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The Honourable Jackie Jacobson, Speaker

Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories

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Tel: (867) 669-2200 Fax: (867) 920-4735 Toll-Free: 1-800-661-0784

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YELLOWKNIFE, NORTHWEST TERRITORIES**Thursday, March 7, 2013****Members Present**

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

The House met at 1:31 p.m.

Prayer

---Prayer

SPEAKER (Hon. Jackie Jacobson): Good afternoon, colleagues. Item 2, Ministers' statements. The honourable Minister responsible for the Anti-Poverty Strategy, Mr. Abernethy.

Ministers' Statements

MINISTER'S STATEMENT 41-174):
ANTI-POVERTY STRATEGY

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Mr. Speaker, to live in poverty in Canada is to live with insufficient and often poor quality food. It is to sleep in poor quality and/or unaffordable housing, in homeless shelters, or on city streets and parks. It means making difficult and painful decisions on a daily basis involving trade-offs, whether to pay the rent or feed the kids, pay the electric bill or go to the dentist, buy a new bus pass or forego socializing with friends. To live in poverty is also to be at greater risk of poor health, family or neighborhood violence, and a shorter lifespan. It is to be unable to participate fully in one's community and greater society. It is to suffer great depths of anxiety and emotional pain.

When our government was elected, we set a goal of helping our residents become and stay healthy, educated people free from poverty. Since then, Ministers have stood in this House many times to talk about initiatives that will help us reach that goal. Our Premier and Finance Minister laid the groundwork. Early in our mandate they established a sustainable approach to making our territory prosperous in partnership with other northern governments. Minister Beaulieu has spoken of supports to people with mental health and addictions issues, including the desperate need for prevention and harm reduction. Minister McLeod has introduced a number of programs that address housing needs, especially the new fair and sustainable public housing rent scales and changes to home ownership programs. Minister Lafferty has spoken many times about our government's support for early childhood development and for comprehensive education programs that get our residents ready to enter the workforce. Minister

Ramsay is leading the development of a socially responsible Economic Development Strategy that will provide all our residents with opportunities and choices. We have made sustainable, vibrant, and safe communities our goal.

Mr. Speaker, all of our goals and initiatives are related. Our government's entire agenda is an Anti-Poverty Strategy. A strong, diversified economy increases employment opportunities where they are most needed. Those opportunities come from investments in education and early childhood development. All of this work has the goal of reducing and preventing poverty throughout the NWT.

This is, and will always be, a shared effort. Poverty is complex. Although there is a widening gap between those who are prospering and those who are just getting by, poverty is not just about money. It can mean a family does not have enough healthy food. It can mean they have poor quality or unaffordable housing. It always means they have to make difficult decisions about how to make ends meet. People who live in poverty are at greater risk of poor health and violence, and they often aren't able to participate fully in their communities.

The budget that is before the House is the first step. It includes new investments of approximately \$3.4 million in our Mental Health and Addictions Action Plan, in early childhood development, and in helping Northerners capture the benefits associated with exploration in the Sahtu. These are long-term investments, but Members know they start paying off immediately.

As we prepare for the opportunities that will come with devolution, self-government and increasing economic development, we commit to addressing inequalities that keep our people from succeeding in education and the workforce. In partnership with Aboriginal governments, community governments, non-government organizations and others, we are developing a framework that will set out how we will all work together to reduce poverty. This framework will play an influential role in our government's social agenda and will be the basis for much of our work throughout this Assembly, setting the stage for real gains in the next five to 10 years. It will also include a mechanism to ensure long-term continuity of coordinated efforts to reduce poverty.

There is no place for poverty in the NWT. This is the shared belief of many Northerners as well as the individuals and organizations who came together to build this framework. Over the coming months my Cabinet colleagues and I will return to this House to discuss new investments and new ways to deliver programs to reduce poverty in the North. These investments will be part of an action plan based on the framework and developed with Members. We believe in strong individuals, families and communities sharing the benefits and responsibilities of a unified, environmentally sustainable and prosperous Northwest Territories. I look forward to talking to Members about ways to achieve this shared vision. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Abernethy. The honourable Minister responsible for the NWT Housing Corporation, Mr. McLeod.

MINISTER'S STATEMENT 42-17(4):
AVAILABILITY OF RENTALS
FOR CRITICAL STAFF

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Mr. Speaker, a lack of affordable, adequate and suitable housing creates challenges in recruiting staff for the GNWT, Aboriginal governments and for community governments. Staff need homes to live in if they are going to continue delivering the programs and services the people of the NWT rely on their governments for.

Currently, the NWT Housing Corporation has about 90 market rentals in communities and has provided support to communities and other organizations for another 40 units. The NWT Housing Corporation is taking steps that will expand this stock and help to address this issue.

We are standardizing the rents in our units using the same community zone system as is used for the public housing rent scale. In the past, rents were based on individual unit costs and could vary significantly. The new rates are fairer and will give potential staff more certainty about their housing costs. As an example, a two-bedroom unit in Fort Liard will be rented for \$1,250 per month with the tenant paying for electricity and municipal services.

The NWT Housing Corporation is also working closely with stakeholders within the education and health sectors, areas of particular concern, to improve the availability of information on NWT Housing Corporation rentals.

Mr. Speaker, we are also re-launching the Housing for Staff program. This program allows the NWT Housing Corporation to partner with community organizations and developers to expand the availability of rental units in smaller NWT communities. The program was in place during the 16th Assembly, but we have made changes to

increase its effectiveness, including increasing the subsidy provided to developers in the northern part of the territory to reflect higher construction costs. We are also changing the requirement that developers only rent to GNWT staff to receive the subsidy to allow for rentals to Aboriginal and community government staff as well as GNWT staff. These organizations face similar recruitment challenges as the GNWT and this step will help address that, while expanding the pool of potential tenants for developers.

Mr. Speaker, we share Members' concern about vacant home ownership units. We will immediately make these units available for rental in cases where there haven't been eligible clients apply for our Homeownership Support Program. This will use our stock more efficiently and make more units available to staff that deliver critical services. This approach will not impact our home ownership programs, but will allow us to get the most out of our housing stock.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, there are communities where the lack of available housing for staff that deliver critical services is particularly severe. The NWT Housing Corporation is consulting with stakeholders and reviewing each community's stock of rental units, and we will invest to develop more units where they are most needed and no private developer is willing to invest.

Mr. Speaker, these actions will be a significant contribution to addressing the problem of availability of housing for staff that deliver critical services. The steps I have outlined will improve our ability to work with potential staff on housing options and is expected to expand the market rental stock supported by the NWT Housing Corporation by about 50 percent. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

MINISTER'S STATEMENT 43-17(4):
ALCOHOL IGNITION INTERLOCK PROGRAM

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: Mr. Speaker, we know that impaired driving leads to injuries, death, and millions of dollars in property damage across Canada every year. Statistics Canada recently reported the NWT and Yukon had the highest rates of impaired driving across the country in 2012. Ninety-four NWT residents were convicted for impaired driving last year. That number doesn't include administrative suspensions where licences were removed temporarily for blowing over the legal limit in roadside breathalyser tests. The Department of Transportation is taking action to turn these dismal statistics around.

Today I'm pleased to announce the Alcohol Ignition Interlock Program in an effort to make our roads safer. An ignition interlock is an in-car breath

screening device connected to the ignition and power systems of a vehicle. The device prevents the vehicle from starting if the driver's blood alcohol concentration is over a pre-set limit.

Individuals who've lost their licences due to impaired driving convictions may be eligible for early reinstatement of their driving privileges in return for meeting specific requirements under the Ignition Interlock Program. If the registrar approves an application, participants may have an interlock device installed in their vehicle, at their own expense, at a cost of \$125.00 per month.

Participants remain in the program until their driving prohibitions are lifted, unless removed by the registrar or they voluntarily withdraw. Participants must meet licensing conditions imposed by the registrar and show a clean record with no violations for the last three consecutive months to complete the program.

Mr. Speaker, the department is working with Canada's leading provider of ignition interlock devices to deliver services to NWT residents using proven technology that effectively reduces the rate of impaired driving. All Canadian provinces and the Yukon administer interlock programs and report the devices work because they mechanically stop impaired driving before it begins.

The Department of Transportation has worked closely with jurisdictional partners, including Alberta, Saskatchewan, Newfoundland and Manitoba, to introduce this program. The department also consulted with the RCMP and municipal enforcement as well as with the NWT judiciary. The department continues to collaborate with the youth organization, SADD, through its Yellowknife Chapter, to combat drinking and driving in the NWT and increase public safety on our roads and highways. We appreciate the cooperation from our provincial partners, enforcement agencies, the judiciary and Students Against Drunk Driving, whose members are with us this afternoon as visitors in the gallery. They are key partners in combatting drinking and driving and increasing public safety on our roads and highways.

I invite residents to check the DOT website for more information on how to qualify for entry to the program. Our web address is www.dot.gov.nt.ca.

Mr. Speaker, the Ignition Interlock Program demonstrates the department's continued commitment to reduce incidents of impaired driving in the Northwest Territories. Driving is a privilege, not a right, and every person must be sober when behind the wheel. Initiatives such as the Ignition Interlock Program advance the 17th Assembly goal of building sustainable, vibrant, and safe communities by focusing on prevention. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Members' Statements

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON NWT ELECTORAL BOUNDARIES COMMISSION INTERIM REPORT

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Electoral Boundaries Commission is touring the Northwest Territories to hear feedback on its proposals to change the number of MLAs in this Assembly and who they represent. I fear that most people do not know how important this is. It goes to the core of how NWT residents are represented and whether consensus government can work.

I have carefully reviewed the proposed electoral boundaries and they are very troubling. All would increase the very powerful influence on our government to an unacceptable level. It is so obvious that Yellowknife is already represented extremely well by its seven MLAs, and three of them Cabinet Ministers.

Our consensus system relies on a balance between the capital and the regions. All the commission's proposals would distort that balance and exaggerate the divisions between rural and urban ridings that sometimes plague us even now.

The people of Alaska reduced this problem by choosing Juneau as the capital instead of the much larger Fairbanks, and British Columbia's capital is Victoria, not Vancouver. I think maybe we should move our capital to Fort Simpson.

---Laughter

Seriously, Mr. Speaker. Besides boosting Yellowknife's power, every proposal has fatal problems. They all ignore fundamental boundaries, deep historic rivalries, political realities, language and administrative efficiencies.

For example, the proposal for 18 ridings and one of the plans for 19 ridings create a new district made up of eight small Deh Cho, Monfwi and Tu Nedhe communities. Their first language is Slavey, Tlicho and Chipewyan. At least three Dene land claim regions are represented, plus Metis claims. Throw in the fact that transportation links between these communities are poor at best and you have a total nightmare for any MLA. It's impossible to fully represent the people in this proposed riding. It appears that the potential for conflict of interest was completely ignored.

The final proposal for 19 ridings is similarly flawed, so is the one for 21 ridings.

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

---Unanimous consent granted

MR. MENICOCHÉ: The final proposal for 19 ridings is similarly flawed and so is the one for 21 ridings. The latter actually includes nine ridings with constituents living in Yellowknife. That is beyond belief. I cannot support more MLAs for the capital, let alone two more.

In short, each proposal of the Electoral Boundaries Commission is a recipe for disaster. Adopting any one of them will compromise, not improve, representation of NWT residents. Adopting any one of them will erode or even destroy our consensus system. Until boundaries are proposed that are actually improved representation, I cannot support tampering with the current electoral system until, perhaps, next term. I urge the status quo. I also urge all constituents and/or NWT residents who care about consensus government to speak up during the remaining public sessions.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON DEVOLUTION AGREEMENT PLEBISCITE

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. A couple of weeks ago the Premier told us yet again that the signing of the Devolution Agreement is just days away, but useful context is still missing in the information he provides. Yes, the public has had access to a very complicated agreement-in-principle, and we have seen media relations centred on milestones rather than content. There is a website people can go to for information, but it's mostly information going out with no invitation for debate. Opportunities for public engagement have been limited or nil. The Land Use Sustainability Framework consultation came and went, I think; a profile that was so ephemeral that it scarcely bears mention.

When does the full public review and debate take place on the quality of the agreement being unveiled? What will the process for public comment be and how will the Premier ensure a meaningful way to take citizens' concerns into account as we move to set up our own resource management apparatus? Will this House have an opportunity to vote on the agreement? Incredibly, this has never been made clear.

The Members' general support for devolution has been pretty clear. Doesn't the government want formal and democratic endorsement providing for debate and the imprint of consent and validation upon this historic step?

I'm hearing growing calls for a plebiscite. Support for devolution appears strong. The real benefit of a vote would be in the exploration of issues. Nothing would focus public interest and attention so much as an opportunity to take part in a historic decision. If the government really thinks this is a great deal,

and it clearly does, a plebiscite would be an ultimate demonstration of that faith.

The devolution of resource management is the biggest last stage in political development short of provincehood. Although the Mackenzie Valley Resource Management Act, a substantial part of resource management, is apparently missing from the draft agreement, we still have here a monumental historic step. Government leads, but as we move to the next level of political responsibility, wouldn't it be good to take our people along with us?

As we approach a draft final agreement, I will have questions for the Premier on the immediate plans for bringing devolution home.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON HAY RIVER COMMUNITY WELLNESS PLANNING

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My community was very excited to have participated in a community wellness planning session which I had the pleasure of attending in Hay River on January 23rd. Over 200 members of the Community Interagency Group and elders participated in this consultation activity and many important points of interest were raised. It was apparent, early in the session, that Hay River has a number of wonderful things going on, and communication between the agencies and partners needs to be a priority.

During the consultation sessions, various strategies were identified as immediate areas of actions such as community mentorship programs, more youth counselling, more sober family events, more prenatal parent activities, nutrition programs, and support for the existing Lights On Program for youth. Also identified was as an immediate area to address is the need for a community wellness worker to coordinate events, disseminate information, bring partners together, and help the community in cooperatively building partnerships. A community wellness project will not only help the community to access First Nations and Inuit Health Branch funding that Hay River has never accessed before, it will have a much greater impact on the community as groups have made strong commitments to partnership and to work on projects together for the future.

The community wellness plan should also give organizations a clearer direction of the needs of the residents of Hay River. Removing barriers to programs was a clear message heard at all levels of consultation.

Another common theme that became evident throughout the session was that priority needs to be given to reaching out to the most vulnerable members of the community and changing the way we do business. Community members made it very clear that they want to see their front-line workers leave their offices and go to those in need of their services, instead of living the theme you build it and they will come. We know this is not working. The community wants to see its workers out serving clients where the clients are, changing office hours so that government agencies that support these clients are available even after regular work hours. Many ideas and strategies for improving and focusing attention on wellness in the community were identified and the community looks forward to seeing action on these items.

I would like to extend a big thank you to Sabrina Broadhead and the Department of Health and Social Services for their vision and action on this topic. A special thank you to Jill Taylor, chair of the Wellness Planning Session, for her hard work and contribution of countless volunteer hours providing opportunities for our community, especially for the youth and the vulnerable residents who so often cannot represent themselves. This type of action, the community wellness project, helps in making it easier for communities to work together, access funding and move forward, and it is a great step in making our community and our territory a healthier place to live.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON INUVIK TO TUKTOYAKTUK HIGHWAY PROJECT

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We are builders in the North. The North is building itself, and now we are living in interesting times. We just completed the Deh Cho Bridge and we're nearing completion of the Devolution Agreement. Now our eyes are focused on the Mackenzie Valley Highway. I am pleased to be able to provide my support for the Mackenzie Valley Highway and also for the Tuk-Inuvik road.

I know that the leadership in the Mackenzie Beaufort region has worked hard for many years and worked with both governments to make this project a reality. I believe this project will benefit the residents of the region, but I also believe it will benefit all people in the Northwest Territories and Canada as a whole, most importantly for us in the Sahtu. We are confident that if this project is successful, then other highway projects in our own region will follow and also will be successful.

The Inuvik to Tuk highway will provide residents in the region with a year-round link to the South and help reduce the cost of living in the communities

such as Tuktoyaktuk. It will also allow residents better access to health care, education, recreation and other government services. Very importantly, it will reduce the cost of providing such services in the region by our own government. We're all aware that this region is depressed economically and this project will provide an important economic boost. It will establish infrastructure that will stimulate economic development in the region. We all know there are major discovered hydrocarbon resources in the Beaufort Sea, and that a year-round link by road to the Beaufort will greatly increase the likelihood of such projects to proceed.

Economic development in this region will benefit all of us in the Northwest Territories. Having grown up in a small, isolated Aboriginal community, I can acknowledge how costly and difficult it is to obtain the basic goods, supplies and services in our communities such as Tulita, Deline, Colville, Fort Good Hope and Norman Wells. This is why many of us in the Sahtu are extremely supportive of building the public infrastructure, and particularly would like to see the construction of the Bear River Bridge and the Mackenzie Highway.

The recent decision by the federal government to invest this amount of money into the North is unprecedented. It is a sign that Canada is willing to again build infrastructure in the North, and we in the Sahtu believe that if we are successful in working with the federal government to build the Inuvik-Tuk highway, then it will pave a way for Canada to work with us to follow with this project by constructing the Mackenzie Valley Highway.

I seek unanimous consent to conclude my statement.

---Unanimous consent granted

MR. YAKELEYA: Completing the highway and connecting Canada from coast to coast to coast will be a big boost to all Canadians in establishing a year-round transportation link to our Arctic coastline. It will also be a major step to protect our Canadian sovereignty. We think it will lead to further investments in other regions such as the Sahtu.

I am very pleased to be able to support this project. Truly, we stand here and say the North was built by Northerners and will continue to be built by our own people in the future. We have a dream.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON MEDICAL TRAVEL ESCORT POLICY FOR SENIORS

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In the last few weeks, Members have spoken a lot and asked many questions about the GNWT Medical Travel

Policy, and I have another unique and special situation that I want to comment on today.

As NWT residents age, it's not uncommon for there to be an increase in the health problems amongst our elders. It means they access the health system more, and in many cases treatment must be outside the elders' home community and often requires an escort to travel with the patient. The defined age of elders varies considerably in the GNWT and across Canada, but it's generally accepted to be 65 plus. Does our Medical Travel Policy permit escorts for patients 65 and over?

Apparently not, according to the recent experience of a Yellowknife constituent in the elder category. Her health condition required a trip out for treatment. Funding to cover the cost of an escort to travel with her was denied by GNWT health. My question is, should it have been?

Through this experience I've learned a whole new term: policy by commitment. MLAs regularly hear Ministers commit to things here in the House during oral questions and in Committee of the Whole. But what do these commitments mean? If it is a policy commitment, it is not written and recognized as a Cabinet officially sanctioned policy, but it should be considered a valid policy change.

In the case described here, there was a commitment in the House by two different Health Ministers to a policy that residents over 65 years old would always have an escort approved for medical travel for treatment outside their community. Those commitments were, one from February 14, 2007, Hansard, then Minister of Health Floyd Roland stated, "Also, our policy is for seniors 65 and over, a medical escort is looked at. It's not a matter of English or if they are able to move and so on. That's one of our policies. At 65 it's not a question, then, of the condition you are in when you are flown. Just to be clear and on the record, our policy is anybody over 65 does get an escort, under 65 it's case by case and we work with the doctor. We do have that in place, we won't be changing that at this point."

Again, in March 6, 2009, Hansard, then Minister of Health Sandy Lee stated...

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

---Unanimous consent granted

MS. BISARO: In March 6, 2009, Hansard, then Minister of Health Sandy Lee stated, "Our program also provides for non-medical escorts where a patient needs assistance for physical support or even mental support for those who are in particular situations. Anyone over 65 is eligible for even non-medical escorts and for interpretation." Yet, the GNWT Medical Travel Policy makes no reference to this provision, and my constituent was denied funding for something approved by two ministerial

statements. So just what weight does the Minister's word carry?

I will have questions for the Minister of Health and Social Services at the appropriate time. Thank you.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON REAL ESTATE AGENTS' LICENSING ACT

MR. DOLYNNY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Buying your first home, or buying a home in general, will no doubt be the most expensive purchase you make in your lifetime. Many of us use the services of a real estate agent or broker, but because of the uniqueness of the North, and sometimes the limited number of agents available, it would be deemed reasonable for buyers or sellers to often be confused of the role of the real estate agent.

Who does the agent represent, the buyer or the seller? In some cases the agent would represent both and this is what we call dual agency.

Our Real Estate Agents' Licensing Act came into force in 1991 and it provides the basic governance for real estate agents in the Northwest Territories and, in my humble opinion, has not kept pace with the developments in real estate practices. In my analysis, this act does not contain some of the basic provisions found in real estate law in other jurisdictions that respond to increasing trends in real estate practice in Canada.

More importantly, the dealing of dual agency concerns and the protection of owners and sellers under the right of representation disclaimers is entirely missing from the act.

The issue of dual agency can be a problematic practice. That is, how can a real estate agent advise and negotiate two parties in the same deal? Or how can an agent have two masters? This is a valid conflict of interest situation for sure, yet the middle ground to finding resolve within this dilemma can be as simple as the consumer being fully informed, hence the representation disclaimer.

This simple fix within the legislation can allow both clients the understanding and the appreciation of what they might be losing and what they might be gaining by adopting a dual agency environment. In legal terms, dual agents should not operate in a fiduciary relationship with either party, and must treat both buyers and sellers equally. They cannot share confidential information and they must not give confidential advice.

It is evident that we need to look a bit more closely at the Real Estate Agents' Licensing Act so that these potential risks that are created by gaps in legislation can be dealt with in this changing environment.

I will have questions later today for the Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs who is responsible for this act. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON ABORIGINAL PRISON POPULATIONS

MR. MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. When I awoke this morning I was listening to the news, and something that caught my attention – and I heard the report three times – and that was the national report on the Aboriginal prison population that has jumped in the last 10 years. In the report it says that Aboriginals are 4 percent of the Canadian population but 23 percent of all inmates in the correctional facilities. That's very alarming. It also mentioned that 25 percent of them are males, one-third are females and then when you get into some of the western Canadian facilities that number goes up, in some cases over 65 percent.

There's a lot of variables that I was thinking about and some of the presentations and discussions, briefings we had this week, specifically with Skills Canada they talked about low literacy rates that add to these things. Mental health and addictions, which we've discussed and has been mentioned in the Anti-Poverty Strategy, socio-economic factors, low employment rates, family violence, poverty and homelessness all contribute to putting our people into jails, and we can't forget, either, the residential school system and some of our mental disorders that some people in the Northwest Territories have to live with. That kind of goes to something that we've been pushing on the side and the Minister responsible for Justice has actually been working on, is the mental health courts. How many of these individuals go through the system but come back out and continue to go through the system, not getting the appropriate help that they need, or ones that go into the system don't get the appropriate judicial requirements that might get them treatment rather than being institutionalized. Literacy rates all go into effect in terms of looking at filling out forms or applications and possibly not understanding the conditions in which they were paroled. In some cases, that was mentioned in the report as well, that some of the parole conditions some of the Aboriginal people get picked up for are very minor and get sent back to jail.

So some of these things need to be addressed and I'd like to find the strategy, and I've been reviewing the 10-year strategy for the Department of Justice and some of those things are mentioned. So I will have questions today for the Minister of Justice on how we can bring those rates down and help our people in the Northwest Territories. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON ABORIGINAL PRISON POPULATIONS

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Equally, like my colleague Alfred Moses here, I too woke up this morning to the national news where they were piping out this story with a shocking, if not shameful, reality. One story clearly said that Aboriginal people are so vastly overrepresented in Canada's federal prison system that current policies are clearly failing them. I could not agree more with that.

It went on to talk about the gaps in the corrections system, how it's failing Aboriginal people. This is a shame. This should be a call to action, if not a simple marquis of this federal government to say let's correct this, let's set strategies to fix this problem once and for all.

As my colleague Mr. Moses had said, when you represent 4 percent of the national population, it's almost a shame to hear that they're proving the facts that they're representing 23 percent of the federal prison population. Something is wrong. Something, clearly, is terribly wrong.

These alarming facts must be addressed. As a Member of this Assembly I also have a bit of an experience, if not a unique experience, I have a former experience of being a territorial employee who worked for the Department of Justice and I worked in the corrections system. I have witnessed these outlandish numbers of unfair balance whereas Aboriginal people truly are over-representing themselves in the corrections system. Again, this should be a shocking reality that this government wants to wake up to and say, what are we going to do. Perhaps this reality should motivate the Department of Justice to examine itself, its current practices and policies. Again, as a former corrections employee, I can tell you that at least 75 percent of the inmates there were all there because of things that were all driven by substance abuse that led them down that garden path into terrible circumstances. They became victims themselves, not just the victimizers of others, that were punished.

There are numerous options before us and they avail themselves through the courts, but there are more options out there than just punishment and punishment. What about treatment, treatment, treatment?

So I hope this McLeod government realizes, as they continue to cuddle up to the Conservatives, that, yes, there are many options out there besides crime and punishment that just inflicts further punishment. There are other options that are necessary due to certain circumstances. There are

treatment options and there are poverty solutions. They are always a factor to the long-term solution. Don't let us miss yet another opportunity to solve this problem.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. Before we go on, colleagues, I would like to welcome Ms. Emma Ouellette, the daughter of our own Darrin Ouellette. Welcome to the House, Emma. Can you stand up? There you go. Welcome.

Today I forgot, and I apologize to my mother-in-law and father-in-law, it's their 43rd wedding anniversary today. Congratulations to Fred and Edith Bourke on their wedding anniversary. Thank you, colleagues, for taking the time for that.

Item 4, reports of standing and special committees.
Mr. Nadli.

Reports of Standing and Special Committees

COMMITTEE REPORT 1-17(4): STANDING COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS REPORT ON THE REVIEW OF THE 2011-2012 NORTHWEST TERRITORIES HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION ANNUAL REPORT

MR. NADLI: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Standing Committee on Government Operations is pleased to provide its Report on the Review of the 2011-2012 Northwest Territories Human Rights Commission Annual Report and commends it to the House.

Introduction

The Standing Committee on Government Operations has concluded its review of the 2011-2012 Northwest Territories Human Rights Commission Annual Report. The standing committee would like to thank Mr. Charles Dent, chair of the Northwest Territories Human Rights Commission, and Ms. Deborah McLeod, director of Human Rights, who appeared before the committee on February 14, 2013. The committee also wishes to express its appreciation for the long service of the outgoing chair, Ms. Mary Pat Short, and the outgoing director, Ms. Therese Boullard.

2011-2012 Annual Report

Mary Pat Short of Fort Smith, Rita Mueller from Behchoko, Roger Wah-Shee from Yellowknife, Yacub Adam from Yellowknife, and William Turner from Yellowknife were members of the commission during the 2011-2012 fiscal year.

In 2011-2012 the director of Human Rights received 367 inquiries, 57 percent of which originated in Yellowknife. There were 38 new complaints of discrimination on the grounds prohibited under the NWT Human Rights Act. Approximately 71 percent of the new complaints alleged discrimination in their

employment. Disability was with by far the highest number of complaints, 21, as it has been for the past seven years. The standing committee remains deeply concerned by the high number of complaints of discrimination on grounds of disability.

The Northwest Territories Human Rights Commission has done excellent promotional work to inform citizens of their rights and responsibilities. The standing committee is pleased that the commission representatives visited eight communities over the year, and that workshops and audio conferences were offered in regional centres as well as in Yellowknife.

Last year the committee encouraged the commission to maintain and expand its presence in social media. The commission included a Facebook ad in its promotional campaigns this year and saw an increase of visitors to its website as a result. However, Members learned during the hearing that the commission, which uses GNWT technology services, has no access to social media. The committee encourages the commission to discuss access to social media with the Clerk of the Legislative Assembly in order to pursue its educational promotional mandate.

During fiscal years 2010-2011 and 2011-2012, the Human Rights Commission initiated a pilot project in which it became a party to all complaints referred to hearings to the separate and independent Northwest Territories Human Rights Adjudication Panel. The purpose of the pilot project was to ease the burden on self-represented parties by ensuring, through legal representation of the commission, that all relevant information was before the adjudicator. During the pilot project the commission became party to 17 complaints.

The standing committee strongly agrees that the public interest is served by ensuring there is a balance between parties to a complaint. The commission's revenue was reduced in 2011-2012 by \$13,000 from the previous year while legal expenses rose to nearly \$82,000 from about \$29,000. Members believe that the commission should continue to have the opportunity to become a party to complaints referred for hearings and that it should be corporately funded for this purpose.

Recommendation

The Standing Committee on Government Operations recommends that the Board of Management provide sufficient additional funding for legal expenses on an ongoing basis to permit the Northwest Territories Human Rights Commission to continue becoming a party to all complaints referred to hearings before the Northwest Territories Human Rights Adjudication Panel.

When the NWT Human Rights Act came into force in 2004, it was considered to be the most modern

and up to date legislation of its kind in Canada. During the year the commission chair expressed the view that a review of the act's 10-year anniversary would be appropriate. The standing committee reviewed all of the annual reports of the Human Rights Commission, all committee reports, and all the government's responses in considering whether there may now be a need for an overall review of the legislation.

Recommendation

The Standing Committee on Government Operations recommends that the Board of Management provide sufficient additional funding for the Human Rights Commission to review the NWT Human Rights Act in the context of current Canadian human rights legislation and Northwest Territories realities and make recommendations in its next annual report.

2012-2013 Work Plan

The standing committee strongly supports the Northwest Territories Human Rights Commission plans for continuing community visits and employee outreach in 2012-2013. The standing committee again urges the commission to visit as many communities as possible each year and to expand its workshop offerings to smaller communities as well as regional centres. Visits to Wekweeti, Norman Wells, Fort Good Hope, Colville Lake, Inuvik, Tsiigehtchic, Aklavik, Fort Smith and Hay River, in addition to Yellowknife, were planned for 2012-2013 fiscal year.

As planned in the fall of 2012, the commission launched its on-line social studies curriculum guide the Teacher's Toolkit. The standing committee looks forward with interest to hear more about the reception and the use of this resource for northern teachers in future years. Members were also very pleased to hear about the commissions' plans to research and gather anti-bullying resources for Northwest Territories teachers.

The Human Rights Commission also planned to partner with the NWT Disabilities Council in 2012 to offer an award for improved accessibility to physical premises. The award was presented as planned in June, to the Yellowknife branch of the Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce. The committee commends both the recipient and the Human Rights Commission for this important initiative.

Conclusion

This is a year of transition for the Northwest Territories Human Rights Commission. The standing committee offers its thanks for the work of the past commissioners and staff for making the Northwest Territories a better place to live for all of our citizens. Members look forward to working with the present commission and staff in ensuring

human rights are respected and promoted in the Northwest Territories.

Recommendation

The Standing Committee on Government Operations recommends that the government provide a response to this report within 120 days.

That concludes the report of the Standing Committee on Government Operations on the Review of the Northwest Territories Human Rights Commission's 2011-2012 Annual Report.

MOTION TO RECEIVE COMMITTEE REPORT 1-17(4) AND MOVE INTO COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE, CARRIED

Therefore I move, seconded by the Member for Frame Lake, that Committee Report 1-17(4) be received by the Assembly and moved into Committee of the Whole for further consideration.

---Carried

MR. SPEAKER: Item 5, returns to oral questions. Item 6, recognition of visitors in the gallery. Mr. Ramsay.

Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. There are a number of people in the gallery today that I would like to recognize. I will begin with some staff members that we have from DOT's road licensing and safety division. We have Steve Loutitt, Megan Welch and Michael Conway. I'd also like to recognize Kelley Merilees-Keppel. I'm not sure if she was up there earlier or is behind me.

Also, I mentioned in my Minister's statement the Students Against Drunk Driving. I'd like to recognize all the good work those students do. We have a number of them in attendance today and I'd like to recognize them. Shania Clark, Shania Tymchatyn, Alyssa Carswell, Jaida Brunett, Bronson Dolyunny, Erin Pirker, Courtney King, Taylor McCarson, Kate Hall, Danielle Wendehorst, Emma Ouellette – and she was recognized earlier, hi, Emma – Tommy Jorge, Michael Cook and Mallory Beland. Once again, thank you all very much for all the work you do on combatting drinking and driving here in the Northwest Territories, and thank you very much for being with us this afternoon.

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Dolyunny.

MR. DOLYUNNY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to introduce to and through you, again, on behalf of all of the Yellowknife MLAs here – the Minister of Transportation kindly went through all the names – but I'd like to point out I have my youngest son, Bronson Dolyunny, in the House today here. He

doesn't normally come see dad work, so welcome to the House.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Dolynny. Ms. Bisaro

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to welcome to the House a new arts group, just a fledgling arts group. Arts Alliance NWT is here. They are a new group that is starting to get going. I don't believe Brian Collins is here, but I'd like to recognize Brenda Crerar-Lowen, Gerda Hazenberg, Shawna Lampi-Legaree and Constantina Tsetso. Best of luck with your new organization.

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

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to recognize visitors in the gallery representing an array of arts groups affiliated with the NWT Arts Council. Weledeh constituent Constantina Tsetso is here representing the Yellowknife Choral Society. With her are Gerda Hazenberg with the Kole Crook Fiddle Society, Shawna Lampi-Legaree with the Yellowknife Watercolor Society, and Brenda Crerar-Lowen, as we've heard, president of Music NWT. These groups and others are cooperating to create a unified voice to support and broaden awareness of not only the benefits of participating in the creation of arts, but also the benefits of interacting with the arts. Please join me in welcoming them to the House.

I'd also like to join my colleagues in welcoming the Students Against Drunk Driving, especially, of course, our own Bronson and Emma. I believe they're all from Sir John Franklin. Great to see them here.

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

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to recognize two hardworking people that I know from the Department of Transportation: Steve Loutitt and Michael Conway. I would also like to recognize the students doing a great job for getting a good, strong message out in the community. Thank you very much. Of course, I want to mention Bronson, Mr. Dolynny's boy. A good chap. Your dad is working hard, Bronson. And of course, Emma, who has also just been recognized.

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

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. From the list I have, it looks like a couple people were missed. First off, I want to recognize the St Pat's Students Against Drinking and Driving, so the St. Pat's students. Although I'm not sure if Sir John has their own students, but these are the St. Pat's students that I'm aware of. The few that were missed off the list are Ryan Lu and Savannah Lane,

as well as the staff member they have with them is Anne-Louise O'Brien, who I know works very hard with them, and we cannot forget all the hard work brought to making SADD so important, the hard work brought to us by one of the hardworking teachers, Michelle Thoms, who is a St. Pat's teacher.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. I'd like to welcome here Ms. Erin Jelani and Daphne Lamontagne, the office of the Auditor General, and also Ronnie Campbell and Glen Wheeler, who are not in the gallery right now, but for tabling of their report into the House today. Thank you for coming and welcome.

Also, I'd like to welcome all our visitors here in the public gallery. Thank you for taking an interest in our sitting here today. It's always so good to see our youth in here, because you're our future. It's good to see you guys.

Item 7, acknowledgements. Item 8, oral questions. The Member for the Sahtu, Mr. Yakeleya.

Oral Questions

QUESTION 198-17(4): INUVIK-TUKTOYAKTUK HIGHWAY PROJECT

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In my Member's statement I talked about the Mackenzie Valley Highway. I'm looking at two sections. The first one is the Inuvik-Tuk road and, of course, the other one the Minister and I personally had experience on from Fort Good Hope to Fort Simpson.

My question is directed to the Minister of Transportation. If the project is approved by both governments, do you think that we'll be able to get the people in the region working right away? We want to see some action.

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

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Our expectation is, should the project move ahead, that work could start there potentially this season, which would mean people would be put to work almost immediately.

MR. YAKELEYA: One of the things I've been thinking about is the training programs. Would there be training programs in place so that if this project, again, is approved and the project is taking off, would there be training programs for the people to take advantage of?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Kind of a hypothetical question but, Mr. Ramsay.

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We'd be working closely with ECE on any training

initiatives associated with the construction of that highway.

MR. YAKELEYA: Has the Minister had some type of an idea as to when we would know for sure that this project is going to begin some actual groundwork in that area?

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: We're awaiting approvals from the federal government and word from the federal government on funding. As soon as that happens, we certainly will be moving things along.

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

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The winter season is coming to closure and soon it will be warm. Does the Minister have some plans in place, once the federal government has given us the permission slip to go ahead on this section of the road, do we see any type of difficulties due to the warming of the seasons?

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: We'd have to act very quickly in order to see construction start this season. As Members know, we're already into March and the season isn't too much longer. We've probably got another five or six weeks in the Beaufort-Delta to actually get a lot of that work done, so we'd have to work quickly.

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

QUESTION 199-17(4):
REAL ESTATE AGENTS' LICENSING ACT

MR. DOLYNNY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today as a follow-up to my Member's statement on the legislative gaps in our dated Real Estate Agents' Licensing Act as pertains to dual agency. Admittedly, the North is faced with unique challenges where we may have limited agents available to fully represent a given area. Therefore, a real estate agent may be forced to represent both the seller and the buyer. In reality, how can one agent place the interests of two separate and distinct parties first in the same transaction? This is tricky yet not impossible as the proper legislative roles around the simple use of representation disclaimers could still legally protect both the owner and the seller.

My questions today are for the Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs responsible for the Real Estate Agents' Licensing Act. As I indicated earlier, this act provides the basic governance for real estate agents in the Northwest Territories and has not kept pace with the development of real estate practices. Can the Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs indicate why we have not looked at this act since its inception in 1991?

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

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. There were a couple of minor amendments made to the Real Estate Agents' Licensing Act. There was a minor amendment made in 2010, and another minor amendment that came into force in April of 2011. However, the Member is correct; this is a very outdated piece of legislation and it's one that could benefit from a full review. I will weigh this against our other legislative priorities and see where it fits into the legislative priorities of the 17th Assembly.

MR. DOLYNNY: I appreciate the Minister's response. I wasn't aware of the recent, I guess, the changes in legislation and I'll make a note of that. Can the Minister indicate as to what work the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs has done to review the gaps of legislation that are currently in the Real Estate Agents' Licensing Act? Has the department identified those provisions found in real estate law in other jurisdictions and looked at responding to increasing trends in real estate in the Northwest Territories?

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: We haven't started any work yet, as I've said before. This is one aspect that we'd probably benefit from a full review. We look at our legislation based on the basis of risk, and we look at the potential risks and benefits of a number of persons that are affected by legislation, and we do have some pieces of legislation that we're working on right now and we need to weigh that against looking at future legislation.

I do agree with the Member, though, it is one that would benefit from a full review. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

QUESTION 200-17(4):
HAY RIVER COMMUNITY
WELLNESS PLANNING

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In follow-up to my Member's statement today, my question today is for the Minister of Health and Social Services. As I mentioned, many residents of Hay River who are involved in agencies for helping people have been very busy putting together ideas and suggestions or initiatives to continue on our path of community wellness. I'd like to ask Minister Beaulieu, through you, Mr. Speaker, if he is any closer to knowing how much funding Hay River would be getting. Thank you.

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

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I don't have the breakdown by community right here just on the wellness funding, but how we funded the project is, we were looking at the federal funding for community wellness funding. In 2011-12 we carried over \$500,000 from the federal funding to start this project, start to initiate the wellness plans across the communities. This fiscal year that we're currently in, we've brought another \$350,000 into this fiscal year to complete more wellness plans across the territory. Thank you.

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: So I'm hearing \$850,000 in total. How many communities will be participating in applying to access that pot of money? Thank you.

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: Our intention is to try to develop wellness plans for all of the communities. I think there will be wellness plans developed. Even in Yellowknife, it will be more complex, it will be working with non-government agencies. In some communities we just work with one body in the community where it's simpler for us to do wellness plans. But the intention is for us to do wellness plans for all 33 communities. Thank you.

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Mr. Speaker, people in Hay River who have participated in this consultation, were canvassed for ideas for specific initiatives that could be carried out in the community. I'd just like to ask the Minister, wellness plans are one thing, initiatives within those plans is another matter. For that reason it would be really nice to know approximately when this funding is going to roll out. Is there a target date like April 1st? Just so the community knows, because they've put a lot of work into this. Thank you.

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: We get annually in excess of \$12 million from the federal government on wellness funding. So what we're hoping to do with the wellness plans to stay within the confines of bad budget, and as the wellness plans are developed and hopefully we do just a bit of internal movement, and we will be funding the wellness plans as we go. But the intention is to complete the wellness plans and then fund them as they're completed. Thank you.

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

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I think the community wellness plan for Hay River has already been completed. That being the case, I understand it may be ahead of some other communities, but when could Hay River expect to receive funding? Thank you.

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: Mr. Speaker, like I've indicated, I don't have the community-by-community breakdown of that budget, but I suspect that if the wellness plans are completed that on

April 1st they would be able to start funding the plans. Thank you.

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

QUESTION 201-17(4):

ALCOHOL IGNITION INTERLOCK PROGRAM

MR. BOUCHARD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions today are in response to the Minister of Transportation's Alcohol Ignition Interlock Program. I'm just wondering when the Minister and the department expect the regulations to be in place to implement these units.

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

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Within the next three months. Thank you.

MR. BOUCHARD: Mr. Speaker, has the department looked at other regions where they have implemented these units? Have we re-introduced or re-created the program? I know some of the issues that the department had in the past, they've basically created their own system and then we found out there were flaws because we never looked at other jurisdictions. Has the department looked into the other jurisdictions?

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: Mr. Speaker, a great deal of consultation took place with other jurisdictions across the country. I mentioned in my Minister's statement Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Newfoundland and Labrador. In other jurisdictions, they see reductions in impaired driving being reduced by 50 to 90 percent. We are very hopeful that once the program is put into place here in the Northwest Territories that we will see a reduction in impaired driving here in the NWT as well. Thank you.

MR. BOUCHARD: Mr. Speaker, I am wondering if the department has been in contact with some of those people that had the infractions already and maybe they're having to work through Justice, but they informed them that this is a program that is coming forward and will be implemented within the next three to six months.

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: Mr. Speaker, the program will be piloted at first in Yellowknife and in Hay River. We will start things in those two centres and move the program forward from there. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. BOUCHARD: Mr. Speaker, not that it's that important, but I'm wondering, because I think this is an important issue, but not that the cost is an important issue, but does the department have any estimates of what the rollout cost of this program would be to start?

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: Mr. Speaker, I can get that detail for the Member, but for the program

itself, for somebody to enrol in the program, as I mentioned, it is \$125 a month. That's the cost for the individual. Thank you.

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

QUESTION 202-17(4):
CORRECTIONAL CENTRE
TREATMENT PROGRAMS

MR. MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In follow-up to my Member's statement today, and actually I just want to make a little reference to the Minister of Justice, the Minister that's responsible for the Anti-Poverty Strategy. He mentions every one of the Ministers on Cabinet and what they're doing to help address the Anti-Poverty Strategy. That is great because, really, we all have a part to play in this very serious issue when it comes to the high rates of our Aboriginal people in the corrections and jail systems. I do believe that this government is taking a very proactive step, and taking the right steps moving forward here over the last 16 months that we've been working together.

First of all, I have my first question for the Minister of Justice. When an individual becomes incarcerated and he goes to a correction facility, what types of treatment programs, mental health and addiction treatment programs, do the inmates have access to in all of our corrections that we have in the Northwest Territories? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Moses. The honourable Minister of Justice, Mr. Abernethy.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As every inmate comes into the facility, whether they are Aboriginal or not, they have their own case manager who will help develop a tailored plan to specifically meet their needs and identify what programs are appropriate based on their sentence and direction given by the courts. We do have psychologists on staff. We do have drug and alcohol programs and we have access to AA and other programs that are available that would suit the specific needs of individual inmates. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. MOSES: Thank you. All these very great programs that are allowed into the jail systems, we almost have better services in the jails than we do in our communities, which is very unfortunate.

With these treatment programs, are they mandatory to take these programs or are they on a voluntary basis for the inmates? Thank you

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Interesting question. It depends in some cases on the sentence that's been passed down by the judge whether an inmate takes a specific program or not. But regardless, we have a large number of programs that are available

to individuals as they so choose. Our case managers will work with the individual inmates to identify, as I've indicated previously, what might be appropriate for that particular inmate. We have a significant number of programs. I mentioned a few earlier, but within our facilities we also facilitate visits with elders and elders programming, traditional arts and crafts, pre-treatment healing programs, Dene laws, land programming, sharing in healing circles, sweat lodges, smudges, the Healing Drum Society does a number of things for us, we have alcohol counselling, Narcotics and Alcoholics Anonymous, we have reintegration programs that we deal with individuals on as they go through into probation or release into communities. So there's a large number of things. Some of it's directed, some of it's up to the inmates and we work with our case managers to direct them. Thank you.

MR. MOSES: Thank you. I want to ask the Minister, does he see trends in terms of high incarcerations during the season or over the year. Is there any specific time where we see a higher increase of individuals being incarcerated in our northern jails any time of the year? Thank you.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Thank you. Anecdotally, I've heard that there is, and in my previous career that's been suggested. It was usually suggested that we'd see higher incarceration numbers over the winter months, but we're not actually finding that to be the case. We are at some of our lowest incarceration rates in our correctional facilities than we've been at in years. Over Christmas we were down to 121 adults where our capacity is 248. We're less than half. Today we're at 177 adults in our facilities with a capacity of 248. So right now we are at some of the lowest numbers we've seen in many, many years. So those anecdotal trends do not seem to be playing out as they have in the past. Thank you.

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

MR. MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. With a lot of the crimes that we see in the Northwest Territories related to alcohol and drug offenses, would the Minister be looking at possibly developing a policy for our correctional facilities, that anyone that goes in on an alcohol or drug-related offense, that they have to take mandatory alcohol and drug treatment programs during their incarceration to help them heal and to help them get the rehabilitation that they need? Would he look at creating a policy and is there any policy in any other jurisdictions in the correctional facilities? Thank you.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Thank you. I'll have the department look to see if there's any mandatory programming in other jurisdictions, but at the end of the day, making a program mandatory does not mean it will be successful. As individuals are suffering with addictions and other issues, they

have to be ready for the healing journey, and if you force them to take it, you're not going to get positive results. We make the programming available, we have really high calibre, high quality case managers who can work with the inmates when they come into the facilities to help them prepare for a healing journey and make the programming available to them. We've got the programming available.

In the last budget round, Members of the Legislative Assembly worked with us to put more money into programming in the Hay River facility. So we've got a lot of really good programming. Yes, of course, we can always try to enhance the programming and make it more effective, but I'm not convinced that making it mandatory is going to give us results if the people aren't ready to utilize the program and if they're not ready to take the healing journey, forcing them into a program that they're not interested in being will not prove results. People have to take some personal responsibility. We're there to help them. We're there to help them into the programming and get the healing that they need. Thank you.

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

QUESTION 203-17(4):
MEDICAL TRAVEL ESCORT POLICY
FOR SENIORS

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions are addressed to the Minister of Health and Social Services today and I want to follow up on my statement. I asked some questions in my statement with regard to the Medical Travel Policy and I specifically noted two ministerial statements previously made in this House during oral questions, I believe. Both Ministers categorically stated that patients 65 years and over do get a medical escort when they have to travel outside of their home community. So I'd like to know from the Minister of Health and Social Services whether or not that is a policy currently and, if it is not, when did this change? Thank you.

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

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: Mahsi cho, Mr. Speaker. That is not the policy and, from what I understand, it was never the policy. We have been looking at medical travel, we've completed a report on medical travel. We see some issues in medical travel, we're pulling medical travel from Stanton back into the department, but from what I can see, that has never been the policy. Thank you.

MS. BISARO: Thanks. I think I thank the Minister for that clarification, I don't necessarily agree with him, but I have to then ask the Minister when we have two previous Ministers of Health who have

stated that 65 years and over patients are allowed a medical escort, what weight does the Minister's statement made in the House carry? Why did that not translate into a policy change? Thank you.

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: Thank you. We confirm that two previous Health Ministers had said that anybody over 65 years old would get a medical travel escort. However, the policy does not indicate that. That was never written down. It was said in the House. It's fairly clear in which case we allow non-medical escorts for patients, but age is not one of the factors. Thank you.

MS. BISARO: Thanks. To the Minister, these weren't commitments that were made to individual patients or to a specific situation. These were statements and these were confirmations of a policy change that was meant to apply across the system and it was meant to apply to the policy in general. So I'd like to know from the Minister, he says no, that that policy does not currently allow for age as a factor in escorts. Again, when a Minister makes a commitment in the House, why is it not followed through and the policy amended? Thank you.

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: Thank you. The Medical Travel Policy is a Cabinet approved policy. So at the end of the day, the policy, when an individual is requesting an escort, the request comes from the physician or the nurse. So a physician of some sort, the patient's clinician I should say, would make the call and ask for an escort and then medical travel would then apply that request against the current policy. So the reality is the program has just been generally following the policy as set out by Cabinet, essentially. So this is why the commitments were made generally that everybody over the age of 65 years old should get medical travel. I don't know, but I can say that if we were to follow the policy, that's not in the policy. Thank you.

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

MS. BISARO: Thanks. So I guess what the Minister is telling us is that whatever Ministers say in the House really doesn't carry any weight. If it contravenes a policy which is already in existence then, oh, don't listen to the Minister, just make sure that you read the policy and the Minister must be making a mistake. So really, that means that any commitment by a Minister in this House doesn't mean anything, and I have a serious problem with that. To the Minister of Health and Social Services, knowing what he knows now that there have been two previous commitments to this change in policy, will he incorporate this change into our Medical Travel Policy as it is reviewed?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. I'll remind the Members to show a little bit of respect in this House for other Members in regard to the positions they hold. Mr. Beaulieu.

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We think it's important to make changes to the Medical Travel Policy. We have many issues with the policy. We actually know of cases where individuals that didn't speak English were sent to Yellowknife or even Edmonton where they said translation could be provided. Clearly, in the Medical Travel Policy it says that a patient would require an escort if they needed translation. We have some issues with the policy on how it is being applied so we want to centralize back into the department. It is essentially done for the whole territory out of Stanton and I think out of Inuvik also. We would have to look at that again and try to develop something that made sense. I don't think there should, actually, if you just look at it from a common sense perspective, I don't think there should be a magic number which is 65, that once you hit 65 you all of a sudden need an escort to go about your medical business, whether it be here or down south. I think we should apply something that is reasonable and I don't really think it should be tied to age.

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

QUESTION 204-17(4):
MEETING WITH FEDERAL MINISTER
OF ABORIGINAL AFFAIRS AND
NORTHERN DEVELOPMENT

MR. MENICOCHE: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Earlier this week Mr. Premier had an opportunity to meet with the new federal Minister Bernard Valcourt. I'd just like to ask the Premier a couple of questions. Firstly, I thought it was important to continue the momentum of NWT Days, especially with the new Minister of Northern Affairs and Northern Development Canada. Can I ask the Premier what topics were discussed at his meeting?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. The honourable Premier, Mr. McLeod.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We had a very good meeting with the new Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development, the Honourable Bernard Valcourt. We talked about quite a number of items. First and foremost, we discussed devolution. We discussed mining opportunities in the Northwest Territories. We discussed oil and gas. We talked about the negotiation of self-government and land claims agreements. We talked about trans-boundary water. We talked about the Dehcho First Nations and the bilateral process that we were both working on to advance on land issues. It was a very worthwhile meeting, and I think we're going to have a very good working relationship with Minister Valcourt and I think he is going to be a very good

Minister who will work with us to advance the priorities of the Northwest Territories.

MR. MENICOCHE: I'm glad that he raised those issues. I'm just wondering, I think one of the particular files in the Northwest Territories, of course, is working with the Dehcho First Nations. I wonder if the Premier had the opportunity to raise that file as well.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: I found Minister Valcourt to be very well briefed on all of the files and he was very knowledgeable about Dehcho First Nations. We discussed some issues that the grand chief had raised and the Minister indicated that his staff would be getting on the file right away.

MR. MENICOCHE: I'm glad that he did raise those issues. I'm just wondering if there's any timing for the Minister paying a visit to the Northwest Territories.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Minister Valcourt indicated that although he'd been a federal Minister in previous governments, he's never had the opportunity to visit the Northwest Territories and that he was going to visit. At the first opportunity he'd be up here in the Northwest Territories.

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

QUESTION 205-17(4):
DEVOLUTION AGREEMENT PLEBISCITE

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to follow up on my Member's statement earlier today with questions to the Premier on devolution. I'm wondering, first, if the Premier could explain what process of public consultation and validation we can expect following the eventual signing of the draft final agreement on devolution.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Bromley. The honourable Premier, Mr. McLeod.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We've been involved in negotiating devolution in the Northwest Territories for over 40 years. As a matter of fact, every department and program that is now with the Government of the Northwest Territories has been devolved from the Government of Canada. There have been at least 10 programs that have been devolved, that I'm aware of, and I'm pleased to report to the Member that, with this agreement, there will be an unprecedented level of public engagement and consultation.

MR. BROMLEY: I'm delighted to hear that and thank the Premier for that. Does the Premier plan to provide an opportunity for this Assembly to debate and vote on the Devolution Agreement and, if not, why not?

HON. BOB MCLEOD: We are all elected by the people of the Northwest Territories to do a job and

represent our constituents to the best of our ability. By all means we will bring it to this Assembly.

MR. BROMLEY: I appreciate getting the full range. I have a good series of yesses going here. How about a plebiscite? Our Elections and Plebiscites Act says that, on the recommendation of the Assembly, the Commissioner can order a plebiscite take place, but that recommendation must come from this House. Will the Premier commit to supporting a plebiscite that will allow meaningful public participation and debate, and a sense of ownership in this historic agreement before signing the final Devolution Agreement?

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Perhaps I'll try to describe what overkill means in the dictionary. We have been negotiating this devolution deal for over 12 years. We have been consulting with the public on a regular basis. I have offered to the Members across that we will be rolling out a communications strategy in the next few years and we will be sharing it with committee. If the committee provides us with feedback we will consider it.

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

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thanks again for the Premier's commitment there. I think it is very important, indeed, to make sure that our public, as the Premier mentioned, it's been 40 years and the public has had very little participation. There have been some Aboriginal governments that have been at the table and so on, but I'm talking about the general public. They certainly have not had the participation that we want.

In a democracy, transparency is greatly appreciated. The ability to participate in a decision is greatly appreciated. I think even having this House participate would be great. Does the Premier agree that giving the public a chance to take some ownership in this historic decision by voting through a plebiscite would be a great thing for the public?

HON. BOB MCLEOD: I've already indicated that the public will have unprecedented opportunities to have public engagement on this deal. I personally don't believe in running government by referendum or by plebiscite. I would not support that.

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

QUESTION 206-17(4):
ABORIGINAL PRISON POPULATIONS

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise with question period and my questions will be directed to the Minister of Justice, similarly as my colleague from Inuvik Boot Lake. In my Member's statement, and again similar to Mr. Moses, our Member's statements really talked about how we feel disgusted with the national rates of Aboriginal

people. They're not reflective of what's considered fair and it certainly is a shocking or glaring reality which must stop. My first question to the Minister of Justice is: In the Northwest Territories we have a number of correctional institutions, would the Minister be able to speak to the percentages of Aboriginal versus non-Aboriginal inmate populations?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. The honourable Minister of Justice, Mr. Abernethy.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The report that the Members are talking about today is actually a report on federal facilities only. It does not address territorial facilities. Remembering that territorial correctional facilities, as opposed to federal jails, are for Northerners who have been sentenced to two years less a day for different levels of crimes. Aboriginal programming is strong in our territorial facilities and on average, to the Member's question, the population of Aboriginal individuals in our facilities is about 88 percent of the total count.

MR. HAWKINS: Because we're not allowed to ask the Minister's opinion if 88 percent is fair, reasonable, or just disgusting, what I will ask is: What work has the Department of Justice done to find out what the root cause of this is and, furthermore, what are they able to do to help bring what one may describe as a reasonable balance in the sense of representation? Because I would say that 88 percent of our population representing the jails being solely Aboriginal people is not reasonable.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: In Mr. Moses' first question he indicated that poverty is a real issue here in the Northwest Territories and poverty has a direct result on crime. We know that poverty is an issue. We know that alcoholism is an issue. We know substance abuse is an issue. This government is doing progressive work to try and deal with those things. One of those things that we're doing is an Anti-Poverty Strategy, which Mr. Moses talked about. We're going to continue to do those things as a government and if we can reduce some of these root causes, we should see a reduction in the number of people that are entering our facilities.

At the same time we are doing a number of things. Diversions at the RCMP level, at the front end over the last number of years, have really plummeted and we've been working with the RCMP to get that number of diversions at the front end up. We're also looking at alternative courts. We're looking at a wellness court or some other model, as supported by MLAs when we get to that point, to help address some of those individuals as they're coming into the system to keep them out of our jails.

Within our facilities we have a significant number of programs, that I mentioned earlier today, to help

people rehabilitate so that they don't reoffend. A lot of work is required to change some of these root causes and as a government we're starting to make progress there.

MR. HAWKINS: I appreciate the answer from the Minister because I was going to ask about diversion techniques. Has the department studied the diversion techniques? As I understand it, diversion techniques are sometimes necessary for the potential person who has been arrested and charged with a crime, to actually go and appear before a court to get a direction rather than maybe a sentence. That's the type of thing I'm saying, that in some cases it probably makes more sense. Has the Department of Justice considered and studied things like rehabilitation, based on proper direction and diversion techniques?

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Diversions can happen at many different levels. We have front-line diversions that are actually being conducted by the RCMP. As I've indicated previously, our numbers here in the Territories have dropped significantly since 2003, but in the last year and a half or two years we've seen a sharp spike, which I think what everybody wants to see is more front-end work done on that end. We're also doing diversions with our community justice committees depending on different levels of crime where youth, as an example, are engaging with the community justice committees to find alternatives to sentencing which are also rehabilitative. So there's a large range of diversions, including if we move forward with alternative courts. It's another form of diversion. We've done a lot of work around diversions, exploring options and opportunities, we looked at what other jurisdictions are doing, and we're trying to find ways to help people rehabilitate and stay out of the system.

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

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Has the department studied diversion techniques in the sense of their success rates? What I'm talking about is how people may reoffend. In other words, if we've given people an opportunity to not go to jail, which in certain circumstances makes complete sense. In other cases, they need to go to jail because of the balance of what they've been charged and found guilty of. Has the department found any diversion techniques that make sense? Because if our present population, on average, is 88 percent, that tells me it's significantly high, and I'm trying to understand how this department is working to get this number down and to be reflective, truly, of what's considered reasonable and representative of the population, not 88 percent, which is significantly high.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: As I've indicated earlier, diversion is just one tool in our arsenal, and

it is proving to be effective in many ways. We've got statistics from other jurisdictions that have done some analysis on recidivism and they're seeing positive responses there. As far as what we have as an actual analysis of diversion only, I don't have that information, but I will commit to looking at the department getting some information on recidivism with respect to diversions that we've done.

But I have to say, once again, we have to deal with the root causes of crime in the Northwest Territories, and as I indicated earlier in my Ministerial statement, poverty is truly an issue here in the Northwest Territories that is driving crime rates. We need to work as an Assembly, and as all people in the Northwest Territories, to battle and combat poverty, which means we have to find jobs, we have to deal with housing, we have to deal with health, we have to deal with mental health and addictions. We, as a government, both sides of this House, are doing that work, and we need to continue to do that work to help reduce crime rates here in the Northwest Territories.

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

QUESTION 207-17(4):

ALCOHOL IGNITION INTERLOCK PROGRAM

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to follow up on Minister Ramsay's statement today on the Alcohol Ignition Interlock Program. This is something that I had pursued awhile back on behalf of a constituent. I'm just a bit curious about something. The idea of an Ignition Interlock Program and system on vehicles the Minister says will make our roads safer. I'm assuming that these devices would be available to people who would otherwise have their licences suspended and wouldn't be driving on the road at all. I'm curious about this, because, well, some people in our society and in our communities feel that when people have their driver's licence suspended for abusing alcohol while behind the wheel, or drinking to over the limit and then getting behind the wheel of a vehicle, should be punished. How does this make our roads safer? That's what I want to know.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. The Minister of Transportation, Mr. Ramsay.

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This is a proven program across the country. Any time you can keep somebody from getting behind the wheel that has been drinking, it's a step in the right direction. As I mentioned in my Minister's statement, the Northwest Territories and the Yukon have the highest incidence of drunk driving across the country, so it's a step in the right direction. It's not going to keep every drunk driver off the road but it will improve our statistics.

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: People that would be eligible to have these devices on their vehicle are people who have been charged with impaired driving who would otherwise be banned from driving, but now they can drive as long as they have this device on there. It's a convenience for them?

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: It would be a way for them to get their licence back a little bit early, and it would be very beneficial for somebody whose livelihood depended on them driving. It's been used in work vehicles that allow somebody to get back to work if they're supporting a family. That's what it's intended to do.

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: The cost per month, \$125 per month, I'd like to know, does that cost per device per person using it per vehicle, \$125 a month, is that the entire cost of administering this program by our government? Is that intended to recover the cost?

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: That cost is an individual's cost on a per month basis. It's \$125. I committed to getting all the costs associated with establishing the program here in the Northwest Territories to MLA Bouchard, and I will share that with other Members of the House.

MRS. GROENEWEGEN: I think it would be good if whatever the cost is for having this device to allow people to drive when they've been already charged with impaired driving, I think that it should be full cost recovery on this. As a taxpayer, I'm not really interested in subsidizing my tax dollars to enable people to drive when they've been charged with impaired driving.

These devices need to be calibrated, monitored, installed. There are all kinds of mechanical aspects associated with them. Where does the Minister propose those services be procured?

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: We're working with some service providers here in the Northwest Territories that have the knowledge and the expertise to service the equipment, and we hope to move forward with a contract to allow them to work on the Ignition Interlock System here in the Northwest Territories, and they will be from the Northwest Territories.

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

QUESTION 208-17(4):

ALCOHOL IGNITION INTERLOCK PROGRAM

MR. DOLYNNY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise here today to congratulate the Minister of Transportation on his Alcohol Ignition Interlock Program. I have some questions around this program. In just doing a quick search on the Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety, which is a Canadian site, it cites some of the workplaces that should look at and help those

who are definitely dealing with a substance issue. As the Minister cited, it is an effort to make our roads safer. Has the department looked at actually installing these devices in some of our own Department of Transportation vehicles?

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

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I've had that very discussion with our staff and, yes, we have given that some consideration.

MR. DOLYNNY: I'm encouraged by what I'm hearing here today. Can the Minister elaborate if there's going to be a test pilot of this program in the near future?

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: The program will start being piloted in Yellowknife and in Hay River.

MR. DOLYNNY: Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. The Member for the Sahtu, Mr. Yakeleya.

QUESTION 209-17(4):

ON-THE-LAND TREATMENT PROGRAMS

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In the research I've been given in regard to the alcohol that's been increasing in the Sahtu, I want to just ask the Minister of Health and Social Services. In Norman Wells, the percentage of alcohol-related calls for service – and this is by the Department of Justice – in 2009 was 23 percent; in 2012 it was 52 percent. In Tulita it was 20 percent in 2009; 2012, it was 47 percent.

You see the increase of alcohol because of a number of factors. I think, myself, we believe that the Norman Wells liquor store has lifted the unrestricted sales of liquor there. I want to ask the Minister of Health and Social Services, how do we start working to deal with this issue. We have the information from the RCMP in regard to community wellness plans and getting that on the ground. Are we providing them with sufficient support and resources to get these plans off the ground and on the land?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. The Minister of Health, Mr. Beaulieu.

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The plan for the Sahtu, in as far as the extra workload given to or, I guess, distributed to the alcohol workers and also even the medical staff, the nurses and that, has been, at this time, for the CEO out of Norman Wells to work with those two communities specifically, and also monitoring the other communities, was to monitor those two communities closely, and if at any time there was a requirement for additional health personnel like clinicians or any mental wellness personnel, I guess, community wellness workers, then there would be a call for it. Then we would go work with, and as we, I mean the Department of Health and

Social Services will work with the Sahtu Health and Social Services to provide assistance to the communities if they are overloaded as a result of the extra alcohol going into the communities.

MR. YAKELEYA: Mr. Speaker, again, going back to the numbers I have been given, in Fort Good Hope the alcohol-related occurrences in 2009 was 238. In Fort Good Hope in 2012 it was 681, and Deline was 23 in 2009 and 319 in 2012. In regard to the increase of the alcohol occurrences by the RCMP, people are drinking quite a lot and they get more calls.

With the Minister's support and his leadership, will he start looking at some solid programs, working with the Department of Justice and other agencies, to say that we have a problem here, Houston? What do we need to do to get the money into our communities to start dealing with our communities? Is that somewhere in his plans in this year's budget?

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: Mr. Speaker, yes, it is in our plans to try to address the issues that are stemming from addictions in all of the communities right across the territory. That is built into our Mental Health and Addictions Action Plan. It's part of the mandate of the Minister's Forum on Addictions and Community Wellness. As they travel around, they are to get enough information and ideas from the communities to be able to develop a solution. By May 1st we are hoping that we can have the report completed. We're looking to address this probably region by region and even community by community. Thank you.

MR. YAKELEYA: Mr. Speaker, while I was at the Sahtu Dene Council annual general meeting, people were asking me. We need to have some solid programs on the land in the Sahtu. Because of the increase of the alcohol in the Sahtu and the lifting of the Norman Wells liquor store to unrestricted sales, I have been personally told that people are buying more than they're allowed to once they come into our communities.

Because the Nats'ejee K'eh is at a 40 percent occupancy rate, we have some money. Can the Minister look at that budget and say we are going to shift some of that money to help our people elsewhere where there is an increase in alcohol?

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: Mr. Speaker, earlier as I was responding to another Member, I had indicated that the department had put in about \$850,000 over the last couple fiscal years to try to address the issues. Also, the department continues to allow communities to access on-the-land programs. What has happened is several of the communities have taken advantage of the program. Deline and Tulita are two of the communities that took advantage of the on-the-land program and put proposals in for and utilize their full budget of \$25,000 in both communities and did some on-the-land work. We

are hoping to expand that program and increase the amount that goes to the communities. We are anticipating that, because each time we talk informally to the Minister's Forum members, they speak of on-the-land program as one of the things that comes up constantly at the community level. Thank you.

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

MR. YAKELEYA: Mr. Speaker, once again I ask the Minister that, because of the occupancy rate is at 46 percent level at Nats'ejee K'eh, there are some dollars, I believe, left. Given that the report will be done some time next year, I think that the implementation of those recommendations that are rolled out later on, can the Minister look at communities down the Mackenzie Valley to say, yes, we have these additional dollars? We appreciate the money that is going into the Sahtu. We would like a little more to really help our people. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: Mr. Speaker, the Member is correct; we are spending \$2.2 million in Nats'ejee K'eh and we are operating at a bit below 50 percent occupancy. We want to look at Nats'ejee K'eh as part of a spectrum of treatment opportunities or treatment options that will be provided to the people of the NWT.

Having said that, what we are doing with the one treatment centre that we do have in place is we are again removing Nats'ejee K'eh from Deh Cho Health and Social Services. We are going to have some discussions with the reserve, of course, where Nats'ejee K'eh sits. That will be directly run through the Department of Health and Social Services to try to improve the amount of people or the rate that individuals that are going in there to try to increase the capacity and change it so that we're trying to provide more of an educational portion to the treatment centre so, like I said, it becomes part of the overall spectrum of treatment. Thank you.

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

QUESTION 210-17(4):
CORRECTIONAL CENTRE
TREATMENT PROGRAMS

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you for noticing there, Mr. Speaker. My questions once again will be to the Minister of Justice. Earlier today my colleague Mr. Moses had asked, are treatment programs such as alcohol and drug treatment programs mandatory. I believe his answer was no. I am going to turn the question around and say, what would it take for the Department of Justice to make treatment programs such as alcohol and drug treatment mandatory.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. The honourable Minister of Justice, Mr. Abernethy.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I indicated previously, what we're interested in doing is working with inmates and people in the Northwest Territories who are ready. If an inmate isn't ready for healing, if they aren't ready to go through treatment, forcing treatment on them will have no results.

We have great case workers. We have a great case management team who will sit down with our inmates when they come into the facility, identify their needs and will work with them to encourage them to take the program, to take that healing journey, if you will. To force them is not going to work. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. HAWKINS: Mr. Speaker, that's a bold statement by saying forcing them will not work. Maybe the Minister of Justice can clarify for the House where that reference and where the strength of that statement comes from. He must have some information reference expert that says, when you are locked up for two years less a day, of course, and you have nothing to do, that forced alcohol treatment... I'm talking about court-ordered treatment, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Mr. Speaker, if it's court ordered, then it would be required, but to force an inmate who hasn't had a direct order to participate in alcohol and drug treatment programming would be against the Charter of Human Rights and Freedoms, so we would not be forcing people to do something that they are unwilling to do unless it was court ordered. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. HAWKINS: Mr. Speaker, I guess the notwithstanding clause does not apply to us on this one. I can tell you first hand, when I worked in the correction centre as a corrections officer and certainly in many roles that I had worked there, a lot of inmates had mental health problems. What type of options, treatments and assessments are provided to inmates who are incarcerated? Furthermore, is there any follow-up provided to these particular inmates or are they simply just let go once they're free? Thank you.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Mr. Speaker, I have already listed off a significant number of the programs that are available to our inmates, including the programs in some of our specific facilities. We have the facility in Fort Smith for adult males, which is actually set up for individuals who are having or experiencing cognitive challenges or other addictions issues. There is some specific programming there. We have specific programming at SMCC, which I listed earlier, as well, which was a result of good work done by the committee with us to put in that programming in Hay River. There are a number of programs there.

As far as transition, as an inmate completes their term or their sentence, they are dealing with a one-on-one case manager who is helping identify the programming needs that they have. As they are transitioning out, we have a program that works with probation officers outside in their home communities or in their home regions that will help with the transition. It will identify programs that are available to them within the region or community that they happen to live, at which point probation will take over that file and work with them to make sure that they're meeting the terms and conditions of the probation and getting the programming that has been identified for them. Thank you.

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

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. How often is court-ordered treatment offered to inmates is not necessarily but as a direction that go to prison? Thank you.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Thank you. I'm not certain how often it is actually ordered within the justice system by a judge, who is a separate branch or arm of government. But I will go to the department and I will try to get that information for the Member. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Abernethy. Item 9, written questions. Mr. Moses.

Written Questions

WRITTEN QUESTION 23-17(4): INCARCERATION RATES FOR NWT CORRECTIONAL FACILITIES

MR. MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions are for the Minister of Justice.

1. What are the incarceration rates of inmates who are sentenced with alcohol and/or drug-related crimes in the NWT for the 2011-2012 fiscal year to the present?
2. Can the Minister provide incarceration numbers of inmates for the 2011-2012 fiscal year to the present on a month-to-month basis for all NWT correctional facilities?
3. Can the Minister provide the number of inmates participating or who have participated in an alcohol and/or drug-related prevention program for all NWT correctional facilities for the 2011-2012 fiscal year to the present?

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Moses. 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. Item 14, tabling of documents. Mr. Ramsay.

Tabling of Documents

TABLED DOCUMENT 41-17(4):
TRANSPORTATION OF DANGEROUS GOODS
2012 ANNUAL REPORT

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to table the following document, entitled Minister of Transportation's Report to the Legislative Assembly for 2012 on the Transportation of Dangerous Goods Act 1990. Thank you.

TABLED DOCUMENT 42-17(4):
REPORT OF THE AUDITOR GENERAL OF
CANADA 2013: NORTHWEST TERRITORIES
INCOME SECURITY PROGRAMS -
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION, CULTURE
AND EMPLOYMENT

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. Members, I wish to table a report of the Auditor General of Canada, 2013: Northwest Territories Income Security Programs, Department of Education, Culture and Employment.

Item 15, notices of motion. Item 16, notices of motion for first reading of bills. Item 17, motions. 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: Tabled Document 9-17(4), NWT Main Estimates, 2013-2014; and Bill 1, Tlicho Statutes Amendment Act; Justice, Executive, Aboriginal Affairs and Intergovernmental Relations, Finance, Legislative Assembly.

By the authority given to me as Speaker, by Motion 1-17(4), I hereby authorize the House to sit beyond the daily hour of adjournment to consider business before the House, with Mrs. Groenewegen in the chair.

Consideration in Committee of the Whole on Bills and Other Matters

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

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you very much, Madam Chair. Committee wishes to consider Tabled Document 9-17(4), NWT Main Estimates, 2013-14, and we'd like to consider Justice, Executive, Aboriginal and Intergovernmental Relations, Finance and the Legislative Assembly. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Okay. Is committee agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mrs. Groenewegen): Agreed, thank you. We will proceed with that after a brief break.

---SHORT RECESS

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Bisaro): I will call Committee of the Whole to order. Committee, we are dealing with the Department of Justice. Mr. Abernethy, do you have witnesses you wish to bring into the Chamber?

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: I do, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Bisaro): Does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Bisaro): Sergeant-at-Arms, if you would please escort the witnesses into the Chamber.

Mr. Abernethy, if you would introduce your witnesses for us, please.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Thank you, Madam Chair. On my right is the deputy minister of Justice, Sylvia Haener, and on my left is the director of finance, Kim Schofield.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Bisaro): Thank you, Mr. Abernethy. Page 9-31, Justice, activity summary, corrections, operations expenditure summary, \$38.169 million. Mr. Bromley.

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Madam Chair. I wanted to ask, really, what kind of mental health services we provide within our corrections system.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Bisaro): Thank you, Mr. Bromley. Mr. Abernethy.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Thank you, Madam Chair. We have a number of things available, different programs available. As I've indicated previously, when an inmate comes in, we do a classification or assessment with the individual where we identify their individual needs and focus them in on programs that will suit their individual needs. At the Fort Smith centre – River Ridge, right? At River Ridge we have some additional programming available for individuals with cognitive or other challenges specifically for those individuals who have those types of needs. I can't remember the names of the specific programs but they're tailored to suit individuals who do have cognitive or other mental health issues.

MR. BROMLEY: Thanks to the Minister. What are these? Are they in-house services or are they accessing Health and Social Services' services? We just heard, I don't know if you had the opportunity, but many of us attended the Early Childhood Development Conference and we learned that in 50 percent or more of FASD-assumed people, actually it's trauma from early life experiences rather than FASD. Obviously, the assessment side is very important, especially when we have people that are returning to the corrections repeatedly. What sort of resources do we have to

help deal with those sorts of things and are they in-house?

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: We have in-house psychologists and other professionals that can help individuals. We have programming available to all of our staff, which is the Mental Health First Aid, which the Department of Health is doing some work on right now to customize to suit or be more specific to northern realities. We are going to have a bunch of our staff trained to be providers of that first aid training, so it's going to be available to all of our staff within the facilities. But we don't rely just in-house. We do access services outside of the facility, be it psychiatrist or other professionals as deemed appropriate based on the individual needs.

I'm happy to hear the information that the Member is providing me on FASD, and I'd certainly look in to that myself a little bit more to get a better understanding. But we don't assess whether people have FASD within our facilities. We assess their challenges and their limitations, and what resources they need in order to lead more productive lives and help them rehabilitate. Rather than assessing them and assigning them a label, we're working with them to identify limitations and help them address those limitations. We don't diagnose or prescribe or identify someone as FASD. We identify that they have challenges and these are the programs that will help them overcome those challenges to help them rehabilitate.

MR. BROMLEY: Thanks for that information. I know the Minister's interest in the sorts of things we were hearing at the early childhood conference as opposed to what we heard in some of our reviews of the Child and Family Services Act, so I know he'll follow up on that. How do these resources compare to what we think should be in place, or will need to be in place if we had a wellness court or a mental health court? Are we at a position yet? I know the feasibility study is not completed but the Minister has looked at a draft. Is there a sense on how this would compare to what would be needed?

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: I can't say specifically. I need to do a little bit more research myself and talk to the department to figure out what they've come to as far as a correlation between what we have in-house and what we would require outside by way of mental health court. I will commit to getting the Member and committee some additional information on that.

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you to the Minister for that. Just in terms of cultural programming, I know that's important in our system. Do we provide that in all our corrections facilities? Is the Minister comfortable with the degree of cultural programming that we're offering?

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: I listed off a number of programs during question period today, and I think I've left my actual list with all those programming by

facility at my desk. But I have it printed out with a list of every facility and the different types of cultural programming we have. It's comprehensive, and I'd be happy to share that with committee, I just can't quote it to the Member right now.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Bisaro): Thank you, Minister. Next on my list is Mr. Moses.

MR. MOSES: Thank you, Madam Chair. As I mentioned during question period, I was looking at the 10-year strategic plan that you guys have in place here. Under one of the headings there's "provide integrated programs and services to offenders," and it mentions that the department will be working on doing individual needs assessments and strategies related to the mental health or cognitive disabilities. It talks about intensive therapeutic interventions for addictions or violent behaviours. Where is the department on this and what type of programs are actually addressing the addictions and the violent behaviours?

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Bisaro): Thank you, Mr. Moses. Minister Abernethy.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: By way of an example, Madam Chair, the North Slave Correctional Centre provides programming to assist with anger management, including moderate intensity family violence prevention and violence prevention programs. One-on-one counselling is offered through a contract psychologist, the traditional counsellor and liaison officer, the chaplain, and through informal sessions with case managers. As I have indicated, every inmate has a case manager assigned specifically to them. North Slave Correction Centre mental health supports are available through the medical department through referrals to a psychiatrist as well.

Additionally, staff are trained in the Mental Health First Aid, as I have indicated previously, which enables our staff to assist the offenders. At one of our other facilities, the Fort Smith Correctional Centre, they provide anger management programming, when available. In essence, he has an institutional psychologist to assist offenders as well. The psychologist also provides an anger management program for offenders. Anger management is also a preventative healing program that is provided by a traditional councillor and liaison officers. As I have mentioned before, it's some in-house as well as access to health facilities and programs outside of the facilities as well.

MR. MOSES: Madam Chair, and further, in one section here it also talks about reintegrated strategies will be provided to assist offenders to effectively return to their home communities and families. What types of strategies are put in place for the individual so that they can become a good citizen, a good member of their communities again?

As you see in some of the news reports, we do get a lot of repeat offenders. A lot of them aren't getting the types of services that they do need in terms of their mental capabilities, literacy, which will be another question that I will have later on is with literacy and work skills. How is the offender or the inmate getting the reintegrated strategy put in place for them, especially when we have small communities? If they do come from the small communities, and they don't have those follow-up resources to give them the assistance or the probation officer might have a high caseload to give that individual the right amount of treatment and care that they do need. What are these reintegrated strategies and how effective are they? What is the follow-up from the department or the corrections with this individual after he's released? Thank you, Madam Chair.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Madam Chair, a plan is a cooperative plan put in place with the inmate and the case worker within the facility who has had a history with that particular inmate, as well as probation, whether it be regional or local. They develop a plan together to reintegrate the person back into their home community or whichever community they will end up in, based on their individual needs and programming that they need, where programming is available.

The probation officers have a requirement to meet and discuss case plans with their clients on a regular basis. Every one of them would be different, based on the individual themselves and the level of monitoring that they would need. Every reintegration plan would look different. It's based on individual needs, risk, and risk of reoffending and what supports they need outside.

At the same time, we are excited by some of the possibilities that have come to us over the last while. In particular, Colville Lake, by way of an example, has approached us and they are interested in working with us to develop a program to help inmates reintegrate into their community specifically. We are still in the early steps and process is there, but we have seen Colville Lake do some really creative things with one of their local citizens who has returned from one of the facilities. They really went way out and took a step beyond to find ways to help them integrate back into the community. We're excited by what is happening there and we're really looking forward to coming up with a form of plan. Once we've had that in place for a while, it is something that we would be really interested in, assuming it works. I would like to put that proviso in there, we want to make sure it works. We would be really interested in working with other communities, but we see significant potential. The community is going to take some responsibility. The inmates are going to have to take some responsibility. We have probation officers available. You're right; they're not in every

community, but they have regular reporting, whether it be by phone or whether they travel into communities. So some interesting things happening here.

MR. MOSES: Just one other question in regard to these reintegrated strategies or the plan for when individuals are released and go back to their communities. Is this plan part of the application process for an individual's request for parole? So would an inmate who developed a plan have a better chance of getting parole than one that didn't have a plan? Thank you.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Parole is more of a federal inmate reality. Regardless, we still have individuals that are on probation and the length of their probation would be dependent on their initial charge and how long they were sentenced and they would vary from one individual to another. Regardless, every inmate that's exiting the facility will have gone through the process of having a reintegration plan. Some of them can be very, very simple and others can be far more complex, and they can range in duration from very short to very long, but, once again, it's tied to the sentence and what kinds of treatments or supports that they need to help them to not repeat again.

MR. MOSES: Just one last question in regard to this and it's dealing with the integrated programs again, and services for offenders that are outlined in the strategic plan by the department. They do mention literacy and workplace skills development. Can the Minister elaborate on what type of literacy programs are in place for the correctional facilities around the Northwest Territories and how is he working with the workplace skill development? I think in one of his Member's statements he talked about a possible program for offenders to get a pardon or something. But if you're developing workplace skills, how is that working to get the individual into a paid job position with a record when they get out of institutions? So just in regard to those two programs. Thank you.

HON GLEN ABERNETHY: Thank you. Within our youth facility we actually have some teachers in there that are providing basic education to the inmates that happen to be in those facilities. Within our adult facilities we have adult educators that come in on a regular basis and provide training and education supports to individuals who have had it identified within their individual case plans. We also, within the facilities, have work teams. We have people working in kitchens, we have people doing cleaning, we have people doing other things where they can gain some work experience and get familiar with different types of jobs. Now, they are limited because they are within the facility, but we do those types of things and we do provide education as outlined within individual case plans.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Bisaro): Thanks Minister. Mr. Moses is done, I have nobody else on my list. We're on page 9-31, committee.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Bisaro): Justice, activity summary, corrections, operations expenditure summary, \$38.169 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Bisaro): Thanks, committee. We move to page 9-32, Justice, activity summary, corrections, grants and contributions, contributions, \$179,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Bisaro): Thanks, committee. Page 9-33, Justice, information item, corrections, active positions. Any questions?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Bisaro): Okay, move to page 9-35, Justice, activity summary, services to the public, operations expenditure summary, \$5.028 million. Mr. Bromley.

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Madam Chair. I'm just interested in the progress report on the offices of the children's lawyer and how this is working out. I believe it's a new position. Maybe the Minister could refresh my memory on when we implemented this and how that program is working out. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Bisaro): Thanks, Mr. Bromley. Minister Abernethy.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Thank you, Madam Chair. Yes, the position is in place, it is a new position. It's been in for just over a year. Anecdotally, we're getting positive statements on that position and what it is able to accomplish. I will say that there was a blip. Unfortunately, the original person that we had in the position left the Northwest Territories and we had to refill the position, which took a little bit of time. So we don't truly have a year's worth of data on the effectiveness of this. Although, we are hearing positive responses and a lot of anecdotal statements that it's positive and there are good results.

MR. BROMLEY: Thanks to the Minister. What does that mean? What is the intent of this office? What would good results look like?

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: The position is intended to provide representation for youth and children in custody cases and similar types of situations to that. Make sure their voice is heard.

MR. BROMLEY: I know there are certainly lots of issues on the custody aspect of children across the Northwest Territories. There is very clear, new thinking that the emphasis needs to be in place to

keep children associated with their families somehow.

In terms of a good result here, is this office helping children stay integrated in a healthy and safe way with their families, recognizing the issues that are being faced here? I think that's the overall intent of our Child and Family Services Act review and so forth, in which Justice plays a big role.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: There's no question that children benefit from access to both of their parents where all safety issues and no risk of harm to a child is present. We have, in the Government of the Northwest Territories and Justice in particular, a mediation program that is available to parents going through divorce so that they can work through the challenges of separate homes, separate lives with children to make sure that everybody's got access where safe and appropriate. I think we're – once again anecdotally, I don't have any numbers, but we're hearing positive results from that program that it is working well to help children stay engaged with both parents. Once again, where all things are equal and the safety of the child is taken into consideration. I'm not sure if that's what the Member is talking about, those types of situations, or is he talking specifically about apprehension under the Child and Family Services Act. Maybe I could get a little clarity.

MR. BROMLEY: Thanks for the Minister's comments. I guess I have to say back at you because I'm not, I guess my question is which of those does this office deal with. I've also heard good things about the parent counselling during separation and divorce program, but I thought we were talking about custody issues related to family trauma and so on, other than separation. Maybe I could get clarity, if we know where the focus of this office is or if it deals with both of those situations.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: The Member mentioned yet another program that's available, and that's Parenting After Separation, which is actually a course that's available to help individuals who maybe haven't gone through the mediation. There are a number of these programs available to help maintain family structure when living in separate homes. The children's lawyer is available to make sure the interests of the child are heard and taken into consideration in all three of these situations. There are limitations when that service can be used as a result of a child apprehension but, where appropriate, they have been able to engage, but it isn't with every case and not all cases under child apprehension is there necessarily a role for a children's lawyer. Where appropriate they are being utilized.

MR. BROMLEY: That's all I had. I guess I'll be looking forward to when an appropriate time has gone by and there is enough substantial experience

with this program to getting an update through committee. I appreciate the Minister's remarks.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: What I'll do is commit to pulling together the statistics that we have to date and get some additional information for the Member and committee just on the activities, the types of activities of the children's lawyer. Even though we have that little gap in the middle of the amount of time that they've been in place so far, so that they have a bit of information. I'll do that.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Bisaro): Thank you, Mr. Abernethy. Next on the list is Mr. Yakeleya.

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Madam Chair. I have questions for the Minister on this page here. One has to do with the coroner's office. If the coroner's office takes into consideration the Aboriginal culture and tradition when they have to do their work in regard to dealing with people in the Aboriginal communities.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Bisaro): Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Mr. Abernethy.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Thank you, Madam Chair. We have coroners in almost every community in the Northwest Territories and we have coroners who are Aboriginal, non-Aboriginal, male, female, young, old – I think all the old ones just rolled their eyes. Maybe so did the young ones. I apologize. We've got coroners all over the Territories in a significant number of our communities, as I've indicated. I feel comfortable saying that they try to take into consideration Aboriginal traditions and Aboriginal beliefs when they're doing their reports. Does it always satisfy everybody? I would say no, but they try to do what they can.

MR. YAKELEYA: The point I want to draw to is, New Zealand has very good coroner policies with regard to taking Aboriginal cultures and traditions into their system. I wonder if the Minister has looked at the New Zealand experience to see if that makes any sense in the Northwest Territories. Most of our communities are Aboriginal people. Fifty percent of the population is Aboriginal people. We're certainly well versed on the people who have this very important role in the communities. That's all. I'll make a comment there to the Minister and he can come back later on to this issue here.

My last point is that service to the public. You know a lot of elders have lived in public housing or private housing, mostly private housing, in their communities and one of the issues that we looked at in the Sahtu was having a public service lawyer going to our communities to help write wills for the elders for the housing. They work really well in Fort Good Hope. The lawyer came into Fort Good Hope and sat down with the elders because this becomes an issue with housing, and the estate and stuff like that. I want to show this is a program that is on the

fly or we're going to request it, but that's something that I know Housing has told me would be good to have all the elders and older people draw up wills for themselves because a lot of them don't do it and it becomes a government issue later.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: As the Member knows, we haven't looked at the New Zealand model, but thank you for bringing it to our attention. We will look at the New Zealand model...(inaudible)... I'd love to, but I can't remember what I was saying. I'm just kidding. I actually do remember this time. I do remember. The answer to the Member is no, we haven't looked at the New Zealand model and thanks for bringing it to our attention. I will have the department look at the New Zealand model and see if there are any lessons in there that we can learn and apply here. We do know that the Coroners Act needs revision. The coroner herself has mentioned a number of things that need to be done to that act to improve what they can and can't do here in the Northwest Territories. The timing might be perfect on that, and I will commit to looking at that legislation and seeing if we can learn any lessons.

With respect to lawyers providing advice in communities to elders with wills, we have a legal aid outreach lawyer position in our legal aid office. I'm going to use the title, we're trying to get away from the title, but once upon a time we referred to them as poverty lawyers. We're not going to call them the poverty lawyer because we want them to be available to provide assistance where possible. This position, this person is doing the exact thing that the Member is talking about, and it has been able to provide advice and guidance to people, not just elders, but elders included, on writing wills. That person travels out to communities as often as they can and is doing good work.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Mr. Abernethy. Mr. Yakeleya, your time is up. I can put you on the list if you need it again. Next on my list I have Ms. Bisaro.

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have a couple of questions here on this page. The first area I'd like to reference is that of the rental office. The Minister knows I've asked a number of questions about the rental office and the Residential Tenancies Act over the years. Specifically, my recollection is that the Minister has advised committee that the department is undergoing a review of the rental officer's recommendations from the last number of rental officer reports. I'd just like to know whether my recollection is correct and, if so, what the next steps are in terms of the review that the department has been doing.

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

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The Member is correct; we are doing that work. Consultation regarding the potential amendments to the legislation is expected to occur spring/summer 2013 and we expect an LP to come forward as early as fall 2013.

MS. BISARO: Thanks to the Minister for that. Is there any hope that the Minister might tell me what sorts of things are being looked at, what kinds of amendments might be coming forward?

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: I believe we have seven core areas that we're looking at, eight, I think. Security of tenure in subsidized public housing, inclusion of transitional and other housing, enforcement of orders, unofficial occupants, conversion to subsidized public housing, retention of inspection reports, consistency with the Condominium Act and other potential amendments to the Residential Tenancies Act are already currently being considered and are scheduled for consultation this spring and summer will include that review. Domestic violence is also something that we're considering.

MS. BISARO: Thanks to the Minister for that information. I look forward to seeing those amendments when they come forward.

My other question on this page had to do with legal registries. As we move forward in this electronic world of ours, I believe it is a goal of the department to do more and more on-line, and to provide greater access to documents and making applications on-line, et cetera. Where are things at with the department in terms of getting or allowing our residents to have greater access to information and to application forms on-line?

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: With land titles it's already up on-line and available, but I'll go to the deputy for a few specifics if the Member is interested in some specifics.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Mr. Abernethy. Ms. Haener.

MS. HAENER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As the Minister mentioned, land titles is on-line. As well, there is some property search capacity on-line. We are also looking at processes for payment in relation to those and ensuring that is available on-line as well.

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

MS. BISARO: Just one last question then, and I guess it goes to what the hopes are from the department for getting what stuff do you want to get on-line. What's your end goal? Is it to have absolutely everything available electronically, or will there always be some stuff that has to be done in person?

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

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Lots.

MS. BISARO: Perhaps the Minister could explain to me what things cannot be done on-line.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: We want to get as much as we can on-line as possible. We're even looking at going into the courts and see if we can do some of the fine payments and other things on-line so that people don't have to come into the courthouse within the registries, as many filings as we can.

There are going to be some challenges. I couldn't tell you a name of a document that we may not be able to do this on, but we've got lawyers in the land titles and legal registries office who are looking at the legality of this and what can and can't be. I'm happy to bring more information to the Member on some specifics, and committee, but we're trying to get as much of it on-line as we can.

Every once in a while, you'd have to worry about signatures and stuff like that to make sure that documents are properly certified, especially if they need to stamp or other things, so there are going to be some that we're trying to figure out. We're trying.

I think if you look at what's happening in this government, there is... Like, motor vehicles, they're trying to do the same thing. So we can learn together and try and find some ways to get as much on-line as we can, remembering that not all communities have access to some of those services, so we have to make sure that works for everybody.

MS. BISARO: Thank you to the Minister for that. I don't necessarily need the specifics, but I was looking for what the end goal was. I think the more we can have things available to our residents on-line, it allows people from communities, for instance, who do have access to the Internet. Once we get the Mackenzie Valley fibre optic link up and running, that should make life wonderful for far many more of our residents.

In my view, we need to be transparent and accessible as a government, and I think this is one way that we can show that. Just a comment, but I applaud the department for moving in this direction.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. We'll take that as a comment. Committee, we're on page 9-35, Justice, activity summary, services to public, operations expenditure summary, \$5.028 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Page 9-37, Justice, activity summary, services to public, active positions.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Page 9-38, Justice, information item, lease commitments - infrastructure. Any questions?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Page 9-39, Justice, information item, work performed on behalf of others. We'll include 9-39, 9-40 and 9-41. Ms. Bisaro.

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I just have one question here on page 9-40. The Not Us! drug awareness campaign had money in 2011-12. Well, last year and the upcoming year there's no money. I'm assuming that that's federal money, but if the Minister could confirm that. I know the campaign is still running, so how are we funding it?

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

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The Member is right. That was federal money, and that federal money is no longer available. But we had dollars that were in there, as well, and we're continuing our dollars forward so that we can continue to run the program which is quite popular and quite effective.

MS. BISARO: What is the budgeted amount annually for the Not Us! drug awareness campaign?

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: It's a hundred and something. I don't remember the exact total, but we'll get it here for you. Can we get back to the Member? It's \$100,000, around that mark. We'll get the exact figure for the Member and committee.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Minister Abernethy. Again, committee, 9-39, 9-40 and 9-41, Justice, information item, work performed on behalf of others. Any questions?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): If I can get you to return to 9-7, Justice, department summary, operations expenditure summary, \$116.759 million. Does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Does committee agree that consideration for the Department of Justice is completed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Great. Thank you. I'd like to thank Ms. Haener, Ms. Schofield and Minister Abernethy for today. If I can get the Sergeant-at-Arms to please escort the witnesses out of the Chamber.

Committee, we'll be moving on to the Department of Executive. That's section 2 in your main

estimates. Before we go on, I'll ask Premier Bob McLeod if he has any opening comments.

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

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Go ahead. Mr. McLeod.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: I am pleased to be here today to present the Department of Executive's 2013-2014 Main Estimates.

In 2013-2014, the Department of Executive has identified a total operations budget of \$20.464 million. There is a net decrease of approximately 10.5 percent from the 2012-2013 Main Estimates. As noted, this decrease is primarily associated with the sunset of devolution negotiations funding. Once a final Devolution Agreement is signed, the level of implementation activity and the required funding for 2013-2014 will increase significantly from the \$6.071 million currently projected but will be offset by federal funding of \$22.5 million, much of which we will receive in the 2013-2014 fiscal year.

The main estimates state that the department will have 83 active positions in 2013-2014. This represents a net increase of three positions from our 2012-2013 Main Estimates related primarily to the addition of three new government service officer positions.

The mandate of the Department of Executive is to provide overall management and direction to the executive branch of Government. This is done through the co-ordination, planning, and evaluation of cross-governmental initiatives; providing support for evidence-based decision making; ensuring consistent corporate communication; and co-ordinating implementation of strategic initiatives that advance the priorities of the 17th Legislative Assembly, as well as tracking and reporting on the government's priorities.

The Department of Executive's 2013-2014 Main Estimates highlights a transition year for our department as well as for the Government of the Northwest Territories and Northwest Territories as a whole. In the coming weeks, we anticipate finalizing a resource revenue sharing agreement, which sets out how resource revenues will be shared with participating Aboriginal governments; a Northwest Territories intergovernmental agreement on lands and resources management, which will establish a government-to-government relationship between the Government of the Northwest Territories and participating Aboriginal governments, allowing for greater co-operation in land and resource management; and the Northwest Territories lands and resources Devolution Agreement itself with Canada, the Inuvialuit Regional Corporation, the Northwest Territory Metis Nation, the Sahtu Secretariat, the Gwich'in Tribal Council, and the Tlicho Government.

The political evolution of our territory through the devolution of land and resource management has been a goal for the last 30 years. It is appropriate at this time to recognize the efforts, perseverance, and dedication of the many people who worked on devolution over the years and have brought us closer than ever to achieving this long-standing goal.

This Assembly's past support for preliminary investments in implementation planning will serve us well as we move fully into finalizing our planning and, ultimately, implementing these long-awaited authorities.

As I stated earlier, in the 2013-2014 Main Estimates, you will note the shift in focus and resources from devolution negotiations to implementation planning. Negotiations funding of \$3.230 million will sunset, and implementation planning activity will increase.

As you know, under the AIP, the Government of the Northwest Territories is eligible for funding of \$22.5 million between the signing of the final agreement and the planned effective date. This funding will help to support implementation planning in areas such as organizational design, drafting the suite of anticipated legislation that will need to be mirrored in order to transfer authorities from the Parliament of Canada to this Legislative Assembly, property and asset transfers, human resource planning and staffing, waste site evaluation, as well as a completion of a number of required sub-agreements and, of course, our ongoing communication efforts.

As well as devolution, there are several other areas where the Department of Executive is taking the lead in supporting the priorities of the 17th Assembly.

Through the development and implementation of the Government of the Northwest Territories land use and sustainability framework, we will continue to work with our partners to ensure responsible stewardship through our land and resource management regime in order to build a strong and sustainable future. This work will support the proposed intergovernmental council proposed in the devolution intergovernmental land and resources agreement that will bring the Government of the Northwest Territories and partner Aboriginal governments together to build a stronger, more harmonized system of land and resource management in the Northwest Territories.

As Premier, I have worked with my federal counterparts to emphasize the need for our governments to work closely together. As part of our efforts under the land use and sustainability framework, we have developed an approach we call Northern Lands Northern Leadership. This approach highlights the need for both governments to acknowledge and adapt to the new role of the

Government of the Northwest Territories as a leader in land and resource management decisions.

An important part of our commitment to the people of the Northwest Territories is to strengthen and build relationships. Our regional directors chair the regional management committees and work with other departments to help co-ordinate Government of the Northwest Territories participation in many significant regional projects such as Mackenzie Valley fibre optic link, Inuvik to Tuktoyaktuk highway, Sahtu oil and gas readiness, Northern mineral workforce development, natural gas supply in Norman Wells, and Inuvik Gas Project.

Building on the overwhelming positive feedback we have received, and in support of our decentralization efforts, the Department of Executive is pleased to announce that the 2013-2014 Main Estimates proposes to establish three new government service officers in the communities of Wrigley and Fort Resolution. This year we were able to staff the position in Tsiigehtchic, but for reporting purposes, this is identified as part of the 2013-2014 Main Estimates. These positions provide services directly to residents in their communities, sometimes in their homes, and in their Aboriginal language. They provide local employment and promote an efficient one-stop shopping approach for many government programs. It is our intention to look at ways to continue to expand this program to more communities and into new areas of e-business.

The Department of Executive provides short-term support to non-governmental organizations that deliver critical Government of the Northwest Territories funded programs and services through the NGO Stabilization Fund. The total amount of support available annually is \$350,000. A process has been put in place to ensure contribution decisions are communicated to applicants no later than two months after the application deadline and funds are provided by the end of the summer.

Building, strengthening, and diversifying our economy is important to the people of the Northwest Territories. We need an efficient and effective regulatory system that supports responsible and sustainable development and that will serve Northerners well after devolution. We will continue to work with the Aboriginal and federal governments to improve regulatory processes the Northwest Territories will inherit post-devolution.

The Department of Executive also works with other departments through the established committees of cabinet and includes the re-establishment of the Committee on Sustainability of Rural and Remote Communities.

Through these committees, the department helps support initiatives in many priority areas such as mental health and addictions planning, the Anti-Poverty Strategy, Economic Opportunities Strategy,

Mineral Development Strategy, energy planning, land management, and major infrastructure projects.

The 2013-2014 Main Estimates identifies additional resources of \$425,000 for the 2014 community survey that will be undertaken by the Northwest Territories Bureau of Statistics. The survey is done every five years. It collects information on housing, language, education, labour force activities, and traditional activities. It is important to have current and quality data from individuals and communities in order to make informed, evidence-based program and policy decisions. This is a project that benefits all departments, community and Aboriginal governments, and all of us as Members of the Legislative Assembly, as well as allowing us to monitor overall progress towards the goals of the 17th Assembly.

The Department of Executive continues to focus on improving accountability across government. For the first time, ministerial mandate letters were posted publicly in January 2012, and in the coming weeks, I will be reporting the results achieved in our first year under those mandates.

Building on our accountabilities, 2013-2014 will mark the introduction of the program review office's three-year work plan, which was developed in collaboration and with input from all departments and the Standing Committee on Priorities and Planning. The work plan prioritizes the reviews, which will be conducted over the next three years.

This concludes my opening remarks. I look forward to answering any questions the committee may have. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Premier McLeod. Do you have witnesses you'd like to bring into the House today?

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Yes, I do.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

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

Premier McLeod, can you please introduce your witnesses to the House today?

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chair. To my left I have Penny Ballantyne, the deputy minister of Executive and secretary to Cabinet. To my right I have Lisa Turner, director of Finance with the Department of Executive. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Premier McLeod. Ms. Turner, Mrs. Ballantyne, welcome to the House this evening. Committee, general comments.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Detail.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): I am hearing detail. Committee, we will defer 2-7. If I can get committee to turn to 2-8, Executive, information item, infrastructure investment summary. Any questions?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you. Page 2-9, Executive, information item, revenue summary. Are there any questions?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you. Page 2-10, Executive, information item, active position summary. Are there any questions?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Page 2-13, Executive, activity summary, directorate, operations expenditure summary. Mr. Bromley.

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I know that this division hosts the office of devolution. I am wondering, anticipating that we must be nearing a devolution draft agreement, what is the budget in here for public consultation should our draft agreement get signed in the near future or whenever? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Mr. Bromley. Premier McLeod.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chair. We haven't finalized the exact number, but it will come out of the \$22.5 million that we will be receiving from the federal government. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you. What else will that \$22.5 million be expected to cover as well as the public consultation aspect? Thank you.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Mr. Chair, it will cover a number of different things: the IT systems, also the planning processes for organization, and also the hiring and job offers and positions that will have to be staffed. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

MR. BROMLEY: Mr. Chair, I am sure that the Premier can relate when I tell him that I have seen IT eat up a lot more than \$22.5 million in a year. I am concerned that we have the participation of our public in this agreement, as the Premier knows. He has listed quite a list of demands on this \$22.5 million. None of those were small expenditures.

How are we going to ensure that there is enough public consultation dollars? I say this knowing that the Premier has stated publicly that we are a public consulting government, a leader in North America I think he said on that front. I appreciate that. We obviously have quite the diversity out there. That is our responsibility. Thank you.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Mr. Chair, we are not neophytes in devolution. We have been involved in devolution for 30 years. Devolution is the administrative transfer of programs from the federal

government to the Government of the Northwest Territories. We are finalizing our communications strategy. There will be unprecedented consultation and public engagement with this particular devolution.

Certainly, we have been doing implementation planning for at least the past three or four years, so we are confident that the resources that are identified will be sufficient to allow us to have unprecedented engagement and consultation approach. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

MR. BROMLEY: Mr. Chair, I guess that just elevates my concern here. I know the Premier is aware of how much consultation costs. I certainly am aware that we are not neophytes at devolution. I think that our public might be in that they have not been involved in the massive discussions and consultations that have been going on. That's where my concern comes from, is that we'd be sure to bring them along with us on this historic development.

If we're going to do an unprecedented level of involvement, I would expect an unprecedented level of cost, thus my concern. Would the Premier be expecting to supplement if the overlapping demands on this budget didn't leave enough for an unprecedented level of consultation? Thank you.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Mr. Chair, I would like to remind the Member that we have been at it for 12 years, and this latest round we have been to every community several times. We do have our Aboriginal partners that have been very active in this area. We have been to every community. We have also been with Aboriginal governments. We have briefed; we have fulfilled every request. It is our expectation that the resources that we have will allow us to do the job and meet the requirements for consultation. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

MR. BROMLEY: Mr. Chair, I guess I will leave it at that. I will maybe ask the Premier to bring his plan forward for committee to comment on. I guess I wish I had the confidence he had. I know we have lots of experience at this and, on that basis, I know we know how costly it is. I do want to acknowledge that Aboriginal governments have been very much involved, and I appreciate the opportunity for them to be at the table and keep their people updated. Unfortunately, that wasn't the case for 50 percent of the people in the Northwest Territories, so somebody needs to speak for those people. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Mr. Bromley. I didn't hear a question in there, but we'll allow Premier McLeod to respond.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The Member can look forward to seeing our draft communication strategy and I don't agree with his assessment that nobody has been in contact with

anybody else that is not part of an Aboriginal government. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Moving on to questions on 2-13 I have Ms. Bisaro.

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I want to follow up a bit on sort of the same vein as some of the questions that Mr. Bromley was asking. I heard the Minister say that there will be consultation and public engagement. I'd like to just ask the Minister what the difference is between those two terms. Thank you.

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

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Engagement is where we will be going to the communities, and describing and advising the public about the Devolution Agreement. Consultation is the legal requirement that is associated with Aboriginal governments that have land claims and treaty rights. Thank you.

MS. BISARO: Thanks to the Premier for that. So if the consultation is only being done because of a legal requirement for Aboriginal governments, am I right in assuming, then, that non-Aboriginal peoples will not be consulted? They will simply be provided with information. Is that correct? Thank you.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Thank you. I think we're getting hung up on semantics, but the results will be the same. Thank you.

MS. BISARO: I don't understand the answer. Perhaps the Minister can explain.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: We will be presenting with the same information, except with the Aboriginal governments we'll have the Aboriginal governments participating as well. Thank you.

MS. BISARO: Thank you. I'm just trying to understand and I have, unfortunately, the same sort of opinion as Mr. Bromley does, that there's a large percentage of half of our population who don't have an opportunity to be "consulted," what I see, in my mind, as consulting. So it sounds to me as though 50 percent of our population is not going to have the ability to say yes or no to this agreement. I guess I would just like to know from the Premier if he thinks that's an accurate assessment. Thank you.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: As I already indicated to MLA Bromley, I don't agree that's an accurate assessment. Thank you.

MS. BISARO: Thanks, at least that's clear. I want to also talk a bit about devolution, and I think the Minister referenced figures in here, or else I saw it in the budget somewhere, but the money for negotiations will be reduced, but we're also working on implementation for once this agreement has been reached and things are signed off. So it's a

general question in terms of implementation. I know it's been worked on within this current budget year. So how are things going? Basically, are we going to get everything done? I think the target date is April 1st of 2014. Is everything going to be done by then? Thank you.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Thank you. There's going to be a substantial amount of work that will have to be done. We've already been at implementation for over a year and also what we do will have to dovetail with the federal government, and the Government of Canada has assured us on several occasions that a transfer date of April 1, 2014, will be achieved once we get a deal. Thank you.

MS. BISARO: Thanks to the Minister for that. So one of the things that I think has been mentioned already is the legislation that is required. We have to mirror the federal legislation and take it on ourselves. So I know that preparation of legislation takes a lot of time and it takes a lot of work. Will we need to be hiring legislative drafters in order to get all the legislation ready for April 1st? I know that our Justice department is pretty backed up right now with regular legislation, so to speak. So this added burden, in my mind, requires more bodies. So is that the case? Thank you.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Thank you. We have already hired legislative drafters specifically to provide for the 24 statutes and acts that we have to deal with to make devolution happen. Thank you.

MS. BISARO: Thanks to the Premier for that. So, good to hear.

I wanted to just ask a question about the numbers that are on this page. Compensation and benefits are reduced from the current budget year to '13-14 and I note at the bottom of the page devolution implementation, I guess it's about the same basically, but if you look at numbers of staff a couple of pages in, the staff members don't change. So why have compensation and benefits gone down so much if our staff complement is the same? Thank you.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Thank you. It's because of the fact that we're sunsetting negotiations and we're moving some people around. We're sunsetting an executive director of devolution, we're sunsetting an expert policy advisor and we're hiring two policy advisors on implementation. So that's the reason for the changes.

MS. BISARO: Thanks. I just want to confirm. So we are sunsetting some expensive staff and hiring less expensive staff. Is that kind of the way it goes?

HON. BOB MCLEOD: That's correct.

MS. BISARO: Thanks for the clarification. I have two last questions here. The first one has to do with the Auditor General's report, which came out I think almost two years ago now, and it was sort of a

status report of a number of reports that they had already done. Within that report at the end of the report the Auditor General identified three barriers, which they saw as barriers to effective and efficient government within the GNWT. They were inadequate information to manage programs and make decisions, insufficient monitoring of third-party program delivery, and an absence of detailed action plans on how and when recommendations and audit reports will be implemented. My understanding is that the Department of Executive took the responsibility on to work with those three barriers and to do something about them. I think there was also a review and I think a report was being prepared. Am I right in my recollection and if the report is done, or is the report done if there was a report being done? Thank you.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Thank you. We followed up with the Auditor General of Canada so that we were very clear on the barriers that he was identifying and that we understood where he was coming from. We have a clear idea of why he was making those recommendations and we are doing a risk management framework that will allow us to address all three of those barriers and Executive will take on the task as recommended.

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I gather there was no report that was done that perhaps could be shared with committee. If there is, I would appreciate clarification of that.

My last question has to do with whether or not the Department of Executive has a human resource plan. I understand that each department has been tasked with developing a human resource plan. I can't remember whether the Executive has one or not.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: We've been preoccupied with devolution and some other priorities, but we will develop a human resource plan. With regard to whether there was a report developed in response to the Auditor General, through you I will ask Mrs. Ballantyne to respond.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Mrs. Ballantyne.

MRS. BALLANTYNE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As the Minister has indicated, the Auditor General's recommendations were reviewed. The deputy minister of Finance and I, along with some other senior deputies, did meet with the Auditor General's staff and had good discussions about what they were intending by their recommendations. What emerged from that is the need for all departments to have an approach to risk management that's clearly articulated. Through the Deputy Ministers Audit Committee we have been working through the Audit Bureau staff to develop principles and templates for risk management that are being shared with departments. The idea is that all departments will have a formalized risk

management framework that will articulate what the risks are inherent in the business of the department and what steps the department is taking to monitor and manage those risks.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Mrs. Ballantyne. Ms. Bisaro, your time has expired. Moving on I have Mr. Yakeleya.

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I want to ask the Premier and his staff with this issue of devolution. We're on the brink of some major changes in the Northwest Territories. We really are yet trying to assume and presume what kind of changes are going to come with devolution. We're preparing our best. We're getting our tools ready, and we're getting the people ready, and we're getting the communities ready for how it will impact our communities. One of the things I know about this change here, is that we must spread the word that devolution is coming. One of the things is, when I was even in the Sahtu, listen to the people.

I want to ask the Premier, in putting together the communications plan and harnessing the power of working together, we need that coalition, because it's going to affect us, affect our grandchildren and so forth. We're preparing something big for our people. I think by switching now from negotiations to implementation, we are actually planting some very strong seeds for change for our people. How do we communicate our vision for devolution?

I want to ask the Premier, my first question would be, as Mr. Miltenberger would say, how do we bring everybody under the tent. The whole North. My colleagues are talking about that. How do we bring them under one tent and say this is the deal, this is what we have?

The Premier talked about the amount of revenue coming in because of the deal and the amount of revenue that could be there waiting for us. It's like a prosperity devolution because we're going to receive additional dollars now that detours to the Northwest Territories and some will slowly trickle to Ottawa. That's just the nature of the game here. We have all the Aboriginal governments who are settled on our side and we're still working with the others on the unsettled land claim areas. We're slowly aligning ourselves and strengthening our relationships.

This new trail that we're carving out, called devolution, we're becoming a developing nation just shy of being called a province. We've got provincial-like powers. That's something that we need to look at. With all the talent and mustering all the skills that we have in the Northwest Territories with the first step of communicating, talking, listening to people is the Minister's communication plan. Do we have enough time to advise our people well, and to say let's grab our best players? Let's do this job for us. People are credible.

I also want to give our Premier a pat on the back, saying this process is happening. I never thought it would be. It was only talk. Now it's actually happening. It is scary because I'm not too sure, and that's okay. It's okay. Our people, we have to reassure them. How you reassure them is to go into the community and talk to them, talk about this stuff. Talk about the fears and the unknowns to make it known and that it's going to be okay.

I want to ask the Premier, in his communication plan that we as MLAs would have some discussion and a team to go into our communities and start discussion right down the whole North, he's already indicated he's not too sure about the budget because he still has to work out some more plans. That's understandable. On this important devolution deal, we're going to have some time to talk to the people. Are you looking at something like a team to go into the communities along with our staff? We have various teams right now. We have the Addictions Forum team out there. We have the Mineral and the Economic Strategy. We've got some models already. I just want to raise this as a possibility and I'd like to hear what you have to say.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Mr. McLeod.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We have been to communities several times. We do have a process that we've been using. We've been going in partnership with regional Aboriginal governments and we've joined up together and gone to the various communities together. As I indicated earlier, we have developed a draft communications strategy. When we go to the regions, we go with our Aboriginal government partners. We will also go to all the communities and we will have our devolution team that will go. It will all be described in our draft communications strategy that we'll be sharing with committee.

MR. YAKELEYA: The Premier is correct on the partnerships and I guess he's looking at the different aspects of the Gwich'in, Inuvialuit, Sahtu, and how to work with them. When in Rome do as the Roman's do sort of concept. I'm looking at the GNWT and I guess that's how it will be done. It has to happen with the Akaitcho or the Dehcho, even in Yellowknife – there's a large population here – Hay River, I guess, looking at those types of support for communicating the Devolution Strategy. I look forward to the draft communications strategy and I'm pressing to him to say yes, okay, we can maybe look at something like that, but he's going to stay consistent with his draft communications strategy. That's okay. I'm looking to see if there's some flexibility, but it doesn't seem to be getting to that point there. I'm going to leave it at that. I'll see if I can use a different angle some other time and get to the Premier's mind there.

I want to say that my other question is, with the devolution, will we have enough time to do the communication? Are we giving it enough time? There are still people in my communities who do not understand devolution. I understand, you see, if given dollars and whatever they do in the Sahtu with that money, it's theirs, but I'm still getting people who are saying, but what is it? It might be a few people who understand but not the common folk that is based in the community and doesn't go out too much. It might be our political leaders that are, and we really can't tell them how to do their job. I do not want to assume that everybody knows, just because we give them the money that everybody knows. I hope our government doesn't make that mistake by assuming that this is what's happening. That's what I'm mostly referring to.

When I was a negotiator in the Sahtu Land Claim we went door to door as chief negotiator in all five Sahtu communities. We voted on our land claims, with 97 percent in favour of settling our land claim. That's what I want to press the point to the Premier, that communication, what he's saying is key to having this deal and people saying yes, I understand it. That's what I wanted to remind the Premier here. It's a good deal. People should be celebrating when we sign the finalized deal, not asking any more questions. That's what I go by. Mahsi cho.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: I think we're saying the same thing. We're planning to go the communities. In the regions we're going to partner with our Aboriginal governments. We're also going to go to the regions where the Aboriginal governments haven't signed on. They're going to come with us, their regional government, whoever is representing them. Even though they haven't signed on, we've done that before where we've gone to the communities. For example, in the Deh Cho we've gone to the communities with Dehcho First Nation representatives. Then we'll be going to all the communities and regional centres as well.

One more point I wanted to emphasize is we will also try to make sure that we communicate in their Aboriginal language that they speak in their communities. We're going to provide for that as well.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Page 2-13, Executive, activity summary, directorate, operations expenditure summary, \$6.756 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Page 2-14, Executive, activity summary, directorate, grants and contributions, grants, total grants, \$185,000, total grants and contributions, \$185,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Page 2-15, Executive, information item, directorate, active positions.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Page 2-17, Executive, activity summary, Ministers' offices, operations expenditure summary, \$3.635 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Page 2-18, Executive, activity summary, Ministers' offices, grants and contributions, grants.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Page 2-19, Executive, information item, Ministers' offices, active positions.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Page 2-21, Executive, activity summary, executive operations, operations expenditure summary, \$7.552 million. Mr. Yakeleya.

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I just want to make a comment here to the regional operations. I spoke to the people in my region and they're very, very happy that the regional operations for the overall management and the single window services centres are very good. I think they really were happy that we are continuing support and expanding in my region. They were quite happy with this. I think they said this is probably the best thing since sliced bread here. The people are happy and the people could have operations done in their own language, so this was good. Whoever thought about this idea, I mean, they should be getting the Premier's Award on this one here. I just wanted to say that, Mr. Chair, that the people were quite happy with it.

The other issue I want to talk about is, the federal government is making a 10 percent cut right across the board with the band funding support and tribal council funding support, and it's going to affect the Northwest Territories band office. I just, again, came from the Sahtu Dene Council meeting where this was brought up. The implementation of these cuts will take effect April 1, 2014.

I wanted to just raise it with the Premier here. Hopefully, we've got about a year's grace time before the implementation takes effect. We should start looking at this issue, because if nothing gets done about it, closing some of the band council offices is a real possibility. Lutselk'e, Tsiigehtchic, Colville Lake, Tulita, they're going to severely be hit by federal government cuts. There's a formula that doesn't quite work in our favour in the Northwest Territories and somehow we've got to let the Minister of Indian and Northern Affairs, Aboriginal Affairs, the Minister know, or the Prime Minister know that this formula needs to be changed, and changed quickly, because I've seen the numbers

and we can't operate our bands on \$50,000 or \$90,000. It's like having those kinds of drastic cuts.

I'm looking forward to the Premier having some discussion. Not right now, but looking at this issue very seriously and seeing if the GNWT could help our band governments, the band offices deal with the federal government cuts and see if they could persuade the federal government to reconsider the special type of funding we get in the Northwest Territories. I wanted to raise that to the Premier under this page here.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Premier McLeod.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I guess I don't mind taking responsibility for general service officers. But I think it was the staff of the Executive that came up with the idea. I think it was largely through the regional directors that work in the communities.

As far as cutbacks in band government funding, I've heard about it, but none of the chiefs have been in contact with me about it. I meet with the grand chiefs on a regular basis so we can ask them about it and see what the implications are.

MR. YAKELEYA: I was notified, just saying that the bands were going to be, right across Canada get 10 percent. I didn't really get into it until I got to Tulita and sat down with the chiefs and they started talking about some of the information, so I'm glad the Premier would be open to some discussion, if it does happen, with the chiefs and the councils and looking at the impacts of this funding that will be taking place here. It's preliminary right now, just having an early discussion, and we're not getting our feet dirty and our hands dirty on this issue here. I'm looking forward to the GNWT's support to the bands that are going to be hit by these cuts. Tribal councils will also be hit. For example, the Sahtu Council fall under a tier one formula from \$558,000, 2011-12. They're going to be cut to \$200,000; the same with the Akaitcho, Dehcho and Gwich'in tribal councils, because of that tier one funding they'll be getting \$200,000 a year now. That's way over half of their funding, so that's something that I'll leave with the Premier to have some of his good people start doing some work on. I know that it's an issue for the Sahtu Dene Council chiefs.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: I don't have that information, but maybe if the Member could share it with us as a start.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Premier McLeod. Committee, we're on 2-21. Continuing on with questions I have Ms. Bisaro.

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I have a couple of questions here. I wanted to also state that I think the single window service centres have been extremely well received. I've heard nothing but positive things about them. I think, in the Minister's

remarks, he did talk about establishing three new government service officers in three new communities, and that's great. I was wondering if the Minister or the department could advise what the end goal is here. How many communities do we want to get single window service centres? Where do we want to have them? How many are we going to end up with when we're done expanding?

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

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I guess our end goal is we want all citizens in the smaller communities to have access to government services. I'll have to go back and check at all the communities. I don't have any government representation, or very limited government representation, to see what our end goal is so far. To date, where we've been able to find some resources, we've been trying to establish government services officers. The last time I checked, we were up to 13 government service officers. I imagine there are probably at least seven other communities that might need government services officer positions.

MS. BISARO: Thanks to the Premier for that information. We're doing three in this budget year that we're discussing, so is it the intention of the department to add another two or three every year until we reach the complement of where we want to get to?

HON. BOB MCLEOD: I think the approach that we've been taking is that if there were resources that became available, either through greater efficiency or through restructuring, we've been converting it to GSOs, at least certainly in Executive. I don't think we're taking the position that we're going to go and ask for additional dollars to create GSOs. That certainly wasn't our intention. As resources became available and we could make the case to convert it, we were doing so.

MS. BISARO: Thank you for the explanation. That's a great way to go with not having to ask for new dollars, but I guess I would encourage the department to make sure that if we don't find efficiencies, that we do make sure that we expand into all the communities where we don't have government representation, because it seems to be a very effective method of providing service to our residents.

I wanted to ask a couple of questions about the program review office. One of the statements in the description of the office, the last sentence, talks about the office helping to build evaluation capacity, and I believe that references the other departments within government. I would just like to know from the Executive, from their perspective, how are we doing at building evaluation capacity within our other departments, because that has been known to be a problem, some departments worse than

others, but it's an ongoing problem, I think, that we have. How are we doing at building up evaluation capacity? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. For that we'll go to Mrs. Ballantyne.

MRS. BALLANTYNE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. We're building capacity in a number of different ways. One is we do have professional evaluators. We have folks, for example, who have Master's degrees in program evaluation who work in the unit, and they can provide that expertise directly. But we also are trying to work in partnership with departments that don't have that expertise, so that they can work with us and pick up some training on the project, as it were. Of course, we're always encouraging staff to take advantage of training opportunities. Several of the folks that we have who have earned Master's degrees in evaluation have received those degrees through support from the GNWT on the job, so we're encouraging folks to do that too.

Over the long term our goal is to get away from having to always contract out for evaluation, and to really build an evaluation culture within the GNWT so that this constant improvement focus is there in all of our programs and services. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Mrs. Ballantyne. Ms. Bisaro.

MS. BISARO: Thanks, Mr. Chair, and thanks, Mrs. Ballantyne. The program review office has been in place and in effect for a number of years now. I wonder if I could get an idea of a number of projects or the number of reviews, I guess, that the department does in any one year. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. We'll go to Premier McLeod.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chair. On average, it's about six a year.

MS. BISARO: The other thing I wanted to ask here, is I had gathered that the PRO, program review office, has established a work plan. I'd like to know is it an annual work plan or is it a multi-year work plan.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: It's a three-year board plan, so I guess it's a multi-year plan. Thank you.

MS. BISARO: Thanks for that info. I'm glad to see that we are not doing just year by year. I think a multi-year or three year or whatever it is work plan is a good thing.

My next question has to do with whether or not the work plan of the program review office is a public document. I think there would be a lot of people, both within government and without, I think, who would be interested in knowing what we are reviewing, what things are coming up. We may even get input which tells us that we're moving in the wrong direction. So is this going to be a public

document, the program review office's work plan? Thank you.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: It was not our intention to make it a public document. We had shared it with committee and asked committee to submit their priority areas, which we were pleased to get feedback from committee. But as of now it is not our intention to make it public. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

MS. BISARO: Just a comment here, I guess, in response. To the Premier, I would suggest that you seriously consider making it a public document. We talk about wanting to be transparent, we want to be accountable to residents and so on, and there's this sort of perception out there, rightly or wrongly, that the government is a great big bureaucracy, and inefficient, and wasting money and time and effort and so on. So this may be one way that we can show NWT residents that, yes, we are actually efficient and these are the things that we're looking at. Again, it may be an opportunity for us to get something from our residents which is going to help us out and help us become more efficient. We may get steered in a direction that we haven't thought of. So I would encourage the department to consider making this document public. Just a comment. Thanks, Mr. Chair.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: If committee makes a recommendation for us to look at it, we'll look at it. The information that comes out of the public review sometimes is very sensitive information. In the past, committee and government haven't seen that as the way to go, but if committee wants to look at doing this, certainly we would look at it. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

MS. BISARO: Just one last comment. I wasn't asking for the work of the PRO to necessarily be public – as much as possible, yes – but I'm talking about the work plan, what this division is planning on doing and what things they're going to be looking at. Thanks, Mr. Chair.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: We'll look at it and see why we weren't making it public in the first place. So we'll take it under consideration. Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Premier McLeod. Committee, we're on 2-21, Executive, executive summary, executive operations, operations expenditure summary, \$7.052 million. Does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Committee, 2-22, Executive, activity summary, executive operations, grants and contributions, grants, total grants, \$350,000. Ms. Bisaro.

MS. BISARO: Thanks, Mr. Chair. I have to ask a question here with regard to the NGO Stabilization Fund. This amount for this fund has stayed the

same, certainly for these three years that we can see, and I don't think it's been increased since its inception. I think the Minister is well aware, and I think the department is well aware, that there are huge demands from our NGOs for extra funds over and above what they either fundraise for themselves or manage to get from various and sundry program grants or other grants elsewhere.

I'd like to know, first of all, whether the Minister considers the demands for funds that come from these NGOs on an annual basis when they apply for this fairly paltry amount of money, does the Minister recognize that these demands are just and that we need to do more than what we are doing to help our NGOs. Thank you.

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

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Yes, we recognize that and we have been reviewing our program and we want to make sure that this amount of money is focused on what we call the real NGOs. I think we've made improvements in that area in the last few years. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

MS. BISARO: Thanks to the Minister. I do agree; there have definitely been some improvements in terms of the timing of when applications are received, and determined, and money gone out. It was pretty miserable there for a while but it's been apparently really good in the last year or two. Again, this is just a comment, but I would exhort the department to try and find money to increase this fund. I think even to \$500,000 would allow a number of the NGOs who don't get money to maybe get some. For an NGO \$50,000 is a lot of money. It's peanuts to us but it's a great deal of money to an NGO. So I would encourage the department to do what they can to try and find money from within to pump up this \$350,000 in the '13-14 year. Thank you.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: We will endeavour to do that. Also, our fiscal strategy would allow us a little more flexibility in future years as well. We think this is a very important area, so we'll take the Member's counsel and do whatever we can to try to increase this amount. Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Premier McLeod. Committee, we're on 2-22. We have Mr. Bromley.

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just wanted to add my voice to my colleague Ms. Bisaro's. I appreciate the Premier recognizing this. I think it's well understood that these volunteer groups, and many of them have paid members, paid staff and so on, but they play a real role in our society. It's a balance in the government and the market and civil society.

One comment I wanted to ask about is real versus non-real. I know we try and really support those that are delivering government programs on behalf of government, but I don't want to discount many hardworking volunteers and volunteer groups out there that do important civil society work that's essential for us to be a successful society. If the Premier could offer any perspectives on that, I'd appreciate that. Thank you.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Thank you. Maybe I used the incorrect wording, I guess. I was thinking of crucial NGOs that provide or deliver GNWT funded services and, also, in the past we've had our organizations that are funded from other organizations that have other avenues for funding have applied. I guess what I was trying to say was that those organizations that don't have other funding sources, we try to focus on those ones. Thank you.

MR. BROMLEY: Thanks for that clarification. I certainly do support the Stabilization Fund and would support it being bumped up if possible. So I'll leave it that. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Mr. Bromley. I think that was more of a comment. We'll treat it as that. Committee, we're on 2-22, Executive, activity summary, executive operations, grants and contributions, total grants, \$350,000, total grants and contributions, \$350,000. Is committee agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you. Page 2-23, Executive, information item, executive operations, active positions. Any questions?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you. Page 2-25, Executive, activity summary, Cabinet support, operations expenditure summary, \$2.521 million. Is committee agreed? Ms. Bisaro.

MS. BISARO: Thanks, Mr. Chair. I just wanted to ask a question here with regard to the women's advisory, and there's also a women's initiatives grants on the next page. The women's advisory office does a number of things. One of the things that I understand it does is to work to try and give a greater profile across government to sort of gender-based analysis. Could I just start with that question? Is that a function of the women's advisory office to try and enhance the understanding of gender-based analysis across all of government? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. For that we'll go to Premier McLeod.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chair. That's correct and this position gives a focus to not only women's issues, but also to promote advances in gender equity. Thank you.

MS. BISARO: Thank you. So one of the things that, in my mind, gender-based analysis should do is to put a gender-based lens on any policy or any program or service that we may put into place. So we started from what I sort of think of as a zero position and are gradually working our way up and implementing a gender-based analysis lens on everything. Could I get some kind of an evaluation from the department as to where we are at this point? Are we 50 percent of the way there, are we 80 percent of the way there? How is it going in terms of using gender-based analysis in everything we do? Thank you.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Thank you. I'd say we're 45 percent of the way there. Our focus has been on promoting it, and also through educational processes holding workshops with the different departments and working with the departments so that there's a greater understanding of gender equity. I don't think we've reached the point yet where we analyze every project from a gender equity lens, but I think that's something that we're aspiring to in the future. Thank you.

MS. BISARO: Thanks to the Minister for that. I appreciate it does take a while because it's a culture change and it's a mindset change, and I guess I would just exhort the departments and all departments in the government to just try to remember whenever they are developing anything new that they need to look at it from an operational perspective, but we also have to look at it from a gender-based or a gender-equity perspective. I think one of the things that gets lost sometimes when we talk about gender-based analysis is it's not only just looking at women. It's looking at particularly in female-based activities, for instance, we should be looking at it from a men's perspective as well as from a female perspective. It tends to be more often than not looking at it from a female perspective because there are more men in a lot of positions, but I just want to point out that it's not just women that we have to consider when we talk about gender-based analysis or gender equity. So thanks, Mr. Chair, just a comment.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: I think we understand that and I think it must be working because the largest part of our workforce is female, and I think our deputy minister cadre is about 50 percent male and female. So I think this helps promote gender equity in all the things we do. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Premier McLeod. Committee, we're on 2-25, Executive, activity summary, Cabinet support, operations expenditure summary, \$2.521 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you. Page 2-26, Executive, activity summary, Cabinet support, grants and contribution, grants, \$50,000,

contributions, \$795,000, total grants and contributions, \$845,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you. Page 2-27, Executive, information item, Cabinet support, active positions. Any questions?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you. Page 2-28, Executive, information item, lease commitments, infrastructure any questions?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Page 2-29, Executive, information item, work performed on behalf of others. Any questions?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Committee, if I can get you to return to 2-7, Executive, department summary, operations expenditure summary, \$20.464 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Does committee agree that consideration of the Department of Executive is completed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, committee. I'd like to thank Premier McLeod, Mrs. Ballantyne and Ms. Turner for joining us tonight. If I can get the Sergeant-at-Arms to please escort our witnesses out of the Chamber.

Thank you. Committee, we're going to continue here with Aboriginal Affairs and Intergovernmental Relations. Premier McLeod, do you have any opening comments?

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Yes I do, Mr. Chair. I am pleased to present the 2013-2014 Main Estimates for the Department of Aboriginal Affairs and Intergovernmental Relations.

The department's main estimates propose an operations expenditure budget of \$7.416 million, an increase of 1.5 percent from the 2012-2013 Main Estimates. This increase is attributed to forced growth of \$130,000 for collective bargaining adjustments, less sunsets of \$18,000.

The department, on behalf of the Government of the Northwest Territories, is responsible for representing the interests of all Northwest Territories residents in the negotiation and implementation of Aboriginal rights agreements, and through our intergovernmental relations with Aboriginal, territorial, provincial and federal governments. This core business directly supports the 17th Legislative Assembly's priority of building a strong and sustainable future for our territory, a key aspect of which is strengthening relationships with

Northwest Territories Aboriginal governments and other governments across the country.

This government knows the value of good relationships and we have made it a priority to reach out to governments both domestically and nationally. Recently, I was proud to lead a group of political and industry leaders to Ottawa for NWT Days. The key to achieving our potential lies in the power of partnerships, and I believe NWT Days has done a great deal to raise the profile of the Northwest Territories and advance our key priorities. We will continue to develop the goodwill built during NWT Days and further strengthen our presence in the nation's capital. We will build on the success of NWT Days to create a future where the Northwest Territories and our people are an essential part of Canada's economy and future.

This government has also made it a priority to reach out to governments across the territory and strengthen our relationships by looking for common ground. This is especially true with our Aboriginal government partners. As part of our commitment to forging strong working relationships with Aboriginal governments, my Cabinet colleagues and I continue to meet regularly with leaders representing Aboriginal governments throughout the Northwest Territories. These meetings have helped us to identify areas where we can make progress together and ways we can strengthen our relationships.

We are already realizing the benefits from these efforts. This past year the Government of the Northwest Territories entered into formal government-to-government agreements with the Tlicho Government, the Gwich'in Tribal Council and the Northwest Territory Metis Nation. These agreements formalize our commitment in how we work together with Aboriginal governments to create a strong and prosperous territory for all residents.

The department will continue to focus on doing its part to build a solid foundation for intergovernmental relations by working effectively with its federal and Aboriginal partners to finalize and implement land, resources and self-government agreements in all regions of the Northwest Territories. With several sets of negotiations nearing critical milestones, we are seeing firsthand how partners working together can achieve significant results. This includes the recent conclusion of a draft Deline Final Self-Government Agreement. Once ratified, this agreement will be the first stand-alone self-government agreement in the Northwest Territories. This will provide the Sahtu Dene and Metis of Deline with the means to implement their Aboriginal right to self-government and strengthen their community, and create new business, investment and job opportunities.

The department's 2013-2014 Main Estimates include no new investments. While there is much work to be done, the department is committed to working hard at achieving results toward the priorities of the 17th Legislative Assembly within existing resources.

That concludes my opening remarks. I look forward to the committee's comments and questions. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Premier McLeod. Premier McLeod, do you have witnesses you would like to bring into the Chamber?

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

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, committee. Please escort your witnesses into the Chamber.

Premier McLeod, if you could introduce your witnesses to the House, please.

HO. BOB MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chair. On my left I have Andy Bevan, acting deputy minister for the Department of Aboriginal Affairs and Intergovernmental Relations, on my right is Richard Robertson, director of policy, planning and communications with DAAIR. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Premier McLeod. Welcome to the Chamber this evening, gentlemen. Committee, we're going to be deferring 4-7. Sorry, general comments.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Detail.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you. Committee will be deferring 4-7. We are going to page 4-8, Aboriginal Affairs and Intergovernmental Relations, information item, infrastructure investment summary. Any questions?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Aboriginal Affairs and Intergovernmental Relations, information item, revenue summary. Any questions?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Page 4-10, Aboriginal Affairs and Intergovernmental Relations, information item, active positions summary. Any questions?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Page 4-13, Aboriginal Affairs and Intergovernmental Relations, activity summary, corporate management, operations expenditure summary, \$2.760 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Page 4-14, Aboriginal Affairs and Intergovernmental Relations, activity

summary, corporate management, grants and contributions, grants, \$300,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Aboriginal Affairs and Intergovernmental Relations, information item, corporate management, active positions. Any questions?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Page 4-17, Aboriginal Affairs and Intergovernmental Relations, activity summary, negotiations. Ms. Bisaro.

MS. BISARO: Thanks, Mr. Chair. I just have one question here. Certainly, in my time here, I've realized that this section of this department is really busy. We seem to increase the number of negotiating tables that we're at on a yearly basis. I'm wondering how things are going in terms of negotiating tables. I don't imagine that we've lost any, so to speak, in this last year. I note on the next page that we have gone down one staff member from the current budget year to the next budget year. Are we still negotiating at the same number of tables as previously? If so, why has our staff complement gone down? Thank you.

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

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chair. We still have the same complement of tables, 15 negotiating tables. We are getting better at negotiating and we are also taking the approach of doubling up negotiators at some tables so that one negotiator can handle more than one table. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

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

MS. BISARO: Thanks, Mr. Chair. No, I'm good. That's all I have.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Committee, we're going to take a short break. We'll return back to page 4-17. Thank you.

---SHORT RECESS

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Welcome back, committee. We are on page 4-17, Aboriginal Affairs and Intergovernmental Relations, activity summary, negotiations, operations expenditure summary, \$2.437 million. Mr. Bromley.

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Just in terms of tables that we've got going, I think for sort of land claim settlements it's Dehcho and Akaitcho and the rest are self-government negotiations. Do I have that right?

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

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Partially right. There are also some negotiations

with bands from outside the Territories and there's the Acho Dene Koe from Fort Liard and the Sahtu communities are doing self-government negotiations.

MR. BROMLEY: These are confidential negotiations, but is there anything that we can say about where we're at, for example, with the Akaitcho and Dehcho land claims settlement negotiations with the federal government and ourselves? I know we've been at it a long time. How long have we been at it and what is it looking like? Is there anything that the Minister can see that we can do to help move those files along?

HON. BOB MCLEOD: We've been trying to work with all of the tables. The federal government has also started, I think, their review of the negotiating tables. They want to focus on the land claims tables that seem to be making the most progress. They undertook surveys but we haven't seen the results of the work that they've done. At least they haven't shared it with us. We know that they have been doing that. We are also having some bilateral discussions with some of the negotiation tables to see if we can work together, at least from the Northwest Territories side, to see if we can make progress.

MR. BROMLEY: By bilateral, we mean the Aboriginal government and ourselves. Is that correct?

HON. BOB MCLEOD: That's correct.

MR. BROMLEY: I know that if we continue to go to individual community negotiations for self-government and so on, this could really add to the workload and sort of the fine grained collection of agreements that we would have at the end of it, and we want to be able to try and come up with a system, ultimately, I think, once we get to the point where we can start talking constitutional development, that we can smoothly figure out a way to work together, once we all have our authorities. Is there anything we can do, or what's the situation with that tendency to get into smaller and smaller parts of negotiation?

HON. BOB MCLEOD: I don't think that's totally pervasive across the different regions that have not settled land claims or self-government. I know in the Sahtu is the approach that was negotiated through their land claim. I know that the Dehcho, not every community is in that situation. The Acho Dene Koe went on their own, but that was agreed to with the Dehcho First Nations. They K'atloodzeeche First Nation decided to stick with their reserve and have a different process. Wrigley moved out, but I don't think they've formally severed their ties yet but...the Akaitcho... The Salt River First Nation already settled their treaty land entitlement and they've gone on their own. It remains to be seen. I think the Akaitcho

government, the four communities are still together, Deninu Ku'e, Lutselk'e and Detah, Ndilo.

I think a large part will depend on progress and, of course, the Dehcho and Akaitcho, of course, have their treaty process, so that's an area where they have to decide if they're going to stick with the treaty process or go with a modern land claim. To me, that's sort of been the sticking point.

MR. BROMLEY: Thanks for that information. And of course, there's Deline, which is, I think, close to a final agreement, in the Sahtu. With the Tlicho, I believe they have the ability to draw down powers. Have we reached that point? Are they at the point where they're ready to do that or what's the situation on that front?

HON. BOB MCLEOD: My understanding is that they have 10 years to decide whether they're going to draw down, and I think they're probably about two or three years away from the 10 years.

MR. BROMLEY: I think that's it. I'm sure most of all the unsettled land claims people would like to see these things settled so we can get on with other priorities, but this is a priority and I appreciate the work the department's doing here, and I hope we can make progress on these files. That's all I had.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Mr. Bromley. Committee, you're on 4-17, Aboriginal Affairs and Intergovernmental Relations, activity summary, negotiations, operations expenditure summary, \$2.437 million. Does committee agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you. Page 4-18, Aboriginal Affairs and Intergovernmental Relations, information item, negotiations, active positions.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you. Page 4-21, Aboriginal Affairs and Intergovernmental Relations, activity summary, implementation, operations expenditure summary, \$694,000. Does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you. Page 4-22, Aboriginal Affairs and Intergovernmental Relations, information item, implementation, active positions. Are there any questions? Mr. Bromley.

MR. BROMLEY: Sorry, Mr. Chair, what page are we on?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Page 4-22.

MR. BROMLEY: Just in respect to land use plans which are part of the implementation process after settlement, where are we at? I know we got pretty close with the Sahtu. Has that been finalized? If we could just get a little update on the various regions

on where we're at with the land use plans. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Mr. Bromley. Premier McLeod.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The Gwich'in Land Use Plan has been finalized and been in place for some time now. The Sahtu has not been finalized but it is very close. I think there are only a couple of issues to be sorted out. The Dehcho Land Use Plan, we are going to take a renewed effort to have that finalized and work with the Dehcho First Nation on that. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

MR. BROMLEY: Mr. Chair, the Tlicho, I know that they have a five-year window and I think it's extended well beyond that. Has that been finalized? Thank you.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Mr. Chair, sorry, I forgot to mention Tlicho. They are still working on that one as well. Thank you.

MR. BROMLEY: I think we talk a lot about development issues and the regulatory process and so on. I know we've contemplated a land use framework, I believe it was called, for some amount of time. We apparently have found it equally challenging internally, but does the Premier see any interim solution to this big problem in terms of... What can we do? There is so much of our country that still does not have land use plans and they are so helpful when it comes to considering development proposals. Thank you.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Mr. Chair, with devolution and the transfer of responsibility for managed lands, I believe through the Land Use Sustainability Framework, I think we see that as the way forward to more fully embrace land use planning and we will be working towards that. We are also, with devolution and the organizational design, looking at having a lands department that would help facilitate that as well. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

MR. BROMLEY: Mr. Chair, I guess it's difficult to know until we get further along on this, but I saw principles and so on in the Land Use Sustainability Framework, but when it comes down to dealing with people's land and what they perceive as their land, it's another kettle of fish. I appreciate that this is a general approach. I think if we give a lot of attention to this that we should be able to make some progress. It's still a pretty general approach and I hope we can work on... Again, we've talked about this since early in the 16th Assembly that I am aware of, but it would be great to see some interim because, again, as we have discussed, there are still some big barriers out there for resolving situations in a big part of the Northwest Territories. Thank you.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: I guess the other way forward we see it is with devolution and with greater

use of northern tools to make advances in different land issues. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you. This is a phrase I've heard more often recently and I have constituents coming to me and asking what it means. There's a lot of confusion about what northern tools refers to. So could we just take a moment? That would be very useful if I could get some idea about what we mean by northern tools. Thank you.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Thank you. The new Wildlife Act that a legislative proposal has gone forward, there's provisions for northern tools. Also, as part of the Intergovernmental Council it was described under Chapter 6 of the AIP, and I think there will be opportunities there as well. Thank you.

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you. I know that with organizations and partnering governments there is some confusion about that. So to the extent that we can lay that out and be specific when corresponding or whatever, I'm getting the impression that would be very useful. This has been useful for me and I'll be taking a look at these agreements as they come to fruition and educating myself on it. But thanks for those comments. That's all I had. Thank you.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Thank you. We'll do that and as we flush out our thinking in more detail, we'll also make sure that the public is more aware of it. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolyunny): Thank you, Premier McLeod. Committee, we are on 4-22, which is active positions, implementation. Mr. Yakeleya.

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Chair. One point that Mr. Bromley made mention to is the Sahtu Land Use Plan. The Premier talked about that specific land use plan and I spoke to the board and member for the Sahtu Use Plan and March 5th was the 30-day time period for feedback to the final draft of the Sahtu Land Use Plan. I'm very curious as to a couple of issues that need to be worked out with the GNWT before it goes to the Cabinet for final approval, and the SSI would also be needing to give its final approval. Once the final approvals of both governments, then they ship it over to the federal government for their blessing and signing off and we would have a Sahtu Land Use Plan similar to the Gwich'in, which will be finalized. So I want to ask Mr. Premier if he thinks that within the life of this government that we'll have a Sahtu Land Use Plan with the other land use plans also moving up, and that the territorial government will do its utmost best efforts to wrap up some of the issues that the Premier talked about that need to be sorted out? So we're very much looking forward to it, in light of the oil and gas exploration happening in the Sahtu. So this will bring certainty to development and sustainability of our resources in the Sahtu. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolyunny): Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Premier McLeod.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The government works together through a Cabinet committee, called Managing This Land, where we bring all the different departments that have responsibilities for land or land management and dealing with land use planning. Right now the Department of Environment and Natural Resources is leading the Government of the Northwest Territories' internal review of the Sahtu Land Use Plan through a collaborative interdepartmental working group. We do that to make sure that the plan respects the roles and responsibilities that are set out in the various land claims and the MVRMA. We want consistent direction to the government.

I can commit to get back to the Member with more information, but my understanding is that the approving partners are waiting for a decision from the Sahtu Land Use Planning Board as to whether or not we can share the draft final plan for a targeted four-week scan. I will get back to the Member with more detailed information.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolyunny): Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Page 4-22, Aboriginal Affairs and Intergovernmental Relations, information item, implementation, active positions.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolyunny): Page 4-25, Aboriginal Affairs and Intergovernmental Relations, activity summary, intergovernmental relations, operations expenditure summary, \$1.525 million. Mr. Yakeleya.

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have two questions to the Premier regarding the intergovernmental affairs relationships engaging with the Metis groups in the North. My first question is: What is the GNWT's policy or position when it comes to engaging with Metis groups and how long ago was that established?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolyunny): Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Mr. McLeod.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I guess we came up with this policy when the Metis Nation no longer existed. At that time we tried to find a consistent approach, and the government of the day decided that they would take the money that was available for funding the Metis Nation and divide it up amongst the 17 Metis locals that were in existence at the time. The money stayed the same for all these years and the last few years we took an approach whereby if some of the money was not disbursed, we would disburse it before the end of the fiscal year to those Metis locals that were in good standing because, of the 17 Metis locals, there was only 10 or 11 that were in good standing. We would go through an exercise where we would give them their allocation and then towards the end

of the year, if there was a surplus we would disburse it.

More recently we've made the conscious decision that we would only fund the 11 Metis locals that are in good standing and we took the \$250,000 that was there and we split it 11 ways. It works out to somewhere in the neighbourhood of between \$13,000 to \$20,000 per year to each local.

MR. YAKELEYA: I appreciate the information the Premier has given me. I have to save some of this stuff for Member's statements.

One more question. There have been some movements on the Metis rights with recent court case law. What is the government doing to analyze the impacts of that case law and how it might affect the way we work with Metis groups in the future?

HON. BOB MCLEOD: As we predicted, the Government of Canada has appealed the decision. Our preliminary analysis is that it would have minimal or no impact in the Northwest Territories because of the fact that we've been treating Metis differently. We're the only jurisdiction in Canada that has Metis health benefits. We've been accorded hunting rights. If anything, if the decision stands up we may have been able to recover some of the money that we spent on behalf of Metis, but that remains to be seen because it's before the courts.

MR. YAKELEYA: We'll just have to wait for that appeal decision to go through the process and see what comes out of it. I will leave it up to the good judges to decide on that on there. I'm not going to get too far on that one here. Certainly I know that we've been very fortunate with the Metis health benefits. I know when my mother was alive she was certainly happy to have these health benefits because it really helped her out a lot there. Of course, with the Sahtu Dene and Metis land claims we have hunting rights. I come from the same people. My grandfather was a true-blooded Dene and those are the rights that he gave to me through my bloodline. I want to say that I'm still using them to the fullest and I thank my grandparents for that. Also, the Sahtu Dene and Metis is the first comprehensive land claim in Canada that gives rights to a Metis Nation. No other has been given that type of rights. They are a nation of people and, certainly, I continue to advocate for them. If there's a story to be told, maybe one day we'll sit down and listen to how Metis people grew up in the North and how we were looked upon by this very federal government of the day. Things are changing so I did want to say that we've come a long way and we'll continue moving. Those are comments. The Premier really doesn't have to make any comments. I just wanted to make known a little bit of what I want to really express. I'll need a day and a half to do that. This time I just don't have that time.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Again, committee, we're on 4-25. I have Mr. Bromley.

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just wanted to follow up a little bit on the Intergovernmental Council that the Premier mentioned earlier. I assume this division would be the one working with this. I believe it's a construct that would happen after devolution. If I could just get an idea of what the membership would be and the role would be of the Intergovernmental Council, and maybe what GNWT's position or relevance with respect to the council would be.

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

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That responsibility lies with the Department of Executive but I'll answer it anyway. Under the AIP on devolution, Section 6 provides for an Intergovernmental Council essentially so that all of the different governments can work together to manage the jurisdictions together but each being responsible for their own jurisdiction. We would have this council so that we would all work together to deal with land issues and resource issues and so on. That was the idea behind the Intergovernmental Council.

MR. BROMLEY: That gets me in the ballpark and I think I'll leave it at that. I'm sure we'll be having lots more discussions on that.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Mr. Bromley. Page 4-25, Aboriginal Affairs and Intergovernmental Relations, activity summary, intergovernmental relations, operations expenditure summary, \$1.525 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Page 4-26, Aboriginal Affairs and Intergovernmental Relations, activity summary, intergovernmental relations, grants and contributions, grants, \$350,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Page 4-27, Aboriginal Affairs and Intergovernmental Relations, information item, intergovernmental relations, active positions.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Page 4-28, Aboriginal Affairs and Intergovernmental Relations, information item, lease commitments - infrastructure.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Page 4-29 and 4-30, Aboriginal Affairs and Intergovernmental Relations, information item, work performed on behalf of others, \$547,000. Mr. Yakeleya.

MR. YAKELEYA: I just have a quick question here on the work on behalf of others. We have some very bright students who are going to post-secondary education. Recently I heard in the news that Human Rights was going to hear that the federal government – I'm not too sure what you call it, underfunded or undermined – did not live up to the obligations of the Aboriginal children for education. I'm not too sure exactly on the hearing but it seems that it could be a possibility. I'm not too sure. I want to know if the Minister, within this department, has some interning students who have done some work on post-secondary that could look at some studies on Aboriginal health or education or things like that that will help us with our land claim operations and self-government agreements. Do we have that type of arrangement with other universities or any type of things that would give some research to our communities as we start negotiating and taking over some of the responsibilities of the programs and services?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Mr. McLeod.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Implementation funding is to provide for funding of those activities that have been negotiated under the various land claims. As far as money for hiring interns to do research in different areas, that's more usually done through the different departments like Health or Education. We do have two summer students usually every summer but we don't have any interns planned.

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Premier, for clarifying that. I probably got mixed up between some of the issues. I just think that because we're on the brink of forming a government-to-government relationship that some prudence would be given to some of the self-government organizations and self-governments. Maybe that's something we have to talk about on a larger scale as to education, health, and having summer students or interns that are finished with degrees and could be of assistance to us as to our community or government. We can carry that on some other time. I just wanted to get a sense of where the Premier was at and certainly help me clarify some of the issues here.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Pages 4-29 and 4-30, Aboriginal Affairs and Intergovernmental Relations, information item, work performed on behalf of others, \$547,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): If I could get you to turn back to page 4-7, Aboriginal Affairs and Intergovernmental Relations, department summary, operations expenditure summary, \$7.416 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Does committee agree that consideration of the Department of Aboriginal Affairs and Intergovernmental Relations is concluded?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Mr. Robertson, Mr. Bevan, thank you for joining us this evening. Thank you, Mr. McLeod. If I could get the Sergeant-at-Arms to please escort the witnesses out of the Chamber.

If I can turn your attention to section 5, Finance. I will turn it over to Mr. Miltenberger. Mr. Miltenberger, do you have any opening comments?

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: I do, Mr. Chairman. I am here to present the Department of Finance's Main Estimates for the 2013-14 fiscal year.

For 2013-14, the department has identified a total operations budget of approximately \$156.3 million, which represents a 10 percent increase over the current fiscal year.

The operations budget is comprised of:

- A \$67.5 million contribution to the NWT Housing Corporation to provide the Corporation with its operating cash flow for the fiscal period.
- The remaining \$80.8 million for department operations represents a 10 percent increase from the 2012-13 Main Estimates. This is primarily the result of:
 - \$7 million to continue to advance the Mackenzie Valley Fibre Optic Link Project. This project will provide a high-speed data link up the valley and will have significant positive impacts for economic and community development and the delivery of government services;
 - \$8.2 million resulting from the transfer of funding from the Department of Transportation for the semi-annual debt service payments on the Deh Cho Bridge debt;
 - These increases are partially offset by a \$6.2 million decrease to the contribution made to the NWT Power Corporation to help mitigate the impacts of increased power rates resulting from the corporation's general rate application.

As the government's lead revenue department, the revenues managed by the department are projected to total approximately \$1.48 billion, or about 92 percent of the total GNWT revenues of \$1.61 billion being forecast for the 2013-14 fiscal year. This represents a 5 percent increase from the 2012-13 Main Estimates. This is attributable to a projected increase of \$51 million in federal transfers, and a projected increase of \$13 million in

corporate income tax revenues and \$7.5 million in personal income tax revenue forecasts.

Each of the business activities of the department provides a foundation for all other activities of government, through assessing new revenue sources, managing expenditure growth, protecting assets, providing critical fiscal, financial and economic information, and promoting accountability.

The department's 2013-14 Main Estimates continue to support the priorities of the 17th Assembly, and continuing initiatives that will support the sustainability of our territory for future generations. As Members are aware, the Premier has issued specific mandates to each Minister to support these priorities. Specific activities in the department's 2013-14 Main Estimates include:

- the continuation of several modern management initiatives such as the renewal of the Financial Administration Act, the planning and implementation of financial shared services across the GNWT, and finalizing the Service Innovation Strategy, formerly the Knowledge Management Strategy;
- advancing the Mackenzie Valley Fibre Optic Link Project;
- supporting the efforts to ensure a successful completion of a Devolution Final Agreement and the implementation of the agreement;
- supporting the development and implementation of a GNWT approach to decentralization;
- a fiscal strategy that supports the priorities of this Assembly but also recognizes the GNWT has finite resources, and we need to continue our plan to reduce overall short-term debt;
- developing a strategy that recognizes the volatility of our revenues and plans to ensure stable revenues for planning and budgetary purposes.

That concludes my opening remarks. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Minister Miltenberger. Minister Miltenberger, do you have witnesses to bring into the Chamber tonight?

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Yes, I do, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Sergeant-at-Arms, would you please escort the witnesses inside.

Mr. Miltenberger, if you can introduce your witnesses to the House, please.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have with me the deputy minister,

Mr. Mike Aumond, and the deputy secretary to the Financial Management Board, Mr. Sandy Kalgutkar. If either one of them faint tonight it's because I was insensitive and did not invite them in to have supper, and I publicly apologize for that.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Minister Miltenberger. Your insensitivity is noted. Mr. Kalgutkar, Mr. Aumond, welcome to the House this evening.

Committee, we will defer 5-7. Moving on to 5-8, Finance, information item. I am so sorry. I did this last time. General comments. I guess I'm just being clairvoyant.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Detail.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, committee. Page 5-8, Finance, information item, infrastructure investment summary. Any questions?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Being none, 5-9. Finance, information item, revenue summary. Any questions? Mr. Bromley.

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. A couple quick questions here. Under recoveries, something sort of startling in terms of numbers happened between the '12-13 revised estimates for insured and third-party recoveries. I'm just wondering if I can get a little explanation of that.

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

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The \$2.6 million was money received in a settlement with a former insurer with the GNWT regarding a lawsuit initiated by the GNWT for compensation with respect to the GNWT and the GN's settlement with victims of Ed Horne.

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you for that explanation. Just in terms of the Minister's opening remarks with respect to income tax and corporate tax, he notes a forecasted increase to these amounts, which is good to see, but when we're looking at the revenue, of course, it looks like there's a decline from what the revised estimates were. I know this is always a bit confusing, but is there a date when we can get revised estimates that will more accurately predict the forecast, or do we await for the federal assessment, which I know always take a year and a half or a couple years?

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: We get revised amounts monthly, but the date by which most returns are in is October, so October is a month we look to to get more certainty.

MR. BROMLEY: My last one. I see our federal transfer grant from Canada still remains a very large proportion of our budget, and I believe 2014 was the end of our current agreement on the formula for that. Could we just get an update? Does

that happen during this fiscal year we're discussing, and where are we in renewing and is there anything that concluded that the Minister could share with us?

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: This arrangement, the Territorial Formula Financing will be a status quo arrangement until 2018-19, the same commitment that was given by Minister Flaherty when we, as well, with the health transfer and the social transfer.

MR. BROMLEY: Thanks for that information. Does that mean the same sort of rate of increase, or does it mean the amount we're getting this year is what we're getting annually until '18-19?

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: The criteria for the formula stay the same, so it's still governed by things like tax effort and the amount of money spent in other jurisdictions. And their operations, as I indicated in my budget address, we anticipate with the deficit reduction going on across the land, that our formula could be affected negatively, but the criteria and all the elements of the formula have been left in place until 2018-19, but we're still bound by those variables.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Minister Miltenberger. Committee, we're on 5-9, Finance. Mr. Bouchard.

MR. BOUCHARD: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I'm just looking at the taxation revenues. I'm just looking at the projection, the main estimates for 2012-13 and '13-14. Obviously, we're seeing an increase, if you compare those numbers, but the revised estimates have us at \$312 million. I'm just wondering why we wouldn't project that same type of number and why that number has jumped up from our main estimates and would we not expect that in the future years to come?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Mr. Bouchard. For that we'll go to Mr. Aumond.

MR. AUMOND: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Personal income tax and corporate income tax, by their nature, are volatile. The reason we had the bump in 2012-13 to the revised estimates is we had, in particular with corporate income tax, a couple of companies that filed for previous years and restated their taxes over and above the estimate that Canada provides us. Companies can go back and file taxes for up to seven years. We had a couple of large companies do that this past year, which is the main reason for the increase in the taxes. When we try to project what is going to happen further, we take some guidance from Canada but also what is going on in the territory. If we discount those companies that re-filed, then we are just projecting a modest increase over what we had projected at the beginning of last year. Thank you.

MR. BOUCHARD: That's it. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Committee, we are on 5-9, Finance, information item, revenue summary. Any questions?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Page 5-10, Finance, information item, active position summary. Any questions?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you. Page 5-13, Finance, activity summary, deputy minister's office. Mr. Bromley.

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I would just like to get on top of this business. The contributions to the NWT Power Corporation are not territorial power subsidy funding. Am I right in that assertion? Thank you.

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

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: That's correct.

MR. BROMLEY: Okay, thank you. I see that the last year we contributed \$10.6 million to the general rate application. That is a subsidy, I believe, to electricity rates and that's dropping to \$3.5 million for this proposed fiscal year. Will that continue in future years? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Mr. Bromley. For that we'll go to Mr. Kalgutkar.

MR. KALGUTKAR: Thank you, Mr. Chair. That's correct. For the 2014-15 fiscal year it's going to drop to about 1.3 or 1.4 million dollars. Thank you.

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you. Now, the Inuvik gas contribution I see \$5 million last year, \$5.9 million proposed for this year. What is the status of that? Are we expecting that to continue as well? Thank you.

MR. KALGUTKAR: Mr. Chair, the Member is correct. It is going to continue on for the next few years, and then it will also drop off after the 2015-16 fiscal year. Thank you.

MR. BROMLEY: So these are subsidies in addition to the territorial power subsidy?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Mr. Bromley. For that we'll go to Minister Miltenberger.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: That's correct, Mr. Chairman.

MR. BROMLEY: Mr. Chair, I just want to confirm that these do not reduce the power. They don't reduce the underlying power and underlying causes of high power cost. They simply subsidize the rates and cushion the shock as rates go up. Is that correct? Thank you.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Yes, Mr. Chair. These mitigate the impacts of the rate shock.

MR. BROMLEY: That's all I have on this page. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Mr. Bromley. Committee, we are on 5-13. Mr. Bouchard.

MR. BOUCHARD: Thank you, Mr. Chair. My question is about the NWT Heritage Fund. We have guidelines in place on that contribution and what those funds will be used for in the future. Is there a buffer time zone that we don't withdraw that money within the first 10 years of the fund or is there any kind of guidelines?

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

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. At this point we are contributing \$250,000 a year and there is a 20-year period where we can't touch the principal.

MR. BOUCHARD: Mr. Chair, is there any expectation over the next few years to start to contribute more to this fund?

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Mr. Chair, that has been flagged as we get into devolution and move into implementation and resource revenues start to flow, we have to have the discussion about the money. We are in the position that it should go mainly into infrastructure, paying down the debt and discussion about the Heritage Fund as well. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Committee, we are on 5-13, Finance, activity summary, deputy minister's office, operations expenditure summary, \$79.725 million. Does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you. Page 5-14, Finance, activity summary, deputy minister's office, grants and contributions, contributions, \$77.142 million. Does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you. Page 5-15, Finance, information item, deputy minister's office, active positions. Any questions?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Seeing none, 5-17. Ms. Bisaro.

MS. BISARO: Thanks, Mr. Chair. I have a question that I think belongs here. The Minister, in his opening remarks at the very end, talked about developing a strategy that recognizes the volatility of our revenue and plans to ensure stable revenues. Is this referencing the Revenue Stabilization Fund which has been talked about for a while? I haven't heard anything about it for a while. Thank you.

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

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The Member is correct; there is still work being done on the framework and looking at how we would structure and fund such a fund. Thank you.

MS. BISARO: Thanks to the Minister. What kind of a time frame are we looking at? Is it going to be within the 2013-14 budget year or are we looking at 2014-15? Thank you.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Mr. Chair, the framework will be done this current fiscal year and we would look to advance it fully into the next '14-15 budget cycle.

MS. BISARO: That's good. Thanks to the Minister.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Committee, we are on 5-17, Finance, activity summary, fiscal policy, operations expenditure summary, \$24.945 million. Does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Okay. Page 5-18, Finance, activity summary, fiscal policy, grants and contributions, grants, \$23.6 million. Does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you. Page 5-19, Finance, information item, fiscal policy, active positions. Are there any questions?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you. Page 5-21, Finance, activity summary, budget, treasury, debt management, operations expenditure summary, \$26.762 million. Mr. Bromley.

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Just in terms of managing our debt, am I correct that we only have short-term debt, we don't have long-term debt?

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

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We have both. We have some long-term debt with the bridge. We have other long-term debt against our borrowing limit that's self-financing. As well, we have short-term debt. Thank you.

MR. BROMLEY: Okay. All of the debt that is not self-financing is the amounts that we pay in interest the cost of that debt indicated on this page, or could the Minister tell me what it is or which ones would fall under that category? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Mr. Bromley. For that we'll go to Mr. Kalgutkar.

MR. KALGUTKAR: Thank you, Mr. Chair. If the Member would look at the other expenses section of the page, that \$13.1 million includes \$8.2 million for the Deh Cho Bridge interest payment and \$5 million for short-term interest costs as well. Thank you.

MR. BROMLEY: Okay. So our short-term debt has been in the order of \$5 million, I have three years in front of me, it looks like our short-term debt has gone up from \$580,000, to \$5 million, to the \$13.2-roughly million. Am I correct in that? Thank you.

MR. KALGUTKAR: Thank you. What we have provided for is an allocation of \$5 million for short-term interest costs, but as the Member has alluded to, our short-term interest costs have been lower than that. If Members recall, we increased them for the '12-13 budget because we were projecting some pretty significant short-term borrowing debt during that year and also if Members recall, we increased our authorized borrowing limit for short-term debt to \$275 million. So the amount that we have provided for is just to have some kind of buffer there just in case we have increased borrowing needs during the course of the fiscal year. Thank you.

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you. I appreciate Mr. Kalgutkar's comments there. I knew it wasn't that simple. So we're proposing \$8.166 million for Deh Cho Bridge interest payments for this coming fiscal year. Will it stay at that amount and for how long? Or what's the forecast for amounts there and longevity of that payment? Thank you.

MR. KALGUTKAR: Thank you. The long-term debt payments on the Deh Cho Bridge debt are linked to inflation. So they won't start going up, but for the medium term they're going to be around the 8.1 to 9 million dollar range. They are about half offset by the bridge tolls. Thank you.

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, and just the second part of that was how many years we will be paying that amount. Thank you.

MR. KALGUTKAR: Thank you. For the term of the loan which is 36 years. Thank you.

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you. My second topic of interest here was the Mackenzie Valley fibre link contribution. I think this is a project that we all are looking forward to seeing completed. There's \$7 million listed for this coming fiscal year. Is that a one-time cost or, again, do we have a forecast into the future for that project? Thank you.

MR. KALGUTKAR: Thank you. Right now the \$7 million is accounted for if we procure the project as a pure P3 type model. So there will be an initial cash contribution to the project to help offset the capital cost of \$7 million, and then ongoing there's an availability payment of \$7 million to help service the debt payment. Thank you.

MR. BROMLEY: Just to complete the picture for me, and ongoing for how many years? Thank you.

MR. KALGUTKAR: Thank you. Right now we're modeling a 20-year bond issue. That's what it will be based on. Thank you.

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

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: So it is clear for the Member or for this House as well, we are actively pursuing discussions with some of the Aboriginal governments looking to set up a joint venture, which would be separate and wouldn't involve the P3 approach. So what structure we choose to go forward could possibly affect the dollars. The other thing, of course, is if this project in fact generates the revenue we think it will, then the increased revenue will more than offset and diminish what's owed. Thank you.

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

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, and thanks for the additional details. That was my next question, was to what degree this would be a self-financing project, and I believe I heard the Minister say that the anticipation is that this would be, to some degree, a self-financing project. Maybe I can just get that confirmed. Thank you.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you. As we had shared information in terms of our projections, but this project is seen to be a revenue generator over time. Once we pay down the capital investment costs, the remote sensing operation out of Inuvik, which is the anchor tenant, would be the main revenue generator where we have countries, and agencies, and departments lined up to put in satellites and rent space on our fibre optic line, and then there will also be the ancillary benefits tied into the putting in of the fibre optic line into all the communities down the valley as we install the main line. So over time this is going to, and I'm talking decades, that this is anticipated to be a net revenue generator I think "par excellence."

MR. BROMLEY: Are there investment opportunities here? Will the government make money on this? Thank you.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you. We're looking at two things here, but we're going to be, from the start and on into the future, a major partner in this if we go out to Aboriginal governments. Once the debt is paid off it will generate revenue. What we're looking at is what would be a more modest than would be normal return on investment so that we can make our best efforts to keep the cost of service into the communities as reasonable as possible, which we think will generate a longer-term benefit and get us more customers. So, yes, there is going to be revenue generation and it's also going to have

some broader economic impacts. The Member talks about will we look at full cost accounting, and full cost impacts and benefits to the communities where they will have significant, we believe, opportunities in each community. Thank you.

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you. Yes, the Minister is outlining many of the reasons that I support this project, but I'm striving for transparency here, as I'm sure he realizes. So, yes, this will generate revenues once it's paid off. I've had a lot of investments on the basis of that. Some of them manage to get paid off and others didn't. How long do you think, is there a forecast on paying this off? I realize in a full costing accounting approach that, in fact, there are many benefits that should accrue very early on the moment that things are hooked up here. Thank you.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you. We're projecting a fairly aggressive repayment schedule of about 10 years.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Minister Miltenberger. Mr. Bromley, your time is expired. Let me know if you need back on. I have Ms. Bisaro.

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I have to start with my pet peeve and that's the amount of money that's in "other." I talked about this a lot. I thought we'd gotten rid of that, Mr. Minister, and I understand the explanation. But if it's an amount that's \$50,000 or \$200,000 then it probably isn't too much, but when we have an "other" of \$13 million, although I appreciate that \$8 million of it is the debt, it's a little difficult to sort of look at the budget and kind of go yeah, yeah, we just have \$13 million of undescribed money. I'll just leave that at that.

I wanted to talk a bit about insurance and self-insurance programs as listed under the activity description. What self-insurance programs do we run or do we have? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. For that we'll go to Mr. Aumond.

MR. AUMOND: Thank you, Mr. Chair. We run, I guess, our own self-insurance programs for our assets that we have as a GNWT that we insure. We have premiums that we pay for others as well.

With respect to the Member's comments about other expenses, I appreciate the comments and we will endeavour to see what we can do to provide more clarification for next year.

MS. BISARO: I appreciate Mr. Aumond's efforts to try to get rid of "other." With regard to our GNWT assets, we are responsible for them so we are self-insuring our own assets, but there are always risks when we have assets and the risk of loss. I think there's a program called Property Impairment Reporting Program for GNWT buildings. Could I get confirmation that that is a program that we use to assess risk on our GNWT assets?

MR. AUMOND: In part, we do use that program and there are other programs that our underwriter, for those assets that we do procure insurance on, direct us to undertake in conjunction with the fire marshal and others to provide all types of inspections and make sure that we have not only preventative maintenance programs that our Department of Public Works and Services would undertake on everybody's behalf but also to make sure that the people who occupy the building and operate the building use it in a way that is consistent with what the underwriter or broker is directing.

MS. BISARO: I just want to follow up. In terms of risk management, do we feel comfortable that we have a really good handle on all of our buildings, all of our GNWT assets in terms of the insurance risk and risk of loss, I guess for lack of a better way of putting it?

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

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We are reasonably happy. There are many things we don't control when it comes to risk management. For example, the majority of our communities are in the middle of the Boreal Forest. There are more and more extreme weather events across the land. The whole concept of stationarity, which is the predictability of those types of occurrences, has all but disappeared. The insurance business, in fact, no longer looks at stationarity because it makes forecasting and doing insurance, and making projections almost impossible. Given a number of those broader major variables, we believe we have a reasonable handle on the issue of risk management.

MS. BISARO: My next question has to do with assets which have been downloaded, so to speak, from GNWT to municipalities. As municipalities have taken over their own control of their communities, many buildings have been devolved from GNWT down to the municipalities. In terms of insurance and risk management of those buildings, do we have any hand in that or is that totally the responsibility of the municipality?

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: We worked with communities to set up an insurance program for the communities and we invest money in that. A number of years ago we were all being collectively put in the poorhouse by the usurious insurance rates companies were charging, and we went to a self-financing one in the North and we invest in that. It's cost effective. It's done through NWTAC.

MS. BISARO: Just one last question. The Minister just said that we still put money into NORCIX to the NWT Self-Insurance Program. I thought we had stopped doing that.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. For that we'll go to Mr. Aumond.

MR. AUMOND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The Member is correct; the GNWT does not provide a direct contribution to NORCIX, but the GNWT does provide money and, in some cases, provides specific funding to purchase insurance to communities so that they can procure the insurance through NORCIX or any other avenue they wish to pursue.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Mr. Aumond. Continuing with questions I have Mr. Bouchard.

MR. BOUCHARD: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just have a question about the fibre optic link contribution, the \$7 million. Is that an interest cost or can we capitalize it?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Mr. Bouchard. For that we'll go to Mr. Kalgutkar.

MR. KALGUTKAR: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The payment is really a marker to give us a negotiating mandate to how we're going to structure the actual corporation that's going to manage the Fibre Link Project for us. As I noted before, the first payment is going to be towards the capex of the project, so the first is a \$7 million contribution to whomever the entity is that manages the project towards the capital costs and then the ongoing payment of \$7 million to offset the debt servicing costs. As the Minister alluded to before, in the early days there are not sufficient revenues to generate sufficient cash to pay down the debt so the GNWT is assuming that risk, and the \$7 million is to help offset that risk. Going forward, as the Inuvik satellite facility grows, the amount of that payment should decline as well. The amount of the payments also will depend on how we structure the ownership of the corporation.

MR. BOUCHARD: Just for my clarity, then, this is a payment we're going to make to an entity that takes in all the partners in the fibre optic link.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Mr. Bouchard. For that we'll go to Mr. Aumond.

MR. AUMOND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As Mr. Kalgutkar has explained, it will depend on how the ownership structure unveils itself. It may take place in terms of a contribution to capital, it may take the form of an availability payment. It may also represent, depending on how the ownership structure is defined and considered at the end of the day, part of the GNWT's contribution for its ownership in the facility itself.

MR. BOUCHARD: I just look forward to seeing the way the structure is completed once we have the project up and running and the entity, how it's going to be run.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Mr. Bouchard. Page 5-21, Finance, activity summary, budget, treasury and debt management, operations expenditure summary, \$26.762 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Page 5-22, Finance, activity summary, budget, treasury and debt management, grants and contributions, grants, \$7 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Page 5-23, Finance, information item, budget, treasury and debt management, active positions.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Page 5-25, Finance, activity summary, office of the comptroller general, operations expenditure summary, \$22.377 million. Ms. Bisaro.

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Just two questions here. One has to do with the Audit Bureau. We have, in my experience, been struggling to fully staff the internal Audit Bureau for a number of years now. I just wondered if I could get an update. Do these numbers in this budget reflect a fully staffed Audit Bureau?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. For that we'll go to Mr. Aumond.

MR. AUMOND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That is correct.

MS. BISARO: That's good to hear. The other question I have here has to do with the reporting of the public accounts, and I know that the department has been struggling somewhat to get public accounts out by the end or the date that is legislated and by the end of the calendar year. I gather, I think there have been a few changes to the reporting of the public accounts. Is it likely that the department's going to be able to get the public accounts out a couple of months earlier than we have seen them for the last few years?

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

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. There has been significant improvement in terms of the time. We have met yearly, at least I meet yearly, the staff meets more often with the Audit Bureau, the audit folks, and we work with all the agencies that are supposed to be reporting in. We have shortened that timeline and are going to keep working on shortening it. There has been recognition of the improvement by the Auditor General, but I'll ask the deputy if he wants to add anything further to that matter.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Mr. Aumond.

MR. AUMOND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As the Minister stated, we have made some improvements. By the legislation, we're supposed to have the public accounts ready by the end of the calendar year and I think this year we had them ready in October. The current Financial Administration Act dictates that we have to table the accounts at the earliest possible session, which was this one here. One of the changes we are contemplating on revising the act is to make the public accounts available when they are ready. We won't necessarily have to wait for a session to table them to make them public.

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

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Thanks to the Minister and the DM for the information. I just want to say that I appreciate the fact that the department's been working really hard and the Auditor General also has been working with the department really hard to try and improve the process and to get the public accounts out a lot earlier. I've seen an improvement and I just hope we can maintain that. Good on you for working so hard.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. Moving on with questions, I have Mr. Bromley.

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I want to just ask a little bit about the Environmental Liability Fund. It came up in one of the previous departments we were discussing, it might have been Public Works and Services, I can't remember now, or Transportation. Maybe I could just start by getting clarification on what this is, how much is in the fund if it is a set amount, and how it's managed to meet the needs. I know that environmental liability can go from zip to a whole bunch in no time at all. How does it work to meet that sort of volatile need?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Mr. Bromley. For that we'll go to Mr. Aumond.

MR. AUMOND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Back in 2007-2008 the GNWT, through the Financial Management Board, established a policy and authority for all the environmental costs related to contaminated sites to be paid through a central fund. Prior to that time the government would take an assessment of all the environmental liabilities it had, and it would note them in its notes to its financial and in the public accounts and financial statements. That is no longer the case. We now manage under a central fund.

Back in 2007-08, when we did an original assessment, we booked a large amount of money on our books to remediate those sites. As at March 31, 2012, the fund had a level of \$44,187,970. It was a process where at the end of every year, as

sites become assessed and the values and the cost of remediated sites become known, adjustments are made to the fund. As sites are remediated, the fund is reduced by the amount that was booked. We undertake that process every year and we make adjustments where we have adjustments that exceed the appropriation of the government that has been approved by the Assembly, that we will come back and seek a supplementary appropriation to do that if that was required. That hasn't been the case for the last couple of years.

MR. BROMLEY: So are we, just for my clarification, booking the value of the estimated cost of remediation or are we booking dollars to pay for the remediation, if you get my drift.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Mr. Bromley, before we continue with these questions here, I would just remind the Member that we are on operations expenditure summary under the office of the comptroller general and we're hearing about things more like waste management questions. Can you indicate to me how this is related to these pages, please?

MR. BROMLEY: Mr. Chairman, if you look at the third paragraph, the second last line. The Environmental Liability Fund.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Mr. Bromley. For that we'll go to Mr. Aumond.

MR. AUMOND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The answer to the Member's question is both. When we take the assessments, usually after about a Phase 3 assessment, based on those costs we would book that into the fund, and then the actual cost of remediation would be paid through that fund, whatever the cost is to remediate it.

MR. BROMLEY: I think I'm getting it. If I were to ask what our current environmental liabilities are, knowing that the fund is about \$44 million would tell me that that's what our current liabilities are right now. Is that correct? If not, maybe I could find out what the current environmental liabilities are.

MR. AUMOND: As of March 31st that was the value of the liabilities.

MR. BROMLEY: Okay, so this is obviously a substantial fund. How current are we in terms of knowing what our environmental liabilities are? I imagine we're moving steadily towards a routine sort of assessment and so on. Are we fairly current on those or are we still catching up with today's world in that respect?

MR. AUMOND: As I said, we've been at this in a substantive and in what I would consider to be a robust way since 2007-08, and we've continually adjusted the fund based on the assessments as we undertake them, so we think we've identified most of the sites that we are aware of, and we've

assessed them to the degree that we have up until March 31, 2012.

As I stated earlier, this is ongoing work. We have a formal committee within the bureaucracy that looks at this and manages this, and there's adjustments made to the fund on a yearly basis.

MR. BROMLEY: Thanks very much for this information. Just one last one here. Do we categorize at all? I'm wondering what might, if we know, roughly, what proportion might be due to fossil fuels versus asbestos or contaminants of a different nature.

MR. AUMOND: I would have to confirm, but I would believe so, because we would have that information through the various ESAs that would be undertaken, but I do not have that information here with me today.

MR. BROMLEY: I wonder, could I ask the Minister to provide that. I don't want it to be an onerous, time-consuming exercise, but if that could be readily pulled out, that would be useful.

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

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Yes, Mr. Chairman, we'll provide that information.

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you to the Minister. I think on a full cost accounting, I think that sort of information would be useful.

I just want to look now at the Power Subsidy Program. I know, under debt management, we subsidized about \$27 million last year and we're proposing \$21 million this year. I see that directly under the Power Subsidy Program we're subsidizing a little over \$11 million each year. Now, that's up quite a bit from '11-12 when it was at about \$5.2 million, and I know rates are going up and whatnot. Is this a temporary rise or are we settled in at this amount for the indefinite future, at roughly \$11 million, and what will influence it as we go forward?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Mr. Bromley. Mr. Kalgutkar.

MR. KALGUTKAR: When the government did the electricity rate review and we went to the rate zones, our power subsidy cost did go down and what influences that program is, obviously, the power cost, right? So as power costs go up, the subsidy will increase as well.

MR. BROMLEY: It's never simple, Mr. Chair. Let's see. Our rate went down but because absolute costs for electricity are up it ends up being a higher amount. Maybe I can get Mr. Kalgutkar to try that one more time and what we can expect to see in the future here.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Mr. Bromley. We're actually going to go to Minister Miltenberger first.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The subsidies are linked to the rates and as the rates of power go up, and we've been having the rate increases over the X number of years, even though they've been cushioned, the subsidy goes up commensurately, and they're linked, so they're going to keep moving together.

MR. BROMLEY: I appreciate that plain language version of what's actually happening here. To plain language it even more, we're going to be paying more and more subsidies into the future, so it is going up as time goes by. I guess what's really important here is to try and deal with the underlying costs of generating power, and we're not putting much towards that. We are putting some, but it's very modest compared to these sorts of amounts that I've been quoting: last year, \$27 million; this year, \$21 million. It looks like it's sort of dropping a little bit next year but, obviously, this amount is going up. This is a long-term commitment, so it would be really worthwhile – I'm sure the Minister would agree – investing in how to get those rates down. I throw that out as a comment, but I'd welcome any comments by the Minister. I know he would dearly love to see us figure out how to reduce power rates, fundamentally, as well, which would then, of course, bring down our power subsidy program as well.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: We have a common goal here. We are investing significantly and are going to continue to invest, not only money but planning and policy development in things like biomass and solar. We're going to be coming forward with a very ambitious hydro project that's going to allow us to link the grids and have reasonable-cost power available for economic development as well as provide power into some communities that are currently on diesel. We are going to, as well, work with Inuvik and other thermal communities on the Liquid Natural Gas Initiative. We are very committed to that.

We also want to push on encouraging people to switch to alternative energy. As well, we want to continue to push efficiencies and conservation, which is also an underappreciated area in terms of what's possible in terms of savings. We are committed to doing that as well. The reality, though, across the world is the energy costs continue to rise everywhere and it is a challenge for all of us.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Minister Miltenberger. Mr. Bromley, your time has expired. Committee, we're on 5-25. Mr. Bromley.

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. To complete this loop here – and I appreciate the Minister's comments there – I do note in his opening comments that we are reducing our total

contributions to subsidizing these electricity rates by over \$6 million this year, but I also observed that none of that reduction is being transferred into actually addressing the cost of power and reducing that through energy initiatives that would help in that way. Would the Minister consider supporting more efforts such as was done in the 16th Assembly? Each year we are dropping now our power subsidy rates somewhat, a significant amount in terms of millions of dollars, and we are not increasing our expenditures on energy expenditures. Would the Minister agree that we should be putting some of these reductions from subsidy that we're enjoying into actually addressing the costs of power in a real fundamental way?

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

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would agree that we want to, in the coming year, as we look at increasing the amount of money we're going to put into infrastructure, have a serious discussion how much of that money, that extra \$50 million a year goes into energy infrastructure. We will be coming forward, as I have indicated a number of times now and the Premier has also made reference. We are going to come forward with a number of major initiatives, one tied to hydro in the North and South Slave focusing mainly initially on transmission and then we are, as well, going to lay out what we think is a very positive plan as it pertains to liquid natural gas and how we think that will lower energy costs. At the same time, we are going to continue to work on efficiencies, conservation and the rebate. We are going to continue to put more money into all those rebate programs that will assist people in terms of switching to more energy-efficient alternative energy type of units. Thank you.

MR. BROMLEY: Mr. Chair, I appreciate those comments. I know the Minister has concerns in this area and we'll be going after things. He listed quite a number of initiatives that we hope to do. All of them have costs to them. I guess I'm disappointed that here we have \$6 million that we are reducing in subsidies and no attempt to increase our efforts in the direction that the Minister has indicated. I will leave it at that, Mr. Chair. That's all I had on this page. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Mr. Bromley. Committee, we are on 5-25, Finance, activity summary, office of the comptroller general, operations expenditure summary, \$22.377 million. Does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you. Page 5-26, Finance, activity summary, office of the comptroller general, grants and contributions, contributions, \$11.085 million. Does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you. Page 5-27, Finance, information item, office of the comptroller general, active positions. Are there any questions?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you. Page 5-29, Finance, activity summary, office of the chief information officer, operations expenditure summary, \$2.469 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you. Page 5-30, Finance, information item, office of the chief information officer, grants and contributions, contributions, \$100,000. Does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you. Page 5-31, Finance, information item, office of the chief information officer, active positions. Any questions?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you. Page 5-33, Finance, information item, Liquor Revolving Fund. Mr. Yakeleya.

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I have a couple of questions here in regard to the Liquor Revolving Fund. Can the Minister indicate to me from 2011-12 what was the number of sales in the Norman Wells liquor store?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Just give them a second to look for that information. We'll go to Minister Miltenberger.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We don't have that level of detail in terms of community consumption of alcohol, but we can commit to get that information for committee. Thank you.

MR. YAKELEYA: Mr. Chair, I look forward to the information from the Minister. In 2011-12 the Territorial Liquor Commission had sales about \$46.3 million. Gross sales increased over the previous year by 1.6 percent. In regard to the Liquor Commission, there are goals and objectives. One of them is to educate people on responsible alcohol use and not abusing it. Can the Minister briefly tell me what type of promotional programs they have out there to support their goals and initiatives under this Liquor Commission?

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Mr. Chair, firstly, we work with the Government of the Northwest Territories where we have a huge interest in alcohol education, through Health, through Active Living, through all of those other programs. As a commission, we label all of the bottles. We have the bags that are marked. We do posters. We do ads about responsible drinking, as

well, as I indicated, to try to make sure that what we are doing is supportive and ties into the work that has been done by government departments such as Health and Social Services and Education. Trying to really push, for example, not having pregnant mothers drink is one really key area. We make efforts in all of those areas to try to educate people to make the right choices. Thank you.

MR. YAKELEYA: Mr. Chair, certainly I encourage the Minister to continue providing other effective means of educating the young people.

If you look at the RCMP stats in the Sahtu, the increase of liquor has shot up quite considerably. It's scary. If you look at the amount of liquor that is being sold in the Northwest Territories combined that with the stats of the RCMP with people who are getting into trouble because of alcohol, those numbers are high. If you look at even the jail, \$37 million to house correctional facility inmates in our jail here, and the amount that the Northwest Territories liquor sales have caused a lot of headaches for a lot of people.

I agree with the Minister when it comes down to it, it is a personal choice and personal responsibility. Sometimes with the alcohol, it adds some other chemicals in there that really fights the person and the heart and gets them addicted. That has happened to the best of us.

I want to work with the Minister within the life of this government to have some other options. How do we educate the people? More and more young people are using alcohol. If they can use it in a responsible manner, great, but I believe that education is the key for handling this issue here.

I want to ask the Minister if this education promotion is done by the NWT Liquor Commission, is it going to reconsider how we promote, other than labels on the bottles and bags and posters and ads. Is there something else that we could look at that would see that we have something to measure? Do you have a measurement of results? Maybe we can look at some of the numbers that we are having here, certainly the Norman Wells liquor store due to the unrestricted sales that certainly shot up from previous years. This is what I want to look at.

I heard him once say, on one hand we buy the liquor and on the other hand we do the treatment. We do both. I am looking to see how we can help our people. I believe in our goals for healthy, independent, strong people. This is one issue here with our hand in the bottle that is also killing a lot of our people. It's a tough commission, I guess, and how do we do that? Where is the balance? Thank you.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Mr. Chair, the Member and I have had numerous discussions about the ravages of alcohol and its destructive force across the entire fabric of the Northwest

Territories and how he and I, growing old together, still talk about how do we bend the curve on this in a positive way.

I can make the commitment that we will work with, of course, the social program Minister, Social Programs members' committee, the Liquor Commission, when it comes to the issue of alcohol and education and what we can or should be doing that we're not now doing, that we would, of course, do our part as part of that process. If there are things out there that we haven't thought of, there are innovative approaches being done in other jurisdictions, we as a government of course want to look at those because this is one of the single...this is, in my mind, the biggest social problem that we do have in the Northwest Territories. Thank you.

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you. I'm going to have to disagree with the Minister there. I'm not growing old. We have matured together. We have worked together on this issue, and we've had discussions. This is one of the most complex and serious issues that we've talked about. I'm really encouraged by the Minister to say that there's a possibility of looking at some things like how do we work together.

Liquor is provided in the Northwest Territories. That's one of the things that we do as a government or any government across Canada. On the other hand, it has such a destructive force that I keep bringing it up to the Minister, and we'll continue to talk until we get really old, old together, and see how we deal with this issue.

I know the government is working hard on it through other initiatives, and I really want to have some good discussion on this issue here. If we can solve and resolve this issue, look out world: the Northwest Territories is going to take off because we've got some really good people that just happen to have this demon, as some people call it, hanging on to them, and that's pretty bad.

So I'm going to leave it at that. I look forward to working with the Minister on this. And again, how do we start promoting other promotional campaign ads that tell the people if you're going to take this, it can be pretty dangerous? If you do it responsibly and mature, then it's okay, and that's what we've got to learn.

So I'm going to leave it at that. That's all I have to say, just mostly comments.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Committee, we're on 5-33, Finance, information item, Liquor Revolving Fund. Any questions.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you. Committee, 5-34, Finance, information item, Liquor Revolving Fund, active positions. Any questions?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolyunny): Seeing none. Page 5-35, Finance, information item, work performed on behalf of others.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolyunny): Committee, if you'd be kind enough to turn to 5-7, department summary, Finance, operations expenditure summary, \$156.278 million. Does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolyunny): Thank you, committee. Does committee agree that consideration of the Department of Finance is completed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolyunny): Thank you, committee. I'd like to thank Mr. Kalgutkar, Mr. Aumond and Minister Miltenberger for this evening. Sergeant-at-Arms, if you could please escort our witnesses out of the Chamber. Thank you. Mr. Menicoche.

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. I move that we report progress.

---Carried

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolyunny): I will now rise and report progress.

Report of Committee of the Whole

MR. SPEAKER: Good evening, colleagues. Can I have the report of Committee of the Whole, Mr. Dolyunny.

MR. DOLYUNNY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Your committee has been considering Tabled Document 9-17(4), NWT Main Estimates, 2013-2014, and would like to report progress. Mr. Speaker, I move that the report of Committee of the Whole be concurred with.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Dolyunny. A motion is on the floor. Do we have a seconder? The seconder is Ms. Bisaro.

---Carried

MR. SPEAKER: Item 22, third reading of bills. Madam Clerk, orders of the day.

Orders of the Day

PRINCIPAL CLERK OF COMMITTEES (Ms. Knowlan): Orders of the day for Friday, March 8, 2013, 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

- Motion 17-17(4), Appointment of Acting Clerk of the Legislative Assembly

18. First Reading of Bills

19. Second Reading of Bills

20. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters

MR. SPEAKER: Madam Clerk has the floor!

PRINCIPAL CLERK OF COMMITTEES (Ms. Knowlan):

- Tabled Document 9-17(4), NWT Main Estimates, 2013-2014
- Bill 1, Tlicho Statutes Amendment 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, March 8th, at 10:00 a.m.

---ADJOURNMENT

The House adjourned at 8:13 p.m.