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The Honourable Tony Whitford, Speaker

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YELLOWKNIFE, NORTHWEST TERRITORIES**MONDAY, MARCH 27, 2000****MEMBERS PRESENT**

Honourable Roger Allen, Mr. Bell, Mr. Braden, Mr. Delorey, Mr. Dent, Honourable Jane Groenewegen, Honourable Joe Handley, Honourable Stephen Kakfwi, Mr. Krutko, Mr. Lafferty, Ms. Lee, Mr. Miltenberger, Mr. McLeod, Mr. Nitah, Honourable Jake Ootes, Mr. Roland, Honourable Vince Steen, Honourable Tony Whitford.

ITEM 1: PRAYER

--Prayer

SPEAKER (Hon. Tony Whitford): Good afternoon, Members, and welcome to a new week. This week, Yellowknife is playing host to a group of hardy golfers. However, most of us know that it will be several weeks, if not months, before the golfers amongst us can actually take to the greens.

The group includes a long time friend of the North, Peter Gzowski, and other celebrities including the Northwest Territories own Joe "Pinto" Dragon, Paul Andrew, Rene Fumoleau, Suzette Montreuil, Diane Brookes, Fran Hurcomb and Pat Braden, the younger brother of our colleague, the Member for Great Slave, Bill Braden.

All are here to take part in the annual Peter Gzowski Invitational Golf Tournament being held March 29th on Frame Lake. This annual event raises money for literacy in the Northwest Territories and is hosted by the Northwest Territories Literacy Council.

The Council was founded in April 1990 to promote literacy in all of the official languages of the Northwest Territories. The money raised during this event is used to help fund projects that promote literacy in our communities across the NWT. Equally important is the awareness of literacy that this golf tournament creates by bringing celebrities such as On the Road Again's Wayne Rostad and Ernie Coombs, better known as Mr. Dress-up, into communities to promote reading and literacy.

This year's tournament is the 11th annual in the Northwest Territories, and it is the second time that Yellowknife has hosted the event. We owe a debt of gratitude to Mr. Gzowski and all the celebrities who have participated in the 11 years, for the funding that they have raised for literacy and perhaps, more importantly, for the awareness they have created about this issue.

I have invited the celebrities to join us in the Assembly later today. During the break, they will join us in the Great Hall for tea and bannock. I have also arranged for a small putting range to be put in the Great Hall and I hope to see some of you golfers among us out there demonstrating your skills and swings. Thank you.

I wish to inform the House that I have reviewed the unedited Hansard for Friday, March 24th, and would like to make a correction for the record.

Under the item written questions, the Member for Thebacha, Mr. Miltenberger, addressed the same written questions to two different Ministers. The questions are in order. Therefore, I

have ordered that they be recorded as written questions 11 and 12. This is to assist with tracking of the questions. Thank you. Item 2, Ministers' statements. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Finance, Mr. Handley.

ITEM 2: MINISTERS' STATEMENTS

Minister's Appropriation	Statement	18-14(2):	Interim
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HON. JOE HANDLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, when the 14th Legislative Assembly first took office a little over two months ago, we were aware that we faced a difficult challenge in dealing with a looming \$60 million deficit for the 2000-2001 fiscal year. The last Legislative Assembly had completed its term having done its best to leave future legislators with a balanced budget, but it had been unable to achieve this. The reasons the budget was not balanced were many, but the basic problem was that there was little or no revenue growth over the past few years while spending was increasing.

The solution to our financial problems must be to increase our revenues while reducing the growth in our spending. This sounds straightforward, but it is not. The last Legislature did a lot of cost cutting. Departments were combined, wages were rolled back, hundreds of staff were laid off, capital spending was cut, and programs and services were reduced. But even after all of this cutting, the budget was not balanced when the 14th Legislative Assembly took office. From this we can only conclude that just cutting costs will not solve our financial problems.

Mr. Speaker, governments must be run efficiently and they must be accountable. But it is even more important that governments be effective in achieving their goals. Our economic development policies and programs must create jobs and bring about economic growth and do this in a way that maximizes the benefits to NWT residents. Our social policies and programs must result in a measurable improvement in the quality of life in our communities and in the health of our citizens. If we do not achieve these goals, we will never balance our budget. To achieve these goals, we may even have to invest more resources in the short term to realize reduced spending demands in the future.

It is in recognition of these realities that the 14th Legislative Assembly set as its first task the development of an agenda that would set out what we wanted to achieve, what our priorities are, and how we planned to achieve our goals. This agenda is critical as a guide to what strategies and policies we should implement, where we should invest, and from where we should reallocate. The agenda is now in a form where we can share it with aboriginal governments and other NWT stakeholders to receive their input and guidance. Over the next

few months, the agenda, and the feedback on it, will guide our decision making. The first major opportunity we will have to implement new direction based on the agenda will be in the June budget.

In the meantime, we have not hesitated to act when the issue was urgent and the Members of this House were in agreement about the immediate course of action. Specifically, I refer to the decision to support a reduction in the pupil teacher ratio and to increase funding for special needs in the education system. Members also supported maintaining the Working Together program and we responded with new funding. We have also invested in the intergovernmental forum initiative, in oil and gas development and in diamond manufacturing. Although our time in office has been short, we have acted on urgent issues and will continue to do so as they arise, but we must work hard as a Legislature to complete our agenda so that our decisions are made within an overall plan.

Mr Speaker, while the development of the agenda is being finalized by the 14th Legislative Assembly and while the June budget is being prepared, the business of government must go on. That is why all Members agreed that we needed to bring in an interim appropriation. By its very nature, an interim appropriation does not reflect new direction and policy shifts. The interim appropriation is simply intended to allow us to maintain existing programs and services while we work on a new agenda and budget. However, in recognition of our fiscal situation and the fact that the interim appropriation had to include some full year contract commitments, I felt that we had to base this interim appropriation on reduced capital spending. As a result, the interim appropriation is based on a capital plan for 2000-2001 that reflects \$10 million of projected deferrals from what had been originally planned by the last government.

Mr. Speaker, this \$10 million in capital project deferrals, along with some other small improvements in our revenue and expenditure outlook, has reduced our anticipated deficit for 2000-2001 from \$61 million to \$42 million. It is my intention to reduce this deficit even further when I bring forward my June budget. But this does not mean we will try to cut our way to a balanced budget. We have learned that this will not solve our fiscal problem and will only make matters worse

When we bring in the June budget, we confirm our support for education and such priorities as maintenance of a quality health care system. We will also implement efficiencies where they make sense, but just as important, we will adopt the strategies and policies and make the investments that will lead to real economic growth, real job creation and real social improvements. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Handley. Item 2, Ministers' statements. The honourable Member for Yellowknife Centre, Mr. Ootes.

Minister's Statement 19-14(2): International Rough Diamond Conference

HON. JAKE OOTES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to provide the House with an update on the Second International Rough Diamond Conference in Tel Aviv, Israel. That event brought together 90 percent of the world's diamond producers. Tu Nedhe MLA Steve Nitah and I attended as part of a delegation of about 30 Canadians.

I had the opportunity to give a half-hour presentation on the

diamond industry in the Northwest Territories. I also took part in a panel discussion on the "World of Rough Diamonds." I described this government's initiatives to ensure the development of our diamond industries benefits Northerners and northern businesses. We want to develop a viable self-sustaining industry that will contribute to the economic well-being of the people in the North. And to do that, the industry must include northern people.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to report that my presentation solicited tremendous response. The world is interested in what we are doing to develop value-added industries. Just a few years ago, Canada was not even mentioned at events of this calibre. Now, it is widely recognized that within the next few years, Canada will take its place among the top five or six diamond producers in the world. Many delegates asked how they could become involved in the NWT. They were particularly interested in this government's support programs such as training-on-the-job and loan guarantees, as well as our college pre-employment, diamond training and certification programs.

The NWT delegation had a private meeting with a number of Israeli officials and the executive directors of the Israeli Diamond Institute and Israeli Diamond Manufacturers' Association. They were able to give us some insight into the challenges of developing a secondary diamond industry. Mr. Speaker, it is through participation in events such as this that the Northwest Territories builds its reputation in the diamond world. The contacts that Mr. Nitah and I made in Tel Aviv are another step in the progress of the northern diamond industry. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Ootes. Item 2, Ministers' statements. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Health and Social Services, Mrs. Groenewegen.

Minister's Statement 20-14(2): Stanton Regional Health Board Chairperson

HON. JANE GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to announce the appointment of Mr. Larry Elkin to the position of chairperson for the Stanton Regional Health Board. Early in his career, he worked at both the community and regional level in the NWT. Through extensive northern travel and work, Mr. Elkin developed a keen understanding of community needs, priorities and aspirations, knowledge he has applied to all his work.

Mr. Elkin has over 30 years of policy and management experience with both the NWT and federal governments. For 20 of those years, he served as deputy minister for a number of departments, including: Planning and Program Evaluation; Local Government (now Municipal and Community Affairs); Public Works and Highways; and the NWT Housing Corporation.

In addition to his career credentials, Mr. Elkin has participated in the work of various boards and agencies. Recently, he was the regional chairperson for the Capital Equipment Campaign undertaken by the Stanton Regional Hospital Foundation. In this position, Mr. Elkin developed a great appreciation for the health services provided by Stanton Regional Hospital and other health and social services boards.

I am confident that Mr. Elkin, as chairperson of the Stanton Regional Health Board, will work in close co-operation with the other health and social services boards to ensure the best

quality care for all residents. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. Item 2, Ministers' statements. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Ootes.

Minister's Statement 21-14(2): Education Week in the NWT

HON. JAKE OOTES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, many of my colleagues have noticed the Territorial Bookworm display in the Great Hall of the Legislative Assembly. If you take the time to examine this worm closely, you will notice that its segments come from communities across the Northwest Territories. The Territorial Bookworm display recognizes Education Week, which is being celebrated in the NWT from March 27th to March 31st. This is a time set aside for all of us in the NWT to recognize our achievements in education.

This year's theme is "Literacy, Language and Learning." The Bookworm Challenge celebrates all three aspects of this theme. The Territorial Bookworm Challenge went out in January when the Department of Education, Culture and Employment sent a kit on how to construct a bookworm to every school, college campus, library, career and learning centre in the Northwest Territories. The rules of the challenge were simple. Each time a story was read or shared with another person, a segment listing the name of the book, the author and the residents involved was added to the bookworm growing in that community.

By demonstrating the significant role literacy, language and learning plays in our daily lives, the challenge symbolizes the strength we acquire each time we read, write or share our stories. As you can see in the display, it was a huge success. More than 20 communities have taken part and over 6,000 books have been read. The annual two-day Peter Gzowski Golf Tournament for Literacy is also taking place this week. Known simply as the PGIs, these tournaments, which feature national and local celebrities, have raised millions of dollars for literacy programs across Canada. This year's PGI will take place Tuesday and Wednesday in Yellowknife.

Mr. Speaker, the importance of education cannot be overstated. Each day, educators across the NWT face and meet the challenge of preparing our young people to become productive citizens of our northern society. In this week set aside to celebrate education, I would like to pay tribute to all the dedicated people working in our education system, as well as the many hard-working students who make the job worthwhile.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Ootes. Item 2, Ministers' statements. The Premier, Mr. Kakfwi.

Minister's Statement 22-14(2): Minister Absent From the House

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I wish to advise Members that the Honourable Jim Antoine will be absent from the House this week to represent the Government of the Northwest Territories on a trade mission to the Yukon and Alaska. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Kakfwi. Item 2, Ministers' statements. Item 3, Members' statements. The Member for Inuvik Boot Lake, Mr. Roland.

ITEM 3: MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

Member's Statement on Value of Utilizing Preventative Measures in the Health Care Field

MR. ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker we have heard many times of this government's work in trying to provide programs and services for the residents of the Northwest Territories. Issues that have been raised in this House, Mr. Speaker, have been in the area of prevention versus treatment. In this forum, we have heard about the cost of delivering health care to residents of the Northwest Territories. Much of those expenditures are spent on delivering health care after someone has become quite ill.

The disappointment, Mr. Speaker, is that we could reduce a lot of our expenditures in health care by being more preventative. As a government, we need to focus on prevention. We need to make a shift and move from dealing with fires that are existing today and challenging ourselves to deal with prevention. There is a saying, "an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure". I think that the government has taken it very literally and took some silver coins, as they say, and put them on the weigh scale. A pound of silver on dealing with the after-effects of things like smoking and drug and alcohol abuse and an ounce trying to deal with the prevention side. Mr. Speaker, we need to focus. We need to change the way we look at things and start delivering programs in the area of prevention.

If we are going to make a difference in the Northwest Territories with the fiscal situation we have, we have to make some difficult decisions on how we are going to treat things as prevention. Are we going to focus on dealing with things before they become full blown? Mr. Speaker, I think we need to put more emphasis on prevention. We have seen some work and I hope to highlight that in my questions to the Minister responsible for Health and Social Services later. But I think we need to put more emphasis on the prevention side of the scale. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

-- Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Roland. Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for Yellowknife South, Mr. Bell.

Member's Statement on Telehealth Delivery Concerns

MR. BELL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to talk today about some concerns I had with the digital communication network and specifically how it relates to Telehealth. I think we have discussed a few times in this House that there are inefficiencies and problems with available bandwidth. I think Mr. St. Germaine mentioned the other day that Telehealth requires about 380 kilobytes of bandwidth in order to become operational in the Territories. This is clearly a problem that we have to address. There are also concerns with lags in relay times,

I think the thing that has been lost here and the thing that we have to get back to realizing is that four years ago, when this government looked at this initiative, they had concerns they felt needed to be addressed and could be addressed with the

DCN. I think it was assumed this program could save the government and the Northwest Territories a lot of money and would also improve the level of service, specifically in the communities.

There are a few areas where I think this is very possible. We know we have recruitment and retention problems with physicians and nurses. I think if Telehealth became a reality, we would need fewer physicians overall. This would certainly help us. We would also reap the benefits of reduced medical travel. Currently, nurses are fairly quick to refer patients back to the regional centres in Yellowknife, for very good reasons. They may not have the expertise to deal with the problems or may not feel comfortable with dealing with the problems in the smaller communities where they do not have the facilities.

Reduced travel is another issue. Certainly there would be reduced travel for Yellowknife physicians who would not have to do as much of a tour of duty of the communities as they currently do. This would both save the government money and help to alleviate the shortage of physicians we currently face in Yellowknife.

Access to specialists in communities is another issue. It is one thing to send a general practitioner around, but certain specific ailments and concerns need to be dealt with by specialists.

The last item I would like to talk about is something that has been lost here: the education aspect. We know that on-line, direct internet service from the south would certainly help nurses and physicians in the smaller communities. It would help keep them current, up to date, and certainly improve the level of service in the communities and in the North. Mr. Speaker, at the appropriate time today, I will be questioning the Minister responsible for Health about the DCN and specifically Telehealth. Thank you.

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

Member's Statement on High Cost of Medical Travel

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to make a statement today regarding the cost of Medivacs to this government. I refer to the service that we have provided in the smaller communities, where time and time again individuals go to the health centre complaining about having the flu or a cold. Then it adds up to pneumonia and they are sent out of the communities to either a regional centre or, if it is an emergency, they are medivaced to Yellowknife or Edmonton. Mr. Speaker, that costs this government and the cost continues to rise.

Time and time again, Mr. Speaker, I have stood in this House and talked about the service that is being provided to individuals in the communities, and the fact that they have gone back to the health centres four or five times before the ailments are dealt with. The same thing applies to the Regional Hospital in Inuvik, where individuals have gone from the communities to Inuvik, some cases on their own, to see the doctors and have been told that there is nothing really wrong with you, come back in a couple of weeks. Then they find themselves going back again three or four times later, being medivaced to Edmonton or Yellowknife.

So something has to be done with this picture, Mr. Speaker. We have to find ways of being more responsible in preventing these illnesses, which could be dealt with through medications at the community and regional level. We do not want to find ourselves paying more in the long run for medivacs for an individual who becomes so ill because of a common ailment such as the flu, which becomes pneumonia, so they have to be sent to either Yellowknife or even southern Canada.

The same thing applies to the concerns I raised in this House about early detection for cancer. People complain of aches and pains in their stomach and are later diagnosed with having bladder cancer. There again is another example of the cost to this government. If we spend more time dealing with preventative measures and prevention of illnesses, I think it will result in a saving to this government. So with that, Mr. Speaker, I will be asking the Minister questions on this matter later today. Thank you.

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

Member's Statement on Palliative Care

MR. DELOREY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in this society of ours, feelings play a major role in our day-to-day life. From the time we come into this world to the time we leave, we experience change. Change is usually accompanied by some emotion, from joy to sadness. We go through times when all we really care about is how well we feel and what we can do to bring more joy and excitement into our own lives.

Mr. Speaker, we all know the joy and excitement that the birth of a healthy baby brings into our lives. This excitement continues as the young child develops and matures and achieves the goals that he or she has set out.

Many of us have experienced the concerns and worry when friends or loved ones are troubled for whatever reason, and very often we feel frustrated that there is very little we can do to ease the pain and suffering of others. Mr. Speaker, one of the hardest things I have had to deal with is when I have witnessed the pain and suffering of loved ones caused by terminal illness.

It is very difficult, and sometimes impossible, for us to fully understand what others go through. It is equally hard to administer the help they need to comfort them.

Mr. Speaker, the aging population of the Northwest Territories is in need of help. Fortunately, there are fully trained professionals who can provide this help. I feel that we must do everything we can to make these services available. We all want the best for our ever-increasing, aging population. I feel that a properly equipped and staffed palliative care centre in the Northwest Territories would go a long way towards providing the comfort they truly deserve. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

-- Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Delorey. Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for Thebacha, Mr. Miltenberger.

Member's Statement on Community Services Boards

MR. MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, today I would like to briefly touch on the issue of governance, specifically community services boards. Mr. Speaker, community services boards are a method of governance that are being looked at in a number of regions in the Northwest Territories. It has worked for the Dogribs. It is being looked at in the Beaufort Delta as well as in the Deh Cho. The question I have is, what are we going to do in the South Slave, which itself has four health boards?

History has shown us, Mr. Speaker, that in the South Slave, regional structures are not very successful. The regional council that was in place a number of years ago failed mainly because Hay River did not want to take part. As well, there is pressure on the South Slave Divisional Board of Education to be disbanded once again because there is unhappiness with how the communities are being served.

Mr. Speaker, the challenge to the Department of Health and Social Services is going to be, what do we do about governance in the South Slave? I have been pushing the concept of community services boards. I think it is one that has some merit that should be looked at closely, especially in the communities like Fort Smith. I believe they would work in Hay River, Lutsel K'e, and Resolution as well.

Mr. Speaker, later today I will be asking the Minister when and how the government intends to proceed on the issue of governance in the South Slave. I know it ties into a number of issues, such as education and housing. But very clearly there has to be a broad, comprehensive approach of how we are going to do this that recognizes the regional differences, but also the fundamental pressure to rationalize some of the services and governance structures we have in the region. Thank you.

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

Member's Statement on Doctor Shortage in Yellowknife

MR. DENT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, there has been much comment in the media about the shortage of doctors. I have heard from my constituents that they are concerned about that, in particular the impact that may have on emergency services.

As we heard last week from the deputy minister of Health and Social Services as we were reviewing the interim budget for the department, this is an issue that affects not only Yellowknife. We heard that because of the shortage of doctors, they can no longer travel to the outlying communities. That has reduced the number of clinics that are being held in the smaller communities.

Mr. Speaker, we recently heard the government announce there was an agreement made with the Alberta Medical Association on locums for doctors for communities outside of Yellowknife.

This is good news for the communities, because it allows doctors from the other communities to take extra training, or to

take vacations. But Mr. Speaker, there is no such agreement for within Yellowknife. There is no deal for locums here.

While I understand, as the deputy minister said last week, that there is no crisis right now, I am concerned more doctors may decide to leave. Then where would we be?

Mr. Speaker, Northerners want to know that this concern is being addressed. We heard last week the first step, according to the department, is to stabilize the doctor situation. Mr. Speaker, I encourage the government to do more than just stabilize the situation. I want to know the government is working on a plan that will deal with the shortage of doctors in Yellowknife. Therefore, Mr. Speaker, I will be asking the Minister questions on that issue this afternoon during question period. Thank you.

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

Member's Statement on Dogrib Treaty 11 Comprehensive Claim Negotiations

MR. LAFFERTY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, on Friday, I returned from a negotiating session in Calgary on the Dogribs' modern treaty.

The Dogrib Treaty 11 Council invited me to attend. I sat in for a day of negotiations, met with members of the Dogrib negotiating team and I was briefed on key provisions of the Dogrib Agreement-in-Principle.

As an observer, I was very impressed by the dedication and hard work of the Dogrib negotiators, the federal and territorial government negotiating teams and by their clear commitment to reach a strong, lasting and just agreement.

I am pleased to report that the negotiators are making real and substantial progress in working cooperatively towards their final goal. If this continues, the text of a final agreement should be complete in a matter of months.

As the Members of this Assembly are aware, the Dogribs' treaty deals with rights in a comprehensive manner, including not only land claims, but self-government matters as well.

Finalizing this treaty will mark an historic moment in the history of the Northwest Territories. For the first time, aboriginal self-government will become a reality as part of a broader settlement of the Dogribs' aboriginal and treaty rights. The Dogribs believe it will stand as a valuable model for other aboriginal groups in the Mackenzie Valley to consider.

This is a crucial time in the Dogribs' negotiations. Several key matters are now on the table, which challenge a number of existing government policies and laws – especially those of the Government of the Northwest Territories. Until they can be resolved, it will be difficult for the Dogribs to come to a final agreement.

These are not matters that the government negotiators can adequately address by themselves. Political direction and support is required to guide the negotiators successfully through this crucial period.

The Dogrib Treaty 11 Council believes that this political leadership and support must come from the Ministers

responsible in the Government of the Northwest Territories and, when the time is right, the whole Cabinet.

In practical terms, the Dogrib Treaty 11 Council would like the Minister, or Ministers, to devote their personal attention and commitment to the Dogrib negotiations and to giving their negotiators...

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Lafferty, your time has expired.

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

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. The Member for North Slave is seeking unanimous consent to conclude his statement. Do we have any nays? There are no nays. You may conclude your statement, Mr. Lafferty.

MR. LAFFERTY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As soon as possible, the Dogrib chiefs and I plan to meet with Premier Kakfwi and Minister Antoine to confirm their commitment to finalizing the Dogrib Final Agreement and to discuss ways in which they can provide leadership at this crucial time in the negotiations. Thank you.

-- Applause

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

Member's Statement on Recognition of Janet and Helen Wong

MR. BRADEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my statement today is about youth.

In a society and world that often seems to be too big, and too uncaring for any chance of making a change, there are young people striving to do just that.

These individuals help us realize that no matter what the odds, nothing will happen until someone with the will and the commitment takes a first step, and others join in.

Today, Mr. Speaker, I want to recognize two young people who are endeavouring to make a difference and who can serve as an inspiration to us all.

Janet Wong, a 17-year old student at Sir John Franklin High School in Yellowknife, joined in the national "Stop Racism Youth Challenge" last year. Along with some schoolmates, she helped create the anti-racism mural at the YWCA here in Yellowknife, a project in support of tolerance and understanding of all races around the world. Janet is also a busy volunteer in causes that include Students Against Drunk Driving, and the Terry Fox and Run for the Cure cancer runs.

Her younger sister, Helen, has been the top fundraiser for the past three years in her school class effort to raise money for UNICEF, the United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organization. Helen's hope for the new millennium, Mr. Speaker, is simple and powerful; that all children have a chance to go to school.

These two young people have been honoured as Millennium Dreamers for their outstanding contribution. They will be joining 80 other youth from across Canada as ambassadors for their country in May.

Along with their parents, they will be guests of UNESCO, McDonald's Restaurants, and Walt Disney World in Florida, where more than 2,000 young people from 100 countries will participate in a three-day symposium called, "Kids Inspiring Kids for a Better Tomorrow".

Mr. Speaker, for me, this is all about how kids can make a difference. I invite this Assembly to join me in acknowledging their work, and the efforts made by many other young people across the Northwest Territories who believe they too can make a difference. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

-- Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Braden. Item 3, Members' statements. The Member for Tu Nedhe, Mr. Nitah.

Member's Statement on Expansion of NWT Diamond Industry

MR. NITAH: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My statement today is about my recent trip to Tel Aviv for the Second International Rough Diamond Conference. Mr. Speaker, the Northwest Territories has become a major player, as Mr. Ootes alluded to earlier in his statement.

We are in the beginning stages of a very young industry in Canada. We showed some imagination and commitment to create a secondary industry out of the diamond mines that exist in the Northwest Territories.

We have to continue in that line of thinking, towards developing a jewellery manufacturing industry that will complement the diamond industry, which will hopefully work towards the establishment of a tourism industry in the Northwest Territories.

I think there are opportunities in the Northwest Territories to develop industries where people from all over the Northwest Territories can be involved in the industry, as supported by their respective governments and the Government of the Northwest Territories.

So I challenge the Members of the Northwest Territories Legislative Assembly, the government, and the people to throw on their imagination caps and start coming up with ways of developing the jewellery and secondary industries in the Northwest Territories to complement the future of tourism. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

-- Applause

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

Member's Statement on Recognition of Deh Gah School Pages

MR. MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to take this opportunity to recognize the pages that are here from the Deh Cho. We have four pages from my home community of Fort Providence. They are all students from the Deh Gah School in Fort Providence. I would like to thank them for coming and sacrificing one week of school to be here with us. The pages that are here from Fort Providence are Ashley Arychuk, Julie Elleze, Robyn McLeod and Victoria Constant.

On behalf of the 14th Legislative Assembly, I would like to say welcome, and I hope they enjoy their stay here in Yellowknife. Thank you.

-- Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Welcome, pages. We had the pleasure of meeting the pages not that long ago while we were in Fort Providence. Item 3, Members' statements. Item 4, returns to oral questions. The Minister responsible for Education, Culture and Employment, and for the NWT Power Corporation, Mr. Ootes.

ITEM 4: RETURNS TO ORAL QUESTIONS

Return to Question 37-14(2): Aboriginal Education Rights

Return to Question 41-14(2): Designation of Financial Assistance Funding

HON. JAKE OOTES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a return to a question asked by Mr. Nitah and Mr. Delorey on February 25, 2000 on aboriginal education rights and designation of financial assistance funding.

The Government of the Northwest Territories does not receive funding from the Government of Canada specifically earmarked for aboriginal post-secondary students. The Government of the NWT devotes an allocation for programs, but does not specify how much goes to aboriginal post-secondary students. Specifically, the money devoted for the Student Financial Assistance Program does not specify allocations for Dene students, Métis students, Inuit students or non-aboriginal students.

The only education support program administered by the Government of the Northwest Territories in which money is specified for certain aboriginal groups is the University College Entrance Preparation Program, which is actually a federal program. We administer the federal guidelines for the program that allocates grants to status Indian and Inuit students, who require one year or less of academic preparation prior to post-secondary studies. I have several other returns. Would you like me to carry on?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Ootes. Yes, you may continue with your next return.

Return to Question 45-14(2): Uptake on SFA Program

HON. JAKE OOTES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have two more returns. The next one was asked by Ms. Lee on February 25th on the Student Financial Assistance Program. What is the total number and proportion of students accessing the NWT SFA Program by student category?

There are 1,244 students who are accessing student financial assistance during the current academic year. This includes 362 Dene students, 114 Inuit students, 154 Metis students and 614 non-aboriginal students. This means that Dene students make up 29 percent of the students, Inuit students make up 9.2 percent of the students, Metis students, 12.4 percent, and non-aboriginal, 49.4 percent of the student population.

Return to Question 72-14(2): Effect of Division on NTPC Headquarters

My next return was asked by Mr. Miltenberger on February 29th. It was on the effect of division on the NWT Power Corporation Headquarters. The impact of the division of the NWT Power Corporation on the Hay River headquarters is not yet known.

The decision to divide the corporation was made in November, 1999. Before the final impact on headquarters can be determined, the corporation must know what the Government of Nunavut's intentions are with respect to a systems manager contract to provide services to the new Nunavut Power Corporation. This request for proposals was issued in October, 1999, but no decision has been taken yet. Should the corporation win the system manager's contract, or a contract to provide services, this will have a great impact on its post-division staffing levels in Hay River.

In response to the decisions to divide the corporation, a review has been initiated of its organizational structure, in both the head office and in the field, to determine the optimal post-division structure. Until this review has been completed, no final determination can be made as to the impact of division on the headquarters. The corporation is also exploring new business opportunities, and the success of these ventures and the timing will impact on headquarters.

It is likely that there will be some job losses as the result of dividing the corporation, although the extent cannot be determined at this time. This subject has been discussed with the employees through their union, and the corporation is taking steps to mitigate any potential impact in its normal staffing activities. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: I have a comment on returns to oral questions. Return to Oral Questions 37-14(2) and 41-14(2) should be made separately. While I recognize the questions are closely related, I also recognize they were asked by two different Members, both of whom deserve a response. It will also ensure that the public record on Hansard is maintained accurately and without unnecessary confusion. Item 5, recognition of visitors in the gallery. The Member for Great Slave, Mr. Braden.

ITEM 5: RECOGNITION OF VISITORS IN THE GALLERY

MR. BRADEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It gives me great pleasure to acknowledge two outstanding young people and their parents from my riding, Helen Wong, Janet Wong and their parents, James Wong and Christine Siu.

-- Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Braden. Item 5, recognition of visitors in the gallery, The Member for Hay River North, Mr. Delorey.

MR. DELOREY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to recognize the president of the NWTTA, Pat Thomas, in the gallery.

-- Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Delorey. Item 5, recognition of visitors in the gallery. Item 6, oral questions. The Member for Mackenzie Delta, Mr. Krutko.

ITEM 6: ORAL QUESTIONS

Oral Question 127-14(2): Travel for Non-Medical Escorts

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Time and time again in the last Assembly, I raised concerns my constituents had about the medical escort travel policy. I feel this policy is unfair, particularly for aboriginal people who find themselves travelling south to Yellowknife or Edmonton and who have a hard time speaking English.

Those patients are frightened. In most cases, they are unfamiliar with the city. Also, they feel a need to have someone help them through one of the most drastic, if not horrible, times of their life: experiencing the effects of having to be diagnosed with cancer and other diseases.

Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister responsible for Health and Social Services. Is there a central policy or government directive that covers the use of medical escorts? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Krutko. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Health and Social Services, Mrs. Groenewegen.

Return to Question 127-14(2): Travel for Non-Medical Escorts

HON. JANE GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, there is a policy with respect to medical travel benefits. I believe the Member refers to something that is called non-medical escort. Patients and families often wish to see family members travel with patients to give them the kind of emotional and language support Mr. Krutko speaks of.

Mr. Speaker, this is a very emotional issue, as the need for a non-medical escort is often not deemed to be a requirement by the medical staff making the referral. In fact, there have been many inconsistencies in the interpretation of this policy in the past. I believe the rule is that it is determined by the physician if patients require a non-medical escort to accompany them. Thank you.

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

Supplementary to Question 127-14(2): Travel for Non-Medical Escorts

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in regard to this aspect, I know of a case where these individuals did receive letters from their doctor, later to be turned down by somebody at the senior level or at the regional director's level. Yet you say the policy is by way of a letter from a doctor? I would like to ask the Minister if that is in place, why is it being overlooked at this time?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Krutko. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Health and Social Services, Mrs. Groenewegen.

Further Return to Question 127-14(2): Travel for Non-Medical Escorts

HON. JANE GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, if the Member is referring to specific case where I believe he is saying that a doctor's referral was overruled by a health board, I would have to know the specifics of that case. It is difficult to respond to something as specific as that.

I know that health boards are charged with the responsibility for implementing the policy and ensuring that their medical travel costs do not get out of control. That is part of their responsibility. I would have to have more detail from the Member as to the specific case in order to respond to it. Thank you.

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

Supplementary to Question 127-14(2): Travel for Non-Medical Escorts

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I find it pretty surprising that the Minister is not aware of the case. I hand-delivered the letter directly to her office. It has to do with Roxanne John of Aklavik. The Minister does have a copy of the letter and also the copy from the regional office.

Again, I would like to ask the Minister a question on medical travel. In most cases, we find that with medical travel, you get the people from the regional office escorting individuals, rather than having people from the communities. A lot of times they will get the nurse to escort these individuals, which is a cost to this government.

Through the policy, is there any reference on exactly who can escort individuals, if it is not the individual's family member?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Krutko. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Health and Social Services, Mrs. Groenewegen.

Further Return to Question 127-14(2): Travel for Non-Medical Escorts

HON. JANE GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, Mr. Krutko has drawn this particular case to my attention in the past. I do not have the specifics of it in front of me, which is why I cannot refer to exactly what happened. I did read the letter from the doctor and it was somewhat subject to interpretation as well. It was not that specific. It is difficult to discuss individual patients by name in the House. Mr. Speaker, if the Member did not receive a response to this particular issue, we will certainly be happy to provide that to him.

As far as who is qualified to travel as a non-medical escort, it would appear that family members do qualify to serve as non-medical transport escorts. Thank you.

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

Supplementary to Question 127-14(2): Travel for Non-Medical Escorts

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to ask the Minister what exactly is the government policy for medical travel? Is there any reference on how you deal with people that might misuse the travel, where individuals who are named as an escort travels with the patient and does not assist that individual? For example, making sure that their needs are met in the hospital or even making an attempt to visit them while they are in the hospital. Instead, it becomes a free trip to go on a shopping spree. Some people find they go to a major city and the patient does not see these individuals after they are dropped off at the hospital. Is there anything in the policy that makes sure that is being monitored? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Krutko. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Health and Social Services, Mrs. Groenewegen.

Further Return to Question 127-14(2): Travel for Non-Medical Escorts

HON. JANE GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I do not believe the medical travel policy includes exactly what the responsibilities of a non-medical escort would be once the patient has arrived at a destination and has been admitted to the hospital. I do not believe the policy is that specific. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. Item 6, oral questions. The honourable Member for Great Slave, Mr. Braden.

Oral Question 128-14(2): Mental Health Workers

MR. BRADEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is clear to me that mental health workers are the forgotten health care workers in the Northwest Territories. Proper mental health can be just as important to a community's well-being as taking care of the community's physical health.

Indeed, there is a greater and greater body of knowledge, Mr. Speaker, that tells us that a growing number of reasons for in-patient hospital admissions is those who have mental disabilities and mental disorders. In our correctional institutions, the impacts of stress and poor living standards is culminating in mental disorders that are crowding those facilities. Can the Minister tell the House whether there is a full complement of mental health workers in the Northwest Territories? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Braden. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Health and Social Services, Mrs. Groenewegen.

Return to Question 128-14(2): Mental Health Workers

HON. JANE GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. No, I am not able to tell the Member whether there is a full complement. I am not sure which communities have mental health workers in them. I did have the opportunity to meet with all of the CEOs of the various boards when I first took over this portfolio. Certainly around the table that was a common theme we heard, that there are emerging and increasing numbers of cases of mental health workers, particularly among children and youth.

There is a tremendous demand in the communities. As to which communities have these workers at the present time, I do not have that information available. But I would be pleased to get that information for the Member. Thank you.

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

Supplementary to Question 128-14(2): Mental Health Workers

MR. BRADEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Related to that is a recent survey that was done of disabilities in the Northwest Territories. This was a very extensive survey. I do not know if the results have been compiled yet, but there was some controversy, Mr. Speaker, because the survey was not inclusive of mental disabilities and mental disorders in the same spirit and in the same philosophy as physical disorders.

Can the Minister tell the Assembly what is being done in terms of evaluating our population for mental disabilities? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Braden. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Health and Social Services, Mrs. Groenewegen.

Further Return to Question 128-14(2): Mental Health Workers

HON. JANE GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the Member is correct that there was an initial survey conducted of needs assessment of persons with disabilities in the Northwest Territories. When it was pointed out that persons with mental health problems were not surveyed under the definition of a disability, a phase two needs assessment of persons with disabilities-mental health was undertaken. The department made a commitment to develop a second phase to the needs assessment to capture mental health information.

Consumer groups and non-government organizations expressed concern about the omission of psychiatric and mental health needs in the first phase of the survey, but a mental health needs assessment working group has been meeting since December 1999 to discuss the scope and methodology of this project. This will be launched soon, and this information will be compiled and analyzed. Thank you.

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

Supplementary to Question 128-14(2): Mental Health Workers

MR. BRADEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to ask the Minister more about this phase two needs assessment. I am pleased the department has recognized that this needs to be done. My question is how inclusive is this survey, Mr. Speaker, of non-government organizations? There a large number of very well qualified and well skilled community and non-government organizations to help with this survey. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Braden. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Health and Social Services, Mrs. Groenewegen.

Further Return to Question 128-14(2): Mental Health Workers

HON. JANE GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the working group that has been established includes representatives from Health and Social Services, the Northwest Territories Council for Disabled Persons, the Canadian Mental Health Association - Northwest Territories Division, Mental Health Consumer, Stanton Regional Hospital, Mental Health Clinic and Psychiatry Unit, Aurora College, the Independent Club House, the Yellowknife Women's Centre, and the Northwest Territories Family Services. That is the list of government and non-government agencies that are included in this working group. Thank you.

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

Supplementary to Question 128-14(2): Mental Health Workers

MR. BRADEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Again, full marks to the department for including a very broad swath of community in it. I would like to ask, is the survey going to be one that goes across all ages, especially into the schools and the very young people? As we are learning more and more, early childhood development is an area where we can make a great impact, and do it very efficiently.

Is it going into the youth and young people as well? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Braden. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Health and Social Services, Mrs. Groenewegen.

Further Return to Question 128-14(2): Mental Health Workers

HON. JANE GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in as much of any of the organizations I have just listed has information specific to youth and children, it will be included. It will be difficult to acquire information though, in the form that you can survey adults. You obviously cannot survey children. It will be hopeful that some of these organizations will have access to children and youth.

For example, the Stanton Regional Mental Health Clinic, I am sure the psychiatry unit would have statistics with respect to children and youth and how much that service is required here.

It is important to point out the department feels that we do not have accurate information on the number of people who are affected by psychiatric illness, their needs and what the service gaps are. Hopefully this information will be compiled and it will be very critical to the mental health system, reform and funding. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. Item 6, oral questions. The honourable Member for North Slave, Mr. Lafferty.

Oral Question 129-14(2): Alcohol and Drug Treatment Centre

MR. LAFFERTY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my colleagues have heard me talk about the need for a treatment

centre in the North Slave. Our constituents are sent to Hay River, Yellowknife or down south when the funding is available. There are long waiting lists and people are frustrated with the lack of service.

I do not believe that large treatment centres are the answer, especially ones located in communities with unrestricted access to alcohol. Mr. Speaker, for an alcohol treatment program to be successful, you have to treat the whole community, the families. Not only the individuals.

Can the Minister inform the House when the government will release details on how addiction treatment will be funded in the future?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Health and Social Services, Mrs. Groenewegen.

Return to Question 129-14(2): Alcohol and Drug Treatment Centre

HON. JANE GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, again, I would like to thank Mr. Lafferty for bringing this to our attention. As the Member knows, our business plans are in the works as we speak, trying to develop the best way to address the issue of addictions.

I agree with the Member. There are certain regions which do not have adequate services available, which could provide services in their own languages, without them having to travel so far from home. It could include a family component.

Mr. Speaker, there are funds that were one-time funding that was provided to the Department of Health and Social Services for special initiatives. Certainly, the two areas that we have heard from so far who are requesting such funding for addictions treatment are the Inuvik region and the North Slave region. We will be responding to those requests. Hopefully, there may even be some significant funds available to announce at some time in the future. Thank you.

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

Supplementary to Question 129-14(2): Alcohol and Drug Treatment Centre

MR. LAFFERTY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would just like to ask the Minister if she agrees that for successful addictions treatment to occur there must be support from families and the community?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Health and Social Services, Mrs. Groenewegen.

Further Return to Question 129-14(2): Alcohol and Drug Treatment Centre

HON. JANE GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, I do agree with the Member, that support from community and family is very important. I think we have learned from past experience that many times when individuals go for treatment and are in treatment for 35 days, or whatever the length of the course is, and then return to their communities, that there is a significant rate of returning to the former behaviour because

the community and the family were not involved in the case. The aftercare was not there at the community level.

I think what we have seen is perhaps our efforts have not been as productive as they might have been had the community and the families been involved. Yes, we do endorse that here. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. Item 6, oral questions. The honourable Member for Deh Cho, Mr. McLeod.

Oral Question 130-14(2): Aboriginal Foster Parent Recruiting

MR. MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In the Northwest Territories, we all owe a debt of gratitude to those couples and persons who volunteered to be foster parents to the children whose lives are in crisis. Many of these children have been removed from situations involving violence or substance abuse. For aboriginal children, the problem can be compounded by the placement with non-aboriginal foster parents. We realize the department has no choice, because of the shortage of aboriginal foster parents.

Can the Minister tell the House what her department is doing to increase the numbers of aboriginal foster parents in the Northwest Territories?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Health and Social Services, Mrs. Groenewegen.

Return to Question 130-14(2): Aboriginal Foster Parent Recruiting

HON. JANE GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The boards are responsible for the operation of foster care services in accordance with the Child and Family Services Act and regulations that are set out by the department. I know a number of jurisdictions have foster family associations who are actively involved in recruiting suitable foster homes for children, so in the event that children need to be apprehended, there are suitable homes in the community available for them.

One of the areas I would like to see more work done, and it is not only recruiting homes, but providing training and accreditation for various levels of care that children may need to receive in those homes. I do not know if specific initiatives are being undertaken to recruit homes at this time, but I could communicate with the boards and with the foster parent associations and find out what kinds of things they are doing.

It is a very difficult task. The payment for foster parent homes and providing that service, is currently \$24 per day to accommodate, feed and care for a child. There are not a lot of people interested in getting involved in that line of work. Thank you.

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

Supplementary to Question 130-14(2): Aboriginal Foster Parent Recruiting

MR. MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Minister has touched on an issue I would like to raise and that is the amount of money the department gives foster parents. This affects the

ability of the department to attract aboriginal foster parents. What the department gives foster parents is not sufficient to meet the financial requirements of raising a child. In small communities, there are many parents that would make good foster parents. Unfortunately, they cannot afford to be foster parents. Can the Minister tell the House if the department has any plans to examine the rates paid to foster parents?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Health and Social Services, Mrs. Groenewegen.

Further Return to Question 130-14(2): Aboriginal Foster Parent Recruiting

HON. JANE GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This is an area of not only rates but also, like I said, of training and support services to foster parents that I would like to look into.

I have heard from numerous foster parents since taking on this role, and it is easy to see that it does not take long when you are operating at a deficit in terms of caring for other peoples' children. It is a very important thing that we find homes. If we are going to take children away from their own parents, it is very important that we find suitable homes. I do not think \$24 a day is going to attract people to do this job. Thank you.

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

Supplementary to Question 130-14(2): Aboriginal Foster Parent Recruiting

MR. MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Minister has indicated that she did not know what the department is planning to do to increase the numbers for aboriginal foster parents. I would like to ask when would she know and when will she have a plan for foster parents? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Health and Social Services, Mrs. Groenewegen.

Further Return to Question 130-14(2): Aboriginal Foster Parent Recruiting

HON. JANE GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. All I can do is commit that I will take this up with the department after this Session is over. We will address the issue of compensation. We will address the issue of homes that are culturally suitable for children in care and we will address the issue of training of foster parents. I cannot tell the Member when I will be able to report back on that. Perhaps in the June Session. Thank you.

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

Supplementary to Question 130-14(2): Aboriginal Foster Parent Recruiting

MR. MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to ask if the Minister would take into consideration a difference in rates for foster parents depending on which community they live in? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Health and Social Services, Mrs. Groenewegen.

Further Return to Question 130-14(2): Aboriginal Foster Parent Recruiting

HON. JANE GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. At the present time, I believe the only things that are taken into consideration in terms of the range of payment is the needs of the child. A child without special needs is \$24 a day. A child with very special needs could range up to as high as \$90 a day. I do not think there is presently anything integrated in for location, but that is something we could also look at. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. Item 6, oral questions. The honourable Member for Range Lake, Ms. Lee.

Oral Question 131-14(2): Recruitment and Retention of Health Care Professionals

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question also goes to the Minister responsible for Health and Social Services. I would like to raise an issue that was raised often during my campaign, which has to do with the shortage of doctors in Yellowknife and more specifically, a recruitment and retention plan.

As I recall, Mr. Speaker, there was an injection of multi-million dollars to retain and hire doctors and nurses last year. I wonder if the Minister could inform this Assembly as to what effect the injection of cash has had. Specifically, how many doctors and nurses and other health care professionals were we able to hire with that money? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Lee. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Health and Social Services, Mrs. Groenewegen.

Return to Question 131-14(2): Recruitment and Retention of Health Care Professionals

HON. JANE GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I believe the multi-million dollar injection the Member refers to is the \$3 million for registered nurses under the recruitment and retention strategy. I am pleased to report that from January 1999 to January 2000, the vacancy rate for nurses dropped from 18.4 percent to 6.9 percent.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. Supplementary, Ms. Lee.

Supplementary to Question 131-14(2): Recruitment and Retention of Health Care Professionals

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am happy to hear that result. I wonder if the Minister could tell me what communities are under staffed at the moment in terms of regional health staff? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Lee. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Health and Social Services, Mrs. Groenewegen.

Further Return to Question 131-14(2): Recruitment and Retention of Health Care Professionals

HON. JANE GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I have figures as of January 7, 2000, on the vacancy rates for nurses and social workers by health board. It refers to full-time positions. It has numbered positions and percentage of vacancy rates. This is fairly extensive because it includes registered nurses and social workers.

I would be happy to provide the Member with this most recent information. We continue to track this on an ongoing basis. This information is of January 7, 2000. If there is anything more recent than that, I could also provide that. It is rather long to read that out. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. Supplementary, Ms. Lee.

Supplementary to Question 131-14(2): Recruitment and Retention of Health Care Professionals

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It makes Ordinary Members' jobs very difficult when the Minister comes so prepared.

-- Laughter

I appreciate that the Minister is going to give me that information. I am assuming that there are some sections in there where there are shortages of health care professionals. I do not assume that every community in the Northwest Territories is fully staffed with health care professionals. I wonder if the Minister could inform us as to what she is doing to address those communities where there is still a shortage of health care professionals? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Lee. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Health and Social Services, Mrs. Groenewegen.

Further Return to Question 131-14(2): Recruitment and Retention of Health Care Professionals

HON. JANE GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, although the workforce has stabilized right now with nurses and social workers, our efforts in the department for recruitment and retention continue. There are a number of initiatives and activities that we have undertaken to address this issue and to ensure that it remains stabilized.

There is quite a list of them. Again, I do not know how much of this you would want me to list off. I will just highlight a few of them here.

One of the things of which we are very proud of is the effort with Aurora College in terms of training a northern workforce. We have had very good success of the expansion of educational opportunities for people.

An interesting idea came up yesterday with the Northwest Territories Health Care Association, and that is perhaps looking at women. In particular, women who may have raised a family in their younger days, and now their families are grown and they may be looking at re-entering or entering the workforce for the first time. We were thinking that would be an interesting group to target as well. They may want to attend college. We

usually think of college recruitment in terms of young people coming straight out of high school.

There are quite a number of initiatives here. Again, I could provide this list to the Member if she would like to have it. Everything from support to the people that are in the workplace already. There is also the development of a website so they can have an interactive communication between health care workers. The establishment of a three nurse educator consultant position to support nurses that are employed by the nine boards of health. That is another area where we provide support to these workers to ensure they are able to do the best of their ability. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. Final supplementary, Ms. Lee.

Supplementary to Question 131-14(2): Recruitment and Retention of Health Care Professionals

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This funding that went into recruiting nurses, the program I mentioned earlier, it was a two-year program and it was time specific. It was an injection of \$3 million. I wonder if the Minister could advise the House as to whether she is planning to inject more cash or expand this program to ensure the positions remain filled and the necessary services are provided? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Lee. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Health and Social Services, Mrs. Groenewegen.

Further Return to Question 131-14(2): Recruitment and Retention of Health Care Professionals

HON. JANE GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The \$3 million that was targeted specifically for registered nurses was a one-time arrangement. It was like a supplement to the wage of the nurses that were already here. It was also a signing bonus for those nurses we were hiring on in the Northwest Territories. It was targeted at registered nurses because that is where the highest percentage of vacancy existed. I think that now the situation has stabilized. I do not believe there will be ongoing specific funding for registered nurses. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. Item 6, oral questions. The honourable Member for Yellowknife South, Mr. Bell.

Oral Question 132-14(2): Telehealth Potential in the NWT

MR. BELL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question today is also for the Minister responsible for the Department of Health and Social Services. One of the initiatives the Department of Health and Social Services has that really interests me is the potential use of Telehealth in the Northwest Territories. During the interim appropriation process, I was disappointed to hear that progress on this important initiative was being hindered by a lack of available bandwidth.

Can the Minister indicate whether she has made an arrangement for her officials to meet with Education, Culture and Employment and Ardicom on this important issue?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Bell. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Health and Social Services, Mrs. Groenewegen.

Return to Question 132-14(2): Telehealth Potential in the NWT

HON. JANE GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, during the consideration of the Department of Health under the Interim Appropriations Bill, I did commit to coordinating a meeting between Education, Culture and Employment and Ardicom, and I believe the Minister of Finance, to look at this. This meeting has not taken place yet. Thank you.

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

Supplementary to Question 132-14(2): Telehealth Potential in the NWT

MR. BELL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Can the Minister tell us when we can expect this meeting?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Bell. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Health and Social Services, Mrs. Groenewegen.

Further Return to Question 132-14(2): Telehealth Potential in the NWT

HON. JANE GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it would appear my Cabinet colleagues would be available to have a meeting to deal with this specific issue next week. We could report back to Members at the next sitting of the Legislature. Thank you.

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

Supplementary to Question 132-14(2): Telehealth Potential in the NWT

MR. BELL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Can the Minister inform the House which communities currently enjoy access to the Telehealth system?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Bell. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Health and Social Services, Mrs. Groenewegen.

Further Return to Question 132-14(2): Telehealth Potential in the NWT

HON. JANE GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it would appear that Fort Smith and Inuvik have had pilot projects in the area of Telehealth, and so I would suggest those are two communities which must have the capacity under the digital communications network to receive those services at this time. Thank you.

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

Supplementary to Question 132-14(2): Telehealth Potential in the NWT

MR. BELL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Fort Smith and Inuvik... I am guessing, but I am pretty sure they have doctors in those communities. I wonder when the department plans to test Telehealth in a community that only has nurses. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Bell. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Health and Social Services, Mrs. Groenewegen.

Further Return to Question 132-14(2): Telehealth Potential in the NWT

HON. JANE GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, when we meet to discuss this, we will talk about the capital investment that will be required to put the infrastructure in place to do this.

There are certain types of services that could be acquired by Telehealth that do not require the same amount of technology as others. For example, counselling services is one area where you do not need the amount of equipment as you would for other types of medicine services. I could not tell you exactly when we could do this. We will have to look at what kind of capital investment would be required and discuss it with the Social Programs Committee. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. Item 6, oral questions. The honourable Member for Frame Lake, Mr. Dent.

Oral Question 133-14(2): Physician Shortage in Yellowknife

MR. DENT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I said in my statement today, I was pleased to hear that the government had signed a deal with the Alberta Medical Association on local replacements for doctors outside of Yellowknife. I think this is an important deal for the people of the Northwest Territories. It helps to ensure their health and safety, as well as providing doctors with opportunities to get extra training and to take vacations.

However, I noted, Mr. Speaker, this deal does nothing for the doctor shortage being experienced in Yellowknife. If a doctor in Yellowknife goes on holiday or decides to take extra training, his load has to be picked up by one of his or her already overworked colleagues.

Mr. Speaker, my question for the Minister is what can we expect the department to do? What is the department doing in the next few weeks, the next few months to deal with the doctor shortage in Yellowknife?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Dent. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Health and Social Services, Mrs. Groenewegen.

Return to Question 133-14(2): Physician Shortage in Yellowknife

HON. JANE GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I could be corrected, but I do not believe the agreement with the Alberta Medical Association for the provision of local physician services is limited to communities outside of Yellowknife. Thank you.

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

Supplementary to Question 133-14(2): Physician Shortage in Yellowknife

MR. DENT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am not sure if that was an answer or another question. My understanding is that the locum arrangement only deals with positions outside of Yellowknife.

Mr. Speaker, I will ask the Minister again: what in particular is she planning to do to address the position shortage in Yellowknife in the next few weeks or months? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Dent. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Health and Social Services, Mrs. Groenewegen.

Further Return to Question 133-14(2): Physician Shortage in Yellowknife

HON. JANE GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I believe that the local positions and the agreement we have with the Alberta government will provide temporary relief for the physician shortage in Yellowknife.

The Northwest Territories Medical Association position is that only 14 of the required 26 positions are in residence in Yellowknife at this time. Although the number of actual practicing physicians does exceed 14, due to the number of part-time positions.

Mr. Speaker, the department has had consultation with several professional associations and, in conjunction with looking at payment methods for positions, is considering addressing the physician shortage through an alternative primary care model, where the boards could employ the services of nurse-practitioners, nurses with credentials similar to those in the small communities, community health nurses who have a broader range of education. Also, having a pilot project whereby we could, for now, temporarily alleviate the physician shortage by having patients see a nurse as their first point of contact as opposed to a physician. Then, critical cases could be referred onto the emergency services if required. Thank you.

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

Supplementary to Question 133-14(2): Physician Shortage in Yellowknife

MR. DENT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It sounds to me that the Minister is referring to what we have heard and referred to in the past as the Nurse-Practitioner Plan. I think she knows the Members on the Standing Committee on Social Programs are in support of that process, and we encourage the government to pursue that course of action.

But, Mr. Speaker, we also know that is going to take a considerable length of time to implement. What is the Minister going to do now to deal with the shortage of doctors in Yellowknife? We still have not heard the answer to that question, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Dent. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Health and Social Services, Mrs. Groenewegen.

Further Return to Question 133-14(2): Physician Shortage in Yellowknife

HON. JANE GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I believe the immediate and temporary solution is going to be the use of local positions from the Alberta pool of locum positions. Thank you.

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

Supplementary to Question 133-14(2): Physician Shortage in Yellowknife

MR. DENT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I said, we have been given the understanding that the deal with the Alberta Medical Association did not cover Yellowknife. I am pleased that it apparently now does. Could the Minister advise us when will she provide us with a timetable for the implementation of the nurse-practitioner model in the larger centres in the Northwest Territories?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Dent. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Health and Social Services, Mrs. Groenewegen.

Further Return to Question 133-14(2): Physician Shortage in Yellowknife

HON. JANE GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I realize that this is a pressing issue and I am as interested in finding a solution as anyone is. I have extended the invitation to the Social Programs Committee to meet to discuss how we might expedite and bring this particular primary care model into existence in Yellowknife.

The department has done a lot of the background work and a lot of the consultations that needed to go on. I cannot say exactly when it will come into existence. Let me say that it is a priority. I will be looking to the Standing Committee on Social Programs for their assistance in this. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. Item 6, oral questions. The honourable Member for Thebacha, Mr. Miltenberger.

Oral Question 134-14(2): Community Health and Social Service Boards

MR. MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions as well are addressed to the Minister responsible for Health and Social Services in regard to governance issues. I would like the Minister to indicate what concrete steps she has taken or will be taking in conjunction with their social envelope colleagues, education and housing, to deal with the governance issues in the regions. Specifically, the development that seems to be taking place with community services boards. Are they being proactive and involved in that kind of way or are they just standing back and letting the universe unfold? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Health and Social Services, Mrs. Groenewegen.

Return to Question 134-14(2): Community Health and Social Service Boards

HON. JANE GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I have asked the department to develop criteria for the continuation of health and social services boards. But also, this is an area which the Cabinet is wanting to look at because the criteria is very key to regional issues in anticipation of things such as aboriginal self-government and land claims. This is a broader government issue. Cabinet will also be visiting this subject in our upcoming planning sessions. Thank you.

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

Supplementary to Question 134-14(2): Community Health and Social Service Boards

MR. MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Did I hear correctly? That the Minister has her officials working on a plan for the continuation of regional health boards? If that is the case, what has she instructed her officials to do with the South Slave? And is that not counter-productive, if at the same time all the signals are pointing away from the regional health boards? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Health and Social Services, Mrs. Groenewegen.

Further Return to Question 134-14(2): Community Health and Social Service Boards

HON. JANE GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, Mr. Speaker, I did indicate that I have asked the department to develop criteria for the establishment and continuation of health and social services boards. I did not say regional boards. However, we have such a mix and such an assortment of boards at this time, I think it is important to establish criteria and come up with ways of operating boards that are as efficient as can be.

We have everything from regional boards and community service boards to boards as small as the one in Lutsel K'e, for example, which is an entire health board that serves less than 500 people. Due to the myriad of board make-ups and sizes we have right now, I think it is important that we look at this. Thank you.

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

Supplementary to Question 134-14(2): Community Health and Social Service Boards

MR. MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the Minister has indicated that we have a myriad of boards and structures. She has instructed her officials to look at how we are going to keep this myriad of boards and structures going. It causes me some concern.

Can the Minister indicate if she has had any discussions with her social envelope colleagues in education and housing at

how they might best integrate some of the common services that serve common clients and take a page from what seems to be working quite successfully with the Dogrib people? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Health and Social Services, Mrs. Groenewegen.

Further Return to Question 134-14(2): Community Health and Social Service Boards

HON. JANE GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the concept of community service boards is not a new one. It is something that has been talked about in the past. However, you hear good things about them and there does also appear to be a downside in terms of focusing on certain areas.

These are all things that need to be looked at. We will not be making any decisions or any rationales on this without certainly consulting the Members and standing committees. Thank you.

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

Supplementary to Question 134-14(2): Community Health and Social Service Boards

MR. MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would just like to remind the Minister of her commitment to answering questions and not giving a response that totally ignores the question. The question was, have you had any discussions with your colleagues, from education and housing, about how you might best integrate services in areas of governments when there are common clients, in communities where it makes sense? It is a very simple question, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. I would just remind the honourable Members that they should address the chair and not each other. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Health and Social Services, Mrs. Groenewegen.

Further Return to Question 134-14(2): Community Health and Social Service Boards

HON. JANE GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, this has been discussed amongst the Ministers as the Member indicates, informally, but no official communication has taken place on this. It has not been on an agenda as a specific item.

-- Interjection

I am not listening to comments from across the House. I believe that this was discussed in Caucus when we had our retreat in Fort Providence. Of course, we are always looking for better ways of delivering programs and services to the people of the North. We will continue to discuss this. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. Item 6, oral questions. The honourable Member for Inuvik Boot Lake, Mr. Roland.

Oral Question 135-14(2): Smoking Cessation Programs

MR. ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as I mentioned in my Member's statement, we have heard of the disproportionate number of smokers in the Northwest Territories. That is one of the largest areas of cost drivers we find when it comes to acute and primary care programs. We know that smoking related diseases and conditions are placing a severe strain on the limited resources that the Department of Health and Social Services can bear.

Can the Minister responsible for the Department of Health and Social Services inform this Assembly if there are any programs that deal with prevention in the area of smoking? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Roland. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Health and Social Services, Mrs. Groenewegen.

Return to Question 135-14(2): Smoking Cessation Programs

HON. JANE GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the Member is right. The cost of tobacco to our budget, on an annual basis in the Northwest Territories, is about \$31 million annually. This is a very significant amount of money.

The department is strongly committed to addressing this public health issue. The Department of Health and Social Services and boards have all endorsed this priority under the health promotional strategy framework. In particular, the need to focus on the high rates of tobacco addiction amongst young people in the Northwest Territories.

We are actively providing support to an interdepartmental working group that is drafting the Territorial Tobacco Strategy and work plan, addressing healthy public policy legislation, public education, communication enforcement and research. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Supplementary to Question 135-14(2): Smoking Cessation Programs

MR. ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am aware, from my previous role in the 13th Assembly, that there is work ongoing. The Minister is informing us that in fact the work has not been concluded. They are still working on a plan. Can the Minister confirm that they are still in the process of working out a plan? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Roland. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Health and Social Services, Mrs. Groenewegen.

Further Return to Question 135-14(2): Smoking Cessation Programs

HON. JANE GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the Member is right. This is an initiative that was undertaken under the previous direction of my predecessor, Mr. Floyd Roland. Mr. Speaker, the Territorial Tobacco Strategy was completed and a draft has been circulated to

Government of the Northwest Territories departments. The comments on the draft are expected to be returned to the department by March 31, 2000. Thank you.

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

Supplementary to Question 135-14(2): Smoking Cessation Programs

MR. ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I hope that this plan, when it does come out and is launched, is going to be more than what we see from time to time with some posters and pamphlets. Hopefully, it will be focused on the young people, as the Minister said.

I would like to know what is spent in the area of prevention when it comes to smoking? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Roland. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Health and Social Services, Mrs. Groenewegen.

Further Return to Question 135-14(2): Smoking Cessation Programs

HON. JANE GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, not enough. I do not have the specific figure here. Mr. Speaker, my feeling on the smoking cessation program is that we must target young people.

We know that it is extremely difficult to kick the habit once people are addicted to tobacco. I think one of our areas of key investment must be in discouraging young people from taking up the habit in the first place. Members will notice, in many of our public service announcements and the ad campaign that has already aired on television, that we have engaged the services of young people to actually put that message out there. I think they have been very effective. I do not have the exact figure for how much we are spending at this time, but I could provide the Member with that. Thank you.

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

Supplementary to Question 135-14(2): Smoking Cessation Programs

MR. ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to get those numbers and thank the Minister for committing to provide them. I would like to commend the department for using the young people in the ad programming. I would like to know if the Minister will provide us with a draft or final document that we can see as to the plans that are going to be put in place if the dollars are there? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Roland. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Health and Social Services, Mrs. Groenewegen.

Further Return to Question 135-14(2): Smoking Cessation Programs

HON. JANE GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would be happy to share that, certainly with the social programs committee and any other Members who have an interest in the subject. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. Item 6, oral questions. The honourable Member for Hay River North, Mr. Paul Delorey.

Oral Question 136-14(2): Palliative Care in the NWT

MR. DELOREY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is for the Minister responsible for the Department of Health and Social Services. As I stated in my Members statement, I have some concerns about the status of palliative care in the Northwest Territories.

Mr. Speaker, we have an aging population. More and more non-aboriginals are no longer retiring to the south. More and more people are making a commitment to live and die in the North. We as a society have a responsibility to make our elders' and other residents' final days as comfortable as possible. This means that we need a health care system with hospitals and staff that are equipped to meet the challenge.

Can the Minister tell me what hospitals in the Territories have a palliative care program?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Delorey. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Health and Social Services, Mrs. Groenewegen.

Return to Question 136-14(2): Palliative Care in the NWT

HON. JANE GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I am aware that Hay River has a palliative care unit. I am aware that Stanton does. I do not know about Inuvik.

The Member is correct in saying that we have an aging population. By the year 2018, it is expected the number of seniors in the Northwest Territories will have grown by 135 percent. People are staying in the North.

There is a vast difference between having palliative care units as opposed to palliative care health services. Palliative care health services are ones that administer care to persons that are in the last stages of their life. This is a field of medicine that is constantly changing. Perhaps through the local physicians and specialists pool out of Alberta, in-service teaching and training could be provided to resident Northern doctors. I think that about every six months there are new medications and new strategies for caring for people who are in the last stages of their life.

I think that this is an area where there is a gap in medical services in the Northwest Territories. I have had it raised to me several times by Northerners who have gone through the process of having a loved one who has passed on in the care of hospitals here in the North. Their main concern was making sure they were not in extreme pain. I think that is where the specialty is required. Thank you.

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

Supplementary to Question 136-14(2): Palliative Care in the NWT

MR. DELOREY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, could the Minister inform the House whether there is money specifically provided to boards for palliative care?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Delorey. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Health and Social Services, Mrs. Groenewegen.

Further Return to Question 136-14(2): Palliative Care in the NWT

HON. JANE GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I do not believe that palliative care is something that is specified in terms of funding provided to boards. Thank you.

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

Supplementary to Question 136-14(2): Palliative Care in the NWT

MR. DELOREY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in the case of Education, Culture and Employment, there is a program that provides fiscal resources to education boards depending on the number of special needs students that it has. Could the Minister tell the House whether there are similar programs offered by the Department of Health and Social Services to boards who have palliative care patients?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Delorey. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Health and Social Services, Mrs. Groenewegen.

Further Return to Question 136-14(2): Palliative Care in the NWT

HON. JANE GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I believe that the funding that is provided to health boards for acute hospital care would be general. It would not have any specific areas identified for palliative care. Thank you.

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

Supplementary to Question 136-14(2): Palliative Care in the NWT

MR. DELOREY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wonder if the Minister could inform the House if she is aware of how many doctors and nurses we have in the Northwest Territories that have formal training in palliative care?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Delorey. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Health and Social Services, Mrs. Groenewegen.

Further Return to Question 136-14(2): Palliative Care in the NWT

HON. JANE GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I am not aware of any resident specialists who are training specifically in the area of palliative care that are in the Northwest Territories at this time. I could make inquiries of the boards to find out if there are any physicians in the North who have any special accreditation in that area, and provide that information to the Member.

Mr. Speaker, I would also like to thank the Members for all of these questions today. I think I now exceed Mr. Ootes in terms of popularity. Thank you.

-- Laughter

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. It is not over yet. Item 6, oral questions. The honourable Member for Tu Nedhe, Mr. Nitah.

Oral Question 137-14(2): Incremental Cost to Health Boards

MR. NITAH: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question today is for the Minister responsible for the Department of Health and Social Services.

Mr. Speaker, I represent two communities in the Assembly. I also have two health boards to represent the people in these two communities. When these two boards were formed after the conclusion of the Mackenzie Health, funding transferred to local control was very low as always, Mr. Speaker.

As a result, one of the communities had to dismantle its board, leaving individuals in the community to do the work of delivering programs and services in this area with very little resources for staff support. The other one is working very hard, as we speak, to get over the deficit.

Mr. Speaker, the boards in the community, after they took control and have done some great work in delivering programs, have an understanding of the specific needs of each community and the members.

Unfortunately, they do not have the proper resources to do the kind of work that is really necessary. The kind of work that this government wants to be done in the communities in terms of educating people on smoking and the effects of drug and alcohol abuse, et cetera.

Can the Minister tell the House whether the block funding formula makes allowances for forced growth at the board level? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Nitah. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Health and Social Services, Mrs. Groenewegen.

Return to Question 137-14(2): Incremental Cost to Health Boards

HON. JANE GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am not certain how the department deals with the issue of forced growth with the boards. I am sorry, but I will have to take that question as notice. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you. Minister Groenewegen has taken the question as notice. The time allocated for question period has expired. The chair recognizes the Member for Thebacha, Mr. Miltenberger.

MR. MILTENBERGER: Mr. Speaker, I seek unanimous consent to return to item 5, recognition of visitors in the gallery.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. The Member for Thebacha is seeking unanimous consent to return to item 5, recognition of visitors in the gallery. Are there any nays? There are no nays. You have unanimous consent, Mr. Miltenberger.

REVERT TO ITEM 5: RECOGNITION OF VISITORS IN THE GALLERY

MR. MILTENBERGER: Mr. Speaker, we are lucky today. I notice we have many of the celebrities from the Peter Gzowski

invitational golf tournament here. I would like to recognize one in particular, a constituent from Fort Smith. If you have a look back there, it is Joe Pinto-Dragon, soon to be Doctor Dragon. His mother made my fine jacket. He has done everyone in the North very proud. We are very proud to recognize him today. Thank you.

-- Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, and welcome, Mr. Dragon. The Member for Frame Lake, Mr. Dent.

MR. DENT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a couple of constituents who are celebrity golfers this week that I would like to recognize, Diane Brooks and Suzette Montreuil. I will be watching them very shortly on the putting green just to see what sort of acumen they have on the greens compared to how they do in literary practices. Thank you.

-- Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Dent. Recognition of visitors in the gallery. The Member for Hay River South, Mrs. Groenewegen.

HON. JANE GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, today I would like to recognize my celebrity constituency assistant from Hay River, Wendy Morgan and her visiting daughter, Jennifer Morgan.

-- Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. Recognition of visitors in the gallery. The Member for Hay River North, Mr. Delorey.

MR. DELOREY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to recognize CBC reporter Snookie Catholique, in the gallery.

-- Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Delorey. Recognition of visitors in the gallery. The Member for Tu Nedhe, Mr. Nitah.

MR. NITAH: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. With the assistance of my honourable colleague, Mr. Miltenberger, I am told that a constituent of mine, Mr. Rene Fumoleau, is in the gallery. I would like to recognize him. I did not even know he was a golfer, I wish him luck.

-- Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Nitah. Recognition of visitors in the gallery. The Member for Yellowknife Centre, Mr. Ootes.

HON. JAKE OOTES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My eyesight is not what it used to be. It is like my hearing, it is gone somewhat. But I think I can see well enough to recognize Mr. Steve Peterson from the CAW. My apologies if you are a likeable image of him.

-- Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Ootes. Indeed it is Mr. Peterson.

I would also like to take this opportunity to recognize some of the participants in the Peter Gzowski International Golf

Tournament here in Yellowknife for literacy. Mr. Peter Gzowski himself in person.

-- Applause

Mr. Wayne Rostad from On the Road Again.

-- Applause

Well known to us, Fran Hurcomb from Yellowknife, and Pat Braden.

-- Applause.

I would also like to recognize Mr. Paul Andrew and Mr. Ron Kent.

-- Applause.

Item 5, recognition of visitors in the gallery. The Member for Range Lake, Ms. Lee.

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to take this opportunity to recognize Mr. Dressup, also known as Mr. Ernie Coombs. I believe he is out there and has not been recognized.

-- Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Perhaps we just did not recognize Mr. Dressup. Maybe he has changed his costume.

-- Laughter

Item 5, recognition of visitors in the gallery. The honourable Premier, Mr. Kakfwi.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to recognize Rene Fumoleau, who is also part of the delegation.

-- Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Are there any further recognitions of visitors in the gallery? I would like to welcome everyone that is here in the gallery to participate in our daily events. Welcome again. Before we go on to the next item, we will take a 15 to 20 minute break.

-- Break

MR. SPEAKER: The House will come back to order. Item 7, written questions. The Member for Yellowknife South, Mr. Bell.

ITEM 7: WRITTEN QUESTIONS

Written Question 12-13(2): Residents of the Home for the Homeless

MR. BELL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is for the Honourable Roger Allen, the Minister responsible for the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation. I have been apprised that the operators of the Home for the Homeless have received a letter from this government advising staff that the clients of this shelter must vacate by tonight, March 27, 2000. This letter is contrary to the understanding of the Home for the Homeless residents that they have until March 31, 2000, to find alternative accommodation. Attempts made by the residents to

find accommodation by tonight have been unsuccessful, due to the Salvation Army emergency shelter being at capacity.

I am therefore requesting that the Minister responsible for the Housing Corporation respond to this urgent matter by addressing the following:

1. Is the Minister aware the Home for the Homeless residents are to be evicted as of midnight tonight?
2. Were the shelter residents previously advised they had until March 31, 2000, to find alternative living arrangements?
3. What is the Minister prepared to do to assist these people who are now without any place to live in this city?
4. Is there any form of emergency assistance these residents can access if there is no room at the Salvation Army?
5. It is obvious there has been a misunderstanding at some level. Will the Minister ensure he will look into how this situation took place to ensure residents are not placed on the street with just hours of notice given?

Thank you for your immediate attention to this emergency situation.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Bell. Item 7, written questions. Item 8, returns to written questions. Mr. Clerk.

ITEM 8: RETURNS TO WRITTEN QUESTIONS

CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Hamilton): Mr. Speaker, a return to Written Question 1-14(2), asked by Mr. Miltenberger, and responded to by the Premier concerning Nunavut contracts.

Return to Written Question 1-14(2): Nunavut Contracts

On February 22, 2000, the Member for Thebacha submitted a written question asking for information identifying all the contracts with the Nunavut government, including the contracted services that are not being charged for the contract, the number of full time equivalent positions involved in the contract delivery, the end date for the contract and any plans to negotiate an extension.

Under separate cover, I have provided the Member with an outline of the current services agreements between the GNWT and the Government of Nunavut. The information was also provided to Ministers and to the other Members of the Legislative Assembly.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Item 8, returns to written questions. Item 9, replies to opening address. Item 10, petitions. Item 11, reports of standing and special committees. Item 12, reports of committees on the review of bills. Item 13, tabling of documents.

ITEM 13: TABLING OF DOCUMENTS

Tabled Document 36-14(2): Policies of the Board of Management

In accordance with section 42(2) of the Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act, I wish to table the Policies of the Board of Management in Respect to the Indemnities and Allowances payable to Members.

And further, in accordance with Section 42(3) of the act, I wish to table all the other policies of the Board of Management. I would like to indicate that these policies are also available to the public on the Legislative Assembly's web site. Thank you.

Item 13, tabling of documents. Item 14, notices of motion. Item 15, notices of motion for the first reading of bills. Item 16, motions. The honourable Member for Frame Lake, Mr. Dent.

ITEM 16: MOTIONS

Motion 12-14(2): Support for Pension Entitlements Due to Former Giant Mine Workers (Carried)

MR. DENT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker,

WHEREAS the closure of Giant Mine has had a devastating effect on former employees and the City of Yellowknife;

AND WHEREAS Royal Oak Mines made no effort to be a responsible employer, and ensure that severance for all employees and pension entitlements for hourly employees were in place;

AND WHEREAS Royal Oak Mines under funded the workers' pension funds, which will result in a 25 percent cut to the retirees' pensions as of April 1, 2000;

AND WHEREAS this corporate pension under funding is permitted under the federal Pension Benefits Act;

AND WHEREAS a negotiated arrangement, in which a federal government department played a role by allowing these circumstances to continue;

AND WHEREAS the cuts to the pensions and severance payments for former Giant Mine workers will adversely affect these individuals, their families and the community as a whole;

AND WHEREAS federal legislation provides little or no relief for protection to the former employees of Giant Mine, or any other Canadian workers who are adversely affected by corporate closures and bankruptcies;

NOW THEREFORE I MOVE, seconded by the honourable Member for Yellowknife South, that this Legislative Assembly urges the Government of Canada to take immediate action to provide the full earned pension entitlement and severance due former employees and pensioners of Royal Oak Giant Mine, as of the date of the mine's closure.

AND FURTHER, that this Legislature request the Government of Canada to amend the Pension Benefits Act and the Bankruptcy and Insolvency Act to protect the rights and interest of all Canadian workers, so that this unfair and unacceptable situation does not occur again. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Dent. The motion is in order. To the motion. The honourable Member for Frame Lake, Mr. Dent.

MR. DENT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to urge all Members of this House to vote in favour of this motion. Mr. Speaker, former workers at Giant Mine were notified in mid-February that the pension fund for hourly workers was under funded. That means that as of April 1, 2000, former workers will lose approximately 25 percent of their pension.

Mr. Speaker, this affects 59 workers immediately, and many more who will be affected as they retire. These pension cutbacks will also impact on widows who are beneficiaries of their late husbands' pensions. Mr. Speaker, as this was a non-contributory pension fund, the union had no control over it and no information on the status of the fund.

As well as the pension, Mr. Speaker, there is the issue of the 250 workers who were laid off in October of 1999, who have not yet received a severance package. Mr. Speaker, the way these people have been treated by their former employers is absolutely disgraceful. I think the federal government should be ashamed that their legislation continues and sanctions this treatment.

Mr. Speaker, I hope that with this motion, the federal government will consider the importance of changing federal bankruptcy, labour, and pension laws to ensure that this does not happen to other workers in Canada. There is another issue that brings this even further into focus. I recently became aware, Mr. Speaker, that in 1997, Royal Oak Pension Committee invested funds in Royal Oak shares even though the company was already in trouble at the time. The workers had no idea that this was happening. I think that this indicates that we really do need the Government of Canada to have another look at pension fund legislation.

Mr. Speaker, there is broad public support for the action requested by this motion. Recently, a petition bearing more than 1700 signatures was delivered by the Citizens Support Group to Ethel Blondin-Andrew, and to NDP labour critic Pat Martin.

Mr. Speaker, as you know, Members for Yellowknife, at their constituents meeting, heard from a number of former workers at Giant Mine, how this is going to affect them personally. I think we were all moved by Mary Kosta's action in support of the workers with her hunger strike.

Mr. Speaker, because DIAND facilitated the sale of Giant Mine to Miramar Mine, and knew that the pension fund was underfunded, I believe that the federal government should take some responsibility as requested in this motion, in making up the shortfall. Mr. Speaker, I would urge all Members of this House to vote in favour of this motion. If we can demonstrate unanimous support, perhaps the Ministers responsible, Jim Peterson, who is Secretary of State for Financial Institutions, and Robert Nault, who is the Minister responsible for the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, will do the right thing and provide the members of this association, the former workers at Royal Oak Giant Mine, with the support that they deserve. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Dent. To the motion. The honourable Member for Yellowknife South, Mr. Bell.

MR. BELL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I, too, would like to urge all Members to vote in favour of this motion here today. I think that we have all seen the federal government drag their feet on this issue for too long. I think sometimes governments get caught up in being too worried about setting precedent, and how this will affect other bankruptcies in the future, and I do not think that we can look to that. I think that we have to take some action now.

I think that we also have to see workers come to the front of the line in bankruptcy situations. There are serious flaws in our bankruptcy legislation, and we need to address them. The workers have poured their blood, sweat and tears into this community and into this country. They are about to receive a 25 percent reduction in their pensions. I think it is disgraceful.

I think we have to urge the federal government to take action and take action now. I would also like to ask for a recorded vote. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Bell. To the motion. The honourable Member for Range Lake, Ms. Lee.

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to speak in favour of this motion, and I urge the House to vote in favour of it. I rise also with a very heavy heart about the issue that we are dealing with. It has been an issue that has frustrated me as an elected representative of this House over the last six months.

Mr. Speaker, I feel a very heavy heart, because this motion that we are passing is such a small act, in light of all of the vision and actions that have been taken by so many people in this community who really share the severity of the predicament that the workers face.

As Mr. Dent has indicated, he has outlined the facts behind this case. When we were in the constituency meeting, Mary Kosta, the wife of one of the pensioners, begged us to pass this motion. Mr. Speaker, I am not comfortable having to beg. I want to be in a position, as an elected official, to be able to do something more concrete than to stand here and beg the federal officials to do something. This is only a small act, on top of so many different things.

Mr. Speaker, I can tell you that during my election campaign, I met with many people in my riding who are directly affected by this. Not only the 60 workers who are going to be on pension which will be cut by 25 percent as of April 1, 2000. I am also talking about so many workers who are in a total state of shock.

I will never forget the look, when I walked into so many doors on Stevens Court, on Magrum Crescent, on Borden Drive, on Rivett Crescent. Speaking to these men who have worked for years at the mine, who are too old to start something new without a lot of assistance, but are too young to retire. They looked at me as though there was nothing I can do, that this was so unfair. I hoped so much that I could do something for them. I started to see, after looking at it from the legal perspective, I looked at the territorial legislation, I met with the department of Indian Affairs officials, and I talked to our Member of Parliament. I could not do anything but send sympathy and my thoughts to Mary Kosta while she was on a hunger strike. The answer is, there is nothing we can do. This is not good enough, Mr. Speaker.

I understand that this motion has to do with amending the federal legislation so the same thing does not happen to other workers in other parts of Canada. I am not so sure what good that is going to do to those pensioners who are going to take a 25 percent cut as of April 1, 2000. Or for those workers who did not get their severance pay, and who have to line up behind an amount of no less than \$1.6 billion being claimed in bankruptcy hearings. Mr. Speaker, that is just not fair. These workers should not be forced to line up behind \$1.6 billion of other claims.

Mr. Speaker, I realize that all I can do right now is to plead to the Minister responsible for financial institutions. But I would like to think that, as an elected representative, I could somehow be the voice for those people I met, Mr. Willy, Mr. Laniger, Mr. Delaney, those people who made a public position. I feel comfortable in naming their names. There are a lot of unnamed people in my riding that I have to speak for. I would also like to speak for those who are not just on hourly pay, but those workers who are on salary, who looked at me and said "what about me?"

Mr. Speaker, my suggestion to the Minister responsible for financial institutions is please do not be hung up on the precedents issue. Please think of these people as individuals, who are going to have a very personal impact on their livelihood as a result of lack of action by him and by the Minister responsible for Indian Affairs, and perhaps the Prime Minister.

I am trying to take comfort in the fact that our Member of Parliament has been doing something. I have been in contact with her. I know she is trying to do something. If this motion could help her in any way... I also appreciate the fact that this comes at the end of the other motion that was passed by the City of Yellowknife and the councillors.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to speak out to make it clear to the Minister responsible for financial institutions that this is not a regular, precedent-setting situation. The deal between Miramar-Con Mine and Giant Mine could not have gone through without the direct involvement of the Department of Indian Affairs. This is not just about a commercial transaction. I have said it in public at the constituency meeting, and I will say that again. If you look at the trustees' report, the transaction went through the Department of Indian Affairs. The Department of Indian Affairs was a titleholder of this property before it passed from Giant Mine to Con Mine.

I do not begrudge whatever Miramar-Con Mine was able to get out of this deal. I am in fact glad that something was able to happen there, and that we were able to salvage as few jobs as we were able to. My point, Mr. Speaker, is that in the process, when they were talking about how to transfer assets, how to address the cleanup problem, they had completely forgotten the needs of the workers. When you are thinking about under-funded pension plans, we are not talking about a lot of money. We are talking about maybe \$2 million to replenish this pension fund.

Mr. Speaker, I want to say at the same time, there is a trust set up to look after the cleanup of the arsenic at Giant Mine. When I posed this question to the DIAND official, he said, "we have to look after the environment, but we are not obliged to provide for workers". Mr. Speaker, I do not for one moment think that environmental cleanup and the arsenic is a small problem. We

have a huge problem sitting there, and it could cost between \$300 million and \$500 million to do so. But surely, Mr. Speaker, the people and their financial security, their pension and severance package entitlements are as important as the environmental cleanup. I say to the Minister responsible for financial institutions and the Minister responsible for Indian Affairs, that they have the responsibility to do something about it.

Mr. Speaker, I believe that addresses my points. I am not at all confident what the Minister is going to do, but I do hope that this motion today, which I hope will be unanimous, will send a strong message to the Minister that he has an option to do something. He has an option, as politicians always do when they want to, to find a way to replenish the under-funded pension and to address the severance pay for the workers. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Lee. To the motion. The honourable Member for Great Slave, Mr. Braden.

MR. BRADEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I too support this motion and urge every Member of this Assembly to join in and send a signal to Ottawa, and support our Member of Parliament in her efforts. It is also apparent, Mr. Speaker, that the clock is ticking. The federal government has a year-end coming up in just four short days. My understanding is that is very significant to some actions that could be taken. I hope that once this Assembly does pass this motion, it is transmitted to Ottawa post-haste, and lends our voice to any action they can take.

I would also like to address, Mr. Speaker, along with this very disturbing issue, the other legacies of the Giant Mine that are left in the wake of the bankruptcy. Definitely the pension issue and the unfairness to those employees is number one on the list. There is another significant one that is still unresolved and that is the matter of layoff notice, as described not only in our own labour laws, but in contracts that the miners had, which are still unresolved.

Mr. Speaker, there are hundreds of creditors in Yellowknife, the Northwest Territories and Canada who were left holding the bag when Royal Oak was forced to close. Our own city has already dealt with the matter of a very large back-tax bill. Our own government has an exposure of about \$1.7 million on bad debt to the Northwest Territories Power Corporation that will never be resolved.

Mr. Speaker, my colleague, Ms. Lee, has already addressed the yet unresolved legacy of the surface and the underground cleanup. We are still engaged with our own Workers' Compensation Board in action regarding the widows of the blast several years ago.

Mr. Speaker, the legacy of Giant Mine is something that will continue to haunt this community and this Assembly. Let us deal with it responsibly and compassionately. We will have more on our plate over the coming years. I am confident of that. We are doing the right thing today with our action on behalf of the pensioners. Once again, I speak in support of the motion. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Braden. To the motion. Question has been called. Mr. Dent.

MR. DENT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I do not have a lot to add. I would like to thank the Members who have spoken in favour of this motion. Again, I would urge all Members to make this a unanimous motion. I would like to reiterate the call for a recorded vote, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Dent. Question has been called. The Member is requesting a recorded vote. Mr. Clerk. All those in favour, please rise.

CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Hamilton): Mr. Dent, Mr. Miltenberger, Mr. McLeod, Mr. Bell, Mr. Nitah, Mr. Braden, Mr. Steen, Mrs. Groenewegen, Mr. Kakfwi, Mr. Handley, Mr. Allen, Mr. Ootes, Mr. Krutko, Mr. Delorey, Mr. Lafferty, Ms. Lee and Mr. Roland.

-- Applause

MR. SPEAKER: All those opposed? Abstentions? The results of the vote are 17 in favour. There are no nays and no abstentions. The motion is carried unanimously.

-- Applause

Item 16, motions. The honourable Member for Frame Lake, Mr. Dent.

Motion 13-14(2): Setting of Sitting Hours by Speaker (Carried)

MR. DENT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker,

I MOVE, seconded by the honourable Member for Weledeh, that the Speaker is authorized to set such sitting days and hours as the Speaker, after consultation, deems fit to assist with the business before the House. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Dent. There is a motion on the floor. The motion is in order. To the motion. Question has been called. All those in favour? All those opposed? The motion is carried. Item 16, motions. Item 17, first reading of bills. Item 18, second reading of bills.

Item 19, consideration in committee of the whole of bills and other matters. Minister's Statement 1-14(2), Sessional Statement; Tabled Document 14-14(2), our Communities, Our Decisions: Let's Get on With It!; Bill 1, An Act to Amend the Education Act; Bill 3, An Act to Amend the Financial Administration Act; Bill 6, Interim Appropriation Act, 2000-2001; Committee Report 2-14(2), Accountability and Oversight on the 2000-2001 Interim Appropriation; Committee Report 3-14(2), Governance and Economic Development on the 2000-2001 Interim Appropriation; and Committee Report 4-14(2), Social Programs on the 2000-2001 Interim Appropriation.

Prior to going into committee, by the authority given the Speaker by Motion 13-14(2), the committee of the whole may sit past adjournment until it is prepared to report. Item 19, consideration in committee of the whole of bills and other matters, with Mr. Krutko in the chair.

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

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): I would like to call the committee to order. We are reviewing a number of items in committee of the

whole at this time, I would like to ask, what is the wish of the committee? Mr. Dent.

MR. DENT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I would like to recommend that we continue consideration of Bill 6, Committee Report 2-14(2), Committee Report 3-14(2), and Committee Report 4-14(2) concurrently, continuing with the consideration of the Department of Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development, as we had started on Friday. We will move on to Transportation, and Education next on the list, in that order.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Thank you, Mr. Dent. Is that the wish of the committee?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): At this time, I would like to ask the Minister if wishes to bring in his witnesses?

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI: Yes.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Does the committee agree the Minister can bring in his witnesses?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Sergeant-At-Arms, could you escort the witnesses in please?

We are dealing with the Department of Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development. I would like to ask the Minister if he could introduce his witnesses. Mr. Kakfwi.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI: Thank you. With me is the deputy minister, Mr. Bob McLeod, on the left, and on my right is Mr. Kennedy, the director for corporate services.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Thank you, Mr. Minister. Are there any comments or questions for the Minister? Mr. Roland.

MR. ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, as we left off on Friday, we requested some information. We received in our mail today the five-year capital plan that Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development had put forward, and some of the changes that were brought forward during the interim.

One of the areas we do not have information on is the area of sole sourced contracts. I would like to receive information from the Minister regarding the amount of dollars that are spent in the area of sole sourced contracts?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Thank you, Mr. Roland. Mr. Kakfwi.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I believe we have submitted a letter to Mr. Roland, as he is the chairman of the Standing Committee on Governance and Economic Development, explaining that we had looked at the December capital allocations and subsequently done a reallocation. We have submitted a page showing the reallocation to the committee. The chairman, I believe, now has the reallocations by number.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Roland.

MR. ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I do have, as I said in my opening comments, the package that was in my mail box.

I have been able to quickly go through them. I thank the Minister for providing that overview on the capital side. But we requested some numbers in the area of sole sourced contracts as well. That is not included in the five-year capital plan that I was able to go through. Can we get some further information on that? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Minister.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, the department was not clear as to what contracts were being focused on here. I am advised that all contracts are listed and reported on quarterly. I do not know if that is sufficient to address the question by the Member and the committee.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Roland.

MR. ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We have been told through many of the departments that, within the interim appropriation, there are a number of contracts that have to be for the full year. Looking for information on those that we are approving now within this interim, how many of those would be sole sourced? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Thank you, Mr. Roland. The Minister responsible for the Department of Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development, Mr. Kakfwi.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I will ask the deputy minister to answer the question.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): The deputy minister, Mr. McLeod.

MR. BOB MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Going through the different divisions, in the forest management division, we have a number of sole sourced contracts. Most of those are with aboriginal organizations for the provision of fire crew and fire suppression services. We have some aircraft contracts that are provided on a sole sourced basis, but the majority of them are done through request for proposals. The largest portion of our contracts are in the forest management program. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Mr. Roland.

MR. ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Out of the operations and maintenance we are approving here, how much would be for contracts? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Kakfwi.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We had provided a summary of contracts to the committee, and that has shown a total listing of \$9.7 million.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Thank you, Mr. Kakfwi. Mr. Roland.

MR. ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. So the Minister is indicating that out of the \$41,134,000 in operations and maintenance, that \$9.7 million of that is on all of the contracts within the department?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Thank you, Mr. Roland. Mr. Minister.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The amount of \$9.7 million is the total dollar value of the contracts that are included in the interim appropriation that is requested.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Thank you, Mr. Minister. Any comments or questions for the Minister? Mr. Miltenberger.

MR. MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I happen to have the document that the Minister referred to, the latest contract document. There are a few questions that come to mind when I read this.

On page 86, there is Diamond Hitch Resources from, I am not sure where "CB" is, for community facilitation, \$73,632. I was wondering if the Minister could provide a brief overview on who that is and where they are from.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Mr. Minister.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I will ask the deputy minister to respond to that.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): The deputy minister, Mr. McLeod.

MR. BOB MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Diamond Hitch Resources is a consulting company out of Calgary. It is a one-man operation. The principal is Mr. Rick Layton. He has been working in the Fort Liard – Nahanni Butte area, with the band to help advance their activities in the forest area. Also, he has provided some expertise to the Fort Liard Band and to Nahanni Butte in working with oil and gas companies.

The Band has been able to incorporate both of those activities into their economic development and operations. He also works with the different communities and has been involved with Fort Simpson and Jeanne Marie River to a certain extent. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Mr. Miltenberger.

MR. MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Could the deputy indicate whether this kind of work is fairly specialized in that there are no Northerners who do that kind of work? Is it that specialized? Is that why we ended up hiring somebody from Calgary?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Mr. McLeod.

MR. BOB MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I believe we wanted to get an individual who had actual experience in both the oil and gas and forestry sectors. It is an area that is fairly specialized.

We were able to find somebody that was recommended and has been able to work with the Band. The Band has been very interested in keeping him around. If you find somebody who can work with aboriginal corporations and aboriginal communities, I think it has been to our benefit to have him around. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Mr. Miltenberger.

MR. MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have just a couple more questions. I noticed on page 91, another item

struck my eye. A sole-sourced contract to King Motion Picture Corporation for \$49,000 to do, I am assuming, a video of some kind. Could the Minister indicate what that was, and why it would be sole-sourced? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Mr. Minister.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am not sure what the Member is using as a document, whether it is a quarterly report or not. We think it is the work on developing promotional videos for the North.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Thank you, Mr. Minister. Mr. Miltenberger, could you clarify the document you are getting the information from please?

MR. MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It is the document referred to earlier by the Minister in reply to Mr. Roland. It is a contract report for the second quarter year-to-date, for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2000. It was sent to us by Mr. Handley earlier this month. I believe it was tabled as well, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. I believe that was tabled in the House and it is a public document. Mr. Minister.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I am not sure what this has to do with the interim appropriation requested by the department.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Thank you, Mr. Minister. Mr. Miltenberger.

MR. MILTENBERGER: Mr. Chairman, it speaks to spending habits and concerns raised by contracts in general. To that end, Mr. Chairman, I only have one question left.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): I will allow it.

MR. MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My last question is about a sole-sourced contract, page 91, for \$8,000 worth of golf shirts to Lake Awry Cap and Crest in Yellowknife. It does not seem very specialized, so why would that be sole-sourced? It seems like a lot of golf shirts. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Minister.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It is part of our revenue generation for the department. It is goods that we order and then sell. Apparently one of the items is for \$35, a golf shirt. Members should be made aware that they are available. Those who want to invest good money. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Thank you Mr. Minister. If Members could keep your questions to the interim appropriation, Bill 6 itself, so we can deal with the matter at hand. Mr. Dent.

MR. DENT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I understand that this is an interim appropriation and that we do not have the full year's expenditures for a lot of things. I know, for instance, under firefighting, both pre-suppression and suppression, there is a chance a good deal of the expenditures could have taken place by the end of July.

So could I find out, the monies that we see in here for firefighting, both suppression and pre-suppression, how does

that compare to what we are expecting to see for a full year? Could I get what the expectations are for the department for the full year expenditures on both of those? What proportion are we seeing here right now?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): The deputy minister, Mr. McLeod.

MR. BOB MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. What we started doing about three years ago, we portioned our suppression budget over the length of the summer. So we try to keep our expenditures in accordance with those projections. As you are probably aware, the department fights fires according to a policy that has been approved by this government. We have a holding figure that we live with. If there is an extreme fire season, and it looks like we will exceed our budget, then we normally come back to the Financial Management Board to try to obtain additional funds.

Over the course of the season, we identify the suppression budget, normally over the summer. The figure here would be what we have portioned for the four months, and it is based on historical expenditure patterns. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Dent.

MR. DENT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Because it is not an equal amount expended every month, then it is difficult for me to calculate what the expected annual figure might be. I understand the range that this can take. I am looking at suppression. Since we have taken over suppression, I understand that the range has been from \$5.7 million in 1997-1998 to as high as \$27 million in 1994-1995. So I know there is a significant range. But what I am trying to get now is an understanding of what is the expected figure for the full year. What is the holding figure that is in our budget for the full year?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Minister.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI: Mr. Chairman, we are not clear exactly what it is the Member is asking. Perhaps he could ask the question again.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Dent, can you restate your question?

MR. DENT: The deputy minister said that the figure we see here is based on historical figures and we are seeing what they were expecting to spend through July.

My question is, using those historical figures, what number would we expect to see by the end of September? I am just asking for a ballpark figure. The deputy minister mentioned a holding number. What is the holding number for fiscal 2000-2001?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): The deputy minister, Mr. McLeod.

MR. BOB MCLEOD: The suppression figure is the total for the forest management division, and is about \$29 million. The suppression-holding figure, the last time I checked, was about \$11 million. It has not been set for this fiscal year yet. But in the past, the holding figure was around \$10 million or \$11 million. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): General questions or comments. Mr. Dent.

MR. DENT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate that information. It was what I was looking for. Following up on a question that my colleague had in terms of contracts that are contained within this current interim. One of them that I noticed was for David Elliott Diamond Industry Consultation, for \$250,000.

As I understood, he was providing us with consultation when we received applications for assistance to set up polishing factories and so on. He was assisting us by evaluating those projects. I am wondering about this amount of dollars for somebody, when I am not aware that we are going to have any reason to have applications within the next year. I do not believe that there is going to be an increase in the quota of diamonds available from BHP in that period of time. We know that Diavik is not going to be producing diamonds in that period. So why would we have to maintain this contract for the next year?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Minister.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The fact is we realized early on in this development that we know very little about the diamond industry. We need a presence in Antwerp in order to keep abreast of some of the development and activities in the diamond industry. So we have contracted Mr. Elliott to advise us globally about activities that should be of concern and interest to us, to keep us current in our thinking and about what is going on in the diamond community.

We have retained him. We also know that the facilities that are operational here, we need to be advised about whatever information we get from them, to understand it as is relative to the international activity. This is what the consultant provides to us. That is what my understanding is. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Dent.

MR. DENT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I know the first time I met Mr. Elliott, he was running his own firm that was called Diamond Tenders. For this amount of money, do we get the services of anyone else? Or is this for information provided just by Mr. Elliott? Is he still running his firm in addition to this?

It still seems like a large amount of money for the amount that I expect that we will get from him in the course of the next year. Are there any special projects that we are expecting to undertake? Does he travel here to provide training, to save us the cost of sending our people overseas? I really have not heard anything in the Minister's answer to justify the \$250,000. I wonder if I could get some more information on this.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): The Minister for Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I think that it is fair to say that without international and outside expertise, it is very difficult for us, with any confidence, to say that we are on top of the game. In order to have some level of confidence that we know what we are doing, we need someone established from the diamond community.

For instance, we are looking at the idea of trying to create a niche in the market for Northwest Territories diamonds. Perhaps Canadian diamonds, perhaps specific, Northwest Territories or Arctic diamonds.

We need advice on how that can be done, and to get some assistance so that whatever we do is done in a context that would be helpful. We have also said for a couple of years now that we would like to see the North, and Yellowknife perhaps, being designated and recognized sometime in the future as a diamond centre. Essentially where we can see people coming to do business with diamonds, where diamonds will be sold and marketed.

By ourselves, we are not able to move in that direction with any confidence. So we need advice on how that can be done, what type of activity and planning we need to do in order to move in a cohesive direction. Those are two very specific things that we are working on and that we need advice on. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): General comments or questions for the Minister. Mr. Bell.

MR. BELL: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have a question for the Minister. It relates to departmental vision and how he sees the mandate of the department.

Some time ago when this department was amalgamated, economic development was merged with wildlife. I was wondering if the Minister can talk a little about that. I am not suggesting that the preservation of wildlife and economic development are mutually exclusive. But at times, we have seen that they can have conflicting mandates.

Can the Minister discuss a little bit about why the marriage of these two departments, at the time that it occurred, was relevant at the time? Does he still feel that it is relevant? I am also wondering if he would possibly consider the establishment of a department of industry that might concentrate its efforts on some of the major economic development priorities that this government has.

So while I appreciate that this is not directly related to the interim, I am hoping that the Minister can just quickly discuss these couple of questions. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Kakfwi.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the Member for the question. It is always good to get clear again what the vision and mandate of the department is.

I cannot read it word for word, but it is usually available somewhere. I think that it is good to have a department that is responsible for ensuring that the wildlife, the environment and the land is utilized and kept for our future generations as well.

That the wildlife is well-managed, that the land and the water and wildlife itself are not disrupted and negatively impacted to a point where it can be available for future generations or for the present, for that matter.

Economic development activities and initiatives should be pursued actively to ensure benefits to the North, aboriginal peoples, to communities and to this government, in a way that balances a need for economic benefits as well as protecting the wildlife and the environment.

In general terms, that is the vision and the mandate that we have. We know that to have anybody, whether it is a company or a department espouse a singular purpose, such as to pursue mines and mining activities, is no longer acceptable. What we

look for are companies like BHP and Diavik, who actively pursue diamond or mining activity, but at the same time make very strong statements and commitments to protecting the wildlife and environment.

The government is the same. We bring our wildlife and environmental interests and concerns together in the same shop with our interest of promoting oil and gas development, mining, and economic development. It is the in-house type of approach we take. We think that works best towards taking a balanced approach.

Our highest priority is to make sure that wildlife and the environment are protected. If we can do that and at the same time promote economic activity, then we are prepared to do it.

I think the idea of putting everyone in one shop and forcing them to work out a balanced approach that takes every interest and concern under consideration before initiating work was the right decision to make. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Thank you, Mr. Kakfwi. Mr. Bell.

MR. BELL: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to thank the Minister for his comments. I would just like to add that what I am suggesting is that we create a specialized and specific department of industry. I am saying this with the understanding that industry today, in order to be successful, has to look at sustainable development and has to be in business with the idea and with the mandate of being a good corporate citizen. I think we have seen that companies that do not operate under these principles and guidelines are not successful in this day and age.

I would suggest to the Minister that we could possibly have a department or area that focuses strictly on industry, but keeps within these guidelines and mandate. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Thank you, Mr. Bell. Mr. Minister.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It is our intent to keep the department operating the way it is. There are no plans at this time to look at setting up an agency or department strictly to deal with industry. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): General comments? I have Mr. Lafferty on my list.

MR. LAFFERTY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to ask a question on this department. I see various North Slave items. I do not recognize any of these lakes or trails or anything like that. I am just wondering if maybe the previous Member for North Slave gave the budget away, or what is the case here?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Minister.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I believe the Member is referring to parks that are mostly in the vicinity of the Yellowknife area, along the Ingraham Trail, which are projects funded through the North Slave Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development offices. I believe that is what the Member is looking at, such as Fred Henne Park, Hidden Lake Park, Ingraham Trail Parks and Signs, Prelude Lake Park and Reid Lake.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Thank you, Mr. Minister. Mr. Lafferty.

MR. LAFFERTY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am wondering why they put the name North Slave on it, when you have other names like Yellowknife Headquarters, Yellowknife...you also have headquarters. I am just wondering, do they not have enough money and they have to use North Slave's money? I do not understand why, Mr. Minister, all of these areas are not in the North Slave region, but they fall under there. It seems like North Slave has no funds at all for any parks or anything of the sort, tourism, or anything at all. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. Mr. Minister.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The parks, such as the one out by the airport, Fred Henne Park, some of the parks along the Ingraham Trail, are all projects that are funded on a regional basis. The funds come out of the North Slave regional allocation. That is why it is not seen as a headquarters project.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Thank you, Mr. Minister. Mr. Lafferty.

MR. LAFFERTY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In the last few weeks, listening to the funding and everything, sometimes I am thrown into Fort Smith. Sometimes I am in North Slave. I am just in limbo here. Maybe the government can put regions and departments in their right place. It would be easier for me when I am speaking to my constituents. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. Mr. Minister.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to thank the Member for the comment. We have discussed this briefly in Fort Providence. Some of our remarks have referenced that. We know the Dogrib region is emerging through the claims and self-government negotiations as a distinct, stand-alone type of region. It has to be identified separately from the Fort Smith region. Some work needs to be done towards that.

After the Session is over, sometime in April, we will be meeting as a Cabinet to develop some thinking and suggestions along that line. Hopefully, we can move on the suggestion the Member is making. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Any general comments or questions? Mr. Miltenberger.

MR. MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have a number of questions. I am wondering if I can get clarification from the Minister on the summary of the interim appropriation. Under economic development, there is an item, sunsetting, of \$1.6 million. I was wondering if the Minister could clarify what that is?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Mr. Minister.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. This was money that was committed to assist Giant Mine in doing exploration work. This is the last year for that commitment. It is sunsetting. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Thank you, Mr. Minister. Mr. Miltenberger.

MR. MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Could the Minister also indicate, under the interim appropriation, how much was the development fund out of the interim appropriation? How much of that money is targeted for the Business Development Fund?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Minister.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, the allocation has not yet been decided. The total amount of grants and contributions, as you can see in the figures, is \$5.3 million. That would include all grants and loans that are handled by the department through community features, the Devcorp, PCC, plus regional offices. The specific allocations have not been done yet. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Thank you, Mr. Minister. Mr. Miltenberger.

MR. MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Could the Minister indicate when such a number will be identified, so people have an idea of where the money they are asking for is going?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Minister.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. This will become clear as we develop our business plans. The business plans will be submitted to the standing committees, I believe in the last week of May. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Mr. Miltenberger.

MR. MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. With the Department of Health, we had a concern that they put \$200,000 as a holding figure that they were not sure where they were going to spend it. They just wanted to have it in there, until they got around to spending it wherever they saw fit. I am concerned to hear the department is asking to approve a fairly large chunk of money that they will decide later on how it will be divided up.

So it causes me some concern, Mr. Chairman, from that perspective and the Minister is very vague. They want the money now, but they will decide in June even though the interim appropriation is for April, May and June. They will decide when the business plans are done where the money is going to be spent. What are they going to do with the money in the meantime?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Minister Kakfwi.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. This, as you know, is done to reflect historical patterns, and is a target of what we think we will need in the first four months of this coming year. We already have commitments to the different agencies and groups that we fund for grants and contributions. The BCC, the community and regional groups that we have commitments to, as well as the development corporations. So it is not like it is a huge cheque that we are asking for, and we are going to decide later on how to spend it. Most of it has been called for already. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Thank you, Minister Kakfwi. Mr. Miltenberger.

MR. MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate that clarification from the Minister, which is somewhat different from his first answer. Could the Minister confirm that there will be money put into the Business Development Fund for April, for the entire corporation?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Minister Kakfwi.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI: Yes.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Miltenberger.

MR. MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have some questions about the money put into the budget here for energy conservation. The issue of a territorial-wide comprehensive energy strategy, and the need for community energy planning, is a critical one. Could the Minister indicate, under this title "Energy Contribution", what the work is targeted for? It says that it is going to be completed and paid out by July. Is it for a plan, a strategy? What is it for?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Mr. Kakfwi.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Mr. McLeod will take the question.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Thank you. The deputy minister, Mr. McLeod.

MR. BOB MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. This money for energy conservation is a program that, I believe, came over from Public Works, and it is made available to a number of groups by application. The draw on this fund is quite rapid and it is usually all expended early in the fiscal year. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Mr. Miltenberger.

MR. MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. So, if Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development was going to do any work on energy strategy, where would that money be reflected? Or is that some other department mandate?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Minister Kakfwi.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI: In the area of energy, we have been doing some work with the Arctic Energy Alliance. Apparently, one of the things that we are working on is a greenhouse gas strategy right here in the North. I believe that is something that we are going to try and finish in the next few months. That will prepare us to deal with an overall national strategy that is also in the works. I think that is what the resources are identified for. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Thank you, Minister Kakfwi. Mr. Miltenberger.

MR. MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have a question as well about this Northwest Territories Arctic Tourism marketing for \$488,000. Is any of that money spent in the regions, or do we continue to put all of our money into a centralized tourism marketing agency? I am thinking specifically about Big River Travel, and those other groups that are trying to resurrect themselves and give a regional perspective to tourism.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Minister Kakfwi.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI: Thank you. It goes to the Northwest Territories Tourism Association. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Thank you. Mr. Miltenberger.

MR. MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. So, can we assume then that all that money is parked in Yellowknife? And they, in Yellowknife, decide how they are going to do marketing for tourism across the Northwest Territories and that money is not put out into the regions? There is no tie in with regional tourism initiatives? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Minister Kakfwi.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI: Mr. Chairman, I believe the association is located here and we have committed to providing dollars to them, so they in turn can provide services to their membership. It is probably true that they have an office here. It pays for services that are provided to their tourism operators. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Thank you, Minister Kakfwi. Your time is up, Mr. Miltenberger. Any general comments? Mr. Dent.

MR. DENT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to follow up on the same issue that my colleague was just asking about. This is \$488,000 marked for tourism marketing. Could I find out if this is the extent of the money that will be spent by the department on marketing the Northwest Territories in the next year?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Minister Kakfwi.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI: Mr. Chairman, I think that the number the Member is looking at is not even included in the interim appropriation. It is not the total for the year. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Thank you. Mr. Dent

MR. DENT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Here is where I am confused, because at the top of the sheet of paper that we were provided, it says this is a summary of contracts committed for the full year. So, if this is not the full year's expenditure for tourism marketing, perhaps the Minister could let us know what is the total amount of money that is planned for tourism marketing in the Northwest Territories this year?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Minister Kakfwi.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Apparently, the total amount that is committed for the year is somewhere in the neighbourhood of \$900,000. Not all of the dollars are indicated in the figure that the Member is referring to.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Mr. Dent.

MR. DENT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. So, the balance of the \$400,000, approximately, that would still be outstanding, are those funds administered or distributed by the department? Or are they administered by the association and parceled out to tourism operators to promote their business?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Minister Kakfwi.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The department provides the money directly to the association.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Mr. Dent.

MR. DENT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I understood that the department made a contribution to the association. I guess what I am trying to understand is this \$488,000, which is shown as a contract. I understood from answers that Mr. Miltenberger had received that it was actually a contribution to the association. In addition to that money, the Minister had mentioned that there was another \$400,000.

That additional \$400,000, is that maintained by the department and then parceled out to individual operators throughout the year? Or is that used by the department to purchase ads in magazines? I am trying to get a sense of how that additional money is used. Assuming that this additional \$488,000 is being giving to the tourism marketing association.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Thank you, Mr. Dent. Minister Kakfwi.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI: Mr. McLeod will take the question.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): The deputy minister, Mr. McLeod

MR. BOB MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. A portion of that goes to the tourism association. I should add that within the regional operations, each of the regions has an allocation of money for tourism activities. There is a small amount in each of the regions as well. For the most part, in a normal year, if we did not have the interim appropriations, most of the money that you are referring to goes to the Northwest Territories Arctic Tourism. The department does have a role to play in terms of developing tourism products and also in dealing with tourism, so that is where the difference lies. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Mr. Dent.

MR. DENT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. There was a substantial reduction in the amount of money that was provided to the tourism associations over the past few years. I think that a concern of a number of people in this House is that we do not spend enough money promoting the North, particularly in comparison to other jurisdictions like the Yukon. Their government spends a tremendous amount of money to promote the territory. I think that many of us believe we have tremendous potential in tourism and that we need to assist tourism operators better, in order to achieve that potential.

I think that we can get more jobs for Northerners if we can get more tourists to come here and visit this Territory. I would just like to get a sense as to whether the Minister has given any consideration to increasing the budget for marketing tourism in the Northwest Territories? Would he at least consider looking at some way to improve the support to the tourism marketing associations in the Territories in the business planning process?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Minister Kakfwi.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We have had, as all Members are aware, very limited resources in the last number of years because of the loss of the economic development agreement funding. That was not replaced. Also, because of the cutbacks that the government undertook in the last five years. What we have done is taken what limited resources we had and focused on the diamond development, and more recently on the oil and gas activity. There has been

in increase in the allocation for tourism, mostly because we are waiting on an economic strategy, which is currently being developed.

As well, we have been lobbying for several years now to get the federal government prepared to provide some generic funding to us again. Funding for economic development that is no longer available to Nunavut, the Northwest Territories or the Yukon. We have recently raised this with the federal government through discussions with both Mr. Nault and Paul Martin. There is a draft economic strategy that may be available to us, hopefully in the next week or so. If the co-chairs of the economic advisory panel are prepared to share it with us, we can have a preliminary glance at it with the federal government, and see if it is something that they can use as a basis for giving new dollars to us to assist in the development and promotion of the North economically through a strategy paper. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Thank you, Mr. Kakfwi. Mr. Dent.

MR. DENT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would hope that we are left with putting some emphasis on promoting tourism. I think there is a lot of room for us to do more than what we are doing.

I still have a few other questions. I know under activity 313, trade and investment, I see a number of contracts proposed. Again, it says they are full year contracts, according to the documentation we received. There is not a lot of explanation for them.

For instance, the contract for \$25,000 to Alec MacPherson, or \$20,000 to the Mackenzie Valley. I am just wondering if we could get some information about what these contracts are for. Could we get some confirmation as to whether or not the amounts shown here really are for the full year or if, like the Northwest Territories Arctic Tourism Marketing Strategy, funding that is not really a full year?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): The deputy minister, Mr. McLeod.

MR. BOB MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I guess I will start with Mr. MacPherson. Mr. MacPherson is hired by the government and his costs are cost-shared by a number of departments. He provides advice in the trade and investment area. Also, he is located in Ottawa. In a lot of instances, we cannot make it to many of the meetings that are called in Ottawa. A lot of them are on very short notice and for short periods of time. So, we utilize Mr. MacPherson to cover those meetings and to report back to us. So his services save the government money in the long-run.

You mentioned there were four other ones. I am just looking for them here. Kirk Computers provides us with computer services assistance. Manufacturers Association, that is a core funding to the Manufacturers Association. Mackenzie Valley, we have contracted them to develop a report as to value-added opportunities related to natural gas development. That is a consultant service through the Science Institute, I believe. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Mr. Dent, your time is up. Mr. Miltenberger.

MR. MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Just to follow up on Mr. MacPherson, the deputy indicated that this

was cost-shared. Is this figure, \$25,000, the big figure other departments are charged back, or pay their share, or does Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development pay \$25,000 and other departments pay similar amounts to this gentleman? Could the Minister or deputy clarify that Mr. MacPherson contract a bit further, please?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): The deputy minister, Mr. McLeod.

MR. BOB MCLEOD: My understanding is that this is what we pay and we charge back. I believe the total amount of his contract is about \$100,000 or \$125,000 a year, or something in that range. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Mr. Miltenberger.

MR. MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. So, Mr. MacPherson in fact is paid \$125,000 a year to attend meetings. This is just a portion of that \$125,000 and that is cost-shared with other departments?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Mr. McLeod.

MR. BOB MCLEOD: Yes, that is my understanding. This is for a four-month interim appropriation, and we cost-share our work to other departments. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Mr. Miltenberger.

MR. MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. So between that gentleman and Mr. Elliott, there is \$300,000, almost \$400,000 in consulting fees. Is that correct? Not to mention the other folks here that are consultants that you have, which I am assuming are just a small fraction. Like Interpolar Consultants, for \$20,000. I have a feeling that figure for the year is more like \$80,000.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Mr. Minister.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI: Thank you. This is a request through interim appropriation. It is based on what we had allocated last year. These are two areas, as I pointed out, requiring services of people who know the business that we do not, that are not currently available in the Northwest Territories. So we are contracting for those services. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Mr. Miltenberger.

MR. MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I will save further comments on that particular item for the business plans. I have some questions on the trade missions, the \$178,000 that is budgeted. What would be the total figure for the year? Is this, once again, based on current or historical spending patterns? What trade missions are in the works? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Minister Kakfwi.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Apparently, because most of the trade missions are done in this first part of the fiscal year, this is roughly 70 percent of what we usually spend on an annual basis. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Mr. Miltenberger.

MR. MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. So, since I have to do the basic math here, it is about \$250,000. Could I ask the Minister to identify what trade missions they had planned for this year? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Minister Kakfwi.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI: Thank you. Some of the examples are, for instance, Minister Antoine is off on a trade mission to Alaska. We have had trade missions to the Yukon, which is also included in this current trade mission. I think there are trade missions to Nunavut and Greenland being planned. As well, in the past there have been trade missions to British Columbia, Alberta and Manitoba. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Mr. Miltenberger.

MR. MILTENBERGER: The Minister made reference to some past ones, plus Mr. Antoine's current trade mission, which I assume comes out of the current fiscal year. He has identified possibly Greenland and Nunavut. Is that the extent of the anticipated trade missions for the coming year?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Minister Kakfwi.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I can provide more updated information to the Members, but mostly these trade missions are plans initiated by the Chamber of Commerce and the business community, so we allocate monies annually for these types of activities. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Mr. Miltenberger.

MR. MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Could the Minister indicate then, the money that is here for trade missions is not used for government people, it is used to fund non-government people to attend along with the government employees?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Minister Kakfwi.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI: Thank you. We provide and it is cost-shared with the different groups. For instance, we were on Team Canada. I think there have been trade missions to the Orient. There was one planned for last year that, I think, was cancelled. There was one to China. Fortunately or unfortunately for me, I think it is right during the planned November Session. I may or may not be in China. I may be with you or I might be in China then. But those are missions that we pay our share of.

There are suggestions for missions to southern Alberta. There was one held earlier, I believe, to northern Alberta and British Columbia and there was work being done by what you call Northwestern Ministers to develop a rough economic cooperation planning strategy for northern British Columbia, Alberta and Saskatchewan to develop what they call the Northwest Cooperation Planning Strategy. There was some work done to address that. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Mr. Miltenberger.

MR. MILTENBERGER: Mr. Chairman, sorry, it must be the lateness of the day for me, but it is still not clear to me. Is this \$178,000 or \$250,000 for the year, is that used to cover Ministerial and government travel or is that used to pay non-government people? Or is it used, like with the federal

government, they just send us a bill for our share and it comes out of this? They send us a bill for our share of a trade mission and it comes out of this money?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Minister Kakfwi.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We cost-share most of these trade missions, except the international ones, which I think the Government of Canada pays most of it. They invite us along and we pay, I do not know what portion of it. On the national ones we are cost-sharing with the groups like the Chamber of Commerce. So they provide some funding, but I think a good part of the funding comes from this government. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Mr. Miltenberger, your time is up. Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My question is in regard to contacts that this government is presently in. I would just like to know from the Minister, do these contracts also cover retainer contracts with different companies? Is this it or are there more contracts out there in which people are being held on retainer contracts for services that may be needed down the road? Do you have a list of the retainer contracts that this department presently holds?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Minister Kakfwi.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI: Thank you. I am advised that all the contracts that we hold with people are included in the list that we have provided. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Can the Minister tell us who on this list of people are on retainer contract? Will they be doing any work, which will be over and above the retainer fees in the next four months?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Minister Kakfwi.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI: Not that we are aware of, no.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am not too clear on the answer. Are any of these consultants going to be doing any work on behalf of this government in the next four months on any special projects we are presently looking at?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Minister Kakfwi.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI: The contracts that are listed show the ones that are individuals that we are going to contract for, and the amounts. These are for the year. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. On the main estimates, which are coming up in the next couple of months, will we have a better breakdown of the actual costs which will be over and above this list here? This is only for a four-month period, so will we be seeing a list which will be carrying us over for the next eight months, which will possibly exceed this? Will this be an ongoing process, or is this for a one-year retainer fee? Is this for the whole year or is this just for four months?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Minister Kakfwi.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. These contracts, as they vary with the ones that we know about, are included. To the best of our knowledge, the ones that were fairly clear about what the annual commitment is are included. Where the contracts may vary, have been changed through the course of the year, we have included only what we think we require based on the historical basis for the first four months. These will become available to the Members through the quarterly report. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Maybe I should ask the question another way. Are any of these contracts, these numbers that we have listed here for a whole year? Is the retainer contract that is in place there for a whole year?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Minister Kakfwi.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We are not clear exactly which ones are and are not the larger ones. We are pretty sure it is for the entire year. For instance, the contract with Mr. Elliott and the amount for Fort Resolution and Fort Providence, the Integrated Management Committee work. But other than that, I think most of the smaller ones are historical spending based on four months. If the Member wants to know precisely, we can provide that information. We just do not have that available right here. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The reason I ask is that in the case of the diamond consultant, we are paying \$225,000. That is for four months. So, realistically, that is why I ask, is this a one-year contract or is it a four-month contract? So we can make clarification if that is for one year or for four months. We are talking one quarter of the season, adding on eight months to it is almost \$700,000. The question I am trying to put is this number that is presently on the books is \$225,000. If that is for four months, we are actually talking \$700,000 if it is based on a one-year contract. Can the Minister tell me exactly, is that a one-year contract or is that for four months?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Minister Kakfwi.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The \$225,000 shown for contract with Mr. Elliott is for the whole year. We know that is what it was last year. So it is not just for a quarter. The other amounts that we have listed here, as I have said, we can provide a list as to which ones are funding for the first four months based on historical spending. We will give that to the Member. We just do not have that available right here.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I look forward to getting that information. On another matter, economic development contracts or the program itself regarding business grants, we know that there are, presently, very limited resources that are out there for helping small business, to start to look at economic business plans and to get the business sector going. Can the Minister tell if there are any new dollars that are going to be coming forth in the new fiscal year regarding the projected dollars that are there now? They are

very limited. I would like to know if we are going to be seeing any increases in the next year in that area compared to the limited resources we have now.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Minister Kakfwi.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It is far too early to comment on it. Of course, it is always good to have additional resources made available to promote businesses, whether it is in grants or contributions, especially to our communities, but it is far too early to make that comment. As to whether or not there is going to be an increase this year, we will be dealing with that through the business planning cycle. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): General comments. Mr. McLeod.

MR. MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to ask a question regarding oil and gas initiatives and if we can count on seeing some dollars spent in the area. As the Minister is aware, many of the communities in my riding, the Hay River Reserve, Kakisa, Fort Providence, are spending a great deal of time on educating themselves as to the process as indicated. We have a lot to learn on the diamond industry, the same case for oil and gas. There are other communities out there throughout the Deh Cho, Nahanni Butte, Trout Lake, that are all also trying to bring themselves up to speed on gas initiatives. Many of them are working on planning and setting up management plans and impact agreements and drafting different documents. I would like to ask the Minister if there was any money earmarked this coming year as part of this interim appropriation for oil and gas, as I believe last year there was very little, if any. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Minister Kakfwi.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I believe we are providing additional dollars for the first four months, of \$185,000. That is to put one person in the Delta, another person in the Sahtu and one in the Deh Cho to help communities in the regions, support them in their efforts and interests in getting them to understand and involved in the oil and gas business. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Mr. McLeod.

MR. MCLEOD: Thank you. I am glad to hear that. I have a question on a different matter, and it is something that Mr. Miltenberger referred to and is of great concern to me, regarding the BDF funding for this year. I understand from the Minister's answer that it has not been defined as to what the budget is going to be. I have a very sincere concern as the last year, I believe the BDF budget for the South Slave Region, of which the Deh Cho riding sits in, received only \$200,000, and that was spent by the end of June. I am very concerned this may be the case again. I would really like to have a more definite answer, if I could, as the money may be spent before the new budgets are even set. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Minister Kakfwi.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We try to allocate money on a fair and equitable basis. It is true that some communities and regions have a high demand, a lot of proposals coming forward that use up the contribution allocations made available to them rather quickly. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Mr. McLeod.

MR. MICHAEL MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. One final question regarding the letter you submitted to Mr. Roland. You indicate in there, on an item for Kakisa regarding Lady Evelyn Falls, I am assuming it is to do a park expansion, that the scope of the work was reduced and funding moved to the master plan and the remainder of funding will move to various South Slave projects. Could you clarify what that is all about and what it means?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): The deputy minister, Mr. McLeod.

MR. BOB MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My understanding is that in the previous plan, it was anticipated that work would be done to expand the Lady Evelyn Falls campground area across the road and to increase the capacity. At this time, that project has been reduced and now it has been planned for a longer period of time. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Thank you. Mr. McLeod.

MR. MICHAEL MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I apologize but I do not understand. Does that mean the project has been deferred? I am not familiar with the term reduced. Does that mean it has been bumped?

It is my understanding that the only way the campground can be expanded is to go to the opposite side of the road. I am not clear as to what the answer was.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Thank you. Mr. Bob McLeod.

MR. BOB MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. What it means is we have spread the project out over a longer period of time, so the total project, which is over five years, is valued at approximately \$665,000. It will be spread out over a five-year period of time. The majority of the work will be done about three years down the road.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Thank you. Mr. Miltenberger, general comments.

MR. MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just have a couple more questions. In regards to Mr. Elliott, the diamond industry consultant, could the Minister clarify the \$225,000 for the year? Is that a retainer? If he actually does any work, is there a charge over and above that, or does that cover whatever labour he may do for us as well?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Minister Kakfwi.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I think there is some interest in Mr. Elliott, so I think we will prepare an information item for some Members that could give some idea as to why the retainer is of the amount. My understanding of it is that we know what the going rate is with people in this business, with people with certain credentials and standing in the business community. We will also provide a summary of the type of work and services that are provided by this gentleman. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Mr. Miltenberger.

MR. MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. So the Minister is asking for us to agree to give him the money and then he will explain later after we have committed it to the actual particulars. Is that what he is suggesting?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Minister Kakfwi.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Not at all. The Legislature has already approved this in a prior year. It is an ongoing contract and a retainer that was approved previously. Mr. Elliott has been on a retainer with us. We are saying that the contract has been worthwhile. It is the view of the department that we have to keep current and abreast of developments in the diamond industry. That in order to move and speak with confidence, we need to be advised by someone who knows what is going on, and advises us in how we should be talking and who we should see, the events and conferences we should know about and make sure we are invited to.

For instance, the recent international conference. That did not just happen by accident. There has been a lot of work done. For the first time, we were invited to speak for Canada, by the industry, about diamonds. These types of things have a value and a significance that is hard to rationalize.

My advice to the Member is that he should see it as a very good investment. The fact is, through advice from Mr. Elliott and other people that he has introduced us to, while it does not produce anything for Fort Smith, it has produced something for Yellowknife, for the Yellowknives, for the Dogribs, for people who are benefiting from the significant progress and developments that we have been able to achieve in regards to value-added activities around diamonds. We will continue to retain the services of Mr. Elliott because we are by no means done.

We will continue to do work. We need advice in doing business with BHP and Diavik. We need to continue dealing with people like Aber Resources and Sirius Diamonds and Deton Diamonds, as well as other international diamonddeers. We do need an advisor. Mr. Elliott is a well-established, well-known credible diamonddeer.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Mr. Miltenberger.

MR. MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. So, to be clear, the Minister is at least somewhat conversant with this gentleman. So let me ask again, is it a \$225,000 retainer? Is that the full cost? If he does actual work for us, does he get money over and above that \$225,000? I am a big fan of investments and strategic investments and all of that other good stuff, and, unlike the Minister, I am still hopeful that there will be benefits from diamonds in my constituency as well. As a legislator, being responsible for the expenditure of public funds, when we are spending a quarter of a million dollars, I would like to have a clear sense of the cost. I do not think that is an unreasonable request. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Minister Kakfwi.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The amount shown is the full cost of the contract. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Mr. Miltenberger.

MR. MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That was not too hard at all. I have a question about tourism and marketing for \$488,000. Back in the 12th Assembly, the government made a decision, a relatively unilateral decision, that they were going to centralize the functions of tourism and marketing into two operations. One in Yellowknife and one in the east, I think it was Rankin.

The people in the South Slave, I know, find this particular arrangement very unsatisfactory. I have raised this a matter in the House a number of times, the need to look at, now especially as we are a freestanding Territory, being able to support the regional tourism associations. To, in fact, get some on-the-ground tourism support in the regions, and not just have it in Yellowknife, where they will periodically venture out into the regions.

I would like to ask the Minister, in his capacity as being responsible for this particular department, are they prepared to look at that? Have they had any discussions? I know that the Big River Travel Association, has held meetings on their own, on ways that they can look ahead. I agree with them that this current arrangement is not satisfactory, if we are looking at decentralizing and recognizing the regional interests in tourism. I would appreciate the Minister's feedback on that. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Minister Kakfwi.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. There is a tourism strategy that is presently being developed and it should become available in the next couple of months. I think that will address the issue that the Member is raising. It has been raised by a number of people over the last couple of years. Hopefully, the tourism strategy should help us focus on that particular issue. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Mr. Miltenberger.

MR. MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Is the Minister saying that there is going to be a move away from the highly centralized Northwest Territories Arctic Tourism to a more regionalized approach again? How it is going to be done? Is it going to be defined in the strategy? Or is he just saying that it may be referenced, but we are going to keep on with the same old, same old? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Minister Kakfwi.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We are trying to get advice from the private sector and from governments on what is the best strategy to engage in and develop tourism. All I am saying is that we tried a regional based approach for a number of years, and it did not seem to be going anywhere. We then centralized. The merits of that remain to be seen.

Hopefully, we will get advice from the tourism strategy that is currently being developed as to what should the approach of this government be. I am not suggesting that any particular approach is the best. I am mainly interested in hearing what the advice will be. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Thank you. At this time, we will recess for 15 minutes, and Mr. Delorey will be next for questions or comments.

-- Break

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): I will call the committee back to order. We are on Hay River territorial parks. Mr. Delorey.

MR. DELOREY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. On the item of Hay River territorial parks, there is \$110,000. In the five-year plan, there is \$605,000. Is this \$110,000 part of an ongoing project that is in the process?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Minister Kakfwi.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I believe the money is to continue to build a capacity at this campground. It is in the Hay River Territorial Park. It is to expand the capacity and improve the services. It is well used, and one of the more used park sites that we have. It is in the fourth year of a six-year redevelopment plan. It gets very overcrowded, so we are continuing to try to build the capacity so it can handle more visitors. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Mr. Delorey.

MR. DELOREY: This \$110,000 has nothing to do with wages or contracts awarded for the running of the park?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Minister Kakfwi.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI: Yes, that is correct.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Mr. Delorey.

MR. DELOREY: I was wondering if the department is aware of, or if there is any money allocated here for the problem with sewage disposal and water for recreational vehicles in the tourism area in Hay River? Where it is set up now at the tourist information booth? Is there any money allocated for changing that site?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Minister Kakfwi.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI: Thank you. We are not aware of it, but we can check into the comment made by the Member. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Mr. Delorey.

MR. DELOREY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Would the department find that information out for me? There is a major concern. Last year the pump out and resupply for motor homes and campers coming into town was creating an awful odour problem for some of the residents, and they were after getting that site changed. I was wondering if the department was aware of it, and if they have made arrangements to do anything about it. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Minister Kakfwi.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI: We will get back to the Member on it. We will check into it. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Mr. Delorey. General comments. Mr. Nitah.

MR. NITAH: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My question has to do with the Economic Strategy Panel. Can we have a status report on that and when we will see some results? If we could have some influence towards those results and the strategy that is going to be developed. Is it going to be reflective of the current financial situation that we are in or what we hope to be in? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Minister Kakfwi.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. There is a draft economic strategy that is presently being developed. I understand that the advisory panel, the co-chairs have called a meeting of the panel for the 5th and 6th, or the 6th and 7th of

April, so that they can have a look at the draft strategy that they hope to have developed and written by then. Hopefully, all things considered, if it is in focus, on track, and in line with what the panel has in mind, then perhaps within a month, a couple of months, there should be a final document that will be available. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Mr. Nitah.

MR. NITAH: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you for that information. I am just wondering about the rationale on using the current deputy ministers as panel members, in light of a similar initiative undertaken with the Government of the Northwest Territories with Diamond Square Senior Managers. They were the ones who sat on the panel to develop a secondary industry. Why was a similar group of individuals not used within the government? I was just wondering, if the deputy ministers are very busy, they may not give us their focused attention as managers within the government.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Minister Kakfwi.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The strategy we used to make some gains in the diamond industry has been one that has been put together by different people over the last few years, but largely driven by Cabinet and Ministers. The Economic Strategy is a strategy that we felt, as a government, should be driven by people by the communities from industry, from aboriginal communities. So the panel is made up largely of non-government people.

Once they do the work on what the economic strategy should be, then they will go to us as a government, to the federal government and hopefully it will be something well in line with our own ideas about what a strategy should entail. We are the ones who need the strategy. We have decided that accomplishing a strategy could not be developed in-house by government. It had to come from the communities and the people. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Thank you, Mr. Minister. General comments or questions for the Minister? Mr. Braden.

MR. BRADEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to look at an area regarding preparations for eventual gas development down in the Mackenzie Valley. In some of the briefing information that the department supplied to our committee, under a number of the department's initiatives, it talks about things underway under oil and gas. Under corporate management, reference to the Mackenzie Valley Development Planning Process, which I understand has petroleum and gas development at its core. Under environmental protection, there is reference to gas development. Under trade and investment, developing a report on issues related to value added potential. Under community, economic development services, developing economic models. Minerals, oil and gas, of course, three or four bullets talked about gas and pipeline development.

Our committee was also informed from a letter by the president of the Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers (CAPP) that organization has put together a northern group focused on gearing up for this. My question, Mr. Chairman, while all these things are taking shape under the Department of Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development, does the Minister see a kind of central or coordinating agency that will be an umbrella, that will be a central focus for not only this government's work,

but other government's departments as well in gearing up for this?

The context of my question, I guess I can relate it back to the diamond development. When that potential really started to become evident early in the 1990s, government was scrambling to catch up on its intelligence and get up to speed on its capacity. I wonder if we are seeing the same thing with the pipeline development. Is the government trying to look at this in a coordinated fashion?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Mr. Minister.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We like to think we are. We know that we have to work with the producer or the developers as well as with the regulators. The federal government, groups like Industry Canada, Natural Resources Canada, Indian and Northern Affairs, will play a role. They need to find some ways to coordinate their work with us, or we do, mostly. As well, we need to coordinate our work with the aboriginal organizations or the aboriginal leaders to ensure that we know of the efforts they are making, we recognize the efforts, and where we can we support them in work and put our efforts in coordination with them.

We know that the federal government is prepared to work with us on that. We have asked for some money to provide support to the aboriginal groups so that they can get adequate advice and support in their quest to build and manage a northern pipeline. We need to work with the regions in the communities. We are providing them with some dollars as well. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Mr. Braden.

MR. BRADEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am still looking for some indication that the department will be seeking some kind of a framework or an administrative arrangement that will be able to bring all this together, if you will. The phrase that we often use is a "one-stop shop", right now, if some inquiry came out of the blue and said "I would like to know something about oil and gas or the gas development in the Northwest Territories". I am wondering who or what office I would send them to start with, because it is certainly evident that there are many tentacles starting to grow from this thing. This is a good thing. We need to build our capacity, but to centralize and coordinate is what I am looking for, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Minister.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We do not have anything outside of the department as of yet. That probably would happen if it were something that is of interest to the federal government and the aboriginal representatives. At this time in the department, we have minerals, oil and gas division that is under Doug Matthews. This is the section that deals with all of our activities with regards to minerals, oil and gas. But there is no "one-stop shop" identified at this time outside of the department.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Nitah.

MR. NITAH: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would just like to ask a couple of questions relating to Mr. Braden's questions. We know that in the Northwest Territories our economic backbone is going to be resource development. Minerals, oil and gas is going to be a big part of that, but the word industry comes to mind.

When I say industry, I am talking about the tourism industry. I am talking about the trapping industry. I am talking about the forestry industry. I am talking about the fisheries industry. Right now what I am seeing is dual Ministerial responsibilities in this area. Where you have one Minister responsible for diamonds, another Minister responsible for oil and gas. It is kind of confusing. I have a hard time picturing what processes are available within the government. If I am having a hard time, imagine how the average Joe out there in the communities will fare.

But if we are going to convince the aboriginal governments and the federal governments that resource development responsibilities are to be transferred to the Government of the Northwest Territories, I think we are going to have to do a better job at informing people about what we do. For that reason, I think that we should really consider having a stand-alone department to deal with this. If we are going to develop the resources in a responsible way, then we are going to have to let people know how it is going to be done, where it is going to be done, the rules and regulations.

The biggest stigma that is on the Northwest Territories right now is regulatory regime, and what kind of influence do we have on the Mackenzie Valley Resource Management Act to ensure that there is a clear, consistent route that investors could take in getting permits for resource development to happen. I do not see that.

Would the government consider establishing such a department where their concentration is for the management of resource development and industry separate from environmental protection? Environmental protection is very important to everyone in the Northwest Territories, including developers. But to try to do both under one umbrella sends mixed signals. So my question is, would the government consider creating a department solely for industry, the backbone of our financial future? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Minister.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, a number of years ago, we had three departments: Economic Development and Tourism; Renewable Resources; and Energy, Mines and Petroleum Resources. When the federal government reduced our budget, we undertook to form one department out of three. The target was to initially save \$5 million. About two months into the exercise, we were asked to cut \$10 million. We met that target, and what resulted from that was a new department called Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development.

We think that we can make the argument that it has been a good approach to a "one stop shop" to deal with economic development. It has been efficient. We have saved ongoing costs of \$10 million to the government and reduced the size of headquarters considerably. So, at this time, there are no intentions to review that with the idea of creating two or three departments, where one is currently serving the needs of this government. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Nitah.

MR. NITAH: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I understand the need to save dollars, but I would argue the fact we are in different situation than we were in a few years back. I think the people of Northwest Territories would like to see some form of

movement. The question of transparency is still there. Who is responsible for what within Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development? It has been brought to my personal knowledge that even within Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development people responsible for the different areas that are under Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development are not working well together.

The morale is down because of new direction. Because of that, we are losing people with valuable skills. If that is the case, it is not working. I do not see anyone out there telling me that it is working. People from the communities are not telling me that it is working. People from the industry are not telling me that it is working.

The question about influence in the Mackenzie Valley Resource Management Act for care processes, for permitting processes, I do not see that being done or how it is going to work in the department. It is obvious by the dual Ministerial responsibilities within the department that it is too big for one Minister to handle. Therefore, it has been divided up between different Ministers.

Where an individual who may want to buy stocks in companies that are operating in the Northwest Territories, and he wants to ask information of the government; perhaps he is enquiring about Diavik or oil and gas, where he or she has been directed to one Minister for one area, and another Minister for the other area and the Minister responsible for that area... there are questions to be asked.

I think we could still do better. I know the reasons that we have done this. In light of our aspirations to develop the resources up here and to derive the benefits and financial resources from it, I think we have to do better than that to create an investment climate that is acceptable all around. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Minister.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I do not see the issue anywhere here in the interim appropriation, but it is always good to revisit larger issues from time to time. There is no question that we have a morale problem in the department. We had a lot of uncertainty when we first set up the department. Some felt we were constitutionally incapable of balancing, in a fair way, environmental concerns with wildlife concerns with interest in developing the economy, creating jobs, getting diamond mines to open and operate. But I think that we have dispelled that, and not through grandiose statements, but by the fact that BHP Diamonds is operating a mine, and Diavik is hopefully on its way to realizing that.

We have also shown the commitment to handle environmental issues and wildlife issues. This has been well done. We are currently setting up to do a huge undertaking in writing up the Wildlife Act, as no one has tackled that in over twenty years. We have successfully completed a Protected Areas Strategy, and we have, I like to think successfully, to date managed to get a substantial benefit out of diamonds that was not made readily available in the beginning.

Again, we have done that through a one-department approach. So the argument can be made that there is a substantial reason to believe that the idea of putting the environment, the wildlife, the economic initiatives under one department was a wise one, and it has substantially benefited this government

and the people in the regions and communities. That is truly what I believe.

In any case, if there was some possible merit in thinking that we would be better served to have two or three departments again, we have even less money than we did a number of years ago. So there is no way that we can ever get Members, like the Member for Thebacha, to agree that we should create more jobs at the headquarters level, and proliferation of the bureaucracy would meet with very staunch opposition. I happen to disagree with the Member. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): I think Mr. Minister, if we could avoid using people's names, just so we do not have other people taking offence to comments. So if we could keep peoples names out of our statements. General comments? Mr. Roland.

MR. ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The departments provided information to the committee, breaking down its operations and maintenance, capital and so on. For example, under integrated resource management, there are actually seven areas where it is integrated resource management.

I believe, that for example, the first bullet is integrated resource management and in brackets 'dc', does that mean Deh Cho? Then integrated resources management 'ev', one is 'hq' that has to be headquarters. Another one is 'ns-dr'. I do not know if that is Dogrib region. And then 'ns-ns'. Could we get some clarification on that? This is information that was provided by the department for review.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Minister.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That is correct. Those are designated for different regions that we have within the department.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Roland.

MR. ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Can he break that down, because there are a couple here such as 'vq'. I am not sure which one that is. And then 'ns-dr' and 'ns-ns'. Is that North Slave? I am not too sure of those two. Could we get clarification on that?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Thank you, Mr. Roland. Mr. Minister.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The first one, 'dc' is Deh Cho, 'ev' is the Inuvik, the Mackenzie Delta Beaufort area. Headquarters is 'hq'. The next one is North Slave, which is the Dogrib region. The next one is North Slave-North Slave, which is everything but the Dogrib region in this area. The next one is South Slave, and the last one, 'vq', is the Sahtu.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Thank you, Mr. Minister. Mr. Roland.

MR. ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Could we get information in the area of integrated resources? Is that the combination of oil, gas, diamonds, and environmental area? Can we get clarification on that?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. McLeod.

MR. MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Integrated resource management is under our fish and wildlife division. It is one aspect of it. It is the way our department is dealing with the different aspects in regard to resource management and the renewable resource side of things.

It includes all of the different areas of development in that field. In that division, we are attempting to capture all of those activities in those areas. It is also spread out over a number of regions as well. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Thank you, Mr. McLeod. General comments. Mr. Roland.

MR. ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. When I look at the summary of contracts committed for the full year, there were a number of questions earlier on that. There seemed to be some differing responses. In this one area, where it totals \$9.7 million, that is a full-year commitment. All of those numbers in here are full year commitments. Is that correct?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Minister.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We can provide a definitive list of which ones are and which ones are not full-year commitments. We do not have that information readily available. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Thank you, Mr. Minister. Mr. Roland.

MR. ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That would definitely be much needed, because if we look under resource management, economic development, for example. Under activity 313, trade and investment. There is an area here for Mackenzie Valley, \$20,000. Then I go further down to activity 330, minerals, oil and gas, you have an area of \$30,000, world petroleum congress. Those are the only two areas I see that I think refer to the Mackenzie Delta Oil and Gas work that is going on.

Then I see the one where it comes to diamond industry consultation. That was discussed to some degree earlier, but my comparison is oil and gas versus diamonds.

As we have heard much talk lately, oil and gas is going to be the future development of the Northwest Territories. It is going to keep us in a cycle of positive growth if we can get beyond this funding crisis we seem to find ourselves in on an ongoing basis? Is that correct? As I read this, under 313 trade and investment, you have the Mackenzie Valley at \$20,000. This is the document that says summary of contracts committed for the full year and other expenses originally required during interim period. Is that \$20,000 Mackenzie Valley and this maxim of \$30,000, those are the oil and gas? Or are there other oil and gas areas within this? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Minister.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In the oil and gas initiative, we tentatively plan to request over \$700,000 for the entire year. For the interim appropriation, I think we asked for about \$185,000. Most of this money will go outside of headquarters. It will go to the communities and regions. It is a different approach than we have taken on diamonds. At this time, it is the new money we are going to expend in support of the interest of oil and gas and promoting economic

opportunities and supporting communities and regions. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Thank you, Mr. Minister. General comments. Mr. Roland.

MR. ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Under the briefing that the department gave during a committee, work under diamond projects, at a total of \$541,000, was being expended or proposed to be expended by the department. How does that figure tie into the contracts that have been let? Is the \$225,000 also part of the \$541,000, or is that over and above?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Minister.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI: Thank you. That would be part of it. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Thank you. Mr. Roland.

MR. ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That \$225,000 for the consultant is part of the \$541,000. Does that come under operations and maintenance? Under the \$541,000, we have compensation benefits of \$101,000, grants and contributions of \$60,000 and operations and maintenance of \$380,000. What area would that come out of?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Minister.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI: Mr. Chairman, I am not clear on the question, but if he is asking where the money is coming from, it comes out of the operations and maintenance allocation of the contracts.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): General comments or questions for the Minister? Mr. Minister.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I forgot one part of the question asked by Mr. Nitah, as to whether or not the assignment of Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development is too big for one Minister.

I just wanted to comment that in the previous government the Department of Resources Wildlife and Economic Development was assigned to one Minister, along with the Justice portfolio. That was managed. The intent all along I think was, and it was never finessed to any large extent, was to share the responsibility for some of the work with, for instance, Finance, the Premier's Office and with the Department of Education.

In this scenario, we have an agreement that the Minister of Finance, the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs, the Minister of Education, the Deputy Premier, will all assist in carrying out the work of the department. They are attending meetings, functions, and giving speeches on behalf of the government.

These large time commitments are always difficult for one Minister to manage. It was always the intent to spread it out. At this time, there is a very good agreement amongst the Cabinet to share in the opportunities and the events that fall under this portfolio. It has created an opportunity to work together very well and to let everyone have a part in carrying out this responsibility. I just wanted to comment on that, which I missed earlier. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Thank you, Mr. Minister. General comments or questions for the Minister? Mr. Nitah.

MR. NITAH: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Since the Minister feels inclined to answer all questions, would he feel comfortable in answering the question about how to influence the Mackenzie Valley Resource Management Act, so that the regulatory regimes or review processes are clear and transparent and understandable? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): For Members, we are dealing with interim appropriation at this time. I think if you are asking questions, it should be directed to the interim appropriation. I am not too sure if there is anything in the interim appropriation regarding the Mackenzie Valley Resources Act, but if there is, maybe the Minister can add to that. The Minister can answer the question if he wishes. Mr. Minister.

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. There is some suggestion that this is a very unwieldy, cumbersome regulatory regime. In fact, it is a new regime. At least in the Sahtu, the regime presiding over the Sahtu part of the Mackenzie Valley Resource Management Regime has been working very well and processing applications and permits on a very timely basis. If the fear was there previously, there is reason to believe it should be unfounded. People setting up the boards and undertaking the work are working and moving to carry out their mandates and responsibilities in a very expeditious way. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Thank you, Mr. Minister. Questions for the Minister? Detail? We are on tab 6 of your binders, page 8 – 6, interim appropriation. We are dealing with Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development. Total Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development, operations and maintenance, \$41,134,000. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Page 8, Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development, total economic development capital, \$3,139,000. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): With that, I would like to thank the Minister and his witnesses. Thank you. Does the committee agree that we continue on with the Department of Transportation?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): At this time, I would like to ask the Minister responsible for Transportation if he has any opening comments.

HON. VINCE STEEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I will proceed with my opening comments.

Mr. Chairman, this afternoon the committee of the whole is reviewing the 2000-2001 interim appropriation for the Department of Transportation. The proposed appropriation for the department includes an operations and maintenance component of \$22.2 million with a capital component of \$17.7 million. Altogether, the department's requested appropriation for the first four months of the 2000-2001 fiscal year is \$39.9 million.

The proposed appropriation is based on the department's adjusted budget from the 1999-2000 fiscal year projected for

the first four months of the new fiscal year. The budget target assumes that the department's operational requirements for 2000-2001 will remain the same with no significant changes in program expenditures between years.

Mr. Chairman, the Members will notice that the Department of Transportation's proposed appropriation amounts to the better part of its expected total appropriation for the 2000-2001 fiscal year. This is because of the extent to which the operations for our airports, ferries and highways are carried out under contract with municipal government and private contractors. The department's contractual obligations must be committed from the start of the fiscal year.

Secondly, with our short construction season, the department must get started on the capital projects it intends to deliver within the first four months of the 2000-2001 fiscal year. The department cannot award new contracts without this Assembly first having made the necessary appropriations.

This interim appropriation will allow the Department of Transportation to get on with its day-to-day business of running the territorial transportation system.

Mr. Chairman, I have been pleased with the questions that Members from every part of the Northwest Territories have asked me in the House about the Department of Transportation's highway maintenance and reconstruction programs. It is clear the Members know just how important the transportation system is for our economy, our businesses, our communities, our constituents and our families.

The Department of Transportation's expenditures included in this interim appropriation will benefit almost everyone in the Northwest Territories one way or another. I am sure the Members will agree that these expenditures are necessary and worthwhile. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Are there any general comments from the committee which oversees the Department? Mr. Roland.

MR. ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The committee met with the Minister and his staff on March 17, 2000, to review the proposed 2000-2001 Interim Appropriation for the department. The committee made note of the following issues.

Traffic Volume on Northwest Territories Highways

Committee members were concerned with the traffic volumes on the Northwest Territories highway systems, especially the Liard and Highway No. 3., where there may be increased volume resulting from increased oil and gas, and diamond mine development respectively. Committee members were also concerned with traffic volumes for the near to mid term.

The Minister agreed to provide the committee with a report on traffic volumes, including forecasts for all Northwest Territories highway systems.

Highway No. 3

Committee members questioned why contracts for Highway No. 3 were not scheduled to be awarded until July.

The Minister replied that the highway is a design-build project, and as such represent significant savings over previous approaches, as design faults rest exclusively with the builder.

Highway Strategy

Committee members had discussions with the Minister about various highway development options. One of those options discussed was a highway be built alongside the proposed pipeline. A parallel highway would not only provide transportation links for communities near the pipeline, but also represents improved access to resources and value for money.

Further, the committee informed the government that many aboriginal groups would not support a pipeline without the proposed parallel highway.

The committee asked the department if it had a comprehensive strategy to improve our highway systems that will result in increased access for remote communities and to resources such as those in the Slave Lake geologic region.

The Minister, at the request of the committee, agreed to provide a summary report of the Government's Highway Strategy report to members.

Funding for Community Access Roads and Other Projects

Committee members were concerned with the lack of funding for community access road projects. Members noted that some communities receive funding whereas some do not. Members recommended that if funding cuts are to be made, they should be made equally amongst all regions and communities, not just specific areas or municipalities. See page 4, capital, departmental submission, Department of Transportation, 2000-2001 Interim Appropriation.

Additionally, committee Members added that projects such as community access roads are especially important to small communities. In many communities, these small capital projects are the only available employment opportunities for the entire year.

The committee recommended that if funding cuts are considered in any programs or services within government, they should be made equally "across the board".

Funding Discrepancies

Finally, the committee submitted a list of capital projects described in the proposed interim appropriation that had funding discrepancies with their funding allocations as listed in the 2000-2001 five-year capital plan to the department for further explanation prior to consideration of the proposed 2000-2001 interim appropriation in the House. The Minister agreed. See page 1-5, capital, departmental submissions, Department of Transportation, 2000-2001 Interim Appropriation.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Thank you, Mr. Roland. At this time, I would like to ask the Minister if he would like to call any witnesses?

HON. VINCE STEEN: Yes, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Does the committee agree that the Minister will bring in his witnesses?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

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

Would the Minister introduce his witnesses for the record?

HON. VINCE STEEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, on my right is Ms. Lynn Cook, director of finance. On my left is Mr. Peter Vician, deputy minister, Transportation.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Mr. Minister. Welcome, witnesses. General comments or questions for the Minister? Mr. Roland.

MR. ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As I stated earlier in reading the committee's report, we were expecting some information on the differences that were in the capital plan. I did not receive a package. I do not know if it has been delivered to the committee or committee members. I am unaware of it at this time. It is unfortunate.

It means that we are going to have to go with a little more detail as we discuss the capital situation. But Members in general know that the Department of Transportation is a vital part of our government in the network that it provides throughout the Northwest Territories, when it comes to marine, air and road transportation.

The concerns that were shared in a number of areas, and we heard it in the House on a number of occasions, was trying to balance out volume-based formula with a need to make sure that the Northwest Territories as a whole remains strong and that we can build a strong territory together.

Needless to say, there was much discussion in the committee. Hopefully, we will be able to go through this department and see what important areas and initiatives are being undertaken. I am sure that the department will listen with interest when it comes to the highway and the Mackenzie Valley pipeline being built together. There has been discussion by the aboriginal groups that they would like to see this happen.

We know if we look at the highway system purely as a capital project, that the Mackenzie Valley Highway is estimated at the \$700 million figure. That is our whole budget as the GNWT, and would not be accepted in a sense of a large scale project to be done in a short number of years.

Instead, Mr. Chairman, I think the door has been opened. We should at least investigate and see if we can start something on a small scale, maybe bring some private sector partners into this and then truly build a linkage north to south and east to west, as they say.

As well as opening the doors to tourism and remote communities, it would also open the doors to the resource potential that lies within many of the lands that are taken up by the land claim organizations, as well as those still available to the government overall.

There has been a bit of concern, and hopefully the department will address some of the concerns the committee raised as we go through the capital plan, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Mr. Roland. Mr. Minister.

HON. VINCE STEEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, the Member refers to the discrepancies between the two capital plans that the committee has versus the one the department has. We did have a list of discrepancies and I have been advised that there is a breakdown of them, which I can supply to the Members. I do not mind listing them here.

I have identified 11 projects with a carry over or increased number of projects. There were nine projects which were deferred, and there were four which were completely deleted. We reduced seven projects and we re-profiled two new projects. In the carryover increase, there were eight projects with specifically increased expenditures, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Chairman, in regard to a reference of volume that the Member is referring to, I believe the Premier has pointed out that the department uses volumes only in reference to traffic volume. We are not referring to volumes of people or populations in the regions.

We are suggesting that our expenditures are based on volumes of traffic in particular highways and in particular regions. That translates into the amount of expenditures we would have to identify in order to maintain the highways, or to reconstruct the highways. That is the only reference I have regarding volumes. It refers to volume of traffic.

As far as the road down the Mackenzie, the department has identified in the interim \$100,000 towards new road planning studies. Included in those planning studies would be the finalization for the reports for the Northwest Territories Highways Strategy, and how we intend to involve the communities and the federal government on the highway down the Mackenzie Valley. There would also be some study work done on the road into the Slave Geological Area.

Mr. Chairman, I hope that if the Members have specific questions as to which projects you want deferred or deleted, we can supply them with that information here as well. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Thank you, Mr. Minister. That would be helpful if we can get a copy of that and circulate it to the Members. It may make the process smoother if we have the information in front of us. Just a reminder to the Members as well to speak up when you are making a presentation. A few people are finding it hard to hear. General comments or questions for the Minister? Mr. Roland.

MR. ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Just following up on the volume aspect of dedicating funding to different areas. The Minister said, and also committed to providing, the reports on the traffic volumes over all highways. That alone goes to show that the larger centres are going to have higher volume over the road system. The fact is the larger places are going to have higher numbers. If there is development, the numbers are going to go up even higher.

When we discussed Highway No. 3 and the amount going into it as well, we know what is needed. We know there has been some work with the federal government on the transportation initiative, which would connect all capital cities of all the regions, and some dollars are being looked at to try and upgrade those systems. It would be nice to know where that information has gone and how much money might be available

to this government, so hopefully if there are more dollars made available by the federal government, we can take some of the other dollars being spent now and spread them throughout the Territories to try and make those linkages possible, from north to south. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Minister.

HON. VINCE STEEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As a department, I do not believe any of the provinces know exactly how the federal government intends to divide the \$150 million they have for the national highway system.

We are not sure how much we would get out of that at this point. However, the Member is right in that it will allow us to redirect some of our funding towards other areas in our transportation infrastructure. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Thank you, Mr. Minister. General comments? Mr. Bell.

MR. BELL: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to speak specifically about new money for highways. I am obviously interested in the speed-up of Highway No. 3.

Of course, we understand the reason this cannot be sped up is primarily a matter of money. It would cost additional money to speed this project from ten years to three years.

In light of some of the discussions Premier Kakfwi had with Paul Martin and Prime Minister Chretien, where he received assurances from them that there would be some economic development money available to the GNWT in the form of ADA agreements, likely for specific types of things.

I am wondering if the Minister has had a chance to sit down with Mr. Kakfwi and discuss the possibility that some of these highway projects, like Highway No. 3, could be considered project-specific, considering they have a few diamond mines that specifically rely on that upgrade and construction.

We know the traffic is going to get heavier. We know the use is going to get heavier. Obviously, citizens are concerned about that, and I think it is hampering economic development. I am wondering if the Minister has taken some of these things into account in light of the recent meetings Mr. Kakfwi has had, and use that as a possible approach for getting new money for these highways? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Thank you, Mr. Bell. Mr. Steen.

HON. VINCE STEEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have not had an opportunity to sit down with Cabinet and discuss the approach we will use to try to obtain our share of the \$150 million in funding that has been allocated for highway infrastructure.

However, as a department, we have taken on the initiative of trying to obtain the support of the smaller provinces, such as Prince Edward Island, and try to work out a strategy together as to how we can approach the larger provinces for support.

For example, have everybody agree on a base formula for dividing up the \$150 million. A base amount to each province or territory, and from there divide up the rest based on either populations or length of the highway in specific jurisdictions.

We are still waiting for a response from Prince Edward Island, but that is the approach we are using at this time. No doubt I will be sitting down with Cabinet as to how exactly we are going to do this, once we receive some kind of response from the provinces as to how they intend to approach this as well. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Thank you, Mr. Minister. Mr. Bell.

MR. BELL: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I think I can speak for most of the Members of this House when I say that the amount of money that was presented in the new federal budget for infrastructure was disappointing.

I think we realize that by the time that \$150 million filters down to this level, no matter what statistics we use for dividing this up, it is not going to be enough money to go around and develop infrastructure the way we need to see it develop in the North.

I am suggesting that we make a plea to the federal government and let them know that highways, roads and infrastructure are going to be critical for economic development.

If there is economic development money available to us on a project specific basis, maybe we can appeal to them on this basis. Just a comment. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Thank you, Mr. Bell. It was more of a comment than a question, but if the Minister would like to respond, he may.

HON. VINCE STEEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, the Member is quite correct in that the amount of money, regardless of how much it is, is going to be minimal compared to what we actually need just for our own portion of the national highway system.

We have identified the need for this Territory to be \$256 million, just to bring our portion of the highway up to standards. I know the Premier has been giving some thought to putting his support behind this suggestion of having some way of getting Mr. Coronet identify where the money is in this budget, either this year or next year. We can address the needs on a more realistic scale.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Minister. General comments? Mr. Nitah.

MR. NITAH: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Can the Minister tell the committee which projects have been carried over and those that have been deleted all together? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Nitah. Mr. Minister.

HON. VINCE STEEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. If the committee will bear with me, it will take a few minutes here. First of all, Fort Simpson, mobile equipment, airports, includes \$186,000, capital carryover from 1999-2000.

The rehab of the terminal building in Fort Simpson, there was \$400,000 deleted, deferred one year. The rehab of the apron in Fort Simpson, \$10,000 deleted. Some of these projects I am showing as either deferred or carry over has happened. The deferred is only for a year. That is what we are planning at this point. If they are deleted, they are gone, for whatever reason.

They may have been done, or they are done through another process.

In Fort Smith, we have a sewer system expansion at the airports. That project has been deferred to 2004-2005. In Fort Smith, we have expanded the terminal building. That has been increased with the thought that some of that is going to be recovered from NAV Canada. It was increased from \$400,000 to \$570,000. Fort Smith mobile equipment, that is a go ahead. Fort Smith replaced the rails. That project is deferred to 2004-2005.

Hay River, Highway No. 2, West Channel Bridge, increased from \$1.6 million to \$2 million. That is with the carry over of \$400,000 from last year. Then Hay River Mobile Equipment has been reduced from \$249,000 to \$34,000 and it is going to be deferred to 2004-2005 for replacement.

Hay River Rehab Air Terminal Building, we will put that ahead \$540,000. Previous budget had \$5,000. It includes a \$65,000 capital carry over from 1999-2000 and a budget adjustment to revised scope of work. The Rehab Hay River Maintenance Garage, \$260,000. We put it up to \$450,000 and post-interim appropriation includes \$45,000 capital carry over and a budget adjusted reflects a wider scope of work.

The next one is a project of mobile equipment for Lutsel K'e Airports, showed \$25,000. We have the project completed in 1999-2000. Lutsel K'e trail to Austin Lake, that is a community access road. That one is a proposed carry over of \$45,000, so the total is \$99,000 carried over from last year's \$45,000.

Rae Lakes, to replace the air terminal building was \$200,000 reduced it to \$5,000 and that project is complete. It was advanced due to CARS project and NAV Canada recoveries. Rae Lakes access road, that one stays. The next one down for change is Fort Smith region Highway No. 3, kilometre 243 to 333. That is a project from \$5.8 million to \$6.1 million. With that, there is a carry over of \$300,000 from last year.

The next one is Highway No. 4. We had a plan in there of \$2.5 million, but we reduced it \$494,000. It reflects a 2006 reduction to meet the requirements of this year's budget.

The next project down, Fort Smith region, and it is regarding ferries. There was a \$50,000 expenditure there and then we deferred it to meet the budget requirements.

The next one is in Colville Lake airport parking garage; and that is \$197,000 from the previous year. We had zero in the budget. That is a carry over of \$157,000 with an estimated \$40,000 for additional funding to offset the costs of the construction delays. The project was not done last year, so we just carried it over. We estimate a \$40,000 increase in expenditures there.

The next one is Holman, replace air field lighting, was \$35,000 previous, \$250,000 now. It was to reflect cash flow of \$35,000 in 2000 to \$500,000 in 2001-2002 and \$10,000 in 2002-2003. But we refined the project and adjusted to a total of \$559,000 with \$250,000 this year and \$300,000 next year. Finally, \$8,000 in 2003.

The next adjustment is in Inuvik airport. There was \$1 million there in the previous budget. We put it up to \$1.3 million and it reflects Transport Canada airport capital assistance policy, but we are hoping to get some recovery there of the whole project.

Inuvik air terminal building, we put that up from \$100,000 to \$110,000 and it was a minor project adjustment. We had also Inuvik replace (inaudible) and it was \$10,000. The project has disappeared. I presume it was wrapped into another one. Replace airport maintenance garage, we had zero there before, but we put in \$75,000.

Construction schedule for 2000-2001, in accordance with the December 1999 highway capital plan. We designed the project, but not this year. It was supposed to have been done last year.

Mr. Chairman, if somebody has run down the clock, I am not aware of it here. Would you like me to finish? It takes me a little while here.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): I think, Mr. Minister, that was the document that we were asking for a copy to be circulated to the Members.

HON. VINCE STEEN: Mr. Chairman, if the Members want to be project specific, we can do that. We can provide a summary to the committee now. Mr. Handley will be presenting another summary next week.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Would it be possible, Mr. Minister, to get a hard copy of that document today or at your earliest convenience? Would that be satisfactory to your question, Mr. Nitah?

MR. NITAH: That would be satisfactory. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Mr. Minister, could you supply a copy of that?

HON. VINCE STEEN: Yes, Mr. Chairman, we have a copy here we could supply to the Members.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Minister. General comments. We will go to Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. A concern I had last year and it is probably going to arise this year, is for roads that are not paved or chip-sealed that we have a lot of problems with. Especially in the summer season, with dust and trying to have some sort of a dust control system in place. It is usually calcium that we use on our highway systems to maintain the problem with dust.

Also, trying to ensure the roads that have gravel and not hardtop, we try to find a safe way of dealing with the problem of dust control. I would like to ask the Minister, I am not too sure where in the budget if there is any money or money made available to be allocated to the other highway systems which do not presently have hardtop or are paved.

Last year I received a commitment from the department that they were going to do a calcium project on the Dempster Highway. I also asked at the time to ensure that it was ongoing. That it was not just for the one year, and that it would be built into the budget. I do not see it in here, so I would like to ask the Minister, where in the budget are the funds available for the calcium project for the highways which are presently graveled and not a hard surface with pavement or chip-seal?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Mr. Steen.

HON. VINCE STEEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I do believe that calcium is under operations and maintenance, so I will ask the deputy minister to respond to the Member as to whether calcium application to Highway No. 8 is ongoing or not.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Mr. Vician.

MR. VICIAN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In response to the Member's question, the calcium program is identified as part of the interim appropriation under the operations and maintenance portion of the budget, specifically within the highway activity. There is not a specific line item referring to calcium, but the commitment is to continue and repeat the calcium program on the gravel highway system as we did this past year.

So for the 2000-2001 year, the interim will consider, because it is the first four months of the year, the contracts for placing calcium on those roads. I can assure the committee that the intent and the plan right now is to do the same program as we did last year. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Vician. Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Can the Minister tell me if this includes all highways in the Northwest Territories that are presently not paved or chip-sealed?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Mr. Steen.

HON. VINCE STEEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I will defer that to Mr. Vician.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Mr. Vician.

MR. VICIAN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The current calcium program on the highway system in the Northwest Territories provides dust control treatment on a majority of the gravel system. However, it does not cover the entire system.

In some parts of the system where there are lower traffic volumes, those sections are not treated. There are sections on the Liard Highway, for example, and some sections of the Dempster Highway that do not receive treatment.

The criteria at this point sets it at a traffic volume level and, if I recall correctly, it is 50 vehicles per day. At this point, there are a number of sections of the system that do not receive that level of traffic. However, within those sections there are dust-free zones. Calcium is applied within those sections to provide opportunities for passing in a dust-free environment. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Vician. Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I would like to know the scenario that they came up with calculating 50 vehicles to cause the problem with dust control.

I thought dust control was based on the heat and the limited rainfall that you have which causes dust. I did not realize you had to have 50 vehicles to calculate a formula, and that is the reason you get calcium. I would like to know from the Minister exactly where this formula came from? What is the basis of the argument that it takes 50 vehicles?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Mr. Steen.

HON. VINCE STEEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I will defer that question to the deputy minister. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Lafferty): Mr. Vician.

MR. VICIAN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The principle of dust control was established many years ago in terms of an objective to make all of our gravel surfaces on the highway system dust-free. That is the primary objective. Over the years, we have increased the amount of dust-free surface. At this stage, the criteria that is used is based on traffic volume. The hope is, of course, that we could find additional funds to treat the entire system. However, we have set a limit right now that we can afford with the system.

In terms of the scientific reasoning for 50, it is not hard science by any means. It is a case of a set criteria on a lower traffic volume level. The systems we look at, we assess in terms of how they perform. So those lower traffic areas are looked at by our highway maintenance staff in the field. If it is determined that there is a serious problem, of course that is raised and we will pursue that further. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Vician. Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Looking at the budget, I see there is some \$500,000 that has been taken out of Highway No. 8. I would like to ask the Minister, are there plans to re-instate that money and bring it back up to the capital allocations that were in the five-year capital plan?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Mr. Steen.

HON. VINCE STEEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, at the present time we reduced Highway No. 8 from \$2.5 million to \$2 million. Next year, we will plan to put it back to \$2.5 million. We plan to keep it at \$2.5 million for the next four years.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Steen. Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The other question I have for the Minister is that I notice in the budget that there has been several items taken out, but they are not in the interim appropriation, specifically community access roads. Could I receive some assurances from the Minister that those dollars will be put back into the capital planning process, especially for those communities that have the monies taken out at this time through the interim? Will they be in the main estimates?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Mr. Steen.

HON. VINCE STEEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, although it may look like there are some communities that had their access road funding reduced or deleted, that is not the case. It is just that we only identified the access road funding for those communities that identified to the department that they needed the funding within the first four months. We have not reduced any access road program in any communities. In the Member's riding, since we have had our committee meetings and the Member made us aware that his community of Aklavik was, in fact, planning to use their money before break-up, the department is now re-examining how we can supply the funding to the community so that they can carry out their gravel requirements. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Steen. Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. One of the problems that we have is the whole process that we use to calculate or evaluating needs versus volumes versus priorities and trying to determine a system that is fair to the communities, or fair to the different jurisdictions in the Territories, making sure everybody gets their fair share of dollars for maintaining the 2200 kilometres of highways we have in the Northwest Territories.

Yet, on one hand we will be talking about one highway based on volume traffic. On another highway, we will talk about the calcium project based on, say, 50 vehicles. Are there any plans in the works for the department to come up with a fair system? All communities and regions on all the other highways feel that there is a more workable way of finding a fair system that is out there, say one that is based on numbers? I think numbers is one of many methods we can use. I am wondering if the department is considering the possibility of having a conference or getting together with other interested parties to find a more workable solution.

The reason I say that is because one thing I find, especially hearing from people that have to drive on different highways, that the snow has not been removed or the winter roads are too rough. It is because the decision making is usually left in Yellowknife, in which they have a minimum amount of money to maintain a road, but they do not have any money available to maintain on an as-and-when needed basis. It is always determined by someone else that you cannot maintain a road because there is not enough snow. You cannot get the calcium on the road because you used up your limit.

But somehow, there has to be a system in place where we are able to give the powers to the people that work on these roads day in and day out. The contractors get a lot of flack from the general public because they are wondering why you are not on the road. Why is your grader not grading this spot? Then we have to raise the issues here in the Legislative Assembly.

I am wondering if there is a mechanism in place that the department, along with the people in the field and the contractors, could come up with solutions to these problems we hear a lot of complaints about, especially from the general public? Could we find a more workable solution to deal with those problems? Is the Minister and his department open to considering such an offer to see if there are ways we can find a more fair and open process for maintaining our highway systems? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Mr. Steen.

HON. VINCE STEEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I know the department has a maintenance schedule based on classification of highways. As well, the reports the highways supervisors do of inspections on a daily basis on the highways. They in turn either instruct or expect the contractors to take action if the highway requires grading or plowing. However, in case I missed something here, I will ask my deputy to expand a little bit on that. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Steen. Mr. Vician.

MR. VICIAN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Specifically in terms of how we approach highway maintenance throughout the system and the priority for that, our local foremen are in direct consultation with the communities that they are generally responsible for in the general area and looking for suggestions. Probably more importantly is the issue that up to 60 percent of

our highway maintenance system is operated by northern contractors. We obtain a great deal of feedback and input from our Northern industry in terms of better solutions, better approaches of how to do day-to-day and year-by-year maintenance practices. We are continually trying to identify new approaches and those approaches are brought into our routine operations. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Vician. General comments or questions to the Minister? Ms. Sandy Lee.

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I would like to make a general comment because this is my first opportunity to speak on this project publicly as, while I had a chance to review this department in the Standing Committee on Governance, I just want to put on the record the importance of this project to the people of Yellowknife and my riding. I think everyone is aware I am referring to Highway No. 3, which was widely discussed and talked about during the election campaign.

If I may, Mr. Chairman, I am sort of left speechless now that I have a chance to speak about this. I know basically what I want. I have found out since I have been elected to this position, it will cost about \$60 million to re-construct Highway No. 3, which is no less than a total capital budget for the whole government which is being asked for in this interim budget. So it would be highly unrealistic for me to be sitting here and demanding that \$60 million. If I was to be satisfied with having it done in a three-year period, that would require me to ask for a total of all of transportation's capital budget in this interim to go to Highway No. 3, and that would be unrealistic of me to ask as well.

Although I would love to do that. I think that with the debates we have had on this topic in the last two months, it shows differences in philosophies about what money for the road is. They are two accepted philosophies. Many jurisdictions all around the world spend money on building roads to create jobs, which is obviously the need that is out there in communities. I appreciate that.

As I look at Highway No. 3, we are looking at another philosophy of building roads, which is meeting the needs based on volume. I will not sit here and try to argue that more money should go to Highway No. 3 versus other areas, but at the same time it is very important for me as a Member for Yellowknife that I put it on record that this is a very important project.

Not only the fact that it is an eyesore. The last stretch of the road to a capital in this country is not paved. It is a major inconvenience for the tourists who are travelling to the city.

At a time when there is such a major industrial project happening in this area, it is totally frustrating to be an elected official and see there is not enough money available to put in this road to facilitate that resource development.

I have asked in the House on a number of occasions for statistics on volume. I have yet to be provided with that. I know there must be some kind of statistics on volume available in the department because the Minister talks about it, other Members talk about it and the Member for North Slave tells us about it. Then it is on the newspaper every Wednesday and Friday, warning the people who are driving the road about the volume

and the delay in time. I do not think I need any other evidence to tell me that this has to be a priority.

As an elected official, it is important to argue to have money allocated for his or her own riding. But at the same time, we have to be prepared to look at the big picture. This is why I have to review all options, and work with the government, if at all possible, and work with the department to figure this out. I am absolutely committed in seeing Highway No. 3 widened and reconstructed within the next three or four years.

I would like to keep my campaign promise. I do not have a lot of specific questions, other than to add that I am afraid I am not that hopeful that we are going to be able to get a lot of money out of the federal government, under the current regime we have heard so far. I think all of the Members have already stated that \$150 million is not going to get us far.

At an opportune time, I would like to pursue, argue and debate vigorously to get a separate funding from the federal government, so we could have Highway No. 3 reconstructed without having to take away from the economic development potential in communities, which is being pursued for reasons other than what I am looking at.

With that, I would like to ask a very specific question about Highway No. 3, Mr. Chairman. During the review of Highway No. 3 in the standing committee, I had asked a question about why the contract for Highway No. 3 was not being let out until the end of July. The official had explained the how's of it, and he explained in detail the steps that are required to issue that contract. It is still very unclear to me. It is as clear as mud for me. I am not interested in how. I just want to know why. Why can we not have the project ready to go on May 1, 2000, instead of July 31, 2000? I really need to know. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Ms. Lee. Mr. Steen.

HON. VINCE STEEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I believe this particular question came up, as to why we are not prepared to go May 1, 2000, in committee. The department attempted to explain to the Member how the department awards contracts and how we have to have a certain timeframe in order to request tenders.

Perhaps the deputy minister could attempt to explain our hopes for funding from the federal government, as well the process we use for tendering and the timelines we need to award contracts. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Steen. Ms. Lee.

MS. LEE: I understand, Mr. Chairman, that the deputy minister was going to give me some information.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Sorry, Ms. Lee. Mr. Vician.

MR. VICIAN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. To the first point, as the Minister indicated, our hopes are that the federal government funding that was announced in the February 28th budget, specifically for highway infrastructure on the national highway system, will provide some additional funding.

At this point, we are pursuing the issue with the federal government. There are meetings being held this week by teleconference. I understand our finance officials from the

Department of Finance are meeting with the treasury board next week to discuss that, with the hope of establishing a principal, which has been communicated previously by Ministers of Finance, Ministers of Transportation, to set a minimum criteria of funding for smaller jurisdictions across the country.

With that, we hope the funding level would be much more relevant to implementation rather than a small amount that really does not mean anything in this type of a highway job, to a level in the order of a half million at least, that could make this project change in terms of the time it would take to complete. Otherwise, it becomes somewhat ineffective in terms of delivering. Adding a few dollars is not going to finish this job any sooner because of the scale of the project.

With regard to the second question, in terms of tendering practices used by the department, the department, through its industry discussions, identified the best approach of using design-build contracts for very large scale projects, especially those that are complicated by the nature of construction such as we have here between Rae and Yellowknife.

We do that to basically get the best contract options available from the industry. One contractor may identify a cheaper solution through a design approach. That is what we found in our last round when we did this type of a tender.

The tendering timetable at this point is underway. Contract requests for expressions of interest proceeded in February and have already closed. Three proponents were identified. Subject to approval of the interim appropriation, the next stage would be initiated, which is the final design-build proposal submissions by those three pre-qualified contractors. Those are expected to be submitted by the second week of June, with a contract awarded by late June, early July. Contracting to commence probably by mid-summer.

As this is a multi-year project, the contract work would proceed over the period of summer, winter and into the next season. Therefore, in terms of scheduling, it will arrive at the same completion date regardless of what approach was taken. We are going to see the best in terms of savings by having contractors provide their best approach to finishing the work. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Vician. I have Mr. Lafferty.

MR. LAFFERTY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I notice that going through the communities, the highways department goes right into town, does maintenance, sanding, et cetera. They are spending a lot of time in the communities, especially Yellowknife. They have to go right through the municipality, Giant Mine, Yellowknife Motors...I am just wondering where you put it in the budget? Can you tell me where all of the work you are doing for the municipalities is in the budget?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. Mr. Minister.

HON. VINCE STEEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I will defer that to the deputy minister for a response.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Steen. Mr. Vician.

MR. VICIAN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The highway maintenance activity only applies to the designated public highway system, as defined under the Public Highways Act and its regulations. No maintenance occurs on municipal highways or roads.

It happens to be that in many of our communities, the highway system extends itself to within the boundaries of the municipality, but they are still designated as public highways. Each case has a different reason, the primary reason being those were sections of highway transferred from the federal government to the responsibility of the territorial government through the two specific transfers.

The item for maintenance of those activities is included within the operations and maintenance appropriation for the highways activity within the interim appropriation. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Vician. Mr. Lafferty.

MR. LAFFERTY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. On the same line, is the highway department going to look at turning over the maintenance and operations on those roads within municipalities, so they can concentrate on the highways themselves? They are spending three hours sanding the roads around Yellowknife, Giant, and along the Ingraham Trail, while Highway No. 3 has not been plowed and there is no equipment on that road.

I came in this morning, and there was no equipment heading out that way. They were all heading the other way. I am just wondering if they quit wasting time within the municipalities, maybe the highways would be a lot safer.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. Mr. Steen.

HON. VINCE STEEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I will get Mr. Vician to respond to the comments from the Member.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Steen. Mr. Vician.

MR. VICIAN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In terms of devolving responsibility for some sections of the public highway system to municipalities, the discussion has been broached by the department with some communities in the Territories. It continues to be an issue of discussion, and will continue to be in the future with municipalities that are willing to take on the care and custody of sections of highway in the Northwest Territories.

As far as the dedication of resources, those resources are deployed each morning by our highway foremen at the various camps in the system, both contract camps and private camps. They attempt to address where they think the highest priority was for that given morning. Obviously, they try to wrap things up as quickly as they can. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Vician. Mr. Lafferty.

MR. LAFFERTY: Maybe the highways department might look at putting Highway No. 3 maintenance out for tender so it could be well-maintained. Right now, since January, I have been complaining about the highway and it has only been plowed three times.

There is a lot of money going to operations and maintenance. I just want to know where the money is going because I do not see it going on that highway. So if you can tell me where the money is going, I will be happy and I can tell my people, oh, the money is being spent right. What are you doing with the money you say you have for operations and maintenance? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. Mr. Steen.

HON. VINCE STEEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, the department does have breakdowns of the cost of maintenance for each highway by kilometre. I will ask Mr. Vician to give some examples of what those costs are for separate highways.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Steen. Mr. Vician.

MR. VICIAN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The average cost of maintaining our highway system throughout the Northwest Territories varies dramatically. The example of the section of highway between Rae and Yellowknife is one of our most expensive and is well over \$13,000 per kilometre in terms of cost on an annual basis.

As it compares to much less costly sections in the areas of say the Liard or the Deh Cho, where we can experience costs in the order of \$2,000 to \$3,000 per kilometre per year. There are many reasons for that in terms of the amount of dedicated time and equipment necessary to maintain that section of road, the cost of gravel on that section of road and the cost of material, such as calcium, to surface that road. It does vary dramatically.

We do have a comprehensive expenditure history of what it costs and how much money is applied to each section of the highway system throughout the Northwest Territories. I believe the Minister has committed to providing that report to the committee. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Vician. I would remind the Members to keep your questions to deal specifically with the interim appropriation. Mr. Lafferty.

MR. LAFFERTY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, just going back on that road again, like I said, there is no maintenance being done on it. I do not know where the money is going. If you are not going to use it on Highway No. 3, could you please give it to Highway No. 8 for the maintenance?

-- Laughter

-- Applause

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Mr. Steen, would you like to comment to that?

HON. VINCE STEEN: I have no comment, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): I have Mr. Krutko on my list.

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, just looking through this wish list that we received from the Minister regarding deferring different capital items, I happened to come across a line item talking about explanation, the difference between proposed interim appropriation and the December 1999 vision for the five-year capital plan.

Under the Aklavik Foothills Trail, I notice there is \$50,000 and it states, "MLA Krutko made a big issue at committee review of not including the project on the interim appropriation." I would like to know, is this note from the deputy minister or the Minister? Who is the one that put this comment in the statement? I do not know what your interpretation of a big issue is.

We are talking \$50,000 here and we could not get that out of you. I would like to know what the interpretation of a big issue is and, if this is a public document, which it is now, I take offence to my name being used in this manner. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Who may not be an appropriate question in this, but Mr. Minister, if you would like to comment on that.

HON. VINCE STEEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, the comments here are not to be taken as reference to Mr. Krutko's abilities in any way. Rather, it is a heads-up to me to make sure that I respond to this Member's concern, because he did make it an issue at the committee hearing. So this is a note to me, and it is not meant as anything else. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Steen. Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Regarding the \$50,000 in this particular item, I would like to make it clear for the record, if you look at the community access roads, the communities of Rae Lakes, Wha Ti, Aklavik, Fort Good Hope, were the communities that were left out regarding the community access allocations.

I think that for the Minister or his department to make the gesture that I made a big issue over the \$50,000 strictly for Aklavik is not true. I spoke in regard to all communities that the funds were not there. Rae Lakes, Wha Ti, Aklavik and Fort Good Hope were not mentioned. Yet I notice in the Minister's riding, Paulatuk, Tuktoyaktuk and Sachs Harbour, none of those dollars were cut. To me, the way it looks in the record is that in the Minister's ridings, he keeps all the money for himself and the Members' ridings, who are not on Cabinet, are the areas that are getting cut. That is what it looks like to me. Is that true?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Mr. Steen.

HON. VINCE STEEN: Mr. Chairman, I cannot help how it looks to the Member. But I can assure him there is no pork-barreling here. What this suggests, and what I tried to clarify to the committee, was that those communities that identified their need immediately before break-up and within the first four months, their money is listed.

Those communities that need their money later, they will still get their money and we plan to put it into the main estimates, but it is not in the interim appropriation because the communities did not identify their need at the time we were putting interim appropriations together. This included Aklavik.

Since that time, we have had a meeting with the chief. We have had correspondence with the chief of Aklavik. We also had a meeting with Mr. Krutko. We made an effort to put Aklavik's money in here because they did indicate they intend to use it before break-up. That is exactly the explanation for

why some communities have their community access funding identified and some do not. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Steen. I would just like to remind the Members of Rule 23(l) which imputes false or hidden motives to any other Member. I just would like to remind the Members to respect each of the Members' and the comments they are making, not accusations. Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Could the Minister or the deputy minister clarify the statement that is made in the document they tabled regarding the Department of Transportation where it states, "MLA Krutko made a big issue in committee review for not including the project on interim appropriation". Could I get clarification on the exact intent of that statement?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Krutko. I think, Mr. Krutko, that question was basically asked before and answered, but I will give Mr. Steen the opportunity to answer again, if he would like.

HON. VINCE STEEN: Mr. Chairman, as I said earlier, there was no intent that this be taken any other way than as a heads-up to me as the Minister that Mr. Krutko did bring this to our attention and did bring it up as a big issue in the committee.

I am not suggesting he brought it up as a big issue just for himself. He brought it up, as he stated, as an issue for those communities that were not shown as having their funding in the interim appropriation. So the intent is just to bring it to my attention and to make sure I was informed of this issue. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Steen. Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you. Can the Minister tell me who the author of this document is?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Mr. Steen.

HON. VINCE STEEN: Mr. Chairman, I could ask my deputy minister to respond to that, but I really do not think that asking who is the author of this particular document is going to help the situation. I gave the explanation from the department, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Steen. I think that answer has been asked and satisfactorily answered, Mr. Krutko. We will not carry that question any further. Do you have another question for the Minister?

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I do not believe I asked the question earlier about who the author of this document is. This is the first time I asked it. It was not answered earlier. I would like an answer to that question if it is possible.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Mr. Krutko, the Chair feels that question is out of order right now, so we will not pursue it any further. Do you have another question, Mr. Krutko?

MR. KRUTKO: A point of clarification, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, this document was given to us and tabled to be distributed in this House. All I am asking for is the author of the document. This is a public document. I am just asking who is

the person who put this document together for us, which is now in the hands of all Members in the House. I am talking about the document which has been allocated. I am just asking for clarification on exactly who the author of this document was, which is the privilege I feel we should all have as Members. This is a document that is now in the public hands, which has been tabled in this House. It is a public document. I am just asking, who is the author of this document?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Mr. Krutko, just for the record, this is not a public document. It is a circulated document, and it is only available in the House. If the Minister wants to respond, I will allow the Minister to respond.

HON. VINCE STEEN: Mr. Chairman, as I said earlier, it does not matter who wrote the document. As the Minister, I am responsible for this document.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Steen. Mr. Miltenberger.

MR. MILTENBERGER: I move to report progress.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): A motion is on the floor. The motion is in order. The motion is not debatable. To the motion. Question has been called. All those in favour? All those opposed? The motion is carried. We will rise and report progress. Thank you, Mr. Minister, and your staff.

MR. SPEAKER: The House will come back to order. Item 20, report of committee of the whole. Mr. Delorey.

ITEM 20: REPORT OF COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

MR. DELOREY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the committee has been considering Bill 6, Interim Appropriation Act, 2000-2001, and Committee Report 3-14(2) and would like to report progress. Mr. Speaker, I move that the report of the committee of the whole be concurred with.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Delorey. Do we have a seconder? The Chair recognizes the honourable Member for Thebacha. All those in favour? All those opposed? Thank you. The motion is carried. Item 21, third reading of bills. Item 22, orders of the day. Mr. Clerk.

ITEM 22: ORDERS OF THE DAY

CLERK OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY (Mr. Hamilton): Mr. Speaker, meetings for tomorrow morning at 9:00 a.m. of the Standing Committee on Accountability and Oversight, and at 11:00 a.m. of the full Caucus. Orders of the day for Tuesday, March 28, 2000:

1. Prayer
2. Ministers' Statements
3. Members' Statements
4. Returns to Oral Questions
5. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery
6. Oral Questions
7. Written Questions

8. Returns to Written Questions
9. Replies to Opening Address
10. Petitions
11. Reports of Standing and Special Committees
12. Reports of Committees on the Review of Bills
13. Tabling of Documents
14. Notices of Motion
15. Notices of Motion for First Reading of Bills
16. Motions
17. First Reading of Bills
 - Bill 8, Supplementary Appropriation Act, No. 4, 1999-2000
18. Second Reading of Bills
19. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters
 - Minister's Statement 1-14(2), Sessional Statement
 - Tabled Document 14-14(2), "Our Communities, Our Decisions: Let's Get on With It!", Final Report of the Minister's Forum on Health and Social Services
 - Bill 1, An Act to Amend the Education Act
 - Bill 3, An Act to Amend the Financial Administration Act
 - Bill 5, An Act to Amend the Motor Vehicles Act
 - Bill 6, Interim Appropriation Act, 2000-2001
 - Committee Report 2-14(2), Accountability and Oversight on the 2000-2001 Interim Appropriation
 - Committee Report 3-14(2), Governance and Economic Development on the 2000-2001 Interim Appropriation
 - Committee Report 4-14(2), Social Programs on the 2000-2001 Interim Appropriation
20. Report of Committee of the Whole
21. Third Reading of Bills
22. Orders of the Day

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Clerk. This House stands adjourned until Tuesday, March 28, 2000 at 1:30 p.m.

-- ADJOURNMENT