an application to the Office of the Public Guardian is the last resort for people who don't have the capacity to make decisions about their own health and wellbeing because of disability or disease. The Public Guardian provides this vital service of monitoring the care and wellbeing of its wards. Most of us will never have to call on the Public Guardian, but young adults who have aged out of permanent foster care, people with mental illness or intellectual disabilities, and older adults with Alzheimer's or dementia are potential candidates for guardianship.

Not to put too fine a point on it, the NWT Public Guardian's office is swamped. There are 50 applications pending, and the waiting time is a year. To make an order of guardianship, an assessment by a psychologist or psychiatrist is needed to establish the applicant's capacity. Once complete,

the applicant goes to court for a guardianship order. The Public Guardian contracts out the assessment, but there is a shortage of health professionals to complete them.

The first thing we must do is better resource the Office of the Public Guardian. They need to be able to contract psychologists who can clear up the backlog. The people waiting are vulnerable. A year is too long to wait for someone who has no one to help them make life-changing decisions. A second problem after wait lists is the size of the case load. The Public Guardian and her assistant now have 68 people on their case load, and that number will become bigger once the 50 pending applications have been sorted out.

The Public Guardian's job is to monitor the care and wellbeing of her clients. How much monitoring can she do with such a large case load? How long does it take to get a response when one of her clients has a health crisis: an accident or a new diagnosis? This is not motor vehicle licensing, Mr. Speaker, where people can take a number.

In the meantime, there's an ounce of prevention any of us can take to assist those who might care for us when we are unable to do so, ourselves, and that is to create a power of attorney and have it signed and ready to go. It will set out who your decision maker is so that you don't need to go through the Public Guardian's office. This document can then be updated as needed. Mr. Speaker, I seek unanimous consent to conclude my statement. Thank you.

---Unanimous consent granted

MS. GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you, colleagues. Taking care of vulnerable people is at the core of government services to residents. These services need to be delivered in a professional, timely manner. It's time for GNWT to better resource the Office of the Public Guardian so they are part of the solution rather than the problem. I'll have questions for the Minister of Health and Social Services. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Item 3, Members' statements. Item 4, returns to oral questions. Item 5, recognition of visitors in the gallery. Minister of Education, Culture and Employment.

Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today, we held the 7th Annual Education Hall of Fame celebrating individuals for their hard work and dedication through education, across the Northwest Territories. We have a bunch of inductees here

today, role models, mentors, and very respected elders. I would like to recognize our Beaufort Delta recipient from Inuvik, Ms. Sarah Jerome; our Deh Cho recipient from Fort Simpson, Valerie Gendron; our Sahtu recipient from Tulita, Vivian Pellissey; South Slave recipient from Fort Smith, Ms. Jane Dragon; our North Slave recipient from Yellowknife, Ms. Rita Mueller. And, unfortunately, Mr. Jim Martin from Behchoko and Ms. Muriel Tolley from Yellowknife, who is also the recipient of the Minister's Choice Award, were not able to be in attendance today. I also would like to welcome their spouses and their family members who are able to join in the celebrations and join us in the gallery today. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Recognition of visitors in the gallery. Member for Thebacha.

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to recognize educator Jane Dragon of Fort Smith. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Recognition of visitors in the gallery. Member for Inuvik Twin Lakes.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to use this opportunity to recognize two constituents from Inuvik Twin Lakes: Sarah Jerome, who we've spoken about numerous times already today; I appreciate the work you've done. With her is her husband, Freddy Jerome. So welcome to the gallery. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Recognition of visitors in the gallery. Member for Nahendeh.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I, too, would like to congratulate all the inductees, specifically starting with Valerie Gendron, who actually taught five of my children and she survived. I thank her for that. Her husband, Roger Pilling who is a good friend and a good volunteer for the fire department. I'd like to welcome and thank him for coming here. And Rita Mueller, a dear friend, it's well deserved, and she's very humble, as is Val. And then, of course, Ms. Jane Dragon, who I've had the opportunity to speak with numerous times, and her daughter, Joyce. Welcome to the Assembly. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Recognition of visitors in the gallery. Member for Mackenzie Delta.

MR. BLAKE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I, too, would like to recognize Sarah and Freddy Jerome, who spent a lot of time within my riding visiting family and friends. Also I recall when they used to live 12 miles north of Tsiigehtchic. I still remember those days. Welcome to the House. Mahsi cho.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Recognition of visitors in the gallery. Member for Sahtu.

MR. MCNEELY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to recognize Vivian Pellissey from Tulita for her huge contribution as one of the inductees, and the rest of the group as well for this huge personal contribution to the whole environment of education capitalization. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Recognition of visitors in the gallery. I, too, would like to welcome all the inductees, all the award winners of the NWT Education Hall of Fame. Welcome and thank you for making a huge difference in our children's lives and for the Northwest Territories. Masi. Those who we may have missed in the gallery, welcome to the Chambers. It's always great to have an audience in the gallery. Masi. Item 6, acknowledgements. Item 7, oral questions. Member for Yellowknife Centre.

Oral Questions

QUESTION 260-18(2): OFFICE OF THE PUBLIC GUARDIAN

MS. GREEN: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. My questions are for the Minister of Health and Social Services. What can the Minister do now with discretionary reserves and funds to hire more resources to clear the backlog of applications to the Public Guardian? Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Minister of Health and Social Services.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As the Member has indicated, the current wait list for the Public Guardian is unacceptable in all ways, and I have already directed the Department of Health and Social Services to review the business processes to make sure that the business processes make sense and we're getting the most efficiencies and utilizing our money in the best way. As part of this business process review, I have asked them to analyze how applications flow, assessments, referrals, and also do some trend analysis on the increased demand that we're having on the Public Guardian Office. This review won't be done until the end of the calendar year and we do have a significant backlog at this point in time, so the department is actually looking to do some in-house training to train more assessors, whether they are in the Northwest Territories or outside the Northwest Territories, so that we can move on the number of assessments that need to be done so that we can start reducing that list while this review is taking place. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MS. GREEN: Thank you to the Minister for that answer. He referred to the assessor, and my question is whether that assessor training will happen in this fiscal year and whether there are intake resources at the regional health authority level for the Public Guardian?

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Under the Act, any person assigned the responsibility to prepare such a report by the Public Guardian can become an assessor. This could be a nurse, it could be a psychiatrist, it could be medical practitioners, it could also be clinical social workers. So these are individuals that exist across the Northwest Territories, and we're looking at training people across the Northwest Territories to be assessors as one of our initial steps. But also we are looking at individuals outside the Northwest Territories, so it's both.

MS. GREEN: Thank you to the Minister for that answer. So if I'm one of the 50 people who is now waiting for the Public Guardian to adjudicate my application, how much longer should I expect to wait?

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: It's 72 outstanding referrals, actually. The number continues to climb. There is a number of reasons that accessing the applications can take longer than would be desirable. Some of the challenges that we face are actually tracking down some of the individuals who have actually filed the applications. It's a transient territory; people are moving around. We've also had our challenge with the number of assessors, which we are addressing currently. There are individual situations where we have found members that are disputing who should actually be the public guardian or the private guardian. So there are multiple reasons why some of these applications take a long time. We are looking to expedite the process and clear off as much of this backlog as we can, but there are some additional challenges far outside just the number of assessors we have. I can't give a definitive time, because every application is unique and every application will take a different amount of time depending on the challenges faced.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Oral Questions. Member for Yellowknife Centre.

MS. GREEN: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. As I said in my Member's statement, clearing the backlog will also result in a greater case load for the current Public Guardian staff, which is, as I understand it, one person and one assistant, which is beyond the capacity of the resources currently allocated. So I would like to hear the Minister's plan to not only clear up the backlog but to better staff the Public Guardian's office? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: As the Member indicated, there are currently 68 individuals in the Northwest Territories under a public guardianship, and there are about 80 individuals that are under private guardianship that had to go through the full assessment process. The Member is right; the numbers are increasing, with the 72 referrals in

front of us that will likely result in some additional individuals requiring either public or private guardianship.

The first step that we're taking, Mr. Speaker, is doing the review of the program to make sure that it's efficient, that it's meeting the needs, what changes we can make with existing resources. From there, we will be able to clearly assess future demand and ongoing demand, which may require some additional investment in this area, additional positions. I won't commit to adding positions at this point in time. We have to finish the assessment to determine what the true workload in that unit is, and whether or not additional positions are required. But, given the demand, it may be necessary to add some positions. We'll know by the end of the calendar year. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Oral questions. Member for Nahendeh.

QUESTION 261-18(2):
NORTHWEST TERRITORIES YOUTH
AMBASSADOR PROGRAM

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As you heard from my Member's statement, the Youth Ambassador Program is very important for our youth. As part of the promise I made to the youth, I will have some questions for the Minister for Municipal and Community Affairs. Mr. Speaker, you always hear that youth are important. However, sometimes governments -- local, regional, or territorial -- do not follow up on that action. Can the Minister please tell us what the department is doing to enhance programs like the Youth Ambassador Program? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Youth Ambassador Program is, in my opinion, one of the most important programs that we run within the Government of the Northwest Territories, and I think we will see some long-term benefits of the program. We've retained a consultant to complete an evaluation of the Youth Ambassador Program to provide suggestions on how we can improve this program in future years. The review is actually going to cover all ten years of the program's operations, and once the evaluation has been completed, the department will be in a position to consider program enhancements.

MR. THOMPSON: Mahsi cho to the Minister for his answer, and I know the youth will appreciate hearing it, such as I do. Mr. Speaker, part of the Youth Ambassador Program is the promotion and showcasing of traditional games and knowledge. Can the Minister please advise this House how the

department is looking at new training events to get more youth involved and preparing them to be able to showcase our traditional games and knowledge in future events, as our older performers -- or as our performers are now getting older?

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: The department really has some good training programs when they are preparing youth to go off to some of the events that they attend. A training event will be held in March of 2017 to prepare the Youth Ambassador Project at the Canada Summer Games, and discussions are still under way with the Host Society in Winnipeg to gauge our interests related to our Youth Ambassadors, but no decisions have been made on the traditional games component of the -- at the March event. The Aboriginal Sports Circle continues to do some community clinics and hosting the traditional game championships. So my experience has been in the past that we've seen a number of events where our youth have been there, at NWT Days in Ottawa especially I think was a very successful event and it was well-attended and well-received by all the people that attended the event. We continue to train our youth, and we know some of our youth workers are going into communities, promoting traditional games. So it's one that's high on the radar, and we will continue to promote.

MR. THOMPSON: I thank the Minister for that answer. The Minister, in his previous answer -- not this one here, but the previous one -- talked about the evaluators and doing a 10-year evaluation of the program. Can the Minister confirm that he will be talking to all candidates that were part of the program, all the alumni, and get their stories and their challenges and how that has had an impact on their life presently?

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: An evaluation is currently under way and the report will be provided to MLAs, and I can say from personal experience, having the MACA file and dealing with the Youth Ambassador Program since 2008, I've seen first-hand the benefits and a lot of the Youth Ambassador alumni that are actually doing quite well. We actually had some at the NWT Association of Communities AGM that was held a couple of months ago, and the feedback that we got from them, that they were so interested in municipal politics that they may consider a run for municipal politics in the future, or as early as this fall. We're looking forward to that, but I see first-hand the benefits of the Youth Ambassador Program and it's one that's going to be continuously supported by this government.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Oral questions. Member for Nahendeh.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker and I thank the Minister for his great answer. Yes, some of us who have been involved with this program understand the importance of it. Now, we've talked about the challenges of making this program successful. Can the Minister commit the department will look at increasing funding for this program, or add a coordinator position that will lead to more success for this program, not this year but for the next business plan? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: We are always looking at ways that we can increase our funding, especially for the youth. I mean, I can tell this House that we've had five events, I think, in the last year or so and we spent close to \$650,000 at these events, and some of this is O and M funding for staff time and such. So it is a program that, you know, we will look at ways to enhance once the evaluation has been completed, and we will work with committee members to see how we can incorporate into our business plans and main estimates going forward. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Colleagues, I would like to draw your attention to a Member's guest in the gallery. We have a former Member of the Legislative Assembly for Wiilideh, also former Premier and former Minister. Welcome to the Chamber. We also have His Worship, the Mayor of Hay River, Brad Mapes. Welcome. Oral questions. Member for Tu Nedhe-Wiilideh.

QUESTION 262-18(2):
COLLABORATING WITH YELLOWKNIFE DENE
FIRST NATION ON SKILLS 4 SUCCESS

MR. BEAULIEU: Marci cho, Mr. Speaker. As per my Member's statement, I'd like to ask the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment some questions. Will the Minister have the Department of Education, Culture and Employment work with YK Dene First Nation on implementing components of Skills 4 Success? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Minister of Education, Culture and Employment.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, the department will be continuing the work with the Yellowknives Dene First Nation. In the past, we have worked in partnerships with CanNor as well as with the Department of Tourism, Industry and Investment in the development of an Economic Development Strategy, as well as a Labour Force Strategy. Our goal is in the next few months to table an action plan on the Skills 4 Success document in this House, and we want to make sure that YKDFN is part of that and that we listen to their advice, listen to the direction that they want to go, and yes, we will be continuing that work with the

Yellowknives Dene First Nation. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. BEAULIEU: I would like to thank the Minister for that response. Will the department commit to working in partnership with YKDFN on the development of the skill development in the two communities of Detah and Ndilo?

HON. ALFRED MOSES: The department is committed to working with all our partners throughout the Northwest Territories. The Yellowknives Dene First Nations is a key stakeholder; obviously they are involved in a lot of the socio-economic agreements that we have with the mines. We're working with all partners that are involved in adult post-secondary education and skills training to support NWT residents. With the skills knowledge and attitudes for employment success we are committed to continuing working with Yellowknives Dene First Nation in how we can focus on developing the skills as well as the education, post-secondary education needed to get into the labour force or else meet some of our in-demand job needs, not only here in the region but right across the Northwest Territories.

MR. BEAULIEU: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to ask the Minister if his department is able to commit funding to YK Dene First Nation for their skill development program.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Any program funding that the department does have is based on program eligibility, and funding applications must be submitted to the Department of Education, Culture and Employment in order for funding considerations to be explored. Our department is working with partners or interested organizations to help them develop those proposals and applications moving forward. And, like I said, it's based on program eligibility and whether or not they do meet the criteria, but we are interested in receiving applications from the Yellowknives Dene First Nations and moving forward from there.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Member for Tu Nedhe-Willideh.

MR. BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, the YK Dene First Nations are interested in, of course, making all the appropriate applications; the deadline for those are on July 5th. They feel that they want to have a meeting with the Minister, this is scheduled for June 30th because of Session, but the community is asking if the Minister would be prepared to meet with them a couple of days earlier than what it scheduled on June 30th. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: I'm losing my voice here. I was back home doing a lot of talking over the last

few days, and a lot of speeches the last couple of days as well. Unfortunately, during session time we are-- there's a lot of meetings that go on here in the House as well as session and going through our budget process. However, my schedule doesn't really confirm that I'd be able to meet before the 30th, although I will commit that officials in my department are available to meet before the 30th. Should a time open up that I might have some time, I will also look forward to trying to meet ahead of time. I know there is a short timeline to get the applications through. Pending availability I will keep in touch with our officials and I know our officials are talking with members of the Yellowknives Dene First Nation and should a time come up I'd be happy to meet with them earlier than later.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Oral questions. Member for Yellowknife North.

QUESTION 263-18(2):
DRAFT AGRICULTURE STRATEGY

MR. VANTHUYNE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my questions are for the Minister of Industry, Tourism and Investment about the draft Agriculture Strategy the government shared with Committee earlier in the week. I also want to take this opportunity to thank the Minister and his department for the work that they have done in both the consultations that have been conducted as well as the current draft.

Mr. Speaker, can the Minister share how the strategy will integrate the work of the Northern Farm Training Institute, the Aurora Research Institute, and the in-house work of the department to make the most effective use of our resources and knowledge base? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Minister of Industry, Tourism and Investment.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Agriculture is a very important sector to our government and part of the Mandate of the 18th Legislative Assembly. We have provided the Standing Committee on Economic Development and Environment with a draft Agriculture Strategy for review and look forward to hearing back from the committee. A key recommendation of the proposed strategy is that various organizations need to work together, including departmental collaboration to ensure that we all use our resources efficiently and effectively.

Another recommendation is the creation of a central repository or a common public point of information sharing. This portal will assist community advocates as multiple agencies will be contributing to shared data program. And I should also point out that we've worked very closely with all of the agencies

that the Member referred to and they've played a very large part of developing our draft Agriculture Strategy. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. VANTHUYNE: Thank you to the Minister for his reply. I'm happy to hear about the portal and shared data; I'm sure that will be very useful. Mr. Speaker, what steps are included in the strategy to identify and make more land accessible for agriculture?

HON. BOB MCLEOD: To date we haven't had any requests for very large areas of land for agriculture purposes but we do anticipate that happening in the future. And so the strategy does speak to potential land use within municipal boundaries and authorities. Part of the implementation will be guided by the land use and sustainability framework which serves as the underpinning of all decisions in respect to land, including the development of land for the agriculture sector in the Northwest Territories.

The issue of access to land for agriculture will be reviewed through collaborative processes with municipalities and Aboriginal governments and land use planning boards and committees, and as land claims are settlement there will certainly be more certainty in this area.

MR. VANTHUYNE: Certainly certainty is what most are looking for and that would be appreciated. Mr. Speaker, can the Minister share what steps are outlined in the strategy to develop and support education, knowledge and best practices about food production at the community level?

HON. BOB MCLEOD: The draft Agriculture Strategy has many recommendations on how to develop and support educational programs and educational resource development for agriculture. We will encourage and support the development and delivery of courses for community and regional trainers. The goal with the strategy is to improve overall capacity by having more people involved in northern agriculture, and we will develop foundational safe agriculture and food production, education resources including community and private sharing agriculture and harvesting of non-animal products. And the draft Agriculture Strategy is built on five pillars, including planning, knowledge, leadership, marketing channels and access to productive resources.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Oral questions. Member for Yellowknife North.

MR. VANTHUYNE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you to the Minister for his reply. My last question, Mr. Speaker: what evaluation measures are included in the strategy to evaluate the effectiveness of our investments in agriculture, both

in terms of dollars and with regard to new programs and initiatives launched under the new strategy? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: As Stompin' Tom would say the best test is right at the table.

---Laughter

HON. BOB MCLEOD: But I agree it's important to make sure our programs are effective. We have seen increased interest in our agriculture program as more and more people are growing their own food. We're still in early days as the strategy has not been released; however, we will review the effectiveness of this strategy as we move forward into implementation.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Oral questions. Member for Deh Cho.

QUESTION 264-18(2):
NORTHERN FOOD PROGRAM

MR. NADLI: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions today are for the Minister of Industry, Tourism and Investment. Look, it's pretty clear in terms of agriculture, we know what we want to do, it's the question of how, and critically, of course, is when. So I understand that the draft Agriculture Strategy has gone to the appropriate standing committee, it's under review as the Minister indicated, can the Minister give us a timeline on the target implementation for some of the strategy's immediate and short-term actions? Mahsi.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Minister of Industry, Tourism and Investment.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. When the Member in his Member's Statement referred to food from Mars I thought he had talked to my grandson who-- I was talking to him yesterday or the other day and he said he had a project that he was working on and I asked him what it was. He said he and his friend were planning a trip to Mars and he lamented that he had the hard part of the job because he had to find a way to get to Mars; his friend had the easy job, he just had to figure out how to grow food on Mars, so.

---Laughter

HON. BOB MCLEOD: In regards to your specific question, our department has been working with the Zhahti Koe Friendship Centre since late 2015 on developing a community garden. They secured a land lot recently and fencing has been ordered. Twenty raised garden boxes, a tool shed and compost bins are ready and will be shipped to the community. The department has not received any applications specific to commercial gardening or greenhouses at this point. We also run the Take a

Kid Gardening Program in the schools. We have a regional office that's very ready and willing and prepared to work with anybody that's interested to getting more into the agriculture commercial side. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. NADLI: I think the Minister outlined in general that no applications have been received in terms of providing assistance for community members at the local level. Can he explain how can residents and communities access funding for greenhouse projects and other local initiatives under the Northern Food Development Program?

HON. BOB MCLEOD: I'd like to reassure the Member that we're not waiting until the Northwest Territories Agriculture Strategy becomes the strategy. Right now as we go forward we certainly encourage Northwest Territories residents to become involved in agriculture. Our ITI regional offices are the contacts for anyone interested in learning more about agriculture, including the development of greenhouses, and the department will be pleased to work with all communities to make progress on this front.

MR. NADLI: I'd like to thank the Minister for his reply. It's very encouraging that we're not-- we need to develop a strategy but those programs and services could be readily available for people at the local level. How is agriculture being incorporated into the GNWT science agenda?

HON. BOB MCLEOD: The Growing Forward 2 Agreement provides up to \$1.2 million annually in cost-shared investment to the Northwest Territories agricultural sector to increase resource capacity to grow food in all NWT communities. The Small Scale Foods Program is delivered in all 33 Northwest Territories communities through ITI's regional offices primarily in support of community gardens. We have seen much success with the insulation of community greenhouses in communities on the Beaufort Sea. Many of the initiatives are community led and the department is pleased to provide insight, support and expertise.

As the Member knows, we have the Northern Farmers Training Institute, and certainly I see that as being a very excellent program that would help deliver to our science agenda. We know that research into agriculture and development of agriculture products is very much done in the south, and certainly with this institute we believe we can tap into these funding sources as well.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Oral questions. Member for Deh Cho.

MR. NADLI: Mr. Speaker, I don't know if the Minister is familiar with the Yukon Gold, but it's a customized-- or basically a tailored potato that was

seeded in part of the Yukon. I'm kind of looking forward to maybe coming up with a unique northern spud.

---Laughter

MR. NADLI: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Are we looking for partnership opportunities with the universities and other northern jurisdictions to advance local food production in the NWT? Mahsi.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: We are always looking for opportunities to maximize the funding reach of our scarce resources and certainly we've been approached by other bodies including I guess different non-government organizations I guess is the best way to call them that and we also have very good connections with universities, so we certainly want to get the best bang for our buck and we look at all of the different sources of funding.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Oral questions. Member for Kam Lake.

QUESTION 265-18(2):
CORE FUNDING FOR DECHINTA CENTRE FOR
RESEARCH AND LEARNING

MR. TESTART: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Core funding for Dechinta Bush University will create 156 jobs in their business proposal. The vast majority of these jobs will be in the smaller communities and regional centres. Will the Minister of Education, Culture, and Employment commit to providing additional funding in the next departmental business plan? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Minister of Education, Culture and Employment.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The department has been a supporter of Dechinta for the past several years in providing some funding. We're always working with them and just having ongoing discussions with the Dechinta executive. Most recently our current discussions is that we're waiting for this current budget process to finish before we start allocating funding. We continue to speak with Dechinta executive and supporters to see where we move forward next, and that will be at discussions at the next business plan cycle which will be commencing in about three months' time. I really appreciate the Members continuing to bring up the concerns of funding for Dechinta. We have a lot of champions within this House and appreciate the efforts and continued questions and bringing up the awareness for the program and the work that they do. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. TESTART: I appreciate the Minister's comments; however, I didn't hear a solid

commitment, but I'll move on from there. In their business case, Dechinta's looking for \$5 million. I note that we fund Aurora College to the tune of around \$32 million. Can the Minister give us some stats on the success rate of people who take Aurora College programing? We know that Dechinta's sitting at 100 per cent success rate. What are the comparable stats for Aurora College and are we getting value for money for that \$32 million that we currently invest in Aurora College? Thank you.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: This year we've actually had an increase in graduation rates in the high school, but also in Aurora College system. This summer the Aurora College is actually going through new strategic plan for the next ten years. It's going to be reflective on our Skills 4 Success Action Plan which we are developing this summer as well. And I understand that Dechinta's also working on a proposal, maybe a revised proposal reflecting our Skills 4 Success Action Plan. The details, I can get the details in terms of success, in terms of how many graduates we had in Aurora College compared to Dechinta. I could get those specific details and I can get it to the Member if he likes.

MR. TESTART: Yes, I would appreciate if the Minister could provide that information to me. Ms. Speaker, the recent Labour Market Study that the Minister referenced showed a real need for more post-secondary educated workers here the Northwest Territories. Dechinta does not have the ability to grant credentials despite its high success rates. Will the Minister commit to bringing forward legislative changes by the next sitting of this House?

HON. ALFRED MOSES: In the 17th Legislative Assembly there was a motion that was brought forth actually I believe in November of 2015. The department is looking at that. Most recently Nunavut did do a feasibility study of the same information that the Member's asking for. We did get a copy of that feasibility study from Nunavut. We are looking at the recommendations and the possibilities moving forward and what we as a territory are going to be doing in terms of the legislation or the granting of degrees, but we've got to take a look at that feasibility study and see whether or not it will reflect whether our financial situation as well our capacity in the Northwest Territories to be able to do that.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Oral questions. Member for Kam Lake.

MR. TESTART: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, Dechinta's not an idea, it's a real institution. It's producing graduates; it's doing very good work. It isn't an untested project. This is

something that's clear and measurable. They have a business case, it's very well thought out. I think it's time to act on these issues and stop speculating through action plans and strategies. Will the Minister make those commitments to bring forward funding by the next business plan and bring forward legislative changes the next sitting of this House? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: At this moment, I can't commit to bringing the legislative changes until we've done the review of the feasibility study, looked to what other jurisdictions are doing and still have those discussions with Dechinta moving forward. I know Nunavut has that feasibility study. They spend a lot of money into that feasibility study. It was in the news just recently and we're going to look at those moving forward, but at this time I cannot commit to bringing more funding or a legislation before the next business plan review which is about three months away.

MR. SPEAKER: Oral questions. Member for Sahtu.

QUESTION 266-18(2):
SIGNIFICANT DISCOVERY LICENCES IN SAHTU
REGION

MR. MCNEELY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today my question is addressed to the Minister responsible for OROGO on the activities to date in that area with regard to the expiration licence acquired by the Sahtu Explorer's Group here several years ago, particularly in 2010, 2011, 2012, and 2013. I ask the Minister to date what is the status of the significant discovery licenses that have recently been issued if any? If I could get an update on that. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. I believe the question is to the Minister of Justice.

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, significant discovery declarations do fall within responsibility of OROGO, but significant discovery licence are obtained from ITI, so I'm not sure whether the Minister of ITI would like to respond to that portion of the question. I can advise that there has not been much significant activity of any kind in the Member's constituency or throughout the Northwest Territories in the last couple of years since these matters were devolved to us.

MR. MCNEELY: My next question is in trying to understand the opportunities available with the tenures that were recently done at that time to see if any land monitoring opportunities to see if these applicants or these developers are in compliance with their tenures in creating opportunities to maintain these licenses. That's sort of where I'm going with the question. So my next question is

would the Minister provide a briefing on the update of the current licenses to be issued SDLs if there is any?

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: Mr. Speaker, I don't like to make commitments for other Ministers, SDLs would be handled by the Department of ITI and perhaps the question could be more appropriately addressed to that Minister.

MR. MCNEELY: I'll leave that question to the other side to decide which one I'm going to get a response from.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. I think that was a comment to executive. Oral questions. Member for Mackenzie Delta.

QUESTION 267-18(2):
HEATING ISSUES RELATED TO THE JOE
GREENLAND CENTRE

MR. BLAKE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I have a few questions for the Minister of Housing. As I mentioned a few times in this House, we recently have the Joe Greenland Centre that opened last summer. A great facility, Mr. Speaker. We also have one that's under construction in Fort McPherson. The main issue with Joe Greenland Centre's since we noticed from October to April was the heating system, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, even through the election campaigning when I was visiting the elders there, they had little heaters set up in their units, Mr. Speaker. A couple of them had burnt out just because they were working so hard, but I'd like to ask the Minister, you know, what is the department's plan to resolve the heating problem at the Joe Greenland Centre? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Minister of NWT Housing Corporation.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Joe Greenland building is really an unfortunate incidence because not only were there heating issues within that building, that's a building that we accommodate our seniors which are really valuable population within the Territories, and so on behalf of the department I do apologize that there was a mix-up with the heating system. The plan to go forward though, we consulted with engineers, we did a lot of research in it, we checked the building code. We couldn't find any actual issues. The building was up to code, it was engineered properly. And so after doing all of the research the plan to move forward is actually on Monday, this past Monday, June 20th, we renegotiated with the contractor and so we will be putting extra radiators into each unit within that building. And I can guarantee that that will be done by the end of summer so that our seniors actually have a warm

place to sleep in the winter. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. BLAKE: That's good news. I hope that that resolves the issue. As I mentioned, we also have a similar design that's being built in Fort McPherson. Will the department ensure that that system is adequate for the building that's being built and that we have proper heat this coming winter?

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Actually, the other seniors' facilities may look similar, but they're actually a different design, so we're not projecting that there will be any other instance with those different design buildings.

MR. BLAKE: Mr. Speaker, you know what, we'll see what happens with the Joe Greenland Centre this coming winter, but you know if that does not resolve the problem, will the department look at other heating systems, whether it's wood pellet boilers or something like this? I know the government is leaning towards more wood pellet boilers in the community, so you know that may be an option that we may have to look at if that doesn't resolve the issue. So will the department look at that alternative?

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Yes, as stated earlier, heat is very important to all people and I have a special commitment towards our elders as well, so we are getting the radiators fixed and if that does not resolve the issue then we will look at alternative heat systems. But I can guarantee that we will address the issue of heat for our Elders.

MR. SPEAKER: Oral Questions. Member for Frame Lake.

QUESTION 268-18(2):
HABITAT PROTECTION FOR BATHURST
CARIBOU HERD

MR. O'REILLY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. While we're on the subject of creating heat, I have some questions for the Minister of Environment and Natural Resources. In October of 2010 the Wek'eezhii Renewable Resources Board made recommendations to GNWT and Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada to develop best practises for avoiding impacts to caribou. The Board also asked for monitoring of landscape changes. Can the Minister of Environment and Natural Resources tell us whether GNWT has responded to those recommendations from six years ago and the status of this work? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Minister of Environment and Natural Resources.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. ENR has been engaged with Nunavut on issues of protection of caribou during calving and post-calving. GNWT and ENR is a registered participant in the Nunavut Planning Commission process for developing a Nunavut Land Use Plan. During the technical meetings up this point, the GNWT has put forward the position that in this industrial activity of any type including mineral exploration, production, construction of roads, pipelines, and other infrastructure should not be permitted on the calving areas. ENR staff participated in NPC technical meeting specifically on the subject of protection of caribou habitat in Nunavut including calving and post-calving ranges. The progress of the meetings was to build consensus on approaches for habitat and disturbance management through the combination of tools such as conservation areas as well as seasonal and locational restrictions on development activities. With respect to monitoring and landscape changes ENR has a number of initiatives underway to track and report on the status of Barren-ground caribou ranges in the NWT.

Since 2013, the NWT Cumulative Impact Monitoring Program and partners have developed a series of validated anthropogenic disturbance footprints for the different administrative regions for the NWT. These data sets will be updated twice a year to ensure the data remain current. The NWT State of the Environment Report reports on human activity and landscape disturbances on an annual basis by Echo Zone. The GNWT monitors all land use permits submitted on the ranges of the Barren-land caribou including within the Nunavut and provides expert comments and recommendations on all permits that may be negatively impacted caribou habitat especially with respect to sensitive habitat such as calving and post-calving grounds. ENR and Forest Management Division delineates the areas of forest impact by fire on an annual basis across the Northwest Territories.

This information is publicly available on ENR's data warehouse, ENR has contracted out to summarize the environmental trends from 1979 to 2014 for NWT Barren-ground caribou herds with the interpretation of herd specific trends and their implications on each herd. ENR expects those results this year and will make them available to interested parties as soon as possible as a report is available.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. I believe that is a thorough, detailed answer.

---Laughter

MR. SPEAKER: If we can make it short and concise and clear for the question period and also for answering as well. Masi.

MR. O'REILLY: I want to talk a little bit here about caribou protection measures. The Minister mentioned that GNWT rightly opposed the mineral development in the calving grounds of the Bathurst caribou herd on the Nunavut side. Yet, there is still no caribou protection measures in place for the Bathurst caribou or any herd on the NWT side of the border. I would like to know from the Minister of Environment and Natural Resources, what specific actions has GNWT taken to reduce the impacts of mining activities on the Bathurst caribou herd on our side of the border?

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: I don't know if I can make this too short or not. GNWT is working through several avenues to address the impact of mineral exploration and development on the Bathurst herd. Actions related to individual projects are typically addressed through EAA assessments, regulatory permitting process through the development, and implementation and review of wildlife management and monitoring plans for proposed and existing developments. Specifically ENR remains engaged in a review process of proposed developments within the Bathurst range, for example Gahcho Kue and J-Pipe extension associated with Ekati, to ensure possible effects on the Bathurst herd are duly considered and mitigated where possible for projects in NWT ENR's developing guidelines industry to support the development of wildlife management and monitoring plans which can now be required for operations that may cause significant disturbance to wildlife and wildlife habitat.

MR. O'REILLY: Appreciate the response from the Minister. Still didn't hear the words though, "caribou protection measures." I will try a different tactic here. Can the Minister of Environment and Natural Resources tell us what concrete actions have been taken in terms of habitat protection on the NWT side of the border in the interest of the Bathurst caribou herd?

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: In terms of the impact on the herd on the NWT side of the border, we acknowledge that the hardships have been taken on to the communities. We are working with the communities on a plan with the Bathurst herd. The Member knows that. This is a very serious matter.

Developing approaches to protect the habitat is the long-term endeavour. Including the engagement of many parties, ENR has been involved in a few initiatives of advance habitat protection to protect the herd from disturbances during sensitive time periods. One of the involvements of the Nunavut land use planning process method mentioned earlier, the other is a range planning process that is taking place now. In our supportive participants from the Departments of ITI and Lands and Industries working towards the development of a range plan for the Bathurst caribou herd. This plan

is being undertaken by a working group of 21 partners, including the Tlicho government, the Wek'eezhii Renewable Resources Board, other Aboriginal organizations, industry, and NGOs. The range plan would be a guidance document for the use by wildlife management authorities, including government, making recommendations on habitat management. Issues such as conservation areas, acceptable levels of disturbance of the range, seasonal and mobile range caribou conservation measures.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Oral questions. Member for Frame Lake.

MR. O'REILLY: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Appreciate the answer from the Minister again. We have already taken steps on the harvest side. There is not going to be any harvesting on the Bathurst caribou herd by Aboriginal peoples, residents, outfitters, and so on. I am asking what are we going to do on the habitat side? Earlier, I mentioned how the Wek'eezhii Renewable Resources Board says that we need to take action now as managers. I have been involved in this range planning exercise myself in a previous life. When are we going to see some results? Is this government prepared to take some interim actions now as a manager, particularly on the habitat side for caribou protection measures? What are we going to do now? I don't think we can wait for this range plan. Thanks, Mr. Speaker.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: As the Member is aware; we are working with all the people that are associated with this herd, from industry to NGOs to Aboriginal governments to boards. We are having consultation with these people ready to come up with a plan for this herd. As soon as we can come up with a schedule, how we are going to move forward with this -- the group is working on this, and we will share that with the Members and committee when possible. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Oral questions. Member for Yellowknife Centre.

MS. GREEN: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my questions are for a Minister who is not present at the moment. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Oral questions. Member for Nahendeh.

QUESTION 269-18(2):

INUVIK TO TUKTOYAKTUK HIGHWAY

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, last week the Minister of Transportation did a Member's statement in this House and talked about the Inuvik-Tuk Highway. It was coming in on budget at \$299 million. Mr. Speaker, can the Minister inform this House if the scope of the project changed to ensure it fell within the budget? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Minister of Transportation.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Earlier in the life of this Assembly, we had to sit down with the contractor and review the progress made on the Tuk to Inuvik Highway, it remains on budget at \$299 million. But we have had to change a partial scope of the work on a section of the highway to help assist with moving the project along. We have changed the height of the embankment in certain areas where engineering have said it is possible and just moved things around.

MR. THOMPSON: I thank the Minister for his answer. Mr. Speaker, can the Minister please confirm that this was a joint project through funding with the federal government and what was the GNWT's percentage of this project? Share of the project?

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: Yes, this was a joint endeavour with the GNWT and the federal government. I don't know the exact numbers of our participation. I would have to get back to the Member on what the exact figures were on that.

MR. THOMPSON: I thank the Minister for his commitment to get back to me on the exact percentage. Mr. Speaker, can the Minister confirm that this was a negotiated contract with two long-term, successful northern companies?

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: Yes. The answer is yes.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Member for Nahendeh.

MR. THOMPSON: I love that short, brief answer. It still gives us some more time for asking other questions. I thank the Minister for that great answer. Mr. Speaker, can the Minister please advise this House what parts of the negotiated contract policy was identified to proceed with these two northern companies that have been long-term companies in the North and have been doing a great job? What was the part of the negotiated contract policy that Cabinet and the Executive Council used to renew the negotiated contract? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: That was a decision that was made in the life of the 17th Assembly. That was before my time. I would have to look back and see what was the decision on that and get back to the Member.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Oral questions. Member for Yellowknife Centre.

QUESTION 270-18(2):

REFORM OF THE CANADA PENSION PLAN

MS. GREEN: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my questions are for the Minister of Finance. I read this week that all of the provinces have signed on to a reform of the Canada Pension Plan which will

supplement benefits for workers who don't have corporate pension plans. All have signed on, I heard, with the exception of Manitoba and Quebec. I would like the Minister to say what position the GNWT took on the reform of the Canada Pension Plan. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Minister of Finance.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the Member is correct. There was, I think, eight of the ten jurisdictions that signed on to the enhancements to the Canada Pension Plan. One had to take it back to their government to have a conversation with them, and Quebec has their own Quebec Pension Plan. The Member's question is about what our position was. Unfortunately, we don't have a vote at the table. It is just the seven provinces. They allowed the ten provinces to have some input into this. I think it is two-thirds and the NWT, Nunavut, and Yukon don't have a vote at the table. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MS. GREEN: Thank you to the Finance Minister for that information. Does the GNWT have a voice at the table where the Minister is able to speak about this pension plan reform?

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Mr. Speaker, we do have a voice at the table. Unfortunately, they came to us after we had a bit of a break, and a lot of the decisions were already made. We brought that to their attention and the Chair recognized, and he apologized, that was his fault, that he should have included the three territories in the pre-discussion leading up to the break where a lot of conversations took place. They recognize that. We made our point. They gave us an opportunity to speak afterwards, but by then a lot of the decision had already been made. We brought it to their attention, and we intend in the future to make sure our voice is heard.

MS. GREEN: Thank you to the Minister for that answer. Can the Minister tell us what he said when he was called on to speak about this issue?

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Mr. Speaker, I said how come you never let me speak before?

---Laughter

No. Mr. Speaker, I did point out to the fact that while I appreciated the opportunity to have some input into this that I would have appreciated more of an opportunity to speak before we took a break where a lot of the discussion went on. I pointed out to the fact that we are facing some challenges up here. One of our biggest challenges, and one of my biggest priorities, was trying to put our people in the position where they are able to pay into CPP. And I spoke of the infrastructure part of it, and how if I know our people are paying into CPP, then I know they are working.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Oral questions. Member for Yellowknife Centre.

MS. GREEN: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. And thank you to the Minister for that. That is my last question. What do you think the impact is or have you had any research done on the impact of the pension reform on employees and businesses in the NWT? Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Mr. Speaker, there has been some preliminary work done as to what it may cost employees and employers across the country. We will do some work on our part, and seeing that this is an important issue, once we get that work done, I would be more than happy to offer a briefing to committee. I have to say this is an issue that is across the country -- my e-mails were actually jammed with about 5,000 e-mails from across the country. Must be doing a mass e-mailing project. Most of the e-mails you could tell weren't from the Northwest Territories. But we will do our work. I will share any information I have with committee.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Oral questions, the time has expired. Item 8, written questions. Item 9, returns to written questions. Mr. Clerk.

Returns to Written Questions

WRITTEN QUESTION 5-18(2): MAINTENANCE CONTRACTS ON HIGHWAY NO. 1

DEPUTY CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Schauerte): Mr. Speaker, I have a return to written question asked to the Honourable Wally Schumann, the Minister of Transportation, by Mr. Thompson on June 2, 2016, regarding maintenance contracts on Highway No. 1. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

1. What is the annual maintenance budget for each section of Highway No. 1, including the ice crossing?

Later today, at the appropriate time, I will table a document indicating the annual maintenance budget for sections of Highway No. 1, including the ice crossings.

2. What is the total amount spent on maintenance on Highway No. 1, since 2010-2011?

The Government of the Northwest Territories has invested \$13,675,907.00 in contracted maintenance on Highway No. 1 since 2010-2011.

3. Which companies have been awarded maintenance contracts on Highway No. 1 since 2010-2011, and what was the rationale for selecting them?

Later today, at the appropriate time, I will table a document that includes the total amount spent on maintenance since 2010-2011 and indicates the

companies that were awarded maintenance contracts since that time.

Contractors are selected in accordance with the policies and procedures established and as prescribed in the Government Contracts Regulations. The GNWT offers public access to an archive of contracting history that is readily available online at: <http://contracts.fin.gov.nt.ca/>.

4. How does the department review contracts or contractor and in-house maintenance work on Highway No.1?

The Department of Transportation uses the NWT Highway Maintenance Manual as its benchmark to evaluate the quality of contractor performance during routine inspections conducted by Highway Maintenance Supervisors to ensure DOT standards are being met. In-house work by the Department is only completed when geographic limitations, safety concerns, or equipment shortages are encountered by the contractor.

5. How does the department monitor and consider the impact of weather conditions on the maintenance work if performs on Highway No. 1?

Highway Maintenance Supervisors monitor surface conditions on NWT highways and, based upon the weather, will direct contractors when required to deliver additional maintenance work to improve conditions.

The Department has recently developed a historical log of weather information to be used for tracking climate trends. Maintenance efforts, such as grading and plowing, fluctuate based on weather conditions. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Returns to written questions. Item 10, replies to Commissioner's opening address. Item 11, petitions. Item 12, reports of standing and special committee. Item 13, reports of committee on the review of bills. Item 14, tabling of documents. Minister of Transportation.

Tabling of Documents

TABLED DOCUMENT 77-18(2):
MAINTENANCE CONTRACTS ON HIGHWAY
NO. 1

TABLED DOCUMENT 78-18(2):
ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES
STRATEGIC PLAN 2015-2020

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: Mr. Speaker, further to my Return to Written Question 5-18(2), I wish to table the following document entitled "Maintenance Contracts on Highway No. 1." Also, Mr. Speaker, I wish to table the following document entitled "Environment and Natural Resources Strategic Plan 2015-2020." Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Tabling of documents. Minister of Finance.

TABLED DOCUMENT 79-18(2):
FOLLOW-UP LETTER TO ORAL QUESTION 135-
18(2) IMPACTS OF GNWT JOB LOSSES

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I wish to table the following document entitled "Follow-up Letter to Oral Question 135-18(2): Impacts of GNWT Job Losses." Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Tabling of documents. Member for Yellowknife Centre.

TABLED DOCUMENT 80-18(2):
ARTICLE - "DEATH RATES HIGHER IN FOR-
PROFIT NURSING HOMES, REPORT SAYS"

TABLED DOCUMENT 81-18(2):
ORIGINAL STUDY - HOSPITALIZATION AND
MORTALITY RATES IN LONG-TERM CARE
FACILITIES: DOES FOR-PROFIT STATUS
MATTER?"

MS. GREEN: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I have two items to table. The first is an article entitled "Death rates higher in for-profit nursing homes, report says," and the other is the report itself: "Hospitalization and Mortality Rates in Long-Term Care Facilities: Does For-Profit Status Matter?" Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Tabling of documents. Member for Frame Lake.

TABLED DOCUMENT 82-18(2):
LETTER FROM MARSHALL & COMPANY
BARRISTERS & SOLICITORS TO MINISTER OF
JUSTICE REGARDING M. M. DE WEERDT LAW
LIBRARY

MR. O'REILLY: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. I would like to table the letter dated June 20, 2016, to the Minister of Justice from Austin Marshall of Marshall & Company expressing concerns about the closure of the NWT court library. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

TABLED DOCUMENT 83-18(2):
SUMMARY OF MEMBERS' ABSENCES FOR THE
PERIOD FEBRUARY 18, 2016 TO MAY 30, 2016

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Tabling of documents. Pursuant to Section 5 of the Legislative Assembly Executive Council Act, I wish to table the "Summary of Member's Absences for the period February 18, 2016 to May 30, 2016." Masi.

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 the Committee of the Whole of bills and other matters,

Tabled Document 50-18(2) with Member for Mackenzie Delta in the chair. By motion 18-18(2), I hereby authorize the House to sit beyond the daily hour of adjournment to consider the business before the House. Masi.

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

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, committee. I call the Committee of the Whole to order. Mr. Beaulieu, what is the wish of the committee?

MR. BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, committee wishes to consider Tabled Document 50-18(2): "NWT Main Estimates 2016-2017." We would like to continue the Department of Justice, Lands, Transportation, Public Works, Municipal and Community Affairs, Legislative Assembly, and Finance. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. We will continue after a short recess. Thank you.

---SHORT RECESS

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): We'll begin consideration of the Department of Justice. Minister, would you like to bring in witnesses to the Chamber?

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: Yes, I would, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Sergeant-at-Arms, please escort the witnesses into the Chamber. Thank you, Minister Sebert. Please introduce your witnesses.

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Kim Schofield to my left, director of finance; Sylvia Haener, deputy minister, to my right.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Minister. Committee, we'll begin on page 271. Justice, court services, operation expenditure summary, total activity, \$13,928,000. Are we agreed? Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. I think where we ended off on Friday was I was asking the department some questions about the court library. I understand that the Law Society of the Northwest Territories and the Northwest Territories Law Foundation have made significant contributions towards the operation of the library over a number of years and so it's quite an investment on their part. Would the Minister be prepared to meet with the Law Society and the Law Foundation to talk about the future of the facility? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Minister Sebert.

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: Yes, Mr. Chair, the situation we're envisaging for the future is to have a resource centre. Certainly, when we are discussing such a project, we would be discussing that with the Law Foundation, Law Society and the local bar. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Minister Sebert. Any further questions, Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I appreciate the commitment from the Minister to meet with the Law Society and the Law Foundation about the court library and its future. Would the Minister also commit to bring forward a plan or maybe a transition plan for the court library into this resource centre, and would he be prepared to bring that plan forward to the Standing Committee on Social Development? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Minister Sebert.

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: Mr. Chair, once we decided that it was advisable to close the current facility, we're looking at, of course, a resource centre as part of our legal outreach. There's many issues that have to be determined; the type of centre that would be, where it would be located, and so on. We will of course consult with those parties when we are deciding what kind of facility would be most suitable. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Minister Sebert. Any further questions? Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. Again, I appreciate the commitment of the Minister to meet with these interested investors in the court library. Would he be prepared to bring forward a plan to the standing committee on Social Development on how the court library is going to transition into this research centre? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Minister Sebert.

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: We would be prepared to do that, Mr. Chair, because we're always interested -- those are important investors, as was mentioned, in the resource centre, so we would be prepared to appear before Standing Committee to discuss the resource centre. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Minister Sebert. Any further questions? Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. I appreciate the commitment of the Minister to appear before

Standing Committee with this plan. Would that plan also include what is going to happen to the books and the resources that are actually in the court library? The reason why I mention this is that it's my understanding that there are some volumes and some information, some documents, books in there that are the only known copy on this planet, and they are of a great historical value for people that would want to do research on the history of the Northwest Territories, our legislation and so on. And I know that our library here at the Legislative Assembly already has a bunch of stuff in storage underneath the post office. And I'm not sure that there's been a real plan for what's going to happen with the resources of the court library. So in coming forward to standing committee, would the Minister also include a plan for what's going to happen with the resources that are currently in the court library? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Minister Sebert.

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: Yes, Mr. Chair, those elements of the collection that are deemed to be of historical value would be identified and retained with the department's legal division or considered for transfer to the archives or the Legislative Assembly Library. The remaining collection would be offered for donation to other NWT libraries or disposed of by gift to law firms or possibly by destruction. It is expected the bulk of the collection will likely be offered to the resident lawyers on a first come first served basis. I understand that is what took place when the library was downsized to its current size, Mr. Chair. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Minister Sebert. Any further questions? Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. Look, I'm not trying to push this too hard, but can the Minister commit to talking about that plan with the standing committee when he brings forward information about how the court library is going to transition into the research centre? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Minister Sebert.

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: Yes, I can commit to do that, Mr. Chair. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Minister Sebert. Any further questions, Mr. O'Reilly?

MR. O'REILLY: No. Thanks, Mr. Chair. I appreciate the commitments made by the Minister, but I do need to go on record as opposing this cut to an important public service. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Any further questions on page 271? Are we agreed? Court services, operation expenditure summary, total activity, \$13,928,000. Are we agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you. That brings us to page 274, legal aid services, operation expenditure summary, total activity \$6,252,000. Any questions? Also go to page 275, legal aid services, active positions, information item. Mr. Thompson.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. In regards to the Deh Cho position, the individual has retired. When is the department looking at filling this position? It is very important to the residents in the riding. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Mr. Thompson. Minister Sebert.

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: Thank you, Mr. Chair. That very important position will be filled. We don't have an exact date on that, but it will be in the near future. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Minister Sebert. Any further questions, Mr. Thompson?

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I guess I'm a little concerned that the individual who was in the position informed the department a long time ago when she was going to be retiring, and the department didn't take that opportunity to try to find somebody she could train in there. So when he says in the near future, is it going to be done in this fiscal year? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Mr. Thompson. Minister Sebert.

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: Yes, Mr. Chair, it will be done in this fiscal year. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Minister Sebert. Mr. Thompson.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, and I appreciate the Minister for his answer. Will there be a training plan in place or is it being looked at to be staffed within? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Mr. Thompson. Minister Sebert.

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: Mr. Chair, that is yet to be determined. We will be seeking the right kind of individual for the position, and we're not certain as to who will apply. Obviously, if it's a new person, there'll be training required. Should know, Mr.

Chair, that there's always ongoing training for court workers, so that would clearly be part of -- whether it's somebody who's already in the system or somebody new. There will be training if it is someone new, but there's always ongoing training for all court workers in any case. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Minister Sebert. Any further questions, Mr. Thompson.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair, and I thank the Minister for that answer. Would the Minister be willing to look at putting a 25-mile radius on the position so it is actually a local hire and not somebody outside the region, so they understand the local issues and have a relationship with the people? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Mr. Thompson. Minister Sebert.

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: Mr. Chair, I imagine we would hear from HR with respect to that. However, it's often difficult to staff these positions, so we may have to look further afield than a very narrow radius. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Minister Sebert. Mr. Thompson.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair, and I thank the Minister for his answer. I struggle with this a bit. I would hope that the Minister and the department would actually look at trying to staff within the 25-mile radius first, whether it's Fort Simpson or Fort Liard, those are the two major centres that seem to have the impact. I'd hope the Minister could look at that first. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Mr. Thompson. Minister Sebert.

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: In the past there's been, Mr. Chair, some difficulty in filling these positions, so I don't think I could make that kind of commitment at this time. Clearly, a local resident, perhaps one speaking one of the local Aboriginal languages, would have some advantages. I don't think I can commit at this time to restricting the competition to a certain radius. I will hear from HR with respect to this matter I imagine. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Minister Sebert. Any further questions, Mr. Thompson?

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. This will be my final one, I hope. I'm disappointed in hearing that, but will the Minister and the department be willing to get back with that information and what

they're doing with that position to myself? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Mr. Thompson. Minister Sebert.

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: Mr. Chair, when the competition goes out, then it would be known as to whether we are restricting the radius or not. Clearly, there's considerations that will go into the nature of the ad that goes out that will be mainly driven by the people actually hiring the person. So it would be known at that point as to the radius, if any, if there's a restriction on the radius. However, I can't really commit to anything along those lines at this juncture. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Minister Sebert. Mr. Thompson.

MR. THOMPSON: I apologize, I guess I'm going to have to ask the question a little differently. I'm asking if the Minister and the department will tell me when the position is coming out. I didn't ask if it's the radius. I just want to know when it's coming out so that I'm aware and I can, you know, help promote this important position out there. So thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Mr. Thompson. Minister Sebert.

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: Yes, Mr. Chair, we will inform the Member when the position is coming out. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Mr. Sebert. Next we have Ms. Green.

MS. GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, my question concerns page 275. What the active positions present is that there's a decrease of three positions in the Beaufort-Delta. Could the Minister provide some detail on that? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Ms. Green. Minister Sebert.

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: Yes, I can do that, Mr. Chair. The reduction in position is a result of the planned changes of the situation with respect the Legal Aid Clinic in Inuvik. One of the positions that will be removed to Yellowknife, and I think the person involved is already contemplating that move or has made that move, is the lawyer's position. The lawyer's assistant apparently has already found other employment in the Inuvik region. So this is a significant change in the Delta Legal Aid Clinic. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Minister Sebert. Ms. Green.

MS. GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. What I took from that answer is one lawyer moved to Yellowknife and one assistant has found other work in Inuvik. So that does mean there are still four people in that office there? If so, what roles are they in? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Ms. Green. Minister Sebert.

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: Mr. Chair, one of the positions that has also been vacant is the Fort McPherson court worker position, which has not been filled for some time. Those are the three positions. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Minister Sebert. Ms. Green.

MS. GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Could the Minister describe the services that remain in Inuvik for the Beaufort Delta in the legal aid clinic? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Ms. Green. Minister Sebert.

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: Mr. Chair, just some history on the clinic up there: At one point, 10 or 15 years ago, there was resident lawyers in private practice, the Federal Crown Attorney's Office was located there, and there was a resident judge, and there was a legal aid clinic with, I think, two or three lawyers. Things changed over time. There's no longer a resident judge. The federal Crown Attorney's Office closed, I think, five or six years ago, and we were left with the legal aid clinic, but we were only providing family law services.

Now, those services will still be provided out of Yellowknife. So these changes necessitated our changing, taking a realistic look at the clinic, finding that it was not an efficient way of provided services. As I said, some time ago there were criminal law lawyers there, several and who were very busy. And there will still be a court worker in Inuvik, so legal services will be provided by that court worker and, also, the clinics out of Yellowknife. There are four clinics: Somba K'e, Community Legal Aid Clinic, and the Yellowknife clinic -- so there will be three, three left then, as we're closing, planning on closing, the one in Inuvik. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Minister Sebert. Ms. Green.

MS. GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Can the Minister confirm, first of all, when the clinic there will be closed? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Ms. Green. Minister Sebert.

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: Mr. Chair, effectively, it's closed now. I don't think there's any staff there. As I mentioned, the lawyer has moved, as I understand it, to take a position in a clinic in Yellowknife, and the staff person has found other employment. So it's effectively closed now. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Minister Sebert. Ms. Green.

MS. GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, I appreciate that people can obtain services on the phone, but I'm wondering if there are any plans to travel, for the legal aid lawyers to travel, to Inuvik to provide services, not just in connection with the court circuit but services of other kinds and at other times. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Ms. Green. Minister Sebert.

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: Mr. Chair, of course the lawyers who are going up there, providing criminal law assistance, will generally travel there either the day before or the day of court. And also, too, we've enhanced, over the last few years, the outreach services. The lawyer that provides that service will often go up, well, does go up to communities. Individuals up there, in Inuvik and that area, will be able to avail themselves of that service. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you Minister Sebert. Ms. Green.

MS. GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. And then there's the question of the family law. How will that be provided, and can it be provided in person? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Ms. Green. Minister Sebert.

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: Mr. Chair, of course, since there was only one lawyer practising, either in a clinic or privately up there, there was just the one lawyer, it was always necessary to, in family law cases, to have a lawyer representing the other side to be from Yellowknife, so, now that that lawyer has moved to Yellowknife, people will have to avail themselves of the service by telephone, at least initially. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Minister Sebert. Ms. Green.

MS. GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. So the services will be available by phone. Are there any additional resources in the Yellowknife-based clinics to deal with the extra demand for services from the Beaufort Delta? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Ms. Green. Minister Sebert.

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: Mr. Chair, we're not really anticipating any changes, in the sense of overall demand increasing, because the number of lawyers providing assistance in family law cases will not be reduced. In any case, as I mentioned earlier, it was always necessary for the "other side," if I can put it that way, one of the two sides in matrimonial disputes, to obtain legal help, either through the clinic or from lawyers in Yellowknife. I don't think that, as far as getting hold of a lawyer, there should be any increased difficulty with this change we're contemplating. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Minister Sebert. Ms. Green.

MS. GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I'm wondering if the Minister could commit to tracking calls from Inuvik through the remainder of this fiscal year so that he can determine exactly what the demand is and whether the wait times people face are reasonable. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Ms. Green. Minister Sebert.

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: Yes, Mr. Chair, we could of course do that. They already do track files by location. I happened to notice amongst the statistical information provided to me that there was a 30 per cent decline in overall case load handled from Inuvik in fiscal year 2014-15 to 2015-16, so, obviously, the source of files can be tracked. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Minister Sebert. Ms. Green.

MS. GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. So is that information that the Minister can share with my colleagues on the Standing Committee on Social Development? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Ms. Green. Minister Sebert.

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: Mr. Chair, I think we could, obviously, provide statistical information. Obviously, we can't provide the names of clients, of course. Statistical information should be easily obtained and could be provided. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Minister Sebert. Any further questions, Ms. Green?

MS. GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Statistical information will be satisfactory. I'm concerned about this change, while noticing that there's been a decline in use, just with reference to our mandate, which says that we will make justice accessible to

the residents of the NWT. So I feel like we need to make good on that, and tracking how much demand for services there is an important part of that. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Ms. Green. Minister Sebert.

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Of course, we do have that in our mandate. And it has been of concern, both to the department and to members of the bar, that it has been extremely difficult to staff these positions outside of Yellowknife in the last number of years. So we do realize that it would be better in some ways to have clinics in various communities outside of Yellowknife, but it has become very expensive, difficult to staff, and that's why we're taking this approach to the clinic. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Minister Sebert. Ms. Green, your time has expired. Would you like me to put you on the list again? Okay. Thank you. Committee, are there any further questions to page 275? If not, we continue with page 274, legal aid services, operations expenditures summary, total activity, \$6,252,000. Are we agreed? Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Mr. Chair, when I look at page 274, program detail, there are cuts between what was in the mains for 2015-16 and 2016-17 for court workers, legal aid commission, and the Yellowknife Legal Aid Clinic. Even the Somba K'e Legal Aid Clinic, there's a small decrease there. So, with this decrease in expenditures for legal aid services, how are we actually improving access to justice, which is in our mandate? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Minister Sebert.

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: Mr. Chair, if I could go through the list in some detail, if we could look first at the Community Legal Aid Clinic, the variance is due to a transfer of a new phone system to TSC, budget and reductions and savings from a new Voice-over-Internet-Protocol system, so it's a technical improvement that leads to the saving.

With respect to court workers, the Main Estimates of \$1,084,000, the variance is due to the elimination of the court worker position in Fort McPherson, which had not been filled for some time. Legal aid commission, again its improvement, it's technology, it appears; variance is due to reductions in private Bar fees, savings from the new Voice-over-Internet-Protocol system and transfer of a new phone system.

Office of the children's lawyer, variance is due to transfer of a new phone system. Somba K'e Legal Aid Clinic, variance is due to a new phone system,

again. That would appear to be the case also with the Yellowknife Legal Aid Clinic. It appears, in our view, that there's not really a reduction in service; there's some efficiencies that have led to these reductions. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Minister Sebert. Any further questions, Mr. O'Reilly?

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. I'm all for efficiencies. Does the department then have any specific plans on how it is going to monitor access to justice? What specific indicators? Is there going to be satisfaction surveys? I don't know. What are the specific plans of the department to actually monitor and track access to justice and how the department is going to improve on that over the term of this Assembly? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Minister Sebert.

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: Mr. Chair, I know that the Legal Aid Commission does monitor, in the sense of, when there's complaints and everything, that there are complaints about lawyers or service, it does go to the commission. I can advise that, with respect to family law, which was a great concern because several years ago there were very lengthy wait times, up to nine months or a year -- and I now understand that the wait list for family law clients is around 90 days, so three months. Urgent matters, of course, are assigned to counsel right away. So they do monitor client satisfaction, if I can put it that way, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Minister Sebert. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. I have no further questions, just a quick comment: that I'm still trying to understand how closing the legal aid clinic in the Beaufort-Delta, closing court registry, and closing the court library actually improves access to justice, but that's more of a statement. Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Minister Sebert, would you like to comment?

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: These changes, Mr. Chair, were only contemplated after very, very complex and comprehensive examination of the clinic library system, and it was thought that our money could simply be used more efficiently in a different way. So these changes were not taken on lightly. I realize there's a good deal of concern about many of these changes, but we thought it was simply the best, moving forward. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Minister Sebert. Committee, any further questions to page

274? Legal Aid Services, operation expenditure summary, total activity, \$6,252,000. Are we agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you. That brings us to page 277, office of the regulator of oil and gas operations, operations expenditure summary, total activity \$1,869,000. We'll just defer this and go to questions on page 278, office of the regulator of oil and gas operations, active positions, information item. Any questions? Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. I'm going to approach this cautiously, because I have the greatest respect for the staff in this office. As I understand it, these folks are all employees of the Government of the Northwest Territories. Is that correct, Mr. Chair?

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Minister Sebert.

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: Mr. Chair, they are employees of the Government of the Northwest Territories. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Minister Sebert. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. Are these indeterminate positions, or are they contract? What's the status of these positions? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Minister Sebert.

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I understand that all of the positions are indeterminate. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Minister Sebert. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. I guess where I'm going with this is the individual services executive director is a government employee, indeterminate, and does he serve, then, at the pleasure of the Minister? How is that position crafted? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Minister Sebert.

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: Mr. Chair, he doesn't serve at the pleasure of the Minister. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Minister Sebert. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. Is the department looking at other models for how we regulate oil and gas operations? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Minister Sebert.

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: Mr. Chair, no, we're not looking at other models at this time. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Minister Sebert. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. It's not the answer I guess I was hoping to hear, but I do have a question on the next page. Should I just hold it there? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. If there are no further questions on page 278, we'll -- I see none. We'll move to page 277. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. So as I understand it there's no change in staffing for this office, but I see that there's a change in compensation and benefits, a fairly substantial reduction. What's going on here? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Minister Sebert.

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I wonder if I could have you ask the deputy minister to respond to that. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you. Ms. Haener.

MS. HAENER: Thank you, Mr. Chair. There was funding for eight positions for the OROGO office. Prior to this unit being transferred to the Department of Justice, Industry, Tourism and Investment took the reduction for those two positions and thus only six are reflected in the information for the Department of Justice. The two positions that were eliminated are an information management officer and a regulatory officer. These positions were allocated to the unit post-devolution but were never filled, and it was determined that, given the low activity, they weren't necessary at this time. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Ms. Haener. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. Just so I understand, when did these reductions take place? Because it's not what I see on page 278 in 2015-16. Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Ms. Haener.

MS. HAENER: Thank you, Mr. Chair. All I can indicate is that what came to the Department of Justice was funding for the six positions. As part of the budget process, Industry, Tourism and Investment reduced its -- reduced the allocation for two positions. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Ms. Haener. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. So does anybody know when ITI made the reductions? Thanks, Mr. Chair. Just for 2015-16, on 278 it shows that there are six full-time positions. That's presumably to April -- sorry, March 31st of 2016. Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Minister Sebert.

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: Mr. Chair, I would suggest that Ms. Schofield could provide some information. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Minister Sebert. Ms. Schofield.

MS. SCHOFIELD: Thank you, Mr. Chair. When the decision was made to transfer the unit to the Department of Justice, an FMB submission was prepared to transfer the funds from ITI to the Department of Justice. In doing that, the reduction amounts were taken into consideration at the time of establishing those budgets. Then there are restatements that have to occur from one department to the other. In preparing the Main Estimates, the department has to present them as are approved by the Financial Management Board, and it resulted in the six positions coming over. The two were a part of the reduction that ITI had presented in their overall reduction exercise. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Ms. Schofield. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. I still don't quite understand this. So does that mean ITI got to keep the money for those two positions? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Minister Sebert.

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: Mr. Chair, I understand that ITI was not able to keep that money. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Minister Sebert. Any further questions, Mr. O'Reilly?

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. I'm just not sure about the presentation here. That might be something I'd have to take up in our review of the Main Estimates when we do this offline somewhere else, but I'm just not sure that this is -- I'm not sure it contains the information about the full staffing of OROGO in 2015-16. So I don't know how else to pursue it. Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Would you like to comment, Minister Sebert?

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: I don't think I have anything further, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Okay. Thank you, Minister Sebert. Any further questions, committee, to page 277? Okay. Office of the regulator of oil and gas operations, operations expenditure summary, total activity, \$1,869,000. Are we agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Agreed. That brings us to page 280, policing services, operations expenditure summary, total activity, \$44,729,000. Are we agreed? Questions? Mr. Nadli.

MR. NADLI: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I just wanted to ask the Minister if he could maybe provide an explanation in terms of I think it's been lately about three years since the bridge came into operation, and it's now, you know, the effect is that we have 24-hour traffic up and down the Mackenzie Highway that travels north and south. So I wanted to get an understanding of whether that has had a negative impact in terms of the resources of RCMP officers and detachments, either in Yellowknife, Behchoko, Fort Providence and Hay River, and whether there are designated resources for highway patrols plus at the same time ensuring the safety and well-being of residents in the communities. Mahsi.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Mr. Nadli. Minister Sebert.

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: Mr. Chair, I'm not aware in any change of activity, and if there is a change of activity, it hasn't been brought forward to us. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Minister Sebert. Mr. Nadli.

MR. NADLI: Thank you. I understand that with community residents RCMP local detachments are developing community policing plans. I just wanted to understand whether that will continue, especially in regard to smaller communities such as Kakisa that efforts have been made to ensure that their input will be sought and that at least their

involvement -- at least lay the foundation of community policing plans. Mahsi.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Nadli. Minister Sebert.

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: Thank you, Mr. Chair. We are committed to having community policing plans with all communities. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Mr. Nadli. Nothing further from Mr. Nadli. Mr. Beaulieu.

MR. BEAULIEU: No, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Nothing from Mr. Beaulieu. Mr. Blake.

MR. BLAKE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. A few questions here, first starting with territorial policing services. This is, as I mentioned a number of times in the house, policing services in Tsiigehtchic, you know, it has improved over the year, the last few months here, but the community really would like to see some sort of station set up for policing in the community. I know a number of years ago we had a bylaw officer at the time take the Aboriginal policing, but since then, that is almost 20 years ago, Mr. Chair. You know, the community would really like to see a station set up in Tsiigehtchic. Would that be possible in the future? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Blake. Minister Sebert.

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: Mr. Chair, the provision of adequate policing services to all of our communities remains a priority for the Department of Justice and the GNWT, as well as the RCMP. So Justice continues to work with the RCMP to address the concerns of the smaller communities. The RCMP aims to improve services to Tsiigehtchic by increasing the number and length of patrols to the community. In 2015, Fort McPherson RCMP conducted 80 patrols to the community. Currently the NWT Housing Corp. is in the process of installing a two-bed portable unit, and that will allow the RCMP to use it for overnight accommodations for the members on patrol. So although there is no full-time RCMP detachment in that community, we do understand the concerns that the Member has expressed many times and do believe that this is the solution. There are increased numbers of patrols and we do believe that the community is adequately covered. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Mr. Blake.

MR. BLAKE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. No, I've seen the improvements over the last few months, and I look forward to the duplex coming to the community

as well. I know the department did plan to have officers there on the weekends, which is great. Which brings me to my next question, with the First Nations Policing. You know, how many people throughout the territory actually are involved under this topic here? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Blake. Minister.

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: Mr. Chair, I understand that there are four persons involved. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Mr. Blake.

MR. BLAKE: Yes, thank you, Mr. Chair. That's great. As I mentioned, you know, looking back over the years we had a good uptake. I believe it was in the '90s, somewhere around there. I've seen a number of officers, First Nations, that actually succeeded, you know, became officers, which is great, but we'd like to see more. I know a few years back there was a lot of advertising for this. I haven't seen very much lately, but, you know, what's the plan for this? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Blake. Minister.

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: I understand that Public Safety Canada is doing a review of the First Nations Policing Program and that they will be coming north for a conference, I'm told, in September. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Mr. Blake.

MR. BLAKE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. That's great news. I hope the committee is invited to that. Also, you know, as we may all know, for those that have been around for a bit, we hear stories of all the special constables that we had back, way back when the RCMP first started coming to the Territory. I think that was very successful; they worked hand in hand with the RCMP and without them, they wouldn't have found Albert Johnson, I don't think.

--- Laughter

MR. BLAKE: That sort of program was very successful. It would be great to see something similar to that starting up again. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Blake. Minister.

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: Mr. Chair, I think we're all cognizant of the great contribution of special constables. In the past, it did seem to me, and I arrived in the North as that program was kind of

coming to an end, that there were, however, not many of our Aboriginal citizens who were actually full-fledged members of the RCMP. That started changing. So I think they found the program to be less important than it had been previously. The Member's point is well taken. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. There's nothing further from Mr. Blake. Do I have any more comments or questions on Policing Services? Seeing Mr. Vanthuyne.

MR. VANTHUYNE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, what steps is the government taking to draft the legislation for the ombudsman? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Vanthuyne. I'm not sure if this is the correct section. I'll get the Minister to clarify. Minister.

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: Mr. Chair, of course, as all Members will know, the position of the ombudsman is one of the matters that we're going to be discussing at the summer caucus. So I expect that, after those discussions, we'll have a better idea about how this legislation would proceed. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Would this topic be better discussed at maybe the department total or in a different section, Mr. Vanthuyne?

MR. VANTHUYNE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. According to the description on page 281 it indicates that "the legal division provides advice and representation to all GNWT departments and specified public agencies. GNWT bills and regulations are prepared by legislative drafters in legislation division." According to our mandate, we've indicated that Justice will be the oversight for this and so as much as I respect the Minister's reply, this is the public and open opportunity to ask these questions and I'm hopeful that the Minister can give a respective and meaningful reply. It's a fairly simple one. I'm just asking what steps the department is taking to draft the legislation on the Office of the Ombudsman. I respect that to some degree it's going to be talked about in the caucus meeting, however, I'm going to-- the same question will be asked.

So I leave it to the Minister to reply to that again and I'll throw out another question while we're at it: will the department be engaging the public to get meaningful input? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Vanthuyne. You referred to page 281 which is part of the next section, services to government. If there's no further question on page 280, policing services, I'll call this section now and then we can

move on and you'll be on the top of the list for the next section.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): I will call the page. Justice, policing services, operations expenditure summary, total activity, \$44,729,000. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): We'll now move on to services to government. We have the operations expenditure summary on page 282. We will first discuss the detail starting with page 283. Comments or questions on 283? Seeing none, we can move on to page 284. Do we have comments or questions on 284, active positions? Seeing none. Page 282, the operations expenditure summary. Mr. Vanthuyne.

MR. VANTHUYNE: Thank you for putting me in order, Mr. Chairman, now I'll calmly ask what steps is the department taking to draft legislation for the office of the ombudsman? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Vanthuyne. Minister Sebert.

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: Mr. Chair, the government is, of course, committed to filling the prior commitments developed in our mandate and is currently reviewing the feasibility of various options for establishing the office of the ombudsman. There are many different examples, and I know that in the last Assembly there was a good deal of time spent on this, and it may have been that there had even been some drafting. The department is developing a work plan which will establish timelines and deliverables relating this aspect of the mandate.

Now, the legislation, to a large extent, will be determined by our discussions in the summer because, as I mentioned, there are many different models. So after we have decided which model we're going to pursue it would seem to me that at that point legislation could be contemplated. I don't think there would be much point in working up legislation at this point as we're not certain which model we're going to pursue. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Mr. Vanthuyne.

MR. VANTHUYNE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I wonder if the Minister can please explain a little bit more about the work plan that he's referenced and what that-- you know, he says that it's going to consist of deliverables and a timeline. If he could elaborate on what Members can expect to see with regard to the work plan that would be appreciated. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Vanthuyne. Minister.

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: Mr. Chair, I wonder if I might have the deputy minister address the issue. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Ms. Haener.

MS. HAENER: Thank you, Mr. Chair. We are working on this initiative in collaboration with the Department of the Executive, and part of the work plan or the work plan we expect to cover items like the research on what is happening in other jurisdictions with ombudsmans and the models that are deployed there, the-- what the experience is in those other jurisdictions in terms of effectiveness. Obviously, aspects of the work would include consultation and engagement with folks here and with other stakeholders. Those are the types of things we would expect to see covered off in a work plan and timeframes would be developed to go in the work plan as well and frame out when we would expect different phases to be completed. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Ms. Haener. Mr. Vanthuyne.

MR. VANTHUYNE: Thank you, Mr. Chair, and that's great information; I appreciate that. I'm wondering if we could maybe get a timeline from the department on when we might see the work plan itself, or is that something that is even going to be shared with Members? The reason why I ask is I don't want to necessarily be a part of every step of this process but there was indication that there would be some consultation and public engagement and so I'm trying to get an understanding of when the work plan would be going through that process of public consultation and engagement. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Vanthuyne. Minister.

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: Mr. Chair, after the caucus meeting and the summer is over there could be a meeting between -- another meeting of Caucus to discuss just those next steps. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Mr. Vanthuyne. Nothing further from Mr. Vanthuyne. No one further on my list. Are there further comments or questions, services to government? Seeing none, I will call the total activity on page 282, services to government, operations expenditure summary, total activity, \$13,361,000. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): We'll move on to page 286, services to public. We'll defer the total activity until we discuss the detail on page -- starting with page 287. Comments or questions on page 287, services to public, active positions. I'll give Committee a moment. Seeing none we can move back to page 286, services to public, operations expenditure summary. Do we have comments or questions on page 286? Ms. Green.

MS. GREEN: Sorry, this question relates to 286. May I ask it now?

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): To page 286? Yes, we're on page 286 now.

MS. GREEN: Okay, thank you for that. Earlier today, Mr. Chair, I spoke about the backlog of work in the public guardian's office, and the public trustee's office is in some ways a mirror image of the public guardian, and I'm wondering if the Public Trustee's Office is facing the avalanche of applications for service that the public guardian is? Specifically, they have 72 applications pending at this time. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Ms. Green. Minister.

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: Mr. Chair, we don't believe that the public trustee is facing the same avalanche of applications and I'm not aware of any particularly significant increase of activity. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Do I have further comments or questions on page 286? Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. Under legal registries, there's a reduction of over \$100,000. Can someone from the department explain that? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Minister.

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: Yes, Mr. Chair, I understand that one of the positions of document examiner has been eliminated. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. Will this have any impact on -- or how will that improve access to justice? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Minister.

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: Mr. Chair, we're not contemplating that that will have any effect on

access to justice; I understand this is a registry position. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. So I'm sort of back to another question I had asked about how these reductions-- the impacts of these reductions are going to be monitored and tracked in terms of access to justice. Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Minister.

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: Mr. Chair, the department is always alive to this concern. We certainly don't see that position as having any effect on access to justice. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. I'm just not quite still sure how the department is going to monitor this, but I don't think this is the place to follow it up. Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Would the Minister like to respond?

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: Mr. Chair, only to say that we are aware of this issue and concern. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Do we have further comments or comments for page 286? Seeing none, I'll call the page. Justice, services to public, operations expenditure summary, total activity, \$4,303,000. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): We have an information item on page 288, work performed on behalf of others. Does Committee have comments or questions on page 288? I'll give Committee a moment. Ms. Green.

MS. GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, my question for the Minister is about the framework for enhancing Victim Services in the NWT. There appears to be no funding in this budget. Could the Minister describe what happened to the funding and whether there is funding available in some other pot to ensure that this victim service program continues?

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Ms. Green. Minister.

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I understand that the program came to an end and

we weren't in a position at this time to renegotiate this funding. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Ms. Green.

MS. GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Could the Minister please describe what this program did when it was running? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Ms. Green. Minister.

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Perhaps the deputy minister could assist. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Ms. Haener.

MS. HAENER: Thank you, Mr. Chair. We expect the program to continue and to be ongoing. The lack of the amount there on the page is due to the fact that we're kind of in a transition period right now. We had negotiated an agreement with the federal government, it came to an end. We're currently in the process of renegotiating that agreement to obtain similar funding for future years. In terms of what this program covers, it's the victims of crime emergency fund. We had that agreement in place for a five-year period and it obviously was intended to enhance Victim Services here in the Northwest Territories. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Ms. Haener. Ms. Green.

MS. GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. So, Mr. Chair, could the Minister confirm that the Victim Services program is still in place but this segment of it isn't? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Ms. Green. Minister.

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: Yes, Mr. Chair, I'm told that it's in the community justice budget. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Ms. Green.

MS. GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. That's everything.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Ms. Green. Do I have any further comments on the information item on page 288 and 289? Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. I guess this is the section where the contributions of the Law Society and the NWT Law Foundation are shown towards the court library over the years. There was

a commentary piece on CBC by a local lawyer that talked about how there was a 2012 special committee of the Law Society that was set up to make recommendations on the court library and they came up with a number of recommendations to actually reduce the costs of the library but it doesn't appear that any of those were actually implemented. I'm just wondering if anybody from the department can talk about what happened with that special committee and why none of the recommendations were followed up. Thanks, Mr. Chair. At least in the opinion of this individual. Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Minister.

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: Mr. Chair, I know that there were efforts over time to reduce the costs, but in 2012-13 the Department of Justice in cooperation with the Law Society, as was mentioned by the Member, and the Law Library committee performed two comprehensive surveys of members of the bar to identify subscriptions that could be cancelled, so some were cancelled. Expenditures did drop in 2013-14 but then they jumped again by \$47,000 in 2014 and \$75,000 in 2015-16. The acquisition costs, and mainly here we're talking about subscriptions to services, continue to increase at a rate that bear no connection with the CPI. And I was reading somewhere I think that last year we sent \$350,000 to major publishers in the GTA, the Greater Toronto Area, so there were efforts to keep costs under control. They obviously were not as successful as we would have hoped and costs continued to escalate far beyond the rate of inflation. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. Could the Minister undertake to provide a copy of this report from the Special Committee of the Law Society that I think it was submitted in 2013, and then if there was a departmental response to the recommendations, could he also provide that to the appropriate standing committee? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Minister.

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: I'm not certain that we could share that very easily. I think we would need the consent of the Law Society perhaps and the judiciary also. We could approach them, but I'm not certain what their response could be. So there's parties beyond us that would have to agree to release the report. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. So would the Minister commit to see if that might be possible? Then I promise I'll leave him alone about this for a little while, not too long but a little while. Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Minister

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: Certainly, Mr. Chair, I could commit to doing that. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Nothing further from Mr. O'Reilly. Ms. Green.

MS GREEN: Speaking of the law library...

---Laughter

Just kidding. Mr. Chair, my question is about the community justice fund. I see on page 264, which I recognize is a page we already covered, that the estimate for community justice went down by \$200,000. Is that \$200,000 reduction a result of the loss of funding through this framework for enhancing victims services in the NWT? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Ms. Green. Minister.

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: Mr. Chair, I am given to understand that it is not. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Ms. Green.

MS. GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, I'm still trying to figure out what this program does and how the loss of it has an impact on the people at the NWT. Maybe that's the question I need to ask. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Ms. Green. Minister.

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: Yes, Mr. Chair, the deputy minister can explain for what the fund is or the reason for the fund. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Ms. Green.

MS. GREEN: I understand Ms. Haener will be able to provide an answer. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): I apologize, I was in a sidebar conversation with the Clerk. Ms. Haener.

MS. HAENER: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The note there references the Victims of Crime Emergency Fund. What that fund did, and we hope will do in the future is, for example, if an individual is the victim of a property crime, a break and enter, and their door is broken in and they need emergency support to repair that door so that they can be safe again, the fund is available to provide supports to cover that off. So it's expenses that a victim would occur in an emergent situation. The victims services providers across the NWT are aware of this fund and support victims in putting forward requests to access the funds. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Ms. Haener. Ms. Green.

MS. GREEN: (off microphone)

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Ms. Green. Is there any further comments or questions? Seeing no further comments or questions, we can return to the department total on page 259. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. It's not a question about the court library, so the Minister can breathe a huge sigh of relief. I should have asked this earlier about the office of the regulator of oil and gas operations. Since the staff are government employees, how does the department and the government ensure the independence of this office? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Minister.

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: It is clear, Mr. Chair, that they are at arms-length from the government. I know that there are other models, including models in Saskatchewan, where there is not that separation. So we have agreed to follow a model, rather, that does in our view ensure that separation and therefore their independence. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. While it might be clear to the Minister that an arms-length office, can he describe how that happens on a day-to-day basis and so on? Because it's not clear to this Member. Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Minister.

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: Mr. Chair, perhaps the deputy minister could be of assistance. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Ms. Haener.

MS. HAENER: Thank you, Mr. Chair. In terms of the day-to-day operations of the OROGO unit, it's very different from other units within the department. I, as deputy minister, oversee the senior managers within the department. Jamie Fulford who heads up the OROGO unit reports to me for administrative purposes only. Meaning, I approve his leave, I support him in other administrative matters in the unit. Our financial unit supports them in terms of helping them with variances and other expenditure matters, for example.

In terms of the day-to-day operations and the work that's done supporting the regulatory function, they do that on their own. There is reporting through to the regulator, to the Minister as regulator on an ongoing and regular basis. That is done in a separate manner from what would normally be done within the department with other units where there would be discussions, for example, on projects at the senior management table. That is not done with the OROGO unit. I hope that gives some sense of what it means on a day-to-day basis. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Ms. Haener. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. I just want to provide some assurance to the department and the staff that in no way am I questioning the integrity of any of the staff there. I'm just trying to understand how they implement independence. So that's all I've got. Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Do you have any further comments or questions? Mr. Testart.

MR. TESTART: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I was remiss not to ask this under the court services section. I note the funding has not changed significantly for the sheriff services division. I'm wondering if the department can indicate what the long-term plan for that division is in terms of training and additional duties. There has been some talk, I know discussion with the RCMP about the sheriffs taking a broader role in prisoner escorts and court security. Is there any plan on the Department's side to actually move forward on that? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Testart. Minister.

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: Mr. Chair, the department is aware of this issue and we continue to work with

the RCMP, looking at various models, but no final decision has been made. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Mr. Testart.

MR. TESTART: It's not really helpful I suppose, but are we to assume then we'll have status quo for the next -- for the life of this government or are we going to be looking at something -- I only say this because I know it's a complicating factor in our relationship with policing in the Northwest Territories. It was a perennial complaint at the RCMP and the business of court is sometimes frustrated by the lack of available RCMP members, as the department well knows.

I would like to see a more proactive stance than I guess we're not sure of what decision we want to make. And I appreciate that that's where we're at, but I would strongly recommend putting a bit more emphasis on how we're moving forward on this issue, as I am concerned that it's limiting police resources when we have able-bodied sheriffs who can do the work themselves if they were given the proper support and training. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Testart. Minister.

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: Yes, Mr. Chair, we are looking at options. The model that has been our model here for many years may not be sustainable. We are aware of the issue and we are in discussions or we will have discussions with the RCMP as to next steps. I'm not certain whether changes in legislation would be required. I realize there are other jurisdictions, including the one to our south, Alberta, where the Sheriff's Office does provide many of these services.

It would involve a considerable change, and necessitated change, in the training and support we do provide to the Sheriff's Office and may also require a change of legislation. We are aware of the issue. It's not as though we're stuck in the present situation forever and ever. Discussions at this stage I think are pretty preliminary with the RCMP and in the department. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Mr. Testart.

MR. TESTART: Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you to the Minister for a more thorough response, I appreciate that. Needless to say, whatever model we decide to take for providing court security services, there are occasions where Sheriff's officers are asked to do things that the act doesn't enable them to do. Is the department looking at correcting that through amendments to the various

pieces of legislation that govern Sheriff's officers and their powers in the courtroom? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Testart. Minister.

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: I'm not sure I understand the question fully, Mr. Chair. I'm not certain which parties are asking the Sheriff's Office to do things they shouldn't do. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Mr. Testart.

MR. TESTART: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The Minister could ask the Sheriff's officers for more, but essentially, there are times when there are RCMP officers who aren't available in the courtroom to deal with certain circumstances. If there's not a secure custody in the courtroom, then frequently RCMP officers aren't present. If that's the case, then all court security responsibilities fall on the Sheriff's officers. If they're required to detain someone who is convicted or required to arrest someone for good order in the courtroom, the current legislation, there's a gap in the legislation, it doesn't enable them to do that. Judges are requesting -- to be clear, judges are requesting this, and that is the difficulty there. I'm wondering if the department's going to correct this or is looking to correct this, as it could result in some trouble in the future for all parties concerned. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Testart. More of a forward-looking policy question than a budget question, but how do you respond, Minister?

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: Mr. Chair, I think we are aware of the complexity of this issue. Certainly the Member has raised an interesting and complicating point, which we are aware of. I think the best that I can say now is that we are aware of this issue and it may be that in the future we have to make changes in the training of people that are working in the Sheriff's office, and we may also need some legislation. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Mr. Testart.

MR. TESTART: Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you to the Minister for answering a policy question during the budget deliberations. Our sheriffs do a very difficult job and they put their lives on the line to protect the public and it's good to see the department is taking these issues seriously. I look forward to see progress on this issue in the coming years. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Testart. Do we have further comments or questions? Seeing no further comments or questions from committee, I will call the page. Justice, total department, \$127,092,000. Agreed? Does committee agree we've finished consideration of the Department of Justice?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (MR. SIMPSON): Thank you, Minister, and thank you to your witnesses for appearing before us. Sergeant-at-Arms, please escort the witnesses from the Chamber. Next, the Committee has agreed to consider the Department of Lands. I'll turn to the Minister responsible for the department for opening comments.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, I am pleased to present the 2016-2017 Main Estimates for the Department of Lands. Overall, the department's estimates propose a net decrease of \$1,015,000, a decrease of three per cent from the 2015-16 main estimates, and a decrease of four positions. These estimates directly support the objectives of limiting expenditure growth in order to achieve the long-term sustainability of the fiscal framework. The estimates include \$133,000 for one additional remote sensing analyst for the Western Arctic Centre for Geomatics in Inuvik. Funding for a new Western Arctic Centre for Geomatics was approved in 2015-2016 to provide geomatics services and research support for lands, resource, and infrastructure management. These services and research will provide the GNWT with more and better information to improve the stewardship of our lands and resources. We held the line on expenditure management with no forced growth other than northern allowance adjustments of \$29,000.

We are further responding to the government's fiscal pressures and fiscal strategy through ongoing reductions to the operating base totalling \$1,052,000. The estimates include sunsets of \$150,000 for one-time funding. The estimates include increased revenues of \$460,000. We are proposing to modernize the rates for regulatory revenues, quarry royalties and land leases. In 2016-17, we have restructured to create the securities and project assessment division. This division is an amalgamation of the liabilities and financial assurance division and the project assessment branch to generate greater efficiencies and support further work in the area of securities. This will include working with boards and other GNWT departments to develop policies and procedures. There is no net fiscal impact from this amalgamation.

We have just completed our second year of operation since the department's creation on April

1, 2014. There are a number of key accomplishments and changes that I would like to highlight. In the summer of 2015, the department held a ballot draw. The uptake on the ballot draw opportunity demonstrated a strong and growing demand for more recreational land use opportunities in the NWT. The department is now consulting on a draft recreational land management framework which will provide guidance on how the GNWT will manage recreational land in the future, including plans for making more land available for recreational purposes. The department is, and will continue to work towards making land available through fee simple title where possible

In March 2016, the department hosted a second Land Use Planning Forum to discuss and feed into the development of the land use planning strategic framework. In attendance were representatives from land use planning boards, and Aboriginal and federal governments, as well as from GNWT departments. The department led the GNWT's response to Cantung Mine. The department ensured the clean-up responsibility was returned to Canada. It secured the leasehold interests in the Mactung property in order to protect and preserve GNWT security interests in the Cantung property. This protects the economic potential of the Mactung resource for future sale. Contribution agreements were finalized and funding arrangements were negotiated with the federal government for the establishment of the Surface Rights Board. Regulations were developed, leading to the Surface Rights Board becoming fully operational on April 1, 2016, which met legislated timelines.

The proposed estimates for the Department of Lands continue to support the priorities of the 18th Legislative Assembly, particularly under the environment, economy, and climate change, governance and accountable, and transparent government themes. Our legislative initiatives include developing a path forward for the Northwest Territories Lands Act and Commissioner's Land Act which will involve policy development, procedures, and legislative amendments. Some of this work can be completed in the short-term, while other activities will require a longer timeframe.

The department is coordinating GNWT input on further regulatory work by Canada affecting lands and resources in the NWT and has provided input on five sets of regulations under development or amendment. The department continues to manage the inspections, compliance, and enforcement program with a focus on education and awareness. We also continue to work with the Department of Environment and Natural Resources through the cross-appointment of inspectors, and to respond to spills. As a new department, we continue to assess our resource allocations to ensure they are directed to the areas that will respond to the priorities of this

18th Legislative Assembly and to the areas where the need is greatest. We continue to work to ensure that devolved programs are being effectively and efficiently managed. This concludes my opening remarks, Mr. Chair. I look forward to Members' comments and questions.

CHAIRPERSON (MR. SIMPSON): Thank you, Minister. Would you like to bring witnesses into the Chamber?

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Yes, I would, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (MR. SIMPSON): Thank you, Minister. Sergeant-at-Arms, please escort the witnesses into the Chamber. Would you please introduce your witnesses, Minister.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Yes, thank you, Mr. Chair. I have with me to my right, Kate Hearn. She is the acting deputy minister for the Department of Lands. To my left I have Brenda Hilderman. She is the director of finance and administration.

CHAIRPERSON (MR. SIMPSON): Thank you, Minister, and thank you to the witnesses for appearing before us. We can start the consideration of the Department of Lands. Page 295 is a total department. We will first begin, however, on page 296 with the detail, lands revenue summary. Do we have comments or questions on page 296, lands revenue summary? I see none. We can move onto the information item on page 297, active position summary. Do we have comments or questions, page 297? I see no comments or questions. We will move onto corporate management. Corporate management beginning at page 299. We will first consider the active positions on page 300. Do we have comments or questions beginning on page 300? I see none. Back to page 299, corporate management. Mr. Vanthuyne.

MR. VANTHUYNE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm just wondering if the department can give us a bit of an explanation on the significant jump in the travel expenditure from 2014 to 2015, and it seems that we're proposing the same amount as the 2015-16 budget. If we can get an explanation on the travel expenditures that would be greatly appreciated. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (MR. SIMPSON): Thank you, Mr. Vanthuyne. Minister McLeod.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Yes, Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, just being formed in 2014-15, we didn't do as much travel as we would normally do, but I think in 2015-16 and 2016-17 you see the 124 because there is a greater demand for us to be out travelling, be out inspecting, and just having the presence out there. I think that's probably why you see the increase. I can anticipate a figure of this much going forward.

CHAIRPERSON (MR. SIMPSON): Thank you, Minister. Nothing further for Mr. Vanthuyne. Further comments or questions. Mr. McNeely.

MR. MCNEELY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I just noticed on this page here you've got purchased services, and I assume that rise in there is probably due to some consulting/hiring charges, and if so can the Minister explain the increase? That'll be one of two questions. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (MR. SIMPSON): Thank you, Mr. McNeely. Minister McLeod?

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, the Member's referring to page 299 under purchased services. It's gone from \$327,000 in 2015-16 in the revised estimates to \$227,000 in 2016-17 main estimates, so it's actually gone down by \$100,000, but for a breakout, I mean if the Member still wants a breakout then we can provide that. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (MR. SIMPSON): Thank you, Minister. Anything further, Mr. McNeely.

MR. MCNEELY: Yes, and thanks, Mr. Chair. I think there was something -- I've got the wife's glasses on or something here, but anyways that's the excuse I come up with. On the opening comments there, I notice that the Minister had mentioned that there's going to be some initiatives towards restructuring and initiatives taking towards that and the short-term, long-term is as well towards the Commissioner's Land Act and the Northwest Territories Land Act. Is there monies budgeted for that allowance to restructure our land admin?

CHAIRPERSON (MR. SIMPSON): Thank you, Mr. McNeely. Minister McLeod.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The Member is correct that we are going to be looking at the acts because we have two acts that we're operating under right now. As far as having a line item for it, it's within the day-to-day operations of the division so there's no specific line item for it. If the Member's looking -- I'm not sure exactly what our budget is for that, but if the Member would like that information, I'm sure we could find it somewhere. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (MR. SIMPSON): Thank you, Minister. Mr. McNeely.

MR. MCNEELY: Well, I just think, Mr. Chair, it's a good initiative and it's part of the housekeeping on straightening out the Lands Act to reflect our new position as new lands owner underneath the devolution transfer. So I think that's good management and I was just wondering on the short term, are we going to be seeing any short term

initiatives towards that say within the next 24 months? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (MR. SIMPSON): Thank you, Mr. McNeely. Minister McLeod.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Yes, thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, we are looking at the two acts and if there's any amendments to either act which would strengthen our position then we'll be looking at making some amendments and in the longer term going towards legislation, but I think that's going to be an enormous piece of work. So if we can make any amendments to strengthen the acts to our benefit then we will do that in the short-term with a longer term goal of eventually amalgamating both acts. I'm not sure we'll see the amalgamation in the life of this Assembly but I'm sure we'll start some preliminary work. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (MR. SIMPSON): Thank you, Minister. Nothing further from Mr. McNeely. Are there any further comments or questions? I see none. I will call the page: Lands, corporate management, operations expenditure summary, activity total, \$3,026,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (MR. SIMPSON): Moving onto informatics. The activity totals on page 302. We'll begin discussing the detail on page 303. Comments or questions on informatics, active positions? I see none. We can move onto operations, expenditure summary on page 302. Comments or questions on page 302. I'll give committee a moment. I see no comments or questions. Oh, I see Mr. McNeely. Go ahead.

MR. MCNEELY: Yes, Mr. Chair, just going on page 301 on informatics. Could the Minister explain the whole initiative on that particular page there, 301? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (MR. SIMPSON): Thank you, Mr. McNeely. Minister McLeod.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I think the activity description in page 301 is pretty well self-explanatory. It points out a lot of things that we're hoping to do and some initiatives that we want to undertake. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (MR. SIMPSON): Thank you, Minister. Mr. McNeely.

MR. MCNEELY: Yes, it seemed like it's a program. I get this sort of activity initiative here, but if it's including four different departments, are four different departments putting money towards this system or this support or this initiative?

CHAIRPERSON (MR. SIMPSON): Thank you, Mr. McNeely. Minister McLeod.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Yes, thank you, Mr. Chair. It's fully funded under the Department of Lands budget.

CHAIRPERSON (MR. SIMPSON): Thank you, Minister. Do we have any further comments or questions on page 302? I see none. I will call the page: informatics, operations expenditure summary, activity total, \$7,118,000. Agreed.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (MR. SIMPSON): We'll move onto Lands, operations. The activity total is on page 305. So we'll discuss the detail beginning on page 306. Comments or questions on page 306, grants, contributions, and transfers. I see none. Continue onto page 307, active positions. Mr. Thompson.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Can the Minister explain that we'll have the reduction of the regional staff here and in his conversations with myself we're going from five to three, what's going to happen with those three positions? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (MR. SIMPSON): Thank you, Mr. Thompson. Minister?

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Yes, thank you, Mr. Chair. I think during business plans we had said that the three positions we were hoping to turn them into training positions in Yellowknife and give those out in the region an opportunity to move here for a couple years, take the training and then go back to their home community. I'm not sure what the uptake is on that right now, but if we have to put it out for competition, our goal is to put it out to competition as part of the requirement, the hiring requirement. It would be understood that they move out to the region after they've completed a couple years here in the capital and then we'll utilize their knowledge out in the region. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (MR. SIMPSON): Thank you, Minister. Mr. Thompson.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair, and I thank the Minister for his answer. It actually helps, but again it really hurts if we're losing a position in the region which I struggle with. I understand what you're trying to do. I guess my other big issue though is we have five, we're going to reduce it to three, how are we going to be able to pick which region gets these positions or is the department looking after a time to phase into the other two regions? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (MR. SIMPSON): Thank you, Mr. Thompson. Minister.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chair. We actually had two of the positions were vacant and we had three that were filled, so we determined that we would use those three positions that were filled, move them here. I think, at the end of the day, our goal would be to have all five regions staffed and with folks that we'll have them trained up to do a lot of the work that's required. Because my understanding is that a lot of the work now is just being forwarded to headquarters. So, if we can get them trained up and then build up their capacity, that they can go back to the region and possibly build up the capacity in the region. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Mr. Thompson.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair, and I think the Minister for the answer. I'm hoping at some point in time all five positions will be out there and filled in the regions. Has the department looked at -- I know they have done a really good job with RO1s, the resource officers ones, and they've done a really good job with that.

Has the department looked at the potential of doing land officer one, where we can start with the local people to train, on the job training and stuff like that, and use MACA courses out there to be part of the dealing with this huge demands on lands issues? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Thompson. Minister.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, the RMO1s were well-received, and we have them all filled. They're all filled with local people. I think three of the five or four of the five are female. We've had very good interest in that, actually. If there are, as part of the HR plan, you know, if there's further opportunities to offer training positions in the regions, then that's something that we'll take into consideration. We want to be able to build up the capacity in the region because who knows the region better than the folks that live there, right. We would like to try to build the capacity there. It's probably an initiative that we have to look at, going forward, and see if we can fit it into our fiscal situation. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Mr. Thompson.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair, and I thank the Minister for the well-thought-out answer. I'm looking forward to, with fiscal restraints and the challenges we face out there, that we can work with you or your department in getting these positions filled. Because I know two of those young ladies and, yes, they're very capable individuals, that do

the job. So I'm hoping that will be something that we look at in the future business plans.

I don't know if this is the area, but a lot of the issues in regards to land leases and that, is this the area where I need to ask those questions? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Thompson. Minister.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Land leases would be the call of the Chair. If he allows the Member to ask the questions on any particular page, then I will attempt to answer them. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. I'd like to solicit the Minister's advice on what would be the appropriate section.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Yes, thank you, Mr. Chair. My apologies. This would be the right area, if the Member wishes to ask his questions here.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Since we're on page 307, active positions, this might be more appropriate to discuss once we get to the operations expenditure summary. So do I have any further comments or questions on active positions, page 307? Seeing none, we'll move back to operations expenditure summary on page 305 and allow Mr. Thompson to continue his line of questioning.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair, and I thank the Minister for his indulgence with me in this. In regards to land, commissioner's land and that, in the smaller communities, there seems to be some real struggles about who owns what or what the process is. Is the Minister and the department willing to work with the smaller communities and come up with a plan that will allow elders' lots and that to be paid by the band instead of having individual? Because, right now, the struggle is, what I'm hearing in the smaller communities is, elders cannot afford to pay for the leases and that, and the bands have asked me to ask the question. Is it something that they can work out that the band actually pays for seven people's lots through this process? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Thompson. Minister.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Yes, thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, I'm trying to understand the question. I mean, if the band wants to pay for the leases, then that would be the call of the bands. So I'm not sure -- I mean, we can work with them, as long as somebody's paying the lease. I mean, they have a lease. Right? As long as somebody's paying it. If it's the band, then it will be them. If it's a question of the ownership of the land, then that's

something we need to have a discussion about with the communities. Because, in some of the communities, there's some band land there that we don't have much jurisdiction over, my understanding. But, no, we can work with them, and if the Member has any specific issues, I mean, we can always have that discussion on the side and we can follow up and work with his communities to see how. At the end of the day, as long as the leases are being paid. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Mr. Thompson.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair, and I thank the Minister for the willingness to work with. I do have small communities which is not territory land, it's Commissioner's land. It's about elders, and, you know, all of a sudden, they're getting these lease things or lease agreements coming to them saying you've got to do a lease. They're going, well, we've never had to do it before. And then there's demand for payment on these lands, so, for the leases. So they're trying to be law-abiding citizens, but they can't afford it. So I've had some bands ask me: is there some way we can work out? I thank the Minister for his commitment on that. So I will work with the Minister on that later on.

The other question, the next question, I have is just in regards to the big challenges that we're facing out there in equity leases and that. I know that you've made a commitment to have your staff talk to people out there. There are more challenges after we've had our conversation in the House. More people have come forth. So is there something that the department can look at after, you know, the 10 per cent after 10 years and it's a hundred per cent that it's a dollar a year until land claims are settled or whatever? Is that a potential that the department can look at so that we don't face these challenges later on? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Thompson. I just want to remind all the Members to confine your questions to this budget as much as possible and leave policy discussions for a question period, Members' statements, et cetera. I'll allow the Minister to respond. Minister McLeod.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Yes, thank you, Mr. Chair. The quick answer is we're looking at modernizing our policy so there will be an opportunity to have that discussion at the time. Mr. Chair, before I say thank you, Mr. Chair, I just want to recognize, up in the gallery, Mr. Willard Hagen, who will be the deputy minister of Lands. He's taking in our proceedings, and he will be sitting

at the witness table with me next year, this Assembly willing.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. We look forward to that. Mr. Thompson.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you very much, Mr. Chair, and I apologize for going on there, but I had to get it on the floor, and, if I didn't, I would have to deal with it when I get back home, so I thank the Minister for his answers. I have no other questions for this page. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Thompson. Mr. Beaulieu.

MR. BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I, too, have to get some clarification in this area. I just want to ask the Minister if there is still such lots that have band lot status in the communities?

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. Minister.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Yes, thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, I'm aware of a few communities that still have band lots. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Mr. Beaulieu.

MR. BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I'm wondering if the Minister could advise me as to the status of land set aside for Indian housing. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. Minister.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Yes, thank you, Mr. Chair. I'm not sure about that. My understanding was the band land was used for a lot of housing that went up. My understanding is the Housing Corporation had some units on some band land and there was a question as to the ownership of the land, and those units were then -- they weren't reverted back to the band. I think they wrote most of them off because they were a lot of older units that were actually 1968 Indian housing. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Mr. Beaulieu.

MR. BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I'd like to ask the Minister on lot rentals and that. Again, I recognize that this is not a line object here, on our budget, but again, same with the previous speaker, a lot of people are wondering about the change and the high cost of renting lots as opposed -- that will never become ownership or free title land until after the land claim is settled, from my understanding.

I'm wondering why that model is being used, the lot rental model, by this department. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. Minister.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Yes, thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, if I could ask the Member if he's speaking of lands within the community that are selected as part of the interim land withdrawal, that the Aboriginal government negotiating the claim is eventually going to get ownership of and we're charging rent in the meantime? If I can just get the Member to clarify that, I'd appreciate it. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Mr. Beaulieu.

MR. BEAULIEU: Thank you. I didn't want to get too deep into these non-budget questions. However, for clarification, what I'm discovering is that individuals that were leasing because they don't have ownership of the lots did not attain ownership through a previous process -- there's no more ownership process now -- but then ended up on a leased, piece of leased land which has now become a rental land. So individuals are actually renting the piece of land for 10 per cent of the value of the piece of land that they're renting. So it's quite an extreme high cost, and many people can't afford it, so people are just going into arrears very quickly. So that's, I guess, that's for clarification, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. Minister.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, that was as my response to the previous speaker's question, I talked about modernizing our policies, and I'd be more than happy to sit down with committee and get their input into some of the work that we've been doing, give an update on some of the work that we've been doing. That may answer a lot of the questions that they may have. So, I mean, I'll put that offer out there, Mr. Chair. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. I see nothing further from Mr. Beaulieu. Mr. McNeely.

MR. MCNEELY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Underneath the resource management unit there, on page 305, and then looking at the language on 304, is there funding within that annual budget there to have an annual review of land tenures, land administration, on an annual basis? Take the Sahtu, for example, would the Sahtu Land Claim Department and other municipalities that have an annual lands administration workshop, if you want to call it that,

is there funding within this budget for those types of management systems?

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. McNeely. Minister McLeod.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Yes, thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, that's just part of our ongoing work with all the inspections that we do after we got the Department of Lands formed in 2014. I would like to see us do a complete inventory of all the different lands that are out there. I'd like to say we're still learning the process, but we've been almost two years now. We'll put something together and make it part of my commitment to Member Beaulieu on giving the committee a briefing. Thank you. It's part of our ongoing work that we do, and we do the inspections and see what, try to catalog as much of the land that we have. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. I see nothing further from Mr. McNeely. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. There's a number of reductions on this page that I'm wondering about. Program management and administration is down, I don't know, maybe \$150,000. Land Use Administration is down over \$100,000. Resource Management is down almost or over \$300,000 from last year.

What's the rationale for these reductions, and how will that impact our ability to manage lands, stuff that we've inherited under devolution? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Minister McLeod.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, I think the total reduction was \$636,000 if I am not mistaken. It was for utilities, fuel costs for inspections program, restricted base funding for inspection response to spills. We withdrew a couple of positions. Then these Commissioner's senior lands officers function in headquarters, we have reduced it from five to three positions. I think that is the total of the \$636,000. Then we have one sunset of \$80,000. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. I appreciate the Minister refreshing my mind on some of those. What impact will it have on our ability to manage and inspect lands? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Minister.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, I think we still will have the capacity to carry out our inspections as we have done in the

past. If you recall from MACA lands days, before it was converted over, one of the questions we kept getting was the amount of inspectors we had. I think since Lands has been formed, we have -- I am not sure of the exact number. I can get them, as far as our inspector division goes. We have a fairly robust inspection division that is adequately staffed. I will confirm that information, and I will share it with committee.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. The expenditure category there, there is a significant reduction for travel, and I think the Minister may have explained that in terms of reduced fuel costs and so on. Is that the case for the reduction there? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Minister.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: I am going to have to apologize to Mr. O'Reilly. I didn't quite hear the question. I apologize for that.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Mr. Chair. Is a reduction in the travel line below? I think the Minister talked about a reduced fuel expenditure. Is that the explanation for the reduced travel there? I guess what I am asking is, I want to make sure that our staff have the ability to travel to do the work to properly manage and inspect the lands that we have inherited. Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Minister.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, the fuel shows up under utilities, just below travel. There was a restricted base funding for inspection response to be filled was a \$250,000 that the Member would have noted under travel. We still have a fairly healthy budget. I think there is not much happening out there on the water side of it. So inspection requirements may not be as high as they are, but we still have folks out on inspection. I think we have 28 total across the Department of Lands and all the regions. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: That is all the questions I have. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Mr. Thompson.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I had one question I didn't ask. With the affected employees, were any of those positions, are they federal transfers, or were they existing GNWT employees when they started out? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Thompson. Minister.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: I don't have that level of detail right now, but I will provide it to the Member. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Mr. Thompson.

MR. THOMPSON: I thank the Minister for the commitment to get that information to me. Some of the concerns out there was that it was the staff when they amalgamated became staff that was long-serving territorial employees and not new employees coming in from the feds. I said I would ask the question during this process. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Thompson. Would the Minister like to respond?

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, we actually have some from the GNWT that were affected. Also some of the federal employees were affected as well. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Mr. Thompson.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. And I thank the Minister for that answer. Just clarifying some rumours out there. It is better to get information on the floor, so people are aware of it. I thank the Minister, and I have no further questions at this time.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Thompson. Mr. Vanthuyne.

MR. VANTHUYNE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Just one, kind of, general question relative to this area: during the business planning review, the committee of economic development and environment made the suggestion at the time that the department take meaningful steps to harmonize the Commissioner's Land and Territorial Lands Act. I wonder if the Minister can comment with regard to the department's intention on giving that consideration. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Vanthuyne. Minister.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, as I said before that, where possible, we will make some amendments that might need to be made right away. I think the overall amalgamation of the two acts is going to be a very large piece of work. We will be more than happy to provide committee an update. As I committed to Member Beaulieu, we would be more than happy to give committee an update with all the work that we have going on, including an update on the Commissioner and Territorial Lands Act. It is going to be a huge undertaking.

What we would like to do is try to get some amendments in there to help us as we go forward, with the understanding that eventually we are going to amalgamate the two Acts. As I said before, the preliminary work might start during the life of this Assembly, but I think it is going to be a future Assembly that is probably going to take on the bulk of the work, because it will be a huge piece of legislation. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Seeing nothing further, do I have further comments on questions on page 305? Seeing none, I will call the page. Lands, operations, operations expenditure summary, activity total: \$11,282,000. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): We will move on to planning and coordination. The activity total is on page 309. We can discuss the detail on page 310. Comments or questions on page 310? Planning and coordination, grants, contributions. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. There were a number of reductions on this page. Just wondering how those were decided upon. These are contributions that are given out to different Aboriginal governments, communities and so on, to, I think, engage in some of our processes. So how were the reductions made? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Minister.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, this would probably have been a result of our overall reduction exercise. If we find in the future we need to allocate these type of dollars again, then we can make some adjustments in the future, but it is part of our overall reduction exercise. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. Just so I understand it, you have 2015-2016 Main Estimates here. Then there are the revised estimates, looks like there are no changes made. Do we know how fully subscribed those programs were in 2015-16? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Minister.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, the quick answer is they weren't fully subscribed. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. I don't want to prolong this, but could maybe the Minister or the staff get back and let me know what the year ends

were for 2015-16 for those programs? They can do that offline. Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Minister.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, as I said, they weren't fully subscribed to, which is correct. I actually have the number here. I thought I would try, "They weren't fully subscribed to" first. The actual number is \$546,000. They still weren't fully subscribed to. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Mr. O'Reilly. Ms. Green.

MS. GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, my question is whether the Minister can tell me about the role that Lands is playing in the establishment of the Thaidene Nene Park and how that is reflected on this page?

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Ms. Green. Minister.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, it is just part of the business of lands. We provide information and support to the department of ENR. There is no particular line item for it. It is just part overall of our operation. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Ms. Green.

MS. GREEN: No. That answers that question. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Ms. Green. Further comments or questions, page 310? Seeing none, moving on to page 311. Active positions. Do I have comments or questions on page 311? Seeing none, return to planning and coordination, operations expenditure summary, page 309. Mr. Thompson.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Just a couple of questions. I noticed "land use sustainability" has gone up but the other areas have gone down. Could the Minister explain why the increase in this area? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Thompson. Minister.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you. Ms. Hilderman.

MS. HILDERMAN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The increase is due to two internal reallocations. One is \$50,000 contributions that previously we had under the line item for Land Use Planning unit and \$202,000 reallocation of contracts-based funding.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Ms. Hilderman. Ms. Hilderman.

MS. HILDERMAN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I would like to be a little more specific on that and the \$202,000, \$142,000 was reallocated from the Land

Use Planning unit and \$60,000 from Land Use Planning and Sustainability, which is the unit that the director and their support staff are in. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Ms. Hilderman. Mr. Thompson.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I thank Ms. Hilderman for answering that question because it answers two other ones I had. I am good with this page. Thank you, Mr. Chair. No more further questions.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Thompson. Further comments or questions, page 309? Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. Those questions, they bring up a question for me. Are we taking money then away from Land Use Planning and putting it into Land Use Sustainability? As I understand it, one of the parts of our mandate was to ensure that we have completed a land use plans maybe even at the end of our four-year term. I am just trying to figure out how reallocating money from land use planning into land use sustainability is going to help us accomplish that. Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Minister. Ms. Hilderman.

MS. HILDERMAN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Thank you to the Member's question. When we came into being April 1, 2014, we had zero base, the Department of Lands. There were some areas where it was our best estimates what the base requirements might be. In the case of those reallocations between those three units for the contracts-based funding, it is more that we just didn't get it right. These reallocations are about funding the right unit within land use planning and sustainability. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Ms. Hilderman. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, and I appreciate it. We are dealing with labels on a page, which really don't translate into very much. I guess what I am most concerned about is the reduction overall from 7.3 in the mains in 2015-16 down to \$6.8 million this year. That is why I guess I am asking these sorts of questions. Why the overall reduction in this part of the Lands department? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Minister.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, this was, again, part of the reduction exercises. For the actual details of the reductions, I can provide that to the Members if they wish. I could read it off here, but it is a fairly long list. I can provide this information to the Members so they can

see exactly what the reductions are. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. I appreciate that. I know I am the only thing standing between us and dinner. Happy to get that in writing from the Minister. I did have one other question though if I could. Going back to the Minister's opening remarks, he talks about, in his opening remarks, the amalgamation of the liabilities of the financial assurances division and the project assessment branch -- and that is, I think, the section of Lands we are talking about here -- and how there can be some policies and procedures developed, particularly around the area of securities. I keep asking about this stuff. Any progress on this? We have enough money in the budget to make this happen? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Minister.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: I will have Ms. Hearn respond to that, Mr. Chair. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Ms. Hearn.

MS. HEARN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. We will be providing a full briefing on the status of the securities group next week, including some of the background materials that are of interest to Members. Generally we are trying to take advantage of similar skill sets between both groups. We did unfortunately have a slow start to LAFA, the liabilities and financial assurances division. We had a lot of difficulty in finding the specialized people we needed for the job descriptions as they were written, so we've gone back to first principles, which is really dealing with some of the issues that were identified by the Commissioner on Environment and Sustainable Development in the federal government, with Canada's management of securities in the Northwest Territories. So we're moving forward on those issues. We should hopefully have staffing completed by the end of the summer, but meantime we're sort of using expertise from the project assessment branch to do some of the basic securities work, including continued internal engagement on the guidelines. We can provide a full briefing next week that has been scheduled for Tuesday. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Ms. Hearn. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. I'm very happy to hear that and I look forward to the meeting on Tuesday. Thanks.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Further comments or questions? Page

309. Seeing none. We'll call the page. Planning and coordination, operations expenditure summary, activity total, \$6,827,000. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Committee agrees. We have an information item on 312, lease commitments. Questions, comments, on page 312? Uncontroversial page. Moving on to page 313, work performed on behalf of others, another information item. Comments or questions? Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. Just so I understand this, the entire budget for the Surface Rights Board is coming from the feds, and how long is that going to last for? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Minister.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, the Member is correct. It comes from the feds, and it will go on forever. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. I've never heard that kind of a promise from a Minister before, so I'm glad to get it. I just don't know what these guys are actually going to do, because I just don't know how many disputes there are actually going to be in terms of surface rights. I know they have some policy development and stuff to do, but I'm just not sure what they're going to do. I'm on record as suggesting that the legislation that was passed by the federal government is not a co-management approach and I'm hoping that we would move towards that direction ourselves. Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Comments from the Minister.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Yes, thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, the less work that they have to do, the better, I think. And we don't have to pay for it. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Anything further, Mr. O'Reilly? I'm seeing nothing. Page 313. Seeing none. We can move back to page 295, total department summary. Final comments or questions on the Department of Lands, page 295? I'll give committee a moment. Seeing nothing, we'll call the department. Lands, total department, \$28,253,000. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Does committee agree we've completed consideration of the Department of Lands?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): I want to thank the Minister and your witnesses for appearing before us. Sergeant-at-Arms, you may escort the witnesses from the Chamber.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Would the Minister please introduce his witnesses.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: To my right, we have deputy minister Russ Neudorf, and on my left is assistant deputy minister Jayleen Robertson.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Thank you to the witnesses for joining us. We'll now proceed to consider the detail for the Department of Transportation. The department total is on page 405; we'll defer that until we consider the detail. Beginning on page 406, an information item titled the revenue summary. Do we have comments or questions on page 406, revenue summary? Mr. Vanthuyne.

MR. VANTHUYNE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, under the regulatory revenue, the line item noted as airports, landing and other fees, there is a significant increase from the previous couple of years by nearly \$3 million. Can the department please provide an explanation for the increase? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Vanthuyne. Minister.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The big increase on that line is due to the Yellowknife Airport's introduction of the airport improvement fees. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Mr. Vanthuyne.

MR. VANTHUYNE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. So what type of fee was being calculated in order to show this \$3 million increase? Can the department explain a little bit more on the fees and the rate structure for the Yellowknife airport fee structure? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Vanthuyne. Minister.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The increase in landing fees is going to bring it to average to an airport the size of the Yellowknife airport, and that will be a \$20 increase for IRF for going south and a \$10 IR fee for going north. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Mr. Vanthuyne.

MR. VANTHUYNE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And just for clarification, those numbers that the Minister shared, are those on one-way travel or is someone expected, for example leaving Yellowknife to Fort Smith return, is that a \$10 fee or is that a total of \$20 there? Similarly moving south, if you're going from Yellowknife to Edmonton return, is that a \$20 fee or is that a \$40 fee? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Vanthuyne. Minister.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Those fees only apply to one-way out of Yellowknife. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Mr. Vanthuyne.

MR. VANTHUYNE: So, again, just for clarification, and sorry if I'm not understanding fully, if someone is flying from another jurisdiction into Yellowknife, those fees would not apply. Is that correct?

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Vanthuyne. Minister.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I guess for clarity, if it's a return ticket going to Edmonton and back you only get charged a \$20 fee. If you're going within the Northwest Territories, it's a \$10 fee no matter if it's a return ticket or a one-way ticket. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Mr. Vanthuyne.

MR. VANTHUYNE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Can the department give a little bit further explanation around why these numbers were determined? I mean, I appreciate the Minister's comment as it relates to other jurisdictions having similar-sized airports, but I think that clearly we are in a very unique situation, especially being in a northern remote area, that we have to be very prudent and understanding of the effects that these types of fees can have on cost of living. I'm not suggesting that I'm opposed to the fees, but trying to capture 100 per cent cost recovery for maintenance and O and M operations of the airport right out of the gate is going to have some degree of sticker shock. And quite frankly I feel that people are going to really feel this effect in their pocketbook. Can the Minister maybe explain a little bit more why we're coming out with fees that seem to be fairly high, and why we wouldn't try to maybe get a 25 per cent or 50 per cent cost recovery on our airport operations at first? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Vanthuyne. Minister.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I can see the Member's point, but we're just moving these fees to just to be the average. There is a number of other airports that charge a larger amount than we're proposing coming out of the gate. Going south, that's an average of 3.4 per cent we believe will be the increased cost of travelling on your ticket, and on a northern ticket it would be approximately one per cent. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Mr. Vanthuyne.

MR. VANTHUYNE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Often, a lot of other jurisdictions are putting fees on their tickets because they have a particular project or an airport expansion, or what have you, that they're trying to pay for. And respectfully, we don't seem to have that. This is one that's going to be introduced for perpetuity to help operate the airport independently from having to be subsidized by tax dollars as it currently is. I'm of the opinion that, if you're not trying to pay for a project or an airport expansion that would have a definite beginning and a definite end, then a fee of this nature and at this significant increase right out of the -- right at the beginning is going to have a fairly traumatic effect on folks as it relates to their pocketbook and the cost of living, which we're trying to reduce. And so I guess the question to the department is, you know, have they given consideration on what effects this might have on the cost of living and would there be any consideration maybe toward, you know, capturing maybe 50 per cent of the cost of operation of the airport rather than trying to do 100 per cent cost recovery right out of the gate? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Vanthuyne. Minister.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Just so we can make some clarity on some stuff, the AIF portion of the ticket will be going towards capital for the airport, and the other fees will be going towards O and M of the airport. To explain to the department why we're doing this, part of this is the fiscal situation that the GNWT is in, and this was one of the opportunities to raise some revenue. It's been looked at for a number of different Assemblies, and with the fiscal challenges that we are facing here lately, this was an opportunity for us that we thought we would bring this in to help offset some of the costs of running the airport. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Mr. Vanthuyne.

MR. VANTHUYNE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. At this point, no further questions. I'll let others ask. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Vanthuyne. Further questions? Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. There seems to be a lot of numbers being thrown around in terms of predictions of revenues and so on. Does the Minister actually have a business case, or the projections? I guess, because -- yes, does the Minister have a business case and can he share that with the Regular MLAs? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Minister.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. We are currently working on a business case and we will be willing to share that with the Members when we have that finished. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. Glad to get that commitment out of the Minister. Any idea as to when we might see the business case? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Minister.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. We are working on it and hopefully we'll be able to present it to the Members later this summer. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. I appreciate that. I think part of the difficulty is going to be I think the department is bringing forward legislations to set this up, and to properly communicate and allow the standing committee to do its work, having the business case sooner than later would be very helpful. Because I do think that there needs to be a lot more communication done on this. The summer is a long time. Is it something that we can expect sooner than later? Because if the committee is going to do a good job looking at the legislation that's going to come forward for this, we need to know what the numbers are, and the public needs to know what the numbers are. So can the Minister give us a little bit more firm date than summer? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. You're more optimistic about the length of summer than I am. Minister Schumann.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. One of the things that we're also doing with this business case is we're already out doing consultation on this initiative, and that's some stuff that we'll be putting together as well. As far as the

business case and getting it to committee sooner than later, I can't tell you the exact date, I know it's probably in draft form already, so as soon as we can get it done, sooner the better, we'll get it to the Members. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. I guess I just want to add my voice to my colleague about phasing in of rates or fees rather than trying to do it all at once. I think that it will have greater public acceptance. Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. More of a comment. Would the Minister like to respond?

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I'll just take it as a comment, thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Anything further from Mr. O'Reilly? Seeing nothing further, Mr. McNeely.

MR. MCNEELY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Just looking at the transfer payments there from the federal government in the upper page category there. And I'm looking at particularly the -- it's probably a one-time contribution here of \$319 in the last fiscal year for the permafrost research study in the Inuvik section area. Is there any current study dollars there for the next phase, the next proposed project investment there, the Norman Wells/Wrigley Highway section? Preconstruction study dollars, if you want to call it that, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. McNeely. Mr. Neudorf.

MR. NEUDORF: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The money referred to here was for some one-time funding that we received from Transport Canada. It was to construct a couple of test sections on the Inuvik-Tuk Highway, test sections so that we can test some different construction techniques and how they perform in areas with permafrost.

As the Member had indicated, we do continue to also promote the next section of the Mackenzie Valley Highway, the section from Wrigley to Norman Wells. We have a proposal in with the federal government, a business case for that for \$700 million to construct that section. We're really still in the early stages talking about the financing of it. We would hope that, you know, if we do get a positive signal, that part of what we would be doing there is of course ensuring that we're protecting the permafrost as much as we can during construction. Then looking for whatever opportunities there are to

do some addition research as well, but that will come later. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Neudorf. Mr. McNeely.

MR. MCNEELY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Is there current applications from this government to the federal government for those types of preconstruction studies in that Wrigley/Norman Wells section? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. McNeely. Mr. Neudorf.

MR. NEUDORF: Thank you, Mr. Chair. We're looking for whatever opportunities might exist related to continuing to promote the Mackenzie Valley Highway. As I indicated before, we do have a \$700 million proposal for construction. That's obviously a significant ask, and so it will take some time for the federal government to respond.

In the meantime, we have submitted the project description report to start the environmental assessment, that is underway but is slowed down a little bit because we need to do some additional studies, additional engineering, environmental studies and we're looking for funding to obtain that as well. Finally we do have a bit of a demonstration project I guess to start Mackenzie Valley Highway from Norman Wells south to Canyon Creek, about a \$20 million project that we're pursuing underneath the Building Canada Plan and the funding that we have there. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Neudorf. Nothing further from Mr. McNeely.

Question on page 406? Mr. Nakimayak.

MR. NAKIMAYAK: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, my question is for the line of the new highway corridor, Planning Infrastructure Canada. And maybe the line below that as well too, the Inuvialuit implementation Inuvik to Tuktoyaktuk Highway. My question to the Minister is are there plans to... like the opening of the highway is going to be a big thing, it's not just for Canada, but for North America as well too, we're connecting coast to coast -- and I'm just curious if there's any plans for the GNWT to work alongside with Inuvialuit and the federal government on plans for the opening of the highway in preparation? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Nakimayak. Minister Schumann.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Yes, the department is working with the federal government on that exact thing. As the federal

government's contributed two-thirds to this project, I'm sure they're going to want to be a part of this grand opening and make sure everything is in place to celebrate it. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister Schumann. Mr. Nakimayak.

MR. NAKIMAYAK: Yes, just one more comment to that, Mr. Chair. I encourage the Minister to work with myself, Inuvialuit and the federal government as we move closer to this as it'll become a big logistical project as we move closer towards the opening. I appreciate the comments, thanks.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Nakimayak. Would the Minister like to respond?

HON. WALLY SCHUMAN: Yes, I'd like to also just let the Member know that as things move along we'll keep him informed how things are progress on this. So thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Further comments or questions on page 406, revenue summary? Mr. McNeely.

MR. MCNEELY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Further down the page there on 406, total permits, looking at the three sets of numbers across the board here, 3.9, 3.9, 3.9 again, and back in 2014-15, 4.4. Are those numbers related to the total revenues going across the Deh Cho Bridge? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. McNeely. Minister.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Those are for the Deh Cho Bridge. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Mr. McNeely.

MR. MCNEELY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Are those numbers consistent with the projects that were originally submitted? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. McNeely. Minister.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Yes, they are. Just to clarify one thing, the 2014-15 was due to the increased traffic of Gahcho Kue construction as well. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Mr. McNeely. Nothing further from Mr. McNeely. Mr. Vanthuyne.

MR. VANTHUYNE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I go back to the issue I raised earlier. Can the

Department explain or provide some insight on what percentage of air traffic at the Yellowknife airport is non-passenger-based? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Vanthuyne. Minister.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. We don't have that information readily available, but we'll get it to the Member. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Mr. Vanthuyne.

MR. VANTHUYNE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The reason why I'm raising this is: is it the department's intention that some type of fee is also going to be applied to air traffic that goes out of the Yellowknife Airport that's non-passenger air traffic? There's a number of different types of air traffic that go in and out of Yellowknife that don't carry passengers, whether it's cargo planes or, you know, three or four helicopter companies there. They certainly have a percentage of wear and tear on the Yellowknife Airport.

Is it just passengers that are going to incur this fee to pay for the maintenance and the wear and tear on capital projects or are we going to expect that these non-passenger-based flights are also going to incur some type of fee? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Vanthuyne. Minister.

HON. WALLY SCHUMAN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. As far as helicopters go, if they're taking off and landing from their own operations and not using the terminal, there would be no fees charge for them. They'll be paying lease fees or other stuff for their operation. As for non-passenger airplanes, there will be a landing fee still applicable to them as well. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Mr. Vanthuyne.

MR. VANTHUYNE: Sorry, can the Minister just repeat the second part of that answer please? Sorry, my apologies, I was trying to capture a note here on the helicopter portion. I would appreciate if he could just reply again. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Vanthuyne. Minister.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Non-passenger flights will be still charged a landing fee. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Mr. Vanthuyne.

MR. VANTHUYNE: As they may or as they do currently or is this the same fee or what type of free structure are we talking about? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Vanthuyne. Minister.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I guess just for clarity, all airplanes landing at the Yellowknife Airport are currently paying landing fees. What we're proposing is to increase their fees to the average of an airport this size across Canada so it would be just an increase in the landing fee to standards that we're proposing. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Mr. Vanthuyne.

MR. VANTHUYNE: Okay, that's good. I appreciate it, thank you. Sorry, Mr. Chair, while I can. Is that increase in fee captured in this increase of the \$3 million in revenue? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Vanthuyne. Minister.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. As reflected in this budget, only a portion of this year is captured, and then as we progress into the next fiscal year, then we'll have the full amount captured. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Mr. Vanthuyne. Nothing further from Mr. Vanthuyne. Any more questions on page 406? Seeing none, move on to the information item on page 407, active position summary. Comments or questions, page 407, active position summary. I see no comments or questions on page 407. Mr. Thompson.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Just to clarify, those active positions throughout this report. So can we ask the questions, if it's a highway issue or a ferry issue, we'd ask it during that or do we have to ask it on this page here, 407? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Thompson. I imagine you can ask a question on any position on this page, which I believe encompasses all the positions, or if you have a specific question about a marine position you can wait until that section. I'll leave it up to you, Mr. Thompson.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Thompson. Nothing further, we'll move on to airports. On page 409 we have the operations expenditure summary. We'll defer that until we discuss the information items, starting on page 410. Any questions on page 410, Airports, grants, contributions and transfers? Mr. Thompson.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I notice that there's an increase in the North Slave by two positions. Can the Minister explain what the North Slave region is? Is that the airport here in Yellowknife? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Thompson. If there's no comments on 410 we can move to 411 where the active positions that Mr. Thompson is referencing are. So, Minister.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. It's a two position increase for Yellowknife. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Mr. Thompson.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. So for the North Slave, who looks after the North Slave -- like the Tlicho airports? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Thompson. Minister. Mr. Neudorf?

MR. NEUDORF: Yes, thank you, Mr. Chair. In the North Slave it includes Yellowknife plus the Tlicho airports and Fort Providence. And so we have one airport manager in Yellowknife; he is also responsible to manage the Tlicho airports and Fort Providence and Lutselk'e as well. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Neudorf. Mr. Thompson.

MR. THOMPSON: I'm good with this page. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Nothing further from Mr. Thompson. Any more comments or questions on any of the detail related to airports, pages 410 or 411? Seeing none we can move back to the activity total. Page 409, operations expenditure summary, comments or questions? Mr. Thompson.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I notice there's a lump sum, but does the department break it down into regional budgets? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Thompson. Minister.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Not for this purpose it's not shown that way, but that's how we come to these expenditures on region by region. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Mr. Thompson.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Can the Minister provide this information by region so we can see the comparison? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Thompson. Minister.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: Yes, we can provide that information. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Mr. Thompson.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you. And I thank the Minister for his commitment. Can I get a timeframe because I'm having a real problem with timeframes right now. So if I can get a timeframe within the next month, next week. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Thompson. Minister.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. We'll get back to the Member within one week. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Mr. Thompson.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair, and I thank the Minister for that response. In regards to forced growth, how is that developed? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Thompson. Mr. Neudorf.

MR. NEUDORF: Thank you. Mr. Chair, typically what would happen in airport operations is we would look to see what the drivers are that would fit with forced growth criteria and then we would determine if we could make a case. If we can pursue a forced growth submission the most common type of forced growth in the airport's activity particularly would be a contract cost increase. So if we have a contract that's coming up for renewal, we'll know that there will be some inflationary increase to that contract and so we will pursue forced growth to get that inflationary contract cost increase. Sometimes it can be usage has increased at a facility that would drive some additional O and M, which qualify for forced growth, and then in the past we have also got forced growth increase related to weather events where we're getting more...you know, the climate is changing, it's getting warmer, that causes us to undertake

more O and M. And so we have been successful in the past in getting forced growth for that situation as well. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Neudorf. Mr. Thompson.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair, and I thank the deputy minister for his answer. In regards to regional budgets and that, do you track the increases needed throughout the year or the fiscal years? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Thompson. Minister. Mr. Neudorf.

MR. NEUDORF: Yes, thank you, Mr. Chair. The contracts are obviously airport-based typically so we would track each of those contracts individually. For this particular budget there is actually a forced growth increase of \$257,000, that's in the Fort Simpson region. It is for contract cost increases related to both highways and airport-related activities. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Neudorf. Mr. Thompson.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, and I thank Mr. Neudorf for that answer. I guess right now I'm looking at the airports. Do you have that split between the airports and the highways? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Thompson. Mr. Neudorf.

MR. NEUDORF: Yes. Thank you, Mr. Chair. So there were seven different contracts that resulted in that \$257,000 increase. Of those, two were airport-related, one for Trout Lake airport and one for Jean Marie River Airport. The Trout Lake airport resulted from the new longer runway that we recently completed construction of in the community. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Neudorf. Mr. Thompson.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you. Just in regards to contract services. It's a \$4,000 difference from the-- approximately, I guess it's \$33.6 million difference in the 2015 revised to the main. Is there-- what's the difference in there? Why have we seen such a huge reduction in this area? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Thompson. Minister.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: I will defer to deputy minister Neudorf.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister Schumann. Just for the sake of Hansard

and clarity, if you wouldn't mind just letting the Committee know who you're directing the question to. Mr. Neudorf.

MR. NEUDORF: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The revised mains were quite a bit higher under contract services in 2015-16 and that's because we did get some one-time funding for two different runways. We had some significant repairs that had to be undertaken at Yellowknife Airport; it was about \$3 million repair, and then \$1.6 million at Inuvik to complete a repair that we had there. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Neudorf. Mr. Thompson.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I hope this is my last question on this section here. Does the department cover 24-hour services for the smaller communities, i.e., for medevacs and that, when there's the need for runways to be cleared? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Thompson. Minister.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. When there's an emergency in any of the communities we'll call out all services that need to be to facilitate cleaning the runways so the emergency can be responded to. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. There's nothing further from Mr. Thompson. Do I have more comments or question on page 409? Seeing none, we'll call the page, Transportation, airports, operations expenditure summary, activity total, \$28,598,000. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Committee agrees. We'll move on to corporate management. The activity totals on page 413, we'll defer consideration until we look at the detail beginning on page 414. Questions on page 414, grants, contributions and transfers? Mr. Beaulieu.

MR. BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I'm wondering how much money would it take to fund all of the projects under the local community roads project? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. Minister.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. That would be a difficult question to answer because it's a community-based application and it varies year to year. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Mr. Beaulieu.

MR. BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. When does the department think the estimates where they have a lot of history here with the amount of applications that they've been receiving in the past, what was it last year? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. Minister.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I believe the last couple of years the Community Access Program has been -- our application base by \$1.5 million. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Mr. Beaulieu.

MR. BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, that's it. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. Mr. McNeely.

MR. MCNEELY: Yes, on the same page, 414, here on the same program, community access roads. Earlier the Minister mentioned this is a community-based application program is there reserved amounts per region? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. McNeely. Minister.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. This program is a first come, first served application base. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Mr. McNeely. Nothing further from Mr. McNeely. Any more discussion on page 414? Seeing none, we'll move to page 415, active positions under corporate management. No comments or questions on page 415? We can return to the activity total on page 413, operations expenditure summary, comments or questions, page 413? I'll give committee a moment. Seeing nothing, I'll call the page, Transportation, corporate management, operations expenditure summary, activity total \$11,970,000. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): We'll move on to highways, page 417 is the activity total. There are information items beginning on page 418. Do we have comments or questions on page 418? Mr. Thompson.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Is this the maintenance or is this costs we have to pay the Deh Cho Bridge Corporation here?

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Thompson. Minister.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. No, this is a grant contribution to the community to create benefits and economic opportunities related to the Deh Cho Bridge. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (MR. SIMPSON): Thank you, Minister. Mr. Thompson.

MR. THOMPSON: I've got some other questions, but that will probably be in page 417. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (MR. SIMPSON): Thank you, Mr. Thompson. And just for the, I guess, clarity in Hansard and for the ease of the tech, people, audio techs, if you have no more questions, just state it when the red light comes on. Thank you to all the Members. Do we have comments or questions on page 419, highways, active positions? Mr. Thompson.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. In regards to headquarters, the 26 positions, I've asked this question previously and I still haven't seen the information. How many engineers do we have within this department? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (MR. SIMPSON): Thank you, Mr. Thompson. Minister Schumann.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. We thought we provided this to the Member but we'll make sure we get back to him if he hasn't got it. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (MR. SIMPSON): Thank you, Minister. Mr. Thompson.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I appreciate the Minister saying he's going to be back to me with it because I still haven't got it. So I'm just wondering in regards to the engineer's position, is there dual roles or do we need an engineer to check culverts and that's all they do and engineers check the highways. Do they have dual responsibilities? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (MR. SIMPSON): Thank you, Mr. Thompson. Minister.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I'll defer that to the Deputy Minister Neudorf.

CHAIRPERSON (MR. SIMPSON): Thank you, Minister. Mr. Neudorf.

MR. NEUDORF: Thank you, Mr. Chair. All of our positions have job descriptions with them that would layout the duties associated with it. Along with that job description it would talk about the requirements to be qualified for the job, some of

which would obviously require a professional engineering designation. And the positions would tend to be specialized, so for example we have people in our bridge section, structure section, that are bridge engineers and are specialized in that, engineers in our highway reconstruction section, specialized in highway reconstruction. So that as a profession you get additional experience in your profession, you obviously will build up experience in that profession and we'll, you know, rely on that expertise to help manage our infrastructure. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (MR. SIMPSON): Thank you, Mr. Neudorf. Mr. Thompson.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair, and I thank the deputy minister for his answer. I'm just trying to understand if you have two people why you need to send two people that look after culverts and they're in the vehicles and going down together. Is there a rationale for it? Could the deputy minister or Minister explain the rationale for having you know two staff to go check culverts? Is it a safety issue or is it an engineering requirement? It's just something that has been brought to my attention numerous times by other people in the communities seeing vehicles going there with two people and they're engineers checking, you know, signs and culverts where other engineers go down the road, so I got the first answer, but now the second one would be greatly appreciated. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (MR. SIMPSON): Thank you, Mr. Thompson. Minister.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I'll defer it to Deputy Minister Neudorf. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (MR. SIMPSON): Thank you, Minister. Mr. Neudorf.

MR. NEUDORF: Thank you, Mr. Chair. There is no special requirement for engineers to always have a buddy, but it would depend on the particular circumstances, situation. A lot of times it is a safer situation if there are two individuals in the vehicle driving long distances. Sometimes the requirements of the job will take two people as well if you're out inspection or doing a job. There is no special requirement that there has to be two people. It's just the way it would work out and I'm sure that there are many times that we would send one person out in a vehicle as well. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (MR. SIMPSON): Thank you, Mr. Neudorf. Mr. Thompson.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. That's my questions for this page. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (MR. SIMPSON): Thank you, Mr. Thompson. Mr. Nadli.

MR. NADLI: Thank you, Mr. Chair. In my riding there's at least two communities that have a highway maintenance camp and there's been a pullback of resources from the communities. I just wanted to get an understanding in terms of the scope of regionalization effort whether this is temporary or this is reposition of resources so that at least you have key personnel on the ground serving smaller communities from regions. So could the Minister provide an explanation in terms of the scope of regionalization of the highways and operations? Mahsi.

CHAIRPERSON (MR. SIMPSON): Thank you, Mr. Nadli. Minister.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I'll defer to Deputy Minister Neudorf.

CHAIRPERSON (MR. SIMPSON): Thank you, Minister. Mr. Neudorf.

MR. NEUDORF: Thank you, Mr. Chair. All of our operations, airports, and highways are regionalized, so we have camps located throughout the NWT and communities that take care of our operations. That's the way we've been doing it since DOT was created and since the infrastructure was devolved from the federal government in the '80s. So there's been no change in that. In fact, over the years as we've had the opportunities to identify needs and address those needs, the growth that has been in transportation has been in the regional operations to deal with the incremental challenges that come from changing climate, increasing traffic, those types of things. In terms of the numbers here, there is a net reduction of five positions here. Those are all related to a reduction initiative that we have and in the South Slave so in Hay River and Fort Smith. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (MR. SIMPSON): Thank you, Mr. Neudorf. Mr. Nadli.

MR. NADLI: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Yes, it's good to know that the new changes have been taking place in terms of the operations of the highways, some operations and it's encouraging that once again I've heard the word forever, which is good. The other point that I wanted to make and to seek some clarification: is this in terms of the pullback of Enterprise in terms of whether that's temporary in terms of maybe decommissioning the operations there and getting service from Hay River. Can I get some clarification on that? Mahsi.

CHAIRPERSON (MR. SIMPSON): Thank you, Mr. Nadli. Minister.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: I'll let ADM Jayleen Robertson answer that.

CHAIRPERSON (MR. SIMPSON): Thank you, Minister. Ms. Robertson.

MS. ROBERTSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. We are transitioning the Enterprise highway maintenance crew to work out of the Hay River facility right now. As the Member is aware, we have not been using that facility for quite a while now due to some issues with the building. What we found is that the crew is working out of the Hay River camp actually provide better service to the high traffic area of Highway No. 2 as they can actually leave and start doing the road maintenance right from the facility in Hay River. Highway No. 2, the heaviest traffic area there is getting ploughed sooner and faster and in time for the early morning commute. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (MR. SIMPSON): Thank you, Ms. Robertson. Mr. Nadli.

MR. NADLI: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Yes, my final question is just to more -- likely I've heard it in a roundabout way, but since the operation of Deh Cho Bridge coming into stream about three years ago, has there been perhaps just an evaluation in terms of the number of traffic that goes down the highway between, say, Enterprise and Yellowknife and if there's been notable identification of the need to provide more services just to maintain the roads say during the wintertime versus the summertime. Mahsi.

CHAIRPERSON (MR. SIMPSON): Thank you, Mr. Nadli. Minister.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I'll defer that to Mr. Neudorf.

CHAIRPERSON (MR. SIMPSON): Thank you, Minister. Mr. Neudorf.

MR. NEUDORF: Thank you, Mr. Chair. When the Deh Cho Bridge came into operation, we did look at the O and M, additional O and M requirements, and address them at that time and most of the additional requirements were actually on the bridge itself. In terms of the incremental traffic, there has not been a significant increase in traffic, particularly related to the Deh Cho Bridge. Obviously the traffic pattern has changed a little bit because you can now use that highway 365 days of the year and 24 hours a day. We had, I would say -- about five to seven years ago, we actually went through a process to get additional money to look at winter operations and we expanded the winter operations from. It was 40 hours a week to 84 hours a week, so 12 hours a day, seven days a week O and M coverage on that highway in the wintertime to deal with weather events, be able to respond to that type

of thing quickly. So we're pleased with that. That type of service is performing quite well and it's meeting the demands of our users right now. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (MR. SIMPSON): Thank you, Mr. Neudorf. Mr. Nadli.

MR. NADLI: Thank you, Mr. Chair. No further questions.

CHAIRPERSON (MR. SIMPSON): Thank you, Mr. Nadli. Next on my list, Mr. Blake.

MR. BLAKE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Just a couple questions on winter roads. You know a couple years back some of you may recall there were plans to open up the road from Inuvik to Norman Wells going up the highway there, so people could have a chance to travel, you know, down the valley here. It kind of fell off the books there a couple years back but you know it's a great idea. You know how many times in this House I said the amount of money that's being spent in the Yukon, you know, it's a shame that we don't open this stretch of road up. You know, you'll see a lot more spending whether it's trucks from Hay River or boats, whatnot, you know. You'd see a lot more money being spent here in the NWT I feel. Thanks.

CHAIRPERSON (MR. SIMPSON): Thank you, Mr. Blake. Minister, would you like to comment?

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. That would be an interesting to be able to do that, but in light of the fiscal situation we're in and to justify spending that kind of money and the challenges we have right now would probably be tough to accomplish. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (MR. SIMPSON): Thank you, Minister. Mr. Blake.

MR. BLAKE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. It shouldn't cost that much extra. People are already using that stretch out on the fibre optic line. It is a shame the department is not really looking into that. It could do so much for this territory.

Also, on another note, we are on highways here, so I note, I think, it was in 2008, it was supposed to come out on contract to change the culverts, I think it is Kilometre 145 just near Tsiigehtchic there as you climb the hill. It never did come out to tender or negotiate. I know that stretch of highway is up next for the widening, so what are the plans for the department? Those culverts do need to be worked on. What is the overall plan? Thanks.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Blake. Minister.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The first part is the road that takes time to open, the winter road, that would be roughly a ten to \$20

million one-time hit to open up that section of the winter road from Norman Wells to Tsiigehtchic. It would probably add approximately \$2 million to the O and M winter road budget. So that is the fiscal reality of it. We would love to do it, but we would have to find that money somewhere. As for the culvert question, I will default that to deputy minister Neudorf. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Mr. Neudorf.

MR. NEUDORF: Thank you, Mr. Chair. We do have quite an extensive major culvert and bridge management program. We send engineers out onto the highway and inspect our culverts and our bridges every year and feed that information into our management system, so we can track the condition of all of our culverts and come up with an appropriate maintenance and an appropriate replacement program. That has resulted in an increase actually of the amount of money that we have to repair, rehabilitate, bridges and culverts. It is not a capital item, but bridges and culverts, we now have \$6 million a year to rehabilitate that infrastructure. So we do have our inventory system -- kicks out when major culverts, in particular, are in need of repair.

I know there is a culvert on Highway No. 8, kilometre 147, that is likely the same culvert that the Member is referring to. It is on our list of projects that we are monitoring closely. If some more significant issues arise, then we will put it on the priority list for replacement. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Neudorf. Mr. Blake.

MR. BLAKE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Just getting back to what the Minister just said, I didn't say to open it up from Norman Wells to Tsiigehtchic. There is already the fibre optic line going to Inuvik, to Campbell Lake. That is the actual route, the Mackenzie Highway I believe. In the future, hopefully, it is no use trying to open up another section over land. May as well use the same route. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Blake. Would the Minister like to respond?

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The fibre optic line. I had the opportunity to go out there, and it is not a very wide right-of-way that they produced. We would, at the appropriate time, if the funding came available, we would obviously want to have a look at accessing that portion of the right-of-way as much as we could. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Seeing nothing further, are there any further questions on page 417? Mr. Thompson.

MR. THOMPSON: Mr. Chair, thank you. I am glad - I almost missed this. In regards to the Deh Cho

bridge and the maintenance, does the Minister know what the (because I don't see it in here) what the cost is to actually provide the maintenance on this bridge? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Thompson. Minister.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I will default that to Mr. Neudorf.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you. Mr. Neudorf.

MR. NEUDORF: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The budget does not break out the specific amounts for Deh Cho bridge. When the Deh Cho bridge was brought into service, for the annual incremental O and M cost associated with the bridge, it was about \$200,000 to \$250,000 that we received. There was also some additional money that included surface maintenance, applying additional chemicals, and sweeping of the bridge. Then some additional monitoring of the bridge itself, some inspections. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Neudorf. Mr. Thompson.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. And I thank the deputy minister for that answer. My understanding is these are new additions on the scope of the bridge, like lighting and the cattle gate. Is that part of the maintenance cost? Was it factored in? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Thompson. Mr. Neudorf.

MR. NEUDORF: Thank you, Mr. Chair. If the Member is referring to the installation of the cattle gate and the lighting system, that was all part of the capital cost of the project. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Neudorf. Mr. Thompson.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I was actually talking about the maintenance on it. Was that part of the \$250K or with the other additions? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Thompson. Mr. Neudorf.

MR. NEUDORF: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Yes. Maintenance and all aspects of the bridge would be part of that 200 to \$250,000 that we had received. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Neudorf. Mr. Thompson.

MR. THOMPSON: I have been informed that there was a metal gantry under the catwalk underneath, and it is gone to wood, or is that correct? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Thompson. Mr. Neudorf.

MR. NEUDORF: Thank you, Mr. Chair. As part of the construction of the bridge, a wooden catwalk was constructed by the contractor. That was used during construction, and once construction was over, that was removed. As part of the design, we had considered installing a permanent metal catwalk under the bridge. After it was costed out, it was deemed too expensive, and we did not include that as part of the bridge. It would be nice for some types of inspections to get underneath, but we have what is called a snooper truck. It has a cantilevered arm boom on it that can drive along the surface of the road and have a cage that would have an individual to do inspections that can be in that cage and can go anywhere underneath the bridge and can see what is happening on the bridge. We don't actually need that permanent catwalk. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Neudorf. Mr. Thompson.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I thank the deputy minister for his answers. It clears up a number of questions that I have had. There was a bunch of rock last time I went across. Is that a capital issue or a maintenance issue, that it is still sitting there? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Thompson. Mr. Neudorf.

MR. NEUDORF: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I am not sure what rock exactly is being referred to. Protection of the piers by installation of scour rock is a very significant aspect of the bridge. So one of the last things that we did was to actually monitor that, where that scour rock was underneath the water, and undertake some additional shaping of that to ensure that it is protecting the piers from any potential scour. There might have been some of that scour rock left over in a pile that can be there for future maintenance purposes. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Neudorf. Mr. Thompson.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I think the deputy minister answered the question. You guys do have a regular maintenance schedule to look at the pier and all that area? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Thompson. Mr. Neudorf.

MR. NEUDORF: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Yes. A structure like that, and in a river like that, there is obviously some significant forces on it and some significant monitoring that is required in order to ensure that it continues to function as it is designed and supposed to, and that we are ahead of any potential issues that may come up. So we do have an inspection program that takes care, looks, monitors all of those aspects of the bridge. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Neudorf. I see nothing further from Mr. Thompson. Mr. Vanthuyne.

MR. VANTHUYNE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. A couple of questions. First off, the section of Highway No. 4 from Niven Gate to the city of Yellowknife, or into the city at the corner of the Explorer Hotel, most folks know and the department, I know, is well aware that this section of road is being used a lot for active transportation, whether it is bikers, walkers, runners, what have you. There is a large number of residents that, with a growing population out in the Niven Lake area, that are using that section of road quite regularly. I wonder if the department can provide us an update with regard to will there be repairs on that road? That road is in extensive need of repair on an ongoing basis. There is a development going in on that road, a new hotel. I expect there is going to be work done to get water and sewer across the roadway as well, proper entranceways made into that development. There was talk at some point of having this particular section of the road turned over to the city of Yellowknife, but they don't want to take responsibility until the necessary repairs have been done. Then, lastly, it seems like there is water trying to transfer from Frame Lake to Niven Lake constantly through that road. It is acting like a dam. Will there be appropriate repairs made to that surface of that road to make it safe, possibly widening the shoulders and as well adding culverts to that road? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Vanthuyne. Minister Schumann.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. First of all, the road from Niven to the Explorer is safe, otherwise we probably wouldn't have it open. So the road is safe. We are doing a planning study, looking at what we are going to do to upgrade a couple of sections of that road. This is something that I have had conversations with just lately. We are working with the developer on his access to the new hotel that is across the highway from the Legislative Assembly. We are also in ongoing discussions with the city of Yellowknife. All of us are working together trying to come up with a plan of what we are going to do with this section of road moving forward. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Mr. Vanthuyne.

MR. VANTHUYNE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. So to be clear, there is a plan coming forward on what maintenance, repairs, or upgrades are going to be taking place on this highway? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Vanthuyne. Minister.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The short answer is yes. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Mr. Vanthuyne.

MR. VANTHUYNE: Will the plan, Mr. Chair, be consisting of taking in some degree of public consultation? I ask that because there are concerns raised by the public as it relates to that road. They want the opportunity to share their issues on what they might want to see as improvements on the road in order to be able to access it regularly for active transportation. Or will it simply be the intention of the department to just keep it a vehicular highway and not an active transportation thoroughfare as well? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Vanthuyne. Minister.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. We have already had ongoing consultation and extensive discussions with Ecology North on the use of this road and with the city about the uses of it. Anyone that wants to come talk to us about their concerns about this section of highway, we would gladly sit down and discuss that with them as well. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Mr. Vanthuyne.

MR. VANTHUYNE: Interpreting that, I have heard the Minister say that the public's comments will be inclusive of the plan. Is that correct? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Vanthuyne. Minister.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Of course they will be. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Mr. Vanthuyne.

MR. VANTHUYNE: Further to active transportation, Mr. Chair, there is a portion of Highway No. 3 near the turnoff to Highway No. 4, commonly referred to as the airport loop, that the shoulder was lessened when the extra lane was put in to make the turnoff onto Ingraham Trail (Highway No. 4.) Does the department have a plan to bring the common width of the shoulder back on that section of the road again for the purposes of safety of people using it for active transportation? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Vanthuyne. Minister.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. We have no immediate plans to widen that section there. We will continue to monitor it and have discussions with whoever need be with concerns moving forward. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Mr. Vanthuyne.

MR. VANTHUYNE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That is appreciated. I would appreciate that they do

monitor it. It used to be that you could use either side of the road to walk, run, or ride up. Now, clearly, everyone has to use just the one side. When you have moving vehicles and potentially people coming from either direction on that one section -- it is not a very long section, so it is not as though we are asking for a whole lot here. I know that it would take extensive work. But I appreciate the efforts that the department is making in monitoring it, and I will work with them in the future to see if we can make sure that that is put into the budget for public safety.

Lastly, Mr. Chair, relative to Ingraham Trail, a couple of things. How does the department determine when a section of road gets whatever level of attention in terms of repair? That road, obviously because of the high traffic that it is used for, especially during winter haul, gets a lot of damage to it. Right now, after winter haul is done, the road is left with numerous potholes, missing shoulders, missing painted lines, missing entire sections of road. How does the department determine how to prioritize maintenance to a road that is in such disrepair? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Vanthuyne. Minister Schumann.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: Thank you, Mister Chair. I'll defer that to deputy minister Neudorf.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Mr. Neudorf.

MR. NEUDORF: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Highways are in continual need of repair, and so we have highway crews that do that and they're funded to do that. I would note that, you know, Highway No. 3, that crew based in Yellowknife does the chipseal repairs on both Highway No. 3, between Behchoko and Yellowknife, and Highway No. 4. So they will be aware of the condition of the roadway and then come up with their work plan accordingly to deal with the issues. I note that, at the present time, they are working on Highway No. 4, about the Prelude Lake area, and they're working their way back into Yellowknife to deal with some of the chipseal distress areas. As they come back, then the users will notice an improvement to the surface of the road. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Neudorf. Mr. Vanthuyne.

MR. VANTHUYNE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Does that mean that the department is -- and I know that they have to have some degree of doing this, but I mean, in the interests of public safety, there has to be a way in which to measure when O and M costs start to exceed the cost of replacing a section of road. You know, that's, right now, the concerns that are raised with me by residents living

on the Ingraham Trail, is that the road is clearly unsafe in sections of that road. You know, is there a way in which the department is evaluating that and deeming whether a section of road should be replaced or not? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Vanthuyne. Minister.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: I'll defer that to deputy minister Neudorf.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Mr. Neudorf.

MR. NEUDORF: Thank you, Mr. Chair. We do continually monitor our road. We're out on the roads every day, monitoring to ensure that they are safe. And, generally, we take action required to make sure that the road is safe, including having appropriate speed limits and signage as required, and then, as well, undertaking necessary repairs to the surface of the road. Obviously, it takes, will take, time to get the crew around to undertake all those needed repairs, and so we'll ensure that there's appropriate safety in place until that happens, including reducing speed as required.

We are continually balancing between capital and O and M, as well. If it's just a surface repair and it's a short section, then that would be a maintenance expenditure. There does come a time when the road does have to be reconstructed. Typically, we would look at upgrading the road at the same time. We do have some capital money on both Highway No. 3 and Highway No. 4 to undertake those repairs. The priority right now for Highway No. 4 is the continuing to upgrade the section past Prelude Lake, about kilometre 45 to kilometre 50 in that area. We're straightening out that road, reconstructing it.

All of this would be noted in our highway functional plans that we have. So each numbered highway has its own very high-level functional plan that would talk about the traffic, the users, the condition of the road, and then speak to some of the high-level needs and how the department is addressing those. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Neudorf. Mr. Vanthuyne, your time has expired. Do I have any further comments or questions on page 417? Seeing none, I'll call the page. Transportation, highways, operations expenditure summary, activity total \$71,089,000. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): We'll move on to Marine. The activity total is on page 421. We will begin by discussing the detail on page 422, active positions. Questions on page 422? Seeing no

questions on page 422, return to page 421, marine, operations expenditure summary. Questions? Mr. Blake.

MR. BLAKE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Where to begin? I note there are a lot of cutbacks here. I note, I'm not sure what the preparations are in Inuvik this fall, but, you know, I think people really got used to having the ferry open all fall up at Tsiigehtchic on the Mackenzie River, and I just want to know what the plans are, moving forward, because a lot of people are asking back home. You know, it sure helped out with the cost of living up there, as well. So I'd like to ask the department: what's the plans for this coming fall? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Blake. Minister.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. We're continuing with what we've done in the past here with the ferry service in Tsiigehtchic, so there's no change, going forward, right now. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Mr. Blake.

MR. BLAKE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. So the ferry will run right up till possibly December, then? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Blake. Minister.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. For the coming season, that is correct. We will be looking at all aspects of the ferry operation in the Beau-Del in the coming years. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Mr. Blake.

MR. BLAKE: Yes, thank you. No, I know the crews are getting very familiar with running through the fall, there, so I think it'll run smoothly. I know a lot of work has been done to the ferry this past spring, and I think a little more needs to be done next year, so that's great to hear, and I look forward to it. Thanks.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Blake. Would the Minister like to comment?

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The Member is right. We've done a number of repairs on the ferry up there, and we'll be doing a little bit more work on it this coming season, this next summer. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Next I have Mr. McNeely.

MR. MCNEELY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I recall previous discussions here, with the department, on federal funding for the assistance of marine site maintenance. Is there any progress on federal funding for that particular cost?

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. McNeely. Minister.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. We've written a letter to the federal minister, voicing our concern on reinstating this funding for this initiative, and we'll continue to work with the federal government and the Minister, moving forward on this. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Mr. McNeely.

MR. MCNEELY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. So we may expect some funding for next marine season? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. McNeely. Minister.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. We don't know what the expectations of the federal government to reinstate this money, and, as the Member is well aware, we have a new Minister of Fisheries and Oceans, so we will be engaging with him in these discussions, as well. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Next on my list I have Mr. Thompson.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I know the Minister gave me a commitment to give me the breakdowns of the regional costs of the ferries by the 29th; it's magically the 29th now. In regards to ferry operations, I notice that my colleague up in Tsiigehtchic and McPherson has got a nice little bit of an operation going till December. Has the department looked at the potential of doing the same thing in the Deh Cho? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Thompson. Minister.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The operation in Tsiigehtchic versus what's happening in Fort Simpson is two totally different things. One of the reasons it's in the Beau Delta is to service the propane and the liquified natural gas in the region, and the Fort Simpson region does not need to have that service delivered to them. So this is just to have a continued service to make sure there isn't an interruption to the power supply and heat supply for the town of Inuvik. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Mr. Thompson.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair, and I thank the Minister for that enlightened answer. They've been talking about LNG opportunities in Fort Simpson, so I guess my -- I look at this and mean proactive on the Department of Transportation, would you guys be looking at it, looking at how to make it more efficient in the ferry operation? I guess it's just being proactive. So, Mr. Chair, can the Minister elaborate if the department is looking at that? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Thompson. Minister.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. That's an initiative that would be taken on by our Public Works and Services and NTPC, and I suspect that, moving forward, they will be contacting our department to see, you know, what will we be doing to meet the demands if the LNG was put into Fort Simpson. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Mr. Thompson.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair, and I thank the Minister for his answer, and we look forward to LNG in our community of Fort Simpson so we can get the longer ferry service.

In regards to the old Merv Hardie in Fort Providence, there, what is the status of that ferry? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Thompson. Minister.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The Merv Hardie continues to be the backup for all our ferry operations in the Northwest Territories, and, at present, we have no plans for it other than that. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Mr. Thompson.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. So that's really good to hear, it's backup. Would it not be nicer to have it closer to where the other ferries are actually, in Fort Simpson or, you know, Wrigley, or Tsiigehtchic, or McPherson. So would the Minister look at moving it to Fort Simpson for potential use there? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Thompson. Minister.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. If there's an issue with the other ferries, which we've had some issues in the past year, but most of the time we can service them on a timely basis

where interruption of service is not a great deterrent. Where the ferry is presently parked, the Merv Hardie, it's a Coast Guard base, and it's a safe location and out of the way from any type of vandalism or anything like that. So we're quite comfortable leaving the ferry right where it is. So thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Mr. Thompson.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I've been informed there's been a bit of vandalism on that beautiful piece of equipment, so I guess I would really like the department to look at maybe switching the ferries and getting the Merv Hardie into Fort Simpson, and we can use the Fort Simpson ferry to be moved up to Tsiigehtchic. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

---Laughter

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Thompson. Would the Minister like to respond?

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I guess, just to make a comment on the vandalism that happened when the ferry was parked at the Deh Cho Bridge crossing, and that's one of the reasons we moved it to where it is. So thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Anything further, Mr. Thompson?

MR. THOMPSON: ...ferry in Fort Simpson at some time soon, so, without the other one breaking down. So, thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Thompson. Anything further on marine transportation? Seeing nothing, we'll call the page. Transportation, marine, operations expenditure summary, activity total, \$7,887,000. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Moving on to road licensing and safety, the activity total is on page 424. We can discuss the detail on page 425 to begin with. Questions on page 425, active positions, road licensing and safety, active positions, page 425? Moving on to page 424, road licensing and safety, operations expenditure summary, questions? Mr. Blake.

MR. BLAKE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Just under safety, you know, I notice in the past they used to do a lot of highway patrols, but it doesn't seem like, in my region anyway, it doesn't seem to be as much highway patrols. You know, at times, there tends to be a little bit of speeding. So, you know, I think it would be a great idea to do a lot more highway

patrols, just to have a little more safety on the highways, especially on the Dempster. It gets pretty dusty, and it would be nice to have some patrolling on the stretch there. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Blake. Comments, Minister.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The highway patrol patrols commercial traffic only, and we still continue to do that on a regular basis. As for public speeding and other safety issues, that's an RCMP logistic issue, so that's something that the Member would have to take up with the RCMP. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Mr. Blake.

MR. BLAKE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Maybe things have changed, but I recall a few years back the highway patrol actually giving out tickets on the highways, so I'm not sure what's changed there. But what are the changes, maybe I could ask him? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Blake. Minister.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Highway patrol only patrols commercial traffic, not the general public. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Mr. Blake? Nothing further from Mr. Blake. Any more comments or questions on page 424? Seeing none, we'll call the page. Transportation. Mr. Testart.

MR. TESTART: Thanks, Mr. Chair. In the 2015-2016 revised estimates under computer hardware and software, there was no expenditure, and this year we're back to \$30K. I'm just wondering what -- we went from \$54,000 to nothing to \$30,000. Can the Minister provide some detail on computer hardware and software? I understand that's not related to TSC Services. That's contained in the charge-back line. So, if we could get more detail? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Testart. Minister.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I'll let Deputy Minister Neudorf answer that.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Mr. Neudorf.

MR. NEUDORF: Thank you, Mr. Chair. It was an internal adjustment. We put \$30,000 into that computer hardware and software line item, and it had to do with our road licensing and safety system, our DRIVES system, our motor vehicle

system that manages all of the driver and vehicle licensing issues. And so we have been upgrading that system over the years with online services, and we've had a budget pressure there. We were able to meet that internally by reallocating some funding of \$30,000. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Neudorf. Mr. Testart.

MR. TESTART: Thank you, Mr. Chair. So did it not cost anything last estimates, or was it just not budgeted for, was it found elsewhere? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Testart. Mr. Neudorf.

MR. NEUDORF: Yes, thank you, Mr. Chair. It's very likely that, as we've expanded the system, expanded on-line services, this line item became a little bit more. Instead of being able to bury it into one of the other line items here, we decided it was time to make it its own separate line item of \$30,000 to properly track the budget. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Neudorf. Mr. Testart. Nothing further from Mr. Testart. Any other questions, page 424? Seeing none. I will call the page, Transportation, road licensing and safety, operations expenditure summary, activity total \$5,655,00. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): We have one information item left, on page 426, work performed on behalf of others. Questions on this page, page 426. I'll give committee a moment. I see no questions. We can return to the department total on page 405. Do we have any final questions on the department total, page 405? Transportation, department total. I see no questions. I'll call this page. Transportation, department total, \$125,199,000. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Does committee agree we have concluded consideration of the Department of Transportation?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Members. Thank you to the Minister and his witnesses. Sergeant-at-Arms, please escort the witnesses from the Chamber. I'll turn to the Minister responsible for opening comments, Minister Cochrane.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I'm pleased to present the 2016-2017 Main

Estimates for the Department of Public Works and Services. The department's estimates will support the core programs and services which help achieve our government-wide goals while providing the best value to the government, communities, businesses, and residents of the Northwest Territories. These estimates propose an increase of \$1.4 million, or one per cent from the 2015-2016 Main Estimates, which is budgeted at \$120 million.

Highlights of the proposed estimates include:

- continued investment in operations and maintenance for new and aging building infrastructure to ensure the availability of facilities to support the delivery of government programs and services;
- the creation of four positions for cross-department support to implement the final phase of the Government of the Northwest Territories' Digital Integrated Information Management System;
- a \$3.5 million contribution to the Arctic Energy Alliance, including a \$760,000 one-time enhancement to support residential and commercial energy conservation and efficiency programs; and
- the department's proposed budget reductions in response to our government's call to address our fiscal situation.

These proposed Department of Public Works and Services estimates support the priorities of the 18th Assembly. Specific activities in support of these priorities include the promotion and support of the use of energy efficient technologies in the public and private sectors and increasing the production of renewable and alternative energy.

The department's capital asset retrofit fund program reduces the cost to government in operating buildings through the delivery of energy efficiency upgrades and the installation of renewable energy solutions. For example, in just seven years, capital asset retrofit fund projects have helped achieve a reduction of 24 per cent in the total energy intensity in the Government of the Northwest Territories schools. Savings from the implementation of energy efficiency and alternative energy projects such as biomass resulted in an annual utility reduction of \$1.8 million in 2015-16, which is returned to the Capital Asset Retrofit Fund Program to finance further energy efficiency upgrades. In addition to this significant savings in taxpayer dollars, greenhouse gas emissions reductions of nearly 9,000 tonnes were also achieved. The departmental Capital Asset Retrofit Fund budget for 2016-2017 is \$3.8 million.

In addition to the substantial support being provided to the Arctic Energy Alliance, the department is undertaking a number of other energy initiatives, including \$720,000 for the development of a solar project and variable speed generator in Aklavik to allow for a high penetration of solar into the local electricity system; \$250,000 to continue feasibility and design work for a proposed wind project in Inuvik; and funding to support the development of a new Energy Plan.

The deferred maintenance program has a proposed 2016-17 budget of \$8 million, including \$3 million in capital and \$5 million in operations and maintenance improvements. The deferred maintenance program remains an essential part of our department's overall strategy to address the deficit in building infrastructure needs essential to the delivery of government programs and services. The program is coordinated with the capital planning process, energy conservation investments, and our regular preventative maintenance program to maximize effectiveness. The current deferred maintenance backlog is calculated at \$214 million, which is a significant reduction from the \$470 million first identified in 2007-08. While the department anticipates continued pressure on deferred maintenance in 2016-17 and beyond related to the normal aging of our asset base, continued investment in the deferred maintenance program will ensure that buildings continue to be safe for occupancy and that critical deferred maintenance items are addressed to maximize the useful life of these assets.

The Technology Service Centre is an important program for the government and a major focus for our department. The technology service centre's service costs of nearly \$23 million are recovered entirely through chargebacks to client departments and government agencies, so we are always seeking efficiencies by evaluating and implementing innovative technologies to better serve the needs of our clients. The increased use of modern, web-based applications, data collection and analysis, and the evolving global information security environment are just a few of the challenges that the technology service centre is committed to meeting.

It is through these and other department activities that Public Works and Services will continue to provide its many clients with the high quality of services they have come to rely upon and assist the Government of the Northwest Territories and the 18th Assembly in achieving its goals. This concludes my opening remarks. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Would you like to bring witnesses into the Chamber?

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: I would.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Sergeant-at-Arms, please escort the witnesses into the Chamber. Minister, would you please introduce your witnesses.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. On my right is Mr. Paul Guy. He's our deputy minister. On his right is Laurie Gault, and she is the director of Technological Service Centre. On my left is Vince McCormick, and he's the director of corporate services. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. We will now proceed to consider the detail of the Department of Public Works and Services. We will begin by deferring the departmental summary on page 377 and we can start discussing the detail beginning on page 378, revenue summary. Any questions on page 378, to revenue summary? Comments or questions on revenue summary? Seeing none. We'll move on to page 379, active position summary. Questions on active position summary? Seeing none, we can move on to asset management. It begins at page 381 with the activity total. We will begin by discussing active positions on page 382. Asset management, active positions, page 382. Questions, comments? Committee has no questions or comments. Back to page 381, operations expenditure summary. Questions on page 381? I'll call the page. Public Works and Services, asset management, operations expenditure summary, activity total, \$97,003,000. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): On to directorate. We can begin discussing the details on page 385 of the directorate, active positions. Page 385. Questions from committee? I see no questions. We'll move to the operations expenditure summary on page 384. I'll give committee a moment. Any questions, page 384? Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. There are a couple of significant changes in the program details there. Corporate information management is up about \$600,000 and finance is down about half a million dollars. I was just wondering if someone from the department can explain those changes? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Minister Cochrane.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. So the corporate information management,

we have four positions with the DIMs, new positions. And then the finance, there are long-term benefits and the leave was gone. It now goes into its own budget, so that's where the variances are on those. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. I'm feeling a little dim. What does DIIMS stand for?

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Minister.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. It's the electronic records management, so I believe it's Digital Information Management. So it's the records management for us. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks. And just further down on the page there, contract services, there is a pretty big reduction there. Can someone explain that, please? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Minister.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, I'll transfer to my....

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): To Mr. McCormick? Mr. McCormick.

MR. MCCORMICK: Thank you, Mr. Chair. There was an adjustment from the prior year. We moved some money from our controllable assets up into the computer hardware and software for the directorate.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. McCormick. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. So I don't know what a controllable asset is, either, but this is some sort of accounting change? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Mr. McCormick.

MR. MCCORMICK: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Yes, that's correct. Controlled assets are small, movable assets, so we moved that up from controllable up into the contracts. It's for the way the phones are being handled now.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. McCormick. I just want to remind all the Members and other witnesses to just indicate when you're

finished talking so the audio techs can switch the microphones. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. No further questions on this page.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Any further questions on page 384? Seeing none. I'll call the page. Public Works and Services, directorate, operations expenditure summary, activity total, \$11,936,000. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Committee agrees. We'll move on to energy, page 386, page 387. We'll begin by discussing the detail on pages 388 and 389, interrelated pages. Do we have comments, questions, on pages 388 and 389 under energy? Ms. Green.

MS. GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I think this is the right place to ask this question from the opening remarks. The Minister mentioned a reduction of 24 per cent in total energy intensity. I just want a definition of that phrase so that I'm sure that I understand it. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Ms. Green. Minister.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I'll let the deputy minister answer that question.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Mr. Guy?

MR. GUY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The energy intensity is really a way we measure the energy usage of a particular asset. In this case, in that example we had done the analysis of all the schools. It takes into both the heating energy requirement and the electrical energy. So those reductions that we found across the education assets were a result of the implementation of the biomass boilers as well as the projects through the capital asset retrofit program, the retrofits. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Guy. Ms. Green.

MS. GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. So this is not the other definition of energy intensity, which is calculated as a unit of energy per unit of GDP, so it's an economic efficiency measure. Is that correct, it's not related to that? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Ms. Green. Mr. Guy.

MR. GUY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. That's correct, it's not a GDP. We're looking at normalizing the energy consumption across the portfolio so we work it out based on the degree days of the heating year, and then factor into the overall size of the building as well as its geographic location. So it is not related to GDP. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Guy. Ms. Green.

MS. GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Yes, that makes lots of sense. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Next I have Mr. McNeely.

MR. MCNEELY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. My question is on 388 here. It seems like last year's consolidation went into this year with a slight increase here. More specifically, last year there was a number of programs with a budget figure attached to them. Now it's all consolidated into energy programs and policy development with an increase. Do I read it right, Mr. Chair? If I can get the Minister to -- ask clarification, was that the intent, was to consolidate everything into one line program item? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. McNeely. Minister.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I'll let the deputy minister answer that.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Mr. Guy.

MR. GUY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I recognize this page is a little bit complicated. Last year what we had shown there was all the funding that came from the various departments through the consolidation of energy initiative that was completed last fiscal year. You'll see where all the different pots of money show up as contributions. In fact, when this page was developed last year, some of those contributions turned out to be contract services. So some of it moved into contract services. The rest of it, the contributions, we've rolled up into the category of energy programs and policy development. Those are really the contributions agreements that we do to the Arctic Energy Alliance. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Guy. Mr. McNeely.

MR. MCNEELY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. So the guidelines for the delivery of this line item would remain the same, Mr. Chair?

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. McNeely. Mr. Guy.

MR. GUY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Anytime in the future where we have contributions, they would show up on this page. We will, in future, likely show more detail, but in a more accurate form than is shown here. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Guy. Nothing further from Mr. McNeely. Mr. Testart.

MR. TESTART: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I also have questions about the roll-up into energy programs and policy development. I'm just looking at the description where it says, funding to support the Arctic Energy Alliance and develop policy to support broad GNWT energy objectives. Can the Minister clarify if we are funding the Arctic Energy Alliance to develop policy or if we're funding them to deliver programs, or are we doing both? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Testart. Minister.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Now, we fund the Arctic Energy Alliance for energy supplements to the communities. The policy is for things such as our energy plan that we'll be developing, those types of things. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Mr. Testart.

MR. TESTART: Thank you, Mr. Chair. So what percentage of this \$3,530,000 is allocated to the policy development side of that line item? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Testart. Minister.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Mr. Guy will speak to that.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Mr. Guy.

MR. GUY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The funding for actual in-house work done on energy policy planning and developing things like energy plans would fall on the other page, under things like salaries and contract services where we would use contractors to provide it. This is purely the contributions and the contribution agreements that we do. And for administrative purposes, they fall under energy program and policy shop, so that's why they're show under that heading. The majority of that money is the \$3.5 million that we're providing

Arctic Energy Alliance this year. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Guy. Mr. Testart.

MR. TESTART: Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you to the department for that clarification. I'm just wondering -- and that's what I assumed looking on the other page, energy policy planning progress, but it is curious that this line item is called energy programs and policy development.

So, this contribution doesn't include any policy development related to the Energy Plan? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Testart. Mr. Guy.

MR. GUY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. No, it's not intended to be at all directly linked to the energy plan. Really, it is the contribution agreements we provide to the Arctic Energy Alliance for the alternative energy programs biomass. The Alternative Energy Technologies Program and that suite of programs and rebate programs that Arctic Energy Alliance operates and provides. It's just shown under that because that is the administrative division of the department which it is funded through.

Going forward, we will commit to providing more clarification on how we denote that in the plan and this information item next year. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Guy. Mr. Testart.

MR. TESTART: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I'd like to commend the Department for committing to that clarification. The other item here is energy research and analysis. Is that also going to be undertaken by the Arctic Energy Alliance? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Testart. Minister.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I'll let the deputy minister answer that.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Mr. Guy.

MR. GUY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I'm not quite sure what line item -- it was energy efficiency analysis that was referred to, but we do our own in-house energy efficiency analysis through our staff on government-owned buildings and energy efficiency analysis is done to commercial businesses and to residents in the northwest territories. It's provided

through the Arctic Energy Alliance, so there would be some funding in that \$3.5 million for them to do that. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Guy. Mr. Testart.

MR. TESTART: Thank you, Mr. Chair. My apologies if I misspoke. I was speaking to energy research and analysis, \$440,000, which is right beneath the \$3.5 million for energy programs and policy development on page 388. So the description is renewable energy, monitoring data collection and testing. So that \$440,000, is that also contribution to the Arctic Energy Alliance? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Testart. Minister.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The breakdown for that \$440,000 is for: the energy research and analysis, it's for the Aklavik variable speed generator \$300,000; it's for wind monitoring \$40,000; and hydrology monitoring and forecasting in the North Slave Region at \$100,000. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Mr. Testart.

MR. TESTART: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Is that in-house monitoring then? Who's actually doing the research and analysis in this case? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Testart. Mr. Guy.

MR. GUY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. So some of that work would either be done in-house or be done through contract services, not necessary by the Arctic Energy Alliance. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Guy. Mr. Testart. I see nothing further from Mr. Testart. Do I have any more comments, questions from anybody? Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. In the Minister's opening remarks she talks about \$3.5 million contribution Arctic Energy Alliance. I think I know where to look for that on this page. There's also a \$760,000 one-time enhancement. Is that located on this page or where would we find that? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Minister.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The \$720,000 for the low water is included in the \$3.5 million figure. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. Yes, I wasn't asking about the low-water level, I was asking about the Minister's opening remarks, and there was a one-time enhancement to Arctic Energy Alliance to support residential and commercial energy conservation and efficiency programs. So just wondering where that shows up in the departmental budget. Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Mr. Guy.

MR. GUY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Yes, that one-time funding, the \$750,000 is in the \$3.5 million I spoke to, it's in that line item on page 388 under energy programs, policy and development. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Guy. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. Can the department explain how this one-time enhancement came about? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Minister.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. That was a transfer from the low-water monies that was incurred in the two years prior to this Assembly, thank you, and it was transferred to Arctic Energy Alliance. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. I appreciate the answer. So to just put that maybe in plain language: the money that's used to subsidize the diesel costs associated with low water levels, part of that extra funding was used so we could build capacity in the renewable side of things so that we wouldn't to keep, hopefully, paying money for diesel? Is that correct? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Minister.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you. I'll let Paul answer that. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister Cochrane. Mr. Guy.

MR. GUY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Yes, that funding was allocated as part of the previously approved funding with last the government for low water to enhance the existing programs Arctic Energy

Alliance has, and those are things like the commercial energy retrofit, homeowner retrofit, the rebate programs and all those things to help residents reduce their energy costs. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Guy. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. I appreciate the answer, and it's the policy direction I certainly want to go in. Is this something that the department's going to continue because we just had the North Slave resiliency study that actually recommended against doing this. So what direction is the department going to go in with this? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Minister.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The funds that are provided to the Arctic Energy Alliance are for all the communities throughout the Northwest Territories, not only the Yellowknife area. The bigger thing that should be noted is that we will be doing a new energy plan, and within that plan we'll be identifying for future years the direction of the department and where we should be going in the expenditures and revenues, that we'd be looking within that. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. I think I made my points. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Anything further to pages 388 and 389? Mr. McNeely.

MR. MCNEELY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. On the bottom of the list of programs there there's Yellowknife LNG Plant Feasibility. The way I read it, there was a project undertaken in 2014-15 year, carried over, probably did some finishing and some wrapping up there, that's why there's less funding for 2015-16. And I assume that study is completed. What's going to happen with that project now or potential project after the feasibility study? Is it feasible or not or is it a one-time project and now it's done? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. McNeely. Mr. Guy.

MR. GUY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. That study that we did, that was a one-time funding project to look at that option. And, in fact, we did expand it to include things like biomasses. Well, part of the issue with

LNG for Yellowknife is the long supply chain and the cost. But we did complete that report and that will feed into the planning for the lifecycle replacement of the corporations' assets in Yellowknife. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Guy. Mr. McNeely. Nothing further from Mr. McNeely. Mr. Vanthuyne.

MR. VANTHUYNE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Under page 389, we indicate there the electric vehicle, which was funding for the Arctic Energy Alliance to undertake an electric vehicle demonstration. As referred to earlier, the resiliency study, it didn't really indicate in there any kind of positive favouring with regard to promoting electric cars. I'm wondering if the department can maybe explain, you know, what were the outcomes from that vehicle demonstration and why wouldn't it be something that we would want to consider going forward?

I see two positives with it generally, unless I can be told otherwise. But one is that this is obviously an initiative that would get the territory off of fuel, and also this would potentially be a revenue-generating source by selling, you know, power for electrical vehicles. I wonder if the Department could please comment on that demonstration? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Vanthuyne. Mr. Guy.

MR. GUY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The electrical vehicle study was funded as an energy initiative prior to the consolidation in Public Works and Services. Arctic Energy Alliance is provided one-time funding to do that work. They completed their report and the results were positive, they'll be publishing the report shortly on their website.

At the end of their study we acquired the vehicle at the Department of Public Works and we put it into our fleet to take the place of another fleet vehicle. We're doing an analysis on it now to see what the opportunities of using that type of technology in a fleet environment. As we move forward on the Energy Plan that the Minister has spoken to, we will be looking at opportunities to see if this technology can become of our future energy planning and see if we can use those type of vehicles to expand the rate base. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Guy. Mr. Vanthuyne.

MR. VANTHUYNE: Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you to Mr. Guy for his reply. And that's encouraging to hear, that the department is going to give further consideration and possibly incorporate

these vehicles into their fleet. I think it's important that we lead by example. And so certainly, if this is a doable opportunity, then we certainly want to take advantage. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Vanthuyne. Would the Minister like to comment?

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The electric car is really exciting for all of us. If it was less than \$400, then you would see one in the parking lot of mine as well. So thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Anything further, Mr. Vanthuyne.

MR. VANTHUYNE: No, thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Vanthuyne. Do I have further comments or questions on pages 388 and 389? Seeing none, we will move to the information item on page 390. Active positions, under energy. Comments or questions? Seeing none, we move back to page 387, energy, operations, expenditure summary. Questions on this page? Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. I am assuming this is the part of the department's budget where there would be funding to prepare a plan to get all the communities of the Northwest Territories off diesel. Is that where that sort of funding would be found? Is that something that the department is working on? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Minister.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: I will let Mr. Guy answer that. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Mr. Guy.

MR. GUY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Yes. The Member is correct. This is the page where that type of work would be funded. Within the contract services, we have some funding allocated this year to do our Energy Plan for the territories. That type of initiative around reducing reliance on diesel would be addressed through that plan. I think planning work for that. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Guy. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: No. Thanks.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Nothing further from Mr. O'Reilly. Mr. Vanthuyne.

MR. VANTHUYNE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Because I didn't see it anywhere else and we are about to close this section or this division on energy, I just wonder if the department could please provide us with the status of the Net Metering Program? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Vanthuyne. Minister.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you. I will let Mr. Guy answer that as well.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Mr. Guy.

MR. GUY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. There is a Net Metering Program in place that allows residents to install renewable systems on their home and net meter up to 5 kilowatts, I believe, is the limit. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Guy. Mr. Vanthuyne.

MR. VANTHUYNE: My apologies, Mr. Chair. I just didn't hear Mr. Guy on the last part of his comment there. Thank you. If he could repeat it, it would be appreciated. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Vanthuyne. Mr. Guy.

MR. GUY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. There is a Net Metering Program in place that allows residents to install renewable technology in their homes and net meter. I believe the limit is 5 kilowatts. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Guy. Mr. Vanthuyne.

MR. VANTHUYNE: Five kilowatts. Again, in my ignorance, Mr. Chair, five kilowatts, is this a per hourly-type rate? What is this? For clarification, could I get an explanation? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Vanthuyne. Mr. Guy.

MR. GUY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Five kilowatts would be the production output of the renewable technology, the solar panels for example, how much they could feed back into the system on a continuous basis. So 5 kilowatts per hour. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Guy. Mr. Vanthuyne.

MR. VANTHUYNE: Nothing further, Mr. Chair. Thank you for the explanation.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Vanthuyne. Ms. Green.

MS. GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. That brings up a question that was certainly a very live one here during the election campaign last year, and that is whether there would be a move and maybe it is not the right department, but a move to enable the municipalities to create a revolving fund for energy upgrades of the kind that have solar panels all over the roof. Is this the right department for that? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Ms. Green. Mr. Guy.

MR. GUY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I believe that is the initiative through the Cities, Towns and Villages Act that would allow local improvement processes to be put in place where residents could borrow money through the city and have it recovered on the taxes. That piece of legislation falls in Municipal and Community Affairs. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Guy. Ms. Green.

MS. GREEN: Thank you for that clarification.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Nothing further from Ms. Green. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. Just on this subject of net metering. Although we have that policy in place for it, people that build up credits, they lose them at the end of the year. So it is not really a very good policy. And I don't think it goes far enough in terms of encouraging people to become more self-sufficient. Is the department looking at developing a better policy when it comes to net metering? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Minister.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Those are the kinds of issues that we will be looking at when we do the new Energy Plan. All of the alternative energy, anything that we are doing within that scope, will be reviewed and considerations will be made in the new plan that we bring forward. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. I appreciate getting that commitment from the Minister. The net metering is going to be within the scope of the Energy Plan. I know there are a number of solar projects that were installed here in households in Yellowknife over the last year. I am sure those people are going to be quite interested to hear that. Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Would the Minister like to respond?

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you. I will take that as a comment.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Further questions on page 387? Seeing no questions, having no one on my list, I will call the page. Public Works and Services, energy, operations expenditure summary, activity total, \$9,060,000. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Committee agrees. We will move on to Technology Service Centre. The activity total is on page 392, but we will discuss the detail on page 393. Questions on page 393, TSC, chargeback. Seeing none, we can move

on. Page 394, TSC, active positions. Questions, TSC, active positions. Seeing none, we can move back to page 392, TSC, operations expenditure summary. Questions? Mr. Testart.

MR. TESTART: Thank you, Mr. Chair. In the activity description, it indicates the technological service centre, TSC, provides information, technology services, and support to GNWT departments and some health authorities. Which health authorities is the department servicing? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Testart. Minister.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I will let Laurie speak to that one.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Ms. Gault.

MS. GAULT: Thank you, Mr. Chair. We are currently in progress for supporting all of the health authorities. The remaining authorities are Hay River, Yellowknife Health Authority, and Tlicho. We just completed Tlicho. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Ms. Gault. Mr. Testart.

MR. TESTART: The objective is to service all the public agencies in the Northwest Territories. Is that correct? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Testart. Ms. Gault.

MS. GAULT: Yes, that is correct.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you. Mr. Testart.

MR. TESTART: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Does that also include our schools as well? Not just the school authorities or district authorities, but the actual schools themselves. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Testart. Ms. Gault.

MS. GAULT: Thank you, Mr. Chair. If the question was regarding the school boards, we provide the school boards with the network connectivity. We do not provide them their e-mail, nor their desktop support. The health authorities, it is for the full desktop and their service support. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you. Mr. Testart.

MR. TESTART: Sorry. Thanks, Mr. Chair. Perhaps I was unclear. Do we also provide that service to the schools themselves, not just the school boards, but the actual schools? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Testart. Ms. Gault.

MS. GAULT: Thank you, Mr. Chair. We don't provide any of the desktop or any of the equipment to the schools. We provide them with some support for the Internet reporting. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Ms. Gault. Mr. Testart.

MR. TESTART: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Where would I find detail on security software, security infrastructure that is protecting the government? I see we have information per department, but are we tracking -- is there a clear way to see what we are spending on information security? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Testart. Ms. Gault.

MS. GAULT: Thank you, Mr. Chair. At the desktop level, we provide encryption on all laptops, as well as we have just implemented desktop software with antivirus as well as hacking, illegal attempts. This is on every desktop. At the data centre level, we have firewall protection, so against traffic coming in and out of our data centre, in through the government. At those, as well as on the infrastructure itself, there is security built into the different pieces of equipment. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Ms. Gault. Mr. Testart.

MR. TESTART: For the data centres themselves, which would be in the area of most vulnerability if there are issues there, is that contained in the Public Works and Services line? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Testart. Minister.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I will let the deputy minister address that answer.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Mr. Guy.

MR. GUY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. No. The Public Works and Services line would just be our portion of the chargeback. So it would be rolled up into the overall budget of the TSC, and some of it would be under contract services. For example, there is licensing around security software; some of it would be O and M, for purchasing small hardware associated with the security software. But the security is a significant portion of the work that we do at the TSC. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Guy. Mr. Testart.

MR. TESTART: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I appreciate the department clarifying these questions. Finally, are we funding positions that are specialized in security analysis and how many there are? What

are they? Can I just get more detail on those positions if they do exist? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Testart. Mr. Guy.

MR. GUY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The overall responsible for the security is the Chief Information Officer's Office in the Department of Finance. He has some specific staff in his office that are focused on security. Our role is really to make sure that we adhere to the security policies and best practices. I will have Laurie speak to the detail, but we do provide specific training around security to the staff that operate the data centres and the equipment and the software and the servers. In terms of overall security policy and monitoring, on a global scale, more of that would fall under the purview of the sales office. But I will ask Ms. Gault, if the Chair will allow, to provide additional detail. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Guy. Mr. Testart.

MR. TESTART: That is fine. I will save questions for the Department of Finance. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Testart. Any more questions for Technology Service Centre? Seeing none, I will call the activity total. Technology Service Centre, operations expenditure summary, activity total, \$1,712,000. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): We have some information items at the end of the chapter, page 395, public stores revolving fund. Questions? Seeing none, page 396, petroleum products revolving fund. Page 397, petroleum products revolving fund, active positions? Seeing no questions, move on to page 398. Lease commitments. Any questions on lease commitments? I see no questions from committee we move on. Page 399, work performed on behalf of others. Mr. Vanthuyne.

MR. VANTHUYNE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Under the Royal Canadian Mounted Police line item the description indicates that we have an MOA in place with regard to maintenance and utility management services. I'm just curious as to why in 2014-15 we are at about five and a half million dollars and then in the last couple of years we're at \$8 million. What was the increase for? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Vanthuyne. Minister.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you. I'll let Paul Guy answer that as well.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Mr. Guy.

MR. GUY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The funding level for that program is established with the RCMP on an annual basis. The actual numbers were based on what we spent in 2014-15 delivering that program up to that limit of \$8 million. It was, I think, very early on in the program, we were still ramping up, still doing a billing assessment, condition assessments so we did not do as many perhaps retrofit and renovations projects that year as we are now doing. Most of it was basic code-mandated preventative maintenance on fire extinguishers, alarm systems, dealing with backlogs on their boiler and system repairs. So it was really just ramping up to the level of funding, it is fully charged back, it's fully recovered, and it's for the work plan that we developed in cooperation with the RCMP. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Guy. Seeing nothing further from Mr. Vanthuyne, I have Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. On this page, there's a new allocation of \$50,000 to the Healthy Family Centre here in Yellowknife. Can someone from the department explain that? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Mr. Guy.

MR. GUY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. That's one-time funding to do project management and deliver a kitchen renovation project that will be recovered from that organization. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Guy. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. I think there was a story in the paper, I don't even know what day of the week it is anymore, yesterday about -- is this the -- what do they call it? I think there's some sort of a family centre in the SideDoor; is that what this money is to help them with some renovations or to help Yellowknife Health and Social Services with some renovations of that building? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Minister.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. No, the Side Door actually is a non-profit. This is for the Yellowknife Health and Social Services Authority, and so the Healthy Family Program is right across the street from there. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks. I don't have any other questions on this one. Thanks.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Ms. Green.

MS. GREEN: Yes. This must be a new program or maybe it's with a name that I don't know. So it's across the street from where, please? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Ms. Green. Minister.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Ms. Green is right, I'm not sure of the name either. When I'm reading it it's the healthy family thing, so it's the parenting support program that the authority provides to parents. It used to be right across from the authority, now I'm not too sure if there's a restaurant there so I might have the location correct at this point, but it is the parenting support program that the authority goes into families and teaches parenting to struggling parents. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Ms. Green.

MS. GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. No further questions.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Ms. Green. Anything further on this page? Seeing no further questions, we'll return to page 377. Any final questions for the department total? I'll give committee a moment. Mr. Nadli.

MR. NADLI: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I just wanted to get an explanation from the Minister. The Minister stated that an initiative in Aklavik will be undertaken in terms of trying to move away from diesel energy and at least maybe advance forward with a solar energy project. I'm just kind of wondering if that initiative was merited on two fronts. Maybe in the first instance is because of its northerly location as a community and having transportation issues. And very similarly and recently too, there was an initiative in Colville Lake in terms of establishing solar energy to supplement the generators.

The other point that I wanted to make is these communities are serviced by NTPC. Were those things considered when that initiative was rendered and a decision was made to go forward on those bases? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Nadli. Mr. Guy.

MR. GUY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Yes, when we do these types of projects we work very closely with NTPC. The reason Aklavik was selected for this

project is because NTPC has a major capital retrofit project committed to lifecycle repairs and upgrades on that plant. It was an opportune time to provide the supplemental funding for the renewable portion. In that particular project we are providing solar panels as well as some funding for a variable speed drive on the generator system to improve the efficiency of the generator and provide an alternative as a pilot to see if that technology will work in lieu of batteries and those type of systems. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Guy. Mr. Nadli.

MR. NADLI: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I'd like to thank the deputy minister for providing an explanation. If those decisions were merited on those two points, where would the community within this part of the NWT, say a community that's just off the road on the main transportation road from Enterprise to Yellowknife at the same time serviced by Northland Utilities, how could they be part of that initiative to try to get off diesel and perhaps consider a solar project? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Nadli. Mr. Guy.

MR. GUY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. When it comes to provide supports to those private corporations that are in the utility business that would be sort of a policy decision that would have to be addressed again; current policy I don't think allows us to do that. The thinking has been investing in government assets and corporate assets. Going forward through the Energy Plan those are all things that could be considered. However, the test and the piloting of this technology is something that all utility providers across the North could be looking at, whether it's government owned or another government's Crown corporation or private sector utilities or even independent power producers like mines. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Guy. Mr. Nadli.

MR. NADLI: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I just wanted to clarify to see if I'm understanding this correctly. The government asked that the NTPC in a community providing perhaps power. In the case of Kakisa it's serviced, of course, by Northlands Utilities so it's not considered a government asset but Kakisa needs backup power. How would a community like Kakisa be considered for perhaps a solar energy project to try to create a decent backup system? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Nadli. Minister.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. So the priority for Public Works and Services has really been in the thermal communities because of the huge costs of transportation costs to get diesel into the communities so that they can function. But with the new energy plan that we'll be looking at we are considering assets for the southern communities as well. So I'm not committing to anything, but the new energy plan we'll be looking at things, for example, soliciting; is it viable to solicit the federal government to get an extra run from the Taltson. You know, those kinds of things will be reviewed within the energy plan and we will be looking at all alternative energies for all communities during that planning process. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Mr. Nadli.

MR. NADLI: Thank you, Mr. Chair. No further questions.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Nadli. Any other questions from committee on page 377, department total? Seeing none. I'll call the page. Public Works and Services, department total, \$119,711,000. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Does Committee agree we have completed consideration of Public Works and Services?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, committee. Thank you to the Minister and your witnesses. Sergeant-at-Arms, please remove the witnesses from the Chamber. As we agreed, we will begin consideration of the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs. I turn to the Minister responsible for the department for opening comments. Minister McLeod, your opening comments.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, I am pleased to present the 2016-2017 main estimates for the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs. Overall, the department's estimates propose an increase of \$723,000, or less than one per cent over the 2015-16 main estimates. These estimates continue to support the objectives of limiting expenditure growth in order to sustain the long-term sustainability of the fiscal framework.

Highlights of the proposed estimates include

- \$1.578 million in reductions that the department was able to find without reducing core funding to community governments; and

- \$2.301 million in forced growth increases, primarily to support the increased cost of operations and maintenance, and water and sewer delivery at the community government level.

The proposed Department of Municipal and Community Affairs estimates continue to support the priorities of the 18th Legislative Assembly. Specific activities in support of these priorities include the continued implementation of the Accountability Framework for Community Governments. The Accountability Framework allows the department to more accurately identify supports required by community governments and to take steps to put those supports in place. The first Accountability Framework Annual Report will be tabled during this session of the Legislative Assembly. MACA will work with 10 community governments as part of a pilot program to install and launch computerized maintenance and asset management systems; remote monitoring systems will be installed in two additional communities, and opportunities for additional systems are being investigated; building local capacity for careers that focus on community governance through the development and delivery of on-line training for community government staff and elected officials. That concludes my opening remarks. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister McLeod. The Chair recognizes Mr. Beaulieu.

MR. BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I move that we report progress.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. Motion is on the floor to report progress. The motion is in order and non-debatable. All those in favour? All those opposed? The motion is carried. I will now rise and report progress.

MR. SPEAKER: May I have the report? Member for Hay River North.

Report of the Committee of the Whole

MR. SIMPSON: Mr. Speaker, your committee has been considering Tabled Document 50-18(2): Main Estimates 2016-2017 and would like to report progress, and, Mr. Speaker, I move that the report of the Committee of the Whole be concurred with.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Do I have a seconder? Member for Deh Cho. Motion is in order. To the motion. Question's been called. All those in favour? All those opposed?

---Carried

MR. SPEAKER: Item 23, third reading of bills. Mr. Clerk, orders of the day.

Orders of the Day

CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Mercer): Orders of the day for Friday, June 24, 2016, at 10:00 a.m.:

1. Prayer
2. Ministers' Statements
3. Members' Statements
4. Returns to Oral Questions
5. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery
6. Acknowledgements
7. Oral Questions
8. Written Questions
9. Returns to Written Questions
10. Replies to Commissioner's Opening Address
11. Petitions
12. Reports of Standing and Special Committees
13. Reports of Committees on the Review of Bills
14. Tabling of Documents
15. Notices of Motion
16. Notices of Motion for First Reading of Bills
17. Motions
 - Motion 21-18(2): Altering of Sitting for Monday, June 27, 2016
18. First Reading of Bills
 - Bill 5: An Act to Amend the Vital Statistics Act
 - Bill 6: Miscellaneous Statute Law Amendment Act, 2016
 - Bill 7: An Act to Amend the Revolving Funds Act
 - Bill 8: An Act to Amend the Children's Law Act
19. Second Reading of Bills
20. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters
 - Tabled Document 50-18(2): Main Estimates 2016-2017

21. Report of Committee of the Whole

22. Third Reading of Bills

23. Orders of the Day

MR. SPEAKER: Masi, Mr. Clerk. This House adjourns until Friday, June 24, 2016, at 10:00 a.m.

---ADJOURNMENT