



NORTHWEST TERRITORIES LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

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The Honourable Tony Whitford, Speaker

Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories

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YELLOWKNIFE, NORTHWEST TERRITORIES

Thursday, June 5, 2003

Members Present

Honourable Roger Allen, Honourable Jim Antoine, 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. Roland, Honourable Vince Steen, Honourable Tony Whitford

ITEM 1: PRAYER

---Prayer

SPEAKER (Hon. Tony Whitford): Good afternoon. Item 2, Ministers' statements. The honourable Member for Weledeh, Mr. Handley.

ITEM 2: MINISTERS' STATEMENTS**Minister's Statement 47-14(6): Fiscal Update**

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Speaker, there have been a number of fiscal developments since I presented my budget speech in February, and I would like to provide Members with an update on the government's fiscal position and outlook. In February, I forecasted a \$77 million deficit for 2003-04 and warned that we could hit our federally imposed borrowing limit of \$300 million by the end of 2004-05. I also pointed out that solving our fiscal problems was not fully within our control as, ultimately, our fiscal health depends on federal investment and support and on equitable resource revenue sharing.

At the time of the budget speech, I also renewed our government's commitment to make the investments necessary to advance our economic and social goals and to ensure NWT residents benefit from resource development. At the same time we recognized that we were going to have to demonstrate that our government was operating as efficiently and economically as possible.

Mr. Speaker, we are still on track with our spending and our own-source revenue forecasts contained in the February budget. Our medium and long-term outlook has not changed. However, there are some issues relating to our funding from the federal government, in particular population, that have created additional uncertainty about our immediate fiscal situation.

A principal area of concern is with the final 2001 census results. The money we receive through our formula financing agreement with the federal government is adjusted for relative population growth and so census counts are extremely important to us. Equally important are the results of Statistics Canada's coverage studies - their estimates of the number of people missed in the census. At the time of the budget we did not have information on what Statistics Canada's census under-coverage adjustments would be, so we based our revenue forecasts on the best population numbers we had at the time. These were based on our own survey of census under-coverage, which indicated that the 2001 census missed over 10 percent of our population. Since we made that revenue forecast, Statistics Canada has published their initial under-coverage estimates for the Northwest Territories as only 7.25 percent. We think this is far too low and we are working hard to convince Statistics Canada to make changes needed to improve their study. There are many millions of dollars at stake over these census under-coverage numbers.

We have recently learned that there is even more uncertainty about the census coverage numbers. On May 29th we were informed that the preliminary coverage numbers released in March contain an error. At this time, Statistics Canada does not know the impact of this error nor when they will release corrected preliminary numbers.

Last month I identified another area of revenue uncertainty - one related to the calculation of tax effort in the formula financing agreement. This issue is being resolved with a positive impact on our fiscal situation.

Our revenue problems are compounded by the fact that the formula financing agreement, over the last 15 years, has been subjected to federally-imposed restraints, cuts and adjustments that leave it inadequate to meet our needs. In addition, the revenues from the formula financing agreement have become much more volatile and unpredictable, making planning extremely difficult and forcing us to rethink our plans every few months. This cannot continue.

Mr. Speaker, we live in a territory whose economy is strong. We have even more dramatic economic growth on the horizon. Jobs are abundant and unemployment rates are at an all time low. Despite all this, our territorial government is facing large ongoing deficits which, if not addressed in a timely manner, will lead to fiscal crisis.

To respond to these circumstances, we have a two-part action plan that we have already put in motion.

First, we have taken actions to address our need for more revenue. Our revenue actions started with the commitment the Premier obtained from the Prime Minister that the adequacy of the formula financing agreement would be addressed. On May 12th I met with Finance Minister John Manley as follow-up to the Prime Minister's commitment. Mr. Manley's understanding and support are essential if we are to solve our fundamental fiscal problems. I was extremely encouraged by the understanding of our issues that Minister Manley demonstrated and his willingness to review the situation. He also understands the need to address these revenue issues as soon as possible.

With the encouragement and understanding we have received from Minister Manley, we are moving forward with confidence that we can make substantive progress on improving our revenue outlook through a fair deal on resource revenue sharing and a more responsive and appropriate level of funding in a renegotiated formula financing agreement. Achieving positive results in these negotiations is absolutely essential. Without more equitable fiscal arrangements, we cannot meet our obligations to provide adequate programs and services to our residents while maintaining fair and competitive taxation levels.

But there is no easy fix to the fiscal problem.

We are continuing to press for appropriate adjustments to the census under-coverage numbers. We understand that Statistics Canada is examining a number of issues related to the preliminary numbers raised by the GNWT. Although we don't know what the ultimate result will be of the correction of the errors or the review of our proposals, there is a potential for good news in Statistics Canada's review, but there is also a possible downside. Until we know the final numbers, the population issue will make fiscal planning an uncertain science and this must be reflected in our fiscal management.

The longer-term issues I identified in my budget are still outstanding. It will take time to renegotiate and implement the formula financing agreement. It will take time to negotiate a fair deal on resource revenue sharing, and we must also take time to ensure we doing our part by having fair and competitive tax and fee systems.

Getting this time will be a challenge and leads us to the second part of our action plan.

The second set of actions we are taking concerns expenditures. We must do everything reasonable to manage our spending in both the short and long term, while making sure we do not compromise our fundamental social and economic goals and objectives. We must still protect those most vulnerable, we must assist those able to become more independent to do so, and we must invest in those who represent our future.

In the short term, we are constrained in the expenditure savings we can achieve by the fact that projects are underway and commitments have been made. We are also constrained by the time required to bring about substantive expenditure reform responsibly. But savings can be achieved. For 2003-2004 we have committed to save \$20 million out of our existing budget. Ten million dollars of this will come from internal restraint measures each department is instituting in the areas of travel, administration, contracts and other discretionary services. These measures have been designated to minimize impacts on clients, employees and the general public. Members will also see these reductions reflected in the supplementary appropriations bill I will submit this session. A further \$4 million will come from restrictions on supplementary appropriations and \$5 million more from targeted restraint that is still in the process of being identified.

In the longer term we are committed to more substantive and structural reform to achieve efficiency and effectiveness gains in how we are organized, in how our programs are designed and delivered, and generally how we do business. Development of these reform measures has been underway for several months through the work of a number of internal task teams who have been looking at everything from how we are organized, to which programs we deliver, at what level of service, to how we approach capital planning and investing. Most of these task teams are reporting over the next few months. Their recommendations will be considered by this government as well as the new 15th Legislative Assembly.

This action plan is a reasonable and responsible approach to the fiscal uncertainties we face. These are fiscal issues that are not our making. The culprit is a fiscal arrangement with the federal government that has been eroded by unilateral federal actions over the years, a fiscal arrangement that is not responsive to the realities in the Northwest Territories, a fiscal arrangement that creates an imbalance between the

government which bears the costs of resource development and the government which reaps the benefits.

It is imperative that the federal government respond proactively to us to address these fiscal issues. The problems and solutions have been, and continue to be, within federal control. We cannot expect NWT residents to deal with these issues alone. The Prime Minister and Finance Minister Manley have the opportunity to show us they share our vision of a strong and self-reliant Northwest Territories, and we are confident that they will respond. For our part, we must ensure that we are doing not only our fair share to address our needs, but are vigilant and aggressive in keeping our needs front and centre with our federal counterparts.

The economy of the Northwest Territories is strong and will only get stronger. Now we must rebalance how the federal and territorial governments share the costs and benefits of economic growth. Thank you.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Item 2, Ministers' statements. The honourable Member for Nahendeh, Mr. Antoine.

Minister's Statement 48-14(6): Canadian Rivers Day

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the many rivers of the Northwest Territories play an important role in our history, culture and lifestyles. They provide transportation routes, sustenance, tourism and hydro electric opportunities for many of our communities.

I am pleased to declare Sunday, June 8th, Northwest Territories Rivers Day as a means to celebrate, commemorate and preserve our spectacular rivers and waterways of the Northwest Territories. We will join other Canadians on Sunday in honouring and celebrating the heritage, vastness and diversity of our rivers.

The Northwest Territories has many great rivers. We should celebrate their cultural and heritage values and the important role they played in the lives our people and the explorers who opened up this vast country. We are fortunate in the Northwest Territories to have three Canadian heritage rivers. They are the South Nahanni, the Arctic Red and the Thelon rivers. I encourage all residents to remember the vital element of our natural element and to preserve and enjoy our rivers. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Mahsi, Mr. Antoine. Item 2, Ministers' statements. The honourable Member for Inuvik Twin Lakes, Mr. Allen.

Minister's Statement 49-14(6): Sahtu Youth Trapper Training Program

HON. ROGER ALLEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I am pleased to provide an update to Members on the successful completion of the Sahtu youth trapper training program. This program was sponsored by the NWT Youth Secretariat through the youth corps program; the department of Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development; Indian and Northern Affairs Canada; the Sahtu divisional board of education; Sahtu Secretariat Incorporated; the Fur Harvesters Auction Incorporated; and the International Fur Trade Federation.

The Sahtu youth trapper training program was established to provide young people in the Sahtu with an opportunity to develop a traditional skill base and learn a number of important life skills. Participants undertook training and gained actual experience in trapping techniques, hunting, fish harvesting, first aid and pelt preparation. At the same time, they also received educational upgrading towards their high school equivalency diploma and participated in a number of activities designed to help develop personal wellbeing and self-esteem.

Mr. Speaker, today I am pleased to report that all but one of the original students remained in the program through to completion. They maintained trap lines, worked efficiently in teams, harvested a quantity of fur and earned high school credit for their work. The response from the community has been excellent. For example, Patrick Garrah, principal at Ehtseo Ayha School in Deline has noticed significant changes in the students who participated. They benefited from the opportunities that the program created for them, such as learning new life skills, travelling to Toronto and North Bay, Ontario and to Turton Lake, NWT and meeting new people. Most of the participants say they will continue their education. To honour this accomplishment this special graduation ceremony will be held in Fort Good Hope on June 5, 2003.

In addition, the Fur Harvesters Auction Incorporated is keen on the project and have indicated they are willing to provide training again. They offered glowing praise for Wilfred Jackson, the senior instructor who worked with them throughout the year.

Mr. Speaker, at this time I would like to formally recognize and applaud the accomplishments of these young people and properly thank those organizations and individuals who were involved in developing and implementing such a successful program. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

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

ITEM 3: MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

Member's Statement On New Testament In Dogrib Language

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the recently published New Testament in Dogrib is the result of many years of hard work and a unique collaboration between various institutions from within and outside the Dogrib community. The work on this edition of the New Testament started in earnest in 1995 under the then formed Dogrib Translation Committee, a board of directors in which the following institutions were represented part or all of the time: Mary Siemens from the Dogrib Divisional Board of Education; Father Jean Pochat of the Roman Catholic Church; John B. Zoe and Gabrielle Scott, Treaty 11; Rev. Lee Barry from On Eagle's Wings; Vic Monus and Jaap Feenstra, Wycliffe Bible Translators; and Jim Stauffer from Northern Canada Evangelical Missions.

The actual translation was done by: Mary Siemens, Marie Louise Bouvier-White, Alice Sangris, Margaret Rabesca, Sonny Zoe, Elizabeth McKenzie, Vic Monus, Jim Stauffer and Jaap Feenstra. This publication is historic because it is the first time in more than 100 years that a complete new testament has

been published in one of the Dene languages. A Gwich'in new testament was published towards the end of the 19th Century.

Though the work on this first edition took less than eight years, the people who worked on this really built on years of language work invested by Dogrib people, elders, priests and missionary translators, educators and linguists. The publication of the Dogrib New Testament and the audio recordings currently being worked on are highly important, not just to make the Bible a more open book for the people, but also for the preservation and revitalization of the Dogrib language.

Currently, the Dogrib New Testament is already being used in church services and in the readings for literacy classes in the Dogrib communities. The decorative New Testament has even replaced the English Bible in the oath ceremonies concerning the Dogrib land claims agreement.

Part of the funding was provided through the Department of Education, Culture and Employment's aboriginal language and literacy funds. The other funding came from the Dogrib Community Services Board, the Rae-Edzo Band, the Roman Catholic Diocese of Mackenzie, the Hogarth Foundation, the Canadian Bible Society and Wycliffe Translators. The New Testament will be officially launched and dedicated as part of the annual Dogrib assembly in late August.

Mr. Speaker, although I am not a person who speaks an aboriginal language, I want to thank and congratulate the people who put the effort into this very unique work that is now at completion. Thank you.

---Applause

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

Member's Statement On Building Capacity In Small Communities

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, we talk about the vision of the Northwest Territories, we talk about the potential we have. Mr. Speaker, one of the most valuable assets is the people of the Northwest Territories and the people in our communities which make up some 27 small communities in the Northwest Territories. Yet, Mr. Speaker, those communities face challenges over and above the requirements of trying to accomplish capacity within our communities and having the authority to make decisions and also to be able to have the resources to build capacity in the communities.

Mr. Speaker, the approach that we take today is that someone comes into town, asks what your capital needs are then they tell you, well, sorry, you have to follow the rules. The rules are based on three criteria which the communities have to meet. The criteria are structured in such a way that they are solely to the benefit of government and government departments. They are not there to benefit communities by way of the community's wish list. For years we have heard of budget cuts, we have heard of how you cannot establish community infrastructure such as a skating rink, a ball diamond, and road improvements because of health concerns.

Mr. Speaker, the capital process we have today does not satisfy the needs of communities. The process we have is from the top down, not from the bottom up. Mr. Speaker, we as Members of the House from the small communities have to practically fight to prove to this government that a capital

requirement is the result of water contamination, people telling our communities there is a boil water order. The environmental health officer has to address it or you have to bring in a fire marshal to prove that you have a building that is not safe.

I for one, Mr. Speaker, have fought for capital in my riding, in my communities, and I for one take the health of my constituents seriously. I for one, feel offended when government officials come to our 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 Member statement. Are there any nays? There are no nays, Mr. Krutko. You may conclude your statement.

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, colleagues. Mr. Speaker, I for one take offence when public officials come to our communities and say, "You have to follow our rules. You have to ensure that your requirements meet the criteria that we give you." Yet we had a committee that went around to all 27 communities that were involved and found out that the system that we use is not adequate. Those were put forth to Cabinet in an interim report, yet to date very little has been done.

We have some of the highest poverty rates in the Northwest Territories. We have high statistical numbers that well exceed, in some cases, the national unemployment average and household incomes. Yet, Mr. Speaker, that has not been addressed.

I for one will continue to fight for the residents of the Mackenzie Delta to ensure that we receive our fair, equitable share of the wealth in the Northwest Territories so that we will also have a lifestyle that we can pass on to future generations. With that, Mr. Speaker, thank you very much.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for Great Slave, Mr. Braden.

Member's Statement On Proposed Territorial Recreation And Sport Board

MR. BRADEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, following up on remarks by my colleague, the Member for Hay River South, I also would like to raise concerns that I have had brought to my attention by constituents about the proposed creation of a new territorial recreation and sport board. The concerns that I want to bring forward are from the territorial sporting organizations, Mr. Speaker, who have been grappling with this issue for at least a year now and are still not supportive of the creation of a new board.

I took the opportunity to attend their annual general meeting on May 24th and listened to the concerns of the volunteer board and the 27 sport organizations that comprise it. During the session on the proposed territorial recreation and sport board, Mr. Speaker, I was disappointed that neither the deputy minister nor the Minister were there for what is a very controversial issue and one that they are not taking seriously. It was a clear message sent from the Sport North group, Mr. Speaker, that this is something that they need to pay more attention to.

The message from Municipal and Community Affairs was that the Minister has said it will proceed with the creation of this board. Implementation is the issue, not whether it is the right thing to do. Well, the Minister has said his officials are prepared to meet and continue to meet. They are clearly not getting or understanding the message from sport bodies.

The core of sport and what makes it work in the Canadian system and here in the Northwest Territories are the volunteers who make contributions well in excess of any funding that might ever come from government. It is ironic that Municipal and Community Affairs, who have the responsibility for volunteer development and recognition – and they are doing a good job with it – is the focus of such concern and criticism from these sporting volunteers.

Much is accomplished by them across the Northwest Territories, Mr. Speaker. We get exceptional value from the volunteers and from the Sport North group and what we need to do is recognize their concerns at this time. What the government needs to do, Mr. Speaker, is to define the expectations it has for sport and recreation for all our communities and then work with the partners to find out how it can be achieved. Certainly the first thing, Mr. Speaker, is to at least defer the creation of this new territorial sport board. Thank you.

---Applause

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

Member's Statement On Access To GNWT Grants And Contribution Funding

MR. LAFFERTY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, we are fortunate to have access to computers as part of our job. When I looked on the government Web site I discovered a 62-page document called "Guide to N.W.T. Grants and Contributions". This document outlines funding that is available for a number of programs established for Northerners by the government. Mr. Speaker, many people in my riding do not have access to a computer. Although times are changing and more and more people are entering the information age, there are still a number of my constituents who maintain a traditional lifestyle. Because of this they are unaware of government programs.

I know that the government has created programs such as the Community Harvesters Assistance Program, the Fur Pricing Program and the Hunters and Trappers Disaster Compensation Program. These programs recognize and support traditional lifestyles, however, these programs do little if the people they were created for do not know about them. In my own riding I have a constituent who lost his trapline and cabin because of a fire. He did not know about the disaster compensation program until over a year after his fire occurred. Because of this he did not meet the deadline for applying and his claim was rejected.

Mr. Speaker, I think our goals as a government are to provide effective programs and services for all Northerners. I think that with this mandate comes the responsibility to ensure that Northerners are informed about what they are entitled to and I think that some flexibility is required when looking at individual cases. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will have questions on this.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for Deh Cho, Mr. McLeod.

Member's Statement On The Passing of Jonas Bonnetrouge

MR. MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take a moment to remember and recognize an elder from my constituency who passed away on April 21st this year, Mr. Joseph Bonnetrouge. Mr. Speaker, in our communities our elders play a vital role in the preservation of our traditional lifestyles and values. When one passes away many teachings are often forgotten, but their legacies live on.

Mr. Speaker, although Mr. Bonnetrouge lived a humble life and was a very quiet person his smile was genuine and his words were comforting to those who were close to him. Joe Bonnetrouge was born on October 8, 1925 and in 1943 he started working for the Government of the Northwest Territories as a janitor for the health centre and then the school. With his new job he received a new title. The local residents of Fort Providence fondly knew him as Dr. Joe. He would go out of his way to help patients by escorting the elders, translating and assisting the nurse when needed. Joe married Melvina Gargan on January 12, 1959 and raised nine children and many grandchildren.

As part of Joe's work history he worked as a roughneck for an exploration company, trained as a surveyor on the construction of the Yellowknife Highway and was an alcohol and drug counsellor for the Fort Providence Dene Band. After many years of service to the Government of the Northwest Territories, Joe retired in 1985 and devoted time to his family, as well as to hunting and trapping.

Mr. Speaker, Joe was a friend, teacher and advisor who is loved and sadly missed by many. As an elder, Mr. Bonnetrouge contributed to the history of the Northwest Territories by promoting official languages for the benefit of generations to come. He served as an elder representing the Deh Cho in the Office of the Languages Commissioner advisory board.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to pass on my condolences to his wife Melvina; his sons Gary, Noel, Clifford, Clinton and Travis; his daughters Phoebe, Darlene, Agnes and Cassandra; his grandchildren and his great-grandchildren. On behalf of the people of the Deh Cho I want to say to his family that our prayers and our thoughts are with them. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Our condolences do go to the family and the elder will be missed. Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for Inuvik Boot Lake, Mr. Roland.

Member's Statement On Concerns With The Gwich'in Contracting Memorandum Of Understanding

MR. ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to raise concerns about the memorandum of understanding that was signed with the Gwich'in regarding contracts in the Beaufort-Delta communities, especially the impact there would be on my constituency of Inuvik, all the more so, Mr. Speaker, in light of a correspondence I received that was sent to the president of the Gwich'in Tribal Council by the Minister of Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development laying out what contracts and what projects would be included

in there. There is a list that shows about 133 projects and values approximately \$29 million, Mr. Speaker.

But Mr. Speaker, as I go through that list, my concerns are highlighted and I am sure the constituents and the small business people in Inuvik, whether they are aboriginal people or non-aboriginal people, will be greatly concerned because included in this amount are such things as electrical power supply to the communities. That is not a private, small company. It is the Northwest Territories Power Corporation, NorthwesTel phone services, natural gas supply. Those things are huge in volume and high in dollar amounts and I do not even have how much they would total. But when I look at the list and see the value is approximately \$29 million I have to ask where this money is coming from because as we went through the budget there is no \$29 million figure that I can find in there. There are a few projects like the campus, some other small projects, some highway and airport stuff, but not \$29 million worth.

So if you add in the Northwest Territories Power Corporation, the gas supply, if you put those into the picture and you say that the memorandum of understanding has a potential value of \$29 million and that other bidders in the community can take half of that, well, you take out half that amount from there and you take out the Northwest Territories Power Corporation and the natural gas supply and the telephone services there will be peanuts left for anybody else trying to secure any work. Those are long established businesses, so I will have questions for the appropriate Minister later. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Roland. Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for Frame Lake, Mr. Dent.

Member's Statement On Creation Of A Territorial Recreation And Sport Board

MR. DENT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, not long ago the Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs distributed a report to Members called "N.W.T. Recreation and Sport Board Recommendations Report". It was dated March 31, 2003. Mr. Speaker, I have taken the opportunity to review the report and I have to say that I do not find in the report convincing arguments for the recommendations. The main one is the creation of a new 13-member board added to the existing five territorial organizations and the numerous individual sports bodies.

Mr. Speaker, I believe that following through with this recommendation will actually mean less money helping to promote sports and recreation in the Northwest Territories. Mr. Speaker, the recommendations suggest that there will be at least two meetings a year of this new body that will include representatives from all 32 communities and 30 sports organizations. But, Mr. Speaker, the existing sports organizations already spend a lot of money on travel for meetings. If this latest recommendation is implemented, even more is going to be spent on meetings, obviously making less money available to help develop sports and recreation opportunities in the North.

Mr. Speaker, I have not heard the Minister agreeing to put more money into sports and recreation to cover these increased costs. I know there were no extra funds in the budget we passed last session to cover those costs, so there has to be an overall reduction in what would be available to promote and develop sports and recreation in the North.

Mr. Speaker, another area in the recommendations that I am concerned about is accountability. The final recommendations report suggests that the board would be accountable first to the Minister and second to partners and communities. I find this problematic as well. Why have a board if they are told that they are accountable to the Minister first? You might as well have staff do the job. That is like telling a Member of this assembly that we are first accountable to the Premier and to the government. But we are not. We are accountable first to our constituents and that is what gives our comments in this House weight.

AN HON. MEMBER: Hear, hear.

MR. DENT: Before we start adding another layer of bureaucracy in any area, we need to have an overall discussion about the purpose and role of boards and agencies and public governance. I've lost count of how many times I've heard Members of this House comment about how we have too many boards and agencies already, and we're not always sure what the roles are for the ones that we have. We should have a discussion that resolves that concern first, then let's have a discussion about what will solve the concerns over the current territorial administration of sports and recreation. Let's turn the process around and make sure we're solving whatever the problems might be. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

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

Member's Statement On GNWT Daycare Subsidy Program

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to bring to the attention of this House a problem my constituent has experienced over the last few years in dealing with the government's daycare subsidy program. Mr. Speaker, what we should be aware of is that a licensed day home is a small home-based operation that is just a little bigger than a regular babysitting service, where the operator is allowed to have up to eight children and up to six of them of preschool age.

Mr. Speaker, I've learned that some operators have spent up to \$5,000 to start such an operation to meet the various regulatory and safety requirements. While they can apply for a grant from the government, the money has to be put in first which is a burden to many contemplating such a move. What is even more of a concern to me, Mr. Speaker, are the difficulties the operators face once they get started in dealing with the government for their clients who receive a subsidy from the government. Currently, Mr. Speaker, the government subsidizes \$28 per child per day, while the going market rate is \$35. Once they're billed, the government often takes months and months to pay their bills. In the meantime, these operators are expected to care for these children and carry the costs until they are paid. This is not a fair practice, Mr. Speaker.

Furthermore, Mr. Speaker, I'm advised that these clients on subsidy are cut off for whatever reason without a normal notice of 30 days that would be expected of any other client. The operator is then left out in the cold without the ability to fill the spot to maintain stability in their earnings.

Mr. Speaker, the important point here is that the daycare program is a much-needed service and there is not enough of it. The daycare subsidy program is one small thing the government is doing and it's a good thing, it's just that it should

be done right and not create hardship to those who are providing this very important service. If these situations continue, Mr. Speaker, daycare operators will be less and less willing to take in the children who are on the daycare subsidy program, and it's not fair for these children and families who rely on this service, Mr. Speaker. I would urge the Minister responsible for this program to review this situation and improve the way this program is administered. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

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

Member's Statement On Comments On National Seniors' Week

MR. DELOREY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to draw attention to a very important week being celebrated from June 1st to June 7th, that being Seniors' Week. Mr. Speaker, our seniors are to be honoured not just during Seniors Week, but all year long. I feel strongly that senior citizens' contributions to our communities cannot be measured.

Mr. Speaker, our seniors are a collective force that cannot be ignored or forgotten about by this government. By the year 2018, the seniors' population is projected to at least double in the Northwest Territories. The Hay River Seniors' Society, Mr. Speaker, recently held their election of officers, and I am pleased to recognize the new executive here today. Mr. Speaker, Lloyd Brunet is the president; Allan Eirikson, vice-president; Ross Ullathorne, treasurer; Betty Robinson, secretary; and the directors are Peter Osted, Del Hamilton, Ron Douglas, Alvin Armstrong, Paul Rose, Chris Robinson and Fred Beaulieu.

Mr. Speaker, the Hay River Seniors' Society has been diligently working on seeing their dream of a new seniors' residence completed. Mr. Speaker, I look forward to continuing to work with the Hay River Seniors' Society on this very important project.

I would also like to say, Mr. Speaker, that I've had the pleasure of attending the Respect Our Elders workshop on March 25th and 26th in Hay River, that was put on by the NWT Seniors' Society. It was an excellent workshop and it was very informative.

It is also very encouraging, Mr. Speaker, to see seniors taking a very active role in matters that affect them, such as elder abuse and their role in society. As the president of the National Advisory Council on Aging, Mrs. Rayburn, so rightly put it, we must take care of our future as we are going to spend the rest of our lives there. As our honourable Minister put it, most of us in this House have an interest in how that future is secured, as most of us are fast approaching the age where we will be joining the seniors' ranks.

Mr. Speaker, in recognition of Seniors' Week, I would like to state that I intend to continue to bring up issues in this House that affect our seniors. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

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

Member's Statement On Recognition Of National Seniors' Week

HON. ROGER ALLEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I, too, am embarking on the seniors' role, wanted to recognize Seniors' Week in the Northwest Territories. I would like to convey to my respected elders in Inuvik Twin Lakes, that we fondly think of them.

Mr. Speaker, the seniors continually participate in several program activities each month to add to the quality of life in their community. For example, the seniors hold two lunches each at the Ingamo Hall Friendship Centre, they also participate in the baking program, they involve themselves in an exercise program at Aurora College. Mr. Speaker, many of the seniors in Inuvik play an active role in the health of its residents. For example, one elder continually assists in making traditional foods and now it applies to reducing diabetes. Another prominent elder consults on the local culture of different organizations.

Mr. Speaker, we cannot forget how influential our seniors are in the political process, providing me as well as others with guidance, as an example. Also the long-term care ward at the Inuvik Regional Hospital has an excellent seniors' support program. Currently the long-term care ward has a dressing program for elders who need assistance in daily living. Transportation of elders to various functions and activities is provided to these same seniors.

Mr. Speaker, these are just a few examples of how the seniors live an independent, but healthy and active lifestyle in Inuvik and the riding of Inuvik Twin Lakes. So as the MLA for Inuvik Twin Lakes, I will express my gratitude and appreciation to the seniors for their contributions and to those who assist them in the community of Inuvik. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Allen. Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for Weledeh, Mr. Handley.

Member's Statement On Dettah Language Centre

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, today I want to talk about a little project that shows what a small group of people with a bit of creativity, a lot of commitment, a lot of determination and lot of volunteer time can achieve. Last winter, Mr. Speaker, I was invited by Mary Rose Sundberg to come and see her centre that she was working on. Mary Rose is a long-time advocate of aboriginal languages. I went down and I was surprised to see her in a little log cabin no more than about 10 by 12 feet in size, a fire going and the smallest oil space heater I've ever seen, sweeping out the little cabin, putting together some used furniture, and setting up some computers that had been donated from Air Tindi and possibly from others. It was the beginning of the Dettah language centre, and Dettah and N'dilo have long depended on the language centre out of Rae-Edzo.

In this little building, Mary Rose, along with a group of students and a group of other people, have worked hard in training people in the language, both Dogrib and Chipewyan, in preparing reading material for young children, and more than anything else, preparing a lot of good teaching aids that go with the books. So they develop books with culturally-relevant characters in them and prepare little aids that young children can use as they learn how to read.

I've noticed the last time I was there that they've built little teepees that children can use for reading centres, and those are to be given to the other schools in Yellowknife and possibly in other areas. But this is just such a good example of what people can do if they choose to take it under their control and do it.

I was also pleased last week to go to the centre and see that they had prepared a biography on one of the elders - Michel Paper who I've mentioned before in this House. It's a biography of his life.

It's a tremendous little centre, operating without much of a budget with money they can pull together here and there, but I think a very fine example of what can be done.

Mr. Speaker, in the gallery today we have Mary Rose Sundberg who has been the main drive on this one. We have Berna Martin who has worked along with her, and Betty Harnum. But I think these people are a great example of how little communities can take things in their own hands and achieve a lot on behalf of their people, and particularly the elders and young people. Thank you.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Handley. Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for Nahendeh, Mr. Antoine.

Member's Statement On Tribute To Elders As Teachers

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'm going to speak in my language today.

(Translation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'll speak in my own language today. The day before yesterday I spoke in English, but today I'm going to be speaking my own language. We the native people, the elders are the ones that have taught us to be the people that we are today. So whatever the elders taught to us, it is very important for us. They tell us about long ago and about the different ways things are today. So the kind of people we turn out to be and the way we live, we learn from their example. Today we live in a dual culture, but we still rely on their words and what they taught us. We rely on the elders' traditional knowledge to be the people we are today, and they tell us about the lifestyles that they've had in the past. So we remember their words and I'd like to thank all the elders for that. Their words, their lessons are very strong and stay with us. They really think about self-government. What they've told us and the words they have given us, we remember those and their words will be in how the government works. Maybe if we keep doing this, our future will be secure. For whatever our elders have done for us in the past up to today, I'd like to thank them very much for it. Thank you.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Item 3, Members' statements. Item 4, reports of standing and special committees. The chair recognizes the honourable Member for Range Lake, Ms. Lee.

ITEM 4: REPORTS OF STANDING AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES

Committee Report 12-14(6): The Circle Of Self-Government: Report Of The Special Committee On The Implementation Of Self-government And The Sunset Clause

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it's with great pleasure that the Special Committee on the Sunset Clause and the Implementation of Self-Government brings to this House its final report entitled, "The Circle of Self-Government."

Mr. Speaker, when the resident territorial government was established in 1967, it came with a federal government promise of greater self-government. However, as the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples has documented, while the system of territorial government in the Northwest Territories has been better than most in Canada in responding to aboriginal peoples' cultures and values, it has not gone far enough. A central purpose of self-government agreements is to ensure that aboriginal peoples gain more control over decision-making on matters that affect them.

We have examined the new systems of government that are emerging from self-government negotiations. It is important that we all understand these agreements so that we have a sense of how things will change for the Legislative Assembly and the Government of the Northwest Territories but, more importantly, so we can have a territory-wide conversation about what all NWT residents can expect in the future.

Mr. Speaker, self-government agreements, and other related documents, are often long and technically complicated. In this report we have tried to avoid technical language so that it will be more accessible to the general reader. However, we acknowledge that discussing self-government in general terms can be problematic sometimes, because the details are important. We have deliberately avoided using the phrases "public government" and "aboriginal self-government." These phrases suggest clear distinctions that will not likely be reflected in practice. In our view, this terminology tends to imply separate realities or watertight compartments. From our work to date, we have concluded that governments in the NWT will not be easily categorized as aboriginal or public.

The governance systems that will be established as a result of self-government agreements will probably not fit neatly into one box or the other.

For example, Mr. Speaker, the territorial government in Nunavut is sometimes called an expression of aboriginal self-government, but in the NWT the territorial government is usually referred to as the public government. The draft Gwich'in and Inuvialuit self-government agreement-in-principle, and the Tlicho agreement are products of self-government negotiations, but will provide mechanisms to deliver programs and services to all residents in many situations. The Deh Cho First Nations framework agreement states that a Deh Cho government will be a public government based upon Deh Cho First Nations laws and customs and other Canadian laws and customs.

In this report, Mr. Speaker, we simply use the phrase "self-government" by itself. We think this describes the type of government all NWT residents want. From this perspective, self-government can be seen as a statement about the capacity of NWT residents to make decisions for themselves,

rather than as a reference to a particular model of government that applies to a particular group of people.

Similarly, we use the phrases "community government" and "regional government" to indicate the approximate geographical area in which a particular government will operate, regardless of how they might be established. We are aware that the composition, structure, and powers of community and regional governments might vary considerably from agreement to agreement.

Mr. Speaker self-government has meaning for all of us. We all want to be self-governing. We all want to keep our identities as individuals and groups. However, we must keep in mind that we live closely together and, to one degree or another, are dependent on each other. Together we make up the communities of the NWT and the governments that serve them.

In our view, Mr. Speaker, this is the starting point for understanding the systems of governance that have evolved in the NWT in the past, and for examining what potentially lies ahead as a result of implementing new systems of governance in the Northwest Territories in the future.

Mr. Speaker, I now would like to refer to my colleague, the Honourable Jim Antoine, to continue the presentation. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you. The chair recognizes the honourable Member for Nahendeh, Mr. Antoine.

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, a single self-government agreement is sufficiently complex that confident forecasts about its implementation are not entirely credible. When two, three, six, seven or more self-government agreements are involved in the equation, the process of predicting implications is considerably more difficult.

Even though self-government agreements are generally quite detailed, these documents, and the other legal and political side agreements required for their implementation, will in all likelihood only provide a broad framework, rather than a detailed script, for governance in the Northwest Territories. The literal wording of every provision of every self-government agreement will probably not be fully implemented.

This does not mean these agreements will lose their legal or political force. Simply put, over time, practical approaches will have to be taken by all governments in the Northwest Territories if governance is to be effective. In fact, this is how the Constitution of Canada itself has evolved.

So while the situation is not entirely predictable at this point, a clearer picture is emerging as each new agreement is concluded. These agreements will result in fundamental changes to many aspects of the way the Legislative Assembly and the Government of the Northwest Territories now do things, including: law-making; policy-making; government decision-making; government operations, including program and service delivery; human resources management; land and resources matters; financial management including budgeting and appropriations; raising revenues through taxation and other means; spending on capital assets and other facilities; and, intergovernmental relations.

Many people, in many organizations and levels of government, are thinking about these potential changes, and are trying to plan for the potential implications. They are looking for practical ways to manage a smooth transition.

There will be fundamental changes in the relationships among the community, regional and territorial levels of government. Responsibilities for law-making and for the delivery of several programs and services will change. Self-government agreements often involve systems for delivery of programs and services to all residents. The people we will hold accountable will consequently change. Governments will be required to consult more with each other and to coordinate and cooperate in their activities.

Government is simply the way we organize ourselves to achieve our common goals. We are all involved. We share responsibilities for finding common objectives and addressing competing interests. This is why we so often hear people talking about partnerships, stakeholder cooperation, co-management and shared jurisdiction.

The practical issues surrounding implementation of self-government agreements are not always easy to determine from simply reading the agreements. In fact, the expression implementation of self-government can be misleading. Describing the evolution of a system of governance in this way makes it sound like a process that is done once or that can be completed in a specific time. Would we describe the political, economic and social processes that go on continuously in Canada as implementing public government? It is important to remember that change will occur over many years rather than completely and suddenly on a given date.

Mr. Speaker, I would now like to pass the committee report to committee Member Mr. Delorey. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Mahsi, Mr. Antoine. The chair now recognizes the honourable Member for Hay River North, Mr. Delorey.

MR. DELOREY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. There was a time in the Northwest Territories, and across Canada, when communities were relatively self-sufficient and self-governing. One of the strongest trends in the 20th century was the increasing involvement of many levels of government in virtually every aspect of our daily lives. How did this happen?

One reason is that collectively we have chosen to organize ourselves in ways to improve the standards and conditions in which we live. Most of us now expect governments to deliver a broad range of important programs and services such as health, social services, education, transportation, housing and so on. If these roles and responsibilities are not carried out, we blame the government.

But who is the government? We are. In the Northwest Territories, with its small population and close-knit communities, the government is potentially every one of us, our friends and our neighbours. We, the residents of the Northwest Territories, make up all northern governments, whether it is the territorial government, the band councils, the aboriginal councils, the land claim institutions, the community governments, or the regional boards and agencies.

How can you help? In delivering this report, we want to encourage an ongoing dialogue or conversation about how we can work together to make the NWT a better home for all residents. Most of us think we would do things differently if we were in charge -- if we were the government. What would you change and what would you want to stay the same?

Imagine you have the opportunity and responsibility to make such choices -- because in fact you do. This is what self-

government involves, for all of us. Self-government agreements will place the emphasis back on the communities and the people. The futures of all NWT communities will be linked together even more closely than they are today. The new relationships that will develop among our northern governments will depend on our attitudes, and our relationships with each other.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to hand the continuing report on with Mr. Lafferty. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Member for North Slave, Mr. Lafferty.

MR. LAFFERTY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The committee has concluded that the range and scope of potential impacts of self-government agreements on the structures and operations of the GNWT and Assembly could be all-encompassing. Fully implemented self-government agreements could potentially have implications for every facet of government in the Northwest Territories. We also believe NWT residents are open to change but will also expect stability.

On the following pages our conclusions are organized according to the terms of the committee's mandate. Our recommendations include structural and action-oriented matters. These recommendations are only a starting point in an effort to provide a basis for a more coordinated and systematic examination of the changing face of governance in the Northwest Territories. Some changes may take a decade or more to unfold.

As we noted in the introduction to this report, the expression "implementing self-government" can be misleading. Describing the emergence of new systems of governance in this way can make it sound like a process that is done once or that can be completed in a specific time.

We believe it is important to stress that implementation of self-government agreements needs to be seen as an ongoing process. From this perspective, self-government agreements are not final agreements, they are beginning agreements. It is important to remember that change will occur over many years rather than completely and suddenly on a given date.

In practice, we think the staggered processes of negotiation and implementation will give rise to gradual and practical changes. Nonetheless, the Government of the Northwest Territories and Legislative Assembly may well face the prospect of ongoing reorganization and restructuring for the next 10 to 15 years as self-government agreements come into effect in the regions and communities.

Owing to time and resource constraints, we were unable to undertake a full and detailed review of every potential impact on existing legislation, or on particular programs or services. Nor was it possible to go into extensive detail on possible implications for all current governmental practices and procedures.

In the nine months during which the committee has been examining these issues, we have barely skimmed the surface. The committee believes ongoing work is required. We recommend that the appropriate bodies continue in-depth analysis on most elements of the current mandate, and we have provided recommendations in this regard.

The conclusions and recommendations reflect what we think is possible at this stage of the implementation process. We

believe it is imperative that future Assemblies and governments continue to analyze and prepare for the changes that will flow from the trends we have identified in this report. We recommend that future Assemblies return to and build upon the issues presented in this report at regular intervals as implementation processes come into effect and as circumstances warrant.

Complex legislative, operational and financial issues have to be carefully evaluated, and the necessary time and resources have to be dedicated to planning and carrying out transition measures.

Responsibility for planning and preparing for the implementation of self-government does not fall upon the GNWT and the Legislative Assembly alone. The federal government and aboriginal governments are partners in this process and we encourage early attention to enhancing existing forums, and to promoting and establishing new forums, where appropriate, to ensure ongoing dialogue on implementation issues.

Mr. Speaker, at this time I would like to turn this over to my colleague, Mr. Braden.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. The chair now recognizes the honourable Member for Great Slave, Mr. Braden.

MR. BRADEN: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Based on the conclusions we have outlined in our address to the Assembly today, we make the following recommendations:

1. The Standing Committee on Rules and Procedures should be given responsibility for monitoring and reporting on the implications which implementation of self-government agreements will have on the powers, structures and procedures of the Legislative Assembly.
2. The GNWT should formally designate a sole point of accountability for developing a comprehensive action plan for implementation. This department, ministry or agency should prepare the GNWT and NWT communities for implementation of self-government agreements and should oversee this transition within the regions and communities.
3. A cooperative, arm's-length research body or think-tank should be created which is dedicated to the study of governance systems and practical operational issues associated with the implementation of self-government agreements in the NWT.

The Standing Committee on Rules and Procedures, with this new mandate, should carry through with these subsequent actions, Mr. Speaker:

4. Conduct a comprehensive study of the legislative powers of the Assembly, and those set out in self-government agreements and relevant documents, in order to provide a framework for analyzing potential areas where overlap is most likely and where amendment or harmonization can reasonably be anticipated.
5. Examine options for formal or informal structures and procedures for coordinating and harmonizing legislation, policies and practices among northern governments, where no such mechanisms have been identified in a self-government agreement.

6. Review current legislative procedures and processes to identify issues and options respecting:
 - consultations among governments on their respective legislative initiatives
 - informing the Assembly of ongoing legislative initiatives required to implement self-government agreements
 - possible mechanisms relating to consent of an aboriginal party to territorial legislation, where such a requirement is set out in a self-government agreement, and
 - the appropriate role of the Assembly in any such consultation and consent processes.
7. Identify current legislation and Assembly rules which are likely to require amendment as a result of implementation of self-government agreements.
8. Consider an appropriate role for the Legislative Assembly in building capacity for legislators at a local or regional level through joint workshops, seminars, research functions, and so on.
9. Prepare an action plan for the development of the Legislative Assembly's internal capacity to monitor and plan for the potential changes arising from implementation of self-government agreements.
10. Institute a regular and systematic approach for reviewing issues associated with implementation of self-government agreements, similar to the review of GNWT structures and functions which is undertaken as a transition measure prior to each general election.

Mr. Speaker, I would now like to pass the balance of the report back over to our co-chair, Ms. Lee, for conclusion. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Braden. The chair now recognizes the honourable Member for Range Lake, Ms. Lee.

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. An existing GNWT department, ministry or agency with designated responsibility for taking a coordinated approach to implementation should:

11. Develop an action plan for preparing communities, regions, and individuals for the implementation of self-government, including appropriate mechanisms for effective communications and consultations with these stakeholders. Such an action plan should address the need for interdepartmental and intergovernmental coordination. In addition, consideration should be given to establishing a dedicated policy unit within this department, ministry or agency to deal with transition issues and over-arching implementation issues that might affect the structures and operations of the Government of the Northwest Territories and Legislative Assembly.
12. Seek to establish forums for ongoing regular dialogue with the federal government, aboriginal governments and NWT community governments on territory-wide coordination of practical implementation matters.
13. Coordinate with aboriginal, federal and community governments to establish a leadership institute or program dedicated to developing skills suited for the governance systems emerging in the NWT.

14. Take the lead in the establishment of the arm's-length research body or think-tank referred to in Recommendation No. 3, and to the extent possible, collaborate with aboriginal, federal and community governments in this initiative.

Mr. Speaker, that concludes our final report, and with it our special committee's work. I would like to take this opportunity, Mr. Speaker, to express the committee's appreciation to the individuals and groups that met with us and made presentations. I would also like to thank all the staff of the committee, especially Mr. Bernie Funston, our researcher; Mr. Andrew Stewart, operations assistant; and Mr. Hamilton, our clerk, for their assistance, guidance and support during the life of the committee.

Motion To Receive Committee Report 12-14(6) And Move To Committee Of The Whole, Carried

Mr. Speaker, that concludes the final report of the Special Committee on the Implementation of Self-Government and the Sunset Clause and, therefore, I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Nahendeh, that Committee Report 12-14(6) be received by the Assembly and moved into Committee of the Whole for consideration. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Lee. We have a motion and the motion is in order. To the motion.

AN HON. MEMBER: Question.

MR. SPEAKER: Question has been called. All those in favour, please signify. Thank you. All those opposed? Thank you. The motion is carried.

---Carried

Item 4, reports of standing and special committees. The honourable Member for Deh Cho, Mr. McLeod.

Committee Report 13-14(6): Strengthening GNWT Support To Smaller Communities: Final Report Of The Special Joint Committee On Non-Tax-Based Community Affairs

MR. MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, today I'd like to present the final report of the Special Joint Committee on Non-Tax-Based Community Affairs.

The Special Joint Committee on Non-Tax-Based Community Affairs started its work in April 2002. Its purpose was to identify the actions that the Government of the Northwest Territories can take to improve the quality of life in these communities. The committee held community consultation workshops for representatives from three different groups of communities: the eleven smallest communities, the nine mid-sized communities and the seven largest hamlets and charter communities. The committee also initiated several research projects to increase their understanding about the GNWT programs and services in these communities.

Twenty-seven of the 33 communities in the NWT are communities which are of interest to the committee. These 27 communities differ from the regional centres and Yellowknife in more than just population. They have a larger percentage of aboriginal residents than the regional centres. More of their residents participate in hunting and fishing activities and speak their aboriginal language. However, the residents in these communities have lower levels of educational achievement and have higher unemployment rates than residents in regional centres. Although these 27 communities are growing more

slowly than the tax-based communities, they have higher crime rates. The GNWT programs and services that are delivered in these communities seem to be delivered at lower standards. The GNWT facilities are getting old, but the new corporate capital planning process does not seem to be able to accommodate the needs of these communities.

Based on the consultations with community leaders and on the results of the research projects, the committee Members have proposed changes to the GNWT's corporate capital planning process. The GNWT cannot explain how it plans for its new facilities or how it makes project funding decisions. Many people think that the GNWT is not keeping up with the capital funding needs of the smaller communities, because it is building new large facilities in the regional centres, such as the correctional centre in Yellowknife and the hospital in Inuvik. The committee Members also heard from many community representatives about the importance of prevention and development programs in their communities. They were told that the funding arrangements for these programs do not support a comprehensive or sustained community effort. The committee has proposed a new approach for these programs. The Members have asked the GNWT to organize its service standards more clearly and to increase access to housing in these communities. The GNWT should also increase its support for the community constable program. To conclude our report, the committee identified some changes that could be made to the GNWT organization so that it could provide better support to the small communities.

Concerns Of Residents In Smaller Communities

Three consultation workshops were organized as part of the committee's work plan. Representatives from the 11 smallest communities were invited to participate in a workshop session at the North Nahanni Lodge. Representatives from the nine mid-sized communities were invited to a workshop in Wekweti. The seven largest hamlets and charter communities sent representatives to a workshop in Tuktoyaktuk. In all, 19 of the 27 communities sent representatives to participate in the workshops.

The community representatives are concerned about:

- Insufficient capital funding.
- Lack of clarity about capital project selection and management.
- Complicated administration and uncoordinated contribution funding for small projects with short-term funding.
- Ensuring continuing support from the GNWT for developmental and preventative programs. Their view is that these programs are at least as important as the programs dealing with treatment, crisis intervention and problem management.

Their experience is that many headquarters and regional GNWT employees don't have the skills to be able to provide practical hands-on assistance and useful expertise in small communities.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to ask my colleague, the Honourable Vince Steen, to present the next portion of this report.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. The chair recognizes the honourable Member for Nunakput, Mr. Steen.

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

Interim Report October 2002

The committee Members understood that the government was interested in hearing from the committee as soon as possible. They wanted the government to have time to consider changes, which could be incorporated into the GNWT budget for 2004-2005. The Members also wanted time to distribute the report and hear back from community representatives.

Thirteen recommendations were made to the GNWT:

Capital Planning And Funding

- A. Provide better support to small community governments and assist them to do their own capital planning, project management and engineering.
- B. Improve the community consultation process by establishing a meaningful consultation process that is coordinated across departments, regions and communities and provides useful information about capital planning and funding.
- C. Modify the criteria for prioritizing projects by using fewer and simpler criteria and ensuring that community government facilities are included in the capital planning.
- D. Document roles and responsibilities for capital planning in clear language, so that it is explained for GNWT staff, community governments and MLAs.
- E. Increase the capital budget in order to realistically manage the replacement of the GNWT's aging inventory, respond to growth, and make up for previous years' shortfalls.

Development And Prevention Programs

- A. Consolidate prevention and development contribution funding into one fund located in one department and increase the available funding.
- B. Simplify the administration of this funding and ensure that communities are supported in the development and implementation of a sustained community-based effort to create lasting changes in the lives of community residents and improve the well-being of the community.

Access To Services

- A. Establish service delivery standards in smaller communities and be accountable for meeting the standards.
- B. Increase and strengthen access to policing services by expanding support for the community constable program and the First Nations policing program.
- C. Increase access to the home ownership programs by developing block-funding approaches with local governments and increasing the flexibility of housing program eligibility requirements.
- D. Emphasize the importance of prevention programs to increase the response to the alcohol and drug abuse problems in small communities.

Other Topics

- A. Implement changes in GNWT structure, organization and operations to ensure that GNWT regional staff can provide more coordinated assistance to the smallest communities.
- B. Publish plain language, user-friendly reports regarding capital expenditures, service standards, and programs and services in a timely manner.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask my colleague, Mr. Lafferty, to proceed with the report.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Steen. The chair now recognizes the honourable Member for North Slave, Mr. Lafferty.

MR. LAFFERTY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Additional Discussions With Community Leaders

In November, the interim report was distributed to every community and posted on the Legislative Assembly's Web site. Several of the committee Members met with a representative group of community government administrators -- local government administrators of the Northwest Territories -- to review the report. The group of community government representatives generally supported the recommendations. However, they were not optimistic that the GNWT would make the recommended changes.

In December, several committee Members met with representatives of the Akaitcho First Territory to discuss the committee's work. In February 2003, the Yellowknives Dene First Nation wrote to the committee to emphasize the need to treat Ndilo as a separate community from the City of Yellowknife for funding and program purposes.

There were additional letters, including correspondence from the City of Yellowknife, the NWT Association of Communities and an individual from Fort Providence.

The discussions revealed concerns about the treatment of band council governments compared to municipal governments, especially when the band councils are near or part of a large municipality, such as N'dilo or West Point; education; property taxation; and, housing.

Government's Response To The Interim Report

On February 28, 2003, the Premier tabled the government's response to the committee's interim report. The committee Members have carefully reviewed the report. The committee Members are very disappointed by the government's response. In their view, it shows little willingness to acknowledge the concerns of the community leaders or implement any changes to GNWT activities.

The responses to the recommendations of the committee refer to many reviews, which appear to be underway in the GNWT. The GNWT has made only a few commitments and did not identify a schedule for those commitments. Many of the GNWT remarks about the Committee's recommendations are justifications of the government's view about why change is not needed or is not possible.

The committee Members and community leaders have not changed their views about the recommendations in the interim report. The 13 recommendations of this committee remain

unchanged. The government's response did not warrant a reconsideration of these proposals.

Other Important Issues

The committee had a short time and limited resources. Much of their effort was focused on the inadequacy of the GNWT's capital planning process. The committee Members heard about many other issues that require further examination and discussion, such as different treatment for First Nation governments and municipal governments; education; property taxation; housing; and, funding methodologies for allocating funding

Mr. Speaker, at this time I would like to turn over the remainder of the report for Mr. McLeod, the Member for Deh Cho, my friendly neighbour.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. The chair now recognizes the honourable Member for Deh Cho, Mr. McLeod.

MR. MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Treatment Of Band Council Governments

It appears that the GNWT treats band councils differently from municipal governments and does not treat all band councils in the same way. Band councils, such as N'dilo and West Point, experience this difference most clearly when they try to access GNWT funding.

Education

Education remains a significant concern for the committee Members. Many parents are concerned that education services in the smaller communities are delivered to a lower standard than education services in the larger communities. Poor teachers' housing, high teacher turnover and teachers' lack of experience may be some of the contributing factors which may result in lower educational achievements. The committee Members recommend that there should be an examination of the educational challenges and solutions in small communities.

Property Taxation

The committee Members have heard from many residents in small communities about property tax concerns, year after year. It is time for these problems to be tackled and resolved. The committee Members recommend that there should be a review of the property taxation issues in the small communities, where the GNWT administers property taxation.

Housing

The committee Members remain concerned about the lack of affordable housing in many smaller communities. The existing government programs have not effectively responded to the need for housing for teachers, community government staff and other community residents.

Options For Funding Methodologies

The committee Members developed recommendations about capital and application-based contribution funding. Their examination indicated that most of the government's funding is not based primarily or solely on population criteria. However, the allocations usually do take population into consideration in various ways. Most GNWT contribution funding is not guided by well-defined allocation criteria. The committee Members

recommend that there should be a review of funding methodologies in order to determine options that would be useful for GNWT funding in the smaller communities.

A Standing Committee On Small Communities

The committee Members found that there was great value in being able to undertake practical research and discuss issues with community leaders. The work of the committee is one of a few ways that the smaller communities can have a voice that is constructive and potentially effective at resolving common concerns for a majority of the NWT communities. Committee Members know that they cannot make decisions for the next Legislative Assembly. They will recommend, however, that the Members of the next Legislative Assembly establish a Standing Committee on Small Communities and that the present government reflect this recommendation in the transition plan to the next Legislative Assembly. Therefore, the Special Joint Committee on Non-Tax-Based Community Affairs recommends that the 15th Legislative Assembly establish a Standing Committee on Small Communities to represent the interests of, and improve the quality of life in, the non-tax-based municipalities in the Northwest Territories.

This report already identifies some of the work that could be undertaken by that committee. The committee could accomplish significant work in order to challenge Northerners to understand and appreciate the needs of the smaller communities and perhaps even assist the government to take new steps and build better tomorrows.

Motion To Receive Committee Report 13-14(6) And Move To Committee Of The Whole, Carried

Mr. Speaker, that concludes the final report of the Special Joint Committee on Non-Tax-Based Community Affairs, and I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Nunakput, that Committee Report 13-14(6) be received by the Assembly and moved to Committee of the Whole for consideration. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. We have a motion on the floor and the motion is in order. To the motion.

AN HON. MEMBER: Question.

MR. SPEAKER: Question has been called. All those in favour, please signify. Thank you. All those opposed? Thank you. The motion is carried.

---Carried

Item 4, reports of standing and special committees. Item 5, returns to oral questions. Item 6, recognition of visitors in the gallery. The honourable Member for Great Slave, Mr. Braden.

ITEM 6: RECOGNITION OF VISITORS IN THE GALLERY

MR. BRADEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It gives me special pleasure today to recognize two people with Matco Transportation Systems. I would like to introduce Mr. Ray Anderson, president; and, Mr. Wayne Wishloff, the vice-president of Matco. Mr. Speaker, I will be very brief. This company, which has been operating in the NWT for 37 years, has been chosen by their peers in the NWT Chamber of Commerce as the business of the year. They were first established in 1966 in Norman Wells and continue to serve the NWT. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Braden. Mr. Anderson and I go back a long way, as a constituent as well. Item 6, recognition of visitors in the gallery. The honourable Member for Nunakput, Mr. Steen.

HON. VINCE STEEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to take the opportunity to recognize a constituent of mine from Tuk. He's the deputy mayor of the hamlet council, Marvin Gruben. He's also a co-manager and co-owner of Gruben's Transport, a well-established company in Tuktoyaktuk.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you. Welcome. Item 6, recognition of visitors in the gallery. I would like to welcome everyone who has come to visit the Legislative Assembly on this fine day. Item 7, oral questions. The honourable Member for North Slave, Mr. Lafferty.

ITEM 7: ORAL QUESTIONS

Question 253-14(6): Hunters And Trappers Disaster Compensation

MR. LAFFERTY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is for the Minister of Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development. As I mentioned in my Member's statement, I have a constituent who applied to the hunters and trappers disaster compensation program. He missed the application deadline as he didn't know about the program. If a person did not know about the compensation program and missed the deadline, would their case still be considered?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. The honourable Minister of RWED, Mr. Antoine.

Return To Question 253-14(6): Hunters And Trappers Disaster Compensation

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In a case like this, the gentlemen had made an application to seek compensation through the Wildlife harvesters' compensation program. Because of him not knowing about this program, he applied about four years after the incident happened. We are currently reviewing his appeal because he was rejected on that basis. So we are dealing with that situation right now. Thank you.

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

Supplementary To Question 253-14(6): Hunters And Trappers Disaster Compensation

MR. LAFFERTY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I know that the government provides information about their grants and contribution programs to the department, libraries and some non-government offices. I would like to ask the Minister if he would ensure that the trappers and the people who are harvesting on the land are getting that information. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. The honourable Minister of RWED, Mr. Antoine.

Further Return To Question 253-14(6): Hunters And Trappers Disaster Compensation

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Mr. Speaker, the responsibility of the superintendent in the region is to carry out programs and services of the Department of Resources, Wildlife and Economic development. It's their responsibility to ensure that the programs that we provide are decimated out to the communities. I cannot tell you exactly how that happens in the Members' constituency, in his riding. I will assure you that the message is clear. We are reviewing his appeal at the present time and hopefully if he is unilingual, we will make sure he gets the information through translation services of some sort. Thank you.

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

Supplementary To Question 253-14(6): Hunters And Trappers Disaster Compensation

MR. LAFFERTY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to thank the Minister for his answer and I would like to ask him if he could share his correspondence that he gives to his superintendents with me and also with the House? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. The honourable Minister of RWED, Mr. Antoine.

Further Return To Question 253-14(6): Hunters And Trappers Disaster Compensation

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Mr. Speaker, I have no problem providing that information. This is the normal day-to-day operation of trying to get the programs into the communities. I would like to share that information.

MR. SPEAKER: Your final supplementary, Mr. Lafferty.

Supplementary To Question 253-14(6): Hunters And Trappers Disaster Compensation

MR. LAFFERTY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Just going back to the programs, part of the eligibility criteria for some of the programs they have is an applicant has to prove that they have earned at least 25 percent of their gross income from renewable resource harvesting for the period 12 months immediately prior to the incident. Mr. Speaker, I don't know of any caribou, muskrat or rabbit that is walking around in the forest with a price tag glued to its legs. I would like to ask the Minister how can someone prove their income if there is no price on these animals.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. The honourable Minister of RWED, Mr. Antoine.

Further Return To Question 253-14(6): Hunters And Trappers Disaster Compensation

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Mr. Speaker, this is a program that's been in place for a number of years and we are trying to work with it. The way this program works is that through the income from trapping, through the records of the amount of fur that was sold in the previous year, this is what is used to determine the amount of income. It's the best way to determine the income from trapping at this point in time. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Item 7, oral questions. The honourable Member for Inuvik Boot Lake, Mr. Roland.

Question 254-14(6): Gwich'in Contracting Memorandum Of Understanding

MR. ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Following on my Member's statement about the MOU that was signed with the Gwich'in regarding contracting projects in the Mackenzie Delta area, I received correspondence, as I stated, about that and would like qualification from the Minister of Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development on how they came up with the projects listed, especially in the areas of power that is supplied to every community and how they came up with those values. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Roland. The honourable Minister of RWED, Mr. Antoine.

Return To Question 254-14(6): Gwich'in Contracting Memorandum Of Understanding

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Yes, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, through this memorandum of understanding with the Gwich'in and the Government of the Northwest Territories, we tried to estimate and tried to determine what is out there. According to the memorandum of understanding we are dealing with capital as well as operational maintenance. So it is both capital and operations and maintenance. We asked all the departments to come up with a list from their respective departments on the type of capital and operations and maintenance that we do out there in the Mackenzie Delta and the area. The list came back and that is the complete list that we have up to date which includes multi-year, as-and-when type of arrangements and every type of other arrangement we have out there. That is how we came up with this list. Thank you.

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

Supplementary To Question 254-14(6): Gwich'in Contracting Memorandum Of Understanding

MR. ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I understand that is operations and maintenance and capital programs, but my question is more about the dollar values attached. For example, Mr. Speaker, trying to be a little clearer for the Minister, if you take in the Northwest Territories Power Corporation's billings to Government of the Northwest Territories departments, what is the value? Because someone from my community sees that \$29 million is available and 50 percent of that then can be pulled aside and given directly to Gwich'in companies. In Inuvik it is 25 percent. The Inuvialuit have 25 percent, although I do not know if they even signed the agreement as of today. But there is that large number. If the gas supply, the Northwest Territories Power Corporation billings, the NorthwesTel billings add up to \$15 million, does that mean that all the other projects that are out on the capital plan and all the other as-and-when are now not going to be available for an open-bid process to any companies in the region? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Roland. The honourable Minister of Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development, Minister Antoine.

Further Return To Question 254-14(6): Gwich'in Contracting Memorandum Of Understanding

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, with this memorandum of understanding we have to do a lot more work before we get there and we have had a number of meetings with the Gwich'in as well as with the other interest groups up there. With the Inuvialuit we had a number of meetings. There are other meetings also slated for the Inuvialuit between myself and their chairman. The business people in Inuvik, we had a series of meetings with them and we intend to have more meetings.

The process now would be to have a meeting, a government-to-government meeting with the Gwich'in tribal council. As a result, the list that we had submitted with the price tag in there and so that we have to do a number of other serious meetings to determine exactly what type of contracts we are talking about. So there are a lot of other issues we have to deal with before we start determining whether it is going to be the contracts on, let us say the capital contract, let us say the highway contracts or some of the building contracts that are going on there, as well as the different operations and maintenance that is there. We still have to do quite a bit of work to really narrow down exactly how we are going to do it.

At the present time the agreement is that, let us look at the complete list, the dollar figures and let us have a series of meetings to try to come to a better understanding of what it is exactly that we are talking about. At the present time the price tag is, I believe it is \$29 million and we said that we will be negotiating 50 percent of the value of that. So the maximum will be about 50 percent of the \$29 million that is available. Exactly what the mix is, I do not know at this point in time. Thank you.

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

Supplementary To Question 254-14(6): Gwich'in Contracting Memorandum Of Understanding

MR. ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Minister's response gives me more cause for concern as there is no real detail to this, but we are putting a price tag on this which includes some of these big ones, because who is going to bill the Northwest Territories Power Corporation to supply power in the regions? Nobody is going to remove the natural gas supply, there is only one company.

So, as you break it down and pull off some of these big chunks, what is left for all the companies in the region, more specifically to my community? When you break that down one of the things listed is unspecified facility repairs. Mr. Speaker, the government signed a memorandum of understanding, the Minister stated it is not clear what it means. When are we going to get that detail and what does it mean for this summer's capital projects? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Roland. The honourable Minister of Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development, Minister Antoine.

Further Return To Question 254-14(6): Gwich'in Contracting Memorandum Of Understanding

HON. JIM ANTOINE: The next step, Mr. Speaker, is to meet with the Gwich'in as government-to-government. We have exchanged this information in the preliminary list that we put

forward and the idea here is to determine what is going to be available. It is a new thing, we have not done this before so we have to make sure we do it right. Take in all the concerns that are raised and we want to make sure that we follow the existing government policies and guidelines that are there and this is the approach that we are taking. Thank you.

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

Supplementary To Question 254-14(6): Gwich'in Contracting Memorandum Of Understanding

MR. ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Has Cabinet approved this list? It has already gone out, so has Cabinet approved this list that has been made available? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Roland. The honourable Minister of Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development, Minister Antoine.

Further Return To Question 254-14(6): Gwich'in Contracting Memorandum Of Understanding

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the different departments that provided input into this have come out with a different capital and operations and maintenance out there. This is what they have out there. We will have to sit down with the Gwich'in to determine what it is exactly that they might be eligible to try to pursue. I do not think that they will go after projects other than what they could handle at this point in time. My understanding at this point is that once we have this government-to-government meeting we will have a better idea of what it is that will be included in the memorandum of understanding and once a contract or a project is identified, depending on which department it goes through, the department will then take it through the normal negotiated contract process. In the instance when there is more than one Gwich'in company, there is a list of Gwich'in companies that have come forward as well and if there is one or more Gwich'in company to pursue this particular project then there will have to be a competitive process. So, we will be using our existing policies in terms of a negotiated contract, as well as the bidding process once we determine which project is going to be made available through the memorandum of understanding. The department that is responsible for those projects will then go through the normal process of recommending it for negotiated contracts. So, like I said, we still have a lot of work to do and that is generally the process that we are looking at at this point in time. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Item 7, oral questions. The honourable Member for Deh Cho, Mr. McLeod.

Question 255-14(6): Awarding Of Campground Contracts In The Deh Cho

MR. MCLEOD: Mr. Speaker, I also want to ask some questions of the Minister of Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development regarding awarding of contracts, specifically campground contracts. In the last month or so we had a contract awarded in my riding for operation and maintenance of Twin Falls Gorge, which includes Escarpment Creek, Louise Falls and Alexandra Falls. We had three companies from the community of Enterprise bid on it, and I should mention that this whole park falls within the community boundaries of Enterprise, and none of the companies from my riding were successful. There are different methodologies, as we are finding out, to awarding contracts and the tendering process

which is based on street price, negotiated contracts and requests for proposals. They are all tools used to decide how to award the contracts. But I am curious about a campground contract that is only providing firewood, cleaning facilities and it is pretty straight forward, so why does the department use a request for proposals when awarding campground contracts? To me it is pretty cut and dried and there is no need for a request for proposals. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. The honourable Minister of Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development, Minister Antoine.

Return To Question 255-14(6): Awarding Of Campground Contracts In The Deh Cho

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Yes, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, when a department uses a request for proposal it is to try to look at the different approaches that a contractor may take to provide the service that is required in a campground. I do not know the details or the reasons why they did it in this way in this particular case, but generally speaking there are different companies out there that may want to take different approaches on how they would take care of a campground in terms of providing the wood and cleaning up the place, cleaning up the garbage, making sure all the sites are in good order. There are probably a number of different approaches that a company would take. So, we look at the best approach with the best price and it is based on that. Thank you.

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

Supplementary To Question 255-14(6): Awarding Of Campground Contracts In The Deh Cho

MR. MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am still not clear why a request for proposal would be used when awarding a campground contract. Creative approaches to do what? Is it to supply firewood? To change rolls of toilet paper? It does not make sense. The breakdown of how the criteria are measured is 40 percent price, 30 percent personnel and 30 percent innovative services. Can the Minister explain to me what that means? Thirty percent of the criteria is measured on innovative services. In the case of a campground, what is included in that?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. The honourable Minister of Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development, Minister Antoine.

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I do not know at this point in time. I would just be assuming if I answer this. I have to get back to the Member, so I have to take it as notice. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. That question has been taken as notice. Oral questions. The honourable Member for Hay River North, Mr. Delorey.

Question 256-14(6): Clarification Of The Fiscal Update

MR. DELOREY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my questions are to the Minister of Finance and have to do with his fiscal update he gave us this morning. Mr. Speaker, in his update the Minister says that he recently learned that there is more uncertainty about the census coverage numbers and on May 29th we were informed that the preliminary coverage numbers released in March contained an error. Could the

Minister clarify that a little bit more and what that error was and what kind of an impact that is going to have on us? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Delorey. The honourable Minister of Finance, Minister Handley.

Return To Question 256-14(6): Clarification Of The Fiscal Update

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I do not have information on it. It is an error that was made in Statistics Canada in their calculations, I assume. The error caused them to withdraw their under coverage numbers essentially right across Canada. Thank you.

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

Supplementary To Question 256-14(6): Clarification Of The Fiscal Update

MR. DELOREY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in the next paragraph he also says that last month he identified an area of revenue uncertainty and that that issue would have a positive impact on our fiscal situation. Again, could I get a little bit of clarification on what that revenue uncertainty was and how big an impact could that have on our fiscal situation? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Delorey. The honourable Minister of Finance, Minister Handley.

Further Return To Question 256-14(6): Clarification Of The Fiscal Update

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Speaker, as we discuss this issue here today our officials are continuing to work on this. This is a catch-up factor, as we refer to it. It has to do with our tax effort compared to the rest of Canada. The magnitude of the impact is something that has to be determined yet, but certainly it will be, I expect, fairly large. Thank you.

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

Supplementary To Question 256-14(6): Clarification Of The Fiscal Update

MR. DELOREY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Finance also stated that on May 21st he met with the Finance Minister, Mr. Manley, and that the Minister is supportive and understanding of our fiscal situation. Again we state that we are extremely encouraged about his understanding and we look forward to a positive fiscal situation. What is different about the understanding that Mr. Manley has and any understanding that we have had with the federal government before that gives us more certainty that we are going to have a positive result or situation? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Delorey. The honourable Minister of Finance, Minister Handley.

Further Return To Question 256-14(6): Clarification Of The Fiscal Update

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Speaker, when the three Premiers from the territories met with the...

MR. SPEAKER: Oh, we are going to have to pause for a minute for, I think it is...There we go. The honourable Minister of Finance, Minister Handley.

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Speaker, when the three Premiers from the territories met with their counterparts from across Canada and with the Prime Minister there was an agreement for additional money to be our health care costs. As well, and very importantly, the Prime Minister acknowledged his recognition that our current funding arrangement is not adequate for the territories. Direction was given that the adequacy of the formula should be looked at. Mr. Manley as Finance Minister has assumed the main responsibility for doing this. When I met with him on May 12th I found that he had been well briefed, was very aware of our situation and was certainly taking this task of looking at the adequacy of the formula very seriously. The officials who were with him, as well, were very positive in terms of working with our officials to develop a new financing formula that would better reflect our needs. What will be in that formula that has yet to be negotiated? Thank you.

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

Supplementary To Question 256-14(6): Clarification Of The Fiscal Update

MR. DELOREY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the Minister also said that we are encouraging the understanding that Mr. Manley has and that we look forward to renegotiated formula financing agreements with the government. Could the Minister just indicate or state if we have a date for when our new renegotiated formula financing agreement will come into affect or what stage we are at with those negotiations? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Delorey. The honourable Minister of Finance, Minister Handley.

Further Return To Question 256-14(6): Clarification Of The Fiscal Update

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Speaker, I hope that we are able to conclude negotiations for a new financing formula within the life of our government. The new formula will come into affect on April 1, 2004. In my meeting with Minister Manley I suggested to him that we would like to aim toward having the main elements of the formula concluded by sometime in September. I do not know if we can achieve that with this negotiating process, but we are aiming to have it done this fall. Thank you.

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

Question 257-14(6): Rational For New Sport And Recreation Board

MR. DENT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs. Yesterday Mr. Speaker, in response to Mrs. Groenewegen, the Minister enumerated a number of reasons for the study that resulted in a recommendation that a new recreation and sport board be established. Can the Minister outline how another layer of administration resolves any of the concerns that he mentioned yesterday?

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

Return To Question 257-14(6): Rational For New Sport And Recreation Board

HON. VINCE STEEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as I outlined yesterday, the purpose for this whole review of Sport North's board and whether or not we should have the creation of a new territorial board was something born at least two years ago. At that time, as I said, Sport North was given the opportunity by the previous Minister to change the structure of their board to allow a better representation for smaller communities because of the concerns expressed by the smaller communities that there was not representation at that level and they felt that they were not taking part in decision-making or having an opportunity to take part in the sports activities at a territorial or national level. It's the same with the larger centres.

Sport North did not respond. So the Minister at the time went back to the Sport North partners and asked them to consider other ways of addressing this particular issue of no representation. What was born out of that was the creation of a proposed territorial sports board. There was a number of consultation meetings that took place as a result of this, including two meetings where all Sport North partners and territorial sports organizations were present, as well as recreation leaders. They all took part in the recommendation and formation of this board. Thank you.

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

Supplementary To Question 257-14(6): Rationale For New Sport And Recreation Board

MR. DENT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am aware of the history and what has transpired over the last couple of years in terms of meetings and so on, but I am still having trouble understanding how adding another layer of administration is going to deal with the underlying concern, which was that not enough money was getting to where the rubber meets the road. That doesn't tell me how it is that we can add another layer of administration, pay for more meetings, more people to move around to attend meetings and still get more money down to where it really counts to help the athletes and the people who want to enjoy recreation. How does that happen with this new board?

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

Further Return To Question 257-14(6): Rationale For New Sport And Recreation Board

HON. VINCE STEEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the cost of administration and the increasing cost of administration was one of the major concerns discussed at these particular meetings. What was suggested by the partners and the territorial sports organizations was that there already is a Sport North board. We are not creating another board on top of the Sport North board. We are going to replace the Sport North board with the territorial sports board. It would also be taken and seen as replacing some of the need for recreational sports boards or recreational organization boards and combining them all into one. That was the recommendation of the groups. It is not the recommendation of the department, it was recommended by the partners.

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

Supplementary To Question 257-14(6): Rationale For New Sport And Recreation Board

MR. DENT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's interesting because nowhere in this report does it say we are replacing the Sport North board. In fact, when you look at the diagram, Sport North is clearly shown in there along with the Aboriginal Sports Circle, the Beaufort-Delta/Sahtu Recreation Association, the Mackenzie Recreation Association, the NWT Recreation and Parks Association. Mr. Speaker, it's clear from this paper that we are adding a layer and not taking away. How can we get rid of volunteer boards and boards that represent sport organizations? They would have to agree to that, but I haven't heard any of that.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Dent. The honourable Minister of MACA, Mr. Steen.

Further Return To Question 257-14(6): Rationale For New Sport And Recreation Board

HON. VINCE STEEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the particular makeup of the board was proposed by the territorial sports organizations and the groups themselves, including Sport North. Sport North is part of the proposed new board. What level they would be representing as far as the rest of the group, I have no idea at this time because there was no indication from Sport North whether they will still be representing all 27 groups or not. As far as I know, the makeup was decided by the territorial sports organizations and the recreation groups. Thank you.

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

Supplementary To Question 257-14(6): Rationale For New Sport And Recreation Board

MR. DENT: Mr. Speaker, there are an awful lot of questions. We don't know who the three recreation delegates are who would be selected to this board or the three sports delegates. The paper says the first order of accountability is to the Minister. I find that very problematic. I think there are many issues that still need to be addressed. Will the Minister commit to embarking on a further round of consultation, in particular with Members of this Assembly to discuss how this board will work or how this board would work and how it's envisioned before proposing to move forward with it?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Dent. The honourable Minister of MACA, Mr. Steen.

Further Return To Question 257-14(6): Rationale For New Sport And Recreation Board

HON. VINCE STEEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I don't know how to say that I have just as many questions in my mind as the Member does...

---Laughter

---Applause

... about what the total representation by Sport North will be for the future. That's not clear. But I know what the representation is on that board and what is proposed. I have no problem with recommending further consultations and clarification meetings with the sports groups to come to a clear definition of what would be the responsibility, mandates and

makeup of the territorial sports board, but one thing for sure, I am not backing away from the sports board proposal because it is proposed and supported by the small communities' groups of territorial sports and recreation who feel they are not having a part of the sports activities in the Territories. If I may, Mr. Speaker, point out three reasons for the suggested establishment of the board: one, to provide small communities more opportunities to participate in the sports and recreation system; two, to ensure representation by small communities in the decision-making process; and three, to establish a mechanism to allocate lottery resources fairly among communities and regions. Those were the three main points for establishing the board. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Item 7, oral questions. The honourable Member for Great Slave, Mr. Braden.

Question 258-14(6): Proposed Territorial Sport And Recreation Board

MR. BRADEN: Mr. Speaker, I want to follow up on this fascinating topic with the Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs on the proposed sport and recreation body. All this talk about bureaucracy and new ways or new administrative ways of trying to achieve something is part of our job here. I would like to see if we can step backwards a bit and get more of a picture from the Minister of just what are the expectations of the people of the NWT, including the small communities, and what is expected of sport and recreation? Can we get some description, some shape and some size to this expectation? Thank you.

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

Return To Question 258-14(6): Proposed Territorial Sport And Recreation Board

HON. VINCE STEEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, just to keep my response short, I believe the expectation was clearly identified in my last three sentences to the previous questioners. It's clearly to allow for sports activities and participation of all residents of the Territories, both in sports and recreation. Thank you.

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

Supplementary To Question 258-14(6): Proposed Territorial Sport And Recreation Board

MR. BRADEN: This is still a pretty nebulous description, Mr. Speaker. I would like to find out more about how we gauge, measure or design these expectations and then how do we translate that into reality? What is this new board going to do that the existing organizations, which have been around for many, many years and run by dozens or hundreds of volunteers from all our communities, what is it going to do that this organization can't?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Braden. The honourable Minister of MACA, Mr. Steen.

Further Return To Question 258-14(6): Proposed Territorial Sport And Recreation Board

HON. VINCE STEEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, there are going to be opportunities to review the success of the new board once it's put in place. We should keep one thing in

mind, that Sport North was given the opportunity to change the structure of their board in order to address the concerns expressed by the small communities. Sport North did not respond. So it left MACA with not much choice but to tip it back to the sports organizations and the recreation groups and ask them what we can do it about. The end result of that was the suggestion of an NWT sports board, the formation of this board. That's where we are at this point.

One other thing I would like to clarify, Mr. Speaker, that bothered me a little bit, is the statement from the Member saying that MACA did not accept the Sport North invitation for the annual general meeting. We did not receive an invitation to an annual general meeting. I received an invitation to attend the awards program, which I did and which my deputy did. We took part in the program. We did not receive an invitation to take part in an annual general meeting. However, we had our representatives there at that meeting. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Supplementary To Question 258-14(6): Proposed Territorial Sport And Recreation Board

MR. BRADEN: Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the clarification and indeed MACA was represented by Mr. Ian Legaree and he did a good job of representing the department there. If there is such a division, such a gap in understanding and agreeing on where we want to go collectively with this group that represents such a large body of volunteers who are so critical to it, how can the Minister be so adamant as to say we are going to go ahead with this anyway without saying we still need to do some work to resolve our differences? Why is he pushing so hard? Thank you.

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

Further Return To Question 258-14(6): Proposed Territorial Sport And Recreation Board

HON. VINCE STEEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I guess the only response I can make to that is that the previous Ministers did give Sport North, as the major sports organization, the opportunity to address concerns and they chose not to. We felt that we really didn't have any choice but to put it back to the groups with the question of how to resolve this. If, in fact, future discussions with Sport North and the territorial sports organizations and recreation groups suggest that there is another way of doing this, I fully accept that especially if no matter what it is that comes back, the final thing before it's accepted by the department – and I have said this before – would be put to the Members for their consideration as well. So it's not going to be my final decision on this. It's going to be a decision of cooperation amongst all of us, I hope. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Item 7, oral questions. The honourable Member for Range Lake.

Question 259-14(6): Proposed Territorial Sport And Recreation Board

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to pursue the same line of questioning to the Minister of MACA with regard to the changes that the Minister is pursuing. Mr. Speaker, I have to check the Hansard and I guess the Minister has to too, but I must say I am very disturbed by the answers

the Minister has given, especially with respect to the mission of this review because to me, by that answer, he has insulted and offended the work of a very long and dedicated history of Sport North, which is run by staff and dedicated volunteers, Mr. Speaker. I had no idea that the whole idea of this review of this structure is because the board wasn't doing its job apparently. Mr. Speaker, I would suggest to the Minister that the problem is that this government has cut the budget for sports and recreation for so many years and given all the work to Sport North, they survive and do their jobs the best they can with the lottery money and now we are in a dog fight as to what is going to happen with the governance of Sport North. Why doesn't the MACA Minister go to Cabinet and get more money for Sport North instead of getting involved in the middle of a major argument about what to do with the small amount of money they have? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you. The honourable Minister of MACA, Mr. Steen.

Return To Question 259-14(6): Proposed Territorial Sport And Recreation Board

HON. VINCE STEEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, before I can give more money to anybody, I have to have the money. My department is limited to our allocations like anyone else. What we do have I believe is we have seen increases in sports and recreation in the past few years rather than a decrease. What's not being realized is that facilities like swimming pools, arenas, are all part of sports and recreation. Therefore, we are making contributions as a government to work with these programs. You would not be able to have sports and recreation if you didn't have some of these facilities in the smaller communities and that's why we put them there, so I don't believe that we are cutting back that much that we are jeopardizing sports and recreation. My department is also working with the federal government on a program where there are joint funds for sports and recreation. I believe that's addressing some of the concerns expressed by the small communities and by the ordinary Members as well. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Supplementary To Question 259-14(6): Proposed Territorial Sport And Recreation Board

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I grant to the Minister that maybe it's not his government, but I remember a time when there was a whole department responsible for sports and recreation in the Department of MACA or whatever its predecessor was, and now we have a situation where, other than the capital funding, most of the burden of delivering sports programs is done by Sport North. Mr. Speaker, I still believe that this is a question of leadership and lack of financing. The Minister has already indicated he has more questions than answers about this and he suggested that Sport North is not serving the public. Knowing the way the lottery money is spent and the mandate of Sport North, they have a very close relationship with the Minister. So I would like to know what he has done in terms of talking to Sport North or meeting with them and reviewing their mandate and responsibilities in order to help them do their job, if there are concerns in the communities about what they are doing. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Further Return To Question 259-14(6): Proposed Territorial Sport And Recreation Board

HON. VINCE STEEN: Mr. Speaker, these meetings that the Member referred to have been ongoing. We have been meeting with Sport North in the past. Sport North supplies to the Minister and the department their annual financial statements indicating where their finances are, where their expenditures are. We withdrew from all management of sports in order to allow for sports and recreation to be managed more by the partners than by us. That's why we transferred a lot of the responsibilities to Sport North. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Supplementary To Question 259-14(6): Proposed Territorial Sport And Recreation Board

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am glad that he admits then that he gave the responsibility to Sport North. They only have money from the lottery and volunteer services to do this and apparently they are not able to meet the needs of residents, so now the Minister is going to put the blame on Sport North and disband it. Mr. Speaker, what has he done to work out this problem with Sport North? If he is hearing from the people that there are not enough services available, what has he done to provide the boards with more resources or to work out what their mandate is, instead of coming up with this proposal that is really not working out? There's a major question about how the board governance will fit together. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you. I am not sure where the question was there. It was more of a statement. However, the Minister can respond. The honourable Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs, Mr. Steen.

Further Return To Question 259-14(6): Proposed Territorial Sport And Recreation Board

HON. VINCE STEEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I believe the question was, what have I done as far as meeting with Sport North and assisting them with direction to how they can address these particular issues that are being brought up by the smaller communities and by the smaller territorial sports organizations. Well, we have directed Sport North in the past to change their board structure to allow for this participation by smaller recreation and sports groups, but Sport North chose not to respond. That is why we went back, as I said earlier, and went to sports and recreation organizations and asked them what would be their recommendation on how to address the situation. That was the end result of where the proposed sports board came from. Sport North did take part up to the recommendations. They took part in the formation and recommendations of the formation of the sports board until this meeting on May 25th, as far as we know, and probably because of this particular concern we did not have representation, myself or the deputy minister, at the Sport North annual general meeting because there was no indication that Sport North was opposed to this new board. They were taking part in forming it up until that point. Thank you.

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

Supplementary To Question 259-14(6): Proposed Territorial Sport And Recreation Board

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I guess my point is that the Minister and the deputy minister and the government might be meeting with Sport North and my understanding is that Sport North is involved in the process because they would rather be at the table than not. My problem is that the department is not listening to their concerns about this structuring board and many others issues they have. So would the Minister have not just a meeting with them, but listen to them about what they are saying? They have a major serious concern about this board governance and sports and recreation policy. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Further Return To Question 259-14(6): Proposed Territorial Sport And Recreation Board

HON. VINCE STEEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, there are two ways to resolve this thing. I have said this today. The department has indicated to Sport North that we are willing to meet with them and have them specifically address to us, clarify to us, what it is that they have concerns with and secondly, possibly put together a new meeting of all sports organizations and board members and meet again with Sport North. But let's keep one thing in mind: Sport North is supposed to be a federation representing 27 sports organizations. Who's left if it's all those organizations saying that they don't want this board? Who is saying they want the board? If you reverse it, who is Sport North speaking for when they say they don't want this board? That's what I have to have clear, Mr. Speaker.

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

Question 260-14(6): Role Of Aboriginal Sports Bodies

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I caught this debate on television. I, for one, have to speak in favour of the Minister's endeavour here. I think it's about time we start embracing all our communities to formulate a system that is there for everyone. You don't have a system specifically through Sport North where a lot of their administration is done through the larger centres. We see it when it comes to sporting activities like the Arctic Winter Games and summer games. A lot of communities don't take part or are not participating because they don't have either the ability or don't have the qualifications to compete because they don't have a mechanism to deal with it. I would like to ask the Minister where do the Aboriginal Sport Circle and the regional sporting bodies fit with regard to the new structure that you are looking at?

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

Return To Question 260-14(6): Role Of Aboriginal Sports Bodies

HON. VINCE STEEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the aboriginal sports organization was formed and funded afterwards by Sport North. It was under the recommendation from the previous Ministers that Sport North fund aboriginal sports. They are doing that right now. It's more to address certain types of aboriginal sports that were not included before.

So in the formation of the new board, aboriginal sports is included.

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

Supplementary To Question 260-14(6): Role Of Aboriginal Sports Bodies

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the Minister, by encompassing a single sporting body, what's the connection to the sporting body in the regional centres and larger centres and how do they connect to the smaller communities like Holman Island and Tsiigehtchic or Colville Lake? How do the smaller communities participate in the structure you are looking at?

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

Further Return To Question 260-14(6): Role Of Aboriginal Sports Bodies

HON. VINCE STEEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Most of the sports activities are generated through, as the Member well knows, the community recreation office at the community level. They, in turn, belong to either the regional or territorial sports and recreation body. Normally it's a regional sports body. In the Delta, there's a sports and recreation group and I believe in the Sahtu as well. I believe that the goal is to put all these efforts into one board, so that everybody can feel represented in taking part in decision-making as to the allocation of the lottery fund that presently is administered by Sport North.

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

Supplementary To Question 260-14(6): Role Of Aboriginal Sports Bodies

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I think it is about time that we started to rebalance the powers of the territory and ensure that everybody is encompassed with regard to the decision-making process. Sport is probably one of the most important aspects of not only the development of a young child, but also the mental and physical development of the people in our communities. I, for one, feel that that is an area we can build on. So the funding that is presently allocated, do you have any breakdown or analysis of where the funds have gone in the past and how this funding system is going to benefit everyone in the Territories where previously it wasn't?

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

Further Return To Question 260-14(6): Role Of Aboriginal Sports Bodies

HON. VINCE STEEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I commit to bring to the House a breakdown of where Sport North funding goes on a year-by-year basis and that will truly indicate what organizations are receiving it and which ones don't.

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

Supplementary To Question 260-14(6): Role Of Aboriginal Sports Bodies

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, with regard to the lottery funds, presently there is a process of how you allocate those funds and in the past, they've been allocated to the NWT ski organization. Is there a mechanism that is now going to allow for other organizations to have access to lottery funds which presently they don't?

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

Further Return To Question 260-14(6): Role Of Aboriginal Sports Bodies

HON. VINCE STEEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I believe that those people that support the formation of this new board are hoping that the specific concerns brought up by the Member would be addressed through the representation on this sports board by all groups, first at the regional level and then brought up to the sports board level.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Item 7, oral questions. The honourable Member for North Slave, Mr. Lafferty.

Question 261-14(6): Fiscal Update And Restraint Measures

MR. LAFFERTY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is for the Minister of Finance, the Honourable Joe Handley. My question is with regard to the first fiscal update. In his statement, the Minister has said there would be savings of \$20 million; \$10 million is internal measures, \$5 million from supplementary appropriations, \$5 million from targeted restraint that is still in the process of being identified. I would like to ask the Minister, targeted restraint, although it's not identified, does he have any idea of where they are going to be getting it from? Is it from the larger centres or small centres? Is it capital projects? Thank you.

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

Return To Question 261-14(6): Fiscal Update And Restraint Measures

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Speaker, we have not identified exactly where this \$5 million would come from. We've asked departments to be prudent in their spending and at the same time as they carry out their plans for the year and identify any savings, we will keep an account of the impact it will have on all of our residents in the Territories. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Supplementary To Question 261-14(6): Fiscal Update And Restraint Measures

MR. LAFFERTY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Minister, in his statement, said there was targeted restraint. Can you tell us what the targeted restraints are? Thank you.

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

Further Return To Question 261-14(6): Fiscal Update And Restraint Measures

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Speaker, we have a number of deputy minister task teams, 12 I believe, looking at various aspects of how our government is organized, how it functions and identifying possible areas of efficiency. So those are the targeted areas. Thank you.

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

Supplementary To Question 261-14(6): Fiscal Update And Restraint Measures

MR. LAFFERTY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. During his statement on the fiscal update, I noticed that a lot of things were touched upon. Not once was there any mention of how the government operated, how they had cost overruns and all that. So is there a reason why they didn't put these in? Thank you.

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

Further Return To Question 261-14(6): Fiscal Update And Restraint Measures

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Speaker, no, there is no particular reason why they weren't mentioned in there. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you. Item 7, oral questions. The honourable Member for Frame Lake, Mr. Dent.

Question 262-14(6): Proposed Territorial Sport And Recreation Board

MR. DENT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is again for the Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs following up on the same issue. I think that perhaps what has really driven us to this issue of contention is the lack of money that's available across the Territories for sports and recreation. We have lottery funding and lottery gross revenues of about \$2.5 million a year. By the time you pay for the administration and so on, there's not a lot left that's going to go out to communities. As Ms. Lee has pointed out, part of the problem is that in the devolution from when it was all funded by government to when government said lottery revenues will be great to fund sports, there was an actual decrease in the actual money that's been going out to help organizations operate. One of the problem is we are going to now perhaps lose 18,000 volunteer hours per year. That's the equivalent of 10 full-time people. We can't start a new board, expect to get that many volunteer hours out of it and not see an impact. So how are we going to make up for the funding that isn't going to be there to pay for the equivalent of 10 full-time employees working in sport and recreation right now?

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

HON. VINCE STEEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I will take the question as notice.

MR. SPEAKER: The question has been taken as notice. Item 7, oral questions. The honourable Member for Hay River North, Mr. Delorey.

Question 263-14(6): Purpose Of Sport And Recreation Review

MR. DELOREY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I guess this issue that's been brought up a number of times today on sports and recreation is one that is very dear to my heart, especially in sports. I have been involved in it for some 30 years in the Northwest Territories and I have also served probably seven years on the Sport North board. I suspect that on some of the issues that are coming up today and in some of the answers that the Minister is giving, we are going to get a lot more feedback from Sport North because when I hear the Minister saying that Sport North does not react, I take exception to that, even from when I was on the board. The Minister says at one point that they don't react, then on the other hand he says that Sport North is funding the Aboriginal Sport Circle because they were informed to have better representation. Would the Minister confirm, is this whole process to get rid of Sport North? Is that the bottom line?

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

Return To Question 263-14(6): Purpose Of Sport And Recreation Review

HON. VINCE STEEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, from the public department's perspective, there is no advantage to getting rid of Sport North. We would just be moving whatever they do to the board. It's not our intent to just get rid of Sport North. Sport North is part of the new board.

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

Supplementary To Question 263-14(6): Purpose Of Sport And Recreation Review

MR. DELOREY: So, Mr. Speaker, to clarify, the new board is another level of bureaucracy, is that right?

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs, Mr. Steen.

Further Return To Question 263-14(6): Purpose Of Sport And Recreation Review

HON. VINCE STEEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it is not intended as another level of bureaucracy. It is intended as a way of assuring that concerns expressed by smaller communities and small sports and recreation associations are addressed. Thank you.

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

Supplementary To Question 263-14(6): Purpose Of Sport And Recreation Review

MR. DELOREY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, when I look at the list of people that worked on the creation of this new sports board, I don't see a lot of names there from Sport North. The Minister says when you flip it around, you have 27 communities saying that they want a new structure, so who's left? I would say that Sport North is more than a board. I would say Sport North is all the volunteers across the Northwest Territories that contribute to these 18,000 hours of volunteer work that are put into it. I can tell you right now that from a lot of them we are hearing that they haven't asked for a new sport board. They are happy and are continuing to work in volunteer

roles in trying to address the sports needs. I can inform the Minister that when I was on the sports board, we tried to react to small communities. What are we going to do for the new volunteers or what are you going to do with the volunteers now that are saying they don't want a new sport board? That's not the answer.

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

Further Return To Question: 263-14(6): Purpose Of Sport And Recreation Review

HON. VINCE STEEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, that was another one of the touchy points that was mentioned in Sport North press releases; Municipal and Community Affairs' non-recognition of the volunteer aspect of all this in sports. I believe that that's not an accurate statement because this government has made a number of efforts and continues to make a number of efforts to recognize volunteers, not only in sports, but in all aspects of public life and for all aspects of the social services that are supplied to the general public. We do make efforts to recognize the volunteers involved and we will continue to do it. The formation of this new board is not going to do away, as far as I know, with any recognition or need for volunteers and the department is well aware of that.

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

Supplementary To Question 263-14(6): Purpose Of Sport And Recreation Review

MR. DELOREY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I agree that when we want to promote sports and recreation in the Northwest Territories we are not going to do it without volunteers. That I am convinced of and I continue to volunteer in that area. I think that it's very important that we don't lose any that we have now. I would like a commitment from the Minister that he will find a way to involve the major volunteers in sports and recreation right now in how we go forward with recreation and sports in the future. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Further Return To Question 263-14(6): Purpose Of Sport And Recreation Review

HON. VINCE STEEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I couldn't agree more with the Member that we have to show recognition and continue to show recognition for the need for volunteers and for their actual contributions. If it's necessary and if it's the way to go, I am prepared to support some form of volunteer participation at the board level, a seat at the board level if that's what's needed. Whatever they need for recognition at the board level and participation at board level and continued participation in sports activities, I will support it. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Time for question period has ended. Item 8, written questions. Item 9, returns to written questions. Item 10, replies to Opening Address. Item 11, petitions. Item 12, reports of committees on the review of bills. Item 13, tabling of documents. Item 14, notices of motion. Item 15, notices of motions for first reading of bills. Item 16, motions. Item 17, first reading of bills. Item 18, second reading of bills. Item 19, consideration in Committee of the Whole of

bills and other matters: Minister's Statement 44-14(6) and Bill 5, with Mr. Delorey in the chair.

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

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): I will call Committee of the Whole to order. We have two issues to discuss in Committee of the Whole: Minister's Statement 44-14(6) and Bill 5. What is the wish of the committee? Mr. Dent.

MR. DENT: Mr. Chairman, I would like to recommend that we deal with Bill 5 today.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Dent. Does the committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): The chair will call a short break and come back to consider Bill 5.

---SHORT RECESS

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): I will call Committee of the Whole back to order. We will consider Bill 5. Does the Minister have any opening remarks? Mr. Handley.

Bill 5, An Act To Amend The Motor Vehicles Act

Minister's Opening Remarks

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Chairman, it's my pleasure to appear before Committee of the Whole this afternoon to consider the proposed impaired driving amendments to the Motor Vehicles Act. These new deterrents to impaired driving were first proposed in the 1990s as part of a national initiative entitled "Strategy to Reduce Impaired Driving." The Council of Ministers responsible for Transportation and Highway Safety endorsed the strategy, and the Ministers committed to enacting them in their provincial and territorial jurisdictions.

These amendments are aimed at striking the Motor Vehicles Act with some forceful measures to discourage drinking and driving. Driving a motor vehicle is a serious undertaking; it needs our full attention. The consumption of alcohol impairs our mental judgment and diminishes our physical reflexes.

Impaired drivers run a much higher risk of being involved in a motor vehicle accident. The risk is not only to themselves, but to those they are with and everyone else with whom they share the road. It is an unacceptable and unnecessary risk.

These tougher impaired driving measures do not mean that the police will now attach a greater priority to impaired driving offences ahead of their other policing responsibilities, such as violent crime, theft or fraud, et cetera, nor do the amendments imply that we need more officers to enforce them. The importance of the new amendments is that they give our police officers more and better tools to deter impaired driving. Until now, the Criminal Code and its .08 percent blood alcohol content limit was the only deterrent available to the police to discourage impaired driving. With these amendments, the police will also have the territorial Motor Vehicles Act available to them with the proposed new administrative licence suspensions and lower .05 percent blood alcohol content. The

new measures will make our existing enforcement capacity that much more effective.

Mr. Chairman, I want to say that I have been pleased with the positive reception these amendments have enjoyed, both by my fellow Members of the Legislative Assembly and the public at large. More and more drivers these days have come to understand that drinking and driving just don't mix. Regrettably, there are still those who have not yet received the message that society no longer tolerates drinking and driving.

Our message in these amendments is clear. Drinking and driving don't mix, and we hope that these amendments will help persuade drivers not to do it. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Handley. Does the chairman of the Standing Committee on Governance and Economic Development have any comments? Mr. Roland.

Standing Committee On Governance And Economic Development Comments

MR. ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The Standing Committee on Governance and Economic Development conducted public hearings on Bill 5, An Act to Amend the Motor Vehicles Act on April 24, April 30 and May 15 and 16, 2003. The committee would like to thank the witnesses who appeared before us and the Minister and his staff for presenting the bill.

The committee commends the government's efforts to reduce needless injuries and deaths in the Northwest Territories, by introducing tougher drunk driving sanctions aimed at getting drunk drivers off the road and encouraging drivers with alcohol dependency issues to get help. All of the witnesses, including representatives of Students Against Drunk Driving, the Salvation Army, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, and the Chief Coroner expressed strong support for these amendments. As well, the national office of Mothers Against Drunk Driving submitted a letter of support for this bill, and in particular the proposed amendment providing for an automatic 30-day roadside suspension for a second impaired driving offence, which, in their opinion, shows leadership and guidance to other jurisdictions.

While Members were supportive of the principles and intent behind the bill, some Members expressed concern about whether it could realistically be enforced. This concern was allayed to some extent by what the committee heard from the various presenters. The committee was told that the new administrative penalties will give police officers a more effective and immediate means of getting drunk drivers off the road than the existing Criminal Code penalties, and are therefore more likely to be enforced. The RCMP advised us that enforcing this legislation will be a priority for them, and that they will find the funds from within to purchase the necessary roadside breath testing equipment for detachments which do not currently have it. The Minister of Transportation also indicated he would work with the Minister of Justice to see what can be done to improve the adequacy of police resources. The committee would strongly encourage the Ministers and the Cabinet to work together to address this issue. Members feel that the bill will not be effective in reducing impaired driving if there are not adequate resources in place to enforce it.

Members were impressed by the willingness expressed by the Students Against Drunk Driving, the RCMP and the Salvation Army to work together at the community level on education and awareness. As one witness stated, this is not a problem that any one agency alone can handle. The committee heard over

and over again that legislation is only one weapon in the fight against drunk driving, and that education and awareness are also critical.

This is especially so because, as Northerners are all too aware, so many alcohol-related injuries and deaths occur with all-terrain vehicles and snowmobiles, which unfortunately will not be covered by the new legislation. The committee heard this is because there is no NWT-wide licensing system for these vehicles and bylaws vary from community to community. The amendments will not apply to boats either, because they fall under federal jurisdiction. Apart from the provisions of the Criminal Code, which are difficult to enforce, education is the only way we have to get people to stop drinking and driving boats and off-road vehicles. The committee would strongly encourage the department to work with agencies such as the Students Against Drunk Driving and the RCMP to send strong messages to the public that operating ATVs and boats while impaired is dangerous and unacceptable. Members also would urge the department to continue looking into options for bringing in administrative penalties for drunk driving that will apply to ATVs and snowmobiles.

Mr. Chairman, those are general comments. I will now turn to some of the details of the bill.

The committee did hear some specific suggestions for tougher legislation. Some witnesses and Members felt strongly that zero tolerance for alcohol should apply to all drivers and not just to novice drivers. The Students Against Drunk Driving suggested that in some cases the police should have the power to impound vehicles for 60 days, rather than 30 days, and requirements for alcohol ignition interlock devices should be mandatory for repeat offenders, and not at the discretion of the registrar.

Bill 5 makes provision for some programs to be implemented at a later date by regulation. As such, the details of these programs are not available for consideration by this House. The committee does have some comments at this time to guide the development of these regulations, and expects that there will be further consultation with the public and with the committee before they are finalized.

The proposed novice drivers program was of particular concern to Members.

In other parts of Canada, these programs sometimes restrict new drivers from being on the road at night. Members believe such restrictions would be too onerous for NWT drivers because of the extreme seasonal variation in daylight hours. Members also noted that nighttime restrictions could prevent new drivers from acting as designated drivers, a practice that may not be ideal, but is preferable to having drivers on the road while impaired.

The Minister assured Members that drivers will only be considered novices once, for the initial two years after obtaining a Class 5 driver's licence. The novice driver regulations will not apply to people reinstating their licences, or upgrading their licences, for example to a Class 3 or Class 1.

Some Members do not believe the novice driver provisions should apply to older drivers who are getting a licence for the first time. The committee would encourage the department to obtain public input on this issue during its consultations on the regulations.

Members also had some concerns with how the vehicle impoundment process will be established in regulations. There are some cases in which Members feel there may be unfair hardship to innocent people. One such case would be where a vehicle is stolen, and is impounded because the thief was driving without a valid licence due to a drunk driving conviction. Another case would be where an entire family depends on a vehicle and it is impounded because of one member of the family. In both these cases the owner or family member would have to establish their legal right to possession of the vehicle and pay the impoundment fees to get the vehicle back. The department committed to looking at these issues in drafting the regulations.

Members asked the Minister whether the amendments would allow police officers to require people to take blood tests and were assured that officers will not have any new powers to require blood tests beyond the provisions in the Criminal Code.

Mr. Chairman, in summary, the committee believes this legislation is a positive step, but understands that enforcement and education are critical to making it work. Members hope the Minister and the various agencies who appeared before the committee will keep to their commitments of working together to raise public awareness and to find the resources to enforce the act. Members also expect the department to consult widely with the public and the committee in preparing regulations.

During clause-by-clause review of the bill, three amendments of a minor and technical nature were passed by the committee and agreed to by the Minister. Following the committee's review, a motion was carried to report Bill 5, An Act to Amend the Motor Vehicles Act, to the Assembly as ready for Committee of the Whole. This concludes the committee's opening comments on Bill 5. Individual Members may have additional questions or comments as we proceed. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Roland. Does the Minister wish to bring in any witnesses? Mr. Handley.

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Yes, I will, Mr. Chairman.

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

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Sergeant-at-Arms, would you escort the witnesses in please?

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

HON. JOE HANDLEY: With me today are Peter Vician, deputy minister of the Department of Transportation; and Rebecca Veinott, legislative counsel with the Department of Justice.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Handley. We're on Bill 5, An Act to Amend the Motor Vehicles Act. I'll open the floor to general comments. Mr. Dent.

General Comments

MR. DENT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I'll speak very briefly in favour of this bill. I think that it's important to send the message that we will not tolerate drinking and driving on our roads, and I am pleased that the government has taken the initiative to bring forward this legislation.

The statistics have told us that 75,000 Canadians are affected in some way by drunk driving each year. While it's getting better, unfortunately far too many Northerners are still driving after drinking. The statistics are, per capita, worse in the North. In fact, more than half of Canadians say that governments are not doing enough to combat drinking and driving, and a quarter of Canadians say that drinking and driving is the greatest highway safety concern. I'm hearing those concerns from my constituents, and they have told me that they support this action that we are taking here today.

This generation's young people have worked hard to send the same message to legislators, proving to us that this pending legislation is widely supported by the public. Young people are telling us that we need stricter laws and tougher consequences for drunk drivers. I'd especially like to salute the efforts of SADD here in the Northwest Territories -- the Students Against Drunk Driving -- and recognize, Mr. Chairman, that there are three members of SADD in the audience here today. Michele Thoms is the student advisor, Matthew Harvey is a young gentleman who, by the way, represented the constituency of Frame Lake during Youth Parliament and did an admirable job, and he's here. I'm afraid that I don't know the name of the other young lady. But we do have representatives; they are watching us because they too are very concerned that we move forward with this kind of legislation.

In terms of the graduated driving regulations, the research and young people are again telling us that we need safer roads. I know that research has shown that the restrictions that we're proposing do in fact result in significantly fewer injuries and death to young people in the first little while after they get their driver's licence. So this act, overall, will help to make sure that we have safer roads with more experienced and safer drivers on them.

So once again, this is a good bill. I would like to thank the Minister and the government for bringing it forward, and I look forward to its implementation. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Dent. Mr. Dent, I would also like to take this opportunity to welcome Vicki Marquez from St. Pat's SADD, and the Chief Coroner for the Northwest Territories, Percy Kinney in the gallery.

---Applause

Mr. Handley, did you have any response to the general comments? Mr. Handley.

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Chairman, no response, just I suppose further comment. This is a serious issue. When we look at the cost to our government, during the last five years there have been seven fatalities that have been directly attributable to drinking and driving. There have been over 120 injuries. So I think that gives some magnitude that this is a serious problem, and an expensive problem both in human life and well-being as well as dollars. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Handley. The chair will recognize Mr. Braden.

MR. BRADEN: Mr. Chairman, my remarks will also be brief. I would like to underscore a tribute that Mr. Dent has made to the young people, to the organization of Students Against Drinking and Driving which have chapters and organizations, I understand, in a number of communities in the NWT. Their efforts to spread that awareness and that message among their peers is probably one of the strongest weapons we have in this

campaign, especially as it relates to young people. As we can set those values, or help set those values, at this age at an early stage in their driving careers, then I'm very confident that we are going to have safer roads.

It was their efforts and the insistence and the consistency that Michele Thoms applied as the leader of the SADD movement that really helped to bring me on board, and helped me understand just how powerful a voice young people can have. Even when they haven't reached voting age yet, they haven't reached the age of majority or whatever we want to call it, their voice can be heard. They should be proud of themselves and I hope they'll take this empowerment and apply it to other things that matter to young people.

I would also express the disappointment as we went through this bill, Mr. Chairman, and learned that our ability to take these same controls and standards into the area of off-road vehicles and boats was not within our reach. To a large extent it seemed, for reasons of administration or things in our bureaucracy or record keeping that were shortcomings, we wouldn't be able to apply it. I'd be looking in future to how we can cooperate with other departments within our own government and with the federal government to bring these kinds of things into play for recreational vehicles. It's becoming more and more apparent that as these machines get more and more powerful and more and more accessible to people, that it's only inevitable we're going to have more accidents and more fatalities, and it will be in part due to mixing alcohol with motor vehicles of every description. So I'm really hopeful that we'll be able to make some impact in that area as we will today in the motor vehicles on our roads.

So, again, my compliments to the youth, to the police, to people within our own Department of Transportation, to Mr. Kinney, the Chief Coroner, for helping to bring us to this very good thing. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Braden. Again I didn't hear a question, but I'll give Mr. Handley the opportunity to respond. Mr. Handley.

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'll just say that this bill has been a long time coming. There have been a lot of people through the years who have worked to see it come to this point.

It's true that this one only applies to the vehicles on the highways. We did have serious problems with off-road vehicles and boats. In the case of all-terrain vehicles, we don't administer any kind of licensing programs so we don't have the means to do the same thing. But that will not deter us from continuing to look at this issue over the years. With boats we don't yet have the jurisdiction for that, so I suppose that will come at some time.

In many cases, the Criminal Code certainly applies in those situations and it should be a deterrent. But I think the most important thing is going to be continuing education, that we don't operate motor vehicles and drink. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Handley. The chair will recognize Mr. McLeod.

MR. MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, this bill is very difficult to argue against. I think it's everybody's desire to reduce impaired driving across the North. I have to applaud the efforts of the department, however, I think it's taking the easy way out. Right from the time we were elected, I

think just about every MLA here has recognized the fact that we need more resources in terms of policing. We've raised it from the small communities' perspective; the larger centres including Yellowknife have raised it. It's been in the papers. We have legislation in place now that we can't enforce. Any time you're in a small community, try to call an RCMP officer. You're going to get a recording from Yellowknife. I think that should have been taken into consideration. It's easier to pass new legislation than it is to provide adequate resources.

I represent four communities. Three of them have no RCMP officers. We don't have any programs in place for policing in the smaller communities. There's no community constable program, it's just a title. We train people; there's no money to hire them. So we should be looking at how we're going to enforce this, because we have legislation now we can't enforce. Almost every community in my riding has no equipment to do breathalyzers. So I mean we should be taking a closer look.

I'd like to see in five years the stats that show that this is going to make a big difference because, if we can't enforce the legislation we have now, how can we enforce this one? I think there has to be a review. If this is one mechanism that will help, I can't vote against it, but I think the bigger picture has to be looked at, a holistic approach has to be taken. So my comment to the Minister is we just looked at a small piece of it. I'm not a great believer that it's going to make a whole lot of difference. I'd like to ask the Minister what's the next step. Are we going to see more police officers in the communities? Are we going to see more resources for community constable programs? Are we going to see aboriginal policing programs, training programs, or are we just going to pass legislation then walk away and say hey, we did a good job? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Chairman, certainly this piece of legislation by itself is not going to solve all of the problems and stop people from drinking and driving altogether, but it is one more tool, it's one more way of decreasing it. The information we have from other jurisdictions is that this does work, and they have not necessarily had to increase the number of police in their communities in order to do that.

I've already committed -- as I said in my opening comments -- to working closely with the Department of Justice and the Minister of Justice to make sure that we do have a strategy in place that's going to help us be able to enforce this. The RCMP themselves, or the policing in the Northwest Territories, have told us that yes, this will help them in carrying out their jobs. They have made the commitment to do whatever they can to buy the equipment that's necessary out of their existing resources. If they need more, then I'm sure the Minister of Justice and I can talk about making sure they have the equipment. When it comes to policing in other communities and communities where they just don't have adequate resources or don't have any police at all, this legislation should spur us on to try to resolve those problems and I intend to work closely with Minister Allen in resolving those. But this alone Mr. Chairman, I admit, will not do everything, but I think it's a big step. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Minister Handley. The chair will recognize Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I, too, feel that this is great legislation, but I, too, also have the same concerns of Mr. McLeod. I feel that we have to also have the tools in place to enforce our legislation, especially where we find out that the majority of our communities in the Northwest Territories don't even have breathalyzer equipment. Also in regards to having the resources to put into the policing or the enforcement of the legislation by having highway patrols or road checks or other means of trying to catch those people who are impaired on our highway systems, our road systems in the Northwest Territories. Mr. McLeod is right. In every community after 2:00 in the morning there is no policing in our communities. In order for that to happen, you have to call Yellowknife through an automated system and then hopefully you get the message through. By that time, the incident has occurred.

But I think we have to find ways of avoiding a number of deaths and incidents we have seen on our highway system because of people being impaired, also in our communities where we've had some major accidents involving snowmobiles. I think that we as a Legislative Assembly have to do more than just pass legislation. We also have to direct people that are going to use that legislation to ensure they have the resources and they have the equipment to do the job we're asking them to do.

I feel that we pass legislation time and time again with great intentions. But if the legislation is not going to be used because of a lack of equipment, such as breathalyzers or other means of increasing our patrols on our highway systems or increasing the patrols on our road systems in our communities so that we can catch these people, then we will have to do more than just pass legislation.

As for the Minister, I know he's made the comment that he's been talking to the Minister of Justice, but I think that we have to realize that there are communities out there, and the communities I represent such as Tsiigehtchic that is on the highway system and is a prohibition community. We have legislation that allows a community to ask to have prohibition where no alcohol is allowed. Yet, the RCMP are not enforcing that legislation and it is the legislation of this government. I think it is important as a government that when we pass legislation we ensure that it meets the original objectives.

So, I would like to ask the Minister exactly, is there a means or way that we can look at the budgeted amount of dollars that we spend on policing and direct some of those dollars to enforcement of this type of legislation? Has the government ever looked at that?

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

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Chairman, as I said before, I undertake to work closely with the Minister of Justice on the kinds of issues that Mr. Krutko is raising. They are serious issues and I think they are important ones in us being able to enforce this legislation and, in fact, all the legislation that we have. We will have done in passing this legislation step one, and we are not going to stop there. We need to continue to have a system that is whole. Thank you.

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

MR. KRUTKO: Just another area I would like to ask the Minister about is how do we ensure that we have the equipment to catch people who are impaired, things such as breathalyzers. We heard from the RCMP during the briefing

that they do not have this equipment throughout the Northwest Territories. I would like to know, are there going to be dollars set aside to ensure that we have the equipment so that the RCMP or other agencies can enforce the legislation? I would like to ask the Minister if this government can ensure that all the equipment necessary to enforce this legislation is in place for the people that will have to enforce it?

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

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Chairman, the police have committed publicly in support of this bill to try to find from within their resources the money to buy the equipment that is necessary. If we find, as we implement this legislation, that that just is not doable then I am sure that the Minister of Transportation and the Minister of Justice of the day will make sure that they have the resources to do it. Our intention is certainly to work with the Department of Justice and the police to make sure we can get the equipment that is necessary.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Minister Handley. The chair will recognize Ms. Lee.

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I just wanted to make a few comments in support of this legislation. I understand and appreciate that there are lots of other issues that are not being addressed with this and I must agree, with the lack of RCMP services in many areas and the City of Yellowknife, that opens up a whole new debate. The shortage of RCMP and its implication to this bill was also addressed in the committee's report.

Having been a member of this committee that reviewed the bill, I concur with the points made in the report and I do not want to repeat all of the statements made in the committee report and by the other Members around the table here. I think that, regardless of shortages or shortfalls, this is a great piece of legislative work. It is very progressive and advanced in comparison to similar law in other jurisdictions and we should be proud of making it come to reality.

Mr. Minister mentioned earlier about the long time that it has taken for this bill to get to where it is now and it has been so long that we have had whole different sets of SADD members coming and making presentations to us because some of them probably started and graduated from high school. I think it is high time that we did this.

I would also just like to mention again our appreciation for the people who appeared before us. The organization of SADD, who has been a major force behind this initiative, has appeared before us many times. We also had the help of the Northwest Territories Coroner's Office and the RCMP and the Salvation Army, and I really want to express my appreciation again for their work. So, I am not going to say much more than that, Mr. Chairman. I support this legislation and I would like to thank the Minister and the department for working on it and seeing it through. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Ms. Lee. No questions there. General comments. Detail.

Detail

Okay, in your grey binders we have Bill 5, An Act to Amend the Motor Vehicles Act. Clause 1.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Clause 2.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Clause 3.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Clause 4.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Clause 5.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Page 2, clause 6.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Clause 7.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Clause 8.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Page 3, clause 9.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Page 4, clause 10.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Clause 11.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Clause 12.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Clause 13.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Clause 14.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Page 5, clause 15. Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO: I just have a question about clause 14 regarding judgement and also the situation we find ourselves with the ruling of a court case, I believe it was in Quebec, which now has a direct effect on sentencing young offenders; that in order to sentence you have to find an alternative to sentencing. I would just like to know, has the department had a chance to look at that in light of this legislation when we deal with young offenders?

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

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Chairman, at this point we have not looked at this issue, but certainly I will discuss it with the Minister of Justice.

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

MR. KRUTKO: Can the Minister direct a question to the Minister of Justice, who is presently in the House, if you can, has his department had a chance to look at that ruling and see how it affects legislation when we talk about judges sentencing young offenders?

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

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Yes, Mr. Chairman, I would like to direct that to Minister Allen. Thank you.

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

HON. ROGER ALLEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Although we had presented to some of you Justice's position on the act, somehow when we addressed the Youth Criminal Justice Act we did not specifically deal with this section, so we need some time to again concur with the Minister of Transportation on readdressing it. So the answer is really, no.

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

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I think it is important that, if we do have to make revisions to this because of that court ruling elsewhere, that we do it. Can the Minister of Justice get back to the House if there are any changes to the legislation in case it does have an effect on this legislation? We should know as soon as possible. That could be a controversial issue if we find out that judges cannot place these types of sentences on young offenders because of the new ruling.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Krutko. I did not hear a question. Minister Handley.

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Chairman, that's a fairly technical, legal issue, whether it would apply or how to apply, so I'd like to ask Ms. Veinott to comment on that.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Handley. Ms. Veinott.

MS. VEINOTT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Because of the nature of what would be the new section 92, I don't anticipate that the Quebec matter would have any impact. It's simply a provision that indicates that if an order is vacated, a new licence can be issued or the disqualification is terminated. So I don't think it can have an effect on the new section 92. But not having had an opportunity to review the case, I don't think I can comment with complete certainty, but my expectation is that it would not have any impact.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Ms. Veinott. We're on page 4, clause 14.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Page 5, clause 15.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): We're on page 5, clause 16.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Page 24, clause 17.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Clause 18.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Page 25, clause 19.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Clause 20.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Page 26, clause 21.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Page 28, clause 22.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Page 29, clause 23.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Clause 24.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Page 33, clause 25.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Bill as a whole.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Does committee agree that Bill 5 is ready for third reading?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

---Agreed

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Bill 5 is now ready for third reading. I would like to thank the Minister and his witnesses for appearing.

---Applause

What is the wish of the committee? Mr. Dent.

MR. DENT: Mr. Chairman, I'd like to move that we report progress.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): There is a motion on the floor. The motion is non-debatable. All those in favour? All those opposed? The motion is carried.

---Carried

The chair will rise and report progress.

MR. SPEAKER: The House will now come back to order. May I have the 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: Mr. Speaker, your committee has been considering Bill 5, An Act to Amend the Motor Vehicles Act, and would like to report that Bill 5 is ready for third reading. Mr. Speaker, I move that the report of Committee of the Whole be concurred with.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you. Do we have a seconder to the motion? The honourable Member for Nahendeh seconds the motion. The motion is in order. All those in favour? Thank you. All those opposed? The motion is carried.

---Carried

Item 21, third reading of bills. The honourable Member for Thebacha, Mr. Miltenberger.

ITEM 21: THIRD READING OF BILLS

Bill 10, An Act To Amend The Hospital Insurance And Health And Social Services Administration Act

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Nahendeh, that Bill 10, An Act to Amend the Hospital Insurance and Health and Social Services Administration Act, be read for the third time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. We have a motion. The motion is in order. To the motion.

AN HON. MEMBER: Question.

MR. SPEAKER: Question has been called. All those in favour, please signify. Thank you. All those opposed? Thank you. The motion is carried.

---Carried

Bill 10 has had third reading. Item 21, third reading of bills. The chair recognizes the honourable Member for Thebacha, Mr. Miltenberger.

Bill 12, Nursing Profession Act

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's with pleasure that I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Nunakput, that Bill 12, Nursing Profession Act, be read for the third time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. There is a motion on the floor. The motion is in order. To the motion.

AN HON. MEMBER: Question.

MR. SPEAKER: Question has been called. All those in favour, please signify. Thank you. All those opposed? Thank you. Unanimous. The motion is carried.

---Carried

Bill 12 has had third reading. Are there any other third reading of bills?

---Applause

Mr. Clerk, may we have the orders of the day.

ITEM 22: ORDERS OF THE DAY

CLERK OF THE HOUSE: Mr. Speaker, a meeting of the standing committees on Governance and Economic Development and Social Programs at adjournment today, and at 9:00 a.m. tomorrow morning of the Standing Committee on Accountability and Oversight.

Orders of the day for Friday, June 6, 2003:

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 Motions for First Reading of Bills
16. Motions
17. First Reading of Bills
 - Bill 18, Supplementary Appropriation Act, No. 1, 2003-2004
18. Second Reading of Bills
19. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters
 - Minister's Statement 44-14(6), Specialist Negotiations
20. Report of Committee of the Whole
21. Third Reading of Bills
 - Bill 5, An Act to Amend the Motor Vehicles Act
22. Orders of the Day

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Clerk. Accordingly, this House stands adjourned until Friday, June 6th at 10:00 a.m.

---ADJOURNMENT

The House adjourned at 5:15 p.m.

