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The Honourable Jackie Jacobson, Speaker

Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories

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YELLOWKNIFE, NORTHWEST TERRITORIES**Monday, March 3, 2014****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. Before we get start today, I'd like to wish R.C. McLeod a happy birthday today.

---Applause

Item 2, Ministers' statements. The honourable Minister of Health and Social Services, Mr. Abernethy.

Ministers' Statements**MINISTER'S STATEMENT 49-17(5):
ELECTRONIC MEDICAL RECORDS**

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Mr. Speaker, we are transforming the way we use technology to deliver health care to our residents. People all over the world use secure, accessible technology for banking or to connect with their friends and family. Now we can use it to improve access to health services and provide better care to our residents.

We are moving from paper records to digital charts to create electronic medical records, often referred to as an EMR. This is an electronic version of a paper chart that contains a patient's medical history and primary care information. It will be implemented over the next several years and will be used territory-wide.

Paper records in clinics and community health centres present many challenges to our health care providers, such as not having access to their patient's important medical information to provide safe and effective treatment. This is especially true if the patient has moved from community to community.

Electronic medical records will improve patient care and safety. Information is typed, making it much easier to read than handwritten paper charts. This helps to reduce misinterpretation of clinical information such as medication and dosage.

Mr. Speaker, the new electronic system will better protect patient information. Unlike in a paper file, health care providers only have access to the types of information they need to treat the patient.

Rigorous quality assurance processes are in place to protect patient confidentiality, including password protection and a daily audit function. The EMR has other uses. It can provide reminders, for example flagging for a doctor or nurse when a patient needs a critical test to manage a chronic disease, and it can allow a team of health care workers to provide appropriate care. This will reduce duplicate lab tests and reduce the risk of allergy or drug interactions.

Dr. Ewan Affleck of the Yellowknife Health and Social Services Authority has been a champion of electronic medical records, and was recently awarded the Order of Canada for his commitment to improving health care services in northern communities.

---Applause

He calls the EMR "a patient-centred charting tool that will promote the quality of care of each resident of the Northwest Territories."

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased that the main estimates includes more than \$2 million to put in place the foundation that will allow us to roll out the EMR, including bringing more health and social services authorities into the government's shared technology service centre. We will provide better and safer patient care by supporting a team of authorized health care providers at different locations to care for the patient and increase the security of medical information.

The EMR roll out will continue in the coming fiscal year with implementation in the Hay River, Stanton, Fort Smith and Sahtu health and social services authorities. The following year the remaining sites will be implemented, including Beaufort-Delta, Dehcho and Tlicho.

Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased with the progress in moving this important initiative forward, and I encourage all Members and residents to visit the website betterhealthtogether.ca to learn more about the advantages of moving to a digital system. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Members' Statements

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON CONDOLENCES ON THE PASSING OF NAHENDEH RESIDENT SARAH HARDISTY

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I rise this afternoon to commemorate the life and work of the late Sarah Hardisty, a well-respected Aboriginal elder and respected artist of Jean Marie River.

On a special note, she created the band of porcupine quill work that adorns our own territorial Mace.

Sarah Hardisty was born in Jean Marie River in July 1924 when the community was little more than a summer gathering place. Her family lived a traditional life, spending summers in Jean Marie and winters at Fish Lake. Although Sarah recalls many hardships, she fondly recalled a much simpler time and lifestyle.

Sarah married William Hardisty in 1941 and they had 12 children, four of whom have since passed on. When her husband passed away in 1961, she was left to raise eight children. With no formal education or social assistance, she drew strength from her faith, her community and had sheer determination to provide for her family.

Like many Dene women of her generation, Sarah began sewing when she was nine. She could prepare and tan a moosehide by the time she was 12. Sarah's income was from selling moccasins and other traditional clothing she handmade. She quickly gained a reputation of being one of the best sewers in the region with porcupine quill work being her expertise.

Sarah was a testament to the traditional Dene woman. She touched many lives and inspired many women with her humour, soft-spoken words and wisdom while she was working with them.

Sarah taught workshops and sewing classes at the Jean Marie River school. She loved to travel and demonstrate her quill work in New Mexico, Washington and Arizona.

During the 1970s Sarah belonged to the Jean Marie River Native Arts Group that exhibited their traditional arts in places as far away as Toronto. Among her proudest achievements was making a traditional Dene outfit for the Museum of Civilization in Ottawa in 1988 and stitching a porcupine quill territorial crest out of moosehide that was presented to Queen Elizabeth at the Royal Visit in 1994.

Sarah received various awards over the years and most recently the Queen's Diamond Jubilee Medallion presented at a ceremony in Jean Marie River last year in recognition of her outstanding contribution to Aboriginal arts and culture.

In a sad turn of events, Sarah passed away February 9th. She is survived by her children, numerous grandchildren, great-grandchildren, great-great-grandchildren, countless relatives and friends who cherished her hard work and a place she continues to hold in each of our lives.

On behalf of her family who call her "Ama," she will be greatly missed. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON PUBLIC SERVICE HUMAN RESOURCE ISSUES

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to talk about an issue that we, as MLAs, hear about on a very regular basis, and that is sometimes there are issues in our public service.

Mr. Speaker, we have a very large public service for a jurisdiction this size. We heard questions in this House last week about the Safe Disclosure Act and how if employees have problems in the workplace, they can use this as a vehicle to express concern. However, we also heard from the Minister that not one issue has ever been raised through this vehicle.

The Department of Human Resources has been before us in Committee of the Whole and they have shared with us the evolving revolving door, so to speak, on the issue of staffing levels and staffing needs. The Union of Northern Workers, who represents most of our public service, does have a role to play in bringing certain types of concerns, but my concern is that there are divisions, activities, secretariats, different compartments of people within activities of the government where, through changes, whether it's consolidation or decentralization, shared services is a perfect example where certain activities like procurement and finance are being consolidated under one roof.

There are all these things going on and some of our departments are large. We know that Ministers cannot delve into personnel issues and ultimately, I would suspect that it is the deputy minister who is responsible for ensuring staffing levels are what they should be and everything is working well in every shop and every office in every institution of our government.

I think that's a very, very tall order. I think we need – this is my idea, I have an idea for you – some form of an agency, a person, a team or something that can go in, that have the people skills and knowledge of human resources, and hear what some of those issues are and report back to the head of that department and tell them what their recommendations are.

I don't know if that person or team would be out of the Department of Human Resources, if it would be

out of the program review office we've heard about, but I believe there is a need in our government to assess this. I think there are some troubled areas from time to time, as there would be in an organization of 5,500 public servants, and I'm not saying this as a slight against anybody, but I think there are often needs that need to be assessed and we need some troubleshooting in this area.

I will have questions later today. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON HAY RIVER WINTER CELEBRATION AND RECREATIONAL EVENTS

MR. BOUCHARD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's the beginning of March, March Madness. This weekend I was able to go back home and partake in several of the events. Kamba Carnival, our big annual spring carnival, took place with lots of dog races, pancake breakfasts, talent shows and many other different types of games.

The weekend also involved a novice hockey tournament and the third leg of the Hay River snowmobile races that have been going on the circuit.

I would like to thank all those volunteers who helped out in this busy weekend in Hay River. This is a very valuable thing to Hay River, this type of activity. We would like to thank all of those people that travelled in on the winter roads, from northern Alberta and from all over the country to attend many of these events.

March Madness includes next weekend. Polar Pond Hockey will be out on the 10 rinks on the river, in the outdoors. They were busy this weekend putting the rinks together, flooding the ice and getting ready for the big hockey games next weekend. There are still a few spots open. If you have a four-person team, sign up as soon as you can.

March Madness will continue on March 15th to the 23rd. Many of our young athletes will be going to Fairbanks, Alaska, for the Arctic Winter Games, and some of us will be joining them, and hopefully they bring back a whole bunch of gold ulus and a whole bunch of ulus period.

Obviously, the last weekend in Hay River we have an event that's called the Ptub Races and cross-country skiers will be out there competing. So, we look forward to the March Madness. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Bouchard. Member for Range Lake, Mr. Dolynny.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON FINANCIAL INCENTIVES AND STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

MR. DOLYNNY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Last November when the tabled report on Education Renewal and Innovation Framework was originally discussed, the most alarming statistic for me was our truancy rates in the Northwest Territories. This statistical failure, coupled with our students' low test scores and literacy rates were echoed by many in this room.

The truancy statistic that I couldn't shake was that by Grade 4 the average NWT student has already missed half a year of school, or two full years by Grade 10. I mean, how do you begin to tackle the biggest elephant in this territory?

My search for answers did not come up with much success in Canada; in fact, even broadening my search yielded very little in terms of tangible solutions, other than more theories. However, I did stumble by chance on an economic paper by one Roland Fryer that talked about what economists were learning about Pay-4-Performance with students. In fact, this was a bona fide 40,000 student study in 261 schools in Greater Washington, DC, New York, Chicago and Dallas area where researchers gave \$6.3 million in rewards to schools.

What did these policy-makers, economists and researchers discover in these controlled experiments? For one, incentives for output did not increase achievement. That is, the study showed paying students directly to get higher test scores failed to yield results. However, paying students to read books yielded a large and statistical increase in reading comprehension.

Second, and speaking to our NWT truancy rates, they found students improved their test scores when they were focused on improving the input to achievements such as attendance and behaviour.

Yes, I know, it's always a bit risky to lean too much in any one study, even though this case study was controlled and randomized. So is there an application for the NWT to learn from? Seriously, if this controlled study concluded that by paying students to read books, come to school daily, sit in class and without causing a ruckus and other so-called input, all this showed a higher yield on test scores, then what is the risk in the NWT to repeat the parameters of this study?

This is the only gold standard study that tested assumptions of financial incentives for student achievement, to my knowledge, yet this has had policy-makers south of the border at least pause and consider such options. Even the Auditor General of Canada reminds us that change starts with the right framework which is measured by the right investment.

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

---Unanimous consent granted

MR. DOLYNNY: Again, I bring today a study that is thus far singular in design, yet I know the policy climate in the NWT is in dire need of change. So if writing cheques or giving out iTunes cards will improve NWT student attendance and behaviour, then I for one welcome that at least we investigate this option. Thank you.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON ALBERTA ENERGY REGULATOR

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Recently the Premier announced that the Alberta Energy Regulator has been chosen to provide expert advice to our new oil and gas regulator, noting, "This model was arrived at by careful review and consideration of several possible models." I would very much like to see the report that Cabinet considered on this.

Since then, I have received many expressions of dismay from the public at the intent to use the Alberta regulator; with some saying they felt sick to their stomach at this choice. They provide me with a little review and consideration of their own.

Here are some highlights from the report they provided me released last July, assessing Alberta's regulation and monitoring of oil and gas activity. Lead author Dr. Timoney says, "Examination of the records in the Alberta Government's Environmental Monitoring System demonstrates a legacy of over 9,000 environmental instances from 1996 to 2012, while environmental legislation remained virtually unenforced. Over 4,000 of the incidents were violations of Alberta's environmental laws and regulations," and incidentally, records for the previous 29 years were completely missing.

Minister Ramsay said he took some issue over my concern about the Alberta regulator, and that "they have the technical and professional expertise," from Hansard. In fact, the report revealed that Alberta has a dismal enforcement rate of 0.9 percent, 17 times lower than the U.S. With that expert advice, we will enforce our own rules in less than one of 100 violations.

Here are a few more conclusions in the report to be tabled later today. "A recurrent feature of the incidents is that the volume, duration and chemical composition of the releases in the air, and spills, leaks and discharges to land or water are unspecified or unknown. This lack of basic data limits the ability to understand the industrial impacts and represents a significant deficiency in government and industrial monitoring," and, "The contraventions were chronic and repetitive and

indicated little progress towards better management practices." Finally, "Industrial self-reporting as the foundation of the environmental record, both on the part of Alberta government and the Alberta Energy Regulator, fails the test of openness and transparency that are essential to good governance."

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

---Unanimous consent granted

MR. BROMLEY: On Thursday we heard in the ITI Minister's statement detailing the support and subsidies that ITI will provide for the fossil fuel industry. I must observe, once again, there is a clear conflict of interest putting the government cheerleader of this industry in the position of its regulator. Devolution could indeed be great, but I already feel our credibility slipping and public confidence draining away. Mahsi.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON PUBLIC DISCLOSURE OF SENIOR MANAGEMENT SALARIES

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to return to the subject of disclosure of public sector salaries. The many jurisdictions I have talked about in this House do publish their public service salaries, and believe it or not, as of last Friday the Mackenzie Valley Review Board has finally stepped up to the plate to show some leadership in this territory by publicizing what they pay their chair and their board members. It's true, public disclosure is what the public wants to find out where their money is going.

As I've previously stated, provinces like New Brunswick publicize their salary ranges, Nova Scotia publicizes their salary ranges, Ontario does it and even Ontario puts it on a website that's easily accessible by all their citizens. Even anyone from the Northwest Territories can click away.

Manitoba has the courage to be honest with their citizens and even British Columbia goes out of their way and says this is what's important to do, but in the Northwest Territories we hide behind, saying, oh my goodness, it's confidential. In those salary disclosures, a lot of times they spell out the employee, the position, the location that they work, so are they assuming people in those six provinces out of 10 cannot read and wouldn't understand that information? Are they assuming people don't care where their tax dollars go? Are they assuming wrongly? I think so.

It's time this territorial government starts to follow the lead of what the Mackenzie Valley Review Board has just done. It may not be perfect, but my goodness, it is a true step in accountability of where

the public's money is going. Now, of course, they spent a lot of money on honoraria, but that's not the point. The point is people know where their money's going and let them be the judge individually if they feel it appropriately spent.

As I had said, and continue to say, six out of 10 provinces do this. It's time to stop hiding behind mercurial defences as to why we can't do something. It's time to find a way to say how we can do it and achieve this accountability. We will not be able to pry this out of the Ministers because they'll say, oh, we cannot do that, but I believe last session I tabled an experience, if not a crystal clear example, of the Government of the Northwest Territories tabling or publicizing in the Northern News Services, a few years ago, employee salaries. I think that the amount that I tabled was almost seven pages of facts and figures.

In short, I will be coming back to the Minister of Human Resources to talk about how we can show some leadership on this and shed some light finally, once and for all.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. The Member for Sahtu, Mr. Yakeleya.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON TOUR OF CONOCO AND HUSKY LEASE SITES

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Over the weekend I had the opportunity to take a tour to the Conoco lease and the Husky lease up in the Sahtu region. Certainly I took the two days in to look at the whole operation, check out the operation in terms of the campsites, the workers, the oil and gas drilling activities.

When I went to Conoco's lease, I saw a lot of young people working there, young people that were quite happy. They were talking about their work and it's something they look forward to, getting up and going to work rather than sitting back in the communities and doing nothing. They are looking forward to some opportunities. One of the things they were talking about is the types of training opportunities that are there for them. Things are moving quite quickly and that they need some training to build capacity.

As soon as I went into the Husky lease, too, I also talked to some of the people there and that they were looking for some training opportunities, training that is going to be needed in the Sahtu region. I talked to them. Also, they were very, very happy to get up, go to work, get a paycheque after two weeks. One of the things I asked them was how it was to work in these camps. How is it to work out here? Basically, they all said it was okay. The food is good. The paycheques are good, and they like getting up early and working 12 hour days. They said that they were quite happy with what's happening out there, and the companies were

treating them well and that they had the opportunity to work.

I ran into these young people on these tours, and actually, there was a young woman who was driving one of the big trucks hauling gravel, young people working in the kitchen, young people working in security, young people monitoring the road for wildlife. Things are happening in the region. I want to ask the Minister of ITI with regard to the Sahtu oil and gas training needs assessment once the appropriate time comes.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. The Member for Frame Lake, Ms. Bisaro.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON FAMILY VIOLENCE

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Family violence in the NWT is recognized as a problem, but do we really do enough to address it? Violence against women in the NWT is nine times greater than the national average. Several years ago the local YWCA developed and ran a project to look at ways to develop approaches and programs for addressing violence against women. It was a three-year project "to develop and pilot safety options for women fleeing violence in NWT communities without a local RCMP detachment." That project proved very successful and it provided great insight into the environment in the NWT within which violence against women occurs. A report was prepared at the end of the three-year project and it is titled "Safety in Small Communities," and I'd like to share some of the findings from that report with you.

First, and perhaps most importantly, in the NWT we have an environment of fear and oppression around family violence. Family violence is still kept secret. There's rampant fear to talk about it in small communities. There's a lack of trusted supports for women, people they can talk to and be supported by.

Second, there's a huge need in small communities for healing activities and greater supports, especially for women in communities where there is no RCMP presence and no informal supports from their peers. There must be an increase in capacity to effectively provide women with safety in their community. As well, women and families must be empowered to work to help their community become safe. These very valuable learnings are too many to mention. I've only highlighted a few of them today.

To conclude, I want to say that empowering people is a lengthy process that must be sustained over a long period of time and it requires funding to do so. We need to engage the skills of northern women to address the safety needs of their peers, and it requires funding to do so. Women in small

communities need ongoing support to move forward, and that means funding.

Many organizations have come together to create a coalition, a Coalition Against Family Violence, and the GNWT is a partner in that coalition. The recent budget address did little to highlight and recognize the work that needs to be done to assist the coalition and improve the safety of women and families in our communities.

I will have some questions for the Minister of Justice at the appropriate time. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. Member for Inuvik Boot Lake, Mr. Moses.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON SERVICES FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH

MR. MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In 1991 Canada ratified the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. The convention recognizes children as citizens with the right to reach their fullest potential to be treated with dignity and respect, to be protected from harm, to exercise a voice, to engage in play and recreational activities, and to participate freely in cultural life and the arts.

Furthermore, our government here just tabled a document Measuring Success and Focusing on Results. In this report it states a few statistics that I'd like to share with the Members here today as well as residents of the Northwest Territories.

It shows that in the NWT we have 132 foster families. It also mentions that the percentage of children receiving services in their home community is at 87.5 percent, which is great; we're keeping the child at home. However, what that also says to me is that it's putting a little extra stress on some of our social care workers and our service providers.

It also mentions percentage of children receiving services in their home or with a relative, and that's at 59 percent. What this tells me, when I look at it, it talks about the added stress as well as the financial pressures that it might bring to a family or possibly a grandparent.

Further into this report it talks about child and family services committees, where we set out at least a target of six with a baseline of one, but we had none, which is all in this report.

Some other positives are that we do have 15 communities with a Healthy Family Program. We're not the only ones doing good work on behalf of children across the Northwest Territories, but the NWT Foster Family Coalition is another area that focuses on improving the quality of life for children and youth in care, by supporting foster families.

I believe our government is doing the best that it can with the resources that we have and the programs and services that we provide. We have organizations that are putting in the same effort and

acknowledgement in this area, and we want to follow this United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. All I say is that we're doing our part; we need the communities, the residents and the families to also step up and do their part as well. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON TAKE A KID TRAPPING PROGRAM

MR. NADLI: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Take a Kid Trapping is a popular program through Industry, Tourism and Investment. It's designed to introduce youth in the NWT to the traditional harvesting practices of hunting, trapping, fishing and outdoor survival.

[Translation] The students that are going to school are also taking up trapping. They set the traps and snares and also learn how to fish. In the past, our history, our elders have been able to make a trap and make a living doing such. Secondary school students, starting on March 7th, will be doing an on-the-land program, then in one week they will check their traps. They have been doing well. [Translation ends]

Being on the land gives our youth a better understanding of who they are, where they come from and where they live. People who spend time on the land learn to value in a greater way. They see the connection between plants, animals, wind, water and sun that earlier generations always knew. It helps us understand our natural environment and take care of our land so that it can continue to take care of us.

[Translation] They learn how to trap and this is the way our ancestors survived. There are a lot of them that don't have time to be out in the bush, so it is good that they're learning how to trap and be on the land. If they are able to learn to trap, then they will be able to learn how to survive. They also would know how to live on the land safely and it also exposes them to a healthy life.

When they learn how to survive on the land, they learn how to trap. It's also a healthy way of life, so it's good that they're learning to do this out-in-the-land program.

MR. SPEAKER: Member for Tu Nedhe, Mr. Beaulieu.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON CONDOLENCES ON THE PASSING OF TU NEDHE RESIDENT JOHNNY ANDREW BOUCHER

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: Mahsi cho, Mr. Speaker. [English translation not provided]

...to the late Johnny Andrew Boucher, originally from Rocher on the Taltson River.

Johnny was born May 24, 1951, and passed away on February 19, 2014, at age 62. He passed away from difficulties of asthma. I often saw Johnny walking on the streets and he told me that he was not able to get better from his asthma because of his living conditions.

Johnny Boucher was born in Rocher River and was raised in Rocher River and Fort Resolution by his grandfather, Bonaface Boucher. Johnny enjoyed his childhood of being on and living off the land, and was an adventurous type and loved to roam around.

Although Johnny decided to live in the South while he was in his early twenties, he always made sure his immediate family in Resolution and Lutselk'e knew how much he cared for them and loved them, and would make sure to visit whenever he could.

Johnny was an artist and a fishing guide. He was known for his art, but mainly for his art that he did when he lived in the South. Johnny lived in Lutselk'e for a few years in the early 2000s, where he thoroughly enjoyed connecting with the land and living off the land and working as a tour guide for the Lutselk'e Frontier Lodge.

Johnny was predeceased by his mother, Elizabeth Boucher; stepfather, Noel Abraham; brothers Frank (Eddie) and James Boucher; his grandparents Catherine and Boniface Boucher; aunt, Mary-Rose; and his aunt and uncle, Archie and Louise. Johnny is survived by his children Elizabeth Lockhart, Cheyenne Rose Good, Johnny B. Good and Ashley Boucher; grandchildren Amber and Catherine.

My condolences go out to Johnny Boucher, commonly known as Spot. That was his nickname. I know that he was in residential school for a long time; I think almost all of his school years were spent in residential school. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. Item 4, returns to oral questions. Item 5, recognition of visitors in the gallery. Minister Abernethy.

Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to recognize a couple of different individuals. First I'd like to recognize Dr. Ewan Affleck who I mentioned earlier as the champion of electronic medical records, and he was recently awarded the Order of Canada. I'd like to thank him for his commitment to improving health care services for the Northwest Territories.

I'd also like to recognize another important group of individuals, our Anti-Poverty Advisory Committee, who is helping us with the development of the territorial response to the Anti-Poverty Framework.

They are Chief Minnie Letcher of the Liidlii K'ue First Nation, who is one of our co-chairs; Bronwyn Watters, who is the GNWT representative and one of our co-chairs; Julie Green from the No Place for Poverty Coalition; His Worship Mark Heyck, the mayor of Yellowknife; Chief Herbert Blake of the Inuvik Native Band. Bob Simpson is also one of our advisory committee members; unfortunately, he's unable to be here today and he's with the Inuvialuit Regional Corporation. I'd also like to recognize Grant Gowans, who is our senior advisor on the anti-poverty file. Thank you all for being here today.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Abernethy. Mr. Bromley.

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd also like to welcome Dr. Ewan Affleck, M.C., to the House today, a resident of Weledeh, and of course, welcome all of the Anti-Poverty Strategy Advisory Committee members that could make it today, and the mayor of Yellowknife, Mark Heyck. Mahsi.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Bromley. Mr. Moses.

MR. MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to welcome Chief Herbert Blake, Inuvik Native Band, as well as His Worship Mayor Mark Heyck. Grant Gowans is up there. He's a childhood friend of mine and we grew up together on the streets of Inuvik and I want to welcome him to the House today. As well, I'd like to recognize and welcome all the Anti-Poverty Working Group here and I just want to wish them the best of luck, and keep up the good work that they're doing. Thank you.

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

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have three constituents in the gallery and I'd certainly like to recognize and give them their due Grant Gowans, Julie Green and certainly His Worship Mark Heyck. As well, I'd like to acknowledge Chief Minnie Letcher, I haven't seen you in a number of years and, as well, I'd also like to acknowledge the Anti-Poverty Committee and thank them for their work and their commitment to the people of the Northwest Territories. The work that they do is certainly significant and important. Thank you.

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

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I, too, would like to recognize Chief Minnie Letcher. Welcome to the gallery and I hope you enjoy the proceedings here. Mahsi.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. I'd like to welcome, too, Chief Herbert Blake. It's good to see you here. Bronwyn and Grant, it's always good. Mayor Heyck, welcome back. It's always good to have people in the House. Thank you for coming.

Item 6, acknowledgements. Item 7, oral questions. The Member for Sahtu, Mr. Yakeleya.

Oral Questions

QUESTION 197-17(5): SAHTU OIL AND GAS NEEDS ASSESSMENT TRAINING

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions are related to the oil and gas needs assessment training. I wanted to ask Minister Ramsay – I know that he was working closely with the Department of Education and Culture and the Sahtu was going to complete a needs assessment on the Sahtu oil and gas training needs – has that needs assessment been completed?

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

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd have to check with officials at the department and at ECE to find out the status of that work. Thank you.

MR. YAKELEYA: I hope to hear something quickly from the Minister so that I can pursue this needs assessment in the Sahtu. Like I said, I've been on the Sahtu winter roads over the last couple of days, and I went to Conoco and Husky, and I went into the Wells and Tulita, and certainly there is a huge cry for training for the young people.

I want to ask the Minister, once he receives the report, could we look at the Sahtu needs assessment report and bring it to a Sahtu exploration readiness forum, conference, so we could start matching up training dollars with oil companies and the needs in the Sahtu?

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: Again, I fully support the Member's push to have more training in the Sahtu. Currently, we are working with industry, we are working with ECE, and I will get that information to the Member.

MR. YAKELEYA: Given the high interest in the oil and gas industry with all these contractors in communities, there are a lot of other programs going on, but right now the oil and gas industry is hiring a lot of people. Specialists are coming into the Sahtu to do a couple weeks of work then fly out. I'm looking at a training component base that's strong in the Sahtu with the interests of the oil and gas being the main economic drivers this winter. We're looking at this training program to the Sahtu needs assessment to be ready so that we can jump on the activity that's happening now.

I want to ask the Minister, is there something that we can plan once the needs assessments have been reported, that we'd like to look at a second readiness exploration forum in the Sahtu region?

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: The success of the first readiness session we had in Norman Wells and the community meetings that we've had this past year were very successful in letting folks know what was happening in the coming year. I've had discussions with the Member and with the department and we certainly will try to move forward with a readiness session sometime this year, and we will also get that information on the training initiative, as well, and continue to work with folks in the Sahtu to ensure that there's adequate training for people that want to take that training.

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

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The oil and gas exploration is going to slow down sometime at the end of this month, so we need to jump on this opportunity as quickly as possible. When the Minister says sometime in the future, I'm hoping that between the end of March and sometime in September that we will have a training program offered to the people in the Sahtu based on the needs assessment and what's needed now to help our people get jobs, get the training and build capacity. Can the Minister commit to having this forum prior to September?

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: I can't speak to the training side because ITI is not responsible for the training initiative. Again, I will work with ECE and the department to find the information the Member is looking for. I do believe it is very important that that information comes out before ITI, with the communities in the Sahtu, puts on another readiness session there. That readiness session should happen before September, and I agree with the Member.

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

QUESTION 198-17(5): ASSESSING AND MANAGING THE PUBLIC SERVICE

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In follow-up to my Member's statement today, I have questions. I am not sure who they should be directed to because I'm talking about something that probably doesn't really even fall under the purview of any Minister. I'm talking about the idea of how we manage our public service in the Northwest Territories.

Our territory has very many remote and far-flung regions, and as we sit here in this House today, there are people, public servants out in the communities all through our territory that are performing the functions of delivering programs and services to our constituents.

I think it would be safe to say, given the size of our public service, that at any given time there are

areas of our public service, areas of different departments that are in need of review. I think that some indicators could tell us whether there were problems or not, and I'm talking about sometimes things that are slightly intangible such as morale. I think you could probably tell a lot about the efficiency of certain activities if you knew how many people working in that division or that area were off on stress leave, for example.

I'd like to know what is currently in place. What vehicle do we currently have in place for assessing this, other than the deputy minister, who would be located here in Yellowknife, having to follow up and monitor all of those activities and potential problems? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. Minister of Human Resources, Mr. Beaulieu.

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: Mahsi cho, Mr. Speaker. The morale of the GNWT workforce is very important to the Government of the Northwest Territories. We do surveys with the staff and usually there is quite a tremendous uptake. I know that the Department of Health did their own survey with the authorities in the past. We do surveys with GNWT staff and ask those questions about whether individuals consider their jobs to be rewarding, if they're satisfied with their supervisor, if they're happy with the way things are at work. If there are any areas where they have concerns, those are the types of things we try to capture in these surveys. As a result of these surveys, then we will initiate some changes to make things more positive for the employees. Thank you.

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to ask the Minister of Human Resources, who conducts these surveys, how often are they conducted and who reviews them? That wasn't three questions. Thank you.

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: The surveys are conducted through the Department of Human Resources. I don't have the frequency here with me, but I do believe they do it fairly frequently.

---Interjection

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: Every two years. Thank you. My understanding is they occur every two years. The evaluation is done by the Department of Human Resources, working with the various departments. Thank you.

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to ask the Minister of Human Resources, is there a standardized survey that goes out to every public servant in every department, and what kind of uptake do they get? Obviously, these are voluntary. Responding to this survey would be voluntary, and I would like to know what kind of uptake there is on a survey such as that. Thank you.

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: Mr. Speaker, they are voluntary. They go out to every public servant. They are done across the country and we have about 80 percent participation. Thank you.

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

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to know if the Minister would be willing to table, in this House, a copy of the survey that goes out to the public servants, and also if he could tell me here today in the House who reviews these and what kinds of actions do these surveys precipitate. Thank you.

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: Mr. Speaker, we would have no problem tabling the survey in the House. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. Member for Nahendeh, Mr. Menicoche.

QUESTION 199-17(5):
COLLABORATION WITH
MADD AND SADD, CANADA

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Last week in the House I spoke about Fort Simpson resident Ms. Sharon Allen and her starting up the chapter of MADD. It was her desire to keep our community safe by targeting drunk drivers and initiating a check stop like she did last fall.

I would like to ask the Minister of Transportation, how does our department assist with individuals that privately volunteer with such a well-known organization, such as MADD, in terms of keeping our drunk driving statistics down? Of course, there has been a bit of a rise there lately. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. Minister of Transportation, Mr. Beaulieu.

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Department of Transportation works with organizations like the Students Against Drunk Driving and Mothers Against Drunk Driving. We offer some financial support to the Students Against Drunk Driving and we've developed a High Risk Drivers Program that we do in consultation with these citizen-based organizations. We consider these organizations to be very important and attribute a lot of the downturn in impaired driving and injuries related to impaired driving to organizations such as MADD and SADD. Thank you.

MR. MENICOCHÉ: I am certainly pleased to hear the department's support for organizations such as MADD and SADD. Specifically, does he know what other types of supports they have for the individuals and organizations? Most specifically, the RCMP assisted them last year by providing them their

vehicles and flashing lights. Are there any other in-kind supports that the department has?

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: The department would certainly like to continue to support these organizations. There has been one request for funding from the Students Against Drunk Driving from St. Pat's High School. The department, through the Drive Alive! program, continues to work with organizations like MADD and SADD and look forward to any proposal that may come from those organizations because we consider that to be essential in assisting us to reduce impaired driving across the territory. Thank you.

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Of course, we do have our own drinking and driving awareness program. Does the department also involve MADD and SADD when they initiate their annual campaign? Thank you.

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: Sometimes, I think, there has been some joint participation between the department and the Students Against Drunk Driving in combatting impaired driving such as check stops and so on. To date, I don't believe there have been joint efforts with Mothers Against Drunk Driving, but the department would be willing to entertain any joint initiatives that Mothers Against Drunk Driving would like to propose to the department. Thank you.

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

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I guess I would ask if the department would consider, during their next campaign, to involve local chapters of MADD and SADD for drunk driving awareness. Thank you.

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: The department would be pleased to, like I said, look at any proposal that may come from MADD on ways that we can work together along with Students Against Drunk Driving to do check stops or other things we have been doing under the Drive Alive! program at the Department of Transportation. Thank you.

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

QUESTION 200-17(5):
NURSING SERVICES IN TSIIGHEHTCHIC

MR. BLAKE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Earlier this session I did a statement on nursing in Tsiighehtchic. I have questions today for the Minister of Health and Social Services.

I would like an update on the nurse that was committed to in this Chamber last February. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Blake. The honourable Minister of Health and Social Services, Mr. Abernethy.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I indicated the week before last when I was asked similar questions, I have directed the department to do a review of the ISDM with respect to small communities and the types of supports we need to provide to those small communities, whether it is a nurse or some other mechanism to provide support that is appropriate to the communities. When that review is done, I would be happy to share it with the Member and committee. I am certainly looking for any input the Member may have. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. BLAKE: That was my next question. When will the department make necessary changes to their policy to allow a nurse to be placed in a community such as Tsiighehtchic? Thank you.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: What we want to do is provide quality care to all the residents of the Northwest Territories. We want to make sure that our residents have access. I'm not going to presuppose the finding of the review of the ISDM, but we are looking for ways to improve the services that are provided in all of our communities. As I've indicated, we will be doing that review. I don't have a timeline in front of me today, but I will get back to the Member with a bit more clarity on how long that review is going to take. I'm really interested in getting input from the Member as well as committee as we move forward with that review. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. BLAKE: Back in I believe it was 2001 we did have a nurse in Tsiighehtchic that did work very well in the community. I think all we need to do is amend those policies to what we had in 2001 and that will fix the situation. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Blake. More of a suggestion, but, Mr. Abernethy.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: I appreciate the comment and I look forward to doing the review, as I've indicated. There is way more to it than adding in a nurse, or not adding, in a community. We need to make sure the liability issues are good; we need to make sure that safety is taken into consideration; we need to make sure the community is receiving the services they need and expect, so there are a number of things to consider. It's not just a matter of saying yes, but I will work on it with the Member and committee and get back to the Member with additional information. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Abernethy. The honourable Member for Range Lake, Mr. Dolyunny.

QUESTION 201-17(5):
REGULATION OF SUGAR CONSUMPTION

MR. DOLYUNNY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. A couple of weeks ago, I spoke about the alarming statistics in our daily intake of sugar and some of the national guidelines that will be forthcoming from

our National Heart and Stroke Foundation of Canada. Last week I wanted to take this journey a bit further and I posed some specifics around obesity in our territory. This week I'd like to ask some questions to the Minister of Health and Social Services on the subject.

As I said, a couple of weeks ago I asked a question to the Minister of what he was doing specifically in dealing with our daily consumption of sugar in the Northwest Territories. His response, and I quote from Hansard: "I'm not sure. I can't really speak to the specifics of whether we have programs aimed just purely at sugar, but I will get the information for the Member."

Can the Minister give the House any update on what he discovered? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Dolynny. The honourable Minister of Health, Mr. Abernethy.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have directed the department to pull that information together. It hasn't been pulled together at this point, but we will get it to the Member at our earliest convenience. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. DOLYNNY: Can the Minister inform the House of any specific programs that are integrated with our daycares, our soon-to-be junior kindergartens and our schools that deal with sugar and calorie education? If not, why?

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: In cooperation with Education, Culture and Employment and MACA, we are obviously encouraging healthy living, healthy eating, healthy activity within our schools and within our youth populations. We do have the Drop the Pop campaign, which is specifically aimed at pop, but by default, we are trying to address some sugar issues there as well.

In this budget, we also have a significant amount of money – \$1 million – put into healthy eating for school programs as part of our Early Childhood Development and Anti-Poverty strategies. So there are a number of things we're trying to do. I personally believe we need to do more and we will be working with the department to put in more strategies to encourage healthy eating, including a greater awareness on sugar and the differences between more raw based sugars that are in food which has a higher glycemic index.

MR. DOLYNNY: It sounds like the Minister is becoming more aware of sugar and I applaud his knowledge on it.

Can the Minister inform the House if his department collects statistics on obesity in the Northwest Territories and, more specifically, the economic and regional variances? If so, is this information publicly available? Thank you.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: We don't have that type of data, but we will be looking at improving our

record keeping and be able to have more solid record keeping and be able to provide more timely statistics to all Members of the House, including Cabinet, once we have passed the Health Information Act and it moves forward via...(inaudible)...we will have the ability to track data on a more real time basis. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Abernethy. Final, short supplementary, Mr. Dolynny.

MR. DOLYNNY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I think we are making headway here today. Can the Minister inform the House what his policy on dealing with obesity is in the Northwest Territories? Does he have a strategy he can share with us? Thank you.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: As I've already indicated, we are trying to deal with it on a more holistic level. We are working on promoting healthy living, healthy activity and healthy eating. We are doing that in cooperation with Education, Culture and Employment and MACA. Obviously, we would like to do a little bit more. I think it's important to educate the people on the differences of natural sugar occurring in food and white sugar, which is more of the problem than the sugar naturally occurring in food.

We need to do a better job. We are going to put something together so that we can help people understand the difference and help them have informed decisions. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Abernethy. The Member for Hay River North, Mr. Bouchard.

QUESTION 202-17(5):
SAHTU WINTER ROADS

MR. BOUCHARD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Last week I wrote the Minister of Transportation some questions about the Mackenzie Valley Highway and the potential of closing the road only to winter travel, and my questions today are for him in asking, with the temperatures still not dropping in the Sahtu region, why the roads are being closed to winter road traffic only?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Bouchard. The Minister of Transportation, Mr. Beaulieu.

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. For communication purposes, we've communicated, when we saw that the weather was warming up a bit, a possibility of reducing heavy traffic to night traffic, but at this time there are no restrictions. Thank you.

MR. BOUCHARD: Thank you. My next question about these roads is the maintenance and indications are that the maintenance and operations of the maintenance are being shut down at this

current time, I'm assuming because of funding. Is this true?

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: Thank you. The maintenance that needs to be done on the winter road is being done. There will sometimes be just putting heavy equipment on the winter roads, such as heavy maintenance equipment, will do more harm than good in shortening the length that the road may be open. So, essentially what is happening is in any areas where they are dark and attractive to the sun, we try to cover it with snow. But the maintenance that needs to be done to extend the road as long as possible will be done. Thank you.

MR. BOUCHARD: Thank you. I know with this road specifically we've gotten some assistance from industry. I'm just wondering: is there a set budget for this type of maintenance, or do we basically continue the maintenance until we can keep the road open as long as possible and are we allowed to have cost overruns similar to firefighting season? We don't know what the length of a winter season is going to be and it may be more costly. So is there a set budget and are we allowed to exceed the maintenance budgets?

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: Thank you. Generally the winter roads operate in a certain time period. We track the average times in which the roads remain open. As far as the operations costs of the road, these are all done by contract. So we sign the contract with a company to do a certain part of the winter road and we stay with that contract, and that contract is intended to provide services from the time the road opens until the road closes. Thank you.

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

MR. BOUCHARD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Obviously, I do believe we are seeing a colder than average season and I'm just wondering, if the season is longer, will the Department of Transportation extend these road contracts, these road maintenance contracts and take on the additional costs?

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: Thank you. All NWT winter roads are public roads and the Department of Transportation tries to keep the roads open as long as possible. Budgets are a consideration, but if the road can be extended to remain open for an extra week or something at the end of March, then the department will do everything they can to extend that road. But, of course, money is a consideration. This is not a bottomless pit. We have to, at some point, follow the contract. There are provisions in the contract that allow the road to be open as long as possible. Thank you.

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

QUESTION 203-17(5):
SUPPORT FOR FOSTER FAMILIES

MR. MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have some questions in follow-up to my Member's statement today. As I mentioned, the government is doing a lot of good work in terms of supporting foster families and getting the programs in place to make sure that children in the NWT are given the proper services that they are entitled to. I just want to follow up with the Minister of Health and Social Services in terms of trying to educate residents of the Northwest Territories how this government can support them should they want to become a foster family in the community, or else if they want to take the options of taking care of one of their own.

So I'd like to ask the Minister of Health and Social Services, what kind of support is in place for any immediate families that could take care of another sibling's child or an aunt or uncle's child where they can provide the services and an immediate family member will obviously want to keep the children within the family? So what services are provided for immediate family members should they take the responsibility of caring for a child? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Minister. The Minister of Health and Social Services, Mr. Abernethy.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This is actually a fairly complex question because there are so many different scenarios where we could apply. It really depends on the nature or the reason the child has entered into the child and family services system.

If a family member asks another family member to take care of their child, there are no supports, but if the child enters the child and family services system by way of the legislation that we have available to us today and the goal is obviously to keep the children in their communities or with families as much as possible, we want families to be whole and we'll find ways to keep them together. If a person's child, they want them to stay with a family, that family member would have to go through the foster program and become a foster parent in order to receive the supports. If they don't then they don't get the support.

This is a question that came up during a review of the Child and Family Services Act and this is an area that I and many of the Members who participated in that were very, very concerned about. We wanted to find better ways to keep families together. This is something that I think still needs a lot more work within this department and I'm committed to working with the department, with Members to find improvements in this area. Thank you.

MR. MOSES: Thank you. I appreciate the Minister's response. Obviously, when a family takes

the responsibility to care for another family member's children there is added stress and there's added financial pressures that can't be alleviated when sometimes it's on the grandparents, who live on a pension. I mean, we can develop those policies, looking at those policies just specifically with people who are on a fixed income, such as grandparents. I mean, let's start there because the grandparents are usually the ones that take care of their children's children and there's no financial benefit there.

Would the Minister be willing to create a policy that would protect our seniors, our elders that take care of their grandchildren and who do it for the sake of keeping the child in the family? So would he be looking at creating a policy specific to start off for our seniors? Thank you.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Thank you. This is where it gets really complicated, as I've said. If we've got a child entering the system and we want to work with the family to keep the child in the community and if the grandparents are willing to, through the foster screening assessment they are going to get the financial support they need to provide for those kids. But as we heard clearly when we went out to the communities during the Child and Family Services review, not all kids are entering the system, but we still need to find a way to support them.

This is something that was recommended to the department to look into and I, as the Minister of Health and Social Services, still stand behind those recommendations that were made in the previous Assembly and I'm still interested in attempting to find solutions that work for all the residents of the Northwest Territories when it comes to child and family services. Thank you.

MR. MOSES: Thank you. When we talk about these, I guess I wouldn't call them deals, but these agreements between the parents and the siblings, sometimes there's mediation in there and that mediation comes from the social services worker themselves to say our objective is to keep the child in the family and that mediation, when it happens and the grandparent or the family member accepts it, then they're also accepting that there are no financial incentives to go along with that. Speaking of which, can I ask the Minister, what incentives are there out there to get our families in the Northwest Territories to become foster parent families?

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: In the Member's statement he talked about the Foster Family Coalition in the Northwest Territories, and I'd like to take this opportunity to applaud the coalition for providing a unified voice dedicated to improving the quality of life for children in the Northwest Territories. I think they do an incredibly important job. We work with the coalition to help encourage people to become foster parents, and the coalition

is getting out across the Northwest Territories with departmental staff providing training and information sessions to encourage people to become foster parents. I think our numbers, in my opinion, are still lower than they should be. I don't think we're getting the numbers that we need.

We do provide financial incentive to foster parents to care for children, and it was a recommendation of the 16th Assembly to actually look at the rates that we provide. The department is currently completing a foster care rate review to identify the current cost of living and expenses required to support children, and I expect that to be out in the next month or two, at which time we will be able to discuss increasing those rates or stabilizing those rates so that the foster parents have the dollars they need to adequately care for the children they are bringing into their care.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Abernethy. Final, short supplementary, Mr. Moses.

MR. MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On the flip side of that, when we have foster families that are caring for the individual or the child, at what age does the child not become the responsibility of foster families and are set to become independent and go out into society? Is there care or treatment or an area where the GNWT still supports these young adults, because right now what we do see is a lot of young adults who continue to stay home with their families because there is no support, especially in some of the small communities where there might be some housing shortages or some jobs that might not be available for some of these young adults. At what age do we take these kids out of the foster families and is there a plan of care for them when they do leave?

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: This gap in the 16 to 18-year-olds is what I think the Member is alluding to. Right now, when a youth turns 16, they are not required to receive care under the Child and Family Services Act. They can, in a sense, opt out and opt out of foster care. But, at the same time, they can opt in and they can volunteer to stay within the system and continue to receive the supports of the foster parent who will continue to receive support until they're 18. But this is an optional thing. I believe, and I think the 16th Assembly clearly articulated, that we have an obligation as de facto guardians for those individuals that are 16 to 18 to help them as they're going away and pursuing education, help them find a path in their lives, so we encourage them strongly to opt in to support through foster care.

I have directed the Department of Health and Social Services to work with Education, Culture and Employment to see if there's any opportunity to provide some sort of income support to those individuals who opt out, because I do believe we have a responsibility to provide some support to

these individuals once they hit that age of 16 where they can technically opt out. I think a lot more work needs to be done in this area. This is an area that I would like to see addressed under the Child and Family Services Act as well.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Abernethy. The Member for Frame Lake, Ms. Bisaro.

QUESTION 204-17(5):
COALITION AGAINST FAMILY VIOLENCE
ACTION PLAN

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have some questions today for the Minister of Justice. I want to follow up on my Member's statement, and I'd like to talk a little bit about what this government is doing to address the issue of violence against women and family violence. When Minister Miltenberger gave his budget address, as I mentioned in my statement, I heard very little about violence against women and the Coalition Against Family Violence, so I'd like to know from the Minister of Justice if he could please advise what kind of funding is in this budget, this '14-15 budget, for the Coalition Against Family Violence priorities?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. The Minister of Justice, Mr. Ramsay.

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We have moved forward with working with the Healing Drum Society piloting a new program called Wek'eahkaa. We hope to see funding flow for that program in the amount of \$292,000 in '14-15. In addition to that, we also have \$105,000 that goes to the YWCA here in Yellowknife.

MS. BISARO: Thanks to the Minister. I am well aware of those programs, and I don't believe that they come from the 19 recommendations that came from the last Coalition Against Family Violence Action Plan. There were 19 recommendations in that plan. I'd like to know from the Minister if there is any intent on the part of this government to address any of those 19 recommendations in this upcoming budget?

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: We have also hired and filled a position at the "G" Division with the RCMP. It's a family violence coordinator position. That position is up and running. It will help strengthen the RCMP's front-line response to family violence, providing training and support to members responding to family violence situations. We also have the Domestic Violence Treatment Option court, which is an option for low risk offenders. We also have an eight-week treatment program called Partner, and again, I mentioned the Healing Drum Society and the work with Wek'eahkaa as well. Those are some of the things the government is doing to address the issue of family violence here in the Northwest Territories.

MS. BISARO: Thanks to the Minister for telling me things that I already know. Thanks very much. My question, I don't believe, was answered. I'd like to ask the Minister again, what is this government doing to address the 19 recommendations that came from the Coalition Against Family Violence in the last year or two?

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: I will go back to the department and we'll get a detailed response for the Member.

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

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thanks to the Minister. I'd like to ask the Minister, when he does go back to the department, will he please consider the supports that are required in our small communities without an RCMP detachment? I think he's well aware that without RCMP, things are a little less safe than they are in communities where there is RCMP. Will he look specifically at the safety of women in our small communities without RCMP presence?

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: Yes, and I think one good news item, if I could, the number of EPOs that have issued have dropped significantly. It was 116 back in 2005-2006 and it stayed around that number. Last year we had 50, so that number of EPOs is trending in a good way.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. The Member for Weledeh, Mr. Bromley.

QUESTION 205-17(5):
ALBERTA ENERGY REGULATOR

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to follow up on the new role that ITI will be assuming as the NWT oil and gas regulator, so my questions are for the Minister of ITI. The Premier and the Minister have said in the House that several options were considered before choosing ITI as our regulator. Could the Minister summarize what those other options were and what were the advantages and disadvantages of each option?

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

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We could have looked at an option that would have left us with the National Energy Board regulating onshore oil and gas activity in the NWT. It was felt that we could look at an integrated resource management approach here in the NWT which would allow us to build the capacity here in the Northwest Territories to regulate the industry ourselves. We wouldn't be regulated from Ottawa or Calgary. We could build that capacity here at home. We believe we can do that and do it correctly. We've got the Land Use and Sustainability Framework. We've got the Water

Stewardship Strategy. All of these things are going to be put into the work of our integrated approach to resource management here in the NWT. I think it is way too early to be so critical of something that is so positive.

MR. BROMLEY: Being critical is my job. The NEB is playing a big role in enforcing workplace safety standards in the Sahtu, but the Workers' Safety and Compensation Commission also has a role to play in regulating the workplace.

Can the Minister explain who will be in charge of workplace safety as of April 1st? Who will be inspecting oil and gas work sites to ensure that safety rules are being followed?

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: That would be the chief safety officer.

MR. BROMLEY: It would be interesting to know who that person reports to, the chief safety officer. As our current regulator of oil and gas, the NEB includes consideration of the environment in their assessments. In addition to the land and water permits each project requires, the NEB also considers the potential cleanup liability created by a particular project.

As of April 1st, who will be responsible for assessing cleanup liabilities? Will it be just the land and water boards or will ITI have a role?

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: The Member knows full well that we are going to be mirroring federal legislation, the Oil and Gas Operations Act as well as the Petroleum Resources Act. Those pieces of legislation will guide us. For the Member to make assertions that there will be no public hearings, that we are going to throw those to the wayside, things are going to continue to happen here in the Northwest Territories. We will be able to regulate this industry here in the Northwest Territories. We will be able to build a capacity here at home to enable us to do that. The plain fact is that this change will provide for a regulator that is a territorial regulator, not from Calgary, not from Ottawa, but here in the Northwest Territories. Thank you.

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

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm not sure what the Minister was talking about there. He certainly didn't answer the question. I made no assertions. I was asking, as of April 1st, who will be responsible for assessing potential cleanup liabilities. Will it just be the land and water boards or ITI? I'm not sure why the defensive answer there. All of these questions lack the clarity we need, considering these things take effect April 1st. I have to ask why we did not create an NWT version of the NEB as originally intended. A made-in-the-NWT energy board could certainly have taken over from the NEB without generating such controversy and uncertainty so we may mirror legislation, but

somehow we've lost a public board for a Cabinet regulator. I would appreciate a response to that. Why did we not create an NWT version of the NEB as originally intended, a made-in-the-North board? Mahsi.

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: Oil and gas projects here in the Northwest Territories will, again, continue to be subject to environmental regulation under the Mackenzie Valley Resource Management Act, which will continue to require public hearings in some circumstances. It's simply wrong to make an assertion that because of devolution, requirements for public hearings are going to change. That's not the case. This is going to be our best effort put forward to regulate this industry in the Northwest Territories, build a capacity here at home, and with an integrated approach to resource management in the NWT we believe we can get this right. Thank you.

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

QUESTION 206-17(5):

PUBLIC DISCLOSURE OF PUBLIC SALARIES

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to use question period today to return to my Member's statement, which talked about public disclosure of public salaries.

I highlighted that the Mackenzie Valley Review Board has recently, as of Friday, February 28, 2014, taken the courageous step forward of publicizing their honoraria between the board chair and the board. It's time that this government starts following the example followed by six out of 10 provinces.

My question to the Minister of Human Resources is: What steps can this government take forward in publicizing all our board appointment chairs and members' honoraria in a similar manner to the Mackenzie Valley Review Board? Can we do this? Will he do this? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. The honourable Member for Human Resources, Mr. Beaulieu.

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Legislative authority would have to be changed. The step would be to amend the ATIPP Act and the Public Service Act. Thank you.

MR. HAWKINS: I want to thank the team effort on that answer. I could hear various folks giving the answer. How do we amend this act? Would the Minister of Human Resources be willing to bring forward amendments to the Access to Information and Privacy Act to accommodate this type of step that has, as I have highlighted, been done by six out of 10 provinces and, of course, that also now includes the Mackenzie Valley Review Board, who

have all taken the courageous step to publicize their salaries and honoraria. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: I would be prepared to discuss the ATIPP Act with the Minister of Justice. I will talk to the department about the Public Service Act and any considerations with disclosing salaries. At this time, in the ATIPP, in most incidents with a jurisdiction this size, it is considered an unreasonable invasion of personal privacy to disclose salaries. Thank you.

MR. HAWKINS: I look forward to any movement we can make on this particular file. When we often hear that board chairs make between \$130,000 and even over \$200,000 per year to sit on those boards and we hear that the honoraria for those boards could range anywhere from \$150,000 or more, the public wants answers. When we are paying our board folks more than we are paying our teachers, our nurses and even plumbers and policemen, something is wrong.

The next obvious question to the Minister is: What can we do to bring some transparency to some of these board appointment honoraria that need a level of scrutiny, some sunshine on that list to get to the bottom of that? Quite frankly, the public wants to know what they're paid and they want to see where their money is going.

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: Again, as I indicated, we would be pleased to look at both the ATIPP Act and the Public Service Act to see if it would be a legislative proposal which would be shared with all committee members. If this House felt that it would be in the best interest of the public to disclose salaries of individuals, then we will move in that direction. Thank you.

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

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm seeing a small crack at the door here where there seems to be...(inaudible)...to do this. I could go on with great example, but I think the Minister is hearing the issue.

Would the Minister be willing to put this paper together, provide a proposal to committee members on this side of the House before we begin our May session this year? I want to make sure that we start doing this in a timely way. The last thing we want to hear is some day we will get to it, but that means nothing to the public.

Would the Minister be willing to meet the challenge of this particular proposal before May of this year, so we can take a look at this and push up our sleeves and put a little sunshine, which is the best disinfectant, on this problem? Thank you.

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: Recognizing that the disclosure of salary wages and the number of

individuals that are within that salary range across the GNWT or the boards also give the public a very good indication of where their money is going; recognizing that, if committee still wishes to, in a small jurisdiction such as ours where you will see that Yukon, Nunavut and Prince Edward Island also don't disclose because they consider those jurisdictions to be too small; recognizing all that, if the Priorities and Planning committee across the floor want a legislative proposal to look at disclosing salaries, then we'll look at it. Thank you.

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

QUESTION 207-17(5):

SAHTU OIL AND GAS NEEDS ASSESSMENT

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment. In the Sahtu we have about 489 youth between the age of 15 and 24 years of age, according to 2012 stats. I recently questioned the Minister of ITI on the Sahtu oil and gas needs assessment. We have close to 500 youth who are in this category. We have an industry up there. We have a strong need to start training our young people so they can stop flying in workers from the South. These are from all the Sahtu communities.

I want to ask the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment, is the Sahtu oil and gas needs assessment complete so we can start doing further work on it?

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

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. There are activities that are happening in the Sahtu region and my department will conduct a study regarding the feasibility of the Sahtu training centre that we've been talking about for quite some time now. That would consist of education and training, the needs of the communities. Obviously, we need to do that anyway, because we need those feasibility studies within the guidelines that we approach the next step.

We have established a committee and there's been a labour pool that's been developed for training needs, so it is before us. Through the committee, industry sectors are part of that, my department and other sectors as well. Those are the tools that we need to work with so it can be available to the community once it's all compiled from the committee. Mahsi.

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you. The 500 youth that we have in the Sahtu, they're ready to work, they want to go to work, but they need the support to develop the capacity and the skills for themselves. I'm very happy that the government is looking at a Sahtu training institution for the Sahtu, the

feasibility study is happening, I'm glad for that. The Education, Culture and Employment office is looking at the labour pool needs. The Minister said it's available. When is it going to be complete so we can start to look at working with ITI to bring this type of training forward to the next Sahtu readiness exploration floor? Is that report done now?

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mahsi. I need to find out the latest status on the actual report that's been worked on by the committee. It does consist of a variety of parties that are involved on the committee. I'll find out the status and if it's ready for public review or for the committee, because it's a tool that it's giving us to work with while we're developing the study on the feasibility of the Sahtu regional institute of technology that will give us some areas of discussion as we move forward.

So, definitely this is an area that I'll find out the status. Mahsi.

MR. YAKELEYA: Being on the tours and being in the communities and looking at the number of young people we have in the communities and the availability for them to take the opportunity to work in government or oil and gas or traditional economy, I would think that this Minister would be right on top of what's going on in the Sahtu. They're spending well over \$100 million, Conoco alone; Husky is spending over \$10 million. The Minister needs to be on top in saying we have close to 500 youth that need to be supported and we need to support them in whatever industry and skill they need to build.

So, I want to ask the Minister in regards to this, for example, does he know that Class 5 training is needed in the Sahtu? A lot of young people want to work but don't have a Class 5. Can he, for example, in one of those areas, work with the Minister of Transportation and say we will bring Class 5 into the Sahtu, get those young people trained so that they can have a Class 5 driver's licence?

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mahsi. That type of training has been conducted in various communities, along with partnerships with the various different departments and the communities, so by all means we can pursue those. If it's a real need in the community, for sure we'll be working closely with the Department of Transportation and the community. Of course, the college will be involved, as well, when it comes to training in various areas, whether it be trades or different sectors. Those are the needs that need to be identified then I will be getting back to the Member on the information that's going to be provided. Mahsi.

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

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Minister of ITI has committed to having a Sahtu

exploration readiness forum. We certainly need the information from the Sahtu oil and gas needs assessment to be part of the forum so we can discuss and start putting plans down to start training our people. Things are happening in the Sahtu, it's going on now, things are going to be happening more so in the next couple of years. We really need to help these 500 youth with skill development and capacity building in our communities, in all the five Sahtu communities, so will the Minister have that report ready should the Minister call a forum before September?

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mahsi. In order to move forward on a forum for the Sahtu region, obviously we need the tools, we need that data, we need the stats, so I'll be working very closely with ITI as we move forward on developing the forum for the region and providing that information that's required, the community needs assessment and information from the community perspective and also the region. We will be compiling all of that information and working with ITI to deliver that to the community. Mahsi.

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

QUESTION 208-17(5):
MEDICAL TRAVEL POLICY

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I was called by a senior here over the weekend and they were telling me that medical travel now tells them if they want to go out, doctor approved obviously, medical travel tells them to book their own flight and pay for it in advance and submit claims.

When has the policy on medical travel now changed as such that we're now telling the patients who have been approved through medical travel through their doctor, been signed off by the main head doctor and certainly by Inuvik, and now we're telling them that's the process, that they have to front the cost of medical travel and then seek reimbursement? When did this policy change and is this realistic? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. Minister of Health, Mr. Abernethy.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd certainly like to get some more details from the Member on a particular case. Medical travel hasn't changed. It is under review, as I've mentioned many times in this House, and we will be discussing any potential changes. None have been made yet with Members as we move forward. But I would certainly be interested to get more detail on this particular case. If the Member would like to share those with me, I'd certainly be willing to hear them. Thank you.

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you. So, the advice being given to my constituent, who happens to be a

senior, who happens to only be able to pay for this airplane ticket to go on their medically approved trip through the medical travel process, they're to use their own credit card to front the government on a cost on this, is that the policy as it stands? Let's get that clear first on the record, and if that's not the correct advice, maybe the Minister can highlight the right process for those folks listening. Thank you.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Residents who are required to go south for treatment and/or assessment at the direction of a physician or another health care provider in the Northwest Territories are eligible for medical travel. They would go through the medical travel office, who would arrange the travel, once it's been approved accordingly. We aren't requiring individuals to pay for their approved treatments up front, so I'm confused by this one. It shouldn't be happening, and as I said, I would certainly be happy to hear the details and make sure that we correct it. Thank you.

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you. Clearly, the Minister understands what I'm talking about, approved medical travel, and I'm just trying to understand how this could be the case.

Is there any circumstance that the Minister can think of where someone in the medical travel office tells the particular person, constituent of mine, or anyone for that matter, that they need to front the costs first and then seek reimbursement? I'll tell you, they were quite concerned because they don't have the means to front the costs. They can scratch them together, but it does put them in a troubling position. So, is there any circumstance that this would be the right approach? I'm just trying to get to the bottom of the problem.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Thank you. It wouldn't be part of the normal process. The normal process would be for a physician or health care provider to request a treatment and/or an assessment that can be done in a southern facility; it would be forwarded to medical travel. If it's approved as official services, it would be organized and booked by our staff who do the work.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Abernethy. Item 8, written questions. Item 9, returns to written questions.

Returns to Written Questions

WRITTEN QUESTION 7-17(5):
DECEMBER 2013 NORTH SLAVE
POWER OUTAGE

DEPUTY CLERK (Mr. Schauerte): Mr. Speaker, I have a Return to Written Question 7-17(5), asked by Mr. Dolynny on February 7, 2014, regarding the December 2013 North Slave power outage.

Chronology of Events

- An H-frame power pole on the Snare system structurally failed, causing the loss of the Snare Rapids hydro plant by an automatic action to protect customers from a voltage spike, resulting in a system-wide outage in Yellowknife, Behchoko and Detah on December 29, 2013, at 1543 hours.
- At 1600 hours initial attempts to restore power to the first town feeder, with three hydro plants and one diesel unit, failed because of larger than expected power loads (6MB) on this feeder, causing another trip of all generators. This feeder later had to be split up by Northland Utilities Limited (NUL) to allow restoration.
- The second system recovery effort resulted in the 125 VDC backup control power battery system failing, preventing the remote start-up of the Jackfish diesel plant.
- Jackfish crews were called out to manually start Jackfish.
- Generation was restored, with three hydro plants and four diesels, at 1709 hours. A process to energize the Yellowknife feeders one by one was started at this time.
- Behchoko was energized at 1728 hours and Detah was energized at 1751 hours.
- Customer energization in Yellowknife was completed at 1757 hours to all but the largest feeder with all of Jackfish on-line.
- NUL split the last feeder of about 2,000 Yellowknife customers and Northwest Territories Power Corporation (NTPC) energized one at a time and completed final energization at 1824 hours.

Communications

- Two NUL employees were on site at the NTPC control centre shortly after 1600 hours for that duration of outage to communicate with NUL customers.
- Media – CBC – was contacted at 1720 hours by the president and provided an estimated time of full restoration of 1830 hours.
- Over 300 phone calls were answered at NTPC,
- Communications were established with Behchoko via the plant superintendent.

Actions

- NTPC is reviewing its outage communication protocol to improve internal and external communication with stakeholders – customers, board, shareholder, local governments and media – and exchanging emergency response plans to facilitate coordination with local and territorial authorities.

- Meetings have occurred between NTPC, the City of Yellowknife and NUL to discuss communications and system coordination during an outage and reduction of large loads on single feeders.
- A new communications manager began at NTPC on February 6, 2014.
- To ensure similar outages do not reoccur, the corporation has instituted the following changes:
 - The initial line with the failure has been isolated.
 - DC battery banks were replaced.
 - Upgrades are planned to reduce the black start time of the three diesel plants at Jackfish

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Schauerte. 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. Item 14, tabling of documents. Mr. Miltenberger.

Tabling of Documents

TABLED DOCUMENT 51-17(5):
SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES
(OPERATIONS EXPENDITURES),
NO. 4, 2012-2013

TABLED DOCUMENT 52-17(5):
SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES
(OPERATIONS EXPENDITURES),
NO. 4, 2013-2014

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Mr. Speaker, I wish to table the following two documents, entitled "Supplementary Estimates (Operations Expenditures), No. 4, 2012-2013," and "Supplementary Estimates (Operations Expenditures), No. 4, 2013-2014." Thank you.

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

TABLED DOCUMENT 53-17(5):
NEW STUDY DEMONSTRATES
ALBERTA FAILING TO ENFORCE
ENVIRONMENTAL LEGISLATION

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to table a press release, entitled "New Study Demonstrates Alberta Failing to Enforce Environmental Legislation," which includes highlights from the report Environmental Incidents in Northeastern Alberta's Bitumen Sands Region, 1996-2012.

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

TABLED DOCUMENT 54-17(5):
MACKENZIE VALLEY REVIEW BOARD
DRAFT NEWS RELEASE:
INITIATIVE TO IMPROVE TRANSPARENCY
AND ACCOUNTABILITY OF
REVIEW BOARD FINANCES

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to use this occasion to table the press release put out by the Mackenzie Valley Review Board, and at the same time, I have the compendium document, which is what they publicize with this, which is board member honoraria policy that, although confusing, does in some ways spell out what they pay their chair and the board members.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. Item 15, notices of motion. Mr. Yakeleya.

Notices of Motion

MOTION 13-17(5):
TRAINING FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD
EDUCATION WORKERS

MR. YAKELEYA: Mr. Speaker, I give notice that on Wednesday, March 5, 2014, I will move the following motion: now therefore I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Nahendeh, that the Department of Education, Culture and Employment be required to ensure that there is at least one fully trained early childhood educator worker for every junior kindergarten group before the program is implemented; and further, that early childhood education workers be recognized as educational professionals and paid wages accordingly; and furthermore, that Aurora College immediately implements a training program that graduates fully qualified early childhood education workers who meet federal standards; and furthermore, that the Government of the Northwest Territories provides a comprehensive response to this motion within 90 days.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Item 16, notices of motion for first reading of bills. The honourable Premier, Mr. McLeod.

Notices of Motion for First Reading of Bills

BILL 15:
OIL AND GAS OPERATIONS ACT

BILL 16:
NORTHWEST TERRITORIES
INTERGOVERNMENTAL AGREEMENT ON
LANDS AND RESOURCES MANAGEMENT ACT

BILL 17:
NORTHWEST TERRITORIES
INTERGOVERNMENTAL AGREEMENT
ON RESOURCE REVENUE SHARING
AGREEMENT ACT

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Mr. Speaker, I give notice that on Wednesday, March 5, 2014, I will move that Bill 15, Oil and Gas Operations Act; Bill 16, Northwest Territories Intergovernmental Agreement on Lands and Resources Management Act; and Bill 17, Northwest Territories Intergovernmental Agreement on Resource Revenue Sharing Agreement Act, be read for the first time.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Item 17, motions. Item 18, first reading of bills. Item 19, second reading of bills. The honourable Premier, Mr. McLeod.

Second Reading of Bills

BILL 13:
DEVOLUTION MEASURES ACT

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Yellowknife Great Slave, that Bill 13, Devolution Measures Act, be read for the second time.

This bill amends various statutes in order to give effect to the Northwest Territories Lands and Resources Devolution Agreement. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. The motion is in order. To the principle of the bill.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

MR. SPEAKER: Question has been called. Bill 13 has had second reading and is referred to committee.

---Carried

Mr. Premier.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Mr. Speaker, I seek consent to waive Rule 69(2) and have Bill 13, Devolution Measures Act, moved into Committee of the Whole.

---Consent granted

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Premier.

BILL 14:
WATERS ACT

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Thebacha, that Bill 14, Waters Act, be read for the second time.

This bill substantially mirrors the Northwest Territories Waters Act of Canada in accordance with the requirements of the Northwest Territories Lands and Resources Devolution Agreement.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Premier. The motion is in order. To the principle of the bill.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

MR. SPEAKER: Question has been called. Bill 14 has had second reading and is referred to committee.

---Carried

Mr. Premier.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Mr. Speaker, I seek consent to waive Rule 69(2) and have Bill 14, Waters Act, moved into Committee of the Whole.

---Consent granted

MR. SPEAKER: By the authority given to me as the Speaker, by Motion 10-17(5), I hereby authorize the House to sit beyond its daily hour of adjournment to consider business before the House.

Item 20, consideration in Committee of the Whole of bills and other matters, 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 this afternoon. What is the wish of the committee today? Ms. Bisaro.

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Madam Chair. We wish to continue with Tabled Document 22-17(5). We started Transportation. We would like to continue with Transportation, then Municipal and Community Affairs and then Lands, in that order.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. Is committee agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you. We will commence after a brief break.

---SHORT RECESS

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): I'm going to call Committee of the Whole to order. When we left off on Thursday, we were on the Department of Transportation, general comments. At this time, I'd

like to ask the Minister of Transportation if he'd like to bring witnesses into the Chamber. Mr. Beaulieu.

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: Yes, Madam Chair, I would.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you. Is committee agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

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

Mr. Minister, for the record, would you please introduce your witnesses again for the record.

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: Thank you, Madam Chair. To my left is Russell Neudorf, deputy minister, Transportation; and to my right is assistant deputy minister of Transportation, Daniel Auger.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Minister Beaulieu. So, we had left off on general comments. I believe Mr. Yakeleya was not finished on Thursday, so I will go to Mr. Yakeleya first.

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Madam Chair. I had a good weekend to think about what I said and I will tone it down here.

I do want to conclude my opening comments to the Minister, the department and the government. I would ask them if they would seriously consider the issue of decentralization with regard to looking at the regional offices in the Sahtu with the decision-making type of authorities by our superintendents being in this position for 10 years. I thought by now that the government would start seriously considering putting in our own superintendents for airports and highways in the Sahtu region.

I have had a number of e-mails and correspondence over 10 years, reasons why they aren't able to do it yet. I want to make a play for it on behalf of the Sahtu people.

I have notes from one of my road trips, questions asked by Sahtu people why there isn't yet a regional office. We certainly could take advantage of what's happening there now and if we wait for the Mackenzie Valley Highway, it will be a while yet because of the amount of work that is required. We have come to a place where they are doing some work up in Inuvik.

I would ask if they would look at a plan, bring it to the House to look at how they could bring a regional office into the Sahtu for airports and highways.

Madam Chair, the winter roads have been quite busy this year. The support I'm going to lend to this Minister for Corridors for Canada and moving that proposal with the federal government, I'd like to hear where that's out and where the projects in the proposal are being considered for support from the

territorial government. I will ask again to look at the Bear River Bridge and bring that up, so we can take advantage of it.

I'm very glad that the department has produced a booklet for the drivers in the Sahtu, more importantly for the truck drivers in the Sahtu, so they know more about the Sahtu.

The oil companies have given close to \$400,000 to help with the winter roads. Last weekend I went onto the Conoco lease and the Husky lease. Certainly, by talking to the construction foreman, they have given me an indication of what type of dollars have gone into their roads. It's a huge difference what dollars go into their roads compared to our winter roads in the Northwest Territories. There really is no comparison. Safety is their highest priority in the oil and gas industry. I believe that's also with the winter roads we have in the communities. Maintaining the roads and putting the proper signs and cutting down the errors that are dangerous in our Sahtu winter roads are a must, and I think the Minister has begun to do that already.

I do want to say we appreciate the additional support we are going to have in our winter roads for the amount of traffic that is now coming into the communities on the winter roads. Between Tulita and Norman Wells, where I drove this past weekend, there are quite big trucks on the roads there. I would certainly like to see more maintenance on the roads. They are taking out the potholes. Driving from Norman Wells to Tulita is about 84 kilometres. The shape the roads were in, if those roads were like that between here and Behchoko, you would automatically see a lot of transportation trucks and contractors out spooning off those roads. I don't think our roads should be treated any different. We can also put a lot of water trucks out there.

The last point I want to make before concluding is there's a great need for this Minister to work with Education, Culture and Employment to bring Class 5 training into the communities in the Sahtu. I'm working with the Department of Education council. We have a lot of young people in Colville Lake, Fort Good Hope, Deline, Tulita and Norman Wells that certainly could benefit from a Class 5 training program in the schools. A lot of them have been told that they could work, and want to work, but yet they fall short of having a Class 5 driver's licence. That hinders them; that limits them to getting other jobs. So I would look forward to this Minister in this budget helping our communities out to work with the Department of Education, Culture and Employment to get Class 5 training programs in our small communities. Like I said earlier, there are close to 500 youth – that's 2012 stats – that are aged between 15 and 24 years of age and they're ready to get on with life and get some training in oil

and gas, or traditional economy, or with government. A lot of them would benefit greatly by having a Class 5 training program and what better place to do it than in our educational institutions to motivate the youth so that they can know that the training is available to them. Go to school, gain self-confidence, self-esteem and know that their Class 5 training could possibly help them with their educational diploma program.

So that's something specifically I'm looking to this Minister for, to work with the Education Minister to see if this is a possibility of bringing in an educational drivers' training program. That's all I have to say, Madam Chair. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. General comments, Ms. Bisaro.

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Madam Chair. I just have a couple of general comments here. I'd like to initially start off and say that the department has done a good job in enhancing the services to residents through the on-line services, which started fairly recently. I was able to re-register my vehicle and did it on a Sunday morning, having a cup of coffee – it was grand – and then received the blank sticker in the mail, I don't know, a week or so ago and I haven't put it on yet, but minus 30 is not great for putting them on.

So I hope that the department will take the success of vehicle registration and expand. They were talking about expanding on-line services, so I hope that it will happen sooner rather than later. This latest one seems to be fairly successful, so that's all good.

I do want to express my concern still about the Inuvik-Tuk highway and the costs for that particular project. We keep getting little bits of the project that are sort of coming to us after the fact. I know we've had a contract initially that is over with and now we have a second contract, but then we've also got costs for the royalties and for the gravel. So I guess I'm just again expressing my concern about the fact that this project is very similar to one we had a number of years ago and I'm extremely hesitant that we are actually going to make this project on budget and on schedule. On schedule is probably a heck of a lot easier to make than on budget. So, basically, just a concern that I want to express there.

I did raise it in the House, but I want to mention it again. I'm quite disappointed that the department has not yet done a post-mortem on the Deh Cho Bridge. That whole project from beginning to end was fraught with difficulties and certainly processes which we don't want to repeat. The Minister has advised me that yes, that's going to be done, but I think the timing was something like before the end of the 17th Assembly and that's an awful long time from when the project itself was finished. So I would

encourage the Minister to finish it an awful lot sooner.

Other than that, I don't have anything else to add. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. General comments. Next I have Mr. Bouchard.

MR. BOUCHARD: Thank you, Madam Chair. I have a few comments on the department. I guess one of the hot button items that I just brought up today was the winter road maintenance and some of the early closures of the Mackenzie Valley Highway. I guess I am concerned in the fact that I'm hearing from different people in the industry and in the area that road maintenance is being shut down and companies are told that they don't have a cycle left. Some companies only have one cycle left. I guess my concern in that area is, you know, I equate it to firefighting and we tend to have cost overruns in that on an annual basis. We budget a certain amount, but how we can predict what road maintenance is going to be required in certain areas? I don't quite understand how we can predict the weather in those areas.

I know, for example, Tuktoyaktuk gets blown in lots and they may have to actually dig out the road five or six times a year, but what happens if it's 12 or 13 times a year? I'm sure the contractor comes back to us and says, well, it has been extreme weather this season. In this example, the season has been longer. Can they come back to us for additional funds?

For the maintenance side of it, I would think we'd want to maintain as much as we can to keep that road open all the time and as long as we can. As I've indicated, the industry is putting money into this area, as well, so they can keep the road open, get it opened earlier. So, I mean, I'm sure they're interested in keeping the road open longer as well. I guess it's just how we communicate that with people. The concern was that the temperature is not really dropping, but yet they were talking about restrictions on the road already and the temperatures really haven't dropped. I'm sure the Minister and the department know well the concerns already.

The other area of concern that I brought to the department recently was the permitting process for the trucking industry to get over-width and overweight permits seem to be taking longer and longer and I'm not sure what has changed in that process. I was getting compliments on the department's process, the 1-800 24/7 number seemed to be working this summer. But over the last couple of months I've been getting more concerns that it's taking upwards of two or three hours to get a permit to move equipment or to get through an area, so I'm just wondering what has changed that process.

Ms. Bisaro talked about the on-line services and I'm just wondering if there's a possibility that we add that to the service so that we can go on-line, a company would be able to log on on-line, tell them the dimensions of the unit that they're travelling with and basically get approval that way. Along those lines, I was asking questions about that contract, it's a southern contract right now. How much longer is left on that contract and when will we be able to look at that contract being supplied in the North?

Ms. Bisaro talked about getting her sticker and I registered my vehicle on-line and still haven't received my white sticker. I'm not sure what happened there. Yellowknife MLAs, I guess, get a little preference.

The other issue that I want to dredge up is, obviously, I was talking about dredging last week, and I know the department has some people that are dealing with dredging on a consistent basis and I'd like to see us do some sort of assessment of what it's going to cost to complete dredging in the Hay River area. I know it's a federal responsibility, but it's also territorial. It's a shipping and transportation issue. So, I mean, if we can do this internally to do some cost estimates of what it's going to be when the federal programs and the Minister responsible for Emergency Measures basically indicated there's some mitigation stuff there, but I think it's Transportation's responsibility, as well, when we look into the cost of what it's going to take to do this project. Is it a \$1 million project? Is it a \$12 million project? I don't think the department really clearly knows and we would like to know those numbers, those estimates.

Another area of concern we're hearing in the Hay River area is we have a maintenance garage in that area. It seems like that maintenance garage is losing a little bit of traction to a Yellowknife operation here and it seems like where most of that maintenance was being done out of Hay River is now being split between Hay River and Yellowknife, and I'm not sure when that mandate has changed, I guess, as far as creating a second maintenance area for that type of facility. I'd like to know when the department decided that it was going to have two maintenance garages as opposed to just one. The maintenance guys from the Hay River area come up here and they say, well, man, they've got new equipment and new everything there, and we're struggling to get a bunch of the facilities upgraded in the Hay River area. I guess our concern is, obviously, with talking about decentralization, and again, it seems like there's almost a centralization in that department in the maintenance area of it.

Another area of concern and, I guess, appreciation is they repaired the Hay River airport, and it's great that we fixed that bump in the runway, but I guess my question would be when do we expect to do an

overall assessment of the runways and what it's going to take, because right now we know that there's going to be additional expenditures in that area to fix it up probably in another four or five years. I'm just wondering if the department has put that money in there. I couldn't quite find it myself, but if there's any money in to study the Hay River airport as far as runway conditions in the future maintenance requirements there.

One of my final comments is truck regulations. I've talked about it several times in the House here about, obviously the tri-drive. We're trying the experimental couple years' process, and I'd like to get some update on where that's at, what kind of initial results are we getting. As well as the truck regulations that I've talked about is the fact that we have pickups pulling a trailer and now we're over the weight limit of the 4,500 kilograms, and then having to pay bridge tolls as well as having to have a Class 3 driver's licence to run those types of equipment, where other jurisdictions like Alberta don't have those requirements. I want a little bit more consistency and I'm wondering if the department has any more on that, keeping regulations consistent, finding that in Alberta a pickup is a pickup is a pickup. It doesn't matter what it's pulling. I understand some of the trailers that are being pulled are extreme, but any kind of half-ton pulling a trailer now, you're over your 4,500 kilograms, making it very difficult for small contractors that have labourers only that are running this equipment, to run up and down to fix and service some of the communities in my area, and running into this difficulty of having to have a Class 3 driver's licence now basically limits them. They need a talent pool, and most people that can acquire a Class 3 driver's licence are probably using it to their best ability to run a big gravel truck or whatever in any industry or mining industry, so it's a difficulty for the labour pool as well. I'd like the department to continue to try to figure out some of those hiccups in our regulation process when we compare them to other jurisdictions.

That's all my comments. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Bouchard. General comments. Next I have Mr. Dolyunny.

MR. DOLYUNNY: Thank you, Madam Chair. You're probably going to hear a number of similar comments that have already been echoed by some of colleagues, so I'll go in really no particular order here.

First and foremost, I think the Inuvik-Tuk highway did pose a bit of concern for a number of Members, especially under the royalty of granular, and I strongly encourage the department to be a bit more transparent as we move forward on the process to make sure that that whole process is clearly stated for the record. We know that this is the first of many

segments of this road to be constructed and I think it's imperative and paramount that that standard is clearly displayed by the department on how granular royalties came about. We've got a number of other land claim groups that are going to be part of the overall Mackenzie Valley Highway system, and I think we need to be very consistent as we move forward. But I think the department has an obligation and I think they could have done a little bit better job in preparing committee and the public with respect to what this royalty program is, how it's being set up and how it's being implemented.

The issue of the Deh Cho Bridge has come up a couple times here in general comments and I just want to echo more of some of the facts around it. We know that according to the public accounts being tabled of March 31, 2013, that there was a \$600,000 shortfall in the collection of the toll, which begs to ask when – and I think I asked this in the House – are we going to do an audit on our toll system? I believe it's warranted. When you see a shortfall of that magnitude, one does have to ask why. What happened to the traffic? If the traffic flow was reasonable, why would it not be to our advantage to get very close to the numbers of predictability, which obviously we did not do.

We also have the issue of, I think, we have an opportunity here with the Deh Cho Bridge to finally look at a rear-view mirror approach to our toll system in general. I think you've heard Mr. Bouchard, who brought up some of the regulations regarding a lot of people with commercial plates who are over their limit. In a lot of cases, these Yellowknife Members or any Northwest Territories resident who has a commercial small truck that is a half-ton or three-quarter ton pulling even such things as a holiday trailer or a fifth-wheel for their family is not exempt from the regulations, which I think is wrong. We know very well that we have a number of businesses out there – a lot of them are in my riding of Range Lake – who use their commercial truck for pulling things such as their travel trailer if they're going down to Hay River to go fishing for the weekend, and they're over their limit if they're pulling a trailer or a very large boat. We know that that's more of a taxation question that they've got to deal with their personal taxes and their business, but I don't believe that we should be getting in the way of business by having a regulation that imposes the personal use of, I think, commercial vehicles with commercial plates. I'm asking this department to do a thorough review on that specific policy as it has come up a number of times in my riding, and I know others have brought that up as well.

I also believe that if we're on the subject of the Deh Cho Bridge, the department has said in the past that they were going to do a retrospective analysis within six months of its completion. Well, we're well beyond six months now of that completion date and

yet we still have not seen a retrospective analysis, and those are the words of the previous Minister as well. I'm asking this department when will this analysis take place, what is the depth of this analysis, what is the mandate, what are the terms of reference, and what should we expect by doing that? I think if doing it just to regurgitate what the Auditor General did a few years ago, really, in essence, would be a waste of everybody's time.

That said, we do have a small amount of residual money left for the Deh Cho Bridge, and I think this is an opportunity for the department to be very transparent, what this amount of money that's left in the fund, how it's going to be used for the deficiencies, and whether or not there's going to be a shortfall for the number of deficiencies that are left with the bridge. We are all aware that we were left with a taillight warranty with this bridge and now the taxpayers are going to be involved picking up the tab.

You heard, possibly from Members in the past, that we are patiently waiting for the completion of the transportation plan, but more importantly, the overall Highway Strategy. This has been something that has been talked about for a number of years now, ever since I started as a Member of the 17th Assembly. But I think with the Corridors for Canada III, that potential money that's sitting on our doorstep without a plan, it makes one think, what exactly is the overall ideology of the department moving forward? I strongly encourage that the department bring that plan through proper public consultation and through a vetting process of committee so that we can have that high level discussion before these Corridors for Canada III monies start to trickle in. As you are well aware, these are matching dollars, so I know the department is going to have to come to this side of the House to appropriate monies to match this Corridors money that we're going to be getting from the feds.

I'm hoping my next topic has the ears of the Finance Minister and the Finance department, because he's always asking for ways to make money. I think there's a beautiful way we can make money, and I think our airports are possibly the key for making that money. There are a number of our airports that are very high use and are actually quite extensively used by many different airlines and many different residents. I'm talking about your Inuvik, Norman Wells, you have your Yellowknife and you have your Hay River, just mentioning a couple of these higher use airports. If you look down south, a lot of jurisdictions in Canada have looked at privatization of their airports. They've actually liquidated their assets and leveraged their assets because the governments of the day running airports couldn't do a good enough job. It was costing the taxpayer way too much money. By them privatizing them, they actually had a lift. In that first

year they made the money from their capitalization of projects and they were able to leverage their airports for profit.

We struggle, as a territory, for revenue. I challenge this department to work with the Department of Finance to see if there is viability and an opportunity for the privatization of our airports, because I truly believe we have an opportunity.

Last but not least, I've mentioned this many times in the House, is evolving our procurement process, especially in the Department of Transportation, and we've seen problems with this in the past under the term of negotiated and sole-sourcing with our procurement process in Transportation.

I'll be speaking to this more in depth here because the Minister of Finance did table, last week, the findings of the government contracts over \$5,000 and the percentage of monies that are being spent in sole-sourcing and negotiated contracts and I'll be using that information at a further time.

But I believe we have a problem. We have a very antiquated policy when it deals with negotiating and sole-sourcing. Our procurement for our road, the Inuvik-Tuk highway is no different. That is a prime example. I think the process that we have needs a formal review. I'll say this again and I'll continue to mention that for the remainder of my term if it doesn't get the attention it deserves.

The reason why I'm concerned about our procurement process is the fact that once we do negotiate a contract or sole-source policy for the procurement, our BIP is out the window. Our BIP does not have any bearing, which means that our business, our northern businesses, any northern businesses are completely shut out of the process and the procurement process, procurement purchasing and the building of any highway in the Northwest Territories, which leads me to be very concerned about how we're moving as a territory and trying to build the capacity of our business in the Northwest Territories. When these business dollars are going down south under the guise of a procurement and negotiated contract policy, and when the BIP is not even something that the government here is concerned about, I've got a concern. I have to protect the rights; I have to protect the dollars of our businesses; I have to protect it to make sure these businesses have employees and these employees can pay their mortgage and their car payments and everything else and put food on the table.

We've been challenged by the Minister of Finance to put 2,000 people in housing and bring them to the Northwest Territories. Getting rid of the BIP process in large-scale contracting is definitely not in that best interest to support that initiative.

Thank you very much. I appreciate committee allowing me to talk a little bit about the general comments of Transportation. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Dolynny. General comments. Next I have Mr. Nadli.

MR. NADLI: Thank you, Madam Chair. Just some general points, like my colleagues, and more likely a repeat of some issues that are common throughout the NWT that affect the Department of Transportation.

Foremost in my mind is the concept that when you're driving down a public road and you incur some problems, either it's a vehicle accident or fatality and you're there to try and respond, I think the lead agency in trying to provide a service for the travelling public should be the Department of Transportation. I realized over the course of the two years that I've been here that I've been observing the study or else a mentor department that I prefer to come up with at least a coordinated approach to establish an agency or a body that could respond to vehicle accidents or fatalities that happen on the road.

What I'm specifically referencing is the need for paramedics and first responders and ambulance services to be available on a major highway or transportation system. To this date, we don't have anything substantive to tell the public, to indicate to them very clearly and confidentially, yes, when you travel, you're travelling at your own risk; however, this government will be able to provide a service if anything happens. That is not the case, so I'm hoping that at some point the Department of Transportation will take some leadership in terms of ensuring that the interdepartmental efforts that have been going on for some time will come to fruition and that we'll have at least a flashpoint of something being established so that there is at least a service of first responders for people that are travelling, especially the public that now enjoys 24-hour access on the transportation system coming from Edmonton to Yellowknife.

The other points that I wanted to highlight is there's been some reference to the Deh Cho Bridge. Of course, the community I come from is Fort Providence, so we live under the shadow of the bridge. The initial concept, when the discussions took place on the bridge, was that the community wanted to be involved so initiated discussions with governments, so the concept of ownership, and given an opportunity for the community to be involved with a major infrastructure project was basically discussed and hashed out. The same...(inaudible)...possibilities was established. The whole experience, in the end, the bridge was constructed, but at the same time the involvement of the community was minimized. But I still believe what has become of the bridge is that there is a

relationship between this government and the community, and I'm hoping the basis of their relationship could be in terms of building a few key pillars of the community would want to initiate in terms of its interest for tourism, whether it's looking at economic development initiatives, and those possibilities still exist. My hope is that the relationship would not be in vein, that we're trying to build upon the negatives and try to build something positive out of that whole experience.

Of course, speaking of the bridge, too, in the periphery of the bridge are, of course, the old existing winter crossing where people before were able to cross by vehicle on the ice bridge. Those two peninsulas still exist and there's one on the south side and one on the north side. Of course, there's a road that goes alongside the river right from the old winter crossing right to the present site of the bridge and on to the community. That has been a concern for some time for community residents, ensuring that it could be accessible. There are a few residents that make their home out there. It's important to ensure, for safety purposes, they at least have access to the community and the services for medical emergencies if need be. So, I would encourage the department to keep on working with the community, ensuring that the section of road is maintained.

That area, once again, if there's any potential because of the interests in fishing, I know the peninsulas provide an opportunity for wind and keeping off the bugs. People just enjoy the area for fishing. However, I think there's greater potential in how they could plan, organize and at least try to establish a marketing and management regime so that we take advantage of the tourism opportunities that exist in that area.

The other points that I wanted to raise, too, are just in terms of the ferry. The ferry is no longer in existence, of course, so most of our guys have moved on. I always believed that when the Great Slave Lake, the ice moves out about maybe the second week of June and by that time the ice is gone on the Mackenzie right from Beaver Lake all the way down to Inuvik, so you always have about two weeks or a week and a half waiting for the ice to clear before any kind of tugboats can leave Hay River and travel down to Tuktoyaktuk. I think the possibility, perhaps, of building upon nature's advantage needs to be explored. I would encourage at least some discussions from the perspective of the community.

My other point with regard to airports, my colleague raised the idea that airports could perhaps be considered under the domain of private enterprise. Currently, the airport we have in Fort Providence was built, as I understand it, by the American Army when they were establishing air bases throughout the Mackenzie Valley. The current location right

now has it so that any flights coming from Fort Providence would have to almost fly over the community or, in some instances, fly across the river. Sometimes it's not the greatest situation when you have fog rising from the river. Of course, that becomes a major hindrance for observing the runway. Perhaps the community may be interested in looking at how it is some options could be explored to either expand the facility or looking at some other sites.

The other communities that I serve, one in particular is interested in the idea of providing emergency services, if need be, in the realm of transportation emergencies if there's a case that arises and there's a need for an immediate air ambulance. Then the community has to at least have a helipad of some kind.

Those are the key points I wanted to raise. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you very much, Mr. Nadli. Next I have Mr. Moses.

MR. MOSES: Thank you, Madam Chair. You've heard a lot of comments already, so I'm just going to keep mine really general, not general but to the point and try to keep it short.

There are concerns in Inuvik. Anyone who has been up there and driven from the airport to the community of Inuvik, there are a lot of areas that still need some attending to. In some cases it can be pretty dangerous, depending on the speed that you're driving.

I also believe the Minister is quite well aware of the runway issues we had and the sinkhole that appeared not too long ago. We need to address those and that whole system to prevent any further damage.

This past year is the first time that we've tried the ferry operations. I know we've had updates in terms of dates of closure. It was a lot better than when we actually had to wait for the ice road. There were some good statistics when we had those briefings; however, I wouldn't mind working with the department to see how we might be able to address upgrades to the Louis Cardinal ferry or the option of bringing the Merv Hardie down, as well, to make those days that we do have even longer, the days that the road is open.

You've heard about the Highway Strategy. There was mention of that. I'm not sure if committee has seen that strategy.

Lastly, with the Inuvik-Tuk highway, some good comments on that. I had a good update on the weekend when I was back home. The work that's going into that is pretty amazing. Not only that, but the amount of guys who are working on that road, it's quite nice to see.

Lastly, we lost the Coast Guard in Inuvik, the building, not too long ago. Now with this Inuvik-Tuk highway opening up and we talk about Arctic sovereignty and the waters opening up and we're getting more vessels through the Northwest Passage, I wouldn't mind if the Minister could open up communications with his federal counterpart to see if we can bring the Coast Guard office back to Inuvik. Like we said, the waters are opening up and we are getting coast to coast in terms of building the Inuvik-Tuk highway and I think it's a great opportunity to make that a station once again. I wouldn't mind seeing what the Minister has to say on addressing that concern. That's it. Thank you, Madam Chair.

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

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Madam Chair. Maybe some repetition here. The Green Light document on the environmental plan for the department I'd like to get an update on that, an evaluation of whether we are achieving those goals and objectives.

I'm also interested in the Inuvik and Hay River runway issues related to the loss of permafrost and other perhaps unknown underground issues. I'd like to know where we're at in terms of schedule for a comprehensive assessment. I know we've done some short-term maintenance and whatnot, two or three million dollars' worth of work. What capacity are we developing for forecasting these issues? These things are happening, but what are we doing on the front end, on the progressive side, to assess the basis of our runways and try to anticipate where the issues might be and see what we can do for preventative work?

I see on highways that our management costs are declining. I'm not one to complain about that, but a significant decline over the last couple of years. I'm wondering whether there's an improvement of efficiencies or have we dropped a director level position or something there? It's not something you commonly see in budgets these days, so I thought I'd find out what's happening there.

I see the Deh Cho Bridge grant, Fort Providence, \$200,000 a year continues and I'm wondering if the Minister can remind me for how long this goes on and what the purpose is. I think the Member for Deh Cho raised some good questions. Personally, I think it was unfortunate that we tried to use this as economic development for Fort Providence, knowing what the area has. It's amazing country and has great opportunities for economic development. I can't see what a bridge, no matter how big it is, might bring in terms of economic development. Apparently, we are funding that, a million bucks every five years for the community. What are we seeing there? How long is that going on and what are we seeing there in terms of the

original intent of economic development for this community?

Roads and licensing, I have to say, because my last name starts with a B, I have also indirectly had some experience registering my vehicle through my wife. She's really good on the computer. Pretty flawless process, so I wanted to give a nod to the department. I think that's really going to bring some efficiencies and I know a lot of people are appreciating that.

I believe we're talking about legislation that gets rid of the stickers, so we won't even have to wait for the stickers to arrive in the mail soon, perhaps.

I also noticed that the safety and regulation funding is declining, again unlike most line items. I would like to know what's happening on that front. That seems like a real priority area, but again, perhaps it's through efficiencies through the computerized services for drivers and motor vehicles. What's happening there?

Winter roads, I know our costs are generally going up as it becomes more problematic, although there is high variation, as is expected, from year to year. Certainly, with the increased industry traffic in some areas, the potential for damage to roads has unintended consequences for residents, so I think there are lots of questions there.

The department notes in the Minister's statement here that there is increased enforcement, which I think is appropriate, given some of the horror stories we've heard. I'd like to get an update on how many infractions we're seeing and ticketing on the winter road, for example, in Sahtu this year compared to last year, to give us the assurance that, in fact, we are doing something there, and how many patrols and so on.

We've heard for a number of years about the big umbrella Transportation Strategy or plan. It doesn't seem to be materializing. I didn't see it mentioned in the Minister's statement. Maybe I missed that. I know Members certainly have supported that, would like to see it done and I'm hoping that it would include consideration of railroads as one of our options. I know there are some mines that are talking about using that, the one in Tlicho area, for example, and possibly the mine north of the lake here for rare earth metals. I'd like to see it include an assessment of the maintenance deficit for our transportation infrastructure and what the cost is of a so-called balanced approach that we're taking right now that favours new, very expensive to build and maintain projects over maintaining existing infrastructure. I'm hoping that we can hear from the Minister that this Transportation Strategy that should have materialized would include consideration of those subjects amongst many others. I'm going to leave it at that, Madam Chair. Thank you very much.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Bromley. Any further general comments? Mr. Hawkins.

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Madam Chair. When you're near the end of general comments, it hardly leaves anything left to provide a fresh perspective. Rather than going through them all at great length, I will just quickly reaffirm a couple of them very quickly in the sense of I'll just go over them this way.

I support the concerns highlighted by the Inuvik-Tuk highway raised by Members. I think that's a project that we have to keep a close eye on. I certainly, and still do, support the concept and the initiative, and it's just a matter of watching the costs. It's been raised by Members, not particularly by myself but I would say that I do support the intent. There has been talk about ways of spreading this project out over a few more years as opposed to trying to rush and get it all done at once, to ensure we spread the employment benefits of it out further so they become meaningful employment rather than quick jobs for everyone and then no jobs. I think that's something we need to look at. It doesn't mean I necessarily fully support that concept; it just means that I think it's a very good one to talk about and certainly take a good look at.

The YK Airport is a perennial issue for me that our runway, I still think, is not at the length it should be. I think that we really need to start doing a broader view of where the Yellowknife runway should be and where it needs to be in 10 years. There has always been talk about extending the runway and moving the airport services to the other side. I think what we really need to do is maybe kick off a strategy here and say, what should the needs be at this airport for the next 10 to 20 years in the sense of we are targeting for development but really define it as where do we want to be for the next 50 years as a service to the people of the North. Of course, extension of runway means more economic development opportunities. That is an infrastructure that I think if we put some focus in on with the federal government, we could be looking at dollars there, but I'm not the right person here. I would say that these are skills and areas that people within the Department of Transportation would be much better suited, or better skilled and more knowledgeable than I about where to look for potential dollars. I think it's a real missed opportunity to continue to ignore it. I've raised this issue for 10 years. There have been studies about expanding it. Again, I'm not sure we've really spent the energy in the area that we could.

One last thing on this particular area, be it extension of the runway, every time I see in the news about how Iqaluit does cold weather testing, I think, why isn't this us? When I look at their weather in Iqaluit, it's frustrating, but yet, at the same time,

it's kind of weird how we always seem to be colder than them and they do all the cold weather testing. This could end up building into a partnership with the Department of ITI about trying to draw new clientele to the Northwest Territories for new money. That's often the difficult challenge of bringing new money into a district where the money keeps circulating. We want new cash in our Northwest Territories. It doesn't matter where it's going; we just need it in our coffers. I would encourage the government at large to consider trying to reach out to the world as a cold weather testing region. I say that because almost every winter we see cars come up here in a bevy of beamers, a flock of BMWs or whatever little synonym sort of process you want to use to describe them, but quite frankly, we see quite a few of these vehicles, so why aren't we extending them to all manufacturers on these types of things?

Although that's not Transportation-specific, what I think, though, is at the same time we could give a true experience to these folks. I mean, we have ice roads. Wouldn't it be neat to run four or five of those, assuming they could make it, but four or five of those Porsches up to the Ekati diamond mine? They could really test the vehicle on some of the coldest, hardest terrain to drive on. Maybe they'll be next year's TV movie about cold. We could call it the Cold Weather Testing Show or whatever. I'm not in the movie business, but somebody smarter than I could come up with a better name. There is a real opportunity there. We could do speed testing if we had our machinery out on some of these big lakes plowing for these folks and catering to them. We could draw a new economic opportunity. It wouldn't necessarily, like I say, fall strictly on the shoulders of Transportation, but I think Transportation, working with ITI, could look at new opportunities. Again, that's airline. It could be car. There are probably more ideas as well.

The next thing I would like to remind the Minister and the department is Members are still waiting for what I would define as a tangible Transportation Strategy. We sit and continue to wait. This is something we've been asking for, for a number of years. Quite frankly, it seems as if new roads are more important than the old roads and the old roads are certainly in some... I'm not even sure we can define them as roads some days. It depends on what region you live in and how important those roads are it seems some days. We really need that detail to be making good choices. I think, as well, it illustrates to the people of the Northwest Territories that when we get our attention drawn by a nice, new, shiny booklet that tells us about this new infrastructure, we don't forget about the old infrastructure and that it continues to be maintained, needs to be maintained.

Just quickly through the next two subjects, which is I support the development of the on-line registry. I

don't think I was the only one who brought it forward in the past, but I know I brought it forward. I think if the department wants more good ideas, I have a lot more, so feel free to keep listening.

I think that, just finishing off, I do want to support the concerns highlighted by my colleagues about the Deh Cho Bridge, but there is one in particular that I still want to exercise frustration. I had asked for the Department of Transportation, the old Minister refused and the old, old Minister refused about this, about showing the cost of living of goods and how they may change the toll system, and both Ministers scoffed at the concept, one right after the other. It was quite disappointing.

Many northern residents in the Yellowknife region were horrified by the new prices on how they spiked all of a sudden. Guess who they blamed? The Northwest Territories government. What do they blame? Oh, the bridge Yellowknife wanted. Quite frankly, Yellowknifers wanted it, but we always tend to forget that it was the town of Fort Providence that came forward pounding on the door and said, we will be the lead of this. First of all, it's not about blaming, but don't forget Fort Providence was part of the trigger of why we have the bridge. But it's not about that, per se; it's also about the fact that the trucking companies are now putting the costs and their extra little revenues they want to make, and stores are putting their extra revenues they make and they all point back to, oh my goodness, it's the cost of driving that truck across the bridge and that's why these things cost so much money. When you do the math on some of these products that they are saying and blaming solely on the cost of that bridge and the bridge toll, you're finding out that they are charging four, five, six, seven, eight, nine times more than what the toll actually should have had an effect on it. I think that's quite frustrating when you're a consumer and you're always raising the cost of living here.

This government has done nothing to show the cost of living really matters. Any time they refute that, they'll turn and say, oh, but we're maintaining it. Just think if the work we didn't do, where would it be next?

Of course, the final point on the Deh Cho Bridge is last year – I think it was last year – there was a bit of a shock regarding the fact that stores had to reduce their load to somewhere in the range of 75 percent capacity without any notice. I certainly hope that those who learned the lesson through the school of hard knocks have been given some notice and certainly a reminder, and I would encourage the Department of Transportation to get out there even through some type of media radio campaign, reminding people in the North Slave that we have restricted load levels because of permafrost changes in the season, things we've never encouraged before, I would encourage them, once

again, to remind our northern businesses that this may be something they need to plan for accordingly. It did come as a shock and until it becomes business as usual, it may be still be a shock the second time around.

That said, those are just a few brief comments. I look forward to going page by page and detail. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. General comments. No further general comments. I will now turn the floor over to Mr. Beaulieu.

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: Thank you, Madam Chair. Very quickly, I'll start off with the ferry, asked by MLA Blake, the Louis Cardinal ferry. The department is conducting a review of what has occurred at the ferry, trying to close the gap completely between the spring season and the winter season so that we're able to move traffic through there every day. We were not successful in that, but we managed to get the heavy vehicles moving across the Mackenzie at Tsiigehtchic in 30 days as opposed to what was normally about an 80-day shutdown.

This year we have plans to discuss with the community... Some of the people had asked us when we went to Tsiigehtchic, to try to look at talking about the traditional knowledge that's in the community and how we could maybe get the ice bridge in sooner than even this year.

What had happened was this was a completely different situation than the way that we did it in Fort Providence in the past. The water didn't move as quickly in this area as it did where we keep the ferry operational in Fort Providence. It had really nothing to do with the ferry itself. Both the Louis Cardinal ferry and the Merv Hardie ferry would have been under the same issues. Merv Hardie would have had just as much difficulty crossing.

The community was concerned a bit about the damage to the ferry and we, of course, are going to fix the ferry 100 percent before we put it back in the water. There was some damage. As a result, machinery needed to move the ice as we were moving across.

On the Dempster Highway the department is looking at the rehabilitation and reconstruction of the highway through our plan, which is Corridors for Canada III. We are still going through the details of Building Canada, Corridors for Canada III from the federal government. Once the final number is received from all of the possible funding sources that the federal government has in this area, we will then come up with some options to try to address our plan as best we can. That's not only for the Dempster but for all of the highways that were in our Corridors for Canada III.

The department, since 2007, has put about \$28 million to meet some priority reconstructing on the Dempster Highway. We know that there's work needed on the highway and we continue to do that work.

On Highway No. 7, in recent years we've invested, again, about \$12 million in capital, in addition to the regular maintenance that we're doing on there to continue to try to improve the highway. We've had some effort on trying to improve and strengthen that highway from the BC border to the Nahanni turnoff where we anticipate some heavy traffic, so a lot of our effort has been in that area.

We will continue to concentrate on rehabilitating the road. The plan is to put additional investment into Highway No. 7 as part of Corridors for Canada III. Again, we are still waiting for more details on how we're going to structure the money from the Canada Building Plan and how it translates into our plan, Corridors for Canada III.

On Highway No. 1, the Member wanted to get a little bit of detail on what was planned as far as the chipsealing goes. The plan is that from kilometre 81, which I believe is the turnoff to Fort Providence, out to I think it's about 18 or 20 kilometres that we will be preparing and chipsealing that portion of the highway and also chipsealing from 395 to 411, which I believe is from Checkpoint to the ferry. Not Checkpoint, pardon me, Jean Marie. Sorry. I guess it is called Checkpoint, so we've been looking at chipsealing that portion of the highway.

The Corridors for Canada III proposes investments in Highway No. 1 to widen and reconstruct sections between the junction and Wrigley, as well, so from the Fort Simpson junction on to Wrigley.

On the Trout Lake Airport, the work on the new airport, construction of a new airport and longer runway at Trout Lake continues to be something that we are working with the community. There are some challenges, no question about it. Ourselves, the contractor and the community have faced some challenges with it, but we're very confident and comfortable that we are progressing as we go. We are always working with the idea that we're trying to maximize employment in the community and the training opportunities for the residents. Having that is another objective within the overall. It's not just a capital project for us; the community wants to see some employment, some training opportunities.

In addition to that, there's been, I guess, more rain than what we would like to have seen to be able to effectively do the project. There were also some delays as a result of some materials that we weren't happy with.

In response to some of the questions MLA Yakeleya had, Bear River Bridge, DOT is constructing new permanent bridges and improving grade on the Mackenzie winter road to improve the

abilities of residents to travel between the communities and provide safer highways, so we are doing a lot of that work, and some of the work remaining there long into the future in that Mackenzie Valley road is constructed. Some of the work we're doing now will be incorporated into an all-season road. So we're pleased with that.

The department completed the bridge design back quite a few years, 2006, which was estimated to cost about \$70 million, in that area. So that's the kind of money that we're looking at for this one wide crossing on the Mackenzie Valley road and that is something that we've incorporated into our Corridors for Canada III and then, again as I repeat myself, we're waiting for some of the final details on that before we move along.

We're working with the resource development and industry and through the contribution agreements to increase the level of service on the Mackenzie winter road to accommodate the heavy traffic. So, because of the industry in there, we're anticipating and are getting a large number of heavy traffic. So, as a department, we are working with industry to make sure that traffic is moving, that essential items that need to get into the Sahtu to see the work go there, gets in there in a safe manner and that industry is able to get the equipment and supplies they need in order to do the work that's being done in that area. We have tried to assist the process not only with the road but increasing our presence in there with highway patrol officers. We're establishing a list of mandatory equipment that commercial vehicles must have before being permitted on the winter road is something else we're doing. We've improved the signage. MLA Yakeleya talked about the signage and we are improving the signage at all of the creek crossings, and distributed maps of the winter road, constructing wide-outs on the winter road to act as, I guess, hill climbing lanes for trucks and also rest areas.

The Member also spoke of the regional presence for the department in the Sahtu and in Norman Wells, or I guess in the Sahtu in general. We continue to review the option of establishing a regional operation for DOT in Norman Wells. At this time we don't feel that a full regional office is needed in Norman Wells because there is no all-season highway. So we bring in some extra personnel during the winter road season and we feel that we have what's necessary to continue the effective operation of the airport. So, at this time, it is difficult for us to justify an all-year-round regional office, a fully functional regional office, which would essentially just be an office that would take some of the positions, some of the other regions to build up, because right now we are doing the regional office work from, I think, on the airport, out of Inuvik and then for the winter season regional office is in Fort Simpson.

The department anticipates that once the decision is made and that we're going to be constructing an all-season highway up the Mackenzie Valley, then we could see a regional office. It would be strategic and wise to put a regional office in Norman Wells at that time.

Ms. Bisaro supported our on-line service, as many of the MLAs have. We think that that's something that's going to be effective. Member Bouchard asked about expanding the on-line service and that is the intention. So the issue that the MLA brought forward here with commercial vehicles and permitting and so on, it was a bit of an issue with 24/7 operations. We are hoping that as the on-line service expands that we're able to add commercial permitting and so on to the on-line service that we offer now.

MLA Bisaro asked about the Inuvik-Tuk highway and whether or not we would be on budget, that it may be difficult to be on budget. I guess the only way we can respond to that is to say that we have a budget that we're working towards, we have a contract in place, we have a smaller contingency than we would like. With a project this size, we'd hope that there would be a contingency which is comparable to other projects of this magnitude, but we don't have that here. But we've tried to cover as much of the costs as possible. We do recognize there's a risk associated with this type of construction. There's no prototype for us to follow. This is brand new technology that's going in there and this type of highway has never been built anywhere previously. So with all of those unknowns, we took the best experts in this area and put them together and said, you know, they've come up with this plan that they think will work, we're confident, we put the money into it and we're proceeding. Only time will tell whether or not this Inuvik-Tuk highway will be on the original budget or not. So there are hopes that it will be.

She also asked about the retrospective analysis of the bridge, as did MLA Dolynny. We are currently doing a terms of reference for that, recognizing that maybe a promise was made to do the retrospective analysis on the completion of the bridge. We still have some deficiencies. We could essentially say, well, we're just not 100 percent complete until all the deficiencies, or we could say that the bridge is complete with deficiencies this summer. In any event, the idea is to try to bring something that is useful to the table that takes a look at a document, an analysis that's going to help us in the future, not just for the sake of putting an analysis together because we said we would do it in six months. But we want to put something together that's going to be useful and useable for us as we move forward.

The central repair, there is no change in central repair. We're not taking positions out of Hay River to move them into Yellowknife for central repair, but

we are seeing that as our equipment ages and that we don't really have the capital to be replacing all of the pieces of equipment that should be replaced, we are repairing this equipment. So putting a second office, a central repair in Yellowknife was the most economical thing we could do to extend the life of the equipment that we have. So this was not an attempt to remove anything from the regions, but just to try to make our equipment last a little bit longer.

The airport assessment is something that we are doing. Assessment of all of our airports will be done, and right now it's a part of our airport O and M.

I'm just going to talk a bit about the tri-drive, and I'm going to ask the deputy minister to provide a little more detail on that. It's a very technical area. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard): Thank you, Minister Beaulieu. Deputy Minister Neudorf.

MR. NEUDORF: Thank you, Mr. Chair. As the Member had indicated in the question, we do have a pilot underway right now. It's a two-year pilot to look at tri-drive vehicles. We know that industry is asking for it. It can create great efficiencies and we would like to facilitate that. There are, of course, concerns from a safety perspective and then from a protecting the infrastructure, so the more weight on a truck, the more damage could potentially be done. That is why we're doing this two-year pilot. It just got underway and so we don't have any results of that yet, but we're looking forward to the results as time goes on.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard): Thank you, deputy minister. Mr. Beaulieu.

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The Member also spoke about the winter road maintenance and what happens when there is heavier snowfall and so on and it blocks off the roads more than would be anticipated. We build those types of things into our contract, and on the other side, if the season went very well and it was colder than anticipated, then the highway could be extended beyond our contract. We tried to run some of the contracts and the ones down here to about March 31st, and they usually end within that fiscal year. If the road is extended well into April, as sometimes happens further up north, then it's in the contract to do that. That it's a public road and that we keep it open and we pay the contractor that we negotiate with on it.

MLA Dolynny talked a bit about the royalties. We are continuing to negotiate with IRC on the royalties. We are very comfortable and feel that the organization is being very reasonable and that whatever deal that we get between ourselves and the Inuvialuit is going to be something that would be beneficial to the project. They recognize that this is

something that favours the region, but they also recognize it is something that is being built to Tuktoyaktuk and not really having a positive impact on Inuvialuit people of Ulukhaktok, Paulatuk and Sachs Harbour, and the Inuvialuit people in Aklavik, so those people are also part of the land claim. You can't take away a royalty from individuals that are not benefitting directly from the highway. Tuk is. They recognize that. There are many Inuvialuit of their membership in Tuk and Inuvik, and so with that in mind, they were very reasonable and came up with something that they were comfortable with.

The audit on the toll of the Deh Cho Bridge as requested by the same Member, again, as I responded earlier, we'd look at doing that. The first year where we did an audit, or I'm not sure we could really refer to it as an audit, but we did an evaluation and determined that we were slightly lower than anticipated for traffic, so there was less traffic there than we anticipated so our numbers were a little bit lower. This year it looks like we're right on target.

Also, the idea of commercial plates on vehicles that are hauling personal trailers and so on and RVs and so on, we would look at that. Essentially, there is something to compare to with Alberta. Alberta is pretty wide open yet they have heavier weights and so on coming across. But we're not Alberta; we're the NWT. We set our own rules. We consider Yukon also has roads that come from the Yukon that end up over here, and BC, we have access directly. BC roads come directly into the NWT as well. We try to work with all jurisdictions and try to be as harmonious as possible when we're developing a motor vehicles system right across the country. That's something that we looked at and we know that it's difficult to just let everyone go by even commercial, because the Member used an example of somebody going down to Hay River pulling a private vehicle and going down there. Well, it's just as easy for that individual to say that they did some business while they were down there and write off the trip. At any event, I think we're talking about \$91, and that's something that we're, at this time, not prepared to remove.

There was mention of some deficiencies on the bridge. It's not really a holdback. It was something that was a letter of comfort, or letter of credit from a bank and backed up by the Government of New Brunswick. They're watching those expenditures since they're paying for it, so when we put in a request to spend some of that money, we make sure that it's something that's going to meet the acid test for the government down there to be able to make the payment, so we're cautious about what we put through.

Privatization of airports is something that came up. What may appear to be privatization is probably things that are passed on to an airport authority,

and in the Northwest Territories there is only one airport that could possibly end up in an airport authority where there would be a profit. No other airport has enough use to be able to generate any sort of profit, so any airport other than Yellowknife that's passed on to an airport authority would not be something that can operate without huge subsidies from the government, so it is essentially better for the government to continue to operate the airports.

The negotiated contract on the Inuvik-Tuk highway was also brought up, the negotiated contract and how it pertains to BIP. Well, first on the negotiated contract, we have a policy on negotiated contracts that we follow, so we do not bring other things into the mix. We follow that policy. When we negotiate a contract we have to have a policy. That's the way the government does business. We had followed that policy to negotiate that contract. In as far as BIP goes, the Business Incentive Policy. The Business Incentive Policy, had it been applied to the Inuvik-Tuk highway, would have maxed at \$500,000. That's the maximum on BIP. The size of the project really doesn't matter. On this project it would be a very, very small percentage. Putting that out and putting it to public tender and recognizing that on a project this size, an advantage we're giving to a northern company that we're trying to get to do the work, would be minimal, so it would have not been a good idea to put this out to tender because the BIP, even in its fullest application, would have only been a half a million dollars on a \$230 million contract.

In as far as the individual Northerners going to the Joint Venture Group that's building Inuvik-Tuk highway looking at the BIP, making an application and applying BIP, again, we negotiate a contract with these guys. They give us a list of companies that they're going to use some Northerners in an attempt to try and use mostly northern. However, as a government, if we started going into every purchase, every procurement item that this company had and said you had to apply BIP, we would increase the cost of the highway.

On one hand, Members would want us to stay within budget. On the other hand, they want us to apply a policy that would increase the cost of the highway. We looked at this and said, the bottom line here is the most important, most essential thing. We think that the region is getting a benefit by us negotiating the contract. We're going to let the contractor do the procurement and give us a list of the individual companies and individuals that they are hoping to use.

MLA Nadli talked about ambulance services. The Department of Health and Social Services, MACA and our department are working on a project. The Department of Health is bringing legislation forward on first responders. I think the Members recognize, as part of the Health Professions Act, that

emergency responder service providers are one of the first three professions that are going forward. MACA is working with the communities on that. Right now, between the three departments, they are getting together with the community reps that would be affected by providing ambulance service. We are moving through the process and hopefully we will have something, and if we think it's feasible and the best way to go, that's what we're going to do.

The Deh Cho Bridge, the deal was that we are providing \$200,000 a year for the next 35 years to the Deh Cho Bridge Corporation. In addition to that, we've asked the community to provide us with an access road budget to keep the road open from the bridge back towards the lake where the people live. There are about six households or cabins out there that people are using. My understanding is that that road remained open all of this winter.

The airport in Fort Providence, it's not that we don't have the CARs people at that airport. I guess it's a public airport. I'm not recalling all of the details that are around that airport, so I'm just going to have the deputy minister give a little briefing on the Fort Providence Airport. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard): Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. Deputy Minister Neudorf.

MR. NEUDORF: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The Fort Providence Airport is one of the airports that DOT owns and operates. It's maintained by our local highways staff. We have a highway camp in Fort Providence. There is no scheduled traffic into the airport, so it's used for a charter basis. Fort Providence, of course, has a great all-weather road highway access. It's there for whatever use there might be of the public. If there were ideas to expand, change that service, I think DOT would be willing to talk to whoever about any potential changes to the service. But just because Fort Providence is on the all-weather road, a relatively short distance to Yellowknife and to Hay River, it's a smaller airport that we operate because of those things. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard): Thank you, deputy minister. Mr. Beaulieu.

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The airport road or road from Inuvik Airport into Inuvik is something that we've looked at. It's something that we are looking at in Corridors for Canada III as part of the work that's needed on the Dempster. At the time we were putting in Corridors for Canada, we had considered that portion of the road as part of the Dempster and the repairs that are needed. That is something we are looking at within that whole area of Corridors for Canada III. The airport sinkhole is something that we are aware of and definitely something that we will be repairing.

The Member talked a bit about ferry services. Again, I just want to reiterate that the Merv Hardie ferry in Fort Providence, a bigger ferry, mind you, would not have operated any more efficiently with the operation that we are trying to run all season at Tsiigehtchic. Definitely we have no issue with communicating with our federal counterparts in having that discussion with Coast Guard if Coast Guard is going to operate in Inuvik. Again, it would be a federal government decision, but if the Members wish for us to have that discussion, it would not hurt for us to have that discussion to see if that's something they would contemplate.

I'm going to again go back to the deputy minister to talk a bit about the Green Light, as brought forward by Member Bromley. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard): Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. Deputy Minister Neudorf.

MR. NEUDORF: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Green Light is our strategy document for our environmental practices to talk about how DOT would like to operate from an environmental perspective. It is three or four years out now. We have not gone and done a retrospective on it, but in the next while, up to the five-year anniversary of the document, it would be a good idea to take a step back and refresh it to make sure that...report on how we've done in meeting the objectives in it and to relook at what we might want to do going forward.

I'd also note that, as part of our multi-modal Transportation Strategy work that we'll undertake this coming year that Green Light will be incorporated as part of that work as well. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard): Thank you, deputy minister. Mr. Beaulieu.

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Again, on the management costs on highways and also safety regulations, Member Bromley was asking the reason why those two costs went down over the years. I'm just going to have the deputy minister do a response on those two areas.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard): Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. Deputy Minister Neudorf.

MR. NEUDORF: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Highways management side, the budgets were down from '13-14 mains to the current year of the proposed '14-15 mains mainly due to financial shared services and transferring some of the responsibilities from ourselves to the Department of Finance and then also a small adjustment related to procurement shared services.

In road licensing and safety, on safety and regulations there were a number of budgets, some increases due to Collective Agreement, increased

cost due to the contract with Canadian Bank Note, the contractor that produces our drivers' licence.

There was an internal budget realignment to move \$150,000 from this budget used to pay the 24-7 contracting services from total permit services fees from safety and regulations program to the motor carrier services budget, so it was just an internal realignment.

There is also a decrease adjustment due to financial shared services and then, finally, there was an adjustment internal to DOT to centralize some software licensing on our Motor Vehicle Information System new DRIVE system centralizing just to have better management of the various software licences for that software. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard): Thank you, deputy minister. Mr. Beaulieu.

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. On the Deh Cho Bridge Corporation, Member Bromley asked how long the contract was in place for. I had indicated earlier, but just a quick repeat, it is a 35-year deal at \$200,000 per year with the Deh Cho Bridge Corporation and that was to provide some sort of tourism development, economic development or any type of thing that may have been lost with the fact that when the ferry was there, the traffic was stopping in Providence, coming and going. Now that the people know that they don't have to, unless they need to gas up, many of them go straight through on their way south on their way to other communities in the south of the NWT. This money was put in there, too, for the Deh Cho Bridge Corporation to develop something in that area to try to attract people still into Providence that is being lost as a result of the bridge.

The MLA also spoke a bit about looking at a railroad for the Transportation Strategy. I recall from a couple of years ago the Member asking the department to take a look at this as part of the overall Transportation Strategy. I don't believe we have done that yet. That is next year. Again, we would look at that in the multi-modal Transportation Strategy that we would take a look at the railroad, as well, the feasibility of that being part of the transportation system.

The next one I have is the Inuvik to Tuk highway cost. Again, this was Member Hawkins asking about maybe what type of cost controls are in place and why not spread the costs over a longer period of time. Again, we looked at trying to build the road as quickly as possible. We need to get that highway built. We looked at that highway and determined that considering that the highway could only be constructed during small periods during the year, that there is no summer construction because of access to that area then in the summertime they will be working on the parts of the road that they

have already constructed. This is a five-year project and we thought that was a fairly extended time, as well, and was as quickly as we could do it. Money flows in from the federal government. As the Members know, about two-thirds of the cost is coming from the federal government and they have cash flowed it over five years. We have matched our share into that same time period and we are hoping that the road can be built in five years. The thought of slowing it down and spreading it out over a longer period for employment purposes is something that was not a priority for us. Our priority was to build the road.

The YK Airport was brought up earlier by a Member. We have the program review office looking at our governance options. We've done several reviews of the airport and feasibility and what can be done to expand services, or the airport program to move to the other side of the airport and so on. Right now what is happening, the program review office is looking at all those reports and looking at if there is a better way to govern what is going on there, a better way, looking at options, looking at other governance options.

The cold weather testing that the Member spoke of is something that we actually have some involvement in. Recently, we have done some cold weather testing up here for helicopters, so that is something that we are looking at.

The strategy, again, some Members talked about briefings and updates, so again, I am going to have the deputy minister talk about the strategy, but I just have a couple of items here that I will speak on.

The Member was supportive of the on-line registration; we appreciate his support. As we expand, that is exactly our intention and that we need to expand and that is what we will be doing and trying to get as many things on-line as possible.

The Deh Cho Bridge has not increased the cost of living to a large part in the city, so we have had a consultant look at that aspect of the Deh Cho Bridge, whether or not it was adding costs to the city. We notice that there is no change in the cost of gasoline, that there was some, I think, a couple of times where some people may have transferred too much of the cost over and above what they were paying in tolls to some products that were being brought in. That was something that was addressed and the increased costs on items were minimal. Like, if a vehicle was hauling maybe 10 cars across and was paying \$300, then that would be like \$30 per car, as an example, and taking that cost would be the direct cost of the toll they transferred to the customer and would hardly be noticeable, an individual buying a \$40,000 car that was being increased by \$30.

Getting back to an update on the strategy, what the plan is moving forward, I will ask the deputy minister to finish off my response.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard): Thank you, Minister Beaulieu. Deputy Minister Neudorf.

MR. NEUDORF: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We will be updating out multi-modal Transportation Strategy in the next fiscal year. There is a lot of background work that is underway right now. Runway issue study, we talked about Green Light before, our Corridors for Canada, all of those different studies are going to be wrapped together into our new multi-modal strategy. We also do want to undertake some consultations as part of that, so we are working on a plan to put that together, also building on the work of the Economic Opportunities Strategy and the Mineral Development Strategy, recognizing the strong link between transportation systems and economic development in the North and in the NWT. We would hope to finalize that during the next fiscal year and we actually hope to be able to get this to standing committee soon to provide a more detailed update on that. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard): Thank you, Deputy Minister Neudorf. Minister Beaulieu, did you have any closing final remarks?

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. No, I don't. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard): Committee, Mr. Bromley had one more quick general comment.

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Very quickly, I am very excited about the Detah road. I am happy the Minister has decided to move on that and I'm wondering when exactly that negotiation or that request for proposal or whatever will start happening. I know the summer season is the best to do the work and I am obviously hoping to see that come out in April.

I also want to mention that in the Inuvik-Tuk highway, I think the concern is that the economic benefits are not rippling very widely, they are largely accruing to the large companies there.

There was one other issue. The forecasting of runway issues was one thing that wasn't covered that I had mentioned, what we're doing in the way of having a look at runways, making sure that there are no issues there and preventing them if possible. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard): Thank you, Mr. Bromley. Deputy Minister Neudorf.

MR. NEUDORF: Thank you, Mr. Chair. On Detah access, \$2 million was approved in capital last fall. So we are working on the plan for that and actually for reconstructing the rest of the highway. We do hope that the recent announcement from the federal government under the Building Canada

Plan will provide an opportunity to reconstruct and chipseal that entire highway, but as that work progresses, we will be prepared. That work will be undertaken this summer. So we'll have our contracting in place to have that work undertaken this summer.

Runway issues and climate change, we've talked in the past about the work that we are doing around climate change trying to prepare for, better understand what impacts changing climate will have on our infrastructure is already having and then trying to forecast what it might have in the future. One of the tools that we're using there, the important one, is the vulnerability assessment, and we've applied that to several of our runways now just trying to get a better handle or idea of what might happen in the future assuming that the warming trend does continue. Inuvik is the one where it's currently being applied with the depression that showed up there last fall quite suddenly tied to the work that we want to undertake this summer to fully repair and fix that.

So the full focus of looking at climate change is, of course, to better understand what might be happening in the future and then what we can do to adapt to the changes there.

The Inuvik-Tuk highway, lots of work underway there now and I think that the communities are definitely seeing the benefits of that work up to well over 100 people that are employed already on the project and anywhere around 80 percent of local and/or northern people that are working on that job along with a high percentage of contracting and subcontracting opportunities to the local northern companies. So I think the region in particular is feeling the benefits from that project already. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard): Thank you, deputy minister. Next I have Mr. Hawkins.

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'll just maybe use the time just to request a copy of this so-called study that was done.

The Minister highlighted \$300 for a truck to drive across the bridge, obviously, the 10 cars, divide that up, you know, that type of survey. He had highlighted that example, the gas he said they're using as a reference. I'd like to find out who your expert is. I'd like to see what paperwork they generated, justify their position and I'd also like to know if that could be sent to my office, including the costs that may have come. I want to get a sense or a full grasp of what they were looking at because, by the way, as a footnote, I was referring to things like milk, pellets that provide heat, small consumables like lumber and other things like that.

That said, I'd be happy if they would deliver a copy of the study as well as the cost. Inform me as to the cost. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard): Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. Deputy Minister Neudorf.

MR. NEUDORF: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Before the Deh Cho Bridge was to come into service, one of the items that we wanted to look at was what the impact of the toll was going to be on the cost of goods in the North Slave region. We did engage a consultant to take a look at that for us and he came back and said that really there's nothing I can do for you because the top cost of the toll on the price of goods coming into the North Slave region, the cost of the toll or the impact of the toll is so minor that there was nothing that they could measure to make it meaningful. So, in fact, we did not engage the services of a consultant for that work. As we've seen the toll, and the bridge has been in operation I guess coming up to a year and a half now, really the inflation in Yellowknife has tracked inflation in other parts of the country. So there is no extraordinary impact of the toll that could be felt. There are certain commodities where you would expect to see the toll, those large bulk commodities and gasoline is the example that the Minister had brought up before, where if the cost of that toll was going to be passed on completely it would have been at about two-thirds of a cent a litre that could be passed on and the price of gas has not changed for the last three years in Yellowknife. So it stayed the same as it was beforehand, which is where we would hope to see the impact from the bridge come in.

Really, there are efficiencies to be gained. Yes, you have to pay the cost of the toll, but there are many efficiencies to be gained in the transportation industry and then just in businesses and managing their inventory and those types of costs. So we expect, at the end of the day, that those two items would wash themselves out and there would be no impact of the toll and it will take time for that to sort itself out. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard): Thank you, deputy minister. Mr. Hawkins.

MR. HAWKINS: I guess I don't have much of a follow-up because, quite frankly, I'm not sure what to say now because I was given the impression that they had studied this and had some paperwork behind it.

I don't want to tie too much more committee time up on this, but I don't necessarily think that those are the right things studied, and when you consider the Hay River rack price of gasoline today is 90 cents – 90.1 cents, by the way – it does lend oneself to wonder where the additional 48 cents, almost 50 cents are coming from. So how does a gain of 50 cents between Hay River rack price and Yellowknife, well it's the transportation, the costs and everything. To say the bridge didn't have an effect, well, if the deputy minister is correct with his math, I suspect he is, two-thirds of a cent, well, they

ate it, but that's not the way it is when you go buy pellets that go up a dollar a bag from \$5.50 to \$6.50 overnight as an example.

Anyway, I don't really see much to anyone's benefit to pursue this point anymore. My point is this: that cost has increased. The Department of Transportation in concert with other departments could have spent some time studying this. As a public awareness, could Transportation have changed anything? Absolutely not. I've always maintained that private industry has the ability to set their prices. However, it's government's responsibility to inform the consumers and we failed, or I should say the government failed. Some of us tried to raise this concern and it fell on deaf ears and consumers are concerned. So there's not really much more to add. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard): Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. I'll take that as a comment, concern. Is committee agreed we've completed our general comments?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard): We will proceed to detail with the Department of Transportation. Mr. Menicoche.

COMMITTEE MOTION 20-17(5):
CONCLUSION OF TRANSPORTATION
DEPARTMENT SUMMARY,
CARRIED

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. I've got a motion here. I move that this committee now concludes consideration of the Department of Transportation department summary and all related activities and information items contained in Tabled Document 22-17(5), Northwest Territories Main Estimates 2014-2015. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard): Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. The motion is in order. The motion is being distributed.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard): Question has been called. The motion is carried.

---Carried

Does committee agree we are concluded the Department of Transportation?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard): Thank you, Minister. Thank you, witnesses. Sergeant-at-Arms, please escort the witnesses out of the Chamber.

Thank you, committee. We've agreed we'll continue on with the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard): Minister, do you have some opening comments? Minister McLeod.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Yes, I do, Mr. Chair. I am pleased to present the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs' main estimates for 2014-2015. The department's main estimates propose an operations expenditure budget of \$99.4 million, an increase of \$665,000, or less than 1 percent, from the 2013-2014 Main Estimates. This increase is a result of \$3.43 million in forced growth, an increase of \$1.6 million in initiative funding, and sunsets and transfers totaling \$1.01 million.

MACA has a number of key priorities in support of community governments. This year we completed the Accountability Framework for Community Governments and are in the process of implementing this important tool through a series of workshops and meetings with community leaders. MACA began collecting results in 2013-2014, with the first reporting anticipated in the 2015-2016 Business Plan.

An important factor in the implementation of the accountability framework is the creation of an assistant superintendent position in each region. These positions, created in support of the decentralization priority, are critical to the community government's understanding and use of the reporting requirements and in utilizing the tools we have developed to their fullest extent.

Following the introductory workshops, the assistant superintendents are now meeting with all community governments directly to advance this work.

While forced growth can partially explain funding pressures facing community governments, MACA has consistently heard from all communities and our partners at the NWTAC and LGANT that the total amount of funding available to support community government operations is insufficient. In response, MACA has initiated a formal review of the formulas used to calculate funding amounts. MACA anticipates having this work completed by April 2014 so that recommendations may be considered in advance of the 2015-2016 business planning process. This work will be high profile and of significant interest to community governments and will also ensure that MACA is prepared for the future when new resources may become available.

Included in the 2014-2015 Main Estimates are the following new initiatives in support of the 17th Assembly's goals and priorities; they are:

- \$500,000 for youth resiliency programming as part of the GNWT Mental Health and Addictions Strategy;
- \$150,000 to supplement the After School Physical Activity Program as part of the GNWT Anti-Poverty Strategy;

- \$350,000 for the Ground Ambulance and Highway Rescue Program to increase contributions to community governments and to implement a first responder training program; and
- \$129,000 to establish a youth officer position in the North Slave in support of the GNWT decentralization priority.

MACA continues its work to prepare for the transfer of the land administration function to the new Department of Lands. With this change, MACA has introduced a negative adjustment of \$2.73 million to offset the transfer of 19 positions to the new department.

As a result of feedback received from standing committee on our draft main estimates presented in December, we have worked with Finance to change some of the descriptors of line items contained within budget documents. Specifically, descriptors for recreation and youth contribution programs have been amended to provide more detail in both the sport, recreation and youth activity and under regional operations activity.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard): Thank you, Minister McLeod. Do you have witnesses to bring into the House?

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Yes, I do, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard): Does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard): Thank you, committee. I'll ask the Sergeant-at-Arms to escort the witnesses into the Chamber.

Minister McLeod, could you please introduce your witnesses.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chair. To my left I have Mr. Tom Williams, deputy minister of Municipal and Community Affairs. To my right I have Mr. Gary Schauerte, who is the director of corporate services for Municipal and Community Affairs.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard): Thank you, Minister McLeod. I will open the floor to general comments for the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs. Mr. Bromley.

MR. BROMLEY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. I really just have one question. I wonder if the Minister could tell me how this budget has changed with devolution.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard): Thank you, Mr. Bromley. Minister McLeod.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chair. With devolution came the responsibility for land, so

we transferred 19 positions from our lands department over to the new Department of Lands.

MR. BROMLEY: Has the budget dropped commensurately?

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: In my opening remarks, I said our budget did increase by 1 percent, an increase of \$665,000. Even with the drop in the positions that we've had and the money that goes along with it, we're still faced with some challenges and some forced growth and that, so overall, we had an increase of \$665,000.

MR. BROMLEY: I'm just asking because some departments have not been showing. They've adjusted their budgets to show what their budgets would have been last year if they didn't have those positions, so that's why I'm trying to get clear on this. Despite the fact that we've lost 19 positions here, this department has increased its budget slightly is my understanding right now.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: The Member is correct. Despite the fact that we did transfer \$2.73 million along with the 19 positions, we've had \$3.43 million in forced growth. Part of it was the money that went in, \$500,000 for the youth resiliency and \$150,000, so it turned out that we were still \$665,000 more, an increase of \$665,000 over last year.

MR. BROMLEY: I'm just wondering, like, 19 positions, say, would be a couple million dollars, and transfer of \$2.73 million, so we're not transferring any O and M with that, just the \$2.73 million? I just want to be clear on that. It sounds like there hasn't been much efficiency in the transfer of 19 positions and the programs that go with them.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: My understanding is that O and M did go with it, so they were fully-funded positions.

MR. BROMLEY: That certainly provides clarity. It doesn't show me much for efficiency, but it does give me an accurate basis on which to discuss the budget.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard): Thank you, Mr. Bromley. General comments. Does committee agree we go to detail?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard): Committee, we'll continue with detail after a short break.

---SHORT RECESS

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard): I'd like to call committee back to order. We are on Department of Municipal and Community Affairs, page 6-7, department summary, operations expenditure summary, \$99.451 million. We will defer this until activity detail and information items have been considered. Page 6-8, information item, infrastructure investment summary. Are there any questions?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard): Page 6-9, information item, revenue summary. Questions?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard): Page 6-10, information item, active position summary. Mr. Hawkins.

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I think the Minister had been here when I asked each department all of these numerous detailed questions about their human resource management, whether they are funded or unfunded. I can go through the whole list, but I think he's heard it a few times. We could probably save a lot of time by me just going to the Minister. I want that detail as far as these position allocations are concerned. Is he able to provide them? If so, that is my only question on this area. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard): Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. Minister McLeod.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I have a list here with a lot of the positions. I don't think it's going to do any good if I just read it out. I'll provide a copy of the list to Members. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard): Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Mr. Hawkins.

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Chair. He said he would provide the list. Again, I assume it is a breakdown of funded, unfunded, et cetera. I am seeing nods from the staff's heads, so it sounds like that is everything I need. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard): Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. Committee, we are on page 6-10, information item, active position summary.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard): Page 6-13, activity summary, directorate, operations expenditure summary, \$5.455 million. Mr. Bromley.

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I just want to note on the previous page that it looks like we've dropped 20 positions from this department rather than 19, according to numbers here. I just noticed that we're up 33 percent with compensation and benefits for the directorate and yet we've gone down 20 positions in the department. I see we picked up a property assessment and the directorate has gone up by five positions.

Could I just have an explanation, given that we're dropping a lot of our responsibilities in the department – sorry, we are transferring a lot of our responsibilities over to Lands – and recognizing we picked up property assessment, why are we up the five positions and the 33 percent increase in compensation and benefits? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard): Thank you, Mr. Bromley. Minister McLeod.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chair. We only mentioned the 19 because we haven't told the twentieth person yet. No. Nineteen are funded, the twentieth one was an unfunded position. We didn't feel we had to report it.

The property assessment, we are keeping that function within MACA because it was lands. We are transferring that function. It's going to the directorate, I believe, because they will still be responsible for doing the assessments and all the Commissioner's land within community boundaries, so we thought it was important that we retain that part of it within MACA. That's what you see the internal reallocation is for. I think it's \$857,000 that we have moved over from lands to the directorate. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard): Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Mr. Bromley.

MR. BROMLEY: That's all I had, Mr. Chair. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard): Thank you, Mr. Bromley. Next on the list I have Ms. Bisaro.

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I just have one question here and it has to do with the work that is being done to investigate whether or not communities can, or will be able to, assess a hotel levy. I'm asking particularly for the municipality of Yellowknife. I know there was some work being done. It's been a very long time that this work was being done. Can I get an update on where things are at? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard): Thank you. Deputy Minister Williams.

MR. WILLIAMS: Thank you, Mr. Chair. In regards to the hotel levy, we had some consultations with the Hotel Association here in Yellowknife and also with officials from the City of Yellowknife. It's something that is still on our work plan. We still want to do some further consultations. Again, it's added into our legislative agenda that we have, so it has been booked within our legislative agenda.

MS. BISARO: Thanks to the DM for that. I appreciate that it's on the list, but it's been on the list for about three years now. Is this something that's going to get solved one way or the other before the end of the 17th Assembly? Thank you.

MR. WILLIAMS: Yes, we certainly see some movement on it and hopefully we can resolve it either way during the life of the 17th Assembly. We still hear there are some hotel operations outside of the city of Yellowknife that don't agree with a hotel levy, so we have to make sure that we have something that works for all communities in the NWT. We will certainly try our best efforts to get it resolved before the end of the 17th.

MS. BISARO: Thanks to the DM. I guess just in terms of the philosophy, I'm having great difficulty understanding if this is something that can be applied by each individual community, should they want to do it, why does the disagreement of a hotel operator in a community outside of Yellowknife, impact on the possibility of Yellowknife applying that levy? Thank you.

MR. WILLIAMS: Again, as I mentioned, there's still some further consultation that has to take place. We're open to listening to the Yellowknife hotel operators. I think this summer we will be going through some more consultations with them and see if we can have a product that can work for Yellowknife hotel operators, but ideally we would want something that could work for all communities across the NWT.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard): Thank you, deputy minister. Next I have on my list Mr. Dolynny.

MR. DOLYNNY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I would like to welcome the Minister and the MACA team here again this evening. This question could be easily posed in the community services area later on in the department, but I'm asking it under the term directorate. It should be no surprise to the Minister, he's heard me explain my concern here when we had the Department of Health and Social Services and this is the topic of our drinking water.

It is a fact that the drinking water quality base falls under the purview of MACA. MACA administers this website that controls the database for chemical testing and the bacteriological testing that should be occurring throughout the Northwest Territories on a monthly basis as per federal guidelines. Yet, Mr. Chair, when one continues to dial in and try to get updates, especially in the wake of the Obed spill that we had before Christmas, I'm still quite puzzled why a number of communities, especially those communities along the Mackenzie water basin area, places like Fort Smith, Hay River, all these place that are on the water, potential contamination zone, we are not seeing robust and rigorous testing as per our guidelines.

Can the Minister or designate shine some light on this as to what are the barriers for us not doing the reporting? If we are doing the reporting, what are the barriers for us not having it in the database? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard): Thank you, Mr. Dolynny. Minister McLeod.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chair. ENR has got some monitoring equipment, I believe, in Fort Smith and on the Mackenzie River. As far as the drinking water quality, the community operators take the samples and then they, in turn, provide those samples to Health and Social Services and they do the analysis.

As far as the website goes, we recognize there are some improvements that need to be made to the website, so we have a project team that has been put together to complete the work on the drinking water website. We are expecting a launch date of the new, updated site of June 2014. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

MR. DOLYNNY: We heard – and I had to go check my notes – this drinking water website or an updated version of the website probably almost two years ago, almost when I first started as a Member. I'm still very concerned.

This is the only website that the public has in order to validate, reassure them in a transparent manner if the testing is being done. So what are those barriers that we can't update this website with the community drinking water teams that are allegedly doing this testing? Thank you.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: The information, I think, is contained within the MACA website. Again, as I said before, we recognize that we need to improve it, so this site is going to be specifically for the drinking water. We have a project team that's put together. The launch date is June of 2014. So right now you'd have to navigate through the MACA website, but we're trying to make it more user-friendly. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

MR. DOLYNNY: Maybe I will rephrase my questions. We do have a drinking water website that MACA administers. The website has a water quality database broken up by community. It is broken by bacteriological testing as well as chemical testing. Yet, when you drill down to each community, in some communities there hasn't been a test for sometimes up to a year or 12 months ago or six months ago. If you have one testing, you may have only the one chemical testing, but no bacteriological testing. In some cases, you have bacteriological testing and no chemical testing.

So, what are the barriers for putting that information on this particular website today? I'm not sure if we need a working group to do that. It's about data entering. Are the tests there? Have the tests been done? What have the barriers been in putting them into this "only" public website available to residents of the Northwest Territories? Thank you.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: We were anticipating that we were going to launch the new website, but the Member is correct; there is a website there and it has a database. So there actually is no barrier other than entering the information.

I can commit to the Member that we'll go back and ensure that our website is updated and kept updated even though we are anticipating the launch of the new system in June. Thank you.

MR. DOLYNNY: I appreciate the Minister's commitment. The Minister is aware that I've been very vocal on water. We've got some great

stewardship; we've got some great water management strategies. I know the Minister of ENR is well known for the ethics we're bringing to the Water Strategy and I support all those initiatives. I just want to make sure we've got something that the public has access to and it's updated regularly. I think that's my goal.

I will leave this with my last question. The GNWT report on drinking water, the last one tabled, according to this website and according to Hansard, is 2011. We have not seen a 2012 report nor have we seen a 2013 report. When can the public and Members here anticipate seeing both water drinking reports tabled in the next little bit? Thank you.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Our plan is to table them during the May/June session.

MR. DOLYNNY: I appreciate it. I am looking forward to seeing those documents. No further questions. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard): Thank you, Mr. Dolyunny. Next on the list is Ms. Bisaro.

MS. BISARO: Thanks, Mr. Chair. I just have one question and I forgot to ask it earlier and realized it belongs on this page. It has to do with legislation or a legislative agenda as well.

Members have been asking since the 16th when or if MACA will take action on Access to Information and Protection of Privacy legislation for municipalities. The last I understood there was some work that was going on. I believe there was some consultation with communities. Can I get an update on where that is at as well? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard): Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. Director Schauerte.

MR. SCHAUERTE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The department is completing a discussion paper, a public discussion paper that we intend to take to community governments to outline different facets of what an Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act might look like for community governments. It's our intention to deliver that consultation paper in the spring this year and we recognize that our Minister is under obligation to return to standing committee based on recommendations from the Privacy Commissioner. We intend to respond to those recommendations from the Privacy Commissioner. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard): Thank you, Director Schauerte. Ms. Bisaro.

MS. BISARO: Thanks, Mr. Chair. Thanks to Mr. Schauerte for that. I'm very glad that this is finally maybe coming to some kind of fruition. It's an issue that the Information and Privacy Commissioner has raised for, I think, at least eight years. So it's about time that the government actually took some action. So, no more questions. Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard): Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. Mr. Bromley.

MR. BROMLEY: Just briefly, I know the Minister has been looking at building standards and other legislation that might cover it, but can I just get an update on where the Minister is at with that? I know last time we chatted he was going to look at the new federal legislation that we subscribed to, or ascribed to. I forget what it was called, the building codes, the National Building Codes anyway, which had an energy element in it, an energy standard and we were going to subscribe to that. Could I get an update on that? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard): Thank you, Mr. Bromley. Minister McLeod.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I'll just touch briefly on that and then I'll ask the deputy to speak to some of the meetings that they've had with some of the interested stakeholders, but I did commit to following up because there was some changes being made to the National Building Code. Actually, to be quite honest with Mr. Bromley, I haven't followed up on that yet. I meant to go back into the site and see what some of the changes were, but I know our department has been working with some of the stakeholders in getting some of their input. So I'll ask Mr. Williams to touch on that and I will commit to getting on the website tomorrow and having a look at some of the changes because they were contemplating some changes and I think it was during our deliberations last year when the consultations were going on. So I'll check that tomorrow and I will get Deputy Minister Williams to touch on the discussions they've been having with stakeholders. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard): Thank you, Minister McLeod. Deputy Minister Williams.

MR. WILLIAMS: Thank you, Mr. Chair. In early 2013 MACA consulted with industry stakeholders concerning the need for building standards legislation in the NWT. The stakeholders indicated additional time was needed for the study on the topic and to provide meaningful input. So, no further feedback has been received since then.

Some of the stakeholders that we did speak to, we spoke to the NWT Construction Association, the NWT Architects Association and the NWT Association of Communities as well as the Consulting Engineers of the NWT. So those consultations took place, I guess over a year ago now and I guess the next steps are we want to re-engage with them and see if there are any changes. The GNWT did examine this topic in 2008 and determined the current environment at the time offered sufficient protection to help ensure safety of residents. I guess one of the things that we need to move this forward is sufficient evidence needs to exist to justify the expense and effort required to

administer a territorial-wide building standards regime.

So, to sum it up, we have done some consultations. We're looking at a re-engagement over this summer with the various associations and hopefully we could make a recommendation of where we go from there. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard): Thank you, deputy minister. Mr. Bromley.

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Thanks very much for that update. I appreciate that and I'll look forward to any further conclusions. I appreciate the focus on safety. I think that is pretty well covered with the building standards. What wasn't in there was quality, or longevity as the architects may refer to it, and the energy, the opportunity to reduce cost of living, basically, for both our residents and our businesses by subscribing to standards, energy standards, which is a bit tough to get your mind around. In fact, the studies show you don't even spend, but it looks like you are, but when you bring in the cost of mortgage and operation, it's less. So there is an opportunity to save for our residents on cost of living here. So that would be the focus I'm interested in seeing provided to our communities.

Just on the last part of that, I know tangentially the office of the fire marshal is involved for safety stuff and I see a significant drop from this current fiscal year back to that of the last fiscal year with the office of the fire marshal. I know from time to time they play a role participating in national structures and so on, but was there a particular expense this fiscal year that's disappearing during '14-15? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard): Thank you, Mr. Bromley. Minister McLeod.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Have we jumped ahead to public safety, or are we still on the directorate?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard): Thank you, Minister McLeod. Mr. Bromley.

MR. BROMLEY: I can hold it.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard): Okay. Committee, we're on page 6-13, activity summary, directorate, operations expenditure summary, \$5.455 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard): Thank you. Page 6-14, activity summary, directorate, grants and contributions, \$638,000. Ms. Bisaro.

MS. BISARO: Thanks, Mr. Chair. I wanted to ask a question with regard to the grant for community government funding. It's the same amount as last year. I believe, although it does say allocated in accordance with the Extraordinary Funding Policy, the last time we asked about this I believe that there really wasn't a lot of usage of this particular

fund. So I'd like to know in '13-14 how much of the \$168,000 was used and maybe if they've got the information where it was used, to whom it went. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard): Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. Minister McLeod.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chair. When we got the question last year, I was hoping that we'd just reallocate this funding to other areas because we have one legitimate request in for this money right now. So we're having a look at that. But I think as we go forward we may have to take this \$168,000 because all the money that we do have, we allocate to the communities on a formula. Then we have this one pot here with \$168,000 and it gives the impression that we're funding anything that's extraordinary. So we'd like to have a look at this one application we have now, but I think going forward we may have to rethink this one sixty-eight figure and possibly reallocate it to a different division within MACA. Thank you.

MS. BISARO: Thanks to the Minister. That is what I was going to suggest, is that I don't think there's much point in leaving this money here and having it lapse every year. So I have a suggestion for the Minister and I think it probably would apply under public safety, but I think that this \$168,000, or maybe at least part of it, should be available to communities to assist them in buying defibrillators for their public buildings. Thank you.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, we will take the Member's wise words under advisement.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard): Thank you, Minister McLeod. Committee, we're on 6-14, activity summary, directorate, grants and contributions, \$638,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard): Page 6-15, information item, directorate, active positions. Mr. Bromley.

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Just a follow-up. I think the Minister is well prepared for this question on the fire marshal's office expenditures dropping this year significantly from '13-14 to '14-15.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard): Sorry, Mr. Bromley, we're on page 6-14, active positions.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard): Committee, we're on page 6-15, information item, directorate, active positions.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard): Alright, 6-17, activity summary, public safety, operations expenditure summary, \$1.717 million. Mr. Bromley.

MR. BROMLEY: Questions, Mr. Chair.

---Laughter

The fire marshal, what's happening with that? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard): Thank you, Mr. Bromley. Minister McLeod.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: We had a long time to get ready for this question. I'll ask Mr. Schauerte to explain the reduction in money.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard): Thank you, Minister McLeod. Director Schauerte.

MR. SCHAUERTE: In our previous budgets the department was resourced for three positions for the latent Mackenzie Gas Pipeline. In prior year, we made a proposal to reallocate the funding for the Mackenzie Gas Pipeline to other positions in support of government priorities. In our particular case, we used the money to create, in part, the new assistant superintendent positions at the regional level. We also used resources from residual as a result of financial shared services to be created, so what we see, the reduction was a plan review position that was located in the public safety area related to Mackenzie Gas Pipeline applications, and with the authority to reallocate that funding this money has now been moved to regional operations. The amount of the reallocation was \$108,000.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard): Thank you, Mr. Schauerte. Mr. Bromley.

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In terms of emergency management, I see a bump-up in the grants and contributions of a couple hundred thousand, and I know the Minister referenced another \$350,000. What is the Minister aiming at here? One of the things that has come up in terms of community management planning is the increase and the expectation of further increases of the transportation of toxic and explosive materials through our communities associated with the fracking activity in the Sahtu as well as along our highways and rivers and lakes and so on. I know the Minister is familiar with what's happening down South and with these sorts of accidents primarily with the rail, but where we don't have rail in many areas, so we'll be dealing with this stuff on our highways more and more. Will that be included or what are these dollars intended for?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard): Thank you, Mr. Bromley. Minister McLeod.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: I believe the Member is speaking to the \$200,000 increase on the grants and contributions side. I don't think it's the emergency management part on the bottom here. Maybe the Member could just clarify that. I believe he's speaking to the \$200,000 to \$400,000 on the top there under grants and contributions. Because

in emergency management side there's, like, a \$5,000 increase.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard): Thank you, Minister. Mr. Bromley, could you clarify your question?

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Yes, I was referring to the increase from \$200,000 to \$400,000 for ground ambulance and highway rescue as well as the Minister's mentioned, I think, in his introductory remarks, an additional \$350,000 for emergency management. I can look up the specific comment here. It was \$350,000 for the Ground Ambulance and Highway Rescue Services Program increase in contributions to community governments. That's probably in a different division, but anyway, we're looking at \$550,000 increase here apparently for the same thing and I'm wondering if it's going to help with these sorts of issues that I mentioned.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard): Thank you, Mr. Bromley. Minister McLeod.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chair. We just want to make sure we had our information correct here, or semi correct. They give it to me and then I hope I give it to you correctly. The \$200,000 increase there was some of the additional money, the \$350,000 that I was talking about, the contributions to the community to help with their desire to provide some emergency services in the community. Usually it was on an application base, and we tried to allocate all the money. The other \$150,000, we'll find it later on when we get to the School of Community Government, because our intention is to use that for first responder training. This year is to help the communities. We have had some application in the past. I think we've even considered doing a second round of applications. If all the money is not used up we'll go for a second round of applications, so we can probably top them off a bit more. I will get Mr. Williams to speak on some of the Member's concerns on the emergency management side of it.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard): Thank you, Minister. Deputy Minister Williams.

MR. WILLIAMS: Thank you, Mr. Chair. As the Member asked, what are some of the activities in the area of emergency management that will help protect our communities. MACA, right now, is working with community governments and key stakeholders to complete a territorial-wide hazard identification risk assessment that would help evaluate and better understand how climate change might affect the identification and selection of disaster mitigation strategies and the types of preparedness activities that are necessary. This report was recently completed with money that we received from AANDC to do the study, so it's going to assist us greatly in making sure our communities are prepared and we can identify future risks that

you mentioned with rail and increased traffic on the rail lines, et cetera.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard): Thank you, Mr. Williams. Mr. Bromley.

MR. BROMLEY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. That's good to know and I think it would be of interest if committee could see that report, obviously. Territory-wide, was it like all our communities or did it include the highways and other transportation corridors? Do we know? Just in association with that, and I'll see if I can finish this up here, I'm wondering if we're working with Transportation on this, as well, because they might have a role to play too.

MR. WILLIAMS: Certainly, it was territory-wide. We did take into account highways, community boundaries, rail lines, so it did encompass a lot. We wanted to identify what are the hazards and the risks out there so we're better prepared in reacting to any emergencies. As for working with the Department of Transportation, certainly, we have consulted with them on this project, so we got some input from them as well.

MR. BROMLEY: That's all I had, Mr. Chair. I guess maybe I'll just ask if the Minister could make that report available to committee.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard): Thank you, Mr. Bromley. Minister McLeod.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Yes, we'll make that committee report available.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard): Thank you, Minister. Committee, we're on page 6-17, activity summary, public safety, operations expenditure summary, \$1.717 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard): Page 6-18, activity summary, public safety, grants and contributions, \$400,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard): Page 6-19, information item, public safety, active positions. Questions?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard): Page 6-21, activity summary, community operations, operations expenditure summary, \$2.627 million. Mr. Bromley.

MR. BROMLEY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. I know this department is putting a lot of effort into community capacity building and I know that it comes up again under the School of Community government, I believe. I believe we were putting about a million into it, and obviously, there's less than that in the School of Community Government so I'm assuming that it's in here. If that's the case, and this is the appropriate page, what's the status of that work? We've been doing it for a little while now. Is there

some sort of evaluation? I think the Minister got this question last year and was, I think, intent on getting some evaluation done. Are we ready to hear how our efforts are working? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard): Thank you, Mr. Bromley. Deputy Minister Williams.

MR. WILLIAMS: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Actually that funding, the million dollars for the Public Service Capacity Initiative, is under the School of Community Government. We have done an evaluation and it will inform reinvestment in our funding model in this year in the '14-15 budget. We actually have a steering committee meeting tomorrow on it.

MR. BROMLEY: I see the \$680,000 in School of Community Government. Is there somewhere else that \$320,000 could be located in another division? Thank you.

MR. WILLIAMS: The \$320,000 is contained in O and M to run the programs. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard): Thank you, deputy minister. Committee, we are on page 6-21, activity summary, community operations, operations expenditure summary, \$2.627 million. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard): Page 6-22, activity summary, community operations, grants and contributions, \$185,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard): Page 6-23, information item, community operations, active positions. Questions?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard): Page 6-25, activity summary, School of Community Government, operations expenditure summary, \$3.252 million. Mr. Bromley.

MR. BROMLEY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. I am always curious and I've been trying to find out over the years, but I wonder if the Minister could supply me with a list of the courses that address the opportunity, need and methods for energy efficiency, renewable energy and energy conservation in the courses offered in the School of Community Government. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard): Thank you, Mr. Bromley. Minister McLeod.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chair. We may have shared that information before, but I will follow up and we will provide a list of... I think it was a list of courses that you were asking about, so we will provide that to committee.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard): Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Mr. Bromley.

MR. BROMLEY: That's it. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard): Next on my list is Mr. Menicoche.

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. Just with the School of Community Government, I was contacted by one of my remote communities. They have to, I think, pay their own way to attend a lot of these training functions. Particularly to Yellowknife it gets quite expensive. I guess the issue here is, they probably do it already, but can they do more training in the regions and the communities just to reduce the cost of those almost like fly-in communities?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard): Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. Minister McLeod.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chair. We will look at opportunities to try and get out into the regions as much as we can because it is quite important, but for those who come here, it is the community government that pays. I believe now their coming for training is eligible under the gas tax funding. So there are opportunities there too.

The Member makes a good point, though, and we'll try and ensure we do what we can to try to make sure that we bring the training to the community where they will be needing it the most. We have some examples and the deputy minister just pointed out equipment operator training that was brought to Tulita. So there are opportunities there, we just have to ensure we're on top of it. Thank you.

MR. MENICOCHÉ: It sounds like the Minister is aware of the issues in the small communities, because their funding is always tight and the Minister has heard that from many members, too, in the communities. It is about the amount of money it takes to travel out of the communities to get to Yellowknife. It sounds like he's willing to move some of the training closer to the communities, especially about governance and management. In the small communities there is a high turnover of people that manage the communities, so they find themselves training more. Like I said, it's quite expensive.

This gas tax funding for training, it seems like there's some flexibility there. I don't know if that gets out to the community as well. Thanks, Mr. Chair.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Mr. Chair, there are changes to some of the criteria for the gas tax funding. We use every opportunity we have to share it with communities if we can get them to get it through NWTAC AGM and that. We'll ensure that all communities are updated on some of the changes to the criteria. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard): Thank you, Minister McLeod. Committee, we're on page 6-25, activity summary, School of Community Government,

operations expenditure summary, \$3.252 million. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard): Page 6-26, activity summary, School of Community Government, grants and contributions, \$680,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard): Page 6-27, information item, School of Community Government, active positions.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard): Just a note, 6-29 is land administration with the new department. Taking us all the way to page 6-33, activity summary, sport, recreation and youth, operations expenditure summary, \$5.42 million. Mr. Dolynny.

MR. DOLYNNY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Again, as a Member, it is sometimes difficult. We end up critiquing many things in the budget and sometimes we don't take a minute to say thank you for some of the great things that are being done in this government. In my humble opinion, this division – sport, recreation and youth – is definitely under thanked many times, even though we get to see them in action out in the communities, especially our Youth Ambassador Program, by watching the kids do such a fantastic job, especially in the Summer Games and we are waiting for the upcoming Arctic Winter Games in Alaska. I just want to, again, commend the department on doing a great job here. If I could find money, I would definitely put it in this area. This would be a definite return on our investment. Given our obesity rates that I keep talking about and everything else that is kind of a barrier for us to become healthy, this is one area where we should be spending more money and more attention.

I do have a question. Most recently, the Yukon launched their sport school. This is a school that involves an accelerated version of the academic component and integrating it with a number of different sports to create, in essence, a kind of “own the podium” within the framework of education. I have asked similar questions to the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment and there seemed to be a willingness to consider some research in this area.

My question to the Minister and delegation here is: Has the department considered and done the research? Have they seen exactly what the Yukon school has offered? If so, is there a likelihood that we could see something of similar value instilled here in the Northwest Territories in some of our communities? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard): Thank you, Mr. Dolynny. Minister McLeod.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chair. We appreciate the Member's comments on some of the good work that this division does. I think we see the results. I am always proud of the fact that when we go to the Arctic Winter Games, in the last couple of games that I've been to, 27 of the 33 communities are represented by athletes. I think it speaks volumes to the fact that our folks are getting the programming out in the communities and they're going from community to community and having all of these Get Active programs. We appreciate the comments.

You can't say enough good things about the Youth Ambassador Program. I totally agree with the Member there.

We have had very preliminary discussions. Actually, I just had a meeting with a couple of folks over at Sport North last week I believe it was. We made some preliminary discussions. We were just chatting back and forth. In our discussions, I think some of this is tied in with the fact that Northwest Territories, Yellowknife in particular, is going to be hosting the 2023 Canada Winter Games, so there are opportunities there for us to have a look at programs like this. We haven't seen the Yukon model yet and I'm sure we will have opportunity to look at that. So we have to ensure that we do all our homework and put a program in place that is not only best for the Northwest Territories but what is good for the kids and their own personal development. I think there is some merit to it, I just think we need to look into it a little further and be prepared to own the podium in 2023. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard): Thank you, Minister McLeod. Next on my list I have Mr. Menicoche.

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm sorry; I have the wrong page up.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard): Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. Committee, we are on page 6-33, activity summary, sport, recreation and youth, operations expenditure summary, \$5.42 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard): Page 6-34, activity summary, sport, recreation and youth, grants and contributions, \$3.607 million. Sorry; that is all the way to page 6.35. Mr. Bromley.

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just wanted to comment on the high performance athlete grant for \$100,000. I know that is super appreciated by our athletes that are now competing, and winning, at the national and Olympic level. I am wondering if there has been any thought to increasing that, given the levels that our athletes are competing at and the number of athletes that we are starting to see. You know, just in the last year I can think of constituents that have won Western Canada and national championships in their sports. I know many of us could say similar

sorts of things, so is it time to relook at that and see if there is opportunity for an increase there? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard): Thank you, Mr. Bromley. Minister McLeod.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I totally agree with the Member that we are seeing a number of our athletes compete at a higher level now, and again with the fact that we do have the Canada Games coming in 2023 – and it seems like a long time away, but as we all know, it will come awfully quick – I think there are opportunities there for us to develop a lot of our high performance athletes, starting with the community level and as they go through the system.

During the upcoming business plans, there are opportunities there for us to have this discussion as to whether we could increase this or not, because I think the last list I saw we had quite a large number of our athletes were accessing this program. I think we had four or five of them that were competing at almost the international level, then we had a number of them that were competing nationally, so I think we should use the business planning cycle that is coming up to have discussion as to increasing this amount. We are always willing to increase it with committee's support. Thank you.

MR. BROMLEY: Mr. Chairman, thanks to the Minister. I guess I agree that it would be worthy to have that discussion. What would be useful would be to know the number of applicants we have had in recent years and the amount that they have applied for, just to get a trend and see what's happening. I think the Minister started to provide that information in a general way, so it would be good to have that in advance of those discussions. That's all I had.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: [Microphone turned off] ...provide some of that information. I can tell you in the last couple of years we had 35 applicants in 2012-13 for a total of \$105,850, in 2011-12 we had 34 athletes come out with \$98,050. I think as we go into discussions during the business planning cycle, we could probably break them out there. I'm not sure about providing the names, we'd have to check on that, but we can provide whether they are competing internationally. We'll try to provide as much information as we can so we can have a pretty detailed discussion. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard): Thank you, Minister McLeod. Next on my list I have Ms. Bisaro, followed by Mr. Menicoche.

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just want to echo Mr. Bromley; I had the same questions. I am really pleased to hear that the department is willing to look at this because it has

been a number of years where it has sat at the same level, so I'm glad that there is an opportunity to perhaps increase it.

My question on this page has to do with the youth corps money. I see that the department has changed the descriptions of various things somewhat and made them more obvious, so I don't have to ask the question about what things mean, but I do notice that on page 34 we have \$675,000 for youth corps, then again on page 6-41 there is \$500,000 for youth corps and the description seems to be exactly the same. I'm just wondering why we have money in two different parts of the department, some in sport, recreation and youth and some under regional operations. Are these two different programs, or is it one program and the money is just split up? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard): Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. Minister Miltenberger.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: I'm just committing money here, so I can't be Minister Miltenberger.

The Member is correct; there is one pot of money divided into two. The \$500,000, when we get to 6-41, is regional programs and the \$675,000 is territorial initiatives, so there are regional initiatives and territorial initiatives. It's the same pot of money and I know you are going to ask the question, well, can't you just combine them. If we combine them, you will tell me, well, can't you break them out and provide us more detail. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard): Thank you, Minister McLeod. Thanks for thinking for the Member, but I think the Member has another question.

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The Member has no comment. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard): Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. Next I have Mr. Menicoche.

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. These line items are unusual in the fact that they are exactly all the same in the actual and revised estimates as well. I'm just wondering: is that because these programs are fully subscribed?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard): Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. Minister McLeod.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The Member is correct; they are fully subscribed.

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Mr. Chairman, that was my next question. Are all these programs fully subscribed, because I, as well, wanted to kind of build on the momentum of our NWT and northern athletes, especially the one from Alberta as well. I think a lot of the children saw it, as well, so how can we continue that momentum as we develop our northern youth and northern athletes? I don't know if there is movement in the federal area, as well, to help out with the future Canadian athletes. Like I

said, if there is a question there, that will be the one.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Mr. Chairman, our federal contribution has not really changed much over the years, but the federal government is actually starting to help with some of the travel costs of sending our athletes to the games, like the Arctic Winter Games. The North American Indigenous Games, my understanding is that they have decided to assist with travel costs to get our team down to Regina. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard): Thank you, Minister McLeod. Committee, we are on page 6-35, activity summary, sport, recreation and youth, grants and contributions, \$3.607 million. Mr. Bromley.

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. You did say 6-35? Yes, on the Healthy Choices Initiative, I see that has increased a bit here. Generally I'm supportive of this sort of work. I just want to mention that there is a lot of research coming out, you can hear it on the radio these days, CBC, on how the effectiveness of learning programs and physical activity conducted outdoors has exceptional benefits above indoors, both for academic and physical activity. There's something that's more calming and has some unexpected attributes. I know this is probably an application type of fund and I'm wondering if the Minister would look into that and consider giving extra points to those proposals that are for outdoor programs recognizing that research if it holds up to the Minister's scrutiny? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard): Thank you, Mr. Bromley. Minister McLeod.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chair. That's something that we could look at, but I can tell the Member that from the applications and the money that we allocate, a lot of this money goes to programs such as the Member is describing and we normally have a list where a lot of the money went. I can say that a lot of the money did go to, it actually went throughout the whole Northwest Territories. It doesn't really have it broken down as to what the actual activity was, but I'm sure we'd be able to find some of that information and share it with committee, but I do know there's a pretty good balance there. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard): Thank you, Minister McLeod. Committee, we are on page 6-35, activity summary, sport, recreation and youth, grants and contributions, \$3.607 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard): Page 6-36, information item, sport, recreation and youth, active positions. Questions?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard): Page 6-39, activity summary, regional operations, operations expenditure summary, \$80.980 million. Ms. Bisaro.

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Chair. With regard to the community government grants and contributions at the bottom of this page, there has been an increase from '12-13 to '13-14 and then again in '14-15, so is this like a cost of living increase or is it for some other reason? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard): Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. Minister McLeod.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chair. This is all as a result of forced growth with community O and M funding and the water and sewer funding and grants-in-lieu of property taxes so it's all forced growth. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard): Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Ms. Bisaro.

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thanks to the Minister. So, do communities apply or is this a fixed percentage of forced growth that goes to every community across the board? Thanks.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard): Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. Director Schauerte.

MR. SCHAUERTE: The funding in these particular areas is not application based. It's provided to community governments through contribution agreements established early in the fiscal year. The formulas for the particular programs are contained within the policy base for this and it's those formulas that dictate the proportion that each community government receives for each respective program.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard): Thank you, Director Schauerte. Ms. Bisaro.

MS. BISARO: Thanks to Mr. Schauerte. I guess I'm trying to understand, it's based on a formula, that I understand, but if it's forced growth, how does the formula address forced growth? I mean, generally if there's a formula, you've got a pot of money and you apply the formula and divvy it up to the communities, but this explanation suggests to me that the communities are indicating forced growth and, therefore, the pot of money increases, so I'm just trying to reconcile how this works. Thank you.

MR. SCHAUERTE: Thank you. There are factors within the formulas that recognize community-specific factors. For example, the cost of fuel or population changes over time. It's those community-specific factors that determine the need for the community government relative to the operation of water and sewer or O and M funding, so when those community-specific factors are taken into the overall need of community governments, that's what establishes the department's forced growth ask on a go-forward basis and when we

receive forced growth it's applied back into the allocations to community governments.

MS. BISARO: Thanks to Mr. Schauerte. That's great. That's all I have.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard): Thank you. Committee, we're on page 6-39, activity summary, regional operations, operations expenditure summary, \$80.980 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard): Page 6-40, activity summary, regional operations, grants and contributions. Ms. Bisaro.

MS. BISARO: Thanks, Mr. Chair. I have a couple of questions here. The first one, the grants-in-lieu of taxes has increased quite a bit, about \$600,000. Could I get an explanation of the rationale for the increase in this? Thanks.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard): Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. Director Schauerte.

MR. SCHAUERTE: Grant-in-lieu is a payment that our government makes to community governments, obviously in lieu of taxation, so in this particular case, the increase in grant-in-lieu is a result of increased assets that have come on to the assessment roll over time and when those assets come on the assessment roll, there is, of course, a payment that's due to community governments. Our department makes those payments to community governments on behalf of the GNWT as a whole, so it could be any GNWT asset that came on board over time.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard): Thank you, Director. Committee, we're going to look at page 6-40 and 6-41 together, activity summary, regional operations, grants and contributions, \$75.336 million. Sorry, Ms. Bisaro.

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thanks to Mr. Schauerte for the explanation. I understand, I think it was in the Minister's opening remarks that the formula for funding community governments is being evaluated. There have been a couple of apparently very productive meetings and I'm very glad to hear that there's an in-depth look at the formula funding for communities. On this page we have contributions for a number of things. There's community government funding, there's then additional funding and then water and sewer funding and recreation funding. So, as the formula for communities is being revisited, are all of these formulas being revisited or are they all funded on the same formula? Like, there are four or five different pots of money here, so are they all allocated by the same formula, and if not, is every one of the formulas on this page being revisited? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard): Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. Deputy Minister Williams.

MR. WILLIAMS: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Under our current municipal funding policy review we're looking at three pots of money, three pots, that's the community public infrastructure pot, we're also looking at water and sewer and O and M funding, so we're looking at all three of those. Those are the three. I think the Member is right; we had two productive workshops since January and we have a third one slated for April, and at that time we'll be prepared to make recommendations from the committee to the Minister and be able to bring something forward through Cabinet, FMB and through the standing committee. But it has been a lot of good work, we got good participation from a good majority of the communities across the NWT. We're working in partnership with the NWTAC on this project and it's being well received by all. Thank you.

MS. BISARO: Thanks to the deputy minister. My last comment in this area is that I hope, as the water and sewer funding formula is being revisited, that Yellowknife will get a little more than what it has gotten the last number of years, which has been zero.

My last question is on page 6-41, Children and Youth Resiliency Program. This is new money. I can see that and I appreciate that, but I wondered if I could get a bit of an idea or a few examples as to what sorts of programs this is intended for.

MR. WILLIAMS: This new funding is part of the initiative funding that we received to assist and help establish or expand quality children and youth programming that supports physical activity and mental health and builds resiliency in children and youth. This was identified from the Minister's Forum on Addictions and Community Wellness. It identified a clear need for more quality youth programming to support mental wellness in activity.

Physical activity, sport and recreation programs are excellent ways to support the development of positive lifestyles and mental health choices for youth. The front-line children and youth program staff are often the first to notice and identify potential mental health problems, provided that they have the proper training. Part of this program training will be the mental health first aid training for support staff as well as training and physical literacy and physical health and development. We see that this will go a long way in ensuring our youth are prepared for the future.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard): Thank you, Deputy Minister Williams. Mr. Bromley.

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Just following up on that last one, I'd say especially if they're outdoor programs, and I mean that, especially for the mental health aspect of it. From time to time I've brought up the need for eco-literacy, which is, simply, traditional knowledge, I guess. You know, some understanding of the

outdoors and familiarity and comfort with the outdoors can have huge benefits in that area. Just a comment there.

I just wondered how much of the \$15.9 million for water and sewer services is going to Yellowknife this year, if that information is handy.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard): Thank you, Mr. Bromley. Minister McLeod.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chair. None of the money is going to Yellowknife this year.

MR. BROMLEY: That's pretty clear. I certainly hope the formula changes too. For the recreational funding that goes to communities here, my community of Ndilo is in an awkward position as they're considered part of Yellowknife, and the community of Detah, which is really an extension of the Ndilo/Detah community is funded separately, I believe, from Ndilo. Is there any consideration to working with Ndilo on this awkwardness and predicament it puts them in? It's sort of difficult for them to compete for Yellowknife funds, and Detah funds were meant for Detah, so it's difficult for them also for the Ndilo situation.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: My understanding is there have been some preliminary discussions with the City of Yellowknife, but then here again is another opportunity for our group that's reviewing the whole formula funding to take this particular situation into consideration. We have a good cross-section of folks from across the Northwest Territories, big communities, small communities. I think all our largest communities are represented on this group and the City of Yellowknife has representatives on there. I think this would be a good topic of conversation for them to have, and I think our deputy meets with them every so often when they do get together, so it's an issue we can bring up and see where they go with it.

MR. BROMLEY: Thanks to the Minister. That sounds good. This is my last question on these pages. The New Deal taxation revenue program, I just don't recall what that's about. If I can just get a quick refresher on what that fund is all about.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard): Thank you, Mr. Bromley. Director Schauerte.

MR. SCHAUERTE: The tax notices that are issued to community governments that are considered in the general taxation area, the Department of Finance collects that taxation revenue on behalf of community governments, and through this grant program the money is returned back to community governments for their use. At this point, within the communities within the general taxation area there are very, very few opportunities for these community governments to become taxation authorities themselves, so there's economies of scale that play here in terms of being the collection agency and then returning the money to the

community government for their use for community government operations.

MR. BROMLEY: I think I followed most of that. Is it easy to define the general taxation area?

MR. SCHAUERTE: The general taxation area includes all areas with the exception of Yellowknife, Hay River, Fort Smith, Norman Wells, Inuvik and Fort Simpson.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard): Thank you, Mr. Schauerte. Page 6-41, activity summary, regional operations, grants and contributions, \$75.336 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard): Page 6-42, information item, regional operations, active positions. Questions?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard): Page 6-44, information item, work performed on behalf of others and, as well, 6-45, information item, work performed on behalf of others, \$330,000. Mr. Dolynny.

MR. DOLYNNY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Just a point of clarification on 6-45, under the term gas tax we see a number of entries in the past, most recent revised estimates, a little over \$17 million but nothing in the 2014-15. Is this reallocated somewhere or is this part of some changes with devolution?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard): Thank you, Mr. Dolynny. Minister McLeod.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The reason it's not showing any allocation there is because we haven't signed the new agreement yet. We're hoping to have the new agreement signed by the end of March.

MR. DOLYNNY: If that's indeed the case, what impact will this have on the overall main estimates? I mean, this is a fairly large chunk of money, \$17 million. Is this captured in the overall numbers that we're continuously hearing about from the Minister of Finance about a shortfall and everything? Is this factored in?

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: I don't think this money is factored in. It's \$15 million a year that they've been getting for the last number of years and it's indexed this year. Community governments all know that this is probably the money that they're getting because we do put out a MACA update in the fall time to give the communities an idea of what they may be getting, but we always put a disclaimer on there, "subject to Legislative Assembly approval," so that helps with their planning purposes. Most of the community governments know that they're getting this allocation, and I don't believe it's factored in here at all.

MR. DOLYNNY: Would we consider this more like a flow-through amount and it's just indexed?

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Yes, the Member is correct.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard): Thank you, Minister McLeod. I'm seeing a nod from the Minister of Finance as well. Mr. Dolynny.

MR. DOLYNNY: No further questions, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard): Next on my list I have Mr. Bromley. Do you have questions on this page?

MR. BROMLEY: Thanks, Mr. Chair, just briefly. How long is the agreement typically for the gas tax that we're negotiating? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard): Thank you, Mr. Bromley. Minister McLeod.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The new Gas Tax Agreement is going to be for the next 10 years. I believe it's indexed at 2 percent every year starting in 2014-15. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard): Thank you, Minister McLeod. Committee, we're on page 6-45, information item, work performed on behalf of others, \$330,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard): We'll return to page 6-7, department summary, operations expenditure summary, \$99.451 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard): Does committee agree that we've considered the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs and is completed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard): Thank you, Minister. Thank you, witnesses. I will ask the Sergeant-at-Arms to escort the witnesses out of the Chamber.

Does committee agree we will continue on with the Department of Lands, the new Department of Lands?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard): I will ask the Minister if he has opening comments. Minister McLeod.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Yes, I do, Mr. Chair and I will read them as soon as I find them.

---Laughter

I am pleased to present the Department of Lands' first operations expenditure budget, totaling \$26.830 million for 2014-15. This includes funding for compensation and benefits of \$17.737 million for 143 positions, with 51 of those positions in regional centres, funding for contributions of \$680,000, and other expenses of \$8.207 million.

The department will be responsible for the management and administration of both Commissioner's lands and Territorial lands, under the Commissioner's Lands Act and the Territorial Lands Act, respectively.

Responsibilities devolved from the federal government include: being the lead Minister responsible for project assessments; land use planning, including regional land use plans and land use permitting; providing advice to the land and water boards for setting of securities; and leading compliance, enforcement and inspection functions for land use authorizations.

The GNWT is only one partner in an integrated land management system. Land management decision-making must recognize and respect Aboriginal and treaty rights as well as third-party land interests and legal rights. We plan to work with our stakeholders, along with the Standing Committee on Economic Development and Infrastructure, in developing policies that meet the needs of all Northerners.

As mentioned, this budget includes contribution funding totaling \$680,000: \$100,000 for Aboriginal groups for consultation in support of decisions on disposition of lands; \$400,000 for Aboriginal groups in the South Slave and North Slave in support of land use planning processes; and \$180,000 in support of other land use management planning processes.

The operations budget also includes \$950,000 to carry out an aggressive inspection process; \$250,000 of this will be dedicated to inspections at the diamond mines alone.

In these final weeks to April 1st, our implementation team and the Informatics Shared Service Centre will continue to work with other departments on early training opportunities to prepare and better equip transferring and new employees. Knowledge transfer and training for both current GNWT employees and new AANDC employees joining the GNWT is a vital component of our transition planning.

We have made progress since the committee meetings in November, but there is still much work ahead in building a cohesive department. We have the basic outline and will be working hard between now and April 1st to hit the ground running. As I previously said to the Standing Committee on Economic Development and Infrastructure, I fully expect there will be challenges as we go forward. The Land Use Sustainability Framework will form the overarching policy framework for the department and will be supplemented by the existing policies from the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs and Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada. In future, any amendments will be done in consultation with our stakeholders and committee to address land issues. But these processes will take time to do

properly and I am committed to engaging with committee and Members on a regular basis as we go forward over the next few years. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard): Thank you, Minister McLeod. Do you have witnesses you wish to bring into the House?

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: I do, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard): Committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard): Thank you, committee. I will ask the Sergeant-at-Arms to escort the witnesses into the Chamber.

Minister McLeod, I will ask you to introduce your witnesses, for the record.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I have to my left Mr. Mark Warren, deputy minister-designate for the Department of Lands effective April 1st; and to my right I have Brenda Hilderman, director of finance and admin with the new Department of Lands. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard): Thank you, Mr. Minister. We will open the floor to comments on the new Department of Lands. General comments. Mr. Bromley.

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I'm just wondering: what will the Minister's role be in environmental assessment processes? I understand other departments of our government will be reporting to this Minister. Could I get a description? My understanding of the current process at the federal level, we're taking over. Do the departments speak with their own voice into the process but we are proposing that you – this is my understanding, correct me if I'm wrong – will require that departments report to you. To me, this is removing an important series of voices from the process, but perhaps I could get the Minister's corrections and perspectives on this. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard): Thank you, Mr. Bromley. Minister McLeod.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chair. My understanding – and I might have Mark correct me if I'm wrong – is we will coordinate responses and we will be part of a working group with the other Ministers and the input. I think that's as far as our responsibility goes. We'll be doing some of the coordinating work and then all Ministers will have their input into the process. That's as far as we're at right now. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard): Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Mr. Bromley.

MR. BROMLEY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. Everything is in the definitions, of course, so I guess I would ask, what does coordination mean to the Minister. Does that mean he will just make sure the formatting is

the same and that the departments' voice will be clearly heard and they will be contributing directly into the decision-making? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard): Thank you, Mr. Bromley. Deputy Minister Warren.

MR. WARREN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The responsibility for the Department of Lands will be to coordinate the collection of all the different impacts associated with any given project, whether they are social impacts, economic impacts or environmental impacts. But it is pulling the information together to help the responsible Ministers make a decision, but Ministers will act in their own areas independently. The issuing of a land use permit would be of the purview of our Minister, to do the issuing of a water licence would be under the Minister responsible for Environment and Natural Resources, but we would help collect all of the information to help him make those decisions.

MR. BROMLEY: Thanks for that information. As I understand it, the Minister will be the decision-maker, except that there might be some sharing of that with a federal Minister. Could I get some fleshing out of that understanding and clarification? Thank you.

MR. WARREN: No, the Minister isn't, it depends on what we are talking about, but if we are talking about the issuance of a land use permit in the Inuvialuit Settlement Region, then the Minister of Lands would be the final decision-maker on the issuance of that land use permit. If we are talking about the issuance of a water licence, the Minister of ENR would be the decision-maker, but if we are talking about the issuance of a land use permit in the Mackenzie Valley, that is the purview of the boards that are responsible for that. They are the ones that would be, on the advice of the responsible Ministers, issuing those land use permits in the Mackenzie Valley. It depends on where you are operating and which particular authorization is being sought.

MR. BROMLEY: Mr. Chairman, thanks for that information. What will be the participation of the federal Ministers in this decision-making?

MR. WARREN: The federal Minister has a role to play as a responsible Minister, as well, under the Mackenzie Valley Resource Management Act. The federal Minister is part of the decision-making process and you have to achieve consensus amongst the responsible Ministers to have a position going forward for final recommendations that are made to the board. Right now the federal government coordinates that consensus, including the territorial Minister in that process. In the future we are going to be coordinating with the feds, so we will take more of a leadership role, rather than them coordinating us, but a lot isn't changing in that regard. We are not issuing the permits because the board still does.

MR. BROMLEY: So I assume that the federal Minister wouldn't play a role in the water licences and other examples that the Deputy Minister used here, a land use permit in the ISR and so on.

MR. WARREN: Sorry, can you repeat the question about the water licence?

MR. BROMLEY: There were three examples that the deputy minister used, land use permit in the ISR, a water licence, which would be determined by the Minister of Environment and Natural Resources. I just wanted to know if any federal Ministers would play any role there.

MR. WARREN: Not in the examples that I gave. We would be the final decision-maker on the issuance of the land use permit in the ISR, for example.

MR. BROMLEY: Mr. Chairman, my last question here. Who would be coordinating? Would there be one coordinating federal Minister in the areas where there was a federal role, for example, DFO on environment and AANDC? Would AANDC be coordinating that or would our Lands Minister, as an authority, play a role of coordinating federal departments separately? Thank you.

MR. WARREN: Previously the coordination role was done by AANDC and headquarters, but with the devolved responsibility, CanNor is going to be taking over that responsibility on behalf of the federal government.

MR. BROMLEY: Mr. Chairman, this is an unexpected player at the table now. I hadn't heard about this one. So, CanNor is the one that will be working with our Minister of Lands on decision-making. Is that correct? Who is the Minister for CanNor? Thank you.

MR. WARREN: Leona Aglukkaq is the head of CanNor, the president of CanNor, and as far as coordinating with the federal government, it would be us coordinating with them in feeding into the environmental assessment process which is done by the boards under the Mackenzie Valley Resource Management Act, so we would work with them to bring a consensus amongst the responsible Ministers, feeding into the board. All responsible Ministers, federal or territorial.

MR. BROMLEY: I appreciate the information here and the tolerance of my colleagues' new department. I am just trying to get my understanding right here.

Just finally, is this only for lands that we are taking over and Commissioner's land? Any federal land that is left over, there would be a difference; we would not be having the same authorities and so on. Is my understanding correct there? Thank you.

MR. WARREN: The authority of the Mackenzie Valley Resource Management Act and the boards are for all lands, federal or territorial, so how we

feed into the process is changing with us taking more of a leadership role and feeding into that process post April 1, but it would include projects that were potentially on federal lands, because the boards still have the authority over those lands as well.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard): Thank you, deputy minister. General comments. Ms. Bisaro.

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just have to follow up on Mr. Bromley's questions. I got a little confused with the number of Ministers and who is responsible and who is leading and not, and so on. I accept that we will now be the "person" who is at the top and pulling other people in and doing the coordinating, but we have got Fisheries and Oceans at the federal level, we have got AANDC and I forget the third one, and now we have CanNor and the Minister for CanNor, so I am trying to understand how CanNor fits into this equation. Do we now have four federal Ministers that GNWT and the Minister of Lands has to coordinate with, or is it one or is it just three?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard): Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. Mr. Warren.

MR. WARREN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I believe what CanNor is trying to do is coordinate the federal family for us so that we only have to deal with the one point of contact for federal input into the process. Rather than the GNWT going out and trying to build consensus amongst federal Ministers, whether it is a fisheries Minister, and environment Minister or AANDC Minister, that would be done by CanNor and they would then bring that forward to us so that we would have a consensus approach being brought forward by Canada.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard): Thank you, Mr. Warren. Ms. Bisaro.

MS. BISARO: Mr. Chairman, thanks to the deputy minister. I kind of went, hmm, I guess we will have to just wait see how it works. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard): Thank you, I will take that as a comment. General comments. Committee, we will move to detail. We'll go to page 14-7, department summary, lands, operations expenditure summary, \$26.830 million, we'll defer this until activity details and information items have been considered. Page 14-8, information item, infrastructure investment summary. Questions?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard): Information item, revenue summary. Questions? Ms. Bisaro.

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I'm trying to understand some of the numbers on this page and since they're new there's not a lot of information that we have to give us any background. So two questions on this page. Regulatory revenues, I'm

comparing it to what was in MACA previously and this is up, I think, maybe \$20,000 or so, from what was in the general revenue, regulatory revenues in MACA. So with this one, I guess, I would like to know where these revenues come from, what fees and charges make up this \$67,000 and the other question has to do with the lease amount, the lease amount is about \$2.4 million. The lease amount in MACA in '13-14 is only about \$700,000. So why the big increase in land lease fees, or in lease fees I guess I should say? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard): Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. Deputy Minister Warren.

MR. WARREN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The \$67,000, the increase is associated with an estimate of the land use fees that would be received from taking over responsibility for federal Crown lands and then the substantive increase in the lease revenues would be associated with the Territorial land leases, approximately \$1.6 million additional coming in from the federal government for the leases on federal lands.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard): Thank you, deputy minister. Next on my list I have Mr. Bromley.

MR. BROMLEY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. I had a similar question on the lease. It seems like it did in the land quantum that we're talking about here, the previously federal land coming over. I think last year our lease revenue was \$700,000 from MACA and so that's been transferred over, it's \$7,000 and now we're talking about \$1.3 million from the federal government, but given the land quantum difference between Commissioner's land and the federal land, that seems like a small amount. Any explanation for that? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard): Thank you, Mr. Bromley. Minister McLeod.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chair. You're going to have to bear with us as we try and get some information here because we didn't expect some of the questions here. So we're still trying to get our heads wrapped around the money that MACA collects and the money that the federal government collects and recognizing the land quantum, the fees could be different. This time next year we should have a better idea of how we balance the two numbers because the federal government, their fees, I know even for cabin leases, were a lot cheaper than what our fees were.

So there are some moving parts here and I think eventually we're going to get to the day where all the fees are uniform, the fees that we inherit plus the ones that we have now. So right now, I mean, we're just kind of jumping all over the place trying to wrap our heads around some of the numbers too. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard): Thank you, Minister McLeod. We understand this is a new department. Mr. Bromley.

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you. I recognize that reality. I don't have to have these answers right away, but I think we're on the other side trying to learn about the department too. So maybe we can help each other here.

The capital transfers, \$461,000, again, come April 1st it's a brand new department and we're already dealing with some capital transfers. I'm just wondering if we know off hand what that's all about. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard): Thank you, Mr. Bromley. Director Hilderman.

MS. HILDERMAN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The \$461,000 capital transfers is the value of the two assets that we understand will be gifted to the Department of Lands from Canada on transfer date, and under the new public sector accounting standards 3410, gifted assets are recorded at the appraised value in our main estimates. Thank you.

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you very much for that information. Can we say what those assets are?

MS. HILDERMAN: Thank you. That value, \$461,000, relates to the district office in Inuvik and a warehouse in Fort Smith. Thank you.

MR. BROMLEY: That's great. Thank you very much.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard): Thank you, Mr. Bromley. Committee, we're on page 14-9, information item, revenue summary. Questions?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard): Page 14-10, information item, active position summary. Mr. Dolynny.

MR. DOLYNNY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. If we can get maybe a little bit of information here because it's a new department. Understanding the number of active positions that are required to run this department, can the Minister indicate how many positions that AANDC or our federal counterparts use to complete the very same workload that we're embarking on? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard): Thank you, Mr. Dolynny. Minister McLeod.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Eighty-six came over from AANDC, plus we have our folks that came over from MACA and our informatics division. Thank you.

MR. DOLYNNY: Thank you. So 86 employees from our federal counterparts were doing exactly the same amount of work that we're undertaking. Is that my understanding? Thank you.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you. I don't think it's a question of 86. The workload is going to be different. There's going to be some changes. We're inheriting the 33 folks, so we're inheriting folks from MACA. So the workload will be different. So I can't say or agree that it's going to be 86 that came over doing exactly the same work. You've got to look at the quality of work. I mean, there could be a number of different reasons. So we're making sure that we're prepared to hit the ground running and not try to learn this on the fly, but I think there's a difference there. Thank you.

MR. DOLYNNY: Thank you. I guess what I'm trying to do is establish what I call a baseline. So if our federal counterparts were doing very similar work in terms of providing, you know, the terms of reference and the mandate directorate of lands today, we keep hearing about devolution as being taking over control of activities and that we will evolve later. We keep hearing this from the Premier. I have to be honest, with all of the changes in devolution, I have to say that this is the one area that drew my most attention of concern that we were devolving and evolving on the same day. We're adding roughly over 40 percent more employees than what I consider AANDC was providing with what I consider a very similar workload. So we're adding, if my math is correct, 57 new employees to which AANDC was providing with 86 employees. I guess I have a hard wrapping my head around that. We're adding a little over \$8 million of wages at a time of constraint when I think that we're trying to build this department and evolve this department to something to which I think we are going to be happy at the end of the day, but we're doing so almost on day one, which I have a hard time understanding.

My question is: The workload that we're expecting here with the bringing in of the MACA employees, informatics, we're bringing in the AANDC employees, is the workload, is the mandate that much different than what AANDC was doing as of today?

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: It seems like when you go from 86 to the number that we have here, it's a lot, but if you look at the 86 plus 33 that we inherited, that's 119, so there are 119 existing positions. So there are 119 positions that are doing the work from AANDC and the territorial government, and we've identified, I think, the need for 25 new positions. I'm not sure if we've filled them yet but, I mean, we're going to have to start briefing committee after April 1st to fill them in on some of the direction that we're going on some of the hiring that we've been doing. It's actually 119 existing. I know 86 came over from AANDC. Again, here's an opportunity, I think, post April 1st to have a good briefing with committee and fill them in on some of the responsibilities that we have. We have new inspections that we need to do. I mean, there's

a whole different workload, but it's actually 119 existing positions, which sounds a lot better than 86.

MR. DOLYNNY: If I can have a little latitude here just so I can compare apples to apples with the number of active positions. We know that the budget that we have for this department is a little over \$26 million. Do we know what AANDC ran this very same department with in terms of what their budget was?

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: We don't know exactly what AANDC's budget was to run their operation. I mean, we do know that we received \$67 million from the federal government as part of the devolution and the positions that we were going to be inheriting. As far as exactly what their budget was, we don't know that. I suppose if we dug around we could find that.

MR. DOLYNNY: If I can get the Minister and the department's commitment to track down what the, say, rolling average of AANDC's budget and Lands was for the last three years, and if they can supply that to committee. Again, I'm trying to use this as a baseline as we emerge and try to find a happy medium as to what this budget is for Lands and how we're moving forward factoring in potential forced growth for next year. But it's important that we, as Members, have a good understanding of what baseline means. My only baseline is what AANDC was using running this department for years and decades, so would the Minister commit to providing that information to committee?

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: I'll commit to the Member that we'll try and gather some of that information, if possible, and we'll share it with committee.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard): Thank you, Minister McLeod. Committee, we're on page 14-10, information item, active position summary.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard): Page 14-13, activity summary, directorate, operations expenditure summary, \$4.160 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard): Page 14-14, information item, directorate, active positions.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard): Page 14-17, activity summary, planning and coordination, operations expenditure summary, \$5.850 million. Mr. Bromley.

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I've got a couple of questions here. I'm just looking down at the narrative here on page 16, and I see the land use planning and sustainability unit, the land use sustainability unit, the land use planning unit. That's three different sections or divisions or whatever.

The land use planning and sustainability unit and then we have the land use sustainability, then we have land use planning. There's something that is just mind warping about this. Do we actually have, like, a manager or a director or something in each of these units and why the heck don't we get rid of one of them or two of them? Get rid of two of them. I think this might go towards Mr. Dolynny's question.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard): Thank you, Mr. Bromley. Deputy Minister Warren.

MR. WARREN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. This is actually meant to be like how we're accounting for the expenditures and not the organization. The organization is headed by a single director which has three managers under it. The management units are one of land use sustainability, a branch related to project assessment, and a branch related to land use planning, so one director with three managers.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard): Thank you, Mr. Warren. Mr. Bromley.

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I did look back at the organizational chart here, and again, I'd say there's room for some efficiencies. I'm a big proponent of sustainably, I'm sure the Minister knows, and the land use planning, but just in terms of the use of our positions, I'm a bit perplexed here, although you can subtly define the differences between them. I bet the coordination, I bet the results would be a lot better if you combine them in terms of effectiveness and efficiency, but I'll leave that to the Minister. I'll throw that out there as maybe that's something more that we can chat about during a briefing on this new department as we get close to that time.

On the land use planning whatever it's called, section, I see government-led land use planning initiatives in the Wek'eezhii Inuvialuit Settlement Region or the South Slave in the last sentence there. Rather than Wek'eezhii, do we mean Tlicho there? Sorry, Akaitcho, because Wek'eezhii seems like it would be covered by the Tlicho which has their own land use plan for their region. I'm just wondering again. I want to make sure we're well organized there.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard): Thank you, Mr. Bromley. Minister McLeod.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thanks, Mr. Chair. The Member is correct. We'll have to make that change and put Tlicho.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard): Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Mr. Bromley.

MR. BROMLEY: Finally, just on the project assessment branch, I think this follows up a little bit on our original discussion here earlier today. Coordinates interdepartmental participation and

environmental assessment processes and, eventually, and consensus building. Again, I thought each Minister was going to have and retain their own perspectives here, but this seems to mean that there's going to be one piece of input that's a consensus, so I'm just wondering what exactly that means in this process.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard): Thank you, Mr. Bromley. Deputy Minister Warren.

MR. WARREN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The difference here is it's building consensus on how to feed into the decision-making process, not having a consensus decision. I know that it's a fine point, but that's what it is here. This is collecting the information and building consensus amongst the responsible Ministers as you feed into the process, and then the final decision that is made is a singular decision. That's what we're coordinating, the feeding into the process to aid with making an effective decision by whichever responsible Minister we'd be feeding into.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard): Thank you, Mr. Warren. Committee, we're on page 14-17, activity summary, planning and coordination, operations expenditure summary, \$5.850 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard): Page 14-18, activity summary, planning and coordination, grants and contributions, \$680,000. Mr. Bromley.

MR. BROMLEY: I see contributions for Aboriginal groups for consultation and supportive decisions on disposition of lands and again for Aboriginal groups in North Slave and South Slave regions supportive land use planning processes. Obviously, we need to be consulting with other people that are not Aboriginal or don't have Aboriginal treaty rights. Where is the budget to support consultation in those areas? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard): Thank you, Mr. Bromley. Deputy Minister Warren.

MR. WARREN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Again, it's kind of the nuance of the wording. This is to provide a contribution to allow people to participate in the consultation process. We will consult with others through our staff members, with members of the public. It is encompassed in doing land use planning or doing project assessment and others. We would consult out, but this is to allow them to provide feedback to Aboriginal governments specifically related to their Aboriginal rights to be able to feed into the process.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard): Thank you, Mr. Warren. Mr. Bromley.

MR. BROMLEY: I disagree. I'm talking about exactly the same thing. I'm talking about funding those without Aboriginal treaty rights so that they have the ability to feed into the process exactly as

this is being done for Aboriginal groups. In fact, one of the difficulties with our process, environmental review processes, for example, and other processes, such as the proposed Intergovernmental Council and so on, is the lack of recognition of the need for a budget in this area.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard): Thank you, Mr. Bromley. Minister McLeod.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chair. We have a duty to consult with the Aboriginal governments. We do try and consult with as many interested stakeholders as possible, but we do have a duty to consult with the Aboriginal governments. Again, this is another issue that, as we go into the next business planning process, if the Members and committee feel that this is something that we need to address, I suppose we will have to have a look at it then. My basic understanding is we have a duty to consult, so we provide some funding for that. Thank you.

MR. BROMLEY: You do indeed have a duty to consult. That's exactly what I'm talking about. You are choosing to fund only half the people of the Northwest Territories.

I brought this up during early discussions on this department and got the agreement of people at the table that this needs to be recognized. This government is dividing people by not recognizing this need. This has been brought up repeatedly and recognized as a legitimate point. Nothing is happening. We're at the birthing of a new department and a new approach by this government. Where is this recognition? I mean, let's put our money where our mouth is.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Mr. Chair, I believe we have put our money where our mouth is. Again I'll say we have a duty to consult with the Aboriginal governments. I don't believe we have duty to consult, but we do consult with everybody that may have some interest. Again, as we go through the business planning process next year, if the Members feel strongly that that needs to be included, then it's a discussion I think we will have to have at the time, but we do recognize that we do try to consult with all interested stakeholders. If the Member feels that we need to fund them all, then let's have that discussion during the business planning process.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard): Thank you, Minister McLeod. Committee, we're on page 14-18, activity summary, planning and coordination, grants and contributions, \$680,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard): Page 14-19, information item, planning and coordination, active positions. Questions?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard): Page 14-21, activity summary, operations, operations expenditure summary, \$10.486 million. Mr. Bromley.

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The first question here is about securities. I see it's mentioned here both under the Commissioner's land administration, which I understand, and the Territorial land administration.

What is the situation with securities on the Territorial lands with the new legislation we will be adopting here? Right now, for example, under the Commissioner's Land Act, securities are required for any leased territorial property, Commissioner's land property that has a liability of \$1,000 or greater. What is it under the Territorial lands administration new federal legislation?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Mr. Bromley. Minister McLeod.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The boards set the security on the advice of the government and then the government holds the security payment. Thank you.

MR. BROMLEY: So, at this moment in time, there is no requirement to set up financial security for a leased property. Is that my understanding? Just if the boards decide to do it, or can we request it or require it? Thank you.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Mr. Chair, I don't quite understand where the Member is going. Is he talking about lands that we had administered or is he talking on a go-forward basis? If this is on a go-forward basis, on a go-forward basis the board will set the security on the advice of government and it will hold money for them.

Are you talking, like, on Commissioner's land that we had administered in the past? There was security that, on recommendation, could have been required on potentially any lease that we had out there, including cabin leases, but I don't think it was something that was done regularly. Now, on a go-forward basis, knowing that is has become a fairly serious issue, and with the amount of land that we are going to be administering, then we need to make sure that securities are required, and they are set by the board and we will hold the money. Thank you.

MR. BROMLEY: I think the difficulty is that the administration, the legislation that we're adopting does not make that requirement clear. That's how the federal government had to accept \$8 billion in liability for largely northern mines because of a failure to hold security for those mines.

In contrast, I think we have a requirement now in the Commissioner's Land Act on Commissioner's land. So that is a different situation, as the Minister was saying. Given that right now it sounds like we're at the mercy of the board on whether they

assess financial security or not, the need for financial security or not as opposed to having the strength of a legislative tool such as the Commissioner's Land Act which requires that... I guess that's my understanding and maybe I will leave it at that, unless there is more to be said by the Minister. I guess I would hope that I would hear the Minister say that if we don't have that certainty, we are going to pursue it and we can legitimately do so. I will leave it at that.

Just in terms of our inspections, I see we have a diamond resource management inspection capability, but I don't see that for other mines. It is not mentioned for other mines. We seem to have our own diamond resource management section for inspections. Maybe it is covered in resource management. Could I get some clarity – I know the Minister was planning to bump up our mine inspection capabilities – on what is happening there for all mining activity, and I will leave it at that.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: One second, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): We will go to the deputy minister, Mr. Warren.

MR. WARREN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. You are correct that we are required to do inspections on other mines and it is part of the inspection process, and depending on the sophistication of the mines we would have RMO 3, so resource management officer 3 levels doing those inspections.

AANDC currently organizes themselves to have a separate unit to do diamond mines just because of the need to do multiple inspections per month on those mines because of how sophisticated the mines are and how complex they are. They have dedicated senior inspectors in each of those, but I get the Member's point that we should be clear that we also have inspectors for doing other mines. Each region would have a senior inspector that is capable of doing other mine inspections as well.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Mr. Warren. Mr. Bromley.

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Perhaps that's something else we can talk about during our briefing on the new department.

With the additional inspectors and the additional responsibility, we know that our land base is up considerably here, it's a lot more work, an order of magnitude in possible enforcement activities and so on. During the review with Justice, we didn't see much response in anticipation of this. Has the department worked with Justice to get recognition that there is a lot more inspectors, there could be a lot more legal work here as a result of infractions and so on? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Mr. Bromley. Minister McLeod.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I take the Member's point that when we go into business planning next year, we can look at how we...even some of the wording that we use in the operations of diamond resource management and all that, it is a discussion that we could have.

As far as the enforcement, we do plan on having a very aggressive enforcement, as I said in my opening comments, because we believe that we are going to be inheriting, well we got 940,000 square kilometres that we are going to be responsible for compared to I believe it was 2,400 before. In those 940,000 square kilometres there are a lot of issues that we will have to deal with, squatters and so on, so we will make sure that our inspection regime... I think in my appearance before Committee of the Whole, the last time I was here with MACA when it still had lands, I mentioned a couple of times that we are picking up our inspection and enforcement regime and I believe during deliberation for the Department of Justice the other day, they were talking about bringing on five additional people to deal with a lot of the responsibility that might be coming over with devolution and if we have to go out and start enforcing a lot of the land issues. So we won't know until we actually get past April 1st the extent of what we're inheriting as far as our inspection goes, but I do know that on the MACA side of it, when the land was there, the enforcement was picking up. I think we added a couple of PYs in the last two budget cycles. So I believe we're getting prepared and we're not sure, I don't think we'll have a full understanding of the scope of what we're inheriting until we actually get out there and start doing the inspections on our new land and the enforcement. We'll see how things go the first little while. I believe we're prepared, though, Mr. Bromley.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Minister McLeod. Committee, we're on 14-21. Mr. Bromley.

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Just my last question here. In terms of oil and gas, obviously a big impact on the land, any role of this department?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Mr. Bromley. We're going to go to Deputy Minister Warren.

MR. WARREN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, the department does have a role because we're responsible as the stewards of the land. So any activity that takes place on the land, we would be responsible. We wouldn't be responsible for the particular inspection of an oil rig or something, but to the extent that there's an activity happening on the land, generally we would be responsible and we would coordinate inspections with the other inspectors that are out there whether they're...(inaudible)...or ENR inspectors.

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you. Just related to that, in terms of the conservation, ultimately we're talking

sustainability here, and I think that's a pillar in this department. How would that be brought in to all of this?

MR. WARREN: Thank you. Operations is primarily responsible for the land administration functions and the inspection functions. The sustainability elements are going to be brought in more through the sustainability division and land use planning and others, but to the extent that there are activities taking place on the land that impact upon our ability to be sustainable into the future, that would be reported out through the inspection processes that take place here. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Mr. Warren. Committee, again, we are on 14-21, activity summary operations, operations expenditure summary, \$10.486 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, committee. Page 14-22, information item, active positions. Any questions?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you. Page 14-25, activity summary, informatics, operations expenditure summary, \$6.334 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Page 14-26, information item, informatics, activity positions. Any questions?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): And 14-27, information item, work performed on behalf of others. Any questions?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Committee, if I could get you to return back to 14-7, Lands, department summary, operations expenditure summary, \$26.830 million. Does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Does committee agree that consideration of the Department of Lands is completed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, committee. I'd like to thank the witnesses here, Ms. Hilderman, Mr. Warren, thank you for joining us today. Looking forward to a good year, and Minister McLeod, thank you very much. Sergeant-at-Arms, if you could please escort the witnesses out of the Chamber.

What is the wish of committee? Ms. Bisaro.

MS. BISARO: Mr. Chair, I move that we report progress.

---Carried

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): I will now rise and report progress.

Report of Committee of the Whole

MR. SPEAKER: Good evening. Can I have the report of Committee of the Whole, Mr. Dolynny.

MR. DOLYNNY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Your committee has been considering Tabled Document 22-17(5), Northwest Territories Main Estimates 2014-2015, and would like to report progress with one motion being adopted. Mr. Speaker, I move that the report of Committee of the Whole be concurred with. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Dolynny. Do I have a seconder? Mr. Ramsay.

---Carried

Item 22, third reading of bills. Madam Clerk, orders of the day.

Orders of the Day

CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Ms. Langlois): Mr. Speaker, there will be a meeting of the Standing Committee on Social Programs tomorrow morning at 7:30.

Orders of the day for Tuesday, March 4, 2014, at 1:30 p.m.:

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

- Tabled Document 4-17(5), Northwest Territories Electoral Boundaries Commission 2013 Final Report
- Tabled Document 22-17(5), Northwest Territories Main Estimates 2014-2015
- Tabled Document 44-17(5), Supplementary Estimates (Infrastructure Expenditures), No. 4, 2013-2014
- Tabled Document 45-17(5), Supplementary Estimates (Infrastructure Expenditures), No. 2, 2014-2015
- Tabled Document 51-17(5), Supplementary Estimates (Operations Expenditures), No. 4, 2012-2013
- Tabled Document 52-17(5), Supplementary Estimates (Operations Expenditures), No. 4, 2013-2014
- Bill 5, An Act to Amend the Motor Vehicles Act
- Bill 10, Northwest Territories Lands Act
- Bill 11, Petroleum Resources Act
- Bill 13, Devolution Measures Act
- Bill 14, Waters Act
- Committee Report 2-17(5), Report on the Review of the 2012-2013 Public Accounts

21. Report of Committee of the Whole

22. Third Reading of Bills

23. Orders of the Day

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Madam Clerk. Accordingly, this House stands adjourned until Tuesday, March 4th, at 1:30 p.m.

---ADJOURNMENT

The House adjourned at 8:53 p.m.

