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The Honourable Tony Whitford, Speaker

Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories

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YELLOWKNIFE, NORTHWEST TERRITORIES

Monday, March 4, 2002

Members Present

Honourable Roger Allen, Honourable Jim Antoine, Mr. Bell, Mr. Braden, Mr. Delorey, Mr. Dent, Mrs. Groenewegen, Honourable Joe Handley, Honourable Stephen Kakfwi, Mr. Krutko, Mr. Lafferty, Ms. Lee, Mr. McLeod, Honourable Michael Miltenberger, Mr. Nitah, Honourable Jake Ootes, Mr. Roland, Honourable Vince Steen, Honourable Tony Whitford.

ITEM 1: PRAYER

-- Prayer

SPEAKER (Hon. Tony Whitford): Thank you. Please be seated. Good afternoon. Item 2, Ministers' statements. The honourable Premier, Mr. Kakfwi.

ITEM 2: MINISTERS' STATEMENTS

Minister's Statement 23-14(5): Social Agenda Progress Report

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI: Mr. Speaker, a key objective of this budget is to demonstrate that we are committed to a balanced approach which also gives priority to improving the social fabric of our Territory and its residents. This commitment involves working in partnership with other governments and the non-governmental organization community on development of a social agenda.

On February 28th representatives from the Social Agenda Working Group and I provided the Standing Committee on Social Programs with a progress report on their work. Today I want to provide all Members with a brief summary of this progress report.

Mr. Speaker, last June over 250 front-line service workers and decision makers from across the Northwest Territories met on the Hay River Reserve to discuss the need for a vibrant and effective social agenda. In their discussions, they delivered a clear message that development and implementation of a social agenda must be done in collaboration and partnership involving representatives of governments, but equally important representatives of the front-line service workers and non-governmental organizations who deal directly with social issues on a daily basis.

To ensure that the next steps involved meaningful collaboration and partnership, the Social Agenda Working Group was formed. Their task has been to develop a social agenda which can be used by all stakeholders as a framework to guide future actions and decisions. As reported to the standing committee, the working group is committed to producing a limited number of key, achievable recommendations aimed at improving the overall system within which social policy decisions are made and social programs and services are delivered. From the government's perspective, we are especially pleased and interested in a framework that will contribute to more effective cross-departmental coordination of policies, decision making and program delivery.

Mr. Speaker, in addressing these challenges the working group has met five times since being formed in early October. They are working hard. They are working by consensus. They are working in partnership. They want their work to be relevant and

workable. However, given the complexity of their task we have agreed that their reporting time frame needs to be extended to April. In providing this extension, I have been assured that all of their work will be completed in time for recommendations to be included in the next business planning cycle.

Mr. Speaker, a strong social fabric for our Territory is high on this government's list of priorities. You are seeing this commitment reflected in our overall budget and in program initiatives of individual Ministers and departments.

In closing, I speak for all Ministers in thanking the working group for the contribution they have been and will be making to an NWT social agenda. Thank you.

-- Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Premier. Item 2, Ministers' statements. The honourable Minister responsible for Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Ootes.

Minister's Statement 24-14(5): Education Week 2002

HON. JAKE OOTES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, March 4th to 10th is Education Week in the Northwest Territories. It is an opportunity for all of us to celebrate the role that education plays in enriching and improving our lives.

The theme for Education Week 2002 is Changing Land... Changing Peoples. Communities are encouraged to celebrate Education Week by exploring the impact of change on the environment, lifestyles, cultures and languages of the peoples of the NWT.

Mr. Speaker, early childhood programs, schools, learning centres, Aurora College campuses and libraries across the NWT have been invited to participate in Education Week. Groups and individuals are encouraged to celebrate stories and share memories of the past and present by recording them on paper drums and building a community drum display. Some of the drums created are part of the territorial drum display in the Great Hall here at the Legislative Assembly. I encourage each of you to take time to visit the territorial drum display and read about some of the change that has occurred in the Northwest Territories over the years. These stories will help us to learn about the impact change has had on the land and the people of the NWT.

Mr. Speaker, it is no coincidence that Changing Land... Changing Peoples is also the theme of the Interchange on Canadian Studies 2002 conference to be hosted in Yellowknife in April. The interchange is a forum for young Canadians to travel, to meet other young Canadians, to hear from prominent speakers and to share experiences and ideas significant to Canada. The event is held in a different province or territory

each year. The conference in the NWT this year is a unique opportunity to build on the theme, Changing Land... Changing Peoples.

Our annual celebration of Education Week is an excellent opportunity for each of us to reflect on the significant role education plays in our lives. As the Northwest Territories evolves into a self-reliant, economically viable territory, it is important that we acquire as much knowledge and information as we can, not only to understand the impact and significance of change but also to participate fully in that change. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

-- Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Item 2, Ministers' statements. The honourable Minister responsible for Health and Social Services, Mr. Miltenberger.

Minister's Statement 25-14(5): Early Childhood Development

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to be able to report to the House on significant progress that is being made in the implementation of the early childhood development initiatives.

Our vision is that the NWT will be a place where children are born healthy and raised in safe and respectful families and communities that support them in developing to their fullest potential. Initiatives that the Departments of Health and Social Services and Education, Culture and Employment are undertaking with our partners will go a long way in helping us achieve this vision.

A key element in a comprehensive early childhood development program is early and effective screening. The Nipissing screening tool is a tool that will be used to screen children until they enter school to detect developmental delays and permit the planning of effective interventions that will allow a child to reach their full potential. This screening tool was chosen because of its ease of use and adaptability to the communities and cultures across the NWT. Training health care providers on the use of the tool began on February 25th and will continue through March 2002. All regions will have received training by the first week of April. By this spring, the Nipissing screening tool will be used across the NWT.

Mr. Speaker, supporting parents and children in their own homes is another key element of the early childhood development initiative and is the basis of the family visitor-child development support program. This program focuses on promoting the interaction of the parent with their child by supporting and improving parenting skills in their home. Family visitor-child development workers will help families of children under the age of six access community resources. Their primary focus will be on helping parents with children who have developmental delays. They will be able to provide tools such as learning and coping strategies to aid in overcoming the delays. Three health authorities will begin hiring and training existing staff as family visitors early in the new year. By 2004, we anticipate that there will be at least one family visitor in every community in the Northwest Territories.

Healthy family kits and school readiness kits will be offered to every family in the NWT with pre-school age children. Kits will

be appropriate to developmental milestones. Families will receive kits at five stages in their child's development. The first kit is scheduled for completion in April 2002 and will then be provided to every family of a newborn. Child development resource kits will be ready for distribution this spring for use by family visitors. The kits developed are based on age and developmental categories important to child development.

Training on the best use of these kits will take place during the next fiscal year. These kits will be especially helpful to those families with children who have developmental delays. Finished products or a multimedia campaign will be ready by this summer. Airtime for two video public service announcements created by the NWT Council for Persons with Disabilities has been purchased as part of the public awareness campaign and were aired in December and again in February and March. Our thanks go to the NWT Council for Persons with Disabilities for allowing us to use these.

Mr. Speaker, our children are central to the future of the North. The early childhood development initiatives are focused on helping every child get the best possible support during their early years. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

-- Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Item 2, Ministers' statements. The honourable Minister responsible for Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Ootes.

Minister's Statement 26-14(5): Early Childhood Development

HON. JAKE OOTES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Early Childhood Development Action Plan, to which my honourable colleague, Mr. Miltenberger, referred, supports the work underway to develop a comprehensive social agenda aimed at improving the quality of life for all NWT residents. Early childhood is the foundation for healthy development. All children need support and nurturing.

Many children in the NWT receive that support and nurturing from their families. Efforts in the home are enhanced through a range of early childhood programs and services offered at the community level. This government's role is to support communities and families in their efforts to provide every child born with the best possible start in life. We have a responsibility, Mr. Speaker, to ensure support is provided efficiently and effectively, in partnership with other government departments, other levels of government and with non-governmental organizations.

In developing the early childhood action plan, Education, Culture and Employment and Health and Social Services recognized significant opportunity to work together building on successful programs and services already in place. Some programs will be enhanced. Other programs, like the ones outlined by Mr. Miltenberger, are in development. The government is committed to ensuring that a comprehensive range of programs, intended to support early childhood development, is available to all NWT residents through an integrated service delivery model.

Mr. Speaker, an integrated service delivery model breaks down barriers between program providers by encouraging discussion that identifies mutual goals. It promotes collaboration and

reduces duplication of programs and services. Early childhood program providers from across the Northwest Territories have already begun reviewing the options available for integrating services at the community level. The goal of many communities is to establish child and family resource centres to deliver a range of complimentary programs and services.

Research shows that the most effective way of fostering early childhood development is through a multi-faceted continuum of programs ranging from health care to positive parenting and early literacy. Increased interaction between parents, children and other members of the community promotes social well-being, as well as the intergenerational transmission of language and culture.

Mr. Speaker, Northerners have long recognized the need for quality early childhood programs and services. It is a priority for our government to work together and with our partners to ensure that all NWT children get the best possible start in life. When our children grow up healthy and are able to realize their full potential, we will have developed our greatest resource -- our people. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

-- Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Item 2, Ministers' statements. The honourable Premier, Mr. Kakfwi.

Minister's Statement 27-14(5): Free Vote on Bill 7

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI: Mr. Speaker, on Tuesday, February 26, 2002 Minister Steen, as Cabinet's representative on the Board of Management, gave notice of motion for first reading of Bill 7, An Act to Amend the Legislative Assembly Retiring Allowances Act and the Supplementary Retiring Allowances Act. As Members know, this bill is not a government initiative and, accordingly, the rules of Cabinet solidarity do not apply. Ministers will be allowed a free vote on this bill. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

-- Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Premier. Item 2, Ministers' statements. Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for North Slave, Mr. Lafferty.

ITEM 3: MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

Member's Statement on Passing of Respected Dogrib Elder Moise Martin

MR. LAFFERTY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, today my statement is on elders. Over the weekend, the Dogrib Nation laid to rest one of their respected elders. His name was Moise Martin. The Dogrib Nation changed their negotiation updates, changed their plans out of respect for this elder.

One of his achievements was to put on his snowshoes in Rae-Edzo and lead the dogs on the dog-team trail, the dog-team caravan, you might call it, up to one lake past Lac de Gras. He did this with no one else substituting for him or helping him. That is a good achievement. Now, it is even hard to do it with a snowmobile, but in those days, he did it with a pair of snowshoes. Sometimes it is very hard to talk of things like this.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for Hay River North, Mr. Delorey.

Member's Statement on Senior Citizens Home Repair Program

MR. DELOREY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to address an issue that is very pertinent to a large segment of the population in the Northwest Territories. Mr. Speaker, the group that I am referring to is our seniors. Our seniors population is aging at a very accelerated rate and we can no longer afford to ignore this fact.

By the year 2018, Mr. Speaker, the total number of seniors aged 60 and over in the Northwest Territories is expected to increase to over 7,000. Our seniors population is expected to experience a 180 percent increase. The rate of increase among our seniors population far outweighs the rate of our total population.

Mr. Speaker, we as a government have to work collectively to ensure that there is no reduction in programs and services to seniors as a result of this population growth.

Mr. Speaker, our senior citizens have all worked very hard to be productive members of our society for many years. They have scrimped and saved for years in order to own their own homes. The sense of independence that maintaining their own home provides them is very important to our seniors.

Mr. Speaker, our government has put in place several programs over the last few years that have attempted to address a burgeoning seniors population. One such program, Mr. Speaker, is our Senior Citizens Home Repair Program, administered by Northwest Territories Housing Corporation. Under this program, Mr. Speaker, senior citizens can apply to the Housing Corporation for up to \$20,000 in assistance to cover the cost of repairs for improving the condition of their homes.

Mr. Speaker, this aids in making the homes of our senior citizens safer and healthier to live in at the same time as assisting the seniors in maintaining an independent lifestyle.

Mr. Speaker, the financial help that our senior citizens receive from the Housing Corporation comes in the form of a forgivable loan. Mr. Speaker, the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation criteria for eligibility states that in order for the senior citizens to qualify for the Senior Citizens Home Repair Program, they must be 60 years of age and older and have resided in the Northwest Territories for at least five years, one year of which must be continuous prior to their approval.

In addition, Mr. Speaker, the senior citizen must be in core housing need. The client household income cannot exceed the income threshold for their community and the house in which a senior citizen intends to undertake repairs must be owned by them outright.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Delorey. Your time for your Member's statement is over. Mr. Delorey.

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

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Delorey. The honourable Member is seeking unanimous consent to conclude his statement. Are there any nays? There are no nays. You may continue, Mr. Delorey.

MR. DELOREY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, colleagues. This brings me to the point of home-ownership. Mr. Speaker, as I stated earlier, our senior citizens have worked diligently to retain their homes and the independent lifestyle that home-ownership affords is very comforting to our senior citizens.

Mr. Speaker, the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation requires that the senior citizen sign over their mortgage to the Housing Corporation for a period of ten years, as the mortgage will be required for security against the home repair loan. Mr. Speaker, I have grave concerns about this government policy that requires a senior citizen to sign over the mortgage of their home that they have worked so hard to retain.

Mr. Speaker, at the appropriate time I will have further questions for the Minister responsible. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Delorey. Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for Hay River South, Mrs. Groenewegen.

Member's Statement on 25th Anniversary of the Hay River Chamber of Commerce

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, today I would like to make my Member's statement today about some of the activities that took place in Hay River over the weekend. Friday night was the annual Hay River Chamber of Commerce banquet. I would like to say congratulations to President Doreen Farrants and their newly sworn in board of directors and executive.

It was billed as the 25th anniversary of the chamber in Hay River, but as newspaper stories from as far back as 1962 were shared, they clearly made reference to the activities of the Hay River Chamber, so the chamber is more like 40 years old, but only filed annual reports with the societies registry for the last 25 years.

I had the privilege of having been the Chamber of Commerce president for the years 1987, 1988 and 1990, and served on the board of directors in various capacities for a number of other years.

Past presidents Bob McMeekin, Barry Ashton and myself were asked to share our memories of the chamber. Bob reminisced about some of the amazing business community efforts in the early days of establishing the chamber, and Barry talked about the very proud history of the business community in Hay River.

As a chartered accountant and very active member of the business community, he was keenly aware of the number of businesses in Hay River which have seen the participation of two and many three generations, companies started by the parents, now owned, managed and operated by the children and even the grandchildren. Statistics indicate that only ten percent of family-owned businesses make it to the third generation, so Hay River must be some kind of anomaly.

My recollections of my years with the chamber mostly focused on the relationships and although we accomplished a lot of

work, we had much fun in the process -- the weekly luncheons, the special initiatives, the celebrations, rallying the troops and even tackling the government on occasion, are all things that I was reminded of and realized how much I had missed in the last six years.

At the annual banquet each year, the chamber also recognizes the citizen of the year. This year's recipient for 2001 was Ron Cook. Ron is just about to retire as the town's recreation manager. What a deserving recognition this was of Ron's remarkable contribution to so many aspects of community service in Hay River. The bonus is that Ron and his wife Gail plan to continue living in Hay River in their retirement.

In closing, Mr. Speaker, when it comes to private sector activity per capita, Hay River is the business capital of the North. With the resource of our many business people dedicated to the economic well-being of Hay River and fair treatment of this government, we plan to hold onto that distinction for many years to come.

Also, Mr. Speaker, I would like to congratulate the K'amba Carnival planning committee, who this year again, for the 19th year in a row, put on a wonderful K'amba Carnival. Mr. Speaker, I entered the axe-throwing contest. My colleagues will be relieved to know that I did not win. Thank you.

-- Laughter

-- Applause

MR. SPEAKER: What a shame. Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for Deh Cho, Mr. McLeod.

Member's Statement on Storage of Ammonium Nitrate in Enterprise

MR. MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, today I would like to again address the issue of ammonium nitrate storage in Enterprise in response to Mr. Handley's comments of February 22nd, where he stated, "Ammonium nitrate is not as dangerous as some people think it is."

Let me begin by giving an example of an ammonium nitrate storage facility in the city of Toulouse in southwest France. On Friday, September 21, 2001, a huge explosion occurred in the outskirts of the city. The explosion occurred in a warehouse in which granular ammonium nitrate was stored. The amount stored in this warehouse is said to be between 200 to 300 tonnes of ammonium nitrate.

Let me describe the impact of the Toulouse explosion. The blast blew out windows in the city centre three kilometres away and created a 50-metre diameter crater more than ten metres deep. Experts said the explosion was equivalent to an earthquake measuring 3.4 on the Richter scale. More than 500 homes were lost and 11,000 students stayed at home after 85 schools and colleges were damaged. Twenty-two people were killed on site, six nearby, and one died in hospital according to the regional officials. An electrical goods store about 300 metres away from the storage facility collapsed about 45 minutes after the explosion.

Mr. Speaker, the exact cause of this terrible accident remains unknown to this day, although at the time a spokesman for the

Interior Ministry in Paris attributes this accident to an "incident in the handling of products."

Mr. Speaker, you can therefore well appreciate the concern and anxiety that the residents of the settlement of Enterprise have, given that Polar Explosives have recently built a depot in the centre of the community to house ammonium nitrate. This facility was built with no consultation or discussion with the community leaders and seemingly little scrutiny from the territorial government officials.

Mr. Speaker, my information is that the disaster in Toulouse resulted in an explosion from a warehouse that housed 200 to 300 tonnes of ammonium nitrate. A report in News/North on Monday, February 25th states, "Polar Explosives built the depot to truck 23,000 tonnes of ammonium nitrate this winter to diamond mines in one tonne bags."

Mr. Speaker, if only one percent of the amount of ammonium nitrate that is being shipped over the course of a year is stored...

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Your time for your Member's statement is over. Mr. McLeod.

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

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you. The honourable Member is seeking unanimous consent to conclude his statement. Are there any nays? There are no nays. You may conclude your statement, Mr. McLeod.

MR. MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I ask, what assurance can this government give to the residents of Enterprise that what happened in Toulouse will not happen here? What safety regulations are in place to ensure that this facility is a safe facility? What monitoring agency is responsible for ensuring that residents of Enterprise are not killed in an explosion similar to Toulouse?

It alarms me greatly, Mr. Speaker, to read of the seemingly slipshod manner in which the facility has been built. Mr. Speaker, the News/North report of February 25th states, and again I quote, "the depot was set up without safeguards, including a fire code requirement for fencing." This situation is quite intolerable, Mr. Speaker. There needs to be an immediate and thorough investigation into this facility in Enterprise and a complete report prepared. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

-- Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for Inuvik Boot Lake, Mr. Roland.

Member's Statement on Early Childhood Development

MR. ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak on an initiative the Minister of Health and Social Services just spoke about, and that is early childhood development and the work of this government.

Mr. Speaker, it is an important area to focus on and try to help out as a government, to be out there doing our part to ensure that families start off in a healthy and secure environment.

Mr. Speaker, with a lot of the initiatives that have been started to date, one could say we were tinkering or working around the edges of media campaigns. I would be interested in how the Minister is going to respond when I ask him later about what is in a child development resource kit or a healthy family kit.

Mr. Speaker, the important thing is that we do have to give parents, especially new parents and those looking at families, information to understand what can occur during a pregnancy, because a lot of our problems in the Northwest Territories, we have heard it for a number of years now and there has been some work started in the area of FAS/FAE. It is something that we have to try and stop. It is something that is completely preventable if all of the precautions are taken. Mr. Speaker, it is not something that is hereditary. It is a result of one's actions while being pregnant.

Mr. Speaker, I have heard suggestions that as a government if we are going to really do something and really make a difference, we are going to have to get tough with how we treat and look at these situations. It is no longer good enough to work around the edges, so to speak, Mr. Speaker, we need to get to the core of the problem and start trying to do something as a government and possibly even look at legislation in some cases, to see what we can do as a government to prevent this kind of occurrence from continuing.

It would take strong political will to try and move in these areas because we would have the very same situation as trying to impose wills on people who have the freedom of choice when it comes to what they do and how they carry on with their own lives. Here in the Northwest Territories we have bad examples of what happens when mothers take to drinking while they are pregnant and the rest of society has to pick up the tab, so to speak, and try to work with those children who are left to deal with the problems that occur as a result of FAS/FAE. I will have questions for the Minister. Thank you.

-- Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Roland. Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for Mackenzie Delta, Mr. Krutko.

Member's Statement on Resources to Support the Transfer of Programs and Services

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, one of the biggest challenges we face in our communities is the delivery mechanisms for programs and services that we deliver on behalf of the Government of the Northwest Territories. The Government of the Northwest Territories has a program to transfer programs and services to communities. The current policy of the government is community empowerment programs.

The fault of the program is not the program. The program that transfers does not have enough resources to allow the communities to properly administer and deliver those programs and services for the residents of the Northwest Territories. The programs that have been transferred to date are income support workers, mental health workers, economic development officers and, in some cases, renewable resource officers.

Yet, Mr. Speaker, the programs that have been delivered have been delivered from 1994 onward and we have not seen

increases in those amounts in over eight years. Mr. Speaker, the work that these people do is just as crucial as any government employee's is. The human resources that are needed to run these programs have to be qualified. The financial resources that we need to pay and accommodate these employees to carry out their responsibilities has to be adequate.

The transfer of community programs is there to improve social and economic conditions, not to burden them with a lack of people and a lack of resources. Mr. Speaker, the Government of the Northwest Territories' transfer of programs and services has forced communities, because of the lack of resources, to transfer those programs and services back to this government because of the inadequate resources to administer and hire the people to carry out those responsibilities.

Mr. Speaker, one of the key positions that I talk about is the mental health workers in our communities. The mental health workers program assists communities dealing with health and emotional matters such as suicide, alcohol and drug abuse, violence and looking at the problem we have with FAS/FAE in the communities.

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

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you. The honourable Member is seeking unanimous consent to conclude his statement. Are there any nays? There are no nays. You may conclude your statement, Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, these people have just as many rights as government employees in the Government of the Northwest Territories, but they do not have a union or someone there speaking for them. We hear about programs for pay equity, for equal pay for people who work within the Government of the Northwest Territories. The employees we have in our communities carry out the same responsibilities and the same duties as any government employee, either in the social services area or the health area.

Mr. Speaker, I think it is crucial that this government increases the amount of resources that it presently transfers to communities to ensure that those programs and services can be implemented and supplied with the financial means and the professional people to do them. At the appropriate time, Mr. Speaker, I will be asking the Minister of Health and Social Services questions on this matter. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for Tu Nedhe, Mr. Nitah.

Member's Statement on Multi-Use Recreational Facilities

MR. NITAH: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, here in the Northwest Territories we agreed that we were going to work for healthy communities. However, Mr. Speaker, in most of our communities we do not have the facilities for exercise, a healthy environment where children and youth can hang out. The cost of development in the Northwest Territories is so high that when you do establish infrastructure in the communities it would be wise to look at different uses of that infrastructure.

In that light, Mr. Speaker, I was surprised to find out that the government does not have a multi-purpose facility program. I will be asking the Minister for Municipal and Community Affairs questions on that. In Lutselk'e, we are looking for an arena and we are hoping to add on a cafeteria, youth centre and a day care. It is very difficult. In Fort Resolution, the community and the youth are asking for a youth facility where they want to see a swimming pool and other facilities in there.

As a government, if we are going to provide infrastructure and the environment that is going to see a healthy environment for our young people to enjoy, then we as a government should have programs or policies that facilitate multi-use infrastructures. We cannot just have an arena or a school by itself, it just does not make sense. We should be able to build associate buildings so that we can use it for other purposes. An arena that will be used for three months out of the year is just not cost effective, Mr. Speaker. In that light, I am going to be asking the Minister responsible questions. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Nitah. Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for Range Lake, Ms. Lee.

Member's Statement on Workers' Compensation Legislative Review Panel

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to recognize and acknowledge the good work done by the WCB Legislative Review Panel in its review of the WCB legislation. Mr. Speaker, this panel submitted its final report in December 2001 and public input is being sought on the report.

The report, Mr. Speaker, is titled, Act Now, and it says a lot. It is also significant to note it is an acronym for Accountable to stakeholders, Compensation that is fair, Transparency in decision making, Non-adversarial adjudication not litigation, Operations that are respectful and responsive, Workplace safety to prevent work-related injuries.

Having participated in some of these meetings, Mr. Speaker, I believe these are very clear and meaningful headlines that reflect closely what the stakeholders were telling the panel. I have had a chance to review the report itself and I appreciated very much the informative and organized way in which the report sticks to what the panel heard from the stakeholders. I also found it very helpful to read the background statements and the context the panel is giving to what conclusions it is arriving at from the information and the input they heard from the public.

Mr. Speaker, I believe this is a very good piece of work and the chairperson, Ms. Louise Vertes and the panel members are to be recognized and congratulated for the good work and the commitment they have shown in this work. At the same time, Mr. Speaker, I would like to urge both Ministers responsible for the WCB in the Northwest Territories and Nunavut to push this important work forward and to implement the findings and the recommendations in the report as much as and as soon as possible. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

-- Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Lee. Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for Inuvik Twin Lakes, Mr. Allen.

Member's Statement on Inuvik Twin Lakes Arctic Winter Games Participants

HON. ROGER ALLEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, while I was watching the closing ceremonies of the 19th Winter Olympic Games it provided me with some memorable thoughts of the 1972 Winter Olympic Games in which I participated. The memory of the atmosphere and the new friendships that were developed of which some remain today.

One important way of keeping the Olympic flame glowing in the minds of our young athletes is to give them the opportunity to compete in games of their own. Mr. Speaker, today I want to convey that very real message to my young constituents of Inuvik Twin Lakes who are destined to participate in the Arctic Winter Games in Nuuk, Greenland or in Iqaluit, Nunavut.

I want to personally congratulate and extend my most heartfelt good wishes to the Inuvik Twin Lakes competitors in each of the following categories: in speed skating, Alyssa Carpenter and Chris Lennie; in hockey, Kelly McLeod and Phillip Harry; Arctic sports, Paden Gordon-Ruben; dog mushing, Josephine Arey; cross-country skiing, Shaylene Allen.

Part of the mission's staff and regional coordinator is Theresa Ross, who is now scheduled to participate in the Arctic Winter Games as an official.

Mr. Speaker, these games provide enormous motivation for the competitors from my riding of Inuvik Twin Lakes and I know they will do very well. Like the 19th Winter Olympic Games in Salt Lake City, the Arctic Winter Games will inspire these athletes to compete in their own circumpolar games, develop new friendships and they too in the future will pass a similar torch onto others.

I want to wish the athletes from my riding of Inuvik Twin Lakes the very best of luck and do enjoy the competitions whether you are in Nuuk or Iqaluit. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

-- Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Allen. Item 3, Members' statements. Item 4, returns to oral questions. The honourable Premier, Mr. Kakfwi.

ITEM 4: RETURNS TO ORAL QUESTIONS

Return to Question 58-14(5): Fairness in the Public Service

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI: Mr. Speaker, I have a return to an oral question asked by Mrs. Groenewegen on Monday, February 25, 2002, regarding revisions to the Affirmative Action Policy.

The Grant Thornton report, provided to Members in January 2001, recommended a move from the Affirmative Action Policy to an employment equity approach. This recommendation has been accepted but will take some time to implement. Initial research to determine best practices and the most appropriate way to make this change is underway. This work includes reviewing previous work such as the report of the working

group on affirmative action and human resource management and other reviews of the Affirmative Action Policy. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Premier. Item 4, returns to oral questions. Item 5, recognition of visitors in the gallery. The honourable Member for Yellowknife Centre, Mr. Ootes.

ITEM 5: RECOGNITION OF VISITORS IN THE GALLERY

HON. JAKE OOTES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to recognize Jennifer Tilden who is with the CBC here in Yellowknife and reports on matters throughout the Northwest Territories and Nunavut. Thank you.

-- Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Ootes. Item 5, recognition of visitors in the gallery. Welcome to the visitor's gallery. Item 6, oral questions. The honourable Member for North Slave, Mr. Lafferty.

ITEM 6: ORAL QUESTIONS

Question 122-14(5): Storage and Transportation of Dangerous Goods

MR. LAFFERTY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is for the Honourable Joe Handley, Minister of Transportation. I would like to ask the Minister, with all of the activity going on with ammonium nitrate being stored and shipped and other chemicals on our highways, the community of Edzo is right on the highway. If a toxic substance accident were to happen, depending on the wind, it could wipe out the whole community.

I would like to ask the Minister, would he start looking at changing some of the Transportation Act relating to the storage of dangerous chemicals? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Transportation, Mr. Handley.

Return to Question 122-14(5): Storage and Transportation of Dangerous Goods

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my responsibility in Transportation on this matter will be with the Transportation of Dangerous Goods Act and the regulations that are part of that piece of legislation. Certainly, if there are specific issues that can be better handled with regard to transporting ammonium nitrate and other toxins I would be very much open to reviewing the legislation. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Supplementary, Mr. Lafferty.

Supplementary to Question 122-14(5): Storage and Transportation of Dangerous Goods

MR. LAFFERTY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In changing this act, I would like to ask the Minister if he could start looking at how large, big and wide loads are transported, the distance they have to travel apart and the speed limit that they should travel at considering our narrow roads which we do not expect to have completed for five years. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Transportation, Mr. Handley.

Further Return to Question 122-14(5): Storage and Transportation of Dangerous Goods

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The issues with regard to highway speeds, transportation of wide loads, oversized loads and so on falls within the Highways Act, not the Transportation of Dangerous Goods Act. I am certainly open to looking at that continually.

Each year before the winter season starts, we hold a number of meetings with the truckers and with the mines on what is being transported and we will continue to do everything we can to improve the safety and expediency of those materials. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Supplementary, Mr. Lafferty.

Supplementary to Question 122-14(5): Storage and Transportation of Dangerous Goods

MR. LAFFERTY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am not sure. The Minister seems to have two roles or just one role and is referring to another one with a different act. I am not sure what he is referring to when he is saying he is only responsible for the trucking part. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Transportation, Mr. Handley.

Further Return to Question 122-14(5): Storage and Transportation of Dangerous Goods

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Speaker, yes, in answering the question, there are two pieces of legislation. The honourable Member asked about transportation of dangerous goods. That is under the Transportation of Dangerous Goods Act. If there are ways of improving that, I would be happy to do that.

When we deal with issues like the speed the trucks are travelling and the hours they carry extra-wide or oversized loads, that is a different piece of legislation, but I am certainly open to looking at both of those pieces of legislation if it can improve the safety and the use of our highways. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Final supplementary, Mr. Lafferty.

Supplementary to Question 122-14(5): Storage and Transportation of Dangerous Goods

MR. LAFFERTY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to ask the Minister if we can work on this as soon as possible because we know that traffic is increasing, capacity is increasing, loads are coming more often, so if we can work on this as soon as possible, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Transportation, Mr. Handley.

Further Return to Question 122-14(5): Storage and Transportation of Dangerous Goods

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Speaker, yes, we are in the middle of our trucking season for hauling materials up to the mines. I know my department is meeting almost on a daily basis with either the truckers or the mines, with communities, with whoever is dealing with specific issues, so they are dealing with that on a daily basis. If there are specific issues of any community then I would certainly like to talk on those ones.

When it comes to reviewing our legislation, I would like to meet with the truckers once they are over their busiest period and have time to do so and look to see whether or not there are things that we should be changing in the legislation. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Item 6, oral questions. The honourable Member for Deh Cho, Mr. McLeod.

Question 123-14(5): Criteria for Storage of Dangerous Goods

MR. MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question today is for the Honourable Vince Steen, Minister of MACA, regarding the storage of ammonium nitrate. I would like to ask the Minister, can he tell us what the requirements are to set up a facility and depot for the storage of dangerous goods in the communities? What are the regulations? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs, Mr. Steen.

Return to Question 123-14(5): Criteria for Storage of Dangerous Goods

HON. VINCE STEEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, there are two separate pieces of legislation that could be used to control the storage of dangerous goods. One is under the City, Towns and Villages Act. Municipalities may put in place by-laws to control the storage. Secondly, the storage of dangerous goods is regulated by Municipal and Community Affairs under the National Fire Code of Canada. So under either one of these pieces of legislation the storage of dangerous goods would be addressed. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Supplementary, Mr. McLeod.

Supplementary to Question 123-14(5): Criteria for Storage of Dangerous Goods

MR. MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the Minister, could he tell me if the community of Enterprise is in a position to pass such by-laws as he has indicated?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs, Mr. Steen.

Further Return to Question 123-14(5): Criteria for Storage of Dangerous Goods

HON. VINCE STEEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I am not sure whether Enterprise would have the authority to pass the by-law. That is where the fire code would kick in. It

would be under that legislation that the storage would come into play. In this particular case of Enterprise, the assistant fire marshal went in there in December and inspected the storage facilities of RTL. There were a number of deficiencies found. RTL was advised in writing of the deficiencies. RTL responded accordingly by improving the storage to prevent access by anyone, providing a spill control contingency plan for the product, and preparing an emergency plan and procedures, which are prominently posted in the outdoor storage site.

Since that time, the assistant fire marshal has been into the community on three separate occasions and is satisfied that the facilities now meet the standards of the fire code.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Supplementary, Mr. McLeod.

Supplementary to Question 123-14(5): Criteria for Storage of Dangerous Goods

MR. MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As the Minister has indicated, the fire marshal assistant has been to the community at the request of the community on three different occasions. The community, however, is not satisfied. I would like to ask the Minister, can the fire marshal allow the companies to bypass the requirements as per the legislation when it comes to temporary facilities? The facility in Enterprise is certainly not under lock and key and is not in an enclosed area. Can you tell me if there are other rules for the temporary storage?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs, Mr. Steen.

Further Return to Question 123-14(5): Criteria for Storage of Dangerous Goods

HON. VINCE STEEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I will have the department respond to me on what the fire marshal can and cannot do as far as allowing for temporary storage, but I believe the report I have suggests that the storage is now meeting the standards of the fire code. Thank you.

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

Supplementary to Question 123-14(5): Criteria for Storage of Dangerous Goods

MR. MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to ask the Minister if he would consider it as my understanding now is that all that is required is a fire permit or a fire certificate from the fire marshal to set up a depot. I believe that there should be stronger legislation to enforce the handling and the storage of facilities in the community.

I would like to ask the Minister, would he consider legislation that would require storage facility certification in order to set up a depot? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs, Mr. Steen.

Further Return to Question 123-14(5): Criteria for Storage of Dangerous Goods

HON. VINCE STEEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as the honourable Minister for Transportation indicated before, this whole issue of transporting large quantities of dangerous goods at one time is coming to the point where we have to review all the legislation pertaining to this. I would most certainly have the department involved in this see whether or not we are in fact addressing the concerns of the community and meeting the standards set out in the National Fire Code of Canada. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Item 6, oral questions. The honourable Member for Frame Lake, Mr. Dent.

Question 124-14(5): Affirmative Action and Employment Equity

MR. DENT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Premier and it is in relation to his reply to the oral question asked by Mrs. Groenewegen that he made today. Could the Premier advise the House, what is the difference between the Affirmative Action Policy and employment equity?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Dent. The honourable Premier, Mr. Kakfwi.

Return to Question 124-14(5): Affirmative Action and Employment Equity

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will take that question as notice. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you. The question has been taken as notice. Item 6, oral questions. The honourable Member for Mackenzie Delta, Mr. Krutko.

Question 125-14(5): Transfer of Mental Health Workers to Communities

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, regarding my Member's statement, I believe this government has to do more when it transfers programs and services to our communities. In order for it to work, they need adequate resources, both human and financial.

I would like to ask the Minister of Health and Social Services a question regarding the mental health workers positions that have been transferred to communities since 1994. Mr. Speaker, it has been over eight years. To date, the amount that has been spent, set in 1994, is \$50,000. That is what the communities receive.

Mr. Speaker, mental health workers play a key role in our communities, especially with the high number of suicides, alcohol and drug abuse, and mental problems that we find in our communities. I would like to ask the Minister, is your department looking at trying to bring this injustice to order by allowing increases to bring their salaries and wages in line with other professions doing similar work?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Krutko. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Health and Social Services, Mr. Miltenberger.

Return to Question 125-14(5): Transfer of Mental Health Workers to Communities

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, this issue is going to be addressed through the addictions, mental health and family violence strategy. It has been raised a number of times. It was raised when we reviewed the main estimates. It has been raised in relation as well to the alcohol and drug workers. There is a very clear recognition that there is a discrepancy between what is paid for NGO staff and what is currently paid to GNWT staff. We are going to try to start to address that in that strategy. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Supplementary, Mr. Krutko.

Supplementary to Question 125-14(5): Transfer of Mental Health Workers to Communities

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, these employees have been waiting over eight years to see their wages increase. I would hope that they do not wait another eight years. How soon can we see an increase in the wages of the mental health workers in our communities?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Krutko. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Health and Social Services, Mr. Miltenberger.

Further Return to Question 125-14(5): Transfer of Mental Health Workers to Communities

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the intent is to have a strategy done by this spring and a subsequent action plan in place before summer. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Supplementary, Mr. Krutko.

Supplementary to Question 125-14(5): Transfer of Mental Health Workers to Communities

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I believe I heard the Minister state that he had hoped to have it in place by this summer. I would like to ask the Minister, will that also include such things as benefits which are presently delivered to other professions within the government?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Krutko. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Health and Social Services, Mr. Miltenberger.

Further Return to Question 125-14(5): Transfer of Mental Health Workers to Communities

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, this strategy will attempt to identify and address a host of issues as they pertain to addictions, mental health and family violence and the need for adequate resourcing, the kind of service that is currently delivered and improvements that may be required in terms of qualifications, in terms of standards, in terms of the gap, as indicated already, between NGO staff and what is paid to GNWT staff. Thank you.

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

Supplementary to Question 125-14(5): Transfer of Mental Health Workers to Communities

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, can the Minister commit to make it retroactive from April 1st of this fiscal year? If it is going to come to effect this summer, that he makes it retroactive from April 1st.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Krutko. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Health and Social Services, Mr. Miltenberger.

Further Return to Question 125-14(5): Transfer of Mental Health Workers to Communities

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I commit to clearly keeping in mind the suggestion from the Member as we look at the final draft, the final work being put into this strategy. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Item 6, oral questions. The honourable Member for Tu Nedhe, Mr. Nitah.

Question 126-14(5): Multi-Purpose Community Complexes

MR. NITAH: Mahsi cho, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is for Minister Steen in his capacity of Minister responsible for Public Works. With Public Works being the department that oversees most of government infrastructure programs, I would like to ask the Minister, does the department have a program that has more than one facility, more of a multi-usage facility program within the department? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Nitah. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Public Works and Services, Mr. Steen.

Return to Question 126-14(5): Multi-Purpose Community Complexes

HON. VINCE STEEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I think the question is probably better addressed to my responsibilities as the Minister for Municipal and Community Affairs. MACA does not have any program in place to fund multi-purpose complexes at this time. It is still in the discussion stage at this point and it depends on what kind of direction we receive from the Assembly on this. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Supplementary, Mr. Nitah.

Supplementary to Question 126-14(5): Multi-Purpose Community Complexes

MR. NITAH: Mahsi cho, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I apologize to the Minister if I chose the wrong department under his responsibility. Can I ask the Minister, if there is no program now and there is discussion, how long have these discussions been going on and when can we expect something from the department on a program? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Nitah. The honourable Minister responsible for MACA, Mr. Steen.

Further Return to Question 126-14(5): Multi-Purpose Community Complexes

HON. VINCE STEEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I have been discussing this issue with my department. This is not a new initiative that is being proposed by any one community. It has been in the works for a while, but what has to be addressed is if it is a multi-purpose complex, then the community has to address the O and M funding after the complex is built. They have to address where the O and M funding would come from. For instance, if it involves some social programs in the complex, then the proposal would have to show some funding coming from that department as well. Therefore, it is not just a matter of the capital funding. It is a matter of the O and M funding as well. The department says it is not as easy as it sounds to address the proposed program. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Supplementary, Mr. Nitah.

Supplementary to Question 126-14(5): Multi-Purpose Community Complexes

MR. NITAH: Mahsi cho, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, if it is the O and M that is a problem, and if it is a social program, most of these facilities are used in communities to provide programs and services on behalf of this government. I cannot see it being such a big problem that you do not build multi-use facilities if you are worried about O and M. Can the Minister tell us, in his discussion with his department, is he discussing this with other departments that might be considered for paying for some of the O and M?

For example, you build an arena and put in a youth facility or a day care. You are going to need the Department of Education, Culture and Employment or possibly Health and Social Services. In his discussions, is he talking with those departments and other departments? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Nitah. The honourable Minister responsible for MACA, Mr. Steen.

Further Return to Question 126-14(5): Multi-Purpose Community Complexes

HON. VINCE STEEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, if the complex was in fact designed for more than one use, in other words, from the recreation aspect of it, MACA would fund that. That would include funding for utilities. However, if the complex was designed in such a manner that it also can accommodate some social programs like day care or whatever else the community wants to design it for, then some of that capital funding would have to come from those programs as well. Furthermore, the community would be expected to obtain the O and M funding for that aspect of the programs in the building from the other departments. That part has to be sorted out. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Final supplementary, Mr. Nitah.

Supplementary to Question 126-14(5): Multi-Purpose Community Complexes

MR. NITAH: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, knowing the cost of building in the Northwest Territories is extremely

high, the cost of fuel which we use to provide us power and electricity and so on, is high as well as the cost of transportation for transporting materials to and from the construction site is high. I am thinking, in light of all that, it would be common sense for the government to speak to each other on how they could cost-share construction costs and O and M costs, so you could construct more than one facility.

Can I get a commitment from the Minister that he will talk with other government departments to look at cost sharing on capital and cost-sharing on O and M? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Nitah. The honourable Minister responsible for MACA, Mr. Steen.

Further Return to Question 126-14(5): Multi-Purpose Community Complexes

HON. VINCE STEEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as the Minister for MACA, I most certainly would follow up on the suggestion. I do agree with the Member that it is a good initiative and there would be cost savings in the long run. I will follow up on whether or not we can have some kind of a multi-complex funding program. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Item 6, oral questions. The honourable Member for Inuvik Boot Lake, Mr. Roland.

Question 127-14(5): Early Childhood Development Programs

MR. ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question at this time will be directed to the Minister of Health and Social Services, in light of his Minister's statement and my own Member's statement in a similar area.

Mr. Speaker, I believe that in this fiscal year we are in, approximately \$2 million, in that range, has been identified for early childhood development programs. My understanding is that it has just been recently that some of those dollars have started to be expended. They have been expended by the department itself, not non-government organizations.

I am interested in the area of early childhood development and what this department is doing. First of all, Mr. Speaker, I would like to know what is included in his child development resource kits or his healthy family kits? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Roland. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Health and Social Services, Mr. Miltenberger.

Return to Question 127-14(5): Early Childhood Development Programs

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in the child development resource kits, this is a kit that will allow the child development support workers to help stimulate parent-child interaction and to provide assistance for children with developmental delays.

The kit will consist of toys to stimulate the children's physical, sensory and cognitive development. For example, stacking blocks, books, dressing dolls, crayons and puzzles, et cetera. The design is to have 75 kits distributed to community health centres or public health units by May or June of 2002.

Mr. Speaker, in regard to the healthy family learning kits, we are looking at a series of six healthy family learning kits which will be put out to families during the key developmental milestones of children and when children come out for vaccinations the distribution will begin with newborns. The first prenatal kit is scheduled for completion in April 2002. The kits will be age appropriate and will include activity cards with games, songs and other activities parents can do with their children.

Each item in the kit will help promote key messages to reinforce healthy behaviour. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Supplementary, Mr. Roland.

Supplementary to Question 127-14(5): Early Childhood Development Programs

MR. ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Minister said age-appropriate kits, especially the healthy family kits and the first package will be out in April, but he did not say what was age appropriate. What is it, for example, in the prenatal kit?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Roland. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Health and Social Services, Mr. Miltenberger.

Further Return to Question 127-14(5): Early Childhood Development Programs

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, with the prenatal it is going to be information for the mother, healthy pregnancy key messaging such as refraining from drinking, proper diet and exercise. From birth to six months we are going to be giving out information on developmental milestones, what the parents should look for, what the mother should look for.

We are going to give a diaper bag. We are going to give out more information in terms of what should be done to ensure that the child is given the appropriate care and attention. We are going to have fridge magnets with appropriate messages. We want to make sure that there is as much information as possible for the parents of a newborn. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Supplementary, Mr. Roland.

Supplementary to Question 127-14(5): Early Childhood Development Programs

MR. ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is good to know diaper bags and fridge magnets will be going out there with information for mothers, but is there anything further that the department will be doing to try and deal with the issue of childhood development, especially prenatal? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Roland. The honourable Minister responsible for Health, Mr. Miltenberger.

Further Return to Question 127-14(5): Early Childhood Development Programs

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, very clearly these are just tools. There is going to be work with the family visitors, the child development workers.

There is going to be the work that is done as a matter of course, prenatal work done with public health. There is going to be the tie in with social workers and with Education. This is not just an isolated issue or delivery of specific equipment, but it is tied in with the broad range of support that the department, along with Education, already provides in the communities. Thank you.

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

Supplementary to Question 127-14(5): Early Childhood Development Programs

MR. ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Is any of this money being used by non-government organizations or is it all by the department? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. The honourable Minister responsible for Health and Social Services, Mr. Miltenberger.

Further Return to Question 127-14(5): Early Childhood Development Programs

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it will be a combination. The intent is to partner up with the Literacy Council. The intent is to make use of home care and continuing care services that are in the communities which, in many cases, are done on a contract basis. There will be a combination, a blending of services and a blending of resources for this delivery. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Item 6, oral questions. The honourable Member for Range Lake, Ms. Lee.

Question 128-14(5): Update on WCB Review Panel Report

MR. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question today is for the Minister responsible for the WCB. I am just wondering if the Minister could update the House on the panel review report and what he has been working on since the release of the report. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Lee. The honourable Minister responsible for the Workers' Compensation Board, Mr. Handley.

Return to Question 128-14(5): Update on WCB Review Panel Report

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, since the report was released we have sent the report and recommendations to any stakeholders who are interested in it and are now collecting responses and their comments on the recommendations.

Some stakeholders have asked us for an extension beyond the end of February and to allow them time to get their comments in and I am going to allow them more time. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Supplementary, Ms. Lee.

Supplementary to Question 128-14(5): Update on WCB Review Panel Report

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I just realized that the deadline for the input was February 28th, so I was going to ask that question. I wonder if the Minister can give any idea on what the Minister is planning on doing in terms of the recommendations of the report, or is he just going to wait until he reviews what the people are saying? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Lee. The honourable Minister responsible for the Workers' Compensation Board, Mr. Handley.

Further Return to Question 128-14(5): Update on WCB Review Panel Report

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I think the main thing right now is to wait for all of the stakeholders to get their comments in to me. Once I have received them, and in fact as I am receiving them, I am sharing them with my colleague, Minister Ng from Nunavut, since the WCB covers both jurisdictions. He and I will need to get together shortly to review the recommendations to share our comments with the WCB board and set some direction for redrafting legislation. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Supplementary, Ms. Lee.

Supplementary to Question 128-14(5): Update on WCB Review Panel Report

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I believe that the Minister has implemented some of the recommendations already, one of them being the operational review of the WCB. I am just wondering if the Minister could indicate his position on where he stands on the recommendations? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Lee. The honourable Minister responsible for the Workers' Compensation Board, Mr. Handley.

Further Return to Question 128-14(5): Update on WCB Review Panel Report

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, no, I have not implemented any of the recommendations. There was what the WCB called an organizational review that was going on and had already started when the panel had submitted their recommendations. That organizational review is continuing on. It is an internal restructuring of WCB to begin to structure it along the Northwest Territories-Nunavut line, so there would be two different staff members each dealing with the appropriate jurisdiction. Thank you.

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

Supplementary to Question 128-14(5): Update on WCB Review Panel Report

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate that the Minister wants to wait for the input from the public, but I do not suppose that he is proposing that he may not do anything depending on what the people are saying. I am just wondering

if the Minister could commit to the House that whatever changes he is going to make he will do it within the life of this Assembly. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Lee. The honourable Minister responsible for the Workers' Compensation Board, Mr. Handley.

Further Return to Question 128-14(5): Update on WCB Review Panel Report

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, yes, that is my intention, to complete this during the life of this Assembly. With regard to the operational review itself, unless there is a strong recommendation otherwise, I believe that Mr. Ng and I both agree that an operational review should be undertaken soon. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Item 6, oral questions. The honourable Member for Hay River North, Mr. Delorey.

Question 129-14(5): Senior Citizens Home Repair Program

MR. DELOREY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as I stated earlier, the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation Senior Citizens Home Repair Program has provided forgivable loans to a number of senior citizens in the Northwest Territories who meet the Housing Corporation's criteria. Could the Minister please indicate to the House how many senior citizens were provided funding through the Housing Corporation's Senior Citizens Home Repair Program for the year 2001? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Delorey. The honourable Minister responsible for the NWT Housing Corporation, Mr. Allen.

Return to Question 129-14(5): Senior Citizens Home Repair Program

HON. ROGER ALLEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Unfortunately I cannot provide those statistics. I will find that information out and provide it to the Member. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Allen. Supplementary, Mr. Delorey.

Supplementary to Question 129-14(5): Senior Citizens Home Repair Program

MR. DELOREY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, could the Minister inform the House as to whether it is a policy and if all senior citizens that have qualified for home repair have had to turn over their mortgages to the Housing Corporation to get the work done? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Delorey. The honourable Minister responsible for the NWT Housing Corporation, Mr. Allen.

Further Return to Question 129-14(5): Senior Citizens Home Repair Program

HON. ROGER ALLEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am pleased to inform the Member and this House that it is not a requirement that the seniors turn over their homes to the NWT

Housing Corporation if they do qualify under any of the repair programs. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Supplementary, Mr. Delorey.

Supplementary to Question 129-14(5): Senior Citizens Home Repair Program

MR. DELOREY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I am aware of several instances where senior citizens have been successful in obtaining funding through the Senior Citizens Home Repair Program, some requesting loans as low as \$2,500, but they were still required to turn over their mortgage to access the funding. Would the Minister please indicate why the Housing Corporation would require a senior citizen to sign over his mortgage for a loan as low as \$2,500? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Delorey. The honourable Minister responsible for the NWT Housing Corporation, Mr. Allen.

Further Return to Question 129-14(5): Senior Citizens Home Repair Program

HON. ROGER ALLEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. No certainly, to repeat my previous answer, it is not a requirement. There is a loan agreement where the forgiveness starts on the first day of the month after the repairs are completed. My thorough knowledge of this, Mr. Speaker, is that they are not required to turn over their homes under the agreement for seniors. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Your final supplementary, Mr. Delorey.

Supplementary to Question 129-14(5): Senior Citizens Home Repair Program

MR. DELOREY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am glad to hear the Minister respond in that way, Mr. Speaker. I would just like to ask if there are senior citizens out there that have requested forgivable loans through the Housing Corporation to get home repair work done, should they be reapplying now because these ones refused to get their work done and to turn over their mortgages for a low loan? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Delorey. The honourable Minister responsible for the NWT Housing Corporation, Mr. Allen.

Further Return to Question 129-14(5): Senior Citizens Home Repair Program

HON. ROGER ALLEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is important, I think, for our seniors to understand that in 1997 our home-ownership program changed a lot. Several of the programs offered today are the Senior Citizens Home Repair Program, the home adaptations for seniors independence, elders on the land initiatives, seniors, disabled and preventative maintenance initiatives. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to inform the Members that approximately \$1.2 million will be out there for the seniors this year for a number of those program initiatives, and we certainly encourage them to apply now that the new fiscal year is coming upon us shortly. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Item 6, oral questions. The honourable Member for Hay River South, Mrs. Groenewegen.

Question 130-14(5): Consultation on Adoption Act Amendments

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my questions today are for the Premier pertaining to An Act to Amend the Adoption Act and the Family Law Act, and I have a number of questions under that broad subject. Mr. Speaker, this government has clearly stated its intention to work closely with aboriginal governments in policies and initiatives that we undertake as this government. I was wondering if the Premier could tell us if he has any concerns about the aboriginal governments and chiefs not having been specifically consulted with respect to this legislation? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. I have to advise you that that bill is under consideration and you are not allowed questions in the House about it. Item 6, oral questions. The honourable Member for Great Slave, Mr. Braden.

Question 131-14(5): Update on the Kyoto Protocol

MR. BRADEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question this afternoon is for the Minister responsible for Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development. It is a follow through to a discussion that we had last week with the Premier about our government's participation and response to the Kyoto accord and the arrangements that are underway between the provinces and the Government of Canada. Could the Minister advise us of anything new on this front that may have come out of his meeting with other Energy Ministers last week in Victoria? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Braden. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development, Mr. Antoine.

Return to Question 131-14(5): Update on the Kyoto Protocol

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, last week in Victoria when the joint Ministers of the Environment and Energy from the provinces and the federal government got together, I participated in representing the Northwest Territories. As a result of the meeting, it is an ongoing process here where the federal government is going through a consultation process throughout the country to meet with different stakeholders such as industry, environmental groups and aboriginal groups to see what kind of position Canada should take with regard to the Kyoto Protocol with respect to the global warming issue.

We as the Government of the Northwest Territories have supported and continue to support the federal government to sign the Kyoto Protocol. However, there are different jurisdictions that are realizing the costs they would incur in trying to comply with the Kyoto Protocol. Therefore, there was talk of a letter that Premier Klein had presented to the Prime Minister during the Team Canada trip, and the Alberta contingent wanted a reply to this letter that contained about nine different points.

However, the agreement is to continue talking and to go through the consultation process. There is another meeting lined up for May to carry on with it, and this would be probably after the conclusion of most of the consultation talks with the different stakeholders. It is an ongoing process. Canada is still interested in pursuing it and there are still a lot of jurisdictions interested in pursuing support for the Canadian government to sign the Kyoto Protocol. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Supplementary, Mr. Braden.

Supplementary to Question 131-14(5): Update on the Kyoto Protocol

MR. BRADEN: Mr. Speaker, I too support our endorsement of the Kyoto accord, but the question of the costs to comply are certainly valid. I wanted to ask the Minister, is our government undertaking any specific consultation with industry leaders here in the NWT to see what kind of consensus we might be able to forge? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Braden. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development, Mr. Antoine.

Further Return to Question 131-14(5): Update on the Kyoto Protocol

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, yes there is going to be consultation up here. The federal government is going to have consultation up in the North with regard to support for the Kyoto Protocol. We also have a Greenhouse Gas Strategy that we are doing on our own. We have an Energy Secretariat now under the Department of the Executive that is going around to communities, meeting with people and talking with people about what we could do in our own way to help out in trying to meet the requirements of the Kyoto Protocol.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Supplementary, Mr. Braden.

Supplementary to Question 131-14(5): Update on the Kyoto Protocol

MR. BRADEN: Mr. Speaker, I would like to see if there is any specific step or initiative that our government is undertaking in respect to this issue. The Minister's answer seemed to indicate that it was the federal government that was going to lead the consultation. I would like to see what our government is doing. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Braden. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development, Mr. Antoine.

Further Return to Question 131-14(5): Update on the Kyoto Protocol

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The specifics of it is that we have a Greenhouse Gas Strategy in the North and that we have gone through some consultation already. This is our contribution to trying to meet the requirements of the Kyoto Protocol. We are going to continue to try to develop our strategy. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Final supplementary, Mr. Braden.

Supplementary to Question 131-14(5): Update on the Kyoto Protocol

MR. BRADEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to ask if there is any potential at all that compliance with the Kyoto Protocol would in fact threaten any significant development plans that may be in the offing for the NWT? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Braden. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development, Mr. Antoine.

Further Return to Question 131-14(5): Update on the Kyoto Protocol

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the whole area of climate change and the Kyoto Protocol and the concern of industry is that there are certain limits and certain goals that were set for different countries to meet to comply with in the Kyoto Protocol.

There is a concern that we in the Northwest Territories as we have a lot of forests and green areas. We have not had any industrial development, non-renewable resource development in that area, but in the last few years, as we all know, through the diamond mines and through the oil and gas exploration, there is a huge increase in exploration in our area. That could be a concern to us in the North with regard to complying with the Kyoto Protocol. There are certain limits that we have to meet with.

However, the jurisdiction in the Northwest Territories is primarily under the federal government. We, as the Government of the Northwest Territories, do not have control over resource development. The limits that are set, and with the increase in development, there is a huge increase in the cost as well in the Kyoto Protocol. That could be an area to consider more and to research. What does it mean to us? What does it mean to the federal government, because they are the ones who are responsible for resource development? It is an area of concern. Thank you.

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

Question 132-14(5): Economic Development Officer Funding

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development, regarding my Member's statement about the community empowerment agreements that this government has in place with the communities. One agreement relates to the economic development officer position in our communities. Mr. Speaker, since 1996, the salary of most of these positions is around \$43,000. Mr. Speaker, we have not seen an increase since then.

I would like to ask the Minister of Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development, has the Minister looked at the possibility of increasing these agreements? We have situations where communities are now relinquishing on those agreements and giving them back to the government because the

resources they have are inadequate. Is the department looking at increasing those amounts so that it is more affordable and more transparent so communities can deliver that program?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Krutko. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development, Mr. Antoine.

Return to Question 132-14(5): Economic Development Officer Funding

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the Department of Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development has the responsibility of providing economic development officers in certain communities. In the past few years, some of the communities have been requesting that these positions be turned over to certain communities. We have done that. Other communities today that do not have it are also requesting those positions.

Yes, we are looking at these positions to see if they are adequately funded. If they are not, then we will have to make changes to it to make sure that they are adequately funded if the communities still want to retain those positions. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Supplementary, Mr. Krutko.

Supplementary to Question 132-14(5): Economic Development Officer Funding

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to inform the Minister that this is an emergent area. With oil and gas developments that are taking place and the opportunities in our communities, the time is limited. I think that in order to justify those increases, this government should move quickly on them. I would like to ask the Minister, how soon can he implement an increase in the economic development agreements with communities?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Krutko. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development, Mr. Antoine.

Further Return to Question 132-14(5): Economic Development Officer Funding

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I had already committed to reviewing this program. The department is currently looking at these positions in the communities, where they are to see if they are adequately funded. Once that is concluded, then we will be moving towards making a decision, hopefully within the next two weeks or so. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Supplementary, Mr. Krutko.

Supplementary to Question 132-14(5): Economic Development Officer Funding

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, for the communities that have given these positions back to the government because of the limited resources or the lack of resources to carry them out, will the Minister ensure that those communities are warned that there will be an increase, so they can maybe reconsider implementing those programs in the

communities where they have cancelled it because it is not affordable to the communities?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Krutko. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development, Mr. Antoine.

Further Return to Question 132-14(5): Economic Development Officer Funding

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Mr. Speaker, as I indicated to the Member, we are reviewing it internally. Once we have reviewed it and look at what the options are, we would like to then meet with and inform the communities that do have these positions, and also to the communities that are requesting these positions as well. Thank you.

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

Supplementary to Question 132-14(5): Economic Development Officer Funding

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, can the Minister hopefully get back to me and the Members of the House prior to adjournment of the House on this issue, so that we can have something to take back to the communities?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Krutko. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development, Mr. Antoine.

Further Return to Question 132-14(5): Economic Development Officer Funding

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will try to get back before the House rises, when it rises. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Item 6, oral questions. The honourable Member for Inuvik Boot Lake, Mr. Roland.

Question 133-14(5): FAS/FAE Information and Communications

MR. ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question will go to the Minister responsible for Health and Social Services following on my earlier questions. Mr. Speaker, some would say that diaper bags and fridge magnets do not go far enough to address the concerns of the Northwest Territories in the area of children. I would like to know from the Minister, has his department looked at doing anything further than information pamphlets out there to try to deal with the issue of FAS/FAE when it comes to early childhood development? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Roland. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Health and Social Services, Mr. Miltenberger.

Return to Question 133-14(5): FAS/FAE Information and Communications

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the issue of FAS/FAE is a very significant one. There have been considerable resources put towards education. We have labelled, as my colleague knows, bottles of

alcohol. We are investing in screening tools. We are investing not only in fridge magnets and diaper bags, but very clearly, in working with the continuing home care support people in the communities to provide training, to make sure that we tie in with the public health people, the social workers, as we deal with making sure we do everything in our power to encourage pregnant mothers not to drink, to recognize the ravages of alcohol, the damage caused to the fetus. So yes, we are doing other things. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Supplementary, Mr. Roland.

Supplementary to Question 133-14(5): FAS/FAE Information and Communications

MR. ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Has the department considered, for example, looking at legislation that would deal with situations where the department is aware that a mother has problems with alcohol consumption? Are you looking at anything beyond that? I do not think it is accurate to say the department is doing everything it can. This department has acted progressively on different bills.

There is talking to people, developing pamphlets, encouraging them not to drink, but is the department looking at anything beyond that, say in the form of legislation?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Roland. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Health and Social Services, Mr. Miltenberger.

Further Return to Question 133-14(5): FAS/FAE Information and Communications

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the issue of considering legislation or coming forward with legislation that would somehow give us the legal authority to prohibit or somehow force individuals, women, not to drink is one that is fraught with many ethical and legal considerations.

In fact, there was a situation down, I believe, in Manitoba where such an approach was tried and it ended up in a very significant court battle and rulings made it very clear that we have to be very careful if we want to consider that kind of approach. Is the department considering that approach at present? No, we are not.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Supplementary, Mr. Roland.

Supplementary to Question 133-14(5): FAS/FAE Information and Communications

MR. ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is unfortunate that they are not looking at any form of legislation in that area, when in fact, to date, Mr. Krutko in this House raised the issue of newborns being apprehended because of situations. Even that could be considered too late in some instances, Mr. Speaker, because the damage is done in the womb when alcohol becomes part of a situation.

I would like to know, will his department entertain looking at possibilities, for example in bars, when the owners and those working there are aware that a pregnant mother is in there and

becoming intoxicated, can we look at that kind of legislation to at least stop the consumption at some point here? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Roland. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Health and Social Services, Mr. Miltenberger.

Further Return to Question 133-14(5): FAS/FAE Information and Communications

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my colleague and I, I believe, share the same concern and the same goal. We would like to have every child in the Northwest Territories born healthy and not impacted by FAS/FAE. I am prepared to consider and work with my colleague and any of the Members opposite if they have options or suggestions that we have not considered, or that we have and require revisiting to come up with a way so that we can come to the day in our society, in our country here, where all of our children are born healthy.

So yes, I would be happy to talk to the Member and take any suggestions we have to help us deal with this very critical and eminently preventable issue. Thank you.

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

Supplementary to Question 133-14(5): FAS/FAE Information and Communications

MR. ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I look forward to that. Will the Minister communicate with non-government organizations out there to see if they would be interested in looking at something of this nature?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Roland. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Health and Social Services, Mr. Miltenberger.

Further Return to Question 133-14(5): FAS/FAE Information and Communications

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I will definitely bring this message forward but I can also tell the Member that all of the people in the communities working with FAS/FAE, and there are many across the Northwest Territories, are always looking at ways and bringing forward ideas of how we can best deal with this preventable and most unfortunate symptom visited upon our unborn children. Thank you.

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

Question 134-14(5): Transfer of Programs and Services in the Beaufort-Delta

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Premier regarding a letter that was sent to the Premier on January 9th regarding the transfer of programs and services from the Beaufort-Delta Interim Regional Council. It relates to a motion that was passed December 6th.

The motion is Resolution 8, 2001 Transfer of Programs and Services:

WHEREAS the present Government of the Northwest Territories initially transfers programs and services to communities through community empowerment and the transfer of programs;

AND WHEREAS the Beaufort-Delta political accord has determined to work through program and service initiatives.

Just on that, Mr. Speaker, following up on the questions that I asked to the two previous Ministers regarding mental health and economic development officers, I would like to ask the Premier what action this government is taking in light of the motion passed at the Beaufort leaders meeting on the transfer of programs and services?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Krutko. The honourable Premier, Mr. Kakfwi.

Return to Question 134-14(5): Transfer of Programs and Services in the Beaufort-Delta

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. With the negotiations on self-government that are progressing in the Beaufort-Delta, this government has been looking at a number of possible ways to respond positively to the implementation, preparing for the implementation of self-government in the Beaufort-Delta. Also, helping the region to prepare for the oil and gas activity that they will find even more of in the next few years.

There have been specific requests being made over the years for the transfer of GNWT resources to specific communities, the transfer of responsibility for programs and services to communities. We believe these will continue. There is a need to look at engaging in a real discussion about transferring to the region then we need to get that fairly clear at the political level before we start to engage in that. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Premier. Supplementary, Mr. Krutko.

Supplementary to Question 134-14(5): Transfer of Programs and Services in the Beaufort-Delta

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I think this is an urgent matter. It has been identified by the Beaufort leaders in how the community transfer agreements are being delivered. Resources are inadequate and to encourage or attract good people we need the resources and the infrastructure to be able to manage these people.

I would like to ask the Premier again, how soon can we see some of these initiatives taking place and see an increase in the amount of money that is spent on these transfer agreements?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Krutko. The honourable Premier, Mr. Kakfwi.

Further Return to Question 134-14(5): Transfer of Programs and Services in the Beaufort-Delta

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Beaufort-Delta leaders are meeting in a few weeks, I believe. Hopefully we will have some indication of what we are prepared to engage in. We have, informally, made some

suggestions to some of the Beaufort-Delta leaders and we have yet to get some indication of how we should begin our work and how quickly we can proceed on it. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Premier. Supplementary, Mr. Krutko.

Supplementary to Question 134-14(5): Transfer of Programs and Services in the Beaufort-Delta

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I mentioned two documents, a letter which was written to the Premier and the Deputy Premier, Mr. Antoine, and the resolution that was passed in the December Beaufort-Delta leaders meeting.

I would like to ask the Premier, who has had some time to look at this, has the government taken any initiatives or actions regarding the requests made to those two proposals made through the letter and resolution?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Krutko. The honourable Premier, Mr. Kakfwi.

Further Return to Question 134-14(5): Transfer of Programs and Services in the Beaufort-Delta

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We have the letter and we have the motions on file. We have staff looking at possible ways we can respond. As I said, we are expecting to attend the Beaufort-Delta leaders meeting and hopefully we will have some suggestions that we can make to the Beaufort-Delta leaders at that time. Thank you.

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

Supplementary to Question 134-14(5): Transfer of Programs and Services in the Beaufort-Delta

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I hope the Premier does not take too long, because I think the communities are serious about the problems we are seeing with the transfer agreements, especially with the mental health workers and the economic development officers.

I would like to ask the Premier that he does not tie all of this stuff into the self-government agreement. There are community transfer agreements with communities right now.

Will the Premier commit to take a look at the community transfer agreements and allow for an increase in those amounts and the amount of money being funded through those agreements right now?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Krutko. The honourable Premier, Mr. Kakfwi.

Further Return to Question 134-14(5): Transfer of Programs and Services in the Beaufort-Delta

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We will look at those agreements and consider what the Member is raising. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Premier. The time for question period has ended. Item 7, written questions. Item 8, returns to written questions. Item 9, replies to the opening address. Item

10, petitions. Item 11, reports of standing and special committees. Item 12, reports of committees on the review of bills. Item 13, tabling of documents. The honourable Minister responsible for Housing, Mr. Allen.

ITEM 13: TABLING OF DOCUMENTS

Tabled Document 15-14(5): 2001 Annual Report Public Utilities Board of the Northwest Territories

HON. ROGER ALLEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to table the following document entitled, 2001 Annual Report, Public Utilities Board of the Northwest Territories. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Item 13, tabling of documents. Item 14, notices of motion. Item 15, notices of motion for the first reading of bills. The honourable Minister responsible for Finance, Mr. Handley.

ITEM 15: NOTICES OF MOTION FOR FIRST READING OF BILLS

Bill 11: An Act to Amend the Liquor Act

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Speaker, I give notice that on Wednesday, March 6, 2002, I will move that Bill 11, An Act to Amend the Liquor Act, be read for the first time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Item 15, notices of motion for the first reading of bills. Item 16, motions. Item 17, first reading of bills. The honourable Member for Nunakput, Mr. Steen.

ITEM 17: FIRST READING OF BILLS

Bill 7: An Act to Amend the Legislative Assembly Retiring Allowances Act and the Supplementary Retiring Allowances Act

HON. VINCE STEEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker,

I MOVE, seconded by the honourable Member for Yellowknife Centre, that Bill 7, An Act to Amend the Legislative Assembly Retiring Allowances Act and the Supplementary Retiring Allowances Act, be read for the first time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Steen. The motion is in order. All those in favour. Thank you. All those opposed. The motion is carried. Bill 7 has had first reading. Item 17, first reading of bills. Item 18, second reading of bills. The honourable Minister responsible for Health and Social Services, Mr. Miltenberger.

ITEM 18: SECOND READING OF BILLS

Bill 8: An Act to Amend the Nursing Profession Act and the Pharmacy Act

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Mr. Speaker,

I MOVE, seconded the honourable Member for Nahendeh, that Bill 8, An Act to Amend the Nursing Profession Act and the Pharmacy Act, be read for the second time.

Mr. Speaker, this bill amends the Nursing Profession Act to authorize nurse practitioners, who are parties to collaborative

practice agreements, to practice at pilot project sites designated by the Minister. The bill sets qualifications for the registration of nurse practitioners and provides for the development and approval of guidelines respecting their practice. Minor amendments are also made to a number of provisions to ensure the parallel treatment of certificates of registration, temporary certificates of exemption and, where applicable, certificates of registration as a nurse practitioner.

This bill also amends the Pharmacy Act so that prescriptions signed by nurse practitioners may be filled by pharmaceutical chemists. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. We have a motion. The motion is in order. To the principle of the bill. Question has been called. All those in favour? Thank you. All those opposed? The motion is carried. Bill 8 has had second reading. Accordingly, the bill stands referred to a committee. Item 18, second reading of bills. Item 19, consideration in committee of the whole of bills and other matters; Bill 2, Bill 4, Committee Report 1-14(5), Committee Report 2-14(5), Committee Report 3-14(5) and Motion 1-14(5), with Mr. Krutko in the chair.

ITEM 19: CONSIDERATION IN COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE OF BILLS AND OTHER MATTERS

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): I will call the committee of the whole to order. We have several matters to deal with; Bill 2, Bill 4, Committee Report 1-14(5), Committee Report 2-14(5), Committee Report 3-14(5) and Motion 1-14(5). What is the wish of the committee? Mr. Dent.

MR. DENT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I would like to recommend that the committee continue consideration of Bill 2 and concurrently consider Committee Report 1-14(5), Committee Report 2-14(5) and Committee Report 3-14(5), specifically to continue with consideration of the NWT Housing Corporation budget, after which we can move into the Executive.

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

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): At this time, I would like to ask the Minister responsible for the NWT Housing Corporation if he will be bringing in any witnesses.

HON. ROGER ALLEN: Mr. Chairman, yes I will.

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

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

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

HON. ROGER ALLEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. To my immediate left is Mr. Tom Beaulieu, president of the NWT Housing Corporation. To my immediate right is Mr. Jeff Anderson, chief financial officer of the NWT Housing Corporation.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Thank you, Mr. Minister, and welcome witnesses. General comments on the NWT Housing Corporation. Mr. Nitah.

MR. NITAH: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I would like to ask the Minister some questions regarding his opening remarks of Friday. My understanding is that the corporation is starting discussions with representatives of aboriginal governments, non-governmental organizations and other stakeholders to develop a social agenda for the Northwest Territories. Can he expand a little bit on that responsibility? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): The honourable Minister responsible for the Housing Corporation, Mr. Allen.

HON. ROGER ALLEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes in the political context of the NWT Housing Corporation and our involvement in the social envelope, we look at a number of positive changes in the operation and organization through our consultation with aboriginal governments, proposed self-government groups and community organizations to facilitate a number of different housing initiatives and developments as they vary from community to community and region to region. Hopefully that provides some basic answers to the Member's question. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Nitah.

MR. NITAH: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, that does provide some basic answers which leads me to more questions. Mr. Chairman, in the communities I represent of Lutsel'k'e and Deninoo Kue there are some homes in Deninoo Kue that are public housing that are empty. I still have a number of constituents in that community who require different kinds of units. They have been in their particular units for a while but now require a larger unit. What is the corporation doing to make sure that the empty public housing units in Deninoo Kue are accessible to accommodate those who have increased their family size? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Minister.

HON. ROGER ALLEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As you are aware, one of our initiatives is called SOPHI, sale of public housing initiative, which in the smaller communities, if there are surplus unoccupied public housing units, our preference is to allow the residents of that community who would fall under one or two of our existing home-owner programs to take possession of that through a sale. I think that will give those individuals who have some form of income and who can afford to maintain those homes and pay the mortgage, although it may be small, the opportunity to purchase those homes that are surplus to our existing needs. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Nitah.

MR. NITAH: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That is commendable and all, but I know of a number of public housing clients who owe money to the Housing Corporation, back rent through misunderstandings or through negligence. How do those individuals who owe money to the Housing Corporation or the local housing authority take advantage of these programs when the local authority has rules that say that individuals who owe money to the local housing authority do not qualify, or will not qualify for assistance from the local housing authority or the Housing Corporation in other areas? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Minister.

HON. ROGER ALLEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Two points here that I think I need to elaborate on. One is if a tenant is indebted to a housing association and they want to move into some form of home-ownership, we are prepared to discuss the methods in which we can develop a debt recovery plan.

The other thing, if they cannot afford to do that and they remain as a tenant, then the only other choice we have is to encourage the LHOs to relocate that family into a larger unit, if there is such a need. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Nitah.

MR. NITAH: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. How is the corporation going to approach and resolve issues where there are public units available, not only in my riding, but in any riding of the Northwest Territories, but not adequate in size? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): The Minister responsible for the Housing Corporation, Mr. Allen.

HON. ROGER ALLEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. A number of concepts need to be developed here. Again, if the Member is just talking about family sizes and the lack of rooms or lack of adequately sized homes, then certainly we have to look at other options. If we are talking strictly about the sale of public housing units that are a maximum size of three bedrooms and the family needs four bedrooms, obviously we will have to look at other existing home-ownership programs to accommodate those needs. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Nitah.

MR. NITAH: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to go back to the work in partnership with aboriginal governments and non-government organizations in the areas where there are no homes available, there is no public housing available. I will give you an example; Lutsel'k'e. There is a shortage of houses there, a very large overcrowding problem. We are seeing young people who are getting jobs in the mining industry coming home but are not staying because they do not have a place of their own.

What is the department doing to ensure that hotbeds like Lutsel'k'e that is showing that it needs houses, what are they doing to create an environment to build homes in those communities for these young individuals, young families that need homes today? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): The Minister responsible for the Housing Corporation, Mr. Allen.

HON. ROGER ALLEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That is a very critical question we have been trying to answer for several years, the last couple of years, at least. What we are trying to do is expand our existing home-ownership funding to those smaller communities. Also, we have had several discussions in the past about how we may introduce market development into those communities with the high wage earners, so the idea is to, perhaps under this new affordable housing agreement, be able to assist further housing developments.

The other thing that we have to be cognizant of, Mr. Chairman, is the high cost. Even though we do have annual allocations in those communities, with the current cost of construction and procurement and transportation to those units, we may not get as many units on the ground as we would like. Our ambition is

to work with the communities to look at the various partnership agreements. One we call the universal partnership agreement, where they take the funds and develop in accordance with their core need. The other one is called a project authority agreement, where they take over the responsibility for developing those projects that will meet, again, those who are in core need.

Those are two basic programs we feel will help facilitate market development in those smaller communities. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Nitah.

MR. NITAH: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It would be good to have those agreements in place so that you could use the summer transportation season and construction season to alleviate some of the core needs in a community like Lutselk'e. There is a great need right now as we speak.

Getting back to the corporation wanting to get out of the public housing, and they have been doing that for a few years now, we are seeing that the public housing that they are giving up are old buildings that require renovations. Some of them require major renovations.

I spoke about this in the House during question period and suggested strongly that the housing authority at the community level in those communities that do not have a lumber store or business people to act as contractors, that the housing authority in those communities may play that role.

Has the department and the Minister given it some more thought? It would be nice to have a positive response to that suggestion in the form of a program supported by a policy. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): The Minister responsible for the Housing Corporation, Mr. Allen.

HON. ROGER ALLEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As the Member is aware, I did make a commitment to sit down and discuss internally that we will look at implementing a program of that nature where there are no vendors in the off-road communities. I think it is feasible. It is practical. We have made that commitment. We need to take a bit of time to help develop that policy. We feel that some of those were critical challenges. We acknowledge that. We are prepared to put something forward rather quickly, prior to the bargaining season. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. McLeod.

MR. MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I want to bring up a number of different issues under the Housing Corporation's responsibility. First of all, I want to state that it is really a day that is very difficult for many members of the community of Fort Providence. As of noon today, we had seven families being evicted out of Housing Corporation units.

I have several concerns. First of all, that these evictions are happening during the winter months and there is a double standard. There are many communities in the Northwest Territories that do not have rental facilities. If the tenants who are living in these units have a problem paying for their O and M then income support kicks in. It is really difficult for me as an MLA to have to go home and have to sit down with all of these different families and let them know that there is really nothing we can do. As an MLA, I really cannot interfere in what is now

a legal process. In my discussions with the Minister, I also realized he cannot interfere with this process.

A lot of these people have been in arrears for many years. A lot of them, given the economic state of our community with high unemployment, sometimes just cannot find employment or steady income to pay it back. If you are in that situation, if you are in the courts, if you have a charge or a fine, the Department of Justice has a program that will allow people to work off their arrears.

My first question to the Minister is, could the Housing Corporation not look at some type of methodology where people who are in arrears can work some of their balance that they owe and have it written off as they work it off? There must be a better system than just evicting people.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): The Minister responsible for the Housing Corporation, Mr. Allen.

HON. ROGER ALLEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Since it is more of an operational question, I will ask the Chair's permission to allow the president to respond to that.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): The president of the Housing Corporation, Mr. Beaulieu.

MR. BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, the local housing organizations already have in place a method where individuals who have rental arrears are able to work on their own units, or actually work with other individuals or contractors on houses to lower their arrears. Usually, what happens is individuals are required to go to the LHO and get some materials needed to work on their home. They are allowed to work off their arrears in that way. If it has gone beyond that and it has gone to the courts like the Member said, it is difficult to do anything at this point.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. McLeod.

MR. MCLEOD: Thank you. I am actually surprised to hear that there is such a policy in place. I would like to ask the Minister if you could provide me with that. My next question is regarding evictions during the winter months. It was always something that many people assumed was not possible, to evict people out of their homes during the winter.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): The Minister responsible for the Housing Corporation, Mr. Allen.

HON. ROGER ALLEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That policy rests with the local housing authority or the LHO. We certainly can, in the future, ascertain that policy where there may not be any evictions, or certainly encourage them not to occur. I certainly want to take that and put it as a priority of the NWT Housing Corporation in terms of its relationship with the LHOs so that it does not reoccur. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. McLeod.

MR. MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am not sure of the exact numbers, and I do not have all the names of everybody who is being evicted, but we have some seniors on the list for eviction in Fort Providence. Now, the seniors do not pay rent, so I would like to know if the Minister would take a look at this situation in particular, because I do not understand. Is it because they have children who are living with them, and the

senior then becomes responsible for payment? I am not clear how this could happen, that we are going to be kicking out some of our seniors and putting them out into the cold. Could the Minister commit to looking into this situation, especially in the case of Fort Providence?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): The Minister responsible for the Housing Corporation, Mr. Allen.

HON. ROGER ALLEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I will begin by saying that we want to do an operational review of the LHOs to ascertain the level of problems. There are those who are being adversely affected, such as a senior. Their rent is based on the household income, so we want to look at a number of different areas that do affect the tenant or who the house is awarded to as a tenant. Certainly I want to let the Member know that we will do an operational review to at least itemize several of the problems that may occur from time to time. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. McLeod.

MR. MCLEOD: I am glad to hear the Minister say that. I am hoping he will do this in a timely manner. The majority of these people who have been evicted are moving in with their parents, so it is going to be a compounding problem. As they move into their parents' low rental houses, the parent is going to have to pay additional rent. It is just a matter of time before we are evicting practically the whole community out of their units, because it is something that is growing. I understand there is another eviction list that is being developed. We are looking at upwards of 15 families being evicted in the next while. I do not know where it is going to end and I think it just points to the fact that we have a problem. It has to be dealt with.

That is what I wanted to state when I first started speaking, that we have a double standard. We have communities in the North where nobody pays rent, yet in some communities, in this case, we are having to deal with a lot of people who are going to be evicted. We have seven families now. We are looking at more. We are also looking at many people on the arrears list for land taxes. So it is not a small issue here that we are looking at. It is a huge issue that affects a lot of different families.

However, I wanted to ask the Minister, when it comes to home-ownership, in building homes that would be owned by the client or the people in the community, we are only building at the rate of two a year in Fort Providence, while our waiting list is upwards of 30. When I see committees like AOC or Regular Members state to the department that they should be looking to take some of this surplus that we had this year for, I think it was \$160 million, and they do not tap into that budget. It makes me wonder if the Minister feels that we have adequate housing in the communities. Is that his position?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): The Minister responsible for the Housing Corporation, Mr. Allen.

HON. ROGER ALLEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am going to start from the reverse back to the front, saying that it is not my position. Again, I want to emphasize what we feel is important and that we need to look at the communities case-by-case and that we do enter into agreements with the aboriginal development corporations, as well as community organizations, to find creative solutions to a number of housing problems.

I recognize that there is a fiscal dilemma here, but the overall intent is to ensure that we have a mix-and-match of approaches here, that we can identify by either single housing initiatives or having more senior housing initiatives.

In the broader context, we do want to promote EDAP through a number of the communities who can afford it. For those who cannot afford it, to implement more of the independent housing programs. I want to let the elected Member know that we have considered all elements of our housing and home-ownership programs so that we can help the communities benefit. Again, development is through a number of processes here, either through the aboriginal development corporations or through the UPAs or PAs. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Braden.

MR. BRADEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. A couple of areas that I would like to explore, one of them that we have already seen some ground covered on is in the communities, especially Yellowknife and Inuvik, where there is accelerated growth in the economy. The options that residents and potential newcomers to these communities have are very, very limited. Here in Yellowknife, there is some optimism, at least on the construction front, regarding apartment buildings. It seems that a number of private developers are going ahead on some existing land options. We hopefully will see a reasonably quick turnaround in our basic vacancy rate in Yellowknife. I will not speak for Inuvik, but in the capital, there is some optimism for some short-term relief.

It addresses apartments. We are still looking at ways to enhance the diversity of our housing stock in the capital city. In the area are things such as condominiums, mobile home units, and individual stick-built houses. I wanted to ask the Minister and the department, in the tax-based communities, what options does the Housing Corporation provide that will enable diversity in our housing stock for families and individual homeowners? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Minister.

HON. ROGER ALLEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am going to speak to generalities and then I will ask the president to set out some more concrete answers to this. Yes, I have been in several discussions as well with members of the Yellowknife community and some have suggested, as recently as Saturday, that we should talk to the aboriginal governments to set out leases such as they do with the Musqueam Reserve in British Columbia as a method to overcome some of the land problems. That seems to be the core of the housing problems here in the city.

They also discussed the feasibility of going to pump out water systems that would go away from the main artery of the city which is on a piped system. Those are some of the concepts that have been raised and I am prepared to discuss that with our senior officials, but again, in terms of the tax-based municipalities, they certainly want to introduce other housing options providing we can work with the municipalities on some land regimes and some land costing.

If I may, Mr. Chairman, ask the president to reply more to the concrete question. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Beaulieu.

MR. BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In the market communities or the tax-based communities, the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation will move carefully in the area where there is to be a provision of private market rentals. We will try to work with the local non-profit housing organizations to try to put some affordable rental housing units on the ground. We are also trying to work with local organizations that are providing seniors public housing. In a place like Yellowknife, we are planning on working with the senior citizens here to provide seniors public housing units.

Also, working in the area of home-ownership, we are interested in discussing and consulting with the various community organizations that are involved in the home-ownership market here in Yellowknife, including realtors. We are hoping to stay strictly in that area and hope not to impact on the private rental market.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Braden.

MR. BRADEN: Thank you. Those are directions that I can support. I guess what I am seeking here, Mr. Chairman, is an indication that the Housing Corporation is a leader and certainly one of the agencies with reasonably deep pockets that is going out into the community and looking for partners, options and ideas that can help open up more land.

The Minister alluded to this and he brought me into the second area of questioning, which is the need for affordable land. Before houses and apartments can be built, we need to have land that is ready to go, that is serviced to have the things in it that we need to help build a community. Here is where the collaboration, especially between the Housing Corporation and MACA, is very critical along with the municipal level of government.

It is in that area that I wanted to probe a bit more. The Minister mentioned one very interesting possibility there and that is to work with aboriginal corporations and First Nations that are within city limits or neighbouring the city. Can I go to, specifically, the collaboration that should be there between MACA and the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation? It seemed that was lacking in some of the reports we had earlier. I wanted to ask the Minister what he is doing to address that collaboration with his colleague and neighbouring department. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Minister.

HON. ROGER ALLEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I want to thank the Member for that question because it was something I had worked on before I had my portfolio changed to another department. It is still a very good question and I want to say my interest remains in that, because under the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation Act we can also have investment in terms of land development. We recognize that there is a major cost here in the city. We want to, again, as the Member put it so eloquently, collaborate with the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs to try and identify through their own capability of accessing Commissioner's land or turning that over to the municipality and then begin to discuss the feasibility of developing it for home-ownership.

Of course, that will fall under one of our key categories in research and development, the analysis of that, so we certainly feel there is an ongoing requirement to liaise with MACA and also the city to identify what we deem as affordable

development areas within the city that still remain as Commissioner's land. We will continue that discussion with MACA. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Braden.

MR. BRADEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. To another important partner in the whole housing landscape here, and that is the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation. I would like to ask the nature of our agreements with the corporation. A bit later in the budget document, we have some details of several areas we rely on for, it looks like about half, of our revenues. A significant piece here.

What is the long-term nature of our agreements with the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, Mr. Chairman? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Minister.

HON. ROGER ALLEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am going to again speak in terms of the generalities and then I will ask the president to support my analogy here. With the declining involvement of CMHC dollars, that is what requires us to look at the long term again, how we can support development of private market housing as well as putting more people into private home-ownership.

There is a decline in the CMHC level of funding, so that is certainly what drives the process here towards us going out and developing partnerships with the communities and aboriginal governments, non-profit organizations, using different methodologies to approach housing developments. That is my preamble to what I would ask the president to respond to in terms of the specific program. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Beaulieu.

MR. BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As indicated by the Minister, our agreement with CMHC is to decline to zero dollars by 2038 and it starts to decline next year, in fact, in some of the communities and gradually goes down until there is no more funding in that specific agreement with CMHC which pays for the operating or a portion of the operating of the 2,200 public housing units we have across the Territory.

This year, the corporation was able to sign an affordable housing agreement with CMHC for \$7.5 million that will be used over the next four years to make housing affordable in the Northwest Territories with that money for a ten-year period. We are hoping as the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation continues discussions with Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation more of these types of agreements will be put in place to replace the declining dollar, but at the same time, the corporation continues to discuss with CMHC the concept of leaving the social housing dollar agreements in place after the mortgages have been paid off and the funding was supposed to decline.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Thank you, president of the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation. At this time I would like to recognize the people in the gallery. Welcome to committee of the whole. Next on the list I have Mr. Delorey.

MR. DELOREY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just want to make a few comments on the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation's budget, recognizing the fact that they have a

considerable amount of money to spend in the Northwest Territories to deal with the increased demand on social housing and the NWT Housing Corporation's role that it plays in trying to meet the needs of the people. One of the areas that I have some concerns with and I would like to try and get a good understanding of is one of the programs that the NWT Housing Corporation administers with their home repair program and the whole issue of requiring, especially seniors, to give a promissory note and a copy of the title for their property to hold.

The NWT Housing Corporation wants to hold this to secure mortgage for ten years when we are looking at sums of money in very low figures, sometimes around the \$10,000 figure. Just to qualify to get the money, to be able to access the money, they have to give up a copy of their certificate of title.

I am wondering what the thinking is behind it and why you would put a senior through that when obviously some of them are saying, "no, you are not getting it and I just will not bother getting the work done." To me it is kind of disturbing. It is disturbing to seniors. I am trying to get from the NWT Housing Corporation what the thinking is behind that whole scenario and why they would do that. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): The Minister responsible for the NWT Housing Corporation.

HON. ROGER ALLEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Earlier today I responded to that question and what we did confirm was that the seniors are eligible for up to a \$20,000 forgivable loan every ten years. That forgiveness is a minimum of \$2,000 per year. We do not even require that they sign over their home to the NWT Housing Corporation. So, if I may, Mr. Chairman, ask Mr. Beaulieu to add further substance to that.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Thank you, Mr. Minister. Mr. Delorey.

MR. DELOREY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Was there a time when this was in place where you required the senior to give up a copy of his ownership to secure the money? Was that a program that the NWT Housing Corporation was administering?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): The Minister of the NWT Housing Corporation.

HON. ROGER ALLEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I will ask the president to respond to that question.

MR. BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Up until this upcoming fiscal year, the NWT Housing Corporation had seniors sign agreements for up to ten years for the Senior Citizens Home Repair Program regardless of the amount of money that was utilized up to \$20,000 even if an individual had borrowed or had been given a loan for \$2,500. We also felt that was a problem and we incorporated a minimum amount of forgiveness annually, so the agreement is given over a time period at a minimum of \$2,000 per year. So, if an individual senior was to get \$4,000 worth of repairs, they will receive full forgiveness in two years and the forgiveness is in place only to protect the seniors themselves from tax implications of getting their one-time outright grant. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Delorey.

MR. DELOREY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Another area that I would like to touch on is where you have programs to help with public housing and there is a distinct need out there for somebody who is really badly in need, maybe a single mother with kids who is trying to secure a place of residence for herself and is involved in maybe a court battle with an ex-husband or something and is looking for a short-term solution to a funding problem.

What are the latitudes that the people within the NWT Housing Corporation who are administering the programs have? How much latitude do they have to stray from the hard lines that the programs call for when you look at an individual? Can you look at an individual case with somebody and say, "Okay, well maybe we can come up with a short-term solution to this," or is it cut and dried with the programs that the people cannot stray at all and try and help somebody that is in core need? Where does the decision have to go for somebody to finally say, "We are going to help this person on a short-term basis so that they do not get put out on the street or they are not rendered homeless because of policy lines that we have to follow?" Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): The president of the NWT Housing Corporation, Mr. Beaulieu.

MR. BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As the Minister is aware, the government has a policy. Policy is the only thing protecting the bureaucrats who are trying to deliver programs. When it is time for a change or if the policy does not fit the situation, the bureaucrats or the senior people in the field or in headquarters have the option to come up with a decision paper that we have developed internally which we refer to as a presidential decision paper and decisions are brought up to my level for the final decision to be made by myself on these issues.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): The Member for Hay River North, Mr. Delorey.

MR. DELOREY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. So, once a decision is made that, let us say the NWT Housing Corporation has levelled a final decision, is it kind of a closed case then or seen as going over the president's head if the Minister is requested to review this thing and maybe have a second look at it? What is the proper procedure? If I do not agree with a decision that is coming down, what is the proper procedure for me to get it to be looked at again? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): The president of the NWT Housing Corporation, Mr. Beaulieu.

MR. BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Of course, in our structure the Minister would still have the final say if the Minister chooses to make a policy decision that overrides myself as president. Then I am obligated to carry out the decision of the Minister and there is no problem there.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Delorey.

MR. DELOREY: Thank you, those are all the questions I have for now, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Next on the list, the Member for Range Lake, Ms. Lee.

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I would like to take this opportunity to ask the Minister more questions about what he has in store for providing affordable lots in the city of Yellowknife. I have pursued these questions in the House, but I was not quite clear about exactly what the Minister's plan is and I was wondering if he could help me understand that? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): The Minister responsible for the NWT Housing Corporation, Mr. Allen.

HON. ROGER ALLEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I will reiterate my answer. As I expressed to the Member for Great Slave, we are committed to liaising with Municipal and Community Affairs who engage from time to time with the City of Yellowknife to identify where they can secure part of the lands. Under the NWT Housing Corporation Act we can buy into land development, but at costs that mean we are with the construction of the industry or even the purchase of modular units that will exceed our MCC levels. So, really it is to our advantage to continue to press on with the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs to assist with the cost of land development. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Ms. Lee.

MS. LEE: Mr. Chairman, may I ask the Minister to be more specific about what liaising means? I think that it is no secret that everybody has been harping about housing shortages, not all over the Territories, but in particular for me for the city of Yellowknife. It has been an ongoing thing, this is not a new thing. The Minister had indicated in some of his answers in the House that he had meetings with city officials and the Municipal and Community Affairs officials and so on and so forth. So, what exactly is he trying to accomplish, if anything, for dealing with the lack of affordable lots in Yellowknife? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Ms. Lee. Mr. Minister.

HON. ROGER ALLEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. For the record, last June the Minister of Finance, the Member for Great Slave and myself, including the deputy minister of Municipal and Community Affairs, attended a meeting at city hall to discuss in the preliminary stage some of the processes that we can develop to procure affordable lots in the city. There were a number of concepts raised.

Since then, I must admit that I have not been able to speak to anyone except the mayor very briefly last week, but I understand from our own internal discussions our officials have met with some developers in the city and I know from the meeting last February they were basically asked not to enter into the rental market and also not to infringe on market developments.

Now we understand that there is a greater demand and an emerging demand, so we are prepared to look at what role we can play as a corporation in home-ownership development in the city of Yellowknife and land is always a key question in our deliberations. So, we are prepared to work with Municipal and Community Affairs to see if they will take the lead with those vested interest groups so we can come to some conclusion here. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Minister Allen. Ms. Lee.

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am not even clear about exactly what the NWT Housing Corporation's mandate is in providing or playing any role in providing affordable lots in places like Yellowknife. Does the Minister have a mandate to do that or is that his responsibility to do that even? Maybe I should ask that question first.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Ms. Lee. Minister Allen.

HON. ROGER ALLEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I do not see the land issue as being in the NWT Housing Corporation's mandate other than we can purchase land for home development, providing it is affordable. That is why we are trying to guide the discussion through Municipal and Community Affairs. We work in collaboration with that department to identify methods by which we could put housing into the city for our clients. I reference a small portion of our mandate which states that the NWT Housing Corporation recognizes its role in providing affordable social rental housing and home-ownership options while assisting with the development of private housing markets. So that, Mr. Chairman, exemplifies what our mandate is and the direction that we need to go. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Minister Allen. Ms. Lee.

MS. LEE: Thank you. I do not know what that is he just read about the goal. Is that the goal of the NWT Housing Corporation? May I ask what he just read? Where is that from?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Ms. Lee. Minister Allen.

HON. ROGER ALLEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Just to verify, that comes from our mandate and it is also part of our overview in terms of our housing strategies that we continue to elaborate on to assist those who are in need. That extends into our historical home-ownership programs. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Minister Allen. Ms. Lee.

MS. LEE: You see, it is confusing because I guess I have heard the Minister say earlier that the NWT Housing Corporation does not want to interfere with the free market, but what he just said in terms of the overall mandate of the NWT Housing Corporation is very much similar to the division of the department as stated in the main estimates on page 85. It says here that:

The NWT Housing Corporation is committed to working in partnership with communities and aboriginal groups to assist them to become responsible for their own choices in housing. By working together, all community residents are provided with opportunities for homes that support a healthy, secure, independent and dignified lifestyle.

I guess that is broad enough that I would say that the NWT Housing Corporation has a mandate to the people of Yellowknife as it has for everyone. I think the mission says here that "The NWT Housing Corporation in partnership with all Northwest Territories residents and community organizations is responsible for the provision of adequate, suitable and affordable housing."

I do not mean to read this whole book or anything like that, but I am still not clear exactly how the NWT Housing Corporation sees its role in terms of addressing this crucial need in

Yellowknife. The mission I just read shows a broad mandate. I would think that you could argue he is responsible for housing availability, affordable housing in Yellowknife. I am not talking about social housing, I am talking about, for now, affordable housing and affordable housing requires affordable lots. A \$300,000 house is not an affordable house, I would argue.

I guess, this contradiction is shown in the budget address where, under housing initiatives on page 14, the first paragraph reads really well. The government recognizes here that there is a growing concern with the lack of affordable supply of private rental accommodation and housing and that there is need for housing for mine workers, oil and gas workers, government workers and employees of new aboriginal governments and businesses all need affordable housing. So, it says here the shortage affects the Northwest Territories' potential for economic development and it is an issue for retention and recruitment. That is a really laudable and agreeable statement.

Then the NWT Housing Corporation moves in to say that the Government of the Northwest Territories intends to respond to this by doing things, but only in non-tax-based communities. This is why I am confused because I would say that the mandate requires that the NWT Housing Corporation has to be doing something in Yellowknife. The Minister has indicated parity and equality and equity and everything, yet it says right here in black and white that he is not doing anything for tax-based communities. Could he explain that, please?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Ms. Lee. Minister Allen.

HON. ROGER ALLEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I hope I can extrapolate from the long preamble to the question and hopefully recollect some important points, but the emphasis here, Mr. Chairman, is that we have been told by private developers that we should not infringe in the marketplace. What we did say, we did commit that we were prepared to discuss in the context of affordable housing that we would enter into some informal agreements.

If the Member is curious to know what I mean, I am trying to emphasize that under our social housing development programs that we can then consider and we will consider that we can now introduce EDAP for those who are at the top end of our public housing list and may have to move to the next level. That is where I think we are starting to move towards in the city of Yellowknife.

In the context of we need to develop parity in the Northwest Territories and look at some of those impacts that are causing the great concern in the city of Yellowknife, again, in recognition of the fact that migration is occurring from the smaller communities into the larger centre, we need to look at the broader client base and not just those who are working in the oil and gas and the diamond industries and the spin off industries. Yes, we understand and we are trying to address all the questions and not just one singular one that affects affordable housing in the city. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Minister Allen. The Chair recognizes Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, my question to the Minister is in regard to the NWT Housing Corporation and its mandate and outlook on where it could go as a partner responsible for the housing needs and

requirements of the people in the Northwest Territories. I think one thing that we do not hear much about, but I think it does have the perspective of having a real economic value to the Northwest Territories, is the forest industry and the potential that it has by way of log homes and even wood products and materials produced in the Northwest Territories. Right now, a large portion of the lumber industry that does take place is that raw logs are being exported to British Columbia, Alberta and elsewhere, but there is no real spin off in regard to developing a market to produce wood door frames and whatnot. A lot of that material is imported and is built here and then is stamped with manufactured in the Northwest Territories. Realistically, the wood product was not produced in the Northwest Territories.

I think as a government we have to seriously look at the timber potential we have in the Northwest Territories, especially in the Mackenzie Delta where a lot of people do not realize that a lot of the structures and infrastructure that has been built in places like Inuvik and Aklavik and almost all of the government centres back in the 20's and 30's were built from logs and whatnot from the Inuvik region. Just because you are above the Arctic Circle does not mean we do not grow trees up there also.

I think it is important that in the communities I represent, especially in Fort McPherson, they have been working on a pilot project with the NWT Housing Corporation. We have worked on developing log homes in the different communities and I think it has proven itself. I think as a department, if anything, I see a real economic opportunity here for not only the NWT Housing Corporation, but for the residents of the Northwest Territories who will generate employment, an opportunity to make log products and build developing log packages in the Northwest Territories where you can have logs packaged in such a way that you can actually have these things produced at a market where you do not have to spend \$200,000 or \$300,000 to build a home in a lot of these communities. You can do it for a cheaper cost because of the access to the resource that is there.

So, I would like to ask the Minister, is there anything in their eyes of expanding this program to look at the log home projects or to look at people who may be single individuals or elders who may want a log home instead of having a home where you have running water and the plumbing, the whole works? If you can look at something that people just feel comfortable with, having a roof over their heads, having a feeling that they had an input in building it and some pride in those homes and which people used to have in their own homes, you do not see much of that anymore.

I think the whole idea of stimulating our economy is important, so I would like to ask the Minister, is that one area the department can expand on and start looking at allocating resources and start developing more of these type of packages instead of importing these home products from the south?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Minister Allen.

HON. ROGER ALLEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am certainly pleased to hear the question because it is quite ironic that we have again supported the Fort Smith Metis Local to cut some dimensional lumber for the NWT Housing Corporation. We funded the project and we will continue to investigate other

opportunities as they come up. There is a lot of potential in the Northwest Territories, we believe. We know there is great demand for blocking. There is great demand for rough lumber. I think the forest sector of our economy can support that. We can also develop a lot of northern-based building supplies and two years ago the president and I went into a small community south of the border and we saw where they used a lot of the local product too, for instance, as milling material for hard woods. I was very impressed with the very reduced cost. It requires again further discussion with another member of the department to collaborate on the methodologies we can use to develop that small sector that can be self-supporting.

We certainly are more than prepared under our business development section to look at those real possibilities and support it both economically and from a regional perspective. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Minister Allen. Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The reason I ask is because in the Mackenzie Delta, in the communities of Aklavik, Inuvik, Fort McPherson and Tsigehtchic, they do have the portable mells in the communities and I think there is the economic potential and also the offer of employment in those communities in the sector. I think that right now we do have manufacturers designing different things in most of the regional centres, but not in the smaller communities. I think in regard to those communities there is that potential and we should seriously take hold of it. I think for a lot of people who would like to be able to cut their own logs and provide the logs and the labour to build their own homes, that is still viable to them. A lot of people felt proud in the past. They have seen their parents or grandparents having their log homes in their communities. Today, very few people have log homes and I think for myself I would like to see that.

I would like to ask the Minister, are there resources that have been put aside for such initiatives so that we can look at developing this as a viable market in our small communities?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Minister Allen.

HON. ROGER ALLEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would just like to confirm that we already have attached some resources to the concept of log home building. We do have two staff members from the Beaufort-Delta district office who have been participating in a project of that nature for the past two years. We continue to support that. Again, we do have our number of home-ownership programs that can support those local initiatives, it is just a matter of ensuring that they are within the mandate of the corporation and within our audit requirements.

Those are some of the areas we do want to look at in the context of our business development section. Again, we see that as a real possibility. It gives ownership to the community, to the individuals and also it will help the local development corporations find other ways of promoting home-ownership. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Minister Allen. Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I would like to follow up on a question asked earlier by Mr.

McLeod. My concern, especially with the harmonization and the direction that the NWT Housing Corporation seems to be going, is we have to realize that the whole idea of housing the Northwest Territories was based on social housing.

I think the word social should basically give you some idea that it was based on the social dependency on the Government of the Northwest Territories to provide services to the people of the Northwest Territories because of the high cost of living and the social conditions people lived in, in the Northwest Territories.

I have a real problem when we hear about people being evicted or people being told that they have to either find employment, get a job or whatever, and then we turn around and take 25 or 30 percent of their wages. Or if we find out that they are making too much, we tell them to go and find housing elsewhere.

My question to the Minister is, where is the whole idea of social housing in the NWT Housing Corporation, knowing that the Housing Corporation was developed through CMHC to provide social housing to the residents of the Northwest Territories?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Mr. Allen.

HON. ROGER ALLEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am going to provide an answer in the context of again, we heard earlier about the declining CMHC dollars. Our long-term objective, Mr. Chairman, is to put people into their own affordable housing, either through the sale of SOPHI, sale of public housing, or there are a number of home-ownership programs that we support. The on the land program is one that is starting to take some high interest. Self-built and self-designed is another concept that has been raised on a number of occasions. I agree that there are impacts on individuals.

The key, I believe, is to put the people into home-ownership where they begin to determine the type of lifestyle they want to live, not how we should dictate that to them and put them at risk of being evicted because maybe they had a late payment, and suddenly have to go through the legal process. That to me is certainly not good enough grounds to have people homeless. As the Minister responsible for homelessness, I have to also be cognizant of that as well. I am very aware and I want to make the Members aware that we want to look at the full range of programs we have through the Housing Corporation to accommodate those who are in core need. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Allen. I recognize Mr. McLeod.

MR. MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have several questions for the Minister. The first one is, could the Minister tell me if there is a difference between the programs delivered to communities that are considered market communities versus communities that are considered non-market?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Mr. Allen.

HON. ROGER ALLEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes in the definition there is a difference.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Allen. Mr. McLeod.

MR. MCLEOD: I thank the Minister for his lengthy and detailed answer. I would then like to ask if he could tell me if market disruption applies to both non-market and market.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Mr. Allen.

HON. ROGER ALLEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. No, I am of the firm belief that there is not. In the context of trying to promote home-ownership and housing market developments in the small communities there are very few people who can actually afford a full mortgage. Thus we promote the social housing programs. For instance, in the city here there are private developers who can access conventional bank loans to develop markets. If you compare that to a non-tax-based community most banks will not step in, so we feel there is an obligation for the Housing Corporation to fund the majority of those projects. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Allen. Mr. McLeod.

MR. MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The Minister has indicated that the NWT Housing Corporation does not have a market disruption policy. Could I ask the Minister if he feels that the business incentive policy applies to the NWT Housing Corporation?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Mr. Allen.

HON. ROGER ALLEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I was asked that question in the House previously and yes, we do comply with the BIP policy. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Allen. Mr. McLeod.

MR. MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It is difficult to understand that this government, through some of the funding programs in other departments, will not fund initiatives that are considered market disruptive. However, the NWT Housing Corporation does not have the same policy. Could the Minister explain to me why that is any different from providing, for example, business development funds that operate under a market disruption policy?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Mr. Allen.

HON. ROGER ALLEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I will ask the president to reply to that specific question. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Allen. Mr. Beaulieu.

MR. BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The Housing Corporation does not have a stand-alone market disruption policy, but rather inside each of the programs we have a policy indicating which communities this specific program can be delivered in. An example is if we are delivering the independent housing program. The NWT Housing Corporation funds the capital on that 100 percent and then carries the mortgage for a minimum mortgage up to \$350 annually.

We decided that in market communities where individuals are capable of getting bank loans, the Housing Corporation is in a better position then to leverage the money and provide more funding to the communities across the Territories by going into market communities and leveraging our money, as opposed to providing outright 100 percent capital grants to construct a unit.

As an example, a \$160,000 unit in Rae Lakes is the only option to address a core need issue, whereas in Yellowknife it may be \$40,000 and allow the individual to leverage the rest of the money in order to address their core need issue. Therefore, we have expanded the amount of social housing dollars that we can provide to the Territories. In the last four years since we have had the Expanded Down Payment Assistance Program, we have been able to leverage \$27 million in private financing with the program.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. Mr. McLeod.

MR. MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Can the Minister or corporation reassure me that the NWT Housing Corporation will not be providing any commercial units in the regional centres or Yellowknife?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Mr. Allen.

HON. ROGER ALLEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Just to confirm, we do not spend any social housing dollars on commercial entities. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Allen. Mr. McLeod.

MR. MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Can the Minister then further reassure me that the 36 units built in Inuvik are all designated for social accommodation?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Mr. Allen.

HON. ROGER ALLEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I will ask the president to respond to that directly. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you. Mr. Beaulieu.

MR. BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. If the Member is referring to the new apartment block built in Inuvik, yes 36 of those units were secured by the Housing Corporation through the rent supplementary program. That was a transfer of 36 other private market units that were leased through the rent supp in Inuvik, and that allowed an individual to leverage an additional 12 units for the private market, and a 48-unit apartment block was built in Inuvik.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. Mr. McLeod.

MR. MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It is really hard to interpret when the Housing Corporation is moving into an area that should be market driven. In this case it is my understanding that the Housing Corporation is providing financing to construct the units and, in fact, not all the units are social housing. Can he confirm if they provided some up-front money for the people in Inuvik? I thought I heard him say that there are 12 units that are not for social housing.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Mr. Allen.

HON. ROGER ALLEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The NWT Housing Corporation did not up-front any monies, but we did put out a request for proposal (RFP) last year to provide the NWT Housing Corporation with 36 rent supp units in Inuvik. There were 36 existing rent supp agreements and the owner decided to add those 12 extra units at his own expense. That is

how it became a total of 48. The 36 are rent supp units for the NWT Housing Corporation. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Allen. Mr. McLeod.

MR. MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I will have to take a look at the whole situation in more detail before I can ask any more questions along that line. I will just change my line of questioning to projects that are being constructed, or contracts that are being awarded in the smaller communities. I am especially concerned that a lot of contracts are being tendered out and we see these units get partially built and then they are sitting there for many months on end. I would like to know what is the stand on how long it takes to construct a house? How long is that, and how long after the deadline does the Housing Corporation give before they move in and take over the project?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Mr. Allen.

HON. ROGER ALLEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am not familiar with the construction time table, but normally a house of standard size, say 1,000 square feet, would normally take four to six months to completion date. We do monitor the construction phases, so I am again going to ask the president to reconfirm what our expectations are of the contractors under a tender. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Allen. Mr. Beaulieu.

MR. BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The completion date on contracts to construct homes for the Housing Corporation is determined between the contractor and the Housing Corporation at the time the contract is signed. Should the contractor come upon difficult times such as a shortage of labour and so on, then the Housing Corporation has the option to extend the completion date. However, at some point if the contract is still not being completed then the Housing Corporation will take action in accordance with the contract regulations that are laid out, and according to the contract law that we have to abide by.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Just reviewing the NWT Housing Corporation Act itself, the powers and duties of the corporation, it says:

The corporation shall carry out the duties and functions provided for by this Act and may carry out other duties and functions related to any program of housing or housing development that may be assigned to it and, without restricting the generality of the above, the corporation may provide, develop, maintain and manage housing for:

- (a) senior citizens;
- (b) families and individuals receiving social allowances or social assistance;
- (c) individuals requiring minimal nursing care;
- (d) families and individuals generally;

(e) students or apprentices and their families;

(g) co-operative or non-profit organization housing accommodation.

Under the power and duties under (b), it says: "Families and individuals receiving social allowance or social assistance." I would like to ask the Minister how that responsibility falls in line with the increases that we are going to see with regard to delivery of the programs and services. That is one of the responsibilities that you have within the Housing Corporation.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Mr. Allen.

HON. ROGER ALLEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It is difficult to understand the question, but again if there is emphasis to be placed on the specific area then obviously we need to look at our public housing program and how we deliver it in terms of those who are in need and those who cannot afford home-ownership. Obviously our obligation is to then take a look at those who would qualify under our public housing program, and there is a process in place where we have agents in the communities who have a board of directors that would evaluate the clients through an application process. If that is the gist of the question, then that would be my reply. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Allen. Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I think the key words there are families and individuals who receive social assistance. One of the things that I see happening more often is that there seem to be more restrictions put on families, or grandparents and their grandchildren, or the immediate family. Those aboriginal organizations have large family units. In a lot of our communities you are either related to half the town or the other half is related to someone else. With respect to these large family units, because of the restrictions you put in place, especially if a senior or a grandmother has her grandchildren or her nieces or nephews or even her daughters who may want to come to visit or stay over for a couple of months, we penalize them. We tell them that they cannot have so and so staying with them, you will be penalized or your rent is going to be increased. I think this government should be avoiding those types of circumstances.

Also in a lot of those communities you do not have any alternative places for these people to live. You made a comment earlier about people moving to the larger centres and regions, and that is one of the reasons why. A lot of people who go back to their home communities end up living with their parents or their grandparents, and you become a burden on your own family and you have these arguments within your own family, "It is your fault that my rent went up, so get out" sort of thing.

As a government we should not be implementing these types of restrictive policies which basically condemn families. If anything, we should be promoting families to start living together and being more of a cohesive unit so that the grandmother can enjoy her grandchildren or nieces and nephews, to spend time with the family, instead of penalizing them because they might have come in. They may have a part-time job as a summer student and stayed with their grandparents, then they went off to school and the grandparents are stuck holding the bag. The Housing Corporation says, "Sorry, you had Johnny staying with you over

the summer and this is how much he made. That is considered income, so now that is going to be put against you."

I find it awfully hard, especially when you know that these people come back home and they want to spend time with their parents and they want to spend time with their grandparents, but it does cause a lot of frustration within the family with regard to the emotional and mental disruption that this causes to families. I would like to ask the Minister if there is anyone looking at the whole area of reuniting families in these communities, looking at some of these regulations and policies you may have which restrict the ability of families to start living together and spending time together without being penalized?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Mr. Allen.

HON. ROGER ALLEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. There are two key points that I would like to respond to in the context of the question. One is in regard to as a Minister, I am working on leading a discussion within the Housing Corporation to equate the total household income so that those families that are impacted, who have the ability to buy or purchase a home, either through SOPHI or one of the existing programs, most preferably EDAP. The other is to revisit some of our policies that require us to either revise them or redraft the whole policy that would be consistent.

Again, the emphasis here is to deal with it in the context of the universal parts of agreements where the communities have control over some of the problem areas that surfaces from time to time through either quick policy shifts or subtle ones. So we see a number of good ownership programs that the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation changed in 1997. In light of the fact that we know that there is going to be some funding eliminated from CMHC, we need to look at that in the longer term.

Mr. Chairman, I feel that we do have to sit down and discuss some basic policy changes so that we can commit to adapt to the changing environment as well. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Allen. Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I am glad that the Minister is going to consider looking at this because I believe it does cause a strain not only on the individual, but the family and also even the community. There is turmoil that happens within the community, wondering why people who we want to spend time or stay in our communities are leaving. A lot of it has to do with the frustration of just trying to find a place to live or the burden of having something brought on just because you happen to be there, such as living with your parents, or in the meantime trying to find a place to stay and maybe finding a part-time job.

I do not think the policies that the government imposes or implements really look at the collective of aboriginal communities in the sense of looking at it as units versus strictly looking at people as one individual with a dollar sign attached to them.

We have to really take the time to look at what the family values are and exactly what roles do grandparents, parents, the children, the grandchildren, even in some cases, the great-grandchildren play in our communities, so we can start supporting families and supporting people in our communities

to live together and stay together, without putting these barriers in place because of the mighty dollar that everyone seems to be battling over. It seems like the dollar is driving this organization.

There is nothing wrong with the Housing Corporation having a debt. That is the whole intention of having a social housing organization that takes care of social needs in communities. One of the needs is not only housing but people.

I think as a government, I strongly encourage the Minister to take this cause up and come back with recommendations so that we do not have this situation where we end up hearing like Mr. McLeod, where 13 people got evicted this afternoon. I think a lot of it has to do with that aspect of having people live with you because you are immediate family. What are you going to do, kick them out?

I think that for small communities that is not the way people have been raised. Most of us have been raised around our grandparents or our great-grandparents, or they live next door to us. Those days seem to be gone because of government policies and procedures. They have to change. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Mr. Allen.

HON. ROGER ALLEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, certainly it is an ethical question when it affects our small communities. With all due respect, Mr. Chairman, family values in small communities is pre-eminent in our beliefs, likewise in the city of Yellowknife. Land is a major issue for them. We balance the two. That is why we have 11 home-ownership programs that talk about -- and again, I want to be very specific to Mr. Krutko's plight here, and Mr. Nitah, for that instance -- we do have a sale of housing packages, a program that gives the people, if they have the will to do it, to build their own homes. We will provide housing packages. We have done that in a number of communities. We do have a whole range.

One of the key programs in the last several years for seniors is going back on the land. They asked us to develop an on the land home initiative. We have done that. Some people are taking advantage of it and are relinquishing their social housing units in municipalities and moving onto the land. They have indicated to us they are very happy, because it does provide them with a good house and they are happy and they are healthy.

We continue to promote that. For the larger families in the communities, yes, we do have other options that we want to continue to promote. Those are spelled out as well. We are very pleased to share that with the Member, that we are responding accordingly to the demands of each individual community. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Allen. Mr. McLeod.

MR. MCLEOD: Thank you again, Mr. Chairman. I still have several questions to ask and the first one is in regard to contractors. I would like to ask the Minister, what is the standard hold back on contracts that are being let for housing construction?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Mr. Allen.

HON. ROGER ALLEN: Mr. Chairman, if I may, I will direct the question to Mr. Anderson.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Allen. Mr. Anderson.

MR. ANDERSON: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The standard hold back on most of our contracts is 15 percent. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Anderson. Mr. McLeod.

MR. MCLEOD: Thank you. My next question is again regarding the completion dates. We heard the Minister state earlier that there are various reasons why completion dates will be extended. I wanted to know, in terms of the IHP and the EDAP houses, if the dates for extension are something that is discussed, if the home-owner is consulted when they make these decisions?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Mr. Allen.

HON. ROGER ALLEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. If I may, I will direct that question back to the president of the corporation, thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Allen. Mr. Beaulieu.

MR. BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. No, under the contract regulations, we are not required to consult with the home-owner. It is a contract that is between NWT Housing Corporation and the contractor. There is a provision in there that the individual is to provide us a service for a fee. If that cannot be met then any change to that contract is strictly between the contractor and NWT Housing Corporation at this time.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. Mr. McLeod.

MR. MCLEOD: I would assume it would be good government practice to inform a person who is waiting for a house, especially if the house is expected to be completed in six months and we are waiting 12 or 18 months. It may be something that this department should consider.

My next question is regarding the EDAP program. I have voiced several times in this House my concern that it is not a program that works well in our smaller communities. We are not getting any of these units. The units that we did get several years ago for the most part ended up in trouble. It had to be reverted in some cases to the IHP houses. I am told that the program only allowed five units to be built in Yellowknife. It was my assumption that was where the dollars were going.

I would like to know, if the Minister could tell me in terms of percentage, I am not sure if he has that on him, where is the money going for EDAP? Where are the budgeted dollars going for EDAP?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Mr. Allen.

HON. ROGER ALLEN: Thank you. Again, Mr. Chairman, I would ask Mr. Anderson to respond to that, our chief financial officer. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Allen. Mr. Anderson.

MR. ANDERSON: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The EDAP program is delivered in any of the communities where some of

the potential home-owners have the ability to go to the bank and qualify for a percentage of the financing from the bank.

I would say the distribution is more towards the larger centres than the smaller centres, but it is a program that we encourage them to a large extent, simply because the government is able to leverage those funds and get the banks to put money into the market place for housing, which is to everybody's benefit. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Anderson. Mr. McLeod.

MR. MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Given that answer, I know for a fact that Yellowknife did not receive a whole lot of houses. The majority of our communities that are considered smaller, I think the numbers are around 29, cannot access it. Is it safe for me to assume that Hay River, Inuvik, and Fort Smith are the ones accessing these dollars? How much money is that?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Mr. Anderson.

MR. ANDERSON: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I do not have the detailed breakdown with me by community of our allocation. I can tell you that for this current year, we are spending about \$2 million on our EDAP program. Some of that money is for repair as well as new units. Probably about \$500,000 of it is for repairs, which are done in all of the communities. The remaining amount is done for new house construction. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Anderson. Mr. McLeod.

MR. MCLEOD: Mr. Chairman, in the year 2000, the NWT Housing Corporation did a needs survey and since then, has been flogging affordability. However, in the majority of the communities in the North, affordability was not brought up as an issue, yet that seems to be a big issue for the NWT Housing Corporation.

It concerns me where this is leading us. It concerns me by discussions that I hear happening in this House as to the trends that we are starting to develop. We no longer recognize market disruption. We are starting to fund projects in the larger centres that we never funded before.

At the same time, the smaller communities have been stating over and over that they do not have enough houses. Maybe we should be looking at the adequacy of units in the smaller communities. There are many units that were built over the years that should never have passed inspection. Units that were built under the HAP program, the SHAG program.

We heard one of the Minister's staff say that the EDAP program spends money on repairs. At the same time, you failed to say that there is a policy that does not allow the NWT Housing Corporation to spend EDAP dollars, or any repair dollars, on any units that were built by the NWT Housing Corporation. Ninety-five percent of the houses in our communities were built by the NWT Housing Corporation. It is not a real fair picture that we are seeing here.

I think we should be talking about the lack of units in our communities. How many have no running water? How many

need repairs? How many passed inspection? I am not sure how. I have units that do not have insulation in the floors, no insulation in the ceilings, units where the ceilings are full of bats. However, we do not get that attention and we do not seem to have programs to address it.

I would like to ask if that could be something that we could look at, the NWT Housing Corporation to look at. If they could tell me that from now on, affordability is going to be the priority. Is the Housing Corporation as we know it going to start changing their investment plans?

We know the dollars are shrinking. However, as we open up the investment portfolio, so to speak and go into Yellowknife, Inuvik, Hay River and Fort Smith where there is a market, where there are developers, then we are not going to see a change in our smaller communities.

My question is will we see some focus in the small communities rather than the larger centres?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Mr. Allen.

HON. ROGER ALLEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. There are several points that I would like to respond to in the Member's question. First of all, I think it is coming upon the Housing Corporation to tighten up on our construction contracts. That seems to be an inherent problem in our smaller communities. We feel that it is the direction that we need to go to ascertain our level in the design build in our smaller communities.

Talking from a political perspective, we need to broaden our mandate to put more thrust into what we see as an alternative solution in the context of the universal partnership agreements.

Allow the smaller communities to take the lead role. We come in as funders, as advisors, as public educators, so that they do have, if the community desires, more units. Then we work with them to find methods of which we can reduce some costs.

Again, the question of time lines; yes, we need to work closely with the communities, monitor the construction periods a little more closely, provide ongoing support to those community developers. There is a whole range of direction here that we need to pursue.

Again, our ambition is to ensure that communities feel they have input. The problem that we understand in terms of migration -- I am not sure of the Deh Cho, but we know from the outlying communities in the Mackenzie Delta/Beaufort, there is a great migration into the town of Inuvik for a number of reasons.

We heard from the Member for Boot Lake, for instance, that there is a great demand for student housing. We are cognizant of all the impacts. It varies from community to community. Thus, we are trying to address them all. Unfortunately, we have to find different ways to deal with it. Certainly we do take these points at heart and we will continue to lead a discussion on how we can better our approach to putting houses on the ground in the communities, whether it is public housing or private housing. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Allen. Mr. Lafferty.

MR. LAFFERTY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to have a grey area cleared up for me. I understand when the

Housing Corporation guarantees loans or approves clients for home-ownership, I am not sure how it works, but someone builds a home for them. Are the clients given the choice as to who builds or what kind of unit they are going to get, what they are going to pay for it? Some of these people are paying for it for 25 years. I am just wondering, what options do they have when they have been given approval for funding or support out there? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. Minister Allen.

HON. ROGER ALLEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Being specific, if a client qualifies under the EDAP and accepts EDAP programming then he decides who designs or builds for him, providing it is 50 percent or less of the contribution. Under that IHP, the NWT Housing Corporation then funds that, so that is again totally our responsibility.

Before I get into too much in-depth on the response, I am going to ask the president of the NWT Housing Corporation to elaborate a bit further on this question. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Minister Allen. Mr. Beaulieu.

MR. BEAULIEU: Thank you. I guess again the policy that we have in place right now is that EDAP is considered to be something that in many cases the majority of that is funded by the client and that individual has the option to pick the contractor themselves, decide on what type of unit will be built and then we assist the individual in securing the contract to make sure that all of the regulations are in place to ensure that the client is protected. Under the IHP program where we pay 100 percent of the capital we simply use the process of either community partnership or public tender to get those units built.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. Mr. Lafferty.

MR. LAFFERTY: Thank you. Under the programs where the NWT Housing Corporation pays all the costs, do you negotiate the contracts most of the time in the smaller communities because of the lack of resources out there or if it is the winter road season can somebody else come in and do that work for them?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. Minister Allen.

HON. ROGER ALLEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Historically we used either process. Either we did a negotiated contract with the community development corporation or in some cases where there was not a local community corporation or development company, we tendered the projects. That is the substance of the question, yes, that is our reply. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Minister Allen. Mr. Lafferty.

MR. LAFFERTY: Thank you. Just on the same thing with contracts. A couple of my constituents have come to me and they have said to me that they were not given a choice when a home was supposed to be built for them and they were told that the local LHO was going to build it. I am not sure if this is a cost savings for the client or a cost savings for the NWT

Housing Corporation, but can the Minister look at some of these clients and see if maybe they were treated unfairly?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. Minister Allen.

HON. ROGER ALLEN: Mr. Chairman, certainly we will endeavour to do that although the concept is to put the ownership housing development back into the community, therefore you will see a number of different methodologies employed throughout the system. We have heard from other Members here that we need to put more investment back into the community and allow the community to take control and full responsibility, therefore we promote universal partnership agreements. In other words as well, project authority agreements have been used to facilitate local housing developments. We are aware that there are problems cropping up every once in a while, but the main thrust is to ensure that the communities have some input and control over how we put housing developments into those communities. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Minister Allen. Mr. Lafferty.

MR. LAFFERTY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It is good to put the ownership back into the communities if it is working for the public. I would just like to use a few examples. I remember five or six years ago when the programs were taken over by the local LHO, training and the employment was great. Employing people is great, but there was also supposed to be training and trying to put apprenticeship programs in place. That was one of the reasons or a few of the reasons and affordability was one of the reasons. More local control of who gets help and the reason that it was put in local control was they knew the people, they knew who needed help the most or supposed to have anyway.

It seems to me that we are getting away from all that when in some of the communities that I have been around and asking questions I have been finding out there is no training at all, there are no apprenticeship programs out there. The employment is happening, that is good, but at the end now I see that the client is the one that is paying the most. The client is paying for outside contractors coming in and doing the electrical, the plumbing and all the specialized work. That is still happening. The local control was not supposed to create a trades position and getting people out there to create trades so that one day they can maybe be self-employed. That is not happening. Why is it not happening? Are they not expressing it enough in their agreements that that is what the agreements are all about? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. Minister Allen.

HON. ROGER ALLEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That is one of the key areas we had discussed with several communities in terms of trying to develop maintenance men, electricians, oil burner mechanics, technicians. Again, getting back to the core of the question, we need to revisit those agreements where there are areas that are lacking. Again, expressly, we do not want to be seen as stepping in to control the way they develop and support their community businesses. That is not our intent. Our intent is to ensure that our programs are delivered equitably in those communities.

Aside from the political elements of that agreement, we need to continue to provide support to the community and I think that is the thrust of our agreement that we as a corporation need to facilitate through some process, the ongoing program delivery that we so support. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Minister Allen. Mr. Lafferty.

MR. LAFFERTY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, the objective of taking control if it was working good would be great. Buying supplies from a local contractor is one of them and this is one area where I did talk to one of the local suppliers that is going out of business now because he is not being supported by the local companies. This government gave this guy help to become a supplier and now another arm of the government is not supporting this guy. It is just like the northern manufacturers. The same thing happening there. We are not supporting something that we built in the first place. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. Minister Allen.

HON. ROGER ALLEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That point is well taken. It is out of our bailiwick. We still say in the context of those agreements we tend to support the bilateral agreement between those communities and ourselves who deliver on our behalf. If there is any problem with the process we are prepared to revisit the agreements to really find our working relationship.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Allen. General comments? Detail? We are on page 8-9, NWT Housing Corporation, activity summary. Mr. Bell.

MR. BELL: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have raised a concern in the House with Mr. Allen in this sitting about the gap that currently exists in the EDAP program for people who are hoping to access this in Yellowknife. I have only looked into the Yellowknife situation. It is entirely possible that it exists in other communities as well.

My concern is that in order to access the EDAP, Extended Down Payment Assistance Program, you have to meet several criteria. First, you either have to be in public housing or on the public housing wait list, but in order to be in public housing or on the wait list, you cannot make more than \$43,000 a year or you are bumped off. This has happened to a constituent of mine who was bumped off the list because she made slightly more than \$43,000.

The other criteria you have to meet is that you have to make approximately \$52,000 minimum income -- that is the threshold test -- so that you can service a mortgage. So it is virtually impossible -- obviously, it is totally impossible to be both in public housing or on the public housing wait list, making less than \$43,000 and also at the same time make more than \$52,000 and meet the minimum threshold Minister Allen has indicated that they hope to address.

My concern is that last year in Yellowknife, there were five projects, EDAP grants, EDAP assistance given out. I have no way of understanding how those clients could have met this criteria that exists.

Although the Minister has indicated that we are looking to address this gap going forward, we have not done so yet. This

year, in 2002-2003, the Housing Corporation is proposing that there will be 11 projects funded. None of these 11 projects could possibly meet the three criteria that I just outlined. I am wondering if the Minister can speak to that.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Bell. Mr. Beaulieu.

MR. BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The public housing core income thresholds are based on the market conditions and the market rents across the city. They vary between one-bedroom to two-bedroom, three-bedroom, four-bedroom and five-bedroom requirements. As the bedroom counts go up, the income for allowance into the public housing program goes up.

The Member is referring to a situation where a two-bedroom public housing unit has a maximum income of \$43,000 and a minimum of \$53,000 to get into EDAP. We recognize that is a problem as well. We have recently been given a new market rent for the city, dealing with our partners, CMHC, and we feel that that gap is almost closed. What we intend to do with the minimum core income threshold for EDAP is to lower that enough so that gap is completely closed for this coming fiscal year.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. Mr. Bell.

MR. BELL: I certainly support the department in moving to close that gap. I am wondering if the president or the Minister can assure me that the five projects funded last year in Yellowknife were all deals worked with people either in public housing or on the public housing wait list, so there have been no exceptions to this criteria in the last year. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Bell. Mr. Allen.

HON. ROGER ALLEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We are confident that the gap was closed, if that is what the Member was referring to. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Mr. Bell.

MR. BELL: Thank you. Just for clarification, I just want assurance that none of the five projects funded last year were funded with individuals not in public housing or not on the public housing wait list. Regardless of income, I want to make sure that the five projects that we handed out were to individuals in public housing or on the wait list.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Bell. Mr. Allen.

HON. ROGER ALLEN: If I may, Mr. Chairman, refer that question to the president?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Allen. Mr. Beaulieu.

MR. BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As far as we are aware here, all of the EDAP allocations in the city of Yellowknife were targeted to people in public housing, either public housing at the Yellowknife Housing Authority or the North Slave Housing Corporation, or on one of the two waiting lists eligible for one year. If the district had gone outside that policy, then a presidential decision paper would have been brought to my attention. In the last year, it is possible that they had a presidential decision paper where it allowed somebody outside of those two areas to get into EDAP, but I do not recall there being one decision paper with that regard.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. Mr. Bell.

MR. BELL: Thank you. So it is my understanding then, in order to get around the stipulated criteria, one way to do it is to have the LHO present the president with a presidential allowance paper asking for the criteria to be temporarily withdrawn in this certain applicant's case. Is that correct?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Bell. Mr. Beaulieu.

MR. BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It is the Housing Corporation district office, our own staff that will prepare the decision paper that comes to my office for consideration.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. Mr. Bell.

MR. BELL: Thank you. The other question that I have about those five projects that were given out, as the president has indicated, those folks were either in public housing or on the public housing wait list. I suppose it depends on the size of the unit, but I am wondering if the president can also assure me that all five of those projects were done with people who met the minimum threshold for income as well?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Bell. Mr. Beaulieu.

MR. BEAULIEU: I believe that all five individuals would have met the minimum threshold for EDAP unless, again, somebody below the minimum threshold was presented to me through a decision paper, which again, I do not recall that happening last year.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. Mr. Bell.

MR. BELL: Thank you. These five projects all met with the three criteria that we have been talking about. They were either in public housing or on the public housing wait and they also met the minimum income threshold. The gap I am talking about, and hoping we can address, is the one that relates to two-bedroom households. Are there other sizes of households, say four-bedroom or one-bedroom, that do not have this gap problem in Yellowknife? Is it only the two-bedroom where we have a problem with this gap between the threshold and the public housing cutoff point? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Bell. Mr. Beaulieu.

MR. BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. From what I understand, the EDAP policies are developed and we are using average of a three-bedroom unit to develop the policy. It is likely that in the current policy, that there will be a larger gap between the one-bedroom public housing client, than the gap the Member referred to in the two-bedroom. At this time, I believe in the three, four and five, there is no existing gap.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. Mr. Bell.

MR. BELL: Thank you. I suppose it is likely that these five projects were allotted to folks in the larger-sized homes where a gap would not exist, and it is only the smaller-sized two- and one-bedroom homes where there is a gap that we have to address. Is that correct?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Bell. Mr. Beaulieu.

MR. BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That is correct.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. Mr. Bell.

MR. BELL: I would like to thank the president for that clarification. That certainly was helpful in allowing me to understand how this works. I would like to further support the Minister in working toward addressing this gap as it exists for the smaller-size homes. I thank him for his attention to this matter.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Bell. General comments? Detail? Page 8-9, activity summary, operations expense, total operations expense, \$48,981,000. Mr. Bell.

Committee Motion 5-14(5): Biannual Statistics on Rent Supplement Units and Developers Loan Guarantees (Carried)

MR. BELL: Mr. Chairman, I have a committee motion. Mr. Chairman,

I MOVE that this committee recommend that the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation provide the committee with biannual statistics on the number and cost of all rent supplement units in the Northwest Territories and a listing of all loan guarantees and amounts made to developers by the NWT Housing Corporation.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Bell. We will just wait for the motion to be distributed. The motion is circulated. The motion is in order. To the motion. Minister Allen.

HON. ROGER ALLEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. For the record, am I required to remove myself from this vote?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): No, there is no requirement for you to leave, Mr. Allen. We have a motion on the floor. To the motion. Mrs. Groenewegen.

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Mr. Chairman, I do not understand the motion. The motion is that the NWT Housing Corporation provide the committee with biannual statistics on the number of and cost of all rent supplement units in the Northwest Territories. When does biannual start, two years from now? When would we have the initial information on this?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): The motion is on the floor. The motion is in order. If the mover of the motion wants to provide some clarification, he can, or speak to the motion. To the motion. Question has been called. All those in favour? All those opposed? The motion is carried. We will go on to page 89, activity summary, operations expense, total operations expense, \$48,981,000. Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Regarding the Housing Corporation programs and related services, the government has a program called on the land housing, or something to that effect. Do you have a breakdown of it? It is not mentioned here, so I am just wondering if that is one of the responsibilities of this government to deliver such a program? If so, where are you delivering that program?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Mr. Allen.

HON. ROGER ALLEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It is a new initiative under our home-ownership program. It was introduced when several elders wanted to move out of public housing and

have their own units. It is a program that is developed outside of the municipal boundary.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Allen. Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I think that initiative should be enhanced and more people should be made aware of it. I think a lot of people do not want to or do not really like living in municipalities or larger centres, when they feel more comfortable on the land, either hunters, trappers or fishermen who just want to be away from the communities and out of the communities. I would just like to ask the Minister, is there any way of expanding that program to increase the amount of resources you have in that program, so it is more accessible to hunters, trappers or even fishermen, so that they can use such a program? If they do not have a housing unit within a municipality or a community, this can offer them an alternative. If there is no room in social housing, this could assist in the overcrowding and the lack of social housing in a lot of our small communities.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Mr. Allen.

HON. ROGER ALLEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Certainly we support that specific program. Last year, we had ten applicants supported through our funding. It was very well-received and we agree, it can be done through either a universal partnership agreement or a project authority agreement. Certainly we will continue to provide public information on that program. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Allen. Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Regarding the activity description, it talks about the delivery of rental programs in the 26 communities in the Northwest Territories. Knowing there are some 30-odd communities, why do you only talk about the 26 communities and not all 30 communities in the Northwest Territories?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Mr. Allen.

HON. ROGER ALLEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Can we just ask the Member to restate his question? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Allen. Mr. Krutko, could you restate the question for everybody, please?

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Under the activity descriptions, you mentioned in there that you deliver rental programs in 26 communities, yet there are 33 communities in the Northwest Territories. Is there any particular reason that you only provide that service in 26 communities?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Mr. Allen.

HON. ROGER ALLEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I understand that we have 26 local housing authorities. I believe that is where this number came from. There are some communities that do not have public housing. Those are usually in very remote settlements. That may provide an answer to that question. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Allen. Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The Government of the Northwest Territories has policies and procedures in place

about disruption of the different markets, regarding the real estate market, the housing market and what not. As a government, these are our policies. Knowing that there have been suggestions here that you should maybe start building houses in Yellowknife and other areas where you do have a real estate market, I would like to ask the Minister, as a government, do you follow those policies and do not interfere or try to cause disruption in the different markets? Especially in the real estate market, say here in Yellowknife?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Mr. Allen.

HON. ROGER ALLEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. No, it is our policy that we do not infringe on the markets. Our intent is to work with the private developers to ensure that when we do put social housing in the housing markets, it is for our clients. We want to make them aware that we are not infringing on the private market, but more so to ensure that, as other Members questioned us, what do we do with those people on the top end of our public housing unit rental scales that do qualify for either EDAP or IHP programs. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Allen. Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, regarding the policies in the government, I thought it was clear that as a government, we are not supposed to compete against the private sector in the different markets. If this government moves to start getting into building houses where there is presently a private sector that provides service, such as the real estate market or the private sector, is that an infringement on the policy of this government?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Mr. Allen.

HON. ROGER ALLEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. No, we do not see that as embarking on the private sector. We are talking now specifically about our own clients, who are EDAP clients, who do need some affordable housing. As we heard, our public housing tenants are those who qualify for or those who are above the public housing income threshold. So we feel that we do have a clientele out there that requires our attention and we want to make sure that we give them the opportunity to move into home-ownership. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Allen. Mr. Roland.

MR. ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I heard a response to a Member's question earlier. I would like to get more clarification. The question is around changing or making exceptions to the criteria that is set out there. I would like to know from the Minister, how often does this occur, where I guess it is a president's directive or decision paper that is formed and decisions are made for those that do not fit the program. That is my understanding of what has occurred in a number of times from a previous line of questioning today.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Roland. Mr. Allen.

HON. ROGER ALLEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Since it is an administrative question, I will refer that to the president to respond to. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Allen. Mr. Beaulieu.

MR. BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I do not have the exact amount of times that a presidential decision was required

to make a decision to allow individuals who may have incomes that are a little bit lower than the required, core need income threshold minimums, or maybe individuals who have incomes that are slightly above the core need income threshold. We try to use latitude of approximately 10 percent one way or the other. If they fall within that category, then we ask that our officials do up a decision paper explaining their support for this particular client to get into one of our programs.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. Mr. Roland.

MR. ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. So this can occur and it is in any region and under any of the programs that the Housing Corporation offers?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Roland. Mr. Allen.

HON. ROGER ALLEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, that we concur with. Also, I would just put an addendum to this in that it also adds some flexibility in the delivery of the program to certain clients who may just be on borderline either way. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Allen. Mr. Roland.

MR. ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Is it known or is there a policy regulation that would permit using that 10 percent margin, plus or minus?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Roland. Mr. Allen.

HON. ROGER ALLEN: I will again refer the question to the president. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Allen. Mr. Beaulieu.

MR. BEAULIEU: We provided a directive to the districts, advising them that this flexibility in the program is available to them.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. Mr. Roland.

MR. ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. How long has this directive been established? How long has it been in existence?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Roland. Mr. Beaulieu.

MR. BEAULIEU: I would say approximately two years.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. We are on page 8-9, activity summary, operations expense, total operations expense, \$48,981,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Page 8-11, corporate summary, information item. Page 8-13, information item, executive. Page 8-15, information item, policy, programs, and informatics. Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO: Could the Minister state what the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation means where it says "provides assistance and advice to the self-government and land claims issues in relation to Housing Corporation interests and objectives." What are some of those interests and

objectives of the Housing Corporation when dealing with self-government?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Mr. Beaulieu.

MR. BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The interest, of course, to the NWT Housing Corporation is the units, the 2,200 public housing units. Of course, our objective is to stay in tune with the various self-government and land claim discussions where it pertains to a transfer of government assets to self-government organizations because of our ownership that is jointly owned with CMHC on these units. We just have to ensure that the interests of those units and the tenants in them are protected during any potential self-government transfer.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. One of the things that is listed through the self-government agreement is housing. Is there going to be a takeover of the housing programs and services in those areas where self-government agreements are signed, so they can be managed and administered at the regional level to carry on the service that you presently carry on?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Mr. Allen.

HON. ROGER ALLEN: Mr. Chairman, I think I see some examples of this occurring through the universal partnership agreements and PAAs, project authority agreements, as a pre-emption to self-government. I believe we will still have a central role to play, and that is to continue to disperse funds to those entities. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Allen. Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I do not believe he answered my question. Is there going to be a separate housing institution in the places where self-government agreements are finalized?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Mr. Allen.

HON. ROGER ALLEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I believe that question will be answered in the context of the self-government agreements. At this point, it is difficult for us to determine, but we will endeavour to continue to deliver the same level of service until those self-government agreements conclude. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Allen. Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Does the department have any idea or vision of exactly where do these self-governments go? You stated earlier that you have to be involved and it adheres to what is going on at that table. So what is this government's position at those tables?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Mr. Allen.

HON. ROGER ALLEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. At this point, we are observing the political process. I am not sure if we are in a position to answer that, but again, we are trying to deal in with some sort of context with the Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs

to include ourselves in some formal discussion, but at what level, I cannot determine at this point. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Allen. Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. If it is appropriate, if the Minister could refer his question to the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and see exactly what is the position of this government with regard to self-government and the administration of housing programs and services through those negotiations?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Does the Minister want to refer the question to the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs?

HON. ROGER ALLEN: Mr. Chairman, I believe we are now on the NWT Housing Corporation and I am not sure that question is relevant to our budget. However, we did have some informal discussions with the Beaufort-Delta Regional Council, but I would suggest that perhaps we keep to this budget. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Allen. Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I believe this is the Minister's budget and these are the Minister's words, and I want to repeat them for him, "The Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation provides assistance to advise the self-government land claim issues in relation to the Housing Corporation's interests and objectives." It is right here in black and white. The reason that we are here with regard to the committee of the whole doing their business to see exactly where are these issues. Again I would like to ask the Minister, where does the Housing Corporation stand with regard to self-government agreements and what will happen to the Housing Corporation as we know it once those agreements are concluded?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Mr. Allen.

HON. ROGER ALLEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Again, our level of involvement is to provide adequate information to the self-government agreement processes, and also in the context of the amount of work we have doing at the community level through our own process, which is under the universal partnership agreements and through the project authority agreements. Beyond that, Mr. Chairman, it is difficult for me to define precisely the nature of our advice beyond providing information to the negotiation processes. To us, Mr. Chairman, it is a difficult question to respond to in full detail. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Allen. Mr. Krutko, do you have another question?

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to see that detail when the Minister has more time. If he can, could he maybe get his people to try to evaluate that detail and see exactly where the Housing Corporation is going to go in light of self-government negotiations? What is going to happen to the delivery of housing programs and services that are currently under the mandate of this government in those areas where self-government agreements are being negotiated? What happens at the conclusion of those negotiations in regard to the Housing Corporation? If the Minister cannot provide that to me now, it would be nice if we could get it in the next short while.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Mr. Allen.

HON. ROGER ALLEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have just been advised that it is still under discussion through the AIP discussions. Perhaps with the indulgence of the Minister responsible for Aboriginal Affairs, if I may ask the chair to agree that he can provide a short answer to the question, if you could oblige to that request? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Allen. Mr. Antoine, did you care to address that issue?

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, with regard to the honourable Member's question that the corporation provides assistance and advice on the self-government land claims issue as related to the Housing Corporation interests and objectives at the negotiating table, we have been negotiating a number of items with the Beaufort-Delta in the self-government talks, with the Gwich'in and the Inuvialuit jointly for the Beaufort-Delta negotiations. Housing is one item that has been negotiated. We are getting close to finalizing the agreement-in-principle. It has not been signed off by all parties yet. Following that we still have to go through the final agreement. As the honourable Member knows as a former negotiator, it still has a long way to go. It is the subject of negotiation at this point in time. What is going to happen at the end of this whole process, that has to still be finalized through agreements. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Antoine. Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Does the corporation have a memorandum or a legal opinion on this matter?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Mr. Allen.

HON. ROGER ALLEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes I am advised that we do have a lawyer who does provide us with legal opinions and legal advice, and we will continue to follow this very closely in the context of the Member's questions. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Allen. Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO: Is there any possibility of being privy to those legal opinions for Members in this House?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Mr. Allen.

HON. ROGER ALLEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I will certainly evaluate the importance of those legal opinions provided as is consistent with the regular process. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Allen. We are on page 815, information item, policy, programs and informatics. Page 8-17, information item, finance and administration.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Page 8-18, information item, finance and administration, grants and contributions.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO: With regard to page 8-14, program delivery, staff and the community housing authority, there was a question raised in the House about the financial accountability of housing authorities. Does this government have a program to assist communities ensuring that the accountability question is being maintained through audits or some means of ensuring that the community housing authorities are financially responsible or financially sound, so we do not have situations?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Mr. Krutko is asking a question on page 8-14. Does the committee agree to go back to page 8-14?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Mr. Allen.

HON. ROGER ALLEN: I will refer the question to Mr. Anderson.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Allen. Mr. Anderson.

MR. ANDERSON: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The Housing Corporation has several processes in place to assist our local housing organizations. There is ongoing financial support and assistance provided by our district offices on an ongoing basis. We also have financial year-end audits completed at the local housing organizations by external audit teams that go into those communities. We also get quarterly reporting provided from each LHO so we can monitor their financial operations. We have also done several operational audits in this last fiscal year to identify areas where training is required and strengths and weaknesses that we need to look at so we can provide additional support. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Anderson. Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. With regard to the audits, is that a thorough audit that includes all local housing authorities or do you just pick one or two? Is this going to be an across the board audit of all the local housing authorities?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Mr. Anderson.

MR. ANDERSON: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes the corporation gets financial audits completed of all of our local housing organizations on an annual basis, and it goes back to the existence of our public housing program. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Anderson. Page 8-15, policy, programs and informatics, information item.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Page 8-17, information item, finance and administration.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Page 8-18, information item, finance and administration, grants and contributions.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Page 821, information item, debt repayment.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Page 8-23, information item, human resources.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Page 8-25, information item, operations. Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to ask about the affirmative action strategy. Is it being implemented in the department and if so, have there been any major increases in the number of people within the corporation, especially people in the senior and middle management of this department?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Mr. Allen.

HON. ROGER ALLEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, as of February 2002 we have 56 percent of our corporation staff with affirmative action status. Eighty-six percent of our employees at the LHOs are affirmative action status. If you are talking senior management, I will ask the president of the Housing Corporation to confirm our numbers in terms of senior staff. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Allen. Mr. Beaulieu.

MR. BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The Housing Corporation has a fairly small senior management team. There are ten senior managers of the Housing Corporation. Fifty percent of them are priority one candidates. When you add the middle managers and senior managers together, 67 percent of the management have affirmative action status.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO: Do they have a percentage of the overall department based on the statistics?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Mr. Beaulieu.

MR. BEAULIEU: Yes we do. The affirmative action numbers for the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation is 56 percent.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO: Just looking at the GNWT affirmative action report, it states the Housing Corporation, out of 97 employees, 31 people are affirmative action. That to me looks like 30 percent. Can you tell me where those other positions are?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Mr. Allen.

HON. ROGER ALLEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Our statistics, as of February 2002, indicate 56 percent of all corporation staff hold affirmative action status. That, to us, reflects our staffing levels. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Allen. Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Can I get a copy of that, please?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Mr. Allen.

HON. ROGER ALLEN: Yes, we will provide that for the Member. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Allen. The Chair is going to recognize the clock and rise and report progress. I would like to thank the Minister and your witnesses for appearing.

MR. SPEAKER: The House will come back to order. Item 20, report of committee of the whole. The honourable Member for Hay River North, Mr. Delorey.

ITEM 20: REPORT OF COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

MR. DELOREY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, your committee has been considering Bill 2 and would like to report progress with one motion being adopted. Mr. Speaker, I move that the report of the committee of the whole be concurred with.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Delorey. Do we have a seconder for the motion? The honourable Member for Thebacha, Mr. Miltenberger. There is motion on the floor. The motion is in order. Question has been called. All those in favour, please signify. Thank you. All those opposed? Thank you. The motion is carried. Item 21, third reading of bills. Mr. Clerk, orders of the day.

ITEM 22: ORDERS OF THE DAY

CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Hamilton): Mr. Speaker, meetings tomorrow at 9:00 a.m. of the Standing Committee on Accountability and Oversight; Cabinet House strategy; at 10:30 a.m. of Caucus and at 12 noon of the Standing Committee on Accountability and Oversight.

Orders of the day for Tuesday, March 5, 2002:

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

15. Notices of Motion for First Reading of Bills
16. Motions
17. First Reading of Bills
 - Bill 9, Supplementary Appropriation Act, No. 3, 2001-2002
 - Bill 10, An Act to Amend the Income Tax Act
18. Second Reading of Bills
 - Bill 7, An Act to Amend the Legislative Assembly Retiring Allowances Act and the Supplementary Retiring Allowances Act
19. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters
 - Bill 2, Appropriation Act, 2002-2003
 - Bill 4, An Act to Amend the Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act
 - Committee Report 1-14(5), Standing Committee on Accountability and Oversight Report on the Review of the 2002-2003 Main Estimates
 - Committee Report 2-14(5), Standing Committee on Governance and Economic Development Report on the Review of the 2002-2003 Main Estimates
 - Committee Report 3-14(5), Standing Committee on Social Programs Report on the Review of the 2002-2003 Main Estimates
 - Motion 1-14(5), Establishment of a Special Committee on Rural Community Affairs
20. Report of Committee of the Whole
21. Third Reading of Bills
22. Orders of the Day

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Clerk. Accordingly, this House stands adjourned until Tuesday, March 5, 2002, at 1:30 p.m.

-- ADJOURNMENT

The House adjourned at 6:06 p.m.