



# **NORTHWEST TERRITORIES LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY**

**3<sup>rd</sup> Session**

**Day 14**

**18<sup>th</sup> Assembly**

## **HANSARD**

**Thursday, February 22, 2018**

Pages 3347 – 3406

**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 Responsible for Seniors*  
*Minister Responsible for Persons with Disabilities*  
*Minister Responsible for the Public Utilities Board*

**Mr. Tom Beaulieu**

(Tu Nedhe-Willideh)

**Mr. Frederick Blake**

(Mackenzie Delta)

**Hon. Caroline Cochrane**

(Range Lake)  
*Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs*  
*Minister Responsible for the Workers' Safety and Compensation Commission*  
*Minister Responsible for Northwest Territories Housing Corporation*  
*Minister Responsible for the Status of Women*  
*Lead Responsibility for Addressing Homelessness*

**Ms. Julie Green**

(Yellowknife Centre)

**Hon. Bob McLeod**

(Yellowknife South)  
*Premier*  
*Minister of Executive and Indigenous Affairs*  
*Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and Intergovernmental Relations*

**Hon. Robert McLeod**

(Inuvik Twin Lakes)  
*Deputy Premier*  
*Minister of Finance*  
*Minister of Environment and Natural Resources*  
*Lead Responsibility for Infrastructure*

**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 Industry, Tourism and Investment*  
*Minister of Infrastructure*

**Hon. Louis Sebert**

(Thebacha)  
*Minister of Justice*  
*Minister of Lands*  
*Minister Responsible for the Northwest Territories Power Corporation*  
*Minister Responsible for Public Engagement and Transparency*

**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**

Ms. Sarah Kay

**Committee Clerks**

Ms. Gail Bennett  
Ms. Jennifer Franki-Smith (trainee)

**Law Clerks**

Ms. Sheila MacPherson  
Mr. Glen Rutland  
Ms. Alyssa Holland

---

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>

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>PRAYER</b> .....	<b>3347</b>
<b>MINISTERS' STATEMENTS</b> .....	<b>3347</b>
35-18(3) – Northwest Territories Airport Improvements (Schumann) .....	3347
<b>MEMBERS' STATEMENTS</b> .....	<b>3348</b>
Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls (Vanthuyne).....	3348
Addressing Core Housing Needs (Green) .....	3349
Willow River Bridge and All-Weather Road (Blake) .....	3349
Canadian North LNG Corp. (Thompson) .....	3350
Carbon Tax Policy (McNeely) .....	3350
Land Transfer Tax Proposal (Testart).....	3351
Eulogy for Victorine (Vicky) Desjarlais (Beaulieu).....	3351
Ministerial Meetings Transparency and Accountability (O'Reilly).....	3352
<b>RECOGNITION OF VISITORS IN THE GALLERY</b> .....	<b>3352</b>
<b>ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS</b> .....	<b>3352</b>
<b>ORAL QUESTIONS</b> .....	<b>3353</b>
<b>TABLING OF DOCUMENTS</b> .....	<b>3358</b>
<b>SECOND READING OF BILLS</b> .....	<b>3358</b>
Bill 5 – An Act to Amend the Summary Conviction Procedures Act.....	3358
<b>CONSIDERATION IN COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE OF BILLS AND OTHER MATTERS</b> .....	<b>3358, 3359</b>
<b>REPORT OF COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE</b> .....	<b>3358, 3406</b>
<b>ORDERS OF THE DAY</b> .....	<b>3406</b>



**YELLOWKNIFE, NORTHWEST TERRITORIES****Thursday, February 22, 2018****Members Present**

Hon. Glen Abernethy, Mr. Beaulieu, Mr. Blake, Hon. Caroline Cochrane, Ms. 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. Testart, Mr. Thompson, Mr. Vanthuyne

The House met at 1:31 p.m.

**Prayer**

---Prayer

**SPEAKER (Hon. Jackson Lafferty):** Good afternoon, Members. Member for Frame Lake.

**MR. O'REILLY:** Mr. Speaker, I rise pursuant to Rule 21(1) of the Rules of the Legislative Assembly to make a personal explanation. Rule 21 allows a Member the opportunity to explain that he or she has been misquoted or deny published accusations against the Member.

Mr. Speaker, yesterday, in response to an oral question from me, the Premier said, and I quote from unedited Hansard, "The MLA for Frame Lake is on record as stating he wants no mines, no oil and gas, and in his Member's statement, I am not surprised at the line of his questioning."

Mr. Speaker, I have never before or during my time as a Member of this House made such a statement. I know I have never said these things because they are inconsistent with my longstanding and public views, which are on the public record.

In my Member's statement on February 13, 2018, I said, and I quote from the Hansard for that day, "I love mining, as long as it is properly managed and we get our fair share." Mr. Speaker, mining is an important part of our economy. It has provided jobs and opportunities for our residents. I support the mining industry. I just do not support it unconditionally or at any cost. The devastating impacts of unregulated mining are right here in our backyard. As long as I am a Member of this House, I will continue to call for responsible mining in the Northwest Territories and a fair share of economic rent for our residents.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, for the opportunity to once again put my views on the record. Mahsi.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. Item 2, Ministers' statements. Minister of Infrastructure.

**Ministers' Statements**

**MINISTER'S STATEMENT 35-18(3):  
NORTHWEST TERRITORIES AIRPORT  
IMPROVEMENTS**

**HON. WALLY SCHUMANN:** Mr. Speaker, airports are an integral component of our northern transportation infrastructure. Air travel contributes to social cohesion by enabling relatives, families, and friends to stay connected. Air travel saves lives through our medevac system and facilitates business enterprises throughout our vast territory. Many communities rely on air travel to deliver essential goods.

The Department of Infrastructure is committed to working with public and private sector partners to continuously maintain and improve airport infrastructure and operations. Today, I am pleased to report that a number of projects have been completed or are under way.

Last year, our government successfully completed the replacement of the airfield lighting at the airports in Tuktoyaktuk and Norman Wells, thanks to over \$3 million in funding from Transport Canada under the Airport Capital Assistance Program and \$200,000 from our government. The previous airfield lighting dated back to the 1970s and was in need of replacement. Not only will the new lights be more effective for aircraft pilots, they are also energy efficient LED lighting, which will help our government meet territorial and national commitments to lower greenhouse gas emissions.

Mr. Speaker, our government recently completed runway surface rehabilitations at the airports in Hay River, Inuvik, and Yellowknife. Federal and territorial funds were also used to construct new airports in Trout Lake in 2014 and Colville Lake in 2012 under the Building Canada Plan. These projects have increased the safety and capacity of air travel in the communities, and the longer runways allow for the use of pressurized medevac aircraft.

The department is continuing to collaborate with NAV Canada so the aviation industry can access weather information 24/7 for all public airports up to 75 nautical miles from the airport sites. The

availability of real-time accurate weather data is critical to the aviation industry, allowing for improved decision-making by the medevac service contractor and the safe operation of airports.

In addition to improving airport infrastructure, our government is also committed to preventative maintenance, such as the improvement of drainage systems at the airports in Hay River, Inuvik, Yellowknife, Aklavik, and Sachs Harbour. Studies have shown that some airports have subsurface drainage problems leading to ongoing patching and repairs to airfields. Drainage improvements are expected to increase airfield stability and reduce the frequency of asphalt and granular overlays, thereby helping to reduce future maintenance costs and improve airfield reliability.

Looking ahead, a very exciting project is scheduled in the 2018-2019 Capital Plan, the replacement of the air terminal building in Inuvik. The current terminal was constructed in 1958 and has reached the end of its service life. Detailed design and site preparation is scheduled to take place in April 2018, with construction starting in 2019, followed by the demolition of the existing air terminal building in 2021.

The design takes into account the requirements set out by the standards and guidelines for air terminals, such as public space, baggage systems, concessions, airport operation and administration, and a tower height that meets required specifications. Overall, travellers will notice an improved passenger experience and an airport that better fits the needs of various users.

These improvement projects would not be possible without collaboration from the federal government. The Airport Capital Assistance Program, for example, has allowed for \$24 million in improvements since 1995 to airports across the territory and roughly \$3 million in infrastructure funding invested by our government.

Mr. Speaker, as the largest and busiest airport in the Northwest Territories, the Yellowknife airport continues to grow and improve. As part of this transformation, parking was recently expanded to include additional vehicle spaces, more convenient parking was added for tourism operator buses, and we implemented a new free downloadable pay-by-phone parking app in select areas.

Going forward, we are committed to a new security screening system which will improve wait times for travellers. This also supports the number one priority of the Yellowknife airport and airports across the Northwest Territories, which is safety and security. Additional enhancements include a new retail gift shop opening soon and the installation of common-use terminals, which will

create a better travel experience for passengers. The transformation of the Yellowknife airport will also allow for additional revenues and employment opportunities for residents of the North.

Various external stakeholders have played a significant role in guiding the transformation of the Yellowknife airport, such as the Yellowknife Airport Economic Advisory Committee. The committee consists of business and industry leaders who meet regularly to provide strategic recommendations and advice.

Mr. Speaker, improvements to Northwest Territories airports are vital to supporting safe and effective travel and to enhancing business opportunities. We will continue to work with our federal partners, air carriers, and other stakeholders to make improvements to our air transportation system while investigating new ways to make strategic investments in our infrastructure. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. Ministers' statements. Item 3, Members' statements. Member for Yellowknife North.

### Members' Statements

#### MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON MISSING AND MURDERED INDIGENOUS WOMEN AND GIRLS

**MR. VANTHUYNE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, today I want to take on a difficult subject. It is difficult for me, but I know it is far more difficult for many others. It affects communities right across Canada, and yet it is something we are hesitant to put on the table. If we shine some light on it, our tendency may be to quickly move the light away because it is so painful. Yet, it needs to be acknowledged and addressed. I am talking about the issue of missing and murdered indigenous women and girls.

Mr. Speaker, we hear it whenever the Commission holds hearings, and especially when they visit the North. This is a pain and grief that families are suffering from, many for years and years. This tragedy needs to be addressed, out of respect for the victims and their loved ones. Their pain and grief needs to be recognized so that their burden can begin to be shared.

Mr. Speaker, as a white male, I find myself struggling to know the right way to address this tragedy. I have lived in the North my entire life. I admire and respect the Indigenous people of this land, and I strive to demonstrate that in my daily life. However, I know that maybe I cannot understand life from their perspective.

I know I need to acknowledge my white privilege, whether that is comfortable or not. I know I need to be open, to listen, to learn with humility and with respect.

When it comes to the tragedy of the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls, it is hard to know what to say, or even how to start. I know I need to use great caution. Sometimes it feels like maybe it is easier to just not to say anything. I hope I show humility, compassion, and empathy. I want to recognize that the families are going through a grief and pain that maybe I can never truly understand.

Even if that is true, Mr. Speaker, I feel that it is important to raise my voice and to express caring, compassion, and respect for the victims and their families. As leaders, we must commit ourselves to confronting hate, misogyny, xenophobia, and racism whenever and wherever it confronts us, and we must dedicate our lives to words and actions that will make sure that the tragedy of Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls ends now and can never happen again. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. Members' statements. Member for Yellowknife Centre.

#### MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON ADDRESSING CORE HOUSING NEEDS

**MS. GREEN:** Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, at the end of the last sitting the Minister responsible for the NWT Housing Corporation tabled her long-awaited response to persistent core housing need experienced by one in five households in the NWT. I put forward a motion in June 2016 with the support of my colleagues that called on the Housing Corporation to reduce core need in housing by 2 per cent a year for four years. This investment will bring the NWT in line with national levels. The motion called for a plan to achieve this goal. The Towards Level Ground report is the basis of that plan.

Mr. Speaker, a household experiences core need if they have one of the following problems or, potentially, a combination of all three. Housing may be unsuitable because it doesn't have enough bedrooms for family members; it may be inadequate because it needs major repairs to plumbing, electrical, and heating systems; and, finally, it may be unaffordable if the family is spending more than 30 per cent of their gross income.

Mr. Speaker, the Housing Corporation's action plan to reduce core need is sketchy. It includes investments in 15 different program areas, but there is no rationale given for why 384 homes are slated

for emergency repairs or why 30 households are involved in "rebalancing the public housing portfolio." It is not clear how these programs relate to the three areas of core need, nor is there any information about how the \$67 million earmarked for this project is going to be distributed among the regions or where the money itself is going to come from.

There are households across the territory that are in core need, but the greatest number in all three categories is Yellowknife, and the most acute need in Yellowknife is affordability. According the 2014 Community Survey, 868 city households had affordability problems, and the problem is growing.

Mr. Speaker, the plan proposes affordability relief to just 100 households. We all know that Yellowknife is an expensive place to live and that shelter costs are the largest part of any household budget. This plan may make a small dent in this problem, but it is hard to say exactly how it will serve my constituents' needs. Affordability is a huge problem, and it's getting worse, not better. I will have questions for the Minister. Mahsi.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. Members' statements. Member for Mackenzie Delta.

#### MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON WILLOW RIVER BRIDGE AND ALL-WEATHER ROAD

**MR. BLAKE:** Mr. Speaker, earlier in this sitting I called on Minister Schumann to lead the charge in launching new infrastructure projects that will connect our communities and create new jobs. Previously, I suggested an ice road between Tsiigehtchic and Fort Good Hope. Today, I would like to pitch another idea, and it is not a new idea, Mr. Speaker. It's one that the people of Aklavik have advocated for many years. I am talking about the completion of the Willow River bridge and all-weather road.

Mr. Speaker, for those who have not had the privilege of visiting Aklavik, let me set the scene for you. Outside the community, in the foothills of the Richardson Mountains, my constituents of Aklavik have practised their traditional lifestyle of hunting, trapping, fishing, as well as gathering and harvesting.

Those traditional trails are still in use today, but overland access to this part of the foothills is currently restricted to the wintertime or during rare periods of low water, when a jury-rigged bridge can be used.

If the bridge and all-weather road were completed, residents would have year-round access. Not only that, but the hamlet could also easily access gravel

resources, families could use the area for day recreation, and the improved infrastructure would be a draw to tourists and sport hunters. The road could also open options for new solid waste or water treatment facilities.

Mr. Speaker, the proposed project has undergone environmental impact screening, and Tetra Tech and Nehruh-EBA Consulting Ltd. have developed plans and designs for a road that would shorten the current 27 kilometre ice-based overland route to a year-round route of just 19.2 kilometres. Aklavik, where jobs are sorely needed, has also demonstrated that it is ready to take on the work, both the challenges and the opportunities. For example, the Mountain Road Committee, including elder representation, has done a feasibility study.

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

---Unanimous consent granted

**MR. BLAKE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, colleagues. Mr. Speaker, there is work to be done to bring the last stage of the project over the finish line, and there are people and supplies ready to take it on. All we need is government leadership and funding.

I am not ready to give up on this project, Mr. Speaker, and I hope the Minister isn't, either. I am sticking to Aklavik's motto, Mr. Speaker: "Never say die." Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. Members' statements. Member for Nahendeh.

#### MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON CANADIAN NORTH LNG CORP.

**MR. THOMPSON:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it is my understanding that a company called Canadian North LNG Corp. engaged with the NWT government on November 9, 2015, and further met with two senior staff officials of the Department of Public Works on January 17, 2017, about a shovel-ready LNG pilot project proposal. The proposal highlighted the use of NWT natural gas supply from Cameron Hills, which is hereby currently shut down due to economic reasons and several options to convert existing diesel power generators to LNG for the Village of Fort Simpson, Hamlet of Fort Liard, and Hamlet of Fort Providence with no upfront capital commitment from the government hereby providing an average of 35-45 per cent savings over and above the current power rate.

I believe this type of project could be a huge part of our NWT Climate Change Strategy.

Mr. Speaker, it is on the public record that the Northwest Territories contains potentially more undeveloped natural gas reserves than anywhere else in North America. Unfortunately, the Northwest Territories is one of the only jurisdictions in North America that currently does not use natural gas for the majority of its energy source, heating, and power generation.

Mr. Speaker, it is my understanding that the Northwest Territories has, for the last 70 years, been consuming carbon-intensive diesel fuel sourced and imported from outside of its jurisdiction and more recently from the USA. As I did a bit of research, I feel comfortable in saying that the Northwest Territories has virtually no oil and gas production, and I have not seen or heard of any potential projects that would use NWT-sourced gas as such.

Mr. Speaker, natural gas is the cleanest-burning fuel, whether in the form of compressed natural gas or liquefied natural gas. Natural gas has been proven an excellent alternative fuel source that significantly improves local air quality and reduces greenhouse gases.

Natural gas power generation emits 21 per cent fewer GHG emissions than comparable gasoline and diesel power generation and further 75 per cent less carbon monoxide, 49 per cent less nitrogen oxides, and 95 per cent lower particulate matter emissions.

Most of the world's major economies have and are further currently converting to natural gas to reduce and replace diesel power generation.

Mr. Speaker, I believe this could be a great help towards our future and I hope Cabinet agrees with me. Later today I will have questions for the Minister of Infrastructure. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

#### MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON CARBON TAX POLICY

**MR. MCNEELY:** Mr. Speaker, this year the NWT residents will see a Carbon Price Tax. Placing a price tag on carbon emissions will have an impact on all residents, communities, industry, businesses, and government infrastructure.

Mr. Speaker, the current approach of dividing responsibilities for the Climate Change Policy includes overlapping duties between the 2030 Energy Strategy and ENR's Climate Change Strategic Framework.

Implications on improvements and benefits can be seen from other jurisdictions.

Mr. Speaker, in particular, the province of British Columbia's carbon price policy can provide lessons on positive growth from this emerging industry. In 2014, more than 68,000 residents worked in clean economy jobs, up 12.5 per cent from 2010. Strengthening the carbon tax in conjunction with incentives like a tax credit will encourage businesses to accelerate investment in solutions like training, technology, retrofitting, and improved processes.

Mr. Speaker, on the issues of public opportunities 2030 Energy Strategy implementation to this emerging industry, later I will have questions to the Minister of the Department of Infrastructure. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

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

#### MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON LAND TRANSFER TAX PROPOSAL

**MR. TESTART:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On the mandate of the 18<sup>th</sup> Assembly, this government committed to lowering the cost of living in the NWT in order to improve our residents' quality of life and attract more people to make their homes in the territory. I am so surprised to see a new tax proposal, that this government will not only be failing to live up to this mandate commitment, but adding an unnecessary new burden to anyone considering relocating up North or buying a home and therefore counteracting their stated public policy proposal.

I will, of course, remind this House that when the Minister was asked about the public policy object of his proposal, he was silent on anything other than increasing revenues for government. We must ask ourselves if this is really the time to be considering placing more weight on the shoulders of middle-class families and those seeking to join the middle class who live across the territory in our tax-based communities. I, for one, certainly think not.

The median price for a home in my community of Yellowknife is \$336,000. According to the CMHC activity and the resale market in Yellowknife, it was strong in 2016, and housing construction was strong, particularly in the single-family segment, which in 2016 saw a 41 per cent increase compared to the previous year. It was expected to be a stable year as well in 2017, but no data has yet been released. However, national home sales have decreased by 14 per cent from December to January of this year. The number of newly listed homes plunged 21.6 per cent from December 2017 to January 2018. This indicates a severe weakness in the market. Now is not the time to go tampering with the tax formula that would directly affect our

local market at a time of admitted economic instability throughout our territory.

To speak more directly on the current land tax and fee regime, we pay through mortgage and land title fees on average much lower than those jurisdictions who have implemented a land transfer tax. I see no benefit in this, other than an unimaginative way to break the backs of my hard-working middle-class constituents in order to fill government coffers. I find this proposal unacceptable, Mr. Speaker.

Yellowknife just received a new form of taxation last year when this government decided that our tourism sector was starting to grow at a fast rate, so we should have an airport tax. Why does this government not care about financial burdens it puts on its citizens?

I do not support this tax, and I hope the Minister withdraws this tax proposal. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

#### MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON EULOGY FOR VICTORINE (VICKY) DESJARLAIS

**MR. BEAULIEU:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. [English translation not provided.]

Mr. Speaker, today I speak about the passing of an elder, Victorine Desjarlais, of Lutselk'e, whom everyone knew as "Vicky." Vicky was born on May 3, 1932, and was predeceased by her husband Philip Desjarlais, who was a former chief of Lutselk'e Dene First Nation; and her siblings: Albina, Morris, Johnny, Frank, Harriet, and Henry; as well as her granddaughter, Layla. Vicky was survived by her 10 children: Stella, Stan, Ron, Roy, Shirley, Tommy, Joyce, Kenny, Cheryl, and Cindy; as well as her sister Christine, and numerous grandchildren, great-grandchildren, and nieces and nephews.

Vicky was an amazing woman. She raised her family with her spiritual teachings, traditional knowledge, cultural values and beliefs, as well as respect for the land, water, and wildlife. She had a great sense of humour and loved to tell stories and share her traditional knowledge. She loved beading and sewing traditional clothing for her family. I was lucky enough to obtain a beautiful pair of gloves that she made. She also loved being out on the land. And most of all she loved spending time with her family and friends. Vicky's strong wisdom, teachings, and wonderful stories will forever live on in the hearts of her family and future generations to come. I visited with Vicky occasionally during my

community visits and always enjoyed whatever she wanted to tell me.

I take this opportunity to extend my condolences to Vicky's family, friends, and to all of the people of Lutselk'e who respected her greatly. She will be sorrowfully missed by those people and everyone around the area that knew Vicky. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. Our condolences to the family as well. Members' statements. Member for Frame Lake.

#### MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON MINISTERIAL MEETINGS TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY

**MR. O'REILLY:** Merci, Monsieur le President. This government was committed to beign more transparent and accountable. One of the elements of this accountability is the public engagement and transparency portal, which includes a registry showing the meetings of Cabinet Ministers with a variety of outside individuals and organizations. There are a lot of entries in these listings giving dates, times, and names. You can deduce a lot about the priorities and interests that appear to influence our Cabinet. In the end, the lack of real information on the subjects of meetings doesn't do a lot to create transparency.

Consider the listings for the Premier. Based upon the entries in the registry from January 1, 2017, to January 30, 2018, the Premier would appear to have had 23 meetings with businesspeople, including four meetings with mining companies and six meetings with oil and gas interests. There are no meetings listed with civil society, such as environmental or social justice organizations.

During the period of the January 2017 Association for Mineral Exploration round-up in Vancouver, the registry shows one meeting on one day with the Mineral Exploration Roundup chairs and no meetings with individual mining firms. I thought one-on-one meetings were the point of going to Vancouver. There are also a variety of meetings with what appear to be foreign government trade representatives, often in the company of foreign companies themselves, and there are listings of meetings with business representatives which are not listed as business meetings. Identification of meetings under the loose categories "telephone call," "interest group and associations," or "other" doesn't tell you a lot in most cases.

What is really missing is any indication of the general nature of the discussion. When Northwestel meets with the Premier, is it discussion on the improvement of service, use of fibre optic lines, taxation policy, or what? In the three meetings with

Dominion Diamonds, was the subject specific to the Ekati Mine, input on the Mineral Resources Act, or something else?

This registry improved when it went online and became searchable. It's a good starting contribution to the transparency this government says it is striving to achieve, but more progress needs to be made. I'll have questions for the Minister responsible for Public Engagement and Transparency later today. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. Members' statements. Item 4, returns to oral questions. Item 5, recognition of visitors in the gallery.

#### Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery

**MR. SPEAKER:** Colleagues, I'd like to take this opportunity to recognize the following Pages from my riding of Monfwi. I'd like to thank Lynn Football and Reanna Smith, who are both here from Mezi School of Whati, and their chaperone, May Louise Football, for being here. In addition, I'd like to say a big masi cho to all the Pages who are doing a great service to us as Legislative Assembly Members. Recognition of visitors in the gallery. Member for Hay River South.

**HON. WALLY SCHUMANN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today, I'd like to recognize Braden McCullough, a very good friend of my son's, who lives here in Yellowknife, and it's her first time here to the Assembly.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Recognition of visitors in the gallery. Member for Yellowknife North.

**MR. VANTHUYNE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I, too, want to recognize a Page today. Owen Rilet is a constituent of Yellowknife North. Welcome, and thank you to all the Pages for the great work they do on our behalf. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. Recognition of visitors in the gallery. Are we missing anyone in the gallery? It's always nice to have an audience as part of our proceedings. Masi. Item 6, acknowledgements. Member for Yellowknife Centre.

#### Acknowledgements

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT 2-18(3):  
NICOLE LATOUR – NOVA SCOTIA CHIEF  
ELECTORAL OFFICER'S QUALITY, VALUE AND  
SERVICE AWARD

**MS. GREEN:** Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to acknowledge the achievements of my constituent, Nicole Latour, with the Province of Nova Scotia Chief Electoral Officer's Quality, Value and Service Award, recognizing outstanding

achievements by elections officers. As Canada's only First Nations Chief Electoral Officer, Ms. Latour advised the Nova Scotia Chief Electoral Officer on a strategy to increase Indigenous Peoples' participation in provincial elections. Her advice produced good results, and she has been honoured with this award. Please join me in offering congratulations to Ms. Latour for receiving this award. Mahsi.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. Acknowledgements. Item 7, oral questions. Member for Nahendeh.

### Oral Questions

#### QUESTION 145-18(3): LIQUID NATURAL GAS PROPOSAL

**MR. THOMPSON:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'd like to follow up on my Member's statement today, and I have some questions for the Minister of Infrastructure. As part of the NWT climate change, have the various departments looked at potentially expanding the use of liquid natural gas, commonly known as LNG, outside the Inuvik source of NWT natural gas? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. Minister of Infrastructure.

**HON. WALLY SCHUMANN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. LNG is used specifically in Inuvik right now, as well all know. As we develop our 2030 Energy Strategy and our energy plan going forward, LNG is a significant part of that, to reduce our greenhouse house gas emissions. When we roll that out later this spring, we will see the opportunities that are available to residents of the Northwest Territories. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. THOMPSON:** I thank the Minister for that answer, and it's good to hear that the department and the governments are looking at that. So my next question for the Minister: has the Minister had the opportunity to discuss the proposal with the staff about the Canadian North LNG Project?

**HON. WALLY SCHUMANN:** As of late, when we are at the Mineral Roundup, that group was there and I had a chat with them, and they have sent me a proposal of how they see they can use the Cameron Hills LNG possibly in the Northwest Territories.

**MR. THOMPSON:** I thank the Minister, who kind of answered my third question, so I'll go back to my second question. Has the Minister talked to his staff about this proposal that, supposedly, some of the former Department of Public Works talked to these proponents of this proposal?

**HON. WALLY SCHUMANN:** The Member is talking about, maybe, the original proposal which they had submitted previous to both him and me being elected to the Legislative Assembly. The latest one they've sent me, they revised their proposal, and it is a different approach of how they can use the gas out of the Cameron Hills, ship it to Alberta, process it just across the border, and then be able to sell it back to proponents in the Northwest Territories, being either NTPC or a mining company or something like that.

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

**MR. THOMPSON:** Thank you, and I thank the Minister for that clarification. I think he's correct in saying that it might have been a previous proposal. So is the Minister willing to set up a meeting with myself and the principal organizer, or principal component of this company, and some interested people in the Northwest Territories who wish to see this project being feasible? Is he willing to work with us to set up a meeting? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**HON. WALLY SCHUMANN:** I'd gladly sit down with the Member and the proponents of the Canadian Natural Gas Proposal, whatever their legal entity name is, and the people who want to discuss it, and look at opportunities for the Northwest Territories. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. Oral questions. Member for Mackenzie Delta.

#### QUESTION 146-18(3): WILLOW RIVER BRIDGE ALL-WEATHER ROAD PROJECT

**MR. BLAKE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as a follow-up to my Member's statement, I have a few questions for the Minister of Infrastructure. I'd like to ask the Minister: what is the current status of the department's work on the Willow River Bridge and all-weather road project? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. Minister of Infrastructure.

**HON. WALLY SCHUMANN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We've worked diligently with the community of Aklavik on this road and bridge project for the Richardson Mountains. They've accessed the CAP funding since 2011, and they do have a new proposal in right now to the department that's having a look at it. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. BLAKE:** Has the Minister prioritized the Willow River bridge in his infrastructure planning?

**HON. WALLY SCHUMANN:** If it's through the CAP program, that's an application that's on a first-come-first-served basis, and I think the community of

Aklavik has done very well on it. As for the longer federal infrastructure plan, we're going to be signing our bilateral year pretty soon, hopefully in the next month or so with the federal Minister, and those types of programs are still being worked out; but I think there are plenty of opportunities for communities within the new infrastructure funding that's coming to the Northwest Territories over the next 10 years.

**MR. BLAKE:** What will the Minister do to help his partners in the Mackenzie Delta complete the Willow River bridge and all-weather road project?

**HON. WALLY SCHUMANN:** The department always has ongoing discussions with the people of Aklavik who have applied for this funding. There are ongoing engineering and technical challenges that need to be worked out, and the department is working with them. As I've said, the CAP funding is on a first-come-first-served basis, and the community has done very well on it, and we're looking at if we're going to be able to fund them this year as well.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. Oral questions. Member for Sahtu.

QUESTION 147-18(3):  
CARBON TAX POLICY

**MR. MCNEELY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I mentioned in my statement, I'll have questions for the Minister of Infrastructure. My first question is: why is there overlap between the work done on climate change between Departments of Infrastructure and Natural Resources and Finance? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. Minister of Infrastructure.

**HON. WALLY SCHUMANN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Our department, Infrastructure, we're working on our 2030 Energy Strategy, but it is linked specifically to the NWT Climate Change Strategic Framework. We are working together with us, ENR, and the Department of Finance to ensure consistency between all the strategies moving forward that are being developed. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. MCNEELY:** Thanks to the Minister for the answer. My next question is: what is the government doing to help the NWT move to a lower-carbon economy?

**HON. WALLY SCHUMANN:** We believe that transitioning to a strong, healthy economy that is less reliant on diesel fuel is to the benefit of all residents and communities in the Northwest Territories. To secure sustainable sources of energy, we will help to stabilize the cost of living as

we move forward, as the new technologies come along and as the new infrastructure money rolls out. That is why we have developed our 2030 energy strategy that I have talked about, which we have engaged with communities to find solutions and set long-term targets to reduce greenhouse gas emissions for the Northwest Territories, from electrical generation, heating, transportation. These are all going to be laid out in our strategy when we table it, but it also has in there how do we increase efficiencies from not only our own buildings but within communities, and how do we help address industry emissions, as well. So all of these things are going to help us meet our national climate change objectives.

**MR. MCNEELY:** Thanks to the Minister for that clarification and moving-forward statement. My next question is: this 2030 is a long-term vision, but what is the government going to do in the immediate future to address the high cost of energy in our small communities while creating jobs for Northerners?

**HON. WALLY SCHUMANN:** As I have said, we are going to be tabling our 2030 energy strategy pretty soon, but that has the long-term vision, to 2030. We are going to be rolling out a three-year action plan for this session or this Assembly going forward so we have something to work on, which will be released this spring. In that action plan, we will have details, specific details, of the actions that we are going to take, the infrastructure money that is needed to accomplish this. We have six strategic objectives that we want to complete in that, but we are still negotiating our bilateral agreements, which this strategy is going to be using this funding for. Some of the specifics that we have in there over the immediate time, what we are going to do: we are talking about doing a large-scale windmills in Inuvik as one of the ones that we want to move forward right away; transmission lines, as I talked about in the House yesterday. The other fund that is coming forward is the low-carbon economy fund, and that is a different pot of money, outside the infrastructure one, and that is one of the ones of great importance, I think, to the residents of the Northwest Territories. It is aimed at the Arctic Energy Alliance, and, hopefully when we sign off on that bilateral, we will be able to help the Arctic Energy Alliance, give them more money but also to help us meet our greenhouse gas emissions and stuff in the communities.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. Oral questions. Member for Sahtu.

**MR. MCNEELY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am glad to hear the Minister had mentioned there is a fund available here. That leads me to my final question: the residents of the Sahtu would like to know what

investments this government will commit to making in our communities? Mahsi.

**HON. WALLY SCHUMANN:** The government is committed to investing in all of the communities in the Northwest Territories, but, in particular in the Sahtu, we have completed a biomass heating which was installed in the schools in Tulita and Fort Good Hope last year; we hope to expand the wood pellet use in the Sahtu region; we have the wind monitoring that will be getting under way very soon in Norman Wells, as that is one of the sites that has the potential to put a windmill in there; we have solar still being considered for a number of communities in the Sahtu; and I think there is some considerable potential that could be put on the Bear River for hydro potential, but that is something we would have to look at long-term. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

QUESTION 148-18(3):  
MINISTERIAL MEETINGS – TRANSPARENCY  
AND ACCOUNTABILITY

**MR. O'REILLY:** Merci, Monsieur le President. My questions are for the Minister responsible for Public Engagement and Transparency, and they are with regard to the public engagement and transparency portal website. There is some confusion or inconsistency in terms of how ministerial meetings are classified. While I believe that the registry is a good first step, the deficiencies I outlined in my Member's statement really limit the value of this work. First of all, is the Minister aware of inconsistencies in classifying the type of ministerial meetings, and is he prepared to work with Regular MLAs to make improvement? Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. Minister responsible for Public Engagement and Transparency.

**HON. LOUIS SEBERT:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We have been reporting on all Ministers' meetings with outside parties since April 2015, and, prior to that, the Premier had previously published a report of all of his meetings with outside parties, going back to January 2014, so this registry has been in effect for some time. Of course, staff in each Minister's office is responsible for entering and verifying the information that is published. Now, the information that goes into that registry is the date of the meeting, name of organization, parties in attendance, lead Minister and other attending Ministers, and type of meetings. Now, the type of meetings seem to fall into two categories, those with interest groups and intergovernmental, which perhaps do not provide as much information as the Member opposite would like. Certainly, we would be willing to look at improvements to that system.

**MR. O'REILLY:** It is great to get such a positive response from the Minister. I am happy to chat with him when we have a little bit of down time around this. In terms of listing ministerial meetings, there is a column about who the meeting was held with. Sometimes names of individuals are mentioned; other times, an organization only. There seems to be room for improvement and better consistency. Is the Minister prepared to review this aspect of the meeting registry and work with Regular MLAs to improve the registry itself?

**HON. LOUIS SEBERT:** Yes. Prior to this afternoon, I did look through the registry, and I did notice that earlier on sometimes just individuals were listed or sometimes just organizations. I did notice of late that individuals and organizations were listed, and I think that is quite appropriate and proper.

**MR. O'REILLY:** Again, I would like to thank the Minister for agreeing to improve the registry, but the single most important thing is that there is a lack of any information on the purpose or content of the meetings. Obviously, some elements of confidentiality must be maintained, but simply giving a name under the heading "telephone call" does not provide much information on the nature of our Ministers' activities in this consensus government. Will the Minister work with Regular MLAs to develop criteria for providing more informative listings that describe the general subjects of such meetings to promote greater transparency?

**HON. LOUIS SEBERT:** Certainly, I would be willing to discuss this with the Regular Members and bring their concerns to Cabinet. I am not certain what kind of improvements are being contemplated, whether it would place too much of a burden on staff to have a very lengthy description of what took place in the meetings. I suppose that would be possible, but that would impose, as I say, an additional burden on staff. I do agree, having really only two designations of interest group or intergovernmental should certainly be improved, but I would certainly be looking for suggestions from Members opposite as to how that category could be improved. Thank you.

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

**MR. O'REILLY:** Merci, Monsieur le President. I want to thank the Minister again. I heard the word "burden" mentioned several times, and that is not what I am interested in creating. I am interested in creating transparency. This government, though, has resisted calls for creation of a lobbyist registry. In the post-devolution NWT, there is a lot more at stake, of course. If we had such a registry, we would know whose interests are being represented and have a better idea why meetings are taking

place. Will the Minister take transparency and accountability to the next level and work with Regular MLAs and the public to create a Northwest Territories lobbyist registry? Masi, Mr. Speaker.

**HON. LOUIS SEBERT:** Having a formal lobbyist registry would require costs to enact new legislation, and we are a small jurisdiction. I have looked at other jurisdictions, and the other jurisdictions in the North do not have a lobbyist registry, nor does the province of Prince Edward Island. I think a formal registry would be overly cumbersome and unnecessary in our jurisdiction.

One of the questions that does occur to me about a lobbyist registry or a reporting registry that we already have, I have been looking at other jurisdictions and wondering why the Regular Members do not report. Thank you.

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

QUESTION 149-18(3):  
CORE HOUSING NEEDS FUNDING

**MS. GREEN:** Mr. Speaker, my questions are for the Minister responsible for the Housing Corporation. Mr. Speaker, the Housing Corporation's budget that we were debating in the main estimates is going to decrease in this fiscal year, yet the action plan the Minister has produced says that there will be spending of \$20 million in the next fiscal year. My question is: where is that money from the action plan going to come from and when? Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. Minister responsible for the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation.

**HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. At this point, actually, I do not know exactly where all of the allocations are coming from. Because it is really technical asking me about finances and I don't have that on hand, I will have to take notice of the question. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. The question has been taken as notice. Oral questions. Member for Kam Lake.

QUESTION 150-18(3):  
PROPOSED ACCESS TO INFORMATION AND  
PROTECTION OF PRIVACY LEGISLATION

**MR. TESTART:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Earlier today there was a public hearing with the Information and Privacy Commissioner, and it brought to my mind the long-required need to bring about new access to information and privacy protection legislation in this building. We are still working off of the original legislation that came

about in 1996. A lot has changed since then. I would like to ask the Minister of Justice: what progress is being made on updating ATIPP legislation? Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. Minister of Justice.

**HON. LOUIS SEBERT:** Yes, Mr. Speaker. We are working on updating the ATIPP information, and certainly it is important. There were many suggestions made as to how it could be improved, and we are dedicated to improving that piece of legislation. Thank you.

**MR. TESTART:** Does the Minister have any timelines that he can inform the House of when this legislation is anticipated to come forward?

**HON. LOUIS SEBERT:** Yes. We are engaging and have been engaging with various communities and governments with respect to this legislation, and I hope to be bringing forward legislation this year.

**MR. TESTART:** I suppose it is too much to ask for specificity on when the Minister will bring it forward, but I want to ask about another subject. Related to this work is Access by Design or Privacy by Design. Is the Minister doing any work to ensure we are designing government projects and government legislation with Privacy by Design in mind? Has any work been undertaken on that aspect?

**HON. LOUIS SEBERT:** We are, of course, very cognizant of our responsibilities under ATIPP and other privacy legislations, so I would hope that all legislation is looked at through that lens.

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

**MR. TESTART:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This is the Minister of Hope. He often hopes when we raise questions to him, but can the Minister commit to do more than hope and actually do some work to put a public policy lens? Like we do with gender-based analysis and like we do with Indigenous rights analysis, can he put a Privacy by Design lens on policy proposals? Let's narrow the focus, Mr. Speaker. Can he put a privacy lens on Cabinet submissions? Thank you.

**HON. LOUIS SEBERT:** I have not contemplated that to this point, but certainly would be willing to look into it. Thank you.

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

QUESTION 151-18(3):  
FORMULA FUNDING FOR MUNICIPALITIES

**MR. TESTART:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, there is an ongoing issue with the shortfall

in municipal funding that is provided through our funding formula to municipal governments of the Northwest Territories. The Minister has indicated that she is looking at fixing some of those. Can we get more details from the Minister on what our municipalities can expect moving forward on closing the gap in municipal funding? Thank you.

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

**HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Since the analysis was done of the shortfall of community governments a number of years ago, every single year, Cabinet has provided extra money towards that. We are hopeful that that will continue.

We are working at the moment with the NWT Association of Communities to finalize the plan, and at this point, we are not yet finished. Right now, what I can say is that every year there has been an increase, and I am hopeful that that will continue. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. TESTART:** That gap, when we started our term, was \$32 million. How much has this government invested in closing that gap? I am looking for a dollar figure, Mr. Speaker.

**HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE:** For this last year, actually, the proposal within the budget is a proposed \$1.2 million. I do not know the exact for every year. What I do know is that we have given increases for the operation and maintenance, and we have given increases for the water and sewer. We are working with the federal government for the capital and infrastructure monies that are needed, and we work closely with each community so that they can leverage their monies that they have to actually get the federal infrastructure dollars.

**MR. TESTART:** I will remind the Minister that this is the not the federal government's obligation. This is our own funding formula, and the money should be coming from this government, or that funding formula needs to change if this government cannot afford it. We need to figure this out, but if the Minister is right and we are spending \$1.2 million, it is going to take 32 years to close this gap. If not a dollar amount, how much time has been dedicated to a plan? Do we have a five-year plan, a 10-year plan, a 20-year plan? How long is it going to take to close this gap?

**HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE:** I am well aware that this is not a federal government issue; this is a territorial issue. Like I said before, we are not finished the strategic plan. We are still working with the Association of Communities to deal with it. I would like to bring attention to, however, in my

personal opinion, the territorial government is also underfunded, and that is a federal issue.

I empathize with all of the communities. I would love to have money that I could give to every community and every department. We all need money, but I think we are all well aware that the economy is not very good at this time, and we have to live within our means. We are trying to help community as best as possible, but we also do not have the means.

If the federal government would like to give us more money, then I would be more than willing to accept that funding so that we can not only help the communities but our territorial government departments that are in need also.

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

**MR. TESTART:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Making best use of limited financial resources, in the words of our august Finance Minister, I wonder if we can prioritize this as a mandate commitment. It is a requirement of our funding formula. MACA itself, the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs has done this analysis. When will this government meet its own requirements that it has established for itself to support our communities? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE:** We are working diligently on trying to address it. I would like to remind everyone that we have, I believe, over 200 mandates that we are trying to address, and not very many of those mandates do not cost money. So if we are trying to address all of those hundreds of mandates, we need a lot more money than we actually have. So I am committed to try to help the communities. I think the communities understand that. We have provided increases with their operating and maintenance and their water and sewer every single year since that study was done; and as the economy turns, as we have the resources, we will support the communities. We care about our communities. They are our people. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. Oral questions. Item 8, written questions. Item 9, returns to written questions. Item 10, replies to Commissioner's opening address. Item 11, petitions. Item 12, reports of standing and special committees. Item 13, reports of committees on the review of bills. Item 14, tabling of documents. The Honourable Premier.

### Tabling of Documents

TABLED DOCUMENT 91-18(3):  
CORRESPONDENCE TO MARY SIMON  
REGARDING ARCTIC LEADERSHIP MODEL

**HON. BOB MCLEOD:** Mr. Speaker, I wish to table the following document, "Correspondence to Mary Simon Regarding Arctic Leadership Model." Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. Tabling of documents. Minister of Infrastructure.

TABLED DOCUMENT 92-18(3):  
ENERGY INITIATIVES REPORT 2016-2017

**HON. WALLY SCHUMANN:** Mr. Speaker, I wish to table the following document entitled "Energy Initiatives Report 2016-2017." Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. Tabling of documents. Minister of Environment and Natural Resources.

TABLED DOCUMENT 93-18(3):  
INUUVIALUIT WATER BOARD BUDGET 2018-2019

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** Mr. Speaker, I wish to table the following document entitled "Inuvialuit Water Board Budget 2018-2019." Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. Tabling of documents. 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. Minister of Justice.

### Second Reading of Bills

BILL 5:  
AN ACT TO AMEND THE SUMMARY  
CONVICTION PROCEDURES ACT

**HON. LOUIS SEBERT:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Hay River South, that Bill 5, An Act to Amend the Summary Conviction Procedures Act, be read for the second time.

This bill amends the Summary Conviction Procedures Act to provide that the act does not apply to the contravention of a municipal parking bylaw for which an administrative monetary penalty has been established. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. The motion is in order. To the principle of the bill.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Question.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. Question has been called. The motion is carried.

---Carried

Bill 5 has had its second reading. It's now referred to Committee of the Whole, standing committee. Second reading of bills. Item 20, consideration in Committee of the Whole of bills and other matters: Minister's Statement 1-18(3), North Slave Correctional Complex Inmate Concerns; Minister's Statement 19-18(3), Aurora College Foundational Review Process; Minister's Statement 32-18(3), Update on the Northwest Territories Disability Framework and Action Plan; Tabled Document 63-18(3), Main Estimates 2018-2019, with the Member for Sahtu in the chair.

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

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely):** I call Committee of the Whole to order. What is the wish of committee? Mr. Beaulieu.

**MR. BEAULIEU:** Marsi cho, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, committee would like to consider Tabled Document 63-18(3), Main Estimates 2018-2019, with the continuation of the Department of Executive and Indigenous Affairs, followed by the Department of Lands and the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely):** Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. We will take a short break.

---SHORT RECESS

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely):** I call committee back to order. Mr. Beaulieu.

**MR. BEAULIEU:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I move that the chair of the Committee of the Whole leave the chair and report progress. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely):** Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. A motion is on the floor to report progress. The motion is in order and is non-debatable. All those in favour? All those opposed? Seeing none, the motion is carried.

---Carried

I will now rise and report progress. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** May I have the report, Member for Sahtu?

### Report of Committee of the Whole

**MR. MCNEELY:** Mr. Speaker, your committee has been considering Tabled Document 63-18(3), Main Estimates 2018-2019, and would like to report progress. Mr. Speaker, I move that the report of the Committee of the Whole be concurred with. Mahsi.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. Do I have a seconder? Member for Deh Cho. The motion is in order. All those in favour? All those opposed?

---Carried

The motion is carried. Masi. Member for Tu Nedhe-Willideh.

**MR. BEAULIEU:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I speak unanimous consent to return to item 20, consideration in Committee of the Whole of bills and other matters. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Unanimous consent granted

**MR. SPEAKER:** By the authority given to me as Speaker by Motion 7-18(3), I hereby authorize the House to sit beyond the daily hour of adjournment to consider business before the House, with the Member for Sahtu in the Chair.

### Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters (Reversion)

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely):** I call the committee to order. Mr. Beaulieu.

**MR. BEAULIEU:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, committee would like to consider Tabled Document 63-18(3), Main Estimates 2018-2019, and continue with the Department of Executive and Indigenous Affairs, then moving on to the Department of Lands, and then to the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely):** Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. Committee, we have agreed to continue our consideration of Tabled Document 63-18(3), Main Estimates 2018-2019. As per your wishes, we will begin with consideration of the Department of Executive and Indigenous Affairs. Committee has agreed to forego general comments on each department and move straight into consideration of the activity details. I will turn to the Minister responsible for the Department of Executive and Indigenous Affairs. Premier McLeod, do you wish to bring witnesses to the House?

**HON. BOB MCLEOD:** Yes, I do, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely):** Thank you, Premier. Sergeant-at-Arms, please escort the witnesses into the Chamber. Thank you, Premier. I will now ask committee to turn to the main estimates document, Department of Executive and Indigenous Affairs, beginning on page 107. Prior to that, can the Premier please introduce the witnesses for the record.

**HON. BOB MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. To my right, I have Mike Aumond, the deputy minister of Executive and Indigenous Affairs. To my left, I have Terence Courtoreille, the director of Shared Services. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely):** Thank you, Premier. On page 107, we will defer this activity summary and proceed on page 111. Cabinet support operations summary, \$1,625,000. Can I ask Members to refer to which pages their questions refer? Any questions to this activity? Starting on 111 and 112. Questions? Mr. Thompson.

**MR. THOMPSON:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Could the Premier please confirm: is this the section where GSOs are in? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely):** Thank you, Mr. Thompson. Premier McLeod.

**HON. BOB MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. GSOs fall under the section entitled Directorate.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Premier McLeod. Mr. Thompson. Mr. Thompson, we are on pages 111 and 112.

**MR. THOMPSON:** I don't have questions on this section. Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely):** Thank you. Mr. O'Reilly.

**MR. O'REILLY:** Thanks, Mr. Chair. In this section, there is a line item here for Public Utilities Board. In the mandate for the 18<sup>th</sup> Assembly, one of the commitments is to improve net metering for our residents so that we can try to build more energy self-sufficiency. Have there been any changes in direction to the Public Utilities Board with regard to net metering? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely):** Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Premier McLeod.

**HON. BOB MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I should point out that this department only provides administrative services to the Public Utilities Board Minister. However, having said that, there has been no further direction to PUB on net metering. We expect that any direction will emanate with the release of the upcoming new energy strategy for

the Government of the Northwest Territories. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely):** Thank you, Premier McLeod. Mr. O'Reilly.

**MR. O'REILLY:** Thanks. I appreciate the clarification from the Premier. The mandate commitment reads as follows: "We will support net metering through clear policy direction to the Public Utilities Board to provide certainty to allow customers to recover their investment in renewable energy." It is listed as an item for the executive to deal with.

When I last looked at the draft energy strategy, there was nothing in there about net metering. Are there going to be some changes, then, to the strategy, such that net metering is going to get some kind of new direction? Is that where we are going? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely):** Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Premier McLeod.

**HON. BOB MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. As part of the business planning process, it is our intention to move the responsibility for providing services to the PUB to the Department of Infrastructure, which has the lead on energy matters, and I expect that, once it is housed there, whatever direction to the PUB will emanate from that department. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely):** Thank you, Premier McLeod. Mr. O'Reilly.

**MR. O'REILLY:** Thanks, Mr. Chair. I appreciate that. That comes as news to me. I never heard that before that the Public Utilities Board is going to be moved to administration or ministerial reporting, or whatever is going to go to Infrastructure. If I have questions, then, about how we are actually going to support net metering, is the Minister then suggesting that I need to ask those of the Minister of Infrastructure? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely):** Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Premier McLeod.

**HON. BOB MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. My understanding is we thought we were responding positively to requests from the standing committees, specifically the Standing Committee on Government Operations. It is my expectation, and I certainly believe that this responsibility is more properly housed within the Department of Infrastructure. I expect the appropriate direction will emanate from that department. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely):** Thank you, Premier McLeod. Mr. O'Reilly.

**MR. O'REILLY:** Thanks, Mr. Chair. I think I have been to almost all of the Standing Committee on Government Operations meetings -- I am an alternate -- but I don't recall there ever being any direction from that committee to move the Public Utilities Board to the Department of Infrastructure. If indeed it was, then Infrastructure would come under Economic Development and Environment, so I am just a bit confused by what the Minister seems to be saying. Is he suggesting, then, that this is something that has been initiated by standing committees? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely):** Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Premier McLeod.

**HON. BOB MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I guess to refresh the Member's memory I can provide him with a copy of the letter dated January 17, 2018, or I can table the letter in this House, or we can just give him a copy. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely):** Thank you, Premier McLeod. Mr. O'Reilly.

**MR. O'REILLY:** Thanks. I will be the first to admit that I do not read or see every single piece of correspondence, so if the Minister wants to give me a copy, that is fine. I will go back, though, to my earlier question then: is the Minister suggesting that the five questions about where we are going with net metering, that I cannot ask him, that I need to wait until the Minister of Infrastructure is up? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely):** Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Premier McLeod.

**HON. BOB MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. As I said, the Department of Executive only provides administrative services to the PUB, and the PUB has one staff, and that staff looks after the administrative arrangements for the Public Utilities Board. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely):** Thank you, Premier McLeod. Mr. O'Reilly.

**MR. O'REILLY:** Thanks, Mr. Chair. So who provides political direction to the PUB? Who issues letters of direction to the PUB? Do they come out of the Executive, or where do they come from? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely):** Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Premier McLeod.

**HON. BOB MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. We have a Minister responsible for the Public Utilities Board, who is Minister Abernethy. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely):** Thank you, Premier McLeod. Mr. O'Reilly.

**MR. O'REILLY:** Thanks, Mr. Chair. So, if I was not confused before, I am even more confused now. Who do I ask questions of in terms of policy direction and with regard to net metering? It is listed in the mandate as an Executive responsibility. The Minister has just told me that it is the Public Utilities Board, and now he said earlier that the administrative responsibility for the staff person is being moved to Infrastructure. Which Minister do I ask questions of in terms of policy direction with regard to where our government is going to support net metering? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely):** Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Premier McLeod.

**HON. BOB MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. In our response to the chairperson of the Standing Committee on Government Operations, dated November 29, 2017, to this very question, we advised that: "Regular Members can identify the need for policy development and direction through any government-initiated consultation process, for example the review of the draft energy strategy, and standing committee can at any time propose the issuance of specific policy direction to the Public Utilities Board." Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely):** Thank you, Premier McLeod. Mr. O'Reilly.

**MR. O'REILLY:** Thanks, Mr. Chair. While I appreciate that, we are talking about the budget here. I want to know: what is the position of our government in terms of supporting improved net metering? I know it is not answer period, but can the Minister tell me what our direction is as a government in supporting net metering, to deal with this particular mandate commitment? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely):** Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Premier McLeod.

**HON. BOB MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. My recollection is that the government had meetings with the chair of the Public Utilities Board and asked them to review the net metering process which was developed by the Public Utilities Board. The Public Utilities Board, after some period of time, came up with a net metering policy, and that policy has been in effect. There have been concerns expressed about the fact that credits have to be utilized or they disappear or lapse at the end of the fiscal year.

If there are any questions or comments or any Member that has anything that they want to be directed to the Public Utilities Board, they can do it through the Minister responsible for the Public

Utilities Board, or, once the service and support to the Minister will be done through the Department of Infrastructure, which has Energy as a lead, they would still have to work through the Minister responsible for the PUB to deal specifically with net metering, if they want to give direction to the Public Utilities Board. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely):** Thank you, Premier McLeod. Mr. O'Reilly, your time has expired. Questions? Seeing none, I will call this page. Cabinet support, operations expenditure summary, \$1,625,000. Agreed?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely):** We shall move forward to the next summary, which is on pages 114 to 115. Questions to this activity on pages 114 and 115? Seeing none, I will call the summary activity on page 114. Corporation communications, operations expenditure summary, \$1,396,000. Does committee agree?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely):** Agreed. We shall move on to the next summary, starting on page 117 to 119. Questions to pages 117 to 119, directorate, operations expenditure summary? Ms. Green, could you refer to the page that your question is directed to?

**MS. GREEN:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, I am looking at page 117, and I am looking at the line Arctic Inspiration Prize. Elsewhere in the business plan, the Arctic Inspiration Prize is listed in Lands and it is also listed in ECE. Can the Minister please advise us why it appears in all of those different places and where in fact the decision making is made on the contribution to the Arctic Inspiration Prize? Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely):** Thank you, Ms. Green. Premier McLeod.

**HON. BOB MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Chair, the request to increase the contribution which the government agreed to. Originally the government provided \$25,000, and we increased to contribution by another \$25,000. The organizers or the creators of the Arctic Inspiration Prize consequently announced that they would increase the prize value from \$1 million annually to \$3 million annually, and they have established a \$60 million trust fund. Through you, Mr. Chair, I will ask Mr. Courtoreille to explain what occurs in the other departments. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely):** Thank you, Premier McLeod. Mr. Courtoreille.

**MR. COURTOREILLE:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. In prior years, the Arctic Inspiration Prize was funded by all departments, and it was budgeted as such. Starting in 2017-2018, the Department of Executive and Indigenous Affairs funded that \$50,000 contribution internally. Then in 2018-2019, we are proposing to consolidate that \$50,000 contribution within the department and the mains here. Thank you, sir.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely):** Thank you, Mr. Courtoreille. Ms. Green.

**MS. GREEN:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Just to confirm, the effect of this consolidation is that there is one \$50,000 grant coming out of the executive. Is that correct? Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely):** Thank you, Ms. Green. Premier McLeod.

**HON. BOB MCLEOD:** That is correct, Mr. Chair. Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely):** Thank you, Premier McLeod. Ms. Green.

**MS. GREEN:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. My next question is about the segment of programs that are listed under women's advisory. I note that, on page 118, the amount of money that is provided to each of these initiatives has been static over a period of time. I am wondering how the government is going to meet its mandate commitment to increase the participation of women in politics without increasing the availability of money to initiatives that would make that happen. Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely):** Thank you, Ms. Green. Premier McLeod.

**HON. BOB MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. We would be very supportive of providing increased funding for a woman campaign, especially with elections coming up in less than two years. We will be seeking supplementary funding if it has not been approved already. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely):** Thank you, Premier McLeod. Ms. Green.

**MS. GREEN:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I am wondering if the Minister can provide a little more detail on this. How much money has been set aside? It looks like the same amount of money as every other year going back to 2016-2017. Could the Minister provide a bit more explanation of how much more money is available for offering women support who want to get into politics? Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely):** Thank you, Ms. Green. Premier McLeod.

**HON. BOB MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. On page 117, under the heading "women's advisory, corporate administration costs," you will note that there has been an increase from \$205,000 in the 2017-2018 revised estimates, it has been increased by \$84,000 to a total of \$289,000 under the 2018-2019 Main Estimates. The \$84,000 has been earmarked for women's campaign expenses or schools. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely):** Thank you, Premier McLeod. Ms. Green.

**MS. GREEN:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I appreciate the clarification. Historically, I thought that money came out of the status of women council, and that figure hasn't been raised since 2016-2017. It is good news that there is a specific amount of money available for the campaign schools. I just want to confirm now that I understand what the Minister said previously, which is that if all that money is spent then there is an opportunity to obtain more through a supplementary appropriation. Do I have that right? Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake):** Thank you, Ms. Green. Premier McLeod.

**HON. BOB MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. All I can say is we have identified \$84,000 in this business plan. If it is approved, that money will be available. In the past, we have made requests, and it has not always been approved. You can take that situation as money is pretty tight. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake):** Thank you, Premier McLeod. Ms. Green.

**MS. GREEN:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. What I took away from that is that there is \$84,000 available. If all of that money is spent then that is a new ballgame in terms of where the funding is going to come from. Do I have that right? Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely):** Thank you, Ms. Green. Premier McLeod.

**HON. BOB MCLEOD:** That is correct, as far as campaign schools go. Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely):** Thank you, Premier McLeod. Ms. Green.

**MS. GREEN:** That is everything. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely):** Thank you, Ms. Green. Mr. Thompson.

**MR. THOMPSON:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Going back to some questions that Ms. Green was talking about, the Arctic Inspiration Prize. First of all, I have to congratulate the department for consolidating it. I

also have to thank the government for investing into this prize, because it has had a huge impact over the last four years to our residents of the Northwest Territories. My brief question in regards to this: is this something that is going to happen yearly from now on? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely):** Thank you, Mr. Thompson. Premier McLeod.

**HON. BOB MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Yes, the Arctic Inspiration Prize will continue on an annual basis. This year it was aligned with the Northern Lights Conference in Ottawa. The Northern Lights Conference only happens every second year. My understanding is that the Arctic Inspiration Prize will move to every second year. Next year, it will be hosted in Whitehorse. I expect that, the year after that, it will be back at the Northern Lights Conference. I expect that it will continue to move around every second year. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely):** Thank you, Premier McLeod. Mr. Thompson.

**MR. THOMPSON:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and I thank the Premier for that answer. Just going on to another line item, single window service centres. I know we have 21 here, and in my speech to the budget I was hoping to see if the government is willing to increase that number this fiscal year. I don't see it in the budget here presently, but is it something that the department is looking at increasing? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely):** Thank you, Mr. Thompson. Premier McLeod.

**HON. BOB MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. My understanding is that the Finance Minister will be dealing with that, and we will be responding at the appropriate time to committee on where we are at with additional GSOs. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely):** Thank you, Premier McLeod. Mr. Thompson.

**MR. THOMPSON:** Thank you, Mr. Chair, and I thank the Premier for that answer. I am excited about these positions because they have a huge impact in my small communities, the ones that access it right now. I am hoping to see something here in the future. Can the Premier talk about the potential of something regional, not a GSO specifically, but if there is something that the department could be looking at for regional centres or the City of Yellowknife, not for this year, but for the future? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely):** Thank you, Mr. Thompson. Premier McLeod.

**HON. BOB MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. We are certainly very pleased with the level of services that our government services officers currently provide. As the Member knows, one of the most important functions that the GSOs provide is the ability to speak the Indigenous languages of the community. Communications is an essential service when explaining the Government of the Northwest Territories' programs and services. Certainly, our commitment has been to increase the amount of GSOs until we fill all of the small communities with GSOs. I think we are very close to fulfilling that requirement. Certainly, we have been using existing resources to create GSOs. If additional resources become available, we will be prepared to hire more GSOs, although our capacity is very close to being reached.

As far as services to Yellowknife and to regional centres, I guess our view is we need to take a much more holistic approach. It involves more departments, and if we are to improve service delivery in Yellowknife or regional centres, we need to know what kind of improvements would be involved. Certainly, in Yellowknife, we've put a lot of effort and resources to moving more services online; this has proven very popular. So we are looking at undertaking I think we call it a citizen service initiative in which we will look at the whole area of service delivery. We think that the Service Canada model seems to be working quite well, and we have certainly looked at how we can improve the level of service and certainly, as I said, with the GSO service delivery, communication is very important because not everybody knows the whole host of programs and services that are delivered by our government. I think, through the Citizens' Services Initiative, we'll be able to determine what the best way is to move forward, including costing out some various options. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely):** Thank you, Premier McLeod. Mr. Thompson.

**MR. THOMPSON:** Thank you, Mr. Chair, and I appreciate the Minister's answer. I appreciate them looking at this, and I think that will help all the residents. In regard to the GSOs and getting close to capacity, has the department developed a plan as to when we're going to be able to fill these positions? I know the Premier talked about it being based on the fact that it's funding-related and if there's money available. Can the department look at developing a plan so that we know when we can see these positions filled, so all communities have GSOs, and small communities have GSOs in them? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely):** Thank you, Mr. Thompson. Premier McLeod.

**HON. BOB MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Certainly, as soon as this budget is approved, we'll have a more definitive plan recognizing that some communities are harder to fill, to staff GSOs than others; but certainly we will have a plan that will lay out where we would see GSOs being housed. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely):** Thank you, Premier McLeod. Mr. Thompson.

**MR. THOMPSON:** Thank you, Mr. Chair, and I thank the Premier for that answer. So in regard to GSOs, I know right now we have a pilot project with the federal government and for some of the communities. I guess: can the Premier talk about how well that is working, and is there a potential for it to be expanded into other communities? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely):** Thank you, Mr. Thompson. Mr. Aumond.

**MR. AUMOND:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. So far the pilots in the three communities are going quite well. Folks are better able to access federal programs for the GSO offices that are there. As well as that's going, what we are finding, though, is that the demand, perhaps, for those types of federal services aren't as high as the federal government would have thought. Nevertheless, we are doing an undertaking and evaluation of that right now, and we'll be talking with Service Canada about whether to continue that or how to expand that type of service to those communities that don't currently have that. Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely):** Thank you, Mr. Aumond. Mr. Thompson.

**MR. THOMPSON:** Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. I thank Mr. Aumond for that answer. At this point in time, I think I'm satisfied with the questions I've been able to get answered here today, so that will be the end of it. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely):** Thank you, Mr. Thompson. Mr. Blake.

**MR. BLAKE:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Just a few questions here under the GSOs, as well. As I've said numerous times, it's a big help to our small communities that have no resources, unlike regional centres, and people really appreciate that service. Moving forward, is there a possibility to cost-share with the federal government in the future to have that staff position full-time? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely):** Thank you, Mr. Blake. Premier McLeod.

**HON. BOB MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. When we do a review of the pilot project we now have with Service Canada and, certainly, depending on the results, it would certainly depend on whether the federal government is prepared to expand the service. In my view, this pilot project certainly helps make those people that are entitled to programs and services. It helps them to make sure they can access everything they're entitled to. So that's certainly been a benefit; but we will be undertaking this review and we would certainly look at that consideration with the federal government, depending on the results. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely):** Thank you, Premier McLeod. Mr. Blake.

**MR. BLAKE:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, as I mentioned, a lot of people make use of this service in the communities; but for our elderly folks, I think it's very important that a lot of our small communities have radio stations. I think it's really important that we have our GSOs go on the radio and just let the community know what their services are, because we're seeing in a couple of communities that it would be helpful if elders are reminded, even the community is reminded, what services the GSOs actually do. There are some people who aren't too sure what the GSOs are able to do. I just think we need to do a little more education on that part, and local radio stations are the best to do that. Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely):** Thank you, Mr. Blake. Premier McLeod.

**HON. BOB MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. We're certainly prepared to do that. We will find out which communities have radio stations, and I'm sure we can get our GSOs to go on the air and talk about some of the services that they can provide, and educate, and communicate the programs and services that are available to people. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely):** Thank you, Premier McLeod. Mr. Blake.

**MR. BLAKE:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I know it states that there's no end date for the employment, but can the Premier assure us that these positions will be ongoing for, maybe, say, the next 10 years, for example, or any sort of timeframe? I just wouldn't want this important resource to the communities to end in the next couple of years. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely):** Thank you, Mr. Blake. Premier McLeod.

**HON. BOB MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. All of these GSOs, as I understand it, are indeterminate

positions, so those positions will continue. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely):** Mr. Thank you, Premier McLeod. Mr. Nakimayak.

**MR. NAKIMAYAK:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Getting back to the topic of GSOs, I won't reiterate too many questions of what some of my colleagues have said; but I know in my region they're very important, and in some smaller communities we do not have some. I'm just wondering, the Premier mentioned that in some communities it's hard to hire a GSO who has the capacity. I'm thinking maybe we can utilize other communities that already have existing GSOs to help build that capacity. I think, for the communities that are close together, one community with the capacity, one without, it may be easier to work that way and make more sense to help the dynamics of the people, maybe some elders, and people who cannot read in those communities, to help them understand what a GSO does in hopes of putting in a position there. I think it's very important in small communities. Coming from a small community, myself, I see the difference that one GSO makes within the whole department. As well, working with the GOC, I think we need to look at that and see how are we going to streamline this. Maybe that might help with funding down the road, but a lot of the work that we do is more localized, so I am just wondering if the Premier with the department would be looking at training, using GSOs to train possible GSOs in the community where there is a lack of capacity. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely):** Thank you, Mr. Nakimayak. Premier McLeod.

**HON. BOB MCLEOD:** Yes, thank you, Mr. Chair. I certainly believe that we can accomplish that. We bring in all of the GSOs for training at least twice a year. We also have a plan, so we will have an idea. We have GSOs currently who assist smaller communities nearby. They assist with the coverage. They can certainly assist with the capacity building. Some of the smaller centres, we have halftime positions, as well, so I believe that we can certainly develop a plan so that we can not only train people but we can also cover all of the small communities. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely):** Thank you, Premier McLeod. Mr. Nakimayak.

**MR. NAKIMAYAK:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I appreciate the department looking at something like this because I think it is important to employ positions like this in the smaller communities before we go into the regional centres. All of the regional centres, as well as Yellowknife, have all the departments here. We can go to Motor Vehicles,

we can go to the ENR office, places like that where, you know, you may need a system navigator to help people identify where they need to go, but I think in the small communities it is important to try to at least do something like this. A small service like this would be a huge help to the communities. I just want to know what the Premier has to say on that. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely):** Thank you, Mr. Nakimayak. Premier McLeod.

**HON. BOB MCLEOD:** Certainly, we are very pleased with the GSO program. With regards to the larger centres, we will certainly look at improving delivery of services. I think a lot of people have indicated that they have difficulty in finding out or understanding what programs and services we deliver. As an open, transparent government, we will make sure that we find ways so that those programs and services are communicated to the public. We will also look at levels of service delivery to see if there are ways we can improve. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely):** Thank you, Premier McLeod. Mr. Nakimayak.

**MR. NAKIMAYAK:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I am just going to move on there. I appreciate the response from the Premier and the department. I am looking at, on page 117, the Tuktoyaktuk Community Corporation Strategic Direction and Action Plan. I just wonder if we can get a few details from the Premier on that. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely):** Thank you, Mr. Nakimayak. Premier McLeod.

**HON. BOB MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. This is an initiative where we were approached by the community of Tuktoyaktuk, who had submitted proposals to both the Government of Canada and ourselves and wanted to take their own initiative to ready the community for the onslaught of expected tourists and visitors with the opening of the Inuvik to Tuktoyaktuk Highway. So we identified funds for two years to assist the community to get started. They were also successful in accessing funds from the Government of Canada. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely):** Thank you, Premier McLeod. Mr. Nakimayak.

**MR. NAKIMAYAK:** Well, thank you, Mr. Chair. I do not have anything further, thanks.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely):** Thank you, Mr. Nakimayak. Further questions? Mr. O'Reilly.

**MR. O'REILLY:** Thanks, Mr. Chair. Yes, I, too, want to ask some questions about the funding for the Tuktoyaktuk Community Corporation. Before the

Minister tries to say that I am opposed to this funding, it is a one-off here, and I am just wondering: what kind of criteria are there for approving these sort of one-off requests? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely):** Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Premier McLeod.

**HON. BOB MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. From time to time, we have requests from communities that are not covered elsewhere, and we look at them to see if we feel they should be supported. I think that, if in future perhaps there are starting to be more and more of these kinds of requests, we would look at the possibility of developing policy in that regard. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely):** Thank you, Premier McLeod. Mr. O'Reilly.

**MR. O'REILLY:** Thanks, Mr. Chair. I appreciate that from the Minister. In fact, there is other funding later on in the budget for the NWT Friendship Centres. Look, I think that is probably a good investment of money, as well. The Minister talked about maybe developing a policy. It looks like it probably is time to develop a policy to ensure that others know that there may be funding opportunities directly with the Cabinet and that there are going to be criteria around that. Is the Minister committing to developing a policy framework for these sorts of funding requests that are made directly to Cabinet? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely):** Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Premier McLeod.

**HON. BOB MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I guess the easy way would be just to say no to all requests, but I think it would be more appropriate for us to look at developing funding guidelines. It would assist us as we get these requests. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely):** Thank you, Premier McLeod. Mr. O'Reilly.

**MR. O'REILLY:** Thanks, Mr. Chair. So, funding guidelines, is that something, then, that the Minister is prepared to provide as, I do not know, a draft document to Regular MLAs so that we can have a look at that, or perhaps even the public, so that we can make this sort of process more transparent and accountable? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely):** Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Premier McLeod.

**HON. BOB MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. We are prepared to develop those guidelines and share it with committee at the appropriate time. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely):** Thank you, Premier McLeod. Mr. O'Reilly.

**MR. O'REILLY:** Thanks, Mr. Chair. I appreciate the commitment from the Minister on this. Is that something, then, that is likely to happen in 2018-2019? Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely):** Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Premier McLeod.

**HON. BOB MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. We would endeavour to do that. Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely):** Thank you, Premier McLeod. Mr. O'Reilly.

**MR. O'REILLY:** Thanks, Mr. Chair. I do not have anything further on this part of the budget. Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely):** Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Further questions? Seeing none, I will call this summary on page 117. Directorate, operations expenditure summary, \$5,410,000. Does committee agree?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely):** Agreed. Thank you. We shall move on to pages 121 to 123. Any questions on 121 to 123 before I read the summary? Seeing none, I will go to page 121. Executive council offices, operations expenditure summary, \$4,001,000. Does committee agree?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely):** Agreed. Thank you. We shall move on to pages 125 to 127. Members, could you make reference to which page you are asking questions to under Indigenous and Intergovernmental Affairs? Thank you. Mr. Beaulieu.

**MR. BEAULIEU:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I just wanted to get into the negotiations part of this section a bit. I am wondering if the Minister could advise me as to what the plan is for the self-government portion of the negotiations with the Akaitcho? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely):** Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. Premier McLeod.

**HON. BOB MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. My immediate understanding is that we will be negotiating a land and resources land claim agreement and will follow it up with a self-government agreement. Some Aboriginal governments or Indigenous governments have negotiated both at the same time, but my understanding is the Akaitcho will be moving in that direction.

The federal government has started a new process to develop an Aboriginal rights framework to clarify section 35 rights that are under the treaties. We are not sure how that would affect the future self-government negotiations. There is an indication that it may impact on future self-government talks, but at the present moment, my understanding is that we will continue the way we have always done it where we will finalize and negotiate a land and resources claim and also negotiate a self-government agreement further down the road. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely):** Thank you, Premier McLeod. Mr. Beaulieu.

**MR. BEAULIEU:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, there would be some need to develop capacity at the Indigenous government level. I would like to ask the Premier if the Premier has any, I guess, opinion on -- no, I shouldn't ask for an opinion, I suppose. If the government is thinking about when the negotiations on the self-government portion of the Akaitcho negotiations will start?

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely):** Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. Premier McLeod.

**HON. BOB MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Before I speak specifically on the Akaitcho, I should point out that, in other areas, we have entered into agreements with the federal government, ourselves, and the Aboriginal government to provide for capacity building. I think we are having some good success there.

Also, with the Akaitcho government, we have seconded at least one employee to the Akaitcho to help with the work that they are doing on land claims and self-government. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely):** Thank you, Premier McLeod. Mr. Beaulieu.

**MR. BEAULIEU:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I do not have any further questions on this section at this time.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely):** Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. Mr. Thompson.

**MR. THOMPSON:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I am looking on page 126, and it's the NWT Friendship Centre. As I said in my reply to the budget, this is a very positive step by the department to help an organization that has a huge impact on a number of communities. I notice there is \$250,000 in there. Is this something that the department is going to look at as an ongoing basis, or is this a one-time budget line? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely):** Thank you, Mr. Thompson. Premier McLeod.

**HON. BOB MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. This will benefit all friendship centres in the Northwest Territories. There is an old saying that, if you give somebody a fish, they will eat for one day. If you teach them how to fish, they can feed themselves for the rest of their life. I think this is akin to that, where we are helping fund a fundraiser. We will match the amount of money that they raise up to a further \$180,000, then we are going to do it on a two-year basis, and then we will review it after that. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely):** Thank you, Premier McLeod. Mr. Thompson.

**MR. THOMPSON:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I thank the Premier for that answer. That is a positive step. It's a two-year process, and I think that is a very good move by the department. I guess my concern is, if we are going to review it, is the funding still going to be able to be there, or are they going to review it and see if they need to increase the funding? Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely):** Thank you, Mr. Thompson. Premier McLeod.

**HON. BOB MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. My expectation is we would probably review it after the first year. We would not see a gap in services. I think the expectation is that, with this funding, the friendship centres will be able to fundraise a significant amount of resources outside of the current core funding that they receive from the federal government. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely):** Thank you, Premier McLeod. Mr. Thompson.

**MR. THOMPSON:** Thank you, Mr. Chair, and I thank the Premier for that answer. I greatly appreciate that we are looking at it after the first year and seeing how it works, because I, too, would hate to see a gap in an organization that does a lot of good work across the territories from what I have seen and heard from the people there. This is a very positive step, and I would like to thank the department for that.

My next question, though, again, is about the non-government organization stabilization fund. It is in the Department of MACA. The reason I am asking this is because, I believe, in the January 17<sup>th</sup> letter that was sent to the department, one of the other recommendations by SCOGO was that the NGO stabilization fund would actually be moved back to the Executive. Can the Premier confirm if this was part of that letter? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely):** Thank you, Mr. Thompson. Premier McLeod.

**HON. BOB MCLEOD:** Thank you. It was part of a response, and through you, Mr. Chair, I will ask Mr. Courtoreille to talk about our response in that area. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely):** Thank you, Premier McLeod. Mr. Courtoreille.

**MR. COURTOREILLE:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. In the department's response dated January 12<sup>th</sup> through SCOGO, I mentioned that there are currently no plans for the Government of the Northwest Territories to transfer the NGO stabilization fund to the Department of EIA. Thank you, sir.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely):** Thank you, Mr. Courtoreille. Mr. Thompson.

**MR. THOMPSON:** Thank you, and I thank Mr. Courtoreille for that answer. I guess my concern, though, is that PUB is being planned to be moved to the Department of Infrastructure, and the Standing Committee on Government Operations has made the recommendation that the NGO stabilization fund actually go back to the Executive. What is the difference between PUB and the stabilization fund? Why isn't that being moved back, as per recommendation from the committee? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely):** Thank you, Mr. Thompson. Premier McLeod.

**HON. BOB MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I guess we don't see any difference. We are moving those functions to those departments that have the expertise to deal with those programs. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely):** Thank you, Premier McLeod. Mr. Thompson.

**MR. THOMPSON:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I thank the Premier for that answer. I guess we are going to probably have a difference of opinion, because in my attendance at these meetings, the committee really felt that this should be put back into this department. This work started out and moved to the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs, and I think this would be more beneficial as a department looking at this. I have seen some organizations come in to your department and ask for requests. Would this not be a better fit than the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely):** Thank you, Mr. Thompson. Premier McLeod.

**HON. BOB MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. My understanding is MACA has responsibilities for volunteerism and other voluntary services, and also dealing with the communities. So they're in a much better situation to deal with the funding requests and the services that are provided through that fund. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely):** Thank you, Premier McLeod. Mr. Thompson.

**MR. THOMPSON:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I have to praise the Department of Community and Municipal Affairs for the great job that they do. They do a lot of good work with volunteers, but this is a different sort of fund. So, again, like I said, I have to disagree with the Premier on this, but at this point in time I have no further questions in this matter. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely):** Thank you, Mr. Thompson. Mr. Testart.

**MR. TESTART:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I'd like to thank my honourable friend from Nahendeh for raising this important issue; this is something that the Standing Committee on Government Operations, which I chair, has taken very seriously and made numerous recommendations for. I think the NGO Stabilization Fund will solve a couple of problems if it is moved back to executive. It does appear that the executive is taking action on ensuring necessary funds are provided to groups like the Friendship Centres, and that's an important cause, but it needs to be defined by some sort of policy. I know the Premier has made the commitments earlier about a funding policy for that. The crux of the matter is that the NGO Stabilization Fund currently sits in the area of the Department of Community and Municipal Affairs that promotes volunteerism. When questions have been put to the Minister as to the department's use of the NGO Stabilization Fund to promote volunteerism, the department and the Minister have conceded that it does not, in fact, promote volunteerism; it is for stabilizing NGOs, and many of our NGOs are third-party service providers, such as the Salvation Army, the YWCA. These are providing core services to residents, and they're not engaging volunteers, and they're not providing community-level activities. So, given that the public policy objective of MACA's role over the NGO Stabilization Fund is to promote volunteerism, and the fund does not do that, is the Premier willing to reconsider this and move it back to Executive so it can be used to stabilize third-party service providers that are NGOs? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely):** Thank you, Mr. Testart. Premier McLeod.

**HON. BOB MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. We see MACA as providing community services and working with communities, and we feel that the NGO Stabilization Fund is best situated at MACA. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely):** Thank you, Premier McLeod. Mr. Testart.

**MR. TESTART:** Okay, does the Premier believe that this fund promotes volunteerism? Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely):** Thank you, Mr. Testart. Premier McLeod.

**HON. BOB MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I said MACA deals with volunteerism. I think this fund primarily promotes community services. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely):** Thank you, Premier McLeod. Mr. Testart.

**MR. TESTART:** Okay, thank you. I acknowledge the Premier's response, and I understand that this fund is not moving during his tenure as Premier. I think that's a shame, because Members on the standing committee have made numerous requests that this funding be moved and increased, and that has not happened. It's constantly over-subscribed. Assessments of the funding over the past, I think, 10 years have shown that it's underfunded. We need around \$500,000 in the fund; we haven't seen any increases to that. Again, it's not helping promote volunteerism, which seems at odds with the Department of Community and Municipal Affairs' goals. I'll accept what the Premier is saying, but expect further advocacy on this NGO Stabilization Fund moving forward because it does not belong in MACA, and Members have been very clear on that. With that, I have nothing further. Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely):** Thank you, Mr. Testart. Premier McLeod.

**HON. BOB MCLEOD:** I thank the Member for his comments. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely):** Thank you, Premier McLeod. Further questions? Ms. Green, then Mr. O'Reilly.

**MS. GREEN:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, could the Minister please give us an overview of the responsibilities of the new deputy secretary for federal engagement? Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely):** Thank you, Ms. Green. Premier McLeod.

**HON. BOB MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. As the Member knows, with this new federal government, there have been certainly increased interactions at

all levels, and with a lot more of the work being done in Ottawa. There's been a substantial increase in what we call FPTs, or federal-provincial-territorial meetings. Specifically, the deputy secretary will provide strategic advice to the Premiers, Ministers, secretary to Cabinet, and deputy ministers on an engagement that the federal government aim at achieving the Government of the Northwest Territories' key objectives; lead the development of an updated, strategic, collaborative, and cohesive, all-of-government approach to the Government of the Northwest Territories' relationships with Ottawa, with the aim of advancing the Government of the Northwest Territories' key objectives at achieving mandate priorities; coordinate the Government of the Northwest Territories' engagement with the federal government and provide, particularly at the deputy minister and Ministerial levels on mandate priorities, regular reports to Cabinet and standing committees, as required, on effort and results achieved; represent the Government of the Northwest Territories on key files with senior federal officials, for example, discussions regarding new fiscal arrangements with Indigenous peoples; provide strategic advice, intelligence, insight, and information on federal priorities and actions that may affect the Northwest Territories; lead the design and delivery of research, education, and other activities that will increase the awareness and understanding by Canada of the unique context, issues, and opportunities that exist in the Northwest Territories.

I should add that there are still some outstanding issues with regard to devolution and, certainly, when we met with Minister Philpott and Minister Bennett, there will be substantial work involved with working with Aboriginal governments and the federal government, as they look at improving the areas of delivering programs and services; and it's incumbent on us to work with the Indigenous governments to make sure that they are able to access all of the funds that they are entitled to, and that they do not miss out. Also, we'll work with them to enhance their ability and enhance their access to resources. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely):** Thank you, Premier McLeod. Ms. Green.

**MS. GREEN:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, can the Minister please confirm that just one person is being hired for this role? Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely):** Thank you, Ms. Green. Premier McLeod.

**HON. BOB MCLEOD:** Yes, Mr. Chair.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Premier McLeod. Ms. Green.

**MS. GREEN:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, we have departments in this government that have 30 people to cover the range of tasks that are described as the responsibility of this one individual. So can the Minister please tell us, of all those tasks that he just outlined, what the priorities are? What are the top two priorities of the person in this role? Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Ms. Green. Premier McLeod.

**HON. BOB MCLEOD:** I'd say the top priority would be to represent the Government of the Northwest Territories in key files with senior federal officials, for example, discussions regarding new fiscal relationships with Indigenous people; and lead the development in an updated, strategic, collaborative, and cohesive, all-of-government approach to the Government of the Northwest Territories' relationships with Ottawa, with the aim of advancing the Government of the Northwest Territories' key objectives and achieving mandate priorities, amongst others. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely):** Thank you, Premier McLeod. Ms. Green.

**MS. GREEN:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. So I had the impression that one of the tasks of this office and one that would be very important is to do any problem solving around the flow of money from federal government's infrastructure pot, this \$600 million that is coming to the GNWT in the next 10 years. Is this a task that this office is going to undertake and on a priority basis? Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely):** Thank you, Ms. Green. Premier McLeod.

**HON. BOB MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I could see this person representing us in different functions, but I would say that infrastructure funding is well managed, well under way, and I do not see any significant issues going forward on infrastructure funding. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely):** Thank you, Premier McLeod. Ms. Green.

**MS. GREEN:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I appreciate that clarification. So is the priority task, then, of this office to pursue the themes that the Minister developed in his red alert statement of last November? Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely):** Thank you, Ms. Green. Premier McLeod.

**HON. BOB MCLEOD:** Thank you. As long as you understand that the concern with the red alert was that there was no federal economic development strategy in place to replace the fact that there would

be trillions of dollars of oil and gas left in the ground. So part of the Arctic Policy Framework would be a part of that. Also, reviewing the revised new fiscal arrangement with Aboriginal governments will be a large part of that, as well. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely):** Thank you, Premier McLeod. Ms. Green.

**MS. GREEN:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I understand the need for new fiscal arrangements and to make those a priority. I guess what I am less sure about is the need to spend more money trying to revive the dormant offshore. Can the Minister confirm that that is not something that this office will be doing? Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely):** Thank you, Ms. Green. Premier McLeod.

**HON. BOB MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. The whole concern with the fact that there was no federal economic development strategy for the Northwest Territories, there is no federal vision in place for the North, and, through the Arctic Policy Framework, the federal government has assured us that they will be developing their approach and their vision for the North to 2030 and will guide all of their activities in the North, their funding in the North, and their investments in the North and how they will help transition the economy of the Arctic, which includes the three northern territories, Newfoundland, Labrador, Quebec, and Manitoba. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely):** Thank you, Premier McLeod. Ms. Green.

**MS. GREEN:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Okay, so I feel like I am putting the pieces together now. So one of the key pieces will be the development and implementation or the remainder of the development and implementation of the Arctic Policy Framework; is that correct? Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely):** Thank you, Ms. Green. Premier McLeod.

**HON. BOB MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Our biggest concern was that there was no accompanying federal economic development strategy; there was no vision for the North or for the Arctic. I guess the federal government has indicated and they are well under way in undertaking work to develop an Arctic Policy Framework. We have written to them and agreed to participate in the development of that framework. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely):** Thank you, Premier McLeod. Ms. Green.

**MS. GREEN:** Thank you very much to the Minister for his responses. Nothing further.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely):** Thank you, Ms. Green. Mr. O'Reilly.

**MR. O'REILLY:** Thanks, Mr. Chair. My colleague from Yellowknife Centre raised some concerns I was going to speak to with regard to this additional staff person in Ottawa, but I have a few other questions on it. \$387,000 sounds like a lot of money for one person. Can the Minister just provide some kind of breakdown on how this money is going to be used? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely):** Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Mr. Aumond.

**MR. AUMOND:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. So the \$387,000 is broken down into four various themes: Compensation and benefits, \$225,000; operational expenses associated with the position of \$12,000; travel, \$50,000; and then contract services to support the activities for \$100,000; for a total of \$387,000. Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely):** Thank you, Mr. Aumond. Mr. O'Reilly.

**MR. O'REILLY:** Thanks, Mr. Chair. I appreciate that breakdown. \$50,000 for travel for one person, that person is going to be spending a lot of time in the air, I guess. Is that money, then, going to be supporting other people to go to Ottawa, or does that come out of other departmental budgets or ministerial budgets? Just what is the travel money for? It just sounds like a lot of money for one person to be flying back and forth between Ottawa and Yellowknife. That may be one trip a week or something. Okay, let's find out what the money is for. Thanks, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely):** Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Mr. Aumond.

**MR. AUMOND:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. So the \$50,000 in travel is there to support the position. It is also there to support what we think may be requirements for other folks in the GNWT to travel to support the activity. It may also be used to help pay for travel for folks who we may want to bring in from Ottawa to educate them on the realities of the NWT. One of the issues that we are finding is that there are folks in the federal government and elsewhere in Ottawa and in southern Canada who have influence; their understanding of the realities of the North are limited and somewhat dated, in particular the federal public service, who seem to think, when they come up with programming, they don't get the difference, that we are unlike in the South where they generally have a reserve system for Indigenous people, that we have integrated programming and services in the NWT. So we need

to take opportunities to educate them. Part of the travel and some of that money in the travel budget would be used to undertake that endeavour, as well. Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely):** Thank you, Mr. Aumond. Mr. O'Reilly.

**MR. O'REILLY:** Thanks, Mr. Chair. Yes, I am just not terribly comfortable with having a \$50,000 pot of money to bring people down to Ottawa without really sort of having many parameters around that, but I guess we will just have to see how it is used. On the contract services of \$100,000, can someone explain what that is for? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely):** Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Mr. Aumond.

**MR. AUMOND:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. So a few aspects that we will be looking at to obtain some outside services in helping with is around educating Canada about the NWT. So one of the aspects of the federal engagement strategy is to demonstrate and share where the NWT could be a model for Canada in areas such as Indigenous rights, recognition, reconciliation, and government-to-government relationships, co-management, and revenue sharing.

So the main audience would be the federal public service but also thought leaders and academics, looking at seeding some academic research around the unique NWT models and results being achieved, support for public conversations and awareness workshops and panels on northern models and issues, and opportunities for federal officials, as I said earlier, to learn about the NWT through learning events within the public service or other forums that could include support for bringing federal officials to the NWT; looking at producing some materials to help to tell our story. This is primarily research and design, translation, and printing fact sheets and other information that can be used in meetings with federal officials and others to graphically illustrate key issues in the context for decision-making. Some of the areas that we will probably look to focus on will be the NWT economy, territorial programs and service financing, and intersecting of financing with the Indigenous governments; an illustration on how the GNWT mandates priorities on infrastructure; sustainable development; and how people can contribute to the priorities; Canada's priorities for sustainable economic growth and jobs; other research and expert support.

There are new and emerging issues for which the GNWT is not typically known to have capacity for and expertise in Ottawa. This again could include commissioning and receiving research on areas that help bolster our decisions with federal

counterparts. Expenditures in this area could also be used to help us consider the implications of domestic and international policy changes that the federal government was bringing through the Arctic Policy Framework. We know that the whole international area with respect to the Arctic is increasingly becoming important to Canada. We have to better understand our role in that, how the broader world economy may impact us. Again, educating the world about the NWT.

Another way to engage the attention of the federal officials is through participation in international forums for both public forums and Cabinet, such as the Arctic Council and the Arctic Circle. This would be used, as I said, again, to have expertise that we don't currently have in the government to help us with that endeavour. Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely):** Thank you, Mr. Aumond. Mr. O'Reilly.

**MR. O'REILLY:** Thanks, Mr. Chair. I appreciate the detailed explanation. I am still not sure about this expenditure. Is there actually a job description that is available for this position? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely):** Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Premier McLeod.

**HON. BOB MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. We will provide a copy of the job description as soon as we have completed it, which will be in the near future. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely):** Thank you, Premier McLeod. Mr. O'Reilly.

**MR. O'REILLY:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I guess I will just go on record as having questions or concerns about this particular expenditure. If there had been more of an emphasis on infrastructure, maybe getting our territorial formula funding arrangement changed, I could support this. It looks to me like this is a lot of the sort of messaging that the Premier has already started with his red alert campaign. I don't think I could support this.

I want to move on to one other item in this section of the budget. It is also highlighted in the budget address document of additional \$595,000 to be allocated to help finalize Indigenous rights agreements. Can someone tell me what that money is going to be used for and what it is going to accomplish? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely):** Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Premier McLeod.

**HON. BOB MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. That money will be used to have a push to try to significantly advance, if not finalize, the outstanding land claims in the next couple of years. It will be for

negotiators. Also, the Ministerial Special Representative in the reports made some recommendations for our government to play a much enhanced facilitation role in having Aboriginal governments meet to resolve outstanding issues amongst themselves. I think we are at a point where we made revised offers to the NWT Metis Nation and to the Akaitcho government. We are optimistic that we will be making a similar offer to the Dehcho First Nations in the near future, as well. I think that these resources will allow us to do so. Maybe I will ask Mr. Courtoreille to go into more detail with regard to the breakdown of the funding. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely):** Thank you, Premier McLeod. Time has expired, but I will allow more clarification. Go ahead, Mr. Courtoreille.

**MR. COURTOREILLE:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. The \$595,000 proposed for this budget item consists of \$450,000 in contract services primarily related to the hiring of additional negotiators; \$55,000 related to travel; and \$90,000 related to facilitation. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely):** Thank you, Mr. Courtoreille. Further questions? Mr. O'Reilly.

**MR. O'REILLY:** Thanks, Mr. Chair. Thanks for your patience. I just have a couple of others I want to follow up on, on this one. We have had a couple of years where the budget for negotiations or support for negotiations has been cut in the previous two budgets. It is good to see there is going to be some increased funding here. What assurance can the Minister give us that this is going to help close these deals? We are more than two years past the beginning of our mandate, and there hasn't been one new agreement signed. The joint advisory committee that was set up with the MLAs has met twice. What assurance can the Premier give us that these deals are going to be closed in the less than two years left in our mandate? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely):** Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Premier McLeod.

**HON. BOB MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. This is not a business where I can guarantee or give any assurances. All I can say is we are giving it an all-out effort to significantly advance the outstanding land claims. I believe that with these additional resources and renewed effort and new approach, that we will make significant progress. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely):** Thank you, Premier McLeod. Mr. O'Reilly, further questions to this activity summary? Mr. Vanthuyne.

**MR. VANTHUYNE:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just want to see if I can get some additional clarification

with regard to the negotiations. Premier, you noted that there is an effort going on with regard to the outstanding land rights agreements. You mention the NWT Metis, and I am just wondering if you can comment on: where does the North Slave Metis Alliance sit in this? Obviously, it has been very publicly known that they have had concerns about not being consulted in the past. They won a recent court case that has suggested that both levels of government have not consulted fairly with them. Now that this has been done, on a go-forward basis, what would be the steps in which our government would deal with the North Slave Metis Alliance as it relates to land rights? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely):** Thank you, Mr. Vanthuyne. Premier McLeod.

**HON. BOB MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Through the court process, the judge, when it came to Aboriginal rights for hunting, which for the Metis North Slave Alliance, which to my mind there was never any doubt or question, the judge also directed that there be a strength of claim review with regards to what the North Slave Metis Alliance were requesting. Both the Government of Canada and our government completed strengths of claims. The North Slave Metis Alliance and the NWT Metis Nation had an open house, which they reached and signed an agreement that would describe how they would go forward. The MSR also made some recommendations as to the fact that we should play a greater facilitation role, and also, he had some recommendations as to how the NWT Metis Nation, in their draft AIP or in their draft negotiations, should deal with the North Slave Metis Alliance, which, obviously, is just a recommendation from the MSR, but certainly we are willing to try to play a facilitator's role. I think that is where it is at right now.

Generally, we become involved if the federal government recognizes that there is a table for land claims negotiations. That has been the policy of our government, and right now, they are still seeking a table to further negotiations. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely):** Thank you, Premier McLeod. Mr. Vanthuyne.

**MR. VANTHUYNE:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Thank you for the insight. I really appreciate that. I am also wondering: has the NWT Metis and the North Slave Metis Alliance, either or both of them, made a request yet to the territorial government to mediate any kind of discussions between the two or discrepancies between the two to this point? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely):** Thank you, Mr. Vanthuyne. Premier McLeod.

**HON. BOB MCLEOD:** Well, we as a government have met on bilateral basis with the NWT Metis Nation, where they requested an opportunity to clarify their positions on several long-standing items, and I certainly believe that we had a very good discussion. We went a long way to having a better understanding of each other's positions, and I think it certainly advanced the discussions.

We were invited to the public meeting that the NWT Metis Nation leadership had here in Yellowknife, along the North Slave Metis Alliance, and at some point, early in the meeting, they asked the government people to leave, and they were able to reach an agreement on, going forward, how they would work together is my understanding. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely):** Thank you, Premier McLeod. Mr. Vanthuyne.

**MR. VANTHUYNE:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Nothing further at this time. Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely):** Thank you, Mr. Vanthuyne. Questions? Seeing none, I shall call the summary expenditure on page 125, Indigenous and Intergovernmental Affairs, operations expenditure summary, \$8,081,000. Does committee agree?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely):** Agreed. We shall move on to the next activity, starting on page 129 to page 133. Please reference the page you have questions directed to. Questions? Seeing none, I will call page 129, office of priorities and planning, operations expenditure summary, \$880,000. Does committee agree?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely):** Agreed. We shall go back to page 107, departmental total for Executive and Indigenous Affairs, \$21,393,000. Does committee agree?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely):** Agreed. Thank you, Premier. Thanks to your witnesses for appearing before us. Sergeant-at-Arms, please escort the witnesses from the Chamber.

I'm ahead. Does committee agree that consideration of the Department of Executive and Indigenous Affairs is concluded?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely):** Agreed. Thank you, Premier, and thanks to your witnesses for appearing before us. Sergeant-at-Arms, please escort the witnesses from the Chamber.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake):** Thank you, committee. Committee, we have agreed to continue with the Department of Lands. I will turn to the Minister responsible for the Department of Lands. Mr. Sebert, do you wish to make opening comments?

**HON. LOUIS SEBERT:** Yes, I do, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake):** Thank you, Mr. Sebert.

**HON. LOUIS SEBERT:** Mr. Chair, I am pleased to present the 2018-2019 Main Estimates for the Department of Lands. Overall, the department's estimates propose an increase of \$1,447,000, or 5 per cent over the 2017-2018 Main Estimates.

Highlights of the proposed estimates include initiative funding of \$1,451,000; forced growth totalling \$480,000, sunsets of \$215,000, and a reduction of \$116,000. Our estimates include one-time funding of \$558,000 in 2018-2019 to lay the groundwork to develop an approach to manage untenured and unauthorized occupancy of public lands. This funding includes two one-year term positions.

Our estimates include funding to address the long-standing issue of equity leases.

Our estimates include ongoing funding of \$250,000 to support the building of land use planning capacity and will also fund one new senior land use planner position.

The main estimates include \$150,000 in 2018-2019 to support the GNWT Agriculture Strategy Implementation initiative being led by the Department of Industry, Tourism and Investment.

These estimates also include forced growth of \$360,000 for TSC chargebacks and \$120,000 for software, licensing, maintenance, and support costs.

The Department of Lands will be moving forward with full implementation of the Western Arctic Centre for Geomatics in Inuvik, 2018-2019.

We have one sunset of \$250,000 for a business consultant. This position was approved for a three-year term beginning in 2015-2016 to support the establishment of the Western Arctic Centre for Geomatics.

The department's spending in 2018-2019 continues to support the mandate of the 18<sup>th</sup> Legislative Assembly. We continue to assess our resources to ensure we are effectively managing programs and services, and that our approach to management and administration of public lands reflects the interests of the people of the Northwest Territories.

This concludes my opening remarks. I look forward to Members' comments and questions. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake):** Thank you, Minister Sebert. Minister, do you wish to bring witnesses into the Chamber?

**HON. LOUIS SEBERT:** Yes, I do.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake):** Thank you. Sergeant-at-Arms, please escort the witnesses into the Chamber. Would the Minister please introduce his witnesses for the record.

**HON. LOUIS SEBERT:** Thank you, Mr. Chair, to my right is Willard Hagen, deputy minister. To my left Brenda Hilderman, director of Finance and Administration. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely):** Thank you, Minister. I will now ask committee to turn to your main estimates document, Department of Lands, which begins on page 309. Department of Lands, total department \$27,673,000, which we will defer. Does committee agree?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake):** Committee, we'll now go to page 313, corporate management, operations expense expenditure summary, \$3,170,000. Any questions? Ms. Green.

**MS. GREEN:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, my question is about page 313. The chargeback number has gone up by about \$150,000 a year, and I'm wondering what change occurred to account for this change in chargebacks? Thank you.

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

**HON. LOUIS SEBERT:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Perhaps I could defer that question to Ms. Hilderman.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake):** Thank you, Mr. Sebert. Ms. Hilderman.

**MS. HILDERMAN:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. The chargeback base funding increases in 2018-2019 by \$225,000. We have been short-funded since transfer date on our TSE chargebacks and this is to right-fund our base. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake):** Thank you, Ms. Hilderman. Ms. Green. None. Okay. If no further questions, committee, we'll go to corporate management, operations expenditure summary, \$3,170,000. Does committee agree?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake):** Agreed. Thank you. Next we have informatics shared service centre, operations expenditure summary, \$6,754,000. Does committee agree? Any questions. Yes, Ms. Green.

**MS. GREEN:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, can I confirm with the Minister that this is the right segment of the budget in which to ask the question about the agriculture strategy implementation? Thank you.

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

**HON. LOUIS SEBERT:** Thank you. I understand most of the amount for that strategy is in planning and coordination.

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

**MS. GREEN:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I will hold my question until we get to the relevant section. Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake):** Thank you, Ms. Green. Next we have Mr. O'Reilly.

**MR. O'REILLY:** Thanks, Mr. Chair. I'm looking at the business plan that is now a public document, and I see that the geomatics portion of this activity area decreases from about \$3,063,000 to \$2.7 million, so can someone tell me what is happening in here? Are we cutting money in here so we can fund the Western Arctic Geomatics Centre, or what is happening, Mr. Chair? Thank you.

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

**HON. LOUIS SEBERT:** I'm going to ask Ms. Hilderman to assist with the response to that question. Thank you.

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

**MS. HILDERMAN:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. The change in the base funding for geomatics from 2017-2018 to 2018-2019 is \$362,000. That is a reduction of one geomatics officer in the amount of \$112,000, which was the very last of our phase 2 reduction proposals. A sunset of a business consultant for the Western Arctic Centre for Geomatics, it was only originally approved for a three-year period, and this is the end of the three-year term. That is \$209,000 sunset; \$50,000 is for the agriculture strategy initiative for geospatial data and products for mapping. An increase of \$59,000 forced growth for software, licensing, maintenance, and support. Then a transfer of \$150,000 for aerial photography from informatics to operations division,

Commissioner lands administration, and then a net change of zero for the Western Arctic Centre for Geomatics. It was scheduled for a reduction in 2018-2019 from our phase 2 reduction proposals, and we are pleased to say that that funding has been approved ongoing in 2018-2019. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

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

**MR. O'REILLY:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. That is a helpful, sort of, overview of money moving around there and so on. I guess I want to ask the Minister: are we cutting the staff position that is probably located in Yellowknife and just kind of using that funding, then, to build up the Western Arctic Geoscience Centre in Inuvik?

Look, I have always been on record as supporting that centre in Inuvik and capitalizing on the investment that this government has made in the Mackenzie Valley Fibre Optic Line, but if we are just shuffling money around here to build up that office, that is, you know, a result of Cabinet's fiscal reduction strategy. I am not sure that is the way I wanted this to proceed, but maybe if the Minister can help me understand this. Thanks, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely):** Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Mr. Sebert.

**HON. LOUIS SEBERT:** Yes, thank you, Mr. Chair. As has been mentioned, the budget includes a reinstatement for the Western Arctic Centre for Geomatics to fund the three positions there. I understand that that is unchanged. Of course, that reverses the phase 2 reduction proposal that was to take effect in 2018-2019. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

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

**MR. O'REILLY:** Thanks, Mr. Chair. I don't think that was in answer to the question I asked. The position in Yellowknife, is it being cut to help fund the position in Inuvik? Thanks Mr. Chair.

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

**HON. LOUIS SEBERT:** No, that is not the case. Perhaps Mr. Hagen could add something.

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

**MR. HAGEN:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. The geomatics officer you are pointing to was the last of our reductions from last year, and it has had no impact on bringing back the Western Arctic Centre for Geomatics that you all were in favour of. It has not impacted that. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake):** Thank you, Mr. Hagen. Mr. O'Reilly.

**MR. O'REILLY:** Thanks, Mr. Chair. Yes, I do not think I am going to get an answer, but, look, I support the centre in Inuvik. I have always said that. Just, to me, it looks like we are shuffling around money to support that initiative. I support the initiative, but shuffling around money to do it, that is probably not a good way to do. I will just leave it at that. Thanks, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake):** Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Further comment, any further questions on pages 317 to 319? Mr. Vanthuyne.

**MR. VANTHUYNE:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Not necessarily a question but a comment. That is simply again that, as the chair, of course, of Economic Development and Environment, we found ourselves very supportive of the Western Arctic Centre for Geomatics. What we would encourage, certainly, is that the Department of Lands along with ITI and the Executive work towards having this positive development be very inclusive of our new mandate item, which is to develop the knowledge-based economy. So, maybe if the Minister could give any kind of comment to that regard as to: is there any undertaking or any effort to do that? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

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

**HON. LOUIS SEBERT:** What I can say is that we are very happy that this is finally going ahead and reversing the phase 2 reduction. I think we do understand that the centre is a position to support the knowledge economy, which is very important. So, yes, we will be proceeding with this, of course, in a financial sense. We are hoping that it will lead to further development with ITI or Infrastructure, so yes. We will be working also with Aurora College so that the students will find this to be an area of interest in their studies and also, of course, with the federal government, so yes, we are excited about this initiative. Thank you.

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

**MR. TESTART:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I just wanted to follow up on my strong support for the NWT Centre for Geomatics, as well. The Minister just mentioned working with Aurora College, and I am just curious if he can elaborate on that point a little bit further. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

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

**HON. LOUIS SEBERT:** Yes, I think that we see this as a real opportunity so that we can build

awareness with students and the students will become interested in this area of study so that they will become more interested in the sciences and engineering, which appears to be where the growth will occur in the future. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake):** Thank you, Minister Testart -- Minister Sebert. Mr. Testart. Sorry.

**MR. TESTART:** Thank you, Mr. Chair, for resolving that identity crisis. I get where the Minister is coming from, but is there any plan in place to develop that that he can share with us? I understand that there is potential there, but, more than just a comment, I mean is the department working to engage the college in developing some sort of strategy or working with the college in the foundational review? Like, is there anything concrete here, or is this just aspirational at this point? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

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

**HON. LOUIS SEBERT:** As I understand it, the staff at the centre will be working with ECE and Aurora College on the development of a geomatics curriculum through kindergarten to grade 12 programming, and exploring opportunities to create post-secondary geomatics program development. So, yes, we are interested. We do see this as a potential area for growth in the future. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

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

**MR. TESTART:** Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you to the Minister for that response. That is good news. Is there a cost to this program? Are there resources dedicated to it? Thank you.

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

**HON. LOUIS SEBERT:** No, there is not a cost that we have ascertained currently. Thank you.

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

**MR. TESTART:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. So, to clarify, this is something that the division is currently undertaking with their own staff resources, to develop this curriculum in conjunction with ECE? Thank you.

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

**HON. LOUIS SEBERT:** Yes, I understand that is the case. Thank you.

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

**MR. TESTART:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I have nothing further, but I do think this is a step in the right direction for promoting knowledge economy initiatives. This centre is a key component of maximizing our benefits in the region, so I support the department on this. Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake):** Thank you, Mr. Testart. Any further questions, committee? Seeing none, I will turn to page 317. Informatics shared service centre, operations expenditure summary, \$6,754,000. Does committee agree?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake):** Agreed. Thank you, committee. Next we have operations expenditure summary, \$10,758,000, from page 320 to 321. Mr. Testart.

**MR. TESTART:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. So the Minister has spoken about the funding to address the long-standing issue of equity leases. I believe this is the appropriate section. Where can I see that funding in the main estimates? Thank you.

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

**HON. LOUIS SEBERT:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. That comes under Commissioner's land administration, the amount set aside for that.

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

**MR. TESTART:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I see that is a substantial increase, from \$1,764,000 to \$2,388,000. I am just wondering if he can elaborate on how money is going to solve this problem? My understanding is that the current leases are administered by the staff, so what are these additional staff positions doing? Why is more staff time going to resolve equity leases? Thank you.

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

**HON. LOUIS SEBERT:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. This issue of equity leases has been a long-standing problem. There are approximately 245 equity leases throughout the Northwest Territories. Only about a quarter, or 64, are in the settled regions, and 181 are within the unsettled areas. When I first heard about this issue, I think it might have been prior to my being elected; I might have heard it from clients; certainly, I heard from Members of my profession after I was elected, I had assumed that this would be fairly simple to straighten out, thinking that all of these leases would be at least similar.

They are not, unfortunately. The ones within the settled regions are fairly straightforward, many of them, but within the unsettled regions, there are other issues involving possible Aboriginal claims or Aboriginal issues, and that is why additional staff is needed. Also, too, it is not merely in every case a question of simply transferring the title. There may be other issues that arise, such as having to resurvey the land or moving some buildings off the land if they are on two pieces of land, so those sorts of issues have to be resolved. We wanted to resolve this on a timely basis, and, as I say, it turned out to be more complicated than I had anticipated. Whenever I looked at a lease, I thought, "Oh, this one's different than the last one I'd seen." So the public very much wants to resolve this and have a certainty, by the public, I mean those who hold leases, so that they can have a path towards fee simple ownership. We thought it was of such importance that it was necessary to hire additional staff because there's going to be an awful lot of work involved in resolving this issue. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

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

**MR. TESTART:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. So the Minister resolves an issue for one of his problem areas by offering fee simple, I'm talking about the Cassidy Point deal that was honoured. So why aren't we just doing something similar? That seems simple enough for those residents, those lease holders. Why don't we offer that deal to everyone who's struggling with this issue? Thank you.

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

**HON. LOUIS SEBERT:** Cassidy Point. Well, hard cases, in a way, make bad law, if I could put it that way. What happened there was that there was an undertaking by a senior member of the staff of the government some years ago that people would get fee simple in that area, at Cassidy Point, and the government felt obligated to come through with that promise, as I think is appropriate; but that promise was not made generally. So, we're going to have to take these more complicated steps to resolve these other 245 equity leases.

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

**MR. TESTART:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. So in doing so, I believe the Minister, and I disagree with his position on this, but he calls it the "honour of the Crown." If the Minister has established a precedent by signing off on that deal and honouring that promise, and that precedent is in the mind of many members of the public who are concerned about these leases, so, again, I want to ask the Minister

why we cannot offer the same deal to other lease holders who are expecting the same treatment? Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely):** Thank you, Mr. Testart. Minister Sebert.

**HON. LOUIS SEBERT:** Mr. Chair, the promise, as I understand it, was made specifically to those holders of property at Cassidy Point; it wasn't made to the general public. I also understand that, after that promise was made, if I have the dates right, the land-lease-only policy came into effect for those properties in unsettled areas. So I don't see it as a precedent. I did refer to the honour of the Crown, and I realize that's a term of art that often refers to government relations with Aboriginal groups; but it also, in my view, applies to our situation. A promise was made. People doubtless relied upon it at Cassidy Point, and therefore we fulfilled that promise. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

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

**MR. TESTART:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. So, if I understand the Minister correctly, if he could confirm this for me, the reason we can't offer that deal to leases on unsettled land is because of a lease-only policy that was put into place. So the policy is preventing this government from offering a similar deal to those lease holders; is that correct? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

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

**HON. LOUIS SEBERT:** Yes, in essence, that is true. However, I mentioned the honour of the Crown. One of the things we have to do in the unsettled areas is, of course, consult with the affected Aboriginal groups. So there are really two things coming into play there. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

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

**MR. TESTART:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. So the lease-only policy, is that a policy that this government can change? Thank you.

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

**HON. LOUIS SEBERT:** Yes, I suppose we could change the policy, but the policy was put in place in anticipation of the settlement of land claims which, of course, has taken far longer than anticipated. Even if the policy was not in place, it seems to me we would likely have an obligation to consult those Aboriginal groups affected. Thank you.

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

**MR. TESTART:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. So just turning back to the original line of questioning around this exception that was made for Cassidy Point: is the land where those leases reside settled territory? Thank you.

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

**HON. LOUIS SEBERT:** My understanding is that it's not in a settled area. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

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

**MR. TESTART:** Were consultations undertaken with the Indigenous nation that has a claim to that territory prior to that deal being done? Thank you.

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

**HON. LOUIS SEBERT:** I'm not sure which date the Member might be referring to. Is he referring to a consultation prior to the promise being made in the early 1990s or prior to properties actually being transferred? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

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

**MR. TESTART:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Noting the clock, it is the latter; but I'll allow the Minister to answer. I want to make one more comment that, on this business of the honour of the Crown, the honour of the Crown, you need to be a Minister of the Crown to make a promise on behalf of the Crown, not a public servant. I don't think the Minister grasps that fully, but a Minister of the Crown can hold the honour of the Crown. That is how that happens. Thank you.

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

**HON. LOUIS SEBERT:** Thank you. No, I think that when a senior member of the government makes a promise of the type made, that we are honour-bound to fulfill that promise. Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake):** Thank you, Minister Sebert. Members, let's please keep this to the budget, to the page, not case law or anything. Next, we have Mr. Vanthuyne.

**MR. VANTHUYNE:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Yes, I'll try to look forward and not backwards. So, with that, we still have the problem of equity leases, a number of outstanding equity lease issues that are spread throughout the territory. The Department of Lands outlined in their business plan that there

were going to be three new positions dedicated to this. Can the Minister give clarification? What is the status as it relates to the positions that are going to be addressing the equity leases throughout the territory? Because, again, we're looking to approve a budget here with current numbers that are presented before us today; and so I want to make sure that, for the record, we're being accurate. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

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

**HON. LOUIS SEBERT:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. It's a little difficult to answer that because I think there's been some back and forth, if I can put it that way, as to these positions. The point being is that we are determined to resolve this matter, and I understand that one of the concerns of committee is that they want it resolved sooner rather than later. I think we basically agree with that. Thank you.

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

**MR. VANTHUYNE:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Like we've had to do a couple of times, already through these budget deliberations, and anticipating that we want to move forward and approve these budgets, I think it's incumbent upon the Ministers of the departments to realize what it is that needs to be presented. I mean, we're expected here today to approve a budget. As the Minister alluded to, there might have been, call it, back and forth, but I want clarity on the positions that we are trying to support to overcome this challenge of equity leases.

Would the Minister be in a position today to please clarify for us how many positions are expected to be approved in 2018-2019? Whether or not it requires supplementary approval somewhere down the road, we need clarification on how many positions are being approved to help address the equity leases. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

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

**HON. LOUIS SEBERT:** Thank you. As I mentioned previously, there has been some back and forth to resolve this issue, and I think that there was agreement that there would be five positions involved. Thank you.

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

**MR. VANTHUYNE:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I appreciate that, and I appreciate the clarity from the Minister. Further to that, can the Minister please provide some detail as to where those positions would be located? Thank you.

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

**HON. LOUIS SEBERT:** Yes, if I might defer that question to Mr. Willard Hagen?

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake):** Thank you, Minister Sebert. Deputy Minister Hagen.

**MR. HAGEN:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. As starting April 1<sup>st</sup>, our intention is to have two positions in Fort Smith, one position in Yellowknife, a position in Fort Simpson, and one position in Inuvik. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake):** Thank you, Mr. Hagen. Mr. Vanthuyne.

**MR. VANTHUYNE:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I think the Minister had something further to add. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

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

**HON. LOUIS SEBERT:** I just wanted to add that I understand the initial training will be done in Fort Smith, and also, this additional cost is not reflected in the mains. Thank you.

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

**MR. VANTHUYNE:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Actually, I will defer to other colleagues who might have questions on this department at this time. No further questions. Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake):** Thank you, Mr. Vanthuyne. Next, we have Mr. Thompson.

**MR. THOMPSON:** Thank you, Mr. Chair, and I thank the Minister and the Deputy Minister for some clarifications here. I am going to go back to what the Minister of Finance has said in here. It says that this would help residents who hold these leases to secure in renovating and building homes, start their businesses, and contribute to the economy. It's maturing equity leases to fee simple title.

Is that exactly what we are going to be doing with these 234 leases? Is it actually going from equity leases to fee simple title? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

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

**HON. LOUIS SEBERT:** Certainly, in the settled areas, and I am basing that on the assumption that people in those regions will want fee simple, as that will give them certainty as to ownership.

As I mentioned earlier, in the unsettled regions, we are going to have to be consulting with those

Aboriginal groups that have claims or asserted claims. There is some preliminary work to be done. I am aware, of course, and I have heard from many, that people in the unsettled areas also want fee simple. I understand that. Thank you.

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

**MR. THOMPSON:** Thank you, Mr. Chair, and I thank the Minister for that answer. I guess we just need a little bit more clarification, then, because in the budgets, it said converting mature equity leases to fee simple title. Are we converting equity leases to fee simple title, or are we not? Are we saying we have to worry about land claims that are settled here and land claims that are not settled here, and it's only going to be this area here? This needs to be clarified, because what I understood the Finance Minister to say was mature equity leases to fee simple title. That, to me, means it is going from equity leases to fee simple title. Can they please clarify that? Thank you.

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

**HON. LOUIS SEBERT:** I certainly feel that that would be the most satisfactory resolution on this matter. I simply want Committee of the Whole to know that, in the unsettled areas, there is that additional complication. We are hoping to do that, and I am pretty sure that virtually all of those holding these leases, although I think there might be a few exceptions, will want fee simple. Assuming they want fee simple, in the settled areas, I think that is going to be fairly straight forward. It is more complicated in the unsettled areas. Perhaps I could let Mr. Hagen add to that.

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

**MR. HAGEN:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. The Minister is quite correct. In the areas that have settled land claim agreements, people who hold equity leases and are in compliance with their lease can apply to have fee simple title. As we speak, there is work happening, and people are getting title. It is fairly straightforward in the settled land claim regions where the lease holder is in compliance and has no arrears.

As usual, the unsettled land claim regions are very complicated. There are even areas where it is land lease only policy. There are land withdrawals that each Aboriginal government who are negotiating have, including the Metis Nation, and there are also people who are Members of the land claim organizations who are negotiating who do not want their lease converted. They want to wait for their

claim to settle, and those lands reflected then become settlement lands. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake):** Thank you, Mr. Hagen. Mr. Thompson.

**MR. THOMPSON:** Thank you, Mr. Chair, and I thank the deputy minister for that answer. If it was not confusing before, it is getting even more confusing. I understand the process, and I appreciate the answer. I guess my big thing is that we have 244 equity leases. People should be given the option of getting fee simple. I know in my riding a lot of people have come to me. They want fee simple title so that they can start building their homes or businesses and be able to do that. That is a concern, and hopefully, with these positions moving in, we will see a better thing.

In regard to the training, are these five positions going to get trained in Fort Smith and then go out, or are these five positions going to be brought in, and then there is going to be training by satellite or by bringing them in together, but they're going to be stationed? I guess we need to get that clarified. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

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

**HON. LOUIS SEBERT:** Yes, thank you, Mr. Chair. Perhaps I could ask that Mr. Hagen assist in responding. Thank you.

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

**MR. HAGEN:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. We did have a plan that we were moving forward with over the last six months. In the last few days, it was changed on us. We have not put all of the plan totally together, but with this change of five people now, we intend to train them all in Fort Smith, where we have a lady who retired after 30 years. Her expertise is territorial and Commissioner's lands and equity leases.

We intend to train them there, perhaps for a period of three to six months, and then disperse them out to Yellowknife, Fort Simpson, and Inuvik, leaving two in Fort Smith. They will then be working on equity leases exclusively. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake):** Thank you, Mr. Hagen. Mr. Thompson.

**MR. THOMPSON:** Thank you to Mr. Hagen there. I appreciate the answer, and thank you, Mr. Chair. I could spend probably about another hour on equity leases, but I don't have an hour, so I am actually going to go on to my next concern: the lease payments. Right now, it is 10 per cent by the government, as Mr. Beaulieu talked about. He has

one constituent who pays \$4,000. I have residents who are paying large amounts of money based on this 10 per cent and after 10 years they have paid for this land, not only once, but usually, if you are looking at making a home in a community, after 10 years you would hope that you don't have to pay it over again. A lot of people spend 20 or 30 years there, so paying three times as much. In my reply to the budget, I asked the department to look at reducing it to 3 per cent. Three per cent seems to be realistic and fair to the residents. Can the Minister confirm that they are going to look at this amount of 10 per cent and what amount are they looking at if they were going to reduce that amount? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

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

**HON. LOUIS SEBERT:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Certainly, both inside this House and outside this House, I did hear loud and clear that people felt that the 10 per cent was too much. I agree with that. Therefore, the amount that we are looking at is half of that, which is 5 per cent of the assessed value. That is the value of the land. If there are improvements on it, that won't affect the lease for the land. Thank you.

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

**MR. THOMPSON:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I thank the Minister for that answer. That is a positive step. Five per cent is a really good step. Has the department looked at the 3 per cent number and is the department willing to share that number with us? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

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

**HON. LOUIS SEBERT:** I did think about other amounts myself and thought that clearly a reduction from the 10 per cent was warranted and felt that 5 per cent was reasonable. Thank you.

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

**MR. THOMPSON:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. He didn't answer my question. I understand what he thinks is reasonable. I am asking: did the department look at 3 per cent when they were coming up with the numbers? I heard 5, and I understand that is the number that the department looked at, but did the department look at 3 per cent, and if they did, do they have those numbers that they can share with us? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

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

**HON. LOUIS SEBERT:** I felt, Mr. Chair, that cutting it in half was very reasonable. I don't know whether Mr. Hagen wants to add anything to that. I think it is important to remember that, overall, the department is not turning a profit on leases. We are administering an area double the size of most European countries. It is an expensive, complicated process. This isn't making money for us, as I understand it. I will let Mr. Hagen add to that if he wishes.

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

**MR. HAGEN:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. To answer your question, Mr. Thompson, on the instruction from the Minister we looked at 5 and we looked at 3. Five was the number that was given to us to reduce it, which is half. I had to agree with it. I am a big believer that after devolution we had 1.3 million kilometres of land transferred to us. It has a value. There are 40,000 plus people who see that as a lot of value. I think they expect us to be able to get some revenue from that asset. We believe that the value of the land shouldn't be lowered. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake):** Thank you, Mr. Hagen. Next on the list we have Mr. Beaulieu.

**MR. BEAULIEU:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, along the same line, I would like to have seen 3 per cent as well, but I am satisfied with 5 per cent. My question is, although I don't want to go too far into the weeds, it is a question of what the possibility is for individuals who have incomes that are pension income, I forget what you call that type of income, but people who don't have a regular income where they are working and potential for them to have greater possibility of increasing their income. Fixed income. People with fixed incomes like pensioners and so on. Is it a possibility that they could pay for their leases on a monthly basis? Thank you.

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

**HON. LOUIS SEBERT:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Yes, of course, people could pay on a monthly basis. I see there is a note here that informs me that, under section 3 of the Income Assistance Policy Manual, applicants who reside on Commissioner's lands, the Department of Lands, or the NWTHC may qualify for monthly allowance to assist in the cost of the land lease. I wasn't aware of that. It appears there are avenues to assist people who find themselves in the position that you have mentioned. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

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

**MR. BEAULIEU:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, my second question is on the status of the particular lots. Previously, there were areas that were maybe earmarked for commercial development and the commercial development areas don't pan out, so they end up essentially being strictly residential lots. I would like to know if the department has a process in which individuals who find themselves on commercial lots, which appear to have a higher value. I am only saying appear because I am seeing one side of the road that is commercial with a residential property and one side that is a residential lot with a residential property, of course, being quite different in costs. I would like to ask the department if it is possible to switch land status, essentially, from one type to another type. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

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

**HON. LOUIS SEBERT:** Yes, that certainly is a problem in some communities. We do recognize that. It seems to me that what is needed perhaps is a zoning change, so that could be dealt with through MACA, but I will let Mr. Hagen add to that if he wishes to assist.

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

**MR. HAGEN:** Thank you, Minister, and thank you, Mr. Chair. You are quite correct, Mr. Beaulieu. There are some lots in communities that we have discussed where it was a commercial property, and it didn't pan out, and they kept it just as residential. The lot is sometimes twice the size of a normal residential lot, so they are paying, a lot of times, twice the amount of lease payments. Any community has a bylaw to change it back to residential. It could be surveyed, going through MACA and ourselves, surveyed, and the lot could be split in half into residential lots dropping their payments probably by at least 50 per cent. The taxes would also go down dramatically. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

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

**HON. LOUIS SEBERT:** I would just like to add that sometimes getting zoning changes, that type of request, it could be a little bit difficult, and I can't speak for MACA, but generally they don't like to do spot zoning. Maybe if there is a whole section of land involving several properties, that might be easier to have rezoned than a single property, which would then have a different zoning designation than the properties around it. That could be problematic.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake):** Thank you, Mr. Sebert. Mr. Beaulieu.

**MR. BEAULIEU:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chair, I guess I was not thinking about the size of the lot, unfortunately, but I see that where the deputy minister is coming from. He is correct that those lots are substantially bigger than residential lots across the street.

My next question is on a different line, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I know that the department goes into the hinterland and taxes cabins, so I am wondering what the position of the department is in as far as taxing cabins that are used for harvesting. I am referring to, I think we could have a fairly broad definition of harvesting, but keep it to hunting and trapping at this point. I am wondering if there are any different designations by the department on whether or not an individual is using a cabin for recreational activities, something that they can drive to and have their picnics and so on, versus where the individuals are having cabins along rivers that they are boating to and snowmobiling to and so on. I am wondering if there is any difference in that designation, first of all. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

**HON. LOUIS SEBERT:** Yes. I cannot speak to deferred designations. I am not certain if that would be part of what this department does. I do not think so. I do realize that the taxation of cabins is a difficult issue, of course. In those areas with settled land claims, it is not a problem anymore; that has been resolved, or on treaty land. I realize there is an awful lot of land in the unsettled areas that is outside those two situations. I do know that we are attempting to, of course, resolve the land claims in those unsettled areas, which would hopefully resolve this thorny problem, which I do realize is an issue, certainly in the Fort Resolution and Fort Smith area. I do understand that. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

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

**MR. BEAULIEU:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, as quickly as possible, I wonder if there is a difference in the designation of the taxing of cabins if the owner is treaty or if the owner is Metis or non-Aboriginal? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

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

**HON. LOUIS SEBERT:** I think the determining factor is where the cabin is located. If it is in a settled land claims area or on treaty land, that resolves the question. With respect to the other part

of the question asked, I do not believe that MACA does differentiate between the owners of the cabins. Thank you.

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

**MR. BEAULIEU:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That just confuses me a bit because of MACA's involvement. When I was at the far end of Artillery Lake two summers ago, the people who landed there and started posting letters on cabins were from the Department of Lands, not MACA. I am just wondering: how MACA is involved with taxing cabins in the bush? Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake):** Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. Mr. Sebert.

**HON. LOUIS SEBERT:** Well, there are several different departments involved in this. Of course, I have mentioned MACA. Taxation, of course, taxation amounts are pursued by the Department of Finance. I do not know if Mr. Hagen wants to add anything to this. We do realize this is a complex issue that we would all want resolved by the settlement of land claims. Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake):** Thank you, Mr. Sebert. Mr. Hagen.

**MR. HAGEN:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. The Minister is quite correct; a taxation of cabins is done by the Department of MACA. It is collected by the Department of Finance, and any postings you might see on the cabins from Lands would be our inspectors out doing enforcement on compliance and finding a cabin has an unauthorized occupier, so we would post it to give them notice that they are illegally occupying that space. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake):** Thank you, Mr. Hagen. Mr. Beaulieu, your time has expired. Next, we have Mr. McNeely.

**MR. MCNEELY:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. My question is on page 320. On the budgetary number allowances for the program detail and looking forward from this budget, were there resources allowed or budgeted for on the five-year devolution review that would most likely cost them some efforts towards entering into the five-year review negotiations? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

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

**HON. LOUIS SEBERT:** Sorry, I am not entirely sure I understand the question. I understand the Member is pointing to something on page 320; could he direct us to which line?

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

**MR. MCNEELY:** Yes, thank you, Mr. Chair. I'll clarify it a little bit more. There are seven entries there underneath the program detail, and I am just wondering if there was money set aside within those entries for the five-year review, the five-year devolution review?

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

**HON. LOUIS SEBERT:** Well, of course, Mr. Chair, we are always reviewing our estimates going ahead. There is no money specifically set aside for a five-year review as I understand it. Thank you.

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

**MR. MCNEELY:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Do you think we should allow for some costs within our budget for the five-year review if we are going to hire a consultant to do a five-year review? I am not too sure of the details, the terms and conditions throughout the process for the five-year review; I am just wondering if we have allowed some resources for that particular process? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake):** Thank you, Mr. McNeely. Mr. Hagen.

**MR. HAGEN:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I am just not certain where the Member is coming from on the five-year review. I assume perhaps it is on the Mackenzie Valley Resource Management Act that is coming up, among other things, for a five-year review, and as far as I know there are no monies set aside. A lot of those responsibilities are in the Department of EIA and the negotiations of bringing the MVRMA to the Northwest Territories. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake):** Thank you, Mr. Hagen. Mr. McNeely.

**MR. MCNEELY:** Yes, thank you, Mr. Chair. Yes, I was referring to the five-year review underneath the devolution agreement. My understanding, the agreement allows for a five-year review to review the performance on the previous six months and maybe even inheritance of the MVRMA, so I am just wondering if we are preparing for that additional task to negotiate additional responsibilities underneath the five-year review of the devolution agreement.

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

**HON. LOUIS SEBERT:** Yes, perhaps the Premier could assist in clarifying this point. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake):** Thank you, Minister Sebert. Premier McLeod.

**HON. BOB MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. The only reference to a five-year review is the review of the Mackenzie Valley Resource Management Act. When the devolution agreement was enacted, the federal government insisted that they would continue to be responsible for the MVRMA. With the new government, we made representation that there was no need to wait five years. Now, five years will be up in 2019. We had also made representation to the federal government that they should transfer the MVRMA and we would make changes. The federal government has indicated that they want to do changes before, and we still have to get them to agree, although it has been negotiated, that there will be a five-year agreement to start. We have asked that the review begin since it is less than two years away. That is where it is at now, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake):** Thank you, Premier McLeod. No further questions? Mr. O'Reilly.

**MR. O'REILLY:** Thanks, Mr. Chair. I believe it was in last year's budget that there was a \$370,000 reduction in inspections, and I am just wondering: I have noticed in the business plans that the number of inspections for leases and land use permits and so on are steady if not increasing, so how did that cut affect our inspection capacity? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

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

**HON. LOUIS SEBERT:** Yes, I am confident that all of the inspections that are required are being made, but perhaps I will turn that question over to Mr. Hagen, please. Thank you.

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

**MR. HAGEN:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. We have met or exceeded our goal of inspections in 2017-2018. We have not been impacted by any reductions in budget on it. The fact that the Inuvik to Tuktoyaktuk Highway is completed, the fibre optic line is completed, the economic development is not there that there was a few years ago does not mean there are fewer inspections, but it has not stopped us from doing the inspections that are necessary. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake):** Thank you, Mr. Hagen. Mr. O'Reilly.

**MR. O'REILLY:** Thanks, Mr. Chair. I appreciate the comments from the Minister and the deputy minister. It is something that I am going to continue to watch very closely. I want to ask about inspections at Prairie Creek. There were some issues there. I know that there were some additional inspections that were done in the fall. The company was supposed to be submitting some plans for moving forward. Has that actually happened, and where are we at with the existing liabilities at the site? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

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

**HON. LOUIS SEBERT:** Yes, I understand that, of course, there are ongoing concerns about Prairie Creek and possible noncompliance. Perhaps I can give some detail as to what the department has been doing. Since the summer of 2017, there have been six inspections by our inspectors from the Department of Lands and also by the Department of Natural Resources. There were six inspections, as I say, the most recent being October 28, 2017. The next inspection will take place in the spring of 2018, once the snow clears. The site is closed, shut down, for the season. Now, there were some compliance issues related to chemical storage. Perhaps I will turn it over at this point to Mr. Hagen, and he can expand on that answer. Thank you.

**MR. HAGEN:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Yes, that is correct. There were some issues relating to chemical storage being raised by our inspectors, but, the company, we are working with them. Our first goal with our inspectors is to educate and be of assistance and the last being enforcement and compliance. They have made great progress addressing these issues. They have provided us with a response to inspector's concerns, information request from this past year, including a waste disposal plan, a chemical inventory, and we are currently reviewing some of these documents. We are in constant touch with them, corresponding, and we will be doing a follow-up inspection once the snow is gone, like the Minister mentioned, in the spring of 2018. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake):** Thank you, Mr. Hagen, Minister Sebert. Let's not forget to go through the chair as we continue. Minister Sebert wanted to add something.

**HON. LOUIS SEBERT:** I just wanted to add that inspection reports related to land use permits and water licences are available on the Mackenzie Valley Land and Water Board's registry.

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

**MR. O'REILLY:** Thanks, Mr. Chair, and I thank the Minister for that. Something that I do check once in a while is the public registry there. I appreciate the concentration of effort on that particular location because it is a problem, and I am glad to hear that there is some progress being made. I want to ask about: ENR has water use inspectors; they also do wildlife inspections, and Lands does land use permits, land lease, and I understand some of those inspectors are actually cross-appointed. Has there been any thought to centralizing inspection service and putting it with ENR, where, in my view, it should probably be located? I know I raised this with the Minister during business planning, as well, so has he had a chance to look at this? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

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

**HON. LOUIS SEBERT:** Yes, as the Member pointed out, people are cross-appointed, and, prior to devolution, basically, these functions were carried out by a single department. It would seem to make some sense to have them combined, but maybe I will let Mr. Hagen take it from there. I understand what the Member is talking about. I know that different inspectors do work closely together and some are cross-appointed, so hopefully the system is not rendered inefficient by the fact that there are two departments, but I do understand the point.

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

**MR. HAGEN:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. This question has been asked of our Minister and the Minister of ENR a couple of times on putting the inspectors in a single department. I believe it has been looking and is still being studied. I can say from the Department of Lands that we work very well with the Department of ENR, who have the water inspectors, and we have not had any complications. Would it be more efficient? I think by year end that we should have some answers on the efficiencies of having it under one roof or in one department. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake):** Thank you, Mr. Hagen. Mr. O'Reilly.

**MR. O'REILLY:** Thanks, Mr. Chair. Yes, I appreciate the Minister's comments and the deputy minister's, as well. Before devolution, it was one department. Now it is split between two, and I do not think necessarily that there are any complications, but we might get some more efficiencies if it was brought back under one roof. I appreciate that they are going to look at that. Hopefully, they can come back to the Regular Members and let us know what they found. Is that

something the Minister can commit to do? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

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

**HON. LOUIS SEBERT:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Certainly, I can commit to that. Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake):** Thank you, Minister Sebert. Committee, we do have two more names on the list. I am not sure of any others, but, as notified, supper is ready, so we will take a short recess and wrap up afterwards. Thank you.

---SHORT RECESS

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake):** I would like to call the committee back to order. Next on our list, we have Mr. Vanthuyne.

**MR. VANTHUYNE:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Under operations, I think this is where we can talk about unauthorized occupiers, and I just want to get some clarification from the department as to what constitutes an unauthorized occupier. Maybe just a brief description of what an unauthorized occupier is? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

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

**HON. LOUIS SEBERT:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Well, to state the obvious, an unauthorized occupant is someone who puts up a permanent structure and occupies land without a lease or without a legal right to occupy the land. That has been an issue in the Northwest Territories for some time. Our estimate is that there are about 715 structures on public land that do not have any tenure, that is to say, no lease or other legal right, and about two thirds to three quarters of those are in the Yellowknife area. Thank you.

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

**MR. VANTHUYNE:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. If somebody was to want to skirt being considered an unauthorized occupier, they would, then, I guess, go with something that would be not considered a permanent structure. Is this a case where we have people with wall tents and what have you that are arguably maybe not permanent but semi-permanent, and those also seem to be what are often referred to by some as being squatters? Does the department take in complaints relevant to those types of occupiers, and are we managing them in any way? Are we leaving posts or messages at these sites as well? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

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

**HON. LOUIS SEBERT:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Perhaps I could defer that question to Mr. Hagen. Thank you.

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

**MR. HAGEN:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. People occupying or putting up wall tents that are semi-permanent are not classified as unauthorized occupants, although it is supposed to be seasonal use. It is a little bit of a grey area.

We don't call them squatters, because there is no homesteading act in the Northwest Territories, so there are no squatters' rights. If they have a permanent structure, it is unauthorized. If it is a tent frame and it is there for a while and it looks like it is semi-permanent, then we do check to make sure that their garbage is taken care of, there's a proper outhouse, and there's no contamination going into the water. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake):** Thank you, Mr. Hagen. Mr. Vanthuyne.

**MR. VANTHUYNE:** Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you for some clarification. I am going to assume that maybe the same thing, then, applies to the use of campers and the like that find their way into roadside turn-offs and what have you that are not necessarily territorial parks. I am thinking of the Ingraham Trail that is in my riding where, on occasion, there are going to be people who have just found space, and they have basically set up what appears to be a non-permanent structure. Are we addressing that in the same way that we would as it relates to an unauthorized occupier? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake):** Thank you, Mr. Vanthuyne. Mr. Hagen.

**MR. HAGEN:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. It is a difficult one, because if a mobile trailer can be parked in an area where they can access and yet they can pull it out, the act is fairly clear that it is not a permanent structure. If it is not a permanent structure, then they are not unauthorized. They are treated differently, there is absolutely no doubt about it. We have had circumstances where somebody has pulled a trailer. The next thing you know they put a roof on it or an additional roof, and they put a porch and a door. As soon as that happens, then it's considered a permanent structure and we'll go and post it. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake):** Thank you, Mr. Hagen. Mr. Vanthuyne.

**MR. VANTHUYNE:** So just lastly, Mr. Chair: does the department feel, then, that there's some need to maybe revisit the definition of permanent structure

or find a way in which we can address it? I mean, the point I'm trying to get at here is that this is an ongoing concern as it relates to wall tents, trailers, mobile units that are starting to encroach on Commissioner's lands, NWT lands. Albeit, they're not, maybe, permanent structures, but we have to have a way in which we monitor these activities. Other people are doing the right thing in paying leases and/or fee simple title. I mean, it just appears on every level that others are getting away with having some degree of residency without having to be under the same rules. So is there a way in which the department is going to take steps to address these issues? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake):** Thank you, Mr. Vanthuyne. Mr. Hagen.

**MR. HAGEN:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. That has been a great concern of Lands before I got here and since I've been here, the last three and a half years of Lands' existence. I don't want to throw the feds under the bus, but the fact is that they were very poor managers of the land when it came to people building without any recourse to them. The Recreational Land Use Framework Agreement that we are stalled on right now will address a lot of those issues that are being brought up now. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake):** Thank you, Mr. Hagen. Mr. Vanthuyne.

**MR. VANTHUYNE:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. That's all that I have at this time. Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake):** Thank you, Mr. Vanthuyne. Ms. Green.

**MS. GREEN:** Just one follow-up question, please, Mr. Chair: what is the status of the recreational land use plan for Yellowknife? Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake):** Thank you, Ms. Green. Mr. Hagen.

**MR. HAGEN:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. The Recreational Land Use Framework Agreement was going along at a reasonable pace, and then it collided a bit with the negotiations with the land claims with the Yellowknives, and they decided that they didn't want to support it and go forward until they either got close to resolving a land claim agreement or had a land claim agreement. We were instructed that land claims are the priority, and so we're holding off on it in hopes that there's some agreement in principle coming forth in this region. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake):** Thank you, Mr. Hagen. Ms. Green.

**MS. GREEN:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, I'd like to ask the witness how this information has been shared with people who have property on the Ingraham Trail, like I do. Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake):** Thank you, Ms. Green. Mr. Hagen.

**MR. HAGEN:** Well, the process, of course, we hope to bring it to successful completion. It's going a little slower than we wish it to. We're hoping that any day, any month, we'll get some traction with the Yellowknives, whose traditional land we're dealing with. So we haven't made any announcements because it's still an ongoing process. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake):** Thank you, Mr. Hagen. Ms. Green.

**MS. GREEN:** That's everything. Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake):** Any further questions from committee on pages 320 to 321? If not, I'll call the page. Operations expenditure summary, \$10,758,000. Does the committee agree. Agreed? Thank you. Next, we have planning and coordination, operations expenditure summary, \$6,991,000, from pages 322 to 326. Any questions? Ms. Green.

**MS. GREEN:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, I understand this is the department in which I can ask the question about the money allocated to the agriculture strategy implementation. What role is the department playing in the implementation of the strategy with the \$150,000 allocated? Thank you.

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

**HON. LOUIS SEBERT:** The department, of course, and we have responsibility for the lands, we're looking at our approach for land tenures and the availability of land for agricultural purposes. The problem, which is somewhat related to some of the matters I spoke of earlier, is that land availability in the unsettled land claim areas is constrained, if I can put it that way, by existing land withdrawals. So we do want to go ahead. This is in the interest of the government as a whole, mainly driven by the Department of Industry, Tourism and Investment and their agricultural strategy. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

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

**MS. GREEN:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I appreciate the Minister's answer, but it doesn't really answer the question. So how does this money help the unsettled land claims? I'm missing something. Could the Minister please clarify? Thank you.

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

**HON. LOUIS SEBERT:** This money isn't to settle the land claims, but perhaps Mr. Hagen would elaborate a little more on how the money is being spent. I understand it's to develop policies and procedures for evaluating agricultural land lease applications, but he may have something to add.

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

**MR. HAGEN:** Yes, thank you, Mr. Chair. So, like the Minister mentioned, the Department of ITI has developed an agricultural strategy for the Northwest Territories, and the aim of the strategy is to provide guidance and direction as to its resources and policies. We come in as Lands and do an examination of the land tenure and land availability for agricultural purposes. There's a wide range of possibilities rather than the traditional focus of leasing of arable land; recent advances in agricultural techniques; there's permaculture and greenhouse culture, which doesn't take a lot of land availability, and that's what we don't have. In the unsettled land claim regions where the best lands are available for agriculture, particularly Hay River, Fort Smith, Fort Resolution, all the lands are mostly withdrawn for land claim negotiations, and until those are settled there is very little land available for any large-scale agricultural farming. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake):** Thank you, Mr. Hagen. Ms. Green.

**MS. GREEN:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. So, as I understand it, the idea is to look at alternatives to, sort of, open field agriculture in order to maximize the land that is available for agricultural purposes. Is that correct? Thank you.

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

**HON. LOUIS SEBERT:** Perhaps Mr. Hagen can answer that.

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

**MR. HAGEN:** Mr. Chair, yes, that's correct. ITI and our subs, we looked at the recent advances in agricultural techniques, as I mentioned, permaculture, greenhouse culture; and these present opportunities for sustainable agriculture production conducted in areas not previously considered feasible. Those areas were mostly outside the prime agricultural lands that are withdrawn for land claims. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake):** Thank you, Mr. Hagen, Ms. Green.

**MS. GREEN:** Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thanks to the witnesses for their answers. Nothing further.

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

**MR. THOMPSON:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I'm assuming this is where, the agricultural lands, this is the area we talk about them? So in my reply to the budget, there were some concerns that I heard from a number of residents in regard to leases and the cost to actually using these leases and that. Can the Minister tell us if agricultural lands have a different equity that they have to pay to get this, or is it similar to a tank farm? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

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

**MR. HAGEN:** You would fill out an application for an agricultural purpose and undergo the department's standard lease application and review process. That being said, with the interest in agricultural lands, the department has not received an application for an agricultural development at this time. It is all laid out in the commercial lease application that is submitted to the Department of Lands. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake):** Thank you, Mr. Hagen. Mr. Thompson.

**MR. THOMPSON:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Thank you to the deputy minister for that. Could we get clarification that the security needed for a greenhouse is similar to a tank farm? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake):** Thank you, Mr. Thompson. Deputy Minister Hagen.

**MR. HAGEN:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. A tank farm or a large-scale development would require a land use permit from the Mackenzie Valley Land and Water Board. In that process, they might also be sent to an environmental assessment. If they are successful in getting a land use permit for a tank farm or an agricultural or a large-scale greenhouse development, then the Land and Water Board would set the securities that they felt were needed to protect the environment and people. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake):** Thank you, Mr. Hagen. Mr. Thompson.

**MR. THOMPSON:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Thank you, Mr. Hagen for that answer. Just to clarify, it is not the Department of Lands that puts the security

to it. It is another agency. Is that correct? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake):** Thank you, Mr. Thompson. Deputy Minister Hagen.

**MR. HAGEN:** Let's take a tank farm example where they require a lease. The Department of Lands would run a risk model and we would put forth security on the actual land lease. The developer would have to, like I mentioned, go to the Mackenzie Valley Land and Water Board or the Sahtu or the Tlicho to apply for a land use permit to apply for the actual development. On that development, the land and water boards would put on the security. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake):** Thank you, Mr. Hagen. Mr. Thompson.

**MR. THOMPSON:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I thank Mr. Hagen for that answer. However, I am talking about agricultural land now. We are talking about greenhouses and that, and we are talking about security. Is it the Mackenzie Valley Resource Management Act that does it, or is it the Department of Lands that actually puts the security on it? I am trying to get to who actually puts security to making people put a security down. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake):** Thank you, Mr. Thompson. Mr. Hagen.

**MR. HAGEN:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I believe I just answered the Member's question. They have to get a lease if it is on territorial lands, which most of them will be. On that lease, the department, depending on the development, would run a model and put a security on just our lease to protect our lease. If it is a farm development that is above the threshold that requires a land use permit, and the threshold is very low, then they would go to the Mackenzie Valley or any other regional land and water boards and, if the permit is successful, they will put the securities on the actual physical development on that leased land. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake):** Thank you, Mr. Hagen. Mr. Thompson.

**MR. THOMPSON:** Thank you, Mr. Chair, and I thank Mr. Hagen. You didn't answer my question before, but you did now because basically we were talking about tank farms and I was actually trying to find out about the agricultural land, so I thank you very much for that clarification. My challenge is that I have individuals who are wishing to develop greenhouses within my riding. They keep on coming back to it. When the department works with these people, do they actually walk them through

the process of what they have to do in this area? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake):** Thank you, Mr. Thompson. Mr. Hagen.

**MR. HAGEN:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I believe we are talking about the Fort Simpson, Deh Cho region. We have an office in Fort Simpson with a superintendent and a few officers. Yes, anyone who wants to come to the office, they would gladly sit them down and walk them through the lease application and what is required to go forth with an actual development. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake):** Thank you, Mr. Hagen. Mr. Thompson.

**MR. THOMPSON:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I thank Mr. Hagen. The staff in the region in Fort Simpson do a great job for Nahendeh. They do a really great job. I am just trying to get a better understanding of exactly what the process is, because I have had a number of people approach me with this. I thank Mr. Hagen for that. Now I have a clear understanding of what direction we need to go, and we can move forward on that. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake):** Thank you, Mr. Thompson. Next we have Mr. Vanthuyne.

**MR. VANTHUYNE:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Just for clarification, I thought I heard the deputy minister indicate earlier that the department had not received to date any applications for agriculture leases. Is that correct? Can I get clarification? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake):** Thank you, Mr. Vanthuyne. Mr. Hagen.

**MR. HAGEN:** Thank you Mr. Chair. To my knowledge, I could be wrong, I know we have had inquiries for agriculture land in the area that have existing leases that are not zoned or dedicated to commercial. It is dedicated as a recreational lease, and a commercial operation is not allowed on a recreational cabin lease. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake):** Thank you, Mr. Hagen. Mr. Vanthuyne.

**MR. VANTHUYNE:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Okay, that provides clarity for me. It is an instance such that he just described that I am aware of, that somebody on a recreational property has applied for an agriculture lease. I guess the question becomes: is that a possibility? Are people who are on existing recreational leases allowed the opportunity to apply for an agricultural lease on all or part of it and be given consideration to be able to use some of it for agriculture? There are a lot of

people who have lands, who live on existing lots, and again I am referring to Ingraham Trail, who would certainly maybe like to take advantage of the agricultural industry. I am wondering if the department gives these lease applications consideration to promote agriculture in the territory. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake):** Thank you, Mr. Vanthuyne. Mr. Hagen.

**MR. HAGEN:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Yes, it is a possibility. Recreational leases are laid out as people have cabins with quiet enjoyment of a peaceful environment. If they have neighbours who would agree that agricultural operation could go ahead and not affect them, we would engage them and do that. Although, if you want to really go to the letter of the regulations, people actually don't have the right under the regulations to be living out in those cabins. It is done all the time, obviously, but the access is seasonal, so in fact that isn't really allowed under the regulations. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake):** Thank you, Mr. Hagen. Mr. Vanthuyne.

**MR. VANTHUYNE:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I would like to ask a little bit more about when somebody puts in an application for agriculture. Do we have a clear distinction between those who are applying for the growth of vegetables versus those that are raising animals, let's say, for example? Do we distinguish between the two, or are those two different applications? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake):** Thank you, Mr. Vanthuyne. Mr. Hagen.

**MR. HAGEN:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. As you know, the agricultural strategy has just been developed, and we actually haven't really gotten to the point where we distinguish between whether you have animals, farm animals, or you plant a garden. I mean, you can plant a garden for your own use or your friends' use. It just becomes a problem agriculturally when you go commercial and you sell your product. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

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

**HON. LOUIS SEBERT:** There is funding of \$100,000 in 2018-2019 to develop policies and procedures and criteria for evaluating land leases for agriculture, so hopefully that will address some of these issues. Thank you.

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

**MR. VANTHUYNE:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. And, yes, that would be helpful, and I am sure it will. We definitely need clarification along those lines. What do we have as it relates to rates for land leases for agriculture versus land leases for commercial? You know, is land for agriculture more affordable? Is it at more affordable rate than that of commercial? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

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

**HON. LOUIS SEBERT:** Some lands that are, say, suitable for grazing are leased at \$0.25 a hectare or \$50 per annum, whichever is greater. Beyond that, generally, Commissioner's land that is used for agricultural purposes is leased at 5 per cent of the assessed value, which is, well, currently 50 per cent of the standard lease rate for other commercial properties, so there is an incentive and very reasonable cost to lease land. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake):** Thank you, Mr. Sebert. Mr. Vanthuyne.

**MR. VANTHUYNE:** Okay. I appreciate all that. I think I have to take a step back for a moment and just touch again on land use plans. I am going to touch on the Yellowknife Recreational Periphery Land Use Plan. My understanding, from what I was hearing earlier, is that basically we are not going to make any headway on these land use plans until there is settlement of land rights agreements. Have we explored the opportunity to work directly with the -- and maybe you answered this already, but just please repeat for me: are the Yellowknives really not in favour of working even on that land use plan specifically right now in terms of finding some degree of, I do not know if resolution or certainty might be the right word, on that particular land use plan? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake):** Thank you, Mr. Vanthuyne. Mr. Hagen.

**MR. HAGEN:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. The recreational land, it is a framework, not a land use plan per se, and Yellowknives have indicated a little late in the game that they would rather not be engaged in this recreational land use framework until they are further along or they have a land claim agreement signed. Now, a land use plan that you mentioned is something that is going forward. It is going forward in the Tlicho region on public lands. It is going forward, the Akaitcho now have expressed a big interest in moving forward in land use plan. That would take in the Yellowknives area also. There is an interim land use plan going forward in the Deh Cho. It is unusual. All of the land claim agreements in the Northwest Territories were

settled and signed off and then the land use plan was put into place. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake):** Thank you, Mr. Hagen. No further questions? Mr. O'Reilly.

**MR. O'REILLY:** Thanks, Mr. Chair. I want to turn to the securities coordination line item on page 332, I believe it is. In the mains, it is shown as \$915,000 for 2018-2019. When I go back into the business plan, which is publicly available, it shows that item as \$885,000 on page -- well, it is not numbered. It is in schedule 2 of the Department of Land's business plan. Can someone explain the discrepancy here? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

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

**MS. HILDERMAN:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. At the time that the business plans were developed, the adjustments for amortization were not included, so between the business plan and the printing of the means, we wrote what the amortization requirement for 2018-2019 is expected to be. That includes \$30,000 for the securities and what we call SAPS, Securities Administration Processing System, which is being developed this year. It is in the testing phase and is expected to go live in 2018-2019, and that is \$30,000 which is the difference. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

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

**MR. O'REILLY:** Okay. I appreciate the explanation there, thank you. The member of the Lands team mentioned this SAPS system, where we are going to track securities better, and that is a good thing, but I am concerned about the lack of progress on the mandate commitment to make sure that we do not incur any or that we prevent further public liabilities. There has been nothing changed in legislation policy. This department basically signed on to or agreed to continue the old Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development Mine Site Recognition Policy. There has been nothing public come out of this unit in terms of the mandate commitment. What is going on here after more than two years? Is the unit fully staffed? Why is there no policy work or legislation or regulations coming out of this unit? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

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

**HON. LOUIS SEBERT:** Yes, as the Member indicated, we did, of course, inherit much of this, in fact, all of it from the federal government in 2014. Perhaps Mr. Hagen can expand a bit on some of the work that we have been doing. Thank you.

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

**MR. HAGEN:** Yes, I agree it has been a long, painful progress to find the staffing of that unit, and that has been done, finally. They are very hard people to find. We have gone out two or three times actually for different employees' positions. It is staffed. We are moving forward for legislation as per our mandate. We mentioned the SAPS; that is in its testing phase. We hope to have that rolling out in the near future. As for the legislation, all I can say is stay tuned because I think we are going to be making great progress from here until the end of the mandate. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

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

**HON. LOUIS SEBERT:** I guess to add to that, I am looking at some of the other things we are doing. You have heard already that we are going to continue to build an inventory tracking system to address the handling and processing of securities, and the system design and testing will be completed in the 2017-2018 fiscal year and go live the following year. We are also considering securities in our current land, water and resource legislative initiatives, which includes amendments to the Commissioner's Land Act and Northwest Territories Lands Act. We are making progress, though, admittedly, not as quickly as we would like to, for the reasons that have been mentioned by Mr. Hagen. Thank you.

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

**MR. O'REILLY:** Thanks, Mr. Chair. Yes, progress is not as quick as I would like it, either, and, I think, as required in our mandate, but I will move on to a couple of more problematic sites. The first one is Cantung. Have we finally been able to get rid of the lease for the surface of the Cantung site? I know I have asked numerous times about this, and every time, it seems to be a little bit closer, but has it actually been transferred back to the federal government? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

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

**HON. LOUIS SEBERT:** Yes, this is a complicated situation, as the Member well knows, and it has been difficult for us. I think I will let my deputy minister get into some of the details about what is going on. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

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

**MR. HAGEN:** Yes, thank you, Mr. Chair, and yes, it's the ongoing saga of this file. We were within

arm's reach for the federal government to take back administrative control of the surface lands, with the GNWT keeping the subsurface, and at the eleventh hour their Department of Justice decided that they could not take back administrative control yet until they made some policy changes, and that is where it has stalled at this moment. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake):** Thank you, Mr. Hagen. Mr. O'Reilly.

**MR. O'REILLY:** Thanks, Mr. Chair. Yes, it sounds like there is a little bit more to be told about that. If the Minister wants to share some other information with Regular MLAs, or at least the Standing Committee on Economic Development and Environment, can he give us a more detailed update of what's happening there? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

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

**HON. LOUIS SEBERT:** Yes, thank you. As has already been mentioned, there have been many twists and turns in this, and the federal government seemed to have some late-breaking concerns. Certainly, I would be very happy to meet with committee to discuss this unresolved matter. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

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

**MR. O'REILLY:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. The other site that tends to sometimes keep me awake at night is Prairie Creek, and I probably don't have to tell this Minister, who is the Minister of Lands, he is going to get an Environmental Assessment Report sometime in the near future, probably from the Mackenzie Valley Review Board, about an all-weather road into the site.

The more our fingerprints are on this site, the more likely we are going to assume some of the liability. What, if anything, has our government done about the existing liabilities at the site? If I remember correctly, it is about \$9 or \$12 million that is unsecured at the site. What has our government done to ensure that we don't incur any of that liability? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

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

**HON. LOUIS SEBERT:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Apparently, Canadian Zinc has met all of its current securities requirements under the permits, licences, and authorizations that are currently in place. I understand that our government is holding \$2,075,000 in securities for the mine site and winter road, which includes water licence leases and land use permits. Perhaps, at this stage, I could it turn it

over to my deputy minister for a full explanation. Thank you.

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

**MR. HAGEN:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. As you mentioned, Prairie Creek is out of an EA. It is in the hands of the INAC Ministers and the responsible Ministers from the GNWT. That is where the Minister has asked for more engagement with the Aboriginal communities in the Deh Cho, and then they come back for her final decision on the water licence.

As for liability, there is some historical liability there that the federal government is responsible for, and unless this mine actually takes off and goes to production, then, at that time, there are liabilities that could be incurred by the territorial government, but in order for them to go into production, they will have to apply for a lease from the Department of Lands. On that lease, we have the power and the ability to put in the required securities that we feel are needed to take care of the liability that could possibly be incurred by an operating mine. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

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

**HON. LOUIS SEBERT:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Just to add, the Mackenzie Valley Land and Water Board has a total security amount of \$17,007,000, which the proponent will be required to post in stages, if and when the project proceeds. Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake):** Thank you, Minister Sebert. Time has expired, Mr. O'Reilly. Any further questions from committee? Mr. Vanthuyne.

**MR. VANTHUYNE:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, this is also the activity in which we see the Mackenzie Valley Resource Management Act identified. Maybe I will start with asking the department, through their policy and legislation communications, have they identified any concerns or challenges that we are faced with, with regard to the MVRMA? Is there any undertaking as it relates to working with the federal government to make changes, if necessary, prior to our inheritance of the MVRMA, come 2019? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

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

**HON. LOUIS SEBERT:** The Department of Lands led the GNWT's participation in the current proposed amendments to the MVRMA and also the proposed Federal Impact Assessment Act. Members will recall that there was some litigation that led to the change in the federal government's

process or procedures in this whole matter. I think, ultimately, we would like to bring this piece of legislation home, but that may be sometime in the future.

We have participated in the federal review of environmental and regulatory processes. I don't know if Mr. Hagen wants to add anything to that.

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

**MR. HAGEN:** Yes. One of your questions was whether we work closely with Land and Water Boards under the MVRMA, and we do work very closely with them, almost on a daily basis, when there is a development on the application in, and there is a half-dozen of them at different stages as we speak.

Lands has only participated in the current proposed amendments of the Mackenzie Valley Resource Management Act. The actual negotiations of bringing the MVRMA home to the Government of the Northwest Territories is led by the Department of EIA, and the bill with the proposed amendments to the MVRMA has not yet been tabled in Parliament. Officials from Crown-Indigenous Relations, or CIRNA, have not communicated with us when this is expected to occur. It was supposed to be early fall, and, obviously, they did not meet that date. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake):** Thank you, Mr. Hagen. Mr. Vanthuyne.

**MR. VANTHUYNE:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Okay, so I appreciate that the Department of Lands is working closely with the land and water boards. That is respectful. I also appreciate that it is EIA that is kind of the lead as it relates to working with the federal government on any amendments. I guess the question is: are we aware of concerns that need change in the Mackenzie Valley Resource Management Act, and is the Department of Lands aware of any of those? Are they suggesting or making recommendations to EIA about what might need to be changed in the MVRMA before we inherit it? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

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

**HON. LOUIS SEBERT:** I see a note here that on February 8<sup>th</sup> Catherine McKenna wrote me committing that the government will continue to engage the GNWT through the Parliamentary process to seek our views on regulatory and policy issues. Perhaps I could let Mr. Hagen expand on that, but yes, we are engaged with them, and they do seem to want our engagement. Thank you.

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

**MR. HAGEN:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Like I said, Lands is doing the current proposed amendments, and the negotiations to bring the MVRMA home do include negotiating further amendments. We will have to get it home and do our own amendments. The bill that I mentioned, the proposed amendments to the MVRMA, that was stalled approximately three years ago now on the court action launched by the Tlicho government when the federal Harper government of the day wanted to make one super-board. In there are amendments that, in my future life, we put together some -- I say they are great amendments -- that are still there in this proposed amendment going forth to Parliament. Those amendments will come, and they will make a big difference in the MVRMA as you see it today. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake):** Thank you, Mr. Hagen. Mr. Vanthuyne.

**MR. VANTHUYNE:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Just lastly, we are working with the federal government. We clearly are working with the land and water boards. We are working interdepartmentally with ourselves. Have we taken any initiative to reach out to industry? Are we working with industry and listening to industry and their concerns? I know that they have concerns that they have shared before with our government. Are we reacting or taking any action with regard to those? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake):** Thank you, Mr. Vanthuyne. Mr. Hagen.

**MR. HAGEN:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Yes, we are always taking industry, mining, and so on into consideration. They attend many public forums with us and the Mackenzie Land and Water Boards. They put their wishes forward, if I can call them that, for amendments, and they also meet with the federal government, too. It is all federal legislation, so they are the ones who they have to convince at the end of the day to make any changes. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake):** Thank you, Mr. Hagen. Further questions? Mr. O'Reilly.

**MR. O'REILLY:** Thanks, Mr. Chair. I want to go back to Prairie Creek just for a minute, if I can. I am trying to understand whether there are any legal impediments to us increasing the financial security now to cover the existing liabilities that are at the site. As I understand it, the lease is now in an overhold tenancy position. Are there any legal impediments to us changing the financial security now to cover the existing liabilities? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

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

**HON. LOUIS SEBERT:** As I mentioned previously, Canadian Zinc has met all current security requirements under the permits, licences, and authorizations, and we are holding slightly over \$2 million in securities. I am not certain, but I could look into it to see whether an overholding lease would allow us to increase the security. It seems to me that it might be unlikely that we would have the ability to do that. That might be seen as being in bad faith, but we could get back to you with an answer. Mr. Hagen tells me he could give a better answer.

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

**MR. HAGEN:** I do not know if I can give a better answer, Mr. Minister, but I can give a different perspective on it. The fact is that they have a lease that has been agreed to, the securities held have been agreed to, and, until that lease is up for renewal, we could not go back and increase it. I think it is well known that securities are based on risk, you run a risk model, and they are not operating. As a matter of fact, right now, they are shut down, so the risk is very low, and the securities that we hold on that lease right now are plenty sufficient. Like I mentioned before, if they clear all the hurdles and they eventually go for production, before they can do that they have to renew those leases and get added leases, and at that time we would increase the security to make sure that the Government of the Northwest Territories is well protected for any environmental problems or, heaven forbid, a disaster. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake):** Thank you, Mr. Hagen. Mr. O'Reilly.

**MR. O'REILLY:** Thanks, Mr. Chair. Look, if our witnesses want to come back and give us more information and it has to be done confidentially, that is fine, but why is it that we cannot take any action now to increase the financial security for the liabilities that are on the ground right now? Is there some legal provision of the existing lease that is in overhold tenancy that the Minister does not have the discretion to increase the security right now? I cannot believe that someone would sign off on a lease that does not allow the Minister to have discretion to increase security when and if required. It is not covered right now. This property could come back to the taxpayers, and I want to know whether the Minister has discretion right now to increase the security to cover the existing liabilities on the site because they are not secured. Thanks, Mr. Chair.

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

**HON. LOUIS SEBERT:** I do not know the answer to that, but I know that they have met all security requirements to this stage, so a sudden change by us might be seen as arbitrary. Perhaps the best way of handling this, though, would be to have us look into it and perhaps we could meet with committee on a confidential basis to discuss some of these issues.

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

**MR. O'REILLY:** Yes, I am happy to accept that, but we have been talking about this for two years. At least I have been talking about it for two years. There is currently unsecured liability for the existing condition of the site. Yes, they have met terms and conditions of the water licence, they have paid up the security under the water licence to the state that it is at, but right now we do not have enough security set aside if something went off the rails with the property to cover the existing liabilities. That is the problem. If the Minister has discretion to change that so that we are not on the hook, it is my view and I think it is dictated by the mandate and just good financial management that we get the security in place. So, if the Minister wants to come back and talk again about this, I am happy to have him talk to the committee about it, but there is an unsecured amount of liability there, and that needs to be fixed. Thanks, Mr. Chair.

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

**HON. LOUIS SEBERT:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. We are going around in circles a bit here, but, as I say, they did meet all security requirements. They might see a sudden change as arbitrary, but I will look into this. Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake):** Thank you, Minister Sebert. No further questions? Okay, committee, we have no further questions. We will now go to operations expenditure summary, \$6,991,000. Does the committee agree?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake):** Agreed. Thank you, committee. We will now return to departmental summary on page 309. Lands, total department, \$27,673,000. Does committee agree?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake):** Agreed. Thank you. Does the committee agree that the consideration of the Department of Lands is concluded?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake):** Agreed. Thank you. Thank you, committee. Thank you, Minister, and thanks to your witnesses for appearing before us. Sergeant-at-Arms, please escort the witnesses from the Chamber. No closing comments? No.

Okay. Committee, you have agreed to continue on with the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs. I will turn to the Minister responsible for the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs. Minister Cochrane, do you have opening comments?

**HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE:** I do, thank you, Mr. Chair.

**HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE:** I am pleased to present the 2018-2019 Main Estimates for the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs. Overall, the department's estimates propose an increase of \$482,000 from the 2017-2018 Main Estimates, which is a .45 per cent increase.

These estimates continue to support the Government of the Northwest Territories' objective of ensuring a strong and sustainable future for the government and its programs by managing expenditures due to limited revenue growth.

The 2018-2019 Main Estimates reflect:

- a decrease of \$1.5 million which was the final contribution provided to Host Society for the 2018 Arctic Winter Games;
- an increase of \$944,000 to support the need for increased grants in lieu of property taxes payments to community governments, as well as an increase for the seniors and disabled persons property tax relief program; and
- an increase of \$1,300,000 for community governments to support their operational needs and the delivery of water and sewer services.

The department's proposed spending in 2018-2019 continues to support the priorities of the 18<sup>th</sup> Legislative Assembly.

Under the Community Wellness and Safety priority, Municipal and Community Affairs has refined its implementation plan for a territorial 911 service, and our investment in this budget will result in this service coming online by the summer of 2019.

Through an increase in funding for community governments, we are continuing to invest in a strategy to close the gap in funding levels to municipal core needs. This funding advances the governance priority by helping to build a stronger relationship with community governments. In

support of the cost of living priority area, we will continue to support community governments as they apply for and take advantage of the suite of federal infrastructure funding programs available to them. That concludes my opening remarks. Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake):** Thank you, Minister. Do you wish to bring witnesses into the Chamber?

**HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE:** Yes, thank you, Mr. Chair. I would like to bring witnesses.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake):** Okay, thank you. Sergeant-at-Arms, please escort witnesses into the Chamber. Would the Minister please introduce her witnesses for the record.

**HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. On my right is Ms. Eleanor Young; she's the deputy minister for Municipal and Community Affairs. On my left is Gary Schauerte, who is the director for Corporate Affairs. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake):** Thank you, Minister. I will now ask committee to turn to your main estimates document, Department of Municipal and Community Affairs, which begins on page 331. Committee, we will defer the departmental summary and review the estimates by activity summary. Please turn to the first activity, found on page 335. Thank you. We have Municipal and Community Affairs, community governance, operations expenditure summary, \$2,036,000. Does committee agree?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake):** Any questions? Agreed. Thank you. Next we have Municipal and Community Affairs, community operations, operations expenditure summary, \$2,043,000. Does committee agree?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake):** Agreed. Thank you. Next, under Municipal and Community Affairs, directorate, operations expenditure summary, \$3,765,000. Does committee agree?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake):** Agreed. Thank you. Next, we have Municipal and Community Affairs, public safety, operations expenditures summary, \$2,132,000. Does committee agree?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake):** Questions? Mr. Thompson.

**MR. THOMPSON:** Yes.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake):** Does committee agree?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely):** Okay. Any questions to Public Safety, operations expenditure summary? Mr. O'Reilly.

**MR. O'REILLY:** Thanks, Mr. Chair. Can the Minister just give us a brief update of where we are with the development of 911? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

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

**HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Considering that it is late, I am going to try and do my best, and Ms. Eleanor Young might expand on it. 911, we have worked with the stakeholders. We are now in the process. We have made an arrangement to work with the Med Alert team, so we can co-chair space with that. We are working with municipalities at this time to try to make sure that they have the infrastructure or the means to be able to identify people. Dial plans, I am going to let Ms. Eleanor Young speak on that one. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake):** Thank you, Minister Cochrane. Ms. Young.

**MS. YOUNG:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. To extend on that, we are working with the stakeholders to create the local dial plans in each community so that we have the structure in place for the dispatch system. We are working on a legislative proposal for the 911 legislation and preparing to go in front of the CRTC later this year with regard to the charge model. As mentioned in the opening comments, all of those pieces, we do anticipate to come in to play where we will be hiring staff later this year and operational by the summer of 2019. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

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

**MR. O'REILLY:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. So when might we expect to see a bill come into the House to implement 911? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

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

**HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I think we are all tired at this point. We are preparing to bring the legislative proposal forward this month. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake):** Thank you, Minister Cochrane. It's still early, but next, we have Mr. O'Reilly.

**MR. O'REILLY:** Thanks, Mr. Chair. That was my next question: when could we expect to see an LP? When would we expect a bill to come into the House? Are we looking at September or October, then? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

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

**HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. That is correct, subject to process, of course. There may be glitches, depending on presenting it to standing committee and getting the draft done up. If it all follows through, it should be in September or October. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

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

**MR. O'REILLY:** Thanks, Mr. Chair. I appreciate that. I am sure we are all going to look forward to getting that bill, and committee will do its work. I understood that the original plan was to partner with the city and run the dispatch response part of the 911 service in collaboration with the city using the fire hall here in Yellowknife. It sounds like the plan has changed. Can the Minister just tell us how and why that change took place? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

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

**HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Originally, when this was proposed, one of the only options was actually the City of Yellowknife. We looked at partnering with them. Sometimes things take more time than I expected at the beginning. When we decided that this was going to go through, we actually did more research, and we found that it was actually not only more cost-effective to partner with the Med Alert team, but it also provides a better service. The City of Yellowknife would have needed infrastructure changes to accommodate it. By providing the service with Med Alert and sharing the services, we can actually give better provision of services to the residents of the Northwest Territories. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

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

**MR. O'REILLY:** Thanks, Mr. Chair, and I want to thank the Minister for that explanation. Is there going to be any involvement with the City of Yellowknife moving forward on 911, other than the city dispatching its emergency services as required by 911? Is there any other engagement or involvement with the city as this rolls out? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

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

**HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Yes, every community will have a piece to play within the 911 rollout. We need all communities to be able to identify what their resources are and to coordinate those with us. The City of Yellowknife also will be hopefully taking part in some of the training that we will provide. Other than that, that is how we see it. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

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

**MR. O'REILLY:** I don't have anything further. Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake):** Thank you. Next, we have Mr. Thompson.

**MR. THOMPSON:** Thank you, Mr. Chair, and I think this might be really quick. I see in program management an exclusion of \$370,000. Could you explain that reduction? I guess, the 911 program, is that where the money is going and why we have a reduction in the program management area? Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake):** Thank you, Mr. Thompson. Just a reminder to wait until the light is on before you start speaking or it kind of cuts out a bit. Minister Cochrane.

**HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. It is actually quite cumbersome with the \$370,000. We allocated some resources to establish a senior policy analysis that was \$15,000. The 911, at the beginning, we estimated that we would need money. Let me just look. Actually, Mr. Chair, this is quite cumbersome. I am going to switch it to Gary Schauerte, if you are okay with that.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake):** Thank you, Minister Cochrane. I'm okay with that, Mr. Schauerte.

---Laughter

**MR. SCHAUERTE:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. The change in figure that has been asked about represents a few different changes that have taken place within the unit.

The first one the Minister referenced was the creation of a senior policy position. We have used internal resources to create that position, largely to address concerns raised through the Office of the Auditor General related to fire protection services. Our response to this is to create a position that is working very closely with community governments on fire protection plans and the implementation of the Fire Protection Strategy for the Northwest Territories.

The creation of this position also allows for the department to look at succession planning for things like our Office of the Fire Marshal, which are obviously critical functions to the department. Ensuring that we have succession planning in that area is vital to our operations.

The majority of the rest of the changes represent changes that we have made subsequent to the business plan related to the 911 program. At the time when we appeared before committee related to the 911 program, we had envisioned the potential to be able to implement in the 2018-2019 fiscal year, including bringing on resource revenue or revenue related to the 911 program. As we continued to investigate the implementation of the 911 program, and as we explained during the business planning process, it became clear that we had to look at a different implementation model.

Subsequent to that time, our department has undertaken that research to complete the implementation model, and we did return to the Financial Management Board to readjust our funding allocation related to the 911 program. The net at the end is that we have given up projected revenues for the 2018-2019, because we won't actually be implementing in 2018-2019. The remainder, in total, is about \$606,000 to support the implementation of 911, which is spread amongst a few categories under program detail. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake):** Thank you, Mr. Schauerte. Mr. Thompson.

**MR. THOMPSON:** Thank you, Mr. Chair, and I thank Mr. Schauerte for that answer. If I wasn't confused before, I am getting there now. The senior policy position, is that in program management or the 911 program area? I guess that is the way to look at it first. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

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

**HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. The senior policy analyst position is actually with the Office of the Fire Marshal, and as Mr. Schauerte said, it is actually to give assistance in bringing forward the Fire Prevention Act and the community fire protection plans that are needed. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

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

**MR. THOMPSON:** Thank you. In the Office of the Fire Marshal, we have seen a \$15,000 increase. There have been reallocations in that office to get a new position; is that correct?

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

**HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Yes, we have done reallocations internally to be able to provide that position within our headquarters department at the Office of the Fire Marshal. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

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

**MR. THOMPSON:** I wonder what caused management to lose \$370,000. I shouldn't say "lost." We reallocated \$370,000 between the Office of the Fire Marshal and the 911 program, to simply things. Is that correct, saying that?

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

**HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE:** Yes, Mr. Chair. As Mr. Schauerte said, we had planned for implementation this current year; it's been pushed back a year. So we actually reallocated that money. So, yes, the MLA is correct. Thank you.

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

**MR. THOMPSON:** Thank you. Now, what Mr. Schauerte explained totally makes sense, and I thank the Minister and Mr. Schauerte for answering that. I realize it's getting late, but thank you for being patient with me as we move forward. So I'm done with this section. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake):** Thank you. Next, we have Mr. Vanthuyne.

**MR. VANTHUYNE:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Can the department confirm that this budget consists of a review of the Fire Prevention Act? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake):** Thank you, Mr. Vanthuyne. Minister Cochrane.

**HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Yes, that is correct. The Fire Prevention Act is being reviewed, and we are expecting that there will be changes within this Legislative Assembly. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake):** Thank you, Minister Cochrane. Mr. Vanthuyne.

**MR. VANTHUYNE:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Can the Minister just maybe explain to us what is the review consisting of? Are we doing a jurisdictional review of other provinces and territories, and is there stakeholder engagement, stakeholder consultation that will be taking place as part of the review? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake):** Thank you, Mr. Vanthuyne. Ms. Young.

**MS. YOUNG:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Yes, the Member is correct. As is typical with a legislation process, we have already undertaken an interjurisdictional review, and we've completed phase 1 of our stakeholder engagement already. We are preparing to go out with phase 2 of our stakeholder engagement this coming summer, which is basically taking what we've heard so far and trying to identify some options to address the problems that have been identified and seek input on those. So that is the next round of engagement that we are planning for this year. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake):** Thank you, Ms. Young. No further questions? Ms. Green.

**MS. GREEN:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, I just have a question that relates to 911. Could the Minister remind me about the fees? At what point will the fees cover the costs of 911, or will they not do that at all? Thank you.

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

**HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. As per the recommendation of standing committee, we have agreed with standing committee, and the fees will cover the total cost of 911, except for, of course, the initial implementation that we are currently doing, but after it's on the ground and operating, the fees to the consumers will actually cover the cost for the provision of service. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake):** Thank you, Ms. Cochrane. Ms. Green.

**MS. GREEN:** Thank you for the answer. Nothing further.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake):** Thank you. Next, we have Mr. Beaulieu.

**MR. BEAULIEU:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, I just wanted to get a little bit of an explanation on which direction the ground ambulance highway rescue is going. I know that we've received explanations that it was three different departments and maybe even the various municipalities, that is on page 358, and the various municipalities were also involved in some key communities, like Providence, maybe, McPherson, Smith, and maybe Hay River. I'm just trying to sort out how that has evolved. I know that I see some money. It is probably not enough for all of those communities. I think Fort Simpson is also one of the communities that provides highway access. It kind of falls in the hands of the municipalities, for the most part, but I

don't know what jurisdictions and so on are around all of the whole ground ambulance. I'd ask the Minister if she could explain where that's headed. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake):** Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. Ms. Cochrane.

**HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. So we're still in the process of actually defining all of the resources that will be needed to implement a proper ground ambulance highway rescue service. We have hired a consultant, so that process is going on right at this moment. We're hoping that that will be finished within the next couple of months. We have currently \$185,000 that is for the communities that are providing the highway rescue service at this time. Previously, there were strict requirements on it, that they had to use it for defined services, defined by MACA. That was raised as an issue, I'm not sure if it was in the House or by standing committee, and we also heard that. So we've expanded that, and we took the money and we divided it up to the communities that are providing that service right now. They are allowed to use it for what they see that they feel that they need towards providing highway rescue. Then, once the report is finished, we'll be looking at whether we need to increase it, what resources will be needed, and how we'll distribute that funding, recognizing that we do have one new highway to Tuktoyaktuk and that the road to Whati might need to be considered as well. So, those are the things we're looking at. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake):** Thank you, Minister Cochrane. Mr. Beaulieu.

**MR. BEAULIEU:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, I'd like to ask the Minister if she has, not the exact amount but approximately, how many highway rescues with ground ambulance actually occur annually? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake):** Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. Minister Cochrane.

**HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. We don't have that information at this time. That is one of the things we are looking at. Some of the communities actually provide that information more because they feel that they're not collecting on the fees. Other communities, for example the City of Yellowknife, actually are doing really well collecting on their fees. So we haven't been collecting them before that, and we don't even know if they've been reporting them all. So that is one of the pieces that we are looking at, how many actually will be needed, how many currently, and what's the projection of what will be needed in the future. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Minister Cochrane. Mr. Beaulieu.

**MR. BEAULIEU:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, the Minister indicated she doesn't have that information at her fingertips, and I understand that, no problem. I was wondering if maybe the Minister could look at the feasibility of using helicopters to do all the ground ambulance coverage. I figure the coverage would be quicker and, also, for the number of times that we'd need it, it would be just on an as-needed basis. I'm wondering if that department or DOT or Health has ever looked at that type of analysis in order to determine which is the most economical way of doing highway rescue? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake):** Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. Minister Cochrane.

**HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. We have asked the consultant to actually look at all options. Air rescue might be an option if it's quite a ways away, but, if it's only a kilometer or two from a centre then, of course, that wouldn't make sense; it wouldn't be as cost-effective. So we've asked for all options, and we are looking forward to that report when it's finished. I would like to say that I'm just thinking that you can't determine where an accident is going to happen, so I think it would be having to look at all of the different methods instead of just one versus the other. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake):** Thank you, Minister Cochrane. Mr. Beaulieu.

**MR. BEAULIEU:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I have nothing further in this section.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake):** Thank you. Any further questions, committee? If not, I will call the page. Municipal and Community Affairs, public safety, operations expenditure summary, \$2,132,000. Does committee agree?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake):** Thank you. That brings us to page 351. Regional operations, operations expenditure summary, \$88,999,000. Does committee agree?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake):** Agreed. Thank you. Next, we have School of Community Government, operations expenditure summary, \$2,860,000. Does committee agree? Mr. Beaulieu.

**MR. BEAULIEU:** Mr. Chairman, I apologize. I had one question on the previous section.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake):** Okay. Just give us a second. We may need a motion to go back. Mr. Beaulieu.

**MR. BEAULIEU:** Mr. Chairman, perhaps I could ask the question at the last section as a general comment and then we could proceed.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake):** Okay. Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. Okay, that brings us back to page 356, School of Community Government, operations expenditure summary, \$2,860,000. Mr. O'Reilly.

**MR. O'REILLY:** Thanks, Mr. Chair. I am not sure this is the right place, but, obviously, our government is going to have to respond to cannabis legalization and make sure that, community governments, there is a commitment to ensure that they have the authority to add on additional restrictions. They are also going to need some support in deciding how they might like to exercise that authority and have available information to them. Is this the sort of place where that support would be provided is through something like the School of Community Government, or where would it occur within the MACA budget? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

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

**HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. It does not really fit in here, but I am okay answering it. We are working closely with the departments, across departments, the Department of Justice, Health and Social Services, Workers' Safety Compensation Commission, and Municipal and Community Affairs. Our governance team is actually on this. We are also working with the Northwest Territories Association of Communities because there may be some bylaws that will have to be developed for communities, especially if they are looking at prohibiting marijuana in their communities. So we are on top of it. We are doing our best to make sure that communities get the support that they need. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

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

**MR. O'REILLY:** Thanks, Mr. Chair. I appreciate that, and, of course, our side of the House is going to be very interested to know what those costs are going to be and how they are rolled up across all of the departments, not just yours. So that is just a heads-up to say that there are maybe some revenue implications from cannabis legalization, but there are also going to be some costs to our government and that that implementation and roll-out is going to be really essential when it comes time to look at the bill and understand how that process is going to roll out. So I encourage your

department to engage with the others and develop that implementation plan and that it is costed and so on. I do not need a response, but that is the heads-up. Thanks, Mr. Chair.

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

**HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. The Department of Municipal and Community Affairs is all about providing support and services to the communities, so we are aware that there may be some difficulties with communities. One of them may be cost factors, so we are looking at that, and we are trying to make sure that we provide the proper support -- it is not an option -- so that communities can actually implement this in the most comprehensive way possible. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake):** Thank you, Minister Cochrane. Any further questions on School of Community Government? Mr. Beaulieu.

**MR. BEAULIEU:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I seek unanimous consent to return to the regional operations section on page 352.

---Unanimous consent granted

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake):** Go ahead, Mr. Beaulieu.

**MR. BEAULIEU:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. After all this, I hope I have come back to the right section. Mr. Chairman, earlier in our deliberations with the Department of Lands, I had asked questions about taxation of cabins. The Minister had indicated that the Lands officers did the enforcement; MACA does the taxing. I would like to ask basically a similar question, is that: is there any difference between the taxing of cabins between the treaty people, the Metis, and the non-Aboriginal people who have cabins in the bush for harvesting? Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake):** Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. Minister Cochrane.

**HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I will start, and then, if the chair allows, then I will let Mr. Schauerte expand on it. Municipal and Community Affairs does the assessments in the communities and on Commissioner's land, but Finance deals with the mill rates and the collection of taxes and things. I will let Mr. Schauerte actually expand on that if the chair permits. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake):** Thank you, Minister Cochrane. Mr. Schauerte.

**MR. SCHAUERTE:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. We of course conduct property assessment pursuant to the Property Assessment and Taxation Act. The legislation sets out the classifications of properties that are subject to property assessment. One of the areas is recreational cabins. I can certainly appreciate the question from the Member. We have certainly heard that at the department level, of concerns raised by residents who are treaty status, who believe that they were exempt to taxation. Accordingly, we did work with the Department of Justice to seek interpretation of our legislation, and our understanding of the assertion of treaty rights is that, if a cabin is being used for the benefit of the whole community in that it is a community resource for hunting or fishing or sustenance purposes, certainly that would be something that would be exempt. The type of cabins that are being assessed right now are individual property owners' based on recreational leases, so, within the scope of the legislation, they fall within the area that we would assess, and, accordingly, we have continued to apply PATA in that regard. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake):** Thank you, Mr. Schauerte. Mr. Beaulieu.

**MR. BEAULIEU:** Thank you. So non-recreational cabins that are used for harvesting, like hunting, trapping, fishing, and even berry-picking, I am wondering if those cabins are taxed. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake):** Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. Minister Cochrane.

**HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. As Mr. Schauerte said, if they are individual cabins, belonging to an individual and used for their purposes, they are assessed; if they are a cabin that is used for the community as a whole, they are currently not assessed. My understanding is that, once the land claims are finished, those issues will be addressed, so I would encourage all of our MLAs around the table to push the governments to actually settle the land claims. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake):** Thank you, Minister Cochrane. Mr. Beaulieu.

**MR. BEAULIEU:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I think, Mr. Chairman, most governments want to settle the claim in unsettled areas, but I guess my question is very specific. If an individual is using a cabin for non-recreational use; I don't consider somebody going out to hunt bison and has a cabin along the Slave River to be recreational use. Maybe they go there and picnic and that by boat and so on, but I am seeing recreational use as something you may be able to access by a vehicle, by a car. From the

cabins that are used for traditional harvesting, are they taxed?

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake):** Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. Minister Cochrane.

**HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. As stated, and I will state it again, if the cabins are used for an individual's family and not shared with the community as a whole, they are currently assessed and taxed. If they are used as a community cabin and all community members are allowed to use that cabin for traditional harvesting and hunting, they are not taxed. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake):** Thank you, Minister Cochrane. Mr. Beaulieu.

**MR. BEAULIEU:** Mr. Chairman, I am using the term recreational. Mr. Schauerte used the term recreational. The Minister used the term recreational. I am trying to avoid the term recreational. I am asking if the government would be taxing somebody's trapping cabin. My understanding is that there are cabins on the Slave River near Fort Smith, near Fort Resolution, and cabins on the Taltson River, that are subject to taxing. Individuals are not seeing how that is possible. They went in the bush. They have been trapping there forever. They have replaced their cabins every once in a while, and they trap out of there, and they hunt out of there. Everybody shares cabins. Whether they share it with a community or not shouldn't have any relevance at all if we are using just the rules to assess and then tax. Very specific. I don't want the same answer again, because I got the same answer three times. I clearly understand. If you are sharing cabins with the whole community, it is not taxable. I am asking about an individual who is using a cabin for traditional harvesting, if that cabin is subject to taxation. This is the last time I will ask it.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake):** Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. Minister Cochrane.

**HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I am trying not to say the same thing for the fourth time. The answer is yes. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake):** Thank you, Minister Cochrane. Any further questions on this department? We will go back to this activity. Mr. Thompson.

**MR. THOMPSON:** Sorry. In regard to what Mr. Beaulieu was talking about, the department has a legal opinion from Justice on what is traditional usage and what is recreational, correct? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

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

**HON. LOUIS SEBERT:** I just want to say that a legal opinion from Justice would be privileged.

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

**HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE:** Thank you. We should have said legal review versus legal opinion. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

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

**MR. THOMPSON:** Ok.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake):** Ok, we'll try this again. Minister Sebert.

**HON. LOUIS SEBERT:** I think the contents of the opinion, we have shared in a general sense, which has led to the position we have taken. The actual opinion itself, we can't share because it is privileged.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake):** Mr. Thompson.

**MR. THOMPSON:** Thank you to the Minister of Justice and the Minister of MACA on that one. Can that opinion be shared to committee in confidentiality? Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake):** Thank you Mr. Thompson. Minister Cochrane.

**HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. My understanding is, no, it cannot be shared with committee even in confidentiality. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

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

**MR. THOMPSON:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I will try this another way: can the department get the lawyer to come in and talk to committee in camera on this issue? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

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

**HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. My understanding is, no, that a lawyer of the Department of Justice cannot go in even in camera to share that with committee. The other important thing to note is that we are also working with the Department of Executive and Indigenous Affairs on this. It is a pretty sensitive issue. At this point, no, Justice does not share that information. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

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

**MR. THOMPSON:** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake):** We will turn to our Honourable Premier, Mr. McLeod.

**HON. BOB MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I don't want to muddy the waters, but as we have said before for those regions or Aboriginal governments that have land claims that have negotiated arrangements where these types of cabins are not fully taxed or they are not taxed, we have been talking at least to the NWT Metis Nation where we are expecting we are very close to having an agreement. We have asked them to quantify the issue and we are going to look at what arrangements can be done. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake):** Thank you, Premier McLeod. Mr. Thompson.

**MR. THOMPSON:** Thank you. I thank the Premier for that. I think it is getting a little bit more clear for me now. Just to clarify, if it is in unsettled land claims areas, presently we are not taxing these people in traditional cabins. Is that correct? Thank you.

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

**HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. If it is in areas where Aboriginal governments have land claims and it is negotiated in their agreements, then we are not taxing them. If it is an unsettled land claim area, we are still taxing, as I had defined earlier. If it is for the whole community usage, we are not assessing, because we only assess. If it is for an individual usage for whatever purpose, we are at this point, assessing that property. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

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

**MR. THOMPSON:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I thank the Minister for that answer. Is there an appeal mechanism out there? These people who have these cabins, can they appeal the department? Is there an appeal mechanism available? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake):** Thank you, Mr. Thompson. Mr. Schauerte.

**MR. SCHAUERTE:** Mr. Chair, the Property Tax and Relief Act includes an opportunity for residents to appeal their assessment notice through the Board of Revision. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake):** Thank you, Mr. Schauerte. Mr. Thompson.

**MR. THOMPSON:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. In regard to this, how does the department go out and do the assessment on these cabins? How are they able to do this? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake):** Thank you, Mr. Thompson. Mr. Schauerte.

**MR. SCHAUERTE:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. The Property Assessment and Taxation Act requires that we assess properties on a 10-year cycle. The department currently averages about every eight years or so. We physically inspect properties for valuation change. We have a team of assessors who are based out of Yellowknife, and a work plan is developed based on a rotational schedule with all of the committees that we need to attend to, and it is through that process that we develop the assessment role on an annual basis. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake):** Thank you, Mr. Schauerte. Mr. Thompson.

**MR. THOMPSON:** Thank you, Mr. Chair, and I thank Mr. Schauerte for that answer. It clears up a few things for me. I am going on to something a little bit different on this here. The senior citizen and disability personal property tax relief, we seen an increase of almost \$300,000. Is this just because of our population has grown towards the seniors and we are seeing a bigger demand for this fund? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

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

**HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Yes, the MLA is correct. We are seeing an increase in seniors who are applying for this, and so this is a forced growth figure. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake):** Thank you. No further questions. Next, we have Mr. McNeely.

**MR. MCNEELY:** Thank you, Mr. Chair, I was going to elaborate or mention clarity. As the Honourable Premier mentioned already, in our settled claim area of the Sahtu during the process of settlement, the cabin owners were allowed to select that area and make it a part of an arrangement to the land claims settlement, so there is that allowance available to unsettled areas. I just bring that out for information. It might add some clarity so we can move on. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake):** Thank you, Mr. McNeely. I take that as comment. Any further questions? To regional operations, operations expenditure summary, \$88,999,000. Does the commit agree?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake):** Agreed. Thank you. Go back to where we were before. School of Community Government, operations expenditure summary, \$2,860,000. Does committee agree?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake):** Agreed. Thank you. That brings us next to page 360, sport, recreation and youth, operations expenditures summary, \$5,342,000. Does committee agree? Question. Mr. Thompson.

**MR. THOMPSON:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. In the budget line we see multisport games funding going from \$500 to \$250,000. Can the Minister explain this cut? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake):** Thank you, Mr. Thompson. Committee, that is from page 359 to 363, just for your information. Minister Cochrane.

**HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. That is a multisport games reduction in the budget. Thank you, Mr. Chair. I should add that these reductions were previously approved in the last fiscal year's budget to go over three years. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

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

**MR. THOMPSON:** Just to clarify, since the other side there says we approved it, so what we are saying is we can approve next year's budget already. Can we get that clarified? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

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

**HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. During the process of the 2017-2018 budget, this was brought to our attention. It was brought to our attention on many departments that were actually looking at providing the cuts over a number of years. This was presented to all MLAs, and the budget was passed at that time with the understanding that this was going to happen. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

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

**MR. THOMPSON:** Thank you, Mr. Chair, and I thank the Minister for the interesting answer. I guess I am just going to go right to it. Is the Government of Northwest Territories getting out of multisport games by cutting this money? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

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

**HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Definitely not. It is not the intention for the Government of the Northwest Territories to be getting out of multisport games. We respect the games. We respect the sport and recreation associations and the services that they provide to the residents of the Northwest Territories. We are committed to maintaining the multisport games. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

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

**MR. THOMPSON:** Thank you, Mr. Chair, and I thank the Minister for that answer. I guess we have a difference of opinion of what we call respect, but I'll just say that there. When we talked to the partners or the organizations, when we sit there and they see this money being cut, they ask this question. Has the department gone to the Sport North, Aboriginal Sport Circle, and explained why they are doing this cut? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

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

**HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I do not believe that we have done that to date, but I can commit that we will go to the organizations and explain it to them. We are meeting with them anyway. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

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

**MR. THOMPSON:** Thank you, Mr. Chair, and I thank the Minister for that commitment. I wish we had done it the year before, and for the record, I didn't support the budget, and this is one of the reasons I didn't support it last time. Are we saying that, in next year's budget, the other \$250,000 is going to be removed? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

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

**HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Yes, as presented in the previous year's financial mains, the next year there will be another cut, and that will be the final year of cuts to the multisport games. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

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

**MR. THOMPSON:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Can the Minister tell us where the money is going to go for multisport games, then, if it is not going to be in this budget here? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

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

**HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. The Department of Municipal and Community Affairs is committed to maintaining the multisport games. We will provide funding for the games either through internal funding and/or through lottery funding which was done throughout the years. It was never only funded through the internal funding or through this funding. I believe this was brought forward in 2009. Previous to that, it was funded through the lotteries, and many years we have had to dip into both. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

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

**MR. THOMPSON:** Thank you, Mr. Chair, and I thank the Minister for that answer and being able to get that information out there. Will the Minister and the department be working with the five groups that actually access the lottery funds now and explain to them this is what the reality is going to happen in the future? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

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

**HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE:** As stated earlier, yes, I had made a commitment. We will work actually with the five groups. We are working with them currently anyway, and so we will have a sit down with them and explain how this will impact and how we will cover the multisport games in the future. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

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

**MR. THOMPSON:** Thank you, Mr. Chair, and I appreciate the Minister making that commitment. Since 2009 to this year, is the Minister saying that multisport games have been funded by this multisport games funding and lotteries? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

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

**HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Not every year. In some years, since 2009, we have funded it just through this funding. Since 2009, we have used both this funding pot and also the lottery funding. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

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

**MR. THOMPSON:** Thank you, and I thank the Minister for that. So can the Minister tell us how many years that the lotteries has been used to pay for multisport games, including the money that has

been allocated from this department? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake):** Thank you, Mr. Thompson. Just a correction, it is page 359 to page 365, not 363. Minister Cochrane.

**HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. We did have a graph developed. At this moment, we cannot find it. We can provide it to the standing committee, though. In my recollection, there was a minimum of three to four years, and it was about \$2 million that was taken from the lottery funds, as per my recollection, but we will actually commit to providing that graph to standing committee. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

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

**MR. THOMPSON:** Thank you, Mr. Chair, and I thank the Minister for that. Will this document be public? Can we make this document public? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

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

**HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Yes, we will make that public, and I will go further and commit to actually sharing that with the five regional sports and recreation organizations as well. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

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

**MR. THOMPSON:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I am just going on for the record, again, saying that this is probably one of the silliest cuts I have seen, and I do not support this. However, I am going to have to have an internal struggle with the budget. I have had the conversation with some people here about whether I am going to support it or not, but right now, this is an internal struggle I have. I honestly believe that these games belong to the Northwest Territories, and the Government of the Northwest Territories should be putting money into it and not taking it out of lotteries. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake):** Thank you, Mr. Thompson. I will take that as a comment. Any further questions, committee? Seeing none, I call the page, support for recreation and youth, operations expenditure summary, \$5,342,000. Does committee agree?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake):** Agreed. Thank you. That brings us to page 366. It's just information on page 366 and 367. Mr. Beaulieu.

**MR. BEAULIEU:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I know this is an information item, but I have a question for the Minister on the gas tax. I can't remember last year how we ended up with \$11 million extra in gas tax. Could the Minister just refresh my memory? Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake):** Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. Minister Cochrane.

**HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. The \$11 million was actually just a carry-over figure from the previous year. Mr. Chair, I will let Ms. Young expand on that. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake):** Thank you, Minister Cochrane. Ms. Young.

**MS. YOUNG:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Yes, the way that the gas tax program works, we have a funding agreement with each community, and as they maintain their compliance, we issue payments twice a year. If there is an issue with compliance, we work with the community to try to bring them back into compliance, but if they are in non-compliance, we have to hold the money in accordance with our agreement with Canada until we bring them back in to compliance.

What you saw there was an accumulation of issues related to non-compliance. We have resolved most of those now with communities, but we continue to work with communities to maintain the compliance with their agreement. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake):** Thank you, Ms. Young. Any further questions, Mr. Beaulieu?

**MR. BEAULIEU:** No. That's okay.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake):** Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. Committee, it's actually information item from page 364 to 367. Mr. O'Reilly.

**MR. O'REILLY:** Thanks, Mr. Chair. I just wanted to follow up on my colleague's questions about gas tax reporting, then. I heard the deputy minister say that we are working with communities to improve compliance. What does that actually look like? Are we sending folks to the communities to assist with preparation of reports? I have no idea. What are we doing to improve the reporting so that the money is going to flow better into the future? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

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

**HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. We have a variety of training programs offered through the School of Community Government. We have webinars that we provide for them. If a community is struggling, we do pay close

attention, and we will send someone into that community to try to work with them to ensure that that community meets the requirements of any funding applications that they have outstanding. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

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

**MR. O'REILLY:** Thanks, Mr. Chair. I am glad to hear that. I know that we have a circuit rider program for water treatment training and so on, and if we need one on the Finance side, that would be a good use of money, I think, to make sure that the money flows properly. I don't have to tell the department this; they know this stuff, but I appreciate their efforts on improving the reporting. Thanks, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake):** Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Minister, do you care to comment?

**HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I will take that as a comment.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake):** Thank you. Any further questions? Next, we have Mr. O'Reilly. Sorry, Mr. McNeely.

**MR. MCNEELY:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I realize it is getting late here. I just don't want to be mistaken for someone else here, please. That is what I am getting at, is the compliment here portion, to the Minister.

I am a strong believer on these three particular programs: the Gas Tax, the Small Community Fund, and the Clean Waste Water Fund. To give you some examples of how well I think it is working, and the weakness part, is now the Community of Colville Lake has a new water intake facility, providing cleaner product to go into the delivery truck.

Last year, I was very happy to witness the dust control liquids going to improve the roads around Deline. Now we don't have this dust blowing all over the place and people having to close their windows all the time.

Those are just examples of what I think this program is doing for the smaller communities. I am glad to hear the deputy minister is addressing the weakness part of the administration, which is compliance and reporting. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake):** Thank you, Mr. McNeely. Minister Cochrane.

**HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I will take that as a compliment, and I will share that with our department. Thank you, again, to the MLA. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake):** Thank you, Minister Cochrane. Any further questions, Mr. McNeely? No further questions on page 364 to 367? Seeing none, we will now return to the departmental summary on page 331.

Municipal and Community Affairs, total department, \$107,177,000. Does committee agree?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake):** Agreed. Thank you. Does the committee agree that the consideration of the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs is concluded?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake):** Agreed. Thank you, Minister, and thank your witnesses for appearing before us. Sergeant-at-Arms, please escort the witnesses from the Chamber. Mr. Beaulieu.

**MR. BEAULIEU:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I move that the chair rise and report progress. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake):** A motion is on the floor to report progress. The motion is in order and is non-debatable. All those in favour? All those opposed? The motion is carried.

---Carried

I will now rise and report progress. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** May I have the report, Member for Mackenzie Delta?

### Report of Committee of the Whole (Reversion)

**MR. BLAKE:** Mr. Speaker, your committee has been considering Tabled Document 63-18(3), Main Estimates 2018-2019, and would like to report progress. Mr. Speaker, I move that the report of Committee of the Whole be concurred with. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. Do I have a seconder? Member for Tu Nedhe-Willideh. The motion is in order. All those in favour? All those opposed? The motion is carried.

---Carried

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

### Orders of the Day

**CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Mercer):** Orders of the day for Friday, February 23, 2018, 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
18. First Reading of Bills
19. Second Reading of Bills
20. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters
  - Minister's Statement 1-18(3), North Slave Correctional Complex Inmate Concerns
  - Minister's Statement 19-18(3), Aurora College Foundational Review Process
  - Minister's Statement 32-18(3), Update on the Northwest Territories Disability Framework and Action Plan
  - Tabled Document 63-18(3), Main Estimates 2018-2019
21. Report of Committee of the Whole
22. Third Reading of Bills
23. Orders of the Day

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi, Mr. Clerk. This House stands adjourned until Friday, February 23, 2018, at 10:00 a.m.

---ADJOURNMENT

The House adjourned at 8:44 p.m.