



NORTHWEST TERRITORIES LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

3rd Session

Day 27

17th Assembly

HANSARD

Thursday, November 1, 2012

Pages 1515 - 1542

The Honourable Jackie Jacobson, Speaker

Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

PRAYER	1515
MINISTERS' STATEMENTS	1515
83-17(3) – Minister's Forum on Addictions (Beaulieu)	1515
84-17(3) – Report on the Northwest Territories Power Corporation (Miltenberger)	1515
85-17(3) – Adoptions Awareness Month (Beaulieu)	1516
86-17(3) – Premier Absent from the House (Lafferty)	1517
MEMBERS' STATEMENTS	1517
Diabetes Prevention and Treatment Programs (Groenewegen)	1517
Movember Men's Health Fundraising and Awareness Campaign (Dolyunny)	1517
Yellowknife Spook-a-Rama Halloween Youth Dance (Bisaro)	1518
Income Assistance Program (Nadli)	1519
Prescription Services in Small Communities (Menicoche)	1519
CKLB Broadcasts of GNWT "On the Air" Radio Program (Moses)	1519
GNWT Health and Safety Claims Costs (Bromley)	1520
Facilitating Dialogue between Elders and Youth (Yakeleya)	1520
Government Support for Weight Loss Programs (Bouchard)	1521
Passing of Beatrice Dawson (Beaulieu)	1521
RECOGNITION OF VISITORS IN THE GALLERY	1522
ORAL QUESTIONS	1522, 1532
REPORTS OF COMMITTEES ON THE REVIEW OF BILLS	1538
NOTICES OF MOTION	1538
18-17(3) – Appointment of Two Members to the Human Rights Adjudication Panel (Bouchard)	1538
NOTICES OF MOTION FOR FIRST READING OF BILLS	1541
Bill 17 – Supplementary Appropriation (Operations Expenditures), No. 2, 2012-2013	1541
MOTIONS	1538
17-17(3) – Establishment of Northern Search and Rescue Base (Bisaro)	1538
CONSIDERATION IN COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE OF BILLS AND OTHER MATTERS	1541
REPORT OF COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE	1541
ORDERS OF THE DAY	1541

YELLOWKNIFE, NORTHWEST TERRITORIES**Thursday, November 1, 2012****Members Present**

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

The House met at 1:30 p.m.

Prayer

---Prayer

SPEAKER (Hon. Jackie Jacobson): Good afternoon, colleagues. Item 2, Ministers' statements. The honourable Minister of Health and Social Services, Mr. Beaulieu.

Ministers' Statements

**MINISTER'S STATEMENT 83-17(3):
MINISTER'S FORUM ON ADDICTIONS**

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: Mr. Speaker, in my travels across the Northwest Territories, meeting with communities, attending assemblies and numerous board meetings, I have heard one constant theme: Addictions are destroying our families and communities.

This government spends millions of dollars on addictions services, but our people are still drinking in large numbers.

Almost every family in the NWT is touched by alcohol addiction. I will not deny that drugs and pharmaceutical abuse is an issue, but alcohol is the drug that is breaking apart families, keeping young people from doing well in school and preventing many people from getting and keeping good jobs. This is not news to anyone in this House.

Mr. Speaker, we offer addictions counseling through community wellness workers, mental health workers, detox programs and a Territorial Treatment Centre. We support communities and NGOs to provide community-based programs and send people to southern Canada to attend treatment programs, but we have seen little change as a result of this investment.

Mr. Speaker, we need to stop and ask ourselves not whether we are doing enough but whether we are doing the right things. What works? What makes a person want to get sober and stay sober? There are people in the Northwest Territories who know the answers to these questions.

In order get these questions answered, I have established the Minister's Forum on Addictions. The forum will convene tomorrow in Yellowknife.

Mr. Speaker, the forum will hold discussions in every region and will make recommendations on future directions for community-based addiction programs in the NWT. The focus will be on what works for our people and our communities. We will talk to people who are sober, people who are struggling with addictions, family members who experience firsthand what living with alcohol addiction is like. I want to know what will make people stop drinking and want to live a healthy, happy life.

It's a simple question with complicated answers.

Mr. Speaker, the forum will be chaired by Mr. Paul Andrew and will consist of community members with direct experience. Forum members will meet with community leaders, NGOs and community members. I expect to have their recommendations by March 2013. The final report will provide advice about community-based addictions programs.

Mr. Speaker, the Minister's Forum on Addictions is an important first step in the implementation of our mental health and addictions action plan, A Shared Path Towards Wellness. This is a critical early step in making best use of our resources by helping us identify priorities for investment through the business planning process. I look forward to reporting its results to this Assembly. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. The honourable Minister responsible for the NWT Power Corporation, Mr. Miltenberger.

**MINISTER'S STATEMENT 84-17(3):
REPORT ON THE NORTHWEST TERRITORIES
POWER CORPORATION**

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Mr. Speaker, over the last few sessions I have been reporting on work the Northwest Territories Power Corporation has been doing to ensure that its structure and operations are aligned with government's goal to keep electricity costs as low as possible. As owners of NTPC, Northerners have a vested interest in making sure the corporation achieves this objective. I believe NTPC is up to the job.

The corporation has been called upon to play a large role in supporting this government's goal of reducing dependence on high-priced, environmentally harmful fossil fuels. NTPC has led many initiatives to develop new, clean alternative

energy resources such as wind, solar, geothermal and biomass. We have a new 60 kW solar energy project in Fort Simpson, the largest of its kind in the North. It can generate enough energy for 10 homes, with another 40 kW on the way. We undertook projects in Inuvik and Fort McPherson to use residual heat from diesel power plants to heat community water and nearby buildings. We initiated a territory-wide program to replace high-pressure sodium streetlights with long-lasting LED lights as they expire. We're using state-of-the-art filtration technology to extend equipment life, reduce maintenance and extend the time between oil changes, and we're investigating wind potential in Inuvik area.

NTPC is also working closely with the GNWT, community and Aboriginal governments and organizations to examine opportunities to generate more electricity from hydro developments. Developing the NWT's energy resources to meet our needs today and into the future is a high priority.

Finding and developing the human resources needed to accomplish our goals remains a significant challenge, particularly when faced with stiff competition for skilled workers from high-growth areas such as Alberta and Saskatchewan. Traditional recruitment methods haven't been successful in meeting the demand, so the corporation has refocused and concentrated its efforts into a Northern Talent Development Strategy. As part of its revised approach, NTPC is offering scholarships and apprenticeships to young Northerners.

In the current fiscal year, NTPC has filled four apprenticeship positions and plans to recruit the same number next year. This year the corporation used the Apprenticeship Program to hire two power linespersons in Fort Simpson and Inuvik, an electrician in Fort Smith and a mechanic in Fort Simpson.

A reliable, affordable supply of electricity is fundamental to an enhanced sustainable economy. We are working toward a vision of a connected North and South Slave hydro system. This will minimize diesel backup requirements and capitalize on the hydro potential of both regions while improving reliability and providing a secure, affordable source of energy. When we do that, everyone in the NWT will benefit.

In the meantime, Mr. Speaker, there have been pressing matters at hand regarding community energy supplies. NTPC has been working on solutions for both Norman Wells and Inuvik with the community governments, local producers and suppliers and GNWT departments. While residents in Norman Wells are considering various options to replace natural gas as their primary heating source, Imperial Oil will continue to supply the electricity for

the town in the near to medium term. NTPC has contingency plans in place to relocate temporary diesel generation in the event supply issues do develop.

In Inuvik, Mr. Speaker, NTPC has been working to assess the medium and long-term energy solutions for the town. These options include liquefied natural gas and a variety of renewable energy options such as the significant wind potential that exists in the region.

Reliability is the cornerstone of any power system. That's why the corporation invested in a new dam at the Bluefish Hydro site to replace the aging structure that was in danger of failing. I'm pleased to report that the project will be completed this month.

Outages on the Yellowknife system have increased this year. The corporation is addressing the problem with a comprehensive series of improvement initiatives and a commitment to significantly increase reliability over the next three years. NTPC has already acted on a number of initiatives such as clearing brush along the Bluefish line, upgrading animal deterrents and thoroughly examining its transmission system for damage or weaknesses that could result in outages. It has also brought in experts to ensure its generation and transmission systems operate in a stable and reliable manner. Over the next three years, controls will be upgraded, fault detection equipment will be replaced and lightning protection will be improved.

I will be monitoring progress to ensure NTPC delivers on its commitment.

NTPC is a key part of the government's energy planning and strategy. There is a lot of work ahead, with many areas that require attention and improvement. They are committed to working with all Northerners to improve service. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

MINISTER'S STATEMENT 85-17(3): ADOPTIONS AWARENESS MONTH

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: Mr. Speaker, November is National Adoptions Awareness Month. It's an opportunity to recognize families in the Northwest Territories who provide a remarkable service to children.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud that the NWT has been a world leader in recognizing Aboriginal customs and culture when children need a family. Our legislation recognizes that our people take care of our children within their families, extended families and the community.

Mr. Speaker, adopting a child is a very rewarding experience for families, but most importantly, it brings joy and stability to the child. It brings life and fulfillment into people's lives.

We have many options for residents who wish to adopt. We offer the options of permanent care adoptions, private adoptions and international adoptions. We do whatever we can to find a family for every child.

These options all provide an opportunity for children to stay connected to their extended families, home communities and culture. In all adoption cases, we make every effort to keep children in their own cultures and environment.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the many adoptive families we have throughout the NWT for providing the necessary supports for children who need a home.

For anyone considering adoption, I urge you to contact your local health and social services office for more information. There are children of all ages in need of a family. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. Deputy Premier, Mr. Lafferty.

MINISTER'S STATEMENT 86-17(3):
PREMIER ABSENT FROM THE HOUSE

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mr. Speaker, I wish to advise Members that the Honourable Bob McLeod will be absent from the House for today and tomorrow to attend the National Aboriginal Women's Summit F/P/T in Winnipeg, Manitoba. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for Hay River South, Mrs. Groenewegen.

Members' Statements

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON
DIABETES PREVENTION AND
TREATMENT PROGRAMS

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. November is Diabetes Awareness Month and today, being the 1st of November, I would like to dedicate my statement to this topic. I would like to, as part of my statement, canvass the situation here in the Northwest Territories.

Diabetes is a lifelong condition when the body does not produce enough insulin or cannot use the insulin it produces. If left untreated, diabetes can lead to blindness, kidney failure, stroke, heart attack and, ultimately, early death. The latest available statistics for the Northwest Territories are several years old, but it is safe to say that at least 2,000 people have been diagnosed with diabetes

and more than 200 new cases are diagnosed every year.

Among NWT seniors aged 60 and up, the rate of diabetes is over 20 percent. In 2007-2008 the NWT rate of diabetes was actually lower than Canada's but, unfortunately, we are catching up.

There are some reasons for this. As a population, we are eating less vegetables and fruit than we used to. The decline is documented from 2003 to 2008 at the same time that Canadians, on the whole, are eating more fruits and vegetables.

Our lifestyle is changing. NWT residents are also exercising less. According to the Health department, in 2009 only 41 percent of our population exercised enough to maintain or improve their health. Exercise is a great help in controlling diabetes. I only say this to underline that knowledge is the key to manage diabetes.

I am very happy that there is a lot being done in Hay River on that front. We recently had the Hay River Adult Health Fair and another will soon take place at the Chief Lamallice complex at the K'atloodzeeche Reserve. There will also be a full day workshop on the reserve on the 14th focusing on healthy practices, medication and ways to prevent diabetes.

In town the Centennial Library is hosting a video night on November 27th showing Sweet Success with Diabetes: Laugh and Learn with Mrs. Pudding. It will be followed by an information session.

Hay River schools always encourage healthy eating for our students and there will be information booths in our two main food stores on November 17th and 24th.

Many thanks to all the organizations and volunteers who are promoting a healthy lifestyle and teaching us how to live in a way that prevents diabetes.

I will have questions for the Minister of Health and Social Services during question period.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. The honourable Member for Range Lake, Mr. Dolynny.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON
MOVEMBER MEN'S HEALTH
FUNDRAISING AND AWARENESS CAMPAIGN

MR. DOLYNNY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today marks the first day of Movember and its annual month-long event involving the sprouting of moustaches on thousands of men's faces during the month of November. In Canada and around the world, men with their mos – in other words, moustaches – raise awareness for prostate cancer and male mental health initiatives.

I stand before you today a clean-shaven man. I have registered at Movember.com on my iPhone

app and I encourage all my mo-bros and my mo-sistas, like mo-sista Bisaro and mo-sista Groenewegen, and all my mo-supporters throughout the NWT to do the same. Let's raise awareness and funds for our mo-growing efforts.

Social media is playing a huge factor again this year locally and around Yellowknife. People like Eli Purchase have created a Facebook group you can join. You don't have to go far to see how much this phenomenon will affect everyone around us.

As I indicated, this is a global movement and since its humble beginnings in Melbourne, Australia, in 2004, Movember has grown to more than 1.9 million mo-supporters. In the end, no matter which country or city, Movember continues to change the habits and attitudes men have about their health. It helps educate men about their health risk, all the while increasing the chances of early detection, diagnosis and effective treatment.

Movember raised \$125.7 million globally in the 2011 campaign, with an increase of \$48.9 million over the prior year. Canada raised \$41.9 million alone, which placed our country as the largest contributor of any nation. Administration costs to fund this campaign are at 8 percent globally and 5.9 percent in Canada of raised monies, which are both well below international standards of fundraising.

Campaigns like this clearly help take big steps forward in changing attitudes by sparking conversation, all via the moustache, and having an everlasting impact on the face of men's health. Mr. Speaker, colleagues here in the House, and NWT residents abroad, I want to wish everyone a very "stache-tastic" Movember.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON
YELLOWKNIFE SPOOK-A-RAMA
HALLOWEEN YOUTH DANCE

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Last night Yellowknife had another successful Halloween Spook-a-Rama. Today I want to acknowledge the sponsorship of this event, Yellowknife's longest standing Halloween tradition.

Spook-a-Rama has been put on by the Yellowknife Lion's Club for the last 45 years. As long-time Lion's Club member and organizer Don Finnamore told me, we are now getting third-generation spooks.

Spook-a-Rama was started in response to Halloween vandalism in downtown Yellowknife. Members of the Yellowknife Lion's Club came up with the idea for a teen dance on Halloween. It would give the youth something to do in a safe environment and would cut down on vandalism Halloween night.

The event was, and still is, a partnership between Yellowknife businesses and the Lion's Club. Originally organized by an RCMP officer who was also a Lion's Club member, the effort to keep the kids off the streets on Halloween night is still a joint effort between the RCMP, the Lion's Club, and DND, the Department of National Defence, funded by Yellowknife businesses.

For as long as anyone can remember, Spook-a-Rama has been held at the DND 440 Squadron/RCMP hangar at the airport. It's for youth 13 to 18 years of age and no matter the day, it is always held on Halloween night. The event is free, and free bus service to and from is provided throughout the city. Everyone who attends is searched at the door to keep the event safe. Even if the kids go outside, they are searched when they come back in. Any adults that come in to speak with their son or daughter are escorted while they're in the building; again for safety.

Food is always served, lots of food, I'm told, and music throughout the evening and there are prizes. The main prize is a trip for two to Edmonton provided by First Air or Canadian North. The door prizes are one of the drawing cards to get the kids to the dance. I'm told good prizes means the youth will attend.

It costs about \$7,000 to put on Spook-a-Rama. That's the cost for soft drinks, pizza, busses, advertising, DJ services and door prizes. In the mid-2000s it was touch and go whether or not enough money would be raised to hold the event, but like most northern communities, when it really counts, the community comes together and contributes what is needed, and in this case Spook-a-Rama happened one more time. Year after year Spook-a-Rama has achieved its purpose to reduce vandalism on Halloween night.

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

---Unanimous consent granted

MS. BISARO: In 2000 the Lion's Club president said, "According to the RCMP, while we've been having this dance, acts of vandalism by youth 13 to 18 years old has been zero percent." The same holds true today. To quote Mr. Finnamore one more time, "Since the Lion's Club has been doing the event, vandalism at Halloween is almost nonexistent."

I want to say thank you to the YK Lion's Club for their service to our city. Congratulations on another successful Spook-a-Rama. May you have many more.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. The Member for Deh Cho, Mr. Nadli.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON
INCOME ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

MR. NADLI: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's good to know that our government has income assistance programs to help low-income residents. The employment rate for Yellowknife is around 80 percent, while in smaller communities it averages about 60 percent. Many people in my riding hunt, trap or produce crafts to help put food on their table, but some families don't have enough money to take part in traditional activities, or even to cover their basic needs.

Income assistance provides money to meet people's needs for food, shelter and utilities. The program can also pay for clothing and furniture, disability, educational supports, supports to seniors and child care costs. People who receive income assistance are encouraged to plan for their future and make productive choices. In 2011-2012 more than 3,000 individuals and families in the NWT in total received income assistance. We spent about \$15 million income assistance in the NWT in 2010.

I like to think that income assistance in the Northwest Territories reflects our traditional values of caring, sharing, respect and self-reliance. When people apply for income assistance, they should be treated with respect and consideration. The program should take into account the community economy and the local culture.

Later today I will have questions for the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment on this important program.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON
PRESCRIPTION SERVICES
IN SMALL COMMUNITIES

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It can be very difficult for people in small communities to renew their prescriptions for various drugs. Of course, there are no drug stores and no doctors in most Nahendeh communities.

In some ways our medical system makes the process more difficult than is really necessary. For example, when an elder has a prescription for a medication, why does it need to be renewed every few months? That means a doctor's appointment that is not always easy to get. And if you run short of a prescription and the doctor isn't coming to town for another month or so, it could mean ending up with a trip to Fort Simpson. This causes both inconvenience and expense to people who are often on a limited budget, and it's just not fair to people living in small communities. I'm sure it also costs the health system money that could be spent on other priorities.

It seems that some prescriptions have to be renewed biannually but require an appointment with a doctor in Yellowknife. Again, that is a real expensive way of doing things. I know the Health Minister understands life in small communities and I hope he will do something about this. No one living in the larger centres faces this sort of inconvenience and extra costs.

A better way of managing this is to allow continuous prescriptions. This may help reduce costs across our territory, because I wonder how much of a doctor's time and money we waste on appointments for extending necessary ongoing prescriptions.

Half the battle in designing a good health system is thinking about what will happen at the community level. We should always ask, if we do this, what it will mean for patients out there. If we take that approach, I think we can improve the system quite a bit.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON
CKLB BROADCASTS OF GNWT
"ON THE AIR" RADIO PROGRAM

MR. MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. One objective of this 17th Legislative Assembly is to be accountable and informative. That means getting information of our public programs and services out to the communities and the residents. One way of doing that is using media; specifically, the Native Communications Society, which broadcasts to 32 different communities across the Northwest Territories and the three diamond mines. As well, during those programs, they were offering them in five different Aboriginal languages.

In February 2011, the Native Communications Society and the GNWT began producing a 10-minute radio program that aired every Friday at noon on CKLB Radio. The show was entitled "On the Air." While the GNWT utilized CKLB's recording facilities, the territorial government was to be solely responsible for providing content for this show.

Chronicling government initiatives and programs, the show is extremely informative and constructive. Because of this, the program quickly became extremely popular with the people of the Northwest Territories and particularly with GNWT employees. Due to the show's popularity and effectiveness, the GNWT renewed the program, signing a contract that would keep the program on air until March of 2013.

Since December 2011, only five months into a 20-month agreement, the GNWT has ceased producing shows due to the inability to find a host for the program. The previous host moved to another position within the government and the

GNWT Executive has yet to hire a replacement. Thus the show has been off the air for 10 months.

Earlier in October, Native Communications Society sent a proposal to the press secretary of the Legislative Assembly, outlining a plan to return the program to the air within a month. As the GNWT was not able to find an appropriate replacement host, NCS proposed to take over staffing of the position. While this person would be a member of NCS staff, the position's salary would be paid through the GNWT through a contribution agreement. This would allow the information to be sent out to residents of the NWT and the host would work closely with territorial government staff to produce a product that reflects the communications needs and goals of the NWT.

We have to use the media and CKLB to get the programs and services that we run out to residents of the Northwest Territories.

I will have questions today for the Deputy Premier. Thank you.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON GNWT HEALTH AND SAFETY CLAIMS COSTS

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In June I received a response to my written and other questions to the Ministers responsible for the WSCC and Human Resources. They revealed the extent of penalties we pay for failed safety programs and claims payments, but they also reveal core management issues that need to be addressed.

In July we paid over \$500,000 in penalties for exceptional claims and safety management practices last year, with another large penalty expected this year. Looking at the departmental safety and claims records over the past four years, improvements in positive trends are evident for almost all departments.

In contrast to the Health and Social Services department, which declined from 39 percent to less than 1 percent in claims, we have seen no improvements whatsoever in five of our six health authorities. The Sahtu Health and Social Services Authority has remained at a very low level of claims experience. The high claims and lack of progress in this area for health authorities are alarming. For example, the proportion of claims experience at Stanton Territorial Health Authority rose from 1 percent in 2008-09 to 20 percent of our claims in 2011-12; Fort Smith authority from 1 percent to 15 percent over the same period; the Yellowknife Health and Social Services from .1 percent to 7 percent; Beaufort-Delta from 2 to 10 percent, and the Deh Cho from less than 1 percent to 7 percent. It is a small wonder that penalties are increasing.

Who is responsible for managing this situation, or is that, in fact, the essence of the problem here? What I am getting at is the vital issue of control and accountability for a safer GNWT workplace, particularly within our health system. Unlike all departments – almost all departments – our regional authorities are failing to reduce claims experience costs. Does the Minister of Health not have clear lines of authority and control here? If the responsibility of the authorities is the authorities, where is the authority for ministerial oversight required?

Our various departments have had spotty records meeting the legal requirements for health and safety committees. The Minister responsible for cross-government human resources development can provide guidelines to departments, but delivery is the responsibility of each department. Meanwhile, penalty costs continue to mount.

I seek unanimous consent to conclude my statement. Mahsi.

---Unanimous consent granted

MR. BROMLEY: We pay penalties as one government, but clearly regional health authorities' failure to deliver safety programs and manage claims is generating these penalties now.

I'll have questions for the Minister of Health regarding management of claims for performance by regional authorities. Mahsi.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON FACILITATING DIALOGUE BETWEEN ELDERS AND YOUTH

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm reminded by one of our great leaders from the United States, Chief Sitting Bull, he said, at one of his council meetings to his chiefs, "Let us put our minds together and see what life we can make for our children." I was reminded of that a couple of days ago when I had a meeting with the elders in Fort Good Hope, who sat around the table one morning and they were very, very concerned about our youth today.

Mrs. Groenewegen spoke a little bit about what the elders were talking about: the diet in the younger people with pop and chips and chocolate bars and fast food. Their diet is changing and we're seeing more youth sickness in the communities. The elders are very, very concerned about the youth and what type of life we're setting for them, because there aren't very many elders in the Northwest Territories.

The elders were talking about our close connection to the land and how our land provides for us, but somehow as people in the communities we're

missing the point of teaching our youth about life. They're even concerned that youth at 12, 13 years old are drinking now in our communities. That's going to cause a lot of concern. So our elders were saying that we have to do something.

Even our land is changing, our land is telling us something. There are lots of issues around their concerns about the pollutants in the land and the chemicals that are going into the water. If we don't do anything, our people are going to have a hard time in the future. It has been prophesized by the elders in Deline, Tulita and right down the Mackenzie Valley. Elders are talking about how different our world is going to be if we don't smarten up.

So I want to ask the Minister responsible for Seniors as to what type of programs or what types of things can be done to bring our elders together to talk to us and have a meeting with the youth, and to look at ways that we can help ourselves, such as the addictions forums that he's going to look at in the next year. So I will ask those questions of the Minister. Thank you.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON GOVERNMENT SUPPORT FOR WEIGHT LOSS PROGRAMS

MR. BOUCHARD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The 17th Assembly has set a goal to promote healthy living for the people of the Northwest Territories. We're seeing the costs of health care increasing and we are seeing increases in obesity, high blood pressure and diabetes throughout the northern territories. My colleague from Hay River South indicated Diabetes Month is November. I believe that we need to take steps to implement the goals of healthy living.

I would like to speak to an issue that is close to my heart, or should I say closer to my stomach? For years I was largely overweight. I had high blood pressures and I am a diabetic. On May 6, 2011, I paid to insert a weight loss band on the top of my stomach. The band has been successful for me. I have lost 200 pounds.

---Applause

At this time I would like to thank my family and friends for helping me out with that. My blood pressure is in the normal ranges now, and after six months I was able to get off of insulin. The high cost of weight loss bands is not being covered under any government programming and it is preventing people from helping themselves with their weight conditions.

The Department of Health has to strengthen the weight loss program in the Northwest Territories. We need to assist the cost of these weight loss

bands. The cost of the bands will be returned to the government very quickly. The lack of need for insulin, medication and chronic health care will be seen very quickly over the many, many years. I myself believe that I will not be on a chronic system in the government for an additional 10 years. I will not be on insulin, hopefully, for a very long time to see.

We need to follow other jurisdictions, and we have to have a strong weight loss program and fund weight loss bands. If we want people to have healthy lives, we need to give them the tools and the help to do so.

I will have questions for the Minister of Health when it comes time.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Bouchard. The honourable Member for Tu Nedhe, Mr. Beaulieu.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON PASSING OF BEATRICE DAWSON

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: Mahsi cho, Mr. Speaker. [Statement delivered in an Aboriginal language and then in English.]

Today I would like to pay tribute to the late Beatrice Dawson, originally from Rocher River. Beatrice and her late husband, Fred, moved to Fort Resolution, like many other families, in the late '50s when the school in Rocher River burned down.

Beatrice and Fred had no children of their own but helped raise six kids. Two of the six passed away years ago. They were Shirley Overvold-King and the late Phillip "Wagee" King. Beatrice helped raise her step-daughter Jackie Pascal from Fort McPherson, adopted Delores from birth, and adopted Tendah and Bradley while they were very young when their mother, Shirley, had passed away. Beatrice's compassion and love for family and children showed through her willingness to raise and adopt children.

Beatrice was born September 14, 1931, and passed away October 26, 2012, at the age of 81. Beatrice was detected with cancer in November 2011. She was hospitalized in Edmonton for one month before returning home. At the time the doctor told Beatrice that she would not live beyond March. The doctor could not believe it when he examined her in March to find out she was still alive and well. The doctor said Beatrice was a very strong woman.

Beatrice almost left us in March, as the doctor predicted, but she heard her family gathering around, crying out for her, and she came back. She later told her family that the next time she is ready to go, just to let her go. The love of Beatrice's family kept her alive for an additional seven months. Beatrice passed away peacefully in the Hay River hospital after a gradual decline in her health.

Beatrice is survived by four of those children that she raised: Dolores, Tendah, Bradley and Jackie; 15 grandchildren and two great-grandchildren. Beatrice is also survived by her brother Henri King and Vitaline Lafferty here from Yellowknife, and numerous nieces and nephews. My condolences go out to Beatrice's children, grandchildren, great-grandchildren, brother, sister, numerous nieces and nephews and many friends. Beatrice meant the world to them and to all I'm sure she will remain in their hearts.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. Item 4, reports of standing and special committees. Item 5, returns to oral questions. Item 6, recognition of visitors in the gallery. The honourable Member for Weledeh, Mr. Bromley.

Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to recognize Linnea Stephenson today, a Page from Weledeh.

I'd also like to recognize the work of all of our Pages and express my thanks to them. Linnea I'm sure can be found at the Snow Show at the Yellowknife Ski Club this Saturday, 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Bromley. The honourable Member for Tu Nedhe, Mr. Beaulieu.

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to recognize a couple of traditional healers. Dean Green is still there and Besha Blondin.

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

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I, too, would like to recognize a couple of Pages who have been working very hard for us for about the last three weeks now and one more week to go. Chris Yurris from Frame Lake and Raya Laframboise from Frame Lake are working with us here today.

I also would like to recognize a good friend and old friend – not old in age, of course – Besha Blondin. Welcome to the House.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. The honourable Member for Deh Cho, Mr. Nadli.

MR. NADLI: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to recognize two legislative Pages that have been here for about a week from my riding. From K'atlodeeche Chief Sunrise School, Talia Martel, who is 12 years old and in Grade 8. Her favourite school subjects are English, math and science. Her hobbies are reading, listening to music, and visiting with family and friends. Talia's education goals are to graduate and go to university and get her Bachelor of Science, get into a medical field and become a doctor.

Brooklyn Cayen is 13 years old, in Grade 8, and was born and raised on the Hay River Reserve. She loves math and algebra, reading and writing, and likes experimenting with science. Her hobbies are reading, cooking, skateboarding and listening to music with friends. Brooklyn is also interested in getting a Bachelor of Science degree and becoming a doctor.

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

MR. MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I, too, would like to recognize a couple of hardworking Pages that have been here with us from my riding in Inuvik, Faith Rogers and Keenan Jacobson. They have been doing a really great job and I'm really glad that they had this experience here in the Legislative Assembly.

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

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to recognize a friend of our family, Mr. Jeremy Bird, who works for CKLB, a resident of Yellowknife. Not in my riding, but welcome, Jeremy.

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

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to recognize my cousin Besha Blondin. It's good to see family sitting above me.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. You said it so well; it's good to see family here in the House. I have former MLA Mr. Vince Steen's daughter here, Shannon Steen, my cousin from Tuktoyaktuk. It's good to see Shannon in the House today.

I have Loretta Elias accompanying Shannon here today. Welcome to the House.

I'd like to welcome the Page for this week, one of my little cousins there, Keenan Jacobson. He's doing a real good job here this week. Thank you so much. Ms. Rogers, as well. Thank you.

Item 7, acknowledgements. Item 8, oral questions. The honourable Member for Hay River South, Mrs. Groenewegen.

Oral Questions

QUESTION 277-17(3): DIABETES PREVENTION AND TREATMENT PROGRAMS

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In follow-up to my Member's statement, the Auditor General has noted that Health and Social Services did not have a territory-wide strategy to manage and prevent diabetes. That is part of the Chronic

Disease Management Model which was due to be implemented this year. I'd like to ask the Minister has that happened and, if not, when will this be implemented.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. The honourable Minister of Health and Social Services, Mr. Beaulieu.

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: Mahsi cho, Mr. Speaker. The department is working with the health authorities to run a couple of pilot projects. We're running a pilot project here, a pilot project in the Sahtu on diabetes, and we're hoping that from reviewing the results of the pilot project, we're going to be able to expand diabetes programs across the territory.

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: I thank the Minister for that. I'll be interested to hear the results of those pilot projects. There are clinical practice guidelines for diabetes. How do we monitor whether health authorities are following these guidelines and how do we know if our efforts to control diabetes are working? What kind of monitoring do we have?

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: As the Member indicated, clinical practice guidelines are used to determine how we are treating diabetes. I don't have the monitoring information here with me, but I do know that we get information on where the diabetes is across the Territories, the prevalence of diabetes from region to region.

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Managing and preventing chronic diseases is a major issue for our health system. Diabetes is only one of our problems. What still needs to be done before a full Chronic Disease Management Model is ruled out and what are the obstacles to that rollout?

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: In 2011-2012 the department worked on the Home Care Enhancement and Aboriginal Diabetes Initiative. We spent \$77,500 on that initiative to develop a Chronic Disease Strategy, and diabetes is a part of the overall Chronic Disease Strategy which includes cardiovascular and cancer.

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

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: That's okay. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Member for Range Lake, Mr. Dolynny.

QUESTION 278-17(3):
EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

MR. DOLYNNY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The weather is getting colder outside and I think it's only prudent that we take a look at all our emergency actions both in-house and community and as a territory. For that, today my questions will be for the Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs on the theme of emergency preparedness.

My first question is: Back in April of 2012 while we were doing the business plans and main estimates, the Minister of MACA reported that seven community governments had completed their fire assessments and that at March 31st of this year that number increased to 24. Through a series of questions, we were given some direction that there would be a potential completion of all 33 communities. So my question to the Minister is: Where are we at with respect to the fire assessments?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Dolynny. The honourable Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs, Mr. Robert McLeod.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As of September 21st we've had 28 of the 33 communities that have updated their fire assessment plans and we're trying to work with the other five to have their assessment done as quickly as possible.

MR. DOLYNNY: It's pleasing to see that we're getting to the completion of all 33 communities in what is very, very important here. Leading to my second question on the subject of hazard assessments, these are basically high-level scenarios in terms of where we have communities at risk. Can the Minister indicate as to if all hazard assessments have been performed in all 33 communities?

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: As part of working with the communities on their emergency preparedness plan, hazards would be identified and we'd work closely with those communities to try and see how we can work around those and have them best prepared to handle any emergencies that might come about. We've got about 12 communities that have fully updated their emergency plans. We have 18 that need a little bit of updating, we're working with them. We still have three communities that are without emergency plans and we have to work very closely with them to ensure that they get plans put into place.

MR. DOLYNNY: The Minister is kind of leading into my third question, which is the overarching complement of what's called your Emergency Action Plans. The Minister did give the number, I believe, of 18.

Can the Minister indicate to me as to who is actually doing those Emergency Action Plan assessments? Is it the communities themselves or is it the fire marshals or a designate from the government who are doing those?

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: The fire assessments are done by our assistant fire marshals that are out in every region. They go into the communities and work with the communities to identify their needs and training opportunities. As far as emergency planning goes, we go in and work with communities

to assist them in putting together their emergency plans. As far as the emergency plan goes, the community usually is the lead on that and MACA is support.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Final supplementary, Mr. Dolynny.

MR. DOLYNNY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It does appear that we're actually moving in the right direction with respect to the safety of our communities and proper emergency action plans.

Can the Minister indicate in his crystal ball of items to be completed during the term of the 17th Assembly, when we would be able to see the completion of these so-called emergency action plans throughout the territory?

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: It is our goals, and I think we're starting to see the effects of different types of emergency today that some communities may have not seen in the past. As I pointed out before, we have 12 communities that have updated plans and we have to work very closely with those 18 communities to update their plans. They do have plans, but we just need to update them. The three without, I mean, we'll have to basically get on their case to make sure that they ask us to come in and help them work out their emergency plans.

It would be our desire by this time next year to have all 33 communities with a concrete plan.

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

QUESTION 279-17(3):

MINISTER'S FORUM ON ADDICTIONS

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions today are addressed to the Minister of Health and Social Services. I found it very timely that he chose to make his Minister's statement today on the Minister's Forum on Addictions. I have some questions in that regard.

I've been listening to the Minister over the last few weeks. He's made some comments and he's referenced a number of times consultations around mental health and addictions programs and the strategic plan. He's spoken of a group that is out for consultations and it's clear to me now, although it wasn't before, that he meant the Minister's Forum on Addictions.

The forum has been referenced in the Mental Health and Addictions Plan, but there's little other info that's out there relative to the Minister's Forum on Addictions.

My first question to the Minister would be whether or not there are terms of reference for the forum, and if so, are they available to the public.

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

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, we have terms of reference and, yes, they are available to the public.

MS. BISARO: That will teach me to ask a yes or a no question. It would be very helpful if the Minister could advise the House and advise the general public how they could access these terms of reference which are available to them.

The other point I wanted to make is that over the years, certainly my few years here but in many years prior, the shelves of government offices are filled with reports, with consultations, results of talking to people, et cetera, et cetera. Certainly, I know that Health and Social Services, that department has done many studies and looked into, and they have many reports on mental health and addictions.

I'd like to know from the Minister why we now need a Minister's Forum on Addictions. We have lots of studies out there. Why can we not use the information we've previously gathered? Have we not already asked and answered the questions this forum is going to ask?

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: I'm not sure that we've asked the right questions. As I indicated in my Member's statement, I think we needed to go back out to the communities. At the very beginning of my position as Health and Social Services Minister, I travelled to, I think, 12 or 13 communities with an attempt to try to travel to all the communities in the North, and a common theme was developing in the communities, and the communities were indicating that they need to find a solution for their addiction issues in their communities. With that in mind, we've developed this forum to go back out to those people to see if they do have the solutions, and they're going to provide that information to the forums.

MS. BISARO: I appreciate that maybe we haven't asked the right questions, but I guess I have to go back to the information that we already have. Has the Minister done an analysis of all the reports which have been done over, say, the last 10 years, which would be full of answers to probably very similar questions? It makes me wonder what is so different about this particular forum, about the questions that we're answering right now. Do we know that we have not asked these specific questions before?

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: I guess there are various ways that a department can go about collecting information and the most recent information in the field of addictions, things do change. There are up and down issues and trends on addictions and so on.

The main thing that we want to focus in on is alcohol. This is an alcohol forum. There is no indication to me from the Department of Health and Social Services that we had reports specific to the state of alcohol in the communities. We felt that right now is a good time to go out there and gather that information and see what the people have to say about how they wish to work in this area. There was no indication that the people were asked in the past on what they would do to combat the issue of alcohol in their communities.

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

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I struggle with the fact that we're going to go and ask people. The Minister says that we don't really know the state of alcohol. I think we know all too well the state of alcohol in our communities. I think that we need to actually start doing something. I'd like to know from the Minister, come March 2013, when he's got all these answers, what is he going to do in March 2013 to actually implement and start acting on our addictions problem.

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: When we get the information back from the communities, when the communities tell us that this is the solution, then we're going to assume that those are going to be the solutions. One of the best ways that I found in my past to come up with a solution is to go ask where the problem is. This is what we're doing. We're going back to the communities and we're asking them to come up with a solution. I think it's worked in the past when this type of thing has been requested of the communities and the communities want to come up with the solutions. Once the recommendations, I guess we'll call it at this time, are before us, then we're going to take a look at reshuffling some of our budget.

Right now we're spending \$6 million in community counselling, we're spending \$2.2 million in a treatment centre that has a capacity under 50 percent. What we're doing so far doesn't seem to be really panning out for the people. Addictions are not changing. Addictions are, I think, increasing. Now we want to say, well, you give us a solution, you give us a recommendation, we'll try to develop a solution together to bring that addictions issue down.

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

QUESTION 280-17(3):
INCOME ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

MR. NADLI: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Earlier today I spoke about the value of income assistance programs in the Northwest Territories. My question is to the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment.

In terms of where people are at in terms of trying to get the income assistance, asking for help is a big decision for people to make and whatever people might have is to try and maintain their pride. My question is: How does the department ensure that its employees treat income assistance clients with respect and consideration?

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

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to thank the Member for that particular question, because it has been addressed to my attention as the Minister responsible for the income security framework how the clients are treated by income security officers, client service officers. Due to that fact, we've initiated training for client services officers. I believe that's coming up either this month or early next month on how to professionally deal with the clientele. We are very serious about our satisfaction of how we service those individuals, the clients, and we'll make every effort to deal with that matter. If there are any issues from the clientele, please inform our department. We are following through with that. I am glad the Member is raising that issue. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

MR. NADLI: Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the Minister for giving me reassurance that people will be respected and dealt with at least in a respectful manner. Not every community has large industrial-type resource development projects. How does the department ensure the local economy and culture are taken into account in the delivery of income assistance? Mahsi.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mr. Speaker, we are fully aware, especially in those small, isolated communities, that there is not much of an economy in the community, whether it would be a wage economy or business contracts. Those are areas that we have regional representatives, also client service officers focusing on the productive choices. The Labour Market Agreement that we have in place is for those individuals that do not qualify for EI and that require training in specific areas, as well as the Small Community Employment Program that we initiated onto the communities. Those are just some of the program areas that offset the cost of those individuals that want to be trained so they can enter the workforce or labour market. We want to prepare them. Those are just some of the areas that we continue to invest in. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. NADLI: It's encouraging to see that the department is very responsive in terms of meeting the needs of people. This is my last question. It's just a difference between wage economy and also traditional economies of communities and trying to

distinguish the difference between the circumstances of communities.

Do productive choices have to involve training for the wage economy or can the program support people's choices to hunt and trap? Mahsi.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mr. Speaker, it is a mixture where productive choices consist of the wage economy and also we are moving into more of a traditional economy as well. We have individuals that go out trapping. We have assisted them over the two or three months while they are in the bush. We have done so. We will continue to do that, even those individuals that may be on the land hunting and other sources to bring in some harvesting, as well, for the family and netting fish as well. Those are areas that we are embarking on. I for one like to pursue that even further, how we can engage those clientele so they can make those productive choices. Those are areas that we continue to explore. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. The honourable Member for Nahendeh, Mr. Menicoche.

QUESTION 281-17(3):
PRESCRIPTION SERVICES
IN SMALL COMMUNITIES

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I just want to follow up on my Member's statement and ask the Minister of Health and Social Services some questions about the idea of continuous prescriptions. What policies do doctors follow right now in determining how long a prescription will last and how it should be renewed? Is that policy the same under all health authorities no matter how they operate? Thank you.

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

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The department is currently working on the development of a pharmaceutical strategy. It is not moving as quickly as we want. Included in that strategy is the management of pharmaceuticals.

As far as actual policy that the doctors use or any of the health authorities use to dispense or prescribe medicine or drugs to individuals, it should be a standard process right across from the Beaufort-Delta down to Fort Smith.

MR. MENICOCHÉ: The Minister mentioned the pharmaceutical strategy. I'm glad that at least they are evaluating it, but will the Minister review the prescription renewal system and make some changes that work better for smaller communities across the Northwest Territories? Do we have to wait for that pharmaceutical strategy? I think it would be implemented far sooner than the whole strategy. Thank you.

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: If this is an issue, and I believe it is – the Member is bringing this up and we don't want that to continue – I will talk to the department and we will relay the message to the authorities that we need to make some changes so that this type of thing, where an elder has to leave a community to go get a prescription drug, is a common thing that is renewed all of the time. Making them jump through some hoops in order to get a prescription is not necessary. We will address that issue. Thank you.

MR. MENICOCHÉ: I'm glad the Minister is understanding of the issue that is impacting my constituents.

Has the Department of Health and Social Services taken the time to look at the way other jurisdictions handle continuous prescriptions? I believe there will be some useful lessons there. Thank you.

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: The Member may know that our drugs are handled by Alberta Blue Cross. We have gone to them, looked at them and they're a large organization that we deal with. They have made recommendations to the Department of Health and Social Services on how to improve our systems, recommendations that will go into the overall pharmaceutical strategy. I'm not sure if that work included a look on their initial recommendations. They looked at the best practices across the country. For sure, when we develop the pharmaceutical strategy, we are going to look at best practices across the country. Thank you.

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

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I was just wondering if our legislation provides for nurse practitioners to also dispense medical prescriptions. Thank you.

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: Mr. Speaker, I realize that in the health centres, the health centres can dispense drugs but not prescribe. I think one of the things that nurse practitioners can do is prescribe drugs. I don't know the details of that right now. I'm a little bit mixed up on the dispensing and prescribing. My understanding is what I have heard from the health centres is that they can dispense from the health centre, but only a nurse practitioner or a doctor can prescribe. Thank you.

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

QUESTION 282-17(3):
CKLB BROADCASTS OF GNWT
"ON THE AIR" RADIO PROGRAM

MR. MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm going to follow up on my Member's statement today. My questions today are for the Deputy Premier. I would

like to go back and talk about the show entitled "On the Air" that the government had produced with CKLB.

First of all, why are we defaulting on an agreement? We had a 20-month agreement with CKLB and we have only worked with them for five months. Why have we defaulted on that agreement? Is the government committed to getting this program back up on the air? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Moses. The honourable Deputy Premier, Mr. Lafferty.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. CKLB, the Aboriginal broadcasting, is very important to this GNWT, more specifically when we have to reach out to the most isolated communities. There have been other partners as well. There is ECE and also federal contribution towards this. We feel that we need to invest in this area.

With respect to advertising and also the air time, we have contributed approximately \$3,400 a month towards broadcasting. We did continue to do so until March. Unfortunately, due to the reorganization and the Executive communications staffing vacancies, it was discontinued. But we are in the process of reviewing that again. Within the next two or three months we want to start that up again because we feel that it is important for us. Mahsi.

MR. MOSES: I'm not sure, maybe the Minister can correct me if I'm wrong here, but in terms of 20-month agreements – and there hasn't been anything on for the last 10 months except for five months in agreement – that must mean we're five months left into the agreement. So can the Minister confirm with me that we're still in an agreement and that we don't have to renew another one in two to three months? Can he confirm if we're still in the same agreement with CKLB or not? Because if we have a contract with them for \$3,400 a month and we're not doing the programs, they're losing out on funding for their own organization when they rely a lot on other funding. Can he confirm if we're still in the old agreement? Thank you.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mahsi. That detailed information I will need to get for the Members. I don't have that specific agreement, whether it be a year or two, due to the fact that there's been a vacancy, there's been a reshuffle within the Executive department. So we have to postpone that until such time as the next couple months. But it has been up to March 5, 2012. So it's been a few months that we were without broadcasting, but we are committed to returning that with CKLB broadcasting. So we're committed. Mahsi.

MR. MOSES: I believe the program, or the GNWT renewed program had a contract that was supposed to keep the program on air up until March

2013. I'd like to ask the Minister if he would look into that and get the contracts in there to get the program on the air as soon as possible, because our residents of the Northwest Territories need to know what we're doing within our government.

Can I ask the Deputy Premier if he'd be willing to renew the contract to translate the government programs in the five Aboriginal languages so that those communities that speak their own language and listen to their own language are able to benefit from the program as well? Thank you.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mahsi. We'll do what we can to expedite the process. As I stated, there hasn't been a committed individual to take on the broadcasting as we have done in the past, but we are focused in those areas, and with reshuffle of the Executive communication area now, we need to identify an individual that can take on the task again. So we are committing to that.

With respect to the five Aboriginal languages, we need to work with CKLB on what could be delivered in that time frame and also in that area. We have done so, successfully, in the past. Obviously, we want to reach out to our communities too. So it's very important, especially in the most isolated communities where they don't have the broadcasting of television, that there's radio broadcasting in all communities. So, definitely, that will be our approach. Mahsi.

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

MR. MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I believe that Cabinet did receive a letter and a proposal from NCS looking at, in the interim, while they're waiting for someone to take on the host position and host the radio program, that an NCS staff would host the program, working very closely with employees of the GNWT to get these programs and services out to the community.

Would the Deputy Premier look at that option until a suitable candidate from the GNWT is able to take that on? Will he look at that possibility and that proposal and get this show back on the air? The sooner the better, for not this government but for residents of the NWT. Thank you.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mahsi. Within the Executive department, the communication and services, there is a proposal that has been submitted, along with others that are out there with various programs. With respect to this particular proposal submission, it is being reviewed by the department. Again, what the Member is referring to will be taken into consideration and I will be speaking to the Premier, as well, upon his return, to see if we can expedite this process. Once we identify the individual as the interim, what can we do. So those are questions that we need to address with our Executive department. Mahsi.

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

QUESTION 283-17(3):

GNWT HEALTH AND SAFETY CLAIMS COSTS

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to follow up from my Member's statement today with questions to the Minister of Health and Social Services. In my statement I pointed out the almost universal improvement in departmental claims experience, including the Department of Health and Social Services which dropped from 39 percent of claims down to less than 1 percent, but with the prominent exception of our health authorities, including Yellowknife and Stanton and with the exception of the Sahtu, which has stayed very low.

Is the Minister aware of this situation and is it being treated as a priority concern of his department? Mahsi.

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

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, I am aware of the situation. We are doing what we can to address the situation with the extra costs and so on, recognizing that providing health care service in an environment like a hospital is a lot different than maybe other departments that are operating from 8:30 to 5:00. Thank you.

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you. Actually, the hospital is relatively low compared to those authorities that don't have hospitals, but the Department of Health may not exercise individual operational control of the health authority, but perhaps they do. However, ultimately we must hold the Minister responsible for their funding and oversight. So, obviously, the substantial failures here in reducing claims experience have a negative consequence of large penalties that the GNWT must pay.

Can the Minister confirm that helping the authorities control these costs is not only in the interest of but ultimately the responsibility of Health and Social Services? Mahsi.

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: Thank you. Working with the health authorities and the department, there are many strategies in place to mitigate the risk including training staff programs to return to work for injured staff, and also putting in the occupational health and safety committees in all of the authorities to try to address this issue. Thank you.

MR. BROMLEY: Thanks to the Minister for those comments. The essence of the problem here is that the Minister's department has made an exceptional turnaround in the claims experience and yet the authorities are not. I'd like to ask, is this a confusion of lines of authority here? What are the lines of authority to deal with this issue? Thank you.

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: The information I have is that the largest number of claims, not based on change in the percentage, but the largest number of claims is at Stanton where there's a hospital; the Beaufort-Delta, where there's a hospital; Fort Smith where they have a health centre and acute care. So all of those areas have successfully passed accreditation by Accreditation Canada. So they have the standards, they're good standards, they meet the standards and this ensures that there is rigorous safety procedures in place. A big part of passing that accreditation is to have those types of safety procedures in place. Thank you.

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

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Minister, I think, is correct, according to the information I have. Stanton is the highest at 20 percent, but there are others that are high, as well, and the trend of all of them is to go up from five to 20 times the percentages over the last four years.

I'd still like clarity on what the lines of authority are for dealing with this. Is it that the Minister has no authority or thinks he has no authority? What is he doing to exert his responsibility, as the Minister, to get training programs in place that result in the sorts of progress that we want to see?

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: I think I have the authority to make changes here. I have no doubt in my mind. But the housing authorities are working on it. That's the thing. We conduct safety surveys with Workers' Compensation Committee on a regular basis. They do audits on a regular basis with the authorities. I'm not sure this is an issue of authority. I think it's an issue of how to address the problem.

We have a situation where we're providing 24/7 care. You can't go home at 5:00. The hospitals have to keep going. We are in an environment where we're operating 24/7, 365 days a year, and in addition to that we have one-third of all the public service working in the Department of Health and Social Services. The numbers are high and it's something we're aware of. It's something that we are trying to address. We do have discussions with the authority.

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

QUESTION 284-17(3):
FACILITATING DIALOGUE BETWEEN
ELDERS AND YOUTH

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In my Member's statement I talked about a leader, the Great Chief Sitting Bull. One of his quotes was, "Let's put our minds together and see what kind of life we can make for our children." Sitting Bull was a very spiritual man, just like our elders in the Sahtu and down the Mackenzie Valley. I wanted to ask

the Minister, because the elders are very concerned about the way things are going today, that the land is changing, our children are changing, and our children will die if we do not wake up and start talking to our children. I want to ask the Minister of Health in his role as the Minister responsible for Seniors, if he has looked at any type of initiative to bring the elders together from the Northwest Territories to talk about the changes that are happening in the Northwest Territories and to communicate that to our young people.

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

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The NWT Seniors' Society does come together on a regular basis. Many of the communities do have seniors' societies. I think this type of work is something that, interestingly enough, the Stanton Elders' Council is interested in doing. They talked about this in the context of the health of the community and how they have a strong desire to have an elders' conference, bringing all the elders together headed by the Stanton Elders' Council to one central location and having a discussion to talk about this. In addition to that, they've also asked that they meet with our Ministers Forum on Addictions. Once their work is complete, their community work, they want that forum to touch base with them. I'm going to try to make both of those things happen. For sure they're going to meet at the elders' forum and now we're working on putting a budget together so that they can have an elders' conference.

MR. YAKELEYA: I would ask if the Minister would look at working with the Minister of MACA and seeing if they can bring some of the youth down the Mackenzie Valley to sit with the Elders' Council and talk about some of the changes that are happening today.

Life today is very, very hard. The elders are saying if they do not get the message to our young people, our young people are going to be very pitiful in the future. We need to bring this forum together so that the elders can talk to the young people and tell them if you do not smarten up, you will not survive very long in this world. We need to come back with a very strong message to tell our youth that life is very precious and very short. Our elders want to take that role on. Will the Minister look at this?

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: Interestingly enough, I have actually thought about that, trying to bring the youth and the elders together in a central location. I also thought about the logistics of doing something like that and how difficult that could be. I think it's not insurmountable, and I will be glad to meet with the Minister of MACA and the Minister responsible for Youth to see if we can put something like this together.

MR. YAKELEYA: I would ask the Minister if he would have a serious discussion with the Minister of MACA to put together some form of a plan or outline and come back to committee to see that they get the support to go ahead or he could look within the government to make this happen. The survival of our people is at the brink of having our elders tell the youth what needs to happen in terms of continuing on with a good, healthy life in the Northwest Territories. I ask the Minister if he would come back with some form of discussion plan or some kind of plan and say this is what we want to do to pass on the words of our elders to our young people.

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: Like I said, we would on the elders' side and the Elders' Council. I recognize that we need to engage the various seniors' societies across the North to try and put this together and pay for all of this. I need to be able to find the funding to do such a project. Also, if we are going to engage the youth to find the funding for that as well.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. Final supplementary, Mr. Yakeleya.

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I asked the government if they would put the challenge, the same as us, out to our communities, talk to our youth right through this forum right now, in this time, and ask if they would help us get help in our region to support the Minister and themselves and to put a challenge out there so that the youth can also help with this forum. We don't have to do things for them. Let them do things for themselves. I put the challenge out there.

Would the Minister put some form of challenge to the people, along with us to our young people, that if they want to live, they should be working on things like this that will help them with our elders who are waiting to pass on the good words.

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: Certainly, one of the good opportunities for youth and elders alike to speak on health issues and addictions issues is going to be during the Minister's Forum on Addictions when they travel to the various communities across the North. Having said that, yes, I would work on something with the Minister responsible for Youth. It may not mean that we need to get some money together. It could mean as simple as the Member indicates, just challenging them to come to such a forum or conference to have an opportunity to hear firsthand what the elders have to say about the situations in the communities.

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

QUESTION 285-17(3):
GOVERNMENT SUPPORT FOR
WEIGHT LOSS PROGRAMS

MR. BOUCHARD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I indicated in my Member's statement, we do have a situation in the Northwest Territories with a lot of people who are heavily overweight, and my question to the Minister of Health is: What current programs are available to people that are looking to assist themselves in losing weight?

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

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Other than counselling, other types of things including the people like the physicians themselves, dietitians, psychiatrists, mental health counsellors, nutritionists, internal medicine services and those types of things. We don't have any other type of program. We are working with, I believe it's the Alberta Health Services. They are willing to provide some of the modules they use to address the issue of morbid obesity.

MR. BOUCHARD: I was part of that program and the Alberta program and their demand is very high. I think they have kind of limited the amount of use that we have on their program. I'd like to ask the Minister, has the Department of Health in the past funded weight loss programs such as lap bands or gastric bypass programs?

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: There is no indication that Health and Social Services has funded the laparoscopic adjustment band surgery in the past. What I do know is it is not an insured service in the NWT.

MR. BOUCHARD: I'd like to ask the Minister if he would commit to looking into the funding of lap bands surgery to help those people who are morbidly obese.

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: Interestingly enough, I believe that there is an actual cost benefit to this type of surgery in the system. As the Member indicated, all of the reduction in medications and healthier life for individuals and everything, I believe that there is a cost benefit to this type of thing. Weighing those options, I would look into what it would take to see if the system can take a serious look at the laparoscopic adjustment band surgery.

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

MR. BOUCHARD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to also see if the Minister would commit to looking into setting up criteria of who is eligible, along with a complete weight loss program similar to other jurisdictions such as he indicated, in Alberta. Can we have a matching type of program

that will assist our people in the Northwest Territories to have healthy living?

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: I think we can do that. Since 63 percent of the population of the Northwest Territories considers themselves to be overweight or are considered to be overweight, we couldn't do everyone, so I would say that we would have to have some other indication that these individuals would be eligible should this ever become part of our system.

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

QUESTION 286-17(3):
MINISTER'S FORUM ON ADDICTIONS

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to ask some questions further to my previous questions to the Minister of Health and Social Services. The Minister responded to my questions in regard to the Minister's Forum on Addictions that they will go out to the community and ask questions. But I understand from the Minister's comments that this forum is going to communities with a blank page and basically saying, tell us what to do, fill up this page for us. I would like to ask the Minister if in his experience – it certainly is mine – is it better to go with a plan and ask for critical analysis of a plan or is it better to go with a blank page and say fill this up?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. The honourable Minister of Health and Social Services, Mr. Beaulieu.

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: The initial meeting, which starts tomorrow and then will go all day tomorrow and Saturday, they are going to sit down and this is going to be their very first initial meeting. This is a new thing. They're going to determine what is the best method of getting information. It's possible that in some cases they will be seeking a lot of recommendations and a lot of information. I think they're also going to put some stuff together that will provoke discussion in the right direction.

MS. BISARO: I'm still a little confused. The Minister says that they're going provoke discussion in the right direction. Well, what is the right direction? The Minister is saying that he's going to go and ask people to tell him what to do.

My second question to him would be if we're going to visit communities – and I have to assume there's an opportunity for all 33 communities to have input – what if he gets 33 different solutions? How is the forum or how is the Minister going to take these 33 different solutions and turn them into something that we can actually implement and work with?

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: We know that the general right direction is to try to reduce the amount of alcohol that's being consumed across the territory in the communities. That is fairly general. We're

hoping that we're not going to get 33 different types of recommendations or sets of recommendations from the communities. Firstly, we're probably going to go into about 18 to 20 communities. Secondly, there are going to be four or five different groups. I guess, one, two, four different groups that are going to be travelling. They're going to have a little different set of skills that they're going to bring to the table. They're going to have the right general direction, but at the end of the day, each of these groups are going to try to come up with what we think would be the best bang for our buck on each of these areas that are being recommended by the communities.

MS. BISARO: I wish this group luck, because I think they've got a very tough road ahead of them.

The Minister's indicated there is an opportunity for input. I'd like to ask the Minister about opportunity for input from the general public. I'm sure there will be people out there in the general public who would like to provide their opinion, whether or not they meet with the forum or not.

What is the Minister doing to provide that opportunity to the general public? Is there an on-line component to this Minister's forum? Will there be an opportunity for people to e-mail? Any of those things.

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: We didn't think of on-line questions to work in alongside of this forum, but it's a good idea. I'll discuss that with the forum in the morning when I meet with them.

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

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm really glad the Minister has recognized that at least one good idea comes from this side of the House.

The Minister has indicated that once these recommendations are in that there will be a rearrangement or a reorganization of department resources to implement whatever it is we've got coming forward. With the current resources, we haven't had success to date. I'd like to know from the Minister why he expects that we will get success after this Minister's forum without any new resources.

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: I have to think it will be successful or I wouldn't be doing this. I think the success is there because the recommendations are going to be from the communities. When we travel into the communities, communities say government doesn't listen to them. That's what we want to do. We want to listen to the people. We want to listen to all people.

I mean, there's one forum that's going to be dealing with just Yellowknife and Hay River. Because of the size of the city, we're going to try to do a system where we're going to sit down with them and ask

the people on the forum how would they recommend that we go out to try to encompass as much of the community recommendations as possible. Maybe the recommendation will be that for the city of Yellowknife, in order to reach out, we're going to have to do surveys on-line or communications through television, radio and so on. For that reason, I think a solution is going to come from the communities. They should know. They're the ones that are seeing the issues day in and day out and they must have a solution. We'll go out and find that solution and put our money towards that.

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

QUESTION 287-17(3):
MINISTER'S FORUM ON ADDICTIONS

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Indeed, the issue of addictions in the Northwest Territories is a very, very perplexing one, and I applaud the Minister that he is trying to do something. However, I agree with my colleague Ms. Bisaro that we have studied this issue to death.

Minister Miltenberger came to Hay River when he was doing his forum on where we should be spending money and stood up and made a very, very eloquent speech about personal responsibility. Maybe we shouldn't be asking people who are healthy and sober what we should be doing about addictions such as the wonderful people that Mr. Beaulieu has appointed to this forum. Maybe we should go and ask the people who are doing the drinking what the solution is.

Because you know what? In my 17 years as an MLA, I haven't had very many people come up to me and go, oh, Jane, please help me, I have a drinking problem. I'm addicted to alcohol. Where can I get help? My gosh, if one person came forward and said I have a drinking problem, I need help, we'd be so all over them. We have so much out there to help them, but the problem is that the people that have the problem that we're studying as the issue aren't asking for the help. They're more thinking about how can I keep drinking and pay for my house, or how can I sustain my drinking habit and still have a roof over my head or food in my cupboard.

Anyway, sorry. I know I'm going on about this as a Member's statement. I'd like to ask the Minister of Health and Social Services who's on his committee.

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

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: There are 12 people. We started off with 14. I could name them. In Beaufort-Delta we had asked Hazel Nerysoo, Lawrence Norbert, Freddie Carmichael and Ann Kasook to sit

on that and two of them dropped out, Ann Kasook and Freddie Carmichael. In part of the meeting tomorrow we're going to discuss the possibility of replacing them.

In the Sahtu/Tlicho we have Paul Andrew, Marie Adele Rabesca and Charlie Neyelle. I understand that Charlie Neyelle is contemplating not participating.

In Hay River/Yellowknife we have Jill Taylor, Laurie Sarkadi and Frank Yakimchuk.

In South Slave we have JoAnne Deneron, Pat Martel, Dave Poitras and Wilfred Simon.

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Again, I'd like to applaud the Minister. This is a very, very good and esteemed group of people he's pulled together for this Minister's Forum on Addictions. But when we are looking at the terms of reference, could we please, for a change, instead of talking to people who think they know the solutions who aren't living the issue but only observing the issue, could we please talk to people who are actually living the issue? Could we find a way to get them to talk? Because the Minister asks the question in his statement: I want to know what will make people stop drinking and want to live a happy life. That's a very complex question and I suggest we should be asking the people who have got the addictions.

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: Yes, we will pass that information on to the forum. I guess many people on the forum may be listening to us today discuss this, but that can be something that we will put into the system. We will encourage people who are currently suffering from alcoholism to attend the forums. Thank you.

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Mr. Speaker, of course, this public proceeding here is a forum as well. If there are people out there in the communities, in all of our communities that are listening to this and hearing this today and do have a problem with addictions, who have problems with alcohol and want to find a way out, who want to find a healthy, happy life, I want them to not only know they can approach this forum but that they can go to their health centre, that they can write a letter to the Minister or their MLA, they can phone us and they can tell us what they think their solution is to this problem. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: Mr. Speaker, that's a good idea. Yes, I too will encourage that. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. Colleagues, I'm going to remind Members today, I saw six Members going off on their cell phones. There is no cell phone usage in the House. I am not going to name names, but enough is enough. Give your colleagues the courtesy of their questions and listening to what is going on in the House. I am not going to bring it up again. Thank you.

The honourable Member for Nahendeh, Mr. Menicoche.

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I seek unanimous consent to return to item 8 on the Order Paper. Thank you.

---Unanimous consent granted

Oral Questions (Reversion)

QUESTION 288-17(3): BLACKSTONE TERRITORIAL PARK

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I just want to raise an issue with the Minister of ITI. It has come to my attention that there was a letter of complaint written about the Blackstone Territorial Park. Tourists found it in a sad state of repairs. The washrooms weren't working, showers weren't working, trailer dump station wasn't working. When tourists travel in our region, we have to have good park facilities. They do mention that the staff there was very friendly and courteous and tried to be helpful whenever they could, but it seemed that, over time, Blackstone is apparently being neglected for maintenance. I'm sure that the department is aware of it, and that's my first question.

Is the department aware of the sad state of repair as reported by tourists at the Blackstone Territorial Park? Thank you.

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

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am aware of that complaint. We do get a lot of compliments on Blackstone as well, so I wanted to put that out there.

Just last week we approved the meager capital budget for ITI. It did include some money for Blackstone Park, replacement of the kitchen shelter facility at Blackstone as well as a contractor residence at Blackstone. It's a beautiful park. We do need to find additional capital dollars every year and fight for those capital dollars to go into our parks and campgrounds around the NWT. Thank you.

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Mr. Speaker, I am glad it will have upgraded facilities, but the complaint talks about repairs to the current, existing facilities.

What will be done to fix these deficiencies that were noted at the Blackstone Territorial Park? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: Mr. Speaker, before the parks close up each and every year, there is an inventory taken of necessary repairs that are required not just at Blackstone but at other territorial parks around the territory. We do our best with

maintenance staff and contractors to ensure what can be fixed, with the budget that we have, is fixed and repaired before next park season begins. Thank you.

MR. MENICOCHÉ: I'm glad that there is inventory taken of facilities. Is there a plan to fix these deficiencies as they are noted, particularly the Blackstone? Is there a plan to fix the noted deficiencies? I'm not too sure if it came out in the inventory as well. In fact, I wouldn't mind seeing a copy of that year-end report as well. Thank you.

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: Mr. Speaker, I would be happy to work with the Member and get him the year-end status report from Blackstone. To the letter that the Member cited, we have responded, as well, to those folks who stayed at Blackstone. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. Final supplementary, Mr. Menicoché.

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Mr. Speaker, just one more follow-up. I didn't hear the Minister respond to what specifically they will be doing at the Blackstone Territorial Park to fix those deficiencies. Thank you.

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: Mr. Speaker, for that detail, I'll get that from the department and the region. We'll get that to the Member as well. I will let the Member know exactly what we plan to do there before next park season. Thank you.

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

QUESTION 289-17(3):
DEH CHO BRIDGE PROJECT

MR. DOLYNNY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I've had a theme of safety today, so I'm going to continue on this theme with the Minister of Transportation.

As we indicated today, the first day of November, we are hoping the opening of the much anticipated Deh Cho Bridge is going to be happening in this month. As we've heard in our dialogue earlier in some of our capital discussions, we are dealing with some temporary issues as we prepare to go across this bridge in a degree of safety. What I mean by that is we have temporary electrical set up, we have temporary aviation marine lights hooked up, we have temporary navigation, we have temporary accent lighting, we have temporary conduit or conduit that needs to be done. More importantly, we don't have an active or operating emergency phone system. These are all not actively in a final state.

Can the Minister assure that, because these are obviously requirements for safety and for the completion of this bridge, that indeed if this bridge will be open here at the end of November, are NWT residents safe? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Safety, of course, is the number one concern by the Department of Transportation. When we open the Deh Cho Bridge, it will open this month, and I will have an announcement next week to that regard.

We take safety into consideration. There are a number of engineers. We have project managers. We are not going to open the Deh Cho Bridge if it's safe for traffic to cross that bridge.

There are a number of things that will be temporary. We have an electrical contract that we've let and hope to get that work done as soon as the weather permits in the spring.

The Member is correct; we will be without an emergency phone on the bridge for seven to eight months, but there will be a phone there eventually. Thank you.

MR. DOLYNNY: Mr. Speaker, this is going to be our first year of operation, or anticipated first year of operation with this bridge and we are going to be learning lots of new things about a bridge of that magnitude over a body of water, icing, snow cover. If anyone has been down there to see it, it's quite a large angle of inclination, so we could be running into issues of sliding, small accidents and things of that nature. If we run into a problem in our first season of operation, as the Minister indicated, we don't have a phone. There is no emergency phone to call.

What does the department suggest we do if, indeed, we have a problem on this bridge? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: Mr. Speaker, we would anticipate that there wouldn't be any incidents this coming winter on the structure. It's located in close proximity to the community of Fort Providence. If you had an accident on the highway system between, say, Edzo and Fort Providence somewhere near Chan Lake, you're a lot closer to help on the Deh Cho Bridge itself. So we don't see that as a big issue. We don't see that as an impediment to opening the bridge this month. The bridge will open and it will be safe to traverse. Thank you.

MR. DOLYNNY: Thank you. Obviously, these deficiencies or these temporary systems, including emergency phone, were deemed important for engineers to keep it as a permanent part of our bridge. So I'm really at odds as to what are we going to do for our first year, but that leads me to my other question.

Because we're in a temporary state, we have temporary systems in place, we don't have an emergency phone that will be active, we obviously have to carry insurance or liability as a department,

as a government. Would these deficiencies or non-compliance to a so-called final inspection report or a final signing off of the project, are these deficiencies going to affect our liability and our insurance? Thank you.

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: Thank you. We need to celebrate the opening of this bridge this month and we'll do that. As to whether or not having a phone on the bridge and operating some temporary lighting this coming winter will impact our insurance premiums that we pay, that is information that I'd be happy to get for the Member and other Members of the House. Thank you.

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

MR. DOLYUNNY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I think many people are quite curious and I'll definitely have to ask this last question. As we've talked about the final completion, we heard about an RFP that has been issued; we're not sure if it's closed or not. Can the Minister indicate if this is going to be new monies, potentially, that will be asked in the upcoming next budget, or is this something that would be included in the overall project design and scope and budget? Thank you.

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: Thank you. That contract, that would be money that is included in the overall project cost. It wouldn't be new money and it certainly would be included, and that is related to electrical type of work on the bridge itself. Thank you.

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

QUESTION 290-17(3):
DEMENTIA FACILITIES

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions are for the Minister of Health and Social Services. I'd like to just note that many of my constituents work on behalf of elders across the Northwest Territories, and certainly many of them and many of our NWT seniors are concerned about the lack of dementia facilities and services, particularly in the small communities.

So I'd like to start by asking the Minister when will full dementia facilities be available in small community health facilities across the NWT. Thank you.

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

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Department of Health and Social Services recognizes that we don't have the facility to match all the situations in the Northwest Territories in the appropriate locations. So we're developing a system called Continuum of Care for Seniors, and

within that care we are looking at, first, all the possibilities of keeping individuals in their home as long as possible; secondly, working with the NWT Housing Corporation to develop assisted living inside the senior citizen's home that they own and operate; thirdly, going into long-term care at the regional levels; then lastly, there are 132 people that have been placed in the last three years and 19 of them were appropriate for placement in the dementia centre. So there are only 24 beds in there – we recognize that – and 19 of them were placed in the last three years. Thank you.

MR. BROMLEY: Thanks for the comments from the Minister. Obviously, most of those don't deal with dementia, but the last category is certainly the one we're focusing on here today. The Territorial Admissions Committee makes decisions about placement of older adults – and I have no doubt that's what the Minister was referring to there – and they make decisions to ensure they get placed where there is proper care. However, if there are facilities that are not being used, they're in danger of making poor decisions. In fact, just such a situation exists in Fort Smith, where we have spent \$6 million to open a wing and yet we have nobody to staff it. So, no use of those beds.

So my question is: How can this happen and what's being done to correct it immediately, given the demand we have out there? Mahsi.

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: Thank you. There are 15 people on the overall waiting list for long care treatment. Right now we have five people on the waiting list to go into the Territorial Dementia Centre. That's just added information.

I think that we need to use the units in Fort Smith. I recognize that people that need care because of cognitive issues are in the Northern Lights Home right now in Fort Smith, but to build a new wing and not have the money to operate it is not acceptable. We're going to come back to the government as a department to try to get money to continue or expand the operations of that wing. Thank you.

MR. BROMLEY: Thanks to the Minister for those comments. Indeed, it is a principle to try and place people as close to home as possible, obviously, when we have a facility, but no way of operating it that's not happening. So I appreciate the Minister is going to do something about this. My next question is when? Thank you.

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: I will start discussion with the authorities across the Territories immediately. I am in constant communication with the Joint Leadership Council through the chairs and the public administrators of all of the authorities across the territory. A dementia authority, yes, it is needed. It's often a territorial resource. So I'll discuss it with all of them in my next meeting, which I have scheduled for late January. We'll start the discussions on how we could get the dementia

centre, or the six-unit wing in Fort Smith operational as soon as possible. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. The Member for Inuvik Boot Lake, Mr. Moses. I'm sorry; Mr. Bromley.

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. That was three questions. I wonder if I could just get my fourth one in.

MR. SPEAKER: I'm sorry, Mr. Bromley. Yes, short supplementary. Go ahead.

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thanks again to the Minister. I'm still shaking my head over this \$6 million and now we have to go discuss it with a bunch of people on whether to make this operational or not, given the demands on our infrastructure dollars. I'm shaking my head.

My last question is: Are other regions in the NWT in the same situation as this Fort Smith facility? Thank you.

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: Thank you. No, there's no other area in long-term care, dementia or assisted living where there are units that are vacant that are ready to be used. There could possibly be units that are vacant that are not ready to be used at this time. Thank you.

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

QUESTION 291-17(3): DETOXIFICATION FACILITIES

MR. MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions today are on the Minister of Health and Social Service's Minister's statement that he made today. Obviously, it's sparked a lot of concerns and questions on this side of the House in question period today.

In the statement that he made earlier, he made reference to the government offers addictions counselling through community wellness workers, mental health workers. Then he mentions detox programs. That caught my attention.

Can the Minister tell me what these detox programs are, where they are, and can he give me a specific example other than the emergency rooms and the jail cells? Thank you.

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

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Detox is available in the two hospitals that we operate, Stanton Territorial Hospital and the Beaufort-Delta Regional Hospital. There is also, I think, a capability of an individual to go through detoxification in the larger health centres. Thank you.

MR. MOSES: I'd like to ask the Minister how many detox beds does this territory have to help clients that are in need; the number of beds for our 45,000 population here in the territory. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: One bed in each facility comes to mind, but I don't have that information with me. Thank you.

MR. MOSES: That sounds like two detox beds for a situation that we have that's very disastrous in the Northwest Territories under mental health and addictions, specifically alcohol abuse. In the statement, the Minister goes on and talks about a territorial treatment centre, followed by saying that we support communities and NGOs to provide community-based programs, and then he says, and send people to southern Canada to attend treatment programs. What's wrong with the one we have here in the North? In fact, Mr. Speaker, I believe that our Territorial Treatment Centre is only about 50 percent accommodated at best. I want to ask the Minister why we send clients south when we have a Territorial Treatment Centre that's not always fully occupied. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: Sometimes there's a specialized treatment that's not available at Nats'ejee K'eh. However, in order for an individual to get a southern placement, they have to go through a process. That's a process that's usually initiated at the community level and then goes through some form of either a regional health and social services authority or through the department. Although I don't know the details on how people end up in southern treatment, I do know that it is a process and usually the placement is first. If somebody wants to go to residential treatment, the placement would be first at Nats'ejee K'eh. If they can't provide what's necessary for that individual to stop drinking or stop using drugs, they would then be placed in the South. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. Short, final supplementary, Mr. Moses.

MR. MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Minister goes on and says it's a simple question with complicated answers. I can find some simple answers here. We need a detox centre and beds. We need a culturally appropriate treatment centre, mental health workers, and we need to decrease the days needed for people to be sober to gain access to these treatment centres. We also need early childhood programs.

I'd like to ask the Minister, in his discussions in the region, what's the cost for the Minister and his staff to hold these discussions in the region, because our service providers that are struggling would really like to know what that cost is going to be. Thank you.

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: I'm assuming that the Member is asking about the cost of me and my staff.

---Interjection

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: The forum? It costs \$300,000. That's our budget and we will be getting the money from the federal government to cover the cost. Thank you.

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

QUESTION 292-17(3):
SAHTU SOCIO-ECONOMIC FUNDING

MR. YAKELEYA: Mr. Speaker, I want to ask the Minister of ITI a question. Yesterday he talked about oil and gas exploration in the Sahtu that potentially could happen in the Good Hope, Tulita and Norman Wells area. What is his department doing with regard to dealing with the potential impact of the recent interest of the exploration in that area?

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

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. ITI is leading the Government of the Northwest Territories in the preparation of current and future oil and gas development in the Sahtu. We're working with other departments on advancing on a government-wide approach. We've done that.

We've also helped coordinate the preparedness session that both the Member and I attended in Norman Wells in September. We certainly are looking forward to working with other stakeholders in the Sahtu to advance the interest of the communities there and the opportunities that are going to come. Thank you.

MR. YAKELEYA: The Minister and I did attend the exploration readiness session. One of the issues that the communities talked about was the past Mackenzie Gas Project Socio-economic Development Fund of \$500 million that the federal government was holding to deal with the impacts.

I want to ask the Minister, is there any way that he's working with the Sahtu leadership to ask the federal government if they would release the Sahtu portion to deal with the interest of the oil and gas exploration that could and is happening in the Sahtu region regarding some of the issues we are talking about today.

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: That \$500 million socio-economic money was tied to the Mackenzie Gas Project. When we were in Norman Wells in September, there was some discussion about asking the federal government that what-ifs with what's going on in the Sahtu. Could the federal government look at supplying some socio-economic

money to the Sahtu given what's happening there? That is a good question, Mr. Speaker. My belief is that things will continue to progress in the Sahtu. That money was tied to a pipeline and I still believe firmly that both Mackenzie gas in the Beaufort-Delta and gas that's going to be produced from the shale oilfield west of Norman Wells and Tulita will reach market via a new pipeline. I do believe that will happen

MR. YAKELEYA: Can the Minister make a good case argument to the federal government that this \$500 million can be tied to the development, and possibly look at the Sahtu as being zoned or designated as a special economic area that the federal government can release this \$500 million?

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: I believe that things are going to continue to progress. Those types of discussions will undoubtedly take place with the federal government. We are still relatively in the early days of the development in the Sahtu with the shale oil and the large volumes of gas that would come out of that as well. I do believe it's good to start talking about these things. It's good to get out in front of them, but certainly as the resource is proven up, if it's going to get into commercialization, those are discussions that need to happen. They need to happen with the federal government and our government and the folks in the Sahtu. Thank you.

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

MR. YAKELEYA: The increase of the development of the Sahtu, you know we're early in the development. We are spending just over \$630 million in exploration. Of course, there are a lot of social impacts that are going to happen with that money and the development we are talking about today. We need that money.

I want to ask the minister if he can work with his colleagues to make a strong argument to the federal government so that they can release some of the dollars, all of these dollars to the Northwest Territories to help us with the social impacts of oil and gas development. We need that. Can I ask the Minister to give me a commitment to go to Ottawa and make a strong argument with the Sahtu leadership or Cabinet saying, release that \$500 million, Mr. Harper?

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: ITI will continue to work with other departments in government to ensure that the social impacts of development in the Sahtu are addressed. We've done that. We've been leading the discussions with other departments. Undoubtedly, it is going to have an impact on other areas of our government's operations, so it's important that we stay on the same page, that we're communicating with other departments on what's happening there. We've done that this past year

with what's happening there this winter. Those discussions will continue to take place.

As I mentioned earlier, the \$500 million was attached to the beginning of the construction of the Mackenzie Gas Project, tied to a pipeline. I do think eventually we will see a pipeline built in the Mackenzie Valley. Whether or not we can start those types of discussions with the federal government on advancing those types of socio-economic dollars, we have to really get in and prove up the resource that's in the Sahtu. Every day that goes by, we have a more compelling story to tell the federal government. I think time will tell and it's going to be a good story that's going to be written in the Sahtu. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. Colleagues, I'm going to call a 15-minute recess.

---SHORT RECESS

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Dolyunny.

QUESTION 293-17(3):
SOLAR POWER GENERATION
AND NET METERING

MR. DOLYUNNY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We've heard in this House and we've heard from the Minister of Environment and Natural Resources, there's a lot of green initiatives out there, a lot of energy initiatives, but most importantly, solar. We keep hearing about solar and getting people to think about adding solar panels to their houses and really take that step forward in the 21st Century to be energy smart.

My question will be for the ENR Minister in terms of solar panels pertaining to net metering. Can the Minister explain to the House what is meant by the term net metering? Thank you.

MS. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Dolyunny. The honourable Minister of Environment and Natural Resources, Mr. Miltenberger.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. What is in place in the Northwest Territories, we initially looked at net metering and we are going to review this. We ended up with what's called net billing. The basic intent of both those initiatives is to recognize that as people put in their own sources of power supply, the ability to put power back into the grid and get some compensation for creating that extra energy and flowing it back into the grid. Thank you.

MR. DOLYUNNY: Again, this is a great initiative. I think what we're going to need to find out in the House here is, what exactly is this so-called incentive of putting power back into the so-called grid with a net metre? Can the Minister indicate how much money, if I was to make this large investment, \$30,000 to put solar panels onto my house and I want to put power back into the grid,

how much money am I going to get per kilowatt hour by putting that in? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: It would be in the range, probably slightly more than what we would wholesale the price of power. For example, NTPC wholesales power to Northlands for about eight cents a kilowatt. It would be slightly more than that.

MR. DOLYUNNY: The Minister is right; we would actually be paid back. So I do this great investment, I'm spending all this money and I'm actually getting back, by putting power back in the grid by net metering, the Member says eight cents. I believe that number is probably closer to 13 cents per kilowatt. I know we pay a lot more per kilowatt hour. Many other jurisdictions in Canada and around the world have regulations where they pay back to those people who do the investment, and to do these great initiatives and spend their hardworking money to be energy smart and green smart, they are paying 1.5 to two times the value of that kilowatt hour. Our jurisdiction is paying at cost.

Can the Minister indicate to us why we are paying so very little to people who are making a solar initiative? Why is that number so little and what's regulating that? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: There are a couple of issues here. The issue of net billing is coming up for review. The Solar Strategy opens the door for that type of discussion. In the past it was just a single initiative, trying to put some mechanism in place, be it solar, wind, whatever people would be generating energy with that would be going back into the grid, and how would we be seen to allow that integration to occur. In other areas, for example, as we look at geothermal and the possibility of NTPC involvement, what we're looking at is the price of displaced diesel. That takes you into the range, depending where you live, of course, about 33 cents. If people put in solar, in a community for example, or some business wanted to put in a big solar... (inaudible)... that was going to offset significant amounts of diesel, then the debate and the discussion would be how do we buy that power back and what's the value of it. Of course, the initial value would be the displaced diesel, and then there would be other peripheral costs like reduced maintenance and all these other things, but the displaced diesel cost would then become the number.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Final, short supplementary, Mr. Dolyunny.

MR. DOLYUNNY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I find it odd that we spent over \$60 million in the last number of years on so many different energy initiatives enticing the average person to go out there and put some solar panels, put pellet stoves in, and when we got an ability as a government, we've got an ability as someone who could actually

give those incentives, we give them back at cost. The profit now is being made by the utility company, and the person who is actually coming forward and making those strong initiatives, they're now losing out money. What's the incentive?

Again, I'll ask the Minister here, when can we see this regulation change so that we can actually, truly have an incentive for solar investment by people of the Northwest Territories?

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: In some cases virtue can be its own reward. If you put in biomass and you put in wind or solar and you're getting free energy, then that's the benefit to you. If you can, in fact, not only get free energy for your own needs and you create a surplus, then that will help cover your other costs and then you start generating a profit.

There is opportunity here. There is an energy plan coming out. There's a Solar Strategy coming out and an energy charrette that's going to be held here in a few weeks. We want to engage in that kind of discussion. The Solar Strategy opens the door for that type of discussion, as does the Biomass Strategy. There are rebates and incentives already in place. If the Member has further suggestions, or committee does, that's the very type of discussion we want to get into as we plan for the future.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Item 9, written questions. Item 10, returns to written questions. Item 11, replies to opening address. Item 12, petitions. Item 13, reports of committees on the review of bills. Mr. Moses.

Reports of Committees on the Review of Bills

BILL 12:
AN ACT TO AMEND THE
HUMAN RIGHTS ACT, NO. 2

BILL 13:
AN ACT TO REPEAL THE
CREDIT UNION ACT

MR. MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to report to the Assembly that the Standing Committee on Social Programs has reviewed Bill 12, An Act to Amend the Human Rights Act, No. 2, and Bill 13, An Act to Repeal the Credit Union Act, and wish to report that Bills 12 and 13 are now ready for consideration in Committee of the Whole.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Moses. Item 14, tabling of documents. Item 15, notices of motion. Mr. Bouchard.

Notices of Motion

MOTION 18-17(3):
APPOINTMENT OF TWO MEMBERS TO THE
HUMAN RIGHTS ADJUDICATION PANEL

MR. BOUCHARD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I give notice that on Monday, November 5, 2012, I will move the following motion: I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Mackenzie Delta, that the following persons be recommended to the Commissioner of the Northwest Territories for appointment as members of the Human Rights Adjudication Panel, effective November 5, 2012, and for a term of four years:

Mr. Lou Sebert of Fort Smith; and

Mr. Sheldon Toner of Yellowknife.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Bouchard. Item 17, motions. Ms. Bisaro.

Motions

MOTION 17-17(3):
ESTABLISHMENT OF NORTHERN
SEARCH AND RESCUE BASE,
CARRIED

MS. BISARO: WHEREAS Canada's three northern territories encompass a vast, sparsely inhabited expanse of land and waters that is subject to a very harsh climate;

AND WHEREAS our climate is changing two to four times faster than in the South, and impacts, including increasing numbers and severity of so-called natural disasters, put residents and visitors alike at risk;

AND WHEREAS Arctic sovereignty is a stated priority of the Prime Minister of Canada;

AND WHEREAS there has been a substantial increase in commercial air traffic over polar routes since the 1990s, with the number of annual flights now exceeding 10,000;

AND WHEREAS every minute counts during a search and rescue operation;

AND WHEREAS all present Department of National Defence search and rescue operations are based in southern Canada;

AND WHEREAS a search and rescue base located in the North would greatly reduce the time required to reach people in distress;

AND WHEREAS the NWT economy is growing, with resulting increases to the numbers of workers regularly travelling to remote sites, and the numbers of tourists, thereby increasing the population at risk of a major incident requiring search and rescue;

AND WHEREAS Northerners are Canadians too and deserve the same levels of service as other Canadians in an emergency situation on the land;

NOW THEREFORE I MOVE, seconded by the honourable Member for Deh Cho, that this Legislative Assembly strongly urges the Government of Canada to establish a search and rescue base in a central location north of the 60th parallel.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. To the motion. Ms. Bisaro.

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I bring this motion forward because I believe strongly that there needs to be a search and rescue base north of 60. I've lived in the North over 40 years, and as long as I've been here, Northerners have been talking about the need for a search and rescue base in the North.

All Northerners from the High Arctic to the 60th parallel are a long way from any dedicated rescue facility. Unlike southern Canada, a Northerner in distress or lost on the land is literally many hours away from the beginning of a search and rescue operation, and the further north the emergency, the longer it takes for a search party or rescue team to get to the search area.

Our land is vast up here and our climate is harsh. It only makes sense to locate a search and rescue base closer to the huge land mass that is the North.

There are three search and rescue regions in Canada. At this time, NWT is part of the Trenton rescue region, the largest rescue region of the three, and we are serviced by a Canadian Forces base in Trenton, Ontario, three provinces away and a long way south. We are the area of Canada furthest removed from the nearest search and rescue base. The Yukon is served by Victoria. Much of Nunavut is served by Halifax. We are served by Trenton in southern Ontario.

Not many people up here to get into trouble you say? That's true. Our population is small, but we Northerners deserve the same standard of service as Southerners. As well, many, many people fly over our heads every day of the year. Since 1998, increasing numbers of aircraft are using a polar route to travel from North America to Asia and vice versa. Airlines have recognized that travelling over the top is the most efficient route in terms of both time and fuel. It's estimated that some 11,000 passengers a day pass over the North via one of the four polar air routes.

Should just one of these airliners go down, 300 to 350 people will be at grave risk, unprepared for the cold and the isolation, and many hours from any help. The number of airline flights is only increasing every year, putting more and more people at risk every year. A search and rescue base in the North would get to these downed passengers much

faster. It would mean fewer lives at risk, fewer lives lost.

Northerners, by our very nature, like to spend a lot of time on the land. Many tourists and visitors to our territory are also outdoor enthusiasts. It is, unfortunately, all too common for hikers, hunters, travellers on the land to have mechanical difficulties, to lose their way or otherwise get into trouble. Why should Northerners be at greater risk to life and limb than Southerners just because a search and rescue base is a long way off?

As Premier McLeod stated at the recent announcement by Discovery Air/Airbus Military: "Ensuring the safety of our people, particularly when they are travelling on the land, sea or rivers, is a key part of sustaining our communities and Canada's presence in the North. Residents and visitors need to be confident that if an emergency arises, they will receive protection and support."

Northerners can be much more confident of that protection with a search and rescue base in the North.

Also at that same announcement, Brian Semkowski, the chief executive officer of Discovery Air, stated: "By basing aircraft in the North and designating them as dedicated SAR assets, we believe Canada will be in an excellent position to respond to incidents in the North."

The bottom line is that in an emergency, especially in our northern winter, every second counts. This motion asks the House to petition Canada to establish a search and rescue base north of 60. I hope all Members agree with me that it is time to make that change, and I urge my colleagues to vote in favour of this motion. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. To the motion. Mr. Bromley.

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will be supporting this motion and I want to underscore and support my colleague and thank her and second her for bringing this motion forward. The search and rescue is, obviously, critical and timing is of the essence.

As many of us know – not all of us – it used to be that search and rescue was done pretty much by local providers, air charter services, people with knowledge of travelling on the land and so forth. Over time it sort of became a more bureaucratic approach and things were based further and further away. Finally, far to the southeast of Canada. This is undoubtedly at a cost to the being rescued as well as the financial costs, perhaps. So there is a real need to establish a base in the North.

We know that with the opening up of the passage through the Arctic, cruise ships are becoming more popular in that area and these ships often have passengers that number above the total

accumulated number of people in our northern communities. Should an event happen with them as happened in Italy and so on, obviously it would be quite disastrous and we would really need those resources close to hand.

I myself have benefitted from search and rescue, local search and rescue in the past, my distant past, an experience that I will never forget, a traumatic experience. I want to acknowledge Rocky Parsons, a local pilot at the time supported by a member of the Lutselk'e band, and I don't doubt that there are others in the House today who have also benefited from search and rescue or participated in the delivering of search and rescue.

We need a base in the Northwest Territories, somewhere in the North. Even so, it could be hours away from those needing search and rescue. So let's at least provide that minimum level of service, and I will join my colleagues in asking this House to request that Ottawa ensure that this base is established in the North, in the Northwest Territories. Mahsi.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Bromley. To the motion. The seconder of the motion, Mr. Nadli.

MR. NADLI: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I, too, support this motion. The air industry in the Northwest Territories is fairly well established and they have the capacity, therefore, I feel very confident that they could provide a very key and critical service that is very clearly evident and needed here in the Northwest Territories.

The public safety, of course, is the highest principle in ensuring that we're all safe and that we're confident that if something does happen, there are people out there that will be quite capable and ready to provide a service that is sometimes based on time. Having a search and rescue base here in the North would really provide a timely operational safety net to ensure the public safety is always the foremost in our priorities.

I see this as an operational step. It will, indeed, establish a northern star almost, a beacon of hope, a beacon of light for people that travel through the Northwest Territories. At the same time, we always have to be prepared that accidents, major catastrophes, at the same time people have been lost out on the land, it's always something that we try to avoid, but it does happen from time to time. If that happens, time is critical and having a base here in the Northwest Territories we'll, indeed, be in the position to save lives.

Therefore, I support this motion and encourage my colleagues to do the same. Mahsi.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Nadli. To the motion. Mr. Dolynny.

MR. DOLYNNY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I, too, will be speaking in favour of this motion. As we

heard, time is everything, every minute counts and as we've heard, every second counts. Who better to understand the needs of Northerners than Northerners themselves, and Northerners are better able to handle northern emergencies. Anyone who has watched NWT Ice Pilots or any of our shows and watch our DC-3s in action across the North know very well the intricacies of flying in the North – wind shear, different temperatures, the harshness that we have to experience – and it is only through that type of knowledge of the land and of our air that these are the critical advantages for those who are deeply at risk, who are our own people.

We've heard about issues with air and water and with the larger planes, the longer routes and the more complex air traffic system that we're going to encounter over the next number of years. This is a bigger issue and even a bigger rationale for having a northern depot for search and rescue.

Sea ice is disappearing. This is a common fact, we know that, due to climate change. This will also open up new tourism. This will also open up more routes, larger routes for transportation of goods and services. Even more rational reason that a northern search and rescue is going to be a vital, critical piece of infrastructure for the safety of all Northerners. So I will be speaking in favour of this motion. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Dolynny. To the motion. Mr. Menicoche.

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I, too, am rising in support of this motion and I'll certainly be voting in favour of it. In a time when we're talking about devolution and decentralization, a search and rescue base in the North only makes sense, and in fact the federal government, it has been said, is paying a lot of attention to the North. So here is another way that they can continue with the North as a priority. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. To the motion. Mr. Yakeleya.

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'll be supporting this motion. Hopefully this motion will give some strength to the powers that be in this House in that they go down to Ottawa on every chance and talk to the people in Ottawa as to why we need to have northern rescue operations in the Northwest Territories.

We have a vast region. My colleague talked about Nunavut being served from Halifax, the Northwest Territories from Trenton, and the Yukon from BC and Vancouver. We need to get together with the other provinces and look at a northern operation that will serve the northern territories. So hopefully this strong message will start to trickle down to the powers that be in Ottawa to show that the North is

waking up and that we need a system like this in the Northwest Territories to help our people.

So I'll be supporting this motion. Hopefully this motion will give some power to the Cabinet to talk to their colleagues when they have their federal and territorial Ministers' meeting.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. To the motion. Mr. Moses.

MR. MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to thank Member Bisaro and Member Nadli for bringing this motion to the floor. I rise to support the motion as well. All of my colleagues have made really good causes as to why we need this type of service in the Northwest Territories that would provide services to our circumpolar region.

Once again, I thank the Members for bringing this motion to the floor and I support the motion as well. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Moses. To the motion. Deputy Premier, Mr. Lafferty.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Since this is a direction to the federal government, the Cabinet will have a free vote on this particular motion. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. I'll allow closing remarks to Ms. Bisaro on the motion. Ms. Bisaro.

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'll be brief. I really want to thank all my colleagues for their very thoughtful remarks and for their support. This motion goes to the need for a much needed facility, much needed resources located where it should be, north of 60. So I would like to again thank my colleagues and I would ask for a recorded vote. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. To the motion.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

RECORDED VOTE

MR. SPEAKER: Question has been called. All those in favour, please stand.

CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Mercer): Ms. Bisaro, Mr. Nadli, Mr. Menicoche, Mr. Moses, Mr. Bromley, Mr. Yakeleya, Mr. Bouchard, Mr. Beaulieu, Mr. Miltenberger, Mr. Lafferty, Mr. Ramsay, Mr. Dolynny.

MR. SPEAKER: All those opposed, please stand. All those abstaining, please stand. In favour, 12; nays, zero; abstentions, zero. The motion is carried.

---Carried

Item 16, notices of motion for first reading of bills. Mr. Miltenberger.

Notices of Motion for First Reading of Bills

BILL 17:
SUPPLEMENTARY APPROPRIATION
(OPERATIONS EXPENDITURES),
NO. 2, 2012-2013

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I give notice that on Monday, November 5, 2012, I will move that Bill 17, Supplementary Appropriation (Operations Expenditures), No. 2, 2012-2013, be read for the first time. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Item 18, first reading of bills. Item 19, second reading of bills. Item 20, consideration in Committee of the Whole of bills and other matters: Bill 5, Legal Aid Act; and Bill 7, An Act to Amend the Judicature Act, with Mrs. Groenewegen in the chair.

Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters

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

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Madam Chair, I move we report progress.

---Carried

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Thank you. I will now rise and report progress.

MR. SPEAKER: Can I have the report from Committee of the Whole, Mrs. Groenewegen?

Report of Committee of the Whole

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Your committee would like to report progress. Mr. Speaker, I move that the report of Committee of the Whole be concurred with. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. Do we have a seconder to the motion? Mr. Moses.

---Carried

Item 22, third reading of bills. Mr. Clerk, orders of the day.

Orders of the Day

CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Mercer): Mr. Speaker, there will be a meeting of the Standing Committee on Priorities and Planning at the rise of the House today.

Orders of the day for Friday, November 2, 2012, at 10:00 a.m.:

1. Prayer

2. Ministers' Statements
3. Members' Statements
4. Returns to Oral Questions
5. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery
6. Acknowledgements
7. Oral Questions
8. Written Questions
9. Returns to Written Questions
10. Replies to Opening Address
11. Petitions
12. Reports of Standing and Special Committees
13. Reports of Committees on the Review of Bills
14. Tabling of Documents
15. Notices of Motion
16. Notices of Motion for First Reading of Bills
17. Motions
18. First Reading of Bills
 - Bill 15, An Act to Amend the Human Rights Act, No. 3
 - Bill 16, Supplementary Appropriation Act (Infrastructure Expenditures), No. 2, 2012-2013
19. Second Reading of Bills
20. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters
 - Bill 5, Legal Aid Act
 - Bill 7, An Act to Amend the Judicature Act
21. Report of Committee of the Whole
22. Third Reading of Bills
23. Orders of the Day

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Clerk. Accordingly, this House stands adjourned until Friday, November 2, 2012, at 10:00 a.m.

---ADJOURNMENT

The House adjourned at 4:35 p.m.