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The Honourable Tony Whitford, Speaker

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YELLOWKNIFE, NORTHWEST TERRITORIES

THURSDAY, JUNE 29, 2000

MEMBERS PRESENT

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

ITEM 1: PRAYER

-- Prayer

SPEAKER (Hon. Tony Whitford): Thank you. Good afternoon. Please be seated. A point of order has been raised by Mr. Krutko. Mr. Krutko.

Point of Order

MR. KRUTKO: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order under rules 23(h) and (i) and Rule 24, concerning words spoken yesterday by the Minister responsible for the NWT Housing Corporation, Mr. Allen.

Mr. Speaker, my point of order is contained on page 556 of the unedited Hansard of June 28, 2000. During question period, I asked the Minister responsible for the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation a question concerning the Corporation's adherence to the Business Incentive Policy. Mr. Speaker, I asked the Minister the following question, and I quote from the unedited Hansard:

"Does the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation support the Business Incentive Policy or the Manufacturer's Directive that this government has in place? Why are you not following it?"

Mr. Speaker, the Minister, Mr. Allen, in answering my question indicated, and I quote, also from page 556 of the unedited Hansard:

"Thank you Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I do believe the question is misleading."

Mr. Speaker, my point of order is that the Minister, Mr. Allen, is imputing motives that I am misleading the House with my question. As you know, Mr. Speaker, misleading the House is a point of order. It could also be a point of order for using the word "misleading" as being unparliamentary language. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Krutko. If I recall correctly, this is one of the first formal points of order that the Speaker has been asked to hear. Prior to proceeding with the point of order, and for the benefit of new Members, and perhaps to remind not so new Members of how points of order are dealt with by the Chair.

A point of order is a question raised by a Member who believes that the rules or customary procedures of the House have been incorrectly applied or overlooked during the proceedings. Members may rise on points of order to bring to the attention of the Chair any breach of the relevance, repetition, rules or unparliamentary remarks.

Points of order respecting procedure must be raised promptly. As a point of order concerns the interpretation of the rules of procedure, it is the responsibility of the Speaker to determine its merits and to resolve the issue.

In raising a point of order, a Member should only state the rule or practice he or she considers to have been breached. The Speaker has the duty to preserve order and decorum and to decide any matter of procedure that may arise. The Chair is also bound to call the attention of the House to an irregularity in debate or procedure immediately, without waiting for the intervention of a Member. In addition, the Speaker decides questions of order once they arise and not in anticipation. When a point of order is raised such as the one that we have before us now, raised by the Member for Mackenzie Delta, I will attempt to rule on the matter immediately. However, if necessary, the Chair may take the matter under advisement and come back to the House later with a formal ruling.

I felt it was important to clarify the procedure for dealing with a point of order prior to hearing debate on the point of order raised today. In hearing a point of order, and if it is not clear to the Chair whether there has been an infraction, I may permit debate on the point of order.

Our Rule 24 permits the Member who has been called to order, in this case, the Minister for the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation, Mr. Allen, to explain.

Therefore, to the point of order before me today, the House has heard the point of order raised by the Member for Mackenzie Delta. I would now permit the Member for Inuvik Twin Lakes, Mr. Allen, to speak to the point of order. The rules also allow the Speaker to hear from other Members who may wish to speak to the point of order.

To the point of order. The Member for Inuvik Twin Lakes, Mr. Allen, do you wish to speak to the point of order?

HON. ROGER ALLEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I do wish to point out that when I said the question was misleading, I did not intend to imply that Mr. Krutko had done anything misleading. If that has offended the Member, I would gladly withdraw my remarks. To clarify for the record, Mr. Speaker, I think Mr. Krutko and I have a different interpretation of the issue that was being discussed at the time. That is probably a better way to describe the incident. Thank you.

-- Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Allen. To the point of order. The honourable Member for Mackenzie Delta, Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On the point of order, my question to the Minister, I made it clear that the question

was coming from a meeting I held with colleagues in this House, with Members of the Manufacturers' Association. They raised the point that many of them were concerned they were not being fairly treated by the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation regarding the opportunity to bid and have their products, which have been produced in the North, and are able to market them in the North, that several projects did not have the same opportunity for applying on some of these initiatives.

Specs on different contracts were purchased from southern Canada with no consideration for northern manufacturers. That is the reason I raised the question, does the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation support the Business Incentive Policy...

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Krutko, to the point of order only, please.

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my point of order is I was just doing the job I was elected for. I was just following the direction of the Manufacturers' Association, who felt they were not being fairly treated. That is why I presented the question.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Krutko. I believe what we have here in question in the point of order is the remark made about the question of being misled, or misleading. I think the Member for Inuvik Twin Lakes has withdrawn that remark, and offered an apology. Is the Member for Mackenzie Delta prepared to accept that the word misleading has been withdrawn in the matter? Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in no way, shape, or form have I ever attempted to mislead this House. I still feel offended by that comment. Knowing the Minister is new, I will accept that, but if this were to happen again, I will definitely take it up to a higher level. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Krutko, for that acceptance of Mr. Allen's suggestion to withdraw that. I believe that this matter is now resolved and concluded. It needs no further attention.

I would just like to remind the House that, on occasion, the Speaker will hear a word, but has the option of recognizing and interrupting immediately, or it can wait until...we learned from this first experience on a point of order. The honourable Member for Hay River South, Mrs. Groenewegen.

Point of Order

HON. JANE GRONEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order under Rule 23(i) with regard to comments made by Mr. Miltenberger in his Member's statement yesterday in the House. I have waited until today to raise this point of order because I wanted to review the actual words as recorded in Hansard.

Mr. Speaker, during the course of his Member's statement, Mr. Miltenberger said, and I quote from page 529 of the unedited Hansard:

"...would almost appear that, when it comes to recruitment and retention, the Department of Health and Social Services has obtained public money from this Legislature under false pretenses..."

These comments impute that I, as the Minister responsible for

the budget of the Department of Health and Social Services, had hidden motives with respect to money that was appropriated by this Assembly. Mr. Speaker, I wish to point out, for the record, that I take very seriously the trust placed in me by this House and that I would never intentionally mislead the Assembly or the public about the way public money is spent. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. To the point of order. The honourable Member for Thebacha, Mr. Miltenberger.

MR. MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in this particular instance, I think the facts speak very clearly for themselves. I was very careful in considering my comments. I qualified that. I did not state emphatically or definitively. I said it could appear or it may appear. Mr. Speaker, in the minds of the constituent I represented, very clearly the government is not funding and using this money for the purposes for which it was voted.

It is unfortunate that the Minister and Cabinet have taken such an exception to this, and would choose to devote the House's time to this issue rather than meeting the needs of my constituents. It is unfortunate they have chosen to take it this way. The reality is very clear, Mr. Speaker, in the record. I think, when you rule on this issue, I hope you will take that fact under consideration. It is qualified and based on the discussion and the hard reality of the numbers.

I was not imputing motive. I was making reference to a possible perception of appearance. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. To the point of order. I will take this matter under advisement and report back to the House later. Thank you. Any further points of order? Item 2, Ministers' statements. The honourable Member for Weledeh, Mr. Handley.

ITEM 2: MINISTERS' STATEMENTS

Minister's Statement 11-14(3): Ministers Late to the House

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I wish to advise Members that the Honourable Stephen Kakfwi and the Honourable Jim Antoine will be a little late for the House today. They are on route from Fort Simpson and should be here momentarily. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Handley. Mr. Handley, may I inquire as to whether this is an emergency statement you are making? It was not filed with the Clerk prior to the start of proceedings. Mr. Handley.

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Mr. Speaker, yes, this was an emergency statement. They had planned to be here by 1:30 p.m., but are running a little late. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you. That falls within the rules. Thank you. Item 2, Ministers' statements. Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for Frame Lake, Mr. Dent.

ITEM 3: MEMBERS' STATEMENTS**Member's Statement on the Need for a Government Commitment to Literacy**

MR. DENT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, today, all Members of the Standing Committee on Accountability and Oversight will be making the case for literacy in our Members' statements and during oral questions.

Mr. Speaker, in discussing the definition of literacy, the Literacy Council has suggested, and I quote,

"We live in an information based society which demands increasingly sophisticated literacy scales. Literacy is no longer defined by the basic ability to read, but rather how people use written information to function in society. This changes our assumptions about literacy and its links to broader social, economic and political issues."

Mr. Speaker, not long ago, Members of the Standing Committee on Social Programs met with representatives of the Northwest Territories Literacy Council, along with a broad cross-section of literacy advocates and practitioners. They presented us with a paper, which outlined why this government needs to develop and adopt a comprehensive government-wide literacy strategy.

They showed us the need for the Government of the NWT to really make a commitment to, and an investment in, the people of the Northwest Territories by making literacy the keystone of all of our initiatives.

Literacy is strongly linked to social development in terms of reduced crime, reduced unemployment and poverty, and reduced reliance on income support. Mr. Speaker, there is also a very strong tie between literacy and the economy, in terms of higher employment, income and increased productivity.

Our strategy must run through all departments, but those on the social envelope in particular should take the lead and pull everyone together in the development of the strategy, making sure the coordination is strong.

Above all, there must be meaningful consultation with practitioners like the Northwest Territories Literacy Council, other NGOs, communities and aboriginal groups.

Mr. Speaker, we have heard that project based funding has actually destabilized the whole area of literacy training. The only practical solution is to establish multi-year funding for programs. Obviously, this also requires an effective accountability framework, which includes a meaningful evaluation and monitoring process.

Without a long term commitment to literacy skills development, as part of an economic and social development strategy, a large number of Northerners will be unable to take full advantage of the opportunities just on the horizon right now.

If Northerners do not have the skills to take advantage of new job opportunities, they will simply be filled by southern workers. That is unacceptable.

Mr. Speaker, we need this government to commit now to a healthy and literate population. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

-- Applause

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

Member's Statement on Literacy in the Family

MR. MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, today I would like to make my Member's statement and focus it around the issue of literacy in the family.

Mr. Speaker, there are three components that I wish to touch on, literacy, language and culture. They are part of the whole, a trinity that is linked inextricably.

Mr. Speaker, the underpinning to any success in maintaining and having a flourishing language, culture and strong levels of literacy is the family. Mr. Speaker, this issue is important to all families. We have eight official languages, we have eight cultures. We have language communities that cover the whole Northwest Territories.

My colleague, Mr. Dent, has talked about the issue of a linked strategy for languages and literacy. The underpinning for this has to be the family. As we look at literacy, language and culture, we have to keep in mind, Mr. Speaker, that the aboriginal languages are in dire straits. Some are borderline extinction, and many are considered to be endangered.

The Government of the NWT has funding for aboriginal languages. Unfortunately it is based only on the number of registered aboriginal and Inuvialuit. Where are the Metis and their families as we look at language, literacy and culture?

As I have indicated, families are the foundations for our society. In promoting literacy, language and culture in the family, all should be considered fairly. Thank you.

-- Applause

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

Member's Statement on Support for Literacy Programs

MR. NITAH: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, there are many examples I can give you of failed lives due to literacy problems. One only has to glance at today's present system, or look at the homeless, drug addicted, or people in distress.

On a less sensational level, there are children struggling in school, where each year becomes more difficult because they are having problems reading. It holds them back in their intellectual development. At the end of their schooling, it leaves them with fewer options and a bleak future.

Literacy is a challenge for society today and the depth of the problems are multi-layered, Mr. Speaker. People who cannot read will have difficulties in their lives. They cannot get good pay and jobs. They cannot get good housing. Their children will suffer. They will suffer. Then it affects the generations coming behind them.

Also, Mr. Speaker, it affects the future of this Territory. If our people are not supported in literacy, they are getting short-changed and the Territory is losing out. There should be a more concerted effort on our part to spread reading and writing skills in the form of programs and dollars. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

-- Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Mahsi, Mr. Nitah. Item 3, Members' statements. The Member for Hay River North, Mr. Delorey.

Member's Statement on Level of Literacy of Inmates in the North

MR. DELOREY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, today I would like to call your attention to a matter that affects too many of our Northern residents. Mr. Speaker, I feel there is an urgent need to address the current level of literacy in the North. In particular, how literacy, or the lack of it, affects the inmates at our correctional centres.

Mr. Speaker, I was quite shocked to read that the average education level of an inmate in our correctional system is grade 6. Mr. Speaker, in many cases, the situation that inmates find themselves in can be closely related to the level of education they have.

Statistics show that the higher the level of education, individuals are less likely to get themselves in trouble with the law. Mr. Speaker, I suggest that an inmate with a level of education of grade 6 or less has already been sentenced to a hard life, regardless of any sentence imposed by the courts.

Mr. Speaker, I do not want to suggest that we write these individuals off. Rather, I suggest that we do everything we can to help them help themselves. Mr. Speaker, we are all aware that literacy affects the life choices that we make for ourselves.

I urge the Minister responsible to make a commitment to improve the level of literacy in our correctional centres. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

-- Applause

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

Member's Statement on Improving Literacy through Adult Basic Education

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I too have a lot of concerns in this area, especially in the area of the ABE program and literacy in our communities. We find that the money that we save in our communities for the ABE program is not sufficient in most cases. We just have part-time positions. We do not have the resources to do justice to the number of adults in our communities that need these programs to assist them to get on with their lives, so that they can have good jobs and good opportunities in our communities with the economics that we have.

Yet, Mr. Speaker, there is definitely a difference of programs being delivered, especially in the small communities in relation to the larger centres. I, for one, feel that this government has to be fair in how these dollars are allocated. In most cases, these positions should be full-time and that there is no reason that we should continue these part-time obligations, where we are dealing with funds which are not planned for any long-term opportunities for people to plan for themselves and also for their children. So that they know that they will be able to take a course, not just depending on one year at a time, but realizing that the funds we do get will be there to assist the whole community, from adults, to teenagers, to children who are

coming up who may want to take programs and services in our home communities.

Mr. Speaker, I feel that the Department of Education has to put more resources into this important initiative to improve the basic adult education program and the literacy numbers we have in our communities. We have to, somehow, focus on improving those numbers so that they do come down to a reasonable number.

I mentioned in my comments, in the last number of days, where in my riding we have, in some cases in communities up to almost 40 percent of the people, above the age of 15, who are considered illiterate and do not have anything more than a grade 9 education.

In order to take advantage of the number of jobs that we see coming, especially in the Beaufort Delta, somewhere in the area of 1500 to 1600 jobs, we need trained and educated people, regardless of their age group. This program, I see, is very important, especially in adult basic education and improving our literacy. Thank you.

-- Applause

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

Member's Statement on Options for Delivery of Adult Basic Education Programs

MR. BELL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise here today to talk about the need for this government to make a commitment to adult basic education and literacy.

In the last year, we have seen the sunset of a million dollar program, called the Community Skills for Work. The department is bringing it back, to some degree, putting some money back into it, but there were indications that they were not happy with either the efficiency or the effectiveness of the program being delivered.

Success rates did not seem to show that they were getting value for money, Mr. Speaker, but I would suggest to you that when we take a look at the labour force survey, and we see the staggering low levels of education and we understand that there is a correlation between education and income.

I asked about the review that the department did of the Community Skills for Work, and asking the right questions, looking in the right places. I think it is important that we make the commitment. When we see waiting lists around the various communities for adult basic education programs that go on for a year and sometimes two years, we know there is certainly an interest in these programs.

Mr. Speaker, I would also like to talk about delivery of adult basic education and how the department chooses to deliver its programs. Typically, adults who want to go back to school have a couple of choices. They can go back to high school with students maybe half their age, but they do not often have the option of taking night school. So, in effect, what we do is we force them to go on income support, Mr. Speaker, if they choose to upgrade and pursue further education.

I do not think this makes any sense. I think it is something the department has to closely look at.

Yesterday, I also brought up the issue of distance learning and the DCN, and applauded the department for some of the things it is doing, especially in conjunction with the Calgary School Board. We discussed text versus visual use of the DCN. I think it is going to be important to realize that if we hope the DCN can bridge the gap and start to be used for applications like adult basic education, visual learning is critical for adults. We are going to have to be able to deliver programs over the DCN. I think this is certainly something the department should consider.

Was the Community Skills for Work Program efficient and effective, Mr. Speaker? I do not have the answer to that, but I do not believe the department does either. I think some more thought had to go into this. I am glad they decided to put some more money into this.

It is a time, Mr. Speaker, where we need to be doing more for adult basic education, not less. Thank you.

-- Applause

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

Member's Statement on Linking Literacy Levels to Employment Opportunities

MR. BRADEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As the Premier and the Minister of Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development have said on many occasions, the Northwest Territories has tremendous economic potential. With proper planning and management, we have the chance to be one of the more affluent provinces or territories, only, Mr. Speaker, as long as our citizens are able to fully participate in these economic opportunities.

The June newsletter of the BHP Incorporated, Ekati mine, Mr. Speaker, shows the workforce requirement by job application. They have a job classification that is roughly 83 percent requiring professional skilled to semi-skilled workforce. That leaves only 17 percent classified as unskilled.

The message is clear. We need a literate population, people who can function in society and, Mr. Speaker, there is work underway of many levels to help. I would like to acknowledge the efforts of organisations such as the Tree of Peace and other friendship centres, the YWCA, the Native Women's Association of the Northwest Territories, the Women's Centre here in Yellowknife, and the Northwest Territories Literacy Council for their commitment.

This Assembly too, through its vision statement, Mr. Speaker, wants to encourage pride and desire to be positive contributors and give a sense of initiative to all people in the North.

One of the greatest issues facing us is the development of self-reliance in the socio-economic area. Through the Department of Education, Culture and Employment Income Support Program and the auctions under productive choices, we can develop increased self-reliance if the appropriate support programs and skills are in place.

The problem, which requires priority attention, is literacy. It is perhaps the deepest valley in the record of education in the North over the decades, Mr. Speaker. The statistics are dismal on literacy among aboriginal people, especially in smaller

remote communities. Systemic discrimination, residential schools, and more recently, the daunting issue of FAE, FAS, are among the events that I believe have combined to confront us today with so many people who cannot cope in today's literate world.

People working at the grassroots tell me, Mr. Speaker, that the government does not take literacy seriously. When funding for literacy for 14 women from across the Territories had to be funded by eight different sources, some as far away as Toronto....

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

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

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you. The Member is seeking unanimous consent to conclude his statement. Are there any nays? There are no nays. You may conclude your statement, Mr. Braden.

MR. BRADEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We need an adequately funded, territory-wide literacy strategy in place so citizens are able to make productive choices and take every opportunity this great country offers. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

-- Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Braden. Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for Range Lake, Ms. Lee.

Member's Statement on Yellowknife Correctional Centre Library Book Drive

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, on this theme day of literacy, I would like to take a few minutes to talk about the concept of reduce, reuse and recycle for literacy.

A few weeks past, Mr. Speaker, I challenged my colleagues to lose some weight this spring by donating books and magazines to the Yellowknife Correctional Centre Library book drive.

Mr. Speaker, I have some good news and some bad news. I will start with the bad news first. Many MLAs have not yet taken the opportunity to reduce the number of books and magazines in their homes and donate them to the YCC for reuse. However, Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to report that some MLAs have recycled the idea, and suggested similar approaches for increasing library materials in other correctional institutions in the Northwest Territories.

Mr. Speaker, numerous studies over the years indicate that one of the factors determining whether a person will succeed in life is directly related to literacy. More and more jobs require basic literacy, whether to read safety instructions, a list of work to be performed for the day or completing reports and forms. Personally, Mr. Speaker, I believe the capacity to read well in any language is the most powerful tool one can have.

I can tell you that through reading, I have personally experienced a sense of total empowerment and feeling of wholeness as a person. I have led my way out of sadness into utter joy and solved virtually all questions about life. Reading is the most powerful thing.

Mr. Bill Chipman, the organizer of the YCC book drive, says while he has received numerous donations, inmates read these materials over and over again and they quickly get worn out.

Mr. Speaker, I would encourage you, my colleagues and members of the public who have novels, current magazines, National Geographic, Readers' Digest or reference materials to contact Bill Chipman at Yellowknife Correctional Centre, 669-8620, or a similar person in an institution in your community, and donate your excess books.

You will not only be losing some weight, you will be giving the gift of literacy. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

-- Applause

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

Member's Statement on Linking Literacy Levels to Oil and Gas Development

MR. MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct my comments today towards the issue of oil and gas development in the riding of the Deh Cho.

In the many challenges, including literacy, that are facing our communities in dealing with this issue, I would also like to make some comments about the way this government can help.

The riding of the Deh Cho is in an area where there are outstanding treaty issues for aboriginal people. The lack of a definitive agreement with Canada results in an uncertain climate for both resource development corporations and Deh Cho communities alike. Despite this uncertainty, communities in my riding have started development plans to prepare themselves for resource development.

Secondly, Mr. Speaker, the riding of the Deh Cho has large areas of overlap between its communities, which result in a need for considerable inter-community cooperation on lands that may be considered suitable for oil and gas exploration.

Thirdly, Mr. Speaker, the communities of the Deh Cho riding wish to explore ways of improving the rights issuance method currently used by the Government of Canada and the Northwest Territories.

Fourth, Mr. Speaker, communities in the Deh Cho riding require more resources and support regarding training and human resource development. Without adequate education and training, northern residents, especially aboriginal residents, will not be able to participate in development.

Mr. Speaker, these ongoing challenges mean that meaningful assistance for preparation and development must be provided now. Communities in my riding, Mr. Speaker, need the following assistance from the Government of the Northwest Territories:

- resources that will enable them to coordinate their planning and preparation work on an inter-community basis;
- resources aimed at providing quality education and training for people to work in the oil and gas sector;

- resources to allow them to complete land use planning exercises that will help identify areas where communities are comfortable with development proceeding;
- resources that will enable the leadership of the communities to gain a good knowledge of the oil and gas industry; and
- they will also need support from the GNWT to look at ways of improving the current oil and gas exploration bidding system.

This government, Mr. Speaker, has the opportunity to help the communities in the Deh Cho riding prepare for the resource development activity that is soon coming. It is vital that the GNWT adopts a supportive stance now, thereby becoming a part of the solution rather than the problem. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

-- Applause

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

Member's Statement on Linking Literacy Levels to Apprenticeship Opportunities

MR. ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak about apprentices and apprenticeships. Mr. Speaker, the government was a leader in developing apprenticeships in the Northwest Territories. Many of those apprentices have gone on to either become businessmen or move up further in the corporate world...

SOME HON. MEMBERS: MLAs.

MR. ROLAND: And some MLAs, yes, Mr. Speaker.

-- Applause

Mr. Speaker, as I said, the government was once a leader. Unfortunately, that can no longer be said. Instead, we have left it to the private sector. Speaking from my community perspective, it is the small businesses that pick up where the government left off.

Many times they find themselves in a situation which lacks support, and it is difficult to recruit apprentices. When they do have people who are interested in the trade sector, whether it is carpentry, mechanics or other areas of apprenticeships, they find themselves lacking the necessary qualifications when it comes to education, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, that points to the fact that we need to improve on our system. Literacy, whether it is to get into an apprenticeship or go on to university education, we need to make sure we are doing work that shows it is quality and not just quantity.

Mr. Speaker, when we speak specifically about apprenticeships, I am dismayed that this government had lapsed \$400,000 the previous year in the area of apprenticeships.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Shame, shame.

MR. ROLAND: How many people would that have helped, Mr. Speaker? People who could be on the road to being

productive, to qualifying in a field that would provide more income for themselves and their families, especially when we see this much development on the doorstep.

This government needs to focus on outcomes and results, not results that show lapsed dollars, because to me, that shows poor planning. Mr. Speaker, I will have some questions for the appropriate Minister later. Thank you.

-- Applause

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

Member's Statement on Access to Adult Basic Education

MR. LAFFERTY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, yesterday was the last day of school for many students in the Northwest Territories. The closing of the school year makes me reflect on educational opportunities available to people within my riding. As a territory and as a nation, we take pride in the availability of educational services available to children within our country.

Access to public education is seen by many as a fundamental right of children. Access to education opportunities for adults is not so highly praised or supported. In my riding, 40 percent of my constituents are illiterate. People within the smaller communities do not have access to ongoing adult basic education programming.

I am sure we all know that grade requirements are the qualifier that is used for hiring in many jobs. The availability of and access to adult basic education courses significantly impacts the future of the North Slave.

A suggestion that we made was to encourage the development of a comprehensive literacy strategy for the Northwest Territories. At the appropriate time, I will have questions about literacy funding in the Territory. Thank you.

-- Applause

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

Member's Statement on Fort Simpson Meeting of Aboriginal Leaders and Oil and Gas Industry Representatives

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. (Translation begins) Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today, I want to speak in my own language. This morning, I just got back from Fort Simpson. I flew there yesterday late at night. I would like to make a short comment. I was in Fort Simpson for two days and I met with the chiefs all around the Deh Cho communities, the Metis, the Grand Chief.

We gathered and we met last year in January in Fort Liard about the gas exploration in Fort Simpson. All the aboriginal people who have made a presentation on the oil and gas pipeline have spoken more about it.

From today, we will continue to work together to see how we could come up with one wording to make an agreement. For me, it sounds very good.

The Honourable Stephen Kakfwi made a presentation today in the meeting. North Slave MLA Leon Lafferty was also present at the meeting. We heard all of their concerns in their presentation. It sounds very good. What they have been talking about was for one year. This part of our land, the goal is the oil and gas exploration. We are trying to stop them from doing any further exploration.

For years they have been exploring and they have found gas. Last month, where they have gas, they have made a pipeline going down south. I presume there is still a lot of gas to be pumped out. When the aboriginal people...they should be the ones in the...inaudible...of this oil and gas exploration.

That is one of the biggest concerns they had. Tomorrow, they will continue to talk about how they are going to work together. That is all I have to say. Thank you very much. (Translation ends)

-- Applause

MR. SPEAKER: Mahsi, Mr. Antoine. Item 3, Members' statements. Item 4, returns to oral questions. The honourable Member for Nunakput, Mr. Steen.

ITEM 4: RETURNS TO ORAL QUESTIONS

Return to Question 62-14(3): Inuvik Hospital Project

HON. VINCE STEEN: Thank you Mr. Speaker. I have a return to an oral question asked by Mr. Roland on June the 26th, 2000, regarding progress to the Inuvik Hospital project.

The Department of Public Works and Services is currently working with the Department of Health and Social Services to develop a management and project delivery plan for the Inuvik Hospital project.

The change from a P3 approach to a traditional capital-funded project has required the reassignment of staff and confirmation of the basic project parameters. It is expected that much of the previous work on the project is still applicable.

Both departments are aware of community and regional interest in seeing the project proceed as quickly as possible. However, this is a highly complex and highly specialized facility. It will be critical to ensure that the project management and delivery approach is well thought out and that the basic project parameters are clearly understood by all parties.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Steen. Returns to oral questions. The honourable Member for Yellowknife Centre, Mr. Ootes.

Return to Question 6-14(3): Preservation of Aboriginal Languages

HON. JAKE OOTES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I have a return to an oral question asked by Mr. Krutko on June 21, 2000, regarding preservation of aboriginal languages.

On January 5, 2000, the Government of the Northwest Territories and the Government of Canada entered into a five-year renewal of the Canada-Northwest Territories Cooperation

Agreement on French and Aboriginal Languages in the Northwest Territories. The agreement covers fiscal years 1999-2000 to 2003-2004. In each year of the agreement, \$1.9 million is to be provided for aboriginal languages and \$1.6 million for French.

There was a delay in the signing of the agreement that made it difficult for the GNWT and non-government organizations to fully spend their 1999-2000 allocations. The GNWT successfully negotiated with the federal government an agreement to carry over anticipated surplus funds from 1999-2000. Six hundred thousand dollars was approved as a carryover in the aboriginal languages allocation, to be spread over two years, and \$75,000 was approved as a one-year carryover in the French language allocation. These amounts were determined based on expenditures projected by all departments and non-government recipients.

The Department of Education, Culture and Employment anticipates that a small amount of the funds for which we projected expenditures in 1999-2000 will not have been spent. However, we will not have full accounting completed until the end of July at the earliest. The Department can provide details on lapsed funds once those figures become available. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you Mr. Ootes. Item 4, returns to oral questions. Item 5, recognition of visitors in the gallery. The honourable Member for Hay River South, Mrs. Groenewegen.

ITEM 5: RECOGNITION OF VISITORS IN THE GALLERY

HON. JANE GROENEWEGEN: Thank you Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I cannot tell you how pleased I was today when I walked into my office just before we came into the House to have a surprise visitor, Major James Osler with the Canadian Forces Joint Headquarters in Kingston, Ontario, who is here doing the Jennyjohn Expedition. He is my first cousin, who I have not seen in 25 years. He is accompanied by Major Richard Dixon as well. Welcome.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. Item 5, recognition of visitors in the gallery. The honourable Member for Frame Lake, Mr. Dent.

MR. DENT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. There are a number of people in the gallery today, because of our tie to the theme of literacy. I would like to recognize a constituent first of all, Katherine Robinson, who looks after publicity and fundraising for the Northwest Territories Literacy Council.

Another constituent, Sue Edmonds, is here with a group from the Association for Community Living, and the Literacy Outreach Centre. Miriam Wideman is the executive director of the Association for Community Living, and Linda Lee, who is with the YWCA.

There are a number of people here from the Literacy Outreach Centre, Judy Wattsko, Wanda Powder, Janet Baird, Jaicee Wanazah and Bertha Taylor. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you Mr. Dent. Item 5, recognition of visitors in the gallery. The honourable Member for Great Slave, Mr. Braden.

MR. BRADEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to recognize one of the great teachers of the North, now retired,

Mr. Ed Jeske. I think it is appropriate that he is here in light of the notice that the Honourable Vince Steen gave yesterday about the changes to the Motor Vehicles Act that he plans to make. I think we all recognize that it really takes people and teachers and instructors like Mr. Jeske to give us the values that we need to be safe drivers and safe on the road. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you Mr. Braden. Item 5, recognition of visitors in the gallery. To all of those that are visiting us, welcome to the Legislative Assembly. Item 6, oral questions, The Member for Frame Lake, Mr. Dent.

ITEM 6: ORAL QUESTIONS

Question 91-14(3): Comprehensive Literacy Strategy

MR. DENT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question today is for the Premier. As we have tried to point out today, literacy is critical for people to enjoy meaningful opportunities to participate in social and economic life in the Northwest Territories.

Literacy is important in helping people make informed choices so they can become more productive and healthy. Mr. Speaker, we need to lead the way to a broader understanding of literacy as an important element of economic productivity and labour market participation as well as population health.

Literacy is as much a health issue or an economic development issue as it is an education issue. Literacy is everyone's concern, Mr. Speaker. This government has an important role to play. Government should lead by setting out a comprehensive strategy for literacy development that cuts across departmental policy areas.

Mr. Speaker, will the Premier take the lead and direct his Cabinet colleagues to collaborate in the development of a comprehensive strategy for literacy? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you Mr. Dent. The honourable Premier, Mr. Kakfwi.

Return to Question 91-14(3): Comprehensive Literacy Strategy

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is the intention of our government to work towards a plan on literacy for the people of the Northwest Territories, particularly the smaller communities where literacy is such a difficulty. Something that we have not developed is a comprehensive strategy on how to approach and address, so the answer is yes. Again, we are not going to resolve it in this House. It is something that cabinet would like to work with Caucus on, so that there is full inclusion on exactly how we are going to address this.

It is the intent of this government to address it as a condition of non-renewable resource development in the Northwest Territories. This is the initial suggestion, but if pipelines are going to go, oil and gas development is going to happen, we have to see measurable change in the literacy rate, particularly in the small communities, and that the unemployed, the illiterate can see tangible results we did not reach and in a reasonable timeframe. Particularly, for instance, driver's licenses. Why can we not live with a strategy where everyone in the Northwest Territories, particularly in smaller communities

where vehicles and roads are scarce, can have a reasonable opportunity to obtain a driver's license and driver training? That would all be part of the comprehensive literacy strategy. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Premier. Supplementary, Mr. Dent.

Supplementary to Question 91-14(3): Comprehensive Literacy Strategy

MR. DENT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate the Premier's commitment to developing a government-wide comprehensive strategy. Will the Premier, in the process of developing that strategy, ensure that literacy practitioners like the Northwest Territories Literacy Council and other community-based non-government organizations, particularly from the smaller communities that he has mentioned, are involved in developing a comprehensive strategy?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you Mr. Dent. The honourable Premier, Mr. Kakfwi.

Further Return to Question 91-14(3): Comprehensive Literacy Strategy

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I gather that the Member has agreed to work with us in developing this strategy, and that we can start that in September. Of course, if we are agreeable to working together to develop such a strategy, then it is important to recognize that we have partners and agencies like the Literacy Council, who should be there with us to flesh out the elements of an outline of such a strategy. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Kakfwi. Supplementary, Mr. Dent.

Supplementary to Question 91-14(3): Comprehensive Literacy Strategy

MR. DENT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I think Members in this House are all prepared to work as partners in the development of the strategy, but I think we expect the government to take the lead. We do not want to wait until September to see the process started. Mr. Speaker, will the Premier commit his government to reducing the inequalities that exist and ensure that there is access to high quality literacy programs across the Northwest Territories?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Dent. The honourable Premier, Mr. Kakfwi.

Further Return to Question 91-14(3): Comprehensive Literacy Strategy

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Member is aware that the resource is available to this government, as well as dealing with the budget at this time. The Member should know that in the discussions that we have had with the Prime Minister, the Minister of Finance and the Minister of Indian and Northern Affairs, Mr. Nault, that it is clear that we require literacy money training dollars and we need it now. We are waiting for a response from the federal government.

We have said in partnership with the aboriginal leaders, the chiefs, the Inuvialuit, the Metis, that we are prepared to engage industry to develop oil and gas and minerals in the Northwest Territories, and that has already started. It is not on the horizon. It has already started. What we need from the federal government is an announcement, some sort of indication that yes, they recognize that we are already started into development and that they will shortly announce some sort of financial resources that would be available to this government and to the people of the North, so that we can start training people, we can start fixing up some of the roads, developing some of the winter roads, this summer, this fall. That is what we are waiting for. We have not received it yet. Hopefully, it will come in the next few weeks. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Premier. Final supplementary, Mr. Dent.

Supplementary to Question 91-14(3): Comprehensive Literacy Strategy

MR. DENT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I too hope that the work of the Premier and the Minister of Finance in Ottawa bears fruit within the next few weeks. Whether it does or not, we must invest in our people. So will the Premier commit his government to assure the literacy programs are adequately resourced with multi-year funding agreements? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Dent. The honourable Premier, Mr. Kakfwi.

Further Return to Question 91-14(3): Comprehensive Literacy Strategy

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am prepared to make commitments as far as this legislation will support me on making. There are a number of motions and directions made by Members which need to be responded to. Some of them I believe, entail incurring costs. We have areas in which we can reduce expenditures and reallocate.

We need to work on that in partnership with the Members. So we are presently scheduling our work as a Cabinet to coincide with the target of meeting with Caucus the first week of September. In order to meet that, there are a number of areas in which, as a Cabinet, we need to give direction to our officials to start working on. There are areas where the staff that worked with the MLAs need to work with our officials, so that when we meet in September, there is something of substance that is going to come out of it.

There is a tremendous amount of work to be done, and we have started that already. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Premier. Item 6, oral questions. The Member for Mackenzie Delta, Mr. Krutko.

Question 92-14(3): Allocation of Literacy Funding

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister responsible for Education, Culture and Employment. It is regarding access to adult basic education and literacy problems we find in our communities. Mr. Speaker, many of the small communities in the North do not have access to ongoing adult basic education programming.

Programs delivered in a lot of our small communities rely on project-based funding, such as those now defunct in the Community Skills For Work Program. These type of unsecured, short-term funding literacy programs create unequal access between communities. There are communities that have full-time positions. There are communities that have a part-time position and there are some communities that strictly deliver small programs.

Yet, Mr. Speaker, something further must be done to include small communities, to give them the ability to have the same access to programs. It should not matter where you live. Mr. Speaker, does the Department of Education have a policy in regard to how they allocate literacy funds? Or is it strictly a first come, first serve basis? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you Mr. Krutko. The honourable Minister responsible for Education, Mr. Ootes.

Return to Question 92-14(3): Allocation of Literacy Funding

HON. JAKE OOTES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Let me first state that I think that this is a very good discussion to have and a good question period to have today to focus on literacy and adult basic education here in the Territories.

I want to emphasize the need for us to address the whole issue of the need that is out there. It extends from early childhood through our school system and into the workforce. Literacy is an extreme problem here in the Territories, Mr. Speaker.

-- Interjection

MR. SPEAKER: I am sorry, Mr. Ootes, just a moment. I am afraid I am going to have to ask you to answer the question. You are making a statement. Please answer the question.

HON. JAKE OOTES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The funding for literacy is done through several processes. One is through the College and the other is through the community organizations, dispensed by regions and is done on an application basis. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Ootes. I just want to remind Members that question period is one hour long. The longer you take for preamble, the longer you take for answers, cuts into the questions. You should not make statements when questions are being asked. Get right to the point. Supplementary, Mr. Krutko.

Supplementary to Question 92-14(3): Allocation of Literacy Funding

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To the point, Mr. Speaker. The efforts of planning in all departments, there is usually a five-year capital plan for our business plans. Yet when it comes to funding literacy programs, the only thing we seem to see is a year-to-year basis for funding.

I would like to ask the department if they are implementing long-term funding arrangements for literacy programs in our communities?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Krutko. The honourable Minister responsible for Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Ootes.

Further Return to Question 92-14(3): Allocation of Literacy Funding

HON. JAKE OOTES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As we know, the Community Skills for Work was lapsed. It was not put into base funding by the previous funding. We are proposing, if the budget is approved, to put the funding we are identifying for Community Skills for Work into base funding.

With regard to long-term funding, we have the amounts in the system base funding in all areas. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Supplementary to Question 92-14(3): Allocation of Literacy Funding

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, regarding the literacy program, it appears there are some communities who do not have the adult program being presently delivered in their communities. I would like to ask the Minister, is the department doing a long-term plan to ensure that all residents and communities in the Northwest Territories will have the same opportunities in delivering adult programs and literacy programs?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Krutko. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Ootes.

Further Return to Question 92-14(3): Allocation of Literacy Funding

HON. JAKE OOTES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, Aurora College delivers some programs in some communities, and we supplement that with the Community Skills for Work. That is intended for the smaller communities. It will be based on proposals. Thank you.

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

Supplementary to Question 92-14(3): Allocation of Literacy Funding

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is sad to say you have to apply for funding. Literacy is a problem that affects all of us.

I would like to ask the Minister again, to be fair to all communities in the Northwest Territories, that we allow all communities to have the same access and the same amount of money to deliver adult programs. Will the Minister to commit to promise the communities that he will do that?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Krutko. The Minister responsible for the Department of Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Ootes.

Further Return to Question 92-14(3): Allocation of Literacy Funding

HON. JAKE OOTES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, that is a resource allocation problem. We do not have the funds to be able to provide equal service in all communities. It is based on proposals in communities. Thank you.

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

Question 93-14(3): Delivery of Literacy Programs

MR. BELL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is also for the Minister responsible for the Department of Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Ootes. In the Department of Education, Culture and Employment's document, Towards Excellence, A Report on Education in the NWT 1999, on page 24, it is stated:

"Two thirds of communities do not have learning centres or adult basic education. Options for mature students wishing to complete grade 12 in their community are limited to school."

The report goes on to say:

"Given the increase in the number of students at the secondary level, and the changing demographics of that population, there is a need to consider funding to meet the needs of mature students."

Has the Department of Education, Culture and Employment made any headway in addressing this issue raised in their report, this being there is a need to consider securing funding to meet the needs of mature students? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Bell. The Minister responsible for the Department of Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Ootes.

Return to Question 93-14(3): Delivery of Literacy Programs

HON. JAKE OOTES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the process that is used is through the delivery of adult basic education, Mr. Speaker, and it is done through the College, through the regional organizations and community groups. Funding is provided to the three regions, as well as through the Community Skills for Work program. We have not proceeded beyond that because of resource limitations. Thank you.

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

Supplementary to Question 93-14(3): Delivery of Literacy Programs

MR. BELL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it is well known that adults learn differently than youth. Adult education programs involve a hands-on approach, rather than a traditional teacher centred approach.

When teaching adults, the focus is on developing literacy skills in a context that is meaningful to the adult learner. When adults go into a formal classroom setting, they face a delivery system that generally does not suit their learning style.

By not offering ABE and literacy programs in the communities, many adults have no choice but to go back to a traditional school system that has already failed them.

Has the Minister tracked the success rate of adults entering back into the traditional school system?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Bell. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Ootes.

Further Return to Question 93-14(3): Delivery of Literacy Programs

HON. JAKE OOTES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I do not have that information here with me. I will have to take the question as notice.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you. The Minister has taken the question as notice. Item 6, oral questions. The honourable Member for Great Slave, Mr. Braden.

Question 94-14(3): Income Support and Literacy

MR. BRADEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister responsible for the Department of Education, Culture and Employment. The Minister stated in a previous answer that funding allocations and adult basic education programs come by request, basically at the discretion of communities.

I am concerned about consistency and really being able to drive a literacy agenda forward. Will the Minister be looking at a more aggressive and territory-wide program to make sure training is available? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Braden. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Ootes.

Return to Question 94-14(3): Income Support and Literacy

HON. JAKE OOTES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, that is an interesting question. We are working on a directive for adult literacy and basic education. It is quite extensive. We hope to have that completed in a very short while. Following that, our intent is to develop a strategy for adult literacy and basic education. As the Premier stated, we intend to incorporate other departments and stakeholders in this. Thank you.

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

Supplementary to Question 94-14(3): Income Support and Literacy

MR. BRADEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate that answer. The Minister has referenced other stakeholders. It is something that has come up in other areas in our Assembly's work, that the value of non-government organizations to delivery of community services is valuable.

Is multi-year funding for these kinds of organizations part of that outlook? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Braden. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Ootes.

Further Return to Question 94-14(3): Income Support and Literacy

HON. JAKE OOTES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the concern for multi-year funding has been there on the part of

the NGOs. I am very familiar with that concern, and very concerned for those organizations. It is an issue that has been brought forward many times before. Certainly, it is the area of concern that hopefully we can address through the strategy that will be developed, Mr. Speaker.

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

Supplementary to Question 94-14(3): Income Support and Literacy

MR. BRADEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I do not believe the Northwest Territories is an island in this. I am wondering to what extent has the department explored this issue and common ground with our neighbours in Nunavut, the Yukon, Alberta, British Columbia and Manitoba? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Braden. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Ootes.

Further Return to Question 94-14(3): Income Support and Literacy

HON. JAKE OOTES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I think part of this strategy will have to include some research into what other jurisdictions may be doing in the area of multi-year funding. I certainly am not familiar with the process that has been used to date to do this research. As I said, we have a directive that is nearing completion. Following that, we intend to do a very comprehensive literacy strategy which will encompass the other departments, and there will certainly be consultation with other stakeholders in this area. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Ootes. Final supplementary, Mr. Braden.

Supplementary to Question 94-14(3): Income Support and Literacy

MR. BRADEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in my Member's statement earlier today, I referenced one program in Yellowknife that sought and received funding from some eight different organizations in order to make it feasible. Will the department be looking at streamlining and bringing all of these different sources into one more easily accessible and achievable way of getting these programs off the ground? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Braden. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Ootes.

Further Return to Question 94-14(3): Income Support and Literacy

HON. JAKE OOTES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the area of multi-funding by other organizations and funding by different departments of this government naturally has to be considered. We have federal funding going into early childhood development programs in the Northwest Territories. In many ways, we consider that as part of literacy as well.

I believe the strategy does need to address this whole area, to ensure that we have a clear identity of who funds what if it cannot be combined together under one particular source.

Naturally, it is best to have it come from one source, but at this point in time, I cannot tell you the whys and wherefores that may be in other organizations. Thank you.

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

Question 95-14(3): North Slave Literacy Programs

MR. LAFFERTY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister responsible for the Department of Education, Culture and Employment, the Honourable Jake Ootes.

As a Member of the Standing Committee on Social Programs, I was privileged to sit in on a discussion with the Members and organizations that are part of the Northwest Territories Literacy Council. I was surprised to learn that BHP Ekati Mine plans to spend more on literacy training at the mine site than the Government of the Northwest Territories plans to spend in my entire North Slave riding.

Obviously, BHP recognizes the importance of having a literate workforce. Can the Minister inform the House what programs exist in the North Slave for people who want to upgrade their literacy? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. The Minister responsible for the Department of Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Ootes.

Return to Question 95-14(3): North Slave Literacy Programs

HON. JAKE OOTES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it is, in a sense, good to know that other third parties are starting to look at assisting our people in funding literacy and adult basic education areas. I think that is essential. It is very necessary. We have to build partnerships as we go, Mr. Speaker.

With regard to the question of funding for, I believe it is North Slave, if that is the question. The amount that I have is \$41,000 for the North Slave area, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Ootes. Supplementary, Mr. Lafferty.

Supplementary to Question 95-14(3): North Slave Literacy Programs

MR. LAFFERTY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. \$41,000 does not go a long way when you have four communities.

Another question I have is since BHP Incorporated is operating programs for literacy, have they applied for funding? Would they qualify? Would they get their funding? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. The honourable Minister responsible for Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Ootes.

Further Return to Question 95-14(3): North Slave Literacy Programs

HON. JAKE OOTES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. That is a question that is difficult for me to answer. I am not quite positive.

I would like to expand on my earlier answer, if I may. The department, if the budget is approved and the amendment to the budget is approved, may possibly have \$650,000 allocated for literacy. Of which, \$290,000 will be funnelled through the Aurora College. The remaining amount will be divided amongst the three regions in the North. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Ootes. Item 6, oral questions. The Member for Range Lake, Ms. Lee.

Question 96-14(3): Labour Force Training and Literacy

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to take this opportunity to follow up on the questions that were asked by the Member for North Slave, which speaks a lot to what I said in my statement yesterday and discussions I have been having in committee of the whole.

My concern is this, Mr. Speaker. I think there is something wrong when we ask the major companies, like BHP Incorporated or Diavik or whoever, to get into a socio-economic arrangement where they are required to hire our Northerners. There is something wrong with that, if we are not in a position to provide them with a workforce that they could hire.

Obviously, BHP Incorporated is able to find people. They are having to train people that they hire in basic skills. I want to see the government do something so that we avoid this situation for oil and gas. I think the way to do that is to have the information at hand as to what the requirements are, so that we prepare our people.

Can I ask the Minister whether he has a database that shows what the job requirements are for the future and what the department is doing to prepare them for it? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Lee. The honourable Minister of Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Ootes.

Return to Question 96-14(3): Labour Force Training and Literacy

HON. JAKE OOTES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, certainly through the socio-economic agreements that were struck, there was a requirement to have so many employees. Can we supply that labour force? What is that labour force? What level is that labour force at?

The data that we have available at the moment comes from a labour force survey completed last year, I believe, and it looked at education levels. The other survey that we have is the Census from 1996, and it also provides education levels.

At the moment, other than some surveys we have done directed specifically at the oil and gas industry, that is what we have. Thank you.

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

Supplementary to Question 96-14(3): Labour Force Training and Literacy

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The oil and gas industry is what is hot right now and maybe diamonds have cooled down a bit, I do not know. It should not, I do not think.

Would the government consider really targeting the stats that they look at? The bureau stats have very useful information. Pulling it together and looking at mainly what we have in terms of population and the educational level and who is workable, who is employable, who is trainable, and who is able and willing. I would suggest that there will not be a lot of people. Then we will have to target the training program so that we address the specific needs of the people and we match them with the jobs that are available.

Would the Minister prepare, in preparation for September, and look at coming up with such data? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Lee. The honourable Minister responsible for Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Ootes.

Further Return to Question 96-14(3): Labour Force Training and Literacy

HON. JAKE OOTES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We will certainly compile the data that is available and it will be from the labour force survey and the Census data. It, no doubt, will have limitations from that perspective. It may not answer all the types of questions. I am probably on the same wavelength as Ms. Lee, that we need to do more work in this area.

It is certainly our hope that if we can obtain funding through the Non-Renewable Resource Strategy, we can take the next step in this whole process, and that is to work on our database for labour force levels and availability and education levels. Thank you.

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

Supplementary to Question 96-14(3): Labour Force Training and Literacy

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate the Minister's answer, although I must say that I am very surprised that we do not have this kind of information already when we are going all over the country selling this idea that we are ready for business, but we are not sure if our people are or if we have the infrastructure in place.

May I suggest to the Minister that, while I do believe that the information is available, it should be narrowed. It is about who can work for oil and gas and diamonds, and what they need. May I have the Minister commit that we have very precise information in September about what we are looking at? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Lee. The honourable Minister responsible for Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Ootes.

Further Return to Question 96-14(3): Labour Force Training and Literacy

HON. JAKE OOTES: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We will provide precise information from the information that is available. We cannot enter into surveys to expand upon that. We will gather the information that we have. Just on the basis that we do not have the information, I am not familiar with all the information that is available throughout the government. We must remember one thing, that the paradigm of activity happened about a year ago in the oil and gas industry. It has

come upon us very rapidly, without anyone here being a futurist. This is how things happened.

Now we have to try to catch up. It was somewhat the same with the diamond industry, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

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

Supplementary to Question 96-14(3): Labour Force Training and Literacy

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. May I ask the Minister to commit that he is not going to wait for commitment on the money from the federal government on the Non-Renewable Resource Development Strategy? May I ask the Minister to commit that this is the kind of information we need now? We need to know what are people are able to do, and what they are ready for. Can I have him commit that, Mr. Speaker?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Lee. The honourable Minister responsible for Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Ootes.

Further Return to Question 96-14(3): Labour Force Training and Literacy

HON. JAKE OOTES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We have approximately 25,000 person years of work overall in the next 20 years. Ms. Lee asked if we would get information together, and are we committed to compiling a human resource inventory.

Yes, it is necessary to do that for us. It is an essential element. We are restricted, at the moment, to be able to do that simply because of the resources required to accomplish that. We are hopeful and we are certainly working extremely hard on ensuring that we get the Non-Renewable Resource Strategy in place for ourselves, so that we can tackle this very important area.

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

Question 97-14(3): Oil and Gas Training and Literacy

MR. MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is for the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment. In the 2000-2001 business plan, the Department of Education, Culture and Employment identifies \$500,000 for oil and gas industry training. We have yet to see a strategy developed, and as this funding is to cover our training for oil and gas across the Territories, I do not believe it is enough.

I would like to ask the Minister if he could tell this Assembly whether the Oil and Gas Training Program, envisioned by his department, includes a literacy component? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. The honourable Minister responsible for Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Ootes.

Return to Question 97-14(3): Oil and Gas Training and Literacy

HON. JAKE OOTES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. A part of the thrust of the department is to ensure that we have adult basic

education programs in place, and a component of that, of course, is literacy. Thank you.

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

Supplementary to Question 97-14(3): Oil and Gas Training and Literacy

MR. MCLEOD: I would like to ask if there will be minimum standards or tests that have to be passed in order to enter into oil and gas training?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. The honourable Minister responsible for Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Ootes.

Further Return to Question 97-14(3): Oil and Gas Training and Literacy

HON. JAKE OOTES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The standards will be set according to the type of work and training that the individual will enter into. There will be definite levels for different occupations. There will be, no doubt, pre-employment training. There will be employment training, apprenticeship training and so forth. So the standards will have to be set according to those particular occupations that are identified.

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

Supplementary to Question 97-14(3): Oil and Gas Training and Literacy

MR. MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Can the Minister inform this Assembly whether the oil and gas training has a practical component that allows students a hands on experience?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. The honourable Minister responsible for Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Ootes.

Further Return to Question 97-14(3): Oil and Gas Training and Literacy

HON. JAKE OOTES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Part of the renewable resource strategy is to get the resources to implement programs for training and human resource development. That has yet to be designed. Initially, the attempt has been to identify where the need is. Thank you.

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

Supplementary to Question 97-14(3): Oil and Gas Training and Literacy

MR. MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am aware that there are several institutions in the south that can provide oil and gas training. Can the Minister inform this Assembly whether an individual from the Northwest Territories can access such a program using student financial assistance or apprenticeship training?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. The honourable Minister responsible for Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Ootes.

Further Return to Question 97-14(3): Oil and Gas Training and Literacy

HON. JAKE OOTES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I believe if they are taking an accredited program and the program is 12 weeks in duration and it is a recognized institution, then, yes, they can access funding through student financial assistance. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Ootes. Item 6, oral questions. The Member for Inuvik Boot Lakes, Mr. Roland.

Question 98-14(3): Linking Apprenticeship Training and Literacy

MR. ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, we have heard it said that these are exciting times in the Northwest Territories. We have diamond development and the enormous potential for oil and gas. Prospects on it are that we will become a "have" territory. It is only fair that the people that are in the area of the development should get first crack at the jobs that arise from the development of those resources. We know, especially in the area of oil and gas that is coming up, there is a need for qualified tradespersons, and that need will come up very quickly here.

We know that if we are going to do something, we have to take advantage of it right away, Mr. Speaker, not in three years or later, because at that time it will be too late.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment, seeing that they have lapsed over the last three years, \$935,000. I think a lot of this lapse is due to the literacy rates because you need to have a good education to be able to do the course work that is involved in a lot of the apprenticeships.

Can the Minister inform me if he is aware of the number of people who have applied for apprenticeships and those that have been turned down, and the reason for them being turned down? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Roland. It is a longer question and it sounds like there are two parts to it. The honourable Minister responsible for Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Ootes.

Return to Question 98-14(3): Linking Apprenticeship Training and Literacy

HON. JAKE OOTES: I do not have the answer to the question of how many people and the reasons they were turned down, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

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

Supplementary to Question 98-14(3): Linking Apprenticeship Training and Literacy

MR. ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Well can the Minister provide information to me, and to this House of the number of people who have applied for apprenticeships and have been turned down and having those numbers based on the lack of having proper education levels? Will you provide that? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Roland. The honourable Minister responsible for Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Ootes.

Further Return to Question 98-14(3): Linking Apprenticeship Training and Literacy

HON. JAKE OOTES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, if the information is available, I will certainly make that information available to the Member. Thank you.

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

Supplementary to Question 98-14(3): Linking Apprenticeship Training and Literacy

MR. ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Can the Minister, while he is getting that information, find out, or maybe he has that information now, what is the cost, to this government for one apprentice per year? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Roland. The honourable Minister responsible for Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Ootes.

Further Return to Question 98-14(3): Linking Apprenticeship Training and Literacy

HON. JAKE OOTES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Again, I do not have that information, which I will get for the Member. Thank you.

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

Supplementary to Question 98-14(3): Linking Apprenticeship Training and Literacy

MR. ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. While the Minister is collecting that information, maybe you can also add to that information the number of apprenticeships that have been created since the government has gotten out of apprenticeships. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Roland. I think that would have been better as a written question. I think that maybe the Minister will provide that in a written form. It is a difficult question, I could not understand exactly what it was, but Mr. Ootes, you may answer that if you wish.

HON. JAKE OOTES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wonder if the Member would clarify the question. I did not catch a word in there. Did he say how many are in the apprenticeship program? I did not catch the complete question. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you. I will allow Mr. Roland to restate the question, but be very succinct, Mr. Roland.

MR. ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Can the Minister inform me, since the government has got out of apprenticeships, as I said they used to be the leader, but since the government has got out of apprenticeships in the Northwest Territories, how many apprenticeships have been created? That is by the private sector. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Roland. The honourable Minister responsible for Education, Culture, and Employment, Mr. Ootes.

Further Return to Question 98-14(3): Linking Apprenticeship Training and Literacy

HON. JAKE OOTES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have some data on the number of apprentices in the Northwest Territories, but I do not have the answer to the specific question the Member has asked, and will get him the information on that if that is available, and readily available. Thank you.

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

Question 99-14(3): Literacy Programs in Correctional Facilities

MR. DELOREY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is probably more for the Minister of Justice. As I stated in my Member's statement I was quite shocked to read that the average education level of our inmates in our correctional centres is grade 6. We all know that alcohol is involved in the commitment of the majority of offences in the Northwest Territories. I might suggest that the lack of education that many inmates have contributes to their frustration level, which may drive their need to drink, which in turn results in the commission of an offence. I also suggest that if that person only has a grade 6 education, they may have already been sentenced to a hard life regardless of any sentence imposed by the court.

Can the Minister of Justice tell me what literacy program options are available in the correction centres? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Delorey. The honourable Minister responsible for Justice, Mr. Antoine.

Return to Question 99-14(3): Literacy Programs in Correctional Facilities

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in the correctional facilities that exist in the Northwest Territories, there are literacy programs, along with other programs, offered at these facilities. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Minister Antoine. Supplementary, Mr. Delorey.

Supplementary to Question 99-14(3): Literacy Programs in Correctional Facilities

MR. DELOREY: Thank you Mr. Speaker. Could the Minister tell the Assembly how many hours a day an inmate who is in a literacy program in the correction centre would spend in a classroom? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Delorey. The honourable Minister responsible for Justice, Mr. Antoine.

Further Return to Question 99-14(3): Literacy Programs in Correctional Facilities

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker I do not have the details. That is kind of a detailed question for me to reply to at this point, so I will find that information and

provide the honourable Member with the specific amount of hours per inmate at these facilities. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Minister Antoine. Supplementary, Mr. Delorey.

Supplementary to Question 99-14(3): Literacy Programs in Correctional Facilities

MR. DELOREY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to thank the Minister for that. I would also like to know, Mr. Speaker, if we could have some figures, or if the Minister has any figures on what percentage of our inmates have a grade 12 education or better? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Delorey. The honourable Minister responsible for Justice, Mr. Antoine.

Further Return to Question 99-14(3): Literacy Programs in Correctional Facilities

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I do not know at this point what the statistics are. I will find that information and share it with the honourable Member. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Antoine. Final supplementary, Mr. Delorey.

Supplementary to Question 99-14(3): Literacy Programs in Correctional Facilities

MR. DELOREY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Maybe the Minister could also add in his information that he will gather for me, what programming is available, specifically for the South Mackenzie Correctional Centre in Hay River. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you Mr. Delorey. The honourable Minister responsible for Justice, Mr. Antoine.

Further Return to Question 99-14(3): Literacy Programs in Correctional Facilities

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I understand there are literacy programs provided at the South Mackenzie Correctional Facility, as well as numerous other programs and there are other programs that are provided for the inmates there. You have to realize that at our facilities, we do not have adequate spaces to provide extensive programming, including literacy. We understand there is timing as well. There are different inmates coming in at different times for different lengths of stay, so I will take the questions from the honourable Member and provide as much detail as we can. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Mahsi, Mr. Antoine. Oral questions. The Member for Tu Nedhe, Mr. Nitah.

Question 100-14(3): Linking Health and Literacy

MR. NITAH: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. In light of our acknowledgement of the illiteracy rate of the Northwest Territories, the average of which is 15 percent, and some of our communities are as high as 61 percent, I was somewhat disillusioned during the review of the business plan for the department of Health and Social Services with their Health Promotion Strategy.

In their Health Promotion Strategy, they failed to recognize the negative effect that illiteracy has on the health and well being of members of the Northwest Territories. Mr. Speaker, they also did not recognize illiteracy as a critical issue affecting their department. I would argue, Mr. Speaker, that illiteracy contributes to the social and health problems that the department faces. If you cannot read all the shiny pamphlets in the world on the dangers of AIDS or sharing needles, they are not going to help you.

Can the Minister inform the House whether her department acknowledges the effects that literacy has on the health and well being of Northerners? Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

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

Return to Question 100-14(3): Linking Health and Literacy

HON. JANE GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my department and I recognize that literacy comes to bear on every aspect of a person's life. Illiteracy has a negative impact in accessing every opportunity and pursuing every goal in a person's life. Thank you.

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

Supplementary to Question 100-14(3): Linking Health and Literacy

MR. NITAH: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. I am glad the department recognizes or acknowledges that literacy has an effect on health and social issues in the Northwest Territories.

Can the Minister point to any specific strategy that her department has in place that deals directly with illiteracy? Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Nitah. The honourable Minister responsible for Health, Mrs. Groenewegen.

Further Return to Question 100-14(3): Linking Health and Literacy

HON. JANE GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the Department of Health and Social Services does not deal directly with literacy challenges. That falls under the mandate of the Department of Education, Culture and Employment. However, we are more than happy and prepared to work with Education, Culture and Employment in finding ways of communicating with constituents on health promotion issues, perhaps in other ways than through the written word if that helps to get our message out. Certainly, the mandate for literacy is with Education, Culture and Employment. Thank you.

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

Supplementary to Question 100-14(3): Linking Health and Literacy

MR. NITAH: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Recognizing that illiteracy comes in different layers, some people are functionally illiterate and can read a little bit. In light of that, is the Minister aware whether her department examines the written promotional

material that it prepares to ensure that it is written in plain language? Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Mahsi, Mr. Nitah. The honourable Minister responsible for Health, Mrs. Groenewegen.

Further Return to Question 100-14(3): Linking Health and Literacy

HON. JANE GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I could not stand here and tell the Members here that in terms of our brochures and public information campaigns that we have arrived, but we do try to examine information that we know is going to constituents to make sure that it is in lay-persons terms so that the average person could understand it. Thank you.

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

Supplementary to Question 100-14(3): Linking Health and Literacy

MR. NITAH: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Can the Minister tell this Assembly whether the department has any policy in place covering the production of written promotional materials by third parties? Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Nitah. The honourable Minister responsible for Health, Mrs. Groenewegen.

Further Return to Question 100-14(3): Linking Health and Literacy

HON. JANE GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I am not aware of any policy regarding production of materials in our department, but I do take the Member's comment and suggestion under advisement. I do believe it is a good suggestion. Thank you.

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

Question 101-14(3): Linking Aboriginal Languages to the Literacy Directive

MR. MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions are directed to the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment, and they are in relation to the directive on literacy and adult basic education that the Minister has indicated is in the works and is about to be completed, hopefully in the not too distant future.

Mr. Speaker, there is an assumption by just about everybody that when I am talking about literacy, we are talking about English. My question to the Minister is regarding the directive. Given the fact that we have eight official languages, will this directive encompass and recognize the fact that literacy is an issue in all our languages? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Merci beaucoup, Monsieur Miltenberger. The honourable Minister responsible for Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Ootes.

Return to Question 101-14(3): Linking Aboriginal Languages to the Literacy Directive

HON. JAKE OOTES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The directive does not identify any specific language, Mr. Speaker. It is a directive that addresses the various areas such as definitions of what literacy is and what adult basic education is. It provides some purposes and principles, the accessibility and where the literacy is delivered, and by whom. The Member has a very good point. We have to remember we are also working on a policy for aboriginal languages. I think it is important for us to tie them together, and that I believe is what the Member is saying. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Minister Ootes. Supplementary, Mr. Miltenberger.

Supplementary to Question 101-14(3): Linking Aboriginal Languages to the Literacy Directive

MR. MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the assessment by the Minister was correct. He identified the fact that I was making a link, or trying to make a link between the aboriginal languages and literacy. However, he did not say whether his department and the directive would in fact make that link with the strategy. Could he indicate whether it will or not? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. The honourable Minister responsible for Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Ootes.

Further Return to Question 101-14(3): Linking Aboriginal Languages to the Literacy Directive

HON. JAKE OOTES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. There is some work to be done on the directive. There is also work to be done on the Aboriginal Language Policy. From there we are developing a broad policy on literacy and adult basic education. The three have to meld together at some point, Mr. Speaker.

We are talking about a timeframe problem here, because they have to fit in the Adult Literacy and Basic Education Policy, which is nearing completion. It will ensure that it takes into consideration aboriginal languages as well as the other official language. Thank you.

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

Supplementary to Question 101-14(3): Linking Aboriginal Languages to the Literacy Directive

MR. MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in another area related to the directive, could the Minister indicate who he has consulted with outside of government? What groups and individuals in regard to the development of this directive to ensure it has as much broad, public input as possible to make it as relevant and accurate and reflective of the realities of people working out in the communities? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Ootes.

Further Return to Question 101-14(3): Linking Aboriginal Languages to the Literacy Directive

HON. JAKE OOTES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I am not quite sure as to who has been consulted on this. I would have to get back to the Member on that. I do not have that information now. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Ootes. Final supplementary, Mr. Miltenberger.

Supplementary to Question 101-14(3): Linking Aboriginal Languages to the Literacy Directive

MR. MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I take the Minister up on his offer for more information. I do have a final question. It is in relation to the critical role of the family and children and the need for early intervention when you are talking about literacy and culture and language.

My question is, with regard to this directive, could he speak to where the role of the family, children and early intervention fits into that directive? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. It barely ties in with your original question. I will allow the Minister to answer it. The Minister responsible for the Department of Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Ootes.

Further Return to Question 101-14(3): Linking Aboriginal Languages to the Literacy Directive

HON. JAKE OOTES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it is not specific in those terms. There is a concern about more than just family and early childhood education and literacy. There is also workplace, health and so forth. There is a whole area of concern with regard to literacy. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Ootes. Item 6, oral questions. The honourable Member for Mackenzie Delta, Mr. Krutko.

Question 102-14(3): Aboriginal Language Funding Lapse

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the Minister responsible for the Department of Education, Culture and Employment, about the reply he gave about the aboriginal language funding, where it was lapsed. Is the \$600,000 which was lapsed, is that over and above the \$1.6 million?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Krutko. The Minister responsible for the Department of Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Ootes.

Return to Question 102-14(3): Aboriginal Language Funding Lapse

HON. JAKE OOTES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, yes, the funding is \$1.9 million. The lapsed amount, that we have been able to negotiate and carry over, was \$600,000. That will be spread over the next two years. Thank you.

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

Supplementary to Question 102-14(3): Aboriginal Language Funding Lapse

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Will the funding be distributed equally among all of the language groups?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Krutko. The honourable Minister responsible for the Department of Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Ootes.

Further Return to Question 102-14(3): Aboriginal Language Funding Lapse

HON. JAKE OOTES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I cannot answer the question. We still have to look at how that funding will be allocated. We do have a methodology by which we do the funding. Thank you.

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

Supplementary to Question 102-14(3): Aboriginal Language Funding Lapse

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the reason I asked the question is because the aboriginal groups feel the funding they have been receiving...they feel they have been under-funded for a number of years. The increase is great, but I would like to ensure it is fairly distributed so all communities are able to deliver their language program. Will the Minister commit to ensure the money is allocated fairly?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Krutko. The Minister responsible for the Department of Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Ootes.

Further Return to Question 102-14(3): Aboriginal Language Funding Lapse

HON. JAKE OOTES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, we will use an equitable allocation, certainly by regions and then in our system and methodology of which communities are funded. Thank you.

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

Supplementary to Question 102-14(3): Aboriginal Language Funding Lapse

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, were the aboriginal language groups aware that this money lapsed? Why was there nothing done before, so they had an opportunity to spend the money within the timeframes, so we do not set a bad precedent here?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Krutko. The Minister responsible for the Department of Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Ootes.

Further Return to Question 102-14(3): Aboriginal Language Funding Lapse

HON. JAKE OOTES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I am not familiar with whether the aboriginal groups were aware of this lapsed funding. Lapsed funding is of concern to us. We were fortunate to be able to catch this and address this. It is a substantial amount of money. Hopefully, it will assist us here in

the Northwest Territories to address funding for aboriginal language communities. Thank you.

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

Supplementary to Question 102-14(3): Aboriginal Language Funding Lapse

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Regarding the amount of funding that has been allocated, will the Minister send out a memo or letter to the language group, making them aware this money has lapsed and there will be an increase, so they can plan for it? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Krutko. The Minister responsible for the Department of Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Ootes.

Further Return to Question 102-14(3): Aboriginal Language Funding Lapse

HON. JAKE OOTES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I believe it is normal procedure to indicate the amount of funding that is available for organizations, and that this will be part of the notification. Once the budget is passed, then we can deal with both the budgeted amount and the amount that was carried over. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Ootes. The time for question period has expired. Item 7, written questions. The honourable Member for Range Lake, Ms. Lee.

ITEM 7: WRITTEN QUESTIONS

Written Question 4-14(3): GNWT Duty Travel Expenses

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a written question for the Honourable Joe Handley, Minister of Finance. Please provide the following information:

The total amount of money spent by the GNWT employees on duty travel within the Northwest Territories for the last three fiscal years. If the amount is an estimate, please provide the details of the assumptions used in arriving at the estimate. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Lee. Item 7, written questions. Item 8, replies 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. The honourable Member for Sahtu, Premier Kakfwi.

ITEM 13: TABLING OF DOCUMENTS

Tabled Document 19-14(3): DIAND Minister Letter of Instruction to the Honourable Glenna Hansen, Commissioner of the Northwest Territories

HON. STEPHEN KAKFWI: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I wish to table a letter from the Honourable Robert Nault, Minister of Indian and Northern Affairs, regarding the appointment and the role of the Commissioner of the Northwest Territories, included is a letter from the Honourable Glenna Hansen, Commissioner of the Northwest Territories, transmitting the document to me. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Kakfwi. Item 13, tabling of documents. The honourable Member for Nahendeh, Mr. Antoine.

Tabled Document 20-14(3): Office of the Fire Marshall 1999 Annual Report

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I wish to table the following document, entitled Office of the Fire Marshall 1999 Annual Report. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Mahsi, Mr. Antoine. Item 13, tabling of documents. The honourable Member for Weledeh, Mr. Handley.

Tabled Document 21-14(3): Background Information on the PeopleSoft Project

HON. JOE HANDLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I wish to table the following package of information entitled Background Information on the PeopleSoft Project. This package contains the following information: a chronology of the history of the PeopleSoft project; a list of positions involved with the implementation of the system; a list of contracts and consultants hired in regard to the implementation of the system; and a costing sheet that provides details on the implementation costs of the system, including comparisons to the initial cost estimates. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Handley. Item 13, tabling of documents. The honourable Member for Thebacha, Mr. Miltenberger.

Tabled Document 22-14(3): Paper Prepared by the Northwest Territories Literacy Council Entitled Making the Case for Literacy

MR. MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to table a document from the NWT Literacy Council that was presented to the Standing Committee on Social Programs. It is called Making a Case for Literacy. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Item 13, tabling of documents. Item 14, notices of motion. Item 15, notices of motions for first reading of bills. Item 16, motions. Item 17, first reading of bills. The honourable Member for Nahendeh, Mr. Antoine.

ITEM 17: FIRST READING OF BILLS

Bill 7: Miscellaneous Statutes Amendment Act, 2000

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Hay River South, that Bill 7, Miscellaneous Statutes Amendment Act, 2000 be read for the first time. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Antoine. The motion is in order. To the motion. Question has been called. All those in favour? All those opposed? The motion is carried. Bill 7 has had first reading. Item 17, first reading of bills. The honourable Member for Nahendeh, Mr. Antoine.

Bill 8: Justice Statutes Amendment Act

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Weledeh, that

Bill 8, Justice Statutes Amendment Act, be read for the first time. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Antoine. The motion is in order. To the motion. Question has been called. All those in favour? All those opposed? The motion is carried. Bill 8 has had first reading. Item 17, first reading of bills. The honourable Member for Yellowknife Centre, Mr. Ootes.

Bill 9: An Act to Amend the Northwest Territories Power Corporation Act

HON. JAKE OOTES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Inuvik Twin Lakes, that Bill 9, An Act to Amend the Northwest Territories Power Corporation Act, be read for the first time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Ootes. The motion is in order. To the motion. Question has been called. All those in favour? All those opposed? The motion is carried. Bill 9 has had first reading. Item 17, first reading of bills. Item 18, second reading of bills. The Chair recognizes the honourable Member for Inuvik Boot Lake, Mr. Roland.

MR. ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I seek unanimous consent to go back to item 12.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Roland. The Member is seeking unanimous consent to return to item 12, reports of committees on the review of bills. Are there any nays? There are no nays, Mr. Roland. You may return to item 12.

REVERT TO ITEM 12: REPORTS OF COMMITTEES ON THE REVIEW OF BILLS

Bill 4: An Act to Amend the Workers' Compensation Act

MR. ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I wish to report to the Assembly that the Standing Committee on Accountability and Oversight has reviewed Bill 4, An Act to Amend the Workers' Compensation Act, and wishes to report that Bill 4 is now ready for committee of the whole as amended and reprinted.

Bill 5: An Act to Amend the Workers' Compensation Act No. 2

Mr. Speaker, I wish to report to the Assembly that the Standing Committee on Accountability and Oversight has reviewed Bill 5, An Act to Amend the Workers' Compensation Act No. 2, and wishes to report that Bill 5 is now ready for committee of the whole as amended and reprinted. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Roland, for those reports. We will go back to Item 19, consideration in committee of the whole of bills and other matters. Bill 1, Appropriations Act, 2000-2001; Committee Report 1-14(3), Standing Committee on Accountability and Oversight Review of 2000-2003 Business Plan and 2000-2001 Main Estimates; Committee Report 2-14(3), Standing Committee on Governance and Economic Development Review of the 2000-2003 Business Plan and 2000-2001 Main Estimates; and Committee Report 3-14(3), Standing Committee on Social Programs Review of the 2000-2003 Business Plan and 2000-2001 Main Estimates.

By the authority given the Speaker by Motion 4-14(3), the House is resolved into committee of the whole to sit beyond the time of adjournment until the committee is prepared to report, 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 were dealing with Bill 1, Appropriation Act 2000-2001, with the Department of Education, Culture and Employment. What is the wish of the committee? Mr. Dent.

MR. DENT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to recommend the committee resume consideration of Bill 1 and Committee Reports 1 through 3 concurrently. Specifically, to resume the consideration of the budget of the Department of Education, Culture and Employment. After which, we should move into Municipal and Community Affairs. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Does the committee concur?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): With that, we will take a short break.

-- Break

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): I will call the committee to order. At this time I would like to ask the Minister if he will be bringing in any witnesses?

HON. JAKE OOTES: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, I would like to bring in witnesses. Thank you.

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

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

HON. JAKE OOTES: On my right is Mr. Mark Cleveland deputy minister for the Department of Education, Culture and Employment. On my left is Mr. Paul Devitt director of management services. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): We were on page 9-17, Education, Culture and Employment. Education and Culture operation expense. Total operation expense \$105,737,000. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Page 9-19 education, culture grants and contributions, grants, \$52,000. Agreed? Mr. Nitah.

MR. NITAH: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In the area of aboriginal languages and grants and contributions for aboriginal language and heritage and culture, on page 9-18 under operations expense, aboriginal languages is budgeted for \$5,591,000. On page 9-19, under grants and contributions, a total of \$505,000. That, plus the agreement between the Government of the Northwest Territories and the federal government for languages, another \$1.9 million, for a total of \$6.4 million. I would like to ask the Minister for a break down of how those dollars are spent and where the dollars are going. I realize it is a lot to ask, so I do not expect the Minister to answer me in

detail, maybe just in general. I would like a written copy. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): The Minister responsible for Education, Mr. Ootes.

HON. JAKE OOTES: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Dealing with the aboriginal languages of \$5,591,000, that is for schools and its contribution for a teaching and learning centre, culture and language programs and translation and interpreter services. The second part of it is for classroom assistance and language specialists, and that would be a contribution for classroom assistance, language specialists calculated on aboriginal students K-12. It is provided through the district education councils and district education authorities to the various school boards. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

MR. NITAH: Thank you. I would like to know the success rate of these funds, especially the ones that are going into the schools from K-12. The fact is \$5 million is quite a bit of dollars, and it should help in improving the ability of our aboriginal students in learning and enhancing their aboriginal language skills. I know there are language communities working right now on developing a strategy to enhance and revive our languages in the communities. I would suggest that it is a full-time position, a full-time job to do that. Our languages are deteriorating at such a quick rate that we need to battle head on to have any success.

In consultation with these language communities, I would encourage the department to secure funding to hire full-time language coordinators in each aboriginal community. The dollars that are allocated to the language communities are based on aboriginal population. A lot of the communities in the Northwest Territories have a large Metis contingency, and they are not recognized as aboriginal people that speak their languages. I would suggest there are a lot of Metis people out there that are bilingual. A lot of their relatives and children would like to be bilingual also. I think that should be recognized, and it should be accounted for in the funding policy or funding agreements that the department enters into at the language community. I would strongly suggest that.

I wonder if I could get a commitment from the Minister at this time to work with the language communities and see if there is a need, I do believe there is a need for full-time language coordinators, and that he secure funding for those positions for the long term, not a six month project or a five month project or a one year project. This is not a problem that could be tackled in spurts. It has to be a comprehensive and sustained effort on behalf of all involved, especially the Department of Education, Culture and Employment.

Further to that, to enhance the cultural awareness and history of the communities and regions and people of the Northwest Territories, the original peoples, I believe there is a need to really tackle the issue that people in the communities are despaired because there is a lack of information about the history. They do not know too much about the history. The elders in our communities, their numbers are getting lower, and with that we are losing a lot of tradition.

I believe we need cultural centres in every community that depict the history of the community, the history of the people with photographs, with written literature. This will help revive

and sustain the heritage and cultures of northern aboriginal people and the languages. I wonder if I could get the Minister's thoughts on that, and possibly a commitment in working towards achieving that initiative. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Minister.

HON. JAKE OOTES: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The Member's suggestion of a full-time aboriginal language coordinator in the community is a good idea. I should background this somewhat as to what we do now, and the process that we feel obligated to work under so that there is some understanding of the process we are using.

At the moment, the schools have classroom assistants and language specialists whose responsibilities are to address the whole issue of languages within the school. That is a resource that is available for the children in the school. I do not know whether that can be expanded beyond that, because I am not sure of what the regulations are with regard to unions and so forth.

The other part of this is the funding to the aboriginal language communities. We feel that the language communities are the lead in their particular areas with respect to addressing and developing a plan for language revitalization. They are doing that as we speak. In that, there is a possibility for them to identify such things as a language specialist in a community to work in communities, or for several communities, whatever it is.

The restriction we have today is the resource availability. Because we have already allocated our funding to that, we either do it to the schools or we do it to the aboriginal language communities. So we would have to address that in a different way in order to find the resources. There is certainly, as I am well aware in some of the regions, the loss of languages that is there and the need to address the revitalization.

The cultural awareness is another area that I think Mr. Nitah was very concerned about. We do provide some funding through the Cultural Dene Institute. Again, we are somewhat restricted. We tried to be fair across the board on our funding. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Nitah.

MR. NITAH: I would like to thank the Minister for leaving me a few seconds to add on to my thoughts and questions. Thank you, Mr. Minister.

I agree that the approach is through the school system. I think we need to address that. It is at a fundamental level. All studies point to the home for language revival. I understand the history of the Northwest Territories with the residential schools. Written language, there are a lot of adults and young adults that do not have those skills.

It is great that the students learn the language at school, but if they do not practice it at home with their parents, it defeats the purpose. I think we need to address the issue head on, the two-prong issue or three-prong issue. We not only have to deal with the students in the schools, but we have to deal with their parents so that they are compatible when they are using the language in the homes.

To that end, I think we need to address the problem at the community level, not only at the school level. I think we have to

find the dollars, \$6.4 million is quite a lot of dollars for approximately, I would say, 10,000 people that want to learn language.

If you take half the population of the Northwest Territories, which is about 20,000, you take away the people that are already speaking the language, then \$6.4 million is quite a bit of dollars for that many people. I think you should be able to find resources that are needed that you say there is a lack of, and be innovative. We are talking partnerships all the time. The federal government has programs and services in this area, as well, and if you work with the language communities and the federal government, I am sure you could find the resources to do that.

I would strongly encourage you to follow up on that with all parties involved. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Ootes.

HON. JAKE OOTES: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The need for involvement of family is critical. We recognize that. The component is not just that the answer lies within the school system. The answer lies in a varied number of areas. One being early childhood programs, aboriginal, for example and family literacy programs. We talked earlier about that.

We do feel that we have the right approach by putting it back at the community level through the community language program and funding community language. They are the people that have the ability and the knowledge to address it. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Nitah, one more question, then I will recognize Mr. Miltenberger. Mr. Nitah.

MR. NITAH: In regard to the residential school system, that was a very devastating impact on the aboriginal people in the Northwest Territories. It ruined the language, which kind of took away from the culture. There is a sense of disparity in the communities. I would suggest that sense of disparity, the lack of knowledge about the history, leads to individuals' disparity and their spirit is down.

In any society, when the spirit is broken, there are problems associated with that. I believe our education and graduation levels, high percentage of alcohol use, smoking, health problems, all come from this lack of history and lack of spirit about their history and about themselves.

To that end, I think, there needs to be a big push in the aboriginal community and with this government, to establish cultural centres that would depict, as I said earlier, the history of the people, the culture, and try to revive that broken spirit.

I think that leads to a lot of negative impact on the individuals in our communities and as a society in the Northwest Territories. I think this department, in cooperation and in partnership with all other departments of this government, should look at working with each First Nation community and identifying the resources to establish cultural centres.

It could be used for tourism as well. We always say tourism is important for communities, but people do not like to go to communities just for the sake of going to communities. If we have centres such as this, they will be able to go some place and say, "Oh, this is the history of the community. This is the

history of the people." You could have a website that you could share with the rest of the world, not only with each other.

I believe that if I could get the Minister's thoughts on that. Is he willing to work with the other departments along with the aboriginal communities in establishing cultural centres, which deals with heritage, culture, language and tourism and information centres? I would appreciate that, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Thank you, Mr. Nitah. The Minister responsible for Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Ootes.

HON. JAKE OOTES: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Like the Member, I am well aware of the importance of culture. It is a tremendous contributor to the territory, to people. Unfortunately, we are lagging in that area as well. We are not able to address the many needs that are out there and it is, again, our funding base for cultural grants and contributions is \$2.6 million, which is allocated to various areas. The total budget, sorry, for culture and heritage is \$2.6 million, it covers a number of areas.

I do not disagree at all with the Member's comments in this area. Hopefully, down the road, we can address this in terms of trying to find more funding. We will certainly work with, as the Member has requested, various organizations, aboriginal groups and other government departments to continue to identify where we can support culture and heritage.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Thank you, Mr. Ootes. General comments. Mr. Nitah, I will come back to you. Mr. Miltenberger.

MR. MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just have a follow up question in regard to the issue I raised yesterday, in terms of the language funding and the formula used to allocate it. Based on the number of registered Indians and registered Inuvialuit, it leaves out a significant component of the aboriginal population, which are the Metis people.

The Minister indicated, on page 588, that he would get an answer back to me by today.

I was wondering if the Minister had any information that could speak to that issue on how they are going to accommodate the Metis people?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Ootes.

HON. JAKE OOTES: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We do have some information on that, and I will ask the deputy minister to explain that.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Thank you, Mr. Ootes. Mr. Cleveland.

MR. CLEVELAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. After the question yesterday in the House, we researched the question that was asked by the Member. In fact, we do consider Metis in the allocation. We examine Metis that are in the individual communities and include them in the calculation for purposes of the allocation.

Secondly, just as a related matter, with respect to the South Slave in particular, we have, as well, encouraged discussions between Metis organizations and both the Cree and

Chipewyan language groups, to ensure there is good cooperation in those areas. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Miltenberger.

MR. MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. So it is not the case of being registered Indians and registered Inuvialuit, based on the 1996 Census. You are indicating to me that you have consulted with the Metis locals in the South Slave. You are saying then that there are, between registered Indians and Metis, 2,208 aboriginal people, Chipewyan or Metis in the South Slave?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Cleveland.

MR. CLEVELAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We do use the census figures in the case of settled claims areas. We use specific enrolment data. What we have done is take the census calculations with respect to Metis, in the respective communities and using the numbers that are identified in the census, we have added them to the Dene and/or Inuvialuit numbers for those particular communities.

So Metis are represented in combination with the Dene. For example, in the community of Hay River or in the community of Fort Smith, Lutselk'e, that sort of thing. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Miltenberger.

MR. MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Then could I presume that any further correspondence in regard to funding for language communities, especially where there is significant Metis population, will reflect the fact that they are in there and not left out?

The other thing is, given the questions and concerns, could the Minister provide me with the more detailed breakdown for aboriginal community funding levels for 2000-2001 that would indicate, to me, so that I could see how they added the Metis population and mixed them in with the Dene population to get the numbers they have?

The indication I had yesterday talking to the President of the South Slave Metis Tribal Council, Mr. Harrington, was that they were not included. I received the same information from Mrs. Biscaye, who is doing some work for the Akaitcho territory on their Chipewyan language strategy.

So there seems to be some confusion here, and I would appreciate the information so that I could sort through that and make sense of the situation. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Ootes.

HON. JAKE OOTES: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, we will get the information that is available and provide it to the Member.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): General comments. Mr. Nitah.

MR. NITAH: One quick one, Mr. Chairman. It is frustrating to go over a budget and ask for things and get the response that we do not have enough resources. I would like to suggest that we sit down. I spoke with another longstanding Member of the House during the break, and the only way we are going to change the budget to reflect the needs of our communities is to

start a planning process. Once you complete those plans, then adjust the budget accordingly.

I would recommend to the House, to all Members, that we start that process very soon, and I would encourage and request some kind of commitment from the Minister to do just that. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): The Minister responsible for Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Ootes.

HON. JAKE OOTES: Thank you. This is part of a broader area that involves the Department of Finance, the Financial Management Board Secretariat, Mr. Chairman. We do produce business plans, and we ask for input from those particular committees on our business plans.

The Member, I believe, has an opportunity to discuss that with the particular committee in terms of our department where he may see where priorities should lie, and discuss that with the Standing Committee on Social Programs. It becomes that sort of process, so that all Members have an opportunity to have input. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Nitah.

MR. NITAH: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It is great that we have committees that review the books, but I would suggest that by the time the books arrive to us, the money is already spoken for. We are just approving and questioning here and there. We do not have the time to really dissect the budgets to make a big difference, and if we do, it takes another long process.

We have \$6.4 million. This government has been in operation for 33 years in the Northwest Territories alone. In that time, we have not increased our education level. Our languages are going down. It is not working, Mr. Chairman.

We have to have fundamental changes in the way we approach things and that takes planning. That takes sitting down and really planning and adjusting our budgets accordingly, not based on the last 33 years, but based on what we know we need in the future.

It is frustrating sitting here looking at these statistics. Every negative statistic in this book has an aboriginal name associated with it. It is very frustrating. If I am going to feel like I am contributing, I need to feel like I am planning, I am starting from the beginning, because the plans in the past have not worked, Mr. Chairman.

All I am asking is for a commitment from the Minister to look at ways towards solving those problems in a fundamentally different way. That is all I am asking for, at this point. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): The Minister responsible for the Department of Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Ootes.

HON. JAKE OOTES: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I am there to listen to the Members' suggestions and comments. I will consider those, and certainly be sensitive to what is being said. Once plans need to be put together, we try to work together with the committees. We try to get feedback from the committees, and it is the individual Members who can provide input into that as well. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Thank you, Mr. Ootes. Mr. Nitah.

MR. NITAH: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, it is like trying to squeeze the last drop out of a bottle, in trying to get a commitment from the Minister here. What I am asking for is a fundamentally different way of approaching the issues that are faced by the people of the Northwest Territories, specifically the aboriginal community. If I cannot get a commitment out of him today, I will have to approach it from a different angle another day, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Thank you, Mr. Nitah. Just a comment on the review. It has been quite some time since we have had such things as the Language Bureau, which is no longer there. Are there any plans to look at a review in the area of aboriginal languages?

HON. JAKE OOTES: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We are working right now with the aboriginal language communities on a strategy. We have had extensive feedback on that. The Language Strategy is developing. There will be a review of the Language Bill, I understand, within the next year. There are opportunities to look at that.

Also, the school planning and resource committee, Mr. Chairman, is looking at areas of need and is developing and working on plans. That is an ongoing basis. That particular committee was formed last year, to the best of my understanding. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Thank you, Mr. Ootes. That is helpful. General comments? Detail? We are on page 9-19, education and culture, grants and contributions, grants, contributions, \$52,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Thank you. We are under contributions, page 9-21, \$92,801,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Thank you. Total grants and contributions, \$92,850,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Thank you. Active positions, information item.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Thank you. Student loan revolving fund, another information item.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Thank you. Detail on funding allocated to education authorities, another information item.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Thank you. Page 9-26, college programs, information item.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Thank you. Page 9-27, college funding allocations, information item.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Thank you. Page 9-28, detail of work performed on behalf of others. Mr. Dent.

MR. DENT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Under the Labour Market Development Agreement, I noticed there is a drop of \$2.2 million between the revised estimates and what is in this year's main estimates. I was just wondering why the federal contribution for this program would be dropping so much.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Thank you, Mr. Dent. Mr. Ootes.

HON. JAKE OOTES: We just need a second here, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Dent.

MR. DENT: Mr. Chairman, under detail of work performed on behalf of others, I was looking at the Labour Market Development Agreement, which is on page 9-30.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Thank you, Mr. Dent. Mr. Ootes.

HON. JAKE OOTES: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. This change has taken place because we have signed a new agreement under the Labour Market Development Agreement to take care of the Northwest Territories portion only. Before, it also applied to Nunavut. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Dent.

MR. DENT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. There is an awful lot of funding provided in this area by HRDC to aboriginal governments as well, for similar types of projects. What efforts are undertaken by the government right now to try to bring some coordination to this whole area?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Ootes.

HON. JAKE OOTES: I will ask Mr. Cleveland to address that. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Cleveland.

MR. CLEVELAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The approach we have taken is to focus our efforts at the regional level. Our regional superintendents work closely with the aboriginal human resource development groups in the various regions of the Northwest Territories. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Dent.

MR. DENT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I noticed this department is showing nothing in terms of contracting back the services for Nunavut. There are no further contracts being carried out with Nunavut?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Ootes.

HON. JAKE OOTES: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We are trying to finalize the agreements with Nunavut. They are in the services of museums, archives, apprenticeship program, teacher certification, and student records. That is for high

schools, and student financial assistance until the end of this academic year.

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

MR. DENT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. If I heard the Minister right, that is a drop from 15 that we expected when we considered the main estimates last year, to five contracts in this next year. Is that correct?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Ootes.

HON. JAKE OOTES: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. To six contracts this year.

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

MR. DENT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. This reduction in contracts, has it had an impact on the staffing of the department?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Cleveland.

MR. CLEVELAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, we have been able, in most cases, to staff positions on a term basis. We did that starting a couple of years ago to reduce the impact at this point in time. We expect to have some impact on staff, but we expect it to be quite limited. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Thank you, Mr. Cleveland. General comments. We are dealing with page 9-28, detail of work performed on behalf of others. General comments? Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Page 9-31, revenues, recoveries and transfer payments.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Thank you. We will go back to page 9-11, an item that was deferred. Page 9-11, advanced education and careers. Mr. Dent.

MR. DENT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Under program delivery details, which is covered by page 9-11, on page 9-12, we should look at apprenticeship programs. In this year's mains, we see apprenticeship programs dropping from \$2.6 million in the revised estimates from 1999-2000 to \$2.2 million this year. I know we lapsed \$400,000 last year in this program, but are we just cutting the \$400,000 here, rather than trying to find a way to market those dollars?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): We are on page 9-12. Mr. Ootes.

HON. JAKE OOTES: Mr. Devitt will answer the question.

MR. DEVITT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, the change in the apprenticeship budget is associated with the changes in the diamond training. I think there is a net increase of about \$300,000. With the change of building and learning, from capital to operations and maintenance, there is a reduction as well of \$646,000 with the ending of that program. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Dent.

MR. DENT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Specifically with apprenticeships, and knowing we lapsed a considerable amount of money last year, does the department have a strategy this year to seek out employers to try and increase the numbers of apprentices we do have in the system, and therefore employers taking advantage of the matching funds we offer for salaries?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Ootes.

HON. JAKE OOTES: I will ask Mr. Cleveland to address that. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Cleveland.

MR. CLEVELAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The answer to the Member's question is yes. The apprenticeship program is primarily managed out of our regional offices, and the regional superintendents have placed a focus in this area. The primary region where we feel additional work is required is in the North Slave. The superintendent in the North Slave has made some adjustments in terms of reassignment of staff to ensure the staff work, there is more staff to work directly with employers and potential apprentices. We believe that should address the issue. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Thank you, Mr. Cleveland. Mr. Dent.

MR. DENT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, the Standing Committee on Social Programs has been critical of the department for the money that was lapsed in public career service training. What plans does the department have to make sure that they do not lapse the monies this year, that in fact we are training more Northerners this year for the public service?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Ootes.

HON. JAKE OOTES: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We are examining this with other departments. There seems to have been some concern about funding availability in other departments required to pay 50 percent of the costs. We are addressing that through contact with the other departments. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Thank you, Mr. Minister. General comments? Mr. Dent.

MR. DENT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I know that the committee will be watching this issue and we expect to be updated on plans. I would hope that, given the fact that we are better than a quarter of the way through the year, we will have something coming forward to tell us how the department plans to ensure that these funds are effectively used this year, within the next month or two. As my colleague says, we would like to see more aboriginal nurses get training and to be able to access these funds.

Mr. Chairman, I have another question for the department. Can the Minister advise me when was the last time the food rates in the income support program were adjusted?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Minister.

HON. JAKE OOTES: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I believe it was a couple of years ago.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): I believe that your microphone was off when you first answered the question, Mr. Minister.

HON. JAKE OOTES: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The food scales were increased in 1998 by eight percent. Consideration is being given to increasing the annual community food scale rates based on the consumer price index. Food costs survey may be taken on a periodic basis to verify the CPI increases. We are doing that this year.

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

MR. DENT: It was six years, I believe, before 1998 when the last increase was made. I would want to make sure that we do not get into a situation where we let that many years go by again. The Minister did say that consideration was being given to an annual increase based on the CPI. When will the decision be made? When will the Minister commit to advising the committee that he has indeed agreed to an annual adjustment, based on the CPI, on the food basket.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Minister.

HON. JAKE OOTES: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Once we complete the survey, which we expect to do this fall, we can bring it forward for consideration. Thank you.

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

MR. DENT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Well, hungry people are hoping for more than consideration. I hope we can see a commitment to make an annual increase certainly no later than this fall. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, that concludes the questions I have on this page.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Minister.

HON. JAKE OOTES: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I had a question on process, if I may. It is a question regarding a motion I have for page 9-14, in regard to the Community Skills for Work Program. I just want to check to see if it is the appropriate page to do it on, when we consider that particular page.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Yes, Mr. Minister, we are coming back to this item because it was deferred. We will come to the final totals before we do the wrap, so we will have an opportunity to present it at that time. Mr. Minister.

HON. JAKE OOTES: So, I do that on page 9-15. Is that correct?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Page 9-14, under total grants and contributions. Mr. Bell.

MR. BELL: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yesterday, I asked the Minister about their plans for oil and gas training, and discussed the fact that the human resource strategy for oil and gas training has been produced. We were allowed to see it for a few minutes in committee. We have not seen it yet. We have asked the Minister for copies of this, and I just want to explain that this is really critical for us. There are Members on this side of the House who are very concerned, first of all, with the amount of money. Five hundred thousand dollars is not a lot of money. They want to ensure that it is put to the best possible use. It really is a drop in the bucket, but we would like to see how the department is planning to spend this money. Time is

wasting. Our staff are not going to have much time to analyze this before we finish up the department. I thought that we would have it yesterday, and have a chance to review it yesterday evening and this morning.

We have not had that chance yet. I am wondering if the Minister can get that to us as soon as possible. It is getting late here and we would like to get through the department as efficiently and effectively as possible. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Minister.

HON. JAKE OOTES: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We do have copies here and we can give them to the Clerk.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Thank you, Mr. Minister. It would be good to circulate that information so the Members can have a chance to look at it while we are still on this item. Mr. Clerk, can you circulate the information? Mr. Bell, general comments?

MR. BELL: That would be great. I can discuss with my colleagues, at some point, depending on how much time they have to look at this. If they prefer to defer this section while they have a chance to analyze the plan and discuss how the department plans to spend this money. It is not a lot of money. We want to make sure that it is targeted and put to the best use, and has a broad overall focus: long-term, not just short-term types of jobs. The faster we get a look at that, the better.

I just had one other question for the Minister in this area. Some constituents have expressed some concerns about student financial assistance. I also mentioned that they have had some dealings earlier with the department in the spring, and had a hard time getting a quick response and getting information back from the department. It was explained to them to be patient, that the department is implementing a new computer system to deal with student financial assistance and are having some difficulties in certain areas. The students are asked to be patient. I am just wondering if the Minister can comment on the implementation of the new system and how it is going? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Minister.

HON. JAKE OOTES: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. A number of changes have taken place. We did produce the manual for student financial assistance. I believe it was the first, and yes, it was long. It can use improvement, no doubt. It is also available on the web site, which students can access. The voice response system did have some problems with it, there is no doubt. That is an area that we have corrected.

There are a number of administrative areas that were brought to our attention that the department has been responding to. I have been meeting with the deputy minister to ensure that these issues that were brought to my attention were addressed. I believe that they have been addressed. Thank you.

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

MR. BELL: Thank you, so any problems or hurdles that there might have been internally within the new computer system to administer student financial assistance have been looked at? The department is not receiving any more complaints and things are handled? Is that what the Minister said? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Minister.

HON. JAKE OOTES: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I will ask Mr. Cleveland to address this in more detail.

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

MR. CLEVELAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. With the implementation of a new system, you have adjustments to make as the implementation proceeds. We are quite confident that the new system will be in place and working effectively as we move into the next academic year. We are putting student data into the system at the present time. It is proceeding in accordance with our schedule. As I mentioned before, you have adjustments to make, but we are confident it will do us very well in the future. Certainly much better than the past system. Thank you.

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

MR. BELL: I would like to thank the deputy for that response. I just have some questions about the voice response system, because there have been concerns raised with me in meetings with the students coalition about their inability to hook up, when they call in, with a live person. They feel that they get bounced around the department, or bounced around cyberspace in voicemail somewhere. Especially when it is concerned with funding and whether or not their funding has been approved, how much money they are getting, those kind of things. They cannot access a real person and have to leave messages. It is frustrating, especially since they are in class mostly during the hours of eight to five, so they are trying to check their own voicemail at home and get a hold of people. It is just inconvenient. I am just wondering if you can hit a number and automatically be forwarded to a person in the department who can handle emergency calls and direct your call that way, or do they only have a choice of leaving a message? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Cleveland.

MR. CLEVELAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We put the voice response system in because certainly at peak times, the staff who are available are just not in a position to take calls all the time. We found that students were feeling quite frustrated about the fact that when they phoned the 1-800 number, many of them could not get through. We believe the voice response system is a better way of approaching the situation. We believe that it will allow workers to more effectively manage their caseload. We are dealing with somewhere in the neighbourhood of 1,200 to 1,400 students with a relatively small number of staff. That being said, Mr. Chairman, the manual that has gone out is very specific in its commitment to service levels to the students. It has been very clear with students that a person will get back to them within a specified period of time to address their questions, if they cannot leave a message on the voicemail. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

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

MR. BELL: Can I ask the Minister or the deputy how long the department sets as a target to getting back to students? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Minister.

HON. JAKE OOTES: Two days. It is identified on page 6 of the guide.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Minister, I believe that your microphone was off for a short while. If you could give the response again?

HON. JAKE OOTES: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, the answer to the Member's question is two days. It is on page 6 of the guide. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Bell.

MR. BELL: Thank you for that response. One suggestion that has been made to me by more than one student, and I did hear the Minister state that a web site has been set up to deal with student requests. Maybe this has already been implemented. One thing that was raised with me was that it may be a good idea to have a web site where students can go to access the site, and check the status of their funding. For instance, the cheque will be deposited into your account on a certain date, or you have been approved for this or that amount of funding. Possibly codes could be given out to students at the beginning of the semester. It would be a great way to share information with other students in the area if they chose to do so. I am wondering if that kind of thing is already set up, or if the department has looked at allowing students access and log in to the web site to check the status of their funding.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Minister.

HON. JAKE OOTES: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That is the next phase of the program that we want to institute. Also, there has been mention of having a chat room where students can contact each other and leave a message. That is also one that we want to work on. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Bell.

MR. BELL: Thank you. I think those would be really good initiatives. I know the department is working quickly here with the new system. There will undoubtedly be some wrinkles, but I would just like to urge him to stick with it here and iron these things out, so that the kids who are going to school in the fall will get to school without too much delay, and too many complications. It is a stressful time for students who have come back and have been looking for employment. The longer it takes for you to find a job, the more you start to count the days and the amount of money that you have to save, and wonder exactly how you will make it through the next semester. Certainly, if there have been complaints to the department or to the MLAs, I hope they will take them seriously and take into consideration that students are under a lot of pressure, and work hard to take care of their complaints.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Minister.

HON. JAKE OOTES: Yes, the Member is correct. It is a stressful time when students are trying to find work, and do work. They do not have a lot of time available. We certainly are cognizant of that, and our staff are working extremely hard on this. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Thank you, Mr. Ootes. Next on the list, I have Mr. Roland.

MR. ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, this time I would like to move a committee motion. Mr. Chairman, I move this committee recommends that the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment immediately direct the development and implementation of a strategy to increase literacy levels in every community in the Northwest Territories; and further, that the goal of the strategy be to achieve literacy levels of at least 85 percent of the population over the age of 15 in every community by the year 2003. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): There is no reference in this motion to 2003. Mr. Roland. Could you read your motion in for the record?

MR. ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I apologize for that, I was given the wrong committee motion.

-- Laughter

Committee Motion 11-13(4): Development and Implementation of a Strategy to Increase Literacy Levels (Carried)

I MOVE this committee recommends that the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment immediately direct the development and implementation of a strategy to increase literacy levels in every community in the Northwest Territories;

AND FURTHER that part of the goal of the strategy be to achieve significantly higher levels of school completion in the smaller communities.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, Hear.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): The motion is in order. To the motion. Question has been called. All those in favour? All those against? The motion is carried.

-- Applause

We were dealing with the Department of Education, Culture and Employment, advanced education and careers, page 9-11, total operation expense, \$63,531,000.

Advanced education and careers, grants and contributions, grants, \$9,120,000. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Contributions, Mr. Ootes.

Committee Motion 12-13(4): Adding \$650,000 to 2000-2001 Main Estimates under the Activity Advanced Education and Careers (carried)

HON. JAKE OOTES: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, as noted in my opening remarks, the government has agreed to reinstitute funding for the Community Skills for Work Program for the current fiscal year in the amount of \$650,000. Therefore,

I MOVE that the amount of \$650,000 be added to the 2000-2001 main estimates of the Department of Education, Culture and Employment, under the activity advanced education and careers, grants and contributions, contributions, under the item, Community Skills for Work Program on page 9-14.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Ootes, your motion is being distributed. The motion is in order. To the motion. Question has been called. All those in favour? All those opposed? The motion is carried. Mr. Dent.

MR. DENT: Mr. Chairman, I would like to thank the Minister for bringing that motion forward and for restoring some of the money that we wanted to see in that program. It is still unfortunate that it is not the \$1,000,000 we had last year, but this is certainly better than nothing that was there a short while ago.

To hear that it has gone into the base is a significant improvement.

-- Applause

I appreciate the commitment that was made, because this is in fact base funding and will be there for some time.

One question I have is that because this program was always funded on an ongoing basis or annual basis, a number of groups who had projects that were completed had sent applications into the department for more funding, only to have them rejected because the program had been sunsetted.

The question for the Minister is will those groups now have to reapply for the funding? Will there be a new call for projects to be funded? Or will the department look at those applications that they already have received this fiscal year, and consider them for being funded under this program?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Ootes.

HON. JAKE OOTES: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, there will be a new call. We expect that those who put in their applications previously will resubmit. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Thank you, Mr. Ootes. Mr. Dent.

MR. DENT: Thank you. Will the department undertake to, very quickly, and in writing, let the groups that did apply for continued funding know they will have to reapply?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Ootes.

HON. JAKE OOTES: Thank you. Yes, certainly. We will do that immediately.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Thank you, Mr. Ootes. Mr. Dent.

MR. DENT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Can I get an estimate of when the department expects that it will advertise the new program?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): The Minister responsible for Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Ootes.

HON. JAKE OOTES: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It will be during July.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Thank you, Mr. Ootes. Mr. Dent,

MR. DENT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to move on to my other area. On Page 9-14, we have vocational rehabilitation for disabled persons. I noticed that 1998-1999 actuals, we showed \$45,000 in spending. That dropped to about half of that last year, with \$27,000, and I see nothing in

the main estimates this year. What has happened to this program?

HON. JAKE OOTES: I will ask Mr. Cleveland to address this question, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Thank you, Mr. Ootes. Mr. Cleveland.

MR. CLEVELAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. This program used to be cost shared with the federal government. The federal government's program was ended several years ago. We have maintained a small amount of money, which is indicated here. During the past year, this funding was used to support students who attended post-secondary institutions, but who were not in post-secondary programs in post-secondary institutions.

We have moved this funding and placed it in the income support area. We intend to continue to use the funding for that purpose in the future, even though this program does not exist any longer. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Dent.

MR. DENT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. So am I to understand that this program now has been replaced by the \$5,000 program in student financial assistance?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Cleveland.

MR. CLEVELAND: Mr. Chairman, not quite. The \$5,000 that is there is for disabled students who are in post-secondary programs at post-secondary institutions. This funding is used for students who are not in post-secondary programs, but may be attending access programs and who have disabilities.

So it essentially expands, if you will, the service level, because we can now deal with students who are disabled and attending access programs. We can use the \$5,000 disabled grant for students who are in post-secondary programs. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Dent.

MR. DENT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Will we be using the same amount of money, I guess the \$27,000 that we have here, has that entire amount been added to the income support program? Are we making sure that persons with disabilities are aware that this level of support is available?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Cleveland.

MR. CLEVELAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, the entire amount was added and yes, we have been meeting with NGOs who work with disabled people, as well as through our regional superintendents to ensure they are aware of the program. We expect that our expenditures in this area will continue to be at about this level.

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

MR. BELL: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am just having a quick look at this Oil and Gas Industry Training Strategy. I am wondering if I can ask the Minister for some clarification on a few sections. I am not sure if this thing has been tabled or if I can discuss it. So some guidance? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Ootes.

HON. JAKE OOTES: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have no problem if the Member wishes to ask questions on it.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Bell, the Minister is open for questions on that report.

MR. BELL: Thank you. I think we were of the understanding that \$500,000 was going to be spent in year one here. I mean, we did not know how many years were in this program but we assumed this was year one of base funding, \$500,000 in training. When I looked at the cost to deliver the 2000-2001 program, the total comes to \$1,260,000.

So I am wondering, has the department budgeted for this \$1,260,000? Where can I see that in the budget? Is this money that we are hoping to get from somewhere else? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Ootes, maybe you could point out where it is in the budget.

HON. JAKE OOTES: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The funding that the Member is speaking of is not the funding we are talking about. We are talking about \$500,000 in the budget. This is a proposal, but I will ask Mr. Cleveland to address this, so there is some detail provided as to what this proposal is all about. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Cleveland.

MR. CLEVELAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. When this proposal was put together, it was structured to, as I think we mentioned earlier in the discussion, frame up the broad needs that would be related to the development of the oil and gas industry.

Our intention was to frame it broadly, look at a series of different areas that we think are important to supporting the development and to use it, as the Member suggests, not simply to support necessarily funding the Government of the NWT puts up, but also to use it as we work with other funders to suggest a broad strategy that different organizations and different funders could buy into.

We have, as in our budget proposal, \$500,000. That funding is intended to be spent, as indicated on page 16-19, which identifies the allocation of funding to regions. This is in addition to funding that, as the Member points out, may be part of the base funding, for example, in college contributions. Certainly some of the college activities, and I will give you the example of the number of the trades, have a direct applicability to the industry as well.

So the \$500,000 is being used in support of regional training initiatives, as we discussed yesterday.

If I could add one further point, Mr. Chairman, I have also brought, in addition to the strategy itself, a few copies of the appendices for this report. The Members may wish to look at the appendices, which detail out some of the details as they relate to the specific jobs that are available in the industry, some of the labour market data, the institutions that could provide identified types of training. It is quite detailed and we would be happy to provide copies for the Member's reference. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

MR. BELL: Thank you for that response. Certainly, we would like to take a look at the appendices. Before I go on, I would just like to say that this is one of the things that I am finding the most difficult thing about this budget process, and it is not just this department. This is just a criticism of the overall process or the way it is happening here, but things come in at the eleventh hour, and it is almost like they are wheelbarrows full of information that are dumped on you. We are expected to digest and go through this stuff, make heads or tails of it, and then ask questions and be able to hold the department accountable. It is frustrating and difficult. Certainly, our staff does not have the time to go through this.

So we will try to digest as much of this as we can quickly, but I guess that is just an aside. I will get back to my original point.

When we look at the \$1,200,000, there are other areas of the department that factor in here. As mentioned, some Aurora College programs are directly applicable. I am wondering if other departmental funding is involved in this \$1,200,000. For instance, Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development funding, or other things like this? Or is this strictly Education, Culture and Employment funding involved in the \$1,200,000, Mr. Chairman? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Ootes.

HON. JAKE OOTES: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to comment, first, on the availability of material, and then I will ask Mr. Cleveland to address the specific question.

There is no doubt, and I apologize, that this is at the late stage of being received. We ourselves are finding, as Ministers, that it has been a very heavy couple of months. We are trying to get material together as quickly as we can. I have the experience of being handed a binder a day, it seems, that I have to digest and deal with. Coincidentally, one day, I came into the Legislative Assembly building and a security guard handed me a binder.

-- Laughter

So it comes from everywhere, it seems. I will ask Mr. Cleveland to address the specific question.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Cleveland.

MR. CLEVELAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The funding that is identified in this strategy is for human resource development. As I mentioned earlier, in the adult human resource development business, there tends to be a lot of different funders for different projects. I would say that there are some elements, in this strategy, that can be addressed through other sections of the department. Specifically, some of the stay in school and career development activities we will be building into our normal activity planning within the department.

There are also opportunities, as time proceeds, for additional funding from external sources. Those might range from industry to aboriginal organizations to the federal government.

This plan is built to be adjustable for that purpose and to provide a broad frame, which can be adjusted based on the needs for training, in various areas. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Thank you, Mr. Cleveland. General comments. Mr. Bell.

MR. BELL: Thank you. So when we look at this \$1,200,000, there are other departments involved. There are other activities in this department involved, and it is kind of layered in there and things interconnect.

I guess one of the concerns I have is that we have a budget here for 2000-2001, which we are already well into. Obviously, most of this planning should have already been done, or happened, and I hope it has.

If we are still waiting to find out if some of this funding will come through, possibly some from aboriginal partner groups, or from the federal government. I hope that this is not a wish list. Kind of, one of these things that we have seen that is, "here is what we would like to do if we had the money", and "Ah, shucks. We couldn't get it done because we didn't get the money".

It is nice to plan, and I think we have some good looking things from what I have seen, but I hope that it is a realistic plan. I hope that we do have a realistic shot at getting these dollars because if we do not, in effect, we are just saying to all the people in the communities and in the North, here is what we would like to do for oil and gas training. Unfortunately, we did not get the money and, ah well, we will take another shot at it in the future. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Cleveland.

MR. CLEVELAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The plan itself was developed in consultation with industry. So we are quite confident that the approach that has been described will be useful and will train people for the jobs that are created.

That being said, the plan, as well, can be adjusted to match the schedule of development, if you will. Our view was that it was important to do this early on before we got too far into the developmental process, so that it could be adjusted and the funding could be adjusted over time to match the needs.

We are quite cognizant of the point the Member raises, that you do not want to build expectations if the cash is not there. On the other hand, it is important to lay out what the cost could be when you are talking to other funding agencies. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

MR. BELL: Thank you. I would agree with the deputy, that we do not want to build expectations if we cannot deliver. One point that sort of sparked my interest here is that it looks like there is \$200,000 earmarked this year for student financial assistance in oil and gas training. So I assume that is for this September.

Can the Minister or deputy tell me how students go about accessing this \$200,000 this fall, for student financial assistance related to oil and gas? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Cleveland.

MR. CLEVELAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We have simply identified that as our estimate of cost for students enrolled in the programs. That was part of our planning when we developed our budgets for the Student Financial Assistance Program. It is not over and above, or separate. Students would access it through the normal student financial assistance processes. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Bell.

MR. BELL: Thank you. So this \$200,000 is not new money and there is money in the general student financial assistance fund that can be accessed by people who want training in oil and gas. I assume this is on a first come, first served basis, and it could also be accessed by people who want to be trained for anything, could it not?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Cleveland.

MR. CLEVELAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The process we follow is to identify when we take a new initiative, what we expect the cost of student financial assistance would be. We then take that information and look at it in the context of our overall planning for student financial assistance.

The Member is correct. The Student Financial Assistance Program is open to the public. There is no fixed cap on that program. If we had more students coming into oil and gas, it would cost us more than that. If we had less, it would cost us less.

However, based on our planning, we have built funding into our Student Financial Assistance Program. We have adequate funds to cover it at any point in time. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Bell.

MR. BELL: Thank you. I am just a little bit confused. Maybe the deputy can straighten me out here. If we had students come forward for oil and gas training, and we added up the tally and it came out to \$2 million this year, just for instance, obviously a ridiculous figure and it is not going to happen. We would provide that \$2 million for oil and gas training and then the budget would be, you know, \$2.3 million for the year.

Or on the other hand, if nobody comes forward and says they want to train for oil and gas, the \$200,000 that is identified here is spent anyway, somewhere else, and is not really oil and gas training then, is it? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Cleveland.

MR. CLEVELAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am sorry to cause confusion here. The \$500,000 will be used directly to support program delivery. Based on what we expect for delivery for the \$500,000, we can estimate how many students we expect to have in the Student Financial Assistance Program. That is part of our planning. It is part of our budget in student financial assistance. We do not expect it will exceed the monies we have available.

The Member's hypothetical question is right. If our student financial assistance numbers go up, for whatever reason, over and above our estimates, we could have additional costs. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): General comments. We are dealing with contributions.

Just a reminder, the motion that we just passed concerning the Community Skills for Work Program, there is \$650,000 added. So we are dealing with the totals which now should read, \$23,598,000. Total grants and contributions, the new figure should read, \$32,718,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

Moving to the department summary. Page 9-7. Education, Culture and Employment, department summary, total operation expense, the new number, \$174,072,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

We are moving to capital, under page 14. The Department of Education, Culture and Employment, capital acquisition plan, advanced education and careers, \$1,888,000. Mr. Roland.

MR. ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Just under the capital, where we have the new Aurora campus. Knowing the construction date has been pushed back, audit looks like even further than 2003-2004, it looks like planning money again, 2000-2003. Is that correct?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Ootes.

HON. JAKE OOTES: That is correct, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Roland.

MR. ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. So what is going to happen with the work that has been done to date on that facility? There has been a significant amount of dollars expended on that project. What is going to happen to that? This looks like you are going back to square one. Is that the case? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Cleveland.

MR. CLEVELAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The material from the project is, certainly, being maintained by the department. We will, as we approach the construction point, review that data, and review it based on the college's plans, as well as the program activity. We would update that material and then use that to support the further design work that might take place. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Roland.

MR. ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I also see here, the Aurora Research Institute renovation. Now, knowing both of those are to do with the same group, although they are separate buildings, would we not see them, since we are looking to put a new facility in there, although it has been moved to future years, would it not be wise to incorporate the two of them in one building? We know the Aurora Research Institute is also in an old building. They have taken it over from the federal government. At some point, we are going to find ourselves in that situation of having extensive repairs, because that is another building on pilings that we continue to find in our community that are rotting out. Is that something that could be looked at? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Ootes.

HON. JAKE OOTES: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That is a very good point. I appreciate the Member's comment on that. I think it does make sense to put it under one facility, if that is what is desired on the part of the community as well. It is parked here as an identification of funding.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): General comments? We are dealing with capital acquisition plan, advanced education and careers, \$1,888,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Thank you. Education, culture, \$9,254,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Thank you. Total department, \$11,142,000. Does the committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Does the committee agree the Department of Education, Culture and Employment is now concluded?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

-- Applause

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): I would like to thank the Minister and his witnesses. Thank you.

As soon as the witnesses leave the Chamber, we will start with another department.

I believe the next department on the list is the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs. I would like to ask the Minister responsible, the Honourable Jim Antoine, if he would like to make any opening comments on the department's estimates.

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman and committee Members. I am pleased to present the 2000-2001 Main Estimates for the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs.

MACA is responsible for providing community governments with the support they need to deliver important municipal services to community residents and manage local affairs. MACA's support to communities includes funding and programs designed to provide advice and build local capacity.

MACA is requesting a budget of \$58 million for 2000-2001. Of this amount, \$26 million will be transferred directly to communities through operating assistance grants and block funding agreements. This funding allows communities to provide municipal services, including services such as fire protection, sewage and garbage disposal, road maintenance and by-law enforcement. Additional funding distributed to community governments and municipal organizations through MACA's grant and contribution programs will bring the total amount transferred to communities this year to \$41 million. This represents just over 70 percent of MACA's total budget.

These main estimates outline a reduction in the level of operating assistance provided to communities in 2000-2001. This is the result of the GNWT's decision to reduce its overall capital budget for this fiscal year by \$10 million. MACA's portion of this reduction is \$1.3 million.

This reduction means that the six tax-based municipalities will receive 4.73 percent less than they did in 1999-2000, representing a total reduction of \$567,000. During the review of the interim appropriation, I agreed not to implement the reduction for tax-based communities until the review of the main estimates. The proposed reduction will have to be applied against the remaining payments this year. The department has

advised the mayors and SAOs of these communities of the funding change and the revised cash flow for the balance of the year.

The reduction also applies to non-tax based communities, where it has been accommodated by cancelling or deferring specific projects in this year's capital plan.

These estimates reflect \$731,000 in forced growth funding this year. These additional funds are passed on to communities through operational funding, grants in lieu of property taxes and senior citizens and disabled persons property tax rebates.

During 2000-2001, MACA will pursue activities designed to encourage increased community self-reliance and autonomy. Consistent with the vision this Assembly has outlined in Towards a Better Tomorrow, I believe it is important that communities play an active role in making decisions about their own economic, social and political future. To support this, MACA is focussing on community development and on providing advice and support instead of control.

The Building Communities Strategy is one important way MACA hopes to help communities achieve greater self-reliance. This strategy will help communities develop the skills and capacity they need to take on greater responsibility by focusing on eight key areas, including;

- The School of Community Government;
- Building self-reliant communities;
- Preparing for self-government;
- Wire North;
- NWT volunteer strategy;
- Recreation and sport;
- Building partnerships; and
- Fire fighter training.

These activities will result in improved training opportunities for communities and improved financial planning and management. Wire North will help communities take advantage of new technologies like the Internet, and fire fighter training will improve the skills of community fire fighters.

Developing proposals for updating our governance legislation and moving to streamlined formula-funding arrangements for community governments will also be important activities for MACA this year.

I am sure that Northerners would prefer to have decisions about municipal programs and services made locally. To achieve this, MACA is working to develop a funding approach that is easy to understand and supports community accountability and local responsibility. We plan to bring proposals forward as part of our 2001-2004 business plan.

I have also asked the department to move forward on preparing amendments to municipal legislation. Existing legislation is restrictive in places and does not allow communities the flexibility they need to manage their own affairs. Legislative changes will also enhance the accountability

of community governments to their own residents. MACA has discussed possible changes with the communities for many years and it is now time to move forward on these.

A number of internal activities will support the department's implementation of the Building Communities strategy. One of these activities is the review and updating of our lands administration procedures. Over the past few months, the department has conducted a review of its lands administration operations. This review pointed out many areas that need to be changed or improved. A work-plan to address these concerns has been developed and will be implemented this year. These changes will help establish a better administration of Commissioner's Lands that are managed by MACA. I expect to bring forward new proposals for the direction of lands administration in next year's business plan.

Mr. Chairman, the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs is working to build strong and self-reliant communities across the Northwest Territories. The strategies and activities I have spoken about today will help us help communities develop the skills and capacity they need to take on expanded responsibilities in the future.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for this opportunity to present MACA's proposed main estimates. This concludes my opening remarks. Mahsi Cho.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Thank you, Mr. Antoine. Does the committee responsible for overseeing this department have any comments on the review of the department's main estimates? Ms. Lee.

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I would like to report on the findings of the committee. In general, Mr. Chairman, the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs assists community residents to organize and manage representative, responsible and accountable community government. The department is primarily a service support provider.

The Standing Committee on Governance and Economic Development reviewed the 2000-2003 Business Plans and draft main estimates for the Department of MACA on Monday, May 29 and Tuesday, May 30, 2000. The committee noted a \$10,604,000 or 22 percent increase in total operations or operations and maintenance expenditures between their 1999-2000 main estimates and the 2000-2001 draft main estimates.

The projected increase is due to the inclusion of capital assets under \$50,000 as part of the department's operations expenses as required under the new tangible capital assets reporting process. Previously, all capital assets were reported under capital expenditures. Committee members also noted the decrease of 19 positions or a 13.5 percent decrease in staff since the presentation of the 1999-2000 main estimates.

The committee also noted a \$7,319,000 or 60 percent decrease in total capital expenditures between the department's 1999-2000 main estimates and the 2000-2001 draft main estimates.

Committee members noted that although under the Municipal Operating Assistance Policy and the Settlement Operating Assistance Policy, communities received a minimal increase in operations or operations and maintenance funding. This was more than offset by very substantial decreases in proposed

capital funding.

Furthermore, taxed based communities which receive block funding to meet their overall funding requirements received an almost five percent reduction across the board.

Funding Reductions

Tax-based communities will receive a 4.73 percent less in proposed block funding in 2000-2001. The Northwest Territories Association of Municipalities and members of the standing committee pointed out the lack of notice of the funding reduction by the government. Furthermore, as the fiscal year for tax-based communities is different, adjustments to their budgets are especially difficult, as expenditures have already been planned for the next fiscal year based on current levels of block funding. Communities will have to find money within or raise taxes to make up for the projected shortfall in funding.

Recommendation 1

The Standing Committee on Governance and Economic Development recommends that the government introduce legislation requiring a minimum notification period of one year when the government is planning to reduce funding targeted for specific communities.

The committee also observed that well managed communities might be penalized for good administration. Less well managed communities are given extraordinary funding to balance their budget. Extraordinary funding in these cases does not encourage good municipal management. However communities that live within their means are not given any additional funding. Committee members encouraged the Minister to work with communities to standardize community financing to ensure that the funding process is clear and equitable for all municipal governments. The Minister agreed. The committee understands the review is underway and looks forward to reviewing the report in the fall.

Committee members pointed out that although operational expenditures for non-tax-based communities increased marginally, this proposed increase is more than offset by substantial decreases in proposed capital funding. In addition, as funding continues to be reduced to communities, the community's ability to deliver essential programs and services as well as operate its facilities effectively and safely may be compromised. The committee holds the position that public health should be the top priority in any funding changes or transfers of infrastructure, program or service. In concurrence with recent observations by the Auditor General, a third party accountability framework should also be adopted. This framework will ensure that communities continue to deliver high standards of programs and services, while ensuring economic, effective and efficient community spending.

Self Government

Committee members pointed out to the Minister that while the department has increased funding and its level of participation at self-government talks, reductions in the department's overall capital and operational expenditures are projected to decline. Funding for the department's self-government participation may be better spent on infrastructure or other essential programs or services.

The committee noted that the structure of communities will

likely change with the conclusion of self-government talks and reiterated the importance of having an effective third party accountability framework in place. The Minister agreed with the committee and stated that a legislative proposal scheduled for introduction in the fall of 2000 will address this concern. This concludes the committee's report, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Thank you, Ms. Lee. At this time, I would like to ask the Minister if he would like to bring in any witnesses.

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Yes.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Does the committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Can the Sergeant-at-Arms escort the witnesses in? Mr. Minister, for the record, can you introduce your witnesses?

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. To my left is Dave Murray, he is the deputy minister of the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs. To my right is Gay Kennedy, the director of corporate affairs. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Thank you, Mr. Minister. Welcome, witnesses. General comments? Mr. Roland.

MR. ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, some of the biggest changes the government has gone through, especially dealing with communities, have been through the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs. We continue to see some of the changes during review of the business plan and main estimates, and with the Minister and his staff in committee. There were a number of issues raised of concern. One was around the reductions to communities in the Northwest Territories. This is one of the few departments that deal directly with the communities and community infrastructure.

We have seen the putting off of more capital again to communities, as well as reductions to block funding, that primarily impacts tax-based municipalities. Myself, coming from a community that is tax-based, I have concerns with that, because I have seen over the years the continuing rise of costs of services all in the name of efficiency, as government has put it. For example, I was on the town council when this department forced the hand of the town council by installing water meters. Over the years, we have seen the impact of water meters being installed. Most of the communities have gone on to save a lot of water, and we have found the reserve fund for the utilidor in Inuvik dropping well below what was stated it was supposed to get on a yearly basis. The amount set out initially was \$750,000 that was to be put into this CRFF fund, but it is a replacement fund for the utilidor system. After the water meters were installed, it went down to \$250,000 because so many people had cut back on their water usage. Because of that, increases had to come and people went from a flat fee of \$55 to in some cases well over \$100.

As the community talks about taking over the system, there is talk about rates and are they stabilized, or will they go up once more? So the news of a 4.73 percent reduction did not come as good news to the committee during the interim appropriation. Once again, the Minister informed us that he had to bring it forward this time because he was given targets to

meet, and that is the way they chose to meet them. No matter what area you would go into, it would impact the communities. I guess I would like to raise with the Minister and his staff the ongoing changes. We know, for example, the formula funding situation of how they fund the communities, whether it be in the water and sewer program or other transfers. We know there is some ongoing work. They were supposed to meet with tax-based municipalities during this month. I would like to know from the Minister, has that been going on and how far along are they in that process? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): The Minister responsible for the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs, Mr. Antoine.

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Thank you. Yes, the department did meet with the senior administration officers of the tax based municipalities last week. At this meeting, there was a commitment from the department to ensure that enough time is given before any changes are made to the funding in the future, and that the funding proposals that the department is contemplating have been discussed with the SAOs. I understand there were general, positive responses by the SAOs to it. Of course, this is in the early stages of the ongoing process to try to come to a good way to fund it. As for the non-tax-based municipalities, we will initiate a meeting in the late summer or early fall to initiate this same type of discussion. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Roland.

MR. ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The point the Minister brings up is a good one, the timing of funding to tax-based communities. Most communities go on a calendar year when it comes to setting budgets. We go on a fiscal year. They do not meet. Communities have already, because it is summer, had things in place, projects ready to go. Hopefully, in your review, you will look at bringing those two together, and allowing the timing of the budgets to be together or building in allowances. With that, as well, we have a committee motion regarding the notification and timing of any further reductions or changes to specific communities. It is good to hear that the...inaudible...is going on, but we would like to make sure that this thing moves along and moves along quickly. I know the Minister offered to provide the committee with the binder on what the formula is like and he told us that it is quite a large binder. We thanked him for not providing it to the committee, because as we hear it, it is very convoluted. My work in the past, when it comes to water meters, is that it is a yardstick of efficiency. That term was used a number of years ago. I think we all would have a definition of that yardstick of efficiency, Mr. Chairman.

I look forward to further work with the Minister and his staff in this area. I raise the concerns of the committee that in fact we would like to stem the tide in a sense of more reductions to communities and community infrastructure. Finding out that everything is just getting old in all communities in the Northwest Territories, we are going to find ourselves in a real crunch here when it comes to replacing major infrastructure in the communities. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Minister.

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I know we recognize that the tax-based municipalities have a different fiscal year. It starts in January and ours starts in April, and that we need to work on a system that will give the block-funded

communities adequate notice for budgets. I agree that perhaps one of the things we should do is try to see if it is a possibility to have the same fiscal year. I do not know if that is a possibility, but we shall explore that. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Miltenberger.

MR. MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I would like to start my comments with a question on the issue of accountability. It is a question I have asked both the Minister of Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development and the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment in relation to the statement made in this House by the Premier that there is no clear measurable way to make government Ministers and deputy ministers accountable for not meeting targets.

The Minister is here with the staff with a \$58 million budget. I would like the Minister to speak to the issue of accountability as he sits here in the Legislature with a request for that amount of public money and his thoughts on his accountability, and the accountability of his staff in terms of meeting the commitments that they have outlined for us in this budget. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Minister.

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Accountability is a big concern of mine here in the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs. The department is committed to attempt to provide quantifiable measurements or results, information, in the upcoming business plans. This Session is to look at this year's main estimates, to conclude what we started in March.

We are embarking on another process immediately, which is next year's business plan. We are also working on a financial reporting framework for communities. As I indicated in my opening remarks, quite a lot of the dollars that we get, about \$41 million of our budget, have been transferred to the communities this year, of the \$58 million dollars that we are requesting. This, in turn, is managed and administered by the municipal governments. The municipal governments have been very accountable, in most cases. There are some financial problems in some of the communities, but we are working with them to try to resolve the problems that they have. There, again, I am ultimately accountable for those dollars that go to the communities. Therefore, we, as a department, identify that there are problems in our system on how to deal with the accountability with communities.

I think we are starting a process with the SAOs. I mentioned to the honourable Member for Inuvik Twin Lakes earlier on that there was an initial meeting with the SAOs. We plan to have another meeting with the SAOs for the non-tax-based municipalities. It is coordination. It is cooperation with the municipalities to see how we can work.

With the NWTAM, the department had come out with a financial review. It is a joint effort on their part who are actually administering the dollars on behalf of the people that elect them in the communities in which they are accountable to. The accountability of this department is via the municipalities. We have to work with them to make sure that we come to some arrangement that is acceptable to everyone and ultimately will work. We still have some way to go to put a system in place. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Miltenberger.

MR. MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It is good to hear the Minister say we have the need to work with communities, municipalities, SAOs, and such, but that as a Minister sitting in this House at present that he is ultimately accountable for this budget and the goals and objectives with it. That makes three Ministers so far. It is reassuring that there does seem to be the accountability factor taken care of.

Mr. Chairman, I want to make some comments that are going to highlight some of the issues I would like to address. I intend to save the specific questions until we get to the activity section.

Mr. Chairman, I will have some questions for the Minister on the issue of the water and sewer subsidy, which I understand or I would like clarification on how it is tied into the block funding formula. The previous Minister of the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs told the community when they raised the issue of the water and sewer subsidy that they should address it through the block funding negotiations. Fort Smith is the only community in the Northwest Territories that does not receive any type of subsidy.

I would like to question the Minister on the issue of landfill sites and the situation in Fort Smith, which I see as an indicator of issues that all municipalities, hamlets, settlements are going to have to deal with in terms of the environment and requirements to maintain certain standards in landfill sites. There is a significant cost to that. I know in Fort Smith the town council is taking steps to add \$15 a month levy on people's water and sewer bills in addition to some of the money that the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs donated. It is an issue I want to ask the Minister about and the relationship with the Department of Resources Wildlife and Economic Development. Is this a piecemeal approach or is there a strategy there, so it is a coordinated effort?

I also want to raise the issue that came up in this House earlier during the Arctic Winter Games, and the need for an objective, comprehensive review of the Arctic Winter Games, and the impact they have had over the years. In my opinion, they have a negative impact on community sport and recreation. I think there has been a tremendous lowering of the amount of community sport and recreation and an extensive focus on the Arctic Winter Games where, out of 40,000 people, a couple of hundred athletes go but where a huge amount of our budget is focused and we pay the price.

I am also interested to hear from the Minister if he could provide a bit of elaboration, at the appropriate time, on the changes he made reference to in his statement with regard to the legislative changes he indicated were well overdue and it would improve flexibility, accountability, and responsibility for the municipalities. I think, as a former mayor and councillor, I have a definite interest there. Once again, at the appropriate time, I will be asking the Minister for some specific indications as to the kind of changes that are being anticipated.

Finally, Mr. Chairman, I would ask the Minister in the communities that are tax-based, like in the community that I represent, Fort Smith, they are anticipating some major water and sewer replacement, given the fact that the system they currently operate has considerable sections that are dating back almost 50 years now, underground systems, old asbestos pipes that are breaking, sagging, are plugged up, roots growing

through them. There will be a major cost. I would like to get an update, once again at the appropriate time, from the Minister as to how that would be dealt with. It also, of course, ties into the road surface above because in Fort Smith, the roads are paved. Therefore, you will have to rip up all the pavement and replace it. That is a major undertaking. I understand most communities that have underground services are dealing with that, Yellowknife, Fort Simpson, Hay River.

I thank the Minister, once again, for his comments on accountability. I will leave those comments as opening comments and will proceed with questions at the appropriate time. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Thank you. Mr. Minister, do you want to respond to his comments?

HON. JIM ANTOINE: No, I will wait for the appropriate time. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Thank you. Ms. Lee.

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to take a few minutes to make general comments about my observations going through the budget in the committee, as well as following the Minister's opening statement. My points pertain to the question of notice to the municipal governments when there is a change to financing arrangements and the work that the department is doing on changing the formula for block funding. As well, I would like to mention a few things about the legislative changes to the municipal legislation and the changes the department is undertaking on land administration.

My comments will be very general, Mr. Chairman. I know there will be many other Members who probably would comment on the first item, which has to do with the notice. I just want to reiterate that I think it came to all of us as a surprise in the last Session when a reduction in the funding to the municipal governments was announced without any notice, to not only the Members, but to the municipal governments. I do want to state for the record I hope this never happens again, because I fundamentally believe it is so contrary to the stated position of this government and this Assembly, which is partnership in a real way with all other governments and all other partners. That was something that should never have happened and it should never happen again. I am sure that we will have more time to discuss that later on.

My second comment, Mr. Chairman, has to do with the initiative the department is undertaking at the moment to review the formula financing for block funding. I have no information as to what the result of this review will be. Obviously, this is of great interest to all of us, the tax-based municipalities. Mr. Chairman, I must say I was quite astounded when, during the review, I asked a question about what the formula was. I think the answer was something like it is based on past spending and future needs or something like that. We have to do better than that in terms of figuring out a formula. I think that was the general gist of it. I am sure there is a lot more detail to it, but that was a simply put way. I must say I am looking forward to getting the result of this. I do want to caution the department that whatever changes might be coming forward, it should be fair and equitable and that it is not going to result in massive changes to the traditional formula. I want to see a streamlined, clear formula, but it should not be in a way that totally changes the way that municipalities have been getting funding.

I look forward to getting more information. I would, again, ask the department to consult with us, with our committee, with the Members, and with the municipalities so that we come out with the result that would have a great deal of buy in and one that would make a great deal of sense in that all municipalities will feel they are being treated fairly and that the formula makes sense.

I just have two general comments. I appreciate and I notice that this department has a very ambitious agenda for the next little while. The Minister made a statement in his opening comments that he has instructed the department to make legislative changes to a number of municipal acts. I do not have detailed information on what that might be, but I would urge the department to work with the standing committee and the municipalities on all of these, because that is the most important part of this process. I do not think we are going to get to the end of this without a great deal of...we are not going to find the best and acceptable solution to municipalities and the rest of the Members here, if enough consultation is not done.

That goes for the land administration as well, Mr. Chairman. I think anybody who is involved in this field understands that whenever the word land is mentioned, the complexities automatically fall in there. When you are talking about land administration, it involves many different parties and professions, long traditions and complexities built over many decades.

The Minister makes reference to a work plan that might be worked out. I would like to take a look at what is entailed in that work plan. I think it is on page 5. It says "a work plan to address these concerns has been developed and will be implemented this year." I would caution the Minister that if such a work plan is in place, it is something that should call for wide consultation, certainly before it goes into any kind of implementation. It may be that it is something totally internal. I am thinking it might be bigger than that.

I guess my four points I would like to make here are that this department has to be at the forefront in terms of how the business is done and how it consults with the communities and the rest of the Members. I would like to make that comment, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Antoine.

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I would like to quickly respond, starting with the honourable Member's last point regarding the work plan to address the concerns with lands administration operations. The department has developed an internal work plan to begin to address some of the issues that were identified in the study. We will be implementing this internal work plan to address the different issues. I take the Member's comments very seriously. They urge for the department to work with the standing committee and the NWTAM. The NWTAM is the organization we have been working with as a department, and we will continue to work with them on lands administration operations.

We would like to work with the standing committee on this matter, because it is an area of big concern to all of the communities throughout the North. This whole area has been left for some time now. With the impending self-government arrangements which are just around the corner, the whole area of municipal lands is going to be addressed. We need to have a good understanding of that. This is how I would like to make

the point that the work plan is more of an internal one to begin to address some of the issues we have identified. Once we have an idea on how to approach it, we will address that with the standing committee, and share it with the NWTAM.

The block-funding arrangement is fairly new to this government. The changes happened about four years ago with Yellowknife in 1995, and 1996-97 with the other communities that began to join this new way of government funding, the tax-based municipalities.

Each municipality came up with their own way of funding. It was not strategically thought out to be fair and equitable. Each community is unique in its own way. They each have their strengths and weaknesses. That is how the block-funding was arranged.

The water and sewer subsidy program is in there. Some of the communities are separate and some are included in the operations and maintenance. Once we looked at it, we found out there is no consistency in that approach. We really need to work to see how we could address this area.

The legislative changes, we are just beginning to develop an approach on that. We are in the process of beginning to review the municipal legislation. This has been ongoing since 1995. This review was a joint project with this department and the NWTAM. The department is preparing a legislative proposal based on a report submitted to this Assembly in December of 1998. This legislative proposal for the Dogrib Community Government Act, which is based on a self-government arrangement, has to be prepared as well. The two proposals are coming forward here and will be reviewed.

We will be consulting with the NWTAM in about one month or so on these two areas. We will be reviewing these two proposals approximately at the same time.

The timing, again, I have already mentioned that earlier to other honourable Members, that this department is quite aware that we need to work out, and to ensure enough time is given to the tax-based municipalities, or any municipality, with any changes that may happen to any funding level. We take note of that. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Thank you, Mr. Antoine. Mr. Delorey.

MR. DELOREY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, this department is one that I have had a considerable amount of interest in since we came here and took part in this government. One of the big things that was brought to my attention shortly after I was elected, the town representatives made it known to me that one of Hay River's biggest problems was the level of funding through the block-funding agreement. I know the Minister stated he thought block-funding was a fairly new system in this government. I do not expect him to restate everything he just said, but I would be remiss if I did not give my feelings on this issue.

Hay River feels they did not agree with the block-funding formula when it was put in, simply because of the level they were at, with no capital projects on the go at that time. Other communities did have, and that was taken into consideration in the amount of money they received through the block-funding agreement. Hay River has always been under the impression that they were under-funded. They have stood by that all along,

and they are still of that opinion. I am glad to see the department is taking steps to address that situation and go into some kind of study on the block-funding agreement.

On that one area, one question I would have, seeing as there has been a major problem with the funding cuts that have come along and at the time they have come along. The year-ends do not coincide with the municipalities. The block cuts are affecting the tax-based municipalities at this particular time.

In this review of the block-funding process, when does the department think they would have some answers and some indication as to what the block-funding levels are going to be for next year? Is it going to be another situation where tax-based municipalities will not know when they are setting their budgets how much money they are going to have, or that they are going to be looking at another cut? I would hope with the study, the department would be able to give some positive news to the municipality and do it in a timely fashion so it helps the municipalities plan for their upcoming year.

Before I go on, I would just like to get an indication from the department how they see that developing. How long is their strategy going to take to revisit the funding for the tax-based municipalities and what their funding amounts will be like?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Thank you, Mr. Delorey. Mr. Antoine.

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, in reply to the honourable Member for Hay River North, we hope to have something by September, through next year's business planning process. We should have something by maybe early September....we will just say September. That is our target date right now. We are quite confident we will have something in place with the schedule we set out. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Thank you, Mr. Antoine. Mr. Delorey.

MR. DELOREY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. One of the areas that affects considerably is the ability for the tax-based municipalities to deliver their programs. It is nice for us to say as a government that we are doing all kinds of things to get ready for oil and gas and future developments, and at the same time provide the same level of programs we are giving to our people.

Unfortunately, at the tax-based municipalities level, when they are suffering cuts, it is hard for them to continue that same level of program delivery. I know Hay River is struggling pretty bad as far as capital projects are concerned. They have just done a study for increased recreation facilities. The only way they can see possibly ever being able to accomplish that is they put out a study and a proposal to user groups. These are mostly non-profit organizations. If they can raise \$2 million in the next two years, they figure that will put them close enough in their funding to go to a plebiscite to see if the ratepayers of Hay River would eat up the rest to allow them to borrow the money, but that would still mean close to a 15 point increase in their taxes.

Personally, having been involved in a number of non-profit organizations and sport bodies, it is a pretty big wish to try to raise \$2 million in two years out of a community the size of Hay River and still try to maintain their own programs they have going on at the same time.

From my past experience, they have a hard time surviving, let alone trying to raise an extra \$2 million. That is definitely a concern.

Another big area there is a problem in the Hay River area with Commissioner's lands, lands that are controlled by the department. Being adjacent to lands that belong to, although they are in the jurisdiction of Hay River, how they are taxed and the process businesses have to go through to locate on Commissioner's lands and how that affects the tax-based municipalities. I heard the department say that they are looking at that area as well and how they could address that problem.

If I could, I would like to ask the department what they have in mind for that.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Thank you, Mr. Delorey. Mr. Antoine.

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, this department, in terms of lands, it is one of the areas and responsibilities of this department we would like to address, and try to see if we could begin to get a good handle on trying to address it. We are working with other departments, mainly the Department of Finance, to look at what the honourable Member I think is referring to is, the price of land. The price of leases that are adjacent to the town of Hay River. It seems to be a lot lower in Hay River, and businesses tend to go to where the price is right and therefore the town of Hay River may be losing out. We are looking at how the taxes are different on the Commissioner's Land in relation to town and municipal lands. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Delorey

MR. DELOREY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. One of the things that I mentioned in the House before when it came to tax-based communities and how they administer their funds, the Minister mentioned in his opening remarks building strong, self-reliant communities. I think that when they do their study of communities, they should look at how well the administration of those funds are being handled and we make sure that we are not penalizing communities that are doing a really good job with their funds. Just because they are living within their means does not mean they should be cut or that they should not be looked at as much as other communities for getting extra funding. It is a little frustrating. I know that Hay River had great hopes on getting some extra funds for that Smart Communities Project, but that went to Yellowknife, and rightfully so. They must have had a good proposal as well. I do not think they automatically gave it to Yellowknife.

When you see those kinds of funds going to a community and trying to compete with them, it is kind of tough. Basically, I would like to see the department look at communities, and if they are doing a good job rewarding them, or definitely take that into consideration when they look at their block funding amounts. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): The Minister responsible for the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs, Mr. Antoine.

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I agree with the honourable Member that the communities that are financially accountable in their communities and taking care of business on behalf of their people, they should not be

penalized. Certainly we will factor that when we look at the new financial formula. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Next on the list I have Mr. Braden, and Mr. Bell.

MR. BRADEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As with a number of other departments, I was pleased to see references in the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs' business plan and in the Minister's opening remarks about compliance and follow through in those plans to this Assembly's vision, Towards a Better Tomorrow. Generally, the programs that the department is outlining certainly go to support that. In fact, this department perhaps more than most, has a key function toward the four key priorities that we outlined in that vision.

Some of my colleagues and the Minister have already addressed the area of accountability, and how this relationship will be built between this government and the community partners. Specifically on page 3 of the Minister's comments, Mr. Chair, he said to support this the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs is focusing on community development and on providing advice and support instead of control. I guess it prompts a bit of a question then that if there is a philosophical shift from the department, rather than reigning communities in and keeping a lid on them. There is more of a sense of nurturing and guidance.

The legislative proposals, which I think my colleague Mr. Miltenberger referred to and the Minister answered in some detail, legislative changes that will enhance the accountability of community governments to their own residents. I fully support that, that the people who are paying the taxes should indeed hold their own officials to the greatest account.

The aspect, though, of the changes that are coming down the pipe through land claims, self-government negotiations, really from my point of view, are quite an unknown factor. I wanted to ask the Minister to explore that a bit more. Right now, there is not a lot of certainty or predictability of what is going to happen, how is the department preparing itself and our community partners in managing this inevitable change in our government system? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Braden. Mr. Antoine.

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. A very good question of self-government, which is virtually upon us. The first of its kind will probably be the Dogrib self-government arrangement. I am quite confident that we will eventually come to conclusion in their land claims and self-government talks. Once that happens, we will have to look at a Dogrib Community Government Act. The contents of what they negotiate will have to be considered in this Act, and how will it work with this government. That will be the basis of this working relationship in the four Dogrib communities. It will have a Dogrib community government, I understand. These are still under negotiation and we do not really know the final outcome of that. Certainly that is the question that it is going to go. We will have to work with the organization of the Northwest Territories Association of Municipalities. We attended their Annual General Meeting in Fort Simpson a few weeks ago. There is a lot of concern. There is a lot of concern by the NWTAM and the members of different communities. We will have to work with them on that. The departments will have to develop a good communication plan. Once the Dogrib

agreement is finalized, we will have a better understanding at that time, but until that time, it is difficult to say exactly what the agreement is going to look like.

We have been communicating already. There have been a number of different meetings and workshops at different communities to try and explain the concept to our public. Generally, that has gone on pretty well.

Internally, the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs is involved with different departments to try and have an understanding of what self-government is and how it will affect our department and the municipalities that we work with.

I just wanted to talk a bit about your earlier comments, in looking at the shift in our approach to working with municipal governments from this department. I mentioned that there is going to be more of an advisory role in nurturing and guiding this type of approach, rather than control. I think that in the past, this department may have had a very controlling manner with the municipalities. Things were being developed and they evolved. We are anticipating changing our approach. Each community is different and in some municipalities, the elected mayor and council in municipalities are very accountable to their electors. The only form of accountability that we have with the municipalities is a yearly audited financial statement. That is the extent of our accountability. It is a type of control and accountability through the financial aspect of it. The political accountability to the electors is really up to each council to develop. That is the focus.

In a community where the mayor and council are elected, they should be accountable to the people who put them in there. I am not saying they are not, but that should be the focus. Of course, the financial accountability is very important, and the financial accountability should be to the people they represent in the communities. Yes, there is a shift in philosophy of approach of this department. We hope to change it through our approach, and work with the NWTAM and the standing committee. Hopefully, something positive comes out of that. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Minister. Mr. Braden.

MR. BRADEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It is good we have a caring, new-age kind of department coming up here. I support that approach. Like my colleagues, I have other more specific questions. I will try to hold them to the appropriate place.

Another area I think is somewhat related to communities is the issue of the Intergovernmental Forum, Mr. Chairman, and the involvement of the municipal governments at some point in that process.

We have seen considerable debate over the last couple of Sessions on that issue.

I am sympathetic with the Minister's position on it, in that there is a time for involving the municipal governments. It is not right now. There are still foundations to be built between the federal, territorial, and aboriginal levels of government, but I am also very concerned that, at some point, and for the reasons that we were just talking about, Mr. Chairman, municipal governments will need to be familiar, be seasoned, and be recognized at certain points and certain tables in that process.

I would like to ask the Minister, while he has declared very firmly that it is not the appropriate time right now to bring the municipal governments in as a fourth and equal partner, what kind of protocols or what kind of process or information flow is the department setting up to at least be able to brief the municipalities, help them become familiar with what is going on, and satisfy that very clear urge that we have heard from, at least the city of Yellowknife and I think from the Association of Municipalities, not to be left out completely from this process? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Braden. Mr. Antoine.

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, in the Intergovernmental Forum process, from the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs' point of view, as you know, we wear a number of other hats and have other responsibilities as government. From the department's point of view, the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs has participated with the Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs and the Intergovernmental Forum Secretariat to talk about this. There has been an officials' meeting to talk about setting a work plan to take different points that were raised in the spring at the Intergovernmental Forum. I assigned responsibilities to different participants and officials at that level. This information is being shared with NWTAM and, if not, it will be fairly soon. The school of community governments of this department has been asked to play a role in the Intergovernmental Forum in the area of capacity building in the communities. Although that is not what you asked about, I just mention it here for your information.

I understand that there is another Intergovernmental Forum that is going to be planned for another meeting sometime in late September or October. There is some time to talk to the NWTAM and share this information with them. If there are any questions there, the questions are forwarded to the working groups. Hopefully, we will find a way of protocol approach and how to include them. We have some time before this meeting in the fall to find a way to include them. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Antoine. General comments. We are still on page 4-9, Municipal and Community Affairs directorate, operations expense, total operations expense, \$3,711,000. Mr. Miltenberger.

MR. MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Under this particular activity, I would like to ask the Minister if he could speak to the issue of the proposed legislative changes and outline some of the highlights of the changes. Please provide some specific examples on how they are going to meet the goals laid out in his opening comments. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Mr. Antoine.

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Thank you. The Department of Municipal and Community Affairs is reviewing and updating municipal legislation in the Northwest Territories. The department submitted a report on municipal legislative review in December of 1998. That is what we are working on. The report included recommendations to expand bylaw making and corporate powers. The recommendations also speak to streamlining procedures, as well as reducing liability exposure. There are instructions in the report outlining detailed drafting instructions

that could form the basis of the new legislation. That is, in a nutshell, what we are going to be proceeding on.

Furthermore, there is a Dogrib community government legislation that we have to start working on, which will legislate changes to meet or comply with self-government agreements once that is reached. I will just leave it at that for now. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Antoine. Mr. Miltenberger.

MR. MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Are there any changes that are going to have an impact on the borrowing powers or debentures to build tax-based municipalities that would change what they are allowed to do and the criteria for debentures? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Mr. Antoine.

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, we do not think there is going to be any changes to what the honourable Member is saying. However, I want to say that we are meeting and continuing to meet with the NWTAM to review this. We will be doing this in July in meetings with the NWTAM, just firming up what we intend to do here. If it is a concern to the honourable Member, perhaps we could raise this issue with them at that time. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Antoine. Mr. Miltenberger.

MR. MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It was not specifically a concern, but debentures for tax-based municipalities are sort of a fundamental revenue raising mechanism. I was just curious, since the legislation is old, whether or not this section has been looked at and were there any changes in the municipal legislation area in other jurisdictions that would make it worth while to contemplate any changes? That was my question. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Mr. Antoine.

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. No, we are not contemplating any changes in that regard. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Antoine. General comments. We are on page 4-9, directorate, operations expense, total operations expense, \$3,711,000. Grants and contributions directorate, grants, \$135,000, contributions, \$150,000. Total grants and contributions, \$285,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Go to page 4-13, community financial services, operations expense, total operations expense, \$1,367,000. Mr. Roland.

MR. ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, one of the issues we raised in committee was the accountability of municipalities or communities that received funding from the Government of the Northwest Territories. It has been raised in a report on other matters from the Auditor General on third party accountability. In this area, it provides financial advice to regional offices so that regional offices can support good

community government and financial practices. Are things being done to improve the situation? We have heard there are a number of communities that do not have some of the right people in place or they have not been able to hire them. Has there been work going on in this area to try to improve this situation? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Roland. Mr. Antoine.

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to ask the deputy minister to provide this information. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Antoine. Mr. Murray.

MR. MURRAY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. This particular unit has a couple of responsibilities. One is to provide a certain level of financial expertise to communities who may be considering borrowing or may be considering financial changes in some way. They also assist communities who may be dealing with financial trouble by going in and helping them develop recovery plans. In some cases, they go in and help them straighten up their books. In some cases, they help them decide on what kinds of positions they need to fill.

Another important function in this particular division is working, if you will, on an accountability or reporting mechanism. We pick four or five important variables of financial accountability that would be easy for the communities to measure on an ongoing basis, such as cash balance versus their accounts payable. We then add some very simple, basic trends that we could monitor rather than going just by the audit that we see once a year, by getting this information on a more ongoing basis, every quarter or every six months. We are working on a set of guidelines and parameters, but we still need to have a fair level of consultation before we can just implement that because the communities have to be able to gather the information easily. We do not want to make an administrative burden out of this. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Murray. Mr. Roland.

MR. ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you to the deputy minister for that information, but what has been done to try to deal with this? This is an ongoing one within the department. Have there been increased steps taken to make sure communities have that third party accountability? Could we expand a little more on that area? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Roland. Mr. Murray.

MR. MURRAY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, it is starting to expand and it is further expanding. We have just finished publishing an analysis based on the audits of trends in the various communities and financial problems or skills that they have, in the process of providing that back to the communities as feedback. As well, when we get involved in helping or assisting a community in terms of working out its specific problems, that may take two days. In some cases, it may take several weeks of both regional time as well as people out of headquarters with a higher level of accounting expertise to go in and help them.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Murray. Mr. Roland.

MR. ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In some of the communities, you say there has been this work done and this report going back to communities. Are there timelines set to it as to trying to correct some of the findings that are there?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Roland. Mr. Murray.

MR. MURRAY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The timelines really depend a lot on the situation. There may be some communities where it may take a year or more because they cannot just stop all the services right then and there to solve a problem they may be having. We work with them to develop a recovery plan and a budget debate still provides the basic services, but allows them to start recouping their financial position back to being solved.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Murray. Mr. McLeod.

MR. MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I wanted to raise the issue of property tax as I see a line for grants and property taxes regarding the elderly and disabled home owners, and also to provide property tax forgiveness. In some of the communities in the Deh Cho, and I am told by Mr. Nitah there are also communities in the Akaitcho territory that are experiencing a lot of problems with the issue of property tax. Both these regions are in negotiations over the question of land. That may be some time yet as to coming down to a decision as to who really owns the land.

In the case of Fort Providence, I know there are upwards of 15 people who are refusing to pay property taxes. It is becoming quite an issue in that community. The chiefs brought it to my attention. I believe he has also brought it to the Minister's attention. They are asking for a deferral on property taxes until such time that the issue of land ownership is decided. I would like to ask the Minister if he can give us an update on this issue, if he had done anything in this area.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Mr. Antoine.

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, we recognize there is a concern there by many aboriginal people who are living mainly on Commissioner's land in the communities and have been assessed to pay tax based upon the assessed value of the land. People who live on IAB land, we call them lands reserved for Treaty Indians, they do not pay property taxes. While those who live on other lands, such as Commissioner's lands, are required to pay taxes because of our legislation. This legislation is the general taxation area.

I am going to be working with the Minister of Finance, who sets the tax rates, to try to develop some options which allow for trying to resolve this. Hopefully, we will have some proposals ready by the fall. We need time to look at it, and see what options are there.

The problem here is that this is our legislation that was put in place quite some time ago, and we in the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs, the lands area, put an assessment on the property. The other department put a value on it and tries to collect the taxes. So there are two

departments that we are dealing with. We will be working with the Department of Finance to try to come out with something by the fall. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Antoine. Mr. McLeod.

MR. MCLEOD: I think this whole issue of taxes requires immediate attention. Several of the chiefs have instructed their members not to pay the taxes. I could see a lot of people through the housing program be evicted. I think it is something that blew up in our faces. Under this heading of grants, it states here to provide for property tax forgiveness. I would like to know who qualifies for this?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Mr. Antoine.

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Yes, Thank you. In this activity, senior citizens and disabled persons. That is what this program is for. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Antoine. Mr. Miltenberger.

MR. MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Just a couple of questions for clarification purposes in the area of community financial services. Proper skills and training are critical to the success of the community government. I would like the Minister, if he can just elaborate on whether there is a common financial system that hamlets and communities use so there is a standardized approach for accountability, bookkeeping, financial statements and such. Are the respective financial officers in the communities given some assistance and training when they come on board to make sure they are up to speed? Once they are on board, is there some sort of upgrading to keep them current? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Mr. Antoine.

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, my understanding of this area is that it is up to the municipal governments and administration to provide their own financial administration. We encourage some common approaches. I think Accpac is a very common one. However, to get more detailed information, if the deputy minister could take over from here and give more detailed information here. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Antoine. Mr. Murray.

MR. MURRAY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In terms of financial accounting, there are set policies for accounting guidelines, which both communities as well as government have to follow, in terms of reporting, in terms of auditing, and setting a level of bookkeeping. We encourage the use of Accpac, especially in the small to medium communities, because it is a system that is fairly standard and fairly easily learned. It is used also by many of the housing associations that also function in the communities, so there could be a lot of cross-training and development.

In terms of the training aspect, we are quite willing and go in quite often to orient new finance staff in their jobs in the communities. We encourage the larger communities in the region to assist some of the smaller ones, as well. Through our

school of community government, we are working with the federal government, which is interested in financial training for their band staff in the communities. We are interested in the point of view of training municipal finance staff, and the Housing Corporation is doing the same with their financial people. We are working together on a common training plan and approach so we can go into the communities and train people to be basic financial accounting personnel.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Murray. Mr. Miltenberger.

MR. MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Can the Minister indicate what systems are available or what systems are in place between the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs and the communities for ongoing support on the financial side? Are there a variance of reports, some sort of quarterly financial statements provided so that there is an ability to get up to speed so that no community gets into trouble if there is a problem, and that support is there when it is needed? Is that kind of mentoring tied into the service, so that communities are helped to stay on the financial rails without interfering, but providing them support and assistance to make sure they do not get too far off base when trouble does happen? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Mr. Antoine.

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The department provides assistance to the municipalities. There is assistance in the financial arrangements. It all depends on the community. Some communities need more help than others in some cases. In some cases, they may be required to have monthly financial statements. Other communities that are better positioned and have better financial administration are on a quarterly basis. They do a report. That is my understanding of how the reporting is done. To reply to the honourable Member's question more specifically, I will defer to the deputy minister.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Antoine. Mr. Murray.

MR. MURRAY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Perhaps the one comment that I would like to add, in many communities we do receive reports, but sometimes they are very complex to put together. What we are trying to do is to come up with a simpler system for the communities. It is going to look at key indicators, such as cash balances, accounts payable balances, making sure they have enough funding coming in to meet their obligations, payrolls. We want to find five or six key indicators that perhaps do not put as much burden on the community, as opposed to having to close all their books and send us trial balances and those types of statements every month.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Murray. Mr. Bell.

MR. BELL: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just have one question in this area. I am wondering about the type of training materials you are using in the communities to help financial managers or administrators pick up some of these things and get some of the training they need. You mentioned you are sort of doing this under the community school of government. In a lot of areas, things fit in here. I have been told that some programs were developed. One program in particular, about general financial practices at the community level, provides information

on roles and responsibilities and skill sets of a financial manager. Topics include roles of the financial manager, financial concepts, internal control, cash management, tax administration, other government reporting, things like this. I understand that the programs are being well received. I am wondering if you can talk specifically about the program for financial practices.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Bell. Mr. Murray.

MR. MURRAY: We have a number of manuals that we have been putting together. Some are more up to date than others. This particular one that we are working on is dealing with guidelines to assist the communities with their financial management. I do not have the manual here to go through in detail. I would be pleased to get a copy for the Member himself, but it speaks to broad accountability as well as trying to give the basic tools to do their jobs on an ongoing basis.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Murray. Mr. Bell.

MR. BELL: Thank you. I would like to get a copy of that. I think that this is a very important area. I think that this kind of thing is long overdue and I am glad to see the department is taking this so seriously and putting some money and some time in to this. If our committee could get a copy of that material, it would be helpful for us to take a look at it. Thank you.

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

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I was going to ask about the different provisions of the Gwich'in Land Claim Agreement, but it is under the municipal lands area. I was just wondering if it was appropriate to bring it up at this time.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Any objections from the committee? Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO: Mr. Chairman, we have heard a lot of complaints, especially in the community of Aklavik, in the way taxes are being levied against the properties in the communities.

I know for a fact that there are certain provisions in the Gwich'in Agreement and the Sahtu Agreement regarding the municipal land provisions. Those lands are exempt from property taxes. It says developed Gwich'in municipal lands means the lands with improvements. Those lands are exempt from these taxes, which means that no services are being provided.

There is also a provision that talks about the federal government, where the federal government agrees to pay local governments any real property tax levied for 50 years from the date of settlement legislation.

I know for a fact that they are taxing the organizations, and many aboriginal people have houses on lands that were selected by the Gwich'in, yet under this, they are exempt from taxes. People are being taxed by your department. Why is that? Have you looked at these provisions?

One of the concerns I have is why has there been such a major increase in the value of the land taxes in a lot of our small communities, where before, you can go back ten years where the value of a lot of these properties was under \$2,500, and now we are talking \$15,000. I think many people are concerned.

How did you come up with such an exorbitant value on the property, especially property above the Arctic Circle, which is not the same value as southern parts of the Northwest Territories. That is where I here a lot of complaints from many people in Aklavik. Many people are not paying their taxes because they believe they have certain rights and they are not being adhered to by this government, especially treaty people who have land that was designated for bands under the Indian Act, which was called IAB, Indian Branch Lands. Many people are now being told they have to pay taxes because your house is sitting on it. This government does not own that property. Why are you dealing with that?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Krutko. This might be better dealt with under page 4-25, land administration. We could wait until then to deal with this further. We are on page 4-13. We will wait until we get to page 4-25 to address that question. We are on page 4-13, community financial service, operation expense, total operation expense, \$1,367,000. Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. With community financial services, one of the problems we see in many municipalities is that the amount of responsibilities we are downloading to these municipalities, they do not have the financial resources. One of the big concerns many of them have relayed is that they do not have financial expertise, or people in place to deal with the financial management side of the accountability in our communities.

I see a number of communities who had to get extra funding to assist or offset their cost to the different communities for financial management services. In Fort McPherson in the last number of years, they have gone through three financial administrative officers, because you cannot attract people in these small communities. It is frustrating not only to the councillors, but also the community, because they do not have the expertise in house. The resources they get to compete against other organizations or corporations or what not, they are able to pay these extra dollars to retain these people, but to keep anybody in the small communities for an extended period of time...the government has to do more to enhance or assist them, to ensure they have the resource people in our communities to deal with the financial management of the municipalities and the dollars that are being spent in our communities.

I would like to ask the Minister what they are doing to improve that.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Mr. Antoine.

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, over a number of years, municipal administrators, senior officers and financial administration people who are working right in the municipal administration have identified the concern you have. As a result of that, this department, over the last few years, has developed the school of community government.

The role this school of community government would play is to provide training and support to municipal administration workers and the financial side of it as well. This is in conjunction with the municipalities and the SAOs, that this concept of this school has come up. The contents and the type of work and support that will be provided is working in conjunction with the municipality workers. They will cover the

areas they are concerned about. I think this is one of the areas they will also be providing additional capacity building and development for the workers. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Antoine. We will take a short break and come back in ten minutes.

-- Break

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): I will call the committee to order. We are on community financial services, operations expense, total operations expense \$1,367,000. Mr. McLeod.

MR. MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I want to pick up on a line of discussion that Mr. Krutko was talking about in funding to the communities and some of the problems that I have experienced as a former mayor. Over the years the funding to the communities has been an issue that was raised at the association of municipalities annually. The problem that we raised with the funding is that there is no incentive there for communities to operate efficiently.

Over the years we have seen non-tax-based communities...inaudible...through a budget; all increased drastically. A couple of years ago the department looked at ways to try and alleviate that problem and indicated to the communities that they would be looking at a type of block funding, and we all welcomed that. What it came out to was a cap on the dollars for services. In a way it has helped the department in terms of holding the increases down.

I see a different solution to the problem. The way the system is set up now it does not encourage efficiency. If one community operates very efficiently and it generates a surplus at the end of the year, they are not allowed to keep it. It goes back to the government. If another community operates and spends a lot of money and runs into a deficit situation, they are bailed out. When the cap was set, there was a rating, an analysis done by the department, on all the communities in the North on the water and sewer program. The community of Fort Providence was rated number one in terms of efficiency. It was capped at a level that they were spending for that year. Other communities of the same size, the same population, were capped at a much higher level and that is the money that they operate on to this day. In a way, the community of Fort Providence was penalized for running a tight ship, for operating efficiently.

I have never been able to understand why we cannot incorporate a method of encouraging people to try to run a surplus operation. I would like the department to look at that kind of a scenario. Maybe the community is allowed to keep a percentage of the money they save. I want to ask the Minister if they have considered incorporating an incentive to run a tight ship, or balance budgets.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Mr. Antoine.

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Yes, we are going to be reviewing the whole thing, including the water and sewer program. I agree with the honourable Member about the efficient running of municipalities, and their ability to keep and run their communities and all programs and services they are able to provide efficiently. We have to take a look at that. I have instructed the department to look at different ways to approach it. Perhaps the deputy minister can elaborate a little more on what they have done to date on that. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Antoine. Mr. Murray.

MR. MURRAY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In addition to needing to review the present water and sewer system subsidy program in itself, we are also participating in a government-wide analysis of the way various utilities subsidies are managed to ensure that they are based on solid logic and foundation. The water and sewer program was capped in 1996, in that time period, a formula was put in place and the Member correctly says there was no incentive put into that system for communities that were running efficiently. In defense of some communities, they cost out higher because of where they draw their water from, the distances to water sources and some of those costs. There needs to be some form of incentive built into the program, and how that fits in with the overall move of the department to a formula-funded basis of operation. Part of our discussions will deal with the communities and the whole aspect of incentives. I believe that another Member raised the same sort of issue of the need for incentives for those communities that run well.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Murray. Mr. McLeod.

MR. MCLEOD: One more comment. I agree that some communities have higher costs because of the system that they set up. I have attended Association of Municipalities' meetings and these issues were brought up. We had cases where people stood up and asked "how do you expect us to live with this cap when you have built our sewer lagoon 45 minutes away, and we can only pump out three houses?" I have a community right within my riding, the Hay River Reserve, that is experiencing a similar problem. There is no way they can run as efficiently as people can because they are considered part of Hay River. They have to drive two houses, three houses at the most, and drive 26 kilometres to dump. I would like to know if the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs would recognize the reserve as a completely different community instead of lumping that community in with Hay River.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Mr. Bob McLeod.

MR. BOB MCLEOD: Right now this government does not seem to recognize the reserve as a community operating on its own. It is recognized as a population within the town of Hay River. I think that the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs and other departments have to start recognizing that this community wants to operate on their own. They need their own sewer lagoons. They need their own water and all the other facilities that other communities enjoy. There seems to be a double standard when you look at Kakisa and Enterprise that run their own services. The reserve has to utilize Hay River for the lagoons, water, and everything else.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Mr. Antoine.

HON. JIM ANTOINE: . Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, the Hay River Reserve is a reserve. They asked to be a reserve and were granted to be a reserve by the federal government. However, the federal government did not come forward with what other reserves get in southern Canada. They get directly funded by the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs to put in the infrastructure and to provide the programs

and services. Instead, the Government of the Northwest Territories is tasked to provide those programs and services. To date, that is what we have been doing.

Your request to review the Hay River Reserve as a separate community is the first time I have heard about it. Perhaps other Ministers have heard it before, but this is the first time I have heard this. We are going to have to review this, it is a bigger issue than something to commit to in the standing committee. I do not think I can commit to it. You raised the issue and it is something that we have to address and work through, to see where it will go at this point. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Antoine. Detail. Community financial services. Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO: Under operations expenses, financial services, there is \$550,000. Could the Minister elaborate on what that is for? Where is it being spent?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Mr. Antoine.

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I will ask the deputy minister to give the answer.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Antoine. Mr. Murray.

MR. MURRAY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That financial services section entails the salaries for approximately \$330,000 and other O and M expenditures of \$220,000. The other operations and maintenance expenditure is related to travel for staff to go to the field and work with the communities. It also deals with some of the contracts that we do in terms of developing guidelines, the financial monitoring and reporting procedures, that type of thing. We are also contracting models for the communities so they have standard form contracts when they are going out for projects and things like that. Most of the other operations and maintenance is for outside contracting assistance, as well as travel to develop tools for the communities to use. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Murray. Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Can you identify which communities are accessing this fund right now?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Mr. Murray.

MR. MURRAY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. This is a headquarters activity. The staff that work in this area travel to the communities and work with the various community and regional staff, in terms of dealing with financial problems at the community level. They are on the road a fair amount of the time to get out there and get involved in training at the community level, as well as trying to solve those financial problems that we were talking about before, to ensure that the communities stay viable financially. Those are headquarters functions in that \$550,000. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Murray. Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. What I am trying to get at is which communities are having difficulties right now and what some of the problem areas are. Along with what Mr. McLeod is saying, I believe that we have to allow communities

to be independent and to also have the ability to generate their own revenues. Whatever savings they have, they should recoup. We also have the opposite of the scope where you are looking at the communities that do have problems. My concern earlier was in not really having the ability to attract people, especially in isolated communities or in communities where the cost of living is very high and just trying to find accommodation is a problem. Can you identify some of those communities that are having difficulty at this time, especially where this \$550,000 is presently being used?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Mr. Antoine.

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Thank you. One community having some difficulty right now is Aklavik. The Department of Municipal and Community Affairs has reviewed the current budget and is working with the hamlet staff to monitor their performance. We have Paulatuk, where the department's regional staff is currently working with the hamlet staff to eliminate the factors or the problems that are causing a denied audit opinion. In Fort Resolution, the department has prepared an operational evaluation that is currently being reviewed by the regional superintendent in Fort Smith. Contracts that are currently due have been postponed for about three months to determine the cost benefit analysis of the same. In Fort Good Hope, the hamlet has recently hired a SAO. The department's staff is working with the hamlet's staff to develop a revised budget and a recovery plan for a debt that they have. In Rae-Edzo, in April of this year, the department was advised that the hamlet would not be able to meet its payroll if funds were not advanced. The Department of Municipal and Community Affairs' staff travelled to Rae-Edzo to meet with the hamlet office several times and developed a debt recovery plan that would reduce the expenditures. Eventually, this will eliminate the accumulated deficit. At a later date, there was an advance of money that was made to the hamlet to help their short term crisis. This advance has been agreed upon by the hamlet in the debt recovery plan. We are continuing to work with the hamlet and with the auditors to finalize the community's March 2000 financial position.

Those are some of the communities that we find are having some difficulties. The department is travelling with the financial analysts to the communities to continue to provide support. This is where the \$550,000 is used, to do this type of work. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Antoine. Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Can the Minister or his deputy give us an idea of how long these problems have been happening in the communities? Has it been ongoing? Has it just been recent? Have you seen these financial difficulties or have they been there for a number of years and just continue to grow and grow? It seems like a lot of communities do not have the ability to generate revenues and do not have the tax base or the population base to be able to increase revenues. Most municipalities do not generate revenues, unlike tax-based municipalities. Has this problem been ongoing or has it been around for a number of years?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Mr. Antoine.

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, the financial difficulty with the municipalities has been ongoing

for as long as municipal governments have been there. Some municipalities are doing good and have always done good. Some have had troubles in the past for one reason or another and were able to recover their debt through a debt recovery plan. From time to time, for different reasons, different communities come forward. Therefore, we step in and we help them out.

With regard to your question about whether some of these communities are in financial difficulty on an ongoing basis, I would have to say I do not think so. I think the intention of the municipalities is that if they do get into a deficit situation and ask for help, we step in through the department's assistance and help them try to meet the debt recovery plan. In many cases, municipalities are successful and do get out of debt. They run a tight ship. It moves around. Sometimes it is one community and sometimes it is another. If we understand and identify what the problems are, hopefully we will not have anymore municipalities in debt. Again, in the financial review, we like to look at it. We are going to work with the municipalities to see what the problems are and perhaps maybe address them at that time. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Antoine. Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. One of the problems, especially in the case of Aklavik, is that after being the MLA for the last five years, one of the things that you see, especially in this budget stuff, there is really nothing in it for the communities. Basically, all the capital and infrastructure was there in the past where they were supposed to have ongoing projects. All these capital projects have been put on the back burner because of the deficit situation. You see the amount of money that is now spent in capital versus what was there in the past. The communities do not have any more resources or dollars to even upgrade, fix, or maintain their roads or infrastructure they have in their communities. They are just getting by with what they have. They are the ones that get the heat, day in and day out. They get heat at their hamlet meetings, from the people in the communities who are asking why the roads are in the shape they are, why they are having problems with the water or why they do not have a drainage system in place that is able to accommodate the communities' basic infrastructure.

I think, for me, that is probably one of the most serious problems in our municipalities - the lack of or the ability to maintain the exact infrastructure we had before. The cost of maintaining a lot of these facilities has gone up. The cost of heating has gone up. The cost of power has gone up. The cost associated with employment benefits for employees has gone up. Housing is another problem we have in a lot of our communities. When you compile all these problems, I believe that is where you find a lot of these communities that are in the situation that they are. For you to attract good people, you have to pay good wages, especially when it comes to financial officers, foremen, people just to run the operation. You have to throw in things that were not there in the past. You have to pay them extra money for VTAs. You have to pay them money for housing. You have to pay them money for moving costs to get people in and out. All of these costs are unforeseen costs. They are not in the budget. In most cases, you do not even think about it until you find out the situation.

That is one area I would like the department to seriously look at. I believe in order to get out of this mess with all these communities, they need a long term plan. They need some long term investment, knowing that there will be money there. It is going to take a while to get out of debt. We do not just work it through one year and come back next year to the same problem. We have to ensure that we have the dollars, the resources, and the people and that we identify the actual cost of what it really costs to operate in these communities.

Aklavik is a good example. In Aklavik, there are very few opportunities when it comes to jobs. There is a very high turnover of people in that community, especially people that you have to bring in from the south. Because of that, I feel this has to be looked at. In order to be fair to those communities, we should do a system making a move, realizing this is not just a short term problem. We have to work it through over a period of time, four or five years. We have to say that we know we have this problem and it is going to take you this long to get to this point, but in the meantime, we will identify all the problem areas. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Mr. Antoine.

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, there is a process that we are looking at. We are looking at the financial review of this department to see how we fund these communities. I think that is what the honourable Member is talking about. That is what this department, hopefully in this financial management review that we are undertaking, hopes to address.

Yes, we also need to work closer with the communities to do better planning with them. You mentioned that Aklavik and other communities which are not tax-based do not collect taxes or they do not have any way to generate their own source of revenue. Perhaps this is something we should look at as well. It is a bigger plan than we have in mind. We have already been told that we are too ambitious in what we want to do as a department. Certainly, I think there is some merit in that. I think we have to take a look at that as well. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Antoine. Mr. Lafferty.

MR. LAFFERTY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just have one question. They sort of touched on my question when Mr. Krutko asked about the funding. I asked a question on this in March, when I knew the hamlet was going into a deficit. The question was about the funding formula. I think they sort of gave me an answer that when they look at all the problems in the communities, they are going to see where they can fix it. According to the funding formula, it is standardized all across the territories. Some of the communities take on more responsibility. Some take over water and sewer from the Department of Public Works and Services. Because the facility they are taking over is outdated, a lot of their own operations and maintenance funds are going towards repairs, which they did not expect. Because the community consists of two towns within one municipality, separated by 16 kilometres, they did not make any allowance for travel time back and forth. But we know that they were given special funding just to cover some of their costs for a number of years now. If they were looking at it really closely, since they are in a financial bind right now, that maybe they can look at the funding formula in just one

community. So there is water take over, extra responsibilities. I think those are a big cost. That might have been the ruin of Rae-Edzo. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. Mr. Antoine.

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Again, I do not want to sound like we are putting too much stock in trying to cure everyone's problem by saying we are looking at the financial review. I did indicate to an honourable Member earlier on that we hope to have something and try to look at all the different financial arrangements for our business plan coming in August or September. Hopefully, we will work into it. Like I said, every community is different from each other. Each community you visit is different. They are located differently. Their infrastructures are different. The types of buildings are different. In the case of Rae-Edzo, you have two communities that are set apart and there is one administration for both, which is an added factor. The existing formula we have, as the honourable Member stated, is outdated. That has to be factored into it once we look at these new arrangements. Again, on the water and sewer side, there is a cost factor to individuals in the communities. Each community is different. In some places, people pay their water and sewer bills. Others may not. That may be a factor in there as well. We have to look at all these different factors and see if we can come up with something that is going to be fair, equitable, and accepted by most of the people and see if it will work. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Antoine. We are on page 4-15, community financial services, grants and contributions, grants, \$210,000. Mr. Nitah.

MR. NITAH: Mahsi, Mr. Chairman. I would just like to cover an area that not only impacts my community but I would say all small aboriginal communities in the Northwest Territories. It concerns health. We attribute a lot of the health problems in the territories to smoking, cancer and what not. I am wondering if the department has ever done a study on dust effects on human lungs, and if that affects the health of the individual. A lot of our communities in the Northwest Territories are not paved. It gets very dusty and people breathe that in all the time. I am just wondering if the department has ever done a study on that in conjunction with the Department of Health, or something. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Nitah. Mr. Antoine.

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chair, we do not know if there were any studies done regarding dust. I understand that what the honourable Member is saying is that in some communities that do not have paved roads, they put calcium chloride on the road and other chemicals. I know that has happened in the past in Fort Simpson. I do not know what kind of effect that will have on people. We are going to have to take it up with the Department of Health and Social Services to see if any studies have been done. As far as we know, we are not aware of any studies to determine that. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Antoine. Mr. Nitah.

MR. NITAH: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It may or may not have an effect on health, but it sure does have an effect on the people in the community, at a comfort level, at a visual level, everything. It affects everybody in different ways. I think it might have something to do with retention problems with our

professionals that we bring in as well. I am just wondering if the department could take a serious look at doing something about the infrastructure in the community, roads and other areas, roads especially. It is just not comfortable, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Nitah. This might be better addressed under regional operations, 4-32, but I will allow the Minister to make comments if he wants.

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Thank you. The honourable Member is asking if the department would take a look at it. Yes, we will take a look at it. Perhaps we will ask the department to ask other departments in this area. They may have done this type of work in the communities on dust control. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Antoine. We are on community financial service, page 4-15. Mr. Braden.

MR. BRADEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. To an item on that page, the Senior Citizen and Disabled Property Tax. My question regards the sustainability of this type of forgiveness that is included in here. I note, too, that it is a matching kind of financing for municipal taxation authorities. What I am looking at is that if it is matching, then the total impact of this forgiveness is about \$400,000. If you apply a little bit of math, a little bit of demographics, I see this in the space of three or four years growing to about \$1 million combined impact on municipal and territorial tax systems. My question is sustainability. Is the department factoring in such things as demographics and the rate of growth on this kind of thing? I think there is also an impact of demographics on sport and recreation and how those facilities are designed with the long term in place. To what extent are you looking at the long term in the sustainability of this kind of thing? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Braden. Mr. Murray.

MR. MURRAY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Specifically within the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs, we have not done any major studies on this at this point in time. The funding and its growth has not been all that dramatic in the last few years, but the point is well taken that as the population ages, it could very well grow. I certainly can take a look at the population projections and get a handle on what kinds of growth rates would be coming in this kind of a program. We can do that in time for the next business plan.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Murray. Mr. Braden.

MR. BRADEN: Thank you, that is a very adequate answer. As my colleagues have pointed out, if my mother ever got wind that I thought that we should tax seniors more, well, I would not be her next-to-favourite son anymore.

-- Interjection

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Or her son!

MR. BRADEN: Or her son, yeah, disowned!

-- Laughter

To Mr. Murray's answer, there is fairly dramatic evidence just from last year's main to this year's main. It is an increase of a

third. That kind of thing, with what we know going on in society, it is going to ramp up pretty quickly. I think my point has been well taken. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Braden. I have Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO: I would like to move a motion to report progress.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): The motion is in order. The motion is not debatable. To the motion. All those in favour? All those opposed? The motion is defeated. We are on page 4-15, community financial services, grants and contributions, grants, \$210,000. Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO: Yes, on the Senior Citizens and the Disabled Property Tax, one of the concerns that we always hear from our seniors is that they have to reapply every year. Why could we not have a system in place where we know who these seniors are? The community councils have an idea of who these seniors are with their own property that live in these residences, but every year they go through having to fill out these applications for their tax exemptions and go to the hamlet office. Has the department found a way to streamline this so that they do not have to do it every year, so it is easier on the seniors? Why do you not allow it to happen every five years, and then do the assessment? This has come up before. Every year you are facing the same problem. The small communities do not really understand what this bill is in the mail. As soon as they see taxes, they think the government is going to the community after them. I am just wondering if you have considered streamlining that and making it a lot easier for the elders.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Mr. Antoine.

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chair, I think it is a very good idea and we will take a look at it.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Antoine. Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO: Did I hear him say that he was going to do it next week? When will he do this?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Mr. Antoine.

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We will do it as soon as possible. It might not be next week. It should not be that big of a chore now to take a look at it. We have to work with our staff in the regions and the Department of Finance. We are working with a lot of other groups, so we need some time to look at it seriously. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Antoine. We are on page 4-15, grants and contributions, grants, \$210,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Contributions, \$255,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Total grants and contributions, \$465,000. Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO: Just with regard to the contribution to the granular materials. One of the concerns a lot of the communities have is that they do not have the resources. They do not have access to granular materials, especially to upgrade their roads in the communities. I am noticing that there has been an increase in there. What is the process for communities to access this program?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Mr. Murray.

MR. MURRAY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. This has been treated as a capital program and it has been portioned out to the communities based on where there is a need to develop those resources. It depends on the community and their need for gravel. This is study money to largely go and find out where quarries should be, and to develop a management plan with the communities to develop that resource for the long term.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Murray. Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. This is exactly the type of dollars that I have been looking for, especially in the case of Aklavik. They have been trying to get a road up into the foothills in the mountains to get gravel. There has never been enough money to do anything with. If you look at \$230,000 and spread it out to 30-odd communities, it does not add up to much. Is it strictly for planning? What does the community of Aklavik have to do to access this funding?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Mr. Murray.

MR. MURRAY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My understanding is, when the communities meet with the department to go through their capital requirements both over the five-year capital planning period, that this is one of the areas that could be discussed at that point in time. If you would like us to specifically address Aklavik, we will talk to them right away.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Murray. Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Since I seem to be the only one who is concerned about it, I will just take the whole \$250,000. That way it is on the public record.

-- Interjection

-- Laughter

Can a community access the whole \$250,000?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Mr. Antoine.

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. No, there are other communities in the Northwest Territories and they all need gravel. We will have to work out a fair and equitable way between the communities to share this money. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Antoine. Mr. Lafferty.

MR. LAFFERTY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We all need gravel. Granular material is needed in some of the smaller communities. The only way to get a crusher up there is on the winter road. I do not think they like to crush in the winter, so sometimes a crusher has to go up there and stay until summer, where they crush in the summer and then come out. I think sometimes they have to pay for the whole year for the machine

to just sit there. I am just wondering, is there a way they can look at plans on how they can crush for all the smaller communities if they are in one group, like Wha Ti, Snare Lake, Gameti?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. Mr. Antoine.

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, usually in a gravel crushing operation, this department tries to work with other departments that have a similar project in the same area. For example, with Public Works and Services, and maybe even Transportation, we are trying to coordinate our needs for acquiring gravel together. If it is a crushing operation, then usually it is in conjunction with another department. I think we are going to have to, with this program here, look at what needs there are in the municipalities and what kind of projects there are that require gravel as well, and see if we could coordinate it better. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Antoine. Mr. Lafferty.

MR. LAFFERTY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, since the Highway No. 3 realignment and resurfacing is happening, and they are crushing gravel right next to Rae, we can connect that and do some crushing there. I understand there is some work done on the Dempster Highway, and he can get the other half. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. Mr. Antoine.

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Like I said, crushing is a very expensive operation if you are going to do it only for one small community. It may require using the equipment in the community. Having the equipment in the community for a whole year just to do a small job, and if we have coordination like the honourable Member is mentioning, we have to coordinate again with the Department of Transportation, Department of Public Works and Services, and that is how we will have to do it. There are other communities that require gravel, so he can share it with Mr. Krutko. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Antoine. Mr. Nitah.

MR. NITAH: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to touch on that same area. Just a suggestion to the department to do a study on process kimberlite. We have a lot of trucks going up to BHP and coming back empty. Is there anything we could do with process kimberlite?

I know it is a material you can grow things in. It is a material that is in abundance, and there are transportation links that are coming down. Also, if there is some kind of benefit to it, it will help reduce the impact on the Tundra. Maybe we could do some kind of study on a cost-benefit analysis on transporting, using it and selling it in the Northwest Territories. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Nitah. Mr. Antoine.

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, we will have to talk about it with the other departments. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Antoine. Total grants and contributions, \$465,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): We will go on to page 4-17, emergency services, operations expense, total operations expense, \$855,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): On to page 4-21, community governance, operations expense, total operations expense, \$605,000. Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Regarding the department's involvement in the different land claim agreements and self-government, I see there has been \$520,000 allocated here. How many positions is that? Where are they located? Which claims are they working on?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Mr. Antoine.

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I will ask the deputy minister to answer that.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Antoine. Mr. Murray.

MR. MURRAY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The community governance activity currently has six positions. There is a director, administrative assistant, a secretary, a number of advisors who work on land claims and self-government. There is also an advisory position that deals with legislation and elections.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Murray. Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. One of the concerns I have is that a lot of the communities are negotiating land claims and self-government, they also want to have the ability to generate their own revenues. They want to be able to run their own municipalities. I know for a fact that...you talk about taxes in communities and everything else, it is put into general revenues. The aboriginal claimant groups also want to take on that responsibility of having a say in the development of lands and also have a say in how the taxes are going to be collected.

I think what I see here is that we are competing for the same thing. This government wants to have a say in how they would like control in what goes on in municipalities. They want to have a say in how taxes are going to be collected, how lands are going to be developed, how the municipal acts are going to be established.

On one hand, the aboriginal groups are trying to get something we already have and they want to take it over and run it themselves. On this end, with the number of people you have there, it sounds like...we talk about community governments, we talk about self-government and land claims, the whole intention of the claims is to set up an economic base. The idea of self-government is to eventually control and take over the aboriginal communities so you do not have municipalities, band councils, Metis locals, and that you take over the institutions that are there.

By doing that, you are going to end up centralizing the whole institution to be one institution. The way it is right now, it is all splintered among all different agencies and groups. As a government, for the amount of money and the people we have in here, we are restricting the First Nations people from really doing what they want to accomplish.

I would like to ask the Minister exactly what role do these people play at the table, besides dictating what is in the Municipal Act or saying...what do they see in regard to the establishment of regulations or by-laws that are in effect? The different claims groups will have the ability to generate revenues, to establish by-laws, to implement laws.

The concern I have is because of the role this department plays, I feel it is threatening the whole concept of self-government. The aboriginal concept versus the government concept is like two different worlds.

What I see happening is we are trying to do away with the Indian Act on one hand, but on the other hand we are trying to not be what we have now, which is a municipal council. We want to generate something that reflects those two mechanisms, but what I see happening here is that the government is imposing that this is the way it is and that is the end of it. You have to take the municipality plus the by-laws plus the Municipal Act and that is the way it is going to be.

What kind of a mandate do they have and why do you have so many people involved in that process from this department?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Mr. Antoine.

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, Municipal and Community Affairs has a key role to play in self-government talks in the area of land administration. Once the land claims and self-government talks are finished, in some instances there are municipal lands. There is land administration that is required. There is assessment. Our department does the assessment. There is the expertise there to have the ability to assess the land there. There is the municipal planning. There is a requirement for that. There is the whole area of capacity building, such as training and development of people who are running the municipal governments.

People living in the communities, we have to make sure all people have access to the basic programs and services that are there now, and they are essential. There is a need for this municipal government to be involved, to play this kind of a role here at the negotiating table, and they have.

The Member is talking about us being a threat at the table and so on, but my understanding of what has been going on, for example, in the Beaufort Delta self-government talks, there is an approach that is supported by all parties, that the whole way municipal government is provided in those communities is going to be different from what exists today. There will be a need to revise our legislation. There is going to be a need to do a lot of changes to a number of different legislations that we have to try to accommodate whatever is going to be coming out of the negotiations.

I think there is a need to be involved. Not to enforce, protect or control what happens at the table, but to provide the factual information as to what exists there today. If there are changes

that are going to be made as to how municipal governments are going to be done, then we have that information there. There is a need for Municipal and Community Affairs to play a role at these tables. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Antoine. We are on community governance. Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Can the Minister give me the actual number of bodies, PYs, who are going to be needed for the self-government table? How many people?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Mr. Murray.

MR. MURRAY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We currently have a position in Fort Smith and a position in Inuvik. The one in Fort Smith is responsible for the Salt River talks, and he also provides assistance with the Deline discussions. We have a position in Inuvik dealing with the Beaufort Delta. We have one advisor-negotiator in Yellowknife who is going to be dealing with Akaitcho and Deh Cho talks. As well, we have one person in a land support role. They work with all the tables, providing advice and assistance in specific areas of land administration planning. We also have a person who reviews and writes positions and policy and that type of thing, so when we go to the table, we have a consistent point of view that can be spoken to.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Murray. Page 4-21, community governance, operations expense, total operations expense, \$605,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): We will go on to page 4-25. I think Mr. Krutko has finally managed to get to land administration before we got to it, but anyway...operations expense, total operations expense, \$2,326,000. Ms. Lee.

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. May I just get the information from the Minister regarding the internal changes that the department is putting into play? Can we just have an explanation as to what is?

In the Minister's opening statement, he indicated that some changes will be made here. I would just like to know if the department could provide us with the best information that they have now as to what that is, and what the work plan is. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Ms. Lee. Mr. Murray.

MR. MURRAY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The lands administration review that was done outlined a number of significant areas that needed to be looked at in terms of catch up in the backlog of leasing and lease invoicing. Procedures needed to be developed and staff trained in those procedures. We need to take a look at some of our policies in place in terms of land pricing and land lease only, and a number of other ones. As a result of that, the first step in the work plan that we are talking about, which is largely internal, is working with all the regional staff as well as headquarters to get a handle on each of the areas where problems have been identified, is to get a handle on the number of leases that are out there that need to be updated, in terms of getting accurate information on invoicing and being behind in invoicing, and doing land transfers and those kinds of things. When the report was done,

that kind of data was not available. We need that kind of data in terms of putting together a final overall strategy that we can then take forward to discuss with the Minister, or with Cabinet, or with the standing committee, or the communities.

Over the summer, the primary focus of our work is developing the database of accurate information that is going to tell me whether I have 2,000 leases or 2,500 exactly. A lot of that is working on the inventory system. A lot of it requires staff in the field to be going through various boxes and databases and getting that kind of information gathered for us. That is the internal work that is going on for the next two months. Once that is done, then we will be able to put together an accurate estimate on the time it might take to fix certain components, and then, depending on the volumes, looking at the magnitude and options of possible solutions. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Murray. Ms. Lee.

MS. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Going by the answers the deputy minister has given, it appears that it really is an internal administrative clean up. It is not a major big, policy change on land and administration or anything like that. I could appreciate that. I wonder if I could have the commitment from the Minister to provide to the committee the findings of the report and survey, and the detailed work plan. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Ms. Lee. Mr. Antoine.

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Yes, we will provide that information once the inter-departmental working group puts together their short-term work plan. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Antoine. Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In regard to my comments earlier about the land claims agreements. There are certain provisions and sections that allow for the government to realize that there are certain benefits that arise from the claims, especially when it comes to land that they have selected in municipalities or communities. In some cases, because the lands are not developed, they are just rural lands which they have to pay property taxes on them. Also, there are sections in the agreement which talk about the Indian Affairs' or the federal government's responsibility to pay taxes for 15 years on lands that are designated IAB lands, Indian Branch Lands, that were selected during the land selection process. Has the government done an evaluation? Are you doing any tax acts or tax legislation to allow for these type of amendments so you encompass what is really spelled out in the land claims agreement when it comes to taxes and municipal taxes?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Mr. Antoine.

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Thank you. I think the honourable Member is referring to a land claims agreement with the Gwich'in, and in the implementation part of it, that is where this type of work would happen. In our study on land administration for the department, one area we identified that needs to be worked on is exactly what the honourable Member is talking about. There has not been the type of work put into the Gwich'in land claims implementation so far, with regard to trying to abide by the agreement. We realise, from the study, that there is quite a bit of work to be done. It is a backlog that needs to be cleaned up.

It may require a lot of work. It may even require changes to certain legislation, but we do not know right now. We are just initiating the work, the internal inter-departmental working group that I mentioned. That is one of the things that we will look at. Everything that is related to it, including the taxation that you are talking about, we are working with the Department of Finance as well. We are participating as a member of the inter-departmental working group, along with Justice and Aboriginal Affairs, and Finance. It is a task that we still have to do.

I cannot really answer you to see if we have done it or not. At this point, if some specific parts of it were a problem that arose, that were dealt with but generally, the overall implementation of that aspect of the Gwich'in claim has not been done. With this inter-departmental working group, we will try to develop a plan of action in how to resolve those outstanding issues. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Antoine. I would like to ask the Members to keep their conversations down please, and Ministers as well. Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you. Mr. Chairman, because there is another provision here providing that aboriginal people can use these lands in the municipalities for certain purposes, in which they are exempt, especially using them for traditional pursuits. For example, using them to establish trappers' cabins, or set up a camp, or set up a tent frame inside the municipal boundaries.

In the case of Inuvik, the municipality tried to evict aboriginal people off these lands, but they were Gwich'in lands. They were undeveloped lands. They were living in tent frames and tents. The community tried to evict them. Under the land claim agreement, it is clear that those lands are not included under the classification of improved lands. They have the right as aboriginal people to use these lands for traditional purposes.

Has the department looked at how your laws or legislation is taking away an aboriginal right that an aboriginal group has retained through a land claim agreement, to be able to use these lands in municipalities at no cost, in which they can build cabins? They can set tent frames. They can put a fish camp if they want on these properties and not be penalized for it, or be evicted from it. That was a good example of what has happened to some Gwich'in people living in Inuvik.

Yet you as a government are a signatory to this agreement, but you did not amend your laws or make an attempt to ensure that the people who are imposing taxes or putting these tax bills forth, make them aware that these laws apply and have to be adhered to. This agreement overrides this legislation here because this is protected under federal legislation. These type of incidents are still happening. As a municipality with a responsibility for municipal taxes, you do ensure that you make an attempt to at least strive for improving the way this tax regime is to reflect what is in the agreements. That is just one of them.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Mr. Antoine.

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Thank you. I think if the honourable Member is talking about taxation, taxation is the responsibility of Finance. I think they are the ones that send the tax bills in non-tax based municipalities, and attempts to collect it. The Department of Municipal and Community Affairs' role would be

to assess the lands or the property. The Member mentioned Inuvik. Inuvik is a tax-based municipality. If these properties would then be municipal boundaries of Inuvik, and if it is Gwich'in land according to the claims, then there is a problem that I did not know existed. This is the first time I have heard about it. Certainly this is something we have to look at. It is something that should be dealt with at the implementation table. If it has not been raised there then...

If it is in the agreement that they should not pay taxes, and if it is happening, then it is a problem we have to look at. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Antoine. Mr. Braden.

MR. BRADEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, under the area of lands administration, I would like to look at an issue, perhaps a perception of inequality in the cost of some types of leases around the Northwest Territories. Specifically to recreational and cottage leases in the Yellowknife area, Mr. Chairman.

Cabinet approved a policy in the last couple of years that there would be a \$600 minimum lease cost annually, no matter what the type of lease. It is apparent that this applies across quite a wide field of leases from some smaller communities, where a very comprehensive range of services is provided: snow-clearing, fire protection, this kind of thing. Then to cottage and recreational leases, which may receive some road or access service and not much more. In one of the responses earlier today, I thought I heard a suggestion that some of these policies or legislation may be subject to review. I am wondering if this inequity between various types of leases and the services provided would be reflected in a review of the fee that is assessed, depending on the degree of service provided. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Braden. Mr. Murray.

MR. MURRAY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, the first time I heard it put in that way was when I met with the association along the Ingraham Trail. There were more concerns about the assessed values. The issue on rent never came up per se, but it is certainly something that can be looked at when we review the policies as they relate to land leases. If there is a means of doing it that does not become overly complicated, that is fine.

The other comment is in some respects, it is very tough for anyone to know who is a permanent resident out there at times and who is a cottage dweller, or using it for temporary usage. That has to be factored into what we look at.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Murray. Mr. Braden.

MR. BRADEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate the answer very much. I understand the complications that are introduced there. It is a lead-in to the other concern I had in this area, and that has to do with the degree of monitoring, inspection and enforcement of the conditions that apply to leases, and also to the growing number of squatters that are cropping up along the Ingraham Trail in what we call cottage country in this area. I do not believe there have been any program of developing recreational lots in this area, primarily

due to the complications from land claims for a number of years.

I think what we are seeing is kind of a pent-up demand for people wanting recreational access to the lakes and the great outdoors. The squatters are kind of pushing the envelope. It comes back to this department on the Crown land and the federal government on their Crown lands to do something about this. There is plenty of room out there, Mr. Chairman, for more of this kind of development, but until, if and when land claims are settled, unless this area of enforcement and inspection is not going to be brought into play, this is going to become a larger problem. I think that when claims are settled, this is going to be an outstanding difficulty that someone will have to clean up.

I guess my question would be is the department aware of this and what kind of moves are they looking at to look after this responsibility? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Braden. Mr. Antoine.

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, the department is aware of the situation of people who are putting cabins out on the different lakes along the Ingraham Trail and elsewhere. There are different types of leases out there. I understand there are some federal Crown land leases. There are some Commissioner's land leases. There are individuals who are building without any lease. The Member called them squatters.

We are aware of it. We are doing something about it. We have issued a letter to the different First Nations governments, the Akaitcho Territorial Government. We also wrote a letter to the North Slave Metis to make them aware of it, as well as to the association on the Ingraham Trail, to let them know this department is aware of the issue and asking how we should approach it. We do need to approach it. We intend to approach it. I think there are some good signals out there from the aboriginal side. The Akaitcho government have initialled a framework agreement. I think there are provisions in there on some sort of interim arrangements. That could be talked about. That may help some in that area.

We have to be sensitive to those types of claims that are being put forward. We need to approach it that way. Yes, we are doing something about it. Hopefully, in a short while here, we could move on it. I would like to have the deputy minister add more detail to that. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Mr. Murray.

MR. MURRAY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Part of the problem that Municipal and Community Affairs has had over the years is that we really have no operational ability to enforce from a staff point of view. We do not have people out posting and doing those things you have to do to identify it. What we are trying to do is set up a relationship with DIAND and Fisheries and Oceans, Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development, other departments who have people who go out frequently.

We have also had discussions with the association themselves about how we can work with them to do the things you have to do to identify where the squatters are and the steps that have to be done to post notices, et cetera. There is a process in place for dealing with unauthorized occupancy of both our land

and federal land. There is far more federal land out there than there is Commissioner's land. It would make sense to work in a concerted effort with the other parties involved.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Murray. Mr. Braden.

MR. BRADEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I am working from an assumption that in existing land use law, there are provisions against unauthorized use or occupancy. What I am curious about is where this kind of thing is going on now, I appreciate the department has some staff shortages there, but when the department says it is consulting with aboriginal groups and other users in the area about what to do, I am wondering if that means the department is putting on hold its responsibility to go out and look after the law of the land. What is the status here? Are we putting something on hold? Are we actively changing something here? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Braden. Mr. Antoine.

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I think the situation was in abeyance. I think with the initial initiative we have undertaken, I would like to think we are initiating the beginning of the course of action. The correspondence that went out asked for some feedback by June 30. With that, we will determine what to do from there. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Antoine. Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In regard to a matter I raised about Aklavik and how the government comes up with these assessments, because there have been some real increases in a lot of our small communities for the value of land in which people's assessments have jumped drastically in regard to how much land there was five years ago to where in the last number of years, there was a drastic increase in the actual value of these properties.

In doing the assessment, did you have an independent assessor do these property valuations or was it done in-house?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Mr. Antoine.

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The property assessment is done every ten years. I am told that over ten years ago, when the property was last done, the property was quite under-valued at that time.

The value of the land with improvements, roads and other infrastructure, has increased. The assessment was done last year by staff as well as independent assessors. It was a combination of both. It is done through an accepted assessment and valuation process. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Antoine. Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Can the Minister tell me why there has been such a major increase in property values in communities like Aklavik?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Mr. Antoine.

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I will ask the deputy minister to reply to that. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Antoine. Mr. Murray.

MR. MURRAY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The last general assessment was done back in the 1980s. There have been no reassessments done over the last ten years of any significance. What the assessment process tries to do is take a look at the costs of developing those lands and set a value to that.

I think part of the issue is the fact that costs have gone up over the ten years, not to the extent as...but I think also the values that were in place ten years ago, I know in some cases lots were valued at \$1,000 or \$2,000. Today, the costs of developing those lands is considerably higher. The assessment process tries to set a value to that. I might also add that the Board of Revision is established. Their responsibility is to review assessments. If they think our staff was wrong, they have to go and defend their assessments. If they think their assessments are too high, we told them to change them. That is why there is an independent process to review that, to ensure the system is as open as it can be. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Murray. Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Has the department tried to work with the communities to find a comparable solution to this problem? I for one do not feel that the price of land above the Arctic Circle is worth anything close to what the value of land is south of the lake around Yellowknife or Fort Simpson or Hay River. Why is it that they seem to fall within the same value?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Mr. Murray.

MR. MURRAY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In terms of the actual price of the land in the community of Aklavik, I think the price of a lot is around \$10,000 to purchase. That does not come close to cover the true development costs, depending on the community, and the cost of developing that land.

One of the policies that is being looked at is the Land Pricing Policy. It is part of a land administration review. There is a rather complex formula for pricing land based on its development costs today. We need to have a look at that to see if that is a fair system and a system that sets a proper value for land that is affordable for people. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Murray. Mr. Lafferty.

MR. LAFFERTY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. On the increase in property assessments, Mr. Murray said because of the development and property value, an assessment has not been done since the 80s. In some of the communities, there has been no change since the 80s. The roads have never been upgraded and no highways are being installed. The service has not changed. The water trucks are still the same. Maybe they are developing land in other areas, but those lands are developed and the people using those lands are paying for it through their mortgages.

I am wondering, when they do assessments, they do not go to the communities and see the homeowners and talk to them about what they think the property value is. I do not know who did the assessments in my region, but the people are not happy. Some of them have appealed in May and June of last year and have not yet received a response. Some elders are being assessed. I am wondering if they have consulted with the residents, or do they look on the outside and have a figure for the different sizes of property? How did they do it, and why did they not respond to the appeals? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. Mr. Murray.

MR. MURRAY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The method of doing the assessments is set in legislation and regulations. It is a fairly rigid system that has been in place in the North for at least ten years, if not longer. I do not know exactly the last time it was redone.

It is a very rigid system. It does not involve going to the communities and meeting with the residents. That is not part of the process that was carried out in 1998 or 1999 to my knowledge. It is one of the areas that is in need of review and consideration as to whether or not it is meeting the goals of the government and the communities.

You are correct. There was no consultation with the communities at all.

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

MR. LAFFERTY: I am wondering, if they did not go to the communities, how do they know there is still property there? How do they know when they send you a bill, perhaps the house burnt down and is not there anymore. It is hard to do an assessment sitting in a six storey building in Yellowknife. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. Mr. Antoine.

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, the assessment is under the Property Assessment and Taxation Act. It is a legislation of this Legislative Assembly. In the Act, it spells out how to carry out the work and what to do. The property assessment includes a number of things.

It includes conducting a property assessment. They physically go to every... they did not this time, but they were supposed to. In some cases they do. The property owner in the Northwest Territories pay property taxes to the assessed values. I think the deputy minister already went through the list, but again, the assessment is based on the value of the physical and real property. They look at the log and try to determine what it is worth.

They also try to include the improvements, such as water services or sewer, or electrical services. They also look at the building construction. If it is residential and there are improvements. As well, the market value of the property in the community.

They also look at the development costs of the land. If you were to develop the land at the time, they try to determine what it would cost to develop the lot. They also try to consider other

land costs in the same area. There is a way that they are supposed to determine that.

The property assessments have gone up quite a bit, between 300 to 400 percent. I think that is what is causing a lot of concern in the communities in the Northwest Territories. There is a board that reviews where individuals can go to put in their complaint.

The honourable Member also mentioned that people have put in a complaint to the Board of Revision last year and may not have heard back. That is something that we have to check on. We do not have that information right now. We will see who complained last year and did not receive a response.

The actual taxation in MACA assessed property for all of the Northwest Territories communities, except the city of Yellowknife, which assesses and collects their own taxes. In the other communities, non-taxed based communities, MACA assessed the property and the Department of Finance sends out the tax notices and collects the taxes.

The tax rate is set by the Department of Finance. I am told if the assessment is really high, it does not mean that the taxes will be high. They are trying to balance it off. Perhaps I could be corrected here. We are responsible for the assessment, and Finance is responsible for the actual tax rate. I am told that even though the property may go up, it does not mean that the taxes go up equivalently. We are trying to maintain the same level. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Antoine. Mr. McLeod.

MR. MCLEOD: I just wanted to make some comments on the same issue. Some of the communities in my riding are in the same situation. They are seeing increases in their assessment for up to 300 to 400 percent. I had a call from one of my constituents voicing concern over this. They are very worried that it is going to result in an increase in the taxes.

When he bought his property, it was worth a little over \$2,500 and the last assessment prior to this one was assessed at \$4,000. There have been no improvements to his property. His house is the same one. Now, he is being assessed at over \$24,000.

He does not see why. When I asked the question in question period, I was told the assessment was based on improvements to the property, improvements to the house. In this case, there were none. He is still seeing an increase in the assessment, which will result in increased taxes.

I wanted to ask the Minister what is the assessment based on? I understand in some other communities, the taxes are based using other southern cities or towns as a base. Can you explain to me what is used as a base to base the value of the property on? I cannot see the value of property in the community of Enterprise, for instance, being worth \$50,000 or \$60,000, when ten years ago they were selling for \$2,000. How do you justify it?

I have heard you say improvements to the property and the house, but in this case, this example that I have used, there were no improvements at all. I have to think there were other things built into this assessment. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Mr. Antoine.

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Besides the improvements to real property, which is the house, the market value of the land and also basing it on regional development costs of the land. Lets say there is a piece of property in Enterprise, and if there is a comparable piece of property that has been recently developed in the same municipality, that is what they compare it to.

Ten years ago, property was expensive compared to today. In Enterprise, perhaps in the most recent years, a similar type of property may have been developed for substantially more. Perhaps ten years ago, it was developed in the community for \$2,500, but today, you would sell it for...

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Mr. McLeod.

MR. MCLEOD: Mr. Chairman, I do not think the Minister is going to convince me that some of these properties are worth \$50,000. That is the argument that the residents in the Deh Cho are using. They cannot see the justification of the market value that is being assessed to these properties. It is not realistic to see properties go from \$4,000 to \$30,000. Even to say that your property values have gone up, nobody is buying that. The Minister has indicated that Finance will balance things out by not raising the taxes. Increases will not be so drastic. We have already seen that. Taxes have probably tripled in most of the communities. It seems to be a little too drastic. I would like to ask the Minister if he would commit his department to reviewing the whole process. If nobody has gone to the communities to see the improvements, I do not see how they can use the arguments to justify that the property values have gone up because of property improvements and home improvements. It seems to be just like a blanket approach to it and I do not think that is fair.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Mr. Antoine.

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, the assessment went out to all the property owners in the Northwest Territories. To try to alleviate the problems, or deal with the problems, different individuals may have with the assessment, a Board of Revision, which is an independent body to receive complaints and to deal with each complaint as they come. That is the process that we have in place to try to deal with this issue right now. The honourable Member is asking the department to take another look at how the assessment was done, and to raise concerns I am hearing here today by different Members representing their small communities. We will do that. I have been asking the department myself because a 300 to 400 percent increase in the assessment is quite drastic. The information I share with you is the information I receive. It is a legislative process as well, however, we will review the system, the way they have come to the numbers that they have. I raise the concern that you have with my Members in the department who are dealing with this. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Antoine. Mr. McLeod.

MR. MCLEOD: I wanted to ask the Minister, in light of all the taxes and the frustration in the communities that I am hearing from the chief and members of the council and the mayor and

the council, they would like to consider a block land transfer. I pose that question at some point, to transferring those lands over to IAB lands for treaty and status Dene. Would that be something that the Minister would entertain?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Mr. Antoine.

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, the IAB lands are Indian Affairs band lands. It has never been raised to this department before to consider a block land transfer to Indian Affairs land. I have to go back from experience. I know that different bands in the past from different chiefs, I have done band councils to Indian Affairs themselves to request certain identified lots in their communities to be transferred and made into band lands by Indian Affairs. This is an Indian Affairs initiative. I know that for some years now, Indian Affairs have put a stop to doing that, but I think it is something that could be considered. It used to be done in the past, and we have to find out if it has been considered or done by Indian Affairs again.

As a department within the Government of the Northwest Territories, I cannot speak for the Department of Indian Affairs, a federal department that deals with treaty Indians, to commit to that. Certainly we would like to investigate it and see what the possibilities are. I would work with the individual bands to consider that and be supportive. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Antoine. Before I go to the next speaker, I will give Mr. Lafferty a chance to ask a question. I cut him off early the last time. Mr. Lafferty.

MR. LAFFERTY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I was going to say the property tax assessments they do because of the development of land in other areas, I am sort of puzzled. They do not own the land. They cannot sell the land. Yet the market price goes up. The homeowner does not have anything to gain, whether he sells the home or not. He only sells the home. The land is not his to sell, so the property value goes up and he has to pay for that? Or she? I do not understand and I am puzzled. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. Mr. Murray.

MR. MURRAY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. You are right. It is not the same as ownership of the land, but you can transfer the land that you have in that lease to another person for the remaining amount of time. Most of the leases are in the range of 30 to 35 years. There are a fair number of years of interest in that which get transferred, as well. I am not saying that it is the same value as owned land, though. I would not expect it to be the same as owned land.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Murray. Mr. Roland.

MR. ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, in the previous Assembly I raised a concern, coming from a tax-based community, where through taxes on our properties end up paying for the majority of services and infrastructure that comes into our community. For example, a rec centre in a tax-based community, I will need some information on here. About 20 percent of the transfers and then the taxpayers cover the rest of it. There is a block portion. That affects your taxes in a sense. You end up paying more taxes. I would like to get

information on that. I have heard the concerns of non-tax-based communities. In the tax base, and I know that the Minister made reference to Yellowknife being different because they have their own evaluators and so on. I know the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs has done work in my community, and they have gone to the town and adjusted some of the limits. That has impacted how you read the taxes and the tax roll. For my community, and the other tax-based communities, are they the same and how are they treated differently? What would a three bedroom home and the property that is 80 by 100 in a tax-based community pay versus a non-tax-based community? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Roland. Mr. Antoine.

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, as I indicated, the city of Yellowknife oversees its own assessment. As well, it levies and sets its own mill rate. It is the only the community in the North that does that. I also mentioned that the non-tax-based communities, the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs provides the assessment services, and the Department of Finance sets the tax rates and gives notices and collects the taxes. In the other tax-based municipalities, including Inuvik, Hay River, Fort Smith, and Norman Wells, the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs oversees the assessment. However, these communities set their own mill rates, their own levies and taxes, and they collect their own taxes. There is a difference between Yellowknife, tax-based municipalities and the non-tax-based communities.

The specific question of how they assess the three...the tax-based municipality sets their own mill rates. I do not know what they base it on. That is the system that we have in place right now. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Antoine. Mr. Roland.

MR. ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Just as an example, in a previous home I owned in Inuvik, and this is a number of years ago, but I paid approximately \$1,200 a year for property taxes in my community. I know the community itself sets its own mill rate. If we want more facilities, we are going to increase the taxes, and when the government makes cutbacks, they increase the mill rate because we need to keep the infrastructure in the community. We are stuck in that situation. If you do a comparison of that, and I used about an 80 by a 100 lot, my old piece of property, and valued by the town, and because there are more services I pay more tax. If you looked at a property adjacent or close to the same size in a tax-based/non-tax-based, what would the difference be? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Roland. Mr. Murray.

MR. MURRAY: In terms of how the formula is used to calculate the assessments, they are all done under the same piece of legislation. The same sort of formulas are used. Where the difference is might be in terms of the comparability of the services versus a non-tax-based community. In Inuvik, because they have a utilidor system, it would get a value, but it would not be sitting in another community. By and large, the same formulas were used. If identical services were being provided to

two houses, the assessment part should not change substantially between the two.

From an assessment point of view, where you may find the differences is in the mill rates and things like that, especially if it is in the same region. Because the development costs of land are considered regionally, overall. In terms of the Fort Smith region, we looked into the community development costs in all the communities. We can try to find a specific example and pass that on to you, if you like.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Murray. Mr. Roland.

MR. ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would be interested in seeing the differences, because I did pursue it to a certain degree in the previous Assembly, and actually requested the Minister bring some harmonization between tax-based and non-tax-based communities. There is a big difference there. Some of that is taken into levies in a community. Non-tax-based communities have grown quite large in some areas and they would rather not switch to a tax-based community because they seem to lose some of the funding transfers that happen, and as well do not have to actually do their own taxes and service notice to their own constituents, in that sense. I am interested in seeing the difference there because in the previous Assembly, I heard numbers of \$250 a year for some taxes in non-tax-based municipalities. I can compare it to my own community. I cannot compare it to other communities like Fort Smith or Norman Wells.

I believe there needs to be some shifting here on both sides. At the same time, I understand there is a different level of service that plays a part in that. That is acceptable. Even if it is in the region, maybe some other regions compared to one another. I know a piece of land in Yellowknife can go for \$70,000, but in Inuvik when they did the new sub-division, they were selling a lot that was unfilled. The larger lots were up in the \$60,000 range. Then you had to fill the thing, because if you did not, you would sink. That was very expensive. Before you can even put a house down, you have paid someone else another \$10,000 or \$20,000 just to fill the thing because of the permafrost.

Those kinds of cost come into it. It all impacts. The more you put into it, the more your taxes go up and you are penalized because of the jurisdiction you live in. That is the sort of comparison I was looking for in costs to an individual when it came to paying the actual tax. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Roland. Mr. Murray.

MR. MURRAY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Actually, we are working with the Department of Finance at the present time. Hopefully, we will have that completed by the fall as well.

I can say that, and I have not looked at all the communities, but I did look at some of the ones along the Ingraham Trail. They do not have the same services, but in some cases they were as low as \$150. I think the highest I saw out there, and there are a few nice homes out there, was in the range of \$600 or \$700. That does not mean that would be the same wherever municipal service is provided. We can get that information for you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Murray. Mr. Nitah.

MR. NITAH: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I do not know if this question has been asked already, but before you go into a community and do assessments, do you consult the community leaders? The chief and council, the mayor and council, do you consult them and get their support? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Nitah. Mr. Antoine.

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am told that when the assessment was done, the municipal leaders were informed, but were not consulted. Notices were sent out. I understand this assessment was done in 1998-99, so it was a couple of years ago.

It was mailed out in March to all of the homeowners and property owners. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Antoine. Mr. Nitah.

MR. NITAH: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Has there been any reaction from the community leaders? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Nitah. Mr. Antoine.

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, there have been a number of complaints. The way we read the reaction was there were quite a number of complaints that have gone to the Board of Revision. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Antoine. Mr. Nitah.

MR. NITAH: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Would you surmise that there is no support for this initiative? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Nitah. Mr. Antoine.

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. There are people who are concerned with the increase in their property value. They are worried their taxes will also increase. As I said earlier, I am told that whenever the property assessment goes up, the level of taxes they pay...they are trying to make it as comparable as possible. Hopefully, the taxes do not drastically change that much.

The number of appeals that are before the Board of Revision by communities, in some communities, the number of appeals is very high. There are no appeals in some communities. I am told that there is about 3,100 properties that were assessed. There are 395 appeals pending. Perhaps some people do not regard this as a concern, but maybe some people ignore...I do not know if there is a place they could go to appeal a concern, but there is a Board of Revision that is going to be reviewing concerns that come forward. Maybe in that you could say there is not that much support for the increase in the property assessment. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Antoine. Mr. Nitah.

MR. NITAH: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. When I was referring to support, I was referring to the community leaders. I cannot see the chief and council agreeing to a one organization community. Take Lutselk'e, for example, agreeing that Municipal and Community Affairs comes in and does an assessment on the property and raising the value of the property and taxing them accordingly. We have already heard from other Members that they may try to compare the property

assessment to that of the tax, but that is not happening. I am just wondering if there has been a reaction from the chiefs and councils and mayors and councils. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Nitah. Mr. Antoine.

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The only official complaints we have heard are from Fort Providence and Enterprise. We have not heard anything official from any other chiefs or councils or municipal leaders. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Antoine. Mr. Nitah.

MR. NITAH: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Were all 33 communities in the Northwest Territories assessed?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Nitah. Mr. Antoine.

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, all of the communities were assessed. As well, some properties outside of communities such as the Ingraham Trail and outside of the municipalities where there is Commissioner's land leased, those were all assessed. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Antoine. Mr. Nitah.

MR. NITAH: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, it is obvious there is no consultation with the communities. For what purpose was this done? To what end, since the property is not owned by the individuals who are living in the house? It just makes it harder for them to sell when they want to sell. It is a burden on them having to pay the taxes. What is the purpose? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Nitah. Mr. Antoine.

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. This legislation is the Property Assessment and Taxation Act, which has been in place by this Legislature for quite a number of years. In the Act, it lays out what we have to do. The idea here is to collect taxes and money for this government so we can run programs and services in the communities.

Usually, you have a community and there are people living there. People should contribute to run the programs and services in the community. They should contribute for clearing the snow from the road or picking up the garbage. It is like a user fee. Whenever you call it taxes, people kind of shy away from it. That is what it is in the tax-based municipalities. That is where the money goes, into the general coffers of the municipality and they use it for whatever they want to do with it.

In hamlets and smaller communities, according to this legislation, Municipal and Community Affairs looks at a property and says this is how much we think it is worth. We do it every ten years. According to the Act, they do not have to consult. They just assess it every ten years.

In this case, the assessment has jumped so high, the Minister of Finance will have to look at it and say okay, this is the rate we should set, and try to collect that through the government. In the tax-based municipalities, the people who live there and were property owners, the council sets the rate and collects the money.

Perhaps in the non-tax-based municipalities, that might be one way of looking at it. It is like a user fee, paying your share in the

community. Your community will run a lot better and provide better programs and services. That is one way of looking at it. That is my understanding of what taxes are. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Antoine. Mr. Nitah.

MR. NITAH: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That is an interesting perspective. That is one way of looking at it. Another way of looking at it is if you take it and go back to the days when the aboriginal people of the Northwest Territories were living out in the land following the caribou, doing their thing, and the federal government comes in and brings them to the communities and says we want to educate you, come on in, sets up this government, and this government sets and develops policies and acts, and now they are enforcing the acts. Bring them in. After a while, you get them comfortable, and we will tax them now. That is the way I look at it and that is the way my people look at it. Mr. Antoine, I think you should consult the people. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): No question there. Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I would like to move a motion.

I MOVE that this committee recommends the Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs direct the department to take the necessary steps to bring the Property Assessment and Taxation Act in line with land claim agreements that deal with real property taxes and how we are interpreting the land claim agreements in the Northwest Territories.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Krutko. We will have to get a copy of that motion, so we will take a short break while we make copies.

-- Break

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Mr. Krutko, please read your motion for the record.

Committee Motion 13-14(3): Amendments to the Property Assessment and Taxation Act (Carried)

MR. KRUTKO: I MOVE that this committee recommend that the Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs bring forward amendments to the Property Assessment and Taxation Act to ensure the Act complies with land claim agreements that contain provisions dealing with the real property tax. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Krutko. The motion is in order. It is being circulated to all the Members. To the motion. Question has been called. All those in favour? All those opposed? The motion is carried. We are on Page 4-25. Land administration, operation expense, total operations expense, \$2,326,000. Mr. Krutko.

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

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): The motion is in order. It is not debatable. All those in favour? All those opposed? The motion is defeated. Page 4-25. Land administration, operation expense, total operations expense, \$2,326,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you. Page 4-29. Community development, operations expense, total operations expense, \$1,249,000. Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. One of the concerns I have, especially amongst the aboriginal communities when it comes to sports and recreation is there has to be more done. We now have two sporting organizations; one with all the money and the other with all the people. Is anything going to be done by the government to ensure that the Aboriginal Sporting Circle and Sport North, which has much of the funding from lottery licenses, is going to be fairly distributed? Will there be a mechanism in place to ensure that the Aboriginal Sporting Circle plays a more active role in recreation development for aboriginal communities? That we do see an increase in recreational activities for the smaller communities? We do not have the ability to have large regional games. We do not have the needed facilities. Many of our children do not have the ability to make it to these large events.

We have to realize that recreation is a means of building self-esteem in our aboriginal communities, especially for the young people. We see that in many of our young athletes, especially in hockey. We have seen a lot of outstanding aboriginal people in the sporting circles from the Firth twins to different hockey players.

We have to do more to build the recreation programs in our small communities where we have high illiteracy rates, where we have a lot of unemployment and we have a lot of problems in our communities. One way we can deal with that is through recreation and building the self-esteem of a lot of our young people in our communities, especially the aboriginal children, and make them realize you can strive for what you want to be, and have an opportunity to partake and participate in those areas.

I would like to ask the Minister, is there anything in this budget that will ensure the Aboriginal Sport Circle plays a more active role in recreation, along with the Sport North Federation?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Mr. Antoine.

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Sport North, which is funded by the 649 Lotto here in the Northwest Territories, is supporting the Aboriginal Sport Circle, so whatever type of financial support they receive is not reflected in our budget. It is coming from Sport North. We did provide some assistance earlier on in with the Sport Circle to help them get set up last year, but there is nothing in this budget here to help them. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Antoine. Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Do we have people within the department who can work along with or within associations? Usually, for any organization or institution you set up, it is basically the start up costs that usually get you. You have unforeseen costs. To get an organization off the ground takes a lot of momentum and you have to have people in place to ensure you are able to expand, especially with the Aboriginal Sport Circle.

They deal in the areas where Sport North does not usually deal with, which is the small aboriginal communities. The cost of

getting in and out and trying to run a program of that size takes a lot of organizational work, ensuring you have the money and the resources to assist these children to get the different events, hockey, soccer, or whatever.

We have to do more to promote and assist this organization. I would like to know, is there anything in the budget, or any positions within the budget that will be working along with these organizations in the future? Where in the budget is that allocated?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Mr. Antoine.

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, the Aboriginal Sport Circle is a fairly new organization. I think it was just set up last year. At the initial organization, the department did provide them with some funding to get set up. Presently, Sport North is providing them with assistance, office space and some operation money, travel.

In the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs in community development, we have program advisor positions, sports recreations, who are assigned to work with the Aboriginal Sport Circle.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Antoine. Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I notice under grants and contributions, it says sports and recreation contributions, \$75,000. What is that? Is that money accessible to this organization?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Mr. Antoine.

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I am told that this funding is a contribution, \$50,000 is going to the NWT Parks and Recreation Association. The \$25,000 will be for community application for recreation plans. That is for different communities that may have an application for some sort of a plan. It is there for them. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Antoine. Mr. Miltenberger.

MR. MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have a question for the Minister about the Arctic Winter Games and where they fit. I know we are between years, but this is an issue of some concern to me.

I think there has been a deterioration of sport and recreation at the community level. I also think, given the continued expansion of the Arctic Winter Games we should be taking a look at where we are going. I cannot accept anything south of the 60th Parallel, it makes no sense including them in the Arctic Winter Games.

The cost is going to be so huge and the logistics so impossible, who is going to be able to afford to hold them? I would like to ask if there is any thought when they do any kind of strategic planning in this area? This is a big-ticket item. It consumes a lot of money for sports and recreation, to try to anticipate and look at where we have been, where we are and where we are going when it comes to the Arctic Winter Games.

I know there is already controversy with the Greenland-Iqaluit split and the deletion of some sports, such as biathlon. Are they going to look at this in a strategic way, or are we just going to continue to roll along year to year, from winter games to winter games? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Mr. Antoine.

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I would like to approach it by talking about the Northwest Territories sports and recreation partners. The meeting took place on May 10 to 11th in Hay River.

There have been a number of meetings where these partnerships have come together. At this conference, a lot of people from most of the communities representing sports and recreation. About 80 delegates attended this conference. I think only three Northwest Territories communities were not there. There was Minister Allen and MLAs Mr. Nitah, Mr. Braden, and Mr. Delorey were there. There was a discussion that took place, and there was a lot of ideas that flowed from that conference about sports and recreation development in the Northwest Territories. MLA Ms. Lee also submitted a paper for circulation at this conference.

We are currently looking at what we discussed there. A lot of ideas came out of it, and there were a number of workshops. Hopefully, some sort of strategy will evolve from that. I think there was a lot of enthusiasm by community recreation providers and personnel there. The talk in the workshop discussion was very lively. I think it covered the strategic area as to where we are going to go in terms of sports and recreation in the Northwest Territories. I would like to say we are in-between Arctic Winter Games. Hopefully, I would like to push this one, as a department, to come out with something by July. I will circulate whatever information comes out of it to the MLAs for comments prior to the department finalizing a plan of action on where to go.

On the strategic side, I would like to approach it from that point of view. We are working with sports and recreation people in the communities and the department to develop this plan of action.

As for the Arctic Winter Games itself, there is an Arctic Winter Games international committee. We have two representatives representing the Northwest Territories on that committee. Whenever this committee gets together, and whatever develops out of this plan and strategic approach, we will be giving direction to our representative to take it forward and see how we can pursue it at the committee meeting.

There is another conference here coming up in July, the 12th through the 14th. The federal Minister of Sports and Youth, Denny Kodare will be here, and representatives from the Northwest Territories, Yukon Ministers and sports delegates from Nunavut. The three territories will meet here to deal with the regional sports and recreation development. That is another forum in which we could be discussing these areas. There is a delegate list that has been compiled. The delegation will comprise representatives from communities and different sports organizations. There is a plan of action. Hopefully, it will eventually develop into a strategic approach to the whole area of sports and recreation, including the area of Arctic Winter Games by this fall. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Antoine. Mr. Miltenberger.

MR. MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It is good to hear the news about the strategic planning. My two questions; the workshop in Hay River was part of the discussion around how the Arctic Winter Games fits into the broad strategic plan, and how does it relate? Does it complement community sport or does it do just the opposite?

The other concern I have, Mr. Chairman, is the sheer size and cost of the winter games compared to our population. It is a relatively small number of athletes, a few hundred, possibly. If my memory serves me correctly, the vast majority come from Yellowknife. There are some regions that were not represented. If it were not for things like super soccer and high school hockey tournaments that have been arranged, in spite of the Arctic Winter Games, there would not be any of these activities that bring students at all levels and ages to participate in the kind of intramural, inter-community, inter-regional sporting events that used to take place, which are now the exception rather than the rule. Could the Minister indicate what kind of discussion took place about the winter games, and has the government taken a clear hard look at the logistics, the money, and the amount of athletes involved for the money we are spending. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Mr. Antoine.

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Thank you. The sports and recreation directions conference that took place in Hay River covered a lot of different areas. It also covered the big events, like the Arctic Winter Games and the involvement of small communities. There was lengthy discussion about it in the four different workshops that were going on. Not only about the Arctic Winter Games, but there was the Canada Summer Games, Western Summer Games, Western Canada Games; these are the bigger events that we send athletes to from the Northwest Territories.

The big ticket item here is the Arctic Winter Games, which is a huge cost. It is mainly funded by Sport North through the Western Canada Lottery funding that we receive. In the review of this whole area of sports and recreation, we will have to look at that as well, in the Arctic Winter Games. It will be very useful if MLAs, I know that a number of MLAs have raised a concern about this issue. I think we are going to have to do it together and work on an approach to take. Maybe I will just leave it at that. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Antoine. Mr. Nitah.

MR. NITAH: Thank you. I have similar concerns as Mr. Miltenberger, not with the Arctic Winter Games, but mainly with the lack of involvement by our smaller communities in the Northwest Territories, not necessarily aboriginal, but smaller communities. I agree with the Arctic Winter Games. I think it is a great event for people of all ages. It is a good boon for the communities that are lucky enough to host it. I think it is a good experience for all involved. At the last Arctic Winter Games in Whitehorse, it kind of told me something. That was the first time it was covered by our national sports TV, called TSN. It was great watching our sports in the Northwest Territories. They covered mainly, only aboriginal sports, or Dene games, Arctic sports, et cetera. Those sports involved have been in the Arctic Winter Games from day one. It seems that for Arctic sports, for

example, the high kick, the airplane, what not, only the Inuit get involved. For the Dene, only the Dene get involved. Western games like volleyball, hockey, only the white people get involved. Why do we not try to integrate them?

I would like to see someone from Lutselk'e in the high kick competition. I would like to see someone from Tuktoyaktuk snowshoeing. I think Sport North should take it upon themselves, in close working relationship with the Aboriginal Sport Circle, to develop curriculum or material that will introduce all these sports to all communities and spread it out. It is great television. It is great for tourism. I think that is what I would like to see the department work on for the next few years, introduce all sports to all communities. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Nitah. Mr. Antoine.

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Thank you. I think that as we talk about this issue a lot more, I think we are going to realize that whenever we talk about small communities participating in different events, perhaps there are different events that we have not thought of pursuing at this time. Things that we used to do in the past but do not anymore. Perhaps we have to look at that. As far as participation in the small communities – a lot of it has to do with volunteers, people who commit themselves to give the time to be coaches or to get a team going or just generally to participate. To move participants, let us say, from a small community to be involved to be good in one event or another. I would like to say in the small, southern Dene communities, perhaps try the Arctic sports. I know that it is happening in other jurisdictions.

I think it is through volunteers and people having the commitment and desire to do these things that these things evolve.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Antoine. Mr. Nitah.

MR. NITAH: Thank you. I am glad the Minister is speaking the same line I am in that area. Having said that, I still want an arena in Lutselk'e.

-- Laughter

We need to have facilities in the smaller communities for our people in the smaller communities to participate meaningfully in these sporting events: Canada Games, Western Canada Games, North American Aboriginal Games is another big one, too. If we do not have the facilities, it is hard to participate meaningfully. If we cannot participate meaningfully, how can we support such endeavours? I am in full support, but if in the next Arctic Winter Games there is no involvement to the level I think there should be involvement from the small communities, then this supportive attitude I have would diminish very quickly.

Having said that, the conference in Hay River told me that sports and recreation is not only just sports. Recreation could be hand games, cultural events, crib tournaments, anything that all community members can get involved in. I do not see that too often in the communities. I see more emphasis placed on sports. Usually when you are talking sports, you are targeting certain age groups, and when you are targeting certain age groups, you are eliminating a whole lot of people from whom the dollars are there for. Getting back to the other games, there should be more tournaments in Arctic sports, for example, Dene games. That is how you develop the sport. I still want an arena in Lutselk'e, though. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Nitah. Mr. Antoine.

HON. JIM ANTOINE: The honourable Member is requesting an arena. If you look at the document, capital 6, you will see that it is in the plans for the future years. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Antoine. Mr. McLeod.

MR. MCLEOD: Thank you. My comments are along the same lines. My concern is more so with organization. Granted that a lot of money is raised by Sport North, you do not see a lot of it being filtered down into the communities. The benefits are generally going to the larger centres. When you start to look at why, you could see that the larger centres are much better organized and have a lot more organized sports and committees and groups, and organizations. When you look at the Sport North budget going to the elite athletes, and it shows that it is going to the larger communities. They work to get it. Having said that, you look at the smaller communities that do not seem able to access the programs and the dollars from Sport North, and you will find that most of them are not organized. That is what seems to be lacking in this whole picture. I do not want to point the finger at Sport North and say they are doing a bad job. They are actually doing a very good job of fundraising, but the regions in the communities cannot seem to access the dollars. I think they need some assistance. Some of the regions who are organized and have regional sport groups are starting to draw down on these dollars. I think that all the regions should be setting up that way.

There seems to be a lot of people in the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs that dedicate a lot of time to Sport North. I would like to know if the Minister would consider dedicating one position in his organization, maybe program advisors, who would work strictly on developing regional sport organizations in the regions and work with the small communities.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Antoine.

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We will take the Member's advice and work with that. I think there is a possibility there. The honourable Member also talked about Sports North Federation. I want to say for the record that this Sports North Federation is registered under the Northwest Territories' Society Act as a non-profit organization with a mandate to develop sports in the Northwest Territories. The Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs has delegated delivery of the following programs to the federation. This has been done in the past.

They support the volunteer territorial sport organizations. They work on the development and management of Team NWT at the various games, Arctic Winter Games, Canada Games, Western Canada Summer games. They also work on the development of coaches and other volunteers. They support community-regional sports programs and services.

There is also the promotion of health benefits of participation in sports and recreation. The funding for this organization, the majority of the operating revenue is generated from the western Canada lottery revenue in the Northwest Territories. The Minister of this department delegates operation of the lottery to the federation through the Western Canada Lottery Act. This is how this arrangement came to be.

The community sports organization could apply to Sport North requesting assistance and funding for events like Super Soccer and so on. I think there is a need to better understand what Sport North has been set up to do and what they are doing. I think better communication among communities to see what the possibilities are there with this organization.

Again the question, if I understood the Member correctly, he is requesting the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs dedicate a position to work solely with communities to help develop their sports programs and services. I think it is something that would be a positive move. We will consider it. With the recreation sport partners in the Northwest Territories, going through the major planning exercise we did in Hay River in May, once the results come forward, perhaps it could be part of whatever plan comes out of it, to do what the honourable Member is saying. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. McLeod.

MR. MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am glad to hear the Minister will consider creating such a position, or dedicating one position to work with the communities and regions. I would like to ask if he would consider presenting that concept to the meeting in Hay River. From what I hear, there has been some good stuff coming out of these meetings. I think that is something that should be presented to them to see what the response is.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Antoine.

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Yes, we could do that. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Delorey.

MR. DELOREY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. On the conference that was in Hay River with all those groups, I spent a fair amount of time there in the three days they were in Hay River. There was a lot of good stuff that came out of that conference. There was a lot of workshops and a tremendous amount of ideas that went around the table. One of the major things at the end of every activity and every workshop that was taking place was to put all the ideas in place and to do everything they want to do, including coaching and getting more involvement in communities and getting more recreational complexes in the different communities, at the bottom of all of those exercises was a dollar sign.

The one thing I noticed that did not add anything as far as putting more dollars into it, was the creation of another recreational group, Aboriginal Sports Services. I think it is great to have one and to get more involvement, but when we do that, I think everything has a price tag and we have to be prepared to put more money into it. Whether there has been more money thrown in to that process since we met in Hay River, I know from being there that every one of the working groups had a dollar sign at the bottom of it. We want to do all of this, but we need more money to do it. I do not know if there has been more money earmarked for it or not. Could the Minister throw some light on that?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Antoine.

HON. JIM ANTOINE: No, we have not earmarked any additional financial resources to the exercise that took place in Hay River in May. The results of completing the plans that evolved from that are expected in July. Hopefully, some sort of

a major, strategic plan will evolve from it. It is a planning exercise that is half complete. The discussions took place. We are compiling whatever comes out of there and whatever the proposal that has been developed by the department will be coming to me and I will share it with the MLAs. Once that process is done, then we could see if there are any dollar signs there. Perhaps something in a later budget. There is nothing in this budget here that will accommodate the discussion that took place. We see the strategic planning to take a little longer. It will come later on if there is a request for any additional dollars, if we have any. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Thank you, Mr. Antoine. Mr. Delorey.

MR. DELOREY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would just like to mention one more thing with regard to the Arctic Winter Games. I am a very big supporter of the Arctic Winter Games. I have been involved in them for quite a number of years. I think it is great for the kids and for residents of the Northwest Territories to have that. I am a little concerned about the size the games have grown to and the number of participants.

Basically, it has gone to the point where two places in the Northwest Territories can host them, maybe just one, Yellowknife. The Yukon was hard-pressed to host them in Whitehorse. Now they are splitting them up into two, Nunavut and Greenland. Maybe that is an area we should be looking at, the size of them and being able to spread them around the Northwest Territories a little more, combining two places.

They are getting to be fairly big. I do not know if that is what we want, to create them to the point where there are only certain places that can host them. Pretty soon, we will be going to Grand Prairie because that is the only place that can host them. That might be a bit of a concern the department might want to look at. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Antoine.

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, it is a concern to us as well. Once the strategic planning we have undertaken is complete, we will have to pursue that at the Arctic Winter Games International Committee level. As I said, we have two representatives on that committee. Whatever concerns evolve out of the strategic planning, we will discuss these with our representative and perhaps we could relay our concerns to their meeting.

I think it is at that level where we have to express these concerns. At the Arctic Winter Games in Whitehorse, as a Minister, I was at one of the meetings with all of the other Ministers. This was a big concern, that only certain large communities that have three or four arenas and four or five gyms could be the only place where we could have these games, because it has grown so big. Not many places in the Northwest Territories could provide that except for Yellowknife, perhaps. It is a concern to us and the other jurisdictions as well. If we come out with a good plan of action of how to not only complain about it, but put some of our own positive suggestions forward. Hopefully, we are moving towards that through the strategic planning process here. Thank you.

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

MR. LAFFERTY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have a concern similar to Mr. Nitah, where some of the smaller communities cannot go to some of these games. There is a problem when you have an all-star team from the Northwest Territories which consists of players that have not won a territorial championship. When there is a team that stays home that wins a territorial championship, there is a selection from a different community, a larger community. The selection is done by people who are from all parts of the Northwest Territories, have never seen these players before, and some of them are never given the chance to try out. I have a concern with that.

This happened a number of years ago, and I think someone else mentioned it in the last sitting. What Sport North should be doing is they should be going to the territorial championship teams and saying look, you are our best team in the Northwest Territories. You select a few players from some of the other communities so we can spread out membership in the teams. I think we can sit down and should be able to get something constructive for all the interested members, along with the Sport North group there.

Another thing is this Aboriginal Sport Circle. When I heard about how they were going to set up the indigenous games down in Alberta for the next Arctic Winter Games, I was really disappointed in how they were selecting the teams to represent the territories. What they did was say you and you bring this team. You bring that team. They do not go by which teams are going to be the best team to represent the Territories. They just want representation from every community, but what they are doing is setting up some chance for failure. I was involved in one of the games. I am sure a few of the Members here might have been, where the way they did the selection of teams was just how I said. There is nobody from Inuvik, nobody from Fort Resolution, nobody from Fort Providence, so you guys have these sports. Rae-Edzo had all the championship soccer teams. They had all the championship volleyball teams. They could only bring one team each.

There was a good baseball team in Hay River. They could not bring that team because they were not selected for baseball. Some other team was selected for baseball. When I went out to support one of my teams from the Northwest Territories, I was watching our team get slaughtered. The score was ridiculous. There are no mercy rules, either.

We set up our teams for failure. We cannot continue to do these things. Because of that, I support Mr. McLeod in saying why can we not put an aboriginal person in Sport North along with who we have there already, and maybe just look at the Aboriginal Sports Circle again? Is it the right thing we are doing? What kind of mandate do we have? Who are they representing? I know that they have been having problems with the people in the North Slave because that is not the way you run sports, you know. North Slave were the first ones to go to the Aboriginal Games down south. They brought three busloads. Then the next year the Indigenous Games came and Sport North got involved. So it was being done before Sport North. What I am saying is, yes, let us work together, but let us do it right. I think with the people interested, the MLAs, the volunteers, I think we can put it back on track again.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Minister.

HON. JIM ANTOINE: I think these are all very good comments from the honourable Member for North Slave. He talks about

different sports. I think Sport North is made up of different representatives from different organizations. I think they have somebody from hockey on there, somebody from soccer, somebody from the volleyball association, baseball. They have a representative from curling at their AGM, and they select different Members to sit on their board. How they select for different teams for the Arctic Winter Games, they leave it up to the sport organization. If it is hockey, they leave it up to the hockey association. If it is volleyball, they leave it up to the volleyball organization. These suggestions are good.

As for the other concern in regard to indigenous games, again, it is something that happened in the past. I think last time it was about two or three years ago that they held it. I think this year or the next year they are having it. We learn from the mistakes of the past. I am sure that through the strategy we are developing and whatever results that are shared, these types of comments will really be helpful to add to the strategy we are working on together. At this point in time, I will take the honourable Member's comments and suggestions and different views that have to be taken and considered when we finalize our strategy. Thank you.

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

MR. LAFFERTY: Thank you. Just one other thing, I would like to know if the Minister can get his department to look into how selections are done for coaches. The reason I am saying this is because there was one team that was going to be going to the summer games. They went through two camps and then the coaches were changed. All of sudden, two team Members were changed and two were dropped because the coaches wanted to have players from their own town on that team. Where before they got a coach, they had no representation at all. Things like this are happening, so maybe the Minister can look into some of these so they do not happen again. Maybe have some guidelines for employees and all the recreation people around the North so they can be fair. They are doing this to young people. It will scar them for life. They do not know why they are pulled. They have not made any mistakes or anything. They are pulled from a team because a coach wants to put some players from his own team when a new coach comes in.

We had that experience in Rae. I do not see how those two kids are ever going to get over it. Just so it does not happen again, maybe something can be done about it. Thank you.

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

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. These are good comments. What the department could do is pass this information on to Sport North with respect to the different organizations they represent. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Thank you, Mr. Antoine. General comments? We are dealing with community development. General comments? Detail? Page 4-29, operations expenses, total operations expenses, \$1,249,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Thank you. Grants and contributions, contributions, \$75,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Roland.

MR. ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Are we on regional operations?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Regional operations, page 4-33, operating expenses, total operating expenses, \$46,654,000. Mr. Roland.

MR. ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, a number of hours ago when I spoke to the general comments on the department, there was some concern of the impact of reductions on municipalities that do a lot of planning in advance and put things into action. Later on, the department unfortunately had to pass down some reductions. It has been a concern. It was raised at the NWTAM annual general meeting. It was also brought to the attention of the committee that they wanted something done with that.

With that, Mr. Chairman, the committee agreed that we needed to do something to try to help them prepare for and help them in their planning. Mr. Chairman, I have a motion.

Committee Motion 14-14(3): Recommendation For Legislation Requiring Minimum Notification Period of One Year for Reductions (Carried)

I MOVE that this committee recommends that the government introduce legislation requiring a minimum notification period of one year when the government is planning to reduce funding targeted for specific communities. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Roland, your motion is in order. To the motion. Question has been called. All those in favour? All those opposed? The motion is carried.

Regional operations, operation expense, total operation expense, \$46,654,000. Mr. Miltenberger.

MR. MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have 15 minutes before we have to leave, so I just have a couple of questions. I would like the Minister to speak quickly on the issue of the block funding formula and the water and sewer subsidy. Where is that and when will it be finalized? Thank you.

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

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I think it would be appropriate to ask the deputy minister to give you brief information on this one. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Murray.

MR. MURRAY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In terms of the work with the six tax-based municipalities, we have had one meeting with them to discuss the concepts of block-funding. We are intending to meet with them sometime later in July to have a second meeting where we can start getting into the detail of the calculations and the numbers. The intention would be for us to include that information as part of our business plan development, which is due to be done by the end of August, early September.

In terms of the water and sewer subsidy policy, the government is taking a look at a number of different utility subsidy

programs, of which water and sewer is part of that review. Again, some work is being done on that to coincide with the business planning process.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Miltenberger.

MR. MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The reason I asked is that the water sewer subsidy, the matter, as far as I am aware, the community of Fort Smith, which I represent, is the only community in the North who does not get one. When the issue was raised with the former Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs, it was suggested the matter would be dealt with through the block-funding negotiations.

At this point, the community of Fort Smith is still standing on the sidelines cap in hand, waiting for this issue to be addressed. Thank you.

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

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, we want to look at it during the review. I know this has been a problem in Fort Smith, but the only reason why Fort Smith did not participate in the water and sewer services subsidy was the town of Fort Smith is very efficient at delivering water and sewer services to the residents. As a result of that, they were not participating. Certainly in this new approach and involvement with the tax-based municipalities, we will look at that. Thank you.

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

MR. MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I guess this is the same issue my colleague Mr. McLeod raised, where there seems to be in some instances, you are penalized if you are efficient. The more you spend, the more you get. I do not think that is the trend we want to continue with, because it is not affordable. I look forward to how that turns out.

Could the Minister also speak briefly as well, I know that in our community, and I am sure in other communities, we have some major sewer and water upgrades that are going to be required. In some areas, the systems are 50 years old. Is that process being reviewed at all? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Murray.

MR. MURRAY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, one of the items we discussed when we met with the tax-based municipalities SAOs last week was the need to ensure that sufficient money was set aside that could be moved around between communities over time to deal with major infrastructure projects such as water and sewer.

To make that kind of a system work, we are going to have to do some form of prioritizing, so we can make assessing conditions and that type of thing, so we know where the most urgent needs are. It is being looked at.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Miltenberger.

MR. MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Regarding the landfills in Fort Smith, the Department of Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development has taken, through their renewable resources officers and the legislation they have in

Fort Smith, a fairly strong stand, giving some citations which incurred significant cost in terms of burning and things that have to be done, keeping the landfill sites appropriate in terms of environmental considerations.

I understand this has territorial wide implications. Are there any discussions with Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development and the NWTAM? Every community is going to have to fall into line. They need some very stringent standards in terms of landfill sites. It is going to be Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development will be telling you, but Municipal and Community Affairs will be paying for it situation. Thank you.

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

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, we are aware of the situation in Fort Smith. The Department of Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development have put some conditions in regards to environmental protection, and it is costing quite a substantial amount for the town of Fort Smith to comply with.

The deputy minister has engaged his counterpart in Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development to start addressing this. We are looking at it. It does have territory wide implications and it is quite a substantial cost, if that is applied all over the place. So we really have to take a look at this. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): General comments. We are on regional operations, operations expense, total operation expense, \$46,654,000. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Regional operations, grants and contributions, grants, \$3,492,000. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Contributions, page 4-38, total contributions, \$36,844,000. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Total grants and contributions, \$40,336,000. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Page 4-41, school of community government. Mr. Roland.

MR. ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In the area of school of community government, maybe the Minister can enlighten us as to what the process will be once we start to see some of the settlement of land claims.

I know the idea of the school of community government was to bring some of the controls and supporting programs and services down to the community level, to prepare them for such things. Is this seen as an ongoing initiative? Has it got a time of life to it? Will we see it expire in the next year or so sort of thing or will it continue to go on? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Murray.

MR. MURRAY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The issue of training people in the communities to deal with day to day administrative matters, financial planning, good governance, council operations, many of those skills are also being requested by band settlements and band councils.

I view this as being a type of program that is continuous. Whether it stays in its present form or, as we move into self-government, what role is played by those self-government organizations in the programming and the delivery of what the school offers, that may change.

Serving the kinds of community based training that is being provided through the school is going to be an ongoing requirement for communities, whether it is provided through the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs or through self-government organizations or through some other vehicle. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Roland.

MR. ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Do you see a further increase in activity in this area as we get closer to the settlement of claims? For example, the Beaufort Delta region is pushing for an AIP. We know the Dogribs already have an AIP and are working on a final agreement with this government.

So do we see an increase in activity in this area? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Antoine.

MR. ANTOINE: No, we do not see any increase in this activity. It is in the beginning stages of the school of community government, and things are working fairly well right now. We never anticipated to increase in this area. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): I have Mr. Delorey and Mr. Nitah. Mr. Delorey.

MR. DELOREY: On that school of community government, total operating expense, \$1,640,000 and the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs on regional operations, there was \$82,000 for school of community government there. Are those two figures tied together, in any way?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Antoine.

MR. ANTOINE: Mr. Chairman, if we could get Ms. Kennedy to reply to that, please.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Thank you, Mr. Antoine. Ms. Kennedy.

MS. KENNEDY: It represents funding for a regional staff person in the Inuvik region, who works in assisting the school in the activities. It is funding for that position.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Delorey.

MR. DELOREY: So that is in addition to this \$1,640,000 than?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Ms. Kennedy.

MS. KENNEDY: Yes, it is.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Nitah.

MR. NITAH: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Can other organizations and communities outside the governments or local governments access this program?

For example, development corporations, which I would say is an integral part of governing the community. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Antoine.

MR. ANTOINE: Yes, this activity is available to other agencies of government, like housing associations who work at a community level. It is open to chief and band councils, Metis locals.

This is geared towards people who are actually working right in the communities, in terms of administration and governance. It is there for their development. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Nitah.

MR. NITAH: Thank you. Can I get the department to give me information on how to apply? What criteria is there?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Antoine.

MR. ANTOINE: Yes, we will provide that information. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): General comments. We are under school of community government, operation expense, Total operation expense, \$1,640,000. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Information item, active positions. Detailed work performed on behalf of others.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Total department, \$796,000. Agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): We are going back to Page 4-7, Department of Municipal and Community Affairs summary, operation expense, total operations expense, \$58,407,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Moving to capital, Page 4-6, Department of Municipal and Community Affairs, capital acquisition plan, regional operations, page 6,7,8, total regional operations, \$4,923,000. Mr. Roland.

MR. ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, just in the area I see here that there are a number of activities going on here. The question I have is, in a sense, does the department still, when it comes to the capital plan, go to all the communities by way of letter, or informing them, and get them to go over their capital plan and prioritize. Is that still enforced and practiced today?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): The Minister responsible for the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs, Mr. Antoine.

MR. ANTOINE: Yes, the department informs the communities and the personnel go into the communities and meet and consult with the communities. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Roland.

MR. ROLAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. So they go to the communities to meet with them. Do the councils and the bands themselves have a chance to go over the capital plan and prioritize what they would like to see. Is that the practice when they do go in there? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Antoine.

MR. ANTOINE: Thank you. That is the intent of this process. It is really up to the communities to make themselves available and make arrangements once they get the letter.

I know in many cases, the personnel have gone in and met with the hamlet councils, the band councils and sat down and actually worked through the process of prioritizing the different capital that is needed in each community. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Roland.

MR. ROLAND: Along with that work is there, from the expertise within the department, for example, on the sewage treatment facilities. Is that built into the plan for them to go over, and that would be identified, that the facility will need to be replaced in three years.

Knowing that, for example, in the Northwest Territories, all of our sewage lagoons fall short of the national Canadian standards, but we seem to be doing alright by them. I know there was some discussion, but I do not know if that is still an area that we are trying to improve on and make changes to. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Antoine.

MR. ANTOINE: Thank you. I know the departments, when they go into the communities for consultation, look at all the different facilities that are there. If there are problems with, for example sewage lagoons, they address it and they develop a plan of action on how to deal with it.

In some instances, the old site may no longer be useful, so they have to start planning on developing another site. All this has happened in the past and exactly how they assess it, I am not too familiar with. I know there is an approach that the department has taken in trying to assess what will be needed in the number of years to be replaced. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Miltenberger. Mr. McLeod.

MR. MCLEOD: Yes, I have a question regarding the process the Minister has referred to. I would like to ask the Minister, I know the program officers go into the communities and they set up a capital plan for five years and they try to prioritize all the different capital items in the plan.

I am concerned, and this is where my question comes in, is the regional staff expected to take that plan and revise it, before submission to headquarters here in Yellowknife?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Krutko): Mr. Antoine.

MR. ANTOINE: Mr. Chairman, I am not really familiar with what happens after the consultation. I do not think the regional staff should be revising whatever plan that comes from the community. In my experience, I have not seen that happening. I would like to ask the deputy minister to reply specifically to that. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Antoine. Mr. McLeod.

MR. MCLEOD: Getting all the plans from the communities in my riding, I looked at them and they are nowhere near what came from the regions to the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs, and what is on the capital plan here. Recognizing there were a lot of cuts, and I do not expect everything to make it to this budget, but I feel that the communities are being misled. They are spending, in some cases, two or three days working on capital plans and it is not reaching this level.

I would like to know if that is not the intent, if the Minister would provide that direction to the regions?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Mr. Antoine.

MR. ANTOINE: Yes, we will provide that direction to the regional staff and headquarters, as well. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Antoine. Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you. I would like to ask the Minister if he could tell me where the Fort McPherson water resupply is at? How soon can we see some activities happening? What is happening to date on that?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Mr. Antoine.

MR. ANTOINE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, in the Fort McPherson water supply, it is in the budget to be completed this year. We have been working with the Gwich'in Tribal Council. The Deepwater Lake, where the new water supply will come from, is on Gwich'in land, from the Gwich'in land claims agreement. The department has been given authority to negotiate with the Gwich'in Tribal Council to see about accessing the lake for water.

So, I think we are moving along on schedule. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Antoine. Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I received an interesting phone call today about a contract that went to build some tanks for the water treatment plant in Fort McPherson, where it was issued to NTCL. In which they got a call, I believe it was yesterday, from Mr. Rattray, saying that they are going to go back out to public tender. Yet they were the only group to put a bid in on the first tender.

I am just wondering, if this thing is on track, why are they going back out to public tender for the tanks for the treatment facilities? So I would like to ask the Minister, who is in charge of this process, and why are they having to re-tender on the tanks for this facility?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Mr. Antoine.

MR. ANTOINE: Thank you. I do not know what the honourable Member is referring to. I was just consulted here briefly by the deputy minister, in regard to this latest development. I do not know. We are not aware of what the latest is on that.

As far as I am concerned, the dollars are there. Once they are approved and we have authority to negotiate with the Gwich'in Tribal Council, I would like to get this project underway and completed as soon as we can, according to the timeframe. There may be some changes that I have to find out about, but I would like to see this project go ahead. I think it is going to be going ahead according to schedule. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Antoine. Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Could the Minister check into the situation that I mentioned, where I got a call from NTCL, saying they got a call from Mr. Bruce Rattray, saying the contract they supposedly won is now going to be re-tendered? That will have an effect on this project.

Besides that, in regard to the Aklavik project, they were supposed to be in-line to have an upgrade, in which, looking at the budget, there was only \$75,000. But they were supposed to have a complete overhaul of that water facility, which was in earlier budgets, but now I see that there has only been \$75,000 allocated for that specific project.

I am wondering you talk about communities setting priorities or helping develop the five year capital plan, but every time there is a project that is on the books, it just seems like it just keeps getting postponed. They use the argument, for the cuts and what not that is coming in the budget, that they have to somehow take that out of there.

So I am just wondering, can the Minister tell me if this project will be going ahead and will we see a replacement within the next two years or so?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Mr. Antoine.

MR. ANTOINE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, this project is going to go ahead. It is not in the capital area, where we are looking at. It is in the regional operations. It is a contribution to Aklavik. So water treatment plan upgrade, it is \$250,000 in contribution to the municipality.

In this budget, there are some projects that we retained as a department, and they are different projects that the municipalities are managing themselves through contribution. So this project is going to go ahead. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Antoine. Mr. Lafferty.

MR. LAFFERTY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just have a question on the bridge for Rae. It says, 2001-2002, \$375,000, then 2002-2003, \$5,000. I am just wondering, are you going to build a bridge and then paint it after? Is there air there, that \$5,000 go ahead on 2000-2001?

-- Laughter

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. Mr. Antoine.

MR. ANTOINE: Thank you. These type of projects are usually handled this way so that there is a warranty work or there may be some deficiencies that may be needed to be done afterwards. That is what it is. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Antoine. Mr. Lafferty.

MR. LAFFERTY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just have one more question. I just do not understand it. It is residential Harbour Way in Tuktoyaktuk. There is a lot of money being put towards it. To me, it sounds like when you say Harbour Way, it is a marine project or something like that. I am just wondering what it is doing in Municipal and Community Affairs. If they could just let me know that.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. Mr. Antoine.

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It is a land development program. It is to maintain enough lots to meet forecast residential lot demand. It is the name of the area along the harbour, I believe. That is what it is called. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Antoine. Mr. Lafferty.

MR. LAFFERTY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I was just a little concerned there. I thought maybe they were trying to sneak in a Transportation project under Municipal and Community Affairs here. Thank you.

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

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I believe one of the areas that probably has affected most municipalities and communities is the cut to capital expenses. I think this government has to do something to turn that around. We have to realize that sure, there is a point to having to cut capital projects or defer them, but we also have to realize there is a cost we are going to have to pay down the road to replace much of the infrastructure we have in our communities.

In order for us to keep the same pace with the development, and also the population growth in our communities, we have to continue to develop and work on the infrastructure in our communities. I think we have to re-instate many of these capital items that were deferred, get them back in the books and get the community infrastructure brought back up to code, so it is doing what it is supposed to.

I think in light of what happened in Walkerton, Ontario, that could happen anywhere in Canada. We are not immune to this. We have to realize we do have to sometimes make an investment, realizing that sure, we may have to go into a slight deficit, but understanding we are developing our economy and also ensuring we have the infrastructure to serve the residents we are here to serve. I just want to ask the Minister, what are they doing to try to reinstate or ensure that we increase the expenditures in the capital area for communities and municipalities, so we can start seeing some of our items that have been deferred over the last number of years put back and bring it back in line with our five-year capital planning process.

In a lot of communities, all you see for capital is usually just a little bit of residential development, but nothing in really meaningful ways in our small communities, so what is the department doing to ensure that happens?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Mr. Antoine.

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I think one of the highest priorities for this department, and this whole government, should be that...I agree there are core programs, such as protecting a healthy supply of water. I think that is a key. That is a core program. Of course, there is the sanitary side and the proper treatment of sewage waste water, our garbage collection and so forth. These are the high priorities we should focus on in our programs. Other programs, such as providing recreational opportunities for our youth as well as the adults, must also continue to be focused on.

In light of that, I think that should be reflected in our budgets. It should be reflected in our capital. Whenever, for instance, an example is the community the Member represents, Fort McPherson, with the water situation there. This government and this Legislative Assembly, supports that Fort McPherson should have clean water, so we have accommodated that. It is an example, and there is an urgency there. We put our focus and attention on that.

In terms of, if there are other impending dangers to core projects, like a healthy supply of water, then we have to identify it up front and I can try to accommodate it into our budgets. That is the intention of this department, to follow these core programs. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Antoine. Mr. Krutko.

MR. KRUTKO: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Aklavik was supposed to have a nursing station built there, but they were going to locate it on the ball field, of which the community has put a lot of time, effort and money into developing. In order for them to move this project ahead, they needed to locate it somewhere, so the community made a decision to locate it on the ball field. As part of the agreement, the municipality stated that in order for them to agree to it, this government was going to have to put money in the budget to replace that ball field, or have it moved to another location. I do not see anything here in the budget. I would like to know if the department and the Department of Health looked at that? Are you working on relocating the ball field and developing a new one if you use that site for the hospital?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Mr. Antoine.

HON. JIM ANTOINE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, this is the first time I have heard about Aklavik putting their health station in the middle of their ball field. I think there are arrangements between the different departments, I am told. Health and Social Services is, I understand, going to be picking up the cost to accommodate for a ball field. It is not reflected in our budget, I am told, but we will confirm that. As I said, this is the first time I have heard about it. I am told there are arrangements made between the departments to try to accommodate the agreement that is there to replace the ball field. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Thank you, Mr. Antoine. Total regional operations, \$4,932,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Total department, \$4,923,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): Does the committee agree that Municipal and Community Affairs is concluded?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

-- Applause

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): I would like to thank the Minister and his witnesses. Mr. Miltenberger.

MR. MILTENBERGER: I move we report progress.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Delorey): There is a motion to report progress. It is non-debateable. To the motion. All those in favour? All those opposed? The motion is carried. We will rise and report progress.

MR. SPEAKER: I would like to call the House 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, your committee has been considering Bill 1, Appropriation Act 2000-2001, and Committee Report 2-14(3), and Committee Report 3-14(3), and would like to report progress with four motions being adopted. Mr. Speaker, I move the report of the committee of the whole be concurred with. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Delorey. Do we have a seconder? The Chair recognizes the honourable Member for Frame Lake. All those in favour? All those opposed? 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 HOUSE (Mr. Hamilton): Mr. Speaker, meetings of the Standing Committee on Accountability and Oversight tomorrow at 9:00 a.m.

Orders of the day for Friday, June 30, 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 10, An Act to Amend the Adoption Act
18. Second Reading of Bills
 - Bill 7, Miscellaneous Statutes Amendment Act, 2000
 - Bill 8, Justice Statutes Amendment Act
 - Bill 9, An Act to Amend the NWT Power Corporation Act
19. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters
 - Bill 1, Appropriation Act, 2000-2001
 - Bill 6, An Act to Amend the Nursing Profession Act
 - Committee Report 1-14(3), Standing Committee on Accountability and Oversight Review of the 2000-2003 Business Plans and 2000-2001 Main Estimates
 - Committee Report 2-14(3), Standing Committee on Governance and Economic Development Review of the 2000-2003 Business Plans and 2000-2001 Main Estimates
 - Committee Report 3-14(3), Standing Committee on Social Programs Review of the 2000-2003 Business Plans and 2000-2001 Main Estimates
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 Friday, June 30, 2000 at 10:00 a.m.

-- ADJOURNMENT

The House adjourned at 11:45 p.m.

