



NORTHWEST TERRITORIES LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

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The Honourable Jackie Jacobson, Speaker

Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories

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Yellowknife, Northwest Territories

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

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YELLOWKNIFE, NORTHWEST TERRITORIES**Tuesday, October 22, 2013****Members Present**

Hon. Glen Abernethy, Hon. Tom Beaulieu, Ms. Bisaro, Mr. Blake, 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 1:30 p.m.

Prayer

---Prayer

SPEAKER (Hon. Jackie Jacobson): Good afternoon, colleagues. Item 2, Ministers' statements.

Ministers' Statements

**MINISTER'S STATEMENT 79-17(4):
CHANGES TO HOMEOWNERSHIP PROGRAMS**

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Mr. Speaker, today I would like to update the Legislative Assembly on changes to homeownership programs offered through the NWT Housing Corporation.

When we developed our strategic plan, Building for the Future, residents told us that we needed to examine our homeownership programs. They wanted us to recognize the different roles that homeownership plays in non-market and market communities. They told us we need to make these programs more effective.

Mr. Speaker, following our strategic plan, we have made significant changes to Providing Assistance for Territorial Homeownership, our main homeownership subsidy program. We've changed the way we determine subsidy levels, expanded the eligible pool of clients, and significantly closed the gap between the cost of homeownership and public housing.

Our new approach provides higher subsidies in non-market communities with a higher cost of living. For example, an eligible household in Deline would be able to purchase a new home for about \$140,000 after receiving a subsidy under PATH. This would mean the client would have approximately \$1,500 in monthly costs for their mortgage and utilities. This is very similar to the maximum rent charged for public housing clients.

The approach to the subsidy is different in market communities. Housing supply and development is much different in these communities and in market communities, the program focuses on helping first-time homeowners.

Mr. Speaker, we have also changed the way we deliver our homeownership programs. Residents will now be able to apply for programs at any time during the year rather than only during a targeted intake period. We will work with clients to schedule repairs, making sure to allow for getting materials into the community and for weather conditions.

Mr. Speaker, homeowners are responsible for maintaining their homes and for completing any repairs that are required. The NWT Housing Corporation supports homeowners with modest income to meet that responsibility. We need to ensure that our emergency and major repair programs support homeowners but do not take away from their role in maintaining their own home.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, last year we introduced the Revised Mortgage Balance Program for about 400 clients, with mortgages payable directly to the NWT Housing Corporation. Most of these clients had considerable arrears, and collection rates were very low.

Since then, about 60 percent of our mortgage clients have taken advantage of the program. They have a fresh start and their mortgage payments are predictable and affordable. The success of the program is reflected in the monthly mortgage collection rates, which have averaged 85 percent for clients in the new program compared with less than 30 percent for those that have yet to sign up.

The NWT Housing Corporation will continue to work with clients who are continuing to accumulate mortgage arrears. They still have an opportunity to take advantage of the Revised Mortgage Balance Program, but there are a number of files now being advanced through the legal process.

Mr. Speaker, the homeownership programs support residents to meet their own housing needs. The approach to Securing Assistance for Emergencies, our emergency repair program, to the new Providing Assistance for Territorial Homeownership, our homeownership subsidy program, and to Contributing Assistance for Repairs and Enhancements, our major repair program, reflect our partnership approach between homeowners and the NWT Housing Corporation.

The vision of the 17th Legislative Assembly includes strong individuals, families and communities, and I look forward to working with all Members as we

continue to work on our housing priorities. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

MINISTER'S STATEMENT 80-17(4):
UPDATE ON PARTNERSHIP WITH
WILFRID LAURIER UNIVERSITY

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Mr. Speaker, I would like to take the opportunity today to update Members on our partnership with Wilfrid Laurier University on water and cold region research.

This partnership helps support our government's vision of strong individuals, families and communities sharing the benefits and responsibilities of a unified, environmentally sustainable and prosperous Northwest Territories by ensuring we use sound and reliable evidence-based information when developing policy, programs and services.

The purpose of the partnership agreement, signed in May 2010, is to provide new infrastructure and expertise to our government for environmental research and education, increase our capacity to conduct this research, and provide training needed to manage natural resources while dealing with the emerging challenges of climate and the impacts of growth and development.

Our government committed \$2 million to the partnership with \$1 million upon signing of the agreement. Annual contributions since then total \$600,000. Our investment has resulted in approximately \$12 million in partnership funding.

This investment has allowed the partnership to secure an additional \$5.8 million for research programs in the Northwest Territories, with just over \$1.5 million of that spent here.

The partnership is expected to leverage at least another five to seven million dollars in research funding for NWT programs during the life of the agreement.

Mr. Speaker, there are 10 principal scientists leading research projects in collaboration with communities and residents and involving more than 50 researchers and students. There are also three part-time employees in the Northwest Territories to support these partnership activities.

Two researchers are working with the leaders of the Liidlii Kue First Nations, Jean Marie River First Nation, Sambaa K'e Dene First Nation and the Dehcho First Nations on impacts of thawing permafrost at the Scotty Creek field site near Fort Liard.

Another researcher has provided substantial in-kind support to the Lutselk'e and Sambaa K'e Dene First Nations and Ecology North by

providing wastewater analysis using a relatively simple and inexpensive way to screen water sources for the presence of human fecal matter.

In Wekweeti local students and Government of Northwest Territories scientists are involved in a project investigating snow characteristics to help calculate snow density using remote sensing. The students conduct snow surveys throughout the winter and their data helps this project and another project where GNWT biologists are working to correlate snow characteristics to caribou health.

Mr. Speaker, other projects include:

- permafrost, water and vegetation large-scale monitoring being done from Fort Liard to Inuvik to look at the impact of permafrost melt on vegetation;
- looking at water use in trees, the role of trees in melting permafrost, modeling carbon accumulation in permafrost peat lands and documenting long-term permafrost change using tree growth;
- terrestrial monitoring of hydrology and water chemistry, looking at sense of place and changing water conditions in Fort Resolution and examining contaminants and hydroecology of the Slave River Delta.

Analysis of much of the research gathered in the Northwest Territories will be done at the Centre for Cold Regions and Water Science on the campus of Wilfrid Laurier University in Waterloo, Ontario. The grand opening took place two weeks ago and I was in attendance to see the new facility.

There is also the potential, through our partnership, for NASA to include the Scotty Creek field site and an Inuvik site in its Arctic-Boreal Vulnerability Experiment.

Mr. Speaker, Wilfrid Laurier University professors and staff are working with several of our departments to find ways to support NWT-based graduate students in distance learning by offering distance courses, directed studies and appropriate funding opportunities.

The Northwest Territories continues to be an important area for scientific research for Aboriginal, federal and territorial governments, boards, agencies, and territorial, national and international academic and industry-based researchers and scientists.

Partnerships, like the one with Wilfrid Laurier University, ensure Northwest Territories communities and residents are involved in this research so we benefit from it.

It is my hope that as more young people are exposed to these types of scientific research

projects in the physical and social sciences, they will be encouraged to look at professions in this field. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. The honourable Minister responsible for Women, Mr. Premier.

MINISTER'S STATEMENT 81-17(4):
FAMILY VIOLENCE

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Mr. Speaker, many Northwest Territories residents continue to experience family violence or are dealing with its negative after-effects. This is not the kind of territory that we want. We talk about healthy and educated people in this Assembly, and we talk about safe and sustainable communities. We are committed to achieving those goals and addressing family violence is an important part of that commitment.

One of the biggest challenges we face when it comes to family violence is the perception that what goes on in a person's family is private business. Most times that is true. But family violence is a complex problem that has its roots in social issues. These are issues like prevailing attitudes, social inequality and systemic injustice. Social problems require a community solution; they cannot be fixed by solitary individuals alone, particularly those who are being abused by those they should be able to trust most.

Shared responsibility and community solutions are something we have been discussing a lot lately in the context of community safety. Family violence is no different; we all have a responsibility to do whatever we can to ensure that people, especially the most vulnerable people, are safe in their own homes.

Government has an important leadership role to play in stopping family violence. We share that role with other partners like community governments, Aboriginal governments, law enforcement and community social agencies. Together we are responsible for developing and implementing strategies to prevent family violence. We also work together to ensure that programs and services are available to support victims of family violence and to help the perpetrators take responsibility for, and change, their actions.

Government programs for victims of family violence include emergency funding that helps them with financial needs related to the crime. RCMP, social workers and victim services workers provide support throughout the territory. If they are not safe in their homes, victims can stay at one of our local shelters while they think about what to do next.

For perpetrators of violence, our government's new 24-week Wek'eahkaa program reflects our healing philosophy. Violence is a choice and people need

effective strategies and tools for dealing with their anger appropriately and constructively. The Wek'eahkaa program helps teach men who have used violence in their relationships that there is a better way. We believe every day brings a new chance for a violent person to change his behaviour. This pilot project being delivered in Yellowknife was designed for northern residents. Ultimately, our goal is to have a program that is accessible and relevant throughout the Northwest Territories.

The community can play a role by watching out for the signs of abuse and taking steps to stop it. A healthy and safe community is one where friends and neighbours know and look out for each other. Friends need to ask victims to get help. Neighbours need to call the police when they hear violence in the home or on the street. People need to listen to victims and help them to make the choices that will keep themselves and their families safe.

Family violence is related to many of the issues we deal with as elected leaders. It is connected to poverty, to mental health and addictions, and to respect for women. As we all know, these issues are complicated and the links are not always direct. But by taking a holistic approach, we can make progress on the long-term issues while taking immediate action to ensure victims' safety.

I would like to thank the Coalition Against Family Violence for their work throughout the Northwest Territories to support victims, including the work they do for Family Violence Awareness Week. They help women and teens to know when they or their friends are in unhealthy relationships, and they support victims to be safe. Recently, one of the booklets they produced to help northern teenagers became so popular they were asked to send copies throughout Canada, United States and the United Kingdom. We are not alone in facing this problem. We have a lot to learn from our neighbours, and they have a lot to learn from us.

Mr. Speaker, we cannot achieve the vision of this Assembly if we do not address family violence. Our people cannot be healthy and educated when they live in fear of violence in their own home. They will not have the freedom or confidence to pursue their goals or participate fully in the economic or social life of their community. Children who witness violence will find it difficult to grow up to be good parents and loving partners. As leaders, we need to take a strong stand against family violence. The people of the Northwest Territories deserve nothing less. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for Range Lake, Mr. Dolynny.

Members' Statements

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON ACCESS TO INFORMATION PROVISIONS FOR MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

MR. DOLYNNY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My attempt in June to see a construction contract related to our own government building has illustrated some serious problems in terms of access to information for Members. Under the Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act, MLAs have no more rights or privileges than the public, and in some cases, public access is severely restricted or hampered with red tape.

I know some limits are needed, but I believe public access to government information could be improved and, with it, public confidence in the way we are governed.

Some quick facts, Mr. Speaker: the Information and Privacy Commissioner recommended a full review of the act in the 2010-2011 annual report, and in her own words, "This review has not been done since the act came into force almost 17 years ago." Mr. Speaker, our main goals in reviewing and updating the act should be to improve access to information to all residents and ensure their privacy is protected.

Another major goal is to entrench MLAs' access to a broader range of information on a confidential basis than is generally available to the public.

Let me remind everyone here, this category of access is the cornerstone to the success of consensus government. If Members cannot get access to the information they need, the consensus system will ultimately fail.

I suspect the Justice Minister will say it is not necessary to add to the act or to provide special access to information for Members. In fact, he more likely will say that there's a process convention in place that the Assembly has adopted.

That said, I'm here to say that it is not enough, Mr. Speaker. Conventions are not as strong as clearly defined rights founded in legislation. We can access no less if we are faithfully building a system of government that is open and accountable to both Members and the public at large. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yesterday we had some pretty good discussions here in the House during Committee of the Whole on Aurora Campus and the need for a new stand-alone campus with the planning studies. However, we do have a lot of other facilities here in the Northwest Territories. We have three facilities that allow post-

secondary education for our residents of the Northwest Territories and I just want to speak to those.

As the Member for Inuvik Boot Lake, I do represent a community where the region and the Aurora Campus itself does have space and availability to offer new programs in these spaces working forward. I also want to talk about Fort Smith, as well, as another campus that can provide space.

Up in Inuvik we also have an opportunity here with the new fibre optic link operating with the Aurora Research Institute to develop and create some...

MR. SPEAKER: This is before committee, so your Member's statement is concluded. Thank you. Sorry, Mr. Moses, I should have caught that earlier. Member for Deh Cho, Mr. Nadli.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON DEH CHO REGIONAL HEALTH AUTHORITY GOVERNANCE

MR. NADLI: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Deh Cho Health Authority was just placed under a public administrator. That makes it the fourth regional authority to experience a board takeover. In the Deh Cho case, a slew of resignations had left the board with eight vacancies and only two spots filled. There had also been questions about the efficiency and effectiveness of service delivery.

This shift toward public administrators is a kind of litmus test. It's an indicator of genuine problems with health care governance. Existing health care legislation is vague on the respective roles of the health authority and the ministry. Technology and health care isn't keeping pace. The Medical Travel Policy needs revamping and the level of efficiency in day-to-day operations is less than exemplary.

When the government undertakes health care reform, it should include jurisdictional boundaries. My constituents in Fort Providence and the Hay River Reserve may want to receive services in nearby Hay River rather than Fort Simpson, while the majority actually prefer to receive medical services in Yellowknife. On this note, people who travel for their medical care should not be unduly burdened with the cost of taxis, hotel rooms and meals on the road.

The board takeover at the Deh Cho Regional Health Authority, the fourth of its kind in recent memory, signals the need for a system overhaul. It's time for the government to get into step with best practices in health care governance. Thank you.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON
SUCCESS OF LOW-COST DAYCARE

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We eagerly anticipate the release of the Anti-Poverty Action Plan and the Early Childhood Development Framework and look forward to seeing how this government puts these documents into action. I propose that we insert a few pages based on what Quebec has implemented over the last 15 years.

Since the late '90s, Quebec has made daycare available to all for \$7 per day. The price is the same regardless whether you are rich or poor. The daycares are run by professionals who are trained in early childhood development and education. The results have been excellent. Including the \$7 per day, the daycare program has been shown to decrease poverty, especially among single parents and children. In the first decade alone, the number of single parents on welfare was cut in half and their after-tax income increased by 81 percent. Today the child poverty is half what it was 16 years ago. The \$7 per day daycare program has been shown to increase the number of women in the workplace. In the first decade the number of women in the workplace increased by 22 percent.

The government will say that we cannot afford to be so generous, but we already know that poverty is the root cause of many of our current social expenses. Investing in our children and young families early will produce savings as they grow. Enabling single parents to work instead of sitting at home on income support means they will also be able to pay income taxes.

An economic study in Quebec shows that the provincial and federal governments actually realize savings, receiving \$1.49 for every dollar that was spent on the \$7 a day daycare program.

Quebec is not alone in this. They were inspired in part by the daycare programs in Scandinavian countries such as Sweden that have been doing this for decades. In Sweden universal and affordable daycare is combined with parental leave and flexible work arrangements that allow parents to spend time with their children and continue working.

Many parents know that this is a great way to raise a family. They each work four days a week and put their children in daycare for the remaining three days, but the cost of daycare is extremely high and even people making middle incomes cannot afford it. Seven dollars per day daycare would be an investment in our children, who are our future. Experience in Scandinavia and Quebec shows that it works. It's a no-brainer. Let's get it done. Mahsi.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Bromley. Before we go on, I'd like to welcome back to the House, and it's always good to see, Mr. Anthony W.J.

Whitford, who has held every position in this Assembly. Good to see you, Tony.

The Member for Nahendeh, Mr. Menicoche.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON
DENTAL SERVICES IN SMALL COMMUNITIES

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to speak about this morning's news. I was disturbed to hear about the state of dental problems in our children and in our communities. The dentist in the news this morning stood up and voiced his opinion on that, and I know a lot of it has to do with how it is still federally operated. I'm a bit confused and I will ask the Minister of Health questions on it later on.

With devolution, I thought we had all the responsibilities for health transferred over to us in 1988. According to the federal contract, we're only allowed so many days per year per population of a dental visit, so a small community would have fewer treatment days. Also, the Finance Minister was going around our great Northwest Territories and asking for ways that we can look at how we can spend our resource revenues, and I submit that one of the ways we can take care of our people is by increasing dental visits and a dental awareness campaign.

Just with that, a couple of ideas out there, but firstly I'd like to speak with the Minister of Health and Social Services about how dental is being funded in our Northwest Territories. Thank you very much.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON
OPPORTUNITIES IN THE SAHTU REGION

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thomas Edison once observed that the reason most folks don't recognize opportunity when it comes along is that it is often dressed in coveralls and it looks like work.

Opportunities in the Sahtu and opportunities in the Northwest Territories involve a great amount of work and the willingness to take a chance on something. We are told we take hold of opportunities and know the outcome, which may be uncertain. There has been a lot of media awareness, protests and discussion in the North about the Sahtu's oil play and, more importantly, the use of the technology hydraulic fracking. I want to say let us not fear this technology but to embrace this opportunity.

The Sahtu wants to shed its shackles of poverty. We have a high rate of unemployment in our communities. We have families who need our support so they can work. Sahtu people are well aware of the risk of this technology. We are no

different than the great minds of men who put people in space. We're no different from the great people like Thomas Edison or Helen Keller. We must show, in light of the uncertainties and failures, that we stand to show courage so that our children will know success and non-success, but they will know, and they will see that success does not come very easy in the Sahtu or to people in the Northwest Territories. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON
PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO THE
RESIDENTIAL TENANCIES ACT

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. For the month of September, NWT residents had the opportunity to provide comments to the Minister of Justice about proposed amendments to the Residential Tenancies Act. Since first elected, I have been expressing concerns about that act and asking for some amendments to this piece of legislation. I'm very glad to see that change is potentially on the horizon.

The discussion paper circulated by Justice was thorough and it asked for input on most of the issues I have been talking about for the last five years. However, one issue was notably lacking, one which I hope the department will look at one more time before the amendments come forward. That's the issue of landlord-imposed rental increases and the lack of an appeal mechanism for tenants if they believe the amount of the increase to be unfair.

I recognize the need for landlords to raise rents periodically. They are running a business, after all, and should have the ability to make a reasonable profit, but the operative word here is "reasonable." Any increase to a tenant's rent should be reasonable. Yet that aspect of a rent increase is not within the purview of the rental officer because of the way the Residential Tenancies Act is currently written. The act does state that rent increases can only be done once per year, but a tenant has no place to turn, no one to appeal to if they feel their rent is being unjustly increased.

As the Minister of Justice and department consider amendments to the Residential Tenancies Act, I ask that some consideration also be given to providing authority to the rental officer to deal with rental increases perceived by tenants to be unjust. There are several ways to do it and I'll just mention three.

First, amend the act to include the words "fair and reasonable" when referring to a rent increase, or establish in regulations an upper limit – say 10 to 15 percent for a rent increase in any one year – or require the landlord to provide justification for the amount of a rental increase, proof of increased

operating costs, invoices and so on. All I'm looking for here is some fairness for tenants who feel that their rent has been unfairly increased. As I said earlier, right now there is no opportunity for a tenant to even appeal what they consider to be an unfair increase.

The act will be opened up for the amendments outlined in the Minister's discussion paper. Now is the best time to consider this change as well. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. Member for Yellowknife Centre, Mr. Hawkins.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON
HYDRAULIC FRACTURING

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. There were a terrible lot of lies going around the world about fracking and the worst thing of all is some of them are true. The fact is, we don't know what the truth is about fracking until we have done our research. The GNWT and Members on this side of the House continue to go down this path and this narrative of fracking.

Is fracking right for the Northwest Territories? Yesterday I tried to articulate some of the concerns that need to be looked at if our government chooses to travel down this journey, down this path to resource riches, as we have described it. Yes, I agree with my colleague Mr. Yakeleya, from the Sahtu, that development needs to happen, and development in his region definitely deserves to happen. He will have my support when it comes to development, but is the narrative of fracking the one we wish to travel?

As I talked about yesterday, we need clear disclosure laws, public registries that show all documentation. Quite often we see the filing of technical documents by these proponents and they believe that they should make them so technical, you have to be a lawyer, engineer or even more qualified to read them.

We need laws on the books here to be developed in a way that says all documentation from any fracking policy or any company doing fracking is always in plain language. We need a public registry that spells it out to ensure that any action is taken to close gaps on problems and show that the commitments weren't only just made but that results were achieved.

One of the problems I had seen when we travelled down to North Dakota, and I will tell you I definitely heard, was the monitoring, security, and enforcement of rules and regulations. It's not just that we let people take water out of the ground and pump it back into the ground and then dispose of it. Quite often there wasn't the old saying of the 360 approach. No one was watching people do what

they wanted to do with those waste materials and fluids.

We heard stories about people dumping them. Why? Because it was easy and no one was looking. We heard people just dumping on old sites and saying that was their problem. Who is going to ensure that monitoring and management of these things are critically important?

You cannot go back if you have tainted the water and you have tainted the land. You get one shot at doing it right. Let's not create another Giant Mine. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON CONSIDERATION OF CORONER'S REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS

MR. MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I apologize for my statement earlier. I do understand that the Department of Education is still in Committee of the Whole, and I do appreciate that you allowed me to speak to another important issue. Luckily for me, I have a lot to say and a lot to address here.

My Member's statement that I did expect to talk about was on the coroner's reports. We get those on a yearly basis. My concern with the coroner's report is that sometimes the recommendations, when they do come into the House, don't always get addressed in a timely fashion.

It was very great to hear the statement made today by our Premier on family violence, because sometimes what happens is when we do get these coroner's reports, sometimes they're linked in and tied to family violence. As a result, when those coroners go and do their investigations, put out their reports, recommendations come to this House, and that's where we need to make sure that these recommendations, actions, are addressed, to pay respect and make sure that none of these actions or issues happen again in the future.

I will have questions to the Minister of Justice today on recommendations, what are the guidelines for getting these recommendations addressed, and how often does the Department of Justice go through these recommendations to make sure that they are addressed in a timely fashion so that family members and friends of victims who have passed away from sudden death get the closure that they need and that they know what has happened to somebody in the past will never happen to another resident of the NWT again.

Mr. Speaker, I thank you again for giving me a second Member's statement. Mahsi.

MR. SPEAKER: You're welcome, Mr. Moses. Order! Order! Member for Tu Nedhe, Mr. Beaulieu.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON PASSING OF ROY KING SR.

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: Mahsi cho, Mr. Speaker. Today I would like to do another tribute. I'd like to do a tribute to a Mr. Roy King Sr. from Fort Resolution. Mr. King was my uncle. He was born on May 6, 1949, and passed away October 3, 2013, at the age of 64. Roy Sr. was diagnosed with terminal cancer in the spring and passed away in the fall.

Roy King Sr. was born in Rocher River and was raised in Rocher River and Rat River. He was the youngest of Francois King and Judith Giroux's children. Rocher River was a thriving community where people lived directly on the land. Roy attended school in Rocher River until the school burned down, then he moved to Fort Resolution.

Mr. Speaker, Roy loved his family and was dearly loved by his family in return. This was illustrated by his brothers Tommy and Wilfred, and his sister Annie's children all coming together to bury him a couple weeks ago.

Over the past 20 years, Roy lived with Mary Petit-Jean in Fort Resolution. Roy worked for forestry for many years and retired a couple years ago. He wanted to eventually build a cabin along the Taltson River and go back to living off the land.

Roy would travel with the new boat that he had purchased, on the Slave River, Jean River, up to the Rocher River, Rat River and many of those areas, exploring places where he thought he was eventually going to build his cabin.

Mr. King is survived by his common-law, Mary Petit-Jean; his son, Roy Jr. and his common-law, Julia; and the only remaining sibling in his family, my mother, Annie; along with his grandchildren, Destry, Deborah, Carol, Jared, Greg; many great-grandchildren, Grace, Peton, Roy Jr. 3rd; stepson Greg Villeneuve and his wife, Lorraine; and many nieces and nephews and great-nieces and nephews.

My condolences go out to Roy's family and friends, and especially his common-law, children, grandchildren, great-grandchildren and my mother. Thank you very much.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. Thoughts and prayers to the family. Item 4, returns to oral questions. Item 5, recognition of visitors in the gallery. The honourable Premier, Mr. McLeod.

Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to recognize visitors from the Status of Women Council of the Northwest Territories who chair the Coalition Against Family Violence: Lorraine Phaneuf, the executive director; Annemieke Mulders, programs and research manager;

Samantha Dechief, community development coordinator; and David Wasylciw. Thank you.

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

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I, too, would like to welcome the group from the Status of Women Council here to the House. Can't see you guys up there behind me, but I know you're there. Mr. Wasylciw, as well. He's not a constituent, but we talk often enough he probably could be.

I would particularly like to welcome back some people who used to reside in Yellowknife. I want to call them old residents, but that's not all that good. Sitting here we have Dr. Anne Davies. Her claim to fame, one of many, is that she was the first full-time president of the NWT Teachers' Association in 1979. Ms. Davies is internationally renowned. She's an author, teacher, researcher, particularly on education in classroom assessment. With her is Mr. Stuart Duncan, also a former Yellowknifer, a resident here from 1970 to 1986. So, welcome. He worked with the government in Public Works. He was a founding member of Ecology North and Sport North. I cannot forget my most valuable constituency assistant, Amanda. Welcome all. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. Item 6, acknowledgements. Mr. Yakeleya.

Acknowledgements

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT 9-17(4): PASSING OF ANDY CARPENTER JR. OF NORMAN WELLS

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I would like to acknowledge well-known youth Andy Carpenter Jr., who passed away suddenly in Norman Wells. People remember him as a youth who was easily liked and made everyone smile. He was a youth who was kind-hearted and always had a positive attitude towards everybody in life. He enjoyed hunting and was a strong athletic motivator.

We will always remember Andy in our hearts, especially by his parents, family and friends. Mahsi.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Again, thoughts and prayers with the Carpenter family. Mr. Bromley.

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I request permission to return to item number 5 on the Order Paper.

---Unanimous consent granted

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Bromley.

Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery (Reversion)

MR. BROMLEY: I would also like to recognize today Mr. Tony Whitford, a resident of Weledeh, as well as Amanda Mallon, also a resident of Weledeh. I would like to add my voice in recognizing Mr. Stu Duncan, who was on, I think, one of the very original boards of Ecology North back in the 1970s. It's great to see him visiting our fair city once again. I hope he sees a good difference. Mahsi.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Bromley. Item 7, oral questions. Mr. Menicoche.

Oral Questions

QUESTION 350-17(4):

DENTAL SERVICES IN SMALL COMMUNITIES

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Earlier I spoke about dental issues in the North and how I wanted to find out more about how dentists are funded to go into the communities.

I'd like to ask the Minister of Health and Social Services if he can give me a little bit of information on how dental services are provided to the smaller communities. Thank you.

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

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As Mr. Menicoche indicated in his Member's statement, dental services are not an insured service by the Government of the Northwest Territories. However, we do work with the dentists, and the dentists go into the communities.

What happens is, during the year the dentists have a program where they'll contract with the various authorities, and based on those contracts, they contract a certain amount of days that they are to be in each community, and then they are paid according to the amount of days they would spend in the communities. Then they do what they can in the communities just for the dental services, not for therapy and stuff like that.

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Like I indicated, the health was transferred in 1988, and it seems like some of the health care is being provided by non-insured health services. Maybe the Minister can just explain about how that is still a federal service and why we're not taking care of that.

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: I think that some of the acts of the dentist have to be revamped. Some of the acts are very old, so we are looking at revamping the Dental Profession Act at this time. Although the dental services remains a non-insured service, the department does get support from the federal government through the THSSI funding, or

the Territorial Health System Sustainability Initiative. They provide us about a quarter of a million dollars in this area to pay for the dentists to go in there.

The specific details of why it was not included in a complete transfer in 1988, I don't have that specific detail here with me today.

MR. MENICOCHÉ: I'm not too sure. I was just quick to listen about the particular report that was on the news this morning and that the dentist had spoken about. It addresses that there are shortcomings in the smaller communities, shortcomings in providing dental services, as well as dental awareness.

I'd like to ask the Minister if the department is doing enough in this regard and what is his strategy going forward in improving these services in the smaller communities.

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: The Department of Health and Social Services is working with the Government of Nunavut and the Government of Yukon developing a pan-territorial oral health strategy. We are doing the oral health strategy because of obvious reasons of health and all kinds of positive impacts. Within that health strategy, we are going to do an oral health promotion and prevention. We have listed many programs that we are looking at and together we're hoping that, as indicated in the report, the only jurisdiction that had worse results than the Northwest Territories dental-wise was Nunavut, and we are working with them and the Yukon to see if we can develop something in the area of prevention in order that we turn that around. It starts before babies even have teeth, so we're starting right from scratch in trying to develop a strategy that we think will be effective.

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

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I submit one more time that I think one of the better strategies is to increase the visits, increase the number of days of service to the smaller communities. I'd like to ask the Minister if he will take that into consideration and look at that in his overall strategy. I believe that's one of the musts that we should do.

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: Yes, I agree that some more visits by dental staff will be a good part of the oral health strategy. However, I think filling all of the dental therapist positions is also another strategy that we need to employ, and we'll certainly look at the possibility of increasing visits as we did in other communities that requested that there be more visits. We will again talk to the dental people, within the bounds of our contract with them, to see what is possible.

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

QUESTION 351-17(4):
DEH CHO REGIONAL
HEALTH AUTHORITY GOVERNANCE

MR. NADLI: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Earlier I made my statement on the status of the Deh Cho Health and Social Services that affects my constituency. My question is to the Minister of Health and Social Services.

Could the Minister explain what is the anticipated timeline for reinstating the board of management in the Deh Cho Health Authority? Mahsi.

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

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We certainly had some discussions on the timeline on when we will go back to having a board of management. We need to do some consultation. There is some feeling by some Members in the Legislative Assembly that perhaps we could have some form of advisory board, but the plan is to have a board back in place within two years.

I've had this discussion with the newly appointed public administrator and he recognizes that his role there is to assist us in eventually bringing a board back in place for the Deh Cho Health and Social Services. Thank you.

MR. NADLI: It seems that there is going to be a wait period of two years until the board structured.

Within the current structure of the Deh Cho Health and Social Services, what assurances could the Minister provide that the level of public accountability to the residents of the Deh Cho will be held in highest regard, ensuring that the health care services will continue to be delivered at a scale that is fairly efficient and, at the same time, meets the needs of the public? Mahsi.

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: Mr. Speaker, one of the reasons we appointed a public administrator is that there are certainly some significant concerns with health and social services in the Deh Cho. We are hoping that we are correcting some of those concerns in Health and Social Services and also that the public administrator, along with our senior management, recognizes the need to consult throughout the whole process. I have agreed to do a full consultation with not only Members of the Legislative Assembly but the leaders within the various communities in the Deh Cho along with the public administrator. Thank you.

MR. NADLI: Mr. Speaker, there are fairly significant initiatives happening within my riding, including one of the biggest projects to date is the construction of the health centre. I want to pose a question to the Minister how he sees the public accountability will be maintained, ensuring that projects like the health centre will continue to be

held in the highest regard, ensuring that construction schedules will be maintained and also, at the same time, the local input from people's concerns regarding the health care system will continue to be addressed and remedied. Mahsi.

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: Certainly the mandate of the department is to do the best possible job it can in introducing infrastructure into the community. The new health centre in Fort Providence is on schedule. We're proceeding with that piece of infrastructure. The timelines that we are looking at prior to moving to a public administrator is the same timeline that we are looking at now, so there will be no change in that. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. NADLI: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Minister had indicated and stated that there will be a level of consultation preceding, more likely, the advancements towards the discussion of reinstating the health board.

Can the Minister provide an update as to what it is that he will be consulting and the term of the consultation period before the Deh Cho Health and Social Services Board is reinstated? Mahsi.

HON. TOM BEAULIEU: Mr. Speaker, we are hoping to have one meeting soon. Aside from community meetings, we're hoping to get the MLA from Deh Cho and also the MLAs from Hay River as it could involve the new health centre in Hay River to provide services on the reserve, and also the two public administrators from Hay River and Deh Cho along with the chiefs from Deh Cho to sit down and make sure we are moving in the right direction and that people are happy with the direction that we are going in. Any medical services, as an example, the Member indicated that people in Fort Providence may find it easy to draw their service directly from Yellowknife. That is something we would certainly consider when we consider medical services in the Deh Cho.

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

QUESTION 352-17(4):
HYDRAULIC FRACTURING
BASELINE MEASURES

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In my Member's statement I talked about the observation made by Thomas Edison, who is a well-known inventor who had trials and tribulations before he got the incandescent light right. I want to talk about the issue of technology called hydraulic fracking. I will direct my questions to the Minister of ITI on this issue in the Sahtu.

No matter what we saw in the Bakken and the east corner of Saskatchewan, is the Minister looking at some sort of a checklist in the social,

environmental, cultural and economics when we look at fracking in the Sahtu. Do you check that yes, we have the baseline, we have support from families, we have the economics, we have everything right and then we can proceed? Is there going to be a checklist, a go or no-go on fracking?

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

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. One thing is for sure and that is we have to do our homework, and part of the trip to southeastern Saskatchewan and into the Bakken was to do some of that homework, educate ourselves on the process of hydraulic fracturing, as was the case last year when we went to Calgary, went to a lab there and got time in front of the regulator in Alberta and also the B.C. Oil and Gas Commission that happened in Calgary last year.

We need to ensure that we do everything we can to make an informed decision as a government, as a people. I mentioned it yesterday, the aspirations of the people of the Sahtu, the aspirations of the people of the Northwest Territories, those aspirations have to be handled by us, not influenced by others who do not live in the Northwest Territories, do not call the Northwest Territories home and have really – other than an opinion – not much to add to our future economic aspirations as a territory and as a people, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

MR. YAKELEYA: My earlier comments in my Member's statement talked about the Sahtu being on the verge of the next energy driver in Canada. I want to say to the Minister, with this type of potential in the Sahtu, is the Minister working with his colleagues with regard to preparing the Sahtu to take on this initiative, that things are in place for training, for child care, for education and for the environment, for all these things that we can say yes, we feel comfortable that everything has been encompassed, that we can go ahead to the next stage in hydraulic fracking. Is that a project that he's willing to consider bringing to the House and saying we have it done, we have it right?

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: Let me be as clear as I can be – and I've mentioned it before – without the use of hydraulic fracking, there will be no development in the Sahtu, there will be no jobs or opportunities. That is why it's critically important that we get this right. I know other Members have mentioned this; we can't afford to get it wrong. We have to do everything we can, and certainly from the inception of the development, the activity that's taken place in the Sahtu, this government has taken that opportunity very seriously. We've met a number of times. I know through the Department of Industry, Tourism and Investment, we've had readiness sessions in the area. We've also had

community sessions. We've done a lot of upfront work. I know I've impressed upon all of Cabinet what the opportunities are there, and I know we're working as a team to ensure that we're doing our best to get ready for what is coming.

We have to allow the exploration, the drilling of some of these wells to get a better determination of what is in the ground in the Sahtu, and certainly a lot of industry experts believe there are billions of barrels of oil in the ground in the central Mackenzie Valley and we need to let that happen so that we can get to a point where companies can make a decision and the people of the Northwest Territories can make a decision on whether or not we're going to develop that resource.

We're a ways away from that determination on the commercial viability of that resource play, but we certainly have been doing a lot to get ready, and we will continue to work with the Member and the communities in the Sahtu to ensure that we are getting ready for that development. Thank you.

MR. YAKELEYA: Certainly the people in the Sahtu do realize the opportunity that lies right in their backyard on our land. What I'm asking the Minister of ITI is: Is there going to be some sort of a comprehensive checklist? Families who want to go work, there's the high cost of living. So we need daycares in our communities, Deline, Good Hope, Tulita, Norman Wells, Colville Lake. We need to provide training opportunities in the Sahtu.

Will the Minister be coming forward to say this is a comprehensive checklist so that we can take advantage of the opportunity of hydraulic fracking in the Sahtu? We know that. I want to ask the Minister again, is that something he can look at within the life of this government and prepare our people for the opportunity that we see.

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: Thank you. Certainly the government in its interdepartmental exercise when it comes to preparing ourselves for the development in the Sahtu, that work has happened already. If the Member is looking for a checklist, we can certainly develop a checklist. But the most important thing here is the people in the Northwest Territories will be making those decisions on whether or not development happens in the central Mackenzie Valley, and central to that is the fact that the people of the Sahtu should have, should they choose to have the aspirations to develop those resources, the same, not people in Vancouver and Toronto. Thank you.

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

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I was in Norman Wells over the weekend and I know that our people want to work. We are the ones on our land in the Sahtu. We'll make that decision on frack or no frack.

Now, I just want to ask the Minister, regarding this checklist, is he looking at something this winter on the Mackenzie Valley winter road with the state of our winter roads. They're going to be hauling out some chemicals on that winter road. Is the Minister going to look at some type of funding that would make sure that it will be safe so that these trucks can drive out and we'll know that for sure there's going to be no environmental impacts if there's a spill on our winter roads? Thank you.

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: Thank you. We've had a long history of working with industry in the area. We will continue to work with industry so that we can get the requisite investment by industry to enable us to enhance the winter road. Through the Department of Transportation, we've done a lot of work on mapping. I know the Member and I drove the winter road last year. There's a map that's been developed. We're improving the road itself, putting in a number of bridges and crossings there.

We will continue to try to improve the safety of that road, not just for industry but for the travelling public, and we continue to do that. Also, we are looking at some further enforcement and the provision of highway officers in the area this coming season. We are looking at the possibility of close to 80 to 90 million dollars being spent in the area this winter. So it's important. There's going to be a number of trucks traversing that road again this winter, so it's important that we put all these steps in place to ensure that it is done in a safe manner. Thank you.

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

QUESTION 353-17(4):
BISON ON THE DEH CHO BRIDGE

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to use today's opportunity for question period maybe to probe into the workings of buffalo gates on the Deh Cho Bridge. It's come to our attention through the media, but oddly enough, I've been hearing about the urban legend of buffalo crossing the bridge at Fort Providence, but I have yet to actually see the facts before us.

I'd like to start off by asking the Minister of Transportation how much did the buffalo gates cost and how much will it cost to fix them or repair them so the buffalo aren't roaming up on that bridge. Thank you.

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

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The gate itself was in the neighbourhood of half a million dollars. The good news is that that gate does work. The bison that did appear on that bridge and in photos that appeared on social media didn't go across the Texas gate that was installed. It in

fact went around and jumped a guardrail and got onto the bridge. The Department of Transportation is currently looking at a remedy to see that bison can't go down on the right-hand side of the bridge and jump the guardrail and get on that bridge again. So we're taking steps to ensure that that does not happen again.

Again, the good news is, the gate works. Thank you.

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you. Well, I guess the next question is: How does the Minister know they can't cross the Texas gates? Thank you.

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: That bison, to my knowledge, was observed jumping the guardrail and not going across the Texas gate. The Texas gate is utilized across North America as a way of keeping cattle out of an area. It's certainly something we see a lot of in Alberta and it works. Thank you.

MR. HAWKINS: It reminds me of a joke my kid would say, is why did the buffalo cross the bridge.

---Laughter

Obviously, to get to the other side.

But in all seriousness, how much will this cost now to fix this new remedy or new hole we're finding out in the Deh Cho Bridge process and system? How much more money is required now to keep the buffalo from jumping from the side onto the bridge, and what remedy does the Department of Transportation have in its pocketbook of plays to deal with a buffalo in the middle of the bridge while people are coming over it and while they have no choice? Something is going to happen.

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: Thank you. It wouldn't be a great deal of money to get that fixed and that guardrail raised up. I certainly will make a commitment to get that figure to Members. We have to remember that where the Deh Cho Bridge is, bison that are in the area, that river is frozen six and a half months out of the year. They could certainly walk across there, and bison have been known to swim up to a kilometre at a time, so they could certainly swim across the river.

Our objective, in all of this, is public safety and keeping bison off the bridge. The cattle gate was put in to ensure that bison stayed off the bridge. Obviously, we had a bison that went around the gate and jumped the guardrail, and we will make every effort to ensure that that does not happen. Thank you.

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

MR. HAWKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm really glad to hear what the Minister had to say, but he avoided my last question, which is simply: What is going to happen if there's a buffalo on the bridge and somebody comes along and goes over the

hump of the bridge and all of a sudden sees a buffalo? The buffalo has nowhere to go but on the side or jump over. Potentially someone could hit the buffalo; there's nowhere to swerve. I mean, we know how narrow that bridge is. So the question essentially is: Is public safety being compromised with this failed solution to keep the buffalo off the bridge?

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: Thank you. No, it's not and we are making every effort to ensure that it doesn't happen again. Thank you.

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

QUESTION 354-17(4):
LOW-COST DAYCARE PROGRAMS

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to follow up on my earlier Member's statement with questions to the Minister for Education, Culture and Employment. During the last election campaign, the NWT Status of Women Council in the NWT asked all candidates the following: "If elected, would you commit to helping all communities in the NWT build affordable, quality, licensed child care facilities"? I will be tabling that later today.

I'm happy to report that candidates Bob McLeod, Glen Abernethy and Tom Beaulieu, and most of us on this side of the House made that commitment. The Minister himself did not reply.

Could the Minister answer the question today? Now that you have been elected and put on Cabinet with this responsibility, how is this government planning to fulfill your colleagues' commitment to helping all communities in the NWT build affordable, quality licensed child care facilities? Mahsi.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Bromley. Education, Culture and Employment, Mr. Lafferty.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Throughout the Northwest Territories we have child care centres and also daycare establishments, and throughout Yellowknife as well. At the same time, there is always room for improvement, as well, within my department. We're always exploring ways of improving, whether it be the facility, whether it be changing the policies or programming. We've done that in the past where we've provided funding to the daycare establishment, where we pay for part of the mortgage and part of the operation cost as well. We will continue to make those changes that will reflect and be a positive outcome for the children in the centres.

This is an area that we are also discussing with the Early Childhood Development Framework, an overall framework. Now we are going to be focusing on the action plan. As we move forward, these are some of the changes that will be coming. Mahsi.

MR. BROMLEY: Thanks to the Minister. We are certainly a planning Assembly, and we are hoping for action. After two years in office, people, of course, are starting to get tired of hearing statements of commitment and intentions. I feel that they are starting to look for actual actions.

Could the Minister estimate how many affordable daycare spaces have been created since we were elected?

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: I don't have those exact details, dates and times for establishment of those facilities, but I will provide that to the Members.

Again, with the Early Childhood Development Framework, we've engaged the general public, the educators, the daycare workers, on what's required, what's needed. That is just some of the feedback we received through my department and also Health and Social Services, Again, as we move forward, those are some of the discussions that we will be starting to implement, along with the support or guidance of the standing committee as we move forward.

MR. BROMLEY: We are in the process of reviewing the capital budget, and the government claims its spending the vast majority of the available funds building highways is an investment in our future. I would suggest that investing in our children has been demonstrated to have a better result, including economic result.

How much money is the government planning to invest in new daycare spaces over the remainder of our term in office as of today?

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: I agree with the Member that investing in our children is a priority of this government and we must continue to drive that forward. With respect to the capital planning process, we are still going through the process itself on an annual basis. We provide that information through the capital planning process and we will continue to do so. Next year, the following year, we have two years in our terms, and we will continue to push that forward with respect to the centres in the Northwest Territories.

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

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thanks to the Minister. It's clear. The data are in and they're accumulating more rapidly by the day. Universal daycare provides huge returns. The Quebec and Scandinavian examples prove those returns on dollars invested. Most recently, Quebec, Canada, \$1.49 for every dollar invested, Mr. Finance Minister.

Will the Minister commit to examining this model closely and reporting back to committee soon so we can take action? I know he did express interest

when this was brought up in committee. Sorry. I retract that remark. I know that the Minister is interested in this question, so will he look closely at it and bring it to committee for discussion?

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: We have been gathering information or doing our research, especially with respect to Quebec, the daycare, the \$7 daycare a day, and also just recently, 2013-2014, they are beginning their junior kindergarten. Those are some of the things that we are monitoring, and we are moving forward within our own initiatives, as well, and then we will provide that information to the Members, that research that we've done throughout the other jurisdictions as well.

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

QUESTION 355-17(4):
ACCESS TO INFORMATION PROVISIONS
FOR MEMBERS OF THE
LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

MR. DOLYNNY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is a given that privacy is the very hallmark of security we have bargained for in subjecting ourselves to the rule of law. However, in the same breath, access to information for Members of this House is the cornerstone of democracy, consensus government, transparency and accountability. Democracy itself is weakened and public accountability crippled when access to important information is hampered or refused.

As a follow-up to my Member's statement today, I wish to address questions to the Justice Minister on improving access to information for Members of this House and the public at large.

The Information and Privacy Commissioner of the Northwest Territories has recommended numerous times, through her annual reporting, a need for the Department of Justice to review the Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act. What have been the barriers for the Department of Justice not to follow through with these repeated requests?

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

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I understand the Member's comments, and I understand the desire for Members to have access to all information that the Government of the Northwest Territories has, but I can't stress enough that individuals do have a right to privacy, as do corporations. We do have a process where Members who need or desire specific information can request information, and if we, as Members and Ministers on this side, know who it's coming from, we're certainly happy to work with the Members to provide as much information as we

can. But there will be situations where there are individuals or corporations who have specific information that they have a right to have private, and we have to all, as Members, respect that.

MR. DOLYNNY: My question didn't ask for a schooling on the rule of law here. My question simply is: When will the Justice department begin a comprehensive review of the Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act, which was recently recommended by the Information and Privacy Commissioner and, as well, by the Standing Committee on Government Operations?

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: The standing committee made a number of recommendations with respect to the ATIPP Act, and recommendation number three asked the exact question that the Member is asking here today. In our response, which was tabled earlier this week, we indicated that we are doing that detailed progress report, and we will certainly have that to the committee within this current fiscal year.

MR. DOLYNNY: It's encouraging that we're hearing a progress report, but will the Minister of Justice commit to the Members of this House that when we do this ATIPP review that one of the goals of this review will be to investigate MLAs having a broader range of information access under such rule of law?

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Recognizing that individuals do have a right to privacy and there is certainly information that individuals and corporations may not want in the public sphere, including in the hands of MLAs, we are happy to work with committee on this request.

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

MR. DOLYNNY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate the Minister's response. The Minister mentioned earlier about a progress report, but will the Minister ensure that a complete review of the ATIPP Act is completed in time for all amendments to come forward within the life of the 17th Assembly?

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: If that is the wish of committee, we are happy to work with them.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Abernethy. Colleagues, before we continue on with Members' oral questions, I'd like to welcome Mr. Geoff Wiest, chair of the Independent Commission on Members' Compensation and Benefits; and Mr. David Krutko, a former Member and member of the commission. Welcome to the House.

The Member for Inuvik Boot Lake, Mr. Moses.

QUESTION 356-17(4):
CONSIDERATION OF CORONER'S
REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS

MR. MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm going to follow up with some questions to one of my Member's statements earlier today on the coroner's report. I have been reviewing some of the coroner's reports since 2002, looking at some of the recommendations. I want to ask the Minister of Justice when the coroner's reports come out of his department, who is responsible for addressing those recommendations out of the reports? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Member obviously has taken a look at a number of the coroner's reports. When looking at the reports, he will recognize that many of the recommendations are to different organizations, sometimes different departments within the Government of the Northwest Territories. When it is to a specific department, that department is responsible for responding to those recommendations. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. MOSES: Mr. Speaker, my next question in terms of the responses to these recommendations: Is there a regulated guideline or regulation or some type of guideline to develop a timely response or a timely action to address these recommendations so that incidences that result in death don't happen again? Is there something regulated in place right now? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Mr. Speaker, no, there is nothing regulated indicating a timeline for turnaround on recommendations. The recommendations themselves are not legally binding, but the coroner does expect responses within three months after releasing her report. If she doesn't receive the responses to the recommendations within three months, she usually follows up with the individual to whom the recommendation is made.

Just as a note, it's important that we do get responses to these recommendations because the coroner does use these responses to inform future decisions, so it's important that we do get responses. As a government, we are committed to responding to recommendations when they are made to us in individual departments or as the government as a whole. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. MOSES: Mr. Speaker, over the last week, since we came back in session, there have been discussions about medical detox and treatment and psychiatrists within the NWT. In the 2002 coroner's report, the same recommendations came out that we need a detox facility and we need more resident psychiatrists.

I know the Minister can't speak for all the government, but would the Minister look at seeing what recommendations are made for his department and commit to looking at doing an audit over the last 10 years in which recommendations his department would be able to address and get those addressed? The longer we don't address these recommendations, it just means people are continuing to slip through the hole and that is not acceptable. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: If committee wants that information, I am happy to provide that information. Granted, over a 10-year period of time, it might take quite a bit of resources and time to pull that data together. A specific ask might be a little bit easier to accommodate, but regardless, if that's what committee wants, I am happy to provide that information. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Maybe 10 years is a little bit too long, but maybe I can ask the Minister to ensure his department, since the coroner's office falls under his department, takes responsibility to ensure that other departments act on the recommendations in the reports, not for the last 10 years, but just try one year and try the last report, which was the 2011 report. Can I ask the Minister to at least attempt to do that? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Mr. Speaker, I am obviously happy to follow the request from committee, if that is what committee wants. We are happy to look at the last coroner's report and provide a bit of an analysis from the Department of Justice perspective on actions taken. At the same time, the Member may want to have some discussions with some of the other Ministers where recommendations were made specifically to them as well. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

QUESTION 357-17(4):
PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO THE
RESIDENTIAL TENANCIES ACT

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to follow up on my Member's statement from today and I have some questions today for the Minister of Justice. I discussed proposed amendments to the Residential Tenancies Act in my Member's statement, and a discussion paper which the Minister had put out during the month of September. One of the items in the discussion paper that I did not mention is titled Consistency with the Condominium Act and there are several provisions in there which the department is suggesting to bring the Residential Tenancies Act

in line with the Condominium Act. I agree with the proposal that is suggested, but I think there is one missing. I think the Residential Tenancies Act should also look at providing easy access or a mechanism for a condo corporation to collect on arrears. Condo members have condo fees. When they don't pay them, they are in arrears.

I would like to know from the Minister whether or not anything exists now for a condo corporation if they have members who are heavily in arrears, is there a mechanism for them to collect and if there is not, would he consider adding it. Thank you.

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

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm not aware of every specific clause within the Condominium Act, but I'm happy to have the department take a look at it and provide some additional information to the Member. As far as committing to something I haven't read, that's not something I'm prepared to do at this time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MS. BISARO: Thanks to the Minister. Good on you for not agreeing to something you haven't read. I am right there with you on that one.

One of the things I highlighted in my statement was rent controls and limits on rental increases. Rent controls are highly debatable. There will be probably as many people on the no side as there are on the yes side on rent controls. I highlighted that there is no option for tenants if there is what they consider to be an unfair increase in their rent.

I would like to know whether or not the Justice department, in looking at this Residential Tenancies Act and their paper, did they look at this issue of unjustified rent. And if so, why is it not part of their discussion paper? Thank you.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Mr. Speaker, we did go out with a discussion paper that had eight key themes. We did get a significant number of responses to that discussion paper. We are currently pulling together a "what we heard" document which we are hoping to have out later this fall, which we will be happy and absolutely we will be taking it to committee to discuss before we move forward with an LP. We do hope to move forward with a legislative proposal either shortly before Christmas or shortly after Christmas, where we have an opportunity to work with committee on how we move forward with this particular legislation. Obviously, as the Member said, there is a lot of debate on both sides of the rent control issue and we're happy to have those conversations as we move forward. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MS. BISARO: Mr. Speaker, thanks to the Minister for answering my last question. It is very nice to hear things are moving forward and to get a time frame for it.

My Member's statement suggested three possible solutions to helping tenants if they have what they consider to be a heavy rent increase or put some sort of limits on landlords. I would like to ask the Minister if, having heard them now, although the discussion paper is closed and the review is underway, will the Minister consider the three solutions that I mentioned in my statement. Will he consider them as they look at amendments to the act? Thank you.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Mr. Speaker, the question and answer period doesn't provide a lot of opportunities for the Member to provide the details. I have a vague idea of what the Member is alluding to and I'm happy to work with committee to have these conversations and move forward to have a Residential Tenancies Act that works for all residents in the Northwest Territories, both landlords and tenants. I would be happy to have the conversation. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Abernethy. Item 8, written questions. Item 9, returns to written questions. Item 10, replies to opening address. Item 11, petitions. Item 12, reports of standing and special committees. Mr. Nadli.

Reports of Standing and Special Committees

COMMITTEE REPORT 7-17(4): REPORT ON THE REVIEW OF BILL 24, AN ACT TO AMEND THE LIQUOR ACT

MR. NADLI: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Standing Committee on Government Operations is pleased to provide its Report on the Review of Bill 24, An Act to Amend the Liquor Act, and commends it to the House.

Introduction

Bill 24, An Act to Amend the Liquor Act, is a private member's bill introduced by Norman Yakeleya, the MLA for Sahtu.

Although Mr. Yakeleya is a member of the Standing Committee on Government Operations, he declared a conflict of interest with respect to all committee discussions related to Bill 24, and did not attend the meetings or portions of the meetings where such discussion took place. Mr. Yakeleya, in his role as the sponsor of the bill, did attend all public hearings related to Bill 24.

The bill was referred to the Standing Committee on Government Operations for review on June 6, 2013.

Passage of the bill would allow Sahtu communities to ask the Minister of Finance to hold a regional vote on limiting sales to individuals at a liquor store in the region. Currently, the only liquor store in the Sahtu region is in Norman Wells.

The bill provides the Minister with the option to order a vote if resolutions are received within a six-month period from councils representing at least three of the five Sahtu communities, provided they represent more than half the region's population. The communities would have to agree on the proposal to be voted on.

Although the Norman Wells liquor store supplies all five Sahtu communities, the Liquor Act currently allows only Norman Wells residents to have a say on restrictions on sales to individuals.

On December 5, 2011, the people of Norman Wells voted by a narrow margin to lift liquor restrictions in their community. The restrictions had been in place since the 1970s. At that time the following daily limits were set on sales at the liquor stores in Norman Wells and Fort Simpson:

- 1140 ml of spirits and 12 beer; or
- 1140 ml of spirits and 2 litres of wine; or
- 2 litres of wine and 12 beer; or
- 24 beer and 1 litre of wine.

The liquor rationing system in Norman Wells was removed on February 1, 2012. However, Deline, Fort Good Hope and Tulita have restrictions on the amount of alcohol a person can bring into the community, similar to the maximum sales that were allowed at the liquor store in Norman Wells. The other Sahtu community, Colville Lake, has no restrictions.

Sales at the Norman Wells liquor outlet have increased since the lifting of restrictions. However, the change in restrictions appears to be only one of several factors that could account for rising sales.

In light of significant public interest, and the fact that Bill 24 represents the first request for a region to have a role in a liquor plebiscite, the standing committee decided to hold public hearings in Norman Wells, Deline, Tulita and Fort Good Hope.

The hearings took place between September 9 and 26, 2013. The turnout was strong in every community, resulting in total attendance of approximately 160 people. The committee received submissions from a range of individuals and organizations, both orally and in writing. Every community participated in the hearings, as a delegation from Colville Lake was present at the Norman Wells event.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will now pass it to my colleague Mr. Moses.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Nadli. Mr. Moses.

Feedback from the Public and the GNWT

MR. MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, Mr. Nadli. The overwhelming majority of submissions supported Bill 24 and, indeed, a return to restricted sales at the Norman Wells liquor outlet.

Of course, the latter is not the issue at hand, which is solely how a plebiscite may be requested.

In all the small communities, people pointed out that bootlegging has increased since restrictions on sales were lifted in Norman Wells. Bootlegging is predominantly in hard liquor, much of it in small "mickey" bottles, which reportedly sell for \$85 each in Tulita. Two RCMP officers attended the hearing in that community. One confirmed that calls for service were up since restrictions were lifted in Norman Wells.

Bootlegging is against the law but difficult to control. Police are not able to intercept it all. Alcohol is smuggled into communities by plane, boat, road and snowmobile. Bootlegging was cited as a serious problem in every community, including Norman Wells.

Changes proposed in Bill 24 are not considered to be "the solution" that will stop bootlegging in any community. Rather, there was consistent opinion that the provisions of Bill 24 would help reduce bootlegging.

People in every community spoke passionately about the impact of alcohol abuse, which include many deaths and hair-raising close calls. People spoke of living in fear, of police being unable to respond quickly to complaints, and of the tactics bootleggers use to avoid being caught.

In Fort Good Hope, elder Gabriel Kochon spoke of the deaths of his son and nephew. "Today," he said, "there are children 8 years old [who are] drinking."

The committee heard time and again that children and elders are suffering the most.

Opinion on Bill 24 was more divided in Norman Wells, but the majority of speakers supported it, including several young people.

Nevertheless, Bill 24 was strongly opposed by the Norman Wells Chamber of Commerce, the contractor who runs the liquor outlet on behalf of the NWT Liquor Commission, and several other individuals.

Opponents of the bill consider that it interferes in a business, sets up a regime unique to the Sahtu region, and that involvement in plebiscites by other communities is unfair to residents of Norman Wells and will not stop rampant alcohol abuse. The Chamber of Commerce labeled the bill "unconstitutional."

The committee considered this objection but does not accept its validity. The committee carefully considered applicable human rights legislation in the Northwest Territories as well as the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. The committee does not believe that the bill denies residents any good, service or accommodation on the basis of prohibited grounds of discrimination, or that it

otherwise constitutes unlawful discrimination without a bona fide and reasonable justification. Further, the committee notes that the Northwest Territories Act grants the Legislative Assembly the authority to legislate intoxicants in the Northwest Territories.

Some of the arguments against the bill were echoed by the Minister of Finance. In a letter to the committee on September 26th, he stated that he and his Cabinet colleagues will not support the bill. The Minister cited his desire for consistency of plebiscite policy across the Northwest Territories.

For clarity, the Liquor Act mandates the Finance Minister to regulate sales of alcohol. The NWT Liquor Commission, which contracts and supplies all liquor stores in the territory, also operates under the authority of the Minister of Finance.

Standing committee members were impressed by the submissions they received in every community, and found considerable merit in the arguments both for and against Bill 24.

The committee agrees that fundamental democratic principles must be upheld. In this case, that means a request for a plebiscite should come from communities comprising more than half the population of the Sahtu. An amendment to this effect was made during the public hearing in Yellowknife on October 16, 2013, with the consent of MLA Yakeleya, Bill 24's sponsor.

However, the will of the people, as expressed in four lengthy public hearings, was loud and clear in support of Bill 24. What committee members heard was in fact a cry for help, which brings us to some important matters well beyond the scope of the bill.

I'd like to pass the report on to my colleague Ms. Bisaro.

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

Other Matters

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The committee reviewed dozens of police reports from every community in the region. These monthly summaries from the RCMP are further testament to the carnage wrought by alcohol abuse, the suffering endured in every community, and the burden on police and other government services.

In a year, calls for service to RCMP in the Sahtu are approximately equal to the population of the region: 2,750 calls in 2012. Alcohol is a factor in most crimes and complaints.

Far more alarming is the number of assaults. In 2012, RCMP recorded 255 assaults in Sahtu communities. This is almost one assault for every 10 residents of the region.

In the first five months of 2013, RCMP recorded 120 offenses under the Liquor Act in Sahtu communities.

In Deline alone, a community of about 550 people, there were 43 recorded occurrences of bootlegging in this same period.

In every community the committee heard pleas for programs to help deal with the impact of alcohol abuse. As one man succinctly put it in Norman Wells, "You need help, where do you get it?" There must be effective ways to escape violence and to get well.

People eloquently described the need for safe houses, residential and on-the-land addictions treatment, and more education about alcohol and addictions.

In addition, people want better control of bootlegging. This includes more severe penalties for bootleggers.

It is abundantly clear that alcohol abuse is a societal issue that can only be reduced through a coordinated approach by individuals, families, schools, communities and various government departments. Ultimately, community leaders must lead the way in dealing with addictions issues and helping police deal with bootlegging.

The committee was persuaded that its recommendations must go beyond the limited scope of Bill 24. The integrity of the government is at stake. The same is true for community leadership. There will be no success in dealing with alcohol abuse without local ownership of the problem, local solutions and local action.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to pass the reading of the report to my colleague Mr. Dolynny.

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

Committee Recommendations

MR. DOLYNNY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Standing Committee on Government Operations therefore recommends:

- 1) that the Department of Health and Social Services, the Department of Education and the NWT Liquor Commission increase awareness and prevention programs related to alcohol consumption and abuse. The NWT Liquor Commission must live up to its mandate to "promote the development of a healthy and responsible drinking culture," and to "encourage and support the responsible use of alcohol;"
- 2) that the Department of Health and Social Services make on-the-land addictions treatment available in every community in the Northwest Territories;
- 3) that the Department of Health and Social Services re-establish a residential treatment facility in the Northwest Territories;
- 4) that the Department of Health and Social Services provide detox programs for any resident who is referred;
- 5) that the Department of Health and Social Services deliver coordinated after-care support in every community for those who complete addictions treatment programs;
- 6) that the Department of Justice include identification of, and support for, safe houses as part of community safety plans;
- 7) that the Department of Justice consider legislating stiffer penalties for bootleggers, and apply for forfeiture of vehicles and equipment used in appropriate cases;
- 8) that the Department of Justice deliver an information campaign to raise awareness of potential penalties to bootleggers;
- 9) that the Department of Justice strengthen the ability of RCMP detachments to identify and intercept bootleggers, and provide appropriate tools to detect criminal activity related to alcohol and drugs, such as infrared heat sensors and dogs;
- 10) that the Department of Justice and the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs assist communities that wish to establish and operate community alcohol committees to help control access to alcohol;
- 11) that the Department of Justice establish an effective mechanism for anonymous reporting of bootleggers and bootlegging;
- 12) that the Department of Finance and NWT Liquor Commission ensure that liquor stores accepting orders from residents of other communities abide by local restrictions on importing alcohol;
- 13) that the Department of Transportation establish thorough screening methods for passengers and cargo at all airports in the NWT, specifically related to assist detection of bootlegging;
- 14) that the Department of Finance, through the NWT Liquor Commission, consider restrictions on sales of large quantities of spirits that are not supported by ongoing or special licences, and that individuals purchasing large quantities of spirits be required to identify themselves and sign for their purchases; and finally,
- 15) that a fixed percentage of the government's profit from liquor sales be allocated to augment addictions awareness and treatment programs.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I wish to turn it to Mr. Nadli to conclude the report. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Dolynny. Mr. Nadli.

Conclusion

MR. NADLI: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is significant that Bill 24 provides the Finance Minister may hold a plebiscite if certain conditions are met; it does not require the Minister to do so.

Following the amendment mentioned earlier, members of the Standing Committee on Government Operations support Bill 24 as presented and recommend it as ready for consideration in Committee of the Whole.

The committee understands the Finance Minister's decision that under circumstances specific to this bill, Cabinet will not support it. The committee therefore respectfully requests that Cabinet abstain, or allow a free vote of its members.

MOTION TO RECEIVE COMMITTEE REPORT
7-17(4) AND MOVE INTO
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE,
CARRIED

Mr. Speaker, that concludes the report of the Standing Committee on Government Operations on the review of Bill 24, An Act to Amend the Liquor Act. Therefore, I move, seconded by the Member for Frame Lake, that Committee Report 7-17(4) be received by the Assembly and moved into Committee of the Whole for further consideration. Mahsi.

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

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

MR. SPEAKER: Question has been called.

---Carried

Committee Report 7-17(4) has been received and will be moved into Committee of the Whole for further consideration.

Item 13, reports of committees on the review of bills. Item 14, tabling of documents. Mr. Miltenberger.

Tabling of Documents

TABLED DOCUMENT 128-17(4):
TRADITIONAL KNOWLEDGE
ANNUAL REPORT 2012-2013

TABLED DOCUMENT 129-17(4):
CONFERENCE OF MANAGEMENT
AUTHORITIES SPECIES AT RISK
ANNUAL REPORT 2012-2013

TABLED DOCUMENT 130-17(4):
NORTHWEST TERRITORIES SPECIES AT RISK
ANNUAL REPORT 2012-2013

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to table the following three documents, entitled Traditional Knowledge Annual Report, Conference of Management Authority Species at Risk Annual Report 2012-2013, and Northwest Territories Species at Risk Committee Annual Report 2012-2013. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Mr. Abernethy.

TABLED DOCUMENT 131-17(4):
NORTHWEST TERRITORIES CORONER
SERVICE 2012 ANNUAL REPORT

TABLED DOCUMENT 132-17(4):
2012-2013 REPORT OF THE
LEGAL SERVICES BOARD OF THE NWT

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to table the following two documents, entitled Northwest Territories Coroner Service 2012 Annual Report, and the 2012-2013 Report of the Legal Services Board of the Northwest Territories. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Abernethy. Item 15, notices of motion. Mr. Yakeleya.

Notices of Motion

MOTION 24-17(4):
EXTENDED ADJOURNMENT OF THE HOUSE
TO OCTOBER 28, 2013

MR. YAKELEYA: Mr. Speaker, I give notice that on Thursday, October 24, 2013, I will move the following motion: I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Thebacha, that, notwithstanding Rule 4, when the House adjourns on October 24, 2013, it shall be adjourned until Monday, October 28, 2013.

And further, at any time prior to October 28, 2013, if the Speaker is satisfied, after consultation with the Executive Council and Members of the Legislative Assembly, that the public interest requires that the House should meet at an earlier time during the

adjournment, the Speaker may give notice and thereupon the House shall meet at the time stated in such notice and shall transact its business as it has been duly adjourned to that time. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. 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: Bill 3, Wildlife Act; Bill 13, An Act to Repeal the Curfew Act; Bill 14, An Act to Repeal the Pawnbrokers and Second-hand Dealers Act; Bill 15, Gunshot and Stab Wound Mandatory Disclosure Act; Bill 16, An Act to Amend the Justices of the Peace Act; Bill 17, An Act to Amend the Protection Against Family Violence Act; Bill 18, Apology Act; Bill 19, Miscellaneous Statute Law Amendment Act, 2013; Bill 21, An Act to Amend the Dental Profession Act; Bill 22, Territorial Emblems and Honours Act; Bill 24, An Act to Amend the Liquor Act; Tabled Document 70-17(4), Electoral Boundaries Commission, Final Report, May 2013; and Tabled Document 107-17(4), NWT Capital Estimates 2014-2015, with Finance Minister Mr. Miltenberger, Education, Culture and Employment, Transportation, NWT Housing Corporation. 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 Mr. Dolynny in the chair.

Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you. Committee, we'll call Committee of the Whole to order. What is the wish of committee? Ms. Bisaro.

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Chair. We wish to continue with Tabled Document 107-17(4), NWT Capital Estimates 2014-15, to conclude, hopefully, the Department of Education and then Transportation, then, time willing, NWT Housing Corporation.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. Does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Okay, committee, we'll commence after a short break.

---SHORT RECESS

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): All right. Committee, welcome back. Committee, we are on capital estimates, activity summary, page 8-7, on Education, Culture and Employment, and with that, I have Mr. Yakeleya.

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I would like to reiterate the pressing needs...

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Sorry, Mr. Yakeleya. We'll just go to the Minister here first to see if he has witnesses. Minister Lafferty.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Yes, Mr. Chair, I do have witnesses.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Does committee agree we can bring witnesses in the House?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

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

Again, Minister Lafferty, if you can introduce your witnesses to the House,

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mahsi, Mr. Chair. I have to my left, Dana Heide. He is the associate deputy minister with the Department of Education, Culture and Employment. We have Tammy Allison, who is the coordinator of capital planning within ECE. Mahsi.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. Thank you, Ms. Allison and Mr. Heide, for returning here. Again, we will go to Member Yakeleya. Go ahead.

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I just wanted to say again that the needs in this department, with regard to the infrastructure needs...and certainly being reminded by the Minister of Finance as to the amount of funding we have, and putting the funding where it makes sense and it makes a good business case. I just want to remind the Minister and his officials here of the support that is going to be needed in forthcoming years in the Sahtu region.

I want to ask the Minister in regard to the support for families, single parents. There is a great deal of opportunity coming up in the Sahtu that would greatly appreciate support in the department for early childhood daycare homes. I understand that currently there was one in Norman Wells that closed down, and Norman Wells is a pretty busy place where both parents are working due to the high cost of living in that community, and now they're going to face more pressure because of the issue of conversion of the energy source they will be needing in that community.

I'm looking at this department in this capital planning process to see where the single parents and the families can get help in the communities in the Sahtu. If there is a plan out there that would look at the Sahtu communities, to look at seeing what type of requirements and criteria are needed to bring in daycare homes for our communities. I stated, sometime in my Member's statement, that there are employment rates that are quite low in regard to people working in Sahtu communities other than Norman Wells, and that there is a high percentage of families that are headed by single parents. Even in Norman Wells both parents are

working to support their homes and there is really no support for them in regard to daycare types of programs and homes. So I'm hoping that the Minister would bring forth a type of plan in terms of partnerships, where we could have daycare homes in our communities. That's one point.

The second point, and my last point, is looking for this government here to look at the emerging need of a Sahtu technical institute. Start planning for our region. Through the combination of various meetings of organizations and this government here, I believe that a small Sahtu technical institute can be established within the life of this government, and that we can see where our people could take some additional specialized training, or just general training in heavy equipment mechanics trade that is going to match the needs of the oil and gas companies that are coming into the Sahtu, or the supporting services. These companies have to support the oil and gas industry and also support the communities in electrical, plumbing, pipefitters or painters, so we need to start building that type of infrastructure.

It would be good to hear from this government that this department will look at some of this much needed infrastructure that could happen in the Sahtu. For the last 10 years we have received some of the infrastructure, but also in the last 10 years we have sort of seen a – I'm not too sure how to call it – a zigzag in terms of infrastructure. Today we know that we're very early in the stages of developing the Sahtu, and that's all because of the oil and gas exploration and the potential that could be there to develop it further into something that is quite astounding in regard to taking the oil out of the Sahtu.

I'd like to ask the Minister what infrastructure phases that he can start in regard to building these types of buildings or places in our region. In the past we didn't have that, and that was understandable, but today it's a different story. When you have 11 parcels that are taken up and over \$600 million committed just for the exploration, that tells you that there's something happening there. When you have one company spend over \$40 million on an all-weather road out in the bush, that tells you that there's something going on there, and so I hope that is some strong indication to what potentially could happen in the Sahtu. That's what I'm looking forward to in this infrastructure budget with the Department of Education, Culture and Employment.

I'll leave it at that there and hope that the Minister would come forward in the future, within the life of this government, to demonstrate that yes, he's heard us and is working towards it within our cycle and our plan. We don't have much time left in this government here to see any type of really significant changes. I'm hoping for these two; that

would mean a lot for the people of the Sahtu. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Minister Lafferty.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mahsi, Mr. Chair. Definitely, by all means we will be through standing committee and also the capital planning process with all of these requests from MLAs and this will be one of them.

The Sahtu region is going to be very busy, as we know. We are closely monitoring their situation. We're working very closely with the leadership. They were here today, as well, touring the Legislative Assembly. They had various meetings and I did have a chat with them as well. They want to have future meetings regarding various initiatives that are happening in the Sahtu region.

The child care in Norman Wells is an area that we can certainly re-evaluate the situation. I agree with the Member that we need to encourage the community members to access the workforce environment. We must encourage them by all means.

Again, the Member alluded to partnership. Definitely this is an area I am always interested in, having an open dialogue with the leadership, with the MLA, how best to serve the constituency of the Sahtu region and, more specifically, if it happens to be Norman Wells, how can we make this work. Let's find a solution. I am more open to that. These are some of the challenges we are faced with and I believe it creates more opportunities for us.

Child care and training institutes also go hand in hand. I have talked to it yesterday already, that we are working with regional training committee members that involve industries and other stakeholders from the region. They have developed and produced a community needs assessment and we need to work with that. That will capture the daycare as well. From that, we need to put it forward as part of the capital planning process for next year or the following year, as the Member has alluded to, and we need to build on that.

Training needs to be looked into by the committee. We obviously will need to build on this. I agree with the Member that this is an area that we need to push forward. We are very closely monitoring it as well. Mahsi, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. Committee, again, we are on 8-7. Mr. Bromley.

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I would like to follow up on a conversation here and conversations earlier today on child care spaces and what facilities we are putting in place.

First of all, how many child care spaces or facilities do we have in the Northwest Territories? What is

the capacity of our child care facilities across the Northwest Territories?

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

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mahsi, Mr. Chair. Just going through these binders that we have, we don't have the specific daycare establishments or the actual numbers, but we can provide that to Members.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. I'm sure Members will appreciate that. Mr. Bromley.

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. If we could, at the same time, provide that by community, the number of new spaces and the affordability of those child care spaces, that would be appreciated.

What is in the budget for new child care spaces and facilities this time around here? Thank you.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mr. Chair, as outlined in the description, we don't necessarily have it in the capital plan at this point, but we are discussing it through the Early Childhood Development Framework and whether it is the next year or the following year. As Member Yakeleya also alluded to the interest and the need in his region, we need to identify what is required in all the regions and what is existing right now, and we will be providing that to Members. At this point, when we look at capital infrastructure, we don't have a set of capital infrastructure pertaining to the daycare. Mahsi.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Minister Lafferty. As well, we can maybe get a commitment to Mr. Bromley regarding the affordability and daycare facilities by community, as requested. Mr. Lafferty.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Yes, Mr. Chair, we will provide that detailed information.

MR. BROMLEY: Thanks to the Minister for that. I guess I would appreciate it. I know that discussion with Mr. Yakeleya was interesting and appropriate here. I would like to expand that to the NWT, and obviously I'm very interested in Detah and Ndilo, as well as Yellowknife and so on.

Could we also get what the plan is for new child care facilities at the same time when the Minister provides that information? I understand that inspections are on their way now, but as soon as that's available, if we can get the plan perhaps brought to committee or some sort of commitment there in the near future. Obviously, the life of this Assembly is on the wane here now and we want to get some of these things done. Thank you.

HON. JACKSON LAFFERTY: Mr. Chair, we will provide the recent and most detailed information on the child care facilities at the present time and also

what our plan is as we move forward, the short-term and long-term plans as well. Mahsi.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Mr. Lafferty. Committee, we are on 8-7, Education, Culture and Employment, activity summary, education and culture, infrastructure investment summary, infrastructure investments, \$2.986 million. Does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): If I can get you to return to the department summary, committee. That is on page 8-2, Education, Culture and Employment, department summary, infrastructure investment summary, infrastructure investments, \$3.74 million. Does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you. Does committee agree that we have concluded consideration of the Department of Education, Culture and Employment?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, committee. I'd like to thank the Minister. I would like to thank our witnesses here today and if I could get the Sergeant-at-Arms to escort the witnesses out of the Chamber, thank you.

Committee, do we agree to proceed with consideration of the Department of Transportation?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, committee. There is a section 9 in your binders. We will now go to the Minister of Transportation to see if he has any witnesses he would like to bring into the Chamber.

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: Yes, I do, Mr. Chair. Thank you.

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

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, committee. I will get the Sergeant-at-Arms to please escort the witnesses into the House.

Mr. Ramsay, would you like to introduce your witnesses to the House, please?

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: Yes. Thank you, Mr. Chair. To my left I have Russ Neudorf, deputy minister of Transportation. To my right I have Ms. Jayleen Robertson, director of environment and communications with DOT. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. Ms. Robertson, Mr. Neudorf, welcome to the House today. Committee, we will defer 9-2. We will come back to it at the end. I would like to turn your attention to 9-4, Transportation, activity

summary, airports, infrastructure investment summary, infrastructure investments, \$3.075 million. Does committee agree? Mr. Bromley.

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I just wonder if I can get an update on the situation in the Sahtu, given all the activity there. I don't see much in the Sahtu other than a tractor for the Norman Wells Airport. I'm just wondering what the status is. Is the Minister anticipating getting... The word "prepared" comes to mind. If we could get an update on what the strategy is. I understand there is something like \$630 million worth of activity in the Sahtu this year associated with the oil development alone and I'm just wondering what sorts of pressures we are experiencing and if there's anything coming up there.

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

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the Member for the question. Certainly there's a lot of activity taking place in the Sahtu. I think the number for economic spent this coming winter season is somewhere around \$90 million, I do believe.

A lot of the goods that end up there do go through the airport, but the Norman Wells Airport is a regional airport. It's a hub. It is equipped to handle the increased activity. Going forward, we've identified some funding through the Corridors for Canada III proposal to the federal government, where we would see an increased opportunity through commercial space at the Norman Wells Airport to help with the development that's taking place in the Sahtu.

We are convinced that the Norman Wells Airport is in good position to handle the traffic. Thank you.

MR. BROMLEY: I was talking about the Sahtu generally, of course. I sort of agree that we expect the regional hub to be good for the short term here. It's the smaller airports that I'm wondering about and if they're seeing any kind of magnitude-increase in activity. I know Tulita, a beautiful spot, but it's a pretty modest facility there and so on.

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: We do appreciate there will be impacts on the smaller communities in the Sahtu as well. In the past, we have had a runway length study that we did. We are in the process of updating that study so we can ensure that runway lengths are going to fit the required need in the area as development continues to move forward.

In the past we have worked with the communities. Fort Good Hope is an example; I'm working with the community to see the runway extended there. I know there is some interest from Deline and I had the chief in my office this morning, talking about that again. So we're anxious to see if there are opportunities to partner with people and get some

of these things done. Again, work continues in that area. Thank you.

MR. BROMLEY: I appreciate the Minister's comments. I know he's aware that we want to be doing these things before there is a consequence of not having these facilities there. So being in front of this stuff would be good.

I'd like to turn briefly to Inuvik and the example of some of the climate change impacts that are being experienced there with the runway. Obviously, I don't see it in this budget. Presumably it will be handled some other way here soon. Do we know what the total cost of that issue is? Are there any other instances like that that are happening in our airport infrastructure that the Minister could bring us up to date on? Thank you.

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: Two things with the Inuvik Airport, through the Corridors for Canada III proposal we are looking at a new terminal building for Inuvik. That's a very positive move forward. Also the Member has talked about climate change and the impact it's had on the runway in Inuvik, and we just recently experienced a dip in the runway and we had to provide an immediate fix. That immediate fix cost about \$600,000. It will be a total repair of about \$2.5 million when all is said and done on that runway.

We continue to have discussions with the Department of National Defence on extending the runway in Inuvik and hopefully we can see the day where the federal government is going to put a substantial investment in the Inuvik Airport in a runway extension. So we continue to have those discussions with the federal government as well. Thank you.

MR. BROMLEY: Thanks to the Minister. So that's the only airport that this has expressed itself in that way this year, I'm assuming, unless there's any further update. What are we doing to try to assess airports for vulnerability to this sort of thing, so that we can again try to get ahead of the game? It comes to mind now that Hay River had an issue, and again there's a clear trend development here and we know it's going to get worse. What are we doing to try to get ahead of this and what sorts of costs are we seeing now?

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: No doubt, we are at the forefront of the climate change and the impact climate change is having here in the North. We have had the experience in Inuvik. We have had a similar experience and it's an ongoing issue in Hay River. I know the Members from Hay River would know that. We've also had a small dip in one of the runways here in Yellowknife that we've had to remedy as well.

As far as work, the Northwest Territories, given our location and fact that we are on the front line of climate change, we can have a lot of impact in

helping others deal with it, as well, and taking a look at how we can mitigate the impacts of climate change. I know our airport folks are doing a lot of work in that regard, trying to ensure the runways can stand up given this impact of climate change and maybe help others dealing with similar situations. Thank you.

MR. BROMLEY: Thanks for that information. Maybe I could just hear what the costs were this year so far for the Hay River and Yellowknife situations. On a looking-forward basis, when our school roofs started to collapse because of snow loads, unexpected snow loads, we adapted by changing the standards that construction had to meet for the roofs of schools. Are there those sorts of adaptations happening in the construction of runways to deal with these eventualities or probabilities? Thank you.

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: The issues with the runways have been ongoing for a number of years. Again, we are trying our best to mitigate those issues with our runways, and they are O and M. We treat them as O and M. In the case of Hay River, the repairs to the Hay River runway, I think we were in the magnitude of \$2 million, maybe just slightly over \$2 million. As I mentioned earlier, the complete fix for the dip in the Inuvik runway at the end of the day is going to be about \$2.5 million. Thank you.

MR. BROMLEY: Thanks for that information. The Yellowknife one sounds like... Is that in the past? Are we changing our standards in runway construction in recognition of the new challenges?

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: Yellowknife experienced these difficulties, I believe, about eight to 10 years ago and it was fixed using some insulation and other materials under the runway and we haven't experienced problems since that was fixed. Again, that's going back almost a decade.

MR. BROMLEY: Again, not to be overly persistent, I am just wondering if we've changed our standards of construction with runways and airport landing strips. Thank you.

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: The design continually changes in a way to address and mitigate climate change. As I mentioned, the runway repair back 10 years ago, the materials that were used, I mean, we're learning something with every repair we do here in the Northwest Territories on what works best. Again, it's all in an effort to mitigate the impact. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Minister Ramsay. Continuing on with questions, I have Mr. Menicoche.

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you very much. Just in regard to airports, the Trout Lake Airport project, I was just there on my fall constituency visit and the project has been delayed, so I just wanted to know

how much of a delay there is. Is there expected potential extra costs as well? It's currently not listed in the current budget, only because it was supposed to be completed this year. I'd just like to ask the Minister, are there plans for moving forward with the Trout Lake Airport construction, will it have an impact on this budget and is there any expected cost increases on the project. Thank you.

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

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: Thank you. A lot of these are items that we are still currently trying to work out with the contractor. We're hoping to have the Trout Lake Airport complete by next summer, and we have experienced some wet weather, some other issues with the project itself, but we are continuing to work out and iron out the difficulties to try to get the project completed by next summer. I have made a commitment to the Member that we're going to sit down with the community and make sure the project does see its way through to completion. Thank you.

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you very much. I certainly look forward to bringing the Minister to Trout Lake, because the community has always seen it as their project and they want to continue to benefit from whatever work is left there. So, we'll just leave it at that until we get into the community to meet with the leadership on the Trout Lake Airport.

A couple more questions under airports. Trout Lake has also been asking for a snow blower and that's something I've been raising for some time. I think there was a plan to move a blower in there about two years ago. Can the department tell me about what plans there are to put a snow blower in the community of Trout Lake? It's a fly-in community and it's an incredible amount of work moving snow with a grader.

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: Yes, thank you. We are aware of the situation in Trout Lake when it comes to the use of the snow blower. We believe there probably are more effective ways to deal with it and it all comes down to the amount of snow load in a community, but I don't know if there's more of a technical response. Mr. Chairman, perhaps I could go to the deputy minister for that.

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

MR. NEUDORF: Thank you, Mr. Chair. We do have requests from several communities for snow blowers, but we do always look at the situation, the orientation of the runway. The weather conditions and the amount of snow can determine whether a snow blower is the most effective means to keep the runway clear in the wintertime. Snow blowers tend to be quite high maintenance, a high expense and then they only have use during the winter

season. So, in some communities it's justified because of the snow load and some it isn't because of the reduced snow load and the high cost that comes with a snow blower. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Mr. Neudorf. Mr. Menicoche.

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you very much. I would certainly like to see it in future plans as we move to the opening of the new Trout Lake Airport and it's a much larger area, much more snow has to be removed. Once again, I make the case from the community that I don't have the records to show how many airplanes they do get, but I know every time I travel there, there's an awful lot of airplane traffic. I'm sure the air traffic companies in and around the North are starting to depend on us having that airport open, including for emergencies, so they see the need for a new snow removal machine and I'll press that with the Minister one more time.

Just on the last note and then I've pretty much asked all my questions. In the application of EK35 products, is there going to be any done in the Nahendeh riding at all as well? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. Mr. Ramsay.

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. First, before I go to Mr. Neudorf for a response on the EK35, I just wanted to provide the Member that I believe it's a fair comment that the Member has on the provision of a snow blower in Trout Lake, and as we move toward having the new runway in place in Trout Lake we can see how that may fit into future plans for the department. I appreciate the Member bringing that up and it's something I can't make a commitment on today, but we definitely will look at that. Thank you. We'll go to Mr. Neudorf for the EK35 question. Thank you.

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

MR. NEUDORF: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Current year, '13-14, we're doing first applications in Deline and Tuk, a second application in Aklavik, plus supplying the product for Nahanni Butte and Fort McPherson. Then next year, in '14-15, we do a first application in Nahanni Butte, Fort McPherson, and apply the second application in Deline and Tuktoyaktuk and then supply product for Jean Marie River. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you. Moving on with questions, we have Mr. Blake.

MR. BLAKE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Just a couple of questions for the Minister. Under Aklavik, I know a number of years ago the community was promised the expansion of the airport. I'd just like to ask the Minister when does the department plan to expand that airport. Thank you.

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

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: Thank you. In the almost two years I've been Minister, I don't recall a formal request from the community to expand the airport at Aklavik. If that's something that predates me, maybe the deputy minister may know something about that.

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

MR. NEUDORF: Thank you, Mr. Chair. When we get requests from communities, we always go back to our runway length study that was undertaken in 2007, where there were a number of runways prioritized for extension following that study. We did work in Fort McPherson, Fort Good Hope and Tulita and we are in the process of updating that study. We're interested to see the results and see what the next leads might be, but at the present time we're not aware of any technical need, any technical driver for extending the runway in Aklavik. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Mr. Neudorf. Mr. Blake.

MR. BLAKE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I just want to remind the Minister of my Member's statement just briefly of the completion of the Fort McPherson expansion project. If you look in Hansard you'll find it there.

The other question is for the community of Tsiigehtchic. I mentioned before that they would like to have an emergency airstrip as we don't have an airstrip in the community. We have a lot of emergency situations there and I know the community would really like an airport. What are the plans for the community? Thank you.

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

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: Thank you. If the Member did raise that issue in the House in regard to the expansion of the airport in Aklavik, I will take a look back at that.

On the emergency airstrip for Tsiigehtchic, again, unless the Member, perhaps he's raised that in a Member's statement. I don't recall that as well, but maybe we'll go to the deputy minister for a response to that. Thank you.

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

MR. NEUDORF: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Providing an airport or emergency airport access in Tsiigehtchic has been raised quite a few times in the past. We're going back some time now. The department has always looked at the request and analyzed it, but has not taken any action in terms of a runway and providing that type of infrastructure. But we have worked and there is a helipad in the

community to provide access in emergency situations. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Mr. Neudorf. Committee, we're on 9-4, Transportation. Mr. Yakeleya.

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I want to ask the Minister here on infrastructure and going forward in planning studies. The hub of the Sahtu airport is Norman Wells. With the increase of traffic, I believe Norman Wells is the second busiest airport in the North here. With the ranking so high – other than, of course, Yellowknife being the highest – does the Norman Wells Airport have the required support resources in that airport to sustain itself and to be prepared to deal with more traffic as the oil and gas systems are going forward in regard to the oil and gas exploration?

There are other airports in the North that also seem to have quite a bit of support services, and I'm not too sure if that justifies the amount of resources there than Norman Wells or even Tulita or Deline. They're busy airports. I'd like to follow up from my colleague Mr. Bromley, who talked earlier about the going forward infrastructure planning and with the issue of Inuvik's airport on the climate change and the dip in their airport. I'm not too sure if that would happen in the Sahtu, especially when there is going to be a lot of traffic coming into Norman Wells and that airport gets quite busy. When I was there this winter, quite a lot of people came off that airplane and the terminal was quite crowded at that time, so I wanted to ask the Minister in that regard.

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

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the Member for his questions today. Certainly, the airport at Norman Wells, as I mentioned in response to one of the other Members earlier, we believe it is capable of handling the traffic that it does currently. That's not to say that it could be impacted further down the road when we see more activity in the Sahtu.

Through the Corridors for Canada plan, we have I believe it's \$15 million earmarked over a few years to look at the development of that airport, specifically commercial development and availability of land for commercial use at the airport. I do think we have some funding that we can look at down the road to ensure that we have an airport there that's going to service the needs of not only the travelling public but also industry and development in the region.

MR. YAKELEYA: Certainly I look forward to the approval of the corridor proposal that the Minister talks about and see if it comes to fruition in regard to supporting the transportation issues in the Sahtu and specifically Norman Wells. When I was there I certainly saw a number of airplanes parked and it's

quite crowded in there. Norman Wells, being the second busiest airport on a consistent basis in the Northwest Territories, I'd certainly like to see support for being in that category. We need to continue to support that. I'll leave it at that.

I want to ask the Minister on the airport in Deline. I do thank the Minister for taking some time out of his busy schedule to talk to the chief, the land corp president and self-government negotiator when we were in his office this morning, about the willingness of the community of Deline to look at a type of partnership that was had by the Department of Transportation some years ago with Fort Good Hope. I need the willingness and the partnership of your department to say yes, we can make a go of it rather than drag its feet on this request. I say that because Deline has been at it for a while. They want the standards and the designs of extending their runway, because right now, under the regulations, the Department of Transportation says you only can use a certain type of aircraft with a number of people, and that doesn't make any type of business case for NorthWright Airlines to come into the community, if you can only fly a certain number of people into that community. That's what they are stating.

The bottom line: Deline wants to get into a partnership. They need to know the designs and standards and the specs of increasing the runway, and they will go out and help get the money and go in the partnership just like they did in Fort Good Hope, but I need your department officials to play with them, work hard with them and get them the money. They're not asking for all the money. They want to work in partnership to extend their runway. That's all they're asking. Even at their small airport facility, it's really crowded in there. I mean, I do acknowledge the amount of money this government has and where do you put the money, and for some of the airports I keep seeing a new loader or a new dump truck. It seems like sometimes those take priority, for whatever reason, than to help some of the smaller communities. I'm going to leave it at that.

I want to ask because this is important infrastructure for people in the Sahtu, especially when we have to fly. We don't have an all-weather road and that's our only means of transportation through some parts of the season. Airports are very important to us.

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: Just before I get to the issue with Deline and the runway extension there, I wanted to mention, also, that in Norman Wells we're looking at the runway vulnerability assessment, and that is in response to Mr. Bromley's questions, as well, on what we're doing to deal with climate change. So we're looking at the runway in Norman Wells and assessing that. The Member would know, as he travels through Norman

Wells quite often, that we've put grooves in that runway, as well, to help with the water, and that has been very successful as well. I wanted to mention that.

Getting to the issue with the extension in Deline, we did have a successful partnership with Fort Good Hope in the past. The extension for Deline, we continue to work towards updating the runway length study that we completed a couple of years ago. It's not going to come with a small price tag though. If you look at even extending the runway to 5,000 metres, it's going to be at a price tag of about four and a half million. Then if you went to 6,000 metres, that price would jump to seven and a half million. It's not a small undertaking for the community. A community the size of Deline, how could they partner with us, you know. That's a big amount of money. We'd be looking to continue to move forward, and I think we're going to update the length study that we have.

We'll continue to discuss with the community. I know the community is interested in getting some preliminary design, and we could provide that, a very rough estimate of that to the community so they have a better idea of the numbers that we're talking about, and we can all be on the same page here, because I think the numbers that are there are substantial numbers.

Again, I think when you're looking at the prospect of spending four and half to seven and a half million dollars expanding a runway in Deline, there has to be that economic driver, something that's going to really necessitate the government spending that type of money on extending a runway in a community like Deline. But again, that's not to say we don't want to continue the dialogue, continue the discussion with the community. We will do that.

MR. YAKELEYA: Mr. Chair, I certainly appreciate the response back from the Minister on the runways. I specifically want to talk to Deline in regards to their willingness and their partnership, even though for the department, maybe for the government it seems like a small community. How do we erase the \$4.5 million? Well, that is their business. Let them do it. They have been in business for long enough. Give them the ability. Give them the credence and the faith that they could come up with money. It's for them to decide. All we do is lend our hand in a partnership and see what they can do. It might take them a year, it might take them two years, but it's up to them. We're not the boss. That is what Deline is saying. Give us the design. It's a rough estimate. We will come and we will find the money ourselves. It has been proven in the past. Communities have come to that stage where they can raise money themselves to come into a partnership. There are many means of raising a partnership.

I ask the Minister if he would be open-minded and give Deline, have some faith into our people that they can raise money. This issue is important enough for them to have the extended runway that might create economic opportunities in the future. It is the chicken and egg type of scenario here. I'm thinking that the government is willing to be a partner; then I think we can go along with it. I hope the Minister has that openness to Deline's unique approach. That's all I'm asking, if we consider this approach with Deline. We will see where it goes within the two years of life of this government. Thank you.

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: Mr. Chair, as the Member knows, I have a great deal of respect for the community leadership in Deline. I never would underestimate their ability to raise money and to deliver on a project.

I think, at the end of the day, the House would still have to approve any funding that went into a runway extension in Deline. I think, perhaps as the next step, we could sit down with the community leaders, talk to them about what they believe the economic drivers are or the impetus to get the runway extension done and, again, continue the dialogue, because we really need to do that. We have to get a better understanding from them where they are looking to the future and how it is that a runway extension there will be beneficial to the community and to the region. I look forward to those discussions.

If at all, I can be available – I wouldn't want it to be just department officials – I certainly would like to be at the meeting with community leaders and the deputy minister to discuss the future of that runway extension in Deline. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. Continuing with questions, we have Mr. Bromley.

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I just want to follow up briefly on the application of EK35 product. Sometimes my memory slips on what this is exactly, so I just want to confirm. I have a feeling it's a substance used for dealing with moisture on runways that suffer from frequent large temperature changes as a result of our changing climate. Am I in the right ballpark on what EK35 product is used for? Thank you.

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

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. It's not for moisture control; it's for dust control. It is a dust suppressant. I think Tulita had applied EK35 to the roads in Tulita a few summers back. We were there and it was a marked improvement on the amount of dust in the community. That is what EK35 used for, is a dust suppressant.

MR. BROMLEY: Mr. Chair, I wasn't even close. Maybe I can get an update on what happened with the Inuvik situation. I guess that is an airport that, because of the frequent temperature changes, gets moisture build-up and it was causing jets to slide and so on; scary stuff. What was the resolution on that issue? Thank you.

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: Mr. Chair, I believe the Member is getting to the issue of frost and friction on the runways and the inability of large aircraft to land. I know Inuvik experienced a few days like that last winter where it was a clear day but the runway couldn't accept large planes. That's something that we have avoided in Norman Wells where we have gone to the grooving of the runway in Norman Wells and we don't experience that frost and friction. So that is something. It is not an inexpensive fix, but going forward I think we are going to take a look at how the grooving works again this winter in Norman Wells. If it continues to hold up and do the job, I think we may, at some point in time, be able to do that in Inuvik as well. Thank you.

MR. BROMLEY: That's great. Thank you very much and thanks to the Minister. I know there were some real incidences there. It wasn't just a concern that it might happen; it actually was happening. I appreciate that information.

I'm always open to hearing more on what we are up to there, but it sounds like we are doing some monitoring of the situation of the possible solution in Norman Wells. It sounds interesting.

I also just wanted to comment very quickly again on the wood pellet boiler plan for the Yellowknife Airport. Again, I'm very happy to see that sort of thing. Now the Minister is on the right track with energy projects. I just wondered if he would happen to have what sort of payback we're talking about here with this installation and what sort of greenhouse gas reductions from the normal course of events that this will get us. Thank you.

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: Mr. Chair, I thank the Member for the question. The wood pellet boiler that's to be installed at the terminal building is budgeted to cost \$750,000. It's estimated to displace 320,000 litres of propane annually, generating an annual savings of \$80,000 and a payback period of 9.4 years. Greenhouse gas emissions would be greatly reduced and, in fact, by 477 tonnes on an annual basis. Thank you.

MR. BROMLEY: That was all I had on this page. Mahsi.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolyunny): Thank you, Mr. Bromley. Continuing on with questions, I have Mr. Moses.

MR. MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I have two quick questions here, and one that was already alluded to with the Inuvik runway. It was in the

news. There was a big dip and it did prevent some planes from landing there, and they had to make some adjustments and some emergency repairs to it. As a result, there was some history that was brought up in the news reports as well. There was a discussion on the type of geographical landscape that it was built on, that it could result in future issues with the runway as well.

Has the Minister and his department looked at that in terms of safety, in terms of one of the priorities of our government when dealing with infrastructure, as an opportunity to do a planning study or do some restructuring to that runway? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolyunny): Thank you, Mr. Moses. Minister Ramsay.

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We have done a great deal of work in that regard. We have had a geophysics summit on the Inuvik Airport back in 2011, I believe it was. For a more detailed response, I am going to go to Deputy Minister Neudorf with the technical answer for that. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolyunny): Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. Mr. Neudorf.

MR. NEUDORF: Thank you, Mr. Chair. We have developed a runway vulnerability protocol, working in conjunction with researchers so that we can know, assess what the impact is of climate change on our runways. We are in the process of applying that vulnerability to Norman Wells, Yellowknife, Inuvik and the Fort Simpson runways, so that work is underway.

In terms of Inuvik specifically, we always appreciate when we get historic views of what the situation, what the conditions were like before the runway was there, because it does help to understand what might be happening underneath the runway when we have these types of challenges.

We were aware that in that particular spot there was an old lake and/or water moving underneath that spot, and that will help us as we move forward to come up with the long-term, permanent fix. The solution that was applied just in the last few weeks is a temporary repair. We also have some money to do some additional engineering, so we will go in, do some testing and try to understand exactly what the problem is. Then we will use that to design the permanent repair, which should occur next summer. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolyunny): Thank you, Mr. Neudorf. Mr. Moses.

MR. MOSES: I appreciate the response and also see, looking at the project list for airports here, that the Inuvik terminal building, there was a planning study. Maybe I could get a quick update on that planning study. I believe the Inuvik Airport during our last infrastructure discussions, was recognized

as the oldest infrastructure in Inuvik, so it's nice to see it on the list for a planning study. If I could just get a quick update to see where that is at. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

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

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As Members know, the facility has reached its end of service life and generally is in fair to poor condition. We had an issue last winter with a wind storm and the building suffered some damage as a result of that. So we need to move forward. Our long-term plan is to build a new air terminal building in Inuvik, so part of the process is to get a planning study underway. The money is going to hopefully be coming through the Corridors for Canada III proposal. Again, that's a proposal, but we're looking to build a new air terminal building in Inuvik and this is just part of the process of that happening. So we're going to continue to move forward with the planning study in an effort to get a new air terminal building in Inuvik. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Minister Ramsay. Committee, we're on 9-4, Transportation, activity summary, airports, infrastructure investment summary, infrastructure investments, \$3.075 million. Does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you. Page 9-7, Transportation, activity summary, marine, infrastructure investment summary, infrastructure investments, \$400,000. Does committee agree? Mr. Blake.

MR. BLAKE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I just have a couple of quick questions. I see there are plans to expand the new shop at the Peel River ferry. I was under the impression that it was going to be a stand-alone building. Is that going to be a stand-alone building?

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

MR. NEUDORF: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The facility there is used by both highways and marine groups to store their equipment and the existing facility is small. Not all of the equipment can get in when it needs to be stored in there, so we are looking at expanding the camp there by approximately 2,400 square feet. It will be a metal, prefabricated building. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Mr. Neudorf. Mr. Blake.

MR. BLAKE: Thank you. That answers my question.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Mr. Blake. Page 9-7, Transportation, activity summary, marine, infrastructure investment summary, infrastructure investments, \$400,000. Does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Page 9-10, Transportation, activity summary, highways, infrastructure investment summary, Mr. Blake.

MR. BLAKE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Over our business planning process, we were scheduled to have \$4 million for Highway No. 8, which is the Dempster Highway. I'd like to ask the Minister why it is not in this description.

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

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. There is no money for Highway No. 8 this year. We are waiting for the Corridors for Canada III proposal where we would have money on an ongoing basis for Highway No. 8.

MR. BLAKE: During our session this past spring, the Minister assured that there would be ongoing money with the Inuvik-Tuk Highway Project happening. We need to upgrade that highway. Just this fall alone we had two tractor trailers that went off the highway and four small vehicles. There needs to be a lot of work done to this highway. We're putting public safety at risk here. Is the Minister fine with that? Thank you.

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: No, the Department of Transportation takes very seriously the safety of our roads and the Member may be... When we were there, maybe it was the Corridors for Canada III proposal where we do have money for all highways in the Northwest Territories on a go-forward basis. We are anticipating we will be getting some success with that proposal and we'll have the ability to address concerns from around the territory, including Highway No. 8. Thank you.

MR. BLAKE: My memory recalls very clearly that it was during our business planning process. I'm just surprised the Minister is falling back on his word. I'll just leave it at that. Thank you.

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: Last year may have been the remnants of the BCP funding. We don't have any BCP funding this year; hence, we have no dollars for Highway No. 8. Again, I can't, you know, reiterate enough how important it is that we are successful with our Corridors for Canada III proposal to the federal government. We need this investment in our infrastructure across the territory. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Minister Ramsay. Mr. Blake, are you concluded?

MR. BLAKE: That's fine. Thanks.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Mr. Blake. Moving on, we'll go to Mr. Menicoche.

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. I just wanted to speak a bit about the structures and chipsealing. Rehabilitation and

replacement are of concern. A few of my colleagues have shared the concern about kilometre 187 on Highway No. 1, which is the Providence junction and all the chipseal that is there to about 216. It's been identified by my colleagues as a priority. There's some good chipsealing there and it's deteriorating. In my opinion, I think we should save that. We've got a bit of a budget here for next fiscal year and I'm going to propose we make this a priority for 2014. Perhaps firstly I can ask the Minister what is the plan for this section.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. With that, we'll go to Mr. Neudorf.

MR. NEUDORF: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The Member is referring to the section of Highway No. 1 that would go from Fort Providence junction, kilometre 187, to Checkpoint, kilometre 411. We have had funding in our capital plan for that up until this fiscal year to do reconstruction and, as part of that, do some chipsealing. That was funded under the Building Canada Plan from the federal government. We have chipsealed the first portion from kilometre 187 to 216 or so and we are reconstructing from kilometre 395 to 411. With some money that will be carried over this year, we will get a chipseal on that 16 kilometre stretch from kilometre 395 to kilometre 411.

There is no money in the capital plan to go forward specifically for Highway No. 1 reconstruction. We do have various chipseal, culvert and bridge rehabilitation programs and we use that to maintain, rehabilitate, replace structure and chipseal surfaces as the needs warrant. It's very, very important for us to have that program and to ensure that it's properly funded so we can maintain the integrity of our system, so we have a way to replace, rehabilitate infrastructure as it comes to the end of its lifecycle or fails prematurely.

We do have a general plan for where we expect to be doing chipseal and culverts and bridges next year. We always wait until the spring of the year, though, to finalize the plan so we can see what the exact conditions are and then decisions about where to best allocate the funding that we have. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Mr. Neudorf. Mr. Menicoche.

MR. MENICOCHÉ: I'd like to thank the deputy minister for that explanation of that line item. Just with that, and without getting into further debate, I do have a committee motion here that I would like to move, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. Just give a second to circulate the motion. Mr. Menicoche, you can actually read your motion to the House.

COMMITTEE MOTION 90-17(4):
CHIPSEAL OVERLAY,
CARRIED

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. I move that this committee strongly recommends that the government place a high priority on the chipsealing and rehabilitation on Highway No. 1 between kilometre 187 and kilometre 216 beginning in the fiscal year 2014-15. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. Again, we'll just take a second to circulate that motion.

Motion is in order. To the motion. Mr. Menicoche.

MR. MENICOCHÉ: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I think it's important to state early on here that it's not asking for any money to be included in the budget, but it only asks that the department place priority on this almost 30 kilometres of chipseal that's been deteriorating over the years. I didn't hear any competence in the Minister's answer that they do plan to do it next year, and I feel that if we leave it past the 2014 season that we're going to lose almost half of it because it's all patches, gravel and chipseal. It's got little painted lines; it's actually quite tricky to navigate as it is today. To see us lose it all by another year of letting it sit would be a shame. I feel that it would be good expenditures of dollars, because it's just rehabilitating what's there in patches and to save the infrastructure that we have there.

For a section of highway that's listed on the National Transportation Strategy, Highway No. 1, it's kind of a shame to see it patched up here and there, particularly this fall. On the gravel sections that got exposed, there are holes and it's almost unsafe. It's when the weather affects it that badly.

I'm just asking my colleagues to support me in directing the Department of Transportation to make this section part of their priority as we move forward for rehabilitation of chipsealing next fiscal year, Mr. Chair. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. To the motion. Mr. Nadli.

MR. NADLI: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I, too, speak in favour of the motion. I think it was publicly stated through reports that tourism is on the rise, more so and particularly in the Trout River part. There's been an increased level of interest in terms of people using that facility. At the same time, we have an increase in tourists travelling up north. I believe that section of highway, if at least chipsealed and properly maintained, would be a celebration for tourists that are travelling from down south coming up north. It's integral in terms of giving people a reprieve of a smooth ride into particularly this part of the North.

I support this motion and I'm sure that this deserves priority. Mahsi.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Mr. Nadli. To the motion.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Question has been called.

---Carried

Committee, again, we are on section 9-10. Continuing on with questions, I have Mr. Yakeleya.

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Chair. My questions to Minister Ramsay are on the planning of the infrastructure of the Mackenzie Valley winter road. It is in regard to the amount of traffic that could be there this coming winter. With the amount that we've seen or heard of last year, 2,200 trucks coming up from Wrigley to Tulita and then up to Norman Wells and across to the oilfields, I want to state that I was somewhat disappointed when I read the capital infrastructure and didn't see any type of infrastructure to protect the people and the safety. There's going to be a lot of trucks on that road and some of them will be carrying some pretty dangerous chemicals, hauling in and hauling out. The Minister has experienced this and I appreciate the Minister for coming with me last year on the winter road from Fort Good Hope to Fort Simpson. He got a firsthand account of the style of road that we have and the continuous improvement that we do need here. I don't think we're quite up to the standards that we want to have for safety.

We were in North Dakota and we did see some pictures of their paved roads where there were grooves in their paved roads because of the amount of trucks that were passing through the county there, and that's no different than the ice paving project that we have on the winter roads where the grooves are pretty well dug into the road there.

I want to see if the Minister would look again to see if there is any type of funding that would help with some of the road infrastructure as to clearing out some spots, lining up some of the areas that we need to work on. I know there is some bridge work going on there. That was given last year. We certainly appreciate that, but we need some more in regard to some of the areas that are quite tricky to maneuver around some of these spots.

I ask the Minister, other than what he told me earlier on today in regard to safety, we need to put some money into those roads. Again, I'm not quite convinced that because the development is happening in the Sahtu, the Minister mentioned the amount of \$90 million and we're not seeing any type of infrastructure. It doesn't make sense. I mean, what else do we need to do to put dollars

into those winter roads? Right now it doesn't show anything. That's where the activity is.

What type of business case is the government operating in terms of putting money into our winter roads to show them that they support development? They might not like that in the region. They might say, well, they're not showing any type of support for us on the Mackenzie Valley winter road. Maybe development is not looked upon as a favourable economic booster in the GNWT. So maybe we'll take our time and we might have other thoughts to the hydraulic fracking, because they're certainly not seeing the type of support we need on the winter road. The Minister will know from the amount of phone calls last year that we took, he understood about the conditions of our winter road. I think we need to really look at this again. Thank you.

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

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. A couple of things. First of all, we do firmly believe in the economic future of the Sahtu region, central Mackenzie Valley and the importance of not only having a winter road down the Mackenzie Valley but also advancing, at every turn, an all-weather road down the Mackenzie Valley. You need to look at the Corridors for Canada III proposal to see that we're serious about investing in a big way into the Sahtu. We're looking at the Bear River Bridge, the Oscar Creek Bridge, Bosworth Creek Bridge, and I've mentioned it before, but my goal is to envision to have a winter road all the way down the valley, and I think we're getting close. There is money in Corridors for Canada III to enable us to do that, to have a road from Fort Good Hope, a winter road from Fort Good Hope to the Dempster. We need to keep moving in a positive direction. I really do believe that we are moving in that direction.

Just so the Member knows, we haven't finished negotiating with industry on what support they're going to approve the government with to help us maintain and enhance the winter road this coming season. Earlier today I spoke to the Member about some of the enhancements we've done in terms of looking at more manpower in the region for enforcement and safety.

We've done a lot of work on mapping the route and we're going to try to ensure that there's an orientation for drivers going up the winter road. They can get a map. We can ensure that they're well prepared, especially if they're new drivers. We're doing everything we can to ensure that it's going to be a successful winter season on that winter road. We haven't got to the stage where we know exactly what we're going to be getting from industry, and hopefully it is equivalent to what we've received in the past, but again, those negotiations aren't concluded.

We also will be looking at the completion of more bridges this coming winter, and I know the Member and I spent some time on the winter road last winter. We saw those areas of concern, and especially with Bob's and Strawberry, those are going to be completed this coming season, so that's going to improve the safety of the road. Again, I mentioned earlier the other crossings. We are continuing to move in the right direction, and again, in this year, in a perfect world we'd have money for everything right now, but we're working with what we've got, the best that we can, and we have a plan for the future and it requires a substantial amount of funding. I mean, everybody talks about the infrastructure deficit that we face here, and we really need to get a plan like Corridors for Canada off the ground so we can continue to invest in our infrastructure so that we can grow the economy here in the NWT.

MR. YAKELEYA: The Minister outlined several areas that certainly bring interest to me. However, I do have a motion I want to read in this section here, so if I could.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Yes. Go ahead, Mr. Yakeleya.

COMMITTEE MOTION 91-17(4):
FUNDING FOR MACKENZIE VALLEY
WINTER ROAD SYSTEM,
CARRIED

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I move that this committee strongly recommends that the government take immediate action to identify appropriate and ongoing levels of funding to support the development and expansion of the Mackenzie Valley winter road system beginning the fiscal year 2014-2015.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. We're just going to circulate the motion quickly.

Committee, the motion is in order. To the motion. Mr. Yakeleya.

MR. YAKELEYA: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The motion speaks to the support that's needed in the Mackenzie Valley winter road system. Looking at the infrastructure and hearing the Minister talk, I appreciate his continuous effort to negotiate with the oil and gas industry and seeing what they're going to do to support their operations. It's in their best interest to seek the most advantageous road system going up from Wrigley to Norman Wells. Sometimes I wonder if the oil industry wasn't there, then we wouldn't have much additional dollars here. I'm wondering if this here is we're relying on the oil company to help us out in this area here, and sometimes that's not too good because we're waiting for them, because in here we really have nothing. If the oil industry walks away and says

sorry, we're not going to negotiate as much as you think and they can give you whatever reason. But we are relying on the oil and gas industry to help us with the infrastructure. It should be ours. This is a public winter road system that we should be able to put money in to help with the road.

I do know that they're hoping that the federal government would approve the Corridors for Canada III for future funding, and the Bear River, the Oscar and Bosworth are bridges that certainly need attention. The Bear River is close to \$7 million. Oscar needs to be rejigged and put back in to its proper place. The Minister and I drove past that bridge last year and it's a bridge certainly sitting there doing nothing. If you want to look at efficiency of the government's and taxpayers' dollars, it's just sitting there while we have to go around. We want to really look at those types of situations. The Bosworth is just outside the roads of Norman Wells.

Again, I ask for support because there are going to be a lot of trucks on the winter road. Safety is number one. There were a lot of close calls on the winter road last year. The Minister outlined some provisions to have some safety mechanisms in place. It's good in theory, but in practicality, when you drive that winter road, you drive it, actually, for dear life. The government needs to put some infrastructure and straighten out those roads, straighten out those bends, and look at those hills. It has to be done. It's no different than any other road in the Northwest Territories. I think my people in the Sahtu, their lives are worth it. I'm asking this motion here to ask the government to reconsider, and I would appreciate the support from all Members. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. To the motion. Mr. Bromley.

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I will be supporting the motion here. I appreciate my colleague bringing this forward. This relying on industry...(inaudible)...policy, as we heard during our tour in the Bakken from just about everybody not to rely on industry, don't be controlled by them. In fact, take control and make them participate and so on. We heard a lot of horror stories last winter, and I know the Minister and the Member for the Sahtu described some of the close calls they actually witnessed, and we've all heard stories from people who drove the highway and observed people or truck drivers and their trucks falling down hills, and in one case even abandoning the truck when it started to slide down the hill. These sorts of accidents.

We know that industry ignored the rules and the regulations for the use of the ice road and were ignorant about that, and I know the department's been working on that, and I think maybe late in the game we did try to get some enforcement going out

there, but this is pretty classic stuff. Now we are talking about moving into a season where we are actually going to be moving toxic hazardous materials over the road in large quantities with large, wieldy pieces of equipment, so the costs are going up. The stakes are much higher.

During our tour, again, we heard from the medical emergency people that the sorts of accidents that you see with this sort of activity are, as they described in their words, grotesque, horrific, like a war zone. These are big, awkward pieces of equipment, often with hazardous materials and it's not pretty. In fact, like a war zone, they said. They were having to treat more and more people for emergency medical providers with post-traumatic stress syndrome as a result of attending these accidents. I think we are treating this pretty lightly. I appreciate, again, the attention that my colleague Mr. Yakeleya is bringing with this motion, to try and learn from the lessons of others and get ahead of the game here. I know the Minister is also aware of this information. It was his tour that we were on when we heard this information. I appreciated that opportunity. Mahsi.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Mr. Bromley. To the motion.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Question has been called.

---Carried

We will continue on with activity 9-10. I have Mr. Nadli.

MR. NADLI: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I just wanted to make reference to the matter in terms of how it is that priorities are set in terms of the highways and construction and, of course, the maintenance.

How does the department deal with the various winter roads across the North? Some perhaps could be a higher priority than other areas. Some could be abandoned. What is the position of the Department of Transportation?

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Mr. Nadli. For that I'll go to Minister Ramsay.

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We would, of course, look at the winter roads and the provision of services on those winter roads. We try to treat them all the same, but in the case of an area like the Sahtu with all the activity that is going on there, obviously we have had to do more in that area because of the number of trucks going across the winter road.

I'm not sure if the Member has a specific question. We would be more than happy to try to answer it. We maintain. We build I think it is close to 1,500 kilometres of winter roads in this territory every winter. Thank you.

MR. NADLI: Mr. Chair, the question that I wanted to ask is whether the department will continue the maintenance of the winter road access, previously the winter crossing west of the Deh Cho Bridge in Fort Providence. Thank you.

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: Mr. Chair, yes. We have a priority to maintain the main highway system here in the NWT. I'm aware of the Member's request for the department to maintain that access that was previously there prior to the construction and opening of the Deh Cho Bridge last November. We have a letter that is going to be coming to the Member, suggesting that the community look at opportunities through the funding that they have, the Community Opportunities Fund that's funded on an annual basis by the GNWT, and I had a chance to discuss that letter earlier with the Member.

I will go back to the department and see if there is a way. I'm not sure exactly what it would cost to maintain that portion of road, but that's something we will take a look at. Thank you.

MR. NADLI: Mr. Chair, I am encouraged by the Minister's reply. The other area that I was interested in is the proposed pullout between I believe it's Paradise Gardens and Enterprise. What is the project scope, the details, the schedules in terms of seeing it realized? Perhaps before the summer?

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

MR. NEUDORF: Thank you, Mr. Chair. We, with some funding this year already and then with some additional funding next year, want to construct a pullout on Highway No. 2, kilometre 18, a place where trucks can be pulled over for inspection purposes, or if we have to close the highway because of a wide load, then we can use that as a place to hold other traffic that might be travelling on the road.

We have a site selected. We are going through the design. We will purchase materials this year and then actually construct that pullout, including chipsealing the surface next year. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Mr. Neudorf. Mr. Nadli.

MR. NADLI: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Has the department initiated any discussions with the community of Enterprise or even the neighbouring community of the reserve in terms of the project scope and how they can be involved? Thank you.

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

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I don't believe we've had any discussions with the neighbouring communities, but that's something we could certainly undertake. Thank you.

MR. NADLI: That's all. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolyunny): Thank you, Mr. Nadli. We are moving on with questions on this activity. Mr. Blake.

MR. BLAKE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Just back to highways. I mentioned a number of times that the community of Aklavik would like to see a project to Willow River to their access source. I just wanted to raise that and hopefully we could see that in the budget before our term ends. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolyunny): Thank you, Mr. Blake. Mr. Ramsay.

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The issue for the road to the gravel source at Willow Lake is an issue the Member has brought up a number of times in the past. It is something that we continue, as a department, to work with the community. We have funded them in the past for \$250,000 through the Community Access Program. We have also helped them develop PDR work on the road itself. We had I believe it was \$100,000 toward a study on a bridge crossing. It was expected that that bridge would cost somewhere around \$300,000, but it is expected that the bridge on that road alignment would cost about \$1 million now. So the total project would come in at around \$19.2 million.

We still are interested in working with the community of Aklavik to see that project happen. Certainly today we don't have the capital dollars to allow us to commit to that project. We do want to work with the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs, and perhaps there is an opportunity to advance the project through new Building Canada money or gas tax funding, as well, as those are opportunities that may present themselves to the community of Aklavik.

I must say that our long-term goal is to connect the community of Aklavik to the Dempster Highway at some point in time. We will continue to look forward to that day when it does come. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolyunny): Thank you, Minister Ramsay. Moving on with questions on this activity page, I have Mr. Bromley.

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The first question I have on this page is related to Highway No. 3. I don't see any capital dollars being directed towards Highway No. 3. I think we know, and Mr. Neudorf has said many times, that it's about the worst highway, most challenging highway in the Northwest Territories. I know there has been some really steady work on this highway and that I believe we have a little bit of research going on out there, too, trying to assess out what some more long-time solutions are, but it continues to be challenging to this day.

There are a number of people, a number of my colleagues that have made comments on the status of this highway and that it is a safety issue. Frankly, I was shocked to not see any dollars, recognizing that this is a very thirsty highway. It can soak up dollars like crazy, but for good reason. We have shown to fairly consistently put some money into trying to address the worse issues on a short-term basis so that we are preserving the safety of people. It's the busiest highway, I believe, in the Northwest Territories.

I wonder if we can get some comments from the Minister. What about the safety of the people using Highway No. 3? Mahsi.

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

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The highway remains safe. We have made the effort to lower the posted speed limit on that highway.

The Member is right; it has soaked up a tremendous amount of capital dollars over the years, and is in constant requirement for funding for maintenance and maintenance work. The work has been studied on maintenance. We are doing research on the road itself, again, to try to mitigate the impact climate change has had on that highway. We'll have to continue to put money into that highway. Through Corridors for Canada III we're looking at another investment to rehabilitate the highway, somewhere around \$40 million. So it's another substantial investment in that highway.

Again, I'm going to sound like a broken record, but there's not a lot of money to spread around in this capital budget when it comes to highways. It's very bare bones. It is \$90 million, but if you take out the Inuvik-Tuk highway, there's not a lot of money to go around to other highways in the Northwest Territories and that includes Highway No. 3 in this instance. Thank you.

MR. BROMLEY: The Minister made many interesting statements there. First of all, safety, I would say, is an issue, and I can back that up with however many people the Minister would like me to bring as witnesses. It does, as the Minister said, take constant maintenance to maintain safety conditions on this road, and here we have a break in that constancy.

It would be very nice if we could just wait while we pursue these other funds, Corridors III or IV or whatever. But I'm afraid the conditions on this highway don't stand aside and wait for the Minister to come forward with those dollars.

I think the Minister captured it; we just don't have the money to spread around. No, no, we have lots of money. We have probably never had bigger highway budgets than this. But we are choosing, as the Minister said himself, to pour that into one new

project at the expense of all kinds of facilities in the Northwest Territories, highways. Again, I don't accept that. That's their reasoning, when the evidence is clear here. The Minister is aware of the need for maintenance, and yet here we go putting 80 percent of our transportation budget, incredibly, into a new project. Does the Minister have any comments? Thank you.

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: Mr. Chairman, I can assure Members that I know there are folks out there and the Member wanted to bring some witnesses, but the highway is safe. Highway No. 3 is safe. If you look at the collision rates between 1993 and 2012, collision rates per million vehicles have gone down over half in terms of the volume of collisions on Highway No. 3. I think that means that our highways are safe. We have statistics to back up the fact that there aren't as many collisions on that road as there were in the '90s and that number has been steadily coming down.

The Member seems to... I don't know if something is not quite connecting, but we had \$200 million put forward by the federal government earmarked for the specific project the Member talks about, the Inuvik-Tuk highway. We don't have the ability to take any of that \$200 million and move it around to Highway No. 3, 8, 7, 6, 1 or 4. You name the highway. We can't take that money and move it around. That's not something we're able to do.

We're in the process of this funding with the federal government that's going to see \$200 million flow through to the GNWT so that we can build the Inuvik-Tuk highway. That's the status of that \$200 million and we don't have the ability to move it around.

I think maybe some Members are under the assumption that we can just take some of that money and move it around. That can't happen. That's why you see the budget the way it is and we are going to carry forward.

I have to say this, as well, Mr. Chairman. This is the first year in probably the last eight or nine years – and I've been here almost 10 years now – that we haven't had a federal funding program available to us to invest in our highway system in the Northwest Territories. We've had that opportunity in the past. This year we just don't have anything to avail ourselves of when it comes to federal funding programs. It's kind of that grey zone between us getting new funding programs and the other ones lapsing. So we're stuck right in the middle, and this capital budget that you see in front of you for Transportation is a reflection of the fact that we just can't rely on that federal funding this year. We have some, and yes, it's earmarked for the Inuvik-Tuk highway. That's the stark reality that we're living in today.

But we're hoping to change that with Corridors for Canada III, a \$600 million investment in

transportation infrastructure across the Northwest Territories. Thank you.

MR. BROMLEY: Yeah, baloney, Mr. Chair, to the Minister. That's absolute baloney. We can move dollars around.

The Minister and his staff so far have used three years, four years and five years for this project, depending on what they find with different things, studies that are underway now. So we can simply decide to do this over a longer period of time. We can decide to push for that in this agreement so that we can afford to do the maintenance that's required in our highway system across the Northwest Territories. Certainly not all of it, but we can contribute significant amounts.

I guess this is the seventh year of my being an MLA dealing with the capital budget, and this is the seventh year, despite my best efforts and support from colleagues, that I don't see the Detah road being funded. What is the Minister's reasoning for this? Thank you.

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: Mr. Chairman, the Detah road was not deemed a high enough priority through the capital planning process. I've given assurances to the Member that we have the Detah access road and we will have the ability to conclude that project through Corridors for Canada III, that proposal that we're bringing forward to the federal government. We're very optimistic that that funding proposal will be approved by the federal government. The Detah road would figure very prominently, right at the front of that plan, should that proposal be successful. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolyunny): Thank you, Minister Ramsay. Final comment, Mr. Bromley.

COMMITTEE MOTION 92-17(4):
DETAH ACCESS ROAD COMPLETION,
CARRIED

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I would like to propose a motion. I move, if I may, that this committee strongly recommends that the government take immediate action to identify the multi-year funding necessary to complete construction of the Detah access road beginning in fiscal year 2014-2015.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolyunny): Thank you, Mr. Bromley. We're just going to circulate that motion.

Committee, the motion is in order. To the motion. Mr. Bromley.

MR. BROMLEY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. As I mentioned, I've been bringing this up for seven years now. Just a little bit on the history. The original construction of the Detah road was very shaky and I know the department is aware of this. It was actually thrown in very quickly at the recommendation of the member of the royalty that

had visited Detah during the springtime during the breakup and ended up having a harrowing dog team ride across the deteriorating ice. So he was motivated to lobby very hard and, successfully, this road was put in, but it was put in without much planning or engineering and so on. So, it's well recognized that it needs to be reconstructed.

It's costing the residents of this small community of Detah, and at certain times safety issues. I appreciate the department responding when those are reported to the department. Over the decades they have been pretty good responding on a temporary basis to put the band-aid on and run the grader over and so on, but it has been costing people in certainly their vehicle maintenance and tires and so on. Those are real items.

The reconstruction has been on the books now for decades. Yellowknives Dene First Nation, over that period of time, and in the most recent decade has developed the expertise in highway construction and has a demonstrated ability for highway construction. In fact, I believe they sort of broke their teeth on this highway with some support that was finally found during the 16th Assembly to initiate the project. But again, this project was not funded specifically and that's been the problem from the word go. Just as the Minister's proposal is right now to seek dollars, he hopes to find dollars, no, we're saying now, let's put a definite plan in place to get this project started and started this coming fiscal year. Don't let this thing waffle along on the possibility of surplus funds if another project comes in under budget. Obviously, that hasn't happened for decades. So some real firm action is needed.

Since we started this project, we realized the costs are actually very modest and we're speaking in the order of \$1.5 million to \$2 million a year for two or three years would be significant enough to finish this project. Despite that and then perhaps that's why it's been sloughed off to the possibility of surplus funds and so on, or if we hope to find funds in corridor six, blah, blah, blah.

So I guess I've appreciated the support of my colleagues throughout the years and most recently to elevate this project from the backburner sort of when we happen to have surplus funds category to this is a priority. It's a small but important project so let's get it done category.

The current highway budget, as I've mentioned, and as Members know from looking at the numbers, is so unbalanced that if it was a flat sheet of plywood on the floor, the plywood would be standing up on one corner it's so unbalanced, almost 80 percent going to one brand new project. That's amazing. I don't know where people's heads are when they come up with that sort of distribution of budget, given the needs such as this in the Territories. Again, modest dollars required.

So we do need new dollars to do this project, but we know that there is potential within the budget to have that reallocation. So I don't think we necessarily have to have new dollars to commit to this project, as much as make sure the dollars are committed from this year's budget.

That's all I have to say, Mr. Chair. I appreciate the opportunity to speak to this motion and I'll appreciate my colleagues' support. Mahsi.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolyunny): Thank you, Mr. Bromley. To the motion. Mr. Miltenberger.

HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just wanted to point out that when Mr. Bromley started his comments, he was chastising Transportation for having too much money in this budget. Now he wants to get a motion to put more money into Transportation, creating a bit of cognitive dissidence on our part. But nonetheless, Cabinet will abstain. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolyunny): Thank you, Minister Miltenberger. To the motion. Ms. Bisaro.

MS. BISARO: Thanks, Mr. Chair. To Mr. Miltenberger's comments about this adding funding to the budget, I thought I clearly heard Mr. Bromley say that money could be reallocated from a project that takes up an extremely large chunk of the Transportation budget, take \$1 million and put it into this particular Detah road that he's asking for. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolyunny): Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. To the motion.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolyunny): Question has been called.

---Carried

Thank you, committee. Again, we're on 9-10 in your activity summary, capital estimates. Continuing on with questions on this activity, I have Mr. Nadli.

MR. NADLI: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I just wanted to have some final opportunity for a question that I had for the Minister. It's in regard to the junction on the south side of Fort Providence that leads off to Fort Simpson, then on to Enterprise and on to Hay River. Of course, at this point, it has a gravel quarry and it's pretty close to a forestry tower. In fact, it's in earshot from the base of the tower. I just wanted to know what is the status of that quarry and what are the plans for that quarry. Mahsi.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolyunny): Thank you, Mr. Nadli. For that we'll go to Mr. Neudorf.

MR. NEUDORF: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Work in quarries, of course, is tied to requirements for gravel related to O and M funding, related to capital funding. In this particular case, because the highway in that area is already chipsealed, it would be related to any capital funding we had in our

budget for it. I'm not aware of any specific work in that quarry right now, but we can certainly follow up with the Member and provide him some details on that. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Mr. Neudorf. Mr. Nadli.

MR. NADLI: Thank you, Mr. Chair. That's all.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Mr. Nadli. Committee, we're on 9-10, Transportation, activity summary, highways, infrastructure investment summary, infrastructure investments, \$86.075 million. Does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, committee. On page 9-13, Ms. Bisaro.

MS. BISARO: Thanks, Mr. Chair. I have a question here. There's an expenditure for the Motor Vehicle Information System upgrade and I have a recollection that we've been doing this for a while, I think. I'd like to ask the Minister if he could advise if this is a multi-year project, is this the second year of a multi-year project or the first year, and if it is only the first year, is it a one-year project. Thank you.

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

MR. NEUDORF: Thank you, Mr. Chair. We have been working on our Motor Vehicle Information System for several years. The first objective was to get it onto a more stable platform and the next objective was to rebuild the system. We did that module by module, so the new software is now on a stable platform and it is modern and up to date and we can move forward. The way we'd like to move forward is by providing on-line services.

We, in the current fiscal year, are in year two of a two-year project to provide on-line services and we hope later this year to be rolling that out. The biggest on-line service to be provided will be vehicle registrations. There are other things, including scheduling of exams and appointments, and driver abstracts, as well, would be available on-line.

The money that's in the capital plan here, \$650,000, it's then to do another phase of on-line services. We do want to keep expanding the number of on-line services that we have available to the public. The biggest part of this would be, actually, on-line services rates as commercial vehicles permits and their operators, but there are a number of other different projects there as part of the on-line services.

Only one year is in the capital plan. We still need to work with the CIO, the chief information officer, to solidify our submission so that we can show all three years of that capital plan. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

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

MS. BISARO: No, that's good. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. Committee, again, 9-13, Transportation, activity summary, road licensing and safety, infrastructure investment summary. Mr. Nadli.

MR. NADLI: Thank you, Mr. Chair. My questions are related to licences in terms of small communities. Recently it has been brought to my attention that a person did try to, a young person in particular, did try to get their licence on numerous occasions, and the facility that they have on the highways camp is used, and of course, it's used as the headquarters of the staff, the personnel that work at that camp. The concern that was brought to my attention is that after several attempts, it became very apparent just the distractions of the noise level within that building was perhaps the cause of this student maybe trying for the third time and then finally succeeding to get their licence after about four tries.

The point is that there is a lot of traffic within that little office that they have. Are there, perhaps within the future, plans to perhaps expand that office so that people within the community there could have a proper facility and at least a level of quietness where they could focus and ensuring to get their driver's licence? Are there plans, perhaps, to maybe have the facility expanded in the future for providing that service? Mahsi.

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

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the Member for his question. We've looked at that facility the Member talks of and we have made some improvements to the facility. I want to assure the Member that some of those improvements have been made. If the Member has specific concerns going forward, I'm more than happy if the Member wants to bring those concerns to our attention. We have no plans to expand the facility, but like I've said, we've taken some steps to improve things there. If the Member hears any further complaints or concerns, please bring them to our attention and we'd be more than happy to look at those. Thank you.

MR. NADLI: Can the Minister explain what kind of steps they've made to improve the situation? Was there an addition added?

HON. DAVID RAMSAY: We didn't do an expansion there, but for the specific improvements – and all I am aware of is there have been some improvements – I'll go back to the department and we'll endeavour to get a list of the improvements to the Member.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Again, committee, we are on 9-13, Transportation, activity summary, road licensing and safety, infrastructure investment summary, infrastructure investments, \$850,000. Does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you. Committee, if I can get you to return to the department summary page. This is 9-2. Transportation, department summary, infrastructure investment summary, infrastructure investments, \$90.4 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Ms. Bisaro.

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I move that we report progress.

---Defeated

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Ms. Bisaro.

COMMITTEE MOTION 93-17(4):
DEFER CONSIDERATION OF
DEPARTMENT SUMMARY,
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION,
CARRIED

MS. BISARO: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I would like to move that the committee defer consideration of the department summary for the Department of Transportation at this time.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. Just give us a second and we'll circulate that motion. To the motion.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dolynny): Question has been called.

---Carried

What is the wish of committee? Ms. Bisaro.

MS. BISARO: Mr. Chair, we have concluded Transportation. We could move on.

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

MR. HAWKINS: Mr. Chairman, I move that we report progress.

---Carried

I would like to thank our witnesses here today. If I can get the Sergeant-at-Arms to please escort our witnesses out of the Chamber. Thank you very much. I will now rise and report progress.

Report of Committee of the Whole

MR. SPEAKER: Can I have the report from Committee of the Whole, please, Mr. Dolynny.

MR. DOLYNNY: Mr. Speaker, your committee has been considering Tabled Document 107-17(4), NWT Capital Estimates 2014-2015, and would like to report progress with four motions being adopted. I move that the report of Committee of the Whole be concurred with. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you. Do I have a seconder? Mr. Hawkins. You didn't put your hand up? I thought you had your hand up. Sorry. Mr. Beaulieu.

---Carried

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

Orders of the Day

CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Ms. Langlois): Mr. Speaker, orders of the day for Wednesday, October 23, 2013, 1:30 p.m.:

1. Prayer
2. Ministers' Statements
3. Members' Statements
4. Returns to Oral Questions
5. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery
6. Acknowledgements
7. Oral Questions
8. Written Questions
9. Returns to Written Questions
10. Replies to Opening Address
11. Petitions
12. Reports of Standing and Special Committees
13. Reports of Committees on the Review of Bills
14. Tabling of Documents
15. Notices of Motion
16. Notices of Motion for First Reading of Bills
17. Motions
18. First Reading of Bills
19. Second Reading of Bills
20. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters
 - Bill 3, Wildlife Act
 - Bill 13, An Act to Repeal the Curfew Act
 - Bill 14, An Act to Repeal the Pawnbrokers and Second-hand Dealers Act
 - Bill 15, Gunshot and Stab Wound Mandatory Disclosure Act
 - Bill 16, An Act to Amend the Justices of the Peace Act
 - Bill 17, An Act to Amend the Protection Against Family Violence Act

- Bill 18, Apology Act
- Bill 19, Miscellaneous Statute Law Amendment Act, 2013
- Bill 21, An Act to Amend the Dental Profession Act
- Bill 22, Territorial Emblems and Honours Act
- Bill 24, An Act to Amend the Liquor Act
- Tabled Document 70-17(4), Electoral Boundaries Commission, Final Report, May 2013
- Tabled Document 107-17(4), NWT Capital Estimates 2014-2015
- Committee Report 6-17(4), Report on the Review of Bill 3: Wildlife Act

21. Report of Committee of the Whole

22. Third Reading of Bills

23. Orders of the Day

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Madam Clerk. Accordingly, this House stands adjourned until Wednesday, October 23rd, at 1:30 p.m.

---ADJOURNMENT

The House adjourned at 5:51 p.m.

