



# **NORTHWEST TERRITORIES LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY**

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**5<sup>th</sup> Session**

**Day 86**

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

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## **HANSARD**

**Thursday, October 1, 2015**

Pages 6559 – 6620

**The Honourable Jackie Jacobson, Speaker**

# Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories

## Members of the Legislative Assembly

### Speaker

**Hon. Jackie Jacobson**  
(Nunakput)

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(Great Slave)  
*Minister of Health and Social Services*  
*Minister responsible for Persons with Disabilities*  
*Minister responsible for Seniors*

**Hon. Tom Beaulieu**

(Tu Nedhe)  
*Minister of Human Resources*  
*Minister of Transportation*  
*Minister of Public Works and Services*

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**Mr. Frederick Blake**

(Mackenzie Delta)

**Mr. Robert Bouchard**

(Hay River North)

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(Weledeh)

**Mr. Daryl Dolynny**

(Range Lake)

**Mrs. Jane Groenewegen**

(Hay River South)

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(Yellowknife Centre)

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*Minister responsible for the NWT Housing Corporation*  
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(Nahendeh)

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(Thebacha)  
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**Mr. Michael Nadli**

(Deh Cho)

**Hon. David Ramsay**

(Kam Lake)  
*Minister of Justice*  
*Minister of Industry, Tourism and Investment*  
*Minister responsible for the Public Utilities Board*

**Mr. Norman Yakeleya**

(Sahtu)

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**YELLOWKNIFE, NORTHWEST TERRITORIES**

**Thursday, October 1, 2015**

**Members Present**

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

The House met at 1:31 p.m.

### Prayer

---Prayer

**SPEAKER (Hon. Jackie Jacobson):** Good afternoon, colleagues. Item 2, Ministers' statements. Minister of Public Works and Services, Mr. Beaulieu.

### Ministers' Statements

#### MINISTER'S STATEMENT 226-17(5): 2014-2015 PUBLIC WORKS AND SERVICES ENERGY CONSERVATION PROJECTS ANNUAL REPORT

**HON. TOM BEAULIEU:** The 2014-2015 Public Works and Services Energy Conservation Projects Annual Report published in June 2015 is both a retrospective of what the Government of the NWT has achieved since annual reporting first began and an overview of important changes we have made to support this work going forward.

During the life of the 17<sup>th</sup> Legislative Assembly, finding energy solutions and focusing on energy conservation and technology have become an integral part of how government operates. Since the first biomass project in 2007, we have worked to set targets, create guidelines and develop both outward and inward energy strategies. We are now entering into a "new normal" of how government operates.

In the five years since the Department of Public Works and Services first started reporting on its energy conservation activities, the GNWT has progressively improved its energy performance in a number of important areas, including:

- generating cumulative operational savings of \$8 million;
  - reducing GNWT energy usage in major assets such as schools by up to 15 percent and overall energy usage in government assets by 5 percent;
  - reducing our dependence on fossil fuel for heating buildings by 3.5 million litres annually, which is equivalent to 9,500 tonnes of greenhouse gas emissions;
  - the installation of 18 large commercial biomass boiler systems, nine in the last year alone,
- increasing our wood pellet usage by 86 percent in a single year;
  - establishing the Capital Asset Retrofit Fund Program which now produces over \$1.7 million in annual operational savings as the program is

quickly becoming self-sufficient in funding future energy projects; and

- incorporating opportunities for alternative and renewable energy as part of the planning for all new building projects coming forward for consideration in the GNWT's annual Infrastructure Acquisition Plan.

Operationally, this means a new set of practices, procedures and considerations which prioritize energy efficiency and conservation in the design, construction and operation of all new government buildings have become standardized over the course of this government.

The 17<sup>th</sup> Legislative Assembly has also taken steps to ensure the GNWT is positioned to build upon the successes of the past several years by bringing our energy programs together and creating a focal point for energy policy, initiatives and management within our government.

On April 1, 2015, the new energy activity of PWS was established, bringing together energy expertise from across government. Combining the project management, planning, fuel services and building operations expertise of PWS with those areas of government focused on policy development and promotion of renewable energy solutions means the GNWT is better positioned to respond to future opportunities in the planning and management of our energy needs.

Mr. Speaker, with a flat revenue outlook and a need to take a hard look at how we are spending our money in coming years, operating effectively and efficiently is more important than ever. Continuing energy conservation efforts will be an important part of that. At the same time, our newly consolidated energy activity can contribute to government work in addressing the high cost of living through continued public education and information sharing, identification of energy options and policy development.

Going forward, the 18<sup>th</sup> Legislative Assembly will be better positioned than ever to support energy conservation and efficiency efforts and to assist the public in benefitting from what we have learned as a government. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. Minister of Tourism, Mr. Ramsay.

#### MINISTER'S STATEMENT 227-17(5): TOURISM HIGHLIGHTS

**HON. DAVID RAMSAY:** Mr. Speaker, I rise today to report positive results and trends from this government's investments and initiatives in the NWT tourism sector.

The official tourism statistics for the last fiscal year will be available in late October but the preliminary results

are promising. We are seeing a broad spectrum of interest in the tourism activities available in the Northwest Territories. In particular, the segment of visitors from China, who are commonly associated with aurora viewing, are exploring well beyond this sector.

For example, this past summer, 50 Chinese tourists travelled the Dempster Highway to Inuvik. There they participated in numerous events and activities, including a community feast and drum dance. It was, they say, an unforgettable experience – and still more evidence of the unique and spectacular tourism product that is available to those who choose the NWT as a destination for their holidays and business travel.

Since January 2014, the Northern Frontier Visitors Centre in Yellowknife has received close to 7,000 visitors from China, a number that represents an incredible growth in this target market. Only four years ago the number of Chinese visitors to our territory was in the low hundreds.

The growth in the Chinese market is not an accident. It has been strategically advanced by our government's trade missions to China; supported by investments, made through the Department of Industry, Tourism and Investment, into the operators and businesses that make up the tourism sector, and enhanced by new marketing funds approved by this Assembly for NWT Tourism.

The value of these efforts was confirmed when the Premier and I had the opportunity to host His Excellency Luo Zhaohui, Ambassador of China to Canada, on his first visit to the Northwest Territories earlier this month. A visit from China's highest ranking official in Canada was a great opportunity to show off the tremendous tourism offerings in this region as well as in Inuvik and Tuktoyaktuk. During his visit, Ambassador Luo remarked on the natural beauty of this territory and our well-developed infrastructure. He also spoke publicly about his interest in doing more to support and promote NWT tourism at home in China.

Meanwhile, Mr. Speaker, tour operators in the North Slave and Sahtu regions are reporting an excellent summer season; demand for river adventures in the Mackenzie Mountains west of Norman Wells was at record levels, and tour operators on Great Slave Lake worked virtually without a break throughout the summer.

Preliminary estimates indicate that the number of campground permits issued this season is up by 14 percent over last summer. Satisfaction with our parks amenities and services remains high, and public response to the Cultural Interpretive Program offered this past summer, especially in the Beaufort-Delta parks system, was overwhelmingly positive.

The strength of an increased tourism demand is evidenced in the new capital investments we are

witness to in Yellowknife's accommodation sector and the investments that communities across the NWT are advancing to improve the appeal of their local tourism infrastructure and product.

Communities such as Inuvik, Tsiigehtchic, Jean Marie River, Fort Simpson, Deline, Fort McPherson, and Lutselk'e have all partnered with the GNWT this year to invest in trails, signage, visitor centres, and other improvements with a view to attract and retain visitors and improve their travel experience in the NWT.

We know that the awareness and recognition for our territory's existing attractions and infrastructures is also growing, as evidenced, earlier this year, by Explore Magazine, which named Queen Elizabeth Territorial Park near Fort Smith as one of the Top 25 Campsites in Canada.

Through training and skills development, we have supported our capital spending with investments in the men and women who make up our tourism sector. With a full suite of training and skills development workshops, ITI has worked with the NWT tourism industry to advance the safety, hospitality and the business savvy of our many and varying operators and business owners.

We have also seen considerable growth in the Aboriginal tourism sector, with a number of Aboriginal-owned and operated tourism businesses growing and thriving over the life of this government.

Since 2014-15, we have leveraged over \$1 million in federal investment to match GNWT investments in tourism businesses, skills development and Aboriginal community tourism, a reflection of the shared commitment that exists at all levels of government to developing a healthy tourism economy.

I am also pleased to report that the NWT's new Convention Bureau, still in the first full year of operation, has confirmed five events. Another six are in the offing. They represent an estimated \$1.8 million in future conference revenues, not to mention spinoff benefits for transportation suppliers, restaurants, artisans and tourism operators throughout the territory.

At a time when our economy is challenged by a downturn in resource exploration and development, a weak dollar and the impacts of a worldwide recession, our tourism sector has remained strong and shown signs of vibrancy and growth.

Annual visitors' spending in 2013-14 was \$132.5 million. Despite the fires that impacted travellers in the summer of 2014, we are recognizing modest increases for 2014-15 and we are expecting these numbers to rise even higher based on the strength of this year's summer tourism season.

Supporting promising and successful sectors like tourism is an important part of our effort to foster the kind of economic growth this territory needs to build a prosperous future and ensure our government has the

resources it needs to deliver programs and services to our residents.

Mr. Speaker, the tourism industry that we recognize in our territory today is strong and growing. It is a testament to the wisdom of this Assembly's decision-making, in the face of tough economic conditions, to invest in a sector that is growing, bringing new dollars into our economy and creating jobs and opportunity throughout the territory. I would like to thank this Assembly for its support for our territory's tourism and parks sector, the results of which I am able to share today. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. Item 3, Members' statements. Member for Yellowknife Centre, Mr. Hawkins.

### Members' Statements

#### MEMBER'S STATEMENTS ON IMPACT OF FISCAL RESTRAINT ON THE PUBLIC SERVICE

**MR. HAWKINS:** On Tuesday I voiced my concerns about the impact of the Finance Minister's fiscal restraint measures on the morale of the public service. Mr. Speaker, quite frankly, I don't understand the mixed messages being sent by this government to the people of the NWT that we serve, especially to people who serve us each and every day by doing the job diligently and conscientiously and keeping the government programs running and ticking along each and every day.

The Premier and Ministers of this Cabinet finally say to this House, our employees are our most valuable assets. I happen to agree with that statement, but what is the point of this government repeating this tired phrase when its actions go along with the platitudes from these Ministers?

This government has a Population Strategy meant to tempt 2,000 new residents to the NWT to make their home here by 2019 as a way to increase their federal transfer dollars. The GNWT remains one of the NWT's biggest employers, so it must be prepared to hire these new residents. Why would anyone take a job with the GNWT and move their families here if they risk losing their job in the next Assembly's collateral damage because of fiscal restraint?

This government also has a Human Resources Workforce Planning Strategy, a multi-pronged effort to maintain the GNWT as an employer of choice and to maximize recruitment and certainly retention of employees. How about the efforts of the Department of Human Resources to operate the multi-year strategy along with the Finance Minister's transition plan in exercising design, in his own words, to make sure revenues and expenditures on an ongoing basis stay the same and plan for what has been determined to be a flat economy with revenues going down.

Frankly, I must point out that the GNWT increased its workforce by 260 new employees and positions in the devolution process. How can this government possibly be considering lay-offs as a fiscal restraint measure less than a scant 18 months after devolution?

The GNWT has known for a long time by considering many options by trying to strategize itself for revenue growth and we've known it's very limited, but controlling the cost by cutting away jobs is certainly not the way to attract employees or strengthen morale. We must find a different way.

I will be asking questions of the Minister of Human Resources about the impact of this fiscal restraint on our Human Resource Strategy. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

#### MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON FLEXIBILITY IN THE DELIVERY OF GOVERNMENT OF THE NORTHWEST TERRITORIES PROGRAMS

**MRS. GROENEWEGEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We have stated goals and initiatives of this government. For example, educating people. To that end, we boast the best SFA, student financial assistance, system in the country.

We have a stated goal of increasing the population of the NWT by 2,000 people. These are well-known goals and strategies that we work and expend resources to advance. However, every day we hear of anomalies, contradictions and decisions based on policy that fly in the face of these goals. I believe in rules and transparencies, but sometimes our policies lack discretion and common sense in applying these policies in real life situations.

This week in the House, my colleague from Hay River North shared the story of a constituent, born, raised and educated in the NWT, moving south for a period of time and upon return to enroll in northern post-secondary program with support of SFA is required to re-establish residency for a whole year with no regard for their lifelong residency in the North. The message is don't come home, don't pursue higher education.

It's well known that young people often decide to work or travel between high school and post-secondary education. Could there not be some accommodation for that reality?

Then there's the single parent in public housing who goes south to educational opportunities to improve their life. They come home for the summer no longer eligible for any housing support because technically doesn't conform to the residency requirement. Why come home?

Then there's the single parent in social housing who proudly sends their child off to university and when

the student returns home to work for the summer to make money to go back to school, they land a job and mom's rent goes up to reflect that temporary increase in household income and then mom has no choice but to get their son or daughter to take those needed earnings to contribute to pay for the increased rent. Welcome home, Mr. Speaker.

Then there's the income support client with a disability who gets financial support and contributes to the expense of the family that cares for them. The disabled client gets a GIC cheque and fails to disclose it, interrupting the benefit that they received. Those same benefits that help their family support them in their private accommodation, probably avoiding a very expensive care and support that would otherwise be provided to government service and agencies.

Mr. Speaker, I know we need rules. I know the staff on the front-line positions managing these programs are only doing their jobs in compliance with those rules and implementing too much discretionary latitude can also be a slippery slope.

I seek unanimous consent to conclude my statement.

---Unanimous consent granted

**MRS. GROENEWEGEN:** Implementing too much discretionary latitude can also be a slippery slope, as we know. But surely we, as a government, committed to our goals and stated priorities, could find a way to expeditiously deal with these situations that arise. I know it sounds like the job of an ombudsman, but for now it remains the domain of MLAs advocating for constituents and Ministers and their staff using their time to consider these things on a case-by-case basis sometimes with positive outcomes, but often with unnecessary stress to everyone concerned. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. Member for Weledeh, Mr. Bromley.

#### MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON SHORTAGE OF LONG-TERM CARE FACILITIES FOR SENIORS

**MR. BROMLEY:** Mr. Speaker, for some time many have warned that the crisis of too few available beds at the Aven Centre here in Yellowknife is coming fast. I rise yet again to remind us all that this catastrophe is not only looming, it's here. We must address the shortfall promptly.

The problem has been studied to death by all concerned, who say with one voice, "We need more beds." With a 200 percent growth in Yellowknife seniors over the next 16 years and a 125 percent increase across the NWT, we need several hundred new beds territory-wide. Yet, time is passing with little apparent progress.

We still do not have a single palliative care facility in the NWT. Avens is in need of major renovations and the waiting list grows longer. Our state of

preparedness to serve our elders in need of beds is deplorable.

To humanize this situation, let's look at one real life example of the many, to help imagine the human toll this neglect is exacting.

Annette Lemay, 93, moved to Yellowknife in 1951 to marry Aurel Lemay. Together they lived in their small house, which they moved from the Negus mine site, until Aurel passed away at 95 last July. Aurel retired in 1983 and he and Annette were determined to remain in Yellowknife. They had no children and no blood relations in the NWT, but Yellowknife has always been their home and their family. They were only able to make living independently work because they were together, with their respective abilities in cooking, mobility, corresponding and advocating care complementing each other.

They knew that the day would come when one of them would go, leaving the other needing comprehensive care, so an application was made in 2013 to place Annette on the waiting list for long-term care. Sadly, that day came on July 8, 2015. Annette immediately found herself alone and in urgent need of care.

While she currently has respite until October, she is sixth on the waiting list for placement in long-term care. She remains scared, worried and confused, and is seeking safety and comfort in the community of seniors for the last of her years.

Annette Lemay is the face of the seniors this government is failing. As lifelong founders and pillars of our society today, she and our many elders like her throughout the Northwest Territories deserve better. In Yellowknife, with half of our territorial population served by a facility with a meagre 29 beds needing mid-life retrofit, our seniors' plight is well known and has been obvious for some time.

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

---Unanimous consent granted

**MR. BROMLEY:** As I was saying, in Yellowknife, with half of our territorial population served by a facility with a meagre 29 beds needing mid-life retrofit, our seniors' plight is well known and has been obvious for some time. How can we still be waiting for action?

We have the responsibility and the power. So I say, colleagues, Minister, executive, our Cabinet, out of respect for our elders like Annette, let's get it done. Mahsi.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Bromley. Member for Mackenzie Delta, Mr. Blake.

#### MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON MACKENZIE DELTA ELDERS CARE FACILITIES

**MR. BLAKE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My statement today is focusing on elders' care and the need for

elders' housing. I'd like to mention that on September 14, 2015, I was in Aklavik for the Gwich'in Annual Assembly. At this time we welcomed and celebrated the opening of the new Joe Greenland Centre. This building will indeed house many elders and will have positive feedback from residents of Aklavik.

This past summer the construction of a new elders home in Fort McPherson was halted due to problems that were occurring during building of the pilings.

This is very important to the elders of Fort McPherson, for the completion of this building. A lot of elders look forward to a new residence and a place to gather and call home.

As we speak on the elders home in Fort McPherson, the location was another issue for some middle-aged and current elders. The majority of the people would like to see the location moved to a scenic and quiet neighbourhood. For example, a place down along the Peel River banks, close to the church and walking distance to offices and the store and also a great view of our Richardson Mountains.

I will have questions for the Minister later today.

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

#### MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON GREAT SLAVE LAKE FISHERY

**MR. BOUCHARD:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I rise on one of my favourite topics, Great Slave Lake fish. Over the last four years, I've made many Member's statements on Great Slave Lake fish. We know it's a great product. We know there are a lot of hardworking people out there. It's a great industry, it's a renewable industry, and it's one that we haven't seen the full capacity of. We know we're not even over half our quota that we can catch on a productive renewable basis.

We've made some progress. We now have a business plan in place for those fishermen through ITI. We know that we've gotten some capital money to do a fish plant. We know this spring the Department of ITI insisted on giving a subsidy, and the fishermen have responded over the summer. Over the summer we're seeing anywhere from a 30 percent to 40 percent increase in production. We're seeing just about a million pounds in production if those numbers work out correctly.

I also forgot to mention the fact that we have a new logo, we have a new marketing plan, and we're going forward. We're pushing this project forward. The fishermen need dredging, as well, but that project is not moving forward anytime soon, but the rest of the project is moving forward.

Some of the questions I'm going to have today are for the Minister of ITI. Where we have, again, a roadblock, the federal government, the Conservative federal government right now, and hopefully, we'll see

what all our candidates have to say about this over the next little while where we're going to go with the Hay River fish plant. We have \$1.5 million allocated. We're looking for federal assistance to help us complete the project. We need assistance. This is a great renewable resource. We need to capitalize on it.

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

#### MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON ESTABLISHING OF NWT OMBUDSMAN OFFICE

**MS. BISARO:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Later today I will table a draft act to establish an office of the ombudsman. You and all Members will know that I have been pursuing the issue since I was first elected eight years ago. It's not a new issue by any means. MLAs have been talking about establishing an ombudsman office since 1992, five Assemblies ago. The general public has been looking for such an office long before that.

There have been numerous motions passed in this House recommending the establishment of an ombudsman office. The Standing Committee on Government Operations was mandated by the House to review the question. Their very thorough and comprehensive report recognized the need in the NWT and recommended establishing an office. That was over a year ago now, yet we still have no action by this government to develop legislation to establish an ombudsman act.

Too expensive, Cabinet says. Too time consuming to write the legislation, they said. Well, that second argument has been quashed. With the help of our very capable Legislative Assembly research staff, I have a draft ombudsman act all ready to go. It may not be perfect. It may not reflect precisely how an NWT ombudsman office would operate, but the groundwork has been done. The document can be handed to the Justice department legislative drafters for language adjustment and final tweaking.

It can be, with political will, presented for the first reading during the winter 2016 sitting of the 18<sup>th</sup> Legislative Assembly.

At the risk of being repetitive, I want to list some of the many reasons why the NWT needs an ombudsman office:

- The office is an avenue of last resort for the public, one that is impartial, free and accessible.
- It's an avenue of last resort for landlord tenant issues that are outside the jurisdiction of the rental officer.
- It's an avenue of last resort for housing or income support issues where an appeal has been denied.
- It's an avenue of last resort for administrative decisions by officials in hospitals and other medical facilities.

- It's an avenue of last resort for residents to ensure fairness in the delivery of government services and programs.

At the appropriate time, I will table this draft legislation. My fervent hope is that the 18<sup>th</sup> Assembly will make the passage of an ombudsman act one of their priorities and that an ombudsman act is one of the first priorities that they can check off the to-do list as completed.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. The Member for Sahtu, Mr. Yakeleya.

#### MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON SAHTU CHILD CARE REQUIREMENTS

**MR. YAKELEYA:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Hearing Mr. Bouchard's Member's statement sure makes me happy.

During my Sahtu community tours, I found there is a population of young people we have listened to and spoken to and these young people want to work. There's a huge population of my young people in the Sahtu who want to work. We do not want to rely on government assistance and income support over and over and over. We want to work. We finished school, we've gone to post-secondary, we did the trades training and we want to work. We want to make a contribution to our family. We want to buy things for our family, for our children, take vacations. We do not like getting the income support system. So when they told me that, I ask them what are some of the barriers, and one of the barriers they have said is that we do not have a child care centre in Norman Wells or in Colville Lake. That stops us. We either have to rely on babysitters in the community, and sometimes they're not very reliable, or we have to stay at home. They pay a price either way. They said, "If we had a child care centre where we can leave our children to be brought up in a safe environment, it would go a long way." Some of these are single parents who want to go into the workforce or go to school.

Our young people are hungry to work, are hungry to go to school and hungry to make a living. They do not like to sit idle. They want to get off their keisters and go to work. It's a simple plain fact for them.

I'll ask questions to the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment why we need daycare centres in Norman Wells and Colville Lake. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. The Member for Nahendeh, Mr. Menicoche.

#### MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON NWT HOUSING CORPORATION REPAIR AND RENOVATION PROGRAMS

**MR. MENICOCHÉ:** Mahsi cho, Mr. Speaker. Today I wanted to talk about the repair and renovation programs offered by the NWT Housing Corporation. Over the past few years, I've had elders, seniors on

pension and those with disabilities contacting me that part of the programming that the Housing Corporation offers comes with a co-pay portion and the minimum co-pay portion is about \$500. It's very, very difficult for those on pension and low income to even come up with that type of co-pay portion.

As an example, in Wrigley there was an elder who needs their water tank replaced. Typically in Yellowknife it would be about \$1,500, but with the labour involved it adds up to about \$5,000 in Wrigley alone and the co-pay portion is about \$1,200. They're living in a remote community with a high cost of living and they cannot make this co-pay portion. It is actually a burden on them and, as well, anybody with disabilities.

Just perusing the NWT Housing Corporation website, they say co-pay may be required, depending on household income, but the program that's being offered is co-pay is necessary. So that's a far cry from the guidelines that are listed on our website.

At the appropriate time I will be asking the Minister responsible for the NWT Housing Corporation about how do we best serve our seniors and our elders and those with disabilities in accessing our NWT Housing Corporation home and repair program. Mahsi cho.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. The Member for Range Lake, Mr. Dolynny.

#### MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON GNWT DEBT AND BORROWING CAPACITY

**MR. DOLYNNY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In keeping with my theme of evaluating the McLeod government and with reference to my report of September 29, 2015, today I will talk about GNWT debt and our borrowing capacity, our inability to borrow due to federally imposed debt limit restricting progressive capital investment from 2000 to 2007 thus leading to the territorial infrastructure deficit we see today.

Arguably, this has curtailed efforts to diversify the NWT economy and tied the territory to an intensely cyclical resource development sector. As a result, it is the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> Legislative Assemblies that have successfully pressured Canada to raise the debt limit.

My goal today is to evaluate the process we see before us. Have we been balanced in our approach or have we gone too far and put the taxpayers at risk?

Trends in debt and borrowing capacity are a good measure of fiscal performance. From 2007 to now, the total GNWT debt has risen dramatically by over 392 percent. Large capital projects such as the Deh Cho Bridge and the Mackenzie Valley Fibre Optic Link are major contributors to this growth.

So, although the new federally imposed limit has recently increased to \$1.3 billion, as a general observation, as our total debt has grown, our borrowing capacity has shrunk. Interestingly, from 2000 to 2009 the GNWT ended up with a true cash



surplus and did not require short-term debt. This short-term debt has generally increased in 2009 and has become significant during the life of this current administration. Hence, many will remember the increases we saw as short-term borrowing legislation in the 17<sup>th</sup> Legislative Assembly going from \$175 million to \$275 million and the \$25 million additional approved last year for a grand total today of \$300 million for short-term borrowing.

So what did this translate? Rising debt and softening of static of our GDP in combination has caused the GNWT debt to rise as a percentage of GDP. Couple this with our government's poor response to economic conditions, our infrastructure deficit or our meager revenue outlet, the percentage of total debt to GDP will no doubt rise with larger capital projects looming in the shadows.

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

---Unanimous consent granted

**MR. DOLYNNY:** So, although the GNWT basks in the glory of a defined measure such as an Aa1 Moody credit rating for its debt management and current debt load, the real landscape paints a much bleaker forecast than Moody's can safely measure.

Therefore, Mr. Speaker, we must be cautious moving forward. This was invariably echoed yesterday by the Finance Minister in his fiscal update. It is for these reasons of ignoring the warning bells that my assessment of the McLeod government in dealing with debt and borrowing management will only muster a C grade. Mahsi cho, Mr. Speaker.

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

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

**MR. MOSES:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. One practice of this government every year is that we approve infrastructure budgets. When we approve these infrastructure budgets, one thing we have to understand is we are not approving these budgets but creating jobs throughout the North, we are helping build skills and creating opportunities for our residents, our local residents and people in the small communities.

One of those projects that was recently approved and brought to attention – even in the media and in this House over the last few weeks – is the Inuvik-Tuk Highway. When this government approves big infrastructure projects or any other project, one thing we need to understand, as legislators as well as contractors and people who are putting these bids in, is that claims are a normal part of the construction contracts and that the government and the department involved try to resolve these as quickly as possible. Earlier in the week and in the media it was talked about that this project needs to be halted and

stopped until further review takes place. Mr. Speaker, no, that can't happen.

You heard today from some of my colleagues that we need jobs in the communities. We have people who are hungry to get off their butts and get to work. This is exactly what this job is doing with the Inuvik-Tuk Highway.

We just have to look at some of the highlights. At its peak construction period, there were over 600 individuals working on the project. About 75 percent of those were from the Inuvik region and there was also employment from other territorial communities as well. From those, about 120 people benefitted from training opportunities, and this is going to help when we look at other projects such as the Mackenzie Valley Highway. If any other mine or oil and gas companies want to start doing some work, we're going to have people who are trained to take some of those jobs as well.

About 70 people were trained on the simulator for rock trucks and excavator training, which is also needed, and about 40 people were trained in class 1 and class 3 drivers' licences with airbrakes. All those are going to help us in the future when we look at the Mackenzie Valley Project and other infrastructure in the Tlicho or towards Nunavut.

I do seek unanimous consent to conclude my Member's statement.

---Unanimous consent granted

**MR. MOSES:** Just to finish, we can't forget about the other future benefits and investment potential that the Inuvik-Tuk Highway is going to produce when we look at our offshore drilling, tourism and reduced cost of living for the communities toward Tuktoyaktuk and Inuvik.

Not only that, from a personal level, when you walk around Inuvik and you see the young guys and the young girls working, the family providers, the men who go and work long hours to provide for their families in Tuk and Inuvik and how that benefits them, it's great to see people who are finally working, a decreased number of people on income assistance, all these benefits. I know in the summertime work is slow. I've seen the training opportunities that have been provided to some of these people who are working on this project going down south and getting further training, so they get higher level jobs in the project.

With that said, Mr. Speaker, I do support the continued work for the Inuvik-Tuk Highway and all the benefits it presents. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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



MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON  
KAKISA COMMUNITY HALL GRAND OPENING

**MR. NADLI:** Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Today I have some great news to share about the community of Kakisa. After more than five years, with special planning and construction, Kakisa is ready to host the grand opening of their new community hall.

The new hall is built alongside the old Deh Cho Assembly arbour. It was a bustling hub of community activity year round, ready to host sports and games, feasts and other community gatherings, with space left for storage and meetings.

The old community hall quickly filled to capacity, but the new hall will have more than enough room for all residents, family and friends.

I know the residents of Kakisa have been eager to have a place to gather. When Rowe's Construction completed the last of their work, the community will have a place. The opening has been discussed for October 1<sup>st</sup>, but I've been told this has been rescheduled possibly for mid-October to make sure everyone in the community can attend.

Mr. Speaker, I want to congratulate the community on the dedication to the project and in their achievement and hope for many exciting events at the new community hall in the years to come. Mahsi cho.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Nadli. Member for Tu Nedhe, Mr. Beaulieu.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON  
TU NEDHE HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES

**HON. TOM BEAULIEU:** Mahsi cho, Mr. Speaker. This summer I had an opportunity to attend the graduation for Liidlii Kue School as usual. This year Sydney Bailey, Rayleen Norn, Rylie Chapman and Teagan Laroque graduated. The total number of students graduating since graduations events started in Fort Resolution in 2000 is 53 students. Every year I attend graduation and one year we had nine graduates and we've also had single graduates in Liidlii Kue School. So it's gone very well.

In springtime I went to an event in Lutselk'e where we also had a graduation. For the first time ever in the history of Lutselk'e, they had two students, Tristin Lockhart and Lucas Enzoë, who graduated from Grade 12.

I just want to pass on congratulations here in the House to those students in Fort Resolution going all the way back to 2000. Many of those students are working in Fort Resolution and many of them have jobs outside. There are a good many of them that have gone on to further education and I think the same thing will happen with Tristin Lockhart and Lucas Enzoë in Lutselk'e. They are the first to do it and I know there are going to be graduates. We will probably see some graduates out of Lutselk'e every year from now on.

It's a big milestone for the community. Just about everyone from the community came out to celebrate Tristin and Lucas. The Fort Resolution graduation is usually a big event. This year we had 200 people show up. That's over 40 percent of the population, so that's a very big event.

I thought I'd like to stand up today and congratulate all those students. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. Member for Tlicho, Mr. Lafferty.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON  
CONDOLENCES TO TLICHO FAMILIES  
ON RECENT PASSING TRAGEDIES

**HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY:** Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. [Translation] Today I would like to acknowledge what happened in our community. We just lost two of our citizens in the Tlicho region. I know there's a lot of people in our community who are suffering right now. We all know each other. Even when we're here, we are remembering them and we want to have prayers in our hearts for their parents and their families.

We have to look at how we can resolve this. We have to support them and try to help the community in the situation they are in because of what has happened and what has occurred in our community. I know that next week we will be having a funeral service for the people and the communities. We have to support them with prayers. Prayers go a long way and are a big help for the families.

I just wanted to acknowledge the fact that we have a terrible situation that happened in our community. I wanted to mention this in the House. We have families and friends in the Tlicho community who are all watching and listening to us. I am sure we are praying for the families. Although we are here today, we will support the families, remember them and have a prayer for them. Mahsi.

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

**Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery**

**MRS. GROENEWEGEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to recognize two Pages from Hay River South who have been working in the Chamber for us all week. They are two fine gentlemen, Ethan Schofield and Matthew Lafferty. Say hello to them if you get a chance to. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. Mr. McLeod.

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to recognize a constituent of Inuvik Twin Lakes and president of the Nihtat Gwich'in Council, Mr. Jozef Carnogursky. Welcome to the Chamber.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Mr. Moses.

**MR. MOSES:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I, too, would like to recognize Mr. Jozef Carnogursky, president of Nihtat Gwich'in Council, a long-time friend and I really appreciate the work he's done for the Gwich'in people up in Inuvik and the region and being a strong advocate for the people up in that region. Welcome, Jozef. I hope you enjoy the proceedings. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Moses. Mr. Yakeleya.

**MR. YAKELEYA:** Mr. Speaker, I would also like to recognize the elder from Deline First Nation government, Mr. Andrew John Kenny. Andrew John Kenny mentioned to me yesterday, he said he thoroughly enjoys the Assembly, listening to the people going back and forth. "It's a real good meeting you guys are having," he said. "Too bad I didn't get in there." But he's watching, so I have to watch the election close. Thank you.

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

**HON. DAVID RAMSAY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to recognize all the work of the Pages we have working for us here who have been working this session. We have a Page from Kam Lake, Ms. Hayley Barry. I appreciate all her hard work. I also want to recognize a long-time friend and former chief of the community of Deline, Andrew John Kenny, welcome to the House, as well as Mr. Carnogursky. Good to see you here today.

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

**MR. HAWKINS:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Like my colleagues, I wish to recognize all the Pages, most particularly the Pages from Mildred Hall who are representing us today. Specifically I would like to recognize a constituent. I believe her name is Genzi Zhang. Thank you for your work. I am glad to have all Pages here. It's a great opportunity for all. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. I would like to welcome everybody here in the public gallery. Thank you for taking in the proceedings. Item 6, acknowledgements. Item 7, oral questions. Mr. Bromley.

### Oral Questions

#### QUESTION 898-17(5): COMPREHENSIVE GNWT AGRICULTURE POLICY

**MR. BROMLEY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions are for Minister Ramsay today. I scanned the list of documents to be tabled this session, but I was disappointed not to see the promised Agriculture Strategy listed. We haven't even had a whiff of a draft, in spite of it being promised by the end of this summer, long past.

This strategy, an intended action plan, has been called for by the citizens of the Northwest Territories

for decades. With only days effectively left to deal with this, can the Minister tell me when we can expect to see a draft of this long-awaited strategy? Mahsi.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Bromley. Minister Ramsay.

**HON. DAVID RAMSAY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We've had some great forward momentum when it comes to agriculture here in the Northwest Territories. We've advanced the sector tremendously. We have a What We Heard document from consultations we've had with the public and stakeholders around the territory. We will be tabling that report in the House during this sitting. Thank you.

**MR. BROMLEY:** That's good news. In the absence of a logical strategy, people have been pursuing agriculture on their own, wrestling with volatile and inconsistent support and often barriers from this government. They have a lot of experience to share and they are hoping the government will actually hear them.

What consultative process is the Minister engaged in or was the Minister engaged in to hear from the people regarding a comprehensive NWT agricultural policy? Mahsi.

**HON. DAVID RAMSAY:** We had a tremendous amount of positive feedback from around the Northwest Territories. In talking with stakeholders, people were involved in the agricultural sector here in the NWT. We believe we had a consultative approach. As I said, we will be tabling the What We Heard report in the House probably sometime next week. The Member can see for himself who we talked to and what we are going to focus on. Thank you.

**MR. BROMLEY:** Thanks to the Minister. Agriculture policy is important to the future of sustainable local economies and food security for the communities in the North. If our people are to achieve the optimum level of self-sufficiency, the Economic Strategy must contain a comprehensive agricultural policy.

Is this promised agricultural policy a priority for this government given we are just hearing What We Heard and not a policy or is this another case of this government paying lip service to the sustainable localized economic development communities require while pursuing fossil fuel which should remain in the ground, for example? Mahsi.

**HON. DAVID RAMSAY:** I agree with the Member that this is a very important sector of our economy. I do take issue with some of the Member's overtures that we are just paying lip service and that we are taking our time. Mr. Speaker, this is important to us. As I mentioned, we are going to come forward with the What We Heard report. We initially formed the basis of a draft Agriculture Strategy for the Northwest Territories.

This is too important to be rushed through. We are taking our time. We are listening to people and

stakeholders around the Northwest Territories to ensure that we get this right because it is such a valuable component to our economic well-being as we move this territory forward. Thank you.

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

**MR. BROMLEY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Again amazing context here between what's real now on the ground and able to give us dividends versus the theoretical fossil fuel pursuit that gives us nothing. Given the need to diversify our economies and lessen reliance on boom and bust industries like that, our need for local sustainable jobs and food security, when will such a policy be in place? Mahsi.

**HON. DAVID RAMSAY:** I don't have a crystal ball. I'm not sure who's going to be back and who's going to be in which position, but it's safe to say, early in the life of the next government the Agriculture Strategy will be put forward to the 18<sup>th</sup> Legislative Assembly and debated by Members of that government. Thank you.

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

QUESTION 899-17(5):  
CHILD CARE SERVICES  
IN THE SAHTU REGION

**MR. YAKELEYA:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In my Member's statement I talked about grandparents, single parents and people who want to go to work. One of the issues in Norman Wells and Colville Lake, ironically Norman Wells is an oil-driven economy and Colville Lake is a resource economy based on harvesting and trapping.

What can this government do to help young people with a daycare centre? How can we get those doors open? Thank you.

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

**HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY:** Mahsi, Mr. Speaker, We do have daycare facilities across the Northwest Territories. I know we need to improve certain areas. We have been working in the Member's riding. We currently have three licenced early childhood programs in the Sahtu region. Obviously, Members are requesting additions to that as well.

Fort Good Hope has a daycare; Tulita, child development; and Deline has a pre-school. These are some of the areas where we have established early childhood centres. We continue to improve in those areas.

My staff, my department is more than willing to meet with leadership and stakeholders to develop these centres because we do have funding available. Those are some of the discussions we are currently having. Mahsi.

**MR. YAKELEYA:** The Minister talked about the daycare centres and I appreciate the ones in Fort Good Hope, Tulita and Deline. I want to focus on Norman Wells and Colville Lake. If the funding is there, I want to ask the Minister if he can give me a commitment that prior to the writ being dropped that his staff will initiate meetings in Colville Lake and Norman Wells to act on this funding so that the daycare centres can be opened and these young people can go to work and go to school. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY:** In 2015, obviously these are discussions we've been having with Norman Wells to develop programs. My staff are working with community members from the Sahtu region, more particularly in Norman Wells, to open a licenced early childhood program within the Sahtu region as well.

Just last month the Norman Wells Land Corporation met with ECE and is considering establishing a daycare. Those are discussions we've been having and we are making progress in that respect, Mr. Speaker. Mahsi.

**MR. YAKELEYA:** I do want to thank the staff in Norman Wells and the willingness of the Norman Wells Land Corporation to initiate this meeting with the Education, Culture and Employment department. I appreciate that, Mr. Speaker. I want to ask now if the Minister would redirect his focus and attention to Colville Lake where they also need a daycare centre. There are lots of young families there also willing to look at this initiative.

Will the Minister take a leap of faith and ask his staff to go to Colville Lake and look at ways they can bring solutions to establish a daycare centre for young parents, young people in Colville Lake before the writ is dropped?

**HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY:** This particular issue is not new to my department. My department has been working very closely with the community and has provided funding over the past several years with respect to the summer preschool programming. Just recently Colville Lake residents have expressed an interest in having licenced daycare programming, so at this point my department is working with Colville to identify suitable space availability in the community. So, we're doing everything we can to push that forward and I'm hoping we'll see some progress in expeditious timing. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

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

**MR. YAKELEYA:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In the Northwest Territories there are eight health centres without full-time nurses. That's a fact. Another fact: there are 11 communities without full-time RCMP members in that community. There are eight daycare centres that are not operating in the communities in

the Northwest Territories. I'm just pointing out two in my region, Colville Lake and Norman Wells.

I want to ask the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment, seeing that we have two, can the Minister instruct the staff to work tirelessly to ensure that nobody else in Colville Lake has their doors open for daycare centre prior to let's give a time date of Christmas, so the parents in those two communities can have a Christmas present?

**HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY:** Obviously, we would like to see a child development centre established in those two respective communities. My department, again, is working very closely with the community to have that established and ready to go. So, we're working with community leadership to make that happen and it's just a matter of finding that suitable space in Colville Lake and also working very closely with Norman Wells, the corporation that has shown interest, and we want to move forward on that. So, we're doing everything we can as a department. We need to push that forward as best of our ability with our parties involved. Mahsi.

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

QUESTION 900-17(5):  
DISCLOSURE OF PRIVATE HEALTH CARE  
INFORMATION TO APPROVED CONTACTS

**MRS. GROENEWEGEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The question I have today is for the Minister of Health and Social Services, and it may seem like a small issue, but it's a very important issue when a family is in crisis and a loved one is in the care of a health care facility.

So, I'd like to ask the Minister of Health and Social Services if he is aware of a policy that would guide a health care professional or a person in administration when answering an inquiry about the condition of a patient. Let me give you an example. I recently had a constituent who was in the hospital who was nearing end of life, and her son called from another jurisdiction to inquire about his mother's condition. When the person speaking on the phone checked the list – which I wasn't aware there was such a thing – this individual's name was not on the list, so they were notified, I'm sorry, your name is not on the approved list of people we can discuss your mother's condition with.

I'm bringing this up today because I know it seems like a small thing that I could just as easily ask you personally, but I want other people to be aware of it, too, who may be listening. If people are required to have a list of approved contacts when they are a patient in the hospital, it is very important for them to know that, because, like I say, the family could be in great strife or stress.

I'd like to ask the Minister, is he aware of the policy of the health care facilities with respect to providing

information to people calling to inquire about family members. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. Minister of Health, Mr. Abernethy.

**HON. GLEN ABERNETHY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In the health care system, privacy and privacy rights is an incredibly important factor in providing services, and effective today we have the Health Information Act that actually guides our ability to share information. It indicates when we can share the information and also indicates when we can't share information. Prior to today we were bound by ATIPP.

So, when it comes to health privacy and those types of concerns, I would strongly encourage you and I would strongly encourage all Members to make sure that when individuals are in the health care system, they are very clear and articulate who can and can't receive information, and who can be told that somebody is in a particular facility. But if we don't have that information, we can't and we won't share people's personal information. So, as of today's Health Information Act, it went live today, prior to that it was ATIPP. Thank you.

**MRS. GROENEWEGEN:** For the benefit of patients and patient's families, then, is there a protocol or any requirement on the part of people in admitting or people who are in administration on the front desk of a health care facility to advise a patient or a patient's family that this list needs to be articulated and held by the people who might be in a position to give out information on that patient's condition?

**HON. GLEN ABERNETHY:** Prior to the actual implementation and the go-live date of the Health Information Act, and recognizing that we have eight health authorities here in the Northwest Territories who have all of their own operational procedures and protocols within the institutions, I can't say for sure that there was one policy for all authorities.

Moving forward with the system transformation, we will be able to have consistent standards that are clearly articulated and informed by the Health Information Act moving forward.

**MRS. GROENEWEGEN:** I would further just like to ask the Minister, then, if he would ensure that there is consistency across the health authorities going forward and some mechanism that would remind patients or families of the need that if they want the information to be made available that they have to grant that authority or that approval in some form, maybe attached to the admission form, or some way, so that we don't end up in the situation where someone is wanting to find out about something, which they rightfully probably should know and their parent or their loved one may want them to know.

Can we make sure that there is a formal system-wide process attached to this so that people are fully aware of it?

**HON. GLEN ABERNETHY:** It's a great idea and I will certainly share that information with the department and ask them to ensure that we have mechanisms to ensure that our patients are adequately informed about their privacy rights and their information rights, and to encourage them to include people who should be involved or be aware of their files, particularly family.

This will be a lot easier moving forward with one system as opposed to multiple systems, and this is the type of conversation I know that the professional staff that we have working on amalgamation have been having.

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

**MRS. GROENEWEGEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Could that also include provision for a patient to designate someone other than themselves as a decision-maker to work with the health care providers to make sure that list is comprehensive? So if the patients themselves are not capable of providing that information, if they could be asked to confirm a designated decision-maker who could provide that list for the patient?

**HON. GLEN ABERNETHY:** I know that with the new proposed Mental Health Act we actually have that provision in the legislation to designate an alternative decision-maker. As far as patients not covered under the Mental Health Act or the future Mental Health Act, I'm not actually sure, but I will check and I will get back to the Member.

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

QUESTION 901-17(5):  
MACKENZIE DELTA ELDERS FACILITIES

**MR. BLAKE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In follow-up to my Member's statement, I have two questions for the Minister of Housing. As the Minister recalls from his visits to the community of Aklavik, when we had the old Joe Greenland Centre we'd have a place set out in front, a small deck where elders usually sat, whether it was during the spring, summer, fall. With this new facility, a great facility, as I mentioned, but one thing, I'm not sure if it was due to our budget, but they didn't build much of a deck on each side of the Joe Greenland Centre.

I'd like to ask the Minister, will the department build a deck on each side of the Joe Greenland Centre where elders can gather?

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Blake. The Minister of Housing, Mr. McLeod.

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is a great facility in Aklavik and I was glad to be part of the opening. We still have a bit of work to do in the front of the building. We have some landscaping and that to do. I think that's going to be taken care of next

summer, I believe. I'm not sure about the deck. I would have to check to see if there is an opportunity in the future to put a larger deck on there.

**MR. BLAKE:** I thank the Minister. My next questions are on the new facility in Fort McPherson. I'd like to ask the Minister, how was the location of the elders home in Fort McPherson selected? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** Mr. Speaker, we had some land that was available. I believe we did some consultation with the community. There were no issues raised at the time, so we determined the location of the new seniors centre.

**MR. BLAKE:** My next question is: Why was the project on hold this summer for over a month? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** Mr. Speaker, I'll have to follow up on that. I understand there may have been some issues there. I'm not quite sure what the issues were, but I will follow up and share with the Member some of the information that I receive. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Final, short supplementary, Mr. Blake.

**MR. BLAKE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I drove by the location, I noticed there hasn't really been very much work done there. There are no supplies on the site that are ready to start building.

I'd like to ask the Minister, will the Minister direct his department to work with the elders in the community to select a location for the new elders facility? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** The piles are already in. We did some consultation with the community. We didn't get any feedback, so we determined that that would be the location.

As far as the number of piles go, again, I will ask for an update and find out where we're at with that. But it will be awfully expensive now to change the location. They'd have to wait a little longer for their facility. But I will get all the information and share it with the Member for Mackenzie Delta.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Member for Frame Lake, Ms. Bisaro.

QUESTION 902-17(5):  
DRAFT CONSERVATION PLAN

**MS. BISARO:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions today are addressed to the Minister of Environment and Natural Resources. About I think three weeks ago now, ENR had put out a draft Conservation Plan and it was done in conjunction...

---Interjection

**MS. BISARO:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It was done in conjunction with the Protected Areas Strategy, which has been in the process, in development since

1999, so that's a very long process. It's been many years of work and also many partners involved in the Protected Areas Strategy. I'd like to ask the Minister some questions about this draft Conservation Plan which came out, what some of the changes are, what it is intending for our territory, in terms of conservation.

I'd like to know first of all from the Minister, I know that we have lands right now which currently prohibit any and all forms of industrial development. I'd like to know from the Minister if he can give what percentage of our total lands area are currently prohibited from development. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. Minister of Environment and Natural Resources, Mr. Miltenberger.

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I can give the Member a number for all the land that is current and proposed, including Thaidene Nene and areas that have been worked on since 1999, keeping in mind that the proposed areas in all probability will end up shrinking as the final footprint is determined, but that percentage is 14 percent of the land mass. Thank you.

**MS. BISARO:** Thanks to the Minister. I need to ask the Minister, there was a press release from the NWT and Nunavut Chamber of Mines just yesterday, actually. It states: "According to the mine recorder's office, 32 percent of the NWT is off limits to staking and exploration. That figure includes lands for parks, interim land claim withdrawals and protected areas."

Can the Minister explain the difference between the 32 percent that the Chamber of Mines is talking about and the 14 percent that he just quoted? Thank you.

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Mr. Speaker, the core protected or protected areas are those areas that would be permanently withdrawn from industrial commercial development, like the proposed Thaidene Nene area for the federal and territorial footprints of Nahanni Park, part of Wood Buffalo that's there, Edaezhe and the Ramparts and those types of things. That number all in is at 14 percent.

The other lands where there's conservation designation, we have a Parks Act, for example, that has six levels of park. Five of those levels of park permit activity, commercial activity, permanent activity, so could include industrial development. That would account for the relating percentages. Thank you.

**MS. BISARO:** Thanks again to the Minister. So, we're talking 14 percent that is going to be totally prohibited, but there's another percentage which is going to allow some development. I'm wondering if the Minister could try to advise me and the public what's going to be allowed in this other percentage. I think it's 20 percent, is what I'm advised, another 20 percent that is going to allow development.

What sort of developments or lack of developments will be allowed? What kind of conservation are we imposing on this other 20 percent of our lands? Thank you.

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Mr. Speaker, what is permanent will depend on the circumstances of the particular area. It has to be appropriate, depending on what kind of conservation designation there is outside of the protected area designation. But it does include all the areas on the map.

The Member stated, for example, 1999 Protected Areas Strategy. All the land that's on that map that is designated to be protected is all the land that is projected to have any kind of conservation designation far into the future. There's no new land on there. There's land that's been identified now since 1999. Some of it is yet to be determined, the final designation, but we know some, like the Ramparts or Edzhie, the request is that there be a park there, a protected area. The others will have a range of different kinds of designations. It could be a cultural area; it could be a wildlife area; it could be just an area of some significance that has some designation. If there is some activity that's found within that area, then we will collectively look at what it is and how does it fit, what kind of community support there is, but the door would be open to have that kind of discussion. Unlike Nahanni National Park or Edaezhe, once it's fully withdrawn, or the Thaidene Nene footprint area.

I would also point out, as we talk about this land, we have a very, very significant piece of land – 44,000 square kilometres of land – that has been under interim protection for decades, tied up in land claims. As we commit ourselves to concluding land claims, when we do that will free up very, very high potential areas for potential development that could be contemplated by Aboriginal governments, industry and the territorial government. Thank you.

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

**MS. BISARO:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to thank the Minister, as well, for his explanation. As we go forward, the Protected Areas Strategy has been in place for a very long time. As the Minister says, the areas in that Protected Areas Strategy will continue to go forward. But this draft Conservation Strategy I gather takes the place of the Protected Areas Strategy. It's got a new name.

Who's going to be involved in dealing with this draft Conservation Strategy as we go forward? I presume there are partners. Could the Minister advise us who they are? Thank you.

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Mr. Speaker, we've put this document forward for consultation and we've extended the consultation period to, I believe, October 19<sup>th</sup>, at which time we will put it in a box, basically, and we'll include it with the transition



document for consideration in the 18<sup>th</sup> Assembly, which will include all the feedback we get.

This document is basically post-devolution. The Northwest Territories has taken over the Protected Areas Strategy and has rebranded it and packaged it and is putting it out as a Northern Conservation Action Plan. There is a process that we're going to continue on with from the Protected Areas Strategy, and has been since 1999, a working group that includes representatives from all the different sectors of the economy and the territory, industry and business and communities, environmental groups, that type of thing that are part of the process and will continue to be part of that process as we move forward to provide oversight and work on the various areas that have been designated, some of them for literally decades now. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. The Member for Nahendeh, Mr. Menicoche.

QUESTION 903-17(5):  
HOUSING PROGRAM CO-PAYMENTS

**MR. MENICOCHÉ:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I just want to ask some questions of the Minister responsible for the NWT Housing Corporation. Earlier today I spoke in my Member's statement about the repair and renovation programs that are available to all residents of the NWT, but most particularly my concern is about our seniors, those on pensions, and our disabled. There's the co-pay component on the majority of our programming, and in my experience I've seen that in the small and remote communities people don't have access to \$500 that they're required to co-pay on.

I'd like to ask the Minister responsible, has his department looked at this? Have these concerns been raised to his department with respect to reducing or, if not, eliminating and taking care of our seniors and those who are disabled with this housing program? Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. The Minister responsible for the Housing Corporation, Mr. McLeod.

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We do have the new co-pay program and a lot of folks have done very well with it. However, we do recognize the Member's concern with some of the challenges that are faced with our seniors and those with disabilities. So I will commit to the Member that we will go back and do an assessment and revisit and maybe make some adjustments to the seniors and those who are disabled, people who are living on fixed incomes. Thank you.

**MR. MENICOCHÉ:** Thank you very much. I know that when I first began in the Assembly with the 15<sup>th</sup> Assembly, we did have a specific seniors or elders housing program which spoke to giving relief for those kind of things. I'm wondering if the Minister is willing

to look at it in that perspective in identifying specific seniors or elders repair programs. Thank you.

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** We have a number of programs within the NWT Housing Corporation that the uptake in the programs is from the seniors themselves. We have the Mobility Policy now where we work with those who have mobility issues and we have a number of programs designed for seniors. We have the Preventative Maintenance Program. So, we have a number of programs. A couple of them are designed specifically for seniors and those with mobility issues, and we also have, as far as our CARE program goes, the greater percentage is taken by seniors. Thank you.

**MR. MENICOCHÉ:** Thank you very much. Yes, just with the co-pay component, I'm just wondering what kind of timing does the Minister expect in looking at and reviewing that particular guideline that's in our programming currently. Thank you.

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** Thank you. We will start looking at it immediately and the work has already begun. We do recognize there are some challenges that the disabled and seniors are facing, those who are on fixed income, with the co-pay portion of it. So we have begun looking at that and we will see how soon we can get that work completed. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Final, short supplementary, Mr. Menicoche.

**MR. MENICOCHÉ:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased that they'll look at it here right away. Like I said in my Member's statement, a particular case is an elder needs his water tank replaced and in that case he cannot come up with the \$1,200, but it's a need for that elder and his family. Water and cleanliness is one of our basic needs. So, I appreciate the Minister looking at that immediately and if he can, once again, to look at it and review certain situations. Thank you.

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** Yes, as I committed before and I'll commit again, we will have a look at it and continue to try and improve our programs as we have done for the last number of years with the help of this Legislative Assembly. So, we will continue to try, not try, we will continue to improve our programs and help those seniors, those with mobility issues, the disabled and all those who are in need the best we can. Thank you.

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

QUESTION 904-17(5)  
GREAT SLAVE LAKE FISHERY

**MR. BOUCHARD:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As a follow-up to my statement on the fishery, I'll have questions for the Minister of ITI.

I guess my first question will be: I know we've had a successful summer, but does the Minister have the

actual production numbers and some of the update on where we are with the current fish plant? Thank you.

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

**HON. DAVID RAMSAY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. A vitalization strategy and business plan have been developed to help ensure the longevity and the health of the fishery, the commercial fishery on Great Slave Lake. The Member highlighted a number of areas where the government has worked very hard at the revitalization of the commercial fishery. We continue to push forward. There's a new fishing cooperative in Hay River. We've approached the federal government on a number of occasions, both the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans, Ms. Shea, and also CanNor. We haven't had any success on getting a response from the federal government on our request.

As the Member mentioned, and others have mentioned, there's an election coming up soon. We will have a better understanding of the government in Ottawa after that election takes place.

I can let the Member and Members know that the \$1.5 million we have earmarked for the fish plant in Hay River is something we feel very strongly about. If we can't get investment from the federal government on moving forward with the development of that export grade fish plant, we will be seeking some type of private equity, private investment in that facility so it can move ahead. We can't wait forever for the federal government. Thank you.

**MR. BOUCHARD:** Thank you. My next question would be about that federal government influence. Have we been talking to our current MP candidates going forward to make sure that they know it's on their priorities? I know I've written a letter, but has the Minister, has Cabinet made that a priority to those candidates? Thank you.

**HON. DAVID RAMSAY:** We continue to talk about the importance of the commercial fishery to the Northwest Territories economy. It is a shadow of its former self. The numbers are better this year and I will commit to the Member and Members of the House to get the most recent numbers to them. The Member cited between 30 and 40 percent increase in production. We've seen some new fishermen get out on the lake taking part in the fishery.

As I mentioned in my previous response, we can't wait forever for the federal government. If they don't make a move and support us on moving forward with the fish plant in Hay River, there are other ways to get that investment into Hay River and make this a reality. Thank you.

**MR. BOUCHARD:** My next question is: Is the Minister committed to that continuing? We know that increase is seen and we equate it to that subsidy that was provided to the fishermen this year. Is that a

commitment that will carry on in the business plan until that fish plant is completed? Thank you.

**HON. DAVID RAMSAY:** We've got a number of programs that we have in place to help fishermen on Great Slave Lake. We have a Fish Harvesters Support Program, Commercial Fish Harvesters Support Program, Fish Harvesters Expansion Program, Fish Harvesters New Entrance Support Program and also some core funding that's available to fishermen on Great Slave Lake. Our intent is to see this funding and support carried forward so we can continue to move toward getting that export grade fish facility constructed and in operation in Hay River. Thank you.

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

**MR. BOUCHARD:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We all know that the Hay River harbour is important to the fishing industry. Obviously, my question is: Has the Minister talked to his counterpart in Transportation as well as some of the people he has contacts with in Ottawa about the dredging of the Hay River? We need this for the fishing industry of Hay River. Thank you.

**HON. DAVID RAMSAY:** Thank you. I'm very well aware of the situation in the port of Hay River, being a former Minister of Transportation, and yes, we do talk extensively about dredging. Not just in Hay River, but there are other areas in the Northwest Territories that require dredging, and I'm fully aware of the situation in Hay River, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

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

QUESTION 905-17(5):  
DIAGNOSTIC IMAGING ISSUE

**MR. DOLYNNY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In April of this year, there was a system upgrade to our Stanton Territorial Hospital MEDI-patient system that resulted in more than 1,500 diagnostic imaging reports not being returned to the practitioner who had requested them between April 1<sup>st</sup> and August 6<sup>th</sup> of 2015. Members of this House were flagged on August 11, 2015, by the Minister of Health, and I'll stress "that some quality assurance regulators and digital imaging at Stanton were noticed and that some health system patients were affected but were never disclosed the exact impact." It wasn't until the following week of August 18<sup>th</sup>, the Minister, through a CBC radio morning show, disclosed the magnitude of the issue. As of this date, there has been no formal press release or formal health advisory to the public.

My questions today are for the Minister of Health and Social Services. Mr. Speaker, I think many of us are still concerned about this situation, so can the Minister give the House and the public at large a formal update and maybe indicate what legal risks are still looming? Thank you.



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

**HON. GLEN ABERNETHY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you to the Member for bringing this to the floor of the House. This was a significant issue here in the Northwest Territories within the Department of Health and Social Services and very troubling to both the department and the residents of the Northwest Territories, I'm sure. The physicians, the practitioners here in the Northwest Territories stood up and reviewed every one of the 1,500 files to determine who, if anybody, was at risk, who got information, when they got information and how they got information. At the end of the day, there were eight individuals who should have got information prior to us discovering this problem, and those individuals have been followed up with accordingly.

I do want to take this opportunity to applaud the doctors, the nurses and all the practitioners who stood up to address this issue and to resolve it. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. DOLYNNY:** I appreciate the Minister giving the opportunity to explain the current situation. My concern today is still about the risk management and the liability when such an issue is before the House and is discovered. So, can the Minister indicate, what is his department's formal health advisory protocol, given the seriousness of such a situation? Thank you.

**HON. GLEN ABERNETHY:** When it comes to patient safety and patient care, we will defer to the medical practice on ensuring that the situation is dealt with. At present, when situations like this occur, the first thing that must happen is to stop the problem from continuing, to remove all opportunities for harm. That was done in this particular case. The second step is to follow up with the individuals who may have been impacted, which was also done in this case. At that point we would move forward with some notification to the public, once we understand the magnitude, scope, and the residents have in fact been dealt with. Thank you. Mr. Speaker.

**MR. DOLYNNY:** I think I had a very specific question there, so I'll reword it here. Really there isn't anything in legislation that protects the public in terms of an issue of this gravity, and the only legislation pursuant to a public health advisory is Section 7 and 20 of the Public Health Act, and unfortunately, it is silent on a situation such as a digital imaging mishap.

So, does the Minister feel as strongly as I do, that a more formal process for health alerting protocol is needed for grave situations, especially for such things as this digital imaging mishap? Thank you.

**HON. GLEN ABERNETHY:** I do agree with the Member. In fact, I agree so much that when this issue came to my attention, I did ask for a formal external review to be done to help us determine how on earth we didn't know before August 6<sup>th</sup>, how the situation happened and how we can, as a system, better

respond in the future to make sure that our people are informed in a timely way.

I do also want to recognize, having said that, we still have to recognize the importance of the practitioners and their obligations under a situation like this, which is: stop the harm, work with the patients, then communicate. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**MR. DOLYNNY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Again I thank the Minister here. I just want to make one thing perfectly clear that just still doesn't add up. So, we were reminded multiple times by the Minister of Health that on August 6, 2015, the Department of Health and Social Services was informed of this digital imaging technical issue, and then on the very same day, the vendor was brought in. So, I believe everyone would be a little sceptic that nothing works that timely and this fast in this government.

So, can the Minister indicate, is it possible that this issue was known by the department prior to August 6, 2015?

**HON. GLEN ABERNETHY:** The external review will help us identify exactly what was known and when. The department was not aware of this particular situation until August 6<sup>th</sup>. I have had a couple briefings on this particular issue with staff from Stanton and staff from the department and there have been some rumblings out there. In fact, I understand that there were some issues between Yellowknife Health and Social Services and Stanton, but when they reviewed those they thought those were an internal issue and didn't realize the territorial scope of this problem until August 6<sup>th</sup>. At that time, and I just want to correct the Member, the issue with the vendor was ticketed, which means they were made aware. The vendor actually didn't get into Yellowknife until a couple days later. But as soon as the issue became aware, as soon as it was understood that this was not just a communication error between two authorities but this was a territorial issue, the vendors were immediately ticketed. They were ticketed on the 6<sup>th</sup>. It took them a couple days to get in, but they started working on the problem on that day, once they were officially ticketed.

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

QUESTION 906-17(5):  
INUVIK AIRPORT ROAD IMPROVEMENTS

**MR. MOSES:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have questions for the Minister of Transportation today. It's regarding our airport road in Inuvik. Any Member that has driven that road or has done any visits to Inuvik over the summer – it's not even recently but just throughout the summer – knows how bad a situation that road is in.

I'd like to ask the Minister, what is the plan for paving that road or fixing that road from our airport in Inuvik

to the community of Inuvik? What is our short-term and long-term plan for that road?

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

**HON. TOM BEAULIEU:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The plan is to improve the airport road with the Building Canada Fund. We have that particular project in the second bundle that has gone to the federal government. We're anticipating that we will have some report back from the government, well, approval back from the federal government early in 2016.

**MR. MOSES:** In anticipation of the Building Canada Plan Fund to look at putting money into this project, in the interim what is the government doing now to address this issue? It is quite drastic, and as I mentioned in Committee of the Whole yesterday, there have been incidents where there have been accidents.

I'd like to ask the Minister, in the interim what are we doing to address the severity of this road?

**HON. TOM BEAULIEU:** The entire project is \$11 million. With that, our intention is to survey – and the survey is commencing now – and do some crushing and producing material and strengthen the roadway. Then we intend to replace culverts where a lot of the culverts have sunk and collapsed. Also, at the end, once the road is built to a strength that we're happy with, then we're going to be chipsealing the road. We are going to wait for the Building Canada Plan before the actual construction begins.

Just with our relationship with Infrastructure Canada, we found that it's better to wait and then they're more apt to fund the whole project if we wait and start after they provide us approvals.

**MR. MOSES:** The Minister made mention of chipsealing the highway there, and you know and I know, coming into the Legislative Assembly the road that has just been fixed over and over on the highway here. They chipsealed that this summer and there are already some issues of potholes and those kinds of things. It's going to be recurring in terms of having to do work and more work on it.

In some of the more significant areas on that access road from the airport to Inuvik, can that work be more permanent in terms of a paving project rather than chipsealing where we're going to have to continue to do that maintenance work over and over? Can the Minister, while he's doing his survey, look at areas, especially that one little S-curve where we can get better, longer stability in those roads by paving it rather than continue to chipseal and put money into that road over and over?

**HON. TOM BEAULIEU:** Problems with chipseal are not due to the actual chipseal itself; it's due to what's underneath. What we intend to do with the Inuvik airport road is to rebuild sections where there are

issues. However, we are also open to trying other products that do work better. If we find that there's a product that works better almost under any condition, then we would look at that, but the plan now is to rebuild the road, strengthen it and chipseal.

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

**MR. MOSES:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to ask the Minister, what's the timeline that we can see some construction and some work on the road so that residents, visitors and tourists can see that road being fixed? Is there a timeline that we can start seeing the work being started?

**HON. TOM BEAULIEU:** We are optimistic that approvals will be in very early 2016. As soon as we have approvals, we intend to produce the material, so we will start the crushing. Probably somewhere in the very first quarter of 2016 we should have the crushing done and then the roadwork will actually begin next summer.

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

QUESTION 907-17(5):  
IMPACT OF FISCAL RESTRAINT  
ON THE PUBLIC SERVICE

**MR. HAWKINS:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The other day, on Tuesday to be precise, the Finance Minister indicated that considering reductions to the workforce to ensure expenditures do not exceed revenues is part of the obligation they have to provide the 18<sup>th</sup> Assembly with the best information possible.

Further to that, the Minister of Public Works said today in the House, with a flat revenue outlook and the need to take a hard look at how we spend our money in coming years, operating effectively and efficiently is more important than ever.

In light of what both Ministers have commented on and stated in this House, what is the Department of Human Resources doing in their transition planning with respect to reducing public servants as a cost-cutting option and measure going forward?

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. The Minister responsible, Mr. Beaulieu.

**HON. TOM BEAULIEU:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As a government, we have an obligation to ensure that the 18<sup>th</sup> Assembly is provided with the best transition information as possible as to our fiscal situation so that they can make decisions based on the challenges and opportunities that are before them.

**MR. HAWKINS:** The Finance Minister, in his fiscal update just two days ago, said the revenue is flat and, in essence, by the year '19-20 he had said that we will be down to what we estimate is a \$10 million surplus that will fund things like capital, and of course, it will be the short-term cash deficit.

Can the Minister of Human Resources elaborate as to what this government is doing to ensure that we don't face that type of financial crash in our cash position, so we must be looking at layoffs, as I've heard repeatedly in multiple departments? Can he elaborate as to their strategy and details that they're going through in those exercises and initiatives?

**HON. TOM BEAULIEU:** The only budget that we're dealing with for the rest of this sitting will be a capital budget. The government of the future will be discussing other budget items. This government will evaluate the cost of human resources. The government does want to give the incoming government an opportunity to contemplate all of their options, and part of the options is looking at the cost of human resources.

**MR. HAWKINS:** I can never say enough, but jobs are important, and I know how important they are to not only Yellowknife but to the small communities. They have a major impact on our economy. In the publication we call 20/20: A Brilliant North, NWT Public Service Strategic Plan, we talk about growing the public service. We often hear the Finance Minister directly talking about trying to attract 2,000 new people to the Northwest Territories. Lastly, I'll say even from the Minister's fiscal update, he talks about the importance of our flat population growth as the main source of revenue as it begins to decline, noting that only 19 percent of total revenues are ones of our own source. I don't know how we're going to do it by cutting, slashing and laying off.

How do layoffs, in comparison to those concerns that I've been raising, balance out with the objectives under the 20/20: A Brilliant North strategy to build the public service? Thank you.

**HON. TOM BEAULIEU:** This government will not be laying any of the public service off, but we do provide the best information possible, as I indicated, for the next government to look at and for the next government to have all of the information necessary through the complete costs of human resources, the current vacancy rates of human resources. If the next government was to look at the vacancy rates then that would be presented, if they wanted to look at the costs of the public service, how many casuals we're carrying in the public service, they would look at our workforce planning strategies. We have the Building 20/20 as a recruitment and retention and development of talent strategies. Those are all of the things that we will provide to the next government so they can make those informed decisions. Thank you.

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

**MR. HAWKINS:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Can the Minister clearly articulate how many positions they've evaluated for potential layoffs as a recommendation to the next government? This work is going on right now. They have said repeatedly it's not their hand on the rope, but I can tell you they're giving the next

government the nudge and all the material that they need. So I want to understand the valuation and evaluation that they've looked at, at this particular second, that they're billing department by department by department. No one can dodge that question because it's the responsibility of this Cabinet. That information falls on your shoulders. So, I hope the Minister of Human Resources can answer that question. Thank you.

**HON. TOM BEAULIEU:** Thank you. Any of this type of work with human resources will include talking about the 900 vacancies that we're currently carrying in the books. We don't have the number of positions that we are evaluating for layoff because I haven't seen any such plan to lay off certain people who are currently in the public service at this time.

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

QUESTION 908-17(5):  
HEARING AIDS FOR CHILDREN

**MR. BROMLEY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions are in follow up to my statement yesterday on the need for hearing aids for all young children in the Northwest Territories for the Minister of Health. Currently, not all NWT children are able to access any programs to cover the costs of the hearing aids crucial to their development. Although the GNWT sees fit to support the early identification of children with hearing loss, they do not provide all children with the intervention they require in order to succeed.

I'd like to ask the Minister, what is the status of action to address this gap? Mahsi.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Bromley. The Minister of Health, Mr. Abernethy.

**HON. GLEN ABERNETHY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the Member for raising this particular issue. The Member did raise this issue in July and at that point I was able to read the report that the Member has referred to, and the report suggested that we can support this small number of children who are affected here in the Northwest Territories with a very small sum of money.

I have since directed the department to move forward to find the money from within to provide hearing aids to young children that the Member is describing. They're in the middle of that process now. I was going to wait until a little bit later until I actually had something to announce as far as a completed policy, but I have directed the department to do that and it's underway now. We anticipate that we'll be in a position to start providing those hearing aids to those affected children in the next couple of months. Thank you.

**MR. BROMLEY:** Thanks to the Minister. That's great news, great news indeed, and I hope the word can get out to families that this is relevant to very soon.

The estimate for the annual cost in 2012, as the Minister knows, was pretty modest. Has he had a chance to update that and is there an explanation of the differences that are anticipated? Mahsi.

**HON. GLEN ABERNETHY:** Because we have such a small population here in the Northwest Territories and everybody who's going to need a hearing aid does have to go through the audiology unit at the Stanton Medical Clinic, we know the individuals who are going to be coming through and how many children are going to be affected. It's been a very small number over the last number of years. We anticipate that the cost in 2012 was around \$22,000. The technology prices haven't radically changed. We believe it's going to be about the same amount of money. But as I said, once I have more details I will absolutely be sharing it with the Member and with committee. Thank you.

**MR. BROMLEY:** This is a small number of people, and to those involved, it's extremely important, as the Minister knows.

This week I had a communication with an audiology professional, one of our staff, who said "In the grand scheme of things, it seems so insignificant, but when you are working with these parents and having to look them in the eyes and tell them their child has a hearing impairment and it's going to cost \$2,465, the cost of a pair of hearing aids and ear molds, to give them access to sound, well, it's a difficult place to be in as a professional and I imagine as a family too. And there is simply no reason why we aren't supporting these babies and kids."

So again, I really appreciate the Minister's action on this and I would ask how soon will you be able to let the front-line staff know that there's hope on the immediate horizon and they can start talking to families. Mahsi.

**HON. GLEN ABERNETHY:** Thank you. They probably just heard with the Member's comments and my commitment to making this happen, but I will have the department work with Stanton and the Stanton Clinic to ensure that the practitioners know that we're working on this and that the solution is on its way. Thank you.

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

**MR. BROMLEY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wouldn't doubt they are listening, and the most important question will be, when will this happen? When will this be in place? Mahsi.

**HON. GLEN ABERNETHY:** We do have to write some policies; we do have to make sure that we have the ability to provide the actual physical hearing aids. I will get more information for the Member. I will get back to you on when we anticipate to go live. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Abernethy. Time for oral questions has expired. Item 8, written questions.

Item 9, returns to written questions. Item 10, replies to opening address. Item 11, petitions. Item 12, reports of standing and special committees. Item 13, reports of committees on the review of bills. Mr. Hawkins.

### Reports of Committees on the Review of Bills

#### BILL 54: AN ACT TO AMEND THE FOREST MANAGEMENT ACT

**MR. HAWKINS:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to report to the Assembly that the Standing Committee on Economic Development and Infrastructure has reviewed Bill 54, An Act to Amend the Forest Management Act. The standing committee wishes to report that Bill 54 is not ready for consideration in Committee of the Whole and that the bill not be further proceeded with. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. Item 14, tabling of documents. The honourable Premier, Mr. McLeod.

### Tabling of Documents

#### TABLED DOCUMENT 318-17(5): CABINET OPERATIONAL GUIDELINES DURING A TRANSITION PERIOD

**HON. BOB MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to table the following document, entitled "Cabinet Operational Guidelines During a Transition Period."

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Minister of Finance, Mr. Miltenberger.

#### TABLED DOCUMENT 319-17(5): MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENT OF THE NORTHWEST TERRITORIES AND GOVERNMENT OF NUNAVUT ON THE NORTHERN EMPLOYEE BENEFITS SERVICES PENSION PLAN ACTS

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to table the following document, entitled "Memorandum of Agreement Between the GNWT and the Government of Nunavut on the Northern Employee Benefits Services Pension Plan Acts."

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Justice Minister, Mr. Ramsay.

#### TABLED DOCUMENT 320-17(5): NORTHWEST TERRITORIES CORONER SERVICE 2014 ANNUAL REPORT

**HON. DAVID RAMSAY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to table the following document, entitled "Northwest Territories Coroner Service 2014 Annual Report." Thank you.

TABLED DOCUMENT 321-17(5):  
ANNUAL REPORT OF THE CONFLICT OF  
INTEREST COMMISSIONER WITH RESPECT TO  
THE FILING OF DISCLOSURE STATEMENTS

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. Pursuant to Section 99(2) of the Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act, I hereby table the Annual Report of the Conflict of Interest Commissioner with respect to the filing of disclosure statements for 2014. Thank you, Mr. Clerk. Ms. Bisaro.

TABLED DOCUMENT 322-17(5):  
DRAFT OMBUDSMAN ACT FOR THE NORTHWEST  
TERRITORIES

**MS. BISARO:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to table a document, entitled "Draft Ombudsman Act for the Northwest Territories." Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. Mr. Bromley.

TABLED DOCUMENT 323-17(5):  
ARTICLE FROM NWT LITERACY COUNCIL  
ON UNIVERSAL CHILD CARE

**MR. BROMLEY:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I'd like to table an article, entitled "Universal Child Care Study Highlights Benefits" from the NWT Literacy Council newsletter September 30, 2015. Mahsi.

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

### Notices of Motion

MOTION 48-17(5):  
NORTHWEST TERRITORIES  
DISABILITIES SERVICES

**MR. BROMLEY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I give notice that on Monday, October 5, 2015, I will move the following motion: now therefore I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Deh Cho, that the government work with the Northwest Territories Disabilities Council and community councils to assess the reasons for the failure to implement the action plan formulated in 2008;

And further, that the government work with the Disabilities Council to propose the best way to actively move forward with a Disabilities Action Plan;

And furthermore, that the government produce a response for consideration by the House by June of 2016.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Bromley. Item 16, notices of motion for first reading of bills. Item 17, motions. Item 18, first reading of bills, Mr. Abernethy.

### First Reading of Bills

BILL 68:  
AN ACT TO AMEND THE  
CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES ACT, NO. 2

**HON. GLEN ABERNETHY:** Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Tu Nedhe, that Bill 68, An Act to Amend the Child and Family Services Act, No. 2, be read for the first time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Abernethy. Motion is in order. To the motion.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Question.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Question has been called. Bill 68 has had first reading.

---Carried

Item 19, second reading of bills. Item 20, consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and other matters: Bill 45, An Act to Amend the Workers' Compensation Act; Bill 49, An Act to Amend the Deh Cho Bridge Act; Bill 56, Miscellaneous Statute Law Amendment Act, 2015; Bill 59, Estate Administration Law Amendment Act; Bill 60, An Act to Amend the Motor Vehicles Act, No. 2; Bill 61, An Act to Amend the Public Airports Act; Bill 62, An Act to Amend the Coroners Act; Bill 63, An Act to Amend the Victims of Crime Act; Bill 64, An Act to Amend the Co-operative Associations Act; Bill 65, An Act to Amend the Safety Act; Minister's Statement 221-17(5), Sessional Statement; and Tabled Document 281-17(5), Northwest Territories Capital Estimates, 2016-2017. By the authority given to me as Speaker by Motion 10-17(5), I hereby authorize the House to sit beyond the daily hour of adjournment to consider business before the House, 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 a Whole to order today. What is the wish of the committee, Ms. Bisaro?

**MS. BISARO:** Thank you Madam Chair. Madam Chair, we wish to continue with Tabled Document 281-17(5), NWT Capital Estimates for 2016-2017, starting with continuation of the Department of Education, Culture and Employment and, time permitting, Environment and Natural Resources; Industry, Tourism and Investment; Justice; Lands; Municipal and Community Affairs; and NWT Housing Corporation. Thank you.

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

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

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

---SHORT RECESS

**CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):** I'd like to call Committee of the Whole back to order. When we recessed yesterday, we were on the Department of Education, Culture and Employment. I'd like to ask Minister Lafferty if he would like to bring witnesses into the Chamber. Minister Lafferty.

**HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY:** Yes, I do, Madam Chair.

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

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

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

Minister Lafferty, for the record, could you please introduce your witnesses.

**HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY:** Mahsi, Madam Chair. I have with me, to my left, David Stewart. He is the deputy minister of Education, Culture and Employment. To my right is Olin Lovely. He is the assistant deputy minister of corporate services within the Department of Education, Culture and Employment.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):** Thank you, Minister Lafferty. If I could direct Members' attention, please, to page 14 under Education, Culture and Employment, infrastructure investments, \$6.627 million.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):** Agreed. Thank you. On page 16, labour development and standards, infrastructure investments, \$1.672 million.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):** If I could just turn your attention, then, back to page 13, to Education, Culture and Employment, total infrastructure investments, \$8.299 million.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):** Do Members agree that concludes consideration of the Department of Education, Culture and Employment capital?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen):** I'd like to thank Minister Lafferty and his witnesses.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny):** Thank you, committee. We're going to continue here with the capital estimates. We have the Department of Environment and Natural Resources. With that, we'll go to the Minister responsible to see if he has witnesses he would like to bring in. Mr. Miltenberger.

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** I do, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny):** Thank you, Minister Miltenberger. Does committee agree?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny):** Sergeant-at-Arms, if you could please escort the witnesses in.

Minister Miltenberger, if you'd be kind enough to introduce your witnesses to the House, please.

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have with me the deputy minister, Mr. Ernie Campbell; and Ms. Susan Craig, the director of finance and admin.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny):** Thank you, Minister. Ms. Craig, Mr. Campbell, welcome back to the House.

Committee, we are on Environment and Natural Resources. We'll just open up with general comments. Is committee prepared to go into detail?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny):** Committee, we're going to defer page 19 until after we have dealt with consideration of the activity. If I can turn your attention to pages 20 and 21, conservation, assessment and monitoring, infrastructure investments, \$100,000. Does committee agree?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny):** Pages 22 and 23, Environment and Natural Resources, environment, infrastructure investments, \$100,000. Does committee agree?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny):** Pages 24 and 25, forest management, infrastructure investments, \$21.571 million. Does committee agree? Mr. Bromley.

**MR. BROMLEY:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Just with a couple of questions on the air tanker fleet, we started the purchase of these last year, I believe. When do we expect delivery of these aircraft, and if that's spread over time, when are we getting the first one and when are we getting the last one?

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny):** Thank you, Mr. Bromley. We'll go to Mr. Campbell.

**MR. CAMPBELL:** The schedule, as Mr. Bromley points out, started '15-16, and it was over to '16-17. We expect the delivery for the eight aircraft in the spring of 2017.

**MR. BROMLEY:** Will that be all of them arriving at the same time? I guess while I'm asking that, what is the plan? Does it take particular qualifications for these aircraft or can those positions be filled with existing aircraft expertise in the NWT?

**MR. CAMPBELL:** That would be for all of the aircraft, all eight of the aircraft. We have now started the process for the operations and maintenance contracts



for these aircraft, and that will call for the proponent to supply the qualified personnel for these aircraft as well.

**MR. BROMLEY:** Thanks for that response. I'm wondering: it sounds like those will be workers coming here from somewhere else, or will they be people who are hired locally? I'll get another part in here. I assume we would need some sort of hangar facility as part of this. Maybe I could just get what the plan is for that, as well, and when we might see that, if that's something we would be constructing in the capital budgets.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny):** Thank you, Mr. Bromley. Minister Miltenberger.

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We anticipate that this would be a request for proposals, that there are, we believe, eminently qualified and capable northern businesses that would be very, very interested in a contract like this, and we would anticipate, and we would make sure it's in the contract that, of course, northern pilots be checked out on these planes that are there. There are existing airline companies up here clearly that have the size and ability, could look and manage the hangar space or provide for that. So we anticipate that there is every reason to believe that there would be a northern proponent that would be successful in managing this fleet on a go-forward basis.

**MR. BROMLEY:** I will leave it at that. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny):** Committee, we are on pages 24 and 25. Ms. Bisaro.

**MS. BISARO:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I might be on the wrong page. Next page, thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny):** Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. Again, we are on pages 24 and 25. Forest management, infrastructure investments, \$21.571 million. Committee agree?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny):** Pages 26 and 27, water resources, infrastructure investments, \$790,000. Ms. Bisaro.

**MS. BISARO:** Thanks, Mr. Chair. I have a question here with regard to the type of lab equipment. I seem to recall that we spent some money on the Taiga Lab last year. Because of devolution, we took over the lab, took over the federal responsibility.

Could I get an explanation, if my recollection is correct? If it is, what equipment are we upgrading and replacing when we spent money just last year on the lab? Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny):** Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. Ms. Craig.

**MS. CRAIG:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. The Taiga Lab will be replacing some of its testing equipment within the lab. I believe the piece of equipment they will be

replacing in 2016-17 is an ion analyzer. They have their equipment that they replace on a lifecycle basis. So, every year we'll probably see money in our capital plan for some equipment that they will be replacing.

As to the land and the building, that would be under Public Works' capital projects.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny):** Thank you, Ms. Craig. Minister Miltenberger.

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Just a quick supplement, if I may. The Taiga Lab was part of the devolution package and the federal government knew, for some time, that they were going to be transferring assets, so they didn't renovate and rehabilitate every asset they had to peak condition before they turned it over to us, that's one thing.

What was brought before the House last time, if my memory serves me correctly, was the bringing on, of course, the staff as employees and not contract individuals where they, under the federal system, paid their way by doing all the scientific work that they do and getting reimbursed from industry that offset their wages. We brought them on board permanently. We do recognize, as well, that the Taiga Lab is well past its best before date and is going to be on the list to be renewed or replaced. Thank you.

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

**MS. BISARO:** Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thanks for those explanations. Just a follow-up question. If it's likely that we are going to see expenditures for lab equipment in each year, the background information that we got did not show expenditures in following years. It simply shows the expenditure for this particular year.

Could I maybe get an explanation as to why, if we are going to spend \$70,000 or \$100,000 every year, we know that for the next foreseeable 10 years, why it's not projected in the documents that we were given? Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny):** Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. Ms. Craig.

**MS. CRAIG:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. With the transfer of the Taiga Lab, we are working their lifecycle replacements into our long-term capital plan. We are taking inventory of their assets and assessing their needs on a priority basis and filling them into our plans. Each piece of equipment is a separate asset, so they will be brought forward as a separate project. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny):** Thank you, Ms. Craig. Committee, we are on pages 26 and 27, water resources, infrastructure investments, \$790,000. Does committee agree?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny):** Thank you. Pages 28 and 29, wildlife, infrastructure investments, \$5.378 million. Does committee agree? Mr. Bromley.

**MR. BROMLEY:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I see an upgrade to the washhouse at the Tundra Ecosystem Research Station, which I'm pleased to see. There is a lot of leading edge research based at that research station.

What is the long-term thinking of this research station? I know there was some discussion of that with change in personnel over the past few years. Could I get the latest thinking on that facility? Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny):** Thank you, Mr. Bromley. We'll turn it over to Mr. Campbell.

**MR. CAMPBELL:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. A long-term plan for this research station is to continue to build the project as we go forward, knowing, through the science agenda, we are building partners for research in the North. We are well aware of the Canadian High Arctic Research Station and that development. We want to continue to forge ahead with partnerships with academic institutions and build this research station. This is the first time that we are investing with infrastructure into this station. Most infrastructure in the past had been through partnerships and in-kind resources with other agencies, particularly the federal government. As we go forward now with our science agenda, we want to build this infrastructure going forward, knowing some of the large issues we face in the science area going forward. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny):** Thank you, Mr. Campbell. Mr. Bromley.

**MR. BROMLEY:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I just want to express my support for that decision and that plan. It's particularly become more critical that governments such as ours step into the major gaps left by the federal government pulling out of science and with our recent devolution, I think this is a totally logical step. In my view, it will only become more important. The mid-tundra is quite different than the High Arctic research situation, and as the world starts to express the change that's coming upon us, this could be an important facility to help us understand that with these partners that the deputy minister mentioned, I certainly appreciate that. That's all I have, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny):** Thank you, Mr. Bromley. I will consider that more of a comment. Committee, we are on pages 28-29, wildlife, infrastructure investments, \$5.378 million. Does committee agree?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny):** Thank you, committee. Turn back to page 19, Environment and Natural Resources, total infrastructure investments, \$27.939 million. Does committee agree?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny):** Thank you, committee. Does committee agree that we've concluded consideration for Environment and Natural Resources?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny):** Thank you, committee. At this time I'd like to thank the Minister and our guests, Mr. Campbell and Ms. Craig, for joining us. If I could please ask the Sergeant-at-Arms to escort our witnesses out of the Chamber. Thank you.

Continuing on with our agenda today, we have next on our list Industry, Tourism and Investment. With that, I will turn it over to the Minister responsible to see if he has any witnesses he wants to bring in. Minister Ramsay.

**HON. DAVID RAMSAY:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I do have witnesses.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny):** Thank you, Minister Ramsay. Does committee agree?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny):** Sergeant-at-Arms, please escort our witnesses in, please.

Minister Ramsay, please introduce your witnesses to the House.

**HON. DAVID RAMSAY:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It's my pleasure to introduce to the House the witnesses I have with me today. To my right is Ms. Kelly Kaylo, assistant deputy minister of ITI; to my left is Ms. Rhona Stanislaus, acting director of finance and administration with the Department of Industry, Tourism and Investment.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny):** Thank you, Minister Ramsay. Welcome to the House, Ms. Stanislaus and Ms. Kaylo. Committee, we are on Industry, Tourism and Investment, page 45 of your capital investments. With that, we will turn it over to general comments.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Detail.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny):** Is committee prepared to go to detail?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny):** Thank you, committee. We'll defer consideration of page 45 until we are finished the details. I will get you to turn your attention to pages 48 and 49, tourism and parks, infrastructure investments, \$3.598 million. Does committee agree? Ms. Bisaro.

**MS. BISARO:** Thanks, Mr. Chair. Are we including page 50 as well?

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny):** That would be correct, Ms. Bisaro. That would be 48, 49 and 50. Ms. Bisaro.

**MS. BISARO:** Thanks, Mr. Chair. I just have a question with regard to the Gwich'in Park Lake access road. I know we have a program within Transportation for access roads. I'm wondering why –



this is obviously a road issue – it's in this department as opposed to being in the Department of Transportation. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny):** Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. Minister Ramsay.

**HON. DAVID RAMSAY:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It would be different than a community access road in that it gets to a park and would be the responsibility of the Department of ITI for the construction of that road.

**MS. BISARO:** So, to relate it to something I understand within Prelude Lake Park, it would be the same sort of a road as from the highway to get to Prelude Lake itself. Would that be a good comparison? Thank you.

**HON. DAVID RAMSAY:** That wouldn't be a fair comparison in that there are different land tenures in that park at Prelude Lake and the road itself isn't the responsibility of the park until you get into the park itself. I guess a comparison might be, say, Pontoon Lake Park where there is a bit of an access road into Pontoon Lake. Thank you.

**MS. BISARO:** That's good. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny):** Thank you. Continuing with questions on tourism and parks, I have Mr. Bromley.

**MR. BROMLEY:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I am surprised and disappointed to see that there's not significant work planned for Prelude Lake area. I am wondering if I could get a status on what work has been done there and what is still to be done. I know there's a lot of concern about the parking areas down by the dock and the need to do some work on that dock. Obviously, low water time is a good time to be in there doing that sort of work. Maybe I could start by asking for an update on the status of that redevelopment at Prelude Lake Park. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny):** Thank you, Mr. Bromley. Minister Ramsay.

**HON. DAVID RAMSAY:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I thank the Member for the question. With the limited capital dollars that we do have, we've done a lot of work at Prelude Lake and we will continue to put some dollars into Prelude Lake. Just to update Members, the marine at Prelude Lake boat launch, PWS plans to use a standing offer agreement with a marine engineer to draw technical specs for the mooring system and fabrication for the floating dock system that will complement the existing concept designs. We expect the engineering contract to be completed this month. These engineered drawings will go to tender later this year, due to some procurement procedures attached to the election transition period. Tenders cannot proceed until after the period is over. We expect to begin in the spring of next year.

As far as loop D, the tender for the build is closed and we are ready to award the contract. An internal committee of DOT, ENR and Lands is also helping to

guide the project and we are hopeful that work can begin soon after the contract award this fall.

On to the shoreline improvements, the tender closed September 14<sup>th</sup> for on-the-land work. The in-water work to remove vegetation and place barriers to prevent regrowth has been cancelled due to permitted requirements and after a lack of interest to bid on the work was shown by potential contractors at a pre-tender meeting. Improvements planned are to refurbish the breakwater as per the concept drawings developed last fall. Vehicle access on the southern portion will be maintained and shoreline recreational space on the northern portion will also be developed. Permits are not required for this project as it's considered maintenance as long as there is no work that has to be completed in the water itself.

**MR. BROMLEY:** Thank you very much for that comprehensive response. I think there's a good record in Hansard for constituents who may be interested.

Would this work be proposed to come forward as a supp since it's not in this capital plan?

**HON. DAVID RAMSAY:** This is current year spending, so it's already been accounted for.

**MR. BROMLEY:** I'm not sure I fully understand that. I understand the work to get us to the point of being ready to do the work in the field, but I would assume that that needs to take place during the construction season after the 1<sup>st</sup> of April, and I don't see that work referred to in the capital plan here. That's why I'm wondering whether it would come forward in a supplementary appropriation.

**HON. DAVID RAMSAY:** Perhaps I'll have Ms. Kaylo explain the detail to how the money is going to be spent this year, and as I mentioned, it's already been in this year's capital plan.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny):** Thank you, Minister Ramsay. Ms. Kaylo.

**MS. KAYLO:** The projects that the Minister spoke of were approved in last year's capital plan, so they are for this current fiscal year, '15-16. The work that's underway right now is all in anticipation of completing these projects by the end of this fiscal year, March 31, 2016. We have, as the Minister identified, marine engineer drawings that, once completed, will be presented out for tender for the work for the marina at Prelude. A fair bit of work is required there. Of course, the extreme low water conditions this year have proven challenging for us. The new loop D, which went through consultations this past year, is also underway. The tender for the building of that particular loop has just closed, and again, we're in the stage of awarding the contract and anticipate that that work will be completed by March 2016.

Then the shoreline improvement, same sort of thing. There were some modifications planned around what was presented in terms of the beach area as a result

of getting more information on what could be refurbished along the breakwater, but that work is anticipated to be completed this fiscal year as well.

All those three projects were planned, budgeted for, and are underway now. There is another project for Prelude Lake planned for the '16-17 Capital Plan, which is identified in the Member's books as well. We can speak to that if required.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny):** Thank you, Ms. Kaylo. I have next on my list Mr. Bouchard.

**MR. BOUCHARD:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I have a few questions here. First, I'll just make a comment. I have heard good things about our parks from some of the tourists who come through. It's good to see we continue to update those facilities. Obviously, Mr. Dolynny, I think yesterday or the day before, was talking about some of the access in springtime and fall time. I know that's an O and M thing, but if we're going to invest some capital into this thing then I think we need to open up some of those parks for a little bit longer in the springtime and a little bit longer in the fall time. Definitely an issue.

I guess my first question is, and I know the Minister is also the Minister of Justice and I know Justice built some big fences. We have a bunch of fencing in this capital budget and I'm just wondering what's the concept behind building fences into parks. My fear is that we're making them look like an institution as opposed to a park. I just see several projects on the fencing-type stuff and I wonder what the concept is and why we're putting up a bunch more fence.

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

**HON. DAVID RAMSAY:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The fencing that Members will see is to protect assets first and foremost. We have put a number of fences in and we will have to continue to look at ways to ensure that our assets are protected and not left to be vandalized and potentially damaged. That's why you see the expenditure for fencing.

On the extended parks season, I know the Member and I and other Members have had discussions about the possibility of extending the season, especially in the southern part of the Northwest Territories where we are seeing the milder weather into the end of September. This is something that I think we'll have to continue to have a look at how this can happen. There are some problems when freezing temperatures happen and the impact on our equipment like shower facilities, washroom facilities, and things of that nature. We have to take a look at this, and if there is a way to ensure that we can keep parks open longer, I think that's something that going forward the department will certainly be looking at it.

**MR. BOUCHARD:** I think recently, within the last month or so, we had a public meeting and one of the discussions was about some of the park assets and some of the minor repairs that need to be done in the

park. In parks in and around the Hay River area and the Twin Falls area, I'm just wondering: does the department have a consistent plan to do assessment in all its park facilities, and so on an annual basis we kind of look at what needs to be repaired and what needs to be replaced. As far as I know, we have a lot of wood structures, so rotting wood and stuff like that, especially in trip and fall areas such as walkways and stuff like that. Does the department have a maintenance program where they assess all the needs?

**HON. DAVID RAMSAY:** Yes, the department and the regions do a lot of work on looking at our infrastructure when the park season ends, cataloguing areas of concern, places where we need to look at making some investment and upgrading and looking at maintenance issues. This is done, and I know when you're dealing with the travelling public and our residents using our parks, it's very important that that work happen every year. We also have park officers and park staff who frequent the parks during the park season that are consistently bringing issues to our concern, and they can be addressed in a timely fashion.

**MR. BOUCHARD:** My next question is about the actual budget. It kind of indicates that all of the capital budget for ITI is under small capital projects. Can the Minister just remind what that level is? Is it \$50,000, \$100,000 that we have to be under in order for it to be a small capital project?

**HON. DAVID RAMSAY:** That would be between \$50,000 and \$400,000.

**MR. BOUCHARD:** I'm just wondering: for future considerations, do we have any major large capital projects over the next, let's say, three years that we have currently slotted, or will we just continue to do small capital projects.

**HON. DAVID RAMSAY:** No, we don't have any large scale projects planned.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny):** Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. Committee, again, we're on page 48, 49, and 50, tourism and parks, infrastructure investments, \$3.598 million. Does committee agree?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny):** If I can get you to turn back to page 45, Industry, Tourism and Investment, total infrastructure investments, \$3.598 million. Does committee agree?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny):** Does committee agree that we've concluded consideration of Industry, Tourism and Investment?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny):** Thank you, committee. At this time I'd like to thank our witnesses for joining us here, Ms. Kaylo and Ms. Stanislaus and, of course,

Minister Ramsay. If I can get the Sergeant-at-Arms to escort the witnesses out of the House, please.

Committee, as we agreed upon earlier, we're going to continue on with our capital estimates here with the Department of Justice. With that, I'll turn it over to the Minister responsible to see if he has any witnesses he'd like to bring in. Minister Ramsay.

**HON. DAVID RAMSAY:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, we do have witnesses. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny):** Thank you, Minister Ramsay. Does committee agree?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny):** Thank you, committee. Sergeant-at-Arms, if you could please escort the witnesses into the House.

Minister Ramsay, if you would be kind enough to introduce your witnesses to the House, please.

**HON. DAVID RAMSAY:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm pleased to introduce the witnesses who I have with me today. To my left is Sylvia Haener, deputy minister, Department of Justice; to my right is Leanne Hannah. She's the acting director of finance with the Department of Justice.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny):** Thank you, Minister Ramsay. Ms. Hannah, Ms. Haener, welcome to the House. Committee, again, we are Justice, which is pages 51 and onward. We're going to turn it over to general comments. General comments, Justice. Is committee prepared to go into detail?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny):** Thank you, committee. Committee, we're actually going to defer page 51 until consideration of the activity as a whole. I'll get you to turn to page 52, corrections, infrastructure investments, \$7.846 million. Does committee agree?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny):** Thank you. Page 54, court services, infrastructure investments, \$867,000. Does committee agree? Ms. Bisaro.

**MS. BISARO:** Thanks, Mr. Chair. I wanted to ask a question about the sheriff's vehicle. What kind of a vehicle is it that is required? This says a suburban or similar full-size to transport court party. I guess, how big is the court party? How big does this vehicle need to be? Are we looking at a fairly expensive vehicle or is it, you know, similar price to something you or I would buy off the lot that isn't going to break the bank? Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny):** Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. Minister Ramsay.

**HON. DAVID RAMSAY:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The sheriff's vehicle is an eight-person vehicle. It's required to be that size and it transports court parties. Here in Yellowknife it would transport the court party to Behchoko, so it has to be of a certain size. The cost

on a vehicle of that nature is somewhere in the area of \$65,000. Thank you.

**MS. BISARO:** Mr. Chair, that seems like a heck of a lot of money for a vehicle. I guess the \$65,000, is that sort of a standard price for a vehicle this size, or is this a speciality vehicle, apart from the size of it that will carry eight people? Is it speciality in that it has extra security measures or extra safety measures? Is it bulletproof, says my colleague.

It just seems like that's an awful lot of money. I would have presumed we could get a vehicle of that size and that capability for, I don't know, 10 or 20 thousand dollars less. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**HON. DAVID RAMSAY:** Mr. Chairman, that is the going price for a vehicle of that nature. In fact, it might be a little bit on the low side when you look at vehicles in that class that have to carry up to eight people. Also, the court party would have their documents and other necessary equipment with them when they travel, so it is necessary to have a vehicle of this size.

As far as whether the vehicle would be specially outfitted, no, it wouldn't. It would need to have towing capacity for potential seizures and also a radio would be installed in the vehicle. But other than that, there are no special adjustments to that vehicle that will be made. Thank you.

**MS. BISARO:** I think I may have forgotten my question. Oh, we have two vehicles, as I understand it, in Yellowknife, two sheriff's vehicles in Yellowknife. So I understand that this one that is being replaced is the one that is used to transport the court party. Does the other vehicle need to be of the same size and the same expense, or is it a bit more of a light-duty vehicle for travel in and around Yellowknife? Thank you.

**HON. DAVID RAMSAY:** Mr. Chairman, the other vehicle will be sent to Hay River to replace a sheriff's vehicle in Hay River. So, yes, it will need to be of a similar class with the seating capacity, equipment, storage capacity, towing capacity, and that vehicle, when the new one comes on line, the existing vehicle will be put and utilized in the community of Hay River. Again, the ability to transport the court party is paramount in this. We'll have one in Hay River and one here in Yellowknife. Thank you.

**MS. BISARO:** So now I'm confused. I think the background information we got said that there are three vehicles: one in Hay River, two in Yellowknife. I hope you don't send the vehicle that we are replacing to Hay River, because I understand that it's beyond repair. But then Hay River can deal with that.

I'm talking about the second vehicle here in Yellowknife. Does it need to be as much of a heavy-duty vehicle as this one that we're currently buying?

**HON. DAVID RAMSAY:** Mr. Chairman, sorry for the confusion. There are two vehicles here in Yellowknife and one in Hay River. The one that's in Hay River

currently is going to be surplus. One of the vehicles is going to move from Yellowknife to Hay River and a new vehicle will be purchased to replace that vehicle in Yellowknife, so there still will be two vehicles in Yellowknife. As I mentioned in my previous comment, if the vehicle is used to have the court party in, say, Behchoko, it's very important that the sheriff's office have a vehicle here in Yellowknife. There is definitely a requirement to have two of these vehicles on hand to carry out the duties of the sheriff's office. Thank you.

**MS. BISARO:** Thanks to the Minister. I appreciate that, that we need two vehicles. But it would seem to me that we're not sending two vehicles to Behchoko every day, so can the second vehicle that is here not be a bit more of a light-duty vehicle? Thank you.

**HON. DAVID RAMSAY:** Mr. Chairman, that other vehicle, if the one vehicle is in Behchoko, would still be required to transport a court party to the airport or pick up a court party from the airport, their equipment and the court party itself. So there is a requirement to have vehicles of a similar nature located here in Yellowknife to carry out the duties of the sheriff's office. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny):** Thank you, Minister Ramsay. Continuing on with questions on the court services activity, I have Mr. Hawkins.

**MR. HAWKINS:** Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. First of all, let me thank my good colleague Ms. Bisaro. I was worried I was the only one who had an issue with this particular vehicle and I thought her questions were well thought out to the issue.

I've had grave concerns about a \$65,000 vehicle just to drive a judge around in luxury, because we want to make sure that they don't feel the bumps on the way to Behchoko. I don't think there's any vehicle you could drive to Behchoko without feeling the bumps, but in all seriousness, the ultimate answer here is so they can ride in comfort.

Let's start off with not the hypothetical of the eight-person vehicle. How many people actually go to Behchoko on the court process? I mean, we don't put the prisoners in there with the judge. I mean, for shame we wouldn't want that. So, let's be very clear on this. How many people in that actual vehicle would be driving to Behchoko in a normal circumstance? Not the one time we max out all eight seats, but the normal circumstance. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny):** Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. Minister Ramsay.

**HON. DAVID RAMSAY:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The court party is required to travel to communities to hear court matters, and in some cases road travel is the most economical and logistical way to travel. All circuits range from three to five days in duration and, in the case of Behchoko, the vehicle accumulates between 600 and 1,000 kilometres per week. There are between five and eight staff who travel on these

circuits and are required to bring all items required to conduct court, such as files for court, hard of hearing equipment, interpretation equipment, CCTV equipment, laptops with portable printers, portable defibrillators, personal items for staff for the day and also winter clothing during the winter months, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

**MR. HAWKINS:** Mr. Chairman, it sounds like we should buy them a moving van, not a luxury leather Denali Suburban, who knows? I mean, let's be honest. Maybe the Minister can explain why a Ford Escape that holds four or five people in there, or even a four-door pickup couldn't do this. It would certainly come at half the price for the occasion of driving to Behchoko. We're not even getting into this yet about the fancy \$65,000 vehicle sitting at the courthouse probably doing nothing during the day while one is on its adventure on its way to Behchoko. I'm curious what the Minister has to say about that. Thank you.

**HON. DAVID RAMSAY:** In order to conduct the work of the sheriff's office, it's vitally important that they have vehicles to ensure that they can carry out their duties and in this case they need a vehicle of this size and of the nature, and as I mentioned earlier, if the one vehicle is in Behchoko, the sheriff's office here in Yellowknife could utilize the vehicle for transport to the airport, picking up from the airport and also the execution of seizures and the ability for the vehicle to tow a boat or other pieces of equipment and that is why it's important that it's a vehicle of this type.

As I mentioned to Ms. Bisaro, and I know the Member mentioned Denali, it's not a luxury vehicle. It doesn't have all the bells and whistles on, and it won't. It's a vehicle that's a good size and with capabilities to ensure that the sheriff's office can conduct its business in a safe manner. Thank you.

**MR. HAWKINS:** How many times did the court party go to Behchoko last year?

**HON. DAVID RAMSAY:** I'm starting to wonder how this is germane to the question about a vehicle, Mr. Chairman.

**MR. HAWKINS:** Well, Mr. Chairman, I mean, if he's saying they need this vehicle, this luxury vehicle to sit in the fleet at the courthouse or can go to Behchoko, I am curious how often it's used. But keep in mind, it's not just one vehicle, it's two that they have in their fleet. We're going to get to the second one in a second that sits on standby so they can travel in great comfort. So, how many times did the court party go to Behchoko last year? It's a good question.

**HON. DAVID RAMSAY:** I'm not sure if the Member was listening earlier when I said it accumulates between 600 and 1,000 kilometres per week. I will get the number of times the vehicle travelled out to Behchoko, and we also have to remember, Mr. Chairman, that these vehicles are utilized also to transport juries when needed, and again, it's very

important that the sheriff's office have this type of equipment to carry out their jobs. Thank you.

**MR. HAWKINS:** Well, it's a shame that the Minister is so ill-prepared to answer this question because I think it's germane to the problem, which is if it's only travelling once or twice a week in 52 weeks, that tells you that maybe – again I wish I had the number before me; he doesn't seem to want to share it or he doesn't have it – that if it even goes twice a week, that means it's sitting in Yellowknife three days a week. I not only mention that, I spent a lot of time talking about the second vehicle. So, the second vehicle has to be so large to tow a boat, for example. So you're telling me that that seizure, call it a boat or whatever the case may be, couldn't wait a day or until the evening to be done, which could probably be done by a smaller vehicle. I have yet to find something that, say, a small Ford Escape or a small four-door pickup truck that could carry people, and the final point is it's also to travel juries. Well, it's been my experience that juries aren't made up of eight people, so I don't know how you'd have an eight-person vehicle, luxury vehicle by the way, plus five to eight people in it, plus the jury. The math doesn't add up; the story doesn't add up. So, can we get some facts on how many times it went to Behchoko last year, because I think it's important.

The next question will about the other vehicle. Thank you.

**HON. DAVID RAMSAY:** When that vehicle transports the court party, and there's a court circuit in the community of Behchoko, its occupants are in the community usually between three and five days. They require transportation while they're in the community, and the vehicle is a very important part of the sheriff's office and their ability to carry out their work. The sheriff's office conducts seizures of assets across the Northwest Territories and they are required to transport them to secure storage. This can occur in any community within the Northwest Territories and the sheriff's officers travel via roadway whenever they can to keep the costs of travel down, and a heated cargo area is required if some items can't be exposed to the elements. The vehicle must have a towing capacity to move items that could be seized which, as I mentioned, could include a boat, snowmobiles, trailers or personal watercraft. You can't tow those with a smaller vehicle. Thank you.

**MR. HAWKINS:** Well, I hate to call the Minister wrong, but he's wrong because I did it last week. I towed a big boat with my vehicle and it's a small vehicle. It's not as fancy as the \$65,000 luxury vehicle they want for the sheriff's office to drive the judges around and it doesn't ride as smooth as an Audi, but I'll tell you my vehicle did it.

So, I still haven't got to the answer of how many times did the vehicle go to Behchoko last year and the Minister doesn't have it, he just wants to cite platitudes, saying, well, it goes three to five times.

But we don't really have a real answer, because I think that's important when going to the next question, which is: How often is that vehicle used, the one that's left behind. I think Ms. Bisaro very astutely picked it out, which is: Is that busy running to Tim Horton's? Is that busy maybe serving a summons which only is a piece of paper and a cup of coffee, really? I mean, it's not driving court parties around town so we need a full-sized vehicle, a \$65,000 vehicle sitting at the courthouse just in case we might need it to run someone to the airport. Why not make two runs to the airport?

When I had invited the mayor, the old mayor of Edmonton, to Yellowknife, I made a comment in saying, "Yes, Yellowknife suffers from rush minute," and he laughed for about 20 minutes. "Because we're so small," I said, "everywhere is about five minutes away." So, we don't need the second super-sized vehicle just to drive a sheriff around so they can serve a summons. I mean, it just seems like poor management and a little bit on the gluttony side of ourselves. I mean, we only really, from the sounds of it, could barely justify one, Mr. Chairman.

So, perhaps the Minister could go back and answer the honest question, which is: How many times did it go to Behchoko last year? I don't know why they haven't answered this question and how do we go forward without knowing this. I don't know why they're asking for \$65,000 without being able to answer that question. Thank you.

**HON. DAVID RAMSAY:** A safe assumption would be, and it would vary from month to month, depending on what month of the year you're talking about, but an average of at least twice a month the court party travels from Yellowknife to the community of Behchoko. They're there for three to five days, at least twice a month, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny):** Thank you, Minister Ramsay. Committee, we're on court services, infrastructure investments, \$867,000. Does committee agree?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny):** Mr. Hawkins, I'll allow another question on this activity as long as it's nothing to do with the sheriff's vehicle. We've exhausted all information on that one. Go ahead, Mr. Hawkins.

**MR. HAWKINS:** Well, debate is being stifled very quickly then. I'd like to know how many times the other vehicle is used and what type of services the other sheriff's vehicle is using. So I'm staying away from the specific on the \$65,000, but it's important to understand what it's being used for.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny):** Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. I will give you some latitude on the other vehicle. Minister Ramsay.

**HON. DAVID RAMSAY:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We will get the Member the detailed information on

what the other vehicle is used for. I will just mention again the cost of the vehicle at \$65,000 is not excessive for this type of vehicle and it is not certainly a luxury vehicle, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

**MR. HAWKINS:** I'm not sure it's worth questioning anymore. The information will come. We all know... What do we have? We have five days left in the Assembly. I'm sure it will show up on my desk on October 9<sup>th</sup>. It's really disappointing. To say that it travels to Behchoko now from three to five days a week to at least twice a month, that tells me... It just doesn't tell me it's needed. I think I'd like to move a motion to delete it. I think that this is a super-sized vehicle this department and this section doesn't need. If they need one, keep one in your fleet but you don't need two super-sized suburbans sitting there most of the time gathering dust. They are some of the most expensive vehicles to drive anyway. Anybody who's got one will tell you that you get almost zero gas mileage out of that thing, so we're not only buying a super-sized vehicle, we are buying an inefficient one. If it's that important, we should be driving them in a big bus. I'm not suggesting buying a school bus, but I am suggesting we find a different way to do this business. It wouldn't be unrealistic, Mr. Chairman. That's the fact.

I'll leave it at this: I think it's a terrible waste. I would prefer a policy that forces us down to at least one vehicle and a small Escape. I can tell you that even delivering summons, little pieces of paper, they don't need something more than a Toyota eco car or something like that to do those particular jobs. This is just a terrible expense. The reason it continues is because it's continued. People got used to a big vehicle and the enjoyment of it. That's where I will leave it. They like the big car because they want to be important, I guess.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolyunny):** Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. I will allow Minister Ramsay to have a final comment.

**HON. DAVID RAMSAY:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We have a duty and an obligation to ensure that our staff and the duties that they carry out on behalf of the residents of the Northwest Territories each and every day are done and conducted in a safe manner. These vehicles are required to ensure that the sheriff's office can conduct its business in a safe manner. I don't think we should be underscoring the important work the sheriff's office does on behalf of all residents here in the NWT. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolyunny):** Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. Mr. Hawkins, you've got some time left. Okay, thank you. Committee, we are on pages 54 and 55, court services, infrastructure investment \$867,000. Does committee agree?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolyunny):** Thank you, committee. Page 57, services to public, infrastructure investments, \$365,000. Does committee agree?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolyunny):** Ms. Bisaro.

**MS. BISARO:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. There is one item under this particular section. It's to retrofit some office space. It seems like a huge amount of money to me to retrofit what seems to be a small office.

How big is this office and what kind of renovations are being done that are going to cost us \$360,000 or so? Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolyunny):** Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. We'll go to Ms. Hannah.

**MS. HANNAH:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. The rental office is located on the third floor of YK Centre East and currently it is staffed by a full-time admin coordinator and two contract rental officers. The contractors may or may not be in the office at any given time. They are contractors that are there as required to perform their duties. So, quite often one admin rental officer is there on their own in that position. So this office retrofit is to bring that office up to safety requirements for a single FTE office as that person is there quite often on their own. The amount is based on a quote that we came to in collaboration with the Department of Public Works and Services. This is the quote we put forward in the infrastructure planning.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolyunny):** Thank you, Ms. Hannah. Ms. Bisaro.

**MS. BISARO:** Thanks, Mr. Chair. Thanks for the explanation. I understand, from a security perspective, that we need to make sure that our staff are secure no matter where they're working, but could I get a sense of the scope of this renovation, because \$360,000, I could buy a house for that. I am just trying to understand. Is it just within this office that we're doing renos or do we have to blast through a brick wall to put another door in or something? I'm not sure. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolyunny):** Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. Minister Ramsay.

**HON. DAVID RAMSAY:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We can try to get the Members more detailed information on the scope. We are going to be combining the MEP and the rental office. It is a costly venture to be combining these two spaces and putting in the requisite security requirements into the space.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolyunny):** Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. Ms. Bisaro.

**MS. BISARO:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I don't need any more information. By the time I get the information, we'll be done with the budget. That's all I have, Mr. Chair. Thanks.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolyunny):** Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. I have another question from another Member on this activity. Mr. Hawkins.



**MR. HAWKINS:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My question would be, what's driven this initiative. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny):** Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. Minister Ramsay.

**HON. DAVID RAMSAY:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It's the safety of the staff in the office. Thank you.

**MR. HAWKINS:** Was it predicated on an incident or changing a standard in work environment? Was it a union initiative? Was it brought to the department because of some type of concern? Thank you.

**HON. DAVID RAMSAY:** The departmental occupational health and safety specialist has identified the current set-up of the rental office as a health and safety risk for the employee staffed in that location. At times the clientele the staff is dealing with can be frustrated and very agitated with their landlords and, therefore, can express aggressive behaviour, putting the staff at risk. Proper physical security measures need to be put in place to ensure the health and safety of that staff. Thank you.

**MR. HAWKINS:** Has there been an incident that any of us have been unaware of? If so, when? Let's go back to how often there has been an incident, if there are any, in the last year.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny):** Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. For that, we'll go to Ms. Haener.

**MS. HAENER:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. We have had some situations over the past summer, not just in that office but also in the legal aid offices. Thankfully, there was nothing serious that took place, but we are also aware of situations, and I think they were reported on publicly this summer, that involved social work staff, as well, involving clients who became quite aggressive.

We, as a government, as the Minister has said, have an obligation to our staff to make sure that we're providing them a safe work environment. It became very clear to us that this particular office presented risk that we need to fix. Thank you.

**MR. HAWKINS:** Just to be clear, we are talking about the rentals office. How many incidents have happened recently and how many over the last year, just to be clear?

**MS. HAENER:** I am aware of one particular situation which involved both the rentals office and legal aid. I'm not aware of any others, but one is too many, and it became clear, as I indicated, that there were risks associated with the office set-up and that we need to fix that.

**MR. HAWKINS:** I'm trying to understand now the department's definition of "incident." Just because somebody is upset, that doesn't mean... I don't know. I mean, I'm just trying to understand. We're talking about the nature of the work that people are... In other words, when people file complaints they're upset. I'd like to know what the definition is they're

using as the low water mark of incident. I want to understand this.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny):** Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. Minister Ramsay.

**HON. DAVID RAMSAY:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The Workers' Safety and Compensation Commission has regulations regarding employees who have to work alone, and as we've mentioned, the departmental occupational health and safety specialist identified the current set-up of the rental office as a health and safety risk for the employee that is staffed there.

It becomes incumbent upon us to address that health and safety risk, and as my deputy minister has stated, there was an incident there and we need to ensure that we can protect the employee that we have there. There have been incidents in other offices in Yellowknife and other communities, and we need to ensure that we're doing everything we can to make sure that our employee is protected.

**MR. HAWKINS:** I'm just trying to get a sense of how far we're going to go. I mean, are we talking about a counter that people will have between the two of them? Are we talking about putting them behind a glass wall, that they have to speak through the little vent and slide paper under the window? I'm just curious how far or how big city we're becoming because one person may have been a little upset, and I've yet to find out how upset.

People get passionate. Some would maybe swear, and some define that as aggressive, absolutely. But in the bigger scheme of things, people sometimes get emotional, and you have to sort of look at the whole situation at large. That's what I'm trying to understand.

What does "incident" mean and how far is this going to go? Are we going to put a counter in place or are we going to put them in a glass bubble where they're locked in, security coded and, like I said, speak through the little metal vent, slide paper under the window? I mean, how far is this going to go? I'd like to know.

**HON. DAVID RAMSAY:** I think we should be more focused on the health and safety risks as opposed to what constitutes an incident. We can't be too safe when it comes to protecting the employees that we have.

To get to the Member's question, we are looking at redesigning the space to share a reception area and also a second egress at the back of the office space to allow a second way for the employee to get out of that office should the need arise.

**MR. HAWKINS:** Well, again, not knowing what "incident" means here, we're just taking a stab, and I would caution the Minister on thinking I don't think personal safety or employees don't matter. I think that that's an atrocious description of what I was trying to say. I'm trying to understand, did someone get upset

and swear? Did someone take a swing? Did someone throw something at it? Did they do the George Bush throw a shoe at them? What are we talking about on that and how far are we going to go without knowing this?

I mean, all I'm hearing is "incident." Well, incident means what? We have to bring how much money to change the whole office around? I mean, we have to be fair and honest here. I mean, nobody wants anyone to work in an unsafe environment. No one's saying that. But, I mean, how far are we going to take this? I mean, are we turning a papercut into a triage incident, you know, and we have to send 20 doctors down? I mean, what is the incident that we're speaking of? Give us a sense of how serious this is. If there's only been one, again, nobody wants anyone hurt. No one's suggesting that at all, and I'm very disappointed to even think that would be alluded to, but the thing is, what are we talking about?

**HON. DAVID RAMSAY:** I thought it was quite clear what we're talking about and that's the safety and well-being of the staff that we have in the rentals office. This type of security and finish, the equipment will be similar to other departmental office space with similar clientele such as maintenance enforcement and also the probation offices. Again, it's very important that we understand what we're up against, and that is a clientele who can be unpredictable. They are well known to other social agencies in Yellowknife. We've had experiences with these folks at other offices, including legal aid, so we can't be too safe and we have to ensure that we are protecting our employees.

**MR. HAWKINS:** We still haven't had the answer of what an incident means or in the context of... Thanks, Mr. Bouchard.

The other thing is that now the Minister is stereotyping the clientele by saying they're well known by other social agencies. I don't know what he means, and in all honesty, I mean, we're just sort of guessing at good faith.

Incident, again I'm saying, was it someone upset? They crumpled up a piece of paper and were mad because they didn't get the answer they wanted? I mean, what are we talking about? It's just continue to say as minimum as possible, promise to get back to us, even though we know no one will get back to us in a timely way that it will affect this budget and just drag the clock out so we lose our 10 minutes. Really, all we're hearing here is just the same thing.

Can the Minister explain what type of incident happened so we can understand the necessity for that? I mean, no one wants a serious casualty of any sort or any casualty, and that's the issue, but I'd like to know what we're talking about. He can say all he wants, well, we know what we're talking about. I want to know what the incident means. Was it someone crumpled up a paper? Swore? Are we actually talking

a physical altercation? Like, what are we talking about?

**HON. DAVID RAMSAY:** I thought the deputy and myself have made it quite clear that there have been incidents. It shouldn't matter to what degree those incidents happened. Some of them have been serious in nature, and when you are dealing with a rental office and people are facing the prospect of perhaps losing the place they live, they are under a tremendous amount of pressure, and we can't be too safe when it comes to protecting the employees we have, because when people are faced with that type of pressure, sometimes people don't deal with that pressure very well and they lash out at these front-line workers that we have, and we need to ensure that they're safe.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny):** Thank you, Minister Ramsay. Committee, we're on page 57, services to public, infrastructure investments, \$365,000. Does committee agree?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny):** Committee, if I can get you to turn back to page 51, capital estimates, Justice, total infrastructure investments, \$9.078 million. Does committee agree?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny):** Does committee agree that we've concluded consideration of the Department of Justice?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny):** Thank you, committee. I'd like to thank our guests here today, Ms. Hannah and Ms. Haener. Thank you for joining us today, and of course, Minister Ramsay. If I can get the Sergeant-at-Arms to please escort our witnesses out of the Chamber.

Committee, we're just going to take a five-minute recess.

---SHORT RECESS

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny):** I would like to call committee back to order. I will continue with our estimates on capital with next on the list, which is Lands. I will turn to the Minister responsible to see if he has witnesses to bring in. Mr. McLeod.

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

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny):** Thank you, Minister McLeod. Does committee agree?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny):** Thank you, committee. Sergeant-at-Arms, if you would escort the witnesses in, please.

Minister McLeod, would you like to introduce your witnesses to the House?



**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** Yes, thank you, Mr. Chair. With me I have to my right, Mr. Mark Warren, deputy minister of Lands; and to my left, Brenda Hilderman. She is the director of corporate services.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny):** Ms. Hilderman and Mr. Warren, welcome back to the House. Committee, we are on Lands, general comments. Is committee prepared to go into detail?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny):** Thank you, committee. Committee, we are on pages 59 to 61. Operations, infrastructure investments, \$1.350 million. Does committee agree?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny):** Thank you, Committee. If I can get you to turn to page 59. Lands, total infrastructure investments, \$1.350 million. Does committee agree?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny):** Thank you, committee. Does committee agree that we have concluded consideration for the Department of Lands?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny):** Thank you, committee. Mr. Warren, Ms. Hilderman, thanks for joining us for an easy one, and thank you, Minister McLeod. Sergeant-at-Arms, if I could get you to please escort the witnesses out of the Chamber. Thank you.

Okay, committee, we are going to continue with capital estimates. Next on the list we have Municipal and Community Affairs. Again, I will turn it over to the Minister responsible to see if he has witnesses he wants to bring in. Minister McLeod.

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

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny):** Thank you, Minister McLeod. Does committee agree?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny):** Thank you, committee. Sergeant-at-Arms, if you would escort the witnesses in, please.

Minister McLeod, would you be kind enough to introduce your witnesses this evening?

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** Yes, thank you, Mr. Chair. To my left I have Mr. Tom Williams, deputy minister of MACA; and to my right, Ms. Eleanor Young, who is the assistant deputy minister of MACA.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny):** Thank you, committee. Mr. Williams, Ms. Young, thank you for joining us this evening. Committee, we are on Municipal and Community Affairs. We are on page 63 onward in your capital estimates. We will turn it over to general comments. Ms. Bisaro.

**MS. BISARO:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. There is just one section, the infrastructure contributions to

communities here in this department and I have to state, I think I stated in my opening remarks to the budget, as well, and I have stated here in this department, that communities have been funded for their capital infrastructure at the same level for far too many years. If I look at the background information that we are provided, the government is proposing to keep communities at the same infrastructure funding level for the next two or three or four years to come. That is a real concern for me.

Our communities, under the New Deal, which started quite a few years ago now, have been taking on more and more infrastructure. They have accepted what used to be government infrastructure and it has now become community infrastructure and as they grow, as communities grow, they build their own infrastructure. Yet, they are funded at the same level for their capital projects as they have been for quite some years. I don't know how far back it goes but it goes back a long way.

There have been discussions about doing a review. There certainly has been a review done on operational funding and I am very glad for that and there were some changes made, but there needs to be, and there should have been, the same review on capital infrastructure funding for communities. I don't think that's finished. I hope that it is in the works. I would ask the Minister to confirm that it is happening. If it is not happening, it certainly had better be one of the first things that are done in the 18<sup>th</sup> Assembly. It's really important that the government recognizes that our communities are doing more and more on less and less and we cannot expect them to be subsistent. We can't expect them to protect our residents, to provide services for our residents if we don't give them the capital dollars to keep their infrastructure up to snuff. So, it's just a comment, Mr. Chair.

I do have a question. Where are we at in terms of a review of the funding? Other than that, that's all I have. Thank you.

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

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** Yes, thank you, Mr. Chair. The Member is absolutely correct; funding has stayed at the same level for a while. We have been very fortunate to have been able to leverage some federal dollars to send the communities. We recognize there is a bit of a shortfall, and as far as the assessment, it was part of the formula funding review. Not only did we look at the O and M, we looked at the capital as well. That work has been completed. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny):** Thank you, Minister McLeod. I will allow Ms. Bisaro another comment as she has time on the clock. Ms. Bisaro.

**MS. BISARO:** Thanks, Mr. Chair. I guess I could have held this question, but if the review has been completed, I have to then ask, when are we going to see an increase in this funding? There's no projection

that I'm aware of to increase infrastructure funding anytime soon.

To the Minister: How long are communities going to have to wait before they get some more capital dollars for their infrastructure? Thank you.

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** We had originally intended to start this work I think early in the life of the 18<sup>th</sup> Assembly, but we fast-tracked it and did the formula funding review work before the end of this Assembly. Once the 18<sup>th</sup> Assembly comes into being, they will have to have a look at the fiscal situation. If there are opportunities to increase the money to the communities, then the Minister of the day will have to bring that forward and try to get the funds increased. So, the work has already been completed, Mr. Chair.

**MS. BISARO:** To the Minister: I can appreciate that we're in a tight fiscal situation; however, \$28 million in a 1.6 or 1.7 billion dollar budget is a very small percentage. I know communities are not going to get a doubling of the infrastructure dollars that are shown in this budget, but I think our communities, if we expect them to continue and if we expect our residents to continue getting the municipal services that they need – dogs, ditches and dumps, as they say – if that's going to continue, we're going to have to give them bigger infrastructure dollars. So, I strongly encourage the 18<sup>th</sup> Assembly to look at the amount of money that's going into our communities for capital and to increase it by even 10 percent would make municipalities happy, I'm sure, and that's not a heck of a lot of money. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolyunny):** Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. I didn't quite hear a question there, but I will allow the Minister a comment. Minister R.C. McLeod.

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. We agree with the Member. I think it's a discussion that needs to happen early in the life of the 18<sup>th</sup> so there are opportunities to secure some funding for the communities which badly need it. I think that's a debate that has to be taken up early in the life of the 18<sup>th</sup>, because we have done all the work through the formula funding review and I believe there was a capital deficit of about \$24 million. So, we've identified it and I think we've flagged it. Then again, it's a decision that's going to have to be made early in the life of the 18<sup>th</sup>. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolyunny):** Thank you, Minister McLeod. Continuing with general comments on Municipal and Community Affairs, I have Mr. Bromley.

**MR. BROMLEY:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I believe the Minister answered my question. Did you know I was going to ask this question? With his last breath there, I think he mentioned that the formula review did indicate a shortfall of about \$24 million. Did I hear that correctly? Yes. So we've been underfunding about \$24 million a year. Yes, it's a serious issue. I know the Minister recognizes it. I think the question has been answered. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolyunny):** Thank you, Mr. Bromley. I'll treat that as a general comment. No question. Next on my list for general comments I have Mr. Bouchard.

**MR. BOUCHARD:** That was my same questioning along those lines is with the Association of Municipalities. We got together last night and obviously they're concerned with some of the way this capital budget seems to be locked in forever. Obviously, they are seeing pressures. Obviously, the cost of living is going up, the cost of contracting. I would assume that that number is probably light at \$24 million. I know Hay River has a lot of infrastructure pressure right now, and that's not only what they're using currently with our funding, but gas tax money and they're still seeing deficits and it's going to take them probably 10 or 15 years. They could probably just about eat up this whole budget and not touch the whole deficit that they have.

The bigger communities are seeing more and more people coming there. There are more and more regional pressures from different communities. I think we need to really strongly look at this as a funding arrangement and how we deal with the regional centres that are seeing pressures. We have a lot of people who come from outside the community. We appreciate that for the economy, but a lot of our facilities and infrastructure are used by those people. Not only our physical structures and physical buildings but our emergency services and all that type of stuff, medical services. We have a whole bunch of pressures from the surrounding area and I would assume similar to regional centres throughout the territory.

Like my colleagues, I'd like to stress that we can't lock this in. There has to be at least a CPI index to that to get to some point where we're seeing an increase to it, because at these levels the communities are going to keep falling farther and farther behind and it gets more and more burdensome on the taxpayers and it's not necessarily fair because not all the usage is being done just by the taxpayers. I'm not sure if in the review they actually looked at that regional concept of regional usages. Can the Minister indicate to me whether they did that?

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

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Part of the formula funding review was to make some adjustment, because we had found that some of the smaller communities had just about all the infrastructure they need at the moment. Some of their biggest challenges, I think, was the O and M on some of the infrastructure they have. So I think we've allowed them to use I think it was up to 10 percent of their CPI funding to help with the O and M.

On the larger centres, part of the formula funding review, again, was to go on a needs-based assessment. We recognize that some of the larger centres are facing more pressures than a lot of the

smaller communities. So our funding, I think beginning next year, '16-17, is going to be more on a needs based, because we found that some of the smaller communities were getting more funding than they can use and as far as their needs went. So rather than cut them back, what we've decided to do is just to keep them at the same level they're at until their needs catch up to the actual funding for gas tax and the Building Canada Plan.

We recognize some of the challenges the Member is facing. I think part of our funding review was to help find ways we can help the larger communities deal with some of the pressures they're facing.

**MR. BOUCHARD:** I appreciate that. I think the Minister kind of moved into the next question that I have. This funding that we're providing here isn't tied to any Build Canada. Can they use this funding as their equity for Build Canada applications and projects? Can I get that clarification? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** The Member is absolutely correct; they can use some of the money that they get to leverage the funding from the Building Canada Plan as well.

**MR. BOUCHARD:** With that Building Canada, is it application-based or is the money being divvied up amongst communities per capita case-plus? Are we doing a case-by-case application-by-application base?

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** Mr. Chair, we allocated X amount of dollars to every community, but they have to come up through an application process to justify the amount of money that we're giving them. So, say if they were getting \$110,000 – we'll use that for an example – they have to have some projects, put an application in place for \$110,000. If we just put it into one big pot and it was application-based then we've have competition from all 33 communities, so we thought doing it this way was probably one of the easiest ways to have some of the smaller communities that might be lacking some capacity to get their applications in with some assistance from our regional folks.

**MR. BOUCHARD:** Like I said, using this funding they would be able to get into Build Canada. So my next question on Build Canada, would they be able to, if a community is not using it, would we be opening up that complete pool to the surplus towards the end of the year? Like, obviously communities, I would think the largest centres will have big demand. So, will they be able to apply later, once a community...or is there a cut-off where communities won't be able to use the money, will we open that surplus let's say?

I know in my experience at ITI, sometimes with the contribution funding it was allocated to regions, but after a certain period of time the money went into a territorial pot and everybody could use it just so that the funds were used. Is there a plan to do that or are

we just going to let that money lapse or is it carrying forward to other communities?

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** Thank you. It's a 10-year program, so they can use those funds anytime within that 10 years. They have to find a project that matches the criteria and Canada has to also approve the project. So, they do have some time to make use of the funding that they do have. I think they've got up to 10 years.

**MR. BOUCHARD:** Just for that clarification, let's say a community was getting \$100,000 a year. Every tenth year they could build a project for \$1 million. Is that correct in my assumption?

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** No, it's one allocation over that 10 years. So if they were allocated \$100,000, that's what they would have to use. It's not \$100,000 a year for 10 years. It's just \$100,000 that is their portion of the Building Canada Plan.

**MR. BOUCHARD:** So, in saying that, our communities, are we given a lump sum at the beginning of this Build Canada? I know in Transportation we're doing it over a period of time, 10 years. Obviously, we're not getting a lump sum that we can hand it out to all the communities at the beginning, are we? Or are we getting a percentage over 10 years and I think it's 15 percent? Are we getting 1.5 percent every year or are we getting the lump sum 15 percent and it's going out to communities right away?

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** They would have to use the money to build a project and they would invoice us. Then we would be reimbursed from Canada, I think up to 75 percent of whatever their project costs.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny):** Thank you, Minister McLeod. We'll continue with general comments with Mr. Blake.

**MR. BLAKE:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Just speaking to the funding allocated to the communities, I am somewhat disappointed we're going back to a needs base just because I've seen firsthand the process that we first started with this for the communities, which was great. I know the Minister did mention that some communities weren't spending that money, but I'll use a small community like Tsiigehtchic, for example. To build whether it's a garage, with the funding that's given, you have to save up for a number of years to actually have enough to build that piece of infrastructure. That's what many of the communities are doing. So, it has to do with planning. I know the department did provide some assistance in the planning stages, but it is a learning curve for the communities, but I've seen firsthand the benefits of the process we had in place when the New Deal first came out.

Also, we'll just use Tsiigehtchic as an example again. Under the needs base process here, how would MACA identify what the community needs? I'll use Tsiigehtchic for the prime example. All we have right

now for a facility for our youth for sports is the gymnasium. We don't have an arena. We have a skating rink that was blown over with a big storm we had a while back, but it's a clear indicator that that community needs an arena. So, will that be a priority under this needs base formula? You compare that to a band office that we already have that's functional, it's pretty clear that an arena would outweigh the band office.

Will the department identify that as something that the community needs? You know, we could have a skating rink. Children usually have to go skate on the lake. Those days are over and done with. I know the Minister probably skated on a few ponds, but in this day and age we have skating rinks and arenas that the children could now make use of. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolyunny):** Thank you, Mr. Blake. Minister McLeod.

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. What the community needs is not our decision to make and that was the beauty of the New Deal, is it gave the community responsibility to make the decisions based in their priorities. So if an enclosed rink was one of their priorities then they would find ways to make it work. With the money that we give them through CPI and that, they can access bank financing and we've had communities do that where they've accessed bank financing, knowing they're getting their CPI funding every year to help pay down the loan.

Again, the beauty of the New Deal is that the decision-making is within the community. So if we were still making the decision and they wanted to do a small little rink in a small little community like Tsiigehtchic, it would get into the overall corporate picture and it may be years and years before that ever came to see the light of day. But with the program we have now...and I think we see as we travel throughout the Northwest Territories some of the projects. In one community, a youth centre might be a priority, so they use their CPI money that we give them to build a youth centre, and another one might be a small community hall.

The decision is pretty well up to the community and I don't think doing it in a needs base survey is penalizing the community. What we found was that there were some communities that had a lot of infrastructure money banked that they weren't using because there really wasn't much more infrastructure or they might have been facing challenges with O and M. So we've tried to make it more of a needs base. It's not needs based saying, well, we think you need this as opposed to this. It's, again, a decision they have to make and we continue to work with them on that. Thank you.

**MR. BLAKE:** The other thing, as I mentioned earlier, with the assistance that MACA provides to the communities. I'd like to ask the Minister, as we move

forward, you know, a lot of planning needs to go in place and architects. Does the department provide that assistance or does the community have to go out and spend some of this money for architecture work and design or is it just design build? Thank you.

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** Thank you. We can provide technical advice, and as far as the actual project itself goes, the communities have all gone and found someone to do the design for them. They've actually led the contract themselves in most cases, hired their own project managers. They've actually been able to do it probably less expensively than we could have as a government, because every time you see the little polar bear there, prices seem to go up a little higher.

When the community goes looking for prices, it gives them a few options and I think we've found that they've been able to get some product on the ground, I wouldn't say cheaper, but a lot less expensive than we would have. But, no, we're willing to work with the community, provide them with some technical advice and maybe refer them to people or line them up with folks who do that. So, we provide a lot of assistance, and at the end of the day, the decision is ultimately theirs to make. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**MR. BLAKE:** It's more of a comment. You know, over the years I've seen a lot of benefits that this program provides and I hope that it does continue to go on through the years. For example, in Aklavik the drainage that the community has done has actually helped during the spring. We've noticed less floods because of drainage, the drainage plan that they did. We still need a little assistance with the riprap and building up the roads there, but that's something the community is still working on.

The other thing was in Fort McPherson, the hamlet that they built and they're also building a new garage. It's great for the community; that's what they need. As we move forward, we really appreciate this program continuing.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolyunny):** Mr. Blake, again, more of a comment, but I will allow the Minister a final word.

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** Thank you. We have capital planning folks and we actually have capital plans from all the communities for what they identified, some of their priorities for the future years. Our capital planning group will work with communities and help them with their capital plans, but as far as I know, I think we have a capital plan from pretty well every community for the next five years. So they've identified some of their priorities and we'll work with them as to how they can see those hit the ground.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolyunny):** Thank you, Minister McLeod. Committee, general comments. Is committee prepared to go into detail?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny):** Thank you, committee. We're going to defer page 63 until we've considered all the activities. I would turn your attention to pages 65 and 66, regional operations, infrastructure investments, \$28.002 million. Does committee agree?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny):** Committee, if I could get you to return back to page 63, Municipal and Community Affairs, total infrastructure investments, \$28.002 million. Does committee agree?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny):** Does committee agree that we have concluded consideration of the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny):** Thank you, committee. At this time I would like to thank Ms. Young, Mr. Williams, thank you for joining us and, of course, the Minister, R.C. McLeod. Thank you again. If I could get the Sergeant-at-Arms to please escort the witnesses out of the Chamber. Thank you.

Okay, we're going to turn our attention now to the next on the list, the NWT Housing Corporation and the Minister responsible. I'll ask him if he has any witnesses to bring in. Minister McLeod.

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

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny):** Thank you Mr. McLeod. Does committee agree?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny):** Thank you, committee. Sergeant-at-Arms, could you please escort the witnesses into the House, please.

Thank you. Minister McLeod, will you be kind enough to introduce your witnesses to the House, please.

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Chair, to my right I have Mr. Geoff Anderson, who's the president of the NWT Housing Corporation. To my left I have Mr. Jim Martin, who is the vice-president of finance and infrastructure for the NWT Housing Corporation.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny):** Thank you, Minister McLeod. Mr. Martin, Mr. Anderson, welcome back to the House. Committee, we're on page 67 in the capital estimates here. We're going to start off with general comments. I'll go to Mr. Blake.

**MR. BLAKE:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I just have two questions and comments. I'm very happy to see we have some units coming into the Mackenzie Delta, also the replacement of four units in Fort McPherson. As I've said many times, with waiting lists of up to three to four years, we have some young families that are expecting children, expecting newborns, ready to start a family but yet they're on the waiting list. You

know, they have been for anywhere up to a year, some for three years and there's a real need for additions to our present stock. I can't stress that enough. We have to start planning here for increasing what we have in stock right now, even by ten would help in each community. But, you know, even those single units that we have been building over the years for the elders, that would help a long way. That would free up other units that we have in the community. That's something my constituents keep requesting. There's a real need for more units here, but I'm glad to see we have some new ones on the horizon here and look forward to those opening. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny):** Thank you, Mr. Blake. I'll treat that as comment here. General comments, NWT Housing Corporation. We have Mr. Menicoche.

**MR. MENICOCHÉ:** Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. I just noticed some of these units in the smaller communities, just a general question about the concept of, in order to reduce costs, duplexes or four-plex type of schematic. Is there anything new in the works with regard to that in placing those in the smaller communities, Mr. Chair? Thank you.

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

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. That's a direction that we're going in the future. If you notice, a lot of communities there are a lot of detached, very large houses, and as we're taking those out of stock we're going to more of a multi-unit type of configuration. I think we have up to 68 percent of our units that we have now are multi-unit type of configuration. We find there are many benefits to that. We find that we're needing smaller units now instead of the big five-bedroom Webers we used to have. So, that's the direction the Housing Corporation is taking in the future and there's a trickle-down effect because it helps with all utility costs and the cost to maintain the unit. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**MR. MENICOCHÉ:** I thank the Minister for that answer. With the project listing for the '16-17 construction year, are any of those multiplex-type buildings planned for next year then?

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** All our planned replacement public housing units next year are going to be multi-type units. All our planned affordable housing units are going to be a duplex or a multiplex-type unit.

**MR. MENICOCHÉ:** While I've got the microphone, I'd like to speak a little bit about future needs of Fort Simpson. Of course, due to the housing stock, there's a need for a new eight-plex or a 10-plex type of building. I don't know if the department has that in their forecast for future growth of Fort Simpson and their needs there.

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** Not at this point. As we plan as we go forward here, we'll have to look at each community and their needs going forward. We did, I think, have a couple of duplexes or triplexes that were planned for Fort Simpson, but because of the situation there, we're trying to find ways we can get that product on the ground. As far as immediate future, it's not in the plan right now, but again, as we go forward and as the 18<sup>th</sup> Assembly goes forward then they'll start identifying some of their needs in the communities.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolyunny):** Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Is the committee prepared to go to detail?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolyunny):** Committee, we're going to defer page 67 until we have consideration of the activities. I'd like to next turn to pages 68, 69, 70, 71 and 72, finance and infrastructure services, infrastructure investments, \$22.187 million. Ms. Bisaro.

**MS. BISARO:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I want to make a general comment and reiterate the comments I made in my opening remarks to the budget itself. In general, we don't have enough public housing units in the NWT in any of our communities. Particularly here in Yellowknife, we have a huge wait-list for public housing, we have a huge wait-list for assisted living housing and so on. I would encourage the Housing Corporation to seriously consider finding a way to increase the number of units of public housing that we have. I know that we are losing money through the CMHC declining funding, but we need, particularly in Yellowknife, a greater number of units, we need higher numbers of stock.

That's just a comment. I do have two questions from page 72, the projects in Yellowknife. The first one is it states: "Non-residential building, 1 unit, major retrofit." I'd like an explanation of why the Housing Corporation is renovating a non-residential building.

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

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I'll respond to the first part of Ms. Bisaro's concern and then I'll have Mr. Anderson respond to the non-residential.

We hear the concern that we do need more public housing across the Northwest Territories, and again, we keep saying that we're challenged by the CMHC declining funding, but I think there's probably going to have to come a time where we can't keep saying, well, we're challenged by the CMHC declining funding. We have to think, or future government may have to make a decision as to whether we are just a public housing provider and use the money that we put into some of our repair programs to help offset the losses from CMHC. I think we've been very fortunate in the last couple of years that this Assembly has stepped up and filled in some of the gap of the money

that we lost through the declining funding, but there's going to have to be a decision, I think, made in the future sometime as to whether we are just solely a public housing provider or we continue with the programs we have and continue to be challenged financially.

I will have Mr. Anderson speak to the non-residential renovation.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolyunny):** Thank you, Mr. McLeod. We'll turn it over to Mr. Anderson.

**MR. ANDERSON:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. We have a separate category in the way we categorize our housing assets or our building assets. Everybody is quite familiar with affordable and public housing. The non-residential buildings are related to facilities that we have where we lease out to other government departments or non-profit organizations to provide services and/or office space, as an example. In the case of this project, it relates to a shelter in Yellowknife that we lease the building and because that's a building owned by the corporation, we are providing upgrades to that building to bring it up to good condition.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolyunny):** Thank you, Mr. Anderson. Ms. Bisaro.

**MS. BISARO:** Thanks, Mr. Chair, and thanks to the Minister and Mr. Anderson for the explanation. This identifies it as one unit. Generally, when I see one unit referenced in the Housing Corporation information I think of like a two-bedroom apartment or a house or something. In this building, which is this non-residential building, is it the whole building that's being upgraded and what's the size of the building?

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

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It's actually the Centre for Northern Families and it's the whole building that's going to be upgraded.

**MS. BISARO:** Good to hear that. I know that building definitely needs it. That helps me understand the expense.

The other question I have is the next item in the list and it's public housing, or PH, public housing, housing replacement reserve. I don't remember seeing that in other descriptions of expenditures. I wonder if I could get an explanation or is this a normal practice for us to have a reserve situation and what is this referencing in Yellowknife?

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolyunny):** We'll turn it over to Mr. Anderson.

**MR. ANDERSON:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. This project, we see when we're doing large facilities that need either renovation or replacement, we don't really have the resources to deal with it on an annual basis, so we thought it was appropriate to start setting aside money for the Mary Murphy seniors facility. It's 46



years old at this point. It's in pretty decent shape and we'd like to keep it going for many more years if at all possible. But we want to start building a base of resources so that we can deal with that when the time comes.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny):** Thank you, Mr. Anderson. Ms. Bisaro.

**MS. BISARO:** Thanks, Mr. Chair, and thanks to Mr. Anderson and to the Minister and staff. I think that's great. As long as government allows us to do reserves like that, I think it's a far better way than doing a lump sum multimillion dollar payout at one time. That's all I have.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny):** Committee, we are on pages 68, 69, 70, 71 and 72, finance and infrastructure services, infrastructure investments, \$22.187 million. Mr. Bromley.

**MR. BROMLEY:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I've just been scanning this list repeatedly, looking for the words Ndilo and Detah and I'm not finding them. It's not that I do not spend a good proportion of my constituency work on housing issues in my community. I wonder if I could get the Minister thinking on that and what the strategy is for the situation my people are facing.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny):** Thank you, Mr. Bromley. Just for reference, Mr. Bromley, page 69, item 7, there is a unit there. But I'll let the Minister follow up with that. Minister McLeod.

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. We were positive that we had Detah and Ndilo on the list here, but as the Chair pointed out, it is on page 69. Let me put my glasses on...six units major retrofit. I almost gave them an extra one there. We recognize some of the challenges the Member faces there. You can recall we had a couple, I think we had a triplex there that was vacant. Folks are moving into that triplex, so we recognize the Member has had some issues in his riding and he has brought them forward to us. We are glad to see that we have some work and some units being major retrofitted in Detah and Ndilo. Thank you.

**MR. BROMLEY:** Thanks for the Minister's comments with sharp eyes there. I actually had not found that one. I appreciate very much the retrofits that are done. I know the Minister is aware of the state of the housing in those communities. It's very difficult to visit people in their homes, which are not necessarily public housing units; people are fierce about trying to keep their own homes going. Unfortunately, I have not been successful in helping them get support from the corporation to deal with some of those clearly traumatic conditions.

I know there was a triplex, there was also a couple of homeownership units that have sat empty, brand new, for a couple of years now. I don't know that it is appropriate to ask what the strategy is for that. It seems appropriate, though, that if we are going to build this infrastructure, we want to be able to enable

and find a way to get people into those units. Again, I appreciate the major retrofits on those units. I know the Minister is aware of the need there. I would appreciate comments on how we can figure out how to get people into those units. Thank you.

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** The Member has been very diligent in bringing concerns of his constituents forward. Unfortunately, some of the decisions that are made are ones that he wasn't aware of or because of one reason or another, folks were declined for some of the programs.

We have done a number of things to try and get as many people qualified for programs as possible. I think we have one affordable housing unit left in Detah and our desire would have been to find a suitable client to put into that unit. Failing that, as we did in some of the other communities, we have actually turned it into a public housing unit.

The corporation is well aware of the challenge that we face out there. We just had a meeting out there recently and, again, it was pointed out about some of the vacant units and we are working the steps to try and address that. Hopefully, we are able to do that soon.

Ideally, we would like to have clients for all of our HELP units that we put on the ground, try to get people transitioned into homeownership. For one reason or another, we seem to be, not only in that community but we seem to in other communities, we have been challenged to get people who are qualified. We have changed some of our criteria to try to make them qualified, and for one reason or another we have managed to get a few in. The ones that we haven't been able to use, we have turned them into public housing units. Thank you, Mr. Chair. I went on a little too long.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny):** Thank you, Minister McLeod. Committee, again, we are on pages 68 to 72 on finance and infrastructure services, infrastructure investments, \$22.187 million. Does committee agree?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny):** Thank you. Mr. Hawkins.

**MR. HAWKINS:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I am just wondering what the net positive impact will be in the Yellowknife community for public housing in this budget. Thank you.

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

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I'm sorry, Mr. Chair, I am going to have to ask the Member to repeat his question.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny):** The impact, Minister, on Yellowknife housing with this budget.

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. We have a few projects that are here in the capital. We are just trying to find the dollar value. If we can't come



up with it right away, I will commit to getting that dollar value to the Member. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny):** Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Mr. Hawkins.

**MR. HAWKINS:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I certainly hope before the end of session. That said, can the Minister tell me what the net positive impact on new housing opportunities through public housing will be in the city of Yellowknife? Thank you.

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

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. As I said before, one of the challenges we're facing is we are doing a lot of replacing of public housing, not so much new public housing. We are doing a 19-unit apartment in Niven Lake. As far as future goes, we are doing mostly replacement units. We have, I think, through the ECE transfer program, we have taken over I believe 55 units. The program went through ECE before. They transferred the money to us and then we, in turn, leased a unit from I think it was a private landlord and we put income support clients in those units. We turned them into public housing, so there has been a bit of an increase there but it is, as I said before, a bit of a challenge and is one that we are working towards trying to find solutions for. Thank you.

**MR. HAWKINS:** Other than the Niven Lake... No, sorry. Niven Lake unit, that will put 19 new doors on the market in the Yellowknife area. There are no other new doors being added to this community?

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** I believe that's what I said. We are challenged and we have the 19 doors now, the 55 we got through the Income Support Program, and other than that, that is where we are at right now. Thank you.

**MR. HAWKINS:** It is my understanding that Yellowknife suffers as the community with the largest need, so not necessarily percentage but certainly in the context of actual numbers.

Can the Minister confirm that? Can he also tell me how many people are waiting on the public housing list in Yellowknife? Thank you.

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** In answer to the first question, yes. Second question, we have a waiting list of 146 people on the public housing wait-list in Yellowknife. Again, I think some of these families have to be on the wait-list to access the Income Support Program, so they may already have a roof over their head but because they need to access the Income Support Program, they need to be on the local public housing wait-list. Thank you.

**MR. HAWKINS:** Under this particular circumstance – and now I am going to take a leap in a different direction – what seniors housing does the Department of Housing support in Yellowknife? Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny):** Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. Mr. Anderson.

**MR. ANDERSON:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. In Yellowknife, of course, we have the Mary Murphy facility, we also support many other projects in Yellowknife, including the seniors in Northern United Place. Aven Ridge and Aven Manor are both income facilities. We also support on the mortgage interest rate subsidy side on Aven Manor. The other, I guess, point I would make, more as a general comment, 31 percent of our public housing units are let by seniors, so we have a significant number of folks in that program as well. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny):** Thank you, Mr. Anderson. Mr. Hawkins.

**MR. HAWKINS:** Thanks, Mr. Chair. Thank you for that and thank you for the recap on those places. Can the Minister tell me how many doors we support in each of those locations? So, Mary Murphy, NUP, Aven Ridge and Aven Manor. Thank you.

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

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I commit to providing the Member a list of the doors. We don't have that information with us right now and I'm not even going to guess. Thank you.

**MR. HAWKINS:** Thank you. I'll take it that will be before the end of session. That said, has the Minister been approached in the last two years by any community group in Yellowknife to extend the opportunity of housing for seniors? Thank you.

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** Mr. Chair, we have had discussions with the Canada Winter Games folks about the possibility of having an athletes village and helping them build an athletes village. At the end of the Games, we would turn one of those facilities into a seniors complex and the other one into public housing. Thank you.

**MR. HAWKINS:** Has Housing been approached by anyone at Avens?

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** I believe we had a meeting with them it might have been just over two years ago, but they talked about their desire to expand Aven Manor. Again, I think we had some preliminary discussions with them. I will have to confirm that and I will commit to getting the information back to the Member before the end of session.

**MR. HAWKINS:** Does Housing intend to be involved or support the expansion initiative over at Avens for seniors?

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** Yes, we'll continue to work with the groups that are involved and see if there are some ways that we can be a part of the process. Thank you.

**MR. HAWKINS:** Does that mean that the Housing Corporation will in all likelihood provide a cash support to an initiative when it's ready to be received if asked upon by Avens?

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** Mr. Chair, we'll be a part of the group there and if there are opportunities for us to provide some input and be a part of the process, and even if there was a cash contribution then it would be part of future Housing Corporation's capital plan.

**MR. HAWKINS:** Thank you. At present, I know it's a moving number, the 146 mentioned earlier. Do we have any breakdown of what that actually is? Single people? Single parents with children? Dual parents without kids, with kids? How many are seniors? Especially certainly the last one by all means, but those types of statistics and breakdown to the numbers. Thank you.

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** Mr. Chair, I believe we just signed it off today, the breakdown, and we will provide it to all the Members.

**MR. HAWKINS:** So, I'll get a copy of that before session ends? Thank you.

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** The reason we signed it off, it was an oral question that I believe was asked by the Member for Weledeh, Mr. Bromley, and we just signed off the response today, so we will be providing it to everyone. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny):** Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Committee, we're on pages 62 to 72 and we're on finance and infrastructure services, infrastructure investments, \$22.187 million. Does committee agree?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny):** Thank you, committee. If I could get you to return to page 67, NWT Housing Corporation, total infrastructure investments, \$22.187 million. Does committee agree?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny):** Thank you. Does committee agree we have concluded NWT Housing Corporation consider?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny):** Thank you. At this time I'd like to thank our witnesses here this evening. Mr. Anderson, Mr. Martin, thanks for joining us and, of course, Minister McLeod. If I can get the Sergeant-at-Arms to escort the witnesses out of the Chamber, please.

Committee, at this time we will take a short recess. Thank you.

---SHORT RECESS

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard):** Thank you, committee. We'll call committee back to order. We're going on to Department of Public Works and Services. I'll ask the

Minister responsible, Tom Beaulieu, do you have witnesses to bring into the House?

**HON. TOM BEAULIEU:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, I do.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard):** Does committee agree?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard):** Sergeant-at-Arms, please escort the witnesses into the Chamber. Mr. Beaulieu, I'll get you to introduce your witnesses, please. Thank you.

**HON. TOM BEAULIEU:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. To my left I have deputy minister of Public Works and Services, Paul Guy; to my right, Laurie Gault, director of the Technology Service Centre.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard):** Thank you, Minister. Committee, we'll start at page 73, we'll come back to that after we conclude. I'll go to general comments on Public Works and Services.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Detail.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard):** Does committee agree to go to detail?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard):** Okay, page 73 we'll come back to. Page 74, Public Works and Services, asset management, infrastructure investments, \$14.792 million. Does committee agree? Mr. Dolynny.

**MR. DOLYNNY:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Just some clarification on some of the project listings associated with this activity. I guess, first and foremost, it mentions here YK Centre improvements. If I can just get a brief overview of what exactly that entails. Thank you.

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

**HON. TOM BEAULIEU:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That is tenant improvements. The landlord will be paying for this. This would be an in and out expenditure.

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

**MR. DOLYNNY:** Just a number, again, not trying to disclose an actual number figure. Is this going to be a large asset to retrofit or change, or is this a small project? I'm just kind of curious on the scope of the project. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard):** Thank you, Mr. Dolynny. Deputy Minister Guy.

**MR. GUY:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. This project is to accommodate the financial shared services unit and Human Resource staff and consolidate it in the YK Centre. So it's essentially the unit for Yellowknife of financial shared services and I believe about one floor

of the YK Centre for HR. So within our total portfolio there, the percentage I would say in that building of the GNWT space that will be tenant improved would probably be between 20 and 30 percent. Thank you.

**MR. DOLYNNY:** Thank you for that. I thank the department. Just a question on commercial space or commercial real estate space right now in the Yellowknife area. For our information, what percentages of vacancy do we have in commercial real estate space? Thank you.

**MR. GUY:** Thank you. Just bear with me for a moment. We do track the vacancy of the space by region and by building, and of the commercial space that normally would be considered suitable for the type of occupancy that the government uses there's about 8,400 square metres currently available in Yellowknife. Thank you.

**MR. DOLYNNY:** Okay, so what I'm hearing is that 8,400 square metres of vacancy space in Yellowknife. What is that in square feet, because I deal in different numeric here. What's that in square feet?

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard):** Minister Beaulieu.

**HON. TOM BEAULIEU:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That's times 10.76. It would be about 85,000 square feet.

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

**MR. DOLYNNY:** Thank you for that. I appreciate being right on the ball with conversions. That's pretty impressive. I like that.

So, it's roughly 85,000 square feet versus how much commercial real estate that we have that's actually occupied. What percentage do we have, as a guess, as to what vacancy do we have of commercial real estate in Yellowknife right now? Thank you.

**HON. TOM BEAULIEU:** The 85,000 square feet is actual vacancy space and about 52,000 of that would be the one building, the Bellanca Building. What we thought the Member had asked for was the vacancy. So, if the Member wishes to have the number of what percentage of leased space versus the owned space and how much of that is vacant, we can provide that number.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard):** Thank you, Minister Beaulieu. Mr. Dolynny, could you just clarify the question?

**MR. DOLYNNY:** Thank you. What I'm trying to get at, Mr. Chair, is to get a sense of where the department sits and has an understanding of what is the actual vacancy rate for commercial real estate in Yellowknife. We are a large tenant, both leased and owned, but I'm trying to get a grasp and I know Public Works is right on the ball on this I'm sure. They know those numbers quite accurately. I need to know, as a Member, what is the vacancy rate now in Yellowknife that we have for information in terms of commercial real estate. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard):** Thank you, Mr. Dolynny. Deputy Minister Guy.

**MR. GUY:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As the Minister said, of that 8,400 square metres, 5,000 is tied up with the Bellanca Building. So while that is on the market, if you take most of the building it would be available. If you wanted to rent a floor, it's likely not available. But to the question, I think we would estimate – and I would have to go back and check with my staff for the latest number – but it's probably in the 3 to 5 percent range. Thank you.

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

**MR. DOLYNNY:** Thank you very much. I find that to be possibly a little bit on the low side given some of the statistics that I know that are out there. I think that's probably where the problem lies. It's a bit of a disconnect in terms of what we have, the department has in terms of vacancy rate for commercial real estate versus what's probably out there for Yellowknife.

Mr. Chair, I'm getting numbers somewhere in the order of 12 to 14 percent of vacancy and I guess I need to get a grasp on this. So, will the department commit and provide the Member a full breakdown on what numbers they have for commercial vacancy for Yellowknife and would they be able to provide that information before the end of session? Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard):** Thank you, Mr. Dolynny. Mr. Beaulieu.

**HON. TOM BEAULIEU:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, we can provide that information before the end of session.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard):** Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. Mr. Dolynny.

**MR. DOLYNNY:** Thank you very much. I appreciate that. So, my final question on this one, from the department's standpoint in terms of having an impact or a negative or positive impact on the commercial space available in any type of town or village, at what point or what critical impact does the vacancy rate have in terms of the economics of that town or village or city? Does the department have a certain target number? What I mean is when the vacancy of commercial real estate gets above a certain 7 percent, does that have a negative impact on the so-called rates in that area that the government is working on? Does the department have a specific target that they look at, especially for Yellowknife, where if we're reaching that vacancy rate there is some concern? Is there a special target figure that PWS has to monitor when we get to that critical factor of vacancy versus occupied commercial space?

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard):** Thank you, Mr. Dolynny. Deputy Minister Guy.

**MR. GUY:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I think the targets that we look toward is just having a balanced portfolio

in terms of ratio between leased and owned, which is typical for what the government would have in its portfolio based on best portfolio management practices in terms of the overall available percentage of vacant space where certainly we have not set a target for what we think that should be in Yellowknife. We think that industry best practice is determined with a reasonable level would be usually in the 5 to 7 percent range would be normal to deal with the term and renewal of the portfolio as mid-life retrofits take place.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard):** Thank you, Mr. Buy. Mr. Dolynny.

**MR. DOLYNNY:** I'm good. Thank you, Mr. Chair. I appreciate it.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard):** Alright, committee. Next on my list I have Mr. Moses.

**MR. MOSES:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I see a couple of things here with the shop replacements. I guess focusing first on the Inuvik shop replacement and just going through the substantiation sheet here. I guess the first question would be: When is the expected construction and ready for move in for the groups that would be moving into the new building?

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard):** Thank you, Mr. Moses. Minister Beaulieu.

**HON. TOM BEAULIEU:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We are expecting the majority of the construction to be in 2017-18. So, at the end of that fiscal year the building should be ready for occupation.

**MR. MOSES:** Just in terms of the background on this building and some of the high heating costs, the foundation problems, poorly insulated walls, why wouldn't this be kind of fast-tracked, especially when it got approval from the Peer Review Committee on April 21, 2011? Why has it taken so long to start the construction and now we'll have to wait until 2017-18? Because with the poor insulation, the high heating costs, those all equal to high utility costs. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**HON. TOM BEAULIEU:** We will be starting construction next season, '16-17. About 25 percent of the budget will be spent this coming construction season.

**MR. MOSES:** I guess, in the interim, while the building is getting constructed, is there anything being done to the current building in terms of the foundation problems as well as the insulation that's probably resulting, as I said, in high utility costs, and is there also a safety issue with the foundation? If there are foundation problems, is there a safety issue for the people working in the building?

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard):** Thank you, Mr. Moses. Deputy Minister Guy.

**MR. GUY:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. The Member's correct; the existing buildings are quite old and there are a number of lifecycle issues with them, but we

have taken steps to ensure that they are safe to occupy. We have stabilized the foundations. We also have, the staff are working in a number of locations throughout the community. We have some leased storage space that some of their equipment and tools are stored in and we also have a number of vacated buildings that are slated to be disposed of with the completion of this project. But in the short term, we are taking steps to make sure that they are suitable to use and as this is a new project for consideration in the plan, we are looking forward to moving forward and getting those people into a modern shop environment where they can provide better services to our clients. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**MR. MOSES:** Thank you for the update on that. Just in regards to the Capital Asset Retrofit Program, I think it's a good program and just reading the substantiation sheet, I think it's being well served and well used and we're seeing some of the paybacks on that. But if you look at the shop replacements for both Inuvik and Fort Simpson and then you look at the one for Norman Wells, there's included a wood pellet boiler in Norman Wells. Why wasn't that also an option for Fort Simpson or Inuvik when building the new shops?

**MR. GUY:** That's an excellent question. In Fort Simpson we have a central heat plant there that's a biomass plant and it's adjacent to the site where this new building that's under construction now is going to be located and we plan on connecting that to the biomass district heating system in Fort Simpson. So, that's been part of the plans and we're proceeding on that basis.

The Member is correct; in Norman Wells in their Capital Asset Program we are putting in a wood pellet boiler there, as well, and we certainly will be looking at Inuvik as our priority consideration as we get into the development of that project. We will likely be considering one there as well.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard):** Thank you, deputy minister. Next on the list I have Mr. Bromley.

**MR. BROMLEY:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Would the Minister be able to estimate what our approximate electricity demand is of all our assets in Yellowknife? I know I'm asking for some details here. Thank you.

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

**HON. TOM BEAULIEU:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. We do not have that information with us here today but we can get that information and provide it to the committee.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard):** Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. Mr. Bromley.

**MR. BROMLEY:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thanks to the Minister for that. I didn't expect you to have it right on you, so I appreciate that.

I don't know the degree to which you would have your finger on the pulse, but I'm wondering what the breakdown is of our lighting in all our Yellowknife assets in terms of energy-efficient lighting. Would we be able to estimate, say, have we converted 10 percent to LEDs, and I don't know where there are still T12s and T8s around or whether we've got better standards now. Something that would give me an idea of how far along we've come so far in converting our Yellowknife assets, lighting, to the most energy-efficient options.

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

**MR. GUY:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Certainly, I would say we've gone through several cycles of upgrading lighting in our Yellowknife facilities. We used to have the lower efficiency fluorescent lights we went through, when that technology was the newest technology, and upgraded most of them to the most efficient fluorescent technology that was available in the day.

In terms of the LED lighting, which we believe is the emerging technology, we are now going back through and looking for opportunities to upgrade those lighting packages again. So, really there's quite a bit of work to do to go to that next level with LED lighting and we're starting to do that through some of the work in this plant.

Much of our exterior lighting has been converted. The floodlights and those types of fixtures that are on most of the night on photo cells, they have been more advanced technology. They were some of the earlier ones that were easier to put in, but now that the general purpose lighting has become more cost-effective and more reasonable we're going back now and starting the analysis. So I think as we move forward with the Capital Asset Retrofit Program we are going to see many more projects like that as that technology becomes more mainstream.

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

**MR. BROMLEY:** Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thanks to the deputy minister for that information. I'm wondering: after lighting, considering electricity demand, what is our next biggest opportunity for energy efficiency improvements in Yellowknife assets.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard):** Thank you, Mr. Bromley. Mr. Guy.

**MR. GUY:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. There are a number of things in the mechanical systems, the circulation pumps, moving to variable frequency drive on our air handlers and on our glycol pumps. Our recirculation pumps are another opportunity. We've got lots of projects that we've completed along those lines in the Capital Asset Retrofit Fund. They have shown significant quick paybacks and reductions in electrical consumption. Lighting control systems that have outside lighting sensors that can dim down the lights

in office space and make better use of the natural lighting is another area where we've done a lot of work, and we continue to retrofit on that. Then, obviously, we are also seeing the decrease and the reduction in the cost around solar technology, so we're starting to look at opportunities to use more solar panels and solar generation in our projects and in our buildings.

**MR. BROMLEY:** Thanks for that good information. I guess, since you bring up solar, what's the potential for our Yellowknife building assets? Do they typically have roofs that are suitable for decent sized installations with respect to the buildings demand?

**MR. GUY:** In the Capital Asset Retrofit Program we have two smaller scale solar projects that we're going to put on government assets. They're not in Yellowknife, but there is one on the new shop in Norman Wells which we will be putting on to see how well we can integrate that technology into government buildings. We're also doing one, I believe, on a health centre in Wrigley as well. We are doing a review to see what the potential is to put solar on some of our roofs in Yellowknife to see if we can use that space. But we also have to take into account the impact that those panels might have on snow load or snow accumulation, the operation of air handling equipment, air conditioning equipment, and other facilities that are on the roof, so there are some technical aspects that we have to evaluate when we do that study as well as the shadow studies from adjacent buildings. We're starting to look at those opportunities, but I don't have a total number yet from our staff on what the potential would be.

**MR. BROMLEY:** Just for the Yellowknife assets, what sort of schedule would you require to come up with those estimates considering the issues that you've mentioned there, speaking to the deputy minister, to have some sort of an idea to be able to move to a program of implementation?

**MR. GUY:** The total number of assets we have in Yellowknife is not that many. I would think in the major assets we have a central warehouse out by McDonald's; we have the Data Centre; we have the Laing Building, the new office building, the Stuart Hodgson Building and our North Slave regional office. I don't think we have very many other large office spaces with roofs that we could potentially utilize. Most of the other ones are leased space or owned by others. I think we could complete that evaluation reasonably quickly, but it would take, I assume, several months to do the engineering, the analysis and the costing on it beyond that.

**MR. BROMLEY:** One last question, and I appreciate this information. Was the new building constructed with the potential of solar on its roof in mind, and associated with that, do we now make sure that that's a consideration when we design buildings and construct buildings?

**MR. GUY:** The new office building, certainly, I think we did do an analysis at the time and it didn't seem to be feasible, but as the technology and costing changes, it may be feasible. I can recall back when we did the Data Centre, we did a similar exercise and it wasn't feasible cost-wise. There was no business case to do it there. We looked at whether we could use it for charging the batteries in the UPSs, for example, and it wasn't something that was feasible from a business case, but we're going back and re-evaluating those options again. So I think as we look at the potential, there is still a possibility of perhaps using a new office building going forward as an opportunity for solar.

**MR. BROMLEY:** Thanks again for that information. Just the last part, do we now, when we build buildings, routinely sort of consider the design of the roofing or the exterior with the potential of solar in mind?

**MR. GUY:** That's one of the things we're looking at, updating our Good Building Practices to have a more robust chapter and prescription around those requirements going forward. As I said earlier, there are a number of projects here that we are embarking on through this plan that are going to have solar that weren't originally envisioned, but as we go forward we will look at that, like we do with biomass, as possibly something that we will consider on a mandatory basis on new infrastructure.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard):** Thank you, deputy minister. Committee, we're on page 74, asset management, infrastructure investments, \$14.792 million. Does committee agree?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard):** Page 76, energy, infrastructure investments, \$295,000.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard):** Page 78, Technology Services Centre, infrastructure investments, \$1.890 million.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard):** Return to page 73, Public Works and Services, total budget, infrastructure investments, \$16.977 million.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard):** Does committee agree we have concluded Public Works and Services?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard):** Thank you, Mr. Guy and Ms. Gault. Sergeant-at-Arms, please escort the witnesses. Thank you, Minister Beaulieu.

Alright, committee, next on the order is Department of Finance. I'll ask Mr. Miltenberger if he has any witnesses to bring into the Chamber.

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Yes, Mr. Chairman.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard):** Sergeant-at-Arms, please escort the witnesses into the Chamber.

Sorry. Is committee agreed to that?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard):** Mr. Miltenberger, I'll get you to introduce your witness.

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have with me Mr. Mike Aumond, deputy minister of Finance.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard):** Thank you, Minister Miltenberger. We will open up to general comments for Finance. Department of Finance, general comments.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Detail.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard):** Committee is agreed to go to detail?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard):** Committee, we're on page 31. We'll come back to that page after we've concluded the department. Budget, treasury and debt management, infrastructure investments, \$91 million. Mr. Dolynny.

**MR. DOLYNNY:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I'd like to welcome the Minister and the department here today. This looks like it's a one item aspect or detail. This looks like it's the fibre optic link at the \$91 million mark here, so this will probably be our last opportunity to ask questions specific to this large piece of infrastructure. It appears now that the fibre link is finished and we're now seeing it actually on the books, and I'm assuming it will be taken care of in public accounts in the same way. We know that this originally started off around a \$65 million project, and through about a year or two it did escalate to the number we have today.

I guess my first question is to maybe if I can get a broader scope. What was involved with the overall cost and budget of this P3 initiative to go from a \$65 million project to now the \$91 million that we have on the books? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

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

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The project started out in its initial conceptual stages with a range somewhere between 65 and I think it was 85 million dollars. As the estimating got finer and the numbers hardened up, it moved to the higher end of the scale. When we did certain things like double the size of the cable from 24 pair to 48 pair to give it a lot of capacity, those types of things added cost as well. But I'll ask the deputy, Mr. Chair, with your agreement, if he wants to add more detail. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard):** Thank you, Minister. I'll go to Deputy Minister Aumond.



**MR. AUMOND:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I guess there are four causes for the price to escalate from when we first did the feasibility study until we got to the business case. One, as the Minister had stated, you know, doubling the capacity of the fibre itself was a cost-driver, along with the drilling costs associated with the four main river crossings that we had to deal with.

The other thing is just the timing from the time we did the feasibility study to the time we went out to procurement, you know, just the cost of the line itself increased, generally speaking. Again, a change in some of the pieces of the equipment from 2011 to 2014 to take advantage of some technological advances that took place also caused an increase in the price. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard):** Thank you, Mr. Aumond. Mr. Dolynny.

**MR. DOLYNNY:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I appreciate the response. For the most part, I think the Members on this side of the House were very supportive of this project. I know I have been and I've been able to see the merits in the long term for the residents of the Northwest Territories.

This is a P3 project, if you will, and I think we need to get an understanding of what does this really mean now that this project is finished or coming to completion and it's now on our books. So to bring it to a conceptual number we can understand, proponents built this for the government, built this for the taxpayer and we're now going to be making, I would assume, monthly payments, yearly payments to the proponents I would assume during a period of time. Again, they may want to qualify that. But at a point in time, once we pay this off from financing to maintenance fees to administration fees, what will be the final cost to this project at the end of its lifecycle when I believe we inherit this back as a full cost structure owned by GNWT? Thank you.

**MR. AUMOND:** With respect to this P3 procurement, it has a total capitalized cost of about \$91 million. What we have done is the proponents will obviously use that asset over the concession period and it will drive revenue from customers, of which, you know, the government will be one as well. But primarily it will be the Inuvik Satellite Facility and the antennas there. What the government has done from a budgeting perspective is looked at what the revenue stream and what the growth of facility might be. What we'll be doing is plugging that revenue gap to the tune of about \$8 million a year, and that will go against the \$91 million debt. As we pay that down over the concession period, we'll have an asset that will still be deriving revenue for the government and providing services to the residents up and down the Mackenzie Valley. Unlike some other projects where you'll have high maintenance cost and will not have a revenue stream to offset the cost, this asset will drive revenue

and will become profitable for the government after a period of time. Thank you.

**MR. DOLYNNY:** Mr. Chair, unfortunately I didn't quite get an answer from that. I'm fully aware that this piece of equipment will generate a profit, and that profit will be pursuant to the number of satellite dishes that are built in the Inuvik satellite area and how much money we're going to generate per satellite. So I understand that component.

The question I have is that the price of this \$91 million amortized – and again, we're making payments to the proponents over a period of, again I'm not sure of the amortization of this. I use the word "amortization" because that's the term I'm going to use, but paying back to the proponents this piece of equipment, there is an end cost that will cost taxpayers. What is that end cost minus the revenues? Thank you.

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

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. It doesn't appear that we have that information here. We'll have to agree to provide that to committee.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard):** Mr. Miltenberger, I'm sure everybody is trying to get commitment before the House is done, so will that be available?

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Yes.

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

**MR. DOLYNNY:** Thank you, Mr. Chair, for your wisdom. That was a question I was going to ask, when we might be able to get that information.

Earlier, and again I don't have the transcripts to go by, but I know the deputy minister indicated that part of the increase in the cost was due to the crossings. There were some crossings over some major rivers that possibly escalated the price. Was the original bid not including all river crossings? Again, I don't have the original scope and mandate of the project, but I was led to believe, as a Member here, when this went out to tender, all river crossings were being looked at. What was so special that there was an incurred cost due to river crossings? Was there unsuspected terrain? What was the increase of the cost for those river crossings to do the horizontal drilling? Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard):** Thank you, Mr. Dolynny. Deputy Minister Aumond.

**MR. AUMOND:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Just for clarity, all the bids that we received included costing for the rivers. The cause in price was from our feasibility study to what the proponents provided. The information, when we did the feasibility study at the time, was based on the existing geophysical information that we have. However, the proponents, as a result of the procurement process, were able to take on more extensive studies, more geophysical



studies of the valley, and as a result of that, the river crossings were more complicated and more difficult than we had originally envisioned, and that was responsible for the cost increase. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard):** Thank you, Mr. Aumond. Mr. Dolynny.

**MR. DOLYNNY:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Is it possible that when we tendered this out and were seeking proponents that even our geophysical assessments were possibly not complete? I'm just saying this because I remember some of the proponents who came forward said loud and clear that there were going to be some hurdles, that some of our geotechnical wasn't exactly accurate, that this was going to cost more, thereby making the bid of the current proponent having a bit of an unfair advantage over what we already knew. Then when they started the work, they went, "By the way, we're going to need more money because of the horizontal drilling cost. "Is it safe to say, was there a level playing field going into this that would have made this proponent on the same level as every other one applying and that this was not just a change order based on numbers that maybe we had in error that you were being held to task, Mr. Chair? Other proponents knew about this and yet they weren't the successful proponent.

I guess what I'm saying is, was there a level playing field, knowing what we know now, knowing what we could have done better in the so-called procurement stage of a P3 proponent? Thank you.

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

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, there was a level playing field. Every proponent had the same information and there have been no change orders. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard):** Thank you, Minister. This time, Mr. Blake.

**MR. BLAKE:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I have just a few questions and comments. I guess with the project, it is really good to see this project going through my riding of Mackenzie Delta, a good portion of it. I know we had a number of people working on the project from both Fort McPherson and Tsiigehtchic and Aklavik, also a number from Inuvik as well. It is really what the region needed with infrastructure like this. This sort of work is new to us, to our region anyway. The area had to go through a lot of this wire that was put in place. We saw the process that was going to be taken at the opening but there was a number of areas that when the ground melted, the wire was exposed in many areas. That creates a lot of concern for my residents, for my constituents. A lot of them have a legitimate concern here.

Why wasn't this cable put underground where it is supposed to be covered properly and not exposed to the elements? That sort of thing needs to be double-checked. I know they did a bunch of work this

summer, but now we have to fix this problem. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard):** Thank you, Mr. Blake. Minister Miltenberger.

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. The Member is correct; there were sections of the line that floated to the surface once the ground melted. The line has been checked from one end to the other and they have identified all the areas and they have worked to ensure that the cable is properly buried. Given that is was a unique sort of process, it was something that wasn't anticipated but has been rectified at the cost to the contractor. There is a plan that has been put into place over the summer to do that. Thank you.

**MR. BLAKE:** Just something else, there are possible plans to continue this to the Yukon. I suggest the next time that we do this sort of infrastructure that we insulate where the cable is going to go so that, whether it is woodchips or something along those lines, it will keep the ground from thawing any further. I am sure that is what the cause of this was, plus with all the rain that we have had in our region this summer it created a lot of landslides and it has really increased in my riding. As I have travelled around, I have noticed this. It's just something the department can look into for future use. Thanks.

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** As we turn to look eventually at the Yukon lateral or the Dempster lateral into the Yukon, clearly there will be lessons learned from this project and we will be applying those when that day comes as we look at doing that shorter and more easy-to-access route down into the Yukon. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard):** Thank you. Committee, we are on page 32, budget, treasury and debt management, infrastructure investments, \$91 million. Mr. Bromley.

**MR. BROMLEY:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. A couple of questions. I am just wondering: I think we are midway or more through this project, how are our residents, businesses and communities benefitting from this large expenditure for the construction of this infrastructure in the NWT? Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard):** Thank you, Mr. Bromley. Deputy minister, Mr. Aumond.

**MR. AUMOND:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. As of August of this year, we had a total of about \$10.2 million direct spend in the Beaufort-Delta and Gwich'in settlement areas, the Sahtu Settlement Area and the Deh Cho area, and about 139 person years of work created just over the winter and summer season this past year. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard):** Thank you, Mr. Aumond. Mr. Bromley.

**MR. BROMLEY:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I am assuming there has been more thinking done on this, but I am

wondering if we could get a clear statement on how access to this really state-of-the-art technology is being assured and how it will be improved access for our residents and communities along the line. I understand the situation in Inuvik with the satellite infrastructure and so on, but I am wondering, are homes and residents and families throughout the valley? Thank you.

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

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Every community will have a point of presence established from the fibre optic link. Those in Deline will be covered off by microwave towers. The final mile piece becomes a business opportunity for the community or for some business that wants to go in there, it could be NorthwestTel. Deline, I know, has very strong leanings in decision to trying to manage all those and run all the telecommunications and IT requirements in the community for everybody, so that piece is the step that now happens, one step for the presence there and the line goes live in the second quarter of 2016. Thank you.

**MR. BROMLEY:** I appreciate that. I am just wondering: how are we helping the communities take advantage of that point of presence, I guess is what I am saying. I am asking because, obviously, they don't always have the capacity. I certainly would be at a loss on how to take advantage of the point of presence. It is beyond my ken. I am wondering: are we helping communities to assess options towards optimizing the benefits they will get that a point of presence provides in each home. Thank you.

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** One of the partners in the partnership that is putting this line in is going to run a managers course with NorthwestTel and they have all the expertise. It would be a logical assumption to assume that in their business case they would be interested not only in putting the line down the valley but where they already have a presence in communities where there is going to be now access to cutting-edge fibre optic connections, they would be there looking to, I would assume, upgrade all of the communities. They have already upgraded them to satellite; most of them have cell phone connections. This would be a logical service enhancement that they would look at.

You have other companies, like out of Inuvik you have Ice Wireless, for example, that may have interests and I am not sure about any other businesses. We also have our sweetened slate of business support programs available through ITI that could possibly be tapped into if there was some kind of business opportunity that this community wanted to pursue, such as Deline. Thank you.

**MR. BROMLEY:** Thanks to the Minister. I intend no slur with NorthwestTel, but obviously they will have that possibility, that potential. This is the proverbial captive audience. That is why I am saying it seems

clear there is a need to provide some support to communities to consider and assess alternatives and make sure they are able to pick out the best ones and also that they have some expertise to draw on to make sure that they're not being taken advantage of as a captive audience in our valley communities. Thank you.

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Some communities' thinking and capacity is well along, like Inuvik. I know the community of Deline have their thinking very clear about what they see going forward with their microwave connection and wanting to become the sole provider for the community. Every independent service provider, every ISP will have the capacity to make the case. This is a business enterprise that, yes, communities may choose to pursue themselves or they would support somebody coming in that has the skills that's prepared to wire or put in the fibre optic where it's necessary and hook up the town for the full service of the fibre optic connection. So, we believe that opportunity is there. We have folks on the ground in the regions, in the communities on the economic development side that will be working with community groups, businesses and regional centres, taking calls, and we are standing ready to work with communities as they look at that final mile piece. Thank you.

**MR. BROMLEY:** Thanks to the Minister. That sounds good. I wonder, though, if the Minister could work with his colleague and provide us with an outline of exactly how our economic development officers are aware of this challenge for communities and helping out in helping them select the best possible options and cost benefits for their access to this. Thank you.

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** We will pull something together that will capture that as per the Member's request.

I just want to point out that in my mind the final mile piece has always been where the business opportunity is and we would be there to provide support as opposed to going to communities and getting potentially into the telecommunication business. So between the providers that are there, the ISPs, the communities with us playing a support role, we want to make sure that final mile gets implemented. But we will, on that basis, pull together the information for the Member in the life of this Assembly. Thank you.

**MR. BROMLEY:** Thank you. I have no more questions. I have no problems with the briefing laid out by the Minister there and I'll look forward to that information. Mahsi.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard):** Thank you, Mr. Bromley. Committee, we're on page 32, budget, treasury and debt management, infrastructure investments, \$91 million.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard):** Agreed. Page 35, Office of the Comptroller General, infrastructure investments, \$1.325 million.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard):** We'll go back to page 31, Department of Finance, total infrastructure investments, \$92.325 million.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard):** Committee is agreed we're concluded the Department of Finance?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard):** Thank you, Mr. Aumond. Sergeant-at-Arms, please escort the witness out of the Chamber. Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. I'll go to Ms. Bisaro.

**MS. BISARO:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Next in line is Health and Social Services. We would like to leave Health and go to the Department of Transportation.

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

**MR. BROMLEY:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I move we report progress.

---Defeated

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard):** I'll just confirm with Mr. Beaulieu if you have witnesses and they're prepared to come into the Chamber.

**HON. TOM BEAULIEU:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman, I do.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard):** Thank you. Sergeant-at-Arms, please escort in the witnesses.

Committee, we're on page 81, Department of Transportation. I'll go to general comments on the Department of Transportation. General comments. Mr. Blake.

**MR. BLAKE:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I'm really glad to see, as I mentioned, the Building Canada Plan underway once again. I am a little disappointed it wasn't in place for last season, but here we are today, the first year that this funding is starting up again. Lots has been done, about three-quarters completed, and hopefully we have time, if the weather cooperates, that this gets finished and we have a parking garage upgrades in Aklavik. Hopefully, we can have this done as soon as possible. Within the month would be great.

---Laughter

But also under Willow River, as I mentioned before, it's really important that the department identifies some funds to put this bridge in place. The contractors didn't feel it would cost \$2 million, but that price has come from the department under their assessment as to installing, drilling the pilings, which shouldn't be very much to put this bridge in place. But with the help from the department and funding, I hope this bridge can be put in place this winter, otherwise it

will be just sitting on the land as a possible injury that can happen with people travelling out on the land in the winter not seeing this if it's not flagged properly. We don't want any accidents happening.

Also, the Louis Cardinal hull upgrade, many of my constituents want to know when we are due for a new ferry. This ferry is well over 25, 30 years old now and it's pretty clear it's time for an upgrade. I'm sure with today's technology there's a far better way to provide this service.

With that, those are my general comments. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard):** Thank you, Mr. Blake. I'll go to Minister Beaulieu.

**HON. TOM BEAULIEU:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The parking garage upgrade is scheduled to begin this year. There was some work done on the upgrade. Some of the money was spent on the parking upgrade.

The Willow River Bridge is part of the Access Roads Program. The Access Roads Program, as committee knows, is a program where there is just a little over \$1 million and sometimes a little under \$1 million spent in the program each year. So what we try to do with some of the projects is we try to support some of the programs in a larger way. This is one of the programs that we tried to support and we knew going in that it would be a substantial cost to put the bridge in.

There may be another way to do it where it would be less of a cost, but we knew it would be a fairly substantial cost to install a bridge. We don't have the money in the Access Program. As I indicated in the House, if we intend to continue to finish this road and put the bridge in, then we would probably have to do it under regular capital where this actual project would be viewed as larger capital but just a slight issue with that. As we know, the system is if we're going to spend some serious infrastructure money, it's usually on our infrastructure contribution agreement, usually a lot less and it's not an asset that we retain.

The Louis Cardinal Ferry is due for an upgrade, as the Member indicates. I'm just checking to see if this ferry is scheduled for replacement. My feeling is that it isn't, that we wouldn't be spending money on it to extend, we'd only be spending money on it to extend the life for a little while until we did find some capital dollars or replace it with another asset that we already have. Currently, we have money in for this year and this coming summer and we will be coating the hull of the ferry and that's what we have in front of us today. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**MR. BLAKE:** It sounds like we have a possible supplementary coming about here with the Willow River Bridge. I'm just kidding.

The only other comment I wanted to make was I'm really happy to see we're starting to do some brushing along the highway that's with the Building Canada

Plan funding, I believe. Some has been done just as you leave Inuvik to the airport, roughly 20 kilometres underway at the moment from Tsiigehtchic, 20 miles north towards Inuvik. This brushing is beginning here, which is great. Anywhere else you travel in the country, whether it's leaving here from Yellowknife, you have almost 20 metres on each side cleared for your visibility. This isn't the case up along the Dempster Highway, but I'm glad to see that this work is finally beginning. Very important because a lot of times we have some near misses. People almost hit moose or caribou and it's...

Mr. Chair, is there a problem? As I said, it's bad to see, you know a couple of times, as I mentioned, people almost hit moose and caribou. You know, as we start with this brushing, my residents are very happy with it. In the years to come, I can't wait to see the project completed all through the Dempster. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**HON. TOM BEAULIEU:** The brushing is something that we are doing under the separate contract from the Building Canada Plan. The Building Canada Plan will be the reconstruction of the Dempster Highway, Highway No. 8, and the brushing is the separate contract. We are trying to do it every couple of years if possible. There's a lot of highway to be brushed and I'm noticing that most of the highways now are getting some brushing done. For safety reasons we want to continue to do, right away, brushing as much as possible. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard):** Thank you, Minister Beaulieu. Committee, we're on general comments for Transportation. General comments. Mr. Menicoche.

**MR. MENICOCHÉ:** Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. I do have other issues that I'll address in the detail, but just overall this has been a significant week, beginning last week with the potential claims of the Inuvik-Tuk Highway there. My initial concern and my original concern was about should the claims be successful about taking away from other capital projects, especially in '16-17, so I'd like to ask the Minister: how is the department and how is this government going to handle the potential claim, should it be accepted, especially when we're talking about capital items and transportation in '16-17? You know, as MLAs we all fought pretty hard to take care of our constituency needs and I would say, for example, Highway No. 7. Just how would it impact, of that magnitude of \$32 million, our future capital expenses as planned in this House, Mr. Chair? Thank you.

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

**HON. TOM BEAULIEU:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The amount of capital in the Inuvik to Tuk Highway Project has not changed and we're proceeding with the capital that we're requesting. If there is a claims process, we would be going through a regular claims process and at that point where we are going through

the regular claims process and at this point we don't know if there's going to be a requirement for us to request any money at all to continue the Inuvik-Tuk Highway. It's too early in the process to determine whether that's needed but, Mr. Chairman, I understand my support staff, from the deputy minister, will be arriving here in 10 minutes. Thank you.

**MR. MENICOCHÉ:** Well, all the more reason for the Minister to make a commitment that he won't move any money from our future capital. Like I said, that's a concern of mine and we all work hard as an Assembly, Members on this side of the House with Cabinet, and a couple of weeks ago when we went through the capital budget, we've come here, we've got a fairly good plan that everybody's agreeable with, but the impact of \$32 million I just sure don't want to see it being amended or changed because there is a successful claim there.

I'd just like to ask the Minister one more time what are his thoughts about that movement forward. We try to get assurance in this House that nothing will be done throughout the election period, so I'd just like to ask the Minister what are his thoughts about how long will a claims process take, commit not to do anything during the election period. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard):** Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. Excuse me. Just in the interest of getting the proper answer, we'll take a 10-minute break until the support staff get here. Thank you very much. Sorry, Mr. Miltenberger.

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Two things: that the commitment has already been made as the claim process runs its course that we would be keeping committee and Members apprised of that.

In regards to the concern of the Member for Nahendeh, whatever comes out of that will negatively impact the next budget. Clearly, we're going to agree to this budget. We're going to go ahead with that and the incoming Assembly will pick up all the pieces for everything, look at all the challenges. But this project and whatever comes out of that claims process will not be tacked on to the capital plan where all of a sudden we have to carve away projects. It will be part of the broad consideration as we do our business as an Assembly, those of us who are going to be back here. This is just to give the assurance to the Member that it's not automatically \$30 million off the next capital budget. You know, worst case scenario. The hope is, as Minister Beaulieu has indicated, that at the end of the day we may sort this out and handle it with the existing budget, and we will keep Members apprised of that, but it won't negatively affect constituencies and other communities.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard):** Thank you, Minister Miltenberger. We'll just take a five minute break. Ms. Bisaro. Sorry.

**MS. BISARO:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I move that we report progress.

---Defeated

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard):** We'll carry on after a five-minute break.

---SHORT RECESS

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard):** Committee, we'll resume general comments on the Department of Transportation.

We're on page 81. We'll come back to this page after we're concluded the department. Page 82, Department of Transportation, airports, infrastructure investments, \$1.201 million. Mr. Moses.

**MR. MOSES:** Just on page 82 and talking about the airports, I know it is on the list and it's something that I've brought up during general comments when we got started with the infrastructure process. I just wanted to ask the Minister, when do we expect to have an update on the work that's being done for the runway, the survey work and all that information? When can we expect to get a report on that and make a decision? Also, just with the airport, as well, I know it is on the books to be replaced, the airport facility, and I'm just wondering what the plans are for that as well.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard):** Thank you, Mr. Moses. Minister Beaulieu.

**HON. TOM BEAULIEU:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We're just getting some detail. I'll ask the deputy to respond to the question.

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

**MR. NEUDORF:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. We have funding to repair the dip at the Inuvik Airport runway. We've done two temporary repairs on it as we continue to gather additional technical information. This fall we did gather some more of that and we're going to analyze that this winter and come up with what we hope will be a permanent repair this coming summer. Next summer we do plan to carry over, or ask the money to be reinstated next year to complete that dip.

In terms of the air terminal building, that is in the capital planning process. We are starting a planning study for the air terminal building replacement project this year.

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

**MR. MOSES:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Just further, in terms of the facility itself and the runway, has there been any discussion on lengthening that runway so that it can actually service bigger jets? I know Whitehorse has that opportunity to bring in international flights and with the Inuvik-Tuk Highway coming on board, are there any discussions on lengthening that runway at the Inuvik Airport?

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard):** Thank you, Mr. Moses. Minister Beaulieu.

**HON. TOM BEAULIEU:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The department is working with DND doing some studies for that possibility that we would handle the larger jets in Inuvik.

**MR. MOSES:** With that work that they're doing with DND, is a report expected to come to the House or whether or not the GNWT would have to cover any costs that might be associated with it, federal, like a joint partnership? I know we are doing a lot of, I guess, sovereignty work and a lot of exercises. We had a big exercise this year with the military, and I'm just wondering if the GNWT would also be committing any type of infrastructure dollars to that and if the report will be coming to this House as well.

**HON. TOM BEAULIEU:** So far we have come to the House for money for the studies and we are continuing at a pace of DND. We don't know when there may be a report as a result of our studies or a plan as a result of the studies, but when one is developed, when we do write a report or a plan on the extension of the airport, we will come back to the House with the plan.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard):** Thank you, Minister Beaulieu. Committee, we are on page 82, airports, infrastructure investments, \$1.251 million. Mr. Dolynny.

**MR. DOLYNNY:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I notice on here we have a product listing called runway stabilization. It talks about a special liquid blend we are going to be applying to runways. Can we get a little bit of information about what is EK-35 liquid application? Thank you.

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

**HON. TOM BEAULIEU:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. EK-35 is on the small runways, gravel runways. It is a non-corrosive product that also covers the surface and does prevent dirt from flying up into the air as well. It is essentially a product that they use for the airports so that there is dust abatement on the strips, all the gravel strips.

**MR. DOLYNNY:** I know that the department in the past has used products call Trembind. I know they ran into problems with it as a dust control suppressant and it had some environmental impacts. Has this EK-35 met all standards we have for any type of environmental assessment that it would not affect or harm any of our wildlife in the communities? Thank you.

**HON. TOM BEAULIEU:** The product is approved by Boeing and it doesn't corrode the aircraft. It is a good product and there should be no problem with it. The other product was used a long time ago and we no longer use it.

**MR. DOLYNNY:** Is it safe to say that if I was to look up EK-35 online as a synthetic organic dust control product, it would have no problems whatsoever passing any type of health concerns? Thank you.

**HON. TOM BEAULIEU:** There is no indication there are any health concerns on the application of EK-35 on our runways.

**MR. DOLYNNY:** I would caution the department, if they can provide the committee any of the facts surrounding the safety of the synthetic organic material called EK-35, my quick research does show that there has been some environmental ecological problems with the product in certain jurisdictions, so I would be inclined to make sure that we are doing our due diligence before we start applying this on all of our highways and our airports.

Will the department commit to providing committee some background in terms of the ecological and environmental safety of this product? Thank you.

**HON. TOM BEAULIEU:** We are prepared to do that.

**MR. DOLYNNY:** I notice also on here we have a new airport sweeper, obviously for the Yellowknife Airport. I just notice that, not knowing the breakdown, I don't want to run the competitiveness of any type of bid, what type of valuation do these airport sweepers have in terms of replacement for new? I guess, what is the range of new pricing we may be looking at for this new sweeper? Thank you.

**HON. TOM BEAULIEU:** Our current sweeper is 19 years old. We have budgeted \$250,000 to replace that sweeper.

**MR. DOLYNNY:** The old sweeper that is going to be replaced, does it have any value? Is it going to be re-profiled and used elsewhere in our airport fleet? Thank you.

**HON. TOM BEAULIEU:** It is possible that it has some value. It will likely be surplus. If there is some value, it could possibly be moved for use on a smaller strip.

**MR. DOLYNNY:** So, it is safe to say that we don't know if it has any residual value that we are going to be surplus and selling it, or are we able to bring it up to another airport or maybe use it as a backup? It sounds like a pretty expensive piece of machinery. I don't think these units... Maybe age might be an issue. I don't think these units see a lot of traction time. Again, I am just trying to see how, again, repurposing these very expensive pieces of equipment that have very low hours. Thank you.

**HON. TOM BEAULIEU:** It was deemed that it was not efficient to continue to run the sweeper. We go through the Department of Public Works and Services, we go through the regular disposal process with the sweeper.

**MR. DOLYNNY:** So, what is the normal disposal process?

**HON. TOM BEAULIEU:** Like all of the other assets, we would see if the other departments had any use for the asset. If none of the other departments had a use for the asset, the asset could be offered to other organizations, non-profit organizations or other community governments. With no use there, then it would probably be sold in an auction or sold and shipped down to wherever it was purchased.

**MR. DOLYNNY:** I know it is another descriptor here in terms of product listing, runway drainage improvement in Hay River. Can you maybe give me an update here, what is the scope of this project and why the need for it? Thank you.

**HON. TOM BEAULIEU:** Studies in 2014 suggested there is a subsurface drainage problem that leads to ongoing repairs of the Hay River runway. Replacement and extending the underground drainage system adjacent and parallel to both sides of the runway provide enhanced protection to the runway and adjacent infrastructure. The drainage system is expected to last 20 years.

**MR. DOLYNNY:** Is this a repeat problem that we are having in Hay River or is this a one-time event? I am just trying to get the scope. Has this been a repetitive issue with that runway? Thank you.

**HON. TOM BEAULIEU:** There is a recurring issue for repairing dips on Hay River Airport every five years. We are thinking that this is a solution to resolve it and end the issue.

**MR. DOLYNNY:** So, if we are doing this every so many years, I am assuming this could become a problematic issue. So we are thinking that by just repairing the drainage that we are going to avoid the so-called dips and valleys of this runway. Are there no alternative solutions other than drainage? Is it because it needs to be built up? Does it need a geotextile fabric? Do we need to use another aggregate coating for this runway? Is this just a piecemeal or bandage approach? Is this a permanent fix? Thank you.

**HON. TOM BEAULIEU:** We believe it is a drainage problem. At one point we were looking at the possibility that it may be a permafrost issue, but we have determined that it is a drainage problem and we're convinced that this fix here is going to resolve the issue for at least 20 years, as I indicated.

**MR. DOLYNNY:** We know this runway is roughly 1,830 metres in length. If we're going to be doing this drainage program, which I think it sounds like a fairly large undertaking, is there any consideration of actually increasing the length of this runway to maybe allow for larger planes to land in Hay River? Thank you.

**HON. TOM BEAULIEU:** Mr. Chairman, we have no plans to extend the runway in Hay River. Most of the aircraft that are landing there are much smaller than what the airport can handle. You can land 737s at the



Hay River Airport, so there is no plan to extend that airport runway at this time.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard):** Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. Next on the list I have Mr. Menicoche.

**MR. MENICOCHE:** Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. I just wanted to direct your attention to Trout Lake. I know that people are very happy with a much longer runway, but I think there was some remedial work that was done to the slumpage in the springtime, so maybe the Minister could comment on it. I don't see any capital for '16-17. Does that mean that the airport settled just great and we'll have many years of operational life of the current airport? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

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

**HON. TOM BEAULIEU:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. New airports, new construction comes with some issues that we usually sort out in the first couple of years. There is nothing that we're anticipating that can't be handled with the equipment that is there, with the grader. We know that we didn't have the money immediately to build the airport terminal building, but we now have the money and we'll be proceeding with the construction of the ATB.

**MR. MENICOCHE:** So, just in terms of integrity of the new airport, it sounds like it all settled out. Certainly residents are very happy to see the new airport terminal building was certainly in the bidding process and look forward to the construction to protect the travelling public during the upcoming winter months. Maybe the Minister can let me know when that's slated for completion. Just with that, then I have one other thing with regard to the Trout Lake Airport. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**HON. TOM BEAULIEU:** The tenders on that have closed. We're going to award soon. It's going in on the winter road and we're going to do the construction as soon as possible after that.

**MR. MENICOCHE:** Just with the much larger airport, the Minister was in Trout Lake and one of the needs is a snow blower as opposed to using the graders. That's one of the requests, is to move towards a snow blower for the community of Trout Lake for their much larger airport. They really feel that they'll maintain the airport a lot better with a snow blower.

I'd just like to ask, is it on any short-term plan for the community of Trout Lake? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**HON. TOM BEAULIEU:** Mr. Chairman, last winter we had provided maintenance at the airport with a grader. We're going to continue that this coming winter. We thought that it performed well. Snow blowers are an expensive piece of machinery, difficult to maintain and difficult to operate. So, we're going to continue with this and see how it performs, and then we'll evaluate. We don't have a snow blower scheduled for Trout

Lake, but we will continue to use equipment we have and continue to evaluate.

**MR. MENICOCHE:** Yes, I certainly realize the cost of a brand new snow blower, but I think there may be other ones in the Department of Transportation in other communities or other regions that could be perhaps repurposed to the community of Trout Lake. So I would just ask the Minister to keep that in mind as they evaluate their equipment and the equipment needs. I did speak in the House about it before and I thought there was a solution of an older, not very old, but an older snow blower in another community that could have been repurposed over to Trout Lake. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**HON. TOM BEAULIEU:** Mr. Chairman, we will continue to monitor the airport with what we have, and it may come to a point if we are unable to maintain the airport with what we have, we may have to bring something else in. At this point I can commit to monitoring it and making sure that we're in touch with the community, and if the community keeps advising us that things are running okay, then we'll leave it as is. If it becomes an issue, then we'll have to deal with it.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard):** Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. Committee, we're on page 82, airports, infrastructure investments, \$1.201 million.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard):** Agreed. Page 84, highways, infrastructure investments, \$69.340 million. Mr. Dolynny.

**MR. DOLYNNY:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I guess first and foremost there is a number of highway projects here today listed in front of us here, which is good to see. I guess to bring it to a specific question here, all of the construction projects that are listed on the project listing, are those RFP projects or are those negotiated contract projects? Thank you.

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

**HON. TOM BEAULIEU:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Some of the projects are negotiated and some are tendered. We have a mix of both types of procurement.

**MR. DOLYNNY:** That's great to know that here, so why don't I just ask one at a time here. Highway No. 1 reconstruction, negotiated or RFP? Thank you.

**HON. TOM BEAULIEU:** Highway No. 1, negotiated; Highway No. 6, negotiated; half of Highway No. 8, negotiated.

**MR. DOLYNNY:** I appreciate that. I also see Highway No. 3 and Highway No. 7, if I can get an update as well.

**HON. TOM BEAULIEU:** Highway No. 3, Highway No. 4, Highway No. 7 are all tendered.



**MR. DOLYNNY:** I appreciate the fact that we are doing a mix of tendered and RFP'd road construction. I know the contractors out there will be much appreciative.

Would we anticipate, should this capital estimates get approved, that this is construction for the upcoming winter season, or is this spring construction for most of these roads? Thank you.

**HON. TOM BEAULIEU:** This is a budget to start on April 1, 2016. So we'll be doing the majority of the construction for this budget in the summer of 2016.

**MR. DOLYNNY:** So, we're doing the budgeting after April 1, 2016, or are we doing the budgeting during the winter months? Can I get clarification on that? Thank you.

**HON. TOM BEAULIEU:** We're in the process now of going through the infrastructure capital. If and when this budget gets approved, this process then is for the 2016-17 construction season. So the majority of the construction will occur in the summer of 2016, or next summer.

**MR. DOLYNNY:** I also know that the road that's on here, which I'll assume has a large component of budget associated, is the Inuvik-Tuk all-weather highway. Again, we don't have a breakdown here. We have a full number of \$69.340 million. What percentage of this capital estimate is attributed to the Inuvik-Tuk Highway all-weather road in this capital estimate?

**HON. TOM BEAULIEU:** Thank you. I would say 42 percent.

**MR. DOLYNNY:** Thank you very much. I don't have my calculator handy. What is that in the dollar figure of this budget? Thank you.

**HON. TOM BEAULIEU:** I know that we've been through the process, the cash flow with the Inuvik-Tuk Highway; we have \$30 million in the cash flow.

**MR. DOLYNNY:** Thank you very much. So, it appears that we've got about \$30 million that is part of this a little over \$69 million that's going to be attributed to that one project, which is part of that succession of multiple years in the making here. We know that this project was accelerated last year through both regular process as well as supplementary process. What part of those monies in the past years of both regular appropriation as well as supplementary appropriation is still sitting in stasis? That is that we've actually appropriated money in a bill. This money was given to this department to manage. We got so many kilometres done. We apply for funding from the federal government and then we get matching contributions. How much money is so-called left in a reserve that has not been used from the previous appropriations? Thank you.

**HON. TOM BEAULIEU:** For the carry-over numbers, that's one I'd like to ask the deputy to provide the information.

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

**MR. NEUDORF:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. We carried over about \$4.5 million from last fiscal year into the current one. That's added to the budget that was voted and approved last October. It was \$90 million and then we have \$30 million next fiscal year and then \$4 million in '17-18 to finish up the project.

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

**MR. DOLYNNY:** Thank you. So, it's safe to say that we've got \$4 million of residual or reserve from last year not spent, potentially \$30 million that could be appropriated this year. So for a total of \$34 million, is that what we'll see for this fiscal construction season coming up, or will committee be seeing any type of supplementary to accelerate this quicker? Is that going to be enough money to fulfill the obligation of the contractor to meet obligations on a construction timetable? Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard):** Thank you, Mr. Dolynny. Mr. Beaulieu.

**HON. TOM BEAULIEU:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We do feel that there is enough money to finish the highway.

**MR. DOLYNNY:** We also know that, I believe, there was a contingency reserve fund put aside within this project. I can't remember the exact number, but I believe it was around \$5 million. Has any of that contingency money been used, and if so, how much and for what and is there any anticipation that that contingency fund might be used in this upcoming construction season? Thank you.

**HON. TOM BEAULIEU:** I can tell you that it was around \$200,000, but I don't have the details of what it was spent on. We're not scheduled to use the contingency fund in this construction season that we're now getting some appropriation for.

**MR. DOLYNNY:** Thank you. One final question. Are we safe to assume that the contractor is in a so-called "ready, go" position for this upcoming winter season, that we have all the trucks in place, all the people, their employees in place? This \$30 million that is appropriated today in conjunction with the \$4 million reserve last year, is it going to be sufficient to say that we should have a pretty good completed project at the end of this construction season? Thank you.

**HON. TOM BEAULIEU:** I just have to clear something up here, \$4.5 million carried over at the end of the last fiscal year. We had \$90 million appropriated for this fiscal year that we're in and that's a factor as well. We're, in this fiscal year, spending the money right now. So I just don't want to leave that out completely and we didn't just go from \$4.5 and then jump to the \$30 million that we're trying to get now into the House, but there's the advance, as the

Members know, so that last year's budget was, or this current year's budget was \$90 million.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard):** Thank you, Minister Beaulieu. Next on my list I have Mr. Moses.

**MR. MOSES:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Just following up specifically on Highway No. 8. It's really interesting here about the half negotiated contract with that one, but just in terms of the amount of rainfall and the amount of work that's gone into the work that was done on the highway, is there any extra dollars that would be going into the construction and the surfacing and resurfacing and continued maintenance on the highway, considering the amount of rainfall that we had and the damage that it's done on the highways?

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard):** Thank you, Mr. Moses. Mr. Beaulieu.

**HON. TOM BEAULIEU:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm going to ask the deputy to respond to that.

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

**MR. NEUDORF:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. We had \$4.5 million in capital this year. We negotiated about 50 percent of that with the Gwich'in company and we tendered the other 50 percent. The Gwich'in companies are usually quite competitive in bidding on that work as well. The tendered portion of the work did get done this year. The negotiated portion was a little late in starting, so probably won't get it all done. They ran into some wet weather and bad conditions at the end of the year. So if there's any money left over or work left over then we'll carry over that funding, or we'll ask the House to carry it over I guess.

In terms of the O and M on the road, we have sufficient O and M money to take care of the road in all kinds of weather conditions. Thank you.

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

**MR. MOSES:** Thank you. Just continuing on with that, I see there is a lot of highways mobile equipment that's being purchased this year and when you look at the substantiation sheet there in a few places here, I see Fort McPherson is getting a loader. I was just kind of wondering, because over the wintertime and due to the weather, sometimes that section of highway gets closed for the amount of days and lack of equipment sometimes results in prolonged closures of the road and not being able to open it a lot sooner and you get a lot of people stuck in either Eagle Plains or trying to go back and you look at the food issue and supplies. So I was just wondering if that was something that we've seen over the year, whether or not there might be some type of mobile equipment, either purchase more in Fort McPherson or Inuvik to keep that highway open, so when the highway does close due to weather and snow buildup that we have equipment on there working right away in different sections so we

can get traffic moving a lot sooner than later. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard):** Thank you, Mr. Moses. Mr. Beaulieu.

**HON. TOM BEAULIEU:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We do have equipment strategically placed at James Creek, McPherson and we're trying to, when there's bad weather and the highway's blowing, get it open as quickly as possible. We're not thinking that adding more pieces of equipment will keep the road open. Often the road is closed on the Yukon side. So we don't think it's really a lack of equipment, rather just conditions of weather on the Dempster.

**MR. MOSES:** One question the Minister made reference to is on the Yukon side. I know we've put a lot of resources into our highways and obviously referenced here in the infrastructure budget. I know the question came up earlier in this government, whether or not our Minister speaks directly with the Yukon government to see what kind of investments they're doing to upkeep their side of the Dempster Highway. In the summertime it can get really bad in certain sections and then, as you mentioned, we do a good job to try and open up the highway in the wintertime. On the Yukon side, are they putting in as much effort as I think they should, and whether or not the Minister will make a commitment to speak to his counterpart to try to get those investments in place for a better road? We really promote tourism and now the Inuvik-Tuk Highway is going to be opening up. We want to have a safe driving road so that they're not turning around at Eagle Plains and not continuing on. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**HON. TOM BEAULIEU:** Our regional people are in contact with the regional people from Yukon on a regular basis. I have not, as Minister, had the Minister-to-Minister discussions about the Dempster. If there was an opportunity to do so in the future, certainly I would take the opportunity to discuss the Dempster Highway with the Yukon Minister. I will get some information from the department. I know that not only the regions but I think at a higher level the departments have communicated. If an opportunity arises where we need to discuss the Dempster, I will certainly take that opportunity.

**MR. MOSES:** I don't think we should be waiting for an opportunity to have those discussions. I think that we've got a highway that we're putting millions, hundreds of millions of dollars into and you want to give people, when they start seeing that, they want to come up and go to the Arctic Ocean and I think as Minister and leader for infrastructure of highways we shouldn't wait for an opportunity, we should take the initiative and start those discussions. If we're going to be opening up coast to coast to coast, people are going to have to drive through the Yukon to get up to Tuk and that should be a selling factor right there to the Yukon to say people are going to be driving through your jurisdiction, you guys should put some

dollars into the infrastructure as well. I don't think we should be waiting for an opportunity. It's something we should be initiating, considering the big infrastructure project we have going right now. Can I just get a commitment or a response? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**HON. TOM BEAULIEU:** Again, the deputies have been in touch and have had many discussions about that highway. I will commit to calling the Yukon Transportation or Highways Minister and have that discussion.

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

**MR. MENICOCHÉ:** Highway No. 7, Mr. Chair. I'm pleased with the resources available for our Highway No. 7 reconstruction. Perhaps I can just ask the Minister about the current plans for '16-17 for the amount of money that's resourced for next year.

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

**HON. TOM BEAULIEU:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The work for 2016 will be embankment improvements from kilometre 20 to 23, and following aggregate production, widening, strengthening and surface prep, drainage improvements from that same spot, 20 to 23, and then we'll be doing some crushing and aggregate production in a pit at kilometre 3, so I guess it's at the very beginning of the highway. I'd like to ask if I could have the deputy add to what I'm saying for the work that will be going on on Highway No. 7.

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

**MR. NEUDORF:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Just to add that we would adjust the work as required. So, for example, if it's a wet spring, if we knew it was a certain section that is soft needs to be repaired, then we will adjust the scope of work to take care of those problems. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard):** Thank you, deputy minister. Committee, I'd just remind you that we can't really discuss some of the detailed numbers. If we're looking for general information, that's fine, but if we're looking for detailed numbers for competitive reasons and bidding process, we need to keep it to the general for the capital budget here. Mr. Menicoche.

**MR. MENICOCHÉ:** Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. Just in terms of highways, culverts, bridges and chipseal overlay project, I know that one of the priorities of my communities is we're excited to see the ongoing development of chipseal between Providence junction and towards Simpson and we've still got quite a bit of a ways to go yet. I'd just like to see what the department's plans are for continuing chipsealing between Providence junction and Checkpoint. I know that we repaired some of that chipseal, I think it was 18 kilometres from Providence junction towards Fort Simpson, and there's still

another 18 kilometres of chipseal that should be saved. I would like to ask the Minister if they're going to address that as well. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

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

**HON. TOM BEAULIEU:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. For a more detailed response I'd like to ask the deputy to respond to the Member.

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

**MR. NEUDORF:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. We do have money underneath the Build Canada Plan for the next four years, starting this year, to reconstruct Highway No. 1. Most of the money will be spent between Fort Providence junction and Checkpoint. We have a program right now to reconstruct and chipseal the section from Jean Marie River access to Checkpoint. Of course, a portion of that's done already, up to kilometre 395. But with the funding available in the next three or four years, we hope to get that all reconstructed and chipsealed and then we'll move to Fort Providence and carry on with reconstructing and improving the stretch of chipseal that's there right now.

The Member will know that we're having a hard time with keeping chipseal on this stretch of road there. The base of the road isn't strong enough, so we do have to go in and strengthen that, and then as we do that we'll put chipseal on it again. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

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

**MR. MENICOCHÉ:** Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. Just with the resources available for Highway No. 1, of course it includes the section between Fort Simpson and Wrigley, and most particularly, from the N'Dulee ferry towards the Willow River Bridge, that particular section never really recovered from all the trucks that were on that road when they were doing the Enbridge Pipeline's recovery operations. I drove it a couple times this fall already and it really needs some work. I know that there was some planned work for this fall. I'm not too sure what was done, and I know that I've seen the engineers on that road inspecting it, so I just wanted to know if some of his recommendations and, of course, the concerns of the Wrigley residents is how much work will be done on that section of the highway.

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

**HON. TOM BEAULIEU:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The section of highway between Fort Simpson and Wrigley we are going to continue to maintain with using our maintenance money. That is a very low volume highway as far as vehicles and that go and we're not planning on putting a lot of capital or any

capital at this time onto that highway. We're trying to concentrate our capital on the highways that have higher traffic volumes. At this point, we're going to do the best we can with the maintenance budget to try to maintain that road in the best driving condition that we can maintain it to.

**MR. MENICOCHÉ:** I know that in the past few years that the highway between Fort Simpson and Wrigley there was investment in replacing culverts and almost like mini-bridges, so I'll just ask one more time if there are any plans for replacing any more culverts towards Wrigley.

**HON. TOM BEAULIEU:** In the capital that is one area that we are working where we are working on Shale Creek Bridge. We're sealing the deck and doing some bearing repairs on the deck, and then we're also rehabbing the timber on the deck of Smith Creek. We may have been on that one when they were rehabbing that one. They'll be doing more work similar to that bridge that we had crossed. We'll be doing work on those two bridges. I don't know exactly where they are, but I just have the kilometres. I suppose you know Shale Creek and Smith Creek is where we will be rehabbing the bridges.

**MR. MENICOCHÉ:** I think the Minister was talking about some of the bridges on the winter road section which kind of leads towards the Mackenzie Valley Highway Project to the north of Wrigley. I know that when the Minister came with me and we spoke with the Wrigley delegation, that was one of their asks, was can we start doing a small, mini program of highway development past the community of Wrigley, in terms of piecemealing the eventuality of a Mackenzie Valley Highway up the Mackenzie Valley. Just with those thoughts, any work that has been done by the department with respect to that other than the geotech work that was done.

**HON. TOM BEAULIEU:** That would be a great piece of work and a great project, no question about it. It would be a big part of the Mackenzie Valley Highway if that was to be built. The community had a very, very good plan. They are in support of the Mackenzie Valley highway and it was important for them to get to the first gravel access. They had indicated to us that it was about 30 kilometres of fairly flat territory that was good ground except for two short areas, two small spots, actually, as they put it on the road where they thought there were some swamps. Aside from that, they thought it was a very easy project to do, and we would support that type of a project as part of the Mackenzie Valley highway. It's right on the Mackenzie Valley right-of-way, and that's something we'd love to work towards with the community on the Deh Cho part of the Mackenzie Valley highway.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard):** Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. Committee, we're on page 84, highways, infrastructure investments, \$69.340 million. Mr. Dolynny.

**MR. DOLYNNY:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. This will probably be my last opportunity to talk about Highway No. 3. I know Mr. Menicoche thought I was going to say Highway No. 7 but, sorry. Highway No. 3. We know this is a multi-year project. I believe this is part of a bundle that was being funded here through one of the Building Canada Plan projects. But to get a bit more perspective, what should we expect? What is the budget in terms of the completion? Is there a certain target on Highway No. 3 that we're going to try to complete for this capital budget?

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

**HON. TOM BEAULIEU:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We're scheduled for this budget embankment improvements, kilometre 275 to 278, from 279 to 280, involving straightening and surface prep; drainage improvements and install culverts at kilometre 275, 276, 277, 279, and 279.6; crushing aggregate production at kilometre 285; chipseal kilometre 275 to 278 and 279 to 280.

**MR. DOLYNNY:** I appreciate the details there. When I'm hearing kilometre 275 to 278 and so forth, I'm assuming these are the kilometres between here and Behchoko. I believe we're starting from kilometre 0, which I believe is Fort Providence. Is that my understanding? Or south of that?

**HON. TOM BEAULIEU:** The kilometre 0 is at the highway that turns off Fort Simpson on the other side of the Deh Cho Bridge, and Providence is about 31 kilometres, and then Yellowknife is at 339, and Behchoko 245. This is some of the highway where we had the speed at 90 between here and Behchoko. We're fixing areas there that are troublesome.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard):** Thank you, Minister Beaulieu. Yes, Behchoko is at 245. Mr. Dolynny.

**MR. DOLYNNY:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Thank you for your wisdom there. Thank you very much. I guess when we're talking about sections of the road, I think it's important for us to make sure that we're describing the right sections. People looking back at transcripts are trying to figure out what exactly does this mean. I think anyone would not disagree that the 100 kilometre stretch between here and Behchoko is probably one of the most difficult sections of highway probably in the Northwest Territories and probably one of the most well-travelled ones in the Northwest Territories, so any improvements in that 100 kilometre stretch would definitely be an improvement. I know the Member for Monfwi is probably agreeing with me.

We heard about a multi-year investment, and again, we're doing sections at a time in terms of improvements, embankment improvements and drainage improvements, but I think the public really needs to know at what point in time can we safely say that that stretch of road between Yellowknife and Behchoko would be completely redone, resurfaced

and, as I like to put it, as smooth as we can. Thank you.

**HON. TOM BEAULIEU:** This is part of bundle number one, the first four years of reconstruction on Highway No. 3. The plans that I talked about just previously was this fiscal year and also in bundle three it closes the gap and it finishes off the rest of the bundle and this would mean that there would be six more years of this type of construction on Highway No. 3 between here and Behchoko.

**MR. DOLYNNY:** I will have to decipher that coded message. I guess the question I have is within the four-year bundle cycle that we hear, so from kilometre 245 to kilometre 339, would we assume that between those two numbers that the complete stretch will be resurfaced and reconditioned and rehabilitated to a road that is not what we see today? Thank you.

**HON. TOM BEAULIEU:** We will not be able to do the entire highway with the four-year money that we have in the first bundle, number one from the Building Canada Plan. We will be working on, of course, the worst areas, so the highway will be improving overall every year. What the four-year money won't be doing is the entire highway.

**MR. DOLYNNY:** So it is safe to say that we have roughly 100 kilometres that we are talking about and over the four-year stretch, how many kilometres are anticipated to be rehabilitated, resurfaced and brought to a so-called standard as we are doing it in a piecemeal approach? Is it 40 of those kilometres, 50 of those kilometres? I'd like to get an understanding. What is the target of the department after this four-year bundle? Thank you.

**HON. TOM BEAULIEU:** Not the entire 100 kilometres has dips in it. Some parts of the highway are straight and we are not going to be working on that, but with the four-year money we will be doing about 20 kilometres total where we will be taking the dips, only in Highway No. 3, out. Also, each year we also have maintenance and we do regular maintenance on that road. So as we reconstruct with the Building Canada Plan money, we are also maintaining those sections, as well, so the rest of the 100 kilometres to make sure that it remains a good surface that we are going to bring to these areas to a state that we are bringing these areas to. Thank you.

**MR. DOLYNNY:** I appreciate the Minister sharing those numbers, and thanks for the information. No further questions. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard):** Thank you, Mr. Dolynny. Next I have Mr. Hawkins.

**MR. HAWKINS:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I actually took that highway four days ago and I found it challenging to drive faster than 65 over the whole highway. I am just trying to understand how we look at this highway from the context of what are the sections that require rehabilitation that are defined as dips and what are the sections that are defined as maintenance. That

whole highway has deteriorated horribly. I have taken it several times this summer and I will tell you it has really deteriorated quite a bit since last fall. I would distinguish, I mean the whole thing needs to be resurfaced. So, why don't we start with those first questions? Thank you.

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

**MR. NEUDORF:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. The stretch of highway between Behchoko and Yellowknife has some deterioration in the surface and dips. We are addressing it two ways. First we have our O and M money. With that we basically just fill the dip and put a new chip fill surface on top and it doesn't get any farther than the surface, it is just repairing the surface. When we do have some additional money with the capital funding here, we do take the opportunity to essentially reconstruct the highway. So we start with the drainage, make sure that that is okay, then we make sure that the side structure is okay. We bring it up to grade and then we put a finishing surface on it and chipseal it.

To try to address and come up with better solutions, we do have a number of different test sections out there right now where we are testing different things to see if we can come up with a better way to slow down the rate that the dips are appearing on that road. Thank you.

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

**MR. HAWKINS:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I will return to the test sections, because I would like to know more about that, but I want to understand in this particular section on Highway No. 3 how many kilometres are targeted for reconstruction and how many are targeted, I assume, just to fill in the dips. Thank you.

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

**HON. TOM BEAULIEU:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. The embankment improvements in the recent construction, we are hoping to do four to five kilometres each year, and with the maintenance we try to maintain the full 100 kilometres. So we would put down some material to fix the dips and holes with maintenance and try to maintain the best driving conditions as possible. Thank you.

**MR. HAWKINS:** Is he really saying under the dips we are just filling holes and fixing cracks? Thank you.

**HON. TOM BEAULIEU:** The regular maintenance program, with the capital that we are discussing today, we will be reconstructing sections that we are hoping won't deteriorate any further. With the areas where we are not reconstructing, we continue to maintain it and if there are some dips that need to be filled, if there are holes that need to be filled, then we will be patching the holes and filling the dips with

some material that will keep the road as smooth as possible.

**MR. HAWKINS:** Since the construction of that road a few years ago, when we received all that money to redo it, I am just wondering if there was any part of that actual road that was under warranty, and if so, what sections. Thank you.

**HON. TOM BEAULIEU:** The entire highway would have been under warranty for one year, so as we pay the contractor for reconstructing the highway, it would have been a holdback for a year and then if the highway held for a year, we couldn't legally hold a contractor's money any longer than the year's warranty. So once that money was released, essentially it was up to us to maintain any issues on the highway after that.

**MR. HAWKINS:** Was any warranty action taken? If so, how many kilometres fell under the warranty program?

**HON. TOM BEAULIEU:** I apologize, Mr. Chairman; I didn't hear the question.

**MR. HAWKINS:** It was such a good question I'm surprised they weren't hanging on my every word. I was asking, under the warranty program how many kilometres were actually actioned. In other words, did we actually use the warranty or were we able to access the warranty? Did we access any warranty whatsoever? Thank you.

**HON. TOM BEAULIEU:** The construction of the highway was finished in 2006 and we don't have the information if any warranty money was used the following year with us here. It may have been, but we can provide that information to committee if the Members wish.

**MR. HAWKINS:** I'd like to know if we actually got any warranty out of it, and I certainly hope that would be here before the end of session. As you know, we're down to just a few days.

Under the test section, I know we did a section using the product called Easy Street. Is the Minister able to tell us where they used this, how many kilometres or how long of a stretch they used, and why don't we have a placard of some sort to identify that so people can see where it's being used? I mean, I wouldn't know where to look for it, so no one in the public would, so how would we know what's being used and how much? Thank you.

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

**MR. NEUDORF:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. The purchase of Easy Street is they won a contract to provide material to fill potholes. That was several years ago and we used the material that we purchased underneath that contract to fill potholes. We did a test section at the junction of the Detah access road on Highway No. 4.

The test sections on Highway No. 3 are not about the chipsealed surface, so there's no testing of Easy Street. The test sections on Highway No. 3 were about getting into the subgrade and how do we stabilize the subgrade to keep the ditch from reoccurring. Thank you.

**MR. HAWKINS:** Has that test been successful and when do we call it an end of the test? Thank you.

**MR. NEUDORF:** We do continue to monitor the test sections on Highway No. 3. We'll see some results already. It's about two years that they've been in operation now, but we'll continue to monitor for five or 10 years from now to get the full results. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**MR. HAWKINS:** So the deputy minister is saying we're going to have to wait five to 10 years before the GNWT decides to consider purchasing that?

**MR. NEUDORF:** Some of the dips that are on the highway reappear after a year. It does not take very long. When we did these test sections, we did pick particularly troublesome spots. Even though it's two years, we are starting to see some of the results, but we will continue to monitor for five or 10 years to get the full results.

I would note that none of those test sections involved Easy Street. Thank you.

**MR. HAWKINS:** If we had more time I wouldn't mind knowing a little more about what are they doing and when do they actually start realizing it's a product worth using or not using. I'm just curious. I mean, they've been saying they've been testing it for a number of years. This is the first time I've heard it's two years. I thought it's been out there for four or longer than four.

The deputy minister also talked about other design tests. Can he explain and elaborate? Thank you.

**MR. NEUDORF:** To be clear, the test sections that we're talking about on Highway No. 3, none of them involved Easy Street. So we were not testing surface products; we were testing subgrade repairs. There was no Easy Street on Highway No. 3.

There are four different test sections. Two of them involve culvert repairs and then two of them involve grade repairs. One of the grade repairs involved a product called Sementrics. It was basically a concrete-type product that you use to provide some structural strength to the road, then you construct the road on top of that.

The other one involved different types of drainage of the grade, of the subgrade of the road, and different types of grade in terms of the size of the rock and then in terms of the angle of the ditching that's on the side of the road. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard):** Thank you, deputy minister. Committee, we're on page 84, highways, infrastructure investments, \$69.340 million.



**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard):** Page 86, marine, infrastructure investments, \$100,000.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard):** Page 88, road licensing and safety, infrastructure investments, \$1.250 million. Mr. Menicoche.

**MR. MENICOCHÉ:** Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. Just with regard to road licensing and safety, residents of Fort Liard still find it burdensome that they've got to drive all the way to Fort Simpson each time they need to get their vehicle registration and/or trailer registration. I know that we were supposed to have a mobile licensing unit out there. I don't know if they ever got that going, or has online registration advanced to the point where they can do it from the comfort of their community? Thank you.

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

**MR. NEUDORF:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. All vehicle registrations can be renewed online and that's from Yellowknife or Fort Liard or Trout Lake. It's any community can do that and we continue to expand the number of services that we're providing online with some additional money in this budget to continue with that and we hope at the end of it that all of our commercial vehicle permits are done online so that carriers can use the Internet to provide that type of service.

As the Member indicated, we do have a mobile solution for an issuing office. So we would like, and we try, to provide contractors to provide issuing services for us in each community, but unfortunately, the volume is very small in the smaller communities. So it's hard for anybody to justify doing it. So in the case of Fort Liard, we do work with the community and when the community approaches us and says we've got X number of people that are wanting to renew their registration, could you come in and help us out, we do pick up our suitcase that has a mobile issuing station in it and head to the community and provide that service for a day or two, whatever might be required. Thank you.

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

**MR. MENICOCHÉ:** Thank you very much. Also, a new issue that came up out of Fort Liard was the road tests that the community was almost too small because I think we changed our legislation that the road test had to be done in the larger communities like Fort Simpson. Even Fort Simpson was questionable at that time. So I don't know if the department has reviewed it with regard to giving out learners' permits, class 7s and class 6s. I know that Aurora College goes to great lengths to train up to 10 people at a time in Fort Liard. So just with that there, Mr. Chair.

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

**HON. TOM BEAULIEU:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We don't have the information on whether or not you can get a full driver's licence in Fort Simpson, but we know you can in Hay River, Inuvik, Fort Smith, Yellowknife. We're not 100 percent sure about Fort Simpson, but we can check that to see if you can get a full licence in Fort Simpson.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard):** Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. Mr. Menicoche.

**MR. MENICOCHÉ:** Thanks, Mr. Chair. All right. I'll await that confirmation. I just wanted to ask for another hour for my further questions, Mr. Chair.

---Laughter

I've got no further questions.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard):** Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. Committee, we're on page 88, road licensing and safety, infrastructure investments, \$1.250 million.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard):** Thank you. We'll go back to page 81, Department of Transportation, total infrastructure investments, \$71.891 million.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard):** Agreed. Is committee agreed we're concluded with Transportation?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

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

Committee, next we have on the agenda Legislative Assembly. Mr. Miltenberger.

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** I move we report progress.

---Carried

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bouchard):** I will now rise and report progress. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Item 21, report of Committee of the Whole. Mr. Bouchard.

### Report of Committee of the Whole

**MR. BOUCHARD:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, your committee has been considering Tabled Document 281-17(5), Northwest Territories Capital Estimates, 2016-2017, and would like to report progress. Mr. Speaker, I move that the report of Committee of the Whole be concurred with. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Bouchard. Do I have a seconder? Mr. Beaulieu.

---Carried



Item 22, third reading of bills. Mr. Clerk, orders of the day.

### Orders of the Day

**CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Mercer):** Orders of the day for Friday, October 2, 2015, at 10:00 a.m.:

1. Prayer
2. Ministers' Statements
3. Members' Statements
4. Returns to Oral Questions
5. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery
6. 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
  - Bill 48, An Act to Amend the Mental Health Act
  - Bill 69, An Act to Amend the Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act, No. 2
19. Second Reading of Bills
  - Bill 68, An Act to Amend the Child and Family Services Act, No. 2
20. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters
  - Bill 45, An Act to Amend the Workers' Compensation Act
  - Bill 49, An Act to Amend the Deh Cho Bridge Act
  - Bill 56, Miscellaneous Statute Law Amendment Act, 2015
  - Bill 59, Estate Administration Law Amendment Act
  - Bill 60, An Act to Amend the Motor Vehicles Act, No. 2
  - Bill 61, An Act to Amend the Public Airports Act
  - Bill 62, An Act to Amend the Coroners Act

- Bill 63, An Act to Amend the Victims of Crime Act
- Bill 64, An Act to Amend the Co-operative Associations Act
- Bill 65, An Act to Amend the Safety Act
- Minister's Statement 221-17(5), Sessional Statement
- Tabled Document 281-17(5), Capital Estimates, 2016-2017

21. Report of Committee of the Whole

22. Third Reading of Bills

23. Orders of the Day

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Clerk. Accordingly, this House stands adjourned until Friday, October 2<sup>nd</sup>, at 10:00 a.m.

---ADJOURNMENT

The House adjourned at 9:23 p.m.

