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The Honourable Paul Delorey, Speaker

Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

PRAYER	493
MINISTERS' STATEMENTS	493
41-15(5) - MINISTERIAL ASSIGNMENTS.....	493
42-15(5) - PREPARING TO IMPLEMENT THE NEW DEAL FOR NWT COMMUNITY GOVERNMENTS	493
43-15(5) - COMMUNITY HEALTH REPRESENTATIVE TRAINING	494
44-15(5) - CHAMPIONS FOR CHILDREN.....	494
MEMBERS' STATEMENTS.....	494
MR. VILLENEUVE ON GNWT CONSULTATION PROCESS FOR REGIONAL AND COMMUNITY GOVERNMENTS AND INDIVIDUAL RESIDENTS	494
MR. POKIAK ON TUKTOYAKTUK GRAVEL REQUIREMENTS	495
MR. RAMSAY ON GNWT MACROECONOMIC POLICY DIVISION	495
MR. HAWKINS ON IMPACT OF FEDERAL BUDGET RELATIONS ON THE NWT VOLUNTEER SECTOR	496
MR. MILTENBERGER ON IMPROVEMENTS TO THE CAPITAL PLANNING PROCESS.....	496
MR. YAKELEYA ON MAKEOVER PROCESS FOR TERRITORIAL HOUSING STOCKS	497
MR. ROBERT MCLEOD ON COMPARABLE COMPENSATION FOR NORTHERN NURSES	497
MRS. GROENEWEGEN ON SPEAKING TO MATTERS OF ACCOUNTABILITY AND INTEGRITY.....	497
MR. BRADEN ON OPERATIONAL REVIEW OF THE NORTH SLAVE CORRECTIONAL CENTRE	498
MS. LEE ON SUPPORTS FOR SMALL BUSINESS OPERATORS.....	498
HON. DAVID KRUTKO ON SEARCH FOR WILLIAM TEYA.....	499
REPORTS OF STANDING AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES.....	499
RECOGNITION OF VISITORS IN THE GALLERY	502
ORAL QUESTIONS	503
WRITTEN QUESTIONS	514
FIRST READING OF BILLS.....	514
BILL 13 - SUPPLEMENTARY APPROPRIATION ACT, NO. 2, 2006-2007	514
SECOND READING OF BILLS.....	514
BILL 13 - SUPPLEMENTARY APPROPRIATION ACT, NO. 2, 2006-2007	514
BILL 15 - ELECTIONS AND PLEBISCITES ACT	515
BILL 16 - AN ACT TO AMEND THE JURY ACT.....	515
BILL 17 - AN ACT TO AMEND THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY AND EXECUTIVE COUNCIL ACT, NO. 2.....	515
BILL 18 - AN ACT TO AMEND THE EDUCATION ACT	515
BILL 19 - AN ACT TO AMEND THE ARCHIVES ACT.....	516
BILL 20 - AN ACT TO AMEND THE INCOME TAX ACT	516
CONSIDERATION IN COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE OF BILLS AND OTHER MATTERS	516

REPORT OF COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE.....	530
THIRD READING OF BILLS	531
BILL 6 - ENGINEERING AND GEOSCIENCE PROFESSIONS ACT	531
ORDERS OF THE DAY.....	531

YELLOWKNIFE, NORTHWEST TERRITORIES**Thursday, October 26, 2006****Members Present**

Honourable Brendan Bell, Mr. Braden, Honourable Paul Delorey, Honourable Charles Dent, Mrs. Groenewegen, Honourable Joe Handley, Mr. Hawkins, Honourable David Krutko, Mr. Lafferty, Ms. Lee, Honourable Michael McLeod, Mr. McLeod, Mr. Menicoche, Mr. Miltenberger, Mr. Pokiak, Mr. Ramsay, Honourable Floyd Roland, Mr. Villeneuve, Mr. Yakeleya

ITEM 1: PRAYER

---Prayer

SPEAKER (Hon. Paul Delorey): Please be seated. Good afternoon, colleagues. Welcome back to the House. Orders of the day. Ministers' statements. The honourable Premier, Mr. Handley.

ITEM 2: MINISTERS' STATEMENTS**Minister's Statement 41-15(5): Ministerial Assignments**

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to inform this Assembly of the following change to portfolio assignments effective 5:00 p.m. today. I will assume responsibility for the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation.

The Honourable Floyd Roland will retain responsibility for the Department of Health and Social Services.

The Honourable Charles Dent will become Minister of Human Resources and Minister responsible for Seniors and Persons with Disabilities.

The Honourable Brendan Bell will lead our efforts to deal with the issue of homelessness in the Northwest Territories.

The Honourable Michael McLeod will assume responsibility for the Department of Environment and Natural Resources.

The Honourable David Krutko will become Minister of Public Works and Services and Minister responsible for the Workers' Compensation Board.

The Honourable Kevin Menicoche will become the Minister of Transportation and the Minister responsible for the Public Utilities Board.

Mr. Speaker, all other assignments remain unchanged. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Handley. Ministers' statements. The honourable Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs, Mr. McLeod.

Minister's Statement 42-15(5): Preparing To Implement The New Deal For NWT Community Governments

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs is now six months away from implementation for the New Deal for the Northwest Territories community

governments. A key priority including this government's strategic plan, this comprehensive initiative which builds on past efforts to empower communities will provide community governments with the authority and resources to plan, design and build community public infrastructure.

With ongoing input from community governments, the Northwest Territories Association of Communities and the Local Government Administrators of the Northwest Territories, Municipal and Community Affairs is working to prepare community governments for the additional responsibilities that are part of the New Deal. Building capacity in all areas of local government leadership and administration is an ongoing priority that will enable community governments to effectively take advantage of the New Deal.

At this time, the department is spearheading a number of initiatives that will support community governments.

The department has completed a baseline assessment of community public infrastructure to communities, so they know the current state of their infrastructure and they can develop a capital investment plan accordingly.

Pilot projects have been established to provide five interested community governments with funds to design, manage and construct community infrastructure. The department will partner with them to assist and document best practices. Already these pilot projects are demonstrating that community governments are able to take on these responsibilities and develop infrastructure that respects local priorities, territorial goals and national standards.

Municipal and Community Affairs will work to develop individual transition plans with every community that is taking on new authorities, including developing specific capital investment plans, so that they are ready to proceed in April 2007 with support from MACA as requested and needed.

The School of Community Government is developing new training modules for new community responsibilities including project management, capital planning and building operations. Finally, Municipal and Community Affairs staff are being oriented so that they are ready to assist and support community governments through this transition to new responsibilities.

I am pleased to inform Members that in late November, the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs, in partnership with the Northwest Territories Association of Communities and the Arctic Energy Alliance will be hosting a sustainable planning conference which will focus on integrated community sustainable planning and energy strategies for all community governments for the Northwest Territories. Funding for this conference will be provided through the Gas Tax Funding Agreement with

the federal government, since developing capital plans and community energy plans is a requirement of this agreement. Subsequently, in April 2007, the department is planning a follow-up conference that will focus on the implementation of the New Deal, including workshops on tools, approaches and best practices that the community could utilize to realize their priorities, especially those related to community infrastructure. These two conferences provide a forum for community leaders and staff to strategize, plan and prepare for new opportunities.

Community governments are evolving and taking on a broader range of responsibilities. Community governments know that allocating their resources in accordance with sound vision and good planning will result in sustainable, capable communities that are able to meet the needs and aspirations of the residents. Through conferences, planning tools and capacity building, Municipal and Community Affairs is working to support them in doing so. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mahsi.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Ministers' statements. The honourable Minister of Health and Social Services, Mr. Roland.

Minister's Statement 43-15(5): Community Health Representative Training

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am pleased to share news about the continued success of the training of community health representatives. Aurora College offers the Health Sciences Program which certifies new community health representatives and re-certifies existing community health representatives. The regional health and social services authorities provide financial support for this training.

During each training phase, the students interview retired community health representatives and capture the historical perspective of those who lead the way in health promotion. The students gain a great deal of knowledge through these interviews. Their insights are integrated into components of their training. This process adds to the knowledge and development of community health representatives.

Mr. Speaker, during the months ahead, 19 community health representatives will achieve basic First Aid and CPR certification.

Five community health representatives will achieve instructor level certification in First Aid and CPR. This training provides life-saving skills and develops awareness, prevents injuries and builds capacities in NWT communities.

Community health representatives are the health coaches in our communities. They support individual and community efforts to develop the best health status possible. They lead the way in teaching health protection and personal responsibility and are the builders of a healthier future for all.

I encourage all Members of the Assembly to support the contributions of community health representatives. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Roland. Ministers' statements. The honourable Minister responsible for Youth, Mr. McLeod.

Minister's Statement 44-15(5): Champions For Children

HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to report to Members on the results of an extraordinary fundraising initiative that will make a significant difference to sport development in the Northwest Territories.

On September 9th of this year, the Sport North Federation and several key corporate sponsors including Medic North, the Royal Bank, Canadian North, Top of the World Travel, and Nunasi Corporation sponsored the Champions for Children fundraising dinner.

Ron McLean of Hockey Night in Canada fame and retired Chicago Blackhawks player Dennis Hull were two of the key speakers at the event. Many others assisted including Olympic and Paralympic medal winners Sara Renner and Donovan Tildsley and northern Olympians Sharon and Shirley Firth.

This one-day event raised an amazing \$50,000.

---Applause

These funds will now be split between Sport North's Kidsport Program and the NWT High Performance Athlete Grant Program, which is a partnership between the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs and Sport North.

The Kidsport Program plays a crucial part in the Northwest Territories sports program. It helps buy equipment, pay for user fees and assists with many other expenses for many children who would not get a chance to play if a program like this did not exist. In the lead up to the 2006 Arctic Winter Games, the Kidsport Program played a very important role in helping youth participate.

The NWT High Performance Athlete Grant Program supports today's sport champions as they pursue their dreams, including the Olympics. The athletes are not only champions but are also today's youth role models and tomorrow's sports leaders.

Earlier this year, I was pleased to announce that 10 NWT athletes received funding from the program in 2005-06. Later this fall, I will be announcing the 2006-07 recipients.

Both programs could not exist without the great support of the corporate sector and the volunteers who help out with events like the Champions for Children dinner. Mahsi.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Ministers' statements. Members' statements. The honourable Member for Tu Nedhe, Mr. Villeneuve.

ITEM 3: MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

Member's Statement On GNWT Consultation Process For Regional And Community Governments And Individual Residents

MR. VILLENEUVE: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, today I just want to talk about the consultation processes this government conducts with the regional governments,

our community governments and any individual residents in the NWT. Mr. Speaker, we have all heard of a lack of comprehensive consultations and the lackadaisical attitude of taking proper direction from community organizations and residents in outlying communities by our bureaucracy.

We often hear about the issues and concerns during these consultation meetings falling on deaf ears. We are not reaching the proper authorities; for example, the Ministers' offices on actions or initiatives to consider in order to resolve many concerns being brought forward. What people have learned, Mr. Speaker, is that many residents and community organizations are now demanding something in writing from any government official who travels to their community promising houses, resources or better programs to residents.

Mr. Speaker, this important lesson has been a result of many empty promises and also to ensure more accountability by our government and our bureaucracy to our northern residents. Now we have a situation in my constituency where a government official acted on an informal telephone conversation where an arrangement seems to make sense, but he also needed the proper authority in writing from a community council in order to be legitimately acknowledged and approved. This was never received, therefore not approved. The situation has now put more tension and strain between these community organizations and residents on the efforts to work together.

Mr. Speaker, this community has been hindered by many lines being drawn in the sand for many years, thus resulting in many development initiatives that may improve the lives of residents not receiving full community support, therefore never becoming a reality.

This action by government has drawn another line in the sand and I want our government to know that they cannot act in haste or without proper authority, especially when trying to resolve issues related to the distribution of government dollars to various community organizations that are often working in a very volatile and sensitive political environment. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Villeneuve. Members' statements. The honourable Member for Nunakput, Mr. Pokiak.

Member's Statement On Tuktoyaktuk Gravel Requirements

MR. POKIAK: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Before I start, I would like to extend a birthday greeting to my daughter in Nanaimo, B.C. Thank you.

---Applause

Mr. Speaker, my Member's statement today is about the need for gravel for maintenance of roads, driveways and pads for further development in Tuktoyaktuk. Mr. Speaker, access to gravel sources accessible are only during the winter months, mainly because of the distance and sensitivity of the terrain. We all know, Mr. Speaker, the weather has been extraordinarily warm, which means construction of ice roads to nearby communities will

probably be in late December or January, or even later, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, the Tuktoyaktuk Community Planning Committee has identified the need and requirements of outside of the urban centres. The Cabinet and deputy ministers should consider the needs of the communities outside of the centres. The need for gravel for road, water, access services, road access for gravel pads is vital for the communities.

Earlier this week, the Minister of Housing indicated that over the next three years, there will be over 530 units to be constructed in the Northwest Territories and that the department is working with MACA to ensure that lot development will be available. Tuktoyaktuk has the lots available to address their needs right now, Mr. Speaker, but their concerns will not be addressed until they have access to gravel.

By building an access road to source 177, this will address their future development of infrastructure for Tuktoyaktuk. This government, Mr. Speaker, should work with ILA to gain access to gravel source 177, which is only 22 kilometres southeast of Tuktoyaktuk.

Opening up source 177 would address Tuktoyaktuk granular requirements for a number of years. Earlier this year, Mr. Speaker, I requested that the government commence dialogue with the ILA before the proposed construction of the Mackenzie Valley gas pipeline. Has the Department of MACA and Transportation done this to date?

Mr. Speaker, if this government does not address this problem immediately, access to source 177 will be identified by industry for their infrastructure requirements. Mr. Speaker, I urge this government to allocate funds for Tuktoyaktuk for access to granular source 177, so they can plan for today and future developments. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Pokiak. Members' statements. The honourable Member for Kam Lake, Mr. Ramsay.

Member's Statement On GNWT Macroeconomic Policy Division

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wanted to utilize my Member's statement today to speak about the Government of the Northwest Territories developing a macroeconomic policy framework for the NWT. The Minister of Finance stood up in the House the other day extolling the virtues of this type of policy shop located in the Department of Finance. Interestingly enough, Mr. Speaker, the Bureau of Statistics was relocated last year to the Department of Executive. I find it a shocking coincidence that the Department of Finance all of a sudden thought it was such a great idea to develop a macroeconomic policy division.

It really is amazing how we can develop a macroeconomic policy division and hire three more employees without knowing what exactly we are dealing with. Mr. Speaker, I would like to know why we are pursuing this initiative now.

I would like to point out some facts for the Minister and for the government. The last time I checked, we didn't have a resource revenue deal or devolution deal with Ottawa. We receive \$850 million directly or indirectly from the federal government out of our \$1.1 billion budget. We have a very limited control, next to no control, over resource development. We are limited in the areas of taxation, in spending, debt and investment. Mr. Speaker, we are on a fixed income here. These are the facts. Just last week, I questioned the government on the issue of the \$200 million leaving our territorial economy every year because of over 2,000 migrant workers we have here in the NWT. You add to this all of the cash that leaves the North for contract work performed on behalf of joint ventures. Mr. Speaker, it's just very, very disturbing.

Our economy is plain and simply just not real. Like I mentioned earlier, all the control is in Ottawa and we heard the Premier yesterday state that resource revenue and devolution is the government's top priority and so it should be. We have higher priorities. The development of this macroeconomic policy division should be halted immediately. How can you develop a policy framework and allow employees to begin working on what will amount to be hypothetical scenarios? Put the focus on getting a deal done with Ottawa. When we do get control then and only then should we entertain a macroeconomic policy shop. Mahsi.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. Members' statements. The honourable Member for Yellowknife Centre, Mr. Hawkins.

Member's Statement On Impact Of Federal Budget Relations On The NWT Volunteer Sector

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I'd like to talk about the effects of the recent cuts by the federal government and what those effects will have on volunteer NWT as well as the rest of the volunteer sector, Mr. Speaker. This Assembly has recognized the contributions of volunteers and how it plays a significant role in improving our social, economic, cultural, and environmental conditions throughout our North. We are aware of how much they enhance our quality of life in the NWT and they contribute to our economy approximately \$50 million, Mr. Speaker.

In March 2005 the Premier signed the GNWT Declaration on Volunteering with his Cabinet approval. On behalf of the government, the Premier committed to honour and support the NWT volunteers and the volunteering organizations, support the implementation of the voluntary sector initiative, and establish linkages with other levels of governments and business sectors, Mr. Speaker. This government must live up to their commitments it made to the NWT volunteers and the other organizations when they embarked on this initiative and to this declaration that they made in 2005.

Mr. Speaker, one of the goals of this GNWT action plan was to seek financial stability within voluntary organizations and to link GNWT and federal government voluntary support initiatives. The federal government must hear what these cuts mean to us as a territory, as an Assembly and as a people. The government needs to display its ability to handle the situation and to ensure that

those commitments made last year to those volunteers are truly met.

Mr. Speaker, in closing, I look to Cabinet for leadership on this issue, commitment to be followed through, and support demonstrated clearly to the volunteer sector. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. Members' statements. The honourable Member for Thebacha, Mr. Miltenberger.

Member's Statement On Improvements To The Capital Planning Process

MR. MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, today I would like to talk briefly about the capital planning process and what I think are deficiencies that I think are costing us probably an extra 30 percent of our capital budget and the steps that we could take, I think, to remedy that and put much needed dollars back into the process.

The question is very simple: Why is it that a homeowner that's going to build a house will manage to have the supplies on the ground in late winter, just before spring, so that when the ground thaws they are doing footings and the outside construction? Why is it that Diavik Diamond Mines, for example, a huge capital project out on the barren lands, could get their supplies in over tremendous distance and difficulty on the ground and get their mine built on schedule and on budget? How is it that Diavik Mines can come into Yellowknife -- one of our best corporate citizens, I might add -- can come into Yellowknife and pick up two big projects and bring them in on time and under budget? When, as a government, we routinely take extraordinary amounts of time to plan, design, and then finally build, and when the homeowner and major construction projects are going inside in the winter to do the inside work we are breaking ground to pour concrete?

The issue to me, Mr. Speaker, is very simple. It's bedevilled us now for decades. I've worked for 20 years with the government and I put in 11 years in this Legislature and we constantly struggle with what do we do with our capital planning process to make it more efficient. Yet we have never, in my opinion, taken the time to look at the process from this particular forum right up to delivery on the ground with the project. It is my contention, Mr. Speaker, that we could save probably up to 30 percent of our capital budget if in fact we could readjust how we do our planning right from this Legislature to the ground. We should be able to duplicate what the business community can do with major projects, what the homeowner can do. I would suggest that as we look forward here that we should take the time, in fact, to look at that process. I will say once again that I believe we can save up to 30 percent of what we now spend on our capital budget and I would further suggest that we might want to take the opportunity, if necessary, to ask Diavik or one of those very successful companies to take a look at how we do business, to help us out. Thank you.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Members' statements. The honourable Member for Sahtu, Mr. Yakeleya.

Member's Statement On Makeover Process For Territorial Housing Stocks

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, there's a TV program that's called Extreme Makeover that's about fixing homes requiring major renovations for families in need. The show sends the members of the household on a vacation while their homes are being fixed. Well, Mr. Speaker, I think this House can use a northern version of Extreme Makeover, Mr. Speaker. The makeover crew will be the Regular MLAs. We'll find the money and we'll send Cabinet on a little vacation, maybe to Disneyland or to Bern Brown's Fishing Lodge in Colville Lake, just like they do to the residents of the house on the Extreme Makeover show, Mr. Speaker. We'll start with one room of this House. Let me think. Hmm. We'll start with the Sahtu room.

---Laughter

Then we'll keep working on all the regional rooms until we're done. However, time will just allow the Sahtu region, for this episode anyway, Mr. Speaker.

We could get into the attitude of getting the job done right. We can, we would consult with the people, get their ideas of what needs to get done, we would shop efficiently on a united budget organizing with the airlines and other transportation carriers to get the best price for our dollars. We will set out solid design plans and consider the client's needs first, Mr. Speaker. We will rearrange the authorities and decision-making powers to bring them within arm's reach of the residents. They will become useful to the homeowners because they are not so far away.

Mr. Speaker, we will also throw those noisy diesel-powered generators out and install heat-efficient wood stoves or even wood pellet stoves. These would be more affordable for our homeowners to operator, Mr. Speaker. We will consult with the experts, like the local heavy equipment companies and the land owners, for the best approach to secure land and save millions of dollars to get the gravel for housing pads and not have to barge gravel from one community to the next.

Mr. Speaker, the Sahtu room of this house would make a lot of room for nurses and doctors so they could stay with comfort in our communities. Mr. Speaker, we'll use the room to help rebuild the Sahtu or listen to the input and learn the given trade. Mr. Speaker, as part of this makeover, a room would be used for day care centres that is easier for young mothers and fathers to make a contribution to the household, knowing their children will be playing happy and have a safe home.

Mr. Speaker, finally with the renovations complete we'll bring Cabinet Ministers back to port from their retreat, show them what we have done. Hopefully the Sahtu renovation will inspire other makeovers...

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Yakeleya, your time for your Member's statement has expired. Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. The honourable Member for Inuvik Twin Lakes, Mr. McLeod.

Member's Statement On Comparable Compensation For Northern Nurses

MR. MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I apprenticed with DPW quite a few years ago and one of the things I noticed when I was apprenticing there was the amount of employees we had there from the South that would just come up, work, and then leave. It was easy for them because there was so much incentive for them to come north and work here. As more and more northerners became trained and the incentives became less and less, because working and living at home should have been your incentive, a lot of them left.

A good case, Mr. Speaker, would be we're going through the same thing right now, but it's with our nurses. We have nurses that are working side by side with nurses that come up from the South and they're getting paid less money. The ones that come from the South, and we thank them for coming north and working up here but, at the same time, we have to look after the girls, the nurses from the North that are trained and plan to live here, make the North their home.

Last year, Mr. Speaker, there were 26 graduates and I believe this year we may have 11 more. By doing this we're sending them the wrong message. Are we telling them that they would be better off financially living down south but coming up north to work for two weeks, side by side, get more money, get a housing allowance, get their way paid up, and then they can go down, spend their money south where the cost of living is a lot cheaper than it is up here. We're sending these graduates the wrong message and I think it's time that we started taking care of the nurses that plan to make the Northwest Territories their home; the ones that were born and raised here, they want to work here.

The amount of money that they get paid, they work 12-hour shifts and they get paid at a level that's lower than a lot of people and, Mr. Speaker, I don't think that's very fair. They provide a service that's essential to the North and is this how we tell them how much we value they work that they do, by making them work long, hard hours for less money? I think it's time this government, Mr. Speaker, stepped up to the plate and showed these nurses how much we value their commitment to the North and the work that they put into the North. Thank you.

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

Member's Statement On Speaking To Matters Of Accountability And Integrity

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, today I want to talk about something which is, I believe, a long held perception in the public about the way in which things work in this Assembly. Each Member elected to the Assembly has the right, privilege, and even the obligation, to stand up for their constituents. They also have the right to speak their conscience on matters of conduct and integrity. They should be able to do that without any fear of reprisal.

This is a unique institution in that we ourselves are the gatekeepers on the standard of accountability and integrity to which we wish to aspire and hold ourselves. From time to time it is part of our job to speak to matters

of conduct and integrity. We should never feel that doing so will compromise the interest of our constituencies. There are people in our constituencies who feel that if a Member speaks to difficult issues that cause anything but happiness for the Members of our Cabinet, we do so at the peril of the aspirations of our ridings. I'd like to believe that this is not the case.

I'm not a big fan of bullying or intimidation tactics and there is no limit to the depth in which the principles of democracy could sink if this happens. We should be vigilant to defend the rights of freedom to express both support, when it's merited, and disapproval of what we see coming from our leaders. I, for one, will fight long and hard and even loudly to discourage the reality or perception of the theory that those who don't conform will be punished or intimidated in some way.

Mr. Speaker, there are people out there who don't know how things work in this government, who think that there's a list of initiatives or capital projects sitting on the Cabinet table and when the Member for that riding does something they shouldn't do, there's a little pen that comes out and arbitrarily things start getting stroked off. People still think that in this day and age, and I am standing up today because I want to dispel that theory because I don't believe that's the case, nor should it be the case. I'll have questions later today for the Premier on his thoughts on this matter. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. Members' statements. The honourable Member for Great Slave, Mr. Braden.

Member's Statement On Operational Review Of The North Slave Correctional Centre

MR. BRADEN: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. In 2004, at the insistence of this Assembly, a human resource review was undertaken at the North Slave correction facility, Mr. Speaker. This plan tells us that there is, or should, be a strong focus at the North Slave Correctional Centre shifting from a penal or punishment approach to one of healing and rehabilitation of inmates. This is a very positive step, but from some things that I've heard from some inmates, constituents, over the course of the past few months, from what I've heard, Mr. Speaker, we're not there yet.

Mr. Speaker, it appears that adequate staffing at the facility and training is still an issue there. The staff are not able to fully carry out their jobs due to a lack of training. Inmates have told me that a shortage of staff dictates a number of restrictions or cancellation of programs and things that they have expected and, indeed, we should be delivering to them. A persistent complaint, Mr. Speaker, is an inadequate communication with staff, getting different messages at different times from different people about their situations.

Mr. Speaker, it's especially troubling, I heard from some remanded inmates or persons awaiting trial who have been there for months, who are denied access to programs, even very, I think, rudimentary and elementary programs that they should have access to even though they may not be serving time for a conviction. Mr. Speaker, I'm particularly concerned too about restrictions to access for volunteer support and help organizations

such as the John Howard Society. These are things that must change immediately if we're going to allow the rehabilitation that we aspire to there.

Mr. Speaker, along with the HR review and the steps in progress to implement this, I'm wondering if it's time for a performance and operational review of our correctional service to see that it is indeed implementing what we want it to do, Mr. Speaker.

---Applause

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

Member's Statement On Supports For Small Business Operators

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I wish to speak today about the importance of doing what we can in this government to support the small businesses all over the NWT and in Yellowknife. Mr. Speaker, I have to tell you that I have just heard from my constituents that there are two restaurants in this town that are looking at closing their doors this summer. This is primarily due to rising expenses, labour shortages and generally a very negative business environment in Yellowknife, Mr. Speaker. I have spoken of this before and I have to tell you that we need to do more to create a better small business environment.

One of the suggestions and questions that I asked in the House had to do with reducing the small business corporation tax. As you recall, Mr. Speaker, in the last budget there was a reduction for the big corporations, but there was supposed to be a review done for the small, but it has not come about yet and I'd like to ask the government to revisit that.

Another thing that needs to be done, of course, and that's another thing that's been raised a lot, is to reduce the red tape and regulations and rates of WCB and the Power Corporation. Another thing that's on the table that I think should get more attention is to reduce the northern residents tax deduction because, Mr. Speaker, even though this is a federal issue it's a small thing that we can do and if we are not successful in lobbying the federal government to change that -- because who knows how long that's going to take -- it is incumbent that this does not excuse this government from doing anything on our own to make ourselves more competitive.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to say that Range Lake, the riding that I represent, is one of the most prosperous ridings in the NWT probably. I tell you, this summer almost half of the houses went up for sale. The word on the street is that the people who are doing business and living here are finding that it's just way too expensive to live and do business in the North, and this government is not doing enough to reduce that. The fact is the AOC members visited small communities this summer and we talked about and listened to people about the cost of living issues and that's a serious issue for small communities versus Yellowknife. But I tell you, for Yellowknife, our competitor is Alberta and Alberta cities and we're just not being competitive enough.

So, Mr. Speaker, I'll be looking in this last budget of this Assembly for the government to do something about dealing with this issue head on. Thank you.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Lee. Members' statements. The honourable Member for Mackenzie Delta, Mr. Krutko.

Member's Statement On Search For William Teya

HON. DAVID KRUTKO: Mr. Speaker, I had an opportunity to travel home to Fort McPherson last weekend and spend time with the Teya family. As we all know, William Teya has been missing since September 24th.

Mr. Speaker, Mary Teya and her family would like to thank the people who searched tirelessly day in and day out for over a month, and to the people who provided and prepared the meals for the participants in the search. The community continues to search for William Teya and the RCMP are still following up on leads. I encourage the public to do whatever they can to assist the community, the RCMP, and to help in any way to bring closure to this matter.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to say mahsi cho, thank you very much, to the RCMP, Canadian Rangers from Fort McPherson, Old Crow in the Yukon, the communities of Fort McPherson, Tsiigehtchic, Aklavik, Inuvik, Fort Good Hope and Old Crow, and all the communities that supported across the Territories and their participation and their donation to the search.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank all who have been supportive of the Teya family, encouraged them to continue their support over the days and months to come. All their thoughts and prayers have been a help to the community and to the Teya family in their time of need. With that, mahsi cho to you all. Thank you.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Members' statements. Reports of standing and special committees. Honourable Member for Great Slave, Mr. Braden.

ITEM 4: REPORTS OF STANDING AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES

Committee Report 5-15(5): Report On The Review Of The Report Of The Auditor General On The Workers' Compensation Board Of The Northwest Territories And Nunavut

MR. BRADEN: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure today to read into the record the report of the Accountability and Oversight committee of the review of the Report of the Auditor General on the Workers' Compensation of the Northwest Territories and Nunavut.

Mr. Speaker, the Standing Committee on Accountability and Oversight held its public reviews on the Report of the Auditor General on the Workers' Compensation Board of the Northwest Territories and Nunavut from June 28 to 30, 2006, and on September 20, 2006. The committee was pleased that Mr. Keith Peterson, a Member of the Nunavut Legislative Assembly and Standing Committee on Government Operations, was able to attend our June proceedings as an observer. The committee would like to thank the Auditor General, Ms. Sheila Fraser, and her staff for their excellent work in preparing the report and in assisting the committee with its review. We would also

like to thank everyone who provided written submissions or appeared before the committee, and in particular the injured workers and their family members who showed great courage by speaking in public about their personal experiences.

General Comments

Mr. Speaker, the report of the Auditor General came about at the request of the Legislative Assembly after years of frustration on the part of injured workers, their families, and MLAs with the callous and corporate-centred administration of the cases of some injured workers.

The Auditor General of Canada accepted our request to conduct a performance audit of the Workers' Compensation Board, the Appeals Tribunal and related offices to look into their compliance and process in relation to these cases. In all, about 40 files were referred to the Auditor General.

The committee, Mr. Speaker, does not find a WCB in crisis, and neither did the Auditor General of Canada. However, several areas of fundamental concern have been identified. These are at the most senior levels of the WCB and consequently, Mr. Speaker, have filtered into the organizational roots and culture of the board.

These issues have caused this most vital of our labour institutions to go astray, violate and deny the rights and privileges of some injured workers and allow an attitude of indifference, avoidance and denial to pervade the board and the tribunal.

The Auditor General's report makes 36 recommendations, almost all of which the relevant workers' compensation authorities have agreed with. This is a start to the process of rehabilitation. Changing the policies and performance will take some time, but it must begin with the will and the commitment of the Governance Council and senior WCB executives who are entrusted with this essential part of our economy and our society.

The report states that the WCB is an important public institution that needs to have the confidence of the community. The committee was pleased that the Auditor General was able to confirm many aspects of the system are working well, including the processing of claims according to policy, and the financial position of the accident fund.

However, Mr. Speaker, as the report indicates, and as our discussions with employers, workers and other stakeholders confirm, there are many areas where fundamental change is needed, including policy development, accountability to stakeholders, the claims process, and communications. The existence of several unresolved claims that go back decades is particularly troubling for Members, Mr. Speaker.

Recommendation

The Standing Committee on Accountability and Oversight recommends the Minister come forward with options to expedite the resolution of long-outstanding claims, and to improve timelines for the hearing of appeals.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask my colleague, the honourable Member for Range Lake, to continue reading the report into the record.

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

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the Governance Council must continue to show leadership and commitment, as it demonstrated in its appearance before committee in June, to improving the policy development process, and in particular resolving difficult issues such as chronic pain and pre-existing conditions. The council should not be afraid to break new ground and try made-in-the-north solutions where approaches borrowed from other jurisdictions do not work.

The council should also continue its work to improve accountability, for example, by developing its external reporting as well as its internal balanced scorecard. In the area of risk management, we encourage the council to expand its efforts to prepare for a Mackenzie gas project beyond reviewing the rate structure to, for example, looking at the adequacy of its policies to deal with the types of injuries and issues that are likely to come with such a mega project.

Following our discussion with members of the WCB administration, the committee was concerned that management may not fully appreciate the need for substantive changes to the way the board deals with claimants. For example, one member of the management team admitted that due to turnover and operational requirements, some training takes place on the job. This is not acceptable. It is essential that all claims staff receive sensitivity and customer service training. Further, this training should be provided by outsiders who can provide a fresh perspective and experience from other organizations.

Plain language communication is another area that requires improvement, and the committee welcomed the administration's commitment to progress on this front. We encourage the WCB to look not only at the letters it sends out to claimants, but also at developing plain language versions of at least the most commonly used policies.

At the time of our June hearings, the Governance Council and board had not yet had the opportunity to develop a work plan for addressing the Auditor General's recommendations, and advised us that they were working on a draft protocol for communications with the Minister and Legislative Assembly. The committee looks forward to reviewing both the work plan and the draft protocol in the coming months. The committee will also consider making a regular practice of conducting public hearings on the annual reports tabled by the WCB, Appeals Tribunal and workers' advisor in order to keep the lines of communication open as we work toward a more effective workers' compensation system.

Recommendation

The Standing Committee on Accountability and Oversight recommends the Minister ensure the Governance Council and Workers' Compensation Board administration complete a draft communications protocol and an action plan to address the Auditor General's recommendations,

and forward these to the committee by the end of 2006.

The committee was pleased to hear that the Appeals Tribunal is developing its own website and is looking for a location outside of the WCB's offices. The actual and perceived independence of the tribunal from the board is essential to its credibility and performance. The committee encourages the tribunal to work on developing performance measures which will help it to become more accountable to the public.

Recommendation

The standing committee recommends that the Minister locate the Appeals Tribunal offices separate and apart from the board and that this relocation be undertaken as an immediate priority.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to refer to Mr. Ramsay to continue. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Lee. Honourable Member for Kam Lake, Mr. Ramsay.

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Corporate Culture

While the report provided many recommendations that will help to make the workers' compensation system more effective and responsive, the nature of audit did not allow for it to deal directly with the WCB's corporate culture, which the committee believes is at the root of many of the concerns of injured workers and their families. Members have heard that from the perspective of at least some of the clients, the WCB has an unfriendly, fortress-like atmosphere, where workers and family members feel like they are treated with suspicion from the moment they walk in the door. The one employer who spoke at our public hearings also expressed concern with how workers are treated, and stated categorically, "we don't authorize, permit, support WCB being ruthless of what claims it supports. ... We want workers to be taken care of. ... We want them to be rehabilitated, we want them to be compensated, and we want it to be done quickly and expeditiously. ... We will pay for that."

Recommendation

The standing committee recommends the Minister direct the Governance Council to overhaul its reception protocols, security practices and client and public relations functions to provide a more accessible and responsive level of service.

When we asked the workers' advisor about his impression of the WCB's corporate culture, in our view, he captured the issue when he said, "I believe that at some point in the last 20 years, managing the accident fund has taken a greater priority than managing the legislation." As the workers' advisor went on to point out, the fault does not lie with any individual WCB staff, who are, after all, doing what they have been trained to do. This is an institutional problem which the organization as a whole needs to commit to fixing.

We were concerned after discussing the WCB's corporate culture with the Governance Council that some of the council members seemed to have the impression that what we are effectively asking is for them to always say

"yes." The committee understands that not all claimants have a compensable injury that can easily and readily be diagnosed and processed. Likewise, the committee recognizes that not all employers are always right in their demands. In some cases the answer will have to be "no." We would like to make it clear that our expectation is not for the WCB to always say "yes," but for them to treat all claimants and clients in a timely and professional manner, in compliance with legislation and consistent with best medical and legal practice, whether their claim is ultimately approved or not.

The committee believes that the improvements to staff training, communications, and the policy development process recommended by the Auditor General, when implemented, will help to improve clients' experiences with the WCB. However, we also believe that more is needed to reorient the WCB to a customer service focus. The WCB has a mandate not only to manage the accident fund, but also to assist injured workers and their families.

The obligation the board has to the families of injured workers cannot be underestimated. The committee was especially moved by accounts it heard from workers, and their spouses, of the pain and turmoil suffered by families when workers -- most often the key family providers -- lose their jobs and, over time, their sense of worth and value to themselves, their families, their fellow workers, and their communities.

Recommendation

The standing committee recommends that mandatory orientation and training be implemented for all new employees before they are allowed to engage clients. The committee further recommends ongoing professional development be programmed for each employee, manager, executive and member of the Governance Council and Appeal Tribunal, and documented and reported annually, as a key component of performance measurement.

This duty to assist should be stated clearly in the Workers' Compensation Act. As the workers' advisor suggested, it is perhaps time to also supplement the Meredith principles, which are the foundation of our workers' compensation system, with new concepts that are needed for the 21st Century. While it is impossible to legislate compassion and good customer service, the committee believes a clearer articulation of the WCB's mandate would provide guidance and help to set an appropriate tone for the corporate culture.

The committee stresses that the Workers Compensation Board has a unique role as our society's lawful, mandatory and sole worker insurance program. As such, when injury and job-related illness occurs, the worker deserves the board's fullest consideration, compassion and support services. We expect our WCB to do more, and do better, for injured workers in the NWT and Nunavut. They expect it, and their employers pay for it.

Recommendation

The Standing Committee on Accountability and Oversight recommends the government introduce amendments to the Workers' Compensation Act that set out the WCB's mandate, including its duty to assist injured workers, in clear terms.

Mr. Speaker, I would now like to pass the floor over to my colleague Mr. Yakeleya. Mahsi.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. Honourable Member for Sahtu, Mr. Yakeleya.

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Workers' Advocacy

One of the intended advantages of the workers' compensation system was to create a non-adversarial alternative to the courts that would be provide a less complicated and faster process for resolving claims. Unfortunately, many claims have nonetheless ended up before the courts. The WCB is well equipped to litigate these cases with staff lawyers and lawyers on retainer.

Claimants, however, are at a considerable disadvantage to the WCB. Injured and often without income, they must often rely on legal aid, which will not necessarily pay for counsel with expertise specific to workers' compensation issues. Claimants may also have difficulty accessing independent medical advice. This means that when the system does become adversarial, there is a tremendous imbalance of power and resources.

The committee heard suggestions that one way to correct this imbalance would be to set up a legal fund for injured workers or to expand the mandate of the workers' advisor to allow claimants to obtain legal representation and medical advice through that office.

Other witnesses spoke against this approach, which they are concerned could push more cases into the justice system, and instead favoured making the workers' compensation system work in the non-adversarial way originally intended. Among this group was Governance Council member Steve Peterson, who told us, "litigation is not what compensation systems is about. ...It is supposed to be worker reps and employer reps sitting down compassionately overviewing the file. ...I think that if we were able to go and be much more diligent in our principles and make sure the presumption favours the worker and those issues are addressed with that sort of focus, we would avoid a lot of this litigation. ... I think that it's something we can resolve in-house if we were more diligent in enforcing that presumption for the worker."

The committee cannot support such an idealistic approach. While sound policy applied by well-trained staff using best practices should resolve most cases, it must be accepted that mistakes, errors and challenges will occur. It must also be accepted that the average worker will need legal or other professional help to get answers. The recent Valic (NWT Supreme Court) and Rennie (Nunavut Court of Justice) cases are illustrative of the delays and procedural hurdles injured workers can encounter in trying to have their claims resolved.

Recommendation

The standing committee recommends the Minister direct the worker's advisor to draw up a proposal to provide for assistance to workers who need expert medical evidence, and/or legal assistance with judicial reviews, to move their case forward.

Now I will ask Mrs. Groenewegen to continue on with the report.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Honourable Member for Hay River South, Mrs. Groenewegen.

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Conflicting Medical Opinions

A good deal of discussion during our public hearings centred on the role of the medical advisors in the workers' compensation system, and in particular on what happens when their opinions conflict with the opinions of outside physicians. As the workers' advisor told us, the issue of "objective medical evidence" accounts for about 60 percent of his caseload. It is also a factor in many of the WCB's long-unresolved claims.

As the report states at paragraph 157, "the medical advisors' views carry considerable weight with caseworkers, claim managers and the Review Committee. In addition, the Appeals Tribunal considers the medical advisors views to be important evidence." The committee heard that the WCB routinely accepts the assessments of its medical advisors, who, they argue, are experts in what causes injuries, over the assessments of one or more specialists. Many injured workers find this especially difficult to accept, as often the WCB's medical advisers will make an assessment based on the file alone, without conducting a physical examination of the worker. Medical advisor Dr. David King explained to us that he and his colleague are able to provide objective evidence of the possibility of a claimant's injury being caused by his or her workplace based on reviews of scientific literature. In Dr. King's view, this science-based evidence should be given more weight than personal or professional opinions. The workers' advisor challenged this method, which, from his perspective, also contains a frailty in that examinations of scientific literature may be as subjective as clinical evidence; for example, more emphasis may be placed on some studies than others.

If there is one area of common ground among those involved in this process, it is the frustration that some claims have remained outstanding for years because of the inability to resolve conflicting medical opinions. It is also an area of considerable debate in WCB circles across Canada. We are not alone in this.

The committee agrees with the Auditor General's finding that a better process is needed to resolve conflicting medical opinions. We would add that this process must be independent, must provide finality, and must reflect the principles behind the workers' compensation system, and in particular the presumption in favour of the injured worker.

Recommendation

The Standing Committee on Accountability and Oversight recommends that, as a priority, the Minister work with the Governance Council to develop options for an independent means of resolving conflicting medical opinions that provides finality, and that reflects the basic principles of the workers' compensation system and in particular the presumption in favour of the worker.

Conclusion

The committee looks forward to continuing to work with the Minister, Governance Council, WCB, workers' advisor

and Appeals Tribunal, toward achieving a more effective and responsive workers' compensation system.

Recommendation

The Standing Committee on Accountability and Oversight recommends the government provide a comprehensive response to this report within 120 days.

Motion To Receive Committee Report 5-15(5) And Move Into Committee Of The Whole, Carried

Mr. Speaker, that concludes the report of the Standing Committee on Accountability and Oversight. Therefore, I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Great Slave, that Committee Report 5-15(5) be received by the Assembly and moved into Committee of the Whole for consideration. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. Motion is on the floor. Motion is in order. To the motion.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

MR. SPEAKER: Question is being called. All those in favour? All those opposed? Motion is carried.

---Carried

Committee Report 5-15(5) will be received by the Assembly and moved into Committee of the Whole for consideration.

Reports of standing and special committees. Returns to oral questions. Recognition of visitors in the gallery.

ITEM 6: RECOGNITION OF VISITORS IN THE GALLERY

It's my pleasure today to recognize a constituent of mine and president of the Hay River local Metis council, Mr. Vern Jones in the audience.

---Applause

Recognition of visitors in the gallery. The honourable Member for Hay River South, Mrs. Groenewegen.

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you. Sometimes we lose track of where our constituents live. I thought Mr. Jones was my constituent. Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize Julia Trennert in the gallery today from Hay River. She is the sister of our colleague from Nunakput; Julia Trennert.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. Recognition of visitors in the gallery. The honourable Member for Tu Nedhe, Mr. Villeneuve.

MR. VILLENEUVE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to recognize the Fort Resolution Metis Council president and one of the original native cousins, Mr. Lloyd Cardinal.

---Applause

I'd also like to recognize Vern Jones because he is my cousin-in-law. Welcome to the House.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Villeneuve. Recognition of visitors in the gallery. The honourable Member for Nunakput, Mr. Pokiak.

MR. POKIAK: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. I'd like to recognize my sister Julia Trennert up in the gallery. Thank you very much.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Pokiak. Recognition of visitors in the gallery. The honourable Member for Kam Lake, Mr. Ramsay.

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'd like to recognize councillor-elect to the City of Yellowknife city council Lydia Bardak.

---Applause

And as well, Ms. Arlene Hache.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. Recognition of visitors in the gallery. The honourable Member for Nahendeh, Mr. Menicoche.

HON. KEVIN A. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. At this time I'd like to recognize two Pages that I have with me from Fort Liard: Mr. Tyre Timbre, as well as Mr. Lindsay Berreault, and I'd like to thank them and congratulate them for their hard work this week. Mahsi cho.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. Recognition of visitors in the gallery. If we have missed anyone in the gallery today, welcome to the House. Always nice to have an audience in here. Recognition of visitors in the gallery. The honourable Member for Thebacha, Mr. Miltenberger.

MR. MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to recognize the best CA in the business, Ms. Denise Yuhas from Fort Smith.

---Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Recognition of visitors in the gallery. Item 7, oral questions. The honourable Member for Sahtu, Mr. Yakeleya.

ITEM 7: ORAL QUESTIONS

Question 195-15(5): Cleanup Of The Canol Heritage Park Trail

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to direct my questions to the honourable Minister Brendan Bell, Minister of Industry, Tourism and Investment. Mr. Speaker, I want to ask the Minister in terms of could he provide this House and the people in the Sahtu who are listening on the status of the Dodo Canol Heritage Trail issue in terms of it being a national-territorial historical park? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. The honourable Minister responsible for Industry, Tourism and Investment, Mr. Bell.

Return To Question 195-15(5): Cleanup Of The Canol Heritage Park Trail

HON. BRENDAN BELL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the Member for the question. There's a lot of work underway in this regard to make the Dodo Canol Park Trail more of a regional focal point. I think we're doing some good work. We've struck a committee with the help of the Member, who really reinvigorated efforts in this regard locally. There's a lot of interest now in getting this park created. We have our next meeting, I believe, in November with the committee. They will be talking about this summer's walk on the trail that both the Premier and the Member participated in. I think it raised a lot of attention and profile for the trail and I think it was very worthwhile. I hope we do future walks, Mr. Speaker. Their next meeting is in November and we'll discuss that issue and a number of others, including how we get the land transferred from the federal government. There has to be a park plan in place and we're working through that. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Bell. Supplementary, Mr. Yakeleya.

Supplementary To Question 195-15(5): Cleanup Of The Canol Heritage Park Trail

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the people in the Sahtu region, especially in the Tulita and Norman Wells region and I think in other communities within my region, certainly congratulate the Minister in terms of his commitment in getting the committee off the ground. Mr. Speaker, I want to ask the Minister in terms of continuing on with this work, would the Minister commit to working with the committee on terms of cleaning up the old telephone wires that were laid down in the 1940s? I think there's over 1,600 feet of old leaded telephone wires that are doing some damage to the animals on the trail. Thank you.

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

Further Return To Question 195-15(5): Cleanup Of The Canol Heritage Park Trail

HON. BRENDAN BELL: Yes, Mr. Speaker, I can see from the Premier's applause that he as well has seen this first hand, the telegraph wires and other left-behind articles from the '40s. It's important that we get this cleaned up. Obviously we want to have this issue addressed before we talk about land transfer. We think it's a federal responsibility. We're making that argument and that case that they in fact should clean it up. So we're in discussions in that regard. We'll have more of those as we meet in November. I can say that before we take over transfer of this land, we want to have that addressed. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Bell. Supplementary, Mr. Yakeleya.

Supplementary To Question 195-15(5): Cleanup Of The Canol Heritage Park Trail

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I had mentioned this to the previous Minister of ENR and unfortunately the situation couldn't be dealt with at that time. However, Mr. Speaker, I want to say to the Minister that the trip was truly an experience that the Premier and I

had with the youth from the Sahtu region and I ask the Minister if he would consider looking at this as a national or a territorial leadership walk. I think that's a real good initiative to encourage our leaders, encourage our youth, to spend one week on the land and just talk about life's important issues that they face, and that the Minister would work with the other departments to see if this could be a territorial initiative for all northern youth to participate in. Thank you.

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

Further Return To Question 195-15(5): Cleanup Of The Canol Heritage Park Trail

HON. BRENDAN BELL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Member has made the case for this. I think the Premier obviously came back with great things to say about the initiative. I certainly appreciate the Member taking it on himself really to drive this walk this year and make this thing happen. We'd like to do it in future years. I am, though, of course cautious. We have a committee in place. We want to sit down in November and talk to them, do a bit of a debrief on the walk, talk about how it went and talk about priorities for the coming years. So given committee's support, Mr. Speaker, I see no reason why we wouldn't do more of this. Thank you.

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

Supplementary To Question 195-15(5): Cleanup Of The Canol Heritage Park Trail

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the youth walked, the Premier of course walked, yours truly walked, even though I had real sore feet, but I still kept going. Now I want to ask if the Minister, the good Minister of Industry, Tourism and Investment, if he would come along and walk with us, join in this initiative. He believes in it. I think he does. I think it would be good for the Minister to show leadership and come for a walk. Would he come for a walk with the rest of the boys and girls? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Further Return To Question 195-15(5): Cleanup Of The Canol Heritage Park Trail

HON. BRENDAN BELL: Mr. Speaker, the Member I think has sufficiently shamed me into, as he's saying, taking a hike. So yes, I would love to join him for that. Thank you.

---Applause

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

Question 196-15(5): Speaking On Matters Of Accountability And Integrity

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct my questions today to the Premier. Probably just going back in history a little when our government had a lot more wealth than it does now and the concept was that people got together and they sat around the table and they had little horse-trading sessions and they decided which communities and which regions were getting jobs and programs and capital projects, and

they divvied up this big pot of money and everybody went away from the room relatively happy. Well, as we all know, that's not the way things really work around here anymore because we don't have that much money. If you want to have jobs and programs and capital infrastructure in the community, it's usually a long planning process that was brought forward by a capital planning team. It's brought programs that are brought forward in a way that I believe would guarantee some level of fairness and equity to how things are distributed, how the wealth is distributed throughout the Northwest Territories.

But being a consensus style of government, each one of the Members who sit in this House are all independent and we're free and we don't have any party kinds of disciplines. We're free to stand up and express our opinion on every subject that comes up. We can raise subjects, we can respond to subjects, we can respond to what Cabinet Ministers say, we can applaud them when we think they say something good, and we can criticize them when we think they do something wrong. For that, in this style of government, there needs to be an understanding in the public that this government would not condone any reprisals when a Member is not supportive of something the government is doing, and I'd like the Premier to confirm that for us today. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. The honourable Premier, Mr. Handley.

Return To Question 196-15(5): Speaking On Matters Of Accountability And Integrity

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Speaker, I think things have changed a lot since the old days that Mrs. Groenewegen refers to because we do not do business that way. It's a very well laid out process and there is fairness to everyone. There will be and has been, to my knowledge, no reprisals from our government and we will police that very carefully if we ever hear anybody starting to make those kinds of threats or whatever, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, our obligation as a government is to provide fair, equitable service to everybody regardless of where they live and regardless of what their MLA may have said or not said. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Handley. Supplementary, Mrs. Groenewegen.

Supplementary To Question 196-15(5): Speaking On Matters Of Accountability And Integrity

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I do appreciate the Premier's confirmation of that fact, because I do think that there are people out there who think to the contrary. The other thing is, in the distribution of the work that we do here in the Assembly, some are Regular Members and some are in Cabinet. Again, another perception that's out there in the public is that somehow being at the Cabinet table is beneficial to your riding more so than the rest of us who sit around here. I have said many times, I see us sitting around here as equals. We assign certain responsibilities to Members of the Cabinet, but again there are some constituencies here in the North which are feeling a little vulnerable, particularly right now, and I don't think people should feel that way, because, again, I don't think that's the way the government does their business. That's not my observation. So to the issue of Cabinet versus Regular Members, again I'd like the Premier to confirm that there's not special consideration

given to the wishes or the asks or the plans brought forward by Cabinet Ministers. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. Mr. Handley.

Further Return To Question 196-15(5): Speaking On Matters Of Accountability And Integrity

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I can confirm for the Minister that there is no special privilege given to a Minister's constituency over that of someone else. Some may disagree with that sometimes, I don't know. But, Mr. Speaker, I can say that in my experience in fact it has been a disadvantage to be on Cabinet because sometimes you can't represent your constituency the way you would like to because it conflicts with your role as Cabinet Minister.

Mr. Speaker, on things like capital plans and so on, we review those, we go through them with the committees, we welcome and are waiting for committee reports and recommendations to us. So, Mr. Speaker, everybody is treated equally here, whether you're on Cabinet or not. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Handley. Short supplementary, Mrs. Groenewegen.

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: That's it, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. Oral questions. The honourable Member for Thebacha, Mr. Miltenberger.

Question 197-15(5): Stanton Territorial Hospital - Accreditation Of Staff

MR. MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my questions will be for the Minister of Health and Social Services in regards to Stanton. Mr. Speaker, Stanton is the main hospital in the Northwest Territories and provides, in my opinion, a very high level of service, and we've worked very long and hard over the years as a government to try to improve those levels of service. I think that's important that people hear that from this House as well so that we can be clear that, yes, this is a complex organization with over 500 staff and a \$50 million-plus budget, and yes there are challenges. But there's also been a number of significant successes. What I'd like to ask the Minister is if he could indicate to this House some of the circumstances as they pertain to our staffing circumstances with doctors and nurses and the type of accreditation that we currently hold them. Thank you.

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

Return To Question 197-15(5): Stanton Territorial Hospital - Accreditation Of Staff

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as we all know, we are faced with challenges across the whole jurisdiction, whether it's the smaller communities or larger centres, when it comes to providing health care for people in the Territories. But we have as a government over the years tried to address this through a number of factors, whether we talk about our Graduate

Nurse Program, Social Worker Program, and other areas that we focus on in ensuring that we can provide a level of service that is adequate to all people across the Territories.

There are a number of factors involved and I'm at a bit of a disadvantage here, I guess, in the sense that the Member is quite familiar with this file, but we have done a number of things to ensure that the territorial facility here in Yellowknife is providing an adequate level of service, although we are, as I stated earlier, faced with a number of challenges. But we worked with Stanton in ensuring that the services provided meet the requirements of the people that it serves. We've adjusted programs a number of ways. We've dealt with the Aboriginal Wellness Program. We have the Northern Nurses Grad Program, as I stated earlier. There's quite a list of things that we do and at this time; for example, the vacancy rates at our facility here in Stanton are down to about 16 percent at this time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Supplementary To Question 197-15(5): Stanton Territorial Hospital - Accreditation Of Staff

MR. MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, one of the irritants that has arisen as a result of our attempts, or attempts in the past, to address the fact that we couldn't get OR nurses and nurses to work in ICU because of the pay and a graduated level of payment was set up for nurses. Now one of the irritants that has come to light is the fact that in some cases you'll have nurses on the same ward doing the same kind of work but at different pay levels. I'd like to ask the Minister what the department is going to do to address that particular issue. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Mr. Roland.

Further Return To Question 197-15(5): Stanton Territorial Hospital - Accreditation Of Staff

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the whole issue of ranking of our nursing staff has come up a number of times over a number of years and involves the union, ourselves, the nursing fraternity, and we're trying to address this. When the Government of the Northwest Territories went through a job evaluation process and ranked its employees, initially we had come to a conclusion that a nurse is a nurse and they were all paid at one level. That was implemented and put in place. The nursing groups challenged that, appealed it. We then went through the process and accepted that we had to redo that work. Looked at again a whole evaluation process for our facilities and the nurses and then came up with a ranked system of specialties. That was implemented and, as well, just as we have to proceed, the process of staffing and service levels in the hospital have been put in place and we've now had, for example, two of those levels combined on one ward from time to time. We are now going through the process of making some changes so that those nurses that work on one ward are paid at the same level. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Supplementary To Question 197-15(5): Stanton Territorial Hospital - Accreditation Of Staff

MR. MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Could the Minister confirm that that will be, I'm assuming it will be worked out with the union and with classification so that there's no nurses taking a pay cut on this one? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Mr. Roland.

Further Return To Question 197-15(5): Stanton Territorial Hospital - Accreditation Of Staff

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as we have in the past, in this scenario we've worked cooperatively with the union and staff and any changes that are about to occur, as we have in the past, we will protect individuals and positions. But I haven't seen the full layout of the plan. I'm aware that we are putting it in place to address the concerns that are there today. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Roland. Final, short supplementary, Mr. Miltenberger.

Supplementary To Question 197-15(5): Stanton Territorial Hospital - Accreditation Of Staff

MR. MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Finally, just if the Minister could quickly elaborate on the issue of the Dialysis Program. This is an area of significant growth across the North. Stanton is the main site for dialysis, but we're looking at pilot, not pilot units, but we're looking at subsidiary units out in the communities like Fort Smith, Hay River, eventually Simpson. If the Minister could touch on the pressures and expansions planned for that particular program. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Mr. Roland.

Further Return To Question 197-15(5): Stanton Territorial Hospital - Accreditation Of Staff

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I guess changing gears a little bit from our staffing levels to the actual program side, dialysis is something that has been affected, we have been affected by, and the demand for services can no longer just be delivered out of the Stanton facility. We are looking at expanding that in our other regions where we have high demand and we're trying to work cooperatively with a number of other departments as well to ensure that we get that in place so people who are affected can get the service closer to home. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Roland. Oral questions. The honourable Member for Kam Lake, Mr. Ramsay.

Question 198-15(5): GNWT Macroeconomic Policy Division

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my questions today are for the Minister of Finance and it's in regard to a statement that he made in the House last week in the development of a macroeconomic policy division. Mr. Speaker, I'd like to start by saying when the government goes out and develops some policy framework, I think they should keep reality firmly in mind.

What I see in the development of this macroeconomic policy shop is the fact that it is based solely on hypothetical scenarios. I mentioned in my Member's statement we have no resource revenue deal, we have no devolution deal, we have limited ability in the areas of resource management or development, debt management, taxation, investment, and not to mention the 2,000 or so migrant workers who take \$200 million out of here annually. So I'd like to start off by asking the Minister of Finance where exactly did the direction come from to develop this macroeconomic policy shop. Mahsi.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. The honourable Minister responsible for Finance, Mr. Roland.

Return To Question 198-15(5): GNWT Macroeconomic Policy Division

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the idea of the macroeconomic policy unit has been discussed by previous governments that we should take this direction. Ultimately the final direction came from FMBS prior to this year's budget we're in now. Thank you.

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

Supplementary To Question 198-15(5): GNWT Macroeconomic Policy Division

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, what I take issue here with is the fact that we are dealing with a territory that has no real responsibility for its fiscal situation because we get \$900 million directly or indirectly from the federal government. Five hundred million dollars of that is right out the door in salaries and benefits to our employees and I think, Mr. Speaker, we have higher priorities than this macroeconomic policy division. We need to hire nurses, we need to hire teachers. If you look at an ad that I found in the Globe and Mail recently, we're going to pay these policy analysts in this shop \$80,000 a year. That's more than any nurse or teacher that I know make. Mr. Speaker, we don't have...

MR. SPEAKER: Do you have a question, Mr. Ramsay?

MR. RAMSAY: I'd like to ask the Minister who developed the policy? Who developed this policy? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. Mr. Roland.

Further Return To Question 198-15(5): GNWT Macroeconomic Policy Division

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I know the Member has issues with the macroeconomic policy. He's made it clear since we've discussed this. In fact, at one point I believe he was suggesting it should go into ITI or Executive. It seems anywhere else but Finance. Now it's why are we doing it. The fact is this issue was raised as far back as 1997 that the government should have something like this in place. A good example was, for example, when diamond mines were starting to be established should we pursue secondary industry or should we focus on taxation. That's one of the reasons why we're at this stage today. The fact is, we spend a billion dollars in the Northwest Territories. We do have some of our own-source revenues. Yes, we're tied to the federal government, but we shouldn't

stop and bury our heads in the sand and not proceed. The fact is right now we're in the process of developing that policy. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Supplementary To Question 198-15(5): GNWT Macroeconomic Policy Division

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I think in my discussions that I've had with the Finance Minister I've been clear that we have economists in the other departments the Minister mentioned, in ITI or in the Executive for that matter. But what I'd like to ask the Minister is how come, you know, Members on this side of the House haven't seen this policy? I haven't seen it and I'd like to ask the Minister when are we actually going to see this policy and what is in it? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. Mr. Roland.

Further Return To Question 198-15(5): GNWT Macroeconomic Policy Division

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, we are in the process of developing that policy. In fact, in my Minister's statement here I'd provided sort of a framework as to where we're going and some of the questions we have to ask and some of the partners that we need to work with; for example, our community leaders and aboriginal leaders, as well as our business leaders. In fact, in November as we're going out to start this leg of the work, going to meet with those groups to begin to put the framework together. Of course we're always ready to meet with Members and go through that process as well. Thank you.

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

Supplementary To Question 198-15(5): GNWT Macroeconomic Policy Division

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, again I'm having trouble understanding, and I don't know if it's just me, but I'm having trouble understanding why we need fiscal policy analysts to help us better understand how to spend, in my estimation, what, you know, after we spend, pay all the bills and everything, might amount to \$150 million. That's probably going to go straight to program. I don't understand where this policy is coming from and I'd like to ask the Minister, what is the basis for a macroeconomic policy framework shop in the Government of the Northwest Territories? What is the basis for that? What is he basing it on?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. Mr. Roland.

Further Return To Question 198-15(5): GNWT Macroeconomic Policy Division

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, we're basing it on the fact that the Government of the Northwest Territories needs the appropriate tools to make decisions on spending patterns. It's not only about spending \$100 million. As I stated earlier, we're spending a billion dollars and should we as the Government of the Northwest Territories, how should we spend that money? Should it be focused on schools? Should it be focused on training programs? Should it be focused on infrastructure,

airports, highways? Those are the things we have to use this piece for. In a sense, the policy will be developed and will become a macroeconomic lens that decision-makers like ourselves will have that tool as we make spending decisions as well as revenue-raising decisions. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Roland. Oral questions. The honourable Member for Tu Nedhe, Mr. Villeneuve.

Question 199-15(5): Inadequate Housing Models For New Affordable Housing

MR. VILLENEUVE: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. My questions today are for the Minister responsible for Housing. You're not off the hook until 5:00 today.

---Laughter

So I better get my questions in.

---Applause

Anyway, just talking about the affordable housing initiative. Don't get me wrong, Mr. Speaker, I'm fully supportive of the affordable housing initiative. I only have concerns because I just don't want this initiative to be reflected on five years from now or after its completion by the public as another big Housing Corporation mistake on the type of units that are put on the ground. I just want to ask the Minister, we have some, the old housing plans that I think that I asked the Minister about the other day that were dysfunctional floor plans with inadequate room sizes for children because these kids in these houses, usually there's more than one family member occupying one room which is the size of eight by ten and it just doesn't work. They're also dysfunctional for the disabled or the elderly and the Housing Corporation had to come up with a lot of extra dollars to do some renovations to make ramps, to change bathrooms. I just want to see the houses that are coming, that are going to be put on the ground, and are going to allow people to appreciate and maybe we have to spend a little more money into reviewing some of the old business plans that we have or the drawing plans, Mr. Speaker. I just want to ask the Minister, are the new affordable housing building plans the old plans from years ago that the government still has the reserve-style matchbox-shaped housing units that are not unique in any shape or form to anybody in the community? Are they the old ones or are we going to have some new ones coming out? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Villeneuve. The honourable Minister responsible for housing, Mr. Krutko.

Return To Question 199-15(5): Inadequate Housing Models For New Affordable Housing

HON. DAVID KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, we are looking at more improved models of what we are constructing. We've constructed housing units for seniors, for people with disabilities, and also looking at multi-configured housing, which we are looking at improving the designs and the layout of what we have. But more importantly, we've evolved to a point now where we're actually meeting the needs of the clients that we're serving. I think it's crucial that we have input from the Council for the Disabled, the Seniors' Society and other community organizations to identify what they need. I think from what we've built so far and what we've been

able to put on the ground to date, it is an improvement from what we've had before through this affordable housing initiative. We will be proceeding with those new blueprints that are out there. Thank you.

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

Supplementary To Question 199-15(5): Inadequate Housing Models For New Affordable Housing

MR. VILLENEUVE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Let me ask the Minister if he can provide this House with what changes from the old reserve style matchbox 5-12s that the Housing Corporation has been putting on the ground for the last 10 to 15 years. What changes is the Housing Corporation going to incorporate into this new affordable housing initiative?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Villeneuve. Mr. Krutko.

Further Return To Question 199-15(5): Inadequate Housing Models For New Affordable Housing

HON. DAVID KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, we do take into account the family size and exactly who the tenants we are serving. It is either seniors, families, singles or elderly, but we have to keep that in mind.

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

Supplementary To Question 199-15(5): Inadequate Housing Models For New Affordable Housing

MR. VILLENEUVE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Are they all these 500 units that they are planning on putting on the ground in the next two years now, do we already have the clients already listed of who is going to be getting a house, which ones are going to the public housing? Are those lists already drawn up, family sizes determined and needs assessed? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Villeneuve. Mr. Krutko.

Further Return To Question 199-15(5): Inadequate Housing Models For New Affordable Housing

HON. DAVID KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, we do ongoing surveys. We know exactly roughly how many housing units we have. The majority of these units we are going to be putting on the ground are replacing the older 5-12s that the Member mentioned. Also, we are looking into more energy-efficient units by looking at multi-configured housing. So we are proceeding forward but also looking at exactly what we are going to be replacing and how we are going to get away from the old idea of the old singular constructed dwellings to multi-configured dwellings. So we are able to get a more energy-efficient house but also making sure that it more meets the requirements that we need by way of ensuring that it is efficient, accessible, and affordable at the end of the day for the client to operate, maintain, and own. Thank you.

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

Supplementary To Question 199-15(5): Inadequate Housing Models For New Affordable Housing

MR. VILLENEUVE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. A lot of these affordable housing units are going to be going into communities. The Housing Corporation's intent is to have them turned into or sold off into private homeownership programs or to private individuals in the community. Just with respect to the multi-housing units that are going to be going out there, I know the ones that are there now, they have shared mechanical rooms, water tanks and sewer tanks, which are the design of the old multi-units that we have today. We have lots of problems with the tenants that are in them. People don't like to be in them because of all these shared water, sewer, mechanical and whatnot. How are we going to get people attracted to buy these units? How are we going to do that without changing these configurations? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Villeneuve. Mr. Krutko.

Further Return To Question 199-15(5): Inadequate Housing Models For New Affordable Housing

HON. DAVID KRUTKO: Mr. Speaker, again, it is the client choice at the end of the day of what type of unit they would like to require. Again, it is conforming with what we already have in place by way of it is either...If we are looking at a senior's facility, we like to ensure that a senior is going to move in there. You are basically putting in the mechanism so that you know they are going to be aged in this facility. You know that they are going to need hand rails. You know that they are going to need to be able to have access and eventually maybe in a wheelchair or whatnot. So you design these units with the client that you are looking at serving, but, more importantly, looking at exactly the number of people in those units to bring down the problem that we have with overcrowding but ensuring that we do make them energy efficient and also affordable at the end of the day so they can be able to maintain and operate those units and not have to worry about the high cost of operation. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Oral questions. The honourable Member for Range Lake, Ms. Lee.

Question 200-15(5): Speaking Of Matters Of Accountability And Integrity

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my questions are to the Premier. It is in follow-up to the Member's statement and the questions raised by my colleague from Hay River South. I think we have seen in this House that Members take very seriously any indication or any sense of intimidation or any pressure put off on us unduly for doing our job as a Member, which is to speak on behalf of the constituents that we represent but also for the people of the NWT and the bigger picture of upholding the basic principles of democracy, Mr. Speaker. I was encouraged to hear from the Premier that he also agrees with that notion and that it is important that the Members can speak freely in this House. I heard him, in answering questions to Mrs. Groenewegen, in fact, if he knew of any situations like that, that the government will police that or will be engaged in...I can't remember exactly how he said it, but make sure that that doesn't happen. So I would like to ask the Premier what he has done as Premier to make sure, in fact, any policy, guideline, directive, any statements he has made to make sure that the people out there understand that we have a

consensus government and the government takes its rules seriously in making sure that people understand that we cannot be intimidated? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Lee. The honourable Premier, Mr. Handley.

Return To Question 200-15(5): Speaking Of Matters Of Accountability And Integrity

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I think the public expects that we are going to be fair to everybody as a government, that we all have equal rights in this Legislative Assembly. From the day I first let my name stand as Premier, I made it clear that that is the way that I was going to operate. I don't have the exact wording of my statement in this House following my appointment as Premier, but I operate that way. We have talked about it in Cabinet. Certainly, from our side, there will be no tolerance of intimidation of Members, and I expect the same is true for everybody in this House. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Supplementary To Question 200-15(5): Speaking Of Matters Of Accountability And Integrity

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As we saw last week, apparently it is not in practice. People have forgotten. I hear from the Premier's answer that there hasn't been any direct statement to either the staff or to the public or anybody who is interested in knowing about this that says that we are a consensus government and that we, as a government, respect the Members' rights. Would the Premier make a commitment to do such a thing in a directive or policy way of any kind of document that he sees fit? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Lee. Mr. Handley.

Further Return To Question 200-15(5): Speaking Of Matters Of Accountability And Integrity

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Speaker, I want to think about how we would do it, the best way of doing it. Certainly, in letters to Ministers, that has happened. If the Members feel there is a need to come out with some kind of public statement, then, yes, I will take that into consideration. I am not sure what would be the best way of doing that, but, as I say, Mr. Speaker, I expect that the public believes that we operate fairly in this government. Thank you.

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

Supplementary To Question 200-15(5): Speaking Of Matters Of Accountability And Integrity

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I believe, within this House and outside, I don't think there is that clear understanding that people understand that this is a House of free speech and that it is the Members' jobs to criticize the Premier and the Ministers if and where necessary. That is not happening at all. I would like to ask the Premier, would he put that into paper and maybe he should do an announcement in the paper to let the people know that we hold this very important? Would he be willing to take that commitment, Mr. Speaker?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Lee. Mr. Handley.

Further Return To Question 200-15(5): Speaking Of Matters Of Accountability And Integrity

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. When we were all sworn in, we did pledge an oath of office. We all have to abide by that. We all have to abide by the rules of the House. Everybody has a right to critique, to criticize, to comment on Ministers, on the Premier, on performance. I think the public expects no less. Mr. Speaker, I need more information about is somebody putting pressure on someone. I don't know. Of course, the public always has the right to make their comments to each of us too, and we have to respect that. Mr. Speaker, I want to think about how we would convey this kind of message and so on to the public. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Supplementary To Question 200-15(5): Speaking Of Matters Of Accountability And Integrity

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, he lost a Cabinet Minister last week because Members felt intimidated. I believe, Mr. Speaker, I don't know if everybody knows. I would really like it if he could just repeat what he just said and if he could just do a public notice telling the people that, in fact, that is the case; that we all have to operate under the atmosphere of freedom and freedom from intimidation. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Lee. Mr. Handley.

Further Return To Question 200-15(5): Speaking Of Matters Of Accountability And Integrity

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I can't repeat exactly what I said. My message is that we all have signed an oath. We all have responsibilities. We all know what the rules of the House are or know where to find the rules if we are unsure, and we all operate with respect, but we all have the right to criticize positions taken by one another. Certainly Members have a right to comment on Cabinet's performance, whether it is individual Ministers, the Cabinet as a group or the Premier or whatever. That is all part of the democratic process. Mr. Speaker, we respect that. If we violate that, then we know there are consequences. In fact, Ms. Lee referred to the incident last week. That is a good example of how the system works and why it works if there is a suggestion of intimidation.

Mr. Speaker, as I said before, in terms of going beyond my statement today saying, yes, we operate this way and the good old days of whatever they were before are not tolerated anymore. We operate in an open way, whether it is capital or business planning or question period or whatever it may be. We will maintain that as a government. In terms of putting out a public notice, Mr. Speaker, I want to think about how we would do that. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Handley. Oral questions. The honourable Member for Yellowknife Centre, Mr. Hawkins.

Question 201-15(5): Access To Legal Aid Services

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my questions today will be about legal aid service levels and how we are meeting those challenges here today, Mr. Speaker. It is no surprise to Members here that I take a serious interest in the Legal Services Board as well as the legal aid issue and service levels. Mr. Speaker, I quickly did a search on those two topics and I came up with about 32 questions since I have been a Member in this House. I didn't do a search on e-mails or written questions. I have always been about fair and timely service for those people in our society that need it most, Mr. Speaker. So my question to the Minister of Justice will be as follows: Would the Minister tell me what he is doing to help meet those service level needs to ensure the people who most need it get those opportunities through either a pilot-based program, whether it is a family law clinic or a poverty law clinic? How is this Minister meeting those challenges through any types of partnerships? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. The honourable Minister responsible for Justice, Mr. Bell.

Return To Question 201-15(5): Access To Legal Aid Services

HON. BRENDAN BELL: Mr. Speaker, obviously the Member and I agree. Access to justice is critical. We need to make sure that those who can't afford legal representation, when they are in legal need, have that access. We have had some concern.

The Members on the other side have raised questions continually about our caseloads and backlogs. I am happy to say that we are making some significant progress. We typically averaged well over 100 people on the waiting list. I think we have that down now, I understand, as of September 1st, south of 50, I believe, who are waiting to be assigned lawyers. We have a mixed system where we rely on both staff lawyers and the private Bar, but, Mr. Speaker, we aren't satisfied in this regard. We think we can do more.

It is a constant battle to recruit lawyers. We are looking at some things outside the box. I have had some discussions with my department recently about having a lawyer attend on the basis of a local service provider. I don't want to get into too much detail at this point, just to suggest that the idea is that a morning each week, a legal aid lawyer would attend at this facility and help people who are there get access to legal aid. I have some questions about whether or not everybody feels comfortable dealing with our current framework and mechanism for access to legal aid. I want to make sure that those questions are answered. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Bell. Supplementary, Mr. Hawkins.

Supplementary To Question 201-15(5): Access To Legal Aid Services

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Maybe I will respect the fact that the Minister didn't mention the name, so maybe I will be cautious at this stage of this next question. If he wishes to mention it, I will leave it up to him. Mr. Speaker, this type of new pilot project initiative

about getting potentially a lawyer out there into the community, into an area where people need legal services most, people need advice on what to do. We are talking about people who are at the most risk situation and helping them get out of those terrible situations. So, Mr. Speaker, when does the Minister of Justice see this happening in a timely way? Can he express a period or a range when this new initiative, pilot project or whatever he may call it, when does he see it happening? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. Mr. Bell.

Further Return To Question 201-15(5): Access To Legal Aid Services

HON. BRENDAN BELL: Mr. Speaker, I have asked my department to do some planning. I have set a target of January 1st. I think that is a reasonable time frame. Let me give the Member an example. The Centre for Northern Families in Yellowknife currently has a program where a physician attends to deal and work with some of the clients, I believe, on women's health issues, issues related to pregnancy, with raising children. I think that is very effective and very important. We know we have clinics throughout the city that people can go to, but I think it has been proven that that is not as accessible for some of the clientele who are in critical need. I would like to replicate that kind of service. I would like to go out and see if there is a demand for this, Mr. Speaker. So that is the kind of example that I will be following up. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Bell. Oral questions. The honourable Member for Great Slave, Mr. Braden.

Question 202-15(5): Operational Review Of The North Slave Correctional Centre

MR. BRADEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This afternoon, I would like to ask the Honourable Brendan Bell some questions regarding the performance of, and at, the North Slave Correctional Centre, and specifically regarding some of the conditions in which some inmates are managed there, Mr. Speaker. One of the things I encountered in talking to a couple of inmates was their frustration at not being able to find out just what their situation was and when they felt that there was something that they just could not get resolved, some difficulties, some discrepancy, some conflict between them and their supervisors or case workers, they had nowhere to go except, at least in one case, to their MLA. So I got some pretty frequent phone calls. Mr. Speaker, what I wanted to ask about was the provision that is in our Corrections Act for a position called a corrections investigator who is like an ombudsman or a person who inmates can go to when they encounter systemic difficulties. Is such a person on staff, on contract, or available to inmates now, or has this position been allowed to lapse, Mr. Speaker?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Braden. The honourable Minister responsible for Justice, Mr. Bell.

Return To Question 202-15(5): Operational Review Of The North Slave Correctional Centre

HON. BRENDAN BELL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The first level of appeal when an inmate has a concern is, as it should be, I believe, in the Department of Corrections. But sometimes the inmate won't get the satisfaction they feel that they need there and would like to take it to the

higher level. The Member has cited the provision that allows for that. We have never had, to my understanding, a staff person who fulfills that role. We have gone out for expressions of interest in the past and had people on contract. We no longer have somebody on contract. The department has advised me that we would seek to do that on a need basis, so that, when one was required, we would go out and find someone. I have suggested and asked the department to go out and pursue this now, make sure we have a contract so that there is somebody in place and we don't lose any time should the need arise. So we are doing that, Mr. Speaker.

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

Supplementary To Question 202-15(5): Operational Review Of The North Slave Correctional Centre

MR. BRADEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate the Minister's initiative in this area. Kind of related to this, Mr. Speaker, is there has been a service provided by some volunteer organizations in our community, especially the John Howard Society which, on a volunteer basis of late at least, has gone into the North Slave Correctional Centre, and had face-to-face involvement opportunity to work with inmates in their rehabilitation. But this summer, I understand for a variety of reasons that access by these volunteers was curtailed quite extensively, Mr. Speaker. I wanted to ask whether we have a policy regarding the access of volunteers to the inmate population, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Braden. Mr. Bell.

Further Return To Question 202-15(5): Operational Review Of The North Slave Correctional Centre

HON. BRENDAN BELL: Mr. Speaker, thank you. I would like to say I am sure, but I believe we do have an operational policy with this respect at the facilities. There are, of course, always in these situations potentially safety concerns for inmates or for volunteers who would come. It is of paramount importance that we ensure that safety, but let me say that the John Howard Society fulfills a critical role, I believe, in society but in our corrections system. I appreciate the good work that they do. We want to make sure that they do have access to our facilities, but there are some things that we need to ensure like the safety, as I have indicated. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Supplementary To Question 202-15(5): Operational Review Of The North Slave Correctional Centre

MR. BRADEN: Mr. Speaker, could the Minister advise on the adequacy of staffing at the North Slave Correctional Centre and the training of our staff? This is in relation to complaints and concerns that I received, Mr. Speaker, that there is often communication difficulties, inconsistency with communications, and inadequacy and shortcomings in the delivery of programs for inmates, programs relating to addictions, literacy, school and these kinds of things, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Braden. Mr. Bell.

Further Return To Question 202-15(5): Operational Review Of The North Slave Correctional Centre

HON. BRENDAN BELL: Mr. Speaker, a couple of issues. I think both of them were raised in the HR review. There were many, as Mr. Ramsay has pointed out a number of times, recommendations that we are moving forward with. I think communications have vastly improved at the facility. I think programming is ever improving, Mr. Speaker. Can we do more and can we do better? Yes, I believe we can, but I think we have a number of good programs in place, some recent media coverage, some speculation that we cancelled some programs. In fact, Mr. Speaker, we have reviewed some of our programs and are seeking to improve them. We have felt that some of the people delivering the programming needed more training to ensure that the programs were improved and more adequate. So we have undertaken that, Mr. Speaker. I think all of the programs should be back on line in the next couple of months because, really, as I have indicated, they have never been cancelled. One was delayed for a couple of months while we engaged in some training. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Bell. Final, short supplementary, Mr. Braden.

Supplementary To Question 202-15(5): Operational Review Of The North Slave Correctional Centre

MR. BRADEN: Mr. Speaker, related to the overall performance of our correction centre, the correction service has a values and mission and vision statement. I won't read it here. I don't have too much time. Actually, the way it is written, Mr. Speaker, might get me cited for the CBC "What Are They Saying" contest here. Is there a regularly scheduled program of performance operational review? When was the last one conducted? When might we see the next one, Mr. Speaker?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Braden. There are three questions there, Mr. Bell.

Further Return To Question 202-15(5): Operational Review Of The North Slave Correctional Centre

HON. BRENDAN BELL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I now too am ever mindful of trying to avoid that segment on CBC. There is a review underway right now of our corrections program and the facility. We think that we need to obviously ensure that our programming is as good as it can be. So we have had some concerns come up. Obviously, the Members know we ran a deficit last year. We had some cost drivers that we are seeking to address. We need to know exactly what we are legislatively required to provide, what types of service and other things that are add-on. So we are viewing all of these things. I have indicated that we will come back to the committee with the results of that review shortly; pre-Christmas, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Bell. Oral questions. The honourable Member for Inuvik Twin Lakes, Mr. McLeod.

Question 203-15(5): Incentives And Retention Bonuses For Health Care Professionals

MR. MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in my Member's statement I spoke to the value of health

care professionals. I fully appreciate the fact that a lot of nurses come north to work and they have some financial incentive to do so. I think if we put some of these incentives in place permanently, then they may want to just live here and work up here. I would like to ask the Minister of Health and Social Services, Mr. Roland, if his department has any authority to give retention bonuses or a few more incentives for health care professionals. Thank you.

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

Return To Question 203-15(5): Incentives And Retention Bonuses For Health Care Professionals

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in the area of nurse pay or bonus systems, the government has, in the past, worked with the union and internally to come up with a system. It was put in place. It was there for a short period, trying to encourage the nurses to stay in the North. As well, part of the bonus was to reward them for their years of service. That worked for a little while, but we found as well that, in some cases, as we no sooner made the payment to some of the individuals, they left the Northwest Territories. So it didn't quite work out how it was designed. We have tried to look at a number of other options to fill the gaps. Anything we would do in this area would require the involvement of the UNW as well. Thank you.

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

Supplementary To Question 203-15(5): Incentives And Retention Bonuses For Health Care Professionals

MR. MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate the fact that you would have to go through the UNW, but I feel nurses are different. They could be on the same pay level as a carpenter, for example, and the work that they do, in my opinion, is a lot more important. Has the department ever been approached by health care professionals to negotiate their own contract? Thank you.

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

Further Return To Question 203-15(5): Incentives And Retention Bonuses For Health Care Professionals

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, yes, a number of times this issue has come up. In fact, the very first time was when we took over the delivery of health care from the federal government. That was the first time it came up. It has been reviewed a number of times. This time, not in looking at making our union or setting up another union process, we would still have to follow the same rules as we do when it comes to equal pay, pay equity and those issues as well. Thank you.

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

Supplementary To Question 203-15(5): Incentives And Retention Bonuses For Health Care Professionals

MR. MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, would his department consider entering into separate contracts with each nurse that comes up here on a nurse-to-nurse basis? Is that possible? Thank you.

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

Further Return To Question 203-15(5): Incentives And Retention Bonuses For Health Care Professionals

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am aware that, within the department and our hiring practices, we have tried to come up with some unique ideas or processes of coming up with nurses. Part of the problem is because there is such a large vacancy rate that occurred at one point, we had to come up with this idea. In fact, I believe before we, as we now term it "agency nurses," that was some of the practices that came in place with individuals. Of course, in a work environment, when you find that there is a large demand, there is also the other side of the equation that comes into play where they then do find themselves in a position of some authority in a sense of being able to deliver services for us and trying to fill a gap. We came up with this option of using agency nurses to fill a gap. Unfortunately, we found ourselves having to use that more and more. We are looking at another option of trying to move away from that, but it will take some work and some time. Thank you.

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

Supplementary To Question 203-15(5): Incentives And Retention Bonuses For Health Care Professionals

MR. MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as we well know that a lot of southern agency nurses come north to work. What I am afraid of here, and maybe it is an option, we may see a northern pool of agency nurses. Would that be an option for the department to negotiate with them as an agency pool of northern nurses? Thank you.

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

Further Return To Question 203-15(5): Incentives And Retention Bonuses For Health Care Professionals

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I guess that is an option. If we were to lose our northern nurses and they formed an agency and then contracted the Government of the Northwest Territories, that is not something we would encourage. Ultimately, it comes back to the ability to find the dollars to do this. Hopefully, with some of our other plans in place, we will be able to start coming back to the way we have done it in the past where we hire north and keep our nurses in the North. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Roland. Oral questions. The honourable Member for the Sahtu, Mr. Yakeleya.

Question 204-15(5): Heaters In Independent Homes For Elders

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in my quick Member's statement, I forgot to mention the elders in terms of the extreme makeover I was talking about. I wanted to ask the Minister of the NWT Housing Corporation, we have about an hour and 25 minutes in terms of his portfolio. Would he consider looking at the elders in the Northwest Territories and speaking also for my region in terms of what I talked about a monitor of those heaters that they put into independent homes for the elders to reduce the cost of living to the elders' homes. Can the Minister provide me with some information as to if this is possible to put these heaters in these independent homes to save costs on the elders' pension cheques? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. The honourable Minister responsible for Housing, Mr. Krutko.

Return To Question 204-15(5): Heaters In Independent Homes For Elders

HON. DAVID KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, we have had several projects we have done in different communities where they put space heaters in seniors' homes to bring down the cost of energy and also ensure that they live comfortably but also realize that they also have a set income they have to work with. So we have done several projects like this in conjunction with band councils on behalf of their membership and we are open to that initiative. Thank you.

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

Supplementary To Question 204-15(5): Heaters In Independent Homes For Elders

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I think this would be a really good sign of support for these elders in terms of these independent homes. The Member from Hay River South talked about the types of initiatives that we could do in terms of having energy-efficient homes. Can the Minister commit to having his department look at an assessment in terms of what will it cost to bring in these space heater projects? I know the number of elders that may qualify for these space heaters for this winter. I know because the issue of helping them out would require more time in the next couple of days here. So I would ask the Minister to give that thought. Thank you.

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

Further Return To Question 204-15(5): Heaters In Independent Homes For Elders

HON. DAVID KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, we do have several programs that are there, designed to assist seniors to be independent, to live in their homes as long as possible. We do have the seniors Home Repair Program. We have the Seniors' Maintenance Program. We have the Seniors' Independence Program. The heater that the Member's talking about is a space heater, which is roughly in the range of about \$3,500. I think that it is what we find the clients have had installed in their house and they are very quiet, they do keep the home very comfortable and I think it's important that if this is the way that we can bring down the cost of the seniors heating

their homes and also ensuring that they're able to take advantage of the seniors' fuel subsidy so they don't have to take money out of their pocket to heat themselves, that this is a good program. So I'd like to tell the Member that we are looking at taking this program forward, we are looking at consolidating our programs, and this is one of the areas that we would really like to see an improvement, especially having been involved with working with the Seniors' Society on this and this is one of the programs they very much would like to see implemented. Thank you.

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

Supplementary To Question 204-15(5): Heaters In Independent Homes For Elders

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the Minister's comments on to the cost of the space heaters. I'm asking the Minister, can he look at Colville Lake, Deline, Tulita, Fort Good Hope, even Norman Wells, in terms of saying we would look at these independent homeowners? Seniors are very proud and we would like to put in based on the amounts that we have, put in these pilot project space heaters in the communities to look at these elders and say yes, we are supporting you and we are supporting independent living. I'd like to see that type of commitment from this government. Thank you.

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

Further Return To Question 204-15(5): Heaters In Independent Homes For Elders

HON. DAVID KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as I mentioned, there are programs that can do exactly what the Member is asking for. Again, it's an application-based program and I encourage the Member to work with his communities and put forward an application to the regional office and see if he can do a pilot project in those particular communities for the seniors that you represent. But again, it's an application-based program and by way of coming forward with an application for each community or for an individual or for a number of individuals, then it would be looked at project by project. Thank you.

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

Supplementary To Question 204-15(5): Heaters In Independent Homes For Elders

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As soon as we finish with the House today I'm going to pick up an application for all the people in the Sahtu region, especially the elders. Mr. Speaker, I'd like to ask the Minister in his limited time as the Minister, will he ensure that the new Minister will concentrate on the small communities? I know the Minister who is going to, is from a large riding, and have the housing association Minister not lose sight of the small communities in terms of the workload that the new Minister will have on his plate that the small communities don't lose out on this reshuffling of the Cabinet portfolios. Thank you.

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

Further Return To Question 204-15(5): Heaters In Independent Homes For Elders

HON. DAVID KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as the Minister responsible at this time in this House, I commit that they will do something in regards to those communities and they will be able to come forward with something, work along with yourself and the Minister to be...

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Oral questions. Item 8, written questions. The honourable Member for Tu Nedhe, Mr. Villeneuve.

ITEM 8: WRITTEN QUESTIONS

Written Question 22-15(5): Affordable Housing Plans

MR. VILLENEUVE: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. My question is for the Minister responsible for the NWT Housing Corporation.

1. Can the Minister provide this House with the "new" affordable housing plans?
2. What innovative changes are incorporated into the affordable housing plans that more adequately meet the needs of northerners?
3. Has there been any post-analysis done to assess whether or not adjustments to floor plans will better meet specific needs of potential clients. If so, can the Minister provide this information?

Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Villeneuve. Written questions. The honourable Member for Kam Lake, Mr. Ramsay.

Written Question 23-15(5): Direct Appointments, Transfers And Casual Hires

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is for the Minister of Human Resources.

1. What is the number of direct appointments to the GNWT public service from April 1st, 2006, to October 26th, 2006, with a breakdown by department and agency?
2. Please provide the rationale used for each direct appointment?
3. What is the number of appointments to the GNWT public service from April 1st, 2006, to present that were not the result of an open and transparent job competition? Please categorize into types of appointments such as direct appointments, transfers and casual hires.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. Written questions. The honourable Member for Great Slave, Mr. Braden.

Written Question 24-15(5): Chronic Pain Claimants

MR. BRADEN: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. My question is for the Minister responsible for the Workers' Compensation Board.

1. Of the 39 claimants diagnosed with chronic pain, how many are now receiving permanent or temporary benefits for chronic pain?
2. Of the 23 injured workers who have returned to work, how many returned to the kind of work and pay that they had before being diagnosed? Do any have outstanding claims for compensation for chronic pain?
3. If an injured worker declines to participate in training or pain management programs, what criteria does WCB use to terminate or adjust their benefits?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Braden. Written questions. Returns to written questions. Replies to opening address. Petitions. Reports of committees on the review of bills. Tabling of documents. Notices of motion. Notices of motion for first reading of bills. Motions. First reading of bills. The honourable Minister responsible for Finance, Mr. Roland.

ITEM 17: FIRST READING OF BILLS

Bill 13: Supplementary Appropriation Act, No. 2, 2006-2007

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Frame Lake, that Bill 13, Supplementary Appropriation Act, No. 2, 2006-2007, be read for the first time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Roland. The motion is on the floor. The motion is in order. All those in favour? All those opposed? The motion is carried.

---Carried

Bill 13 has had first reading. First reading of bills. Item 18, second reading of bills. The honourable Minister responsible for Finance, Mr. Roland.

ITEM 18: SECOND READING OF BILLS

Bill 13: Supplementary Appropriation Act, No. 2, 2006-2007

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Frame Lake, that Bill 13, Supplementary Appropriation Act, No. 2, 2006-2007, be read for the second time.

Mr. Speaker, this bill makes supplementary appropriations for the Government of the Northwest Territories for the 2006-2007 fiscal year. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Roland. Motion is on the floor. Motion is in order. To the principle of the bill.

AN HON. MEMBER: Question.

MR. SPEAKER: Question is being called. All those in favour? All those opposed? The motion is carried.

---Carried

Bill 13 has had second reading and, accordingly, stands before Committee of the Whole. Second reading of bills. Honourable Member for Kam Lake, Mr. Ramsay.

Bill 15: Elections And Plebiscites Act

MR. RAMSAY: Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Yellowknife South, that Bill 15, Elections and Plebiscites Act, be read for the second time.

Mr. Speaker, this bill replaces the Elections Act and the Plebiscite Act. It provides a framework for the orderly conduct of the election of Members to the Legislative Assembly and for the holding of plebiscites.

The existing Elections Act and Plebiscite Act are repealed. Consequential amendments are made to the Electoral Boundaries Commission Act, the Income Tax Act, the Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act, and the Public Service Act.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. Motion is on the floor. Motion is in order. To the principle of the bill.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

MR. SPEAKER: Question is being called. All those in favour? All those opposed? The motion is carried.

---Carried

Bill 15 has had second reading and, accordingly...Mr. Ramsay.

MR. RAMSAY: Mr. Speaker, I seek unanimous consent to waive Rule 69(2) and have Bill 15, Elections and Plebiscite Act, moved into Committee of the Whole. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. The Member is seeking unanimous consent to waive Rule 69(2) and have Bill 15 referred to Committee of the Whole. Are there any nays? There are no nays. Bill 15 will be referred to Committee of the Whole. Second reading of bills. Honourable Minister of Justice, Mr. Bell.

Bill 16: An Act To Amend The Jury Act

HON. BRENDAN BELL: Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Deh Cho, that Bill 16, An Act to Amend the Jury Act, be read for the second time.

Mr. Speaker, this bill amends the Jury Act so that the sheriff may compile the jury list from records of the names and addresses of insured persons maintained under the Medical Care Act. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Bell. The motion is on the floor. Motion is in order. To the principle of the bill.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

MR. SPEAKER: Question is being called. All those in favour? All those opposed? Motion is carried.

---Carried

Bill 16 has had second reading. Mr. Bell.

HON. BRENDAN BELL: Mr. Speaker, I seek unanimous consent to waive Rule 69(2) and have Bill 16, An Act to Amend the Jury Act, moved into Committee of the Whole. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Bell. Member is seeking unanimous consent to waive Rule 69(2) and have Bill 16

referred to Committee of the Whole. Are there any nays? There are no nays. Bill 16 will be moved into Committee of the Whole. Second reading of bills. The honourable Member for Kam Lake, Mr. Ramsay.

Bill 17: An Act To Amend The Legislative Assembly And Executive Council Act, No. 2

MR. RAMSAY: Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Yellowknife South, that Bill 17, An Act to Amend the Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act, No. 2, be read for the second time.

Mr. Speaker, this bill amends the Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act to set out certain rights and privileges of the Legislative Assembly, to clarify the responsibilities of the Speaker, Board of Management and officers of the Assembly, to define and ensure the consistent usage of certain terms and to make a number of minor changes to the act.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. Motion is on the floor. Motion is in order. To the principle of the bill.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

MR. SPEAKER: Question is being called. All those in favour? All those opposed? The motion is carried.

---Carried

Bill 17 has had second reading. Mr. Ramsay.

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I seek unanimous consent to waive Rule 69(2) and have Bill 17, An Act to Amend the Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act, No. 3, moved into Committee of the Whole. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. Member is seeking unanimous consent to waive Rule 69(2) and have Bill 17 moved into Committee of the Whole. Are there any nays? There are no nays. Bill 17 will be moved into Committee of the Whole. Second reading of Bills. The honourable Minister of Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Dent.

Bill 18: An Act To Amend The Education Act

HON. CHARLES DENT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Deh Cho, that Bill 18, An Act to Amend the Education Act, be read for the second time.

Mr. Speaker, this bill amends the Education Act to replace the definition "ratepayer."

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Dent. Motion is on the floor. Motion is in order. To the principle of the bill.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

MR. SPEAKER: Question is being called. All those in favour? All those opposed? The motion is carried.

---Carried

Bill 18 has had second reading. Second reading of bills. Honourable Minister of Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Dent.

Bill 19: An Act To Amend The Archives Act

HON. CHARLES DENT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Weledeh, that Bill 19, An Act to Amend the Archives Act, be read for the second time.

Mr. Speaker, this bill amends the Archives Act to replace the definition "public record" and to except certain records from that definition. This excludes those records from the requirements for transfer to the archives. The excepted records include:

- records of the Legislative Assembly, the Speaker, the Clerk, and the committees and individual Members of the Legislative Assembly;
- correspondence between members of the public and Members of the Legislative Assembly;
- certain records of members of the Executive Council; and
- surplus copies of records.

The bill eliminates the Public Records Committee and transfers the committee's powers and functions to the archivist. The bill allows the archivist to authorize the destruction or relinquishment of a public record only if he or she decides the record does not have archival value.

The bill also amends the regulation-making powers in the act. The Commissioner in Executive Council is empowered to make all regulations under the act. New powers are added to make regulations respecting the transfer and storage of records, and to establish classes of records to which particular regulations apply.

The bill also adds a new definition, "record", which includes electronic records. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Dent. Motion is on the floor. Motion is in order. To the principle of the bill.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

MR. SPEAKER: Question is being called. All those in favour? All those opposed? The motion is carried.

---Carried

Bill 19 has had second reading and, accordingly, stands referred to a committee. Second reading of bills. The honourable Minister of Finance, Mr. Roland.

Bill 20: An Act To Amend The Income Tax Act

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Weledeh, that Bill 20, An Act to Amend the Income Tax Act, be read for the second time.

Mr. Speaker, this bill amends the Income Tax Act to reflect and address proposed changes to the Income Tax Act (Canada) that would lower the income tax rate on large corporation dividends received by Canadians. The bill would lower the Northwest Territories income tax rate on those dividends. The bill would not come into force unless the proposed amendments to the Income Tax Act (Canada) come into force. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Roland. Motion is on the floor. Motion is in order. To the principle of the bill.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

MR. SPEAKER: Question is being called. All those in favour? Opposed? Motion is carried.

---Carried

Mr. Roland.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I seek unanimous consent to waive Rule 69(2) to have Bill 20, An Act to Amend the Income Tax Act, moved into Committee of the Whole. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Roland. Member is seeking unanimous consent to waive Rule 69(2) and have Bill 20 moved into Committee of the Whole. Are there any nays? There are no nays. Bill 20 has had second reading and, accordingly, is referred to Committee of the Whole. Second reading of bills. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of bills and other matters: Bills 7, 11, 13, 15, 16, 17 and 20, with Mrs. Groenewegen in the chair.

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

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): I call Committee of the Whole to order. We have quite a number of items before Committee of the Whole today. What is the wish of the committee? Mr. Braden.

MR. BRADEN: Thank you. Good afternoon, Madam Chair. Committee would like to consider two bills; Bill 11, Tourism Act, and Bill 7, Pharmacy Act, in that order, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Is committee agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you. Then we will proceed with that after a short break.

---SHORT RECESS

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Committee, I would like to call us back to order, please. You had indicated earlier that you would like to proceed with Bill 11, Tourism Act. At this time, I would ask Minister Bell if he would please bring opening comments on the bill. Minister Bell.

HON. BRENDAN BELL: Madam Chair, committee members, thank you for your consideration today of Bill 11, the Tourism Act for the Northwest Territories.

For several years, the Northwest Territories' tourism industry, including its tour operators and associations, have expressed a desire to see changes made to the existing Travel and Tourism Act. Specifically, their requests for change have reflected two main themes: create a more streamlined and user-friendly licensing system; and protect the NWT's tourism industry experience.

In its efforts to address these issues, the Department of Industry, Tourism and Investment and the Department of

Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development before it, embarked on a fairly lengthy consultation process.

It was almost immediately evident that the changes and revisions being requested were extensive. For that reason, I am presenting to you today a new Tourism Act for the Northwest Territories; one that reflects the input of, and is strongly supported by, tourism licence holders, tourism associations, aboriginal organizations, other Government of the Northwest Territories departments, and the general public across the Northwest Territories.

One of the most important changes incorporated in the new act will be a simplified process of obtaining a tourism licence in the NWT. The existing tourism establishment licence and travel and tourism outfitter licence will be replaced with a single tourism operator licence.

Only operators who are running guided commercial tourism activities will be required to have this licence. Hotels and business establishments, for example, that do not provide guided tours, will no longer be required to have a TOL.

In the case where a licensed activity does not change, this act will allow for licences to be renewed automatically, providing added stability and long-term certainty for tourism operators and their clients, while further reducing administrative burdens.

Meanwhile we must also protect our territory's tourism product. The quality of a visitor's experience in the NWT depends on their experience of the territory's wilderness.

Changes included in this act will allow us to better govern operations in areas that have cultural or spiritual significance or are ecologically sensitive, through the creation of tourism special management areas.

Licence endorsements will be used to limit the number of tourism operators that may conduct tourism activities in any particular area or restrict or prohibit certain tourism activities by all operators in a certain area.

The actions of a select few tourism operators can easily damage the reputation of the industry as a whole. This act also includes stronger penalties for non-compliance, providing a strong deterrent to those who would break the rules.

Madam Chair, the new act also sets out terms for consultation before new licences are awarded or amendments to existing licences are approved.

These are the types of changes that the tourism industry collectively have indicated are important to them. I'm hopeful that we can see this legislation enacted during this session of our Legislative Assembly and that we can begin our work to bring the new Tourism Act into force by April 1st, 2007.

Our next steps will be to consult with our industry partners, aboriginal organizations and other stakeholders, on regulations for the new act. These consultations will further ensure that the industry maintains a strong voice to speak on matters affecting them.

I would like to thank the Standing Committee on Governance and Economic Development for its careful review of Bill 11, and I'm pleased now to answer any

questions this committee may have. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Bell. At this time I would like to ask Mr. Villeneuve, please, if he would provide the committee's comments on the review of Bill 11.

MR. VILLENEUVE: Mahsi, Madam Chair. Bill 11, Tourism Act. The Standing Committee on Governance and Economic Development met on September 5th, 2006, and October 16th, 2006, to review Bill 11, Tourism Act for the Northwest Territories.

The committee had a brief presentation from Ms. Robin Wotherspoon, president of the NWT Tourism Association.

The committee is pleased with the new simplified process of obtaining a tourism licence in the Northwest Territories. The existing tourist establishment licence and travel and tourism outfitter licence will be replaced with a single tourism operator licence. A new licence will only be required by operators who are running guided commercial tours and activities.

The committee was also pleased to hear the Minister state that where the licence activity does not change in terms of the payment process, licences could be automatically renewed annually.

The committee would also like to see the licence renewal process extended to three to five years, instead of the current annual renewal. As Ms. Wotherspoon stated, many operators run a high-end business, where tour packages are sold several years in advance, making it important to have the surety of a long-term licence. The Minister said the length of time required for licence renewals would definitely be discussed during the consultation process on the regulations.

Although the act also endeavours to protect the NWT tourism industry and tourism experience, the committee was not convinced the Department of Industry, Tourism and Investment, or ITI, has sufficient processes in place to identify serious problems that might warrant refusing to renew a licence. For example, there is no mechanism for other government departments which also regulate the industry to be notified of upcoming renewals and advise ITI of any concerns.

Currently, ITI relies only on the informal process of complaints from customers to determine if there are problems. Committee suggested instead the Minister model the licence renewal process on that of the municipal business licence renewal process. All of the information regarding an operator would be kept on their file in a central registry. This process would allow the government to protect the public and help the NWT Tourism Association to monitor the membership, without making it difficult or onerous for the tourism operator to renew their licence.

The committee was also concerned about the non-remittance of fishing licence fees by tourism operators, and urges ITI to put in place a requirement in the regulations stating that these must be remitted on a regular basis before the government will supply the operator with more fishing licences. The committee was pleased with the Minister's commitment to look into this matter.

Finally, both the NWT Tourism Association and the committee agree this act and the regulations need to come into force as soon as possible, and urge the Minister to ensure this happens. The Minister confirmed that Industry, Tourism and Investment will work closely with stakeholders to accomplish this.

Further, given committee's concerns with the regulations, the Minister has committed to providing both a copy of the regulations and a copy of the communications package to the committee.

Following the clause-by-clause review, a motion was carried to report Bill 11 to the Assembly as ready for Committee of the Whole.

The committee would like to thank the NWT Tourism Association for their presentation, and the Minister and his staff for presenting the bill. This concludes the committee's general comments on Bill 11. Individual committee members may have questions or comments as we proceed. Thank you, Mr Chair.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Mahsi, Mr. Villeneuve. I'd now like to ask Minister Bell if he would like to bring in witnesses for Bill 11.

HON. BRENDAN BELL: Mr. Chairman, thank you. I would.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Minister Bell. Sergeant-at-Arms, could you please escort the witnesses in. Thank you.

Thank you. Minister Bell, if you could, for the record, please introduce your witnesses.

HON. BRENDAN BELL: Mr. Chair, thank you. With me today; Doug Doan, ADM, Department of Industry, Tourism and Investment; Rebecca Veinott, legislative counsel. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Minister Bell. We'll now move on to general comments, Bill 11, committee. General comments. Mr. Yakeleya.

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, I want to make a few comments and I want to specifically focus on the Tourism Act under the licensing on the renewal of it being automatically renewed. I want to ask the Minister if that's a concern by the communities or the regions in terms of a licence that's being automatically renewed without any type of scrutiny or type of process that may not sit well with some of the members in the communities or the regions in terms of some of these people, these licensees, may automatically be renewed without any type of process to provide to the government in terms of having some questionable comments on the licence. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Mahsi, Mr. Yakeleya. Minister Bell.

HON. BRENDAN BELL: Mr. Chairman, this is a concern that came up during committee and I think the discussion that we had there was good. I appreciate the thoughts of committee in this respect. I think that the first point to make is if there are significant community concerns with an operator, we would take that into account before issuing any sort of renewal. So it is complaint-based. If the community or the region has concerns, they should

bring them to our attention so we can address those before we consider a renewal.

Another issue that was raised was about whether or not an operator was up to date with fees that should be remitted to the government. In the case of fishing licences, it's ENR, I believe, that collects those fees, but we would certainly check to make sure they are current before we issue a renewal. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Minister Bell. Mr. Yakeleya.

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I'm glad the Minister has outlined the process where these renewals will not happen automatically. Maybe the terms of automatic renewal should be described in a different language as to what he just said here in terms of these licences, and what constitutes a valid, legitimate, accumulative complaint. The department may have a different interpretation; people in the communities may have a different interpretation. What checkmark says if you pass this threshold it's a complaint? You have to measure, so that's what I'm concerned about in terms of the process of the Minister. It's a good process. I think it's workable. I think you need to sit down with the region a little more in terms of rubber stamping the automatic renewal of a licence, and there are some questions that have to be asked in terms of the process so I want to let the Minister know that.

The other one is...I'm going to use my time, Mr. Chair, and the Minister can respond as he pleases on my questions here.

Mr. Chair, the other one is that with the licences for the outfitters specifically, because I think I have about seven or eight outfitters in the Sahtu region and they cover a vast, wide area of their own jurisdiction under their own licence. I want to talk to the Minister and his officials in terms of these operators in terms of their requirement for a licence. I think we need to really support the communities and I think they are somewhat being supported by the outfitters by providing them at the end of the season, they fly in moose meat or caribou meat into the communities. That's a plus for us. That's a plus for our elders. I think that needs to be really strongly worded in this new act, especially for outfitters in our region, that caribou or moose is distributed equally in the region, I think it's done, and I want to see if there is a means within the licence regulation that these outfitters begin having somewhat of an access and benefit agreement with our communities. Access to our lands, access to the areas that we traditionally hunt, food, benefits of training, benefits of bringing the moose and caribou meat into our people, benefits of having our people look at the possibility of guides, different levels of guides. So these are the type of benefits from this new Tourism Act that would be really helpful for our people in the region, and tourism that the northern people can take.

We have old people in our region that are 60, 70 years ago, that love to go out sometimes and cut up moose meat and cut up caribou and sheep, and cook out there in the mountains. That's their home, Mr. Chairman. These outfitters have to recognize that.

I met with an outfitter this past summer with Mr. Handley and a few people that walked the Canol Heritage Trail, and I did talk to the outfitters and not one single aboriginal

person from the Northwest Territories was at that camp. That's what I'm talking about; people talking about why our own people in our own land are not in those camps. At least at the Dechenia Lodge close to the Yukon border there were people there from the Kaska Nation cooking, guiding and working. So this act better speak to something that informs and invests our people into those regions. It's our land. They got these licences at some other time and area. They do good work out there. They provide dollars to our region. They have to make sure it stays in our region and with our people. We can't have old ladies and old men sitting in Tulita. When they can go back on the land, in the mountains, and they're 60 and 70 years old, they're like 30 and 40 years old. They've got lots of energy. That's their land. They can do that. So I think that's something that I'd like to see being really strong for our tourism in our act here. We have to see the benefits.

I want to say that, Mr. Chair, in terms of my disappointment in one of those camps that we visited. Good camp, nice people, God bless them, but I was very disappointed not to see one of our own aboriginal people out there, Dene or Metis, Gwich'in, Inuvialuit, none of them. I didn't see anything. So that's where our people get mad in terms of we have outfitters in our mountains, in our homeland.

My grandfather is from there, Chief Albert Wright. He signed the treaty in 1921. Did you know that he posts along the mountains to indicate that they signed this treaty, a peace treaty? I wonder if these outfitters know about these posts and know about our lands. I don't think so, because I talked to one of the young people that was guiding out there. I asked that young person, you're a guide? He said yes. I said, do you also skin the sheep? He said yes. I said, where do you do it? He told me where. I said, don't you know from our elders that you can't skin a sheep at the place where you shot it? You have to carry it maybe two miles or a mile away from it. That's what we're taught from our values and our culture; respecting the sheep and that they skin it in a certain way. I didn't know that. I didn't know that. Well, that outfitter has been there for a long, long time and not knowing the value, the basic culture of our people. So we ought to have some say into this. So, Mr. Chairman, I certainly look forward to seeing if these clauses under the Tourism Act capture something that my people can be proud of, and people in the Northwest Territories can be proud of, that the Northwest Territories aboriginal people's culture and values need to be reflected in acts like this. There's a long history here.

So I want to thank the Minister and thank the committee for bringing forward this act and doing the hard work. It's the first time I'm really making comments to the act like this, so I want to say that, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Mahsi, Mr. Yakeleya. Minister Bell.

HON. BRENDAN BELL: Thank you. I appreciate the Member's thoughts and input. I think that's very valuable. I think there were a number of good points that he made.

To the point about effectively what would, I guess, constitute access and benefit agreements when it comes to tourism and our outfitting operators, there's no reason that that couldn't happen with new operations now on, say, Sahtu lands in your region. Mr. Chairman, that

arrangement could certainly be made. It is more difficult to go back with people who have had licences in the past and have some expectation of certainty in their business model going forward, because they've made significant investment.

My understanding is I guess that the far majority of operators do use aboriginal guides, I mean it obviously make sense, but not all. Maybe I'm wrong. But most of the caribou operators, I understand, do and I would encourage all of them to work with the communities and have aboriginal guides who know the land and know the region. It only makes sense, Mr. Chairman. I think if you're hoping to provide an authentic experience, if you're hoping to ensure that the respect for the land is upheld, then that's the way it has to be done. I think communities are going to have a greater say now in how tourism licences are awarded, and I think that's a good thing.

There were a number of points raised. You know, how do you determine what community support is or what a significant concern is? I think that is a very legitimate question. I'm not sure we have exactly the answer and it may vary by region, but we need to spell that out in the regulations and we need to discuss that in the consultation that's about to happen.

So I know this from committee. Much of the detail isn't found in this act, so there are many, many questions that can only be answered as we go through the consultation and develop the regulations. In order to safeguard or to ensure the concerns of committee are addressed, what I propose to do is to come back with those proposed regulations and sit down and discuss them with committee. We're going to need to understand whether or not this meets the test in the various regions. I want to hear from the Members and get their thoughts. Within government already for something like tags, and this is ENR now, but there is, before issuing new tags, there's consultation with communities. We do need to do a good job working interdepartmentally to ensure that there is support for the operators, and I think we can do that. I think this act is going to streamline, obviously much of what we do, but also give communities greater input and greater involvement going forward. These tourism special management areas is something that needed to be formalized. We can't be granting tourism licences on ecologically sensitive areas or culturally sensitive areas, and we've been at risk of doing that kind of thing without strictly spelling that out in legislation. So how we get the consent of regions and communities is something that we need to sit down and discuss.

But I agree with the points that the Member is making. We've got to use local people. It only makes good business sense to involve communities, be respectful of the communities, bring meat back to the communities. I would suggest that if he wants support for the renewal of your licence, it would seem like a good business practice. So that you to the Member.

I will say that I think the tourism industry is generally doing a good job; not everybody, but we can certainly always improve and one of the biggest areas to improve is respect for the communities. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Mr. Minister. Next on the list I have Mr. Pokiak.

MR. POKIAK: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just have a quick question on the Minister's opening comments. He said they're going to start consulting with aboriginal organizations. I'm just wondering, Mr. Chairman, presently the Inuvialuit are entitled to a private...(inaudible)...on 7(1)(a), 7(1)(b) and also have a say with the ISR of our agreement. I would just like to ask the Minister, basically the process now is there are a number of commercial tourism operators on 7(1)(a), 7(1)(b) that have to apply to Inuvialuit Land Administration, and also they have to apply to the GNWT for operation on Crown lands. So I'm just wondering what kind of consultation was done to put the two together to make sure there's one process in line. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Mr. Pokiak. Minister Bell.

HON. BRENDAN BELL: Mr. Chairman, I understand that we can't process a licence unless we have the consent of the Inuvialuit organizations on ISR lands. So I think that's the insurance that the Member has, that we will consult and, obviously, it's critical. It doesn't happen without it. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Minister Bell. Mr. Pokiak.

MR. POKIAK: Thank you. I'd just like to ask the Minister, how are you going to monitor that? Inuvialuit might want to do a tourism operation, commercial operation on 7(1)(a) and 7(1)(b) land. How would the Minister ensure that in order to monitor correctly, how will that be done? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Mr. Pokiak. Minister Bell.

HON. BRENDAN BELL: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Just in terms of granting the licence, how will we ensure the consultation is taking place, is that the question?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Minister Bell. Just to clarify your question, Mr. Pokiak.

MR. POKIAK: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It has sort of something to do with that, but again having worked at the Inuvialuit Land Administration before I know that some people sort of get approved and I don't know how much follow-up is in regard to licence issued to the individuals and then what the department is doing after. So I'd just like to know what kind of monitoring system is there to ensure that the Inuvialuit that are going on 7(1)(a), 7(1)(b) will apply to this legislation. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Mr. Pokiak. Minister Bell.

HON. BRENDAN BELL: Mr. Chairman, in terms of ongoing monitoring, we aren't out there acting to police the industry, and that's why I say that we do need communities to come forward, and the aboriginal organizations, on a complaint basis if they have concerns about an operator, they don't feel the conditions of it's 7(1)(a) and 7(1)(b) are being met. They need to bring that to our attention; obviously, to the proper authority in the Inuvialuit settlement region, as well. If they are significant concerns that haven't been addressed, then we wouldn't issue the renewal of the licence. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Minister Bell. Anything further, Mr. Pokiak?

MR. POKIAK: Yes, thank you. Just one quick last one here. Will the Minister sit down with the land administration, or his regional office in Inuvik...(inaudible)...and Tuktoyaktuk to go through these new regulations? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Mr. Pokiak. Minister Bell.

HON. BRENDAN BELL: Absolutely, Mr. Chairman. We will meet with them and have extensive consultation in order to develop the regs before we come back to the committee. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Minister Bell. Next on the list I have Mr. Villeneuve.

MR. VILLENEUVE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. A quick question in relation to what other Members are asking. Specifically in areas when negotiations are still in the works, like the Dehcho and Akaitcho, when the tourism licence that is going to be issued is reviewed and consultation has taken place, how much weight does the aboriginal organizations offer, I guess, with their decision on whether to renew or issue a tourism licence that's given by the government when they make the final decision on whether to issue or renew?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Mahsi, Mr. Villeneuve. Minister Bell.

HON. BRENDAN BELL: Mr. Chairman, I understand within the interim agreements that we set out with these regions, Dehcho and Akaitcho regions specifically, there are provisions that speak to exactly how tourism operator licences are granted and so we would follow the agreements. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Minister Bell. Mr. Villeneuve.

MR. VILLENEUVE: I think in these interim measures agreements that we have, I think the Minister or the government still has the final say on whether to issue a licence or not, whether an aboriginal organization or community organization, NGO, for example, has some issues surrounding the issuance of a licence to a particular operator or an operator that is maybe not from the territory. How much consideration is given to the final outcome of any issuance or renewal to an organization that has those concerns? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Mr. Villeneuve. Minister Bell.

HON. BRENDAN BELL: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My understanding, and in the past I think it's been conducted in this manner and we propose that it be conducted this way going forward, obviously we meet with the authorities, sit down and go through the proposed licence. We would expect that they would not just issue a veto without raising any concerns. If they have concerns related to wildlife, cultural sensitivity, ecological sensitivity, those are all very legitimate reasons for us to reject a tourism licence if they are founded. But just a veto without any rationale or explanation would be a problem for us, so we would want

to work with the region to understand the nature of their concerns. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Minister Bell. Anything further, Mr. Villeneuve?

MR. VILLENEUVE: Yes, besides the historical, ecological and spiritual reasons given, are reasons related to employment given equal weight? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Mahsi, Mr. Villeneuve. Minister Bell.

HON. BRENDAN BELL: Mr. Chairman, it is a little different than the discussion I just had with the Member for the Sahtu because we are talking about the interim agreements. The section that talks about tourism licensing and the interim agreements. I don't think speaks to employment. Of course, where there is a settled claim, often, as I mentioned, there is the provision to enter into an access and benefits agreement. It isn't quite the same in the unsettled regions. I will certainly concede that. But these are the kinds of discussions we need to have as we sit down to talk about what happens. We try to make sure that when the rubber hits the road, community interests are protected. We do have to go region by region, as I have said before. It's going to be difficult to have a boilerplate model or example here. I think we are going to have to be flexible and come up with some process that works in each of the regions. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Minister Bell. Anything further, Mr. Villeneuve?

MR. VILLENEUVE: Yes, as we move forward to develop regulations that are regionally specific, would it be safe to say that regions could include or incorporate into their own regulations for the region into any tourism licence, employment-specific regulations when dealing with the issuance of any tourism licence? Is that within law or is it allowable? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Mr. Villeneuve. Minister Bell.

HON. BRENDAN BELL: Post settled claims on settlement lands, yes, we do know it's allowed. I am not sure it would be allowed or legal to hold up an operator's licence on the basis of some concerns about the level of employment where you are talking about unsettled areas, but I can certainly check that and get back to the Member. Again I say when we are talking about issuing new licences, the support of the community is critical. I don't think any tourism operator is going to want to go into a region where the region is not supportive of their activities, because I don't think they are going to be able to provide a very good product for the customer if they aren't going to get support from local guides. I would suggest it would be very difficult for them to make a go of it, not that you wouldn't have some try and maybe in the past some have tried without community support, Mr. Chairman. These are the kinds of issues that we need to have a full and frank exploration of and sit down and go through. I would propose that we come back to committee with the regs and the nature of these issues that we have discussed in the regions and if there are still gaps and holes, we are going to have to talk about how to fix that.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Minister Bell. Next on the list I have Ms. Lee.

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would just like to weigh in on this debate a little bit and make comments about tourism in general. I am in support of this bill, but I do want to just talk about what we heard and I want to speak about a region that I don't represent as a Member here, but we got to go to as part of the cost of living pre-budget tour. I was on the team that went to Wekweeti. Because of the time or the timing, a lot of community people were away but we did have a nice little meeting with the SAO and some of the community people. One of the topics that came out was the desire on the part of the community to do more on tourism activities. One gentleman who was there is a licensed guide. I don't know if I would call him an elder. He may be too young to be an elder, but to me he seemed very wise anyway. He really wanted to be able to do guiding work and he said there is no opportunity to do that. I believe the SAO also or somebody informed us that there is no EDO or business development officer in that community.

I think there were comments made elsewhere, not today, on this topic, but in other places where we speak often about a lack of administrative or business infrastructures to sustain, promote, enhance arts and cultural industries and such. I think that is very much related to the tourism industry. I think what the Member for Thebacha spoke about yesterday about the importance of water and how we need to balance our environmental goals along with resource development goals, I think the same can be said about promoting and supporting renewable resources like the tourism industry. From what I see, I don't think we are doing as much as we can on that.

Now I don't know all the details as to why we are not able to do this, but I can think of two things. Not of why we aren't doing that, but just two observations that I want to throw in the mix. One is when you look at the aurora tourism industry in Yellowknife, it is something that we need to be proud of and we are proud of. The product there is really not only for the Japanese tourist to come all this way to look at the beauty and wonder of aurora, but I think there is a lot there and a huge part of that attraction is for people who live in a very densely polluted part of the world to come and instantly notice the noise level going down, the air feeling fresher, open skies and just general slow down of a busy life. If you come from some cross-section in Japan and come to Yellowknife, I think you could really notice that and they value that. They are willing to pay a lot of money and come a huge distance to experience that. While this industry has become successful due to a lot of effort on the part of private entrepreneurs, I think that sort of attraction and even more than that exists as a potential for small communities.

I know for a fact that the Japanese market or the German market would be very interested in going to communities like Wekweeti. Wekweeti has everything that Yellowknife has, and more probably. It is next to the most beautiful lake. The guide and the SAO spoke about some of the attractions that they wanted to show near there. Apparently the Franklin expedition went through there and there are landmarks to show that they went through there.

MR. YAKELEYA: After the hockey game?

MS. LEE: After the hockey game in Deline. There is a lot there to promote.

The other factor is, I understand that we are talking about the Tlicho area with self-government. What this tells me is

that it takes more. Now we are dealing with a different governance structure, but it doesn't mean that the GNWT is out of the picture and that the GNWT doesn't do that. It just means that we have other players at the table, but we all serve the same population. So whether it's with the cooperation and involvement and partnership with the Tlicho Government and Wekweeti community government and community people, as well as the tourism industry, I would like to see the Minister develop that. We should not have any communities like that without the resources to explore and to...It's one plane stop from here to Wekweeti and I would like to hear from the Minister whether the department has worked on a plan like this, what is the potential for that and what do we need to do to get there? Thank you.

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

HON. BRENDAN BELL: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I think those are a number of good questions. First, I agree that just because there is a self-government arrangement doesn't mean the GNWT is able to take a step back approach and wash their hands of the need to encourage investment, encourage entrepreneurship and encourage the development of tourism businesses. We are doing that. Obviously we would like to do more and that's where Tourism 2010 comes into play. We have a number of initiatives that speak to product development, speak to tourism training in all regions but require money and investment.

We said currently we do have three economic development officers that serve the communities of Wekweeti, Whati, Gameti and there is one specifically in Behchoko. We also have an area superintendent in Behchoko. There is a Community Futures organization for the Tlicho. Obviously we have to work very closely with the regional leadership in that area. So we think that it's a good framework for success there and support and we will continue to work. I don't know if the Member had occasion to stay in the hotel overnight in Wekweeti, but there is an example of a business that we financed as a government. So we are involved in the region. We do think it has immense tourism potential. I would agree with the Member in that respect. We are there to support local entrepreneurs who want to come forward and develop tourism products. We have had a lot of discussion around marketing and destination marketing and our NWTT. That is one piece of the picture.

The other is for us to work with people on the ground to develop product so that when we are able to attract people here from other areas, that there is something for them to do and that they have a good time and want to come back. Thank you.

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

MS. LEE: Thank you. It's good that we have a 2010 plan, but the Minister is just telling me that there are three EDOs serving that region. Why is it with EDOs serving three communities that we have a situation where in this community and we do have that hotel there, which is one more reason why we should be looking at programming? Why is there not programming like that product in Wekweeti for these people to guide? Have there been any pilot programs to bring people in? Has there been any effort made for this community to network with the

Yellowknife community or any of the centres? Is there any plan or anything in existence that suggests that this has been looked at or that it will be looked at? Thank you.

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

HON. BRENDAN BELL: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In terms of Tourism 2010, it's the first year of that plan. We are working to start to roll out some product development initiatives. We are working in the regions. I should say that when I say EDOs, what we have done in that region is the option was available to regions to have what we call a community transfer initiative where they took over responsibility for the provision of that service and take money from us on a yearly basis and pay somebody a salary. That's what we have done in that region. I do believe the one position in Behchoko is still a department position. It's different by region. Some regions decided to take over the responsibility and we sent the money and they had a difficult time attracting somebody to do the job and had asked us to take back the role and we have done that. So it varies by region in terms of what our staffing response has been. We have either sent money and resources or we staff the position directly. There is a mix in the Tlicho region, as I have mentioned, with staff positions and community transfer positions. We are doing both. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Minister Bell. Next on the list I have Mr. Braden.

MR. BRADEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. This is a bill that I am heartily speaking in favour of, heartily, heartily in favour of. The tourism industry is something that I and my family have had some connection with over a good number of years. The operators and the people who are involved in it deserve every bit of support and encouragement that we can give them. It's a very distinct lifestyle, a very interesting and challenging way to make a living. It can be immensely satisfying but, in the meantime, there are issues that tourism entrepreneurs face that are perhaps unlike many others in the private sector. So I know this bill has been some time in the making and the industry, of course, is anxious to get it through and I hope to be able to help do that today.

The area of licensing, as has been discussed here, is one of special consideration. The area I was specifically interested in, Mr. Chairman, was in the consultation area and the onus that I believe the old act put on tourism operators to be responsible for seeking or for generating and producing the approvals of communities of regional wildlife committees, of everybody who might be on the consultation list. Sometimes those lists, Mr. Chairman, were daunting, given that these are, in some cases, small businesses, very small businesses, but the requirement for paperwork for communication, for seeking approval, for many of these other things, elevated what are otherwise simple and straightforward businesses way up there in terms of just how complex we made the consultation process.

So what I wanted to ask, Mr. Chairman, is the onus still on the tourism operator to be responsible for generating all of the consultation approvals and requirements or has the system been arranged, so that there is more on us, if you will, or reliance on stakeholders or the government to shoulder some of this burden, Mr. Chairman?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Mr. Braden. Minister Bell.

HON. BRENDAN BELL: Mr. Chairman, obviously we have a legal obligation to do some consultation as well, but most of the onus is on the operator. As the Member has said, at times I imagine it can be a daunting task.

The reality of the situation is even under the current legislation, the current practice, it is very difficult to see a new tourism licence granted. It is quite stringent, the amount of consultation that takes place. We are not seeing a lot of new licences issued each year. We don't expect to see a lot of new licences, I expect, in the near future. It becomes a lot easier in the settled areas where there are settled claims and regional people can benefit directly and feel that their rights are protected. It's less certain in the unsettled areas and that creates some concern for the regions. So we are certainly there to work with the operators to help facilitate meetings. We do want to try to broker deals where we can make sure it's a good deal for everybody. We want to promote the industry and protect the interests of the region. We certainly play that role.

Yes, the Member is correct; a lot of the burden is shouldered by the would-be operator who is seeking a licence. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Minister Bell. Mr. Braden.

MR. BRADEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Does the new act then at least take the option or the avenue of bringing in timelines by which stakeholders or agencies are required to reply or not? Again, this is in the context that if an operator simply has the onus to show consultation and approval, we all know the difficulty of arranging meetings and getting everybody to look at the same thing at the same time. Sometimes this could take months or even a year or more for an operator to get a single approval from a single organization based on getting people together and being able to get to that level of the agenda.

So not at all discounting the significance and importance of consultation, but have we brought in any ways of streamlining this so that agencies do have a responsibility to reply in a timely way? Has that been improved, Mr. Chairman?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Mr. Braden. Minister Bell.

HON. BRENDAN BELL: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. There currently are time frames for stakeholders to apply in the consultation section. We are looking for it here, in the current act, and those have been repeated in the new act as well. I would say that those are in the act and they are there and they will be followed, but we are going to work with would-be operators. If we have a good sense -- and we have regional people throughout the territory -- that the whole region is going to rise up against an operator, we are not going to waste their time putting them through the hoops and dealing strictly with these time frames for requirement. We are going to work to try to address the issues first. There is a time frame stipulated in the existing legislation and that will be brought forward in the new one as well.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Minister Bell. Mr. Braden.

MR. BRADEN: Mr. Chairman, I know one of the big intentions of revising this act was to reduce the paperwork, streamline the requirements that we had in previous laws making it easier on the tourism operator and I dare say on the government, the administrators, who didn't have so much of this stuff to keep track of. Has this act resulted in a tangible and marked decrease in the paper burden, Mr. Chairman?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Mr. Braden. Minister Bell.

HON. BRENDAN BELL: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, there is a reduction in a couple of areas. It would be the two main areas; the annual renewal can be streamlined where there isn't a change in the provision of service. That is much improved now we think and this is something that certainly the industry as a whole is embracing. The other area is in duplication, Mr. Chairman. There is more than one licence required now in a number of cases. So we are making sure that that would only be one licence. As you can see, we are now talking about guided activities as opposed to trying to get out there and have hotels and all these other things regulated by this tourism licence when we don't think they need to be. They follow business codes and other things like this. There is no need for us to go and do this again. I want to clarify again, earlier I mentioned it's in the current bill. When I am talking about time frames, it will be extended to the new bill. If I gave the impression that it was in the legislation, I apologize. It is in regulations currently and will be in the new regulations as well. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Minister Bell. Next on the list I have Mr. Yakeleya.

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. This is probably going to be my last comments to the Minister. I would like to ask the Minister, if not today, sometime in the next couple of days, about tourism dollars and the Sahtu region and the number of outfitters. I wonder about the amount of dollars they have brought into the Government of the Northwest Territories and into our region, as opposed to other outfitters that have commercial licences at Great Bear Lake. I am really interested. I think, Mr. Bell, tourism is going to be a key initiative in the future. It's going to be a real key ingredient in terms of overall economics and working together. It's important that we have a real strong balance. I spoke earlier about the aboriginal perspective and that hasn't been there, so I am going to follow up with a question later on, Mr. Chair. If I could ask the Minister if he could provide me with that type of detailed information, not right now. I just want to look at the amount of dollars, for example, to get one sheep in the Mackenzie Mountains. I have been told \$10,000. I don't know. I have been told. I would like to see that type of information.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Just to caution you a little bit, you have to stay with the bill. That information I think you can get from the Minister at a later time. Mr. Minister, please.

HON. BRENDAN BELL: I will certainly provide the data we have on what the industry is worth and we can give some examples of that. In the end, how much money stays in the region is hard for us to quantify at times, but

we do have some data and I will provide that to the Member. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Minister Bell. General comments. Mr. Yakeleya.

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I do apologize. I thank you for allowing me the flexibility to go into another area. I do acknowledge the bill here. Mr. Chairman, I was hoping I would make a connection in terms of the new Tourism Act, let it speak to if there is a low level of animals, low levels of caribou, sheep, moose, and we have to take care of our own needs in the Sahtu region, does this bill, this act, speak to some form of compensation? I may be again on the border of my questions, but I wanted to ask about the Tourism Act. There is a tourism operation that we are talking about. I guess I am looking in to the future, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Mahsi, Mr. Yakeleya. Minister Bell.

HON. BRENDAN BELL: Mr. Chairman, there is no section in this bill or envisioned in the regs where we speak to compensation, per se. I would say that it's ENR who are responsible for the issuance of tags. As we have seen recently with some of the plans for caribou, some of the concerns we've had, the subsistence hunting and harvesting takes precedence. That's the first interest that has to be protected far before tourism outfitting. Mr. Chairman, I imagine that will continue to be the practice. Obviously we have great deference and legal deference to the co-management boards in the areas and they really are the ones who are consulted and make the judgment call on when it's time. We would provide scientific help as well, but when it's time to start talking about limiting the number of tags and these kinds of things, that will remain in place. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Mr. Bell. Mr. Yakeleya.

MR. YAKELEYA: I've looked forward to speaking with the Department of ENR and the Minister has to work closely with that department in terms of this bill here. To this bill here, Mr. Chairman, my last question is, would the Tourism Act bill here give, provide, instruct, regulate a sort of a meeting with the outfitters and the people in our region in terms of drafting up some sort of an access and benefit agreement? Right now it's on a gentleman's acknowledgment. It's good for us, so we better go into the communities and talk with them. It's good for our business. They don't want anything to happen in terms of the communities not having a good sense of us doing business in our region in terms of tourism. Is there anywhere in the future that we would see this Tourism Act direct face-to-face discussions with communities and regions? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Mahsi, Mr. Yakeleya. Minister Bell.

HON. BRENDAN BELL: Mr. Chairman, clearly, on new licences in regions where we have settled claims, yes. It's not this Tourism Act that would direct something like an access and benefit agreement, it's the claim, it's the legislation. Where we're dealing with existing operators, what I can offer to do is to bring the operators together with the communities to have a discussion of this nature. I think it's important and I do think the operators want to

involve the communities. As I say, that's just good business. So we can facilitate that kind of activity. But for sure, there is the legal requirement to do those kinds of things when we're talking about new licences on settlement lands. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Minister Bell. No further general comments. Does committee wish to proceed to the clause-by-clause review of the bill?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Clause by clause.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Clause by clause. Thank you, committee. We're on Bill 11, Tourism Act. Page 4, interpretation, clause 1.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Tourism operator licence, clause 2.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Page 5, clause 3.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Clause 4.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Clause 5.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Page 6, clause 6.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Clause 7.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Clause 8.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Clause 9.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Mr. Hawkins.

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. If I could just get the Minister to reaffirm, I know it's been said a couple times already today, but there was a commitment, I think I understood, that the Minister would bring regulations back to committee for their overall review. I appreciate that commitment; I just want to make sure that it still exists, it's still on the record. If the Minister would mention in his area about possibly tackling the people who refuse to pay their licence. Would it fall under this particular area...Sorry; remit the licence fees, my apologies. Would it fall in this area as he envisions it? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. We are on clause 9, suspension or cancellation, but I'll ask Minister Bell, please.

HON. BRENDAN BELL: Not specifically to this section, Mr. Chairman, but I will restate the commitment that we will come back with the regulations package and we will

sit down with committee. I've also made the commitment to committee to talk about the communications plan; that holds. We will make good on that commitment. Specifically, and this will be developed in regs, how we come up with some vehicles that deal with those who are negligent in remitting fees to the government, we've got some ideas and we're going to put those down and consult on those and come back to committee on that respect specifically. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Minister Bell. Anything further, Mr. Hawkins?

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just want to say on record, I spoke to an operator not even a week ago about this and they were quite enthused that the Tourism Act was coming before the Assembly, and I even sent them a copy just the other day now that it's printed for the public. That was one of their concerns, about the operators paying or remitting fees. So I just want to make sure that the Minister is well aware that there are operators following this issue and they're looking forward to the Minister finally dealing with this in a firm a clear way. So I appreciate the Minister. No question, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. I've got Mr. Yakeleya next.

MR. YAKELEYA: Mr. Chair, just on the question on the appointment of tourism officers in terms of them having the powers of a peace officer. I'm looking at where they're going to be placed. If they have the powers of a peace officer, can they look at strategically some locations where there's no enforcement officers in some of the communities we have? Are all the regions going to have tourism officers? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. I'll just remind Members we are on clause 9, and that is suspension or cancellation, but I'll allow the question. Minister Bell.

HON. BRENDAN BELL: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I may have missed some of the question here, but the tourism officers will be the existing tourism officers that we have in place here and the interest in their ability to act or have the responsibilities as a peace officer, that's correct, but only for the purposes of this act. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Minister Bell. Anything further, Mr. Yakeleya? Thank you, committee. Thank you for your indulgence here. We are on clause 9. Once again, clause 9.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, committee. Page 7, appeal, clause 10.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Clause 11.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Tourism special management area, clause 12. Mr. Pokiak.

MR. POKIAK: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Just in regard to this clause, I'm just wondering if the Minister is talking with ILA in regard to the Husky Lakes area. Of course, I understand that he might have a certain area that's been restricted for tourism. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Mr. Pokiak. Minister Bell.

HON. BRENDAN BELL: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We will certainly have these discussions in every region with the regional authority. I can't and I don't know if we're currently in discussions, if our regional staff are currently in discussions with relation to Husky Lake, but I will certainly find out for the Member. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Minister Bell. Anything further, Mr. Pokiak?

MR. POKIAK: No, I'm fine with that, Mr. Chair. Thanks.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Mr. Pokiak. Thanks, committee. We are on clause 11.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Clause 12, tourism special management area.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Page 8, Tourist Deposit Assurance Program, clause 13.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Page 9, clause 14.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Administration and enforcement, clause 15.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Clause 15.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Clause 16. Mr. Yakeleya.

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The tourism officers, are they going to be placed, are they already placed, already targeted, are they switching job titles from existing officers in their regional office in terms of having these tours and officers? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Mahsi, Mr. Yakeleya. Minister Bell.

HON. BRENDAN BELL: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. No, the tourism officers are in existence now. Their titles are not changing. They have this designation. So they aren't the creation of any new positions. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Minister Bell. Anything further, Mr. Yakeleya?

MR. YAKELEYA: Yes, thank you. I understand that Deni Gaccione is our Sahtu region designated tourism officer. Now, this tourism officer, because of the earlier discussions in the House in regards to the Dodo Park here, would this tourism officer be designated to work in that 354-some kilometres of designated Canol Trail area

that would look at taking care of the Canol area, besides Great Bear Lake, Colville Lake, Good Hope and the Tulita area? Thanks.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Mahsi, Mr. Yakeleya. I just caution committee not to name individuals for better or for worse, so if you could just keep that in mind as well. Thank you, committee. Minister Bell.

HON. BRENDAN BELL: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, the person in the area, the tourism officer, is responsible currently for that Dodo Park. Mr. Chairman, I would say that we think there's additional workload coming up here in the future with the transfer of that land, and I think we, in speaking with the committee, envision the hiring of an additional officer in that region because we think that there will be the work. We're some ways away from that now, but we're working with the committee on that. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Minister Bell. Anything further, Mr. Yakeleya?

MR. YAKELEYA: Yes, Mr. Chairman. In terms of the tourism officer again and hiring on the additional worker in the area of the management of the park area that I hope we will see something shortly in the Sahtu region in terms of someone in our own backyard so we have that type of training, benefit. I have a person in my mind right now. Because we can't name names here, I'm going to keep it with myself and I'll send a note over to the Minister. Thanks again, Mr. Chairman, for your leniency in terms of committee's rules here. I'm going to ask the Minister when we can expect a designated person that would help out, because our Sahtu region is about 120,000 square miles, big land, lots of cover. I think his department has done a wonderful job in terms of supporting the Canol Trail in terms of that becoming a world-class tourism area, so I want to continue his support with his staff and give all my support to headquarters to continue on that initiative here. It's a real gem in all the work that we have done in the Sahtu region. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Mahsi, Mr. Yakeleya. Minister Bell.

HON. BRENDAN BELL: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I agree that it is a gem, and we have felt for some time that we hadn't done enough work there in order to make this park a reality, and that's why we've stepped up the efforts here. I appreciate the support of the Member. We have asked the committee to identify some candidates for us. I can certainly tell the Member that I envision the successful candidate I certainly hope will be a beneficiary who knows the area well. I think that's in everybody's best interest, so that's what we're aiming for. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Minister Bell. Anything further, Mr. Yakeleya?

MR. YAKELEYA: Mr. Chair, the tourism officer's position, this one here is going to be key in many successes of tourism in the North here and I hope that some of the work that's going to be looked at is the importance of hooking up with key leadership, key people in the region, looking at the significance and the cultural, spiritual area of our land, and really getting a good sense of it. I think some of it we had this summer in terms of walking the 54 miles this summer, that we had a real good sense of the cultural, the spiritual component of people in the Sahtu, and the youth really appreciated that trail and the significance of our

elders in terms of how they use that portion of the land. I know, Mr. Bell, I think you may be looking forward to the trip next year and getting a taste of it, as an earlier commitment has been made in the House here. But I think a tourism officer is going to be a real key person, and I hope we provide as much support as possible in this area here because it's going to be a key...I'm losing my train of thought here, so I'm going to leave it at that, Mr. Chair, and continue on with the bill. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Mahsi, Mr. Yakeleya. I didn't hear a question there. I'm going to move now to Mr. Pokiak.

MR. POKIAK: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just want a clarification regarding appointment of a tourism officer. Will they be employees of ITI, or can you just take somebody off the street and appoint them as a tourism officer? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Mr. Pokiak. Minister Bell.

HON. BRENDAN BELL: Mr. Chairman, the people exist and are employed by the government currently, so there is a tourism officer in the Inuvik region, a very good one. One with a lot of experience and one who we've used in a number of other roles to help train other officers and help do a lot of work in tourism for us as a government. He was very much involved in our Expo work in Japan. So you're very well served in that region. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Minister Bell. Back to clause by clause. We are on clause 16, committee.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Clause 17.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Clause 18.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Page 10, clause 19.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Clause 20.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Offence and punishment, clause 21.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Page 11, clause 22.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Clause 23.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Clause 24.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Clause 25.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Regulations, clause 26.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Page 13, transitional, clause 27.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Clause 28.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Page 14, consequential amendments, clause 29.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Repeal, clause 30.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Commencement, clause 31.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): To the bill as a whole.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you. Does the committee agree that Bill 11 is ready for third reading?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, committee. Bill 11 is now ready for third reading. Mahsi. Thank you, Mr. Minister. Thank you, Mr. Doan and Ms. Veinott, for being with us here this afternoon; much appreciated. Now I'll ask what is the will of committee? Thank you, committee. Committee had previously agreed to go with Bill 7. Is that still the will of committee?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Agreed, okay. Thank you, committee. We will now proceed with Bill 7. Mr. Roland.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am pleased to introduce Bill 7, Pharmacy Act. This bill reflects a significant number of differences from the existing Pharmacy Act to ensure the public receives quality pharmaceutical service and care, and to modernize the definition of the "practice of pharmacy."

Many stakeholders were involved in the development of this act, including the Pharmaceutical Association of the Northwest Territories, the NWT Medical Association, the Registered Nurses' Association of the NWT and Nunavut, the NWT Medical Director's Forum, and the regional health and social services authorities. We appreciate their involvement and the time they have dedicated to helping develop this act. They will continue to be involved during the development of the regulations.

We need to bring the Pharmacy Act up to date with modern practices, as the existing act is 53 years old. IT does not permit pharmacists to accept faxed prescriptions. The existing act has an inadequate discipline process not consistent with modern practice. The drug schedules are

too out of date to be useful, and provisions of the act make it very difficult to respond in a timely manner when there are changes needed to the list of drugs that nurse practitioners or midwives are permitted to prescribe.

The new Pharmacy Act will recognize health care professionals and will also recognize the National Association of Pharmaceutical Regulatory Authorities' drug schedules. These national lists are kept up to date. The department will enact regulations in a variety of areas including the establishment of a prescription-monitoring program.

In the provinces, regulatory colleges for each profession are in charge of licensing and registered pharmacists, and discipline. They also regulate the operation of pharmacies, including business hours and store layout.

In the NWT, there are too few pharmacists to establish a college structure. The GNWT will continue to administer licensing and registration, and an independent committee of peers who will manage any disciplinary process. The new act will also allow for disciplinary provisions such as an alternative dispute resolution process. It should be noted that we have never had a complaint about a pharmacist in the NWT. The new act will not regulate the business aspects of pharmacies but focuses on the profession only.

When this act was reviewed by the Standing Committee on Social Programs, concerns were raised by stakeholders regarding section 20 of the initial bill, which gave pharmacists prescribing powers. Concerns were also raised regarding the unclear authority of the practice of a nurse dispensing. The department worked with the standing committee and stakeholders to resolve these concerns, which resulted in amendments being made to the bill by the standing committee. I am confident this amended bill still gives pharmacists the flexibility they need to successfully practice in the NWT. That concludes my opening remarks. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Minister Roland. I'd now like to ask the chairman of the Standing Committee on Social Programs, Ms. Lee, to provide committee's comments on the bill. Ms. Lee.

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The Standing Committee on Social Programs conducted a public review of Bill 7, Pharmacy Act, on September 5th, 2006, and October 16th, 2006. The committee would like to thank the representatives of the NWT Pharmacists Association, the NWT Medical Association and the Registered Nurses' Association of the NWT and Nunavut for appearing before committee to discuss the ramifications of the passage of the Pharmacy Act for all health practitioners in the NWT.

It became apparent to committee members at the September 5th public hearing that there were serious concerns on the part of the NWT Medical Association representing the doctors and the Registered Nurses' Association of the NWT/Nunavut over the scope of practice for pharmacists proposing the new legislation. These concerns centred on the pharmacist's proposed ability to issue and alter prescriptions without consulting with a doctor or nurse who originated the prescription, and on the availability of nurses in the health centres and nurse practitioners to issue drugs under the proposed legislation. It is a tribute to the professionalism and dedication of all three associations, that they were able to

meet with the Department of Health and Social Services and come to an agreement on new wording that satisfied their needs and allowed the act that regulates the practice of pharmacy to be modernized to recognize existing best practices. This collaborative approach is reflected in the five amendments that were passed during the clause-by-clause review at the committee stage.

Mr. Chairman, I would now like to ask my colleague Mr. Pokiak to conclude the statement. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Ms. Lee. Mr. Pokiak.

MR. POKIAK: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The bill we have before us will modernize the practice of pharmacy in the Northwest Territories. It provides pharmacists with their scope and regulation of practice, and further clarifies the roles of doctors, pharmacists and nurses in issuing and...(inaudible)...prescriptions.

It also moves the drug schedules from legislation to regulation, which will allow the department the ability to add and de-list drugs from the schedules as required, and respond to emerging health care crises by temporarily moving drugs to a lower schedule in order to increase availability.

Following the committee's review, a motion was carried to report Bill 7, Pharmacy Act, as amended and reprinted, to the Assembly as ready for Committee of the Whole.

This concludes the committee's opening comments on Bill 7. Individual Members may have additional questions or comments as we proceed. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Mr. Pokiak. I'd now like to ask Minister Roland if he'd like to bring in witnesses.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Yes, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you. Does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, committee. I will now ask the Sergeant-at-Arms to escort the witnesses in.

Thank you. Minister Roland, I would now like to have you introduce your witnesses for the record.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, to my left is Ms. Janis Cooper, the legislative counsel for Justice; to my immediate right is the deputy minister of the Department of Health and Social Services, Mr. Chuck Parker; and further over is Ms. Gay Kennedy, director of policy, legislation and communications.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Minister Roland. Welcome to our proceedings here this afternoon. We have general comments next. Anybody for general comments, committee? Mr. Braden.

MR. BRADEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. This has been an interesting, multi-faceted piece of legislation. It's been working its way through committee for some time now and I'm pleased to speak in favour of the bill, as a member of the standing committee. I guess in general comments, very general comments, a couple of things that the public,

as consumers, may be interested in in relation to pharmacies and the business of dispensing drugs. One of the things that has been quite controversial for the last couple or three years, in Canada especially, is the industry established through Internet purchase and merchandising of prescription drugs. I was wondering whether this was something that the NWT considered in the context of the...Even though we have relatively few drug dispensing pharmacists here in the NWT, this is something that causes some concern or some interest in other parts of Canada. Was this addressed or how is this addressed in this bill, Mr. Chairman?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Mr. Braden. Minister Roland.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, the Internet pharmacy issue that's been out there in Canada is something that this bill doesn't deal with particularly. It doesn't deal with that section of it. That more falls into the actual physicians' side of the equation and how they deal with that. So that part of it is not covered in this act. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Minister Roland. Mr. Braden.

MR. BRADEN: Okay. So then the bill does not either restrict or enable this kind of thing to happen. It's simply silent on this aspect of dispensing drugs, Mr. Chairman. It's silent.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Mr. Braden. Minister Roland.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The act itself, this Pharmacy Act doesn't cover, or I guess the term is "silent" on that. But there are some other categories or effects here that I guess would fall in the territory. Ms. Cooper may be able to address that.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Minister Roland. Ms. Cooper.

MS. COOPER: Mr. Chairman, the act does regulate anybody who dispenses, any pharmacist who dispenses drugs in the Northwest Territories. Somebody can't just set up a dispensary from which they send things all over the place, without complying with the act. So if pharmacists are up here dispensing...It doesn't prohibit people from purchase online, but we can't do that.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Ms. Cooper. Anything further, Mr. Braden?

MR. BRADEN: I guess that's enough on Internet. I take it that it's not going anywhere.

Mr. Chairman, something that is always a consideration with a bill of this nature is that there's usually a large package of regulations also bolted onto it. The legislation, of course, is the platform. The detail is implemented through regulation. I wanted to ask the Minister if he could give us some sense of when we will see the regulations that affect this new legislation completed and when this new legislation could potentially come into effect, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Mr. Braden. Minister Roland.

HON. FLOYD ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, as with most legislation that flows through this House, as the Member stated, the bill itself, the law that gets put in place follows with regulation being worked on. I understand that they're aiming for April, but Ms. Kennedy can provide more detail, as well, on that.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Minister Roland. Ms. Kennedy.

MS. KENNEDY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. We intend to work on just the registration regulations. That's all that would be needed to get it operational. So we hope by April that we can bring the bill into force with enough of the registration guidelines. They can be used to start the registration process over the course of the year. Then there are numerous other regulations we will probably need to get started on, but probably are not needed for implementation.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Ms. Kennedy. Anything further, Mr. Braden?

MR. BRADEN: Thank you. That will do for now, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Mr. Braden. No further general comments. We will now move, Bill 7, Pharmacy Act, clause by clause, committee?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you. We will begin on page 6, Bill 7, Pharmacy Act, interpretation, clause 1.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Page 8, part 1, registration, clause 2.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Clause 3.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Page 9, clause 4.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Page 10, clause 5.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed. Page 11, clause 6.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Clause 7.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Page 12, clause 8.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Page 13, clause 9.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Page 14, clause 10.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Part II, practice of pharmacy, clause 11.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Page 15, clause 12.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Clause 13.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Clause 14.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Part III, drugs and prescriptions, clause 15.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Page 16, clause 16.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Clause 17.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Clause 18.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Clause 19.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Page 17, clause 20.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Page 19, part IV, review of conduct, clause 21.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Page 20, clause 22.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Clause 23.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Page 21, clause 24.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Clause 25.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Clause 26.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Clause 27.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

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

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

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

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Clause 30.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Page 24, clause 31.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Clause 32.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

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

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Clause 34.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Page 26, clause 35.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, committee, thank you. Mahsi. Page 26, clause 35.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Clause 36.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Page 27, clause 37.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Clause 38.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Page 28, clause 39.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Clause 40.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Page 30, clause 41.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Agreed. Page 31, clause 42.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Part V, general, clause 43.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Clause 44.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Page 32, clause 45.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Page VI, regulations, clause 46.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Page 35, transitional provisions, clause 47.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Consequential, clause 48.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Clause 49.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Page 36, clause 49.1.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Clause 50.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Repeal, clause 51.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Commencement, clause 52.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): To the bill as a whole?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Does committee agree that Bill 7 is ready for third reading?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, committee. Bill 7 is ready for third reading. Thank you. I would like to thank the Minister, Ms. Kennedy, Mr. Parker and Ms. Cooper for being with us this afternoon. Mahsi. What is the wish of committee? Mr. Braden.

MR. BRADEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I move that we report progress.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Ramsay): Thank you, Mr. Braden. The motion is in order and not debatable. All those in favour? All those opposed? The motion is carried.

---Carried

I will now rise and report progress.

MR. SPEAKER: Could I have report of Committee of the Whole? Mr. Ramsay.

ITEM 20: REPORT OF COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, your committee has been considering Bill 11, Tourism Act, and Bill 7, Pharmacy Act, and would like to report that Bill 11 and Bill 7 are ready for third reading. Mr. Speaker, I move that the report of Committee of the Whole be concurred with. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. The motion is on the floor. The motion is in order. Do we have a seconder? The honourable Member for Mackenzie Delta, Mr. Krutko. The motion is on the floor. The motion is in order. To the motion.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

MR. SPEAKER: Question is being called. All those in favour? All those opposed? The motion is carried.

---Carried

Third reading of bills. The honourable Minister of Justice, Mr. Bell.

ITEM 21: THIRD READING OF BILLS

Bill 6: Engineering And Geoscience Professions Act

MR. POKIAK: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Deh Cho, that Bill 6, Engineering and Geoscience Professions Act, be read for the third time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

MR. SPEAKER: Question is being called. All those in favour? All those opposed? The motion is carried.

---Carried

Bill 6 has had third reading. Third reading of bills. Mr. Clerk, orders of the day.

ITEM 22: ORDERS OF THE DAY

DEPUTY CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Schauerte): Mr. Speaker, there will be a meeting of the Social Programs committee at 6:10 p.m.

Orders of the day for Friday, October 27, 2006, at 10:00 a.m.

1. Prayer
2. Ministers' Statements
3. Members' Statements
4. Returns to Oral Questions
5. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery
6. Oral Questions
7. Written Questions
8. Returns to Written Questions
9. Replies to Opening Address
10. Petitions
11. Reports of Standing and Special Committees
12. Reports of Committees on the Review of Bills
13. Tabling of Documents
14. Notices of Motion
15. Notices of Motion for First Reading of Bills
16. Motions

17. First Reading of Bills

- Bill 9, Write-off of Assets Act, 2006-2007

18. Second Reading of Bills

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

- Bill 13, Supplementary Appropriation Act, No.2, 2006-2007

- Bill 15, Elections and Plebiscites Act

- Bill 16, An Act to Amend the Jury Act

- Bill 17, An Act to Amend the Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act, No. 3

- Bill 20, An Act to Amend the Income Tax Act

20. Report of Committee of the Whole

21. Third Reading of Bills

- Bill 7, Pharmacy Act

- Bill 11, Tourism Act

22. Orders of the Day

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Clerk. Accordingly, this House stands adjourned until Friday, October 27, 2006, at 10:00 a.m.

---ADJOURNMENT

The House adjourned at 17:57 p.m.

