



# **NORTHWEST TERRITORIES LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY**

**4<sup>th</sup> Session**

**Day 19**

**17<sup>th</sup> Assembly**

## **HANSARD**

**Wednesday, March 6, 2013**

Pages 2389 – 2428

**The Honourable Jackie Jacobson, Speaker**

# Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories

## Members of the Legislative Assembly

### Speaker

**Hon. Jackie Jacobson**

(Nunakput)

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(Great Slave)

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*Minister of Human Resources*

*Minister of Public Works and Services*

*Minister responsible for the*

*Public Utilities Board*

**Hon. Tom Beaulieu**

(Tu Nedhe)

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*Minister responsible for*

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**Mr. Frederick Blake**

(Mackenzie Delta)

**Mr. Robert Bouchard**

(Hay River North)

**Mr. Bob Bromley**

(Weledeh)

**Mr. Daryl Dolynny**

(Range Lake)

**Mrs. Jane Groenewegen**

(Hay River South)

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(Inuvik Boot Lake)

**Mr. Michael Nadli**

(Deh Cho)

**Hon. David Ramsay**

(Kam Lake)

*Minister of Industry, Tourism*

*and Investment*

*Minister of Transportation*

**Mr. Norman Yakeleya**

(Sahtu)

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>PRAYER</b> .....	<b>2389</b>
<b>MINISTERS' STATEMENTS</b> .....	<b>2389</b>
40-17(4) – Department of Justice Human Resources Plan for the Future (Abernethy) .....	2389
<b>MEMBERS' STATEMENTS</b> .....	<b>2389</b>
Long John Jamboree, March 14-17, 2013 (Dolyunny) .....	2389
Small Scale Foods Program Under Growing Forward Agreement (Bromley) .....	2390
Information and Privacy Legislation for Municipal Government (Bisaro) .....	2390
Discretionary Leave for Teachers Coaching Community Sports (Groenewegen) .....	2391
NWT Electoral Boundaries Commission (Bouchard) .....	2392
Inuvik-Tuktoyaktuk Highway (Moses) .....	2392
Protected Areas Strategy for the Edehzhie (Nadli) .....	2393
Mackenzie Valley Winter Road Trip (Yakeleya) .....	2393
Minister's Forum on Addictions and Community Wellness (Hawkins) .....	2393
Inuvik-Tuktoyaktuk Highway Project (Blake) .....	2394
<b>RECOGNITION OF VISITORS IN THE GALLERY</b> .....	<b>2394</b>
<b>ORAL QUESTIONS</b> .....	<b>2394</b>
<b>RETURNS TO WRITTEN QUESTIONS</b> .....	<b>2402</b>
<b>REPORTS OF COMMITTEES ON THE REVIEW OF BILLS</b> .....	<b>2403</b>
<b>TABLING OF DOCUMENTS</b> .....	<b>2403</b>
<b>NOTICES OF MOTION</b> .....	<b>2403</b>
7-17(4) – Appointment of Acting Clerk of the Legislative Assembly (Blake) .....	2403
<b>CONSIDERATION IN COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE OF BILLS AND OTHER MATTERS</b> .....	<b>2403</b>
<b>REPORT OF COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE</b> .....	<b>2427</b>
<b>ORDERS OF THE DAY</b> .....	<b>2428</b>



**YELLOWKNIFE, NORTHWEST TERRITORIES****Wednesday, March 6, 2013****Members Present**

Hon. Glen Abernethy, Hon. Tom Beaulieu, Ms. Bisaro, Mr. Blake, Mr. Bouchard, Mr. Bromley, Mr. Dolynny, Mrs. Groenewegen, Mr. Hawkins, Hon. Jackie Jacobson, Hon. Jackson Lafferty, Hon. Bob McLeod, Hon. Robert McLeod, Mr. Menicoche, Hon. Michael Miltenberger, Mr. Moses, Mr. Nadli, Hon. David Ramsay, Mr. Yakeleya

The House met at 1:31 p.m.

**Prayer**

---Prayer

**SPEAKER (Hon. Jackie Jacobson):** Good afternoon, colleagues. Item 2, Ministers' statements. The honourable Minister of Justice, Mr. Abernethy.

**Ministers' Statements**

MINISTER'S STATEMENT 40-17(4):  
DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE HUMAN  
RESOURCES PLAN FOR THE FUTURE

**HON. GLEN ABERNETHY:** Mr. Speaker, through their ability to motivate and serve as role models, many staff in the Department of Justice make a significant difference in the lives of people in the Northwest Territories.

In our 10-year strategic plan we made a commitment to our staff – and ultimately the public they serve – to build and maintain a strong foundation at the Department of Justice. The first step towards this goal is to create an effective human resources plan.

Our plan will build and support a northern workforce. To do this, we will make ongoing investments in our over 500 employees, many of whom work in high-risk environments. They work with offenders or support people in crisis or transition. Both front-line and management staff need to have appropriate training so they have the tools, resources and support to fulfill their duties while maintaining the safety and well-being of their clients, colleagues, themselves and the public.

Most Justice staff work in the corrections field in Hay River, Fort Smith and in the two facilities in the North Slave region. Our facilities operate 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Our probation officers work in communities throughout the Northwest Territories. These corrections positions can be stressful and we see frequent turnover.

The department also has specialists in the legal field who represent the government in court, draft legislation, or help families and individuals in their legal issues. Our professional staff ensure courts have the support necessary to see justice served

throughout our system and perform the necessary functions to ensure the smooth running of government systems. Our people have great experience and extensive training; they are a talented collection of individuals.

To ensure we are listening to our staff in a manner that is both meaningful and effective, we offered each employee an opportunity to participate in focus groups on HR issues. Corrections staff participated one on one with an independent surveyor to answer questions about their training and working environment. To ensure replies were anonymous, all personal identifiers were removed. We are using all of this information to develop the human resources plan.

The results were interesting, Mr. Speaker. Employees trusted us enough to provide honest answers. We found the majority of our staff enjoy their jobs, their co-workers and the department as a whole. They feel their work is challenging and interesting. They were also clear about the work that needs to be done. Our management teams are preparing to address these issues.

We will plan for succession in management positions and operations that are vulnerable to staffing changes. As well, we will be refining the recruitment and training model used for corrections and courts to encourage NWT residents to consider joining us in a career in the justice field.

By strengthening our capacity and resiliency, we will maintain the strong foundation that allows us to provide change and gives innovation room to thrive. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Abernethy. Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for Range Lake, Mr. Dolynny.

**Members' Statements**

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON  
LONG JOHN JAMBOREE, MARCH 14-17, 2013

**MR. DOLYNNY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. According to the Long John Jamboree website, in exactly seven days, 21 hours, 24 minutes and 46 seconds, Yellowknife will enjoy and host our 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Long John Jamboree on the ice of the Great Slave Lake in Yellowknife Bay.

My praise and admiration goes out to the many organizers and volunteers that are working feverishly behind the scenes in preparation for one of the "Gotta Go!" winter festivals in Canada.

The organizers for this year are promising even more great events and activities both on and off the ice. We've been promised the return of the kids' tent, music, Terriers and Tiaras, Flaunt your Skivvies, ice hockey, the Snowking Festival, fireworks, artisans, and the MLAs' favorite, the ultimate trivia contest.

This trivia contest is where the Yellowknife MLAs teach the local media teams a thing or two about overall knowledge and the supremacy of smartness.

We know that CBC narrowly won last year because of Mr. Paul Andrew anchoring the team. However, this year, Mr. Speaker, the Yellowknife MLA team has been training for months and we've been put on a restrictive diet of contraband Bathurst caribou meat and Sahtu special tea.

It would be rude of me not to mention last year's third and last place Northern News Service team; however, like in any competition, who really remembers the bronze medalists anyway? Sorry, Mr. Mike Bryant, but you know that's the truth.

Mr. Speaker, it is also important to mention the return of the De Beers-inspired ice carving competition. This is only one of four "big block" harvested ice competitions in the world. It is now deemed the final event of the season for the National Ice Carving Association circuit.

Events like this do not just happen on their own. It takes leadership and commitment to see such a success transpire. Therefore, I would like to thank these Yellowknife volunteer leaders for making this all possible: Adrian Bell, Julia Mott, Cory Vanthuyne, Michelle Demeule, Janet Pacey, Jacqueline McKinnon, Claire Smith, Brad Morrissey, Andre Corbeil, Keith McNeill and Nancy McNeill.

In closing, I would encourage all Yellowknifers and visiting Northerners to make an effort to come down to Yellowknife Bay during March 14<sup>th</sup> to 17<sup>th</sup> and see what all the excitement is about.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Dolynny. The honourable Member for Weledeh, Mr. Bromley.

#### MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON SMALL SCALE FOODS PROGRAM UNDER GROWING FORWARD AGREEMENT

**MR. BROMLEY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Here is a story familiar to communities all over the North. The government guy comes to town in his government truck loaded with his expensive equipment and know-how. He's there to help. He asks directions, drives to the site and gets to work.

Locals watch curiously as another government project takes shape. Days pass and stuff happens until, duty done, the government guy loads up and is gone. Who was that masked man?

From what I hear, that's a pretty good description of the ITI delivery model for the Small Scale Foods Program under the Growing Forward Agreement. The ITI agricultural worker has spent the annual \$245,000 in funding. Yes, we have dutifully tallied the mounting number of local gardens spreading across our communities. Yes, we can claim 30 community gardens, but feedback indicates that's a very hollow claim.

In contrast, modest investments or contributions to non-government organizations like the Territorial Farmers Association, Ecology North and the Arctic Energy Alliance have netted real community engagement, buy-in and capacity building. The Lutselk'e, Simpson and Fort Resolution community gardens are great examples. Watered and weeded by gardeners in the making, the communities harvest the bounty of their own care and attention. Nothing tastes so good. Beyond that, though, community residents very soon use new-found skills and enthusiasm to take on leadership roles themselves.

Fortunately, I have begun hearing that government has realized the drive or fly in, put in the garden, and leave modus operandi is less than ideal. Gardens and gardeners don't grow untended. The Minister's office says three ITI regional offices will be taking on delivery of the Small Scale Foods Program. While I'm happy to support regional roles, I am leery of seeing new positions carry on in the same old way. Based on real partnership results, the approach should be to enhance meaningful support of groups that know how to do community outreach and capacity building.

We're talking about supporting a school of agriculture with funds from Growing Forward 2. A community-wise component of local engagement and mobilization should be part of that new curriculum. Community folks are saying that drive-by gardens don't work. Let's use a proven approach that emphasizes local control with efficient non-government organization expertise to build self-reliance.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Bromley. The honourable Member for Frame Lake, Ms. Bisaro.

#### MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON INFORMATION AND PRIVACY LEGISLATION FOR MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENT

**MS. BISARO:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. One of the statutory officers of this Assembly is the Information and Privacy Commissioner. The commissioner does excellent work, not only carrying out her regular duties but also advocating for areas in need

of further attention. Unfortunately, the government is not heeding all of her recommendations.

For almost 10 years now the Information and Privacy Commissioner has recommended that this government amend the Access to Information and Protection of Privacy legislation, ATIPP, to include municipal governments under the act. This has yet to happen. The most recent Information and Privacy Commissioner Annual Report, 2011-2012, again highlighted this need. The NWT Association of Communities has resolutions on their books for the past six years asking for a change in legislation.

Each year the Information and Privacy Commissioner receives a number of complaints from residents about municipal actions, specifically the way municipalities are collecting, using, or disclosing personal information. In 2011-2012 there were two such privacy complaints about municipalities but they weren't actioned because the Information and Privacy Commissioner has no authority or jurisdiction under the ATIPP Act to deal with complaints against municipalities. Even when the Information and Privacy Commissioner tried to engage these two municipalities in discussions around the protection of privacy of employee information and policy, she was refused.

Currently, without access and privacy legislation applying to municipalities, there are no legislative constraints on NWT municipalities. Even though they all collect and retain significant amounts of personal information about their citizens and their employees, there is no oversight and no recourse for citizens when information is improperly used, nor are there any rules which allow citizens access to the information that municipalities create and collect.

I realize that municipalities face capacity and staffing issues, but the government, through MACA, has to accept responsibility to help their communities, to help them with ATIPP. But the burden on municipalities, if they are included under ATIPP, is acceptable when compared to the potential violation of individuals' rights to privacy and protection of their own information. Of all Canadian jurisdictions, the three territories are the only ones without information and privacy legislation for municipalities. It's long past time for this government to take action on amending the ATIPP Act. It really must be made a priority. Mr. Speaker, as you like to say, let's get 'er done.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. The Member for Hay River South, Mrs. Groenewegen.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON  
DISCRETIONARY LEAVE FOR TEACHERS  
COACHING COMMUNITY SPORTS

**MRS. GROENEWEGEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Something very troubling has come to my attention

and I feel the need to raise this issue in the House today.

Last week a letter went to parents of biathlon athletes in my community from their long-time coach, who is also a teacher in Hay River. Although I cannot read the whole letter in my Member's statement, I would like to draw your attention to some parts of this letter. It reads:

"It is with much sadness and disappointment that I must share with everyone that I will be stepping down as the head coach of the Hay River Biathlon Team and Ski Club. I will finish out the season and continue to lead practices and coordinate the Polar Cup races and the Ptub races this year.

My reason for having to step down is the ongoing lack of support, which I have received over the years from my employer when it comes to volunteering and coaching the Hay River Biathlon Team. The latest reminder of this came when I required one hour of class time off in order to leave with the team, only to be told that I would have to apply for a half-day of discretionary leave and be responsible for covering the cost of a substitute teacher with being away, despite having another teacher offer to fill in for me for that one hour. As a teacher, I do not have lieu time or annual leave that I can draw from, so there are no options when your request for leave is denied.

This is just an example of numerous other requests in the past to coach our team, but with similar feedback. I feel that I am put in a position in which I am continually letting our athletes down as I cannot travel with them to competitions, especially after many, many weeks and months of preparation that we put in leading up to these competitions. It has been explained to me that the reason for this is that biathlon is not a school sport and, therefore, I am not entitled to the same leave as a basketball coach, for example."

The letter goes on to explain the reasons why he decided to step down.

This teacher has been coaching in Hay River for more than 10 years. He has poured himself into his work, dedicating hundreds of hours each season, sacrificing his time and efforts to offer his services on a voluntary basis. It is not easy to find people who are willing, capable and qualified to make this type of commitment, and our government, unfortunately, does little to support teachers that coach outside of school sports. This teacher was only requesting a short amount of time from the workplace to be with these athletes. He is coaching kids, providing opportunities for them to be involved in sport within Hay River. He is also on the Hay River Ski Club and NWT Biathlon Board, and works

to fundraise and plan for many opportunities for our youth.

It is also incredibly demoralizing to put so much into a program and then have so little support and recognition from your employer.

I'd like to seek unanimous consent to conclude my statement.

---Unanimous consent granted

**MRS. GROENEWEGEN:** The only games that are covered by the Human Resource Manual for approved leave are that associated with Arctic Winter Games, Canada Winter Games or national level championships. There is no leave for work as a teacher in our community with a group of youth outside the school setting. This is further compounded by the messages in the media that you hear about the importance of volunteering and giving back to the youth in our community.

Youth are a very high priority of this government, and I don't think we should distinguish between school sports and community sports. I don't think that money can buy the kind of contribution that a coach like this makes, and it's not the fault of the school and it's not the fault of the principal. It is a policy that needs to be looked at.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. The Member for Hay River North, Mr. Bouchard.

#### MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON NWT ELECTORAL BOUNDARIES COMMISSION

**MR. BOUCHARD:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I rise to discuss one of the commissions that are going around the Northwest Territories, the NWT Electoral Boundaries Commission. I'd like to talk about this commission and its involvement throughout the communities. Right now they are in the process of doing public consultation and we've given them direction to go out in the Northwest Territories and get opinions from the residents of the Northwest Territories to see what we do for electoral districts. Do we want 18, 19 or 21 MLAs?

They had a meeting last night in Hay River and it was very poorly attended, sadly to say. I just want to encourage all the Members and everybody else in the Northwest Territories, to attend the upcoming events. There is one on K'atlodeeche tonight at Chief Lamalice Complex from 7:00 until 9:00. Tomorrow, on Thursday night, there is one in Lutselk'e. Next week we have one, on March 10<sup>th</sup>, in Inuvik. There is one in Aklavik on March 11<sup>th</sup>, one in Yellowknife here on March 12<sup>th</sup> and one in Detah on March 13<sup>th</sup>. The commission is also taking submissions either on-line, at [www.nwtboundaries.ca](http://www.nwtboundaries.ca), or you can write the Commissioner and give your comments there. We need public input into this important issue. As MLAs, we will be deciding the fate of the future of

the Northwest Territories, but we need feedback from the general public and we need to hear from them. Thank you very much.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Bouchard. The honourable Member for Inuvik Boot Lake, Mr. Moses.

#### MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON INUVIK-TUKTOYAKTUK HIGHWAY

**MR. MOSES:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I'm going to be speaking on the Inuvik-Tuk highway. Yesterday we had a couple of strong statements and some questions in the House that gives a perception out there that our government is actually hiding something in terms of moving forward on this project and that deals are being done behind closed doors.

I sat here and I listened to it, and I felt that I had to say something today that we do have a process, and that process is waiting for the right correspondence from the federal government. The Minister sat up in the House yesterday. He explained himself. He answered the questions as best he could, but when he was answering, he was also mentioning that some of the information that some Members were seeking was also confidential.

We are very lucky in this House, and as legislators and as MLAs, to get some of this confidential information to help us make the right decisions that we have to make. There is a process for it. When the time is ready, it comes down into the House and we make that decision. I felt that it was unfair to the Minister and unfair to the House that we did have some Members questioning the Minister and trying to get the Minister to bring confidential information out into the public. Obviously, we are going to bring confidential information to the public. Obviously, we are going to bring this information to the public, but there is a process for it.

I just wanted to bring this out because I felt that although we know it in this House, the perception, the way it was stated yesterday, there is perception in the public that the government is hiding documents and hiding information and I don't feel that is the case.

This is a big project. Obviously, I am in support of the Inuvik-Tuk highway for many reasons. A lot of them were discussed in the House. A lot of them were discussed in Members' statements and Ministers' statements, but mainly it's for people in my region, in the Beaufort-Delta region and the community of Inuvik, looking at some of the stats for income support. We have an increase in the amount of dollars that our government is providing for people that are on income assistance right now. We have an increase in the amount of people that are applying to income assistance. We're getting houses that are foreclosing in the community of



Inuvik. This is not only providing infrastructure for the government, for the region, but it's doing something that's bigger in terms of Canada and the nation bringing our nation together closer, coast to coast to coast and building infrastructure to each coast.

I wanted to bring that up in the House today, that there is perception out there. I want to let the public know that we are following due course on this project, and when we do have information, it will become public. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Moses. The honourable Member for Deh Cho, Mr. Nadli.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON  
PROTECTED AREAS STRATEGY  
FOR THE EDEHZHIE

**MR. NADLI:** Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. This week Canada agreed in writing to complete the final stages of their Protected Areas Strategy initiative to establish a co-managed national wildlife area of the Edehzhie. The federal government has also agreed to pay the cost of the litigation of the Dehcho First Nations. In return, Dehcho First Nations have agreed to withdraw their judicial review application.

[English translation not provided.]

Today Grand Chief Herb Norwegian said that he would renew calls for the Dehcho First Nations to the Harper government, to work with them to complete the process of protecting Edehzhie and establishing a co-management regime. The Dehcho First Nations has always been committed to the protection of this important area and that will never change. It's a shame that we had to sue Canada to get the Harper government to honour its obligation, but we are very satisfied with the results of Grand Chief Herb Norwegian. Mahsi.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Nadli. The Member for the Sahtu, Mr. Yakeleya.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON  
MACKENZIE VALLEY WINTER ROAD TRIP

**MR. YAKELEYA:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Last weekend I had the opportunity to drive the Mackenzie Valley winter road with Minister Ramsay. Over 700 kilometres through God's country makes a guy feel a little poetic. I want to share with my colleagues here today some of the things that were going through my mind.

Almost heaven, just past Wrigley, Mackenzie Mountains, Deh Cho Big River. The roads get rough here, rough as any seas. Holes and bumps and ridges, spilling coffee on my knees.

Winter road, get me home to the place I belong. Sahtu country, Great Bear River, get me home, winter road.

All the oil companies gathering up there. The ice couldn't take it, trucks waiting in Nahendeh. Lots of big loads heading north for resupply, it's a race against springtime under the northern sky.

Winter roads, get me home to the place I belong. Sahtu country, Hare Skin River, get me home, winter roads.

I hear the geese, way down south. Now as they call to me, make me daydream, about blasting and plucking this May. Bouncing down the road I get a feeling, the all-weather road highway should have been built yesterday. Yesterday, Mr. Speaker.

So with that I'd like to say thank you to Minister Ramsay for braving the winter road with me and I hope, now that he's experienced it he will agree that we need an all-weather road yesterday. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. The Member for Yellowknife Centre, Mr. Hawkins.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON  
MINISTER'S FORUM ON ADDICTIONS  
AND COMMUNITY WELLNESS

**MR. HAWKINS:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Minister of Health and Social Services did a Minister's statement on the Forum on Addictions and Community Wellness. I want to quote a couple of things. It says not one community in the entire Northwest Territories can claim to be free from health and social problems caused by addictive behaviour.

That beginning statement is very telling about the problems we're having here in the Northwest Territories. I believe in prevention and, certainly, enhancing established treatment facilities, as the Minister has highlighted in his statement, but I think we need to go just a little bit further. We need to draw the line and say we need to establish true treatment facilities to address these types of problems.

I thank the Minister who has offered two detox centres and two in Inuvik, I believe he said, or sorry, detox beds, my apologies there, but I think that only is just a re-profiling of what we already do. Are they just going to be re-profiled spots at the hospital? I liken it to what the federal government does. They keep announcing decisions already made about new money. It is something we're already doing? Are these new beds that he's talking about?

I applaud the government, on the other hand, when they talk about \$9 million annually on counselling and treatment. This is a relentless fight. I will not give up on those people who need help, because hard drugs are a challenge out there. There's not a month that goes by that somebody calls to talk about their children. I can't say this call comes everywhere, but I can definitely attest that this type

of call comes in every month that someone talks about their partner, their friend, their children with these types of problems. We are in a position to better people's lives.

I worry about this Addictions Forum group. Are they just going to restate what the endless amounts of reports, experts and studies have already told us to do? They've told the government to act, but now they decided to strike a new committee. I also fear that laypersons will be helping to drive government policy when we've had many experts who've already pointed out the right direction. Although they mean well, I just worry we are taking on a topic that they don't bring the skills to the table.

I will be asking the Minister questions about giving us an update as to what this forum has said and heard. I want to make it absolutely clear, my last point here for the day, that I certainly support the principles of things like on-the-land programming and to that I will stand with my colleagues, but I fear that it may appear taboo to say, this but no on-the-land program will help people with hard drugs such as crack and meth.

I will have questions during the appropriate time later today and I look forward to the answers by the Minister.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. The honourable Member for Mackenzie Delta, Mr. Blake.

#### MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON INUVIK-TUKTOYAKTUK HIGHWAY PROJECT

**MR. BLAKE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. A lot has been said in this House in recent days about the proposed highway between Inuvik and Tuktoyaktuk. There has been so much talk about cost overruns that I was starting to wonder if I had missed the start of construction. Of course, we know that the decision has not yet been made. Critics of the project are so fixated on costs that they downplay the most important fact: The Inuvik-Tuk highway is a great investment in our economy and future. The benefits are huge. There will be hundreds of jobs building the road for people in the Mackenzie Delta, Inuvik and Nunakput areas. Many of these jobs will last for several years and possibly much longer if the Mackenzie Valley Highway Project goes ahead. There will be many business opportunities and most of the work will go to northern contractors.

I do want to throw in a word of caution here. Gwich'in businesses have not always had a fair shake in getting government contracts in the ISR and that must not happen on the Inuvik-Tuk highway.

This project will turn around the weak economy that we have had for so many years in the Beaufort-Delta. Our young people will see that they have a way to get ahead and support their families. They

will see that going to school is important. We need these jobs. Every year the cost of living goes up and up, and with the cost of electricity and fuel, and groceries and everything else, our people need opportunities besides income support. Once it is finished, the Inuvik-Tuk highway will bring down the cost of living in Tuk and open new opportunities there including tourism, especially if the increased investment dollars that can promote all the Delta has to offer. If we build it, they will come.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Blake. Item 4, returns to oral questions. Item 5, recognition of visitors in the gallery. Mr. Ramsay.

#### Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery

**HON. DAVID RAMSAY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to welcome a constituent, Ms. Lone Sorensen, in the gallery.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. Item 6, acknowledgements. Item 7, oral questions. The honourable Member for Sahtu, Mr. Yakeleya.

#### Oral Questions

QUESTION 188-17(4):

##### MACKENZIE VALLEY WINTER ROAD

**MR. YAKELEYA:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. When Mr. Ramsay and I went on a winter road trip, we drove to Fort Good Hope and to Fort Simpson. On our way from Fort Good Hope to Fort Simpson we stopped, and there was a bridge there at Oscar Creek. I want to ask the Minister what his plans are from his department having that huge bridge, I think it's over a million dollars of infrastructure, sitting there. What are his plans with his department to get it fixed and used?

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. The honourable Minister of Transportation, Mr. David Ramsay.

**HON. DAVID RAMSAY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I enjoyed the Member's song earlier. It was a good song. Good trip with the Member down the Mackenzie Valley. We did see a number of things. One of them was the bridge at Oscar Creek. We took a number of pictures of that bridge. There was some engineering that went a bit awry back about 10 years ago on that bridge. When I got back in the office on Monday, I had an opportunity to talk to the department about the Oscar Creek Bridge and what was happening with that. There are plans to use the bridge on Oscar Creek. It might not be in the location that it's in currently, but there are plans to realign the all-weather road with that bridge. Plans are in the works and I've impressed upon the department that that should happen sooner rather than later.

**MR. YAKELEYA:** It was a long bumpy road and I want to ask the Minister, with all the work going on in the Sahtu, and next year Good Hope is going to get busy on that section, I want to ask the Minister if he could put pressure on his colleagues in the department to get that bridge. The bridge is there because of the engineering that wasn't done properly. Could the Minister press his department to get that bridge? There's over a million dollars in infrastructure sitting there. They might as well just bring that Oscar Creek Bridge and put it right in front of the Legislative Assembly because that's all it's doing is just sitting there. It's an embarrassment. Taxpayers are paying for this and I want to ask the department if they could speed up putting that bridge into operation.

**HON. DAVID RAMSAY:** That happened about 10 years ago with the location of putting the bridge in its current location. It does need to be moved. It's a sizable piece of infrastructure that would require probably looking at relocation and realigning on more of the all-weather road alignment of the highway. It is going to take a capital investment of probably somewhere in the magnitude of \$2 million to \$3 million, I would imagine, to move the bridge and put it where it needs to be. It is in the works and I can assure the Member, having seen it for myself, that bridge will be moved as soon as we can possibly move it.

**MR. YAKELEYA:** The people in the Sahtu are very happy, even over the last couple of days. The people in Tulita are very happy that the Minister has taken the trip and driven down. The Minister knows the conditions that we have to put up with day in and day out in the Sahtu.

I want to ask the Minister, amongst the other bridges, we looked at Bob's Canyon and that's a disaster waiting to happen. The number of trucks that we passed along Strawberry Creek. Will these bridges be fixed so that we can have some safety next year on our winter roads?

**HON. DAVID RAMSAY:** We had the opportunity to stop into Wrigley. We talked with the band manager. The Member and I both had the opportunity to drive through Bob's Canyon and Strawberry Creek. Pehdzeh Ki Contractors, the folks in Wrigley are doing work on both of those areas. Not all of the work is going to be concluded this year. We will continue to work on some of that next season, but certainly from a safety perspective, Bob's Canyon, when we did get back to Yellowknife on Monday I instructed the department to address the concern with the ruts in the road at Bob's Canyon and they had somebody get on that right away. That was addressed immediately.

The work will get done there. We have highlighted both Bob's Canyon and Strawberry Creek as areas of high priority from a safety perspective, and we

are working toward the completion of those projects.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. Final supplementary, Mr. Yakeleya.

**MR. YAKELEYA:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. There were a couple of spots that we went on the Mackenzie Valley Highway. There's one called Washboard Lane and Pothole Valley. I want to ask the Minister, is the Arctic paving program going to increase the dollars for the oil companies, because those number, maybe 1,500 or 1,600 trucks are pounding the roads in the Mackenzie Valley. If the Minister can look at some funding to increase the Arctic paving program in the Mackenzie Valley, that will certainly help our people and probably will save a lot of lives.

**HON. DAVID RAMSAY:** The Member and I probably saw about 60 trucks heading north, just on the Saturday alone, driving from Norman Wells to Wrigley. We need to continue working with industry. This past winter season we've had an investment of \$1.2 million, through partnerships with industry, for enhancements on the winter road. Next season we anticipate that work going a little bit further north towards Fort Good Hope. Our anticipation is that industry will want to continue to work with the Government of the Northwest Territories on ways to enhance the winter road. That includes applying water to the road to build up the base so it lasts longer and is more durable. All indications are that industry will want to continue to be our partner in this effort in advance of us having an all-weather road down the Mackenzie Valley.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. The honourable Member for Frame Lake, Ms. Bisaro.

QUESTION 189-17(4):  
POLICY REGULATING GOVERNMENT  
SOCIAL MEDIA SITES

**MS. BISARO:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions today are addressed to the Minister of Finance. About two weeks ago now, I made a statement in the House about whether or not the GNWT had a social media policy to deal with how we operate our social media sites and whether we have any parameters that we use for either our employees or contractors when they build these sites for us. Mr. Miltenberger graciously committed to review the matter with officials in his department and with Cabinet. My first question to the Minister is: Can he apprise me of the results of the meeting that he had with Cabinet and officials the day after my statement?

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. The honourable Minister of Finance, Mr. Miltenberger.

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Member raised a good point and identified a need in terms of having proper structure

in place. There has been a meeting of senior officials as it pertains to that particular policy. They have done the initial scoping out, they are establishing a work plan and they intend to come back in the fall with a fleshed out policy.

**MS. BISARO:** Thanks to the Minister. It's good to hear government at work and moving quickly. That's wonderful. I'd like to ask the Minister whether or not he can give me any idea of the gist of what's going to be in the policy. Are there any, sort of, general directions that were given to these senior officials that they were sent away with to develop a policy?

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** The Member in the House raised some areas where there were gaps. It was an area when it was raised, and we had officials look at it where there isn't a lot of clear policy direction as it pertains to Facebook and other social media, and how we do our business on there in an increasing fashion. They're going to take a look. They're going to do a review of other jurisdictions and they're going to pull together, hopefully, the best practices in terms of next steps.

**MS. BISARO:** Thanks to the Minister. One of the concerns that I had was with the need for the government to both remain impartial and be seen to be impartial. Is that a focus of what this group of officials is working on?

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** The folks are taking close note of the discussion and debate in this House. The Member has raised some legitimate, pertinent concerns, including the one she just articulated, and yes, we're going to list all those concerns and then see what's the best way forward in terms of coming up with an adequate and functional policy.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Final supplementary, Ms. Bisaro.

**MS. BISARO:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thanks to the Minister. My last question, then, has to do with whether or not any kind of a draft will come before standing committee to give Members on this side of the House some opportunity to have input into a policy.

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Yes.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. The honourable Member for Hay River South, Mrs. Groenewegen.

QUESTION 190-17(4):  
LEAVE FOR TEACHERS COACHING  
COMMUNITY SPORTS

**MRS. GROENEWEGEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In my Member's statement I talked about the need for some discretionary latitude in the granting of leave to teachers who may be involved in volunteering in very worthwhile efforts on behalf of

promoting healthy, engaged youth in our communities. If the government doesn't think that these kind of volunteers make a difference in our communities, we need only point to a young man like Brendan Green, who made it all the way to the Olympics, and he did so as a result of the volunteer coaches in Hay River that started him off and got him going on his sport.

I'd like to ask the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment how do we change a policy that would give the principal of a school the discretionary latitude to grant leave for a teacher to be involved in these activities. Is it a policy at this government level? Is it at the DEA level? Is there a regulation? Is there a human resources manual? How could we go about making amendments to something like that so that we can grant our school principals and our teachers more flexibility?

**HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY:** Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. I do agree with Mrs. Groenewegen that these teachers that do volunteer work are invaluable to the team and they make a difference to the students' lives, even the athletes' lives, so we must support them as best as we can. This is the first I've heard of the incident but, definitely, this is an area that we need to follow through with the DEA, and I need to work closely with my colleague, as well, in HR. We all need to work together on this on what's best for the students and how we can have those individuals, the resource team available for these athletes. It's based on some time off and so forth. There is also an agreement with the NWTTA and so forth, so there are different agreements that we have to work with, but I will commit to the Member that I will be working closely with HR and the DEA on this particular work.

**MRS. GROENEWEGEN:** The Minister has indicated he didn't hear of this before, and perhaps I should have drawn this to his attention in a less public way, but I understand this has been a situation that has been ongoing for volunteers and coaches who are teachers for some time now, so I thought perhaps there would have been other incidents like this raised.

I want to reiterate that I'm not finding any fault. Teachers don't like to complain, and this teacher is not finding any fault with the people who are his superiors. What he is saying, and what I'm saying, is that we need a more flexible policy. I'd like to ask the Minister how will he – I know he's going to consult with the Minister of HR because it is the HR Manual that needs to be talked about here – engage school authorities at the superintendent level or at the DEA level to make sure that there is support for a change like this.

**HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY:** With my department, I've just got a note that they've been in touch with the superintendent to try and find the background of the situation itself, so we are trying

to find a remedy towards this particular area. As you know, we want every athlete to be successful, so that's an area that we need to tackle. This is a GNWT policy and NWT Collective Agreement policy as well. There are several areas that we need to deal with and develop guidelines towards that. Again, I need to work with HR and the DEA. They're getting a clear message now. My department has already been in touch with the DEA, the superintendent, and working through the logistics of how we can support these teachers towards their time off.

**MRS. GROENEWEGEN:** I'd like to ask the Minister if he has previous experience with bringing about such a change or a policy of this nature. I'm just wondering what kind of a time frame we might be looking at. What's involved in terms of the approvals and getting that new rule or regulation or policy out to the folks that are in a position to approve leave? What kind of a time frame might we be looking at to accomplish all of that?

**HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY:** I don't recall encountering this kind of incident in the past. There might have been a couple before. The time frame, I need to seriously look at this. As I've stated, this is the first event, but I will be working with the Department of Human Resources, and also the NWTTA and within GNWT policy itself, and working with the DEA. We need to involve them, the superintendent. We'll try and expedite this process as best as we can. Again, there are parties involved, so we need to engage with the parties. If the changes are going to be made, they need to be involved as well.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. Final, short supplementary, Mrs. Groenewegen.

**MRS. GROENEWEGEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd just, finally, like to ask the Minister, if he does get any push back from any of the people that need to be consulted with or there are any people that don't necessarily agree with where we are going with this and he requires any other political support from the Members of this House, if he does get push back towards this idea, will he agree to inform us so that we can be fully aware of that?

**HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY:** Most definitely. We need to work with all Members on this particular work, because it does impact across the Northwest Territories, the 33 communities, the DEAs, the NWTTA. If there is a push back, then I need to work with the Members.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. The Member for Inuvik Boot Lake, Mr. Moses.

QUESTION 191-17(4):  
DEVELOPMENT OF YOUTH SYMPOSIUM

**MR. MOSES:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today we had a really good briefing from Skills Canada NWT

and it got me thinking about youth programs and all the programs that they do with such a small office. But it got me thinking to a bigger level, and today I have questions for the Minister of Youth in regard to possibly the creation or the development of a youth symposium.

First of all, I just want to ask the Minister of Youth, has there ever been a youth symposium for youth providers of the Northwest Territories, in his knowledge as the Minister of Youth. Has there ever been a youth symposium where providers for youth programs come together and discuss some of the challenges and success stories? That's my first question.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Moses. The Minister responsible for Youth, Mr. McLeod.

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. There are many opportunities for those that provide service to youth to come together on an informal basis and have discussions on how to improve the programs for youth. In the previous Assembly, I think the Premier at the time had a Premier's forum with the youth and had a lot of providers there, a lot of youth workers, a lot of youth that were there. It was well attended, and the suggestions that came out of this forum for the age of the kids that took part in this forum were unbelievable. They did an excellent job. I mean, there are always opportunities for youth providers to gather. As far as an actual symposium goes, it's something that we'd have to have a look at.

**MR. MOSES:** We have some really great youth programs out there, Youth Ambassador Program, Northern Youth Abroad Program. Skills Canada is doing a great job. We do all these programs to empower our youth. Is there something that we can do to empower our volunteers and empower our youth, our workforce who provide these programs to the youth? I guess my question is: Would the Minister be willing to look at creating, coordinating and planning for a youth symposium for our volunteers for our workforce who provide these programs for youth so that they can share their stories, so that they can work the challenges? It would also be a good opportunity to report and evaluate on the programs that MACA and the Minister of Youth provide such as the Youth Corps and the Youth Contributions Program. Would the Minister be willing to look, coordinate and plan a youth symposium for youth, workers and volunteers?

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** I will commit to the Member that I will start having discussions with the officials over at MACA about hosting such a symposium and keep Members apprised as to going forward, and if there's a possibility of having it, we'll make sure we have an opportunity to invite all Members of the Assembly.

**MR. MOSES:** I think it's a great idea and it's an opportunity to evaluate programs, share what the programs are, an opportunity for organizations to give details on the programs that they provide so other organizations can jump on board, and also develop some really great partnerships. It would be an opportunity for the youth ambassadors to probably coordinate such a symposium. A lot of positives here. Can the Minister provide, possibly, a timeline, whether this is something that we can see in the '13-14 fiscal year or '14-15 fiscal year?

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** Mr. Speaker, there are many opportunities for those that provide service to youth to network. We have a number of events that go on across the Northwest Territories at any given time where they could network and share some of their success stories and work with each other. However, I have committed to the Member that I will work with the officials and see about putting on a symposium.

As far as the timeline goes, once I have those discussions, I think I'll be in a better position to give a definite date as to when we plan on having it. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. McLeod. The honourable Member for Weledeh, Mr. Bromley.

QUESTION 192-17(4):  
GROWING FORWARD 2 AGREEMENT  
AND SMALL SCALE FOODS PROGRAM

**MR. BROMLEY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to follow up on my Member's statement earlier today with questions for the Minister of ITI. I do note, in the gallery today, Ms. Lone Sorensen. She has played a real leadership role in delivering some of these NGO agricultural programs.

Could the Minister give us an update on the status of completing and launching a new Growing Forward 2 Agreement and explain how the Territorial Farmers' Association and other stakeholders have been involved in finalizing the second draft as he has committed? Mahsi.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Bromley. The honourable Minister of Industry, Tourism and Investment, Mr. Ramsay.

**HON. DAVID RAMSAY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Growing Forward 2 would be an investment of \$1.2 million on an annual basis and give us \$6 million to put towards agricultural initiatives in the territory over the next five years. The current program expires at the end of this month. We are moving forward in looking at signing the new deal with Ottawa on a way forward for the additional funding.

Some of the areas of investment would include small scale foods, mentorship, traditional harvesting, as well as building industry capacity here in the Northwest Territories. It is very exciting for us. This represents about a half a million dollars

more on an annual basis to the agricultural industry here in the Northwest Territories.

We have been consulting with the Territorial Farmers' Association, and to get specifics on when these consultations took place and who they were with, I would certainly make that commitment to get that information back to the Member. Thank you.

**MR. BROMLEY:** Mr. Speaker, thanks to the Minister. I know there are a number of groups and significant movers and shakers that have been involved in programs in the past. I am sure they are being consulted, so I'll appreciate that information.

The Minister has written to tell me that the ITI regional offices in the North and South Slave and Deh Cho will take on responsibility for delivering the Small Foods Program, and the ITI agricultural consultant will do full implementation in the Beau-Del and support the Sautu office.

As the new season soon gets underway, could the Minister commit to ensuring community partnership components figure largely in this year's program delivery – and I urge the Minister to refer to my statement earlier today – and that program reporting will include specifics on community partnerships, mentoring and real capacity building? Mahsi.

**HON. DAVID RAMSAY:** Mr. Speaker, a big component of this is that industry capacity. We have been talking to the Territorial Farmers' Association on a training component located in Hay River, where folks from the communities would go to Hay River, receive the training and be able to take the knowledge that they have learned in Hay River back to their home communities and train others when they get back home. That, I believe, is going to be a big component of the new funding. We are working out the details on the funding and how it flows and what it ends up going to.

Rest assured, when we do come up with a plan, we will be coming to committee and seeking the indulgence of the Standing Committee on Economic Development infrastructure and the advice of Members from across the way. Thank you.

**MR. BROMLEY:** Mr. Speaker, thanks to the Minister. I look forward to that again. What has been happening is all of those components have been here for the work done by non-government organizations. It has not been done by the workers in the government. That's where we need the tune-up. I would like to see the Minister working with his staff to ensure that those goals are met.

Community markets are also developing in some communities. I believe there is already one in Hay River, and the Yellowknife Commons Cooperative is beginning one in Yellowknife this summer. Is the Minister aware of these value-added activities and

is the department also supporting these efforts? Mahsi.

**HON. DAVID RAMSAY:** Mr. Speaker, yes I am aware of the market in Hay River and the efforts here in Yellowknife. Certainly, the Member is correct, we have to be putting the money in the hands of people who can do the most with it. In a lot of cases in agriculture, it is not much different, and that is the hands of the NGOs, people that are in the business. With the Growing Forward 2 money, I would anticipate that that is going to be the way forward, is trying to get money where it is going to make the most difference. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. Final, short supplementary, Mr. Bromley.

**MR. BROMLEY:** Mr. Speaker, I've heard that the Take A Kid Trapping program is drawing dollars from the Growing Forward Fund. That obviously would be inappropriate use of those dollars. Can the Minister confirm whether that is the situation? What is the justification for that if it is? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**HON. DAVID RAMSAY:** Mr. Speaker, I wasn't aware of that. It is something that I certainly would look into. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. The honourable Member for Mackenzie Delta, Mr. Blake.

QUESTION 193-17(4):  
ECONOMIC BENEFITS OF INUVIK  
TO TUKTOYAKTUK HIGHWAY

**MR. BLAKE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Following up from my Member's statement, I would like to ask the Minister of Transportation a question. The cost estimate of the Inuvik-Tuk highway is about \$300 million. How much of that is expected to stay in the Northwest Territories economy through businesses and job opportunities? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Blake. The honourable Minister of Transportation, Mr. Ramsay.

**HON. DAVID RAMSAY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Decisions haven't been made on procurement but certainly my belief – and I've said it in the House before and I will say it again today – is that the vast majority of that close to \$300 million should stay in the Northwest Territories, should put equipment that's here in the Northwest Territories to work and people to work here in the Northwest Territories. We don't want to see that money leave the Northwest Territories. Thank you.

**MR. BLAKE:** Mr. Speaker, would the Minister describe the economic benefits of the Inuvik-Tuk highway once it is built? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**HON. DAVID RAMSAY:** Mr. Speaker, the economic benefits will be great for all of the communities in the Beaufort-Delta for visiting family

and connecting the communities of Inuvik and Tuktoyaktuk. It will lower the cost of living in Tuktoyaktuk. We won't have to build the ice road to Tuktoyaktuk in the winter months any longer. Long term, this road will have tremendous impact on the exploration and development of oil and gas in the region and lead to many more jobs and opportunities for residents in the Beaufort-Delta.

Also, I should mention tourism. Currently, in the summer months, when tourists drive the Dempster Highway into Inuvik, they have to take a plane into Tuktoyaktuk if they want to dip their toe in the Arctic Ocean. That will be a thing of the past. Tourists will be able to drive all the way to the Arctic Coast and dip their toe in the Arctic Ocean and also visit a pingo or two while they are in Tuktoyaktuk. Thank you.

**MR. BLAKE:** Mr. Speaker, if the project does get approval, what will this government do to ensure that Gwich'in contractors get a fair share of the work building the Inuvik-Tuk highway? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**HON. DAVID RAMSAY:** Mr. Speaker, again, no decision has been made on procurement on the highway, but our expectation is that people in the Beaufort-Delta and companies in the Beaufort-Delta will be able to work together. There is going to be a lot of work.

On a project of close to \$300 million, there is going to be a lot of equipment that is going to be required. It is expected to be somewhere near 200 jobs in Tuktoyaktuk, 200 jobs in Inuvik. There will be opportunities. Our hope is that those opportunities will accrue to as many people as possible in the Beaufort-Delta.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Minister Ramsay. The Member for Yellowknife Centre, Mr. Hawkins.

QUESTION 194-17(4):  
MINISTER'S FORUM ON ADDICTIONS  
AND COMMUNITY WELLNESS

**MR. HAWKINS:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In my Member's statement today I was talking about the Addictions Forum work and certainly trying to compare it to the work that's already been done to date and tying it equally together with some of the issues I've raised, as well as many other Members have raised here in the Assembly today. It's no surprise to the Minister and I've repeated it many times. I believe we need a treatment centre here in Yellowknife and that we need treatment facilities that are appropriate, of course.

My question to the Minister of Health and Social Services today is: Speaking to the Addictions Forum – and I'll be tying all those three subjects together – what have their interim findings been when they're out knocking on the doors of the territory's citizens, and what type of advice and

direction are they getting to challenge addictions in a manner that all the previous reports and studies and experts have not provided us? Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. The Minister of Health and Social Services, Mr. Beaulieu.

**HON. TOM BEAULIEU:** Mahsi cho, Mr. Speaker. The forum was not required to provide an interim report or a verbal report back to the department. They're working with departmental staff. What we're hearing unofficially is that they are hearing many good recommendations from the communities, and one of the forum members spoke to me in an unofficial capacity and indicated to me that he thought that they had accumulated at least 10 good recommendations from the communities so far. Thank you.

**MR. HAWKINS:** Thank you. I think today is a great opportunity if this Minister of Health and Social Services would like to avail himself to it, which is what are many of those good recommendations? I think he said there may be upwards of 10 recommendations. So what are those good recommendations they've been hearing from the communities so we can get a sense of what's actually happening out there? Thank you.

**HON. TOM BEAULIEU:** I don't know what the recommendations are. The recommendations that the guy mentioned, as he was indicating to me that they had these recommendations, was he did indicate that the communities thought there should be some treatment on the land, that there should be some sort of detoxification in the system, and then also that they should be able to utilize the treatment centre in a way that would be a good piece to the overall treatment of addictions, sort of people in the Northwest Territories. Those are generally the only things that I recall, off the top of my head. Thank you.

**MR. HAWKINS:** Thank you. There have been piles and piles of reports by experts, advice in these particular areas. The government could field a library on its own on how much it's studied over these particular initiatives.

I'm tying this point to expert advice and expertise on the panel. Maybe the Minister can speak to the expertise this panel brings to this discussion on the Addictions Forum, and maybe he could use this occasion to highlight what expertise and experience they have around this to ensure we've got the right people in this process. It seems like one that was kicked off quietly then set out to find some facts, and we won't hear from them until after it's done. So there seems to be some gaps as to what experience, strengths and expertise they bring to the table and what they will be bringing to the table for policy advice. Thank you.

**HON. TOM BEAULIEU:** Thank you. We have heard lots from outside experts, there's no question about that. This forum has given us an opportunity to hear from the people, from extended families, friends, neighbours, people who live with addictions every day. These are a group of people who have lived a life of addictions, some of them have lived lives of addictions, some of them are involved with the treatment centres, some of them are involved with counselling at their own community level.

The bottom line is, these are a group of people who we felt would be a good group of people to extract a lot of the solutions from the communities as they travel around. So I guess their expertise is really the life they've lived. The group of people that have come together, some of the individuals are very good at organizing the forums, and travelling with the forums, and doing documentation as well as documentation with our staff. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. Final, short supplementary, Mr. Hawkins.

**MR. HAWKINS:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. By all means I'm sure that these are good people. I just would have thought we would have heard more about their expertise than the life they've lived.

My next question, of course, is the last one, which is: Has the Minister been getting any feedback about two particular areas that I am very passionate about, which is youth treatment options and certainly a treatment centre here for Yellowknife for dealing with addictions? Those are two very important recommendations that I hope are coming forward on how to deal with youth on a youth treatment level, and certainly, as I'd said earlier, a treatment centre possibly for Yellowknife, being one of the largest regions and certainly a catchment area for a lot of problems. Thank you.

**HON. TOM BEAULIEU:** Yes, thank you. I haven't heard from the forum that there was any specific indication from the communities that they met, that they felt there should be a treatment centre located in Yellowknife. I've heard that earlier, somebody had indicated that somewhere, but specifically, officially from the forum, I haven't heard that.

As far as youth treatment goes, I think that initially one of the forum members that we put on there had discussed a lot of youth treatment options with the department previously. So we thought putting her on the forum would bring that to the forefront, but again, officially, no, we haven't heard about any treatment for youth that would be recommended through the forum. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. The Member for Inuvik Boot Lake, Mr. Moses.



QUESTION 195-17(4):  
SKILLS CANADA NWT  
AND JOBS FOR YOUTH

**MR. MOSES:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I mentioned earlier, we did have a meeting today with Skills Canada and I have some questions here for the Minister of Industry, Tourism and Investment. I wanted to ask the Minister how is his department working with Skills Canada and industry together, to get some of our youth that are taking these trades into some of these jobs that we need in industry. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Moses. The Minister of Industry, Tourism and Investment, Mr. Ramsay.

**HON. DAVID RAMSAY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We are responsible for the socio-economic agreements and, obviously, industry here in the Northwest Territories, but the responsibility for training and skills development rests with the Department of Education, Culture and Employment. So we work closely with the department on advancing their training initiatives. Certainly, in any meetings we have with industry, training is first and foremost in their mind in trying to identify a workforce here in the Northwest Territories, and accessing younger people is something industry is very interested in here in the NWT. Thank you.

**MR. MOSES:** Thank you. Under the socio-economic agreements, is the Minister negotiating dollars for this type of training? He did mention it, but I mean specifically for Skills Canada, because Skills Canada are a small office that do a lot of really good work and they have participants who have gone through the program who have won national awards, international awards, and it would be a great opportunity to continue to support these individuals that go through the Skills Canada program. So is the Minister negotiating specific training dollars for Skills Canada so that we can start supporting participants that go through the program? Thank you.

**HON. DAVID RAMSAY:** Thank you. ITI is the lead on the socio-economic agreements and there are a number of components included in the SEAs, that's why we work with Health and Social Services and with Education, Culture and Employment.

On the training side, there is a component to training in the SEAs, and we certainly look to Education, Culture and Employment when negotiating socio-economic agreements so that we can ensure that there is training, that dollars are going to be put into training people here in the Northwest Territories for jobs. We, again, are continuing to work through Mr. Lafferty's lead with a pan-territorial approach to mine training here in the North, and we hope to see some progress on that in the very near future.

**MR. MOSES:** I just want to get a clarification that when the Minister is negotiating these socio-economic agreements that he actually is negotiating for the whole territory and that negotiations are not specific to where the development is currently happening at the time. Can the Minister confirm that he is negotiating for all participants throughout the Northwest Territories so that somebody from the Beaufort-Delta can actually come and get a job in Yellowknife that have the skills required to have the specific job?

**HON. DAVID RAMSAY:** The answer to that would be yes, it's for the entire Northwest Territories.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. The honourable Member for Sahtu, Mr. Yakeleya.

QUESTION 196-17(4):  
TRAINING ACTIVITIES IN THE SAHTU

**MR. YAKELEYA:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Again, I am just following up on our road trip last weekend. My back is still sore. However, I'm going to stand here and I want to ask the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment, with all the activity and training going on, if he would review and evaluate the training plans for the Sahtu so that the people in the Sahtu can meet at least once a month to start preparing a strategy to get people on the job, get them trained and get them moving.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. The honourable Minister of Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Lafferty.

**HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY:** Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. I agree that there should be formal meetings, potentially monthly or quarterly. There are all these different activities happening in the Sahtu region. More specifically, through training, we do have a steering committee of the regional representatives involving different parties as part of their discussion and planning stages. What are the communities' needs? By all means my department will be sharing that with the Sahtu regional representatives, and they should be having more council meetings preparing for the huge activity that will be happening in the region.

**MR. YAKELEYA:** I look forward to working with the Minister in the Sahtu. The winter road is going to close down within, what, 25 days or so? Equipment is going to be sitting idle. However, we in the Sahtu want to start to look at next month.

Can we start assessing, start getting different types of training for the various different programs in the region? I want to ask the Minister if we could speed up the process, inform his department, the oil companies, and the communities and everybody. Let's sit down in April, May and June and let's put together a training plan that we can look at starting in July, and so forth, until the opening of the winter roads. That's what we're looking for. Would the

Minister put the fire under the training committee to get them going?

**HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY:** I do believe there is a plan to have a meeting soon. I will be getting back to the Member on the dates of the meetings, if it's going to be quarterly or monthly. Activities are happening as we speak. Preparation for the various training initiatives will be taking place. Those are areas that I will be instructing my department to work very closely with the Sahtu region; more specifically, the regional representatives that are on the steering committee to establish those meetings. I will be sharing that with the Member.

**MR. YAKELEYA:** If anybody wanted the job, there's a job to be had in the Sahtu. It's busy. It's crazy. People are working. Even down in Nahendeh. Even in Wrigley, as the Minister and I heard. There are jobs up there. However, I want to ask the Minister if he could somehow be directive and forceful and say to the Sahtu, let's get the training jobs going. We could make a huge contribution. Let's not give out any more social assistance. Let's get our people working. That's what we want. That's the kind of leadership I'm looking for from the Minister here. Can he do that?

**HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY:** Yes, we can. This is an area that we're very closely monitoring and there is a huge potential opportunity here. We have to find out the needs of the community. How much manpower is there in the Sahtu region? Who is trainable, employable? What are the training needs in the community? Industries have to be involved as well. We have to get the industries at the table and start discussing this immediately. I agree with the Member, we're going to fast-track this and have a meeting within hopefully the next couple of weeks.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. Final supplementary, Mr. Yakeleya.

**MR. YAKELEYA:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to ask the Minister, in regard to preparing a training plan, I believe we have the assessment. Would his department start going into the Sahtu while the winter roads are open in Colville Lake, Fort Good Hope, Deline, and Tulita and Norman Wells, and bring them together? Cut down the cost, be efficient, be effective. Can the Minister do that within 25 days to get things moving?

**HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY:** Yes, this is an area that, again, we're very interested. Along with the Deh Cho riding, there is a lot of activity happening. We want to expedite the process. The Member is alluding to within 25 days. I think that's doable. Having our parties involved to get to the Sahtu region, the Deh Cho region, and start talking about the training plan. What is needed in the community? What kind of training is required from the industry's perspective? Because industry have their own certain criteria of positions. They need to be involved. By all means those are areas that we

want tackled from my department's perspective. We need that data. Definitely, we'll follow through with that expeditiously.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. The honourable Member for Yellowknife Centre, Mr. Hawkins.

QUESTION 197-17(4):  
TLICHO WINTER ROAD TO  
FORTUNE MINERALS SITE

**MR. HAWKINS:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Last week – the exact date was Monday, February 25<sup>th</sup> – I had asked the Minister of Transportation some information regarding the work on the winter road, or potential permanent road to the NICO Mine, to the Dogrib communities of Gameti and Whati. In that Tlicho area that I wrote, one of the comments back from the Minister, he says my speculation about the work going on behind the scenes and the person I was talking to from Fortune Minerals is it was all guesswork on the Member's part. I just received an e-mail from the Minister's office. Maybe the Minister can inform the House as to what type of guesswork that actually was, because either the Minister has some explaining to do or certainly some clarification to do that it appears it wasn't guesswork. I have a question for the Minister to clear this up.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. The honourable Minister of Transportation, Mr. David Ramsay.

**HON. DAVID RAMSAY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'll take that question as notice.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. Item 8, written questions. Item 9, returns to written questions. Mr. Clerk.

### Returns to Written Questions

WRITTEN QUESTION 7-17(4):  
DISTRIBUTION OF GNWT JOBS

**CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Mercer):** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a Return to Written Question 7-17(4) asked by Mr. Dolynny on February 13, 2013, regarding the distribution of GNWT jobs.

Later today, at the appropriate time, I will table a document, entitled GNWT Positions to Population Ratio as at December 31, 2012. This document identifies the 33 communities in the Northwest Territories, the number of GNWT positions located in each community and region, and the positions to population ratio for each community. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Clerk. Item 10, replies to opening address. Item 11, petitions. Item 12, reports of standing and special committees.

Item 13, reports of committees on the review of bills. Mr. Hawkins.

### Reports of Committees on the Review of Bills

#### BILL 2: AN ACT TO AMEND THE TERRITORIAL PARKS ACT

**MR. HAWKINS:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to report to the Assembly that the Standing Committee on Economic Development and Infrastructure has completed its review of Bill 2, An Act to Amend the Territorial Parks Act. The committee wishes to report that Bill 2 is ready for consideration in Committee of the Whole.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. Item 14, tabling of documents. Mr. Abernethy.

### Tabling of Documents

#### TABLED DOCUMENT 39-17(4): GNWT POSITIONS TO POPULATION RATIO AS AT DECEMBER 31, 2012

**HON. GLEN ABERNETHY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Further to my Return to Written Question 7-17(4), I wish to table the following document, entitled GNWT Positions to Population Ratio as at December 31, 2012.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Abernethy. Mr. Ramsay.

#### TABLED DOCUMENT 40-17(4): GNWT RESPONSE TO COMMITTEE REPORT 6-17(3), REPORT ON HYDRAULIC FRACTURING STUDY TOUR: TOWARD A POLICY FRAMEWORK FOR HYDRAULIC FRACTURING IN THE NORTHWEST TERRITORIES

**HON. DAVID RAMSAY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to table the following document, entitled GNWT Response to Committee Report 6-17(3), Report on Hydraulic Fracturing Study Tour: Toward a Policy Framework for Hydraulic Fracturing in the Northwest Territories.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. Item 15, notices of motion. Mr. Blake.

### Notices of Motion

#### MOTION 7-17(4): APPOINTMENT OF ACTING CLERK OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

**MR. BLAKE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I give notice that on Friday, March 8, 2013, I will move the following motion: Now therefore I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Monfwi, that Ms. Colette Langlois be appointed Acting Clerk of the

Legislative Assembly for the period of August 15, 2013, to August 14, 2014, by the Commissioner of the Northwest Territories as recommended by the Board of Management of the Legislative Assembly.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Blake. Item 16, notices of motion for first reading of bills. Item 17, motions. Item 18, first reading of bills. Item 19, second reading of bills. Item 20, consideration in Committee of the Whole of bills and other matters: Tabled Document 9-17(4), NWT Main Estimates, 2013-2014; and Bill 1, Tlicho Statutes Amendment Act; Municipal and Community Affairs, Justice, and Executive, with Mrs. Groenewegen in the chair.

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

**CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):** I'd like to call Committee of the Whole to order. What is the wish of the committee today? Mr. Dolynny.

**MR. DOLYNNY:** Thank you, Madam Chair. Committee wants to continue our deliberations here on Municipal and Community Affairs and, time permitting, we would like to talk with Justice and Executive.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):** Is committee agreed?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):** We will take a brief break and continue with that.

---SHORT RECESS

**CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):** I'd like to call Committee of the Whole back to order. When we departed yesterday from this Chamber, we were considering Municipal and Community Affairs, activity summary, public safety, operations expenditure summary, and page 6-17. I'll ask the Minister if he would like to bring witnesses into the Chamber.

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** I would, Madam Chair. Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):** Thank you, Minister McLeod. Does the committee agree?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):** Agreed. Thank you. I'd ask the Sergeant-at-Arms to please escort the witnesses to the table.

For the record, Minister McLeod, could you please introduce your witnesses?

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** Thank you, Madam Chair. With me I have, to my left, Mr. Tom Williams, deputy minister, Municipal and Community Affairs. To my immediate right I have Mr. Gary Schauerte, director of corporate services, Municipal and Community Affairs, and Ms. Eleanor Young, who is

the assistant deputy minister, Municipal and Community Affairs. Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):** Thank you, Minister McLeod. Municipal and Community Affairs, activity summary, public safety, operations expenditure summary, \$1.629 million. Mr. Hawkins.

**MR. HAWKINS:** Thank you, Madam Chair. I think I just have one question. I think we've cleared up everything, as far as I'm concerned, and I just want to say I think I just have one question. It speaks more to the philosophy. I think the Minister's heard enough from me about my concerns on consumer affairs and whatnot. I'd kind of like to bottle it up and maybe I'll call it one, hopefully, clear ask, which is: What can the Minister do about the somewhat public anonymity that hides behind consumer affairs?

I'm not suggesting they're not trying to reach out there, but I think there's a general perception from the public that they don't exist. I guess if I could qualify that it may not be feasible to create a storefront objective, and I want to be clear, that's not what I'm asking, but they don't seem to have a prominent public face, so when we do have problems with the Bell cell phones, for example, prices, or we have gas price issues, or other types of issues, the public feels there's nowhere to go, nowhere to complain, and they end up on our desks, as MLAs, to ask what do we do, and they feel this relentless sense of exhaustion and it just seems to poke away.

If I can get some insight from the Minister as to what he can do under his stewardship of this department to help bring up the profile of consumer affairs, and what they can do and how they're seen and perceived in the public, that would be very helpful. I think that's really the only area of concern I have as far as MACA is concerned.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):** Thank you. Minister McLeod.

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** Thank you, Madam Chair. What I can commit to the Members of this Assembly is that we'll try and work a communications plan and let the public know that there is a consumer affairs division. We'll actually let all Members of the Assembly know the consumer affairs division we have. We'll give them a name and number that they can possibly pass on to any constituents that might be calling them. I think that will go a long way into getting our consumer affairs department more in the forefront. I understand, with things going the way they are going now and many of the issues that are being raised by consumers out there, I think it is to their benefit if we publicize the office a bit more. I will commit that we will do that. Thank you, Madam Chair.

**MR. HAWKINS:** The only thing I want to reaffirm is I'm not suggesting in any way they're doing anything bad. I just think that they are a little-known office. They fall through the cracks of public view and they tend to get forgotten. Again, I just want to make sure it is absolutely clear. It's nothing that they're not doing. It is a question of just how they blend into the folds of government and the public loses sight of that and certainly what role they play. That's all I have. Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):** Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. I will take that as a comment. Next on the list I have Mr. Dolyunny.

**MR. DOLYNNY:** Thank you, Madam Chair. As I indicated in my general comments, I've been asking the Minister and his department, numerous times in the last 16 or 17 months of being a Member of this Assembly, on areas of hazard and fire assessments, emergency action plans and how we are moving along in trying to make our communities much more safe and probably more integrated into a real-time database.

First of all, the information we have right now with respect to emergency action plans, is this available in real time? Is this something available that if phone numbers change, it is systematically updated, there's a network of updates that happen across the board? Is this a real-time management program in action? Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):** Thank you, Mr. Dolyunny. Minister McLeod.

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** Thank you, Madam Chair. Normally the community action plans and contact numbers are validated and updated with community governments. Thank you.

**MR. DOLYNNY:** Madam Chair, maybe I'll rephrase my question because the question was real time. What I mean by real time are numbers, contact, policy charts, flow charts, contact of emergency services, basically an org chart of disaster management available in a database that is continuously updated or the department or community governments have access to, so that it doesn't matter which community at any given time, this information can be pulled up off either computer, off Internet, security database. Is the department at this level of having this type of access to information? Thank you.

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** Madam Chair, we don't have that right now, but again, I will commit to the Members that we will work with our community governments and we will try to get all of this information updated. If there's a database that we can put this into where it constantly changes once there are changes at the community level, then I will commit to having our department do that. Thank you, Madam Chair.

**MR. DOLYNNY:** Madam Chair, is there any type of study or working group on this so-called preparedness of a real-time database?

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** No, there is not, Madam Chair.

**MR. DOLYNNY:** Madam Chair, I don't want it to sound like a hypothetical question, but it's almost impossible for me to ask this question without being hypothetical. In the event of a disaster or emergency services intervention, how do our federal counterparts, our federal partners for emergency management, how are they notified? By what means are they notified if not available through electronic real-time management? Thank you, Madam Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):** Mr. Williams.

**MR. WILLIAMS:** Thank you, Madam Chair. We work closely with Public Safety Canada, one of our allies that's right across the street from us in the Greenstone Building. So we do have real-time access to Public Safety Canada. An example, the Nahanni Butte flood, we were working very closely and alerted them that there was a flood in progress. They worked with us, assisted us in putting in the funding application that goes to the federal government for reimbursement. So we do have a good contact and a good liaison with Public Safety Canada. Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):** Thank you, Mr. Williams. Mr. Dolynny.

**MR. DOLYNNY:** Thank you, Madam Chair. I'm still not getting enough level of comfort knowing that we do not have a formalized system of communication with our federal counterpart. Running across the street isn't, in my mind, the most effective way of dealing with a natural disaster should it occur in our communities.

Given this information, is there any opportunity that the department sees this as being an opportunity to enhance the current so-called lack of model that we have and will this become a priority for this department in this fiscal year? Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):** Thank you, Mr. Dolynny. Minister McLeod.

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** Thank you, Madam Chair. As far as formalized communication plans go, I mean, I committed to the Member before that we'll undertake the work in trying to provide a database and putting one together. We will update the Members regularly on the work that we're doing, that way they have some comfort and we'll even provide them with a lot of information that we get from the communities as far as contact numbers go. But I have to say that our communities, especially those that have had to deal with emergencies before, do a fantastic job reacting

to emergencies, and they know who they've got to contact and they know who they have to work with. If this is information that the Member feels needs to get out territorial-wide, then I have committed to trying to provide all that information, compiling that information and possibly putting it into a database. Thank you.

**MR. DOLYNNY:** Thank you. I won't disagree with the Minister. I believe those communities that have put the effort and have had the potential financial background to put such emergency plans in place are probably well prepared for such emergencies. But in the Minister's own words, not every community is at the same level and that's my concern, is that we have a disparity of situations out there, we've got communities at risk, and if we've got communities at risk, we've got a territory at risk. If you've got a territory at risk, you've got a nation at risk. It's a cascade effect in which I think it's critically important that we put the proper plans and the proper standardization models in place so that the communication amongst communities, the communication with government is paramount and I don't believe we're quite there yet and I'm hoping that the department is listening loud and clear.

This is a priority, I believe, and I think that it's a priority that's not being given its full attention. I'll leave it at that. The Minister has already commented on it. I won't seek another comment and rebuttal, but my question related to this area has to do with the communication in the event of an emergency event or a disaster. Do we have proper communication protocols in all 33 communities? Thank you.

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** Yes, we do.

**MR. DOLYNNY:** Thank you. Now, these communication protocols, I would assume, would involve contacting a cascade, a number or an algorithm of community support networks from territorial to federal and potentially government leaders. How is this communication protocol accessed? Is this something that is published? Thank you.

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** As far as being published publicly, no, it's not, but I mean, I have committed to the Member and he talks about the importance of emergency plans, and we recognize the importance of emergency plans. MACA has been having to deal with these for so many years. We're working with the 15 communities that need to update their plans. We're working with them to try and get their emergency plans updated. I have committed to trying to compile as much information as possible, finding somewhere we can put it so that everyone has access it, and I will honour that commitment. If the Member is looking for more and more detail, then we'd be pleased to put together a briefing and provide it to the Member so he knows exactly the work that we will be undertaking.

**MR. DOLYNNY:** I will take the Minister up on his offer. I think I'm speaking not only as a Member of Yellowknife, I think there are community members here who would have very similar concerns. I would take the Minister up on his offer.

Last is, because we're dealing with public safety, there is the Joint Emergency Preparedness Program. This was a federally initiated program, which I believe closed this year. I don't believe it's part of our budget this year. I think it was a zero. This was a cost-sharing program for capital enhancement at community level for safety.

Can the Minister indicate, for the years that we had access to this preparedness program, what was the level of uptake by this government in the various years?

**CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):** Thank you, Mr. Dolynny. Ms. Young.

**MS. YOUNG:** With the Joint Emergency Preparedness Program there were two components to it. There was a component where the territorial government was able to access funding to deliver programs, develop templates for the emergency plans, aspects like that. Earlier in the program we were actually able to use it for salary dollars, as well, for staffing within the department. Then there was the other component which allowed for communities to apply on funding for capital enhancements like the Member mentions. I believe there were applications every year on that program at varying levels over the years.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):** Thank you, Ms. Young. Mr. Dolynny, your time has expired. I can put you on the list again if you like, but I'm going to go next to Mr. Bromley.

**MR. BROMLEY:** Thank you, Madam Chair. I want to ask a few questions about public safety with respect to the safety of our buildings. I'd like to start by just asking, with regard to the Fire Prevention Act, a review of plans and inspections that are done, those are strictly, as I understand it, related to Fire Safety Regulations. Am I correct in that assertion?

**CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):** Thank you, Mr. Bromley. Mr. McLeod.

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** Thank you, Madam Chair. The Member is correct.

**MR. BROMLEY:** Do we have a fire – oh, I forget the name – officer representative in every community, if the Minister knows what I'm asking.

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** We have the fire marshal and the assistant fire marshals that cover each region.

**MR. BROMLEY:** Thanks for that information. Fire marshal's office. That's what I was looking for. Senior's moment. With respect to the other aspects of buildings that are built, I know in general we, I

think, require all buildings in the Northwest Territories to adhere to the National Building Code. Does that include the Model National Energy Code for buildings?

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** I'll go to Ms. Young, Madam Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):** I'll recognize Ms. Young.

**MS. YOUNG:** My understanding is the upcoming 2015 update to the National Building Code will include energy components. At this point, my understanding is it does not.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):** Thank you, Ms. Young. Mr. Bromley.

**MR. BROMLEY:** Thanks to Ms. Young for that information. That's 2015, I believe Ms. Young said. That's good to know that that's coming down the pipe. We know that every jurisdiction except the Northwest Territories has a building standards act, and that ensures that all buildings get inspected and so on. We are trying to achieve the same without a building standards act. The difficulty is that there are a lot of codes that are out there that are not necessarily in the National Building Code and a lot of updates and so on, so it's a complex, sort of, situation for the public. But just given the current situation, how do we ensure that buildings are meeting the National Building Code standard for safety?

**CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):** Thank you, Mr. Bromley. Minister McLeod.

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** Thank you, Madam Chair. I'm assuming the Member's talking about the buildings that the community governments put up? Residences too? Well, as far as the residences go, I mean, if they're built by the NWT Housing Corp, obviously we would inspect each one of the buildings that we put up. As far as the community buildings go, I believe the assistant fire marshal would check to make sure all the codes are met, and again, depending on who designed the building, I think there are times when there are site visits made by the building designer. The architects that design the building, I think they would make site visits to ensure that what they spec'd were adhered to.

As far as private residences go, again, in communities where they have building inspectors, they obviously have to file a plan, but we have a lot of communities that don't have building inspectors, and if they're building a private residence, well, obviously, first of all, it would be to their benefit to build it to code, and if it were bank financing, I think the bank would want to have the comfort that it was built to code.

There was some discussion a number of years ago, and I think it's something we may have gotten out

of NWTAC, too, about building inspectors in the regions. I mean, we would have to have a look at that and see if there are partnerships that we can form with some of the community governments to bring something like that on board. I think, for the most part, most of the buildings that are built in the Territories are inspected, one way or another, to make sure that they adhere to all the applicable codes.

**MR. BROMLEY:** I think the Minister has defined the problem. We think that most of them are somehow caught, and I would agree with that statement. I'm trying to speak for those that aren't caught that this sort of haphazard approach leaves vulnerable to being built and put in place without inspection. Yes, indeed, the NWT Association of Communities has raised this with the Minister a number of times, as has the Association of Architects and so on. And I know the Minister is aware of this situation.

Given that we are not able to say confidently that all of them do get inspected, and I think the Minister touched on a number of the issues, what's the plan? Are we going to take responsibility as every jurisdiction in Canada has? Are we going to leave it to federal legislation with the hope that we'll somehow muddle through?

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** Recently, we had a meeting with the NWT Construction Association, the Architects Association, and the Association of Communities and the Consulting Engineers of the NWT to obtain their views. One of the recommendations that came out of that is we are all committed to do a gap analysis to see what is currently being updated, so we have had that discussion with them. We're looking forward to sitting down with them, and going through some of the recommendations and see where we can improve on the services that are offered to a lot of the small communities.

Again, I mean, I have to keep stressing the point. I think Mr. Bromley has heard me say it on a number of occasions before, that I have the utmost confidence in our communities' ability, and anybody that's putting this piece of structure up, to build it to code, if not over and above code, because it's an investment to them and there's a payback. I think in this day and age when we're taught the importance of energy efficiency, I think people are taking that to heart and they're building buildings that would be energy efficient. I just had to put that on the record, again, my confidence in the people of the Northwest Territories to do quality products.

**MR. BROMLEY:** I appreciate the Minister's hopes and dreams. Unfortunately, it's not always the people of the Northwest Territories, to start with, that are building these buildings. It's often people that are not residents of the Northwest Territories and, unfortunately, there is good reason – I'm sure

the Minister is aware – that every jurisdiction in Canada has a Building Standards Act with an inspection function that's filled. I'm not saying the Minister doesn't have lots of points on this. I want to express appreciation that the gap analysis is being done. That's exactly what I'm looking for, and I will look forward to seeing the results of that, if the Minister is willing to share it, and how we will be going about filling those gaps. Just a comment, and that's all I have.

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** We appreciate the Member pointing out some of the shortcomings of the communities across the Northwest Territories, and how we're the only jurisdiction in the country that doesn't have one. We're a more stable jurisdiction with a lot of the people that are not moving about so often. In the bigger jurisdictions they all have the ability to just go down the street and, for the most part, find somebody to inspect.

Once we get some research done, I will commit to sharing it with the Members and, again, if there is input that the Members want to put into this, then we'd welcome that also.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):** Thank you, Minister McLeod. Next I have Mr. Yakeleya.

**MR. YAKELEYA:** Thank you, Madam Chair. The issue of public safety was of grave concern for the Minister of Transportation, and I when we drove the winter road last weekend there were some near misses. There are big trucks and the roads are quite narrow, so that's what the Minister and I talked about.

The issue that I want to talk about is some of these vehicles have been struck. I just came back from the Sahtu and the Sahtu Dene Council annual general meeting, and people have come up and said some of their vehicles were hit and some clear misses. Some of them actually come out of the road. I mean, stop their vehicles on the roads and trying to wave down a big truck because of the ruts. I want to ask the Minister, in regard to the public safety, we're close to about maybe 1,500, 1,600 trucks so far, and these are semi-trucks. Some of these drivers do not quite understand the Sahtu winter roads, and these are not flat ground. These are foothill mountains, and these are hills that are quite treacherous and quite steep up here, and some of these roads are very narrow. If you pull on to the side, it gives you maybe about three to four inches. We had that experience already with the Minister. We talked about some of the creeks and some of the hills that we've got to look after.

Public safety is number one for our people on the roads, so I want to ask the Minister if there's something in his plans to look at emergency types of response. Right now, we rely on the goodness of the people just from the heart. If there's an accident they'll go out. You know, nurses or... We don't know which community is going to respond. The

Norman Wells town also raises concern here for emergency vehicles, because the RCMP go out, a nurse, or just the goodness of the heart of the people who will do that. We actually did have an accident on the winter road from Tulita to Wrigley where a fuel truck rolled over the bank there.

We're looking for some support from this government to look at emergency response during the period of December to maybe March until we get a proper system in place that would dispatch emergency response vehicles, first aiders, first responders.

We have a group of really good people who are involved with the Canadian Rangers that could be considered. If there are some type of supplies or equipment in the community that whoever the responders are can grab stretchers, oxygen tanks and all the stuff that you need. Would the Minister look at something like that that would ensure our people, ensure the people in the Sahtu, people who are coming up, that there is an emergency response plan in place for our winter roads? Mahsi cho.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):** Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Minister McLeod.

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** Thank you, Madam Chair. We do have an interdepartmental working group that are looking at a number of different things – because this question comes up quite a bit and it is one that I think is going to come up a bit more – made up of Health and Social Services, Transportation, Department of Justice and MACA. One of the things the Member raised is what we are looking at. Remote medical rescue is one of the items the working group is looking at. We get the question all the time, who is going to respond? Those are questions that this working group is looking at as well as equipment, administration and training. I think what we realize in the past is that some of the communities went out, and one in particular had bought a piece of emergency equipment and realized they didn't have the proper training to be first responders and there was a bit of a liability issue. They understood that quite quickly and they got out of that. I think they actually sold the piece of equipment that they bought.

We are looking at also probably piloting a couple of projects in a couple of the communities that are served by the road and see how that works. We recognize that this is a huge issue. I can assure the Member that the working group is looking at all these particular types of issues and incidents. Thank you very much, Madam Chair.

**MR. YAKELEYA:** Madam Chair, the Minister and I have some little thing going there. The Minister talked about a remote medical rescue initiative interdepartmental working group, and they're putting in training and looking at piloting a couple of projects. I would hope that now that the winter

roads are closing, there are another 25 or so more days that it will be open. I know the oil companies are going to use that opportunity to get their equipment out, and people are going to come back on the winter road from holidays and people are steadily using that road. Is it something that I could look for to, say, in the early summer or late fall that we can have a well-designed medical rescue response action plan even for the Sahtu for the next winter that we could take and start training or start notifying people that we have something in place?

Next year if the oil and gas exploration continues, and just sitting down with Conoco yesterday, they are very encouraged – the words they used – to continue working in the Sahtu. They smiled with the word encouraging, also with Husky. We are going to look at something that's more stable, hopefully, in the future, because companies are spending millions and millions of dollars in our region. They go right past all of our small communities along the Mackenzie Valley Highway. Those big trucks are coming up from the Alberta border. There are 1,500 or 1,600 of them right now, and you're going to see more next year. They come up to the Sahtu. We want to get ready and get prepared.

I encourage the Minister to work with his officials and put a plan in place so that we in the Sahtu can feel supportive and feel some safety that this government here is looking after our roads and that we have a place that we could call ours. We know people in our communities would respond. We have been very lucky, knock on wood, cross our fingers, that no serious accidents have happened. We wouldn't want to talk about it.

This is very important to our people in the Sahtu. I have to work with the Minister on the other areas of transportation, but this one here is key for us. We can work with the oil companies. They have medics out there. There are a lot of ways.

Anyhow, I am encouraged by what the Minister is saying. I would be really happy if I can see some plan and dollars spent so that we have a medical response team on the Mackenzie Valley winter roads. Thank you.

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** Madam Chair, the public safety division is purchasing supplies and we're assisting DOT in delivering basic first responder training during some of the airport live exercises. We have a few communities that are partaking in this. The working group's first priority, I think, would be to ensure that we have people that are trained to be first responders.

As far as the equipment goes, I think once they are trained to be first responders and the community, through some of the capital infrastructure money that they get from us, would be able to purchase the necessary equipment.



As far as the timeline the Member is asking about, I'm not quite sure of the timeline right now. The working group is still doing their work. However, as I committed before I think to Mr. Dolynny, I will keep committee up to date on the work we're doing. Again, we recognize the importance more than ever of these emergency services. I think this is work that this group is going to undertake, and I'll try to get it into the Assembly as quickly as possible and update all of the Members. Thank you.

**MR. YAKELEYA:** Madam Chair, there is training going on in Alberta. It's called First Responders Medical Training. I saw it in one of the newspapers. They have it in Alberta. I guess we need to look and see how we can start identifying people in our region to do first responders medical training. We can work with the federal government on this initiative.

The other one is the community infrastructure. If they want to sign on to this, they are looking at a type of purchasing equipment. I'm not too sure how healthy the infrastructure budget is with the communities. They have roads, dumps, other things to look at, water treatment plants, and sewer. That money can only go so far. I think we need to sit down with the oil companies, with Transportation, with our government, with the federal government and say this is what we need to do and this is what it looks like. We need to come together on that type of initiative to purchase equipment, things that they would need. I would be very interested in working with the Minister and support him.

In this issue here, it is something that I would like to see by at least next opening winter road that we have a first responders medical response team concept in the Sahtu. We need that. There's no question about it. We need that. So I would like to see something that our people will know who to call. If not 911, we need to call somebody if something is happening.

I want to thank the Minister and his team for doing a good job in Norman Wells on the issue there that happened. Thank you very much. People are very appreciative. It is a type of initiative that could happen and we are ready for it. That is what I want to see in the Sahtu winter roads. Mahsi cho.

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** Madam Chair, this is one of the things that the working group is looking at, is the equipment and types of equipment that are going to be needed. As far as trying to get it implemented by next fall, again, the Member made a good point about working with a lot of the industry people that are out there. A lot of them would have their own medical personnel. There are opportunities there. Part of the working group's mandate would to explore all of the opportunities that are available, take advantage of training available. It's a good time for us to take advantage of the industry being in the region because they do

have a lot of qualified people there. We saw that in the Beau-Del. We saw them respond to incidents in the Beau-Del. I think they do a pretty good job.

So there are opportunities there, part of the working group's mandate is to explore all opportunities. Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):** Thank you, Minister McLeod. I'm next going to go to Mr. Nadli.

**MR. NADLI:** Thank you, Madam Chair. I've raised a consistent concern of mine, namely because the communities that I represent are situated down the Mackenzie Highway. Of course, the highway extends from the 60<sup>th</sup> parallel right to Yellowknife and at this point of the year we have a very high volume of traffic passing through, trying to beat the seasonal warming of springtime and transporting goods to the mine. This is the vital link of transportation of goods. It's been long established, it's heavily used and I would describe it as the artery or lifeline that brings goods from down south right to Yellowknife. I've raised this concern before in terms of public safety on the highway. Of course, that also extends to the department, in terms of its responsibilities and obligations, to provide a level of service to communities who, in turn, of course, look after the overall interests of its citizens.

In the public section there's a section called ground ambulance and highway rescue and for this year it identifies, for 2013-14, \$200,000. I want to understand what is the intended purpose for the \$200,000 for ground ambulance and highway rescue. Mahsi.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):** Thank you, Mr. Nadli. Minister McLeod.

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** Thank you, Madam Chair. The ground ambulance and the \$200,000 was supposed to go on an application basis to some of the communities and some of the services that they're providing. We found out quick enough that it wasn't enough money. It was actually set to sunset, but committee, I think in the last budget session, had asked to reinstate this money. So we did, and we have, I think two, maybe three communities that take us up on the money, three so far that take us up on the money. So again, as I was mentioning to Member Yakeleya, we're looking at the overall picture and this is kind of just a little bit of assistance until we can look at the overall picture of providing ground ambulance and highway rescue. Thank you.

**MR. NADLI:** Thank you. I do also realize for the last year that same amount was available. I just want to try to come to an understanding, again, in terms of this initiative being available to communities. How has that worked if, indeed, this amount was available, and how has that been accrued by communities that were in a position to use that \$200,000? Mahsi.

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** Thank you. This is application-based funding, and it would support some training and some minor capital upgrade for ambulance and highway rescue services in communities. Some communities don't have the equipment, but it would be able to support training in some small communities. Thank you.

**MR. NADLI:** Thank you. Have a lot of communities taken advantage of that amount of funding? This is not new funding; this was in place in the previous year. So I'm just trying to come to an understanding of whether communities know of this existing program, that it's going to continue for this year and if communities did, indeed, apply and take advantage of this \$200,000.

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** Thank you. This program was fully subscribed to at one point until a lot of the communities realized there was a liability issue with this. So right now in 2012-13 we had three communities that have each received \$40,000. Thank you.

**MR. NADLI:** Thank you. This question is quite simple, and more likely this could be made in reference to other departments, but it's a very simple question. The question is: Who is responsible for an individual in distress at home in the community that requires immediate medical assistance and need of transportation to the health centre?

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** He said it was a simple question. Well, in some communities I believe the health centre might have a van or a vehicle that they use. I think the question was who is responsible, if somebody is hurt in their home, to get picked up and be brought to the health centre. Am I correct, Madam Chair?

**CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):** Thank you, Mr. McLeod. For clarification, Mr. Nadli.

**MR. NADLI:** Yes, that's correct. Who is responsible?

**CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):** Minister McLeod.

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** Thank you, Madam Chair, and thank the Member for clarifying that. Well, again, in some communities the RCMP would bring him to the health centre and in some communities there may be a van that's used by the health centre. In communities where they have ambulance services, obviously they would call an ambulance and an ambulance would go pick them up and bring them to the health centre or to the hospital. So as far as who is solely responsible, I really don't know the answer to that, but I know in different communities different people respond, different organizations respond to those that are in need. Thank you.

**MR. NADLI:** Thank you. The other question is I want to check to ensure the status. I know the Minister has made reference to some issues that seem to be fundamentally challenging this government to come to a position where it could fairly and consistently deliver a vital service to people on the highway and plus the communities. He's pointedly stated that it's a liability issue, plus, at the same time, it's a lack of training or lack of personnel that are qualified to almost become paramedics, and in some instances, too, there is an obstacle of lacking equipment in terms of vehicles and transport vehicles.

I understand there's been an effort to try and bring several departments together. I heard the Minister indicate that perhaps by this fall there might be a report or an effort to report to the House in terms of the findings of this group, but what is the status of this group, and where that's the timeline that's fairly consistent that this group will report to the House at least a semblance of a framework to enhance ground ambulances and highway emergency? Mahsi.

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** Well, the working group are looking at all these different issues right now and they're coming up with ways, some options, and also looking at the cost. I think it's been mentioned in this House before, if we were to look at the cost of implementing the overall ambulance service across the Northwest Territories, it would be quite high. So they're exploring all these options.

As far as an actual timeline goes, I don't have the actual timeline. I know that they are looking at a number of different issues, but I will keep the Members up to date on the work that they're doing and hopefully we can have something, and I say hopefully we can have something to share with Members quite soon. I'm not sure if fall would be a reasonable expectation, but I will follow up and if it is, then I will inform the Members of that. Thank you.

**MR. NADLI:** Thank you. Another simple question, but it more likely would pertain to the working that's in existence right now, but obviously another question. Who is responsible for a vehicle that is on fire on the highway and in distress?

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** Who is responsible for a vehicle that's on fire? I really don't know. It would depend which jurisdiction they're in if there's someone in the community that responds to a fire. That's a difficult question to answer. It may sound like a simple question, but it's a shared responsibility, and people will react as they react when they can. If there's a firefighting service close by, then they will respond, because nobody in the NWT is not going to respond to any kind of an emergency whether it's their responsibility or not. If they're available, they will respond.

Again, the purpose of the working group is to explore all these different types of options. Maybe it's a question that I'm going to have to go around and ask, is who is responsible to respond to this and who is responsible for that. That actually is a very good question and one that I will have to ask as well.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Bisaro):** Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Mr. Nadli, your time is up. I can put you back on the list if you need to be. Next on the list is Mr. Dolyunny.

**MR. DOLYUNNY:** Thank you, Madam Chair. I want to pick up where I left off on the Joint Emergency Preparedness Program which has sunsetted with the federal government. This was established in 1980, according to their website, to enhance the national capacity to respond to all types of emergencies and to enhance resiliency of critical infrastructure. Over the course, they gave out \$170 million to provinces and territories at a federal contribution of 75 percent to the projects.

My question is this: This free money – and I will call it free money – was available to this government up until the fiscal year-end of 2012, and yet I see that we have not taken up that money in 2012. It's not in any literature that we have here. Can I get a bit of an update as to, as I said in my earlier questions, what has been the uptake of this free federal money? And if we can get a bit of a background in terms of what were we able to use that money for.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Bisaro):** Thank you, Mr. Dolyunny. Mr. McLeod.

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** Thank you, Madam Chair. The federal money that was available as free money, as the Member likes to call it, we've taken it up pretty well every year. For some reason it wasn't available to us last year. Every year since its inception, I think we have taken our share of it.

**MR. DOLYUNNY:** If we were taking it up in 2012, it would have actually shown up in the main estimates here as a line entry, and I didn't see it as being a take-up item. I'm getting some conflicting response here. My goal with this information is to find out how good we were at acquiring this so-called free federal money to enhance the infrastructure in many of our communities.

I'm asking again: Would the department or Minister commit to giving a full background of the use of these funding dollars in the last number of years and share that with Members?

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** As I've said, we've taken the money up every year. The Member talked about federal money. I'll tell you one thing with the Government of the Northwest Territories. Not this Assembly, but Assemblies past, any time there's free money from the federal government, we are at their door getting our fair share. It's just something

that we've always done and the government's become quite good at.

I'll provide the Member with the information. We'll put something together to give him some comfort that we've done our work since 1980 when all this money was available and taken our fair share. We've used it for a number of different things. The last time we used it was for a video that we had produced. We have taken our fair share of the money, and I will provide historical background for the Member.

**MR. DOLYUNNY:** If I could remind the Minister, it's not for my comfort that I'm asking for this information. It's for the taxpayers who are asking if we were good stewards of the availability of such funds. I just want to make sure that's put on the record.

Not that I want to dial 911 on this issue, but the concern that was brought up by my colleague here Mr. Nadli in terms of our Ground Ambulance Program is something of a concern. We don't need to have a disaster on our highways to do so. It just so happens that we had a disaster as of late with respect to areas where a ground ambulance or an air ambulance extraction could have been used in probably more effective ways. We've heard today that there were issues of liability, lacking equipment, lacking personnel.

About this working group, my questions are the fundamentals behind this working group. I was led to believe that the department had a very similar working group for a number of years that disbanded, but they did not have any type of conclusion. Now we've got a new working group that's been put together that is working on, I guess, the expertise of our future Ground Ambulance Program. Can the Minister indicate who the members are of this working group and what background they are bringing to the working group? If I could get a response to that, please.

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** The members of the working group are the Department of Health and Social Services, Department of Justice, Transportation, Municipal and Community Affairs.

**MR. DOLYUNNY:** There will probably be a time when I will be asking to get the actual personnel, the people who are part of this group, and I would like to know what their qualifications are in this area with time. I'm not going to ask that today here. This is a question I would expect the Minister to answer here in due course.

The concern I have here is we just heard from the Minister that the findings of this working group might not be available until, as he put it, this fall. I think people are gravely concerned that we do have some gaps in our system. It was clearly indicated here by another Minister, the Minister of Health. These gaps are obviously putting a lot of worry and

stress on motorists, the people of the Northwest Territories who have to use highways for a means of getting to and from. Is there a possibility that this department can look at interim measures until such time as recommendations from a working group become available?

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** I'm assuming that the Member means by interim measure that we provide the service until full service is available. Am I correct?

**MR. DOLYNNY:** The terminology of interim measures is exactly that. We don't really have a program in place currently in a lot of our communities and highway infrastructures. My guess is that an interim proviso in terms of providing any type of ground ambulance protocols or anything that they have will enhance what we don't have today and would probably be better than having nothing.

My question is: Would the department consider interim measures for ground ambulance support in community highway infrastructures during this fiscal year?

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** One of the things we're working on is updating the Highway Emergency Alerting Protocol. As far as the interim measures go, I mean, I mentioned before that we're trying to get some first responder training so we have some folks that are able to respond. We're looking at different types of equipment they might need.

As far as implementing an interim service, that's a huge undertaking, and I think we'd have to, as a department, have a look at that. We'd have to do our due diligence on that because it is going to be a huge undertaking. Even though it would be just an interim measure, there's a lot more to it than just putting a piece of equipment on the ground and hoping somebody can use it.

I will commit to the Member that we will... I mean, all the Members' concerns that were raised, I think I've committed to pretty well all of them that we will have a look at them. It's what we continue to do as a department. When we come back for business plan discussions and have a back and forth with committee, there's opportunity there for them to raise these particular types of issues and see if there are ways they could fit them into the business plan. We look forward to that discussion. Hopefully, by the time we get to that stage we'll have more information to share with the Members.

**MR. DOLYNNY:** I appreciate the Minister's commitment to looking at these. I'm not expecting a piece of equipment on the ground. I'm not expecting that we go out and hire and train someone to be at post. I believe that if the department, in their infinite wisdom and all the tools and resources at their fingertips, can come up with temporary solutions until such time as we do have a

formal process for ground ambulance safety. Will the department and the Minister commit to temporary solutions during this interim phase?

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** I said I would commit to exploring it. I can't make a commitment right here to actually implement it, but I will commit to exploring it and then returning to the Members.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Bisaro):** Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Page 6-17, Municipal and Community Affairs, activity summary, public safety, operations expenditure summary, \$1.629 million.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Bisaro):** Page 6-18, Municipal and Community Affairs, activity summary, public safety, grants and contributions, total grants and contributions, \$200,000.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Bisaro):** Page 6-19, Municipal and Community Affairs, information item, public safety, active positions.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Bisaro):** Page 6-21, Municipal and Community Affairs, activity summary, community operations, operations expenditure summary, \$2.483 million. Mr. Bromley.

**MR. BROMLEY:** Thank you, Madam Chair. I just wanted to ask with respect to the Minister's opening comment on page 2 of 4 at the bottom, the increased operations and maintenance funding and water/sewer funding due to population growth, explaining some of the forced growth funding there. I believe we actually are in negative or stable on population. I'm wondering what that was about. Is it people moving into the centres or what would that be about? Are costs going down elsewhere, where people move from?

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Bisaro):** Thank you, Mr. Bromley. Ms. Young.

**MS. YOUNG:** Thank you, Madam Chair. The O and M funding forced growth calculation includes population as well as other indicators, like the cost of utilities. There is a salary indicator – for example, the GNWT salary positions are used as an indicator – so if there's an increase in the Collective Agreement, there's a calculation for O and M funding to increase the funding based on those salary increases as well. Population is one of about four factors that are included in calculating forced growth for O and M.

**MR. BROMLEY:** Thanks for that information. I guess I would select the ones that apply and leave out the ones that don't. There's a couple of them mentioned here, the fuel and electricity. I think our funding, the Minister said about \$47 million to provide for community government operations and

maintenance costs. What was the increase in that amount due to these factors?

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Bisaro):** Thank you, Mr. Bromley. Mr. McLeod.

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** Thank you, Madam Chair. The forced growth funding, community government operations and maintenance funding went up by \$1.37 million; water and sewer funding operations, \$1.2 million; water and sewer funding classification, \$413,000; grants in lieu of property taxes, \$223,000; Collective Agreement increases, year one and two, \$338,000; Property Tax Revenue Grant Program, \$119,000.

**MR. BROMLEY:** That's all I had. Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Bisaro):** Thank you, Mr. Bromley. Page 6-21, Municipal and Community Affairs, activity summary, community operations, operations expenditure summary, \$2.483 million. Mr. Bromley.

**MR. BROMLEY:** Thank you, Madam Chair. Just one last question with regard to those. Yellowknife obviously seems to be a bit of a magnet for people from across the NWT for people who choose to move somewhere. Are some of these increases going to Yellowknife in recognition of that?

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Bisaro):** Thank you, Mr. Bromley. Ms. Young.

**MS. YOUNG:** Yes. The operations and maintenance funding, all communities received an increase this year and, of course, grant in lieu would be an increase for the City of Yellowknife as well. They do not receive any water/sewer funding the way the formula there works, so they don't get an increase in that.

**MR. BROMLEY:** I'll leave it at that. I'm not worried about the amounts too much right here.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Bisaro):** Thank you, Mr. Bromley. Mr. Nadli.

**MR. NADLI:** Thank you, Madam Chair. Just a question again in terms of community operations. At this point, it's fairly consistent practice that the department works very well with communities in terms of delivering water services to most communities. I just wanted to know, there's one community in particular that's very interested in wild water, of course, by going into the subsurface and then piping the water from underground. What's the department's stand on it? Is there a policy? Are there health-related concerns? What's the department's perspective on that?

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Bisaro):** Thank you, Mr. Nadli. Mr. Williams.

**MR. WILLIAMS:** Thank you, Madam Chair. We have no policy on how we extract water. Usually we use traditional knowledge from the community. We also get advice from our engineering people,

consultants that we hire, but there is no policy, per se, on the best way to draw water.

**MR. NADLI:** I think one of the very explicit policies that the community is going by is looking at the cost measure in terms of doing some comparative analysis in terms of having trucked water versus having their own source water and whether the department continues to engage the community in this enterprise and whether, at some point, there could be a common ground in terms of meeting their desires to ensure that they have their own water source. Has that discussion been ongoing with the community?

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Bisaro):** Thank you, Mr. Nadli. Minister McLeod.

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** The Member is correct. There have been ongoing discussions with the community, because we had heard from them that they were looking at identifying their own water source, so we have had ongoing discussions with them. Where it's at right now, I'm not quite sure. I will follow up with the officials and see where those discussions are and I will inform the Member.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Bisaro):** Thank you, Minister. Committee, page 6-21, Municipal and Community Affairs, activity summary, community operations, operations expenditure summary, \$2.483 million.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Bisaro):** We're agreed, committee. Page 6-22, Municipal and Community Affairs, activity summary, community operations, grants and contributions, contributions, \$185,000.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Bisaro):** Thank you, committee. Page 6-23, Municipal and Community Affairs, information item, community operations, active positions. Any questions?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Bisaro):** Page 6-25, Municipal and Community Affairs, activity summary, School of Community Government, operations expenditure summary, \$3.076 million. Mr. Bromley.

**MR. BROMLEY:** Thank you, Madam Chair. The School of Community Government is obviously a busy place. They provide training in areas that include a long list such as governance, management, lands, infrastructure, bylaw enforcement, fire protection, water and wastewater, emergency management, works, asset management and finances. For a number of years I've been asking if they would consider giving energy management courses, because, of course, that's a primary area for savings and so on. Is that included? Are they doing that now?

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Bisaro):** Thank you, Mr. Bromley. Minister McLeod.

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** Thank you, Madam Chair. My understanding is that the courses that they're offering have been updated to include exactly what Member Bromley is talking about, the energy courses.

**MR. BROMLEY:** I appreciate that response. It would be wonderful if committee could get information on that so we know what's happening there and we don't have to ask it again. Maybe we could even add it to the long list here.

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** We'll be pleased to get an updated course list and provide it to Members.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Bisaro):** Thank you, Minister. Committee, we're on page 6-25, Municipal and Community Affairs, activity summary, School of Community Government, operations expenditure summary, \$3.076 million.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Bisaro):** We are agreed, committee? I'm hearing nothing from my left side. Page 6-26, Municipal and Community Affairs, activity summary, School of Community Government, grants and contributions, contributions, \$680,000.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Bisaro):** Page 6-27, Municipal and Community Affairs, information item, School of Community Government, active positions. Any questions?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Bisaro):** Page 6-29, Municipal and Community Affairs, activity summary, lands administration, operations expenditure summary, \$3.047 million. Mr. Bromley.

**MR. BROMLEY:** Thank you, Madam Chair. I know the Minister's ready for me here. I'm just wondering where we're at with the Recreational Leasing Policy. I think we're hoping that it's going to be done by the end of the month, but I know the public's keenly interested, and we've been through one iteration, and I think there's some hope that there will be another chance to look at it before being finalized, but maybe I can get the Minister to start me off on that.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Bisaro):** Thank you, Mr. Bromley. Minister McLeod.

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** I was waiting for the Member to raise this. The regs are just being worked on now and possibly finalized. The land withdrawal, I think, expires at the end of March. We're working, actually, very closely with the YKDFN now. They've come to the table, which is huge, because they'll be able to provide us with a lot of their traditional knowledge. I believe AANDC

has come to the table as well, so they're part of the working group now. Our goal is to still try and have this out by the end of March, is when it expires, and possibly put some lots up for leasing this spring.

**MR. BROMLEY:** Obviously, the last time we came out with it there were very major issues left to resolve, and the Minister got lots of input on that and I know recognized that it was major. I hope that we're not rushing into this just to meet that March 31<sup>st</sup> deadline. It would be good to get this done, but I would urge the Minister to make sure that we've got public support going forward. That's one point I wanted to make.

The other aspect, a double-barrelled problem that was identified, was lack of familiarity of land managers with the land that they were making regulations about, and the other one was absolutely no real enforcement capacity. I think there was a willingness, but capacity was not there. As a result, to this day, in fact, I know that land lessors are ignoring. Well, there are no formal regulations out there anymore, I suppose, other than federal, and those are being ignored even more with absolutely no enforcement, and this results in a very un-level playing field. It's downright unfair to many, and certainly to the Yellowknives Dene and so on. What's being done in those two areas to correct that problem, enforcement and the other problem I mentioned?

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** The enforcement, we've added into our enforcement. I think we have an extra enforcement person. I will confirm that and provide that to the Member. But I know it was a concern that the Member had raised. I think it was during the business plan review. Then recognizing that we may be getting more responsibility here very shortly, so enforcement is going to be a critical issue. I can assure the Member that that is being worked on.

The familiarity with the area, our folks have done a lot of site visits. I think they've had one study done I know on a particular lake, and the turbidity of the lake, how much it can sustain and how much development it can sustain. They have actually done a lot of really good work, because this was an issue that was raised by the Member, and then working with the YKDFN I think is going to go a long way in familiarizing our lands folks with some of their traditional areas and some of their expertise. That's what we really welcomed when they came to the table, was the expertise that they brought on the different types of land. We did a lot of work as far as the enforcement part and familiarizing ourselves with the lands that we administer. Thank you, Madam Chair.

**MR. BROMLEY:** Madam Chair, I appreciate the Minister's comments. I'm glad we're at work on those things. I still, though, am hearing a lot of uncertainty about the regulations and the deadline

of March 31<sup>st</sup>. We don't want a situation where, obviously, when things come open we're not ready for it. Is the Minister prepared to extend the moratorium on leasing for another month or two, if need be, to get things wrapped up properly before moving forward? Thank you.

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** Madam Chair, I appreciate the Member raising that. I will make a determination. The Member is correct; and I have said this a number of times, we need to make sure we get a good quality product before we put it out there. I think I had used that line a couple of times, because we had an extension a couple of times. If it's a matter of a month or two to make sure that we have everything worked out and everything worked out the way it should be, then I will commit to the Member that I will make that determination close to the end of the month. We'll be sure that we let the public know right away because there are a lot of folks out there that are sitting and waiting and hoping some land does become available for recreational leasing. We want to make sure that we give them that opportunity, however, understanding that we need to make sure that we get this right. Thank you, Madam Chair.

**MR. BROMLEY:** Madam Chair, thanks again to the Minister. That's good to hear. I know that I was using the Minister's words there and he caught that. We want to do a good job. I'm with him there.

We have such a history of unfair and erratic adherence to regulations and inspections and so on that it's going to be very important to really be on top of things once there's the new situation goal, which is going to be difficult because people are going to holler a bit. Some may have never seen this before, maybe. Is there a plan to make sure that the public is well aware that this is a new situation? I appreciate that the department has been doing a yeoman's work in terms of... You know, if we have to, we will go to court. We don't want to but... I just raise that. It would be good to know. I don't see any increase in the budget here to speak of; in fact, the opposite. So I am a little bit concerned about capacity here. Thank you.

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** Madam Chair, as far as capacity part, as I said before, we have added an extra enforcement person. Once we come back in the fall time to do the business plan review with committee, if there's an opportunity there, if we feel that we're lacking in capacity, then we will possibly come to committee and get some feedback from committee on that issue.

I'm sorry; I missed the first part of the Member's question. I think it was just complimenting the department in all the good work that we've been doing.

---Laughter

Except listening. Thank you, Madam Chair.

**MR. BROMLEY:** Madam Chair, the first part was recognizing that this is a new deal. How are we going to assure the public and make the public aware from the very start that we are serious, that we're going to adhere to the regulations? It is not you're just getting after new people, but there is a lot... I don't know. It's a mess out there, as the Minister knows, in terms of whatever regulations you are coming up with, in terms of our history now, but that is the situation to me that has to be dealt with. Thank you.

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** Madam Chair, I apologize to the Member. I completely missed his first part of his question before. We do have a communication plan again. I think the best thing here is, before we actually start rolling everything out, it might be a good opportunity to sit down with the committee and tell the committee this is the plan and this is our communication plan, because the Member is right, there are going to be a lot of new changes. We need some adjusting by folks out there. I would be more than willing to sit down with committee once we have all of this finalized and give them a quick briefing. I think we had an opportunity to do that a little while back and we had some excellent feedback from committee. I will put that offer out there, that we will sit down with committee and outline our whole plan going forward, including the communication plan and how we plan on dealing with... Obviously, we are going to have some concerns out there on how we plan on dealing with those.

The Member talked about fairness. I think we have proven we will enforce the regulations. Make no doubt about that. Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Bisaro):** Thank you, Minister. Mr. Bromley, your time is up. Page 6-29, Municipal and Community Affairs, activity summary, lands administration, operations expenditure summary. Mr. Yakeleya.

**MR. YAKELEYA:** Thank you, Madam Chair. I have a couple of questions for the Minister. What plans are in place with the community operations of the communities along the Canol Trail shale play that is happening right now in Norman Wells, Tulita and next year I think Fort Good Hope is going to start entertaining some companies to do some exploration seismic work there? How is MACA helping out Tulita and Norman Wells? What type of additional support are we going to get for this department here?

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Bisaro):** Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Minister McLeod.

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** Thank you, Madam Chair. We recognize that there is going to be a lot of activity around the Sahtu. I think our staff can prepare for that. Our superintendents and our regional staff will work closely with communities,

probably identify some of the challenges that they may be facing.

Again, we go in there at the communities' invitation. We work with them very closely on this issue. I can assure the Member that we know. We will have the assistant superintendents in all regions too. I think that will go a long way. We will work very closely with community and do our part in supporting them in getting ready for expansion and all the work that is going to be going on in the region. Thank you.

**MR. YAKELEYA:** Madam Chair, the communities have certainly seen the impacts through our boundaries, the roads and the traffic, certainly in Norman Wells. They are starting to realize that this is not going to slow down; because words of the oil companies is that they have encouraging results. So far they are looking at the sites and they are finding it more encouraging than ever. We have a lot of work amongst ourselves to do in our communities. I am looking forward to MACA's support for additional staff members and additional support for helping us. That's what I want to ask the Minister, the type of support, even doing an assessment. I remember MACA did a really good report on, if there was going to be a Mackenzie Valley pipeline, these are the impacts it's going to have on Good Hope, Norman Wells, Tulita, Fort Simpson, Wrigley, right down the valley. I've been asking for that report, but I have not yet seen that report. I don't know if it's with ITI or MACA or if it's locked up in a vault. I don't know. So I'm looking for that report so I can give it to the people and say, well, this was done because of the Mackenzie Valley pipeline if it was going to come down the valley.

We've got a bigger project than the Mackenzie Valley Pipeline. You've got the Sahtu Canol shale play going on here. We're not talking millions; we're talking billions. So I want to ask the Minister if that report is public or if I can somehow get it or the communities can use it for planning. They've got to start sharing this information, otherwise you'll have the information but our communities won't have it and you've got them at a disadvantage. So I'd like to see where we can help each other out. That probably needs a bit of tweaking and a couple of more things that need to be added in or taken out, but basically it's the same. The impacts are going to be the impacts. If we're going to haul out millions of dollars' worth of exploration stuff and equipment or start production of the Canol play, then we need to have our eyes wide open. That's what I'm saying. MACA did a really good report. I remember reading that report. If I knew I was going to be on this long I would have taken it. Thank you.

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** Thank you, Madam Chair. I think the Member's big concern here is to ensure that the communities are ready for future development and I've assured the Member that with

the assistant superintendent is a decentralized effort by MACA to get more people into the regions. So we're looking forward to some of the good work that they're going to be doing.

Again, we will work very closely with the communities to support them in their efforts to get ready for all the work that's coming their way. If there's a role that MACA can play, we will support them, and I'll make that commitment.

The Member was talking about boundaries. Again, a lot of these issues are community-driven issues and we support the communities wherever we can. Thank you.

**MR. YAKELEYA:** Thank you. Maybe I'll ask the Minister of ITI for that community assessment report. I know MACA has it. I wish I would have kept a copy of it. Anyway, that was the Mackenzie Gas Pipeline. So maybe ITI will have it. I'll ask the Minister. At another time I'll ask him for a copy.

So that's okay. I will work with the Minister, I'll work with his team on the impacts. I know they're feeling it now. Again, I was at the Sahtu Dene Council meeting yesterday and the four chiefs were talking about these impacts, and I sat there all day. One of the things that we talked about, and it was because of the four chiefs being there and them having my ear, is them talking about the infrastructure, the water treatment plants, the sewer plants. These are the assets owned by our government and they're pretty expensive to operate. They're pretty complex, pretty technical and they were looking for support where the government could work with our communities to look at how best to serve the community. So I appreciate the flexibility your staff has, Minister, and acknowledging the hardship we had in regard to Colville Lake, for example. We don't need to bring that up, but you guys are working on it in Tulita and Deline and Fort Good Hope.

So I think we need to continue with the infrastructure. The amount of money that the community has, the amount of needs that they have on the roads, dumps, water treatment plants, sewer, other things, we don't meet all our priorities. So I want to ask the Minister in regard to that, because some of our water treatment plants are pretty complex, they're pretty expensive, we need to ensure that our communities have enough and sufficient money to operate them. That's what I wanted to remind the Minister, that if you have a \$10 treatment plant, we need to make sure that there's \$10 worth of operating funding, not 10 cents. So that's something we want to work closely with.

Again, I appreciate the staff working hard with our communities in Colville, Good Hope, Deline, Norman Wells and Tulita on this key, essential infrastructure for our people. Mahsi.



**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** Thank you. I'm not sure about the report. We'll do some digging around and see if we can find the report. We continue to work with the community governments on their water treatment plants to make sure that they're adequately funded to operate these water treatment plants. So we'll continue to do that work. Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Bisaro):** Thank you, Minister. Committee, we're on page 6-29, Municipal and Community Affairs, activity summary. Mr. Yakeleya.

**MR. YAKELEYA:** Thank you, Madam Chair. I want to say something to the Minister on the community operations. The communities are moving towards being more self-sustainable such as the infrastructure that's going on in the communities. We want to ensure that this continues on. So I want to let the Minister know that the people in the Sahtu that attended the Good Governance courses appreciated it, and they say that was a real good course. So it's things like that that help our people. If you bring training programs like that into the Sahtu, they wanted me to say thank you on behalf of the people, the ones I talked to in the Sahtu, which are the four communities essentially. So I have to say that before I forget to say good things to the Minister.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Bisaro):** Thanks, Mr. Yakeleya. Mr. McLeod.

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** Thank you, and we appreciate the Member's comments. These are good courses and opportunity to bring folks from across the NWT together and talk about all the issues that face their community and try to find some solutions. So I appreciate the comments. Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Bisaro):** Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Committee, we're on page 6-29, Municipal and Community Affairs, activity summary, lands administration, operations expenditure summary, \$3.047 million.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Bisaro):** Thanks, committee. Page 6-30, Municipal and Community Affairs, information item, lands administration, active positions. Mr. Bromley.

**MR. BROMLEY:** Thank you, Madam Chair. Very quickly I just noticed Yellowknife is down one and we were just talking about it being one up for the enforcement positions. So I just bring that to the Minister's attention. So somehow there must have been a cut of two positions for us to still have an additional in enforcement. If there's any light to be shed on that, I'd welcome it, or later. Whatever serves. Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Bisaro):** Thank you, Mr. Bromley. Minister McLeod.

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** Thank you. I appreciate all the Members supporting their colleague. It shows up in the regional office. So it wouldn't show up in the headquarters. It shows up in the regional office. Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Bisaro):** Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Committee, page 6-30, Municipal and Community Affairs, information item, lands administration, active positions. Any other questions?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Bisaro):** Thank you, committee. Page 6-33, Municipal and Community Affairs, activity summary, sport, recreation and youth, operations expenditure summary, \$5.200 million.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Bisaro):** Thank you, committee. Pages 6-34 and 35, Municipal and Community Affairs, activity summary, sport, recreation and youth, grants and contributions, grants, \$100,000, contributions, \$3.357 million, total grants and contributions, \$3.457 million.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Bisaro):** Page 6-36, Municipal and Community Affairs, information item, sport, recreation and youth, active positions. Any questions?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Bisaro):** Page 6-39, Municipal and Community Affairs, activity summary, regional operations, operations expenditure summary, \$78.956 million.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Bisaro):** Pages 6-40 and 6-41, Municipal and Community Affairs, activity summary, regional operations, grants and contributions to community government, grants and contributions, grants, total grants to community governments, \$55.682 million, contributions, total contributions to community government, \$15.472 million, total grants and contributions to community governments, \$71.154 million, total other contributions, \$1.125 million, total grants and contributions, \$72.279 million.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Bisaro):** Thank you, committee. Page 6-42, Municipal and Community Affairs, information item, regional operations, active positions. Any questions?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Bisaro):** Pages 6-44 and 6-45, Municipal and Community Affairs, information item, work performed on behalf of others.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Bisaro):** Thank you, committee. We'll return to page 6-7, Municipal and Community Affairs, department summary, operations expenditure summary, \$98.786 million.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Bisaro):** Thank you, committee. Are we agreed we are concluded Municipal and Community Affairs' budget?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Bisaro):** Thank you, committee. Thank you to the Minister, thank you to your witnesses. Sergeant-at-Arms, would you please escort the witnesses from the Chamber.

Our next department is Justice. We'll start on page 9-7. I will first go to the Minister of Justice to see if Minister Abernethy has any opening comments. Minister Abernethy.

**HON. GLEN ABERNETHY:** Today I am presenting the main estimates for the Department of Justice for fiscal year 2013-2014.

The department's main estimates propose an operations expenditure budget of \$116.8 million. This represents an increase of 2.7 percent over the 2012-13 Main Estimates. There is just over two million additional dollars to ensure core programs and services have sufficient resources to operate, with the majority of these funds targeted at policing and collective bargaining increases. These main estimates also propose \$837,000 to fund initiatives that will enhance and expand service delivery to the residents of the Northwest Territories.

The department's mandate is to ensure all residents have access to justice, including legal aid, the courts and their alternatives. We continue to work to build a system of justice that is open, accessible and responsive to the needs of the people we serve. We support families when they are in conflict or personal crisis and help them as they work toward successful resolutions. The department is also responsible for serving and supporting the administration of the courts.

The bulk of our resources go towards maintaining core programs and services the people of the Northwest Territories rely on. These programs are efficient and effective. We support this Assembly's vision of strong independent people who are safe and secure in both their communities and their homes. We provide safe and secure custody of offenders and community supervision to support rehabilitation and reintegration into communities.

Whether it is a youth in trouble with the law, a victim who has been assaulted, people who need lawyers,

families who need help working through separation or divorce, or an offender who needs the proper supports to make better choices, we are there to assist. As the bulk of our staff are located in regional offices, we are close to the people we serve. However, we don't do this alone. We have strong partnerships with NGOs, community justice committees, community and Aboriginal governments and our colleagues within the GNWT to ensure our services are integrated.

The Department of Justice is just completing the first year of the 10-Year Strategic Plan. This plan established broad strategic directions for the future focus. As a companion document and to increase accountability, in the fall of 2012 I tabled the 5-Year Implementation Strategy outlining specific actions and timelines for the department.

The Department of Justice also provides services to government. These include the provision of legal advice for all departments and legislative drafting, the provision of policy advice and support on ATIPP matters, and the services provided by the Aboriginal consultation unit. While these areas may not be clearly visible to most, they provide the backbone to a strong and effective government and are in addition to our program and service work.

As I have mentioned before, providing these services and programs during times of fiscal restraint remains challenging. The justice system is experiencing pressures similar to those confronting other departments. Socio-economic factors contribute to a crime rate that continues to be the highest in Canada. At a time when resources are limited, it is vital that we not simply react, but take the time to fully investigate and plan for sound policy decisions that are also fiscally responsible.

We are working towards this by proposing investments in areas to support this Assembly's priorities. New in this year's main estimates are resources addressing the impact of resource development:

- The Sahtu is experiencing economic growth due to exploration for oil and gas. Last winter, the justice system experienced a strain on policing resources in both Norman Wells and Tulita during the seismic exploration and preliminary drilling phases.
- We must increase our services in this area, as we know that with additional development of this magnitude comes a requirement to mitigate some of the associated impacts by providing both policing services and services to victims. Accordingly, we have included in this budget an additional \$157,000 for one additional RCMP member and \$90,000 to establish a Victim Services Program, both in Tulita. This additional funding will contribute to our goal of safer communities.

Additionally, we are implementing a program at the South Mackenzie Correctional Centre to provide an alcohol and drug treatment program. At the present time, we are providing a Pre-Treatment Healing Program by a traditional counsellor. By combining this program with specific programming for substance abuse, we expect to see success. Our statistics tell us that the most frequent need for NWT offenders is to address issues associated with abuse and addictions from drugs and alcohol. In this budget, we have identified \$339,000 for this very important program.

The department's programs and services also provide the GNWT with modest revenue of \$14.3 million or 12.3 percent of Justices' expenditure budgets. These revenues are either generated through cost-sharing agreements with the Government of Canada for Access to Justice and Youth Justice Service, Exchange of Services Agreements for housing federal and Nunavut offenders, or through the collection of fees and fines in legal registries and the Territorial and Supreme Courts.

I am optimistic we can work with the budget we have developed. I look forward to continuing to work with Members to make a difference to the people we serve. Thank you for the opportunity to provide an overview on the department's 2013-2014 Main Estimates. I look forward to discussing it with you in more detail. Thank you, Madam Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Bisaro):** Thank you, Minister Abernethy. Minister Abernethy, do you have witnesses that you'd like to bring into the Chamber?

**HON. GLEN ABERNETHY:** I do, Madam Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Bisaro):** Committee agreed?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Bisaro):** Thank you, committee. Sergeant-at-Arms, if you would please escort the witnesses into the Chamber.

Minister Abernethy, please introduce your witnesses to the House, please.

**HON. GLEN ABERNETHY:** Thank you, Madam Chair. On my right I have Sylvia Haener, deputy minister of the Department of Justice; and Kim Schofield, who is the director of finance with the Department of Justice.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Bisaro):** Thank you, Minister Abernethy. Members, we will start with general comments on the Department of Justice.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Detail.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Bisaro):** Are we agreed that we have concluded general comments?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Bisaro):** General comments are concluded. We will defer page 9-7 and go to page 9-8. Justice, information item, infrastructure investment summary, any questions?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Bisaro):** Page 9-9, Justice, information item, revenue summary. Mr. Bromley.

**MR. BROMLEY:** Thank you, Madam Chair. I notice we are a half a million down for youth justice services. I wonder if the Minister could tell me what that's about.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Bisaro):** Thanks, Mr. Bromley. Minister Abernethy.

**HON. GLEN ABERNETHY:** That reduction is a result of a decrease in funding provided by the federal government in that particular program area.

**MR. BROMLEY:** What are we doing about it? Is this just a, sort of, ephemeral program? It seems like a basic program that we want to maintain. Do we have any information? Why is it declining?

**HON. GLEN ABERNETHY:** This reduction is across Canada. It's affecting all jurisdictions. For the specific impact on our programming and what we're doing here in the Government of the Northwest Territories, I'll go to Ms. Schofield.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Bisaro):** Thank you, Mr. Abernethy. Ms. Schofield.

**MS. SCHOFIELD:** Thank you, Madam Chair. There has been no direct impact on the programs provided for youth justice services. It's just a reduction in revenue. So the impact is just to the government as a whole.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Bisaro):** Thank you, Ms. Schofield. Mr. Bromley.

**MR. BROMLEY:** I recognize magic when I see it. I have no further questions.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Bisaro):** Thank you, Mr. Bromley. We are on page 9-9, Justice, information item, revenue summary.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Bisaro):** Page 9-10, Justice, information item, active position summary.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Bisaro):** Page 9-13, Justice, activity summary, services to government, operations expenditure summary, \$10.925 million.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Bisaro):** Page 9-14, Justice, activity summary, services to government, grants and contributions, grants, \$49,000. Mr. Yakeleya.

**MR. YAKELEYA:** Thank you, Madam Chair. I want to ask the Minister of Justice, with the impacts of the Sahtu oil and gas play and the activity that's

happening in our communities, I do appreciate and the people appreciate the additional RCMP and victim services coordinator. Just on the RCMP stats with the activity that's going up and happening in the Sahtu, and I want to be more specific when I ask this to the Minister in regard to the lifting of the rations Norman Wells Liquor Store. Has the RCMP seen an increase in the percentage of criminal activity, crimes with alcohol happening and how steep of a climb has that been since the lifting of the liquor ration in the Sahtu?

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Bisaro):** Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. That is a great question but what page are you on?

**MR. YAKELEYA:** Page 9-16.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Bisaro):** Mr. Yakeleya, we're on page 9-14. Mr. Yakeleya, you can hold your question until we get there. Page 9-14, Justice, activity summary, services to government, grants and contributions, grants, \$49,000.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Bisaro):** Page 9-15, Justice, information item, services to government, active positions.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Bisaro):** Page 9-17, Justice, activity summary, community justice and policing, operations expenditure summary, \$3.837 million. Mr. Bromley.

**MR. BROMLEY:** Thank you, Madam Chair. Could I just get a little reminder of what we're doing in the protection against family violence with that budget? I notice there's a small increase there this year. I know this is recognized as a priority for the government and across many departments. If I can get the Minister to give me some detail or some information on what that is being used for.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Bisaro):** Thank you, Mr. Bromley. Mr. Abernethy.

**HON. GLEN ABERNETHY:** Thank you, Madam Chair. There are a number of things happening in this area. We have a – I'm going to pronounce it poorly and I apologize for that – it's Wekeahkaa: A New Day, which is a healing program which we have available and we're just rolling this out as a pilot right now. We've done some contracting on there. It's for men who have used violence in domestic relationships or other relationships. That's rolling out right away. We continue to have – I've just blanked. I apologize. We have the Wekeahkaa.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Bisaro):** Thank you, Mr. Abernethy. I promise I won't call you a blank later on. Mr. Yakeleya.

**MR. YAKELEYA:** Thank you, Madam Chair. Just a couple of questions here. First, it has to do with the great work the community justice committees are

doing in our communities, and the Minister, again, came into the Sahtu and saw the work that was done and the help that the communities are looking forward to. One of the things that they impressed was the need to get people back on the land and do some reconciliation out there in the healing process. I know the Minister is very keen on this and, again, I just came back from Tulita with the leadership meeting there of the Sahtu. I let the Minister know that Fort Good Hope is wanting to do something there. I hope they get in touch with the staff shortly.

Are we going to see an increase to the community justice in our communities where there's lots of activity and things are happening and the type of work that is going to be needed in the next couple of years?

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Bisaro):** Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Mr. Abernethy.

**HON. GLEN ABERNETHY:** Thank you, Madam Chair. The community justice committees are an incredibly valuable resource that's available in the communities. We provide funding support to the communities. It is limited but the committees have been very creative with what they are able to accomplish with those dollars.

In addition to dollars to support the committee, they can apply for funding to do special activities like on-the-land programs or whatnot. Many, many communities take advantage of that. We don't tell communities what to do. These community justice committees come up with ideas based on what they know about their community, and the people in their communities, and what they think will work.

We would like to see a community justice committee in every community in the Northwest Territories. I continue at every opportunity I get to talk to communities that don't have a community justice committee, and encourage them to put one in place. I direct them to community justice committees where we're having significant success and where we've had really great results. One of them is Deline. Deline has a fantastic community justice committee with real, real talented people doing really creative things. I often refer people to look at what's going on in Deline and see if they can build on their model.

Having said that, we don't have community justice committees in every community. We'd like to. As a result, there's always a little bit of money available that we've been able to roll out towards the end of fiscal years that goes above and beyond what an individual committee can get. That's because we do have some vacancies. We will roll that out. We will make it to communities on an application basis as they see fit to use on these exact programs that you're talking about. We see it as a real valuable service. We get great results from the communities where they are. We would like to see them in more.

Begging committee's indulgence, my brain is no longer blanked. I'd like to go back to a few things on Mr. Bromley's question because I completely lost it halfway through there. It happens.

The Department of Justice completed two projects evaluating protection against family violence legislation, and it's impacted and found that the act is meeting its goals, and increasing awareness and protection. In 2011 the Protection Against Family Violence Act Evaluation Report is available through the Department of Justice website. I think there were a lot of questions raised about that.

The NWT, as you all know, has one of the highest rates of family violence in Canada, and the future health of our territory depends upon successfully addressing some of these violence issues in our homes. The department is focusing on protecting victims and their children, holding violent people accountable for their actions while providing them opportunities for change. We do have emergency protection orders, and there were some concerns about those and some recommendations came forward. We've worked on fixing that, where appropriate, and we're also focused on educating the people who use these tools so that they know when they should be used, and how they should be used and what is appropriate. We also have the Wekeahkaa that we talked about earlier. We have the Domestic Options Court available to us as well. We're always interested in new and creative solutions to help us combat family violence. There's a number of good organizations who have been working on this and they continue to provide us recommendations and, where possible, we look at implementing them to find some of those solutions. I apologize for my earlier blank, but I hope that answers the previous question.

**MR. YAKELEYA:** Maybe I can ask some questions now that the Minister's mind isn't blank anymore. I want to ask the Minister with regard to the justice committees' strategies and philosophy, and Tough on Crime Initiative by the federal government and the way things are looking around the community with regard to what he heard from the Sahtu. Maybe he heard different in the other regions.

Is the department looking at the way restorative justice is looked at, the diversion programs, the restorative justice healing programs, victim services?

I say this, and also with crime prevention, because I'm reading a book for the second time called Return to the Teachings by Rupert Ross, who was an assistant Crown attorney who did some work. He wrote some very good articles and discussions with elders on justice. It was an eye-opening experience for him. He takes it from the point of view of being a non-native, white lawyer going into Aboriginal communities to administer the justice

that we have now and the different philosophies, and the way that the Aboriginal communities look at justice, and how he's looking and saying this makes sense. What we're doing doesn't make sense.

Coming in, getting off the plane, going to the arena, doing our five minutes with the people, going to court, then take off into another community. It's just not making sense. Is there somewhere in the strategy, within the life of this government, the Minister could think of maybe using that one book as a reference and having a strategy for the future? Are we going to continue with what we're doing now and have our community justice play a more prominent role in restorative justice, the diversion programs?

Because we send them here to the North Slave Correctional Centre, we taxpayers are on this table, around this room here, are paying \$106,000 for one person to stay there. We feed them, we clothe them, we keep them warm, we give them a few dollars to make phone calls to home, then we send them out after a year. Have they come out better or worse? Will we see them again?

We have to look at if it's efficient and effective to make a contribution to our community with the people who have done harm to us. Isn't that better than costing us? It may require a little more work, but the elders and the people know that.

We need to work on it. I'm looking for that. We have two more years left in this government. Is the Minister looking at this option here? I think this is the way to go. This means leaving a long-term legacy. We know what it costs us as taxpayers to put these people in our facilities. It's great for the economy in Yellowknife, Hay River and Fort Smith, because we're putting millions of dollars into their economies and putting, what, half a million at least into a region if you want to look at this initiative. I'm looking for that type of thinking moving forward. It will take a while. It will take a long time, but we have to start somewhere. I think that's something I would like to have some discussion come by the Minister saying this is what we're looking at. It might be done in 10 years.

**HON. GLEN ABERNETHY:** I believe that's the direction that we're going and I look forward to the Member sharing that book with me once he's done reading it. We have a 10-year strategic plan and we have a five-year implementation plan, and a lot of it is about prevention, quite frankly. We need to find ways to keep our jails as empty as possible.

We are working on a Community Safety Strategy which we have had a lot of discussion about and a draft strategy has been developed, and we've got a general idea of what it's going to look like and now we're looking at doing some piloting around that. I would be happy, obviously, to talk to committee more about that if they're interested.

Diversions are huge. Diversions could happen at many different levels. The RCMP over the last number of years from 2003, 2004, when we probably had our highest number of diversions, diversion levels have been just plummeting. Since I've become the Minister, and in working with committee, it's become so clear how important these diversions are and that we really need to get back to where we were, because it helps keep people out of our facilities where appropriate. Bad people still are going to need to go to jail when they've done bad things, but we can work with individuals where appropriate.

I am happy to say we will provide committee with more numbers as we roll up at each of the end of the fiscal years, but since '11-12, diversions have gone from a low of under 100 and just above 50, to almost where we were in 2003-2004. Our numbers right now are looking to be just almost 200, which is a significant increase just in the life of this Assembly.

I've had a lot of conversations with the commanding officer at "G" Division. He agrees wholeheartedly that we have to do more diversion. He's making it happen and he wants to see more. He's not happy with just getting back to where we were. He wants to see increases as well.

The community justice committees, we've already talked about how valuable they are. We've got youth justice committees as well. We've got a lot of things where we're getting input from the communities, because that's where the solutions are. This would be something more appropriate for when we get to corrections, but we want to do on-the-land programming, and the Member and I have had a significant number of discussions in the House, and he knows that this department is committed to trying to make that happen. He also knows that we're committed to doing rehabilitation or reintegration programs, and we're starting to have some really great conversations around that.

The types of things the Member is talking about are the things that, I feel, we're pushing hard in this department and we're going to see results, and we're already starting to see results. I thank the Member for his comments, and I look forward to working with him in committee to make these things become a reality.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Bisaro):** Thank you, Minister Abernethy. Committee, we're on page 9-17, Justice, activity summary, community justice and policing, operations expenditure summary, \$3.837 million.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Bisaro):** Thank you, committee. Page 9-18, Justice, activity summary, community justice and policing, grants and contributions, contributions \$2.091 million.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Bisaro):** Page 9-19, Justice, activity summary, community justice and policing, active positions. Any questions?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Bisaro):** Page 9-21, Justice, activity summary, policing services. Mr. Bromley.

**MR. BROMLEY:** I want to use this opportunity to ask for an update from the Minister on, I guess, are we one year yet into our new 20-year contract with the RCMP? I know we've had a lot of discussions about that, leading up to it. It got signed and I, of course, didn't hear about it again, but what are we finding after a year of working under this new agreement?

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Bisaro):** Thank you, Mr. Bromley. Minister Abernethy.

**HON. GLEN ABERNETHY:** Thank you, Madam Chair. Yes, we are one year into this. One thing we've learned is it's expensive, and it will continue to be expensive. We pay 70 percent of all costs associated with the RCMP, and as a result of the contract, we're also paying for the infrastructure as well. The costs have gone up.

The benefits of the contract are, obviously, the different types of relationships that we have with the RCMP. We're still in our first year there, so there are still some growing pains trying to figure out what exactly that means, but we are in a different position as far as providing some administrative direction and setting some priorities. I know the department, senior management and I, as well, meet and talk with the RCMP on a regular basis, and we talk about northern priorities. We've been really pushing, and I'd say thank goodness that the commanding officer, I think, has been pushing as well, for community policing plans, and having a real relationship with the communities. The RCMP and the commanding officer, they've been going into most of the communities on a regular basis. Community policing plan in all 33 communities, which I think is fantastic. We've never had that before to that degree. The RCMP are providing regular reports to community leadership on reported crimes, crime rates, activities that are happening in their communities, so the relationships, I think, are becoming quite positive out there.

There is always going to be money issues and trying to figure out where the money's flowing, and trying to get the priorities where we need them to be, but we're working on it, and I think as we move forward it will become stronger and we'll see more benefits in that area.

We do know, based on conversations that we've had with our partners, that both Nunavut and Yukon are very interested in our policing plans, our

community policing plans and that type of approach. Some of the things that are happening here are starting to get attention in other areas.

**MR. BROMLEY:** Thanks to the Minister for that update. You mentioned the 70 percent. That was true before. The infrastructure, I think there were some changes there. Would that largely explain the more expensive comment?

**HON. GLEN ABERNETHY:** It added to the cost significantly, but also since that time there's been a collective bargaining increase for the RCMP, and there are additional costs. We are also now on the hook for 70 percent of the maintenance and 70 percent of the operation of these buildings, where that wasn't quite the way it was before, so that was an area of increase in the previous budget and it's managed to carry through.

**MR. BROMLEY:** I believe I understood from the Minister's remarks that we have more opportunities for, say, on how things go and where priorities are, although we still have difficulties on where the money gets put, or issues. So after one year, is this a good deal?

**HON. GLEN ABERNETHY:** We work with them to set our yearly priorities and we meet with them on a regular basis to discuss things as they come forward at us. It's more expensive but it is a 20-year agreement, and it also includes a 20-year capital allocation as well, which is spread out over the period of time rather than having one billed at one time and having a giant cheque one year and prices, it's spread over a 20-year plan. It is more expensive. We know that. We have a relationship where we could provide more direction as far as priorities. We don't tell them how to police. They police based on their standards, protocols, practices and all those types of things, but we have a pretty good relationship right now. If you ask me if it's a good deal, it's a lot of money and, obviously, we'd like it cheaper. I think everybody would, but that was the national deal that we were a part of.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Bisaro):** Thank you, Minister Abernethy. Next on the list is Mr. Dolynny.

**MR. DOLYNNY:** Thank you, Madam Chair. Welcome to the Minister and the Justice team here tonight. I've got a number of questions on this page relating to constables. I'll start my questions off with the awareness and the support of recruiting for community constables.

Where are we at with the department? Are there special initiatives that are ongoing and how successful have we been in that area?

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Bisaro):** Thank you, Mr. Dolynny. Minister Abernethy.

**HON. GLEN ABERNETHY:** Thank you, Madam Chair. There are a number of different programs currently provided by the RCMP. There's the

Aboriginal Community Constable Program. In the Northwest Territories we have one person who has successfully completed that program. There's an intake, I believe it just ended actually, for two more positions here in the Northwest Territories. We had a large number of candidates, which I think is fantastic. I've made statements in the House about that program, and I've encouraged Members to work with their communities to identify people. I know that we've got lots of candidates and we've got people, I believe, that have been identified for those two positions. Training starts in June for those two positions.

The RCMP also run a youth cadet-type program, and I actually forget the title of the program right now, but it's for young people who are interested in pursuing RCMP as a career. There are limited seats in that, and in the Northwest Territories the RCMP do a pretty good job of advertising that program. I made a statement here in the House and I encouraged Members to submit names. We had one person go through that program here in the Northwest Territories last year, a young individual from Inuvik. We've heard that it was quite successful. The person really appreciated their experience and the opportunities, and we're hoping that we'll see that person in the RCMP someday. Who knows, but that's certainly a hope.

The RCMP continues to recruit. They continue to look for members. We look for any opportunity we can to enhance Northerners in policing.

**MR. DOLYNNY:** Madam Chair, I appreciate the Minister going into detail on that here. The Minister, myself, and members of Justice were at the policing symposium, I believe in 2012. I appreciate the Minister having members accompany him with opportunities like that. One of the things that was discovered during the presentations was the State of Alaska has very similar situations that we have, in terms of communities that do not have state troopers, whereas we also have a lot of communities that do not have RCMP presence. They use a body called a village public safety officer, or VPSO.

I know, in discussing this with the Minister then and the deputy minister at the symposium, the possibilities of this being somewhat of an opportunity for the Northwest Territories to look at a hybrid version of what is truly a successful program in Alaska. Can the Minister comment on it? Has he made any strides as to investigate this as a potential? If he can offer that to the committee. Thank you.

**HON. GLEN ABERNETHY:** Madam Chair, the department has followed up on the program. There are some challenges. Just as a note, it is very similar to the Aboriginal Community Constable Program. There are some differences here in the Northwest Territories. We don't have a policing act,

so having stand-alone police-type professionals in a community that weren't under the employment or under the designation of the RCMP would be complicated because of the lack of a policing act. The program had some positive aspects, but there would also be some challenges given our radically different models of policing in Canada compared to the United States.

We are right now working with Aurora College and some Aboriginal governments and some other groups on looking at a program that we might be able to deliver through Aurora College that would give people some, not policing skills, but some justice training that they might be able to parlay into different areas, be it courts, be it corrections, or if they're interested in going in the RCMP it would give them some skills and some knowledge that would help them in their application process. We're looking at that as an option to help train people.

For now, the one that we know works is the Aboriginal Community Policing Program. We continue to encourage the RCMP federally to consider creating more seats there for us. We have two right now, but we will continue to push because our success on that program is quite impressive.

**MR. DOLYNNY:** Madam Chair, my next question has to do with trends. Can the Minister elaborate, with his contacts with RCMP, are we seeing any trends in the Northwest Territories that residents should be alarmed? I'm thinking of things like potentially weapons offences, maybe bootlegging, these types of things. Are we seeing any large trends with RCMP involvement in our communities?

**HON. GLEN ABERNETHY:** Family violence continues to be an issue in the Northwest Territories. It's recognized by the RCMP, it's recognized by departments, it's recognized by the health care system, and I think it's recognized, clearly, by Members of this House. But it continues to be a challenge and is something that needs additional work. Alcohol abuse, I've talked to RCMP detachment commanders that talk to the commanding officer. They all say, not all, but a significant amount of crime that is happening in the small communities is alcohol related.

**MR. DOLYNNY:** Madam Chair, I have no further questions.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Bisaro):** Thank you, Mr. Dolyunny. Next on my list is Mr. Blake.

**MR. BLAKE:** Madam Chair, I just have a couple of short questions. I would just like to congratulate the department on putting in an additional RCMP member in Tulita. When will the community of Tsiigehtchic actually see at least one member in the community? Thank you, Madam Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Bisaro):** Thank you, Mr. Blake. Minister Abernethy.

**HON. GLEN ABERNETHY:** Thank you, Madam Chair. Currently there is, I believe it was back in 2009ish, an extra position was actually created in Fort McPherson to cover Tsiigehtchic. That position is intended to go into Tsiigehtchic on a regular basis. I understand that we had a community policing plan in place with that community and it hasn't worked out exactly as the community and the RCMP have planned. I have talked to the commanding officer. The commanding officer is going to Tsiigehtchic on April 9<sup>th</sup> to meet with the community leadership to discuss the community policing plan that was in place and try to find some ways to get the coverage that the community members are expecting based on the fact that we have that position in Fort McPherson to provide services to Tsiigehtchic.

As far as a stand-alone detachment and a stand-alone officer in that community, we can't have one-member detachments in communities. There are protocols in place that actually limit that from happening. But we would like to work on some creative solutions to ensure that we have somebody in there as often as we can, not just to arrest people but to provide community education, youth education, work with community members on different types of programming. We would like to work with them to make that happen.

**MR. BLAKE:** Madam Chair, our goal for the 17<sup>th</sup> Assembly is to actually have safer communities. We are just not seeing that happen in Tsiigehtchic. The people there don't feel safe. A good example is if the community experiences a shutdown at the school, which I'm glad that we haven't yet, but I'm just thinking of their response time that those students would face having to wait anywhere up to two hours for a response from Fort McPherson. Will the Minister look at having a community constable in the community of Tsiigehtchic? Thank you, Madam Chair.

**HON. GLEN ABERNETHY:** Madam Chair, the Aboriginal community constable like the one we have in Hay River, they are still RCMP members with a particular focus. We would have the same difficulty putting an Aboriginal community constable in that community without backup. There are requirements to have legal backup in case of a complicated situation or when dangerous situations arise.

We are open to creative solutions for the community. I think the meeting that is going to happen on April 9<sup>th</sup> can be productive. We and the RCMP are very interested in working with the community to find some real solutions. We as a government are focused on safer communities, which is why using programs that we have in place like the Community Justice Committee, Youth Justice Committees, some of the things like Not Us!



Campaign, we can make, with community direction, positive results in communities.

The reports out of Tsiigehtchic tend to be quite low. If they are going up, we should have that discussion, but over time, the amount of calls compared to some other places is pretty low. I recognize what the Member is saying. Work is needed. We are happy to work together to find some solutions.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Bisaro):** Thank you, Mr. Abernethy. Mr. Yakeleya, did you have a question on this page?

**MR. YAKELEYA:** Madam Chair, 6-20?

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Bisaro):** Yes, we are on page 6-21, Mr. Yakeleya.

**MR. YAKELEYA:** Madam Chair, the crime stats with the alcohol in the Sahtu in the last year, I want to ask the Minister. I appreciate that Tulita is going to get an extra RCMP and they are going to get a victims crime service worker. I've talked to some of the RCMP members. They are pretty well worked. They certainly provide, from eye-witness accounts and speaking to them, there is a lot of business. It is pretty heavy. They are doing a good job with the resources they have. I want to ask the Minister, in his analysis, research, has the Minister seen an increase with the crimes associated with alcohol abuse or alcohol. Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Bisaro):** Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Minister Abernethy.

**HON. GLEN ABERNETHY:** Thank you, Madam Chair. In the Sahtu, from 2011 to 2012 there was a noticeable increase in activity in the Sahtu. I don't have the statistics in saying how many of them were alcohol related, but it's interesting that the increase comes at a time of two things happening in the Sahtu. One, the increased activity, which can be significant, and the other being the changes in the rules around the Norman Wells liquor store. Those two things both happened roughly at the same time, so it's hard to truly quantify what the increased rate in crime is. We feel that much of it is probably related to the activity and the money that's available in the communities, which is one of the reasons that we have decided to put an additional officer in Tulita.

We need to work with communities. We've got community policing plans, which we think are fantastic, but people have to take some personal responsibility and work with the RCMP and help us identify when people are bringing alcohol or other substances into the communities. People have to be willing to talk to the RCMP so that they know when it's coming in so that they can intercept. We have been having some pretty good luck this year. I've shared with the Member a significant amount of photos and reports on the amount of booze that's been confiscated and kept off the streets in the

Sahtu region and I think some of that is as a result of community people taking some responsibility and involving themselves in the solution, and we need to see more of that.

**MR. YAKELEYA:** I also have some information, as I indicated, that the increase of liquor sales from the Minister of Finance, or the liquor revenue commission report shows an increase of liquor sales in the Sahtu. Combine that with the activity that's happening in the Sahtu, the amount of people coming in and the lifting of the liquor store rations are significant contributing factors to the crime associated with alcohol.

Any newspaper in the Northwest Territories, you look at it and you always say, the amount of crimes with liquor is high, 85 percent or higher, or drugs. So that tells me something. So I'm really happy the Minister is responding with extra RCMP. I can work on the other stuff later on, but I wanted to tell the Minister I'm happy. In talking to the Members, it's good to have additional support. Even in Tulita it would be nice to have a steno working in the office. We're talking to the members and they're busy. They've got to answer the phone and they've got to be nice after 13- or 14-hour shifts and then they've got to write up their reports. So we need some administrative support for them because it's going to get incredibly busy and the Minister knows. He's travelled with me in the Sahtu and we certainly appreciate that, what he heard and how he communicated with the people, and this is only the beginning.

So I want to leave it at that, and I look forward to continuing to work with the Minister on different types of options that we can have for Colville Lake. It's unacceptable in this day and age to have 11 or 12 communities without RCMP members. So I look forward to the federal government to come up with some funding because our communities do not have RCMP members, and I will continue with the Minister to work on these types of initiatives. Safety first, safety first, safety first. I think I can get that through to the government and we could make a significant amount of progress if we were to establish an RCMP in our communities that do not have an RCMP. So I'll save the rest for my Member's statement and I'll continue consistently to put up my little sign and say more RCMP in the communities without RCMP. We should not be any different. We need equalization.

That's what I'm going to say and I want to thank the Minister for taking his time out and travelling with me in the Sahtu. We appreciate that. We appreciate the government coming along with Minister Ramsay. Other Ministers have come, and I'm hoping the other ones are planning to come. People want to see you in the region. They want to see our Premier, they want to see other people in our region. That's what it's all about in this government.

So I'll save the rest for my Member's statement, Madam Chair. Thank you very much.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Bisaro):** Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Did you wish to comment, Minister?

**HON. GLEN ABERNETHY:** Thank you, Madam Chair. Noted, and we look forward to working with the Member, with committee, with communities and with the RCMP to find solutions to these issues as we move forward.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Bisaro):** Thank you, Minister Abernethy. Committee, we're on page 9-21, Justice, activity summary, policing services, operations expenditure summary, \$40.856 million.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Bisaro):** Page 9-23, Justice, activity summary, legal aid services, operations expenditure summary, \$6.141 million.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Bisaro):** Thank you, committee. Page 9-24, Justice, information item, legal aid services, active positions. Questions?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Bisaro):** Page 9-27, Justice, activity summary, court services, operations expenditure summary, Mr. Bromley.

**MR. BROMLEY:** Thank you, Madam Chair. I just want to follow-up with the Minister a little bit on the wellness court, the mental health court. Obviously, the Minister remembers passing a motion in the House for a mental health court in the 16<sup>th</sup> Assembly and we were led, by the Minister of Justice at that time, to understand work was underway. Now again we've passed a similar motion in the House and work is underway again here. My understanding is that a feasibility study will be completed this 31<sup>st</sup>, March. I'd like to know is this done in concert with Health and Social Services and will it provide direction should the conclusion be approved to put in place a court, will it provide direction on what's required to put such a court in place? Mahsi.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Bisaro):** Thanks, Mr. Bromley. Minister Abernethy.

**HON. GLEN ABERNETHY:** Thank you, Madam Chair. The feasibility study is scheduled to be completed by March 31<sup>st</sup>. I've had discussions about the early draft that's out there that's within the department being worked on by the committee, which includes Health and Social Services, Justice and Education, Culture and Employment are also participating. I'm really close to taking that to Cabinet. Once it's gone through Cabinet we'll be bringing it to committee for discussion and about how we move forward, and the exact things the Member is talking about is the discussion we're going to have to have once we've got all the

information in front of people and how we're going to move forward, which model we're going to choose and how we're going to do that over the '14-15 business planning so that we have something ready for the next time we're sitting here.

**MR. BROMLEY:** Thank you. Obviously, the Minister has a different time frame in mind than I do, but I'm not going to go there. Has this work been done internally or is it through contract work, the feasibility study? Thank you.

**HON. GLEN ABERNETHY:** It's been done with the committee internally. It's several different departments led by the Department of Justice. We have had an opportunity to look at models in different jurisdictions, learn about those models, get as much information as we can, look at what capacity may exist in the Northwest Territories, where we might have some complications, where we will need to do additional work to make this a reality in-house.

**MR. BROMLEY:** Thank you and that's great. I like to hear that. So what jurisdictions have found these courts to be not very good and tossed them out? Thank you.

**HON. GLEN ABERNETHY:** None that I am aware of. They've had challenges. They've all experienced some degree of growing pains as they're making these things become a reality and we're trying to learn what some of those challenges were for them so that we don't have to live through the same types of pains should we choose to accept the model. I will point out that I would say there's no two models that are the same out there and we, as a territory, I think we say it over and over again, we're unique in many ways. So we want to make sure that the model that is applied here works for here. So we want to learn from the challenges that others have experienced.

**MR. BROMLEY:** That sounds like a wise course, they learned by doing it, and that's what I want to see. So if the Minister had the resources, would he get going earlier? Sorry, I withdraw that, hypothetical. I'll leave it at that, Madam Chair. Thank you.

**HON. GLEN ABERNETHY:** We're doing the work; we will come to committee. With committee, we will talk about how to move forward. We will get something done in the Government of the Northwest Territories.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Bisaro):** Thank you, Mr. Abernethy. Mr. Bromley has no further questions. Page 9-27, Justice, activity summary, court services, operations expenditure summary, \$11.803 million.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Bisaro):** Page 9-28, Justice, information item, court services, active positions.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Bisaro):** Page 9-31, Justice, activity summary, corrections, operations expenditure summary, \$38.169 million. Mr. Dolynny.

**MR. DOLYNNY:** Thank you, Madam Chair. My questions have to do with the increased claims growth of WSCC claims for injured workers which, I believe, corrections is causing some quite alarming statistics, especially in the last two years. Can the Minister indicate what provisions we're using or doing as a department to reduce the amount of claims growth in this area?

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Bisaro):** Thank you, Mr. Dolynny. Mr. Abernethy.

**HON. GLEN ABERNETHY:** Thank you, Madam Chair. The Department of Justice was one of the three highest on claims history over the last couple of years. I will say, for the record, that the department is committed to workplace health and safety. In fact, over the last year we had dedicated a senior management position to do some analysis and put some plans in place within the department so that we can see a real reduction in claims in the Department of Justice. In particular, in our facilities where we're seeing the incidents occur. Since 2010 we have seen a 36 percent reduction in the number of Justice WSCC claims as a percentage of all GNWT claims has been achieved. Reductions in WSCC late filing penalty numbers and claims in the number of claims as a percentage of all GNWT claims were realized for 2011.

In short, we are seeing some significant reductions in the Department of Justice in this area. We would like to get those even lower and we are going to continue to do the work. We're going to continue to work with corrections officers and corrections staff to help identify areas where people are getting injured and eliminating those opportunities for injury, if you will. Significant improvement in this area.

**MR. DOLYNNY:** I'm looking forward to seeing the results and statistics to validate the significant improvement that we're hearing from the Minister. We'll find out at year-end whether or not that is entirely accurate. What I heard from the Minister today is that we've got plans in place. It sounds like they've hired a personnel officer to oversee some of the changes that are imminent in that department. Yet I didn't hear about any new safety program initiatives to make the workplace safer. Can the Minister elaborate what safety programs the department is involved with to make the workplace a safer place?

**HON. GLEN ABERNETHY:** As I indicated, we have pulled off a director position to actually do some analysis and start working with corrections to identify means by which we can help the people be

more aware of workplace injury, how people can be more aware of ways to avoid workplace injury. The WSCC has a number of courses and staff within the facilities, and the government as a whole have been taking advantage of these courses. We've done some worksite assessments on the sites themselves to see if there's anything about the sites themselves that are causing or leading more people to be more prone to injury, and eliminating some of those where possible. I can go to the deputy minister for a few more specifics.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Bisaro):** Thank you, Mr. Abernethy. Ms. Haener.

**MS. HAENER:** Thank you, Madam Chair. As you can appreciate, corrections is a difficult environment in which people work. There can be, at times, altercations between staff and inmates. On an ongoing basis we ensure that corrections officers and staff working in the facility have training to ensure they can function in as safe a manner as possible. That includes de-escalation techniques, it includes being able to engage with inmates in an effective manner and in a safe manner. We also have a number of newer things that we are engaged in. The Minister has mentioned some of them. We ensure that staff have appropriate orientations and understand safety procedures in the facility. We make sure that we're up to date on items like fire drills, fire safety and those kinds of standard processes.

We have made sure that all of the occupational health and safety committees are active and that staff are aware of what's taking place in those committees. The information is disseminated to staff. We also are making sure we are well aligned with the Safe Advantage Program. We are considering other processes that include looking at the trends we have around injuries and accidents in our workplaces, and working with WSCC to put into place further training and programs to reduce those accidents. If we're seeing a high frequency of accidents, for example, related to falls in the workplace or sprains, then we would bring the WSCC in to help deliver training to staff on those issues. As well, we would be very focused with the particular staff who have had those injuries to work with them one on one to determine what we can do to reduce recurrence of those types of incidents.

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Bisaro):** Thank you, Ms. Haener. Mr. Dolynny.

**MR. DOLYNNY:** I appreciate the deputy minister's detail on that. One of my last questions here is, these trends that we're seeing in injury, is this across the board in our corrections facilities or are we seeing certain corrections facilities with higher trends in injuries?

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Bisaro):** Thank you, Mr. Dolynny. Mr. Abernethy.

**HON. GLEN ABERNETHY:** The numbers might suggest that North Slave Correctional Facility is higher, but it's also the largest number of staff. We don't have the detail broken out whether, trending-wise, one facility's got higher incidents than others, but we will look and see what we can pull out to see if we can actually pull out that data. I will say that most of the injuries in our facilities are under the categories of sprain, strain and tears.

**MR. DOLYNNY:** No further questions but I would like to report progress.

---Carried

**CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Bisaro):** I will now rise and report progress. Mr. Abernethy, thank you. Witnesses, thank you very much for your attendance. Sergeant-at-Arms, if you would please escort the witnesses from the Chamber.

### Report of Committee of the Whole

**MR. SPEAKER:** Good evening, colleagues. Can I have the report of Committee of the Whole, Ms. Bisaro.

**MS. BISARO:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Your committee has been considering Tabled Document 9-17(4), NWT Main Estimates, 2013-2014, and would like to report progress. Mr. Speaker, I move that the report of Committee of the Whole be concurred with.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. A motion is on the floor. Do we have a seconder? The seconder is Mr. Beaulieu.

---Carried

**MR. SPEAKER:** Item 22, third reading of bills. Mr. Clerk, orders of the day.

### Orders of the Day

**DEPUTY CLERK OF COMMITTEES (Mr. Schauerte):** Mr. Speaker, there will be a meeting of the Priorities and Planning committee at adjournment today.

Orders of the day for Thursday, March 7, 2013, 1:30 p.m.:

1. Prayer
2. Ministers' Statements
3. Members' Statements
4. Reports of Standing and Special Committees
5. Returns to Oral Questions
6. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery
7. Acknowledgements
8. Oral Questions
9. Written Questions

10. Returns to Written Questions
11. Replies to Opening Address
12. Petitions
13. Reports of Committees on the Review of Bills
14. Tabling of Documents
15. Notices of Motion
16. Notices of Motion for First Reading of Bills
17. Motions
18. First Reading of Bills
19. Second Reading of Bills
20. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters
  - Tabled Document 9-17(4), NWT Main Estimates, 2013-2014
  - Bill 1, Tliche Statutes Amendment Act
21. Report of Committee of the Whole
22. Third Reading of Bills
23. Orders of the Day

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Clerk. Accordingly, this House stands adjourned until Thursday, March 7<sup>th</sup>, at 1:30 p.m.

---ADJOURNMENT

The House adjourned at 6:03 p.m.